



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Creating a convivial library: an autoethnographic study of praxis

Daniel Grace

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Sheffield
Faculty of Social Sciences
Information School

September 2020

'All I know is that I don't know,
All I know is that I don't know nothing.'
Knowledge by Operation Ivy (1989)

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to my final supervisory team, Dr Andrew Cox and Dr Jo Bates, for their constant support, critical feedback and instilling a sense that this was doable when it felt like it was not. My initial lead supervisor, Dr Barbara Sen, will always have my gratitude for her tireless encouragement and openness to my sometimes less conventional approaches to research, both throughout my MA and into the initial years of my PhD. If not for her it would never have occurred to me to follow this path.

I certainly would never have reached the end of said path were it not for my partner Ruth and our two children, both of whom arrived in the course of the seven years I've been working on this thesis. When my head was lost in the clouds of some theory or another, they kept me grounded and reminded me why I was doing this.

Thanks, of course, to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for funding me through the last seven years and to all the associated support staff in the Information School and beyond who have tirelessly answered my questions and guided me through the various necessary procedures and processes as they've shifted and changed across time.

Finally, I want to thank those who appear by name in the following pages as participants and co-conspirators; specifically Danny, Marc, Gordon, Kiran, Darrell, Veronica, Jag and Ian. Without their willingness to be involved this thesis wouldn't exist. I also want to thank those who appear anonymously alongside me in the introduction and conclusion of this thesis; those with whom I've been out in the streets, pressed leaflets into reluctant hands, sat in seemingly endless meetings, stood on picket lines and discussed (and argued about...) politics like it really mattered. My friends and comrades, past, present and future. This one is for you.

Summary

This thesis sets out to understand what the role of the public library should be in relation to one of the greatest crises of our time; climate change. Utilising the undertheorised concept of *conviviality* and the positioning of the library as a prototype of a *convivial tool* from the works of Ivan Illich, alongside a critical examination of my own *praxis*, it seeks to draw out a theoretical framework for those also interested in tackling this problem.

Climate change is most often viewed as a crisis into which the library and the librarian may intervene positively, be that through involvement in educational programs or through its own activity as an institution, e.g. aiming for sustainable practices in buildings and workflows. Little has been done to examine the function of the library and librarian, and the assumptions contained in those concepts, within the context of wider social relations (e.g. capital) whose reproduction sits at the heart of the destruction of the environment.

The thesis takes the form of a longitudinal study over two years, documenting my own attempts to realise this idea of a *convivial library*, engaging with open data and wider political activism in my own home city, Sheffield. As a critical autoethnography of *praxis*, this consists of an account created from interviews, ethnographic notes and other documents, read alongside and through theoretical works. The use of dialectical pairs in the coding process alongside autoethnography provides a unique and novel approach to opening up this data to produce new theory, which might, once again, be tested through future organising. This theoretical aspect is grounded by the autobiographic element, locating this particular attempt within the context of my own political activism across the last twenty five years.

Beginning with an examination of the library and librarian's position vis-à-vis the climate crisis through the concepts of the *commons* and community resilience, alongside *conviviality*, this thesis expands and deepens a structural analysis of this relationship, primarily through the work of Jason

W. Moore. Alongside the development of a new method of coding, the unique contribution of this thesis can be found in its theoretical insights. Utilising Moore's concept of *Cheap Natures* I develop a theory of *Cheap Information* as a critique of the function of library services within capitalism.

Drawing on a variety of further theoretical sources from outside of the discipline of Library and Information Science I critique my own *praxis*, unpicking the ways in which this *Cheap Information* flows through structures and into our everyday life. From this critique emerges a more rigorously theorised possibility of the library as *convivial tool* and the role of the librarian in that context, as an ecotonal space committed to limiting the practices of *Cheap Information* and cultivating counter-hegemonic sets of knowledge practices, ones which we might wield towards a future worth living.

Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Summary	4
Contents	6
Declaration	9
Fear of a dead planet	10
Research questions	19
Aims	19
Objectives	20
Conviviality, crises, community resilience and the commons	22
Crises.....	23
The nature of the crises, or the crises of Nature	24
The crises in institutions.....	30
The commons	33
Commons as resources	34
Commons as process.....	36
Information or knowledge commons.....	37
Libraries as a commons.....	39
Community resilience	40
To return	42
To adapt	44
To transform	48
The resilient library	51
Towards a convivial library.....	53
Understanding the crisis, understanding ourselves	56
Epistemological and ontological grounding	57
Methodology	60
Autoethnography	60
Praxis.....	65
Dialectics	70
Why this approach?	72
Voice	73
Methods.....	76
Overview	76

Process	77
Coding and analysis.....	80
Ethics.....	85
Summary.....	88
Searching for the convivial.....	90
Interview with Danny – 02/03/2015	93
Interview with Darrell - 10/03/2015	97
Interview with Kiran - 30/03/15.....	101
Interview with Gordon - 30/03/15	106
Interview with Marc - 31/03/15.....	117
Meeting with Sheffield Better With Data (Danny, Jag and Ian) - 30/06/2015.....	121
Meeting with BWD and Darrell from Sheffield Libraries (Darrel, Danny, Jag and Ian) - 15/09/2015	126
Fragmentation of BWD and initial project idea.....	129
From my notebook 03/12/15:.....	129
More notebook 13/01/16:	130
Meeting with Danny - 09/02/16.....	131
Interview with Veronica - 06/06/16.....	132
Sheffield Solidarity Centre Meetings.....	141
Notebook 14/06/16:	141
Notebook 26/07/16:	141
‘Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?’	144
Cultivating conviviality: failure / success.....	145
Professionalism: library / librarian	148
Community data librarian	153
What do we mean by data?	156
Convivial society or convivial tools?.....	158
The praxis of capital: needs / Needs	159
From Cheap Nature to Cheap Information	162
Data as Cheap Information	164
Use-values.....	165
Convivial data?.....	166
Knowledge work or “librarying”: institutions / processes.....	168
Praxis as a tactic: theory / practice	170

The library user and the volunteer.....	172
A convivial librarian?.....	173
The problem with community.....	178
The problem with friendship.....	180
Everyday limits.....	182
Ecotones.....	184
Concluding thoughts.....	186
Cultivating hope.....	190
Appendix 1: Code Book.....	203
Appendix 2: Sheffield Solidarity Centre Library Working Paper.....	208
Bibliography.....	211

Declaration

I, the author, confirm that the Thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not been previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

Fear of a dead planet

Beginnings are illusory, arbitrary even, if examined closely. They serve a purpose that extends beyond any objective sense of temporal origins. Beginnings, like every distinction we choose to make, are political acts, in that they frame the issue approached to serve a particular purpose; they give power, regardless of whether we are aware of that fact or not. The framing of historical narratives 'powerfully shapes the interpretation of events, and ones choice of strategic relations' (Moore, 2017a, p. 596). This applies from the personal level up to the global, and to everything in between. With this PhD there are many points I could have settled on as beginnings. The most obvious would be the commencement of this specific study, October 2013. My second (and I'd already decided in the case of it failing, final) attempt to secure funding for the research I wanted to carry out was successful. I was working as a library assistant in Sheffield Public Libraries and as a librarian at Sheffield Hallam University. Somewhat ironically, beginning my research into this topic, which touches on public libraries more closely than it does academic, ended my time working in public libraries. Beginnings are endings. Perhaps a little trite, but true nonetheless.

Another beginning might be the research that preceded my decision to embark on a PhD, my MA in Librarianship (Grace & Sen, 2013). In that study I located a start point as the moment when I first read Slone's (2008) 'After Oil'. I think it must have been sometime in late 2009, shortly after beginning my MA Librarianship. I found its use of narrative and imagery to highlight the potential of public libraries in a post-peak oil world compelling and fascinating. I was also intrigued by the flipping of a crisis, in this case peak oil, into an opportunity for positive social change and the idea that, as a public institution, the public library could have a role in this change. This emphasis on social responsibility at the heart of the public library's ethos resonated with my own feelings regarding my job at the time as a library assistant in the reference section of a major city centre public library. For me, it explicitly brought together for this first time the wider crises facing the

world and my day-to-day work life. In drawing this connection it also directed the nature of my research towards methods that could make use of this insight.

A lot has changed since that initial realisation. As I've already stated I no longer work in public libraries. My concern is less directly with the day-to-day of work (although this is inevitably part of what interests me) than it is with broader issues of the institution of libraries, the idea of what they do or could do, and their function in a society faced by multiple crises. Also, since then, the public library service in the UK has declined, with over 800 libraries closing (Bartlett, 2020). Of these multiple crises, one stands out above all others: the climate crisis. The climate crisis is increasingly framed as a dire emergency by scientists; faster, more severe, with the possibility for catastrophic consequences well beyond our control that would make large areas of Earth uninhabitable (Ripple et al., 2020). Many are living with the consequences of this unfolding crisis already. Our most recent, and as I write ongoing, experience with crisis in the form of an immediate emergency, the coronavirus pandemic, can also be seen to have its roots in our relation to the natural world, specifically deforestation which is also a key driver of climate change (Carrington, 2020; Lambertini et al., 2020; Mealy, 2020). If we view humanity as a species-environment relation then capital, which forms the dominant mode of producing the material, useful goods and effects necessary for the species to reproduce, is the antagonistic social relation through which this wider relation works (Moore, 2015, p. 11). As capital expands its commodity frontiers to ensure its continued reproduction, we see an increase in 'intensive processes occurring at the economy's fringes, where "wild" strains are encountered by people pushed to ever-more extensive agroeconomic incursions into local ecosystems' (Chuang, 2020). The optimism in that original article, that spark that set me along the path which led to this thesis you are reading right now, seems less justified than ever. If you were to ask me for my defining emotion, something that described how I feel about the world right now, it would be anxiety.

Here is another beginning. It is June 18th 1999. I, along with several thousand others, am making my way through the City of London. My affinity group, friends who like me have become politicised through a combination of the punk and rave scenes that have given focus to the generalised mistrust and dislike for authority of teenage years, stop to cool off in the spray of a cracked open fire hydrant. As the fountain of water arcs up into the bright sunlight and rains down on the Carnival Against Capital a flatbed lorry pulls up. Masked figures climb out and begin to unload breeze blocks. We don't know what's happening exactly, but we sense it's something we want to be a part of. Two of the new group begin to build a wall in the doorway to a building. Later we learn it was the entrance to LIFFE stock exchange. In the distance we hear the sound of breaking glass. We laugh, we adjust our masks and head towards the drum and bass peeling from the sound system freshly revealed on the back of another flatbed lorry. Anything seems possible right now.

Back a few years and I'm in Ilford Public Library. The section is 335.83. I glance around furtively to check if anyone is watching and pull George Woodcock's "The Anarchist Reader" from the shelf. I'm 16 (or thereabouts) and I am definitely an anarchist and I've been looking for this book because it is mentioned in the liner notes from one of my favourite punk band's latest albums. If I'm honest I don't understand a lot of what is in it, a collection of short pieces by all the big names in the history of anarchism, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Proudhon, Malatesta, Goldman, Bookchin, but in the back is a sticker for something called the Anarchist Communist Federation. I go home, find their website and print their 'As We See It' statement out to read. Mum picks it up, has a quick read and rolls her eyes. Through them I find SchNEWS, a weekly newsletter produce by a group in Brighton with updates

about direct action around the UK and the rest of the world. I pass it on to friends, probably bore them rigid with my half-baked anarchism. Yet we find we agree with the idea that, in the words of SchNEWS, 'If you're not pissed off – you're not paying attention'.

I'm in the library at the University of East Anglia. It's my second year of my undergraduate degree in Development Studies, which I've reached at my third attempt. Mum died last summer. I'm reading Ivan Illich's *Tools For Conviviality*. I first come across Illich in a book called *The Development Dictionary*, in which he has a short essay entitled "Needs", in his words the 'professionally defined requirements for survival' which he contrasts to 'personal claims to freedom which would foster autonomous coping' (Illich, 2005, p. 99). I like the idea of autonomous coping, it sounds like something I would like to be able to do. I wonder about my inability to engage in normal activities, to be able to cope. I wonder about where it comes from, about how these other kids, and I still feel like we're kids, seem to be coping. Maybe they aren't. I spend a lot of time in here, reading. More time than I do going to lectures or seminars, both of which trigger panic attacks. Was it escapism? I wonder, looking back at myself. If it was it was a particularly nerdy form of escapism. Reading political and social theory, hiding in the stacks, adjusting all set essays so I could quote whatever I'd been reading that semester, an approach that failed as often as it succeeded. I leave the library and get a text from my housemate's boyfriend. Have I seen the news? I dash home just in time to see the second plane hit the twin towers.

It is February 2003. In a little under a month US-led forces will invade Iraq. Right now I'm handcuffed to a petrol pump in an Esso garage somewhere near Norwich. With me are a dozen or so others, mainly students like myself. We're here to highlight Esso's role in climate denial and the profits they stand to make from the oncoming conflict (The Guardian, 2003). I try to read a book for a bit but get

distracted by a potential customer angrily yelling at us. Handcuffed to a pump there isn't much we could do if that anger worked itself up into physical violence. That feeling of possibility remains, but it is more focussed. Rather than the diffuse power of capital we have a specific event that we need to stop. And we believe we can do it.

Skip forward three weeks and I'm lying face down on the ground inside the perimeter of RAF Lakenheath, a US soldier standing over me cradling a terrifying looking gun. Not for the first time I wonder if I've really thought this through. A dozen or so of us, affiliated with the Lakenheath Action Group, entered the base through a fence in order to carry out a citizen's nuclear weapons inspection and voice our objection to the impending war (BBC News, 2003). Soon the MoD police are on hand, they formally arrest us and drive myself and one of my friends out into the middle of nowhere, kick us out of the car and tell us not to come back. We return to the base to be interviewed on the local news. They cut the bit where we encourage others to take direct action, but we feel elated. We've acted and surely others will follow.

A few more days forward and it is announced on our televisions and radios that the invasion has begun. The committee of the Stop The War group at our university gather and we put our plans into action. Several hundred students, staff and members of the public march from our campus to the centre of the city. The war proceeds, unabated.

It's 2010 and the coalition government has been voted into office. I didn't vote, because voting doesn't change anything. I feel that way because I've spent the last 13 years watching a neoliberal Labour government continue the legacy of Thatcher and conduct an unpopular and brutal war the Middle East. I feel that way because all of my efforts, and those of tens of thousands of others, still

haven't brought us any closer to a world that is just and that isn't destroying itself. Since the flurry of protests and direct action at the outbreak of the Iraq war I've sunk into a sort of apathy. I still care, but I can't find the energy to turn that into action. Voting won't work, but neither will protest or direct action. Burnout is the phrase you hear most often. There's something else here perhaps, an unacknowledged privilege that lets me walk away from this. For a while at least.

By now I'm working in public libraries in Sheffield. When we moved to Sheffield I swore I wouldn't get involved with politics again and waste my time. A year later, 2011, I'm sat with a group of protesters inside a branch of HSBC. We've turned it into a library for the day, complete with story time for kids. The action is jointly organised between UK Uncut, a protest group focussed on opposing the Coalition's program of cuts to public services and its links to tax evasion by corporations, and Library Workers For A Brighter Future, a group consisting primarily of me and one of my colleagues from work set up to do the stuff that trade unions are unable or unwilling to do. There's another memory here, although I can't quite place the chronology. I'm in a bank again. I'm surrounded by masked protesters, mostly younger than me, with a portable soundsystem playing some kind of music I couldn't tell you the exact genre of. People are yelling: 'Smash capitalism!' In contrast to their black hoodies and masks I'm wearing anorak and carrying a placard with a picture of an owl on it that reads 'Save Our Libraries'. Dashing between the outstretched hands of police who were trying to kettle us inside I wonder if, maybe, I could do this in a different way, if this marks a turning point in my engagement with politics. I become a union rep, we organise a strike. We shut down the library service. I'm interviewed on the news again, but this time I don't talk of breaking into airbases, but of why we're withdrawing our labour. The caption says I'm a striking teacher. Oh well. A decade later the Conservatives are still in power.

And on it goes.

Anxiety is not exactly a new perspective for me. In the last decade or so this sense has taken on a depth and resonance that it didn't previously possess. When we look beyond libraries it increasingly feels as if our time is the time of overlapping and intensifying crises, with neither the time nor space to reflect on what the root causes might be, who is benefiting and how we might address these causes (De Angelis, 2017, p. 1). I've come to recognise what Mark Fisher (2009, p. 37) pointed out, that the individualised cases of anxiety that I see in myself and so many of my friends and loved ones require a political and social explanation in addition to the biochemical. For as long as I'd been involved in activism and organising I'd been vaguely aware of this idea, but, like so much of what makes up this thesis, it wasn't something I'd really devoted time to thinking about and understanding the implications of. I just got on with things. Or tried to. This isn't a thesis about mental health, it is a thesis about the climate crisis and the role the library might have in addressing it. But it's through this understanding that I've adopted a certain perspective, the first-person autoethnographic methodology that I use throughout, which serves to link these scales of considering these crises together.

Others have already made that link. Climate anxiety, a specific response to this crisis which threatens to overwhelm us and destroy our home, has been recognised by psychologists as a serious and debilitating condition (Knight, 2020; M. Taylor & Murray, 2020). In my experience anxiety manifests around things that feel beyond my control. It can provoke two reactions; retreat or act. To retreat is to detach, to make ourselves absent from the world, sometimes as an active choice, but often as not

more along the lines of reflex. Perhaps the most widely read articulation of this position came from the author Jonathan Franzen (2019) in a recent New Yorker article. In this Franzen asks us to consider that climate change cannot be stopped and instead focus on what we can do to survive the coming catastrophe. Of course, such fears of catastrophe are not new, but neither is this pessimism necessarily justified. I'll touch on this theme of catastrophe in a later chapter, but for now I just want to say that this thesis represents an attempt to act rather than retreat, to grapple with this problem, with global crises and their communal and personal effects and causes, refracted through the idea of the library.

My work in libraries was initially just that; work, nothing more. I applied for work in libraries because I liked books, which is a deeply unfashionable reason these days (or at least was the last time I was applying for a job in a library), although I suspect still a motivating factor for a lot of people who work in a library. As I worked in libraries I quickly realised that they were about a lot more than books. I've always tried to treat wage work as a necessary evil as much as possible, something done in order to live the life I want to live but nothing more. My life has been structured around minimising the amount of this work I have to do to meet my material needs. The idea that it might be a vocation or that it might have some more profound meaning or purpose to it beyond getting enough cash to pay the rent and bills was a new one for me. Despite this, libraries became something more than "just a job" as I began to realise their history and potential as an institution and began to reflect more deeply on what they had done for me throughout my life. As a kid library use was encouraged. I, like so many others, have clear memories of teenage years encountering the fantasy and science fiction I still love along with books on anarchism and socialism, the political ideas I came to adopt as my own, in my local library. But it was rereading the work of Ivan Illich as I studied for my MA Librarianship that reinforced in me of the intersection of my political convictions

and my choice of work, that my everyday experiences of working as a library assistant and as a trade union rep had some theoretical grounding I could explore. The concept that jumped out at me most clearly was *conviviality*, a slippery and undertheorised concept, which seeks to reframe the way we understand the *tools*, meant in the widest possible sense here, we use. That I might be able to bend this situation to some purpose beyond the nine to five, and that this might be useful to others in some way, seemed like a path worth pursuing.

The first section will sketch a theoretical starting point, where I was when I began this process, linking it to the core concern of information and library services and what role they might play in addressing the central crisis of climate change. It represents the results of my *praxis*, my limited reflection and attempts to find theoretical explanations for the kind of experiences outlined above, up to the point at which I began this thesis. It explores several key concepts, some of which get taken forward into later chapters, some of which are discarded as new ways of framing the problems they address came forward. Foremost among these concepts is the idea of *conviviality*, which despite doubts and misgivings along the way, remains integral to this thesis. The thesis can be viewed overall as an attempt to theorise this concept more thoroughly. Other ideas I take up here are that of the *commons* and community resilience, although both are subsumed within the concept of *conviviality* as the thesis progresses. The second section deals with the methodology, which as I have already mentioned, hinges on autoethnography but also encompasses elements of *praxis* and dialectics to become a critical autoethnography of *praxis* grounded in a dialectical critical realist ontological and epistemological framework. Subsequent sections will look at my own attempts to explore these ideas and the subsequent theoretical insights gained from these attempts. Specifically I follow my attempts to work with a small group of friends to realise a project around the nebulous idea of a *convivial library*; first exploring working with Sheffield public libraries, the with the associate, or 'community run' libraries within Sheffield, and finally through a project focussed on creating an autonomous social centre, the Sheffield Solidarity Centre. I conclude by bringing these

general points back to the level of the particular, to ground them in narratives that, hopefully, open the ideas out to the world.

I would like this process to be understood for what it is; an attempt to verify whether these starting concepts have any traction under specific conditions. The conditions under which any change can occur to alleviate the state of crisis inform and modify theory. As Wark (2015a, p. 218) reminds us “[t]heory proposes; practice disposes”. This is the process of *praxis*, and it is this process that is at the centre of my thesis. It is my hope that this critical examination of personal *praxis*, and its link to communal and global factors, in the field of libraries and information can provide a spark of its own to trigger further insights and action in working to understand and resolve these crises.

With this in mind my research questions, aims and objectives are as follows:

Research questions

- 1.1. What is a *convivial library*?
- 1.2. How does this understanding of a *convivial library* emerge from *praxis* (the theory/action dialectic)?
- 1.3. How might a *convivial library* be realised in our communities?

Aims

- 2.1. To develop relationships with people who might have an interest in the idea of a *convivial library* in order to:
 - 2.1.1. generate theory, through *praxis*, that allows an understanding of what a *convivial library* is;
 - 2.1.2. generate a wider narrative detailing how this theory emerges in relation to life/action;
- 2.2. To develop my own understanding of a *convivial library* through *praxis*.

Objectives

- 3.1. To conduct a series of discussions, 1-to-1 and as a group, with people as defined above.
- 3.2. To use these discussions alongside my own reflections and theoretical research to generate theory for understanding how we might create a *convivial library* and to write a narrative illuminating this process.
- 3.3. To create the conditions and develop my own understanding for the theoretical and practical realisation of a *convivial library*.

‘Depression is the shadow side of entrepreneurial culture, what happens when magical voluntarism confronts limited opportunities.’ (Fisher, 2012)

It is 2012. I’m carrying the coffin of my friend on my shoulder. The person who’d been beside me, and if I’m honest often ahead of me pulling me on, throughout the anti-austerity movement of the last two years is gone. Together we’d organised protests, occupations and strikes. I lose nearly another year to a depression deep as any I’ve experienced before. I step down as a union rep. I leave my job in public libraries to focus on this thesis. I feel a sense of guilt and also a sense of relief. I simply can’t work there anymore, the motivation I’d possessed prior to my friend’s death has drained from me. As I begin work on this thesis I hope that I can find a way through this ‘dejected apathy’, the result of this constant oscillation between the binaries of motivation/demotivation, found in its extreme form at that particular moment, but generally true of my experience of trying to “change the world” as described above (Fisher, 2009, p. 30). And I do, to an extent. Ideas bubble to the surface. Sat reading books of theory or talking with participants I feel like I’m moving forward again. It isn’t the same as before. I’m older. I become a parent (twice) across the course of putting

this together. I lose a parent too. Life comes at me, if not fast exactly, then at least relentlessly, as it does for all of us. My priorities and my capacity to address them shift, a continuation of the process I first recognised in the owl-and-the-anorak incident. There are stops and starts, but they aren't as sudden or as complete as before. The process of researching and writing this, spread over nearly seven years, has been a process of realising limitations, of hedging expectations, both of myself and of others.

Why am I writing about this in a thesis that aims to try and understand the role of the library in a time of climate crisis? While all of these circumstances are particular to me, I know from conversations I've had that they are not unique among those engaged with scholarship and/or organising. This realisation is precisely the motivating factor in my choice of methodology, autoethnography. What I start here and finish in the conclusion is an attempt to ground the more analytic, theoretical aspects of my research in something more particular and in doing so provide ways in to and out of this thesis. I want to acknowledge that all of these things, the particular and general, the local and the global, are related. We cannot begin to fully understand one without at least attempting to understand the other. It also recognises that my capacity to answer the questions I've set for myself is framed by my own experiences and understanding and, rather than box that off, I'm placing it front and centre. There are things we have to relearn and relearn. That's how I feel about these ideas, about this process I try to uncover here. I become comfortable and life becomes easier and I forget. I forget how hard it must be for others, because although it's been hard for me at times, I can only begin imagine what it's like if that *never lets up*. The theory I'm trying to trace here is in part a way of holding onto this fact, of passing it along. Yes, it is abstract, it isn't packed with meaning and feeling as we first encounter it, in a thesis, which is, for the most part, written in the relatively dry language of academia, and so on. Yet it remains one way of communicating a feeling that I've held onto all these years: that all of this doesn't have to be this way.

Conviviality, crises, community resilience and the commons

What follows is both a review of the literature and an exploration of the theory taken into the process of *praxis* explored in this thesis. As such it is partial; it does not seek to be systematic but to articulate a position, one which will change as it encounters the world. This approach has its limitations, but no more so than any other piece of research that seeks to situate itself within a particular theoretical landscape. It is personal, as would be expected from autoethnography, and represents a cumulative process of learning and reflection, albeit less structured perhaps than what follows. Again, the aim here is to capture a position, rather than to produce something exhaustive and, ultimately, unfocussed. It is a starting point, thoughts and ideas are unfinished but will be picked up or discarded in later sections. In some instances it may be considered that this approach may lack empirical weight, but it is the liberatory potential of theory that forms the reason why I, and many others, attempt this kind of research (c.f. hooks, 2015). As I make clear in my methodology chapter, this is primarily an essay on theory with an empirical element; it is an attempt to understand and modify *praxis*, the process by which theory and practice inform one another. This chapter then represents the theoretical start point on which the action described in my findings built.

A general thread that runs through the theory is the work of Ivan Illich (1973, 1974, 1981, 1983, 1987, 2002b, 2002a). I first encountered Illich in my undergraduate degree at the University of East Anglia. His ideas around ‘post-development’ and ‘needs’ had a profound effect on my thinking at the time (Illich, 1978, 2005). After graduating I didn’t read much Illich until I began my studies in librarianship a decade or so later. I returned to Illich’s work as I believe it has a great deal of value in understanding the function of libraries and information in society. Perhaps the most important concept I draw on from Illich’s (1973, p. 24) work is the one that appears in the title of this thesis, *conviviality*, meaning the ‘autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and the intercourse

of persons with their environment'. This concept is set up in in opposition to industrial productivity in the form of 'conditioned response[s] of persons to the demands made upon them by others, and by a man-made environment' (Illich, 1973, p. 11). In the context of institutions, such as the library, this spectrum between *conviviality* and industrial productivity indicates their role as a *tool*. For Illich (1973, p. 20) *tools* are not only 'simple hardware such as drills, pots, syringes, brooms...cars and power stations' but also productive institutions that produce both tangible ('corn flakes or electric current') and intangible ('education, health, knowledge or decisions') commodities. The individual relates themselves to society through using *tools* that they actively master, or by which they are passively acted upon (Illich, 1973, p. 21). A *convivial tools* is the first type; 'those which give each person who uses them the greatest opportunity to enrich the environment with the fruits of his or her vision' (1973, p. 21). For Illich, '[a]t its best the library is a prototype of a convivial tool' (1973, p. 65). Understanding this hope, this utopian fragment, is the central concern of this thesis. But before hope comes fear, before utopia, dystopia...

Crises

'The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.' (Gramsci, 2007, p. 276)

Slone's (2008) article wasn't my first encounter with the idea of peak oil. Several years earlier I had spent three months on a farm in rural Gloucestershire learning about permaculture, a systems approach to organic agriculture and living. During my time I encountered several people who were engaged in what was then considered a fringe concern around preparing for a world where the oil had run out and climate change had changed the world irreversibly. Peak oil refers not, as is commonly thought, to the biophysical limits of oil, the inherent finiteness of it as a resource and the

inevitability of it running out, but to the resource flow; the amount which can be extracted per unit of time given external restraints, e.g. geologic, economic, environmental and social (Kerchner, 2014, p. 129). The post-peak oil period has been referred to as the “Long Emergency”, a time in human history which ‘will require us to downscale and re-scale virtually everything we do and how we do it, from the kind of communities we physically inhabit to the way we grow our food to the way we work and trade the products of our work’ (Kunstler, 2005b). At that time I felt I lacked the necessary knowledge to examine some of the claims made by those I met, I took the idea of peak oil with a pinch of salt. It seemed too apocalyptic in its consequences and it fit too neatly with the assumptions and lifestyles of those who presented the idea as gospel truth. Since that time peak oil and the discourse around it has entered the mainstream, both explicitly in magazines such as the Economist (2009) and implicitly through media coverage of the search for alternative energy supplies through methods such as fracking and subsidies for renewables. By the time I read “After Oil” (Slone, 2008) I became convinced that this was a crisis worth addressing and that catastrophe beckoned.

The nature of the crises, or the crises of Nature

I didn’t have to go far to find a further crisis: climate change. Both this and peak oil are linked to fossil fuel extraction and consumption and both are of a “long” nature, to borrow Kunstler’s (2005a) terminology. Like peak oil, climate change contains the potential for multiple social and economic crises. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) synthesis report states that a ‘[c]ontinued emission of greenhouse gases will cause further warming and long-lasting changes in all components of the climate system, increasing the likelihood of severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts for people and ecosystems’ (2014, p. 8). It goes on to point out that this will ‘amplify existing risks and create new risks for natural and human systems. Risks are unevenly distributed and are generally greater for disadvantaged people and communities in countries at all levels of development’ (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2014, p. 13). The report, from an

organisation seen by some on the more radical end of environmental action and analysis as bound by 'inherent conservatism ... confounded by a diplomatic quietism' and whose knowledge claims are 'products of particular, situated commitments to forms of epistemic and social order', leaves no doubt that the crisis is upon us, and, significantly, that it is unevenly distributed (Mahony & Hulme, 2018, p. 402; Out of the Woods, 2014a).

One of the key concepts developed in modern scholarship in attempting to understand this proliferation of crises is the Anthropocene. The term is used across both the sciences and humanities to different effect (Moore, 2017a, p. 598). As a scientific descriptor, it derives from a suggestion by Crutzen (2002) that, beginning with the advent of the industrial revolution around 1800, the impact of human activities on the earth system have increased to the extent that we have left the geological epoch known as the Holocene and entered the Anthropocene (c.f. Steffen, Crutzen, & McNeill, 2007). Central to this is a distinction between nature and humanity that rests on the assumption of homogenous humanity separate from nature, either as a given or as an emergent property of modernity (Steffen et al., 2015, p. 94). As an ethical concept then it takes climate change, resource depletion, large scale biodiversity loss and other planetary crises, and packages them into one bundle 'outlining our human obligation towards the universe' (Zylinska, 2014, p. 66). It is immediately clear, referring back to the evidence presented by the IPCC report (2014), that the homogenous humanity that is created by the concept of the Anthropocene is problematic in the light of the uneven distribution of the social and economic effects of crises. The IPCC explicitly notes the need for an intersectional approach to mitigation and adaptation, albeit one focussed on problem-solving over understanding the conditions of the reproduction of such conditions (Out of the Woods, 2014a). The feeling of scepticism I experienced when first encountering the discourse around peak oil returns, not as a product of my perceived lack of knowledge, but through a critical engagement with the assumptions inherent in its catastrophic claims.

A familiar current within modern environmentalism, this rhetoric of catastrophism takes varying forms, but in each presumes an imminent collapse, be it societal, economic, environmental or otherwise (Lilley, 2012). It frames crises in Malthusian terms, as resulting from natural scarcity rather than currently existing social and economic relations, regardless as to whether these crises are viewed as exceptional cases or as somehow endemic to civilisation (Yuen, 2012). My own encounter with catastrophic discourses began with that trip to a farm to learn about permaculture and continued through engagement with a variety of activist and artistic forums. Primary among these was the Dark Mountain Project, an artistic movement that began as a manifesto stating, among other things, its desire to reject the faith which holds that the converging crises of our times can be reduced to a set of “problems” in need of technological or political “solutions” the proposed alternative being “uncivilised writing”, the construction of new narratives for a new world (Kingsnorth & Hine, 2014). Civilisation as a whole is identified as the primary causal reason for current crises, with no focused attempt to understand the complexities such a concept masks. In this opening we begin to see the appearance of Gramsci’s infamous “morbid symptoms”, specifically in the case of the eco-nationalism espoused by Kingsnorth, one of the projects founders (Out of the Woods, 2017). Similar traits can be found in Kunstler (2005a) with calls for closure of the Mexican border, a phrase echoed in the rhetoric of the Trump administration in the USA. In both of these cases, Nature is situated outside human civilisation in much the same way it is in the discourse surrounding the Anthropocene.

One of the most compelling and thoroughgoing critiques of the Anthropocene comes from Moore (2015, 2016, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c), a thinker who I encountered just as my data collection period began. As such he represents more than any the theoretical shift that occurred to me across this period, providing a new frame into which I could put my experiences to try and generate new understandings. As such I will discuss some of his ideas here, but will pick them up again and elaborate on them in later chapters. He argues that this division between Humanity and Nature, and

the inherent assumption of a united humanity, ignores ‘interpenetrated relations of power, technology and capital’ that form the premise of capitalism (Moore, 2017a, pp. 598–600). Capitalism forms a provisionally stable set of practices and conceptions of time, space and identity, so that the Humanity/Nature duality appears as a given of reality rather than being historically constructed (Moore, 2017a, p. 601). It is this “ontological formation” that renders attempts to get a handle on crises so difficult, and leaves us prone to catastrophic thinking. At first glance this might not seem that different from blaming the idea of civilisation as whole for the current crises. How is the “ontological formation” that is capitalism different to civilisation? This is where Moore (2017a) turns to history to illustrate the origins of this conception, to emphasise that it is a constructed way of organising nature. The key lies in understanding that, as with cause and effect of crises, such a formation is not evenly distributed, in fact cannot be due to the need for the capitalism to create new markets. So, in place of the Anthropocene Moore proposes we trace the roots of the current crises back beyond the advent of the “industrial mode of production”, to use another phrase from Illich (1973), and rename this period the capitalocene.

Despite its apparent clunkiness, I found in the term capitalocene a useful frame for considering the crises that beset the world. This is a methodological choice as much as it is an ontological or epistemological fact. It makes it clear that these crises can be understood as emergent properties of knowable world-systems, rather than exceptional cases to be dealt with piecemeal or as inherent to civilisation only preventable through a total collapse. It provides a critical lens for action, a sense of hope that things might be better, rather than a retreat into despair and drudgery. Importantly, Moore’s (2017b, pp. 20–22, 2017c, pp. 178–179) method also links up environmental and socioeconomic trends in demonstrating how the action that reproduces crises is not located solely in the economic sphere, or the social or cultural spheres for that matter, but across the whole of humanity (and extra-humanity) through the process of rendering the *vernacular*, the ‘autonomous,

non-market related actions through which people satisfy everyday needs', open to capital (Illich, 1981, p. 57).

Moore's work draws on the legacy of Marx, and as such forms the second theory thread I use in my thesis after Illich. Central to this is the principle of *world-ecology*, as outlined by Moore (2015), a rejection of the Cartesian narrative of capitalism, or industrial society, emerging from Nature, rendering the understanding of crises into one of relations, where nature is the matrix through which human activity occurs, rather than one of objects, where Humanity acts on Nature and vice versa (Moore, 2015, p. 36). It is this focus on relational understanding of crises, as opposed to an objectified understanding, that is the second thing I want to take from Moore's work. The wider field created through this perspective allows us 'to situate the histories of culture and knowledge production within the history of capitalism' (Moore, 2017b, pp. 3–4). I also make extensive use of Moore's other central concept of *cheapness* in my analysis. This concept explains the "common-sense" externalisation of Nature then creates a category into which anything that needs to be kept off the books can be put, rendering resources cheap, what Moore (2015, p. 17) calls *Cheap Nature*.

These two threads, Illich and Marx via Moore, stand to some degree in tension with one another. For Illich there is an identifiable world, the *vernacular*, outside of capital's grasp to which we might turn for succour in this time of crises. For Moore, such a vantage point does not seem to explicitly exist, although it is implied that capital works through, but ultimately does not fill entirely, all the processes of life-making (Out of the Woods, 2016). This might be explained through the way in which Illich's starting point vis-à-vis Marx differs from Moore's. Illich's thought can be said to expand from the consideration of use-value in chapter one of Marx's *Capital*, away from the exploration of exchange-value that makes up the remainder of the book and the majority of Marxist, including Moore's, thought (Esteva, 2015). Another key difference following on from this is Illich's scepticism around the progressive nature of capitalism, of the need to locate resistance to its *praxis* not within

the proletariat but from outside in ‘precapitalist and preindustrial life in common’; the *vernacular* (Samuel, 2012). While perhaps not considered part of the conventional canon of critical theorists, Illich has in common with the Frankfurt School and other antecedents an engagement with ideas drawn from Marxian critique of the political-economy and an emphasis on examining those points considered outside its realm by orthodox Marxists (Kugelmann, 2002, p. 77; Leckie & Buschman, 2010, pp. vii–viii; Watt, 1981, p. 1). Illich also has much in common with anarchist thought, which while appreciating Marx’s critique of capitalism, rejects what is sometimes seen, although primarily through the works of those who followed him, as his totalising worldview (Kahn, 2009; Price, 2013; Watt, 1981). This is evident in his interest in a qualitative change in the shift away from subsistence lifestyles, a cultural rupture that Illich contends is not adequately addressed by Marx’s concern with power and ownership (Kugelmann, 2002). His preoccupation with our relationship with the environment (see Bollier, 2013; Illich, 1973, 1974, 1983) also places him firmly as one of the antecedents of political ecology. However, the overlap between the two remains significant. Moore’s work doubles back around to where Illich is via Marx, with its focus on the role of appropriation in the production of value.

The crises for Illich (1973, 1981) then is a crises of the “industrial mode of production” which consists of a “war on subsistence” enclosing *the commons*, the upshot of which is a loss of autonomy in service to capital, the creation of *shadow work* and the destruction of the *vernacular*. For Moore it is a crises of relations, of the intertwining co-production of nature and society. However, for both Illich and Moore these crises stem from the production of value, of commodities, through the expropriation of the *vernacular*. The knowledge practices implicated in this act are recognisable as, among other things, Illich’s *tools*; institutions such as the library. The role of the library in the capitalocene is a part of the puzzle of understanding these *tools* so that *convivial* options can be found.

The crises in institutions

'I believe that the present crisis of our major institutions ought to be welcomed as a crisis of revolutionary liberation because our present institutions abridge basic human freedom for the sake of providing people with more institutional outputs.' (Illich, 1973, p. 12)

The purpose of this section is to examine what the library is in the light of the above understanding of crises. There is a specific literature regarding the relationship between library services and the crises of climate change which can be broken down in many different ways. For the purpose of this study I am interested in the extent to which the literature engages with the ideas put forward in the previous section that the current crises are systematic and relational, and that solutions proposed to halt climate change must take this into account. From this perspective the literature can be considered as existing on a continuum. At one end there is literature that considers the library, as an already existing set of institutions and relations, in relation to Nature as an external object. This is best represented by literature around the green libraries movement embodied in organisations such as IFLA's Environment, Sustainability and Libraries special group and materials such as The Green Library Checklist (Antonelli, 2008; Hauke, 2017; IFLA, n.d.; Sahavirta, 2017; Werner, 2013). This checklist includes, among other things, the following as items of consideration: green building project planning, financing, site selection, structure, construction, materials, climate, energy management, recycling as well as green information and communication technology (Green IT), User services, Library facility management, strategic goals, marketing and PR, Green building certificates, etc. (Werner, 2013). This normative understanding of a library, as a place populated by managers engaged in a specific set of acts with regard to information and knowledge, crosses the professional boundaries between public/academic/private. At the other end there is the sparsely populated

literature which, in beginning to recognise the capitalogenic origin of these crises, asks: what would our relationship to knowledge and information have to look like to deal with this in a useful way?

In the first type the emphasis is often on understanding the way the library can assess and therefore alter its impact with regard to specific measurements (e.g. the Sustainable Development Goals) or more general concepts (e.g. sustainability) (Pinto & Ochoa, 2017). The vast majority of this literature takes what can be called a non-critical, functionalist approach, hewing to the belief of Nature as separate entity which can be healed by procedural changes, at differing scales, to the already existing institutions. There is a scale of radicalism, in the sense of approaching the root of the problem as identified above, with regard to the type/extent of reform needed, ranging from the introduction of programs aimed at greening the library (Antonelli, 2008; B. W. Edwards, 2011; Krausse et al., 2007), through ways in which the library may act as a conduit for change through the information and skills it provides (Kurbanoglu & Boustany, 2014; Stark, 2011), to the idea more generally of the library as a site for building community resilience of some form (Havens & Dudley, 2013; Holt, 2013; Veil & Bishop, 2013). Few of these papers and books attempt to draw links between the destruction of the climate and its attendant crises, and the possible need for systemic change beyond the borders of the library service. Those that perhaps have the potential to go the closest to this are those papers looking at the idea of community resilience from the perspective of public libraries. I will return to these, and the broader concept of community resilience and what use it might be in relation to *praxis*, in a following section. Overall though, in their failure to consider the capitalogenic origins of the problem, the literature is critically unable to provide inspiration, except in a negative sense, that can be used to build *praxis*.

Perhaps the most interesting engagement with this literature in a negative sense is the way in which the normative understanding of libraries in this literature, in relation to crises as an institution acting on Nature with an unquestioned right to exist in the general form it currently takes, maps on to

Illich's critique of professional institutions, or the institution of professionalism, with its "two watersheds"; the final form and function of which being more concerned with the continuation of the profession as it is rather than with actually solving the problem facing it (Illich, 1973, p. 7). At some juncture in history the library became complicit in the act of generating more information, of joining 'the ultimate attempt to solve a crises by escalation' (Illich, 1973, p. 9). We might ask, as Illich does of other institutions, when did libraries pass the point at which they increased utility, at which new knowledge is applied to a problem which can (in some fashion) be measured, and entered a period of exploiting society in service of a value determined and constantly revised by librarians? This question doesn't come out of nowhere. It is considered, although perhaps not formulated in quite such stark terms, in some of the more reflexive LIS literature (c.f. Budd, 2003). This exploitation, in its generalised sense, would take the form of the cultivation of illusions which, according to Illich (1987, pp. 27–29), 'turn the citizen into a client to be saved by experts'. To be clear, my use of this way of looking at libraries is a deliberately provocative caricature, one intended to create tensions which can be examined for useful concepts in moving towards *conviviality*.

Falling closer to the second end of the spectrum, there is an emerging literature, from those engaged in critical librarianship, around the idea of the Anthropocene and its relationship to libraries (P. N. Edwards, 2017; Popowich, 2017; Tansy, 2016). Again, some of this falls into the category of functionalism, despite its grounding in critical thought. The concern is primarily with services and functions that libraries or archives currently perform and how they already meet, or could be made to meet, a standard that would address this idea of an epoch in which crises is the norm. The capitalocene is mentioned in passing but not engaged with thoroughly as a concept opposed to the Anthropocene, merely as another name for the same thing. A notable exception to this is Popowich (2017, 2019), who tackles head on the capitalogenic nature of the crises and sets out to explore the contribution library workers can make to class struggle specifically through the idea of immaterial labour and immaterial commodities. The concept of immaterial labour and commodities originates

from Lazzarato's (1996) reading of Marx and was popularised through Hardt and Negri's 'Empire' (2003). Within this work it is afforded a teleological role in bringing about the downfall of capital (Pitts, 2017). It refers to the production of non-material commodities such as information, cultural or affective aspects. A full critique of immaterial labour and commodities and concepts is not my priority in this section, however, Popowich (2017) points out the material, energetic basis of all production, regardless of the final form the commodity takes. Marx (1981, p. 153) commented on how the commodity is only a commodity in relation to other commodities, in a sense its form is irrelevant to the necessary material basis of production. The key point to take from this literature is the material basis of information and knowledge work.

Even closer to my own approach, a recent paper from DiSalvo and Kozubaev (2020), outlines how the concept of *conviviality* might be applied through design to public library spaces. Their design fictions attempt to reimagine the relationship to ICT within this space to work in the direction of user autonomy. Yet at no point do they address this towards the wider question of climate change. Indeed, their approach, through the fictionalised call for funding bids for *convivial* projects, appears to reduce *conviviality* to the imperative to reconfigure existing ICT to get strangers to interact with one another. While this certainly gets at an aspect of the *convivial*, its emphasis on the relational and building autonomy, it does nothing to critically pick apart *tools* as they exist and any wider structural issues that might undermine attempts to use these *tools* towards *conviviality*.

The commons

The concept of the *vernacular* finds its more common expression in the wider idea of *the commons*, enclosure and the knowledge and information practices that enable this process. In addition to the implied engagement with this area present in both ideas, both Moore (2017c, p. 177) and Illich

(1973, 1981, pp. 3, 10) engage with these concepts explicitly in their work. The *commons* is, however, a contested concept.

Commons as resources

In its first, economic form it can be understood as actual objects, something separate from individuals and society, for example a resource shared by a group of people that is subject to social dilemmas (Hess & Ostrom, 2007a, p. 3). More generally, it is, to use Walljasper's (2010, p. 2) simple definition, "what we share". The scale of this resource can range from the family (the fridge) to the globe (the air we breathe) (Hess & Ostrom, 2007a, p. 4). Hess and Ostrom (2007a, p. 9) define the nature of these resources according to a two dimensional classification. The first class is the subtractability of the resource, where one person's use subtracts from the available resource for others. The second class is based on the capacity to exclude others from the resource, defining it as a public or private good.

Following this thread access to these resources is subject to social dilemmas in the form of competition for use, free riding and overharvesting in a traditional (environmental) *commons*, and commodification or enclosure in a knowledge or information *commons* (Hess & Ostrom, 2007a, p. 5). This being the case it is necessary to consider the manner in which they are governed or managed, that is how these dilemmas are resolved (Bollier & Helfrich, 2012). This brings to mind Hardin's (1968, p. 1244) tragedy of the *commons*; 'Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all'. The narrative in his work tells us that only through markets or the State can the *commons* be governed without disastrous depletion of the resource (Bollier, 2014; Bollier & Helfrich, 2012). *Commons* scholars have repeatedly shown the assumptions contained within Hardin's conception of a *commons* to be

oversimplified, and the solution of enclosure to not be the only solution, yet this remains a persuasive narrative for many (Dietz et al., 2003, p. 1907; Hess & Ostrom, 2007a, pp. 10–11).

It is important then to take a moment to understand the relationship between the market and the State in the context of modern *commons* scholarship. With its roots in the work of Polanyi (1985), this is the contention that markets and the State are indivisible as a system of governance and the dominant grand narrative positing them as two opposing yet balanced methods, finding its apogee in the modern creed of neoliberalism and the oft quoted ‘end of history’, is one that is not only false, as demonstrated by the financial crash of 2008, but that serves to conceal the possibility of alternative modes of governance (Bollier & Helfrich, 2012; Chandler, 2014; Graeber, 2011). From Moore’s (2015, pp. 214–216) perspective it seems possible to make the assertion that market and State form two prongs, ‘a double dialectic’, of commodification and appropriation. This two pronged strategy can be seen in the act of enclosure. To elaborate, by enclosure I mean the act of taking that which is held in common and putting a fence or barrier around it. This fence takes the form the creation of scarcity through transforming the value of a common resource from use value to exchange value through a deliberate process of replacing the cultural values that acted as limits on human desire with the market mechanism (Illich, 2002b, p. 207; Yapa, 2013). Things which once were freely accessible and self-governed, are now controlled by capital and are now made into, that is given value as, capital in some form (Dietz et al., 2003, p. 1907; Hess & Ostrom, 2007a, p. 6). My own initial investigations have identified technology as a key method through which the public library’s capacity for promoting community resilience was effected (Grace & Sen, 2013). As Hess and Ostrom (2007a, p. 10) point out, ‘technologies can play a huge role in the robustness or vulnerability of a commons’. Kranich (2007, p. 85) identifies technology as an enclosing force of the information/knowledge *commons*. Illich (1973, 1981), however, goes a step further and specifically identifies *tools* as an enclosing force of the information/knowledge *commons*.

Commons as process

While a key function of this process is the shifting of control of the resource, it is the alteration in attitude towards or in value of the resource enclosed that is, according to Illich (1983), more significant than this transfer of ownership that occurs with the act of enclosure. This second perspective of *the commons* as affective change, as something relational, seems to be entangled with changing knowledge and information practices. It is at this point that the desire to draw hard lines between knowledge, information and data as concepts might be seen to emerge, if not explicitly then implicit in the changes in practices. This idea became pivotal as I continued my fieldwork and subsequent analysis as I found myself working increasingly with the idea of data as it progressed. Despite this desire to distinguish between the information and knowledge, following Davenport and Prusak's (2000) definition, the two terms are often used interchangeably in the context of the *commons* (Hess & Ostrom, 2007a, p. 9). I am not saying this stratification doesn't refer to real differences in the material appearance and conceptual clarity of these three categories, but that these differences are brought into being through the processes described previously. As Floridi (2002, p. 136) notes from a philosophical perspective, the subject (information) is an old one that has become a separate field of investigation 'only very late in the history of thought'.

I'm inclined to agree with Illich (1973, p. 86) when he states; 'We move the problem of learning and of cognition nicely into the blind spot of our intellectual vision if we confuse vehicles for potential information with information itself.' This idea is similar to Buckland's (1991) definition of information-as-process and information-as-knowledge, the act of informing and the act of being informed respectively. The separation here strikes me as both false and unnecessary in that the act of informing contains the act of being informed within it; informing is a relation. The manner in which we act in the world is informed by the manner in which these relationships are structured around us, by the *tools* that might be. It's worth repeating that *tools* mediate the relationship

between individual and society (Illich, 1973, p. 21). The *tool* is not the information, but it mediates our relationships, so it impacts upon how information happens, and whether it is associated with the *tool* directly or is understood as separate from the *tool*. The process of transforming any part of our environment from a *commons*, that is a relationship based in equality, to a commodity, a relationship based in exploitation and appropriation, represents the most fundamental form of environmental degradation (Illich, 1983). It is the obscuring of these relationships in the guise of things outside ourselves, be it Illich's "vehicles" or Ostrom's resources, which is at the root of the crises. Illich rejects the transformation of *the commons* into commodities, regardless of who controls the means of production, as a threat to survival that induces dependence in the role of the consumer (Illich, 1983). De Angelis' (2017) expands on this idea with his examination of the nature of common goods, i.e. that thing or object which is held in common and neither privately or publicly owned. For him this capacity to be held in common is not something which derives from the nature of the object or thing itself, but from the meaning invested in it by the community who use it. Such a view frames the idea of goods as a relation of power, one in which our relationship to one another and our environment becomes the focus. Enclosure of *the commons* is not simply the transference of ownership of objects, but a fundamental shift in relationships to our environment and, therefore, one another.

Information or knowledge commons

The concept of an information or knowledge as a *commons* is not new, with one of the key texts on the subject, Hess and Ostrom's (2007b) 'Understanding knowledge as a commons', published over a decade ago. This conception of information as a common-pool resource is very different to that of the *Information Commons* as digitally orientated work/study space developed in some of the literature, although it does, in theory, inform this work (Beagle, 1999; Kranich, 2007). Yet both hold

in common a view of *the commons* as view of things, of objects. I have already touched on Illich's contribution in the area of the idea of the *commons* and how it might relate to an understanding of information. The idea is not one unique or original to Illich. However, it underpins his radical understanding of a life based in the *vernacular*, that is 'sustenance derived from reciprocity patterns imbedded in every aspect of life', outside and against the combined economic sphere of capital, and this interpretation has been influential in the revitalisation of academic and activist interest in the *commons* (Bollier, 2013; Illich, 1981, pp. 3, 57).

Illich's (1973, p. 86) point that information is something 'created in the organism through its interaction with the world' is worth highlighting. It is through this insight he enables a step further in understanding the knowledge/information *commons* as a relational way of being. Information as a *commons* is not an alternative economy, but an alternative to the economy (Esteva, 2014). It socialises and politicises the economic. This social relationship of the *commons* is a political process of self-governance, sometimes called *commoning* (although my preference is to stick to Illich's term, the *vernacular*), and consists of informal relationships as well as the conscious building of working systems and institutions for meeting everyday needs outside of the market or State (Bollier, 2013). There is a tension here with earlier definitions from Hess and Ostrom (2007a) and their object orientated focus. This tension is a key point later in the thesis. The precise nature of data and its relationship to the *convivial* became central to my analysis. In exploring I use some of these concepts but also move beyond this utilising the work of Moore, as introduced in a previous section, to develop a new conceptual category with which to understand this relationship. So, while it's possible that the concept of common-goods, *commons* as objects or resources, might be mapped on to *tools* in some way, this is beyond the scope of this section. The idea of a *commons* as practice or relations rather than things marks a shift in line with the understanding of nature/society as relational.

Libraries as a commons

The commons requires as its basis open spaces ‘for bottom-up initiatives to occur in interaction with the resources at hand’ (Bollier & Helfrich, 2012). A library can be understood to have three constituent parts. It is a space, the information/knowledge accessible through this space (the resources) and the sum of social interactions that occur in the meeting of individuals with these two previous points (Bryson et al., 2003; Fincher & Iveson, 2009, p. 8). What do we mean by ‘a space’ here? One understanding might be a forum, free and open to all (Walljasper & On the Commons, 2010, pp. 148–150). Hess and Ostrom (2007a, p. 9) specifically identify libraries as common pool resources, that is a shared resource system, that operate at a community level. As such they classify libraries as spaces where it is difficult to exclude members of the community from accessing resources. Through this we can see a model of the library as a *commons* as resources. However, the current trend within public libraries seems to point towards the process identified by Peck and Tickell (2002, p. 381) as ‘a commitment to the extension of markets and logics of competitiveness with a profound antipathy to all kinds of Keynesian and/or collectivist strategies’, that they call the neoliberalisation of space. This might just as easily be called enclosure.

The effect of neoliberalism, i.e. capital, on the library, these acts of enclosure, has been explored in the LIS literature to some degree (Budd, 1997; Buschman, 2005; Greene & McMenemy, 2012). This has generally been confined to recent changes, e.g. the transition to business language such as customer and the idea of information as a commodity (Budd, 1997). The public library’s role in the discovery of information has been seen to have wider implications for democracy and freedom in our society, whether we consider the library to have an educative purpose within the current framework of liberal democracy or a more confrontational role in challenging the status quo (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2010; Gorman, 2000; Halpin et al., 2013; Huzar, 2013). When *the commons* is invoked, it is usually in the formulation of the Information Commons as a

design of workspace usually associated with higher education libraries (Beagle, 1999; Nitecki, 2011; Seal, 2015). An understanding of *commons* as a process, of the *vernacular*, and the historical processes from which the modern library has emerged means we have to take a step back when trying to understand what a library of the *commons* would be. To return to the idea of space, Moore (2015, pp. 10–11) points out that spatial relations are social relations, that ‘social relations develop through, and actively co-produce, space’, and goes on to propose we might replace “space” with “nature”, that humanity is a ‘species-environment relation’. Through this realisation the three constituent parts of the public library outlined above are collapsed into one, that of this relation. I still agree that the library is a space in which we encounter others which could be said to generate a type of information, that it is a productive force (Fincher & Iveson, 2009, p. 8). I also feel it’s possible to go beyond this to say that the generation of information is the generation of the space, that the library reproduces itself as a *tool* through the interplay social/spatial/natural-relations.

Community resilience

In this section I wish to explore the utility of community resilience as a final conceptual tool in building the *praxis* of a *convivial library*. Community resilience has been variously interpreted as the capacity of communities to return or adapt or transform when faced with crises depending on the agenda of whoever is promoting community resilience in a given situation (Brown, 2014; Cretney & Bond, 2014; Reid & Botterill, 2013). I am interested in understanding how these diverse meanings intersect with the concepts developed in the previous two sections. Specifically, I want to know about how knowledge and information practices are understood through different forms of community resilience and the relation it encourages us to conceive of vis-à-vis Nature. The end goal of this exploration is to find a definition of this idea that can contain the previously discussed concepts.

The three ways of conceiving of community resilience, return, adaption and transformation, are generally set apart from one another as totalising means by which a community may be resilient to the effects of crises, e.g. climate change. Each of them constructs the idea of community to meet their particular definition of resilience. I started out on my fieldwork with a specific conception of community, drawing from John Macmurray (1950) via one of my participants, Gordon. This defines community as “life in common as a necessary condition for human life”; in short, community is a given that at most needs to be uncovered. The aim the of following sections is to detail the debates around the concept of community resilience with a view to situating it as a viable concept in understanding what form the *praxis* of a *convivial library* might take. While not exhaustive, the review is of sufficient breadth and depth to ensure a thorough understanding of the current debates in this field and their applicability to the matter in hand.

If we can say one thing for certain about the concept of resilience it is that it is fashionable. Its initial definition in the work of Holling (1973) in field of ecology has been followed by its adoption across a swathe of disciplines; from psychology to engineering, from politics to planning (Albers & Deppisch, 2013; Berkes & Ross, 2013; Bhamra et al., 2011; A. K. Cohen & Schuchter, 2013; Norris et al., 2008). Its use is also multi-scalar, not being confined to community, but also understood at the individual, societal and global level. The adoption of resilience in such a wide array of contexts has led to contradictory meanings. It has been deployed in support of the policies and actions of governments, businesses, supra-national institutions and grassroots organisations, many of whom are fundamentally at odds with one another as regards a desirable course of action faced with the predicament of climate change (Cretney & Bond, 2014; S. S. Patel et al., 2017; Reid & Botterill, 2013). In the words of Brown (Brown, 2014, p. 114) ‘the very malleability and plasticity of the term itself means that it can act as a boundary object or bridging concept, but may also be co-opted by

different interests'. Indeed, the history of the concepts spread through academic and public life can be read as a series of co-options by competing interests. For this very reason it is necessary to be very specific about what we mean when we talk about resilience in the context of a *convivial library*.

In order to be heralded by so many competing interests resilience must be many things. It is a normative concept; it tells us how things should be (Pike et al., 2010, p. 67; Tyler & Moench, 2012; Welsh, 2013). It is a metaphor (Norris et al., 2008). It is a value that can be measured (O. Cohen et al., 2013). It is a process (Almedom, 2013). It is an entirely new way of thinking (Chandler, 2014). This being the case, we're left with a series of questions. If it has been used in so many different contexts, are there any constant aspects of community resilience? That is to say, does the concept have concrete meaning, is it explanatory in itself? If it doesn't, how is it given meaning and for what purpose? Following on from that, when we talk about community resilience in the context of *praxis* towards a *convivial library*, from where do we draw meaning for the concept? In determining this, we will, as many critics of the concept have stated, have to ask community resilience of what and for whom (Cretney & Bond, 2014; Hayward, 2013).

To return

Of what?

To return to a prior state in the aftermath of an emergency, the 'business as usual' model, is a key focus of the use of community resilience in UK government policy (Bulley, 2013; UK Cabinet Office, 2011, 2019). The locus of resilience is the currently existing order, the set of social relations as they exist now as defined by capital. The aim is to ensure things continue as they have done, that the system maintains its identity despite disturbance (Cumming et al., 2005).

Community resilience is limited here to a specific aim of returning to a previous state of functioning. The emergency or disaster need not be specifically linked to climate change. In fact, much of the literature here is concerned with the response to terrorism and the security of capital (O'Malley, 2010; Walker & Cooper, 2011; Welsh, 2013). In equating community with capital in this manner, community resilience might be said to perpetuate 'neoliberal discourses and governance that privilege existing power relations and contribute to the maintenance of the current, dominant capitalist system' (Cretney & Bond, 2014, p. 21). According to Defilippes, Fisher and Shragge (2006) this problematisation of the concept of community, as something which can be deployed both for and against neoliberal orthodoxy, must be understood before organisations at a community level can realise any potential for the *vernacular*, a process of emancipatory social change.

Being a set of actions that occur only at a given time in response to threats to the prevailing order, resilience as return is an empirical, quantifiable concept (Cumming et al., 2005). This tendency, within the social science co-option of the idea, to quantify, and therefore operationalise, resilience has followed what have primarily been qualitative attempts to define the concept (Frazier et al., 2013; Sherrieb et al., 2010).

For whom?

Following on from this, Bulley (2013) argues that this focus on the practicalities of emergency response hides a deeper governmentality agenda whereby community is created in a specific, neoliberal form through resilience. This act of creation is managed through the devolution of responsibility away from the State and onto the citizen, imbuing localised hierarchies with once

centralised responsibility, situating the consequences of disaster recovery firmly in a post-political space (Bulley, 2013; Rogers, 2013; Welsh, 2013). It establishes a set of normative assumptions in line with neoliberal governmentality most recently manifest in the UK Coalition and Conservative governments 'Big Society' and 'austerity' policies (Slater, 2014; Welsh, 2013, p. 6). This individualisation of community resilience is also characteristic of social policy in the neoliberal governance of late capitalist democracies such as Australia and the US (Bottrell, 2013). This focus on the individual must not be mistaken for Illich's (1973, p. 11) idea of autonomy; 'individual freedom realized in personal interdependence'. For Illich the individual is not an end in itself, but always in relation to others.

The return conception of community resilience posits a 'business as usual' model in the face of disruption, be it from climate change or other threats to capital's hegemony. The 'business as usual' is that of the perpetuation of particular social relations through the creation of discourses that contextualise resilience so as to exclude the possibility of any alternatives (Bottrell, 2013).

Community is constructed narrowly as the social world of individuals seen through the lens of capital (Bulley, 2013). There is no space in this conception of community resilience for the *convivial*, for a flourishing of the *vernacular*.

To adapt

Of what?

The idea of community resilience as adaptation is touched upon by the largest subsection of the community resilience literature and it acts as a bridge between ideas of resilience as return and transformation. Within this literature there are multiple, overlapping conceptions of what precisely

is meant by adaptation. In the previous section the case was made for understanding the UK government approach as a policy based on community resilience as return. However, it is also possible to see how this approach covers the spectrum into adaptation as well if we understand it to mean adaptation without transformation, where the fundamental assumptions of capital defined social relationships remain unchallenged. Such a view of community resilience partners the return view allowing for situations where ‘business as usual’ simply isn’t viable. As Nelson (2014, p. 2) argues ‘fostering adaptability has come to mean integrating flows of social, natural and monetary ‘capital’ in a continuous framework of power, in large part through markets in environmental financial commodities such as ecosystem services and environmental derivatives’. Again, questions of political economy are removed from the discourse and the adaptation of the community is undertaken for the continuation of the process of neoliberalisation.

The root of this approach is found in Holling’s (1973, 2001) work and its relationship to social-ecological systems (SES) theory; a body of work that positions social and ecological concerns in terms of complex systems theory (Lyon & Parkins, 2013; Nelson, 2014; Walker & Cooper, 2011). SES has at its core the linkage of social and ecological systems, so that community resilience is a process that is bound up intimately with the environment; the community may be able to adapt, but this may be at the expense of the local ecology, while focussing on just the local ecology ignores essential social factors (Folke, 2006, p. 260). In relation to SES, resilience can be understood to be as ‘a way of thinking... and organizing’ how to ‘measure of the amount of change a system can undergo and still retain the same controls on structure and function’ (Folke, 2006, p. 260; Lebel et al., 2006). While primarily concerned with an adaptive approach, the idea of transformative resilience does appear within the literature (Folke et al., 2010). This highlights the multi-scalar nature of its approach, where SES has as its fundamental unit of investigation the adaptive cycle which ‘models the dynamical evolution of social and ecological systems over time through four phases:

exploitation, conservation, revolt and reorganisation' (Nelson, 2014, p. 5). This cycle at the heart of SES theory naturalises capital, in various forms, shorn of any political, economic or cultural critique, as the potential for a system to change (Nelson, 2014, p. 5; Walker & Cooper, 2011, p. 147). As such, it exposes the value attached by SES to resources as being framed in the same manner as prescribed by enclosure by the capital, against the *vernacular* as commodities (Lyon & Parkins, 2013; Nelson, 2014; Walker & Cooper, 2011).

A second approach towards resilience that has adaption at its heart is found in the influential paper by Norris et al. (2008) in which they outline four adaptive capacities; economic development, social capital, information and communication, and community competence. Understood as a process, community resilience in this context links these adaptive capacities to adaption after a disaster (Norris et al., 2008, p. 127). Later work on finding ways to measure the adaptive capacities of economic development and social capital places this approach firmly in the same camp as SES in that growth, that is the continuation of capital project of governing *the commons* through enclosure, is still considered essential for the eradication of poverty which is a component of community resilience (Sherrieb et al., 2010). Poverty can be defined in these terms is the lack of household income to purchase a set basket of goods, that is exchange value (Yapa, 2013, p. 25). In contrast to that we can hold up use value where poverty is understood in terms of physical access to this basic basket of goods (Yapa, 2013, p. 26). At first glance these two definitions don't appear to differ. The key, however, is in the enclosure of goods and services once held in common as commodities, and the acceptance that there is a degree of capital (in one form or another) one must possess in order to access these goods and services.

A third approach, significant especially with regards to earlier discussion on the Anthropocene and discussion in later chapters, can be found in the work of McQuillan (2017), who reads these two concepts, resilience and the Anthropocene, through lens of computation. In this approach, the concepts are tied to daily life through algorithmic governance: '[r]esilience has become an algorithmic predictor of social vulnerability, embedded in structures that incline towards pre-emptive intervention' (McQuillan, 2017, p. 95). The use of big data and certain *tools* towards a 'calculative imaginary that selects allowable forms of emergence' that for McQuillan (2017, p. 96) its pinnacle in the climate-friendly smart-city, that is in so many ways the anti-thesis of *conviviality*, is a thread I will pick up in the discussion. For now I just want to highlight the linkages within these different concepts that I took into the period described in the findings chapter.

For whom?

Adaption, in both guises recognised above, goes beyond return in that it recognises the extended temporality of community resilience. Community resilience is not to an event, but is a process of being that to some degree anticipates the event against which it is fostered (DeVerteuil, 2015, pp. 29–30). In contrast to return, adaption shifts the focus from individuals to 'the system', recognising the social that return does not, but in doing so often denying individual agency (Béné et al., 2012; Bulley, 2013; Coulthard, 2012). Yet, as is the case with return, community resilience based on adaption all too often lacks a critique of political economy. Attempts, such as Pike et al.'s (2010), to rescue the best of adaption acknowledging it's limitations using slight variations of the term, e.g. adaptability, still fail to address the central concern here. Despite its shift of focus away from the individual adaption is still using the same lens of capital to understand community resilience.

To transform

Of what?

Transformation represents the final conception of community resilience on the spectrum I have outlined. It differs primarily from the previous two concepts in its promotion of collective agency, or the *vernacular*, in dealing with crises. Primacy is not given to individual responsibility, through governmental programs that emphasise consumer ‘choice’, nor is resilience posited as an abstract systemic property, somehow detached from meaningful action by individuals. Instead the literature points to the, somewhat surprising, capacity of communities to cohere in the face of disaster and the transformational potential inherent in such communities as they exist in the *vernacular* (Woods, 2014b, 2014c; Solnit, 2009). Inherent in these works is the critique of political economy missing from both adaption and return. This potential link between the idea of resilience and transformation is rejected by some in the literature (Brown, 2014). Mackinnon and Derrickson (2013) propose replacing the word resilience with resourcefulness in the light of what they see as the inescapable tarnishing of the concepts association with conservative social forces. Such a critique fails to understand how the term is deployed by those initiatives engaged with the *vernacular*. A primary example of this sort of initiative can be found in the work of Scott Crow (2014) and his reflections of time spent as part of the Common Ground Collective offering solidarity and mutual aid in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. His explicit use of the word ‘resilience’ in the context of communities in recent interviews shows how this concept has fallen into common use even within anarchist activist groups (Arel, n.d.). It can contain a set of ideas explicitly directed against capital.

Related to this are the ideas of a *commons resilience* as outlined in P.M. (2014) and De Angelis (2017, pp. 342–343). In these examples resilience is framed as a goal of the process of “commonalisation”, that is the shifting of ‘public or private organisations into a commons, or more likely, into a web of

interconnected commons' (De Angelis, 2017, p. 341). Resilience is a key property of these interconnected systems of *commons* that will be instituted through transformational programs to democratically plan neighbourhoods at what might be called a human-scale (P. M., 2014). In this ambition these ideas form a utopian edge to the more pragmatic, although no less radical, musing of Crow (2014). The two vantage points offer the same concept in the context of specific instances of crisis and in the more everyday context of the unfolding climate crisis. This is expanded upon by Cavanagh (2017), who emphasise the capacity for capital to exploit the very destruction it causes to generate new cycles of accumulation, the response to which needs to be a "revolutionary resilience", rather than just transformative. This line of thought is echoed in Michelsen (2017, pp. 69–74) with an exploration of the concept of resilience in the works of revolutionaries such as Guevara and Debray, through to more modern variants, positing this *revolutionary resilience* 'as a radicalisation of the self-organisation that occurs in moments of crisis, such as that witnessed in New Orleans'. While I agree with the general thrust of this I don't necessarily see the need to make the distinction. What we gain from labelling a particular form of resilience as revolutionary (or even as *commons* for that matter) in terms of theoretical clarity, I believe we lose in terms of its utility as a category around which action might be taken. Indeed, as Michelson (Michelsen, 2017, p. 75) points out, we don't need to agree with the strategies and tactics of those revolutionaries he examines in order to see that 'if we are to argue that resilience is a key strategy of power today [...] it is necessary to engage in discussion of what this has meant, in tactical and strategic terms, for the practice of power's confrontation with counter-formations of political solidarity'.

Less explicit in its critique of capitalist political economy, but no less important for the insights into a *transformative community resilience*, is the literature around the Transition Towns movement. The intention of this movement, in the words of the project's originator, is raising peoples' awareness about the issue and of peak oil's potential impacts, and then acting as a catalyst and support for

their exploration of what to do about it', namely the 'need to begin building resilience at all levels, from the individual to the national, on the scale of a wartime mobilisation, starting now' (Hopkins, 2006). This is achieved through the implementation of localised 'energy descent' plans by local groups made up of all sectors of society (Hopkins, 2008). This localised focus is complemented by an emphasis on low-tech solutions to environmental problems in building resilience (Alexander & Yacoumis, 2018). Despite its focus on peak oil, the movement's concerns expand into related issues such as climate change and 'affluenza' and the erosion of local communities (Bailey et al., 2010). Bay (Bay, 2013, p. 175) points out that despite its lack of an explicit critique of capitalist political economy and policy of non-engagement with other political and environmental initiatives the Transition movement 'is 'political' in the sense that it problematises the way people live their lives every day without directly attacking the capitalist, militarist, colonialist, and consumerist system'. In this sense the Transition Towns movement seeks to transform local communities, challenging the hegemony of capital through cultural and economic practices, rather than explicitly political ones.

For whom?

A transformative community resilience then seeks to challenge the crises locally, with the understanding that in disaster communities 'local, emergent bricolage can efficiently meet human needs even under the most adverse conditions' (Out of the Woods, 2014d). This understanding of community resilience is being defined and used by grassroots initiatives in local communities (Brown, 2014). The central concern is to pull back from capital's control over those things which will ensure the survival of the community in a time of crises and allow opportunities to take control in the momentary lapses in capitalist control enabled by specific disasters (Cretney & Bond, 2014, p. 29). This represents an attempt to return to *vernacular* values, not because of their desirability from

an ideological perspective, although it would be incorrect to deny that this is not present in some of the literature, but because such a shift is necessary in order to meaningfully face the crises.

The resilient library

Outside of my own tentative investigations into the subject (Grace & Sen, 2013), there is only a small amount of literature specifically examining the public library alongside the idea of community resilience, the majority of which is contained within a single book; Dudley's (2013a) 'Public libraries and resilient cities'. Overall the volume approaches resilience as something to be understood within existing political economic frameworks, whilst acknowledging the libraries role as a redistributor of wealth and promoter of equality (Dudley, 2013b, pp. 16–17). Havens and Dudley (2013) deal with the practical problems peak oil and the potential end of the information age present and the ways in which the library might educate and change to limit the impact of these events. Holt's (2013) contribution is probably the most conservative, prescribing of more of the same; job-seeking, English literacy, e-government. Hoyer (2013) stresses the need for partnerships and the removal of financial barriers to accessing libraries. None of these chapters consider the ideas examined previously with regard to an understanding of information as a *commons* and resilience as *transformative* and the potential consequences for the functioning of a public library in the light of these factors.

Veil and Bishop's (2013) research looks at the function of the public library in the specific event of a disaster. It concludes that, in the US at least, a high level of saturation of public libraries within communities means they can function as a key piece of infrastructure around which communities can cohere. Their work builds on the rather simplistic idea that all is needed is to expand current functions, drawing attention to the library's function as a space in such events, it being the last redundant channel of communication and acting as a repository for disaster narratives (Veil &

Bishop, 2013, p. 10). However, there is no attempt to look beyond the emergence of disaster communities as Solnit (2009) and the Out of the Woods collective (2014c) do. Indeed with the suggestion that '[a]n opportunity identified is that libraries served as a free home office for those affected by the storms' suggests, quite literally, that the aim is to return to business as usual (Veil & Bishop, 2013, p. 8).

More recently Lloyd (2015) has examined the idea of information resilience in the context of refugee experiences of new information landscapes, and their capacity to build information literacy and bounce back. This idea has been taken up by others to expand the frame of reference for what the public library currently does in communities to address this particular crisis (Kosciejew, 2019). As such it at first tends towards a resilience as adaption frame, with the emphasis on individuals capacity in the light of structural failures, understood as 'a disruption to their existing knowledge bases, ways of knowing and an inability to recognise information affordances or ways of knowing how to access information', to find security in new and often adverse conditions through use of ICTs and library services (Kosciejew, 2019; Lloyd, 2015, p. 1034). Given the subject this understanding seems appropriate, however it later moves to emphasise strategies of "collective coping" and pooling of information that resonate with the discussion on the *commons* above, and the public library as the institution through which these things may occur (Lloyd, 2015, pp. 1035, 1039).

To summarise, I agree with the idea that the deeply contested nature of resilience necessitates its pairing with 'devices that can help adequately frame resilience [and] may contribute to more successful sense-making and place-making' (O'Hare & White, 2013, p. 278). I feel that the ideas of *conviviality* and the *vernacular* in relation to a *transformative community resilience* go some way towards this. What this means practically is any attempt to construct a *convivial library* needs to find its impetus from outside of the library in the ideas of social movements engaged with resilience of

this type, such as those detailed in crow (2014). Community resilience is a concept through which these broader ideas (*conviviality, the vernacular, etc.*) can be mobilised.

Towards a convivial library

We live in a time of crises and these crises are capitalogenic. They stem from capitals capacity to remake the world in its image, to separate Society and Nature, to make *Cheap Nature* as Moore (2015) would describe it. To work against these crises is by definition to work against capital, to work for the *vernacular*. Such an endeavour is *convivial*. For a *tool* to be of use in this it must too be *convivial*. Through the lens of the *commons*, however, the image of a *convivial library* which can support the *vernacular* begins to emerge. For this it is necessary to understand the *commons* as a relation or process, as the *vernacular*, and not as a common-pool resource. A *convivial tool* then must draw its practice from the *vernacular* which it is seeking to reproduce. This in turn can be articulated through the idea of *transformational* community resilience, a concept already in circulation in wide range of places, academia, government and grassroots activism.

There are implications here for our understanding of knowledge and information here. The idea of an information commons has, as we have seen, multiple ways of interpreting it. Working with Illich's understanding of information as something relational, not as a thing in and of itself per se, gives us a starting point for examining the very idea of information and data and its relation to the climate crises. This in turn opens up an understanding of what the libraries, and librarians, role may be in this context. I explore these ideas in much greater detail in my discussion, following on from my experiences, but for now it seems useful to pull the threads together to sketch an initial picture of the theoretical implications of this new understanding. A *convivial library* means *convivial* knowledge practices. Conceiving of knowledges plural, what Callahan (2012, p. 18) refers to as an

“ecology of knowledges”, helps us think back to the idea of how the library reproduces itself as a *tool* through the interplay social/spatial/natural-relations.

There is a body of work that sees a complimentary relationship between scientific ways of knowing and what is broadly referred to as Indigenous Knowledges (Smith & Sharp, 2012). This extends into the sphere of LIS, where there are ongoing debates around indigenous ways of knowing and their relation to library and archive services, the need to decolonise these services and the practicalities of doing so (J. Anderson, 2005; Genovese, 2016; Lor, 2004; Nakata, 2002; Raseroka, 2008; Thorpe & Galassi, 2018). Other work bridges the gap between a view of confrontation or assimilation and states the need for a reorientation as to what we might mean by scientific notions such as biodiversity, a need to understand it in relational terms rather than numerical measurements, e.g. in the light of woman’s indigenous knowledge in India or the exploration, particularly in the context of design, of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (Kimmerer, 2002; Shiva, 1992). This moves us towards work that takes a more confrontational stance with the colonial nature of research itself (Smith & Sharp, 2012, p. 469). If ‘Indigenous knowledge is a complex accumulation of local context relevant knowledge’ then, as such, we might say it ‘is a viable tool for reclaiming their context-relevant ways of knowing that have deliberately been suppressed by Western knowledge and often branded as inferior, superstitious, and backward’ (Akena, 2012). These are complex questions regarding post-colonialism, post-development and indigenous sovereignty which are beyond the scope of my thesis to do full justice to. However, in approaching the idea of other ways of knowing, the “ecology of knowledges”, it seems necessary to allow space for other cultures to make the claim to something radically different from what we might call the industrial ways of knowing that I’m attempting to outline here. Likewise, I am not suggesting an appropriative movement to co-opt indigenous knowledges into my own category of *convivial* ways of knowing, though there surely is some relation between the two given the origins of Illich’s thinking. They remain what they are, a point of reference for us to understand that other ways of knowing, that will produce different forms of

knowledge whose subjects will use certain tactics to reproduce the knowledge, are possible and might exist in tension.

Going into the next section, the concepts outlined above gave me two places to look for ways forward. Firstly, as public institutions currently tasked with providing information, I contend that public libraries might provide the setting through which the *praxis* of a *convivial library* might be better understood, if not established. In Illich's opposed definition of *conviviality* and industrial productivity we see the opposition of the value and relational forms of *the commons* and the enclosed as they might be represented in particular types of *tools*. A *convivial tool*, 'give[s] each person who uses them the greatest opportunity to enrich the environment with the fruits of his or her vision' (Illich, 1973, p. 21). *Convivial tools* are those that encourage opposition to the process of enclosure not through any particular action they perform but through the relational attitude they inculcate through their particular form. It follows then that a public library that wished to be a *convivial tool* would, at the very least, have to reject any relationship with its users that manifested in terms of producer/consumer, and also the use of any further *tools* which enabled this dysfunctional relation. Secondly, I believed that it would be necessary to approach from another direction, from outside the institution of the library. This tension, between inside and outside, is one of many that informs the rest of this thesis, and informs the methods I have chosen for investigating my research questions.

Understanding the crisis, understanding ourselves

It is now almost a cliché to suggest that we should ‘think global, act local’, but this dichotomy serves to highlight a very precise problem that lies at the heart of existential global crises such as climate change: how to comprehend and act upon the knowledge of their existence in a meaningful and sustainable way in our lives. Within this is the task of determining where and how our lives touch the causes of these crises in such a manner that we retain some degree of agency. My initial research in this area has been autoethnographic and focussed on my then work situation in public libraries (Grace & Sen, 2013). My experience of scholarly research is that it is rooted firmly in my own life experiences, driven by my own interests and passions, by my own desire to instigate change at a personal and community level. Common motivations, no doubt, however there comes a point where, as a researcher, I have to decide to what extent I allow this drive its expression within the methodological approach. I have selected methods that aim to allow the integration of the researcher into the matter being researched, to ground this research directly in my own experience and voice. This is not to say that other voices will not be present, they are vital in the production of my thesis, merely that for them to be present I too must be present. Research should be a dialogue and for it to be of any use beyond the situation with which it is concerned we must be able to see both sides of that dialogue.

As with any PhD the research questions themselves were subject to change across the course of my study. Initially I began with a proposal focussed specifically on technology and its role in promoting *transformational community resilience* through libraries. As I began to read and reflect that initial impulse transformed into something more broad, the idea of the library as a *tool* and its wider role in society, primarily through the consideration of Illich’s (1973) concept of *conviviality*. My experience with using autoethnography in the past, its capacity to provide me with productive answers to the questions I was interested in answering, gave me the confidence to use it again in

this context; to trust that my experience might be able to provide useful insights. As such I set out on my data collection with a loose notion of what could happen, guided by my past experiences and theoretical insights, but with a determination to better understand this concept, *conviviality*, and how it might be applied in the context of libraries.

Epistemological and ontological grounding

In discussing methodology it is first necessary to outline the epistemological and ontological framework within which choices have been made in a little more detail. At the heart of the ontological understanding adopted in this thesis is ‘the creative, historical, and dialectical relation between, and also always within, human and extra-human natures’ (Moore, 2015, p. 35). This is a framing, both ontological and methodological, of a monistic whole of every thing as an ongoing, dynamic flow of relations through which humans and non-humans co-create the conditions of life. This codetermining relation is a dialectical relation, in which ‘literally any *thing* (recognizing that absolutely nothing is a singularity in either a physical or ideal sense) may be considered and analysed as a relation’ (Bales, 2015, p. 84). On top of this is a consideration of the historical natures that emerge from this flow, so that while any thing may be analysed as a relation, there is an epistemological distinction to be made between basic facts and their becoming historical through interpretative frames (Moore, 2015, pp. 38–39). Reality is real, climate changes, but we can only make sense of this, and therefore create meaning with regard to it, historically, through the flow of relations. The consequences for methodology are that they must be able to address this relational, dialectical appreciation of reality. Arriving at this philosophical basis, or at least being able to articulate it in this manner, is in part a product of the process of writing this thesis.

As such the methodology does not sit separate from the study as a beginning point or a frame within which the research is carried out, although it has to be that to an extent, but emerges from the

dynamic flow of relations which also constitutes the subject of the study. The relation between methodology and the final study is not linear but iterative. Such an approach must be considered one of *dialectical critical realism*, and while it doesn't reject out of hand the empiricist approach to understanding the world, it is more concerned with uncovering the causal mechanisms that generate the normative categories which frame the conditions under which such empiricist research might take place (Roberts, 2014). The overall analytical movement within this approach 'comprises a movement from a concrete context within which causal mechanisms are abstracted and analysed and then back to the concrete context to understand how these causal mechanisms operate' (Roberts, 2014, p. 5). Integral to this process is the attempt to bridge the 'structure and agency problem' through an understanding of the private life of the agent, through the degree to which they are committed to the social identity; the aspect of our wider personal identity which reflects the 'capacity to express what we care about in the context of appropriate social roles' (Archer, 2007, p. 23). This 'internal conversation' is the moment of reflexivity and the point of contact and decision between the determining degree of either structure and agency; the focus here is on an understanding of agents and actors as emerging from the relation between people and structures, rather than one being an epiphenomenon of the other. Moore (2015, p. 37) brings wider understanding to this idea of agency with his attributing it to 'bundles', that is historically specific collections of human and non-human natures which are grouped together through and by an external ontological frame, be it capital or that which oppose it. In the words of Marx (2002):

'The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of changed circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances and that the educator must himself be educated.'

With this in mind this thesis uses three interlocking methodologies to attempt to answer the research questions set out in my introduction. The first of these is *critical autoethnography*. This can be defined as the use of self-narrative ‘to develop and refine generalized theoretical understandings of social processes’ where theory is ‘a language for thinking with and through, asking questions about, and acting on—the experiences and happenings in our stories’ (L. Anderson, 2006, p. 382; Holman Jones, 2016, p. 229). The narrative in question, and the second methodology, is that of *praxis*. As a definition I find the following useful:

‘*Praxis* has its roots in the commitment of the practitioner to wise and prudent action in a practical, concrete, historical situation. It is action which is considered and consciously theorized, and which may reflexively inform and transform the theory which informed it. *Praxis* cannot be understood as mere behaviour; it can only be understood in terms of the understandings and commitments that inform it.’ (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 190)

From this it becomes clear that any methods employed to investigate a *praxis* aimed at comprehending the division between the personal, local and global nature of crises need to be rooted in a capacity to look below the surface of things. In doing so the methods become bound up with the goals of the thesis, they are, to an extent, inseparable from one another. If the aim is, as stated, to develop *praxis* as well as studying its process, then the methods form an aspect of that *praxis* and *praxis* form a part of the methods. The third and final aspect of my methodology is the use of *dialectics*, specifically in the process of coding the narratives that emerged in order to elaborate new theoretical positions, as well as more generally structuring the epistemological framing of the study, as described above. Dialectics in the case of the coding refers specifically to the use by the researcher of a priori theoretical frameworks to compare to new conceptual frameworks emerging from the data to develop a robust and useful theory to be applied to the particular social site (Cook, 2008, p. 150). More generally it makes use of Ollman’s (2014) dialectical method, which

permeates all aspects of the research process, to work through the ontological and epistemological implications of the stance outlined above. Each of these three aspects will now be discussed in greater detail, followed by a section on the specific methods employed within this framework.

Methodology

Autoethnography

Autoethnography as a concept first emerged in the work of Hayano (1979, p. 99) and was concerned primarily with how anthropologists wrote ‘ethnographies of their “own people”’. This focussed on the insider status of the researcher in conducting traditional ethnographies, where ‘the choice of field location is often determined by the researcher’s identity and group membership’ (Hayano, 1979, p. 101). The tension between an “objective” perspective achieved through traditional ethnography and the arguably more subjective stance provided by this early definition of autoethnography, and their subsequent values in terms of the research they produce, is a line of contention that follows the history of the methodology through to the present day. In this early exploration, the value of this type of research is found in the contribution that ethnographic reflexivity can bring to the wider project of cultural anthropology (Hayano, 1979, p. 103). This marked the beginning of what has been termed the ‘crisis in representation’ in anthropology which saw a turn towards narrative and the challenging of the ethnographer as an invisible presence in the research (L. Anderson, 2006).

This central concept of autoethnography, the tension between the auto (self) and the ethnos (other) and how this can be worked through to produce a unique perspective, has been developed to different ends in the years following Hayano’s (1979) initial exposition. Doloriert and Sambrook

(2012) classify the emergence of autoethnographic practices into two distinct waves. The first of these produced what might be considered one of the fundamental tensions in the methodology, with the analytical approach opposing the evocative, emotional approach. This opposition follows from a fundamental epistemological difference, between an analytic realism best typified by Anderson's (2006) work on analytic autoethnography, and an interpretivism, found most clearly in the works of Ellis et al. (2010; 2006) on evocative autoethnography. This is in itself an expression of the emphasis placed on where the research emerges in relation to the continuum along which we consider the auto and ethnos tension, with the work of Anderson (2006) and those who follow facing outward towards the ethnos and that of Ellis et al. (C. Ellis et al., 2010; C. S. Ellis & Bochner, 2006) turned in towards the auto.

There are several consequences to this philosophical difference. Primarily this appears as a conflict over what can be said from the experience of autoethnography. In the former, analytical type, there is an acceptance that there may be a layer of abstraction, represented by the production and reproduction of what Anderson (2006, pp. 381–382) refers to as first and second order social constructs. These may, in turn, be theorised, which supersedes in some way the emotive, immediate experience that is considered primary in the evocative form. We do find a desire to move beyond the immediate experience in Ellis (2007), it is not however worked through in such a way as to provide an analytic framework. In this case the desire to leave the world better off, the spark which in the analytic approach might motivate the attempts to generate theory for others to use, is considered to be addressed as a matter of the relations cultivated and nurtured in the act of research itself, as opposed to an abstract product one might present as a research output at the end of a project. It is an idealist approach, in which 'transformation of consciousness is sufficient to produce transformation of social reality', ignoring the material social and historical conditions, Moore's (2015) bundles, which act as an external limit on that consciousness (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 181). Autoethnography then is more than just biographical writing, in that, whether analytic or

evocative, it attempts a 'systematic and intentional approach to the socio-cultural understanding of self' (Ngunjiri et al., 2010). To this consideration of socio-cultural understanding I would add that it can also attempt a political-economic or political-ecological understanding when the focus of the analyses is turned towards the idea of *praxis* as I do in this thesis.

The approach to experience itself then remains similar for both evocative and analytic autoethnography (in that there are many ways to approach it, as with any ethnographic study), with the difference being on how the experience to be narrated and/or theorised from is treated once collected. I can see the merits of both analytic and evocative approaches, and wish to incorporate elements of each into my work, much as Guyotte & Sochacka (2016) attempt in their work on "writing to reach" in engineering education. Holman Jones (2016) also makes a compelling case for the compatibility of these two strands, the emotive narrative and the analytical theory, as part of a *critical autoethnography* that establishes the process of moving between these two aspects of a single wider narrative necessary for making sense of our experience of the world. This term, *critical autoethnography*, is also used in the post-structuralist inspired work of Reed-Danahay (1997, 2017) as an attempt to overcome what is presented as the false dichotomy of subject and objective. Once more, these methods vary in their epistemological approach, albeit with a tendency towards the interpretive. I find myself more interested in realist approaches, with my central concern also being *praxis*, and the epistemological and ontological position this emerges from, as outlined above.

Following this, from the analytical perspective I take the desire to use the self-narrative of analytic autoethnography 'to develop and refine generalized theoretical understandings of social processes' (L. Anderson, 2006, p. 382). From the evocative end of the spectrum, leaving to one side the contested point of whether they actually achieve it or not, I am primarily interested in the idea of how through 'producing accessible texts, [I] may be able to reach wider and more diverse mass audiences that traditional research usually disregards' (C. Ellis et al., 2010, para. 14). This is the tension that informs the output of this study.

Autoethnography in LIS

The use of the autoethnographic method, in all of its myriad forms, within library and information science, can be partly understood as an extension of the use of autoethnography in the organisational setting in general with the emphasis typically on how it aids practice within the profession and associated academic spheres (c.f. Deitering et al., 2017). My own introduction to the methodology is a case in point. My own interest in this methodology developed through the management module on my MA librarianship and the focus on reflexivity as a method of understanding and working through organisational issues. Michels (2010, pp. 162–163) identifies the moment that autoethnography emerged as a possibility within the wider discourse of Library and Information Studies (LIS) with the shift to user-centric research in the 1980s. Despite this relatively early date autoethnographic studies remain relatively thin on the ground within the discipline (Guzik, 2014). Hartel (2019) locates autoethnography as one of the innovative methodologies within a wider “embodied turn” within LIS that aims ‘for a holistic understanding of the human information experience’, alongside phenomenological and sensory ethnographic methodologies. Their potential is often identified in the way in which they might challenge the traditional positivist framework of LIS and the manner in which this can help inform professional practice (Guzik, 2014; Michels, 2010). My own work in this thesis is a continuation of this project, with the modification that practice is theorised as *praxis*. While there don’t appear to be any autoethnographies within LIS that frame the matter in precisely such a way, we do see a link between this methodology and action in the literature, specifically focussed on social justice (Schroeder, 2017).

Critique of autoethnography

Of course autoethnography is not without its detractors, those who make the claim that the focus on the auto is a narcissistic retreat from the responsibilities of ethnographic fieldwork (Delamont, 2009). I find some resonance with this critique in my own reading of some evocative autoethnographies, however, its argument appears to apply what is a unhelpfully labelled distinction between autoethnographic writing (not good research focussed solely on the individual, with no analytical capacity) with autobiographical reflexivity (useful as part of wider ethnographic project with analytical capacity) (Delamont, 2009, pp. 58–60). By this definition I am not really doing autoethnography but autobiographical reflexive writing as part of an ethnographic project. I don't find this quibbling helpful, especially given the clear precedents for the possibilities of analytical and critical autoethnographic work set out by Anderson (2006) and Holman Jones (2016). More helpful is Delamont's (2009, p. 57) reminder that '[a]utoethnography is, whatever else it may or not be, about things that matter a great deal to the autoethnographer'. This is a useful point to take into reflective practice; a reminder that not all of the things that seem significant will be of use of interest to others. It is through the process of *praxis*, the generation of theory from this individual experience, that these things, while remaining perhaps only of interest to me, might become useful to others.

Ethics and autoethnography

It is also necessary to consider the specific ethical issues inherent in the autoethnographic methodology. I will consider the practical elements of ethics in the second section of this chapter that focusses on the specific methods used, rather than the methodological framing of the study. Whatever we might choose to call it, evocative, analytic, critical, the central ethical question in such a methodology is always '(h)ow do we represent Others and their world for *just* purposes?', the '*just* purposes' in question being identified through the application of critical theory to formulate specific

aims and objectives (D. S. Madison, 2005, p. 14). In autoethnography this representation is refracted, consciously, through my position and understanding in an attempt to undermine and explore my own ideological assumptions. It is an iterative process that requires precisely those Others to be involved in it, as, despite its emphasis on my position in relation to the narrative, the auto, it is its relation to the opposite pole, the ethno, which ultimately gives this research its meaning and purpose. The working through of this ethical tension is in part reflected in the choice of other methodologies used; *praxis* and dialectics.

Praxis

In asserting that research is dialogue I'm grounding my project in a particular set of methodologies that recognise the tension between not only the auto and the ethnos but, more broadly, in the immediate phenomenon encountered and the theoretical understanding of those phenomenon, and the need to re-evaluate the researcher/participant relationship in the understanding that I am implicated in this process. While autoethnography provides the window onto this process, there are multiple methodologies that might sit alongside this. Of these the two considered most relevant to the concern emerging from my research question were action-research and *praxis*, both of which are equally well known approaches informed by this understanding of realigning researcher/participant relationships and the tensions outlined above (Tierney & Sallee, 2008). It's probably worthwhile explaining exactly what I mean by *action* in this context, as this has a bearing on later points and also goes some way to explaining why I didn't adopt action research as my primary methodology (although the project was certainly inspired by its tenets around a desire to instigate change to some degree). The problem lies in the difficulty of *praxis*; the very real problem of making critical theory relevant to everyday situations. As Ulichny (1997, p. 146) points out '[d]isrupting the hegemonic ideology that supports everyday "reality" in an institutional context occurs in limited pockets, if at all'. While action research appeared interesting and a possibly fruitful way of proceeding, the

movement through the levels of action described above is a work of reflection, as well as reflexivity. It requires a degree of distance. So while, for me, in this instance, *action* represents all that has a bearing on the material conditions of the problem under investigation, this can be set into two categories: the everyday and the reflective. The difference then between these categories is not in the importance or in the material effectiveness, the extent to which they act on the world, but in the relation of differing pace between the two. This maps on to the concept of action and theory which are more commonly held to be the opposing points of *praxis*. This asynchronous pattern is in built to *praxis*, and is both a problem and a merit. The space and time needed for reflection to reflexively work the route from action to theory and back again gives results that would otherwise not be forthcoming, but the timeframe of this movement is such that it potentially makes the process unresponsive to the matters on which the reflexivity is centred.

As a philosophical term *praxis* has a long history going back at least to the Greeks (Tierney & Sallee, 2008). Here I am concerned primarily with the way it is used in relation to critical, and specifically Marxist, theory and analysis. This is perhaps most clearly embodied in Marx's 11th Thesis on Feuerbach (2002): 'Philosophers have hitherto only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point is to *change* it'. *Praxis* understood in this light, is informed, committed practice, and its study is, by its nature, always through itself (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, pp. 191–192). In this sense then *praxis* is less the methodology than the thing on which my methodology is focussed, the subject of study that is to be developed through the research. In this it is similar to militant research orientation's desire to be 'grounded in a commitment to the augmentation and transformation of the movements of which they are part' (Russell, 2014). The movement in this case comprises of intersecting groups sharing a common anti-capitalist perspective, from which I would probably, in this context, most closely associate myself with what might be called radical librarianship (Quinn & Bates, 2017; Radical Librarians Collective, n.d.). Radical librarianship has, in my own experience of the movement around

it, acted as something of a floating signifier, in much the same way as community resilience. This has led to phases in its life, within the UK at least, that has seen a broad participation narrow to a handful of active individuals who fall out over the inability of the movement to take on concrete structures that prevent what might be characterised as a ‘tyranny of structurelessness’ (Freeman, 1972). This meant that a structure did exist which allowed power to concentrate in a few hands, but remained implicit, primarily as a result of participants not wanting to replicate hierarchical structures of the institutions of wider society. At the same time this power dynamic was rejected by those who found themselves in the position of power, leading to, across the course of my engaging in this study, the general dissolution of the organisation we had attempted to create.

Praxis within LIS

Praxis as a concept in relation to libraries has been addressed by a movement within LIS linked to radical librarianship, that of critical librarianship and its antecedents (Budd, 2003; Hall, 2010; Leckie & Buschman, 2010; Nicholson & Seale, 2018; S. M. Robinson, 2019). Popowich (2018) in particular draws attention to librarianship as *praxis*, the drawing together of theory and practice in the form of a critique of existing institutions and acts of solidarity with the subaltern. This, of course, isn’t something inherent to librarianship but is a strategy which can be adopted by library workers, aligning themselves with particular political values. This idea challenges some fundamental, “common sense” preconceptions about librarianship, such as the need for neutrality that are rooted in focus on “practicality” (Seale & Nicholson, 2018). I have strong memories of some participants on my librarianship MA objecting to the teaching of theory, critical or otherwise, as they simply wanted to learn the practical skills of doing the job. This continued to be my experience in the various places I’ve worked, with few willing or interested in the application of critical theory to the practical tasks that “have to be done”. The limitations this presents for me personally, whether it is when I try to act alone or organise collectively, has resulted in this study being less focussed on librarianship or

library work per se than on the normative assumptions that give rise to the conception of librarianship as a practice. While there is often an implicit tendency to rescue librarianship or library work as a “good thing” even within the most critical aspects of critical librarianship, through its engagement with the concept of *praxis* critical librarianship still provides the scope for the self-critical analysis I am pursuing here (Beilin, 2018).

What this means for the project here is that I am focussed on studying an aspect of a longer process, the development of *praxis*, rather than this being solely a self-contained study. This runs the risk of any findings seeming partial or incomplete. It can be hard to engage in a process like this for a sufficient period to see tangible results (Ulichny, 1997, p. 165). The primary methodology used, critical autoethnography, is a way implementing the reflective/reflexive phase of *praxis* and trying to bring a necessary focus to what is a messy process; to draw some useful conclusions that can be picked up and used by others as part of the development of *praxis*. Selecting what to slice out, what will be the subject of study, was the first major decision. As already stated above, beginning from the site of my previous research in this area, my workplace, was no longer possible as I no longer worked in a public library. In fact as a direct consequence of completing that work, obtain my MA Librarianship and moving on to more gainful employment I am no longer able to access the world I described there in the same way. This presented me with both a problem and an opportunity. I couldn't take off where I left the research, but also it forced me to open the scope, to think more critically about how I might engage with the ideas that were generated from this initial piece of work. It is also important to emphasise again the *in medias res* nature of the study in its inherent inability to capture what happens after it is completed; we join in the middle of the “action” and leave before anything is finished.

It would be fair to say that what I am attempting here is the act of *theorising*. This act emerges from the process of *praxis* and is almost immediately folded back into it. *Praxis* is the relation between theory and practice, it is the way of describing how the two inform each other when we are conscious of this process and reflective on it and draw theoretical conclusions from the process. Combining with the autoethnographic element this becomes, not the examination of static theory or a the simple telling of story, but an attempt to make theory come alive through the narrative (Holman Jones, 2016, p. 229). Wark (2015a) refers to this type of theory, that aims to be passed between different situations (or ‘forms of labour’) rather than to stand as a grand narrative which explains everything, as ‘low theory’. The methodology used in this study is one that attempts to get at the understanding and commitments that inform my actions, and from that critique develop new theory and ideas, that can be reintegrated into *praxis* (mine and others) towards the goal of creating a library which can face up to the crises of the 21st century, what I am calling, borrowing the term from Illich (1973), a *convivial library*. As such, ethnography forms the wider methodological approach to that empirical element. Within that I specifically utilise *critical autoethnography*, combining an ethnographic approach which seeks to turn conventional ethnography to a political purpose, and autoethnography, a method which, in privileging my own voice, locates the researcher in the centre of things and draws out assumptions which might remain otherwise unchallenged (Guzik, 2014; Thomas, 1993). In this case the theory itself represents an ‘interpretive or analytical method’ which guides the “data” collection and analysis detailed below (D. S. Madison, 2005, p. 12). I am engaging in *praxis*, in order to illuminate wider macrosocial processes through the production of theory. Such research ‘requires a reciprocal relationship among the data, analysis, and emerging theory’ necessitating the creation of dialectical propositions to be tested in the data (Cook, 2008, p. 150). This is simply another iteration of the auto/ethnos tension highlighted above.

Dialectics

The idea of dialectics as a ‘flexible tool of analysis’ has its genesis in the writings of Marx and stands in contrast with its Hegelian conception as a totalising system (Sherman, 1976, p. 58). Moore (2015, p. 47) identifies the overarching dialectical movement that defines capitalism as that of project and process; the projects of capital and empires which ‘confront the rest of nature as external obstacles’ and processes in the form of ‘unruly movements of bundled natures’. These bundled natures comprise of human and extra-human natures, the tangling of humanity-in-nature and nature-in-humanity that is the flow of relations, from which emerges historical agency, in the form of the capacity to make change or reproduce equilibrium (Moore, 2015, p. 36). Referring back to my early statements on the ontological and epistemological foundations of this research, dialectical critical realism, dialectical thinking involves the searching out of contradictions of mutually constitutive elements which sit in tension with one another, yet can be worked through and resolved in some fashion (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, pp. 33–34). It is worth quoting at length Ollman’s (2014, pp. 10–11) six successive moments of dialectical method to get a better understanding of the way different factors interweave to create this aspect of my methodology:

‘What’s called ‘dialectical method’ can be broken down into six successive moments.

There is an ontological one having to do with what the world really is (an infinite number of mutually dependent processes that coalesce to form a structured whole or totality).

There is the epistemological moment that deals with how to organize our thinking in order to understand such a world (as indicated, this involves opting for a philosophy of internal relations and abstracting out the main patterns in which change and interaction occur). There is the moment of inquiry (where, based on an assumption of internal relations among all parts, one uses the categories that convey these patterns as aids to investigation). There is the moment of intellectual reconstruction or self-clarification (where one puts together the results of such research for oneself). This is followed by

the moment of exposition (where, using a strategy that takes account of how others think as well as what they know, one tries to explain this dialectical grasp of the ‘facts’ to a particular audience). And, finally, there is the moment of praxis (where, based on whatever clarification has been reached, one consciously acts in the world, changing it and testing it and deepening one’s understanding of it all at the same time). These six moments are not traversed once and for all, but again and again, as every attempt to understand and expound dialectical truths and to act upon them improves one’s ability to organize one’s thinking dialectically and to inquire further and deeper into the mutually dependent processes to which we also belong.’

The overall movement across the thesis is from evocative to analytic to evocative, attempting to weave these two, dialectically opposed forms of a particular type of methodology together. This, again reiterating that reflexive bond uniting the separate facets of my research, is *praxis*, which takes the form of a dialectical relationship (Kovel, 2014, p. 236). Ultimately, choices of methodology, certainly in the context of my research and perhaps in all research, have an ethical weight. The inclusion of dialectics within my methodology hopes to capture some of its emancipatory capacity, its welcoming of difference, with its simultaneous rejection of relativism (Kovel, 2014, p. 238). This ethical commitment precedes any formal ethical requirements as a researcher and ultimately seeks to modify them in the light of the understanding it generates.

Dialectics in LIS

The discussion of the idea of dialectics within LIS is generally confine to those who engage with Marx or Marxist critical theory as part of the wider movement of critical librarianship (Bales, 2015; Popowich, 2018, 2019). Bales (2015) makes a solid case for the use of dialectics as part of an

ontological, epistemological and practical approach to the library that falls within the general category of critical librarianship. As such it is expressed both as a method, through the application of a reflective and active approach to reality applicable to all critical intellectual endeavours, and as the particular philosophical framing narrative for an understanding of what they refer to as the Modern Capitalist Academic Library (MCAL) (Bales, 2015, pp. 1–4). Popowich (2018, pp. 43–44) frames the dialectic as a way of understanding change in the world and the interplay of theory and practice. This is held up as a contrast to the “common sense” understanding of the world. The dialectic’s role then is to unmask the dominant, hegemonic ideology that underlies this “common sense” through drawing out contradictions and (hopefully) productive tensions. Most of the discussion within LIS of dialectics remains at a fairly abstract level, the concepts drawn out as part of the dialectical methods suggested being theoretical tools that are part of developing *praxis*. There do not seem to be any studies within LIS that deploy this abstract theory practically to the task of analysing data, as I lay out further in the methods section below.

Why this approach?

I’ve already talked about this briefly with regard to autoethnography in the light of previous research and experiences, but I think it’s worth taking a moment to reflect on why I settled on these particular methodological approaches. As I’ve tried to illustrate the methodology doesn’t precede the study in a precisely linear fashion. Its emergence as a coherent way of approaching the problems I’m interested in was an iterative process. This is perhaps best understood in the peculiar position of *praxis* in this arrangement, as both the thing studied and the method of studying. My commitment to the epistemological and ontological underpinnings that led to my methodological approach precede the study in one sense but they were also sharpened and given greater coherence through the process (*praxis*) of writing this thesis. Such circularity may appear evasive or unfocussed to some, as if it represents an unwillingness to draw and stand by conclusions, leaving, as it seems to

do, a space into which the researcher might withdraw, hold up their hands and abdicate this responsibility. It is, I would argue, precisely the opposite. The only refusal here is the refusal to accept the imposition of a particular narrative framing of research which does not match with the ontological and epistemological basis of the research itself. Reflexive research is always ongoing and studies like this can only ever hope to focus a moment of that always ongoing process. Their value is in that focussing, which takes a process that is always at some level occurring and pulls it out into the light to be examined more thoroughly and to be theorised and put to use beyond the individual from whose experience it draws.

Voice

It is perhaps useful to explore this idea of the iterative process at the heart of the methodology a little more closely here, at least in terms of the voice that emerges as the narrator of the project. In the following section I'll dig deeper into the particulars of the coding method and its relation to autoethnography, but here I want to talk about how I had several attempts at writing this thesis and how the structure and tone of the finished piece emerged.

The process of writing is central to the method of autoethnography. That divide, between the analytical and the emotive, can structure stylistic concerns, but in either case, the centrality of the researcher, the prominence of the "I", is a major factor (Colyar, 2013). This centring of myself in the narrative, requires I also address the experience of writing autoethnography. My own experience of writing is varied. I completed a Master's Degree prior to embarking on my PhD which led to me writing a paper for a journal and a book chapter. I've had published journalistic articles, poetry, short stories and a novella across the last decade, and am working on my first full-length novel. In each of these I appear in different forms; all my academic writing has been autoethnographic to one degree

or another, in the journalistic work I appear as the investigator and my creative work springs, as with most writers, from the personal experiences and concerns that shape me. In writing this thesis I wanted to draw on all of these threads and at various different points I have tried them out to see what would be the best fit for the research questions at hand.

Each section has its own voice and some were easier to come by than others. Each balances the analytical and the emotive, the sense of an objective perspective with the subjective, in different ways according to what seemed appropriate to the subject matter for that section. The literature review (“Conviviality, crises, community resilience and the commons”) was relatively straight forward and shifted through various versions adding in my own reflections as the project progressed. The methodology (“Understanding the crises, understanding ourselves”) developed in a similar manner, with the analytic core supplemented by a more emotive reflexive narrative as these thoughts and ideas emerged. The findings and discussion (“Searching for the convivial” and “Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?”) developed side by side through iterations that saw them as one single section, until I settled on a more “traditional” split that took the narrative and my own reflections own it as a whole and pulled the more analytical discussion out as a separate section. Finally, the sections over which I spent the most time tinkering with style and structure, the introduction and conclusion (“Fear of a dead planet” and “Cultivating hope”) existed as a (never actually completed) fictionalised short story based upon the analytical conclusions, before I found the voice I wanted. That voice, the one that is perhaps closest to me in the everyday sense in which I understand myself, was perhaps the hardest to write in, drawing as it does upon some very personal experiences.

There are limitations as to what can be done in the format of a thesis, working from a particular discipline, adjusting to particular perceived expectations. There are also limits to what I am capable of in terms of my skill and energy. These frame some of the compromises I made with regard to style; the decision to separate findings and discussion, to not pursue the fictionalised introductions and conclusions. Recognising limits is a part of the writing process. Knowing your own strengths and weaknesses, remembering that you are not just writing for yourself, that you have a reader (well, hopefully more than one...) and that you have a task to convey something to them is vital. There is craft and there is intuition and they need to be balanced, to feed off each other. We might even say there is an emotive and analytical. Perhaps this is extending the metaphor too far. Perhaps it isn't.

As well as drawing on my own experience it seems important to acknowledge the influences that shaped my writing outside of the obvious referenced texts; we are, as Colyar (2013, p. 372) points out, 'never isolated', however personal our writing may appear to be. This broad category ranges from the novels I read while I was working on this thesis to the voices and conversations I would be part of or overhear, an essential source of material for all writers. While perhaps not informing the thesis directly, these encounters shape the voice we use when we come to write. As I wrote I took, not always aware of the fact, a little something from Knausgaard, a little something from Le Guin, a little something from the office, a little something from my family and friends. Recognising this broader cultural context in which we write, the norms we quietly adopt in our practice, is an essential part of reflective practice. It allows the time to stop and think about what we've written and how we've written it. To wonder at the strings of words on the page and contemplate, "Who is this?".

To summarise, my methodological approach can be understood as a *critical autoethnography of praxis* grounded, ontologically and epistemologically, in a *dialectical critical realist* understanding of reality. This grounding in dialectical methodology not only provides an abstract philosophical basis for the study, but also contributes directly to the practical work of analysing my experience through the coding process as is explained in more detail below. *Praxis* here is both the subject of the study and an essential component of the methodology which is given focus, and so rendered as a discreet portion of a longer process from which conclusions can be made, by critical autoethnography. What follows is an explanation of the methods through which I attempted to enact this methodology.

Methods

Overview

The experience analysed for this thesis was a period of two years, beginning in January 2015 and ending in December 2016. Across that period I deployed a variety of methods which I will discuss in greater detail below. My use of these methods at specific times and in response to particular occurrences in itself represents the tension that informs this methodology between the auto and the ethnos. I certainly started out with a greater focus on those around me and the prospect of creating a *convivial library*. While that commitment remained throughout those two years (and continues in to the present) I also turned increasingly inwards as the initial project idea failed to find traction. This is represented in the timeline in table 1. Below. Before examining the process I want to briefly outline the exact methods I used to deploy the methodologies outlined above.

Practically, in order to address not just the topic of concern, *praxis* directed at the problem of libraries in a time of crisis, but also the representational ethical questions posed by my choice of methodologies, the process has included several separate methods:

1. The collection of reflexive notes by the researcher. These serve a dual purpose acting both as a source of data for the aims and objectives, and also providing a space to critically reflect on the process of the methodology itself.
2. A series of 1-to-1, open-ended dialogues with potential project members, selected by myself through already existing networks. These formed an initial core of the data collected. To begin with six interviews were audio recorded, accompanied by note taking where relevant and followed by continuing discussions via email/in person. Discussion was led by the initial theoretical insights on the topics under consideration. This headed up what appears as an unconventional approach to participant selection. The key point to understand in relation to this is that the choice of participants itself is something to be analysed, it is a part of the developing *praxis*, unlike other projects when that process sits outside the study itself, so this is not determined by a methodology, but is examined by the methodology used. This is discussed further below and in subsequent chapters.
3. Ethnographic participant-observations. While the primary source of data remains the open interviews and reflexive note taking, in order to fully capture the ongoing process of collective action, observational data was useful.

Process

Of the many discussions had across this period, six conversations have been recorded with selected potential project members. Not all discussions which provide data for the research were recorded in this fashion as it was untenable to do so. However, they were often recorded as reflective entries and ethnographic observations after the fact. As what Anderson (2006) refers to as an “opportunistic

Complete Member Researcher” (in that I didn’t join the group or setting I was studying as a result of studying it previously, but was already a member at the outset of the research) I gained ‘an added vantage point for accessing certain kinds of data’, specifically that which relates my unique experiences of the situation. Participants, alongside the theoretical texts, were part of the ‘ethnographic imperative [which] calls for dialogue with “data” or “others”’ rendering this reflexivity as a relational method rather than a purely subjective one (L. Anderson, 2006, p. 386). As the aim of this thesis is to study *praxis*, a political process aimed at specific goals, the choice of participants has been led by the desire to create a group of individuals who will engage critically with the theoretical ideas I am developing and with the need for change I have identified; to cultivate what Illich (2002b) terms, with his usual knack for deploying words against their common understanding, a “conspiracy”, a collective process of developing *praxis*, through discussion, actions and reflection. This was intended to be the springboard for wider, collective action, which would aim to appeal to a broader group.

With regard to broader observations I have made notes on general reflective points where my own life has interrupted or complimented the research from outside the predefined borders of the research. In addition to this there are two specific threads where they have been made. They are as follows:

1. Better With Data/Sheffield Libraries/Sheffield Solidarity Centre: Following on from the initial interviews, there were a series of meetings with participants to define and move forward initiative/s based on the research project aims. The first of these occurred on June 30th 2015. Attendees included members of the Better With Data social enterprise. Apologies came from a manager from Sheffield libraries and the coordinator of the sustainability library at Sheffield Students Union. This progressed through several iterations with participants leaving and joining. The precise timings of this process are shown in Table 1 below.

2. In addition to this there was a monthly discussion meeting with two participants, Marc (a retired engineer with a deep interest and knowledge of the theoretical and practical concerns of the study) and Gordon (a participant in various environmental initiatives, such as Transition Sheffield, also with a deep interest and knowledge of the theoretical and practical aspects of the study) which provided essential theoretical insights and an excellent space for reflection.

Table 1.

A timeline of key events from initial interviews through the thread highlighted in point 1. above:

Interview with Danny from Sheffield Better With Data.	02/03/2015
Interview with Darrell from Sheffield Library Service.	10/03/2015
Interview with Kiran from Sheffield University's Student Union.	30/03/2015
Interview with Gordon from my reading group.	30/03/2015
Interview with Marc from my reading group.	31/03/2015
Meeting with Sheffield Better With Data (BWD); Danny, Jag and Ian.	30/06/2015
Notes on the Community Data Librarian concept from Danny with my comments.	21/07/2015
Meeting with Sheffield BWD and Darrell.	15/09/2015
Fragmentation of Sheffield BWD and initial project idea.	December 2015 – January 2016
Meeting with Danny independent of other affiliations.	09/02/2016
Interview with Veronica from Walkley Associate Library.	06/06/2016

Coding and analysis

As outlined above, the analysis relies on theory. The data (interview transcripts, field notes, collaborative documents) was read alongside this macrosocial critique, in order to identify common ground and points of disjunction, and the written analysis structured according to the results of this process.

The whole practical process can be described in the following steps:

1. Dialectical thematic coding of data informed by the theory to produce findings structured according to distinct theoretical/narrative threads.
2. An analytical process of reflection to identify key dialectical themes of agreement and disjunction between the theory and data, the world of the researcher and other participants.
3. Brought together as a conclusion with both narrative and theoretical threads.

Step 1 required a loose thematic approach to coding that is informed by the theoretical points made in the following chapter, as described by Cresswell (2013). Following Cook (2008), and building on the insights of Carspecken (1996), the codes themselves are formed from dialectical oppositions, paired concepts which reveal some tension in the theory to be tested in the data and further used in the analysis:

‘The researcher must be allowed to generate propositions to be tested in the data.

These propositions should be derived from two sources, with attention paid to the dialectical relationship between them. Critical ethnography permits the use of a priori theoretical frameworks but safeguards against their rigid and unquestioned use. At the same time, new conceptual frameworks emerging from the data are the primary source

of insight, yet these frameworks must be compared with existing theoretical knowledge to develop a robust and useful theory to be applied to the particular social site.’ (Cook, 2008, p. 150)

In some ways this follows Guyotte and Sochaka (2016, p. 9) in the attempt to use productive tensions to explore the data, ‘as creating spaces we might move in/out/around rather than bifurcated directions we pursued in an either/or fashion’. However, they did not appear to formalise it as part of a coding process but more as part of a more flexible approach to analysis. It is important to note that through coding in this way I hope to uncover what is unsaid through what is said.

Following Krüger (2019, pp. 234–235), I would say:

‘...it is important to keep in mind that the concepts discussed might not correspond to anything a person engaged in an action would use to describe his own actions. An act may be sustainable without anything like the concept sustainability having ever occurred to the person who acts. This does not mean that the concept sustainability would be inadmissible for describing the situation. It does, however, compel us to attend more carefully to hidden assumptions on the side of the one who describes the situation so, as well as to what really motivates the sustainable action, if it is not a desire to be sustainable.’

Step 2 takes this thematic coding and begins the work of identifying and working through the most pertinent points emerging from it and, moving away from a narrative account, using this as the structure for the analysis (Cook, 2008). The initial set of codes are largely inductive, the specific things or relations they encode are in (relatively) plain sight in the text. Sometimes these things/relations can be matched up with a dialectical partner, something (be it a concept or another thing) which represents its opposite in some way, that creates a tension which can be used to work

at the original idea to see if it holds or if there is something behind it. At the same time there is what I begin to identify in subsequent chapters as the possibility of what is behind all this, the theory we are working both from and towards from the autoethnographic account. It is possible then to, alongside the inductive coding process, produce a set of dialectical relations from the theory which could shed some light on the central questions examined in this thesis, on how a *convivial library* might come into being. The task then becomes seeing how the inducted codes fit within these categories of deductive codes, and what modifications need to be made and what additional theory needs to be drafted in to make sense of the autoethnographic experience. The final code book is available as Appendix 1 and illustrates how inductive codes map to multiple deductive codes.

Step 3 comprises an attempt to continue what I began in the introduction with the conclusion, it is the final part of Ollman's (2014) moment of exposition as described above. In addition to summarising the analysis and its relation to the aims of the research, I attempt to create a narrative frame for the conclusions that is both more accessible, in the tradition of evocative autoethnography, and represents an object of *praxis*. It is an attempt to take the theory and communicate it in a different way. The emergence of this final aspect of the methodology is something that came from the process of the research itself, reiterating the reflexive bond between the subject of study, *praxis*, and the methods used in its study, critical autoethnography.

At this point it is probably useful to give a more detailed account of this process. Appendix 1 gives the code book in its final iteration. This shows vertical columns containing deductive and inductive codes. The columns represent approximate groupings of similar codes, with some codes appearing more than once across the book. The inductive codes are placed within columns representing particular areas of deductive, theory based codes. Each code is a pair that can be understood as a tension to be used to draw analytical insights from. The initial process was one of drawing out simple

inductive thematic codes while simultaneously exploring the literature to find broad theoretical concepts that might relate to the subject studied as deductive codes. The entirety of the data, interview transcripts, ethnographic notes, other communications, was coded using an inductive thematic method and those codes collated and compared, in some cases simplified and merged, and further passes were made through the material to check the integrity of these initial codes. This involved several readings. Firstly, to identify sections of the data which looked useful. Secondly, to apply an inductive code(s) to that passage. These inductive codes were then examined to see what concept, if anything they might be paired with, in order to draw out the assumptions hidden in that particular concept. This pair code might have been another inductive code, or a deductive code, or a concept that emerged from examining the codes at this moment. Quite often these pairs emerged as part of the coding process, when, going back through with a set of inductive codes to hand, I found that one particular passage could have multiple codes applied to it. Examining these codes against one another led to some pairings, though in the cases where there was more than two, decisions had to be made about what might be paired with what. I approached this particular problem in various ways; the frequency with which codes might appear together, the usefulness of a pairing in its (very) initial task of providing some kind of analytical insight. As with all coding attempts it is a case of going over and over, absorbing the information and trusting hunches as your saturation in the material increases.

Once these pairs were completed, the deductive codes were put through the same process of pairing and grouped. Inductive codes were then placed in these groups according to how they related to the deductive pairs in each. The material was then examined again, with the new code book in hand and the previous coding work in mind to see what insights these paired codes might offer. All through this process adjustments were made to the pairings, to the codes themselves, to the number of groups and to the place of paired codes within those groups. The overall effect of this process, above and beyond the more typical form of thematic coding, was to allow a deeper

interrogation of a given inductive concept from the material through pairing with another concept and relating that tension to broader tensions as part of a wider theoretical scope, as represented by the deductive pairs in a given group.

To provide a concrete example of this in action I'll work through an example. During my discussion with Kiran, when discussing an environmental education project within the Student's Union, she stated:

“...the bookcase is kind of open access, so people have been able to sign books in regardless of whether we're there or not...”

In the first pass this brought up the code of *libraries as book warehouse*. This code was already one that had appeared in earlier interview transcripts and was an idea that was emerging clearly from the interviews and my reflective notes. An adjacent concept that emerged as an inductive code was the idea of *libraries as community hub*. These two codes were paired, and so that these two models of thinking about a library that had emerged were set in tension with one another. Now this doesn't assume that they don't overlap, perhaps almost entirely, it just serves an analytical function to find the extent to which that is true and the extent to which any tension between them might lead to their synthesis into a third concept, their ultimate incompatibility or their continuing integrity as separate analytical concepts with regard to the study at hand. Later in the process this pair was grouped under the deductive codes of *library / librarian, ecotone / liminal* and *unprofessional or amateur (?) / professional*. Without getting too deeply into the specifics of the theory here, this will be dealt with in later chapters, it is possible to see how an inductive set of codes can relate to the pairs of deductive codes. Moving on to these deductive codes the idea of *library / librarian* emerged from my own theoretical insights via Illich (1973, 1987). My reading, and my notes and reflections on that, led me to a tentative understanding that there was a tension

worth exploring here. By grouping inductive pairs with deductive pairs the theory, which remained somewhat abstract, now relates directly to the practice being examined giving the specific events a generalizable quality they didn't possess on their own. The pairs of codes allow this practice and this theory to be understood as relational, as non-static elements open to being amended and built upon; that is as elements of a process of *praxis*. This whole process remains somewhat messy throughout, requiring a deep immersion in the material being analysed to hone an intuitive sense of how these concepts mesh together and what insights they might provide. The process is long and all consuming, I would have dreams about coding, but ultimately rewarding for the insights it gives.

Ethics

When considering research ethics in the context of these particular methods, it's important to remember that:

"research is a dynamic and continuous process so informed consent at all stages of the research cannot be guaranteed by a pile of signed consent forms handed out early in the research process. The research milieu can change. Relationships between the researcher and participants evolve as might the socio-political environment within and outside the community." (Scheyvens, Scheyvens, & Nowak, 2003, p. 146)

For recorded interviews consent forms and information sheets were circulated prior to discussion so questions could be asked via email or at time of interview itself. As such consent was reached for observational work through the use of discussion and information sheets on a continuing ad hoc basis, according to specific events and occurrences that emerged as the study continued. This form of 'process consent' is in line with university guidance in the Specialist Research Ethics Guidance Paper (SREGP) on autoethnographic research, for research that is an iterative and interactive process

(Sikes, 2015). Phased review was not practical in the case of this research as there was a need to respond quickly to the initiatives as they arose. As initiatives arose from the participants, actions were taken forward on reaching a consensus. Issues around confidentiality and anonymity were raised and discussed during consensus building discussions, as per the SREGP sheet, to ensure all participants are aware of the options they have regarding their own data. All participants agreed to waive anonymity after discussion of the nature of the project.

My own involvement has been carefully managed. As discussed earlier in this section, this study represents a slice of my ongoing involvement with the concerns central to this thesis. I fully intend to remain engaged with any initiatives beyond the time of my study as necessary. However, I recognise the need for ensuring that I don't set myself up as the leader of any initiatives that have emerged and that such initiatives are sustainable without my involvement and outside the scope of my study. The reflexive practice is vital in ensuring avoiding such pitfalls, as is the approach to building initiatives.

To reiterate, ethics approval has been gained for all phases of the research. As per the SREPG (Sikes, 2015) sheet guidance, consent was sought where possible and appropriate for observational work through the use of discussion and establishing consensus, according to specific events and occurrences that emerge as the study continues. The avoidance of the disrupting influence of consent forms is well within the standard practice of such participatory methods. Such an approach required a rigorous commitment to reflexivity to ensure that commitments to obtaining informed consent for data were adhered to where appropriate.

As well as being vital from an ethical perspective, reflexivity is also central to the project's legibility as a work of academic scholarship. Autoethnography, at least that aims at an analytical output, needs some method of holding itself to account by acknowledging the reciprocal influences between

researcher and participants, through making that reciprocity visible in the text; ‘they must textually acknowledge and reflexively assess the ways in which their participation reproduces and/or transforms social understandings and relations’ (L. Anderson, 2006, p. 385). In doing so, it is the intention that in ‘[a]cting reflexively [...] practitioners will subject their own and others’ knowledge claims and practices to analysis’ (C. Taylor & White, 2001, p. 55). This applies to the dialectical understanding brought to bear in this methodology as well; ‘To practice dialectic well an individual has to be open to contradiction and emergence’ (Kovel, 2014, p. 238). This openness signals that the methodological journey is never complete and that any ‘intentional ambiguity reflect an ongoing reflection and inquiry into the autoethnographic process’ (Guyotte & Sochacka, 2016, p. 9).

This feels like another important point to discuss choice of words, in this case *community*. To some extent this foreshadows discussion in the analysis/results chapters, so this represents a starting position on this idea, which will be further developed in those sections. Reflexive research, such as this, requires the development of the understanding of these ideas is illustrated in the text (L. Anderson, 2006). I’ve hesitated to use this word, *community*, to describe the participants so far, despite frequently using it in earlier drafts. This reluctance stems from an insight from one of my co-conspirators. It was suggested I had a look at the work of John Macmurray (1950, pp. 53–56) with regard to useful definitions of community and society, the ‘two types of human unity’. Macmurray’s framework situates community prior to society. Community is constituted by the sharing of a common life, ‘we become persons in community, in virtue of our relations to others’ (Macmurray, 1950, p. 56). Society is constituted through the actions of a group of persons co-operating towards a common purpose. Common life is community, common purpose is society. The sharing of a common life is a necessary condition for human life, and it is what allows the emergence of society through the pursuit of common purposes. Such a view seems to relegate community to a synonym for humanity, it doesn’t describe anything new. However, Macmurray’s argument rests upon the idea

that this dual conception of human unity allows us to move away from politics and the State as our sole focus, towards personal relations and friendship as an avenue for freedom. It is a politicisation of the personal. Such views have echoes in the work of Illich (2002b; Illich & Cayley, 2005) which situates the possibility for unity outside the State. This represents a starting point in my understanding of this concept and is highlighted here to illustrate some of the assumptions latent in my approach and methods which I later call in to question.

Summary

The combination of critical autoethnography and dialectical coding represents an original contribution to methodology. By focussing on my own lived experience I bring my attention, as the researcher, to macrosocial conditions, which in turn can expand my understanding of that lived experience. Despite this, I am inclined to agree that:

‘Personal experience can be too narrow, too idiosyncratic, to shed light on important social debates. [...] Thus the imposition of critical social analysis may be necessary for the telling of subversive stories that facilitate personal, spiritual, and political emancipation.’ (Berger & Quinney, 2005, p. 6)

Ultimately I seek to balance the voices of theoretical texts and the experience of my autoethnography. In this I follow Holman Jones (2016, p. 229) in attempting a critical autoethnography where theory is ‘a language for thinking with and through, asking questions about, and acting on—the experiences and happenings in our stories’. While they are referring specifically to narrative inquiry, I can agree then with the sentiment of Clandinin and Rosiek (2007, p. 39) when they state that the ‘regulative ideal for inquiry is to generate a new relation between a human being

and her environment – her life, community, world’. This commitment to a “new relation” forms a series of bridges between the personal to the communal experience to the more abstract rendering of theory. Of course these bridges work both ways, the theoretical narrative produced at the end of this study can, I hope, flow back to communal and personal levels of action.

Searching for the convivial

What follows is a narrative, autoethnographic account of a section of two years of my life, of my attempts to realise, both practically and theoretically, that is to say through *praxis*, the idea of a *convivial library*. As I've made clear in previous chapters, the central question of this thesis is one that has personal resonance, it is something I would be concerned with even if I weren't pursuing my PhD. In that sense *everything* that happened to me in those two years, and to some extent in the time preceding it, is relevant to the research question at the heart of this work. The purpose of this thesis, however, is the uncovering of new theory through *praxis*, of creating new maps for familiar territory, which are by definition abstractions of that *everything*. The task in this chapter has been to reflect the central points from this accumulation of interviews, field notes, collaborative documents and emails in such a manner that serves to show what happened when and lay the foundations for the next chapter by pointing towards the tensions that emerged from these varied sources. I have distilled the essence of the data collected across this period into as condensed a form as is possible given the potential breadth of the methodology employed. This process is in itself, as I stated in previous chapters, a tension, albeit one that all research has to attempt. From *everything* I must necessarily abstract that which points towards an answer to the questions posed at the outset.

Throughout the following text I make reference to these specific tensions. These are represented by codes that emerged through the process described in my methodology chapter. These tensions are, in the first instance particular, in the sense that they first emerge in relation to a specific data point. They are also in some sense artificial, to the extent that all attempts to corner off one particular thing or relation from all else misses the wider picture and simplifies an infinitely complex reality. They are also general to the degree that they relate to several data points, and in turn mediate their relation to the theory, and have been used at different scales of data analysis (from the

inductive/deductive coding process of the raw data to the final coding of the narrative itself). It is partly this realisation which frees me, by providing an empirical basis for the relevance of these concepts to differing scales of reality, to extrapolate from the particular to the general, from practice to theory, and back again, in short to develop *praxis*. The borders that frame this process are, as I said above, set out by the nature of the research question asked. Those research questions are:

What is a *convivial library*?

How does this understanding of a *convivial library* emerge from *praxis* (the theory/action dialectic)?

How might a *convivial library* be realised in our communities?

Despite the need to simplify, to make a judgement about what is directly relevant from *everything* that happened across that period, there is also a need to acknowledge, where relevant, those other things that sit alongside this simplified narrative that impact upon it. This is the full, critical autoethnographic component that enables an understanding of the emerging *praxis*, which widens and deepens the scope of the project to ground the critique developed here. These things exist in the codes, in the tensions uncovered in and between the data and the theory. These tensions are grouped together in messy, sometimes overlapping threads which represent a particular aspect of the tension between theory and practice. From another perspective these groupings can be seen as what Moore (2015, p. 46) refers to as bundles of human and non-human natures that make “environments”, the continual flow of being and becoming. As such they transcend the artificial, though analytically useful, dualist categories imposed through each particular code even before we consider the possible dialectical movement that could dissolve such binaries. This capacity for transcendence becomes even more obvious when we look at the code book in its entirety (see

Appendix 1) and note that single concepts appear in more than one pair, leading to the obvious conclusion that such pairs might be extended out into more complex formations.

Why then stick with the pairs of concepts? Firstly, the necessity to form some ordered abstraction from everything requires an approach which simplifies. Secondly, dialectics as a method has an established basis in the literature that allows for a degree of certainty in its adoption. Thirdly, it is only a point on the way to a more complex analysis that seeks to explore the wider linkages between concepts. Finally, tensions are productive from an analytical perspective as they can uncover what is beneath the appearance of the thing. This is an extension of thematic coding, to include a theme not revealed directly by the text *but inferred through a tension with the theme directly observed in the data, as informed by theory and reflection*. While what follows is primarily descriptive of what happened it also begins the analytic process by pointing to which bundle(s) of tensions the event in question matches. The chapter that follows then uses these bundles as springboards for exploring the theory in more depth.

As such then, the narrative follows these key moments:

1. Interview with Danny from Sheffield Better With Data.
2. Interview with Darrell from Sheffield Library service.
3. Interview with Kiran from Sheffield University's Student Union.
4. Interview with Gordon from my reading group.
5. Interview with Marc from my reading group.
6. Meeting with Sheffield Better With Data (BWD); Danny, Jag and Ian.
7. Notes on the Community Data Librarian concept from Danny with my comments.
8. Meeting with Sheffield BWD and Darrell.

9. Fragmentation of Sheffield BWD and initial project idea.
10. Meeting with Danny independent of other affiliations.
11. Interview with Veronica from Walkley Associate Library.
12. Sheffield Solidarity Centre Meetings with Danny and others.

Each of these discrete points in the narrative was represented by a distinct interview/set of notes/collaborative document/etc. which was the source of the initial stages of deductive and inductive coding (see Appendix 1 for example). Represented below is the narrative as a whole. There is a mix of account and reflection in what follows. As made clear previously, a total account is not possible, the aim to is to investigate fruitful lines of enquiry with regard to the *praxis* of a *convivial library*. Going into this process I bring the theoretical understandings explored in the previous chapter. In each conversation I attempted to make the connection between libraries and climate change, usually through the metaphor of *transformative community resilience*, and then see if that led somewhere useful or interesting. This was easier in some cases than others, where the conversations were less new and more continuations of an ongoing process. Otherwise I tried to remain open to a dialogue, to finding ideas that would complement or sit in tension with my own understanding, and that might allow the emergence of some practical project towards the creation of a *convivial library*.

Interview with Danny – 02/03/2015

I already knew Danny when we arranged the interview. In fact we had already discussed some of the ideas around which this thesis is constructed. The interview meant going over old ground as well as new. Nothing unusual in this fact perhaps, like any interview there is an element of construction and artifice to the process; the necessity of capturing data is in constant tension with, especially in this type of study, the desire to make meaningful statements with regard to the real world. So, for the

purposes of the thesis, we begin at the interview, yet the social relation between us, the exchange upon which this is based, extends beyond the lens of project.

The interview begins with me explaining to Danny that I don't really consider it to be an interview, more of a dialogue or a conversation. This is a hope, an attempt to set the tone of anything that follows. Danny makes the point that he feels being treated as a subject or expert is artificial. We're, on the surface at least, in agreement. Following Illich's (2002) lead, my aim in this project was to 'cultivate conspiracy'; conspiracy here having a less sinister meaning than it has in popular use. Illich selects this as a model of organisation, at least in the first instance, because of the type of social relationship it represents. For Illich this relationship is at the root of all other forms of social relationship, it is the conditions under which *conviviality* can thrive. As explained in my methodology, this understanding of research and researcher, combined with insights from autoethnographic methodologies, shifts the scope of participation, the expectation and responsibility of voices. This is a conscious and explicit attempt to open the research out to participation, whilst recognising the limits that might exist on meaningful participation in this context, that result from the nature of a project which is only a bracketed section of my life.

My way in to a conversation with participants was to try and draw the link between a crisis, specifically climate change, and the library. This would, hopefully, lead on to a discussion of community resilience, the concept I felt held a way into the wider theoretical ideas around a *convivial library*. Danny expressed the view that the idea of considering libraries and climate change in the same space was initially counterintuitive to him. He ascribed this to common perception of libraries as 'a place to go and borrow books' and not 'as this source of knowledge, and this kind of like sort of community hub, exchange thing' that I'd described to him. He linked this directly to the

campaigns against library closures within our home city of Sheffield and how they had, in his eyes, mounted a defence of libraries based on the book warehouse model. He also identified a perceived drop off in the level of activity more generally from environmental civil society organisations. This led into a discussion of his own work with the Better With Data Society around air quality (the Air Quality+ data project). A key insight was the long nature of the problem, to refer back to Kunstler's (2005a) term, its lack of dramatic and immediate visibility. This tension between crisis and disaster, between long and short, and how it impacts on any capacity to articulate the wider scope of need for change.

The conversation moved on to what we meant by "public" in the case of the public library:

'Fundamentally, it shouldn't matter who is the ultimate kind of owner and manager of the space; the library. What should matter is the community sense of ownership and control, and use of it, and that whoever it is that is ultimately kind of managing the space is open to collaboration, to kind of involvement, and somehow has enshrined this desire to be outward-looking and involve people.' (Danny, personal communication, 2 March 2015, p. 9)

I was wary of this idea of the ultimate owner not mattering. Central to the idea of *conviviality* is a democratic process of organising and producing *tools*. Private ownership by a large corporation would seem to preclude this option. Which led to us discuss how volunteerism fits within this framework and the tensions between those campaigning to keep libraries open by the council and those volunteering to run them as community spaces. Danny was uncomfortable with the anger directed at volunteers, pointing out that if libraries weren't being closed, would we still object to volunteers opening a local space and connecting with library services. I felt that contained within this somehow is a move towards a more direct model of community ownership, but only under certain

conditions i.e. revolutionary reforms that would undermine capital's hold on reality, that would encourage a return to the *vernacular*, Illich's term for the hegemonic social relation of a *commons*. I pointed out how this, for me, was linked to professionalisation, at least in the sense Illich (1987) defines it. This first discussion also presages an idea that I articulate at the end of the following section, although it runs throughout these discussions, that of the library as space of encounter, of a place where different ways of knowing, different communities, might meet.

This idea of community permeated my conversation with Danny, yet at no point did we stop to really define what we meant by it. I was working with a rough approximation of Macmurry's definition in my head, of community as the common life we share, the bedrock of the social. I'm not sure what Danny's perspective was. Maybe I should have asked? Despite this fact we did discuss the importance of words, of how we name things, and the tactics of naming was a point Danny raised – “you could probably assuage your naysayers there by not calling it a library: calling it something else.” (Danny, personal communication, 2 March 2015, p. 12) This idea was to raise its head again later in the course of my data collection.

Danny's work with Better With Data was just one aspect of his wider interest and work on the idea of open data in general. We moved on to discussing data and openness, and it's relevance to my research interests:

‘Leaving aside any issues around neutrality or not, once you have reduced everything down to this most atomised and basic level, then you've also reduced the ability of people to be able to engage with it, because what is then required is a level of skill and understanding to be able to do stuff with that.

So, actually, those tools, that kind of atomised data, is not useful to most people. There needs to be some element of it being structured, contextualised; there needs to be some shaping of that into something that looks like a bit like a hammer.’ (Danny, personal communication, 2 March 2015, p. 33)

I brought up the idea of community resilience as a potentially useful way of framing the problem.

Danny identified community resilience as:

‘...somewhat more organised civil society organisations, mainly because I’ve spent all my career working in those and volunteering in those. So, I tend to think of it in organised civil society terms, but of course, that’s not the whole story by any means. It’s about much more than that. It’s about individual families, neighbours, and having the capacity to, I don’t know, have self-determination?’ (Danny, personal communication, 2 March 2015, p. 40)

The conversation ended with the decision to meet again with others from BWD to discuss further (Danny, personal communication, 2 March 2015, p. 48). The next week I met with Darrell from Sheffield Libraries.

Interview with Darrell - 10/03/2015

I also knew Darrell prior to this interview. We had worked together, although not directly, within Sheffield Public Libraries. In his (then) current role he looked after the new “associate” libraries, those who had been given over to community volunteer running since the budget cuts of the current coalition administration. We also had a shared interest in writing, having been part of the same writing group briefly. Of everyone I knew at Sheffield libraries, I knew there would be some purchase

with my ideas here. Indeed, he seemed receptive to my initial idea that public libraries need to be involved in addressing the problem of climate change:

‘Yeah it seems fair to me’ (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 2)

This got us into the idea of neutrality, of how a library might go about tackling these topics at the most obvious and direct level. Darrel said:

‘...should public libraries promote evolution as opposed to creationism? To some that’s still a debate. So again, libraries should be impartial about all these things, but I do think libraries have role in promoting the correct information as well.’

I challenged this idea of impartiality and he replied:

‘You can’t be impartial’ (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 3)

This led to some more discussion around a talk we’d both attended by George Monbiot – an experience we had in common. The idea of fungibility, of how ‘...if you put a price on everything, everything becomes interchangeable’ (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 4) and ‘...as George Monbiot was saying, you want to build a road through the forest so you value the road as a couple of quid more’ (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 5). This example specifically referred to the, now concluded, case of Smithy Wood in Sheffield, where it was proposed that an ancient woodland should make way for a new motorway service station (BBC News, 2020).

Darrell said:

‘So you can, there's a beautiful pristine ancient woodland, we're going to build a motorway service station on it and we'll plant a load of trees over half a mile down the

road. Does not replace the ancient woodland. The ancient woodland is by its nature ancient... it's so ingrained in us now, this idea of growth, its and entire, it's a requirement of a stable, successful, happy society. That we will almost accept anything in the name of continued growth.' (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 5)

This looped back round to talking about libraries and where they fitted into this line of thought, Darrell emphasised what he saw as the anti-capitalist essence of libraries:

'They're not there to service growth. People who use libraries regularly, especially those who take books out, I think you'll find that to some extent they are more engaged with that process anyway because they are people who are not always wanting more they're not needing to possess all the time. They're happy to have something and give it back for somebody else to use.' (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 7)

This leads into a conversation around "associate", volunteer run, libraries. I really wanted to discuss this with Darrel as it was the area of Sheffield Public Libraries he looked after and it was already an area I was interested in focussing on as somewhere which change might be effected. Darrel seemed to confirm my thought that there was potentially more freedom, in a collective sense, in this set up than under a conventional library administration:

'they're doing something for the community which will make people think actually we can work together, we don't have to make money, we're just doing something which could potentially enlighten us, and when I say that mean on the drive for knowledge and community space and happiness, rather than developing a need.' (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 7)

The idea is emerging from this conversation and the one I had with Danny that associate libraries might be a space in which library could meet ideas of *conviviality*, inside the idea of community resilience specifically in response to climate change, that there's an openness and flexibility to these spaces that might not exist in a traditional library setting. Partly, this comes from my own experience of working in public libraries, and running up against the issues around neutrality, as discussed above with Darrel. Having been involved in library campaigning I also saw how polarising this move towards voluntary run libraries was, as I put it: 'people were snubbing an opportunity on a point of principle that they'd already decided, which I can understand but just didn't totally agree with the principle in this situation.' (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 7)

We got onto how there might be a lack of infrastructure in libraries to do this sort of stuff, that their scope wasn't as wide as it could be. I asked if extending the library into tool lending and seed sharing might be a way forward and if the associate libraries might be the space to make this happen. Darrel said he knew of such libraries in Sheffield but there was no link with public libraries directly: 'I know there are some in Sheffield. Voluntary Action Sheffield, they've got some kind of tool library of some type' (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 9). I try to use this to move into a discussion of Illich's ideas around *tools* and we get into the *commons*, the idea of freeloading. Darrel is sceptical of the idea of the *commons* as an open sharing system: 'Anything which is really egalitarian, open sharing, is at grave risk from people cheating it and I think again going back to my studies in environmental biology, in behavioural ecology.' (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 10) Which led to some chatting about anarchism/anarchy and the *commons*, the need for rules and structure of some kind and how community libraries might work in this context:

'I think for community libraries to provide some kind of resilience to climate change they've got to, it's laying down the foundations I think. It's very much what you were just saying, it's laying down, it's investing themselves into the community and becoming

part of it, becoming the voice but also becoming the teacher in many ways. Or the respected circle of elders.’ (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 11)

I end with trying out the idea of community resilience as a way of understanding all this stuff. Darrel gives me his own understanding of the idea: ‘I guess resilience to climate change is all about attitudes, people’s attitudes towards society, towards their community and towards their environment.’ (Darrel, personal communication, 10 March 2015, p. 12)

The discussion wraps up in a similar way to the one with Danny, although less concrete. I tell Darrell that there are other people who it might be worth meeting up with, who we might all be able to work together with to enact something out of these ideas. Next up I arranged to meet with another friend, Kiran.

Interview with Kiran - 30/03/15

Kiran was asked to participate for several reasons. I knew that she was involved in climate activism, she worked at the student union which I thought might be an interesting site with regard to a *convivial library* and she was a friend. These were the same criteria that all of these first discussions were decided upon, that there might be some agreement and some interesting sparks that could lead towards realising a *convivial library*. The interview opens the way they all do, more or less, with me laying the key idea out, that this was the beginning of a larger process. We moved on to discuss the idea of how libraries and climate change worked together as ideas, and the sustainability library that Kiran had been involved in setting up in the students union:

‘...why just have it for the students who are taking part in the project, why not let’s see if we can open this up and it can be anyone within the university, staff or students, who come along and let’s open it up so we have like different like broad--, broaden the kind of scope of the library basically.’ (Kiran, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 3)

Kiran explained that funding came from a project around sustainable housing for students but the idea was extended to cover all at the university. It was primarily a library of things, an idea I’d already brought up with Darrel:

‘...the idea was that participants would be able to like borrow items that they could use within their houses that, you know, they, you know, especially with them being students, might not want to spend lots of money on... we’ve got like gardening equipment and like stuff for, you know, bikes and there’s like examples of things people might want to buy as well. And obviously we’ve got the books and the DVDs and things.’ (Kiran, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 4)

This broader idea of what a library might have in it leads to talk about the idea of how ideas are transmitted. We got thinking about how information about the climate in the almost abstract way it gets represented, in the form of numerical data and so on, misses the idea of stories as a way of connecting people:

Kiran: ‘...people need to see like hope and a vision for the future that’s possible rather than just like, you know, the doom and gloom, like we’re doomed, argh... I go oh gosh, it’s awful, doom and like, you know, that is--, like if you only see some shocking stats that is really bad... but most people, the kind of the shocking stats don’t actually mobilise them, so.’

Me: 'And I think this is one of the problems with the idea of giving people the information, it's not--, it's not enough to just be presented with like some facts as look, here it is, it's a thing. Like that's--, it's kind of (a) you can choose not to interact with that or absorb that in any way and (b) even when you do it's like well what do I do with this now?' (Kiran, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 12)

The idea that numerical data alone might be insufficient as a means of communicating the urgency of climate change, and that it was something qualitatively different to a narrative understanding of the crisis is something that appears here and only really returns once I'd followed through the possibilities of working with Danny and had time to reflect more deeply on the process, as will be seen in the next chapter. This idea of narratives as ways of presenting information was something I was already interested in, as can be seen in my methodological choices. However it was this conversation which gave me the confidence to begin exploring the idea in more depth with regard to my actual thesis.

We then talked about expectations of those using the sustainability library, how students had become accustomed to 24-hour access to everything which led to the adoption of what was referred to as an 'open access' bookshelf – essentially a trust-based shelf of materials that anyone could take and return. The project funding itself was coming to an end so there was some discussion of what would happen to all the stuff in the library but at this point Kiran hadn't had the chance to properly explore what the possibilities were. I told Kiran that this struck me as a possible area for future collaboration to which she agreed.

We then went on to talk about skills rather than physical items and the difficulty of engaging people in workshops, even when they say they want them (Kiran, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 18). This was put down to an attitude of wanting skills that could help towards employability:

Kiran: 'I think like the culture within like Sheffield University is like students are a lot more focused on stuff that's going to get them transferable skills...'

Me: '...well if it's not a skill that I can use to get some money or to like do that kind of thing, then--, then I'm not really going to do it or it's not really--, or, I'd like to do it but I don't have the time 'cause I need to do these other things--,' (Kiran, personal communication, 30 March 2015, pp. 18–19)

On reflection this might not be a fair assessment. My own experience of trying to engage students in workshops directly concerned with skills focussed on employability has generally shown an antipathy towards anything that isn't required as compulsory for the completion of the course involved. This maybe gets at the root of the matter, which is hinted at in this exchange, the marketisation of higher education and the nature of the students' relationship to knowledge given this context.

We then talked about our experiences with the public library service in Sheffield, Kiran as a service user and mine as a library worker. Specifically we looked the case of the OWL meters, energy reading meters which were/are loaned out by public libraries as part of a make your home more sustainable agenda:

'I was looking on the council website and I think I saw the link that way. But there wasn't anything in the library and then I phoned up the library to say do you have these

and then the person was like no, we don't have those, not sure what you're talking about. And then someone said oh, hang on a second, I think we do, oh, actually we might do. And then like--, and then I was like okay, they were like yeah, yeah, we have them. And I went in and then I must've been speaking to someone else, they were like oh, I'm not sure about this. So they--, there just was all like confusion about it...' (Kiran, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 20)

A couple of interesting correlations with the themes from the conversation with Danny emerge here. Firstly the OWL meter's use of data and my discussion of that subject with Danny, which developed into a key focus across the period this narrative covers. Secondly, around the possibility of volunteer libraries as a space to address climate issues, it should be pointed out that this was a council run library, rather than a volunteer library. This tension between the professional librarian and the volunteer, which can also be understood as a tension between the library and the librarian in that this way of viewing also challenges the professional role as being central to the libraries functioning, is a thread I pick up again in the next chapter under. This all led back round to discussion of the sustainability library and how it relied on volunteerism and had external pressures on that time in the form of student expectations of what they should get from Union projects, i.e. something more formal and that they could put on their CV, and how this:

'...kind of felt like it was taking away from what it was all meant to be about really... people wanted to know about kind of alternative ways of living but we're then creating this package that fits into the, you know, like career driven and employability skills sort of mind set.' (Kiran, personal communication, 30 March 2015, pp. 23–24)

Again the discussion ended with me talking about who I had met so far, and that I hoped some ideas for a project or some sort of further action might emerge from these discussions. Later the same day I met up with Gordon.

Interview with Gordon - 30/03/15

I know Gordon through setting up the Books for a Better Future reading group when I worked as a library assistant in Sheffield Public Reference Library (c.f. Grace, 2014). I asked him to participate because of the ongoing conversation we had been having across the years on the subjects close to the heart of my thesis. In line with my methodology, Gordon was a friend who I knew would be sympathetic to the ideas I was putting forward, who might want to be involved further down the line, and could give me good feedback and potentially point me in new directions. He would help develop my *praxis*.

The conversation took place in his kitchen, his wife popping in at one point. There was a particular focus on the ideas of community and society, on how they differ and what they might mean for governance and ownership of institutions, *convivial* or otherwise. What information actually is, in relation to knowledge and wisdom, was another point of discussion. In general the subject matter was quite abstract. As I said at the start, we've been having this ongoing discussion for some time, and were aware of one another's interests, limits and so on, so could get closer to the theory than I could in some of my other initial discussions. Consequently, I've structured this section a little more around the ideas discussed than previous discussions.

Through introducing the idea of resilience we get straight to Gordon's involvement in various activist groups, which interested me:

Me: 'But what link there is, if any, between sort of a public library and the community's sort of resilience to the effects of the climate change. Or if you even think resilience is a useful word to use or anything like that. Or I'm just trying to find out what people think about it. People who are already engaged with this kind of--, some of the ideas about this kind of thing, if it has any resonance or any kind of--, yeah, any legs, as an idea that we might do something with in the future.'

G: 'Well, yes. You know I'm in the transition thing. [meaning Transition Towns Sheffield] (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 3)

[...]They tend to focus on being able to grow your own food. Although the access to land is nothing like enough to be even make themselves sufficient. But it may--, it puts you in contact 'cause the way to get the ecological thing going is to get yourself relating and growing food is an extremely good way 'cause you're self-relating well as a whole.

(Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, pp. 4–5)'

This quote encapsulates an idea I pick apart further in the next chapter, that of different ways of knowing the world and the types of social relation they reproduce. Gordon's ideas on this were influential on how I ended up approaching this topic. This was articulated, somewhat crudely, in the coding as an opposition between "local" knowledge and "expert" knowledge, which in turn found itself placed in more than one bundle of codes, crossing over with ideas around community resilience, types of information and the construction of needs (see appendix 1 for the code book in full). We move on to discussing knowledge of how to live, or how to be self-sufficient and how that links to the idea of *conviviality* and where libraries fit into the picture:

G: 'Today, people are completely ignorant of just about how to do anything. Utterly dependent yet at the same time having this philosophy that they are self-sufficient. A complete denial. And that's where to some extent I think libraries come in 'cause they are the place where you can both know that you're ignorant and do something about it.'

(Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 4)

To some extent I agreed with Gordon on this point, it certainly described my own life. Until I'd actively made a point of trying to learn some skills in my early twenties, mainly food growing, I was pretty ignorant, and yet I still can't really fix or mend anything. This leads into some talk around knowledge, the tensions between different types of knowledge, and of visions of the library, not just as a place for books but also a kitchen and a workshop, intellectual and practical, theory and practice together in one place orientated towards building a community.

G: '... a library is wonderfully egalitarian – places...'

Me: '... But the idea that they and only they are capable of performing a particular task to me is--, it's--, I just think it's very problematic in terms of this kind of ensuring skills are spread as widely as possible.' (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 5)

[...]

'... how libraries being a space for these kind of serendipitous encounters that we have, not only with books and information in that kind of resource form but a relational thing...'

I struggled with the notion of a library as a necessarily egalitarian space. That tension, between a libraries supposed egalitarianism and its potential role in exacerbating inequality, is something I explore more deeply in the next chapter, for now it remained a hunch. Partly this came through my experience of working in a public library and seeing

the many imperfections in its running; the effects of marketization, both in the tacit, “common sense” way decisions might be made, and the explicit imposition of pressure to market the service through funding cuts.

G: ‘Tacit knowledge which is Michael Polanyi, whose thesis was called *Personal Knowledge* 'cause he calls it personal knowledge. This is the knowl--, this is the sort of interactive, interdependent, interacting with one another and interacting with what knowledge we have that you can’t capture in books. [...]And that whole thing about trying to make libraries places where that happens, where the book is not the only *tool* but is a part of it. But this is the thing, I mean picking up every library should have a workshop and a kitchen in it, always attached to it...’ (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 6)

[...]

G: ‘the idea of books as *tools* for conversation I think is important. And again it makes me think of the book group that we got started at the library and how that has kind of--, it wasn’t a conscious thought that specifically coming from that kind of angle but that’s--, I guess that’s kind of what we were doing there. We were trying to take the stuff we were reading and then try and discuss it amongst a larger group of people so there was that relational aspect.’ (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 7)

These ideas left a deep impression on me, as will become evident in the next chapter. Gordon was also responsible for introducing me to the ideas of MacMurray (1950), with the differing definitions of society and community:

G: ‘... society is people engaged in a common purpose. Community is people engaged in a common life...’ (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 9)

[...]

'... you have this idea in McMurray of a base of the minimum you need for just relationships, yeah. And that is your foundation. That's not the end of it. And you build on that. What you build is your common life...'

[...]

Me: 'So community is that base then, is that what--,'

G: 'No, no. Community is the common life that runs alongside it, for which all that stuff is for. So all that structure, all those politics, all that stuff is for, to enable our common life together.' (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 10)

[...]

G: '... So the relationship is that our social structures and politics etc. are for our common life, our community. But our community is also through having these structures, because if you don't have enough to eat as we see indeed in places which are completely dysfunctional, the community disintegrates 'cause all you're doing is subsisting...' (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 11)

[...]

G: '...as soon as you make a political decision based on a majority, you exclude the minority. You can't do that in a community 'cause community by definition is everybody in that particular commons space.'

[...]

'... the first thing you have to do with skills is put them in the commons.' (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 12)

To be honest I hadn't given the idea of what we might be talking about when we talked about community and society much thought at this point. It was something I'd considered important, or rather the concepts were important, but were self-evident. Community was community. Community, by definition here, includes everyone. If it doesn't then society is failing in its attempts to include everyone. Clearly this was an insufficient understanding of a complex concept, but at this stage I was happy to take Gordon's ideas at face value, with little interrogation. I coded this idea of community as something in tension with not just society, as per McMurray and Gordon's ideas, but with a variety of other things; the State, business, the individual, centralisation and the library. As will be seen in the next chapter, I dig into these concepts a little more deeply and try to uncover some of my own prejudices and biases that prevented me from realising a more nuanced understanding of the idealised understanding of community that I set out with. As for the tyranny of the majority argument, it was one I was familiar with from anarchist thought and practice. I had some issues about how the idea of seeking consensus as the basis for decision making scaled, with a fundamental tension between pragmatism and utopian ideas. Again, this tension, between pragmatism and utopianism, the tendency to ascribe to concepts normative properties that undermine nuanced understandings, is picked up in the next chapter.

This topic, around the ideas of information, in relation to data, knowledge and wisdom leads Gordon to dig out a poem, *The Rock* by T. S. Eliot:

G: 'Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?' (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 16)

For Gordon, this represented in essence his thoughts with regard to knowledge and its relation to its more abstract forms, i.e. data and information. Again, it was very appealing to me and this idea, that

the abstraction of knowledge as information or data represents certain ways of knowing, is explored in more detail in the next chapter.

We got on to talking about a librarian's role and Gordon's perception of library workers:

G: '... we've got to move to values. And you can only move to values in conversation. All the librarians sat in there, a structure from above, can do is impart information impartially. You've got to get from out behind the desk and in front of the desk and start having a conversation.

[...]

... you are seen by the members of the public, and I use that word deliberately, the members of the public, as the source of knowledge, whereas in actual fact all you are is the source of information.' (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 20)

There was something to this critique, in my opinion, although it was by no means universally true. It chimed with some of Illich's (1973) thoughts on the subject from the 70's, and perhaps that is an indication that it is slightly out of date. My experience was mixed, I'd seen examples of librarians how were very keen to maintain what might be thought of as a professional distance from library users and enforce that boundary and many who were quite the opposite.

Part of our discussion covered the cultural specificity of libraries as we know them, how they emerge from a particular historical and cultural context, and we made some attempts to think about the library in the context of other societies, albeit perhaps an abstract ideal of other societies, for example the idea of "elders" and the library providing an institutional take on that relationship:

G: 'The library is the elders, yes. And people go to them and the elders are impartial and if they're not impartial, everybody knows they're not. So it's harder to work out. It's 'cause you're in the community.' (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 21)

Me: 'Information happens when I pick up the book and I begin to have a relationship with the thing that is written down there. That's when information kind of comes into being. [...]that economisation, although that's probably not the right word, of everything within our society.

[...]

And so the problem that we have is that we take that thing and it becomes a separate thing outside of that relationship. And as soon as that happens that is where the problem begins because that's the thing that we use to relate to our environment with. [...] So that if we're talking preliterate then I guess it's still there as a resource in the form of the elder but that has to be a relational thing to go and talk to that person.' (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 22)

[...]

G: 'They're all entirely relational. And information is also language and thoughts. [...] Language is a relational thing. . It only acquires meaning when you use the words with another person, yeah. And then you have the immediate problem of failure of communication because when I say something, you will by definition, mean something else by it. Every single word.' (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 23)

It seems important to add that while we were agreeing on a lot there were points of disagreement, particularly around the idea of how you create alternative economies based in libraries, especially in the context of voluntary libraries.

Me: ‘...To what extent that could be matched up with these associate library things so that you do, you know, five or six hours a week in your capacity as helping keeping your community library open. And that goes into your time bank, which keep--, is a value but that can only be kept within a very specific community that will be attached to that kind of thing and--,’

G: ‘But it doesn't work.’

[...]

Gordon uses the example of Local Economic Trading Schemes, which seek to replace the cash economy with barter or even alternative community currencies:

G: ‘... one of the key things about gift economies is that you must never, ever try to create some form, even if it's completely remote from rational currencies and so on, of exchange value ... So if you were doing things in a library you have to trust that the people you are doing them with, know who you are, yeah. And that when it comes to your turn--,’

Me: ‘You'll get something.’

G: ‘Something will come your way as the result of the people there. But on the other hand, if you want to have some sort of service type thing, where people are doing the jobs of work and you want that to have recognition, there's nothing wrong with that either as long as it--, you realise it doesn't replace it. 'Cause the thing about volunteers is there's got to be volunteers. People have got to be able to come and go. As soon as

you say to somebody, “We need you,” then you need to say, “Well, what can we exchange to recognise that?” You’re meeting them directly there.’ (Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 24)

I think what Gordon was driving at here was the need for there to be a lack of obligation in the working of a true gift economy. So if you want your library to run on those lines, as a voluntary endeavour, then there can be no exchange for the time given to the working there; it is given without any expectation of remuneration.

G: ‘We’ve set up the library as, or any other thing, as an end in itself and not realised it’s--, there’s a relation going on, it’s for something.’

Me: ‘Yeah, yeah. It’s, in McMurray’s terms, it is a society. It’s part of that society which is for, yeah, the community, common life, in order for that for that to carry on.’

G: ‘Yeah. So you still need means of exchange. You still need some tokens to represent. I mean there’s the physicality of the thing. It’s a building, it needs to be kept warm and dry and repaired. The whole thing, you could localise that as much as you possibly can.’
(Gordon, personal communication, 30 March 2015, p. 26)

At the same time there’s the practicality of actually making something like this work in a capitalist society. So much of what we discuss here strikes me as utopian and idealistic, but it is partly these ideas that I want to unearth to try and understand what a *convivial library* might be like. Is *conviviality* inherently utopian? It’s certainly a point I considered during this process and as I reflected on it afterwards. Achieving a transition, from what we have now to a *convivial society*,

requires the staking out of what we might want to achieve, however improbable or impractical it might seem given the current material conditions we are presented with. This practicality is another thread I pick up in the next chapter.

One of the things I've wondered about is the need for crisis to precipitate change and who can gain from that situation:

Me: '...do you need some kind of crisis situation for these things to really be able to start, for something to happen for, er, well, if--, for good things to happen in a crisis situation you need to be prepared for--, have, you know, have stuff in place or have stuff already happening that will flourish under those conditions or step into any gaps in those situations.'

G: 'Yeah. Absolutely. Well, this is resilience--, this is where your libraries come in.'

Me: 'Yeah.'

G: 'It seems something negative but in actual fact it opens a space. Who is going to jump in?'

Which makes me wonder, who is best prepared to jump in? Could it be a group with a *commons-*based vision for what libraries might look like? Isn't that what I am trying to organise here? To draw the links between the wider issue of climate change and our local library service and figure out what it might need to look like in order to address that issue. We finish on that note, with a quick discussion, as with other participants, of what I'm hoping might come from this; ideas, action and a new way of looking at the library.

Interview with Marc - 31/03/15

It begins with me and Marc discussing how we met, the Books for a Better Future reading group, the same place we both met Gordon. Again, having known Marc for a while and discussed some of the ideas which my thesis set out to explore, we were starting from a relatively high point of understanding one another and the ideas concerned. Subsequently the conversation was, perhaps even more so than my chat with Gordon, a little abstract. A large chunk of the conversation revolves around Marc reading/translating bits of the Convivialist Manifesto (Käte Hamburger Kolleg / Centre for Global Cooperation Research (KHK/GCR21), 2014) to me, which at that point hadn't been translated from French to English, as he knew it would be relevant to my research. While this was interesting, and not entirely unexpected, it wasn't exactly where I hoped the conversation might go. It's hard not to get swept by Marc's passion for the ideas, but I was beginning to sense the tension here between the world of theory and the practical task of bringing a group together around these ideas. This is something we discussed almost straight away, although in the context of the original reading group Marc and myself started when I still worked in the public library.

'So I developed some ideas and wishes for myself, how do I want to see a reading group. And clearly the subject matter was about looking for alternative societies, alternative ways of living together [...]And then of course you being rooted in the library was an ideal opportunity [...]The discussions were not profound in my view. And but then I quickly learned that this is not possible in such a heterogenous setting, where everybody's allowed to participate [...]and I quickly saw that the real advantage of these meetings was not so much, you know, you know, high flying conclusions, but simply the conversation itself, simply the interacting with people, and stimulating interaction, we all have a different path and different interest [...]We quickly developed the appetite for

simply coming together and having a, in some cases random discussion, but always in the end it did help also our progress, you know? So yeah, I learned a lot, I learned a lot because, you know, I came when the group started, I actually came with certain fixed ideas [...]and I quickly found out, you know, this isn't working at all and this is idiotic trying to educate other people and all that, just let them be themselves, let them--, it's their call, it's their life, you know, respect life.' (Marc, personal communication, 31 March 2015, pp. 3–4)

A key theme emerges above, that of library space being a space for conversation between different points of view. This idea of dialogue being central to the *convivial library* reflects back on the thesis itself, with dialogue being one of the key methods through which I came to the understandings presented here. It was an idea that I contrasted with the ideas of monologue, narrative and interview specifically in the coding process, and finally slotted it into the bundle of codes that was headed up by the pair community / society (see appendix 1).

Then we got into Marc's thoughts on the library and knowledge, of knowledge as play and the library as a setting for that:

M: '... how can a library be part, you know, as an agent, not something passive, as a storage room, but something more like a, you know, far more dynamic and as an agent.'
(Marc, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 9)

This idea of an institution as an agent feeds directly into a code pair; library / librarian. The latter is assumed to have the agency, the former is as the structure. What Marc is pointing to here, and which I pick up in the next chapter under the idea of "librarying", is the "resolving" of this dialectic as understanding the *convivial library* as a set of processes.

M: 'How can a library be part of the greatest struggle that mankind has to face... So the default way should be the way of self-governance, a deep democracy, flat structures, participatory, whatever, direct markers, minimum hierarchy, and here I immediately point to chapter four in the book *Understanding Knowledges as a Commons* from Nancy Kranich? ... Where she hammers down the importance of an open access commons, you know, knowledge commons, you know, essential for democracy... You know, that's a big goal, a big task again, you know, for the resilient library, you know? Make sure that everybody can do its bit, so that knowledge should be open, you know? ... So library as an open access commons, for democracy, too library as an open access commons, as a public space for discussions, you know?' (Marc, personal communication, 31 March 2015, pp. 35–36)

[...]

Me: 'Which we did to an extent with our book group didn't we?'

M: 'Well thanks to you, thanks to you, but not because of the infrastructure'

This again points towards the idea that there is a process, in the form of a relation, which underwrites the possibility for action that might be considered as moving in the direction of *conviviality*. What is this relation? Marc offers the metaphor of the librarian as a catalyst.

M: 'And the library would be the playing field. [...]the librarian, you know, is no longer a steward, and an archiver and distributor, but actually becomes a catalyst, a participant, in the process of discovering new knowledge or building new inventions and all that, it becomes a partic--, and how that works, she explains that, you know, those various chapters, as a catalyst for interdisciplinary community, you know?' (Marc, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 45)

And of course we discussed what *conviviality* is in the text Marc has brought along, in contrast to Illich's more specific definition discussed in the previous chapter:

M: '*Conviviality* here is, well it is not--, it's slightly--, it's a more general approach, they certainly take *convivial*, the Latin, you know, it's a living together, *vitae* is living, and *con* is to gather, so living together. How to live together, that's *convivial*, you know?' (Marc, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 23)

This issue, of a word with already broad definitions being used to mean something quite specific, is something I've encountered time and time again. It also points to possible multiple layers of meaning in the idea of a *convivial library*, of how that might work as positive driver for people to engage with the idea. Marc highlights another section of the manifesto, related to what weapons we have at our disposal to create *conviviality*:

'... number one, indignation and shame... Number two [speaks French], being aware, the awareness that we belong to a community, humanity... Number three... is a passion, you know, the mobilisation, the flaming up of connections and passions, you know?' (Marc, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 32)

This linked to what the manifesto has to say about the *vernacular* and its link to an emerging theme at this point, that of other ways of knowing, to emotions and passions:

'And you think all about the vernacular, we talked a lot about the vernacular, the commons based on the vernacular and all these things, yeah, customs. The vernacular

dies if you take away the passions and the affects.’ (Marc, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 32)

[...]

‘The vernacular is actually a direct consequence of [speaks French], you know, connections and passions, you know, and so all sorts of emotions, the emotional thing, you know?’ (Marc, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 33)

The conversation ends in manner now familiar, with the idea that these discussions will stimulate something further. For Marc and Gordon, we would continue our monthly conversations around these, and related themes. These conversations drop into the background at this point in my account, in that I don’t record specific conversations that occur from here onwards, although I try to indicate where they touch on the thread that follows. However, as participants, Marc and Gordon do agree that my notes from those conversations, such as they are (usually titles of things to read, fragments of ideas that we’ve touched on), are valid data for my thesis as they form a part of the *praxis* developed. The tone of these two conversations here give the reader, I hope, a good impression of the way those ideas entered the developing *praxis*.

It was not until later that summer when the I got the chance to catch up with Danny and his fellow Better With Data members, Jag and Ian.

Meeting with Sheffield Better With Data (Danny, Jag and Ian) - 30/06/2015

Originally I’d hoped Darrel and Kiran would make it to the meeting, but both had to pull out at the last minute. Kiran asked to be kept in loop as it may be relevant to the new post she was taking up at Sheffield Student Union, but fundamentally she expressed her feeling that she was just too busy to be involved in anything directly for now. This issue, of the impositions on our time to even consider

the kinds of ideas set out here, is picked up in the coding as a personal tension I felt acutely between my PhD and the everyday demands of life. These pressures are not just there, they emerge from particular social and economic conditions, the exact conditions which I am interested in challenging through my research. Recognising the challenges they present forms a thread going into the next chapter. Initially I bcc'ed everyone into conversation, then it was pointed out by Jag (J. Goraya, personal communication, 29 June 2015) that that didn't help with coordinating and openness, and as everyone was fine being identified to one another there was no need for convoluted anonymity. It wasn't the meeting I'd hoped it would be, not everyone was present, but also as I expressed in my notebook afterwards:

'Felt my ideas were hard to express with a lack of concrete project, did a lot of clarifying of how long I'm available for etc. Felt a bit flat following end – not sure how it will progress...'

The folk from BWD were very different to more activist settings I was used to. My primary experience of doing this sort of thing, as I illustrate in the introduction, would be working with others who, if they didn't all agree entirely on every last detail, at least shared a common language of how the problem should be framed. This felt business like, which was the exact opposite of what I wanted to feel. I associated it with work, with being the shop steward, with being the one critically opposing this type of project. We talked about the role associate libraries might play in expanding the scope of what a library as it currently exists can do, and what role there was for organisations such as Better With Data. There was some resonance with discussions I had been having with Marc and Gordon about the idea of the ecotone, from the ideas of Haraway (Haraway & Reti, 2007), as the borderzone between *commons* and the market and libraries as more than places for books and information.

Perhaps the key idea to emerge from the meeting was the concept of a Data Librarian - a role for a librarian working with open data to facilitate its use in meeting community needs. This idea formed another key part of the thread of rethinking the role of the librarian. The initial document Danny produced and shared among those of us at this meeting led to an exchange of ideas. This was mainly between me and Danny. The following sections deal with the initial notes on this idea and then my own reflections on the meeting, shared with the group, and the response to that reflection.

Notes on data librarian 21/07/2015

What follows are some excerpts from the document itself to give an idea of the discussion occurring here.

Danny: 'The idea of a community data librarian, I think, would be to have a role supporting data literacy, connecting and growing local knowledge, and as a supporter (and maybe host) for developing ideas that use data and knowledge (1). That role could be fulfilled by a data specialist who is available alongside 'traditional' library workers, or through training existing library staff (2). It's a combination of the sort of knowledge custodian role traditionally associated with libraries, plus a community organising element, plus the focus on data and especially open data (3).'

My notes from the discussion document:

1. 'Very easy for this to be co-opted by business and innovation agenda, which I think differs in several ways from community resilience agenda; most significantly in the need to encourage a flourishing of the commons as opposed to the market.'
2. 'Like this idea - potentially easier to enact? Organise training rather than find an individual and fund role? Two aren't mutually exclusive of course.'

3. 'Facilitator?'

Danny: '...access to the data is not sufficient to spark community resilience and community innovation – that requires data literacy and co-production of ideas which are able to use the data as a building block for new projects and initiatives.'

My comments:

'Important point - does the collaborative data structure (in the form of a coop) sit on top of any ownership of personal data? So individual privacy with a conscious process of adding data to common pool?'

'co-production of ideas is also the creation of data - build building blocks with the building blocks?'

Danny: 'Taking a wide view of what the library and the librarian should be, we might well include things like connecting knowledge and helping support and stimulate knowledge-based work in communities. But the current reality of libraries in the UK (in Sheffield, at least) is something other (less?) than that.'

My comment: 'Agree! A library should, on one level, function as a data/information coop for the generation of local knowledge for use in and by the community.'

Danny: 'However, given the existing realities of public libraries in Sheffield, it might well be that projects that involve attempts at connecting communities, developing new knowledge-based ideas would be easier to achieve within other settings like community centres or similar community hub organisations.'

Here we can see a concern emerging that libraries might not be the best place to develop some of the ideas we've been discussing and thinking about. My immediate reaction to the concept was that on one level it seemed like a good idea, open democratic and so on. However a series of questions

sprung to mind, for example to what extent is this still working within the *praxis* of capital? How does this challenge that *praxis* and so move towards a community that is resilient? What is data in this context? It is the particularisation/objectification (the making of a thing from a relation) of aspects of individual's lives within the community – the data librarian exists because of the act of making a thing from a relation? This thing-making is necessary for capital, for the State, but is it necessary for *transformative community resilience*?

Take the Air Quality + project mentioned above - Danny told me that East End Quality of Life Project hasn't made a difference to air quality in the East side of Sheffield, and that this is fundamentally an issue of skills and management. What would a data librarian bring to this situation? Would it necessarily be anything more than the escalation that Illich (1987) speaks of with regard to professionalisation? More monitoring, more data, more analysis, more lobbying – would this solve the problem of air quality? Or would I create a new class whose defined expertise was in this area, whose existence relied on the capacity for them, and only them, to monitor and evaluate air quality? What does this do in relation to the common life? How does this effect power relations within the community?

I want to leave these questions hanging for now, as some are resolved as this narrative moves forward whereas others will be picked up again in the following chapter. At this point I let my misgivings sit in my notebook, in their partially articulated form above, ahead of a meeting with everyone from Better With Data and Darrell from Sheffield Libraries.

Meeting with BWD and Darrell from Sheffield Libraries (Darrel, Danny, Jag and Ian) -
15/09/2015

The meeting was superficially successful. Darrell seemed to find some common ground with the folk from Better With Data, but I felt strangely cut out of the conversation. I gave a brief description of my general ideas, the data librarian concept and some of the other possibilities that had come out of discussions and we launched into a chat about what might be both desirable and possible in the current context of Sheffield Libraries. The outcome of the meeting was the beginning of constructing a survey to identify training needs for volunteers taking on library services for the council. Some of the reflections from my notebook capture my mood at the time:

‘...multiple strands to explore. Have to be careful to focus on what’s practical... Big question emerging: is the public library the place to be doing this stuff?’

‘So if the library isn’t the space for the *convivial library* then where? Autonomous spaces? re: new project to construct workers’ centre by various trade union folks.’

‘...it’s beginning to expand in to all areas of life related to my central concerns. I have to be careful not to over-commit ... Life first, research second. That is *praxis*.’

‘Practical agenda from the meeting which is positive but some of the language used makes me feel apprehensive, e.g. innovation, enterprise, etc. Working with volunteers is controversial – how will others react?’

I felt it was time to meet some of my misgivings head on. I needed to be open and honest with my participants if I wanted anything constructive to emerge from this process, so I shared a reflective document with everyone following the meeting. However, Danny was the only person who commented or engaged with this, or any shared documents – why was this? I got the feeling the

others didn't necessarily take it seriously and/or lacked the time and interest. Perhaps they didn't agree with my starting point or found some of it too abstract.

'I've been thinking about the question someone put to me when we met the other week around what I see as the desired end state of our discussions. In a sense I'd like that desired end to be the product of any discussions we have as we develop the training, but I also have some relatively clear ideas based on the research I've been doing so far.'

There was a focus on ends over process. Did I have a strong enough vision to take to them in the first place? There's a tension here between what I want and what happens when others get involved – this is why I tried to keep it small, to work with people who would share, to some extent, my vision. Some questions remain however. Such as does it get challenged outside ways that weren't part of capitalist *praxis*?

On paper there were some interesting ideas, but in the discussion everything seemed to get railroaded into, "lets' do x because it's good for entrepreneurs/small business/the economy" type talk.

'I'll admit that talk of business support and entrepreneurial ventures, whilst pragmatic with regard to where the interests of particular institutions are and in terms of funding, doesn't seem to sit well with what I'm proposing. My desire would be to see the training focus on how it might help bring charity/third sector groups together with individuals and groups in the community to pool data/information/knowledge for the common good through the associate libraries, not necessarily to enable more individual business ventures that begin the process in the chain of moving the data/information/knowledge from commons to resource to commodity. Although I do

accept I may be misunderstanding what is meant when people use this language - I'm coming from a particular background, with particular views, etc.'

Danny replied:

'When I heard the words business or entrepreneur, I reach for my thesaurus, and mentally substitute phrases like 'social innovation' and 'community venture' which better suit my constitution (and safe in the knowledge that the issue tends to be use of language rather than a specific plumping for capitalism).'

To which I said:

'Very good point! Although I still feel there are issues around automatically using language specific to certain discourses or ideologies (which may not be desirable in the context of community resilience) that serve to reinforce them, and part of the impetus in me doing this research is to engage openly and critically with that. I think I'm also just wanting to be really clear about where I'm coming from and what I would like to see come out of this.'

I'd gone into this thinking they might be spaces where something new could be done and now found myself in a position where I'd be facilitating the transfer of library services from the council to volunteers. Given a different set of circumstances I could see this as a move towards community resilience, but given *current* circumstances, in the context of austerity, I found it troubling.

As will become evident, nothing came of these specific ideas, the data librarian and the training for volunteers. At least nothing happened within the framework of understanding that I suspect some might have brought to this stage of the project, where what would constitute something productive

coming out of this sort of action would have been direct follow through on these ideas. Instead the whole process came apart.

Fragmentation of BWD and initial project idea

Like everyone everywhere does at some point in an attempt to create something I experienced an intense moment of self-doubt following on from these meetings and my realisation that maybe I hadn't gone in the direction that was immediately "successful". I questioned whether I lacked the capacity to make a project happen. But reflecting on it I realised that, no, I've been involved with this kind of thing before and things had come out of those attempts. My thoughts then moved on to what then were the conditions of it not happening and to what extent did this end constitute a failure or a success - and what do these opposed terms even mean?

The following few months were occupied with reading and reflecting on where I was and with searching for some sort of project I could engage with that would represent the focus of my autoethnography of *praxis*.

From my notebook 03/12/15:

'I feel the project has floundered, as much through my own lack of interest/enthusiasm as the other participants. It makes me anxious – the whole process makes me anxious. I constantly fret about being challenged about it being co-opted and turned into something I feel would be against the ethos of the study.'

The relations within and between the tensions are messy. The everyday is messy, we make it coherent through imposing a narrative upon it. The narrative is a narrative of narratives. Temporally it stretches away from the here and now. The further I travelled from the here and now the more possibilities opened up through considering these tensions. These tensions point to theory, to abstract ways of understand everything more generally. In turn this theory can be transformed back into narrative, through *praxis*. Underlying all this is an anxiety though; that things will go wrong, that I will waste other people's time, that I will somehow make things worse. This ongoing tension, between conceptions of failure and success, is central to the projects outcomes.

More notebook 13/01/16:

In discussing my 'desire to be free of coercive ties to other people' I write:

'The struggle between capitalism (market/State) and the commons is a personal one as well as a political one... first recognise this dissonance between my desires to be "free" and my desire to be an "agent" These are not the same thing.'

And more 29/01/16 on the development of the idea that on the edges of the library as it currently exists is the place to look for creating a *convivial library*:

'My interest in working with associate libraries comes out of the conviction (backed by theory...) that State and market are equally problematic as providers of information, that the commons provides a political economic/ecological model, and that the associate libraries present the most viable opportunity to insert this idea into existing institutional arrangements.'

This idea lingers despite my initial frustrations. In my notebook there's a couple of notes dated 04/02/16 that further explores the reasons for working with volunteer libraries, the idea that there is a greater potential for change in that space, and the potential problems with attempting this:

‘this is something that has come out of theory and interviews.’

‘...volunteers need help? An assumption... They may not be interested in what we have to offer.’

As the New Year began to move forward I realised that I needed to meet again with Danny to see where, if anywhere, our ideas might now go.

Meeting with Danny - 09/02/16

My notes from this meeting and the following weeks cover the change in the orientation of the project idea. Part of this came out of:

‘...clashes of personality within BWD – result being the future collaboration will be more focussed on me and Danny, possibly with Ian too. Discussed refocussing on single associate library (so ditching questionnaire) and also Sheffield Solidarity Centre Project.’

- Notebook 09/02/16

There’s an idea here that these would represent strands inside and outside the institution of the library, so giving some space for reflection on how each might progress and work in the context of creating a *convivial library*.

‘Danny very clear that he views his involvement as voluntary/activist – an extension of things he does already.’

This was an issue I wanted to bring up – expecting others to give up time toward my project, my thesis, felt unreasonable on a certain level to me. It also acted as a limitation on who might want to be involved. Not everyone has time to get involved in this sort of thing. As far as working with Danny was concerned:

‘Essentially, it feels like all of my reservations have been addressed.’

I began to think about how I could approach associate libraries and gain a deeper understanding of what was happening there. As I noted in my notebook on 19/02/16:

‘I should begin as a researcher going and having conversations with people involved and then seeing whether it is appropriate to volunteer.’

Following my discussion with Danny I decided that I need to go directly to an associate library and see what might be possible in that space. As I say in my notebook on 10/03/16:

‘Maybe if I could just get one interview [with Walkley Library] and then work on some observations regarding my own use of the service that might work?’

I did get a chance to chat with one of the key people involved with Walkley Library (my local, volunteer run library), but not until later that summer.

Interview with Veronica - 06/06/16

My initial memories of this are that it was very flat, I didn’t get much from it, in terms of answers to questions but also in terms of any willingness to encourage participation from outside – the volunteer library is doing just fine and does not need any outside help seemed to be the message. Which is fair enough in some respects I guess, they are doing well by a certain standard and who am I to turn up now and say “here is some stuff to think about!” The general sense I got was of a not especially critical understanding of community and what it means to be part of/build community, a streak of paternalism, and authoritarianism too in the approach to running of the library. Some of

the answers to my questions felt evasive. I guess there is a desire here to portray what is a controversial project for many as a success.

Me: 'Just before I pressed record, you were just kind of running me through a couple of things, sort of your background, how you've come to be involved with what's going on here at Walkley, Walkley Community Library, is that the correct...?'

V: 'Carnegie Library because it's the only Carnegie-funded library in Sheffield.' (Veronica, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 1)

I find this interesting because of the historical roots of what it represents, this pride in being a Carnegie library, which is historically significant but also problematic viewed from the perspective of *conviviality*. This set me thinking more deeply about the history of libraries, where they originated from and the idea that they are contested sites.

We got on to the considerations around Walkley becoming a volunteer run, "associate" to use the council's term, library.

V: 'Erm, when the initial plans were announced, it was obviously very controversial. There was a group set up which was just against cutting the library, erm, and you've got to fight the council, although if the council hasn't got any money--, and there are those of us that recognise that if there isn't actually any money to pay the librarians, you have to look at other ways of ensuring that a library service continues. Eventually, most of the two groups came together and a lot of people who were originally in the Walkley Against Library Closures actually did come in with the group and we did produce a plan for keeping the library open, along with the other volunteer libraries. Unfortunately, in some respects, although fortunately in one or two others, this was the only library for which there were two bids and the other one came from Kane Yeardley [...] The council

came back and said they would like the two groups to work together and see what they could do, which has put us quite a long way behind many of the other libraries because it's all taken very much longer. Then Kane decided that he would like to buy the building and that caused a huge amount of controversy again because we had originally been led to believe that he would have the building on a 125-year lease, then he said he didn't want it unless he owned it and the council had the 125-year lease with a sub-lease to the library group. After quite a bit of soul searching, it was-- and having already started to run the library and realised all the problems with the building and the amount of work that needed doing, it was decided okay, we would go with that, so long as we've got the guarantees within the two leases, that we could continue to provide a library service.' (Veronica, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 2)

There's a lot in this paragraph, especially round ways capital is capable of framing the manner in which these volunteer libraries operate, and this isn't always effectively challenged because of a pragmatism that wants the library, in some form, to remain open *at all costs*. But the service has improved?

'...the volunteer groups have actually, if anything, been able to expand that part of the work because it's now open for longer hours than it was when we had the paid librarians. Certainly, the daughter of a friend of mine who lived here and moved to Ecclesall, was very disappointed with what was provided at Ecclesall library compared with what was provided in Walkley in terms of young children.' (Veronica, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 2)

What do these claims to improvement mean in this context? It chimes with my own experience in this library, but how generalizable is my experience? There's a need to think in terms of a more critical and radical conception of community here, something I was only really starting to realise I hadn't fully grasped at this point in my fieldwork. Maybe things are better here in this area, but that might be for specific reasons. And better at what exactly? What are these services and what do they achieve?

I then try to introduce idea of community resilience through libraries.

Me: '...the more embedded they are in their local communities, the more they create a particular way of relating to one another within the community that means that in times of crisis, communities can come together and transform or even it transforms the community ahead of these times of crisis to make it more resilient.'

V: 'Well certainly, the fact that there are now well over 100 people involved in one way or another with what goes on in this building, or on a voluntary basis, I think is an indication of the--, I suppose the strength of depth of community feeling within Walkley which is a very distinct urban village, really, with a very strong personality of its own, and the fact that we put on a two week festival every year, which is made up virtually entirely of different groups in the community putting on events and the library, since being run by volunteers, both last year and again this year, are putting on a considerable number of events during the week, although the library always was very involved.'

(Veronica, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 3)

But there's conflict in the community too.

'One of the things I do want to do is set up a friends of Carnegie--, Walkley Carnegie. Unfortunately, the anti- people set up a group that they called Friends of Walkley Library, which pre-empted a bit and were very angry about the building being sold and how the rest of us were selling everybody else down the river and were putting out information about, you know--, they put out, erm, one of these online petitions, saying 'Save the building from being sold,' but it didn't happen to mention that part of the deal was that the library would continue.' (Veronica, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 4)

I wonder to what extent this conflict might spill out into a tension between a private business and a public library sharing space:

V: . 'Erm, I think what we're all hoping is that the--, erm, the two activities going on within the building will be complementary to each other, that the people will be able to take out a book and read it while they have a cup of coffee or have a newspaper to read or if they're dropping their children off for some sort of activity, being able to, erm, just have a cup of tea or coffee as well as the meals later in the evening.'

Me: '...can you see that there would be an argument that there could be a tension between these two things, that it might discourage some people from entering the building?'

V: '...we were looking at whether we could develop a café side as a fundraiser, but most of the anecdotal evidence that we managed to pick up tended to show that actually it didn't raise as much money as it cost. So it didn't seem such a good idea after all, but I think the main thing that swayed us completely was once we realised just how problematic the building is [...]but it was a pretty skeleton staff working here and, erm,

the enthusiasm of so many people getting involved has definitely made a difference to the general appearance ...' (Veronica, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 6)

Next I try to get an idea of a vision for the library, perhaps a somewhat utopian vision, i.e. what could it be given unlimited funds etc.:

V: 'If a millionaire became involved.'

Me: 'Well, or a properly funded local government or something like that.'

V: 'Indeed, yes.'

Me: '[...] but what would your vision for how this library would be run be?'

V: 'Well ideally, we would again have six day a week opening, which certainly it used to be and it's gradually got whittled away. [...]It would be more accessible for young people doing homework, somewhere quiet if they've got, for example, younger siblings and so on, and they're trying to revise for exams [...]a range of activities going on, erm, and for elderly people again somewhere they can come where it's warm, where there's some company [...]'

Me: 'So a community space really?'

V: 'Absolutely, yes.' (Veronica, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 7)

What is the idea of a community space doing here? What does it cover up, what does it show us?

Community is also at least partially about business, or so it seems, although I might of course apply

Danny's thoughts on using my mental thesaurus to substitute my own phrases for business

language:

V: '[...]that area, it's sort of pretty working class, erm, and there weren't a large number of highly academic pupils, but there were a lot of really sound, sensible people, particularly the girls I might add. You could see that they would go on and successfully run their own business and be very good at doing whatever it was they finally decided to do and there was a good sense of community there.' (Veronica, personal communication, 31 March 2015, p. 10)

More problematic is the portrayal of working class kids as unacademic, and therefore non-working class as inherently more academic. As someone who grew up in a working class household, ended up at a grammar school and, after a few false starts in higher education, is now studying for a PhD, I have some emotionally complex and only recently fully formed thoughts on this. This has been part of the very personal side of pursuing this research and, while it doesn't directly address the research questions in hand, the question of class is relevant to the project in its broadest sense and is something I address briefly towards the end of the next chapter and in the conclusion.

I return to the theme developed early by Danny around training for volunteers:

Me: 'Is there anything--, are there any areas that you think, oh it would be really nice to have some training or to learn about that or anything like that, that you've not been able to get or it's just not feasible to do or the expertise doesn't exist or sort of any gaps that you feel could be filled?'

V: 'Not that I personally am aware of and actually, the local authority has been very supportive in providing training.' (Veronica, personal communication, 31 March 2015, pp. 11–12)

I also return to some of the ideas I discussed with Darrel around neutrality and how decisions are made over how the library is used by a community:

V: '[...]if somebody wanted a venue for a public meeting, to discuss climate change, I'm sure that that would be something that would be looked at favourably because I'm pretty sure that that's something that probably the majority of volunteers are very interested in and would like to feel--, you know, would be done.' (Veronica, personal communication, 31 March 2015, pp. 12–13)

So the volunteers, whoever they happen to be seem to be the driving factor as to what is included and what isn't.

Me: 'People often talk about people within the library world, librarians, et cetera, there's always this idea around libraries as a neutral space, as not having any kind of potential--, any actual value. It's something that's criticised quite heavily by a lot of people.'

A: 'It's criticised for being neutral?'

[...]

Me: 'If someone came and said they wanted to host a talk by, erm, a kind of sceptic, Bjørn Lomborg, for example, or something like that? Someone who denies the existence of climate change.'

V: 'Well I would perhaps try and have two together to [both talking at once]. What is interesting is that there's a church group who use the library, Christchurch Walkley.[...] they're a strong evangelical church and some of us think they came to Walkley because we have a woman vicar. They certainly believe in male leadership. I mean, they're lovely people and certainly the financial contribution they make to keeping things going

is welcome, but--, and people got involved in--, you know, both in Walkley Forum and in the library. They're obviously always looking for new people to come in.'

Me: 'Yeah, evangelical organisation, so yes.'

V: 'Yeah, I'm a bit sort of--, I don't want to decry them, but...'

Me: 'No, but there's a tension there.'

V: 'There is a slight tension there, in the way in which, erm--, St Mary's is the parish church. It's been--, it's coming up to 150 years it's been around and people can just drop in if they need just somewhere to be, without pressure being put on them, and so--, and that's the kind of church who tries to be around--, while the building is closed here, at the moment, the likeliest venue for an ongoing interim library presence is going to be at St Mary's.' (Veronica, personal communication, 31 March 2015, pp. 15–16)

There are so many tensions in this last bit, but especially considering the power of individuals through existing community institutions and the arrival of new, not necessarily progressive, institutions, and how they're forced together by capital in the space of the library. The libraries neutrality is its function for capital and patriarchy, the neutrality is the ontological framework of capital, the thing that says all these things are equal and interchangeable in some way through rational debate or something. This was my first attempt to really move outside the bubble of those directly sympathetic to some of the underlying ideas of a *convivial library* and it's interesting to note its general failure on a directly practical level. It also marks a point where I decide to disengage entirely with official channels into influencing currently existing institutions and focus instead on something Danny brings to my attention, the Sheffield Solidarity Centre project.

Sheffield Solidarity Centre Meetings

Notebook 14/06/16:

‘Met Danny last week had chat about Sol Centre. Meeting on 22nd to confirm business plan. Has sent me a copy and library is central to set up. Is keen for me to get involved once space is secured. Seems the most promising avenue of project work so far.’

The SSC plan outlines a proposal to create a space to support ‘...”below the radar” community groups and people in activist groups fighting for progressive social change.’ This will be achieved by providing ‘information, advice and practical support services, as well as a city centre pace for social change groups to learn from one another, share knowledge, access support, explore the connections between their activities, and develop new initiatives and campaigns.’ Its values align closely with what, at this stage, I identify as the key values of a *convivial library*: ‘solidarity; self-help & mutual aid; social justice and community resilience.’ Engaging with the SSC project is a step towards finding somewhere that already shares many of the values of the *convivial library* and using that as a point to establish it.

Notebook 26/07/16:

‘Still waiting to hear any news on Sheffield Solidarity Centre – Danny’s partner is pregnant so it may be he is busier with that! ...writing a strategy document for the Sheffield Solidarity Centre library.’

The strategy document itself was a product of all my thinking up to this point (see appendix 2 for full document). Essentially it laid out the way in which I felt an organisation such as SSC should work with information. I had a chance to present it later that year at a meeting of the SSC steering group. It reflects my ideas, as developed up to now with the input of everyone mentioned so far and others,

of what a library can be. Through the tension between a book place and a thing place, which in itself is a shallow distinction, I can imagine drawing a difference between library as containing things and as being a set of practices or relations. Tied to that is the idea of good and bad information and atomisation and accessibility of information. Yet I'm also interested in uncovering the way in which the idea of information itself works against the idea of a *convivial library*; how does the *vernacular* relate to this? Can I suggest a tension to replace or contain these two ideas that sets the *vernacular* against the industrial? This is one of the dialectical pairs I use as a code elsewhere, so maybe these codes exist at different levels of abstraction, in the same way the picture of what is happening here, the process of *praxis*, exists at different levels.

My reflections on the meeting with the SCC working group are in my notebook dated 25/10/16:

'Well organised group... Presented my libraries working paper and it was met with enthusiasm [...] Have put myself forward to set the service up. Membership will be organisations rather than individuals... I brought up applying for funding to visit a couple of other cities [projects like this] to see how they run on a day-to-day basis. Discussed idea of paid project manager... fits with need to separate administration tasks and democratic decision making.'

It seemed like I might have found a potential space for the *convivial library*. It wasn't, however, to be. Although the narrative ends at this point, nearly two years after it started, it's worth projecting forwards a little more here. In 2015 a change came about in the political left in the UK, the election of Jeremy Corbyn as leader of the Labour party. With the general election in 2017, approximately six months after the narrative ends, the level of intensity increased significantly, at least among those I knew who were active in organising on the left. Projects such as the Sheffield Solidarity Centre,

which prioritised building structures beyond the state and market (to the extent that is possible), tended to become secondary to the possibility of electing Corbyn and creating the conditions to make such projects easier. This certainly seemed to be a factor to me in why the Solidarity Centre never got off the ground. There's a limited pool of energy that can go into this kind of work and the focus will inevitably shift to where there appears to be the most to be gained. That focus on the Labour party and electoral politics on the left, myself included, continued up to the more recent 2019 elections. It may be we find ourselves returning to some of these ideas in its wake.

Across the period of time described here my attempts to realise a *convivial library* progressed and faltered, my ideas changed and my practice changed too, as best it could balancing the practical realities those ideas encountered. In other words I began to develop *praxis*. The final stage of this development is the period of reflection following immediately on from these events, the period that allows space to understand more fully the theoretical implications of what had occurred here. As I've stated previously, without this temporal space to reflect *praxis* will remain to a large degree reactionary and its deeper theoretical insights hard to discern. The following chapter takes this narrative as a leaping off point for developing those deeper theoretical perspectives that might lead towards new ways of approaching the idea of a *convivial library*; the analytical aspect of the autoethnography.

‘Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?’

The task I set myself across the course of the two years of data collection was to explore the possibilities of creating a *convivial library* in Sheffield. This discussion chapter is the final iteration in this particular part of the process. It is both an examination of *praxis* and a part of that *praxis* as well. As it appears in Illich (1973) the *convivial library* is a suggestion that the library itself is a prototype of a convivial institution; that libraries, existing as they did when Illich was writing in the early 70’s, provided an example upon which other institutions might model themselves towards the goal of a *convivial society*. A *convivial society* is one in which the relation of humans to our environment and one another is mediated to a greater degree by *convivial tools*, which allow each of us the capacity for a collective autonomy in the *vernacular* domain. This *vernacular* domain is essentially Illich’s way of talking about the *commons*, it is the historical sphere of life through which needs are both created and met neither by the market nor the state but through a localised subsistence. As the *commons* it is distinct from and essentially an alternative to those areas of life subject to the rule of the state and the market. These two “choices”, market or State, Illich groups under the heading of the industrial, which he identifies as the hegemonic ideology within society as it was then, both in capitalist countries and those areas of “actually existing socialism” in the Eastern Bloc and USSR. As I outlined in my literature review, this understanding of State and market as a historically intertwined pair of institutions is common to many understandings of the *commons* and the alternatives it presents. Despite this approach Illich clearly identifies his thought as being socialist, albeit in opposition to the hegemony of the industrial (Illich, 1973, p. 12). Things have changed significantly since the 1970’s, yet, as I made the case for previously, much of what Illich says, especially the conceptual categories he develops, remain useful in some form. The previous chapter detailed my attempts to explore those ideas practically, this chapter aims to analyse those attempts and modify the theory accordingly with a view to future action.

Cultivating conviviality: failure / success

Unsurprisingly perhaps, a new library did not miraculously spring into existence from my own, very modest attempts to cultivate the idea of *conviviality* here in my adopted hometown of Sheffield.

There are multiple reasons for this, which will be discussed in greater detail below, however I believe its “failure” in this most immediate sense provides some of the most valuable pointers with regard to *convivial praxis* moving beyond this thesis. Perhaps the first point to consider is the hegemony of the industrial or starting from where we are now. Illich is not wildly romantic about the possibilities for change even at what was a relatively tumultuous moment, at least compared to now as regards the type of activity of interest to those pursuing the ideal of socialism e.g. industrial militancy and the legacy of 1968. He is clear on the point that any future society will need to make its own decisions over the relative composition of *convivial* and industrial *tools*, and that this will be a delicate balance. The beginning of the data collection period sees me engaging in discussions with a handful of people towards the end of getting something going in an already existing library space that might expand of the possibilities for and understanding of *conviviality* in that space. To do this I sometimes talked directly of the idea of *conviviality* and sometimes used community resilience as a proxy idea of sorts. Likewise, some of those conversations addressed the issue of the library directly, as with for example my discussion with Darrell who works for Sheffield Public Library Service, or more obliquely, as in my conversation with Kiran who at the time worked on a “thing library”-type project for the University of Sheffield’s student union. By the end of the period of data collection my primary contact was with a single participant, Danny, and focussed on spaces solely outside any already existing institution, the proposed Sheffield Solidarity Centre. Beginning as I did, from the idea that the library represented a prototype of a *convivial tool*, the idea that we might even require a new type of library space was not explicitly part of my initial *praxis*. The questions at the heart of this narrative then are: what drove this arc? How can we understand the tension between my own agency and the structural forces that moved my inquiry in this direction? What

implication do they have for a *convivial praxis*? What are the implications for library and information work and our understanding of the categories of data, information and knowledge? This list isn't exhaustive, there are other questions that overarch, cut across or sit nested within these concerns, yet these questions are at the centre of what follows.

As described previously, my coding of the data worked with the idea of paired concepts in tension with one another. The tensions produced questions about the relationship between the two ideas. These questions aimed at finding out whether they might be merged, superseded by a third category, or simply left in tension with one another productively. By productively I mean in relation to the wider idea of cultivating *conviviality*. These pairs often overlapped, to form more complex relations. However I was keen at that stage of the analysis to keep them as discreet pairs. So, for example, we might see the pair library/librarian, followed by library/community, alongside community/individual. All of these ideas are interrelated, and the pairing could have worked out differently so that any one of these concepts might have been paired with another, but it is from the experience, both action and theory, contained in the narrative that particular pairs become relevant to the questions being asked. To be clear, I view this flexible categorisation of experience as different to the rigid binaries enforced through capital, e.g. Society and Nature, man and woman, white and non-white, which serve not only describe a reality but to dominate humans and the rest of nature and remove the space for reflection, or at least reflection that might allow us to transcend these imposed categories, and therefore the capacity for autonomous collective action (R. Patel & Moore, 2018, p. 202). The relation between capital and these binaries as they might be conceived of as patriarchy, white supremacy or anthropocentrism and so on, is not one way and deterministic. These other forms of domination are co-constituting with capital, actively created 'through symbolic *praxis*, political power and capital accumulation' (Moore, 2015, p. 216).

If there is a core to the narrative it is in my relationship with Danny and our attempts to find somewhere to launch a project around the idea of a *convivial library*. Why this became the core of the narrative is a question I will deal with in greater detail below, for now I want to concentrate on what came from this and how it might be understood. Danny brought new concerns, around open data and its possibilities, which I had not even begun to consider before our initial conversation. These ideas provided the basis of my approach to Darrell and, through him, the public library service as it existed in Sheffield at that time. Together with other members of Sheffield Better With Data, Ian and Jag, we met in person and discussed plans online in order to try and find a mutual point over which we could organise within public libraries. As is evident in the previous chapter, such a point was not forthcoming, although concepts and ideas came out of the meetings and discussions which may be of further use. What this failure might point towards was a particular inability, in that it is specific to the conditions of this research, to work directly with public libraries as they exist now to cultivate *conviviality*.

One way of understanding this apparent impasse of the public library in Sheffield not appearing to me as a place in which our supposedly *convivial* ideas would work begins with the very basic tension library/librarian. Through this pair I hope we can see what the role of the library actually is now and what role the librarian plays within it. By understanding that, I believe we can begin to understand the limits of the institution as regards cultivating *conviviality* and begin to understand at least some of the reasons that I failed to pursue this path. In doing this, in the spirit of autoethnography, I'm drawing not only on the narrative outlines, but on my own deeper experience of working in public libraries and engaging with others who work and use them. With that in mind I want to try a couple of complimentary theoretical ways of approaching this pair. Firstly I think Illich, despite his diagnosis of the library as a prototype *convivial* institution, provides a conceptual argument against the possibility of the library as a *convivial* institution through his ideas of the industrial, the *vernacular*,

shadow work and professionalism. Following that I want to bring in a more Marxist frame with the work of Jason W. Moore. The idea that Marx and Illich might work side by side seems relatively intuitive when one considers Illich's supposed commitment to a form of socialism, yet it isn't one that is often followed through on. Marxists seldom read Illich or vice versa it seems (Esteva, 2015). What Moore brings is a theoretical framework that meshes well with Illich's thought and adds some depth with regard to the question of knowledge and information, a central question with regard to the functioning of a library and a topic that Illich never treats in depth. It's also the case that my encountering Moore's work came via my participants, specifically Marc and Gordon, and our regular reading group; a narrative thread that intertwines with the central story of mine and Danny's attempts to realise a *convivial library*. My *praxis*, that reflective process between action and theory, was developing during this period through these twin interactions with participants who were on the one hand focussed more on the practical task of creating a *convivial library* and on the other those who were more inclined towards the theoretical task of understanding what the possibilities for a *convivial library* might be.

Professionalism: library / librarian

Despite his claim that the library represents a prototype of a *convivial tool* Illich doesn't fail to recognise the potential problems in libraries at the time he was writing. Primarily he identifies it in the form of a wider issue, professionalism, which undermines *conviviality*, the capacity for the library to be a *tool* which can be used to expand the *vernacular* and further the collective autonomy of the users. The literature on professionalism is vast, so for the purpose of this study I will only touch on Illich's ideas and some of the key points in Library and Information Studies. As ever, this is presented not as empirical evidence of a particular truth, but as a potential line of thought for future *praxis*, the truth of which will be borne out by the deeper research needed to address the questions it raises.

Illich is unequivocal on professionalisation in any field. To him it represents the generation of needs, or more specifically the creation of deficiencies in the group which are then administered to by the professional class through the use of industrial *tools* (Illich, 1987). He explicitly identifies this in the trends within libraries when he was writing, stating '[a]s the library got "better", the book was withdrawn further from the handy bookshelf. The reference librarian placed himself [sic] between people and the shelves; now he [sic] is being replaced by the computer' (Illich, 1973, p. 65). This particular example is perhaps an overgeneralisation of what was a very real trend within libraries at the time, alongside a hint of the romanticism of the past sometimes glimpsed in Illich's work. In my own discussions with colleagues past and present, especially those who have worked in libraries during this period, there was undoubtedly a paternalistic attitude towards users that saw certain more "controversial" books kept behind lock and key¹. Illich also argues that the same effect is created, more effectively I would argue, through librarians 'fluent in some special kind of English' forming 'interest groups, [...] fighting for a larger slice of the language pie' (Illich, 1981, p. 64). We might reflect on librarianships fondness for concepts, such as information literacy, that often fail to resonate outside of the profession and often, at least in the practical setting, become instead a jargon by which we might demonstrate the seriousness of librarianship.

The professionalisation of librarianship is bound up with ideas of others perception of it as an important societal role, and therefore worthy of recognition in the ways that such things are recognised in capitalist society, that is to say by capital. Around such a need accrete the various trappings of a profession, e.g. a professional body, and the cultivation of what Illich describes as the

¹ One story involved a particular user who constantly challenged this policy by obtaining a list of the books consider too dangerous to be left on the shelf and systematically requesting them one by one on each visit to the library, highlighting what was considered, even by many staff, an absurd policy. These anecdotes of resistance to the more authoritarian history of the public library are interesting as they both reinsert a degree of agency on the part of the service user and describe the limits of that agency in the face of large public institutions.

‘privilege to prescribe’ (Illich, 1987, p. 17). This has not gone as far in LIS as it has in the professions Illich focuses on in his critique, e.g. medicine and teaching. ‘In LIS, an individual is not necessarily required to be qualified to become an ‘information professional’; this harms both the public perception of LIS as a profession and employer recognition of its knowledgebase’ (Cannon, 2017, p. 144). The final part of that statement is interesting as it describes two groups who we might, as professionals, wish to convince of our worth. Dealing with the second of these first, the employers, Illich (1987, p. 17) notes that ‘a profession, like a priesthood, holds power by concession from an elite whose interests it props up’. Many would perhaps accept the first part of that description, arguing that pragmatically that is how you get things done in a society with unequal power concentrations, class divisions and so on. The second part of this assertion, that in receiving power by concession the profession explicitly or tacitly props up the interests of those from it receives its power, would likely be contested by many in the profession. Of course we can say that professionalism does this quite literally in creating a wealth divide between those who, while working in the same place, are professionals and those who aren’t (Drabinski, 2016, p. 605). However, librarianship has a strong radical tradition that posits the role of the librarian, through the institution of the library, as one orientated towards liberation for those that find themselves marginalised under capital (Gregory & Higgins, 2018). This ethical commitment within the idea of professionalism, in line with the enlightenment ideal of the availability of all knowledge to all, tends to consider the library to be an institution which has an ethical obligation to provide means to all with which to access all of this knowledge (Alissa, 2018). Yet, the codification of this ethical motive for such actions into documents for practical use in institutions, which has only become commonplace post-1990’s, primarily serves the purpose of legitimising the profession, in addition to the more usual understanding of providing guidance for individual’s actions in a professional setting (Hansson, 2017).

Public libraries specifically saw a rapid increase in the use of managerial language in the period following 1997, a signifier of shifting understandings of its role and the role of its users (Greene & McMenemy, 2012). This issue of language, one highlighted above by Illich, illustrates how the professionalisation of public library services is bound up with a shift to what we might call the citizen consumer and its progenitor, capital's neoliberal project². Emboldened with a pragmatism that takes the restructuring of the public-as-consumers as a given, the need to adopt commercial models to survive in the market became a new point of common sense (Rooney-Browne & McMenemy, 2010). The capacity to question this new common sense was undermined by the imposition of austerity by the Coalition government elected in 2010. The years of austerity in the UK saw the taking up of professionalism in libraries as a bulwark to the hollowing out of essential services (MacDonald, 2020). It was this binary choice that I sought to reject, based on the logic outlined above, in my initial attempts with Danny to see if there was the possibility of making something *convivial* flourish in the spaces vacated by the State and not yet colonised by the market.

I don't have to search far to find bracing, popular quotes about the power of libraries to transform lives, the general public good they serve and so on. My wider point is that though this may be true, it is only true in so far as communities coalesce through the library *against* the general thrust of professionalism. Professionalism is a stalking horse for capital. Contained within the idea of the professional is the idea of the "middle class", a fluid concept that serves more as an ideological bulwark against the realisation of the position of professional vis-à-vis capital than it does to describe a coherent class per se (Carlsson, 2008, pp. 33–38; Weiss, 2019). There is another question beneath the surface here that would examine the extent to which the library has *always* been

² The neoliberal project was initiated in order to drive down wages in the minority, developed world, move towards the idea of a "global factory" through a new series of enclosures of common and public resources via the IMF and World Bank in the majority world, which in turn created a global doubling of the proletariat that was significantly added to by the huge expansion of the female proletariat (Moore, 2015, pp. 236–237).

implicated in the propping up of capital's interests. Practically speaking, in the UK at least, the library arose in its contemporary forms around the process of industrialisation and, simultaneously, the resistance to this process (Gray, 2013, p. 39; Rose, 2010). Alongside the arguments for the need for a more educated workforce and the desirability of self-improvement, radicals opposed to capital's domination acted in favour of libraries as a response to the social ills created by industrialisation (Black, 2017, p. 360). This is really just a restating of the tension mentioned above that might be extended to all public institutions. Examining this tension in full is beyond the scope of this thesis but does provide an avenue for future research which would allow the further development of *convivial praxis*, in particular for understanding the role of the librarian in a *convivial library*, a point we will return to later in this chapter.

Regardless of the extent to which these represent particular historical moments and individual experiences of the library, the point remains that the imposition of a professional class between user and information source, and the ubiquitous technological extension of that through devices such as the computer in Illich's day and the algorithm in present times, can work directly against any idea of *conviviality*. Leaving to one side for now the knotty question of what type of *tool* an algorithm is, the very existence of concepts such as information literacy point to the complexity of using such a *tool* in what might approach a *convivial* manner. There is a question here then about what the source of such complexity is and whether, to transform our communities so that the climate crisis might be halted, it is necessary and desirable to engage with it directly, or if there are ways of circumnavigating it which might be deemed preferable. This brings us back around to the question of needs that Illich highlights in his critique of professionalism; what are information needs in the context of a *convivial* society?

Community data librarian

This question of needs arose as a paired concept in my coding as both needs/wants and needs/Needs, with the capitalised version representing the idea of a process of need creation through structures such as professionalism. It is at the heart of the initial project idea that Danny put forward around a community data librarian, and I think it helps us understand how we can overcome the tension between library/librarian. In his outline Danny draws a distinction between traditional librarians, or library workers, and the data librarian's potential role. In this case the former appears to be regarded more as a managerial role, in that it is not concerned directly with the production of knowledge per se, but with its organisation after its production. The data librarian role is an active one in the production of knowledge from data and in many ways an extension into the library of the role of the "information activist" (c.f. Tactical Technology Collective, n.d.). He suggests that what is needed is a set of skills to deal with this particular form of knowledge, i.e. data, and that the aim would be to facilitate the use of data, e.g. air quality data, by the library community in a *convivial* manner; that is towards the goal of *transformative community resilience*. The idea behind this, and one that surfaced in my conversations with Danny, was that of a data coop or *commons* as a way of managing open data collectively, using the role of librarian, and possibly the library as an anchor organisation, in which to facilitate this (Bloom, 2013). This potential need arose directly from Danny's own experience working with air quality data groups in Sheffield (Danny, personal communication, 2 March 2015). The examples he brought up in our discussions seemed to be primarily at an ideas stage, designed to address the needs of existing cooperative enterprises and how they might make use of open data practices with an aspiration towards providing 'a model for ownership of open data resources, giving different stakeholders a say in how shared data is managed' (Davies, 2012). That is to say there were few working models at that time of how we might go about such a task. Subsequently examples of alternative ways of governing data have appeared across the globe. Perhaps the most striking example of the possibilities of data coops or

commons can be found in Barcelona with its data commons policy scheme designed to encourage the growth of platform co-operatives (Calzada & Almirall, 2019). Interestingly, this model doesn't seem to engage with traditional public institutions directly, as myself and Danny initially set out to do with the idea of a community data librarian. A more recent development is the idea of data trusts, a model that apes the structure of legal trusts and brings data into a trust where it can be stewarded on behalf of a community, which do seem to allow for governmental institutions to have a more direct involvement beyond the setting of policy frameworks (Open Data Institute, 2019).

So why didn't the concept gain traction in the initial context we tried to apply it, i.e. public libraries and associate libraries? There's a case to be made that our methods of attempting to get it working just weren't sufficient, that myself and Danny approached it at the wrong level, i.e. we should have engaged with the policy level rather than practice level functioning of these institutions. Alongside this we might think about other reasons that my particular approach to exploring and cultivating *conviviality* found most resonance with those, such as Danny, who already shared some common ground and how that ties into notions of community. There is also the practical level of libraries not having the capacity to include this sort of idea into their current, massively underfunded set up. Could we have started from a different point, one that examined already existing practices for traces of *conviviality* and fostered them instead? In a sense we did do this, in that we discussed the *convivial* potential opened up by the creation of volunteer run associate libraries in Sheffield. Both myself and Danny agreed that the shift in governance and ownership of parts the public library service represented a potential for a 'left shock doctrine' approach that could capitalise on the State's inability or unwillingness to deliver a basic public service and introduce a model based on neither market nor State principles, e.g. mutual aid, the *commons/vernacular* (Jones, 2018, 2019; Milburn & Russell, 2018, 2019). This was a position that was spurred on by my own experience as a union organiser within public libraries during the initial period of the Coalition government's

austerity program and the conservative approach within unions (e.g. attempting to manage the crisis in the least worse way working closely with management, rather than adopting a more confrontational mode that might propose genuine radical alternatives to services as they currently existed) to the unfolding crisis for public services. However, beyond a few conversations with Darrell and Veronica and Danny's attempts to document the core ideas of the Community Data Librarian, we didn't try that hard to engage with the voluntary library service. For my own part it was the shift in tone towards a business and managerial language as we held initial meetings and my own subsequent inability to find common ground with those we were trying to work with that perhaps stalled this aspect of the project. Other factors came into play, such as Sheffield Better with Data breaking apart due to some internal differences and the lack of time and resources on the library services side of things, but I think it's important to emphasise my own responsibility, and subsequent failure, as the person who instigated this and then failed to see it through.

There's a final and very important point to be made here, one which refers back to the previous section on professionalism and the imposition of needs. Myself and Danny believed we had, through our work and experiences, discovered a need, yet it seems equally possible that we were imposing the idea of a need, one that only the newly created role of community data librarian might be able to minister to. Literature on open data points to a similar type of role in the guise of the infomediary, a person or institution which acts to steward open data on behalf of wider, non-expert populations (P. Robinson & Mather, 2017). Where they explicitly address libraries as a potential institution, the references to professionalism in the literature around this concept are generally tacit, taking the form of lists of skills most often associated with professional librarians and capacities provided by libraries' existing digital infrastructure. Indeed much of the literature refers to digital professionals rather than any form of public sector worker in this role (Janssen & Zuiderwijk, 2014; Zuiderwijk et

al., 2014). In each case, whether explicitly talking about libraries or not, all do as we did and take the existence of open data as a given which in itself is enough to generate the need for this new role.

My inability to recognise this in the moment led to some specific choices about who I talked to and what the consequences were. Specifically the contradictions that I ran into that made me feel that my goal, *conviviality*, couldn't be reached through this particular scheme. My analysis of the situation with regard to what the best course of action has shifted as a result of my experience, as I will make clear in the final part of this section and my conclusion. However, while I think these points are important and play a part in undermining these specific attempts, before exploring those ideas in more depth I want to focus for now on the tension between data as a concept and *conviviality* as a way of getting at this underlying question of needs/Needs, and through that opening up the concept of a *convivial* society and its relation to the modern library.

What do we mean by data?

The idea we set out with begins with the assumed need for a way in which the community around the library can produce/use open data in a *convivial* manner. By data we meant 'the raw material produced by abstracting the world into categories, measures and other representational forms – numbers, characters, symbols, images, sounds, electromagnetic waves, bits – that constitute the building blocks from which information and knowledge are created' (Kitchin, 2014, p. 1). Specifically, we were motivated by our conception that 'the problem of access to the data is not sufficient to spark community resilience and community innovation – that requires data literacy and co-production of ideas which are able to use the data as a building block for new projects and initiatives' (Antrobus & Grace, 2015). Data in this context are quantified variables that could be about the communities 'population, its geographical features, its physical assets and infrastructure,

its transport links and how people move around the area, the businesses, public services and voluntary organisations operating in the area, what people do with their time, their health, education and employment. A whole bank of data that provides a starting point for understanding a neighbourhood/community and its needs' (Antrobus & Grace, 2015). As mentioned above, we specifically linked this back to work Danny had been engaged in with local groups monitoring air quality, specifically with East End Quality of Life Initiative and trying to find ways of helping them utilise that data to improve their environment. Danny's experience led him to the conclusion that 'there is a real need for open data infrastructure and assets to be owned and controlled by the wider community' (Antrobus & Grace, 2015). From our starting perspective then, data then is, first and foremost, a resource.

The proposal for a community data librarian focused on a particular type of data, captured environmental data, which was both directly relevant to the core aims of the project around community resilience to climate change and to Danny's own experience and work. Work in this area has examined the journeys taken by similar open data, e.g. weather data, and looked at how it 'flows' to different places, and how that process, in the UK at least, is governed by current legislation which works 'under the neoliberal assumption that all economic growth is socially beneficial, [and] aims primarily to set market forces to work on public data' (Bates & Goodale, 2017, pp. 764–765). This marketisation of what could be considered a public resource is precisely the type of economic and political observation, albeit based on Danny's experience as opposed to any specific research, which drove our initial interest in data as an area for the expansion of *conviviality*. If democratic use of *tools* was at the heart of *conviviality*, then the democratic control of data by the local, place-based communities from which it flowed seemed like a productive starting position.³

³ There is, however, no reason to suppose that the data a community data librarian might be called to work with wouldn't be of a more personal nature, which raises a whole set of other issues and questions. The

Convivial society or convivial tools?

But what if the *tools* used to produce and accumulate data are not *convivial* in and of themselves? That's not to reject the need to understand, curb and manage the excesses of datafication, but to recognise that the pursuit of *conviviality* might be predicated on an understanding of knowledge that has a more limited use for data as it exists today. Here I think it is important to make a clear distinction between what we might understand as a *convivial* society and what we might understand as a *convivial tool*. I believe that it is precisely the nuance in this distinction was one aspect that was missing from my *praxis* in its initial form, and in part explains some of the project's failures. For Illich a *convivial* society is a society in which *convivial tools* predominate but exist alongside industrial *tools* in a manner democratically determined by the relevant constituency; 'The public ownership of resources and of the means of production, and public control over the market and over net transfers of power, must be complemented by a public determination of the tolerable basic structure of modern tools' (Illich, 1973, p. 43). It is a fundamentally pluralist vision, with regard to the balance of types of *tools*. This is expanded upon in Illich's (1981) writings on "shadow work", where he gives a three dimensional analysis of society through axes representing first the traditional choice between left and right around ownership of the means of production and allocation of resources, second the choice between hard and soft technological paths, and finally the choice between societies aimed at

explosion in 'the transformation of social action into online quantified data' from 'aspects of the world not previously quantified', the corresponding feedback loops associated with this process and the emergence of data as "currency" to pay for communication services and security is known as datafication (Dijck, 2014, p. 198; Kennedy et al., 2015, p. 1). It has become an integral, and to a large extent accepted, both explicitly and tacitly, factor of modern life, albeit one characterised by "information asymmetry", wherein personal data is given away without any clear idea of when, how and why it might be used by those it is given to (Pangrazio & Selwyn, 2019, p. 420). Such realisations have prompted the call for the need for yet another literacy, "personal data literacy", to be added to the pantheon of critical literacies we need to be taught in order to navigate the world imposed on us (Pangrazio & Selwyn, 2019). In either of these types of data, and perhaps utilising some of the categories of *commons* management outlined by thinkers such as Hess and Ostrom (2007a), as discussed in the initial literature review, we can see that pursuing a data *commons*, coop or trust, makes sense in the case of personal data as well if our aim is to manage what we already have, e.g. a non-rivalrous, non-excludable, zero marginal cost resource, in a more democratic manner.

growth against those ‘which put high value on the replacement of both production and consumption by the subsistence orientated utilization of common environments’ (Illich, 1981, pp. 11–12). It is with this final axis, and the underlying democracy of any process governing shifts along all axes, that Illich seems most concerned and that is the determinant of a society’s *conviviality*. There is a naïveté, or perhaps more fairly we could say optimism especially given our own hindsight, to Illich’s thought that comes through here as well. His belief that this three dimensional approach could replace the more one-dimensional economic measurement of a polity’s credibility, leading to a situation where ‘[t]he beauty of a unique socially articulated image of each society will, hopefully, become the determining factor of its international impact’ still seems a long way off (Illich, 1981, p. 12).

The praxis of capital: needs / Needs

We can say that data helps form a partial map of the world. Maps help us navigate the world but they also create the world which we navigate, they make legible that which the mapmaker wishes to be legible; raw data does not exist, there is always an interpretative frame prefiguring both data collection and analysis (Dijck, 2014, p. 201; Kitchin, 2014, pp. 19–20). Data are abstractions. For data to be useful complex situated relations on which knowledge is predicated have to be made generally transferable. In crude Marxist terms, use-value must be, at least partly, transformed into exchange-value – a degree of fungibility is introduced to the knowledge. In Illich’s language the *vernacular* must become the industrial or its shadow. To be clear, this isn’t simply an act of translation or transmission of these situated knowledges or an argument for the particularity of these knowledges and their inherent non-transferability between contexts. It is more that this represents an abstraction from partial, locatable and therefore critical knowledges into a form, specifically the forms of information and data, which allows the knowledge to be measured and exchanged, to be put into wider circulation, as a thing qualitatively different from the form it took in its context and

beyond the control of those who produced it (Haraway, 1988). Data represents then, not a given fact of our everyday life, but a particular form of knowledge practice, of capital's "desire"⁴ to 'engage the world as something to be reduced to an interchangeable part' (Moore, 2015, p. 94).

Moore (2015, p. 195) identifies these types of knowledge practices that render the world as interchangeable parts as abstract social natures, used by States and capitalists alike to make legible to capital human and extra-human nature. This forms one part of the *praxis* of capital along with abstract social labour (socially necessary labour of workers to produce commodities) and primitive accumulation (traditionally understood as enclosure of the *commons*). The "soft" processes of knowledge formation, represented by abstract social natures, enable the "hard" transformations of material life, represented by abstract social labour, mediated by the enclosures of primitive accumulation (Moore, 2015, p. 200). This is the process of the creation of Needs.

Practically, thinking back to our example of air quality data, we can imagine a set of knowledge practices which inscribe a time place and set of other data points into a reading describing one aspect of the world, in effect enclosing those qualities and rendering them as quantities. The question of air quality can now be addressed through data; the problem of a relation with our environment is visible in an abstract way and there is a Need for methods that engage with improving air quality through changing the numbers rather than specifically addressing the lived

⁴ There's an idea here that is present particularly in the work of Moore, to ascribe some form of agency to capital, which is, of course, a social relation. This way of approaching capital is a function of the scale at which Moore is theorizing. Moore's (2015, pp. 36–37) definition of agency is as 'an emergent property of definite configurations of human activity with the rest of life', so capital's agency emerges from the specific bundles of human and extra-human natures that reproduce it.

aspect of ongoing poor air quality. We can see this in practice in studies of environmental data collection around fracking sites in the US:

‘Residents lived with the day-to-day visceral experience and abject response to a number of industry activities underway, from the ‘stink’ of infrastructure to the constant truck traffic and the din of compressor stations. They were concerned about their health, and about the impact of this industry on the community. The citizen data collection then became one way to look for patterns that might corroborate or explain what was happening on the ground.’ (Gabrys et al., 2016)

At this point there is no commodification as such, but we do now have a resource. Rendering a relationship as a resource is the first step to creating a commodity. The relation between ourselves and the environment we live in has been abstracted. We can differentiate between levels and types of abstraction perhaps, and we might not think there is any experience that is not in some way mediated, but the degree to which this occurs, the extent to which the relation rendered as resource and is made quantifiable and exchangeable, bears a relevance to its capacity to be commodified. This is accumulation through appropriation (Moore, 2015, p. 95). This chain of events is not predetermined, i.e. a resource may remain a resource and may remain publicly or community owned in some form. Indeed, this is what happens in the above example, where the data is incorporated into stories to tell of the effect of the pollution from fracking on the lives of community residents and providing avenues for potential action to challenge such pollution (Gabrys et al., 2016). What we do see however is that the experience of community members doesn’t become valid until data corroborates it in some way, until it is made legible to capital regardless of whether that process continues on to commodification of the resource. This process highlights our relation to an abstract Nature, which is at the core of the problem I am interested in addressing through *conviviality*, the climate crisis. Capital’s *praxis* forms a provisionally stable set of practices and

conceptions of time, space and identity, so that the Society/Nature duality, which Moore characterises as a Cartesian duality, appears as a given of reality rather than being historically constructed (Moore, 2017a, p. 601).

From Cheap Nature to Cheap Information

In Moore's (2015, 2016, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c; R. Patel & Moore, 2018) view, which he labels *world-ecology*, capitalism is best understood as a way of organising life-making. From this perspective capitalism exists through its frontiers; it is islands of cash exchange within wider oceans of "cheap" things so that '[t]hrough its frontiers, capitalism taps and controls a wider set of relations of life-making than appear in accountants balance of profit and loss' (R. Patel & Moore, 2018, p. 19). By pulling things across this frontier without paying for them, capitalism "creates" value as if from thin air. This "common-sense" externalisation of Nature then creates a category into which anything that needs to be kept off the books can be put, rendering resources cheap, what Moore (2015, p. 17) calls *Cheap Nature*⁵. This cheapening is both the material movement of resources entering the process of accumulation at zero or minimal cost (primitive accumulation), followed by the immaterial movement of our conception of these relations as resources (abstract social nature), realised as some level of change in the manner in which we obtain the material for our ongoing existence (abstract social labour).

⁵ A starting list of these cheap things upon which capital relies, according to Patel and Moore (2018), would contain money, work, care, energy, food, lives, nature. These categories, while different, overlap and intermingle in complex processes, as 'bundles of human and extra-human nature' (Moore, 2015, p. 27). Cheap is not the same as low cost – although that's part of it. To reproduce life in the islands of cash exchange is more expensive over time than if that reproduction happens in the ocean of cheap things surrounding them. Capital experiences periodic crises when things, i.e. work, become more expensive, e.g. through unionisation of workers. Cheap things are not really things at all, but strategies adopted by capital to reproduce itself through necessary processes of life-making.

Central to this is the role of knowledge. Historically, the enclosure of knowledge in forms such as maps rendered the world as different distances which ‘could be measured, catalogued, classified, mapped and owned’ (R. Patel & Moore, 2018, p. 55). This also facilitated the placing of groups that prioritised other ways of knowing nature as part of Nature; their knowledge’s becoming “mere” folklore. With this in mind, to the list of *Cheaps* I want to add information, as part of understanding that wider process in the context of the library and as a step in clarifying what we might mean by a *convivial library*. I first encountered the phrase, *Cheap Information*, in a tweeted reply from Moore himself to one of my own tweets (from my now defunct Twitter account) wondering aloud about some of the theoretical implications of my thesis. The concept also appears briefly, as something to be further theorised, in two blog posts by Wark (2015b, 2015c) discussing the work of Moore and others; specifically ‘cheap information [is] about the where and how of those other components of Cheap Nature that capital needs to appropriate in order to continue to exploit labor and accumulate’.

Cheap Information then is two things. It is “knowledge” drawn across the frontier of capital; it is something from Nature brought into Society. A reminder: the categories Nature and Society do not refer to some border between say town and countryside, but to a frontier drawn through all aspects of life-making, through all aspects of our everyday lives. The quality of the air on my street or my average resting heartbeat, once quantified, appears as part of Nature which can then, potentially, be pulled across the frontier into Society and be used to generate profit. At the same time, the second thing, this information forms a part of the processes through which other things are made cheap. The “knowledge” pulled across the frontier acts as a “map” to “find” and “own” other cheap things. It is work/energy that is appropriated. It is knowledge of ourselves, of our localities, of other *Cheaps* appropriated and put to work.

Data as Cheap Information

That data isn't immediately a commodity doesn't change the fact of its origin. It is through the construction of an aspect of an historical Nature through knowledge practices that make the world legible to capital that allows the continued cycle of capitalization (turning *commons* into commodities) and appropriation (making things *Cheap* to ensure the continuation of capitalization) which facilitate its reproduction. This widening and deepening of the zones of commodification and appropriation are a result of the crises that occur within capitalism due to overaccumulation⁶. Data, as the manifestation of a particular knowledge practice, becomes a name for the shadow realm of our everyday digital existence, *Cheap Natures* in the form of unpaid work/energy 'pressed into the service of capital accumulation' (Moore, 2015, p. 206). At the same time, in tension with this, the idea of data as labour and the need for remuneration for data seems to be gaining some traction (Lanier, 2014; The Economist, 2018). Likewise, with regards to environmental data, it is possible to imagine the individual focus on data as labour being expanded through a data co-op/commons/trust model in the context of a given community to say that a given data set about air quality is not strictly open, or is limited in how it is open, and belongs to this community and they must be remunerated for it. There is an argument from Moore (2015, pp. 227–229) that in demanding capital to pay the full cost of its exploitation, which it ultimately cannot do, is to challenge the regime of *Cheap Nature*. Such a tactic seems fraught with problems, as this approach of placing cost values on all aspects of our environment has more often led to its destruction than any significant rupture of capitalist social relations (Monbiot, 2018).

⁶ Overaccumulation crises are 'crises defined by a rising mass of "surplus" capital that cannot be reinvested properly' (Moore, 2015, p. 226). What this means practically is that capital cannot be reinvested in new innovations in the real economy as *Cheap Natures*' commodity frontiers slowly recede due to what Moore terms the 'falling ecological surplus', which is the 'declining relative contribution of unpaid work to capital accumulation' (Moore, 2015, p. 227).

We can see that this concept of *Cheap Information* takes all environmental data, such as air quality data, and puts them into a single process. While they remain specifically different in terms of content, Moore's theory allows us to understand how, from the standpoint of capital, they are generally the same. Consequently we have to view data as a potential commodity, or as becoming a commodity as it is deposited with whichever entity we allow, explicitly or tacitly, to take it – that is to say as it is appropriated (Roth, 2019). As a commodity it contains both a use value and an exchange value (Marx, 1981, p. 126). The function of data coops/commons/trusts mentioned above would be salvage the use value of data, to put it in action towards the democratically agreed “common good”, in function more or less replicating what the library does with information commodities by returning them to common use.

Use-values

There are two things to consider that follow on from this: the form and the content of that use-value. By form I refer to the process through which a use value appears/is produced independent of its content⁷. Seen from this perspective the role of data coops/commons/trusts would be to mitigate the industrial form of data by democratising its content. However, use-value isn't just a pre-given utility to be used in a particular way, be that democratic or otherwise, it is historically constructed by capital through us and by us through capital (Moore, 2015, pp. 149–150). Use-values appear to us as “ontological formations”, as real things, through capital's ability to create, through nature,

⁷ The content of two knowledge commodities, rendered as information or data, can be directly contradictory, and point towards wildly differing conclusions, with implications for social, political and climate justice, yet both exist partially as use-values. Their content may be disputed, that is the validity of them as information or data, but their form is often not. This echoes an idea found in value-form theory which finds social life process “form determined” by the value-form (e.g. the commodity) (Endnotes, 2010). As such information and data do not pre-exist capitalist social arrangements to be liberated under a *convivial* institutional arrangement, but would cease to exist as such. Where industrial tools prevail, as they would certainly do in some areas of society according to Illich, information and data would continue to exist as forms for use-values.

provisionally stable set of practices and conceptions of time, space and identity, or “bundles” (Moore, 2015, p. 150). The general form these take are *tools*, which can just as easily be productive institutional arrangements as objects, deployed by capital through the State and the market. Data then is the ontological fact as we apprehend it of a particular epistemological position, which is itself an historical understanding of underlying ontology; basic facts, e.g. climate change (the fact that the climate *is* always changing), become historical through our interpretive frames, e.g. the *praxis* of capital (Moore, 2015, pp. 38–39). What appear as things is revealed as a relation:

‘The world does not contain any information. It is as it is. Information about it is created in the organism through its interaction with the world. [...] We move the problem of learning and of cognition nicely into the blind spot of our intellectual vision if we confuse vehicles for potential information with information itself. We do the same when we confuse data for potential decision with decision itself.’ (Illich, 1973, p. 86)

Information then is something produced through us and our interaction with the world, a world which encompasses everything outside of the organism. Again, through these co-constituting epistemological and ontological facets of capital through nature, we arrive at the conclusion that what we have with data is ‘objective knowledge [which] is viewed as a commodity’ (Illich, 1973, p. 86).

Convivial data?

Does this eliminate any potential *convivial* use for data? It certainly seems to narrow its potential. Here we need to keep in mind Callahan’s (2012, pp. 10–11) reminder that for Illich *conviviality* isn’t necessarily an ontological category into which we can simply slot certain *tools*, it is a category that defines the strategies which resist the imposition of industrial *tools*, and as such is undertheorized

for the purposes to which I am putting it here. Work has been done very recently, primarily in the literature associated with the degrowth movement⁸, to provide a more coherent set of criteria for a strategic, and therefore political, use for the concept of *conviviality*. Vetter (2018) identifies five dimensions of a *convivial* technology; relatedness, accessibility, adaptability, bio-interaction and appropriateness. Technologies can then be assessed through a matrix that looks at each of these factors in relation to the materials required, production process, their use and the infrastructure required by them. Although designed for a narrower category than Illich's *tools*, this would go some way to being able to practically identify technologies for data production and collection that might be of use in a *convivial* society (Kerschner et al., 2018). However, precisely because it is more focussed on technology, it doesn't negate the philosophical argument against the particular type of knowledge practices, those of *Cheap Information*, which manifest in that broader category, as productive industrial *tools*. This tension between the industrial and the *convivial* as it manifests in the real world is not easily overcome. I think returning to Illich's axes of understanding *tools*, with *conviviality* as one of three criteria by which society might consider *tool* use, helps us keep some perspective on this question especially in a society as saturated with data as the minority, "western" world has become. Defined in a negative sense *conviviality* is the production of use-values that reduce reliance on the market and the state, holding to this conception as we encounter *tools* that work with data might be sufficient for contingent decisions to be made about them in relation to building a *convivial* society (Illich, 1981, p. 78). But this is still only part of the picture.

⁸ The degrowth movement has its roots in the work of academics such as Serge Latouche and Takis Fotopoulos and represents attempts to explore both practically and theoretically the possibilities towards subsistence based economies along the axis Illich (1981) defines between growth-orientated and subsistence-orientated societies (Adloff, 2016; Asara et al., 2013; D'Alisa et al., 2014; Krüger, 2019).

Knowledge work or “librarying”: institutions / processes

To say that the production and exchange of use-values happens, at least partly, through and by information and knowledge practices is to say it happens, at least partly, through and by institutions such as the library in the work of librarians. We might call this work knowledge work or immaterial labour (Caffentzis, 2013; Lazzarato, 1996; Pitts, 2017). The idea of knowledge work is not particularly new, Caffentzis (2013, pp. 98–99) traces its use as a concept to the early 1960’s at least. This theme of work initially sat on the edge of my investigation but was pulled increasingly to centre stage as it progressed. As outlined earlier, my initial intention was to look at public libraries, and in the interest of focussing the project, I drew a box around my own work in academic libraries. Yet it is through work in the library that the commodity relation becomes self-evident; most immediately in the fact that we sell our labour power as a commodity. It is, in the end, the only thing the majority of us have to sell and so obtain the things we require for survival. This is the capitalist mode of production; the way of living that is hegemonic where I live. The way that impacts our everyday lives varies according to the various binaries by which capital demarks our lives, the borders it enforces to create value. I bring that understanding, or at least the feeling of that fact, to my research. This experience is unique, in a sense, but it is also expandable. I can generalise from this point precisely through my ability to recognise the unique aspects of my experience of this phenomena.

In this idea of these knowledge practices, of *Cheap Information* and its creation of Needs, we glimpse the overcoming of that initial tension library/librarian. It bears some resemblance to the idea of library as a process or a verb; “librarying” (Baker, 2014). As well as giving an idea of some of what the library and those who work in it do now, this points to an understanding of the *convivial library* as a set of practices, specifically a set of practices in opposition to capital, rather than a specific place or person/role. This reflects in some ways the position I found myself in at the end of

the period of data collection, proposing a set of practices that might take place within the Sheffield Solidarity Centre. The extent to which the modern library might be called *convivial* is the extent to which it contains within it information and knowledge practices that are *convivial*, i.e. that allow the users of the institution to participate in the construction of use-values rather than the passive consumption of such values. This is the democratic capacity to question *tools*, those structural elements of society that are generally, under current conditions, accepted as givens or as “common sense”. If use-value is historically constructed by capital through us and by us, then so are the needs which the use value satisfies. I don’t think we can ignore these needs, but perhaps we can begin the task of trying to understand their roots and thinking about how we can find our way to needs that exists outside of this framework, needs that ultimately address the climate crisis. One such need may be the need identified by Danny and myself for a community data librarian. The way in which I choose to move forward with the idea, both the lack of wider community engagement on my part and the failure of engagement with the institution through which we hoped to cultivate the idea, point to this need being a Need. That is, it is a need which exists in order to continue the process of accumulation at the heart of capital’s reproduction. This process is at the centre of what I identified in my initial literature review as *transformative community resilience*, the process of positive change in communities as a result of the experience of crisis.

In my literature review I drew out how *transformative community resilience* is a way of understanding *conviviality* and I maintain that through this concept it is possible to use these moments of “disaster” or crisis, specifically the climate crisis although we might think of the various ways it manifest and how they might also be included within this, to rethink our approach to institutions in a progressive way. If our practical attempts failed in the immediate sense then my theoretical understanding of that “failure” provides the grounds for future approaches. Whatever my own conclusions there remains a hard pragmatic reason for the work of keeping libraries open

through voluntary means to be done, for all the same reasons I involved myself in campaigning and organising against library cuts and closures when they began, namely that libraries do good work that makes a material difference to people's lives. Following on from this, as Budd (1997, p. 315) makes clear, there is also a pragmatic need for any library service to understand information as a commodity; the library has to accept the ontological formations presented to it by capital, at a most basic level it has to buy books etc., in order to continue operating as a library. There is a new tension here then, between the library as a place of *Cheap Information* whilst simultaneously mitigating the worst effects of that type of knowledge practice, and of *conviviality*.

Praxis as a tactic: theory / practice

Initially I found it difficult to say to what extent the ideas outlined in this theoretical analysis played a part in the "failure" of the project to provide an immediate living example of a *convivial library*. I certainly felt some of this intuitively as the group of people I choose to engage with met and discussed ideas, it can be seen most obviously in my misgivings around the project with Sheffield Better With Data and the language being used there as is evident in the previous chapter, but it is only after the fact that I feel I can put some theoretical flesh on those bones. The narrative in the previous chapter, combined with the theoretical work here suggests a movement across the course of the data collection period with regard to my understanding of how to resolve this initial tension between the ideas of library and librarian that seemed key to a *convivial library*. I didn't find the resolution within the data collection period, although I feel that the movement towards the end in working with the Sheffield Solidarity Centre, in engaging with a broader group of people and of opening up the discussion of knowledge and information work more generally through proposals put to that group (as can be seen in appendix 2), saw the beginning of movement in the right direction. There is a worry in this sort of work, research that openly and actively engages with its own political

praxis, that this looking back can degenerate into a form of excuse making, that I am theorising my failure away. Yet this is also why I find critical autoethnography a particularly powerful tool; the structural element to understanding what has happened in a given situation has to be filtered through my own position with regard to these factors in order to find precisely how these structural factors interceded in my own experience. The need for constant reflection allows an analytic narrative to emerge that makes sense of my experience and, hopefully, has some resonance for the reader as well.

At first glance there's a peculiar disjunction to the *praxis* described herein in that it requires time outside away from the action in order for reflection and theorisation, a long wave between action and theory. This position relies on an understanding of action as specifically not thought and reflection. Of course this divide is built into the conception of *praxis* in a sense and is the source of the need for a word that points beyond the binary. It may be the nature of writing a PhD has informed the appearance of longer waves of action to reflection in my own case, as when I examine what is happening more closely, this divide drops away. I was reflecting through theory during my data collection period, and I am acting now, during my writing up when I am focussed heavily on theorising. The weighting does represent my focus at a given time, but in a sense it is almost a narrative device; my internal narrative is currently focussed on theory, on the implications of my past actions, yet I am still acting and must, on some level, be doing so in relation to that theoretical work.

The manner in which these things inform one another, the actual process of *praxis*, is what is of interest here. *Praxis* is reflexive action, whether that is before or after the fact, with a view to acting differently next time; next time being any point after the crystallisation of the ideas, whenever that

occurs. It is in itself a type of knowledge practice, one that is adaptable to any agents will; i.e. the *praxis* of capital. In that sense it might make more sense to talk of it as a tactic, a mental frame through which modes of knowledge production (e.g. capitalist, industrial, *convivial*, situated, etc.) are enacted in forms (data, song, embodiment, etc.) that have content (which can be literally anything) (Fraser, 2011, p. 97). These factors are codetermining in complex ways. The temporal factor outlined above points at something else, a different tactic and, at the same time, a way in which the knowledge generated through *praxis* becomes incorporated into our everyday behaviour. This embodied, practical knowledge is a concept I will explore further below (Fraser, 2011; Letiche & Statler, 2005; Scott, 2008). In order to do that it is necessary to step beyond the workplace, from the industrial to its shadow into the zones of appropriation that surround the islands of capital, Moore's *Cheap Natures*. We need to expand our understanding of who is doing the work in the library; who is (re)producing knowledge, i.e. information and data, and how do they plug into the circulation of commodities, to the creation of value that is at the heart of capital's reproduction. Simultaneously, I can say that we need to understand this process in the context of my own research; who is doing the work and, consequently, whose perspective is being prioritised through this work and who is being silenced.

The library user and the volunteer

What we can immediately see here is that if the library/librarian tension can be collapsed into the idea of knowledge and information practices, of "librarying", then another figure needs to be folded into this, that of the user. It seems nonsensical to think of a library without users. This applies equally when we are thinking of the library as a site of knowledge production and reproduction, and when we think of the circulation and exchange aspect of the knowledge practices. These practices *are* knowledge work; the production/reproduction and exchange of knowledge, happening in the

library through workers and users. This is precisely the expanded way of thinking that *Cheap Information* encourages us to use, and how it extends Marx's analysis out of the immediate site of production to meet Illich. With this expansion we begin to see the wider community that exists around the library as an institution. This expansive definition of knowledge work also allows us to see the place of the associate libraries in Sheffield, those parts of the library service now run by volunteers, as just one part of the wider set of knowledge practices, albeit as "shadow work" to use Illich's (1981) phrase. Here the user blurs into the worker in the form of the volunteer. This perspective works against mine and Danny's initial impulse that these new spaces, brought into being by capital, might have the potential to provide new sites of resistance to capital. Of course, many who share our general interests will be unsurprised by this conclusion, campaigners who opposed cuts to library services have always maintained that this was no replacement. However, the perspective offered by the concept of *Cheap Information* remains unique in that it allows us to see the relation of library/librarian/user as bound up with industrial knowledge practices that form a part of capital's *praxis*, *Cheap Information*. This suggests that both public and voluntary associate libraries, albeit we might contend to differing degrees, are precisely part of the wider industrial logic defining that role. The question of degrees is important and leads to a further question; how might we identify *convivial* knowledge practices, as part of the potential for a wider *convivial* mode of production, in either of these places?

A convivial librarian?

The question remains as to what exactly these modes of production and exchange, and the reciprocal knowledge practices they might contain, would look like. A *convivial library* is an institutional arrangement that enables sets of knowledge practices, "librarying", that form a key strand of this *praxis*. Data, primarily in its form of a commodity, bakes in use-value through its

particular form through its creation by a fundamentally industrial *tool* as opposed to a *convivial* one. Data originates from bundles of work/nature, which vary according to the specific content of data, but not by the method by which it is formed, i.e. appropriation⁹. This extraction is performed by different *tools* which embody a particular knowledge practice, that of *Cheap Information*, which generalises the specific into an exchangeable form.

If data and information are the components of a kind of generalised knowledge, then we might think to look towards the idea of partisan knowledge, in which the holder of the knowledge has ‘a passionate interest in a particular outcome’ (Scott, 2008, p. 318). Such knowledge consists of *vernacular* measures, and as such resists assimilation into a coherent body of knowledge, that is being absorbed by *Cheap Information*, through its confusing and closed nature (Scott, 2008, p. 323). In this sense it closely resembles “tacit” knowledge, those things we know but cannot tell as they defy our capacity to render them into language, as described by Polanyi (1983) and recounted to me by Gordon in our discussion. Linking this to my own thoughts on *conviviality* my mind immediately went to my conversation with Gordon and his insistence that every library should have a kitchen and a workshop attached to it. It was something I’d heard him say many times before and something I instinctively agreed with. Also, there was some resonance with my conversation with Kiran around the tool/object library at Sheffield University and its attempt to broaden the horizon of students towards these more ecologically sound practices.

What would be the conditions necessary for the reproduction of practical knowledge? As a minimum Scott (2008, p. 334) suggests ‘a community of interest, accumulated information, and ongoing

⁹ Roth (2019) provides a compelling account of this appropriation of *Cheap Information* in the case of personal data through the lens of Karatani’s (2014) work on modes of exchange.

experimentation'. We can, I hope, imagine a mix of Kiran's and Gordon's libraries, with workshop and kitchen attached, and maybe we could add garden here too, as being the space in which these three factors might come together. The closed or partisan nature of the knowledges here doesn't refer to the secretiveness, but to the desire for them to not be made fungible through the circuits of capital accumulation. I can imagine that this sort of space might form around the Sheffield Solidarity Centre or projects like it. Its description reminds me of other radical spaces I have encountered or read about, be they permanent or temporary, and the "nowtopian" impulse they represent (Bradley, 2018; Carlsson, 2008).

This way of conceiving the *convivial library* has some resonance with the idea of a library of things, and idea which appeared in many of my conversations and was an initial path of interest. In practice the idea became folded in with the concerns around community data activism that I pursued with Danny. In this scenario data was just another thing that the library might work with communities through. In some ways it also makes me think of the conditions through which I met Gordon, and Marc, in my work as a library assistant in the Sheffield Public Library service. I organised an outreach table at the Sheffield Green Fair, Marc approached me and asked if we could start a reading group on "eco" topics. We did and it ran for several years until I left the library and we decided to continue meeting and discussing¹⁰. Now at first glance a book group doesn't seem to coincide with this idea of a practical knowledge, but I'd argue that the act of meeting and discussing, outside of the usual parameters, allowing us to understand, adapt and apply generalised knowledge to our lives, begins the task of finding these other ways of knowing; this is knowing about knowing. What is perhaps most illuminating in this example is my own role. In this case I act as a library worker attempting to

¹⁰ I've documented this more thoroughly in a book chapter (c.f. Grace, 2014).

create conditions for the flourishing of *convivial* knowledge, this points to a possible role for the library worker in a *convivial library*.

The category of library worker as opposed to librarian is one that was adopted by those who associated with the Radical Librarians Collective (Radical Librarians Collective, n.d.) and with Library Workers For A Brighter Future. This represented a deliberate attempt to overcome the divide between the professional and para-professional split in library staffing. While we have folded libraries, librarian and library user into the processes of “librarying” for analytical purposes, it remains necessary for there to be a place and people involved in these processes. There will, no matter how utopian our impulse, remain a reason for there to be people whose specific task it is to maintain the space of a *convivial library* in order for these other ways of knowing to grow. Such a *convivial* arrangement between ways of knowing would recognise a fundamental tension between values that would find its equilibrium through the democratic process of deciding on types of *tools* available in a community, a process in which the *convivial* library worker would be intimately involved. The extent to which this might be possible in existing roles will vary. My own experience is that I had more freedom (and perhaps more motivation) to pursue this when I worked in a para-professional role. Of course that may be down to the specifics of my own employment history, moving away from public libraries, which in turn is related to the political economic climate of austerity. This broadens the question of how a library worker might be *convivial* from an individual act to part of a collective struggle for a different world. As a librarian it is not enough to call myself a library worker and to try and enact policies or practices that seem *convivial*, I have to be engaged with the wider political movement against capital, to explicitly taking sides. To be, in a word, unprofessional.

If my ongoing discussions with Marc and Gordon, and the other individuals who weave in and out of our reading group at different points across its history, along with the efforts made through the student library at Sheffield University, serve as an examples of the cultivation of this particular tension which is central to rebuilding the *commons/vernacular*, then we need to recognise their very real limitations. There's no prerequisite ability for this new type of knowledge generated to be fair and just in its distribution, 'the availability of such knowledge to others depends greatly on the social structure of the society and the advantages monopoly on some forms of knowledge can confer' (Scott, 2008, p. 334). This gets at a problematic conflict between the desire for the *convivial*, understood to be at least partially about the cultivation of this type of partisan knowledge, and the desire for the democratic. The reading group illustrates this neatly; it has become closed and exclusive, however much we might pretend otherwise, due to the fact that as time went on we began to engage with increasingly complex academic texts. This acts as a neat counter point to the problems encountered in opening up data, in that openness is often 'confined by the hegemonic framework of the neoliberal state', that Danny's community data librarian model, and the sources it drew on, was imagined to counter (Bates & Goodale, 2017, p. 764). Yet in both instances we might see a common thread in their respective reflections of the *praxis* of capital, and by inference the co-constituting praxes of patriarchy, white supremacy and so on, and its inability by themselves to break with their hegemonic logics. This suggests the need for a broad structural component which, democratically, ensures a counter-hegemonic interpretation of this relation. The *convivial* library worker forms a part of this, alongside the broader pushback against the neoliberal state.

This refocussing on the role of the library worker in a *convivial library* brings me back to thinking about my own actions, about the way I went about this study. I'm not an instinctively practical person. I can do practical things with a degree of skill and I enjoy them when I do them, but if I can

read a book about them instead I'll generally go for that option. This might go some way to explaining why, despite my agreement with Gordon and the resonance of his idea and the interest Kiran's work in the University held for me, they weren't something I pursued with any intensity. Instead I found myself working with Danny on what remained, unfortunately, a much more abstract concept. This kind of meta-reflection, a reflection on the process of reflection in a sense, helps clarify some of the blind spots in my approach. It shifts the focus onto the "communities of interest" that I co-created across the period of data collection, whose knowledges I engaged with in my attempts to create a *convivial library*. An understanding of this process is also central to understanding what the role of a *convivial* library worker might be if we understand their role as outlined above to be right in there creating the conditions for communities to coalesce around partisan ways of knowing. This brings us back to one of the problems with my *praxis* I hinted at earlier on; my understanding of community and the reality of the community I found myself creating.

The problem with community

The idea of community appears most prominently in my discussion of community resilience in my literature review. However, my focus within that discussion is primarily on the idea of resilience as a floating signifier and its need for grounding through additional theoretical concepts, e.g. it being transformative and of the community. I started out on my fieldwork with a normative conception of community, drawing from John Macmurray (1950) via one of my participants, Gordon, of life in common as a necessary condition for human life; in short, community is a given that at most needs to be uncovered. I didn't actively think about this in relation to my group of participants specifically because of my approach to *praxis*, drawing on Illich's (2002b) notion of "conspiracy", that the best way forward to create a *convivial library* was to work with those with who I already had some association with and who I might find some agreement as a prelude to finding a wider group in

which to participate. The further I got into my thesis, the more I began to question the assumptions in my application of this notion of community and this approach to organising, or at least its capacity to be put to use in *praxis* towards a *convivial library*. The sharing of a common life is a necessary condition for human life, and it is what allows the emergence of society through the pursuit of common purposes if we accept Macmurray's starting point. What I've attempted here is the pursuit of a common purpose, assuming the existence of a community to which I might take some ideas. If as Macmurray (1950, p. 56) says that 'we become persons in community, in virtue of our relations to others' can I not also say that the value of those persons is not necessarily equal? Relations aren't just there. We relate to one another through the *tools* we use, the hegemony of industrial *tools* means that a certain type of relation predominates (Illich, 1973). Perhaps then instead of a common life we should talk about common *lives*, plural, that overlap in the widest sense that we all inhabit the earth, but whose experiences of this "common life" vary wildly according to where we find ourselves in relation to the various social relations we encounter and the categories we find ourselves in as a result.

Could it be that if such categories are imposed through *tools* that the widest purpose of a *convivial library* must be to create the grounds on which common life might come together? This draws on the concept of *commoning* which I explored in my literature review, yet which didn't appear to find resonance within my practice. As the act of building a community around holding things in common, this idea can be seen as a way of remaking social relations through creating a community. There's a clear need here for someone, the *convivial library* worker seems an obvious fit, to be doing this organising, to have a broad conception of the formation of these pluralistic communities and how they might relate to one another. We need to be cautious however. Young (1986, p. 2) argues persuasively against community as 'the normative ideal of political emancipation'. This is certainly the way it seems to be being used by Macmurray, and the way I had used it in earlier drafts and my

notebook. As such, community is held up an idealistic fusion of differences in opposition to the idealistic atomisation of individualism. Such idealism, in both expressions, masks the attempt to erase diversity and the ‘neat distinction between individualism and community thus generates a dialectic in which each is a condition for the other’ (Young, 1986, p. 8). Illich’s collective autonomy and pluralistic vision of *conviviality* seems to insist on a celebration of diversity, although we have to wonder about how modern progressive understandings of this relate to the subsistence societies he champions¹¹.

The problem with friendship

Moving from the collective to the individual, for Illich friendship represents the normative category by which a *convivial* society is realised (Krüger, 2019, pp. 245–247). This dictated my approach to participants. It was led by my *praxis*, tied tightly to the idea of affinity group organising with which I am familiar and which, to me, seemed to fit with the analysis Illich (2002b) had of working together in “conspiracy”. So while it was never my intention to be representative or any of the other usual considerations around who we might ask to join our research, I can’t ignore the fact that the key participants who I have discussed are all similar to me in many ways; male, white and with a university education. The implications for this are a direct challenge to the method of organising I undertook in pursuing the goal of a *convivial library* and the potential role of the library worker within that institution, and represent perhaps the biggest challenge to my own view of myself, as someone who thought he understood issues relating to domination and liberation, and my actions, which demonstrated that I clearly didn’t, across this period.

¹¹ One interesting example can be found in the Zapatista communities and what Callahan (2019, p. 379) refers to as their “civic pedagogy”, the application of which beyond Zapatista territory requires a ‘space that treats knowledge practices as essential to the construction of alternative social relations’.

hooks (2003, p. 36) states that “[t]o build community requires vigilant awareness of the work we must continually do to undermine all the socialization that leads us to behave in ways that perpetuate domination”. A model of building a community based on already existing friendships, expanding to those with similar ideas, doesn’t always do this work. That initial affinity might be useful for personal motivation, as sense of solidarity and mutual recognition that I still feel is a precondition for being able to engage in any form of organising, but unless it quickly makes the leap out of that space of comfort, then it seems destined to remain there. It doesn’t always scale up. Perhaps that is the point in Illich’s view, but I find that, given the depth of the crisis, this idealism is insufficient. It isn’t enough for these discussions and actions, limited as they are, to be confined to a small group of friends whose experiences are similar. This was a model I’d worked to in the past, with Library Workers For A Brighter Future, as I mentioned in the introduction. Yet, in that case, despite doing some positive things, the “group” (in reality just two of us) also never quite succeeded in pushing out of that space. The transition at the end of the narrative towards working with the group based around the Sheffield Solidarity Centre marked what I had hoped was a step in that direction.

Young (1986, p. 11) articulates what is a central problem with regard to this ideal of community as friendship: ‘The notion that each person can understand the other as he or she understands himself or herself, moreover, that persons can know other subjects in their concrete needs and desires, presupposes that a subject can know himself or herself and express that knowledge accurately and unambiguously.’ The assumptive homogenisation necessary under the name of community is founded in a certainty that simply doesn’t exist when we look more closely. We’re back in the realm of tacit knowledge here. The problem of community is linked to our problem of ways of knowing.

The process I'm going through here is an attempt to remedy this problem, through reflective *praxis*, but it can only ever be partial.

With that in mind, might there be a looser, less totalising model of community that we can look to as the collective subject of resilience and *conviviality*? Thinking again of Haraway's (1988) partial situated knowledges and our other ways of knowing, we might think in terms of a 'collective subject' that is 'not static, one-dimensional, nor homogenous, but rather a composition of diverse subjects that respond to the challenges at hand without being over determined by any overarching, disciplining discourse' (Callahan, 2012, p. 12). This could be the collective subject of *convivial* ways of knowing; the "hard" transformation of material life by the "soft" processes of knowledge formation via the act of *commoning*/cultivating the *vernacular*. Such a process brings to mind once more Moore's (2015, pp. 36–37) definition of agency as 'an emergent property of definite configurations of human activity with the rest of life'. It is this configuration that the *convivial library* seeks to (re-)produce, which library workers such as myself have to understand their actions in relation to, and adjust how we act accordingly, if we are to challenge the hegemonic order.

Everyday limits

At the interpersonal scale at which my data collection was happening we have to factor in alienation, 'a situation in which persons do not have [full] control either over their actions, the conditions of their action, or the consequences of their action, due to the intervention of other agents' (Young, 1986, pp. 16–17). Again, I'm attempting to understand the interplay between structural factors and my own agency during the period of data collection. I've accounted for the "failure" of the data librarian project in terms of its tacit understanding of community as not being sufficient for the purpose we were working towards. I've also attempted to outline the ways in which data is

entangled within the *praxis* of capital, of industrial ways of knowing and *Cheap Information*, and how that structures the failure of attempts to move towards *conviviality*. Now we're in the wider realm of the everyday, of the intersection of these factors with my own life and the way I chose to act which ultimately limited my engagement with the widest possible array of ways of knowing. This is despite my own supposed awareness during the period of data collection of the structural factors that can prevent particular options for organising and research appearing before me. While there is an 'interconnectedness of all things as relations', in pursuing my goal of understanding how to move towards the *praxis* of creating a *convivial library* I also need to acknowledge failure as failure and not attempt to explain everything away with appeals to structural limitations (Bales, 2015, p. 85).

The autoethnographic method, in centring the researcher, should ultimately be an attempt to recognise and foreground my own agency. My own methodology's engagement with critical thinking (the critical ethnographic aspect of my methodology), specifically Illich and Moore, is an attempt to analytically engage with this experience in such a way as to theorise potential ways past the obstacles encountered. Through this understanding my analysis can hopefully remain grounded in some sense of the desire for community. I admire the attempt to find a unifying principle outside the State in Macmurry's work, but, with the experience of this thesis, have to agree with Young (1986, p. 19) that it constitutes a negation of the given and we need to start any project 'as making something good from many elements of the given'. What we might accept as the given, or at least that which we might make good with, must vary. My own acceptance of Sheffield associate libraries, or at least the process that as creating them, as given did not pay off. I moved away from that, but time was lost. Of course the idea of data raises its head again here. Again I moved away from that, though it is only with the benefit of hindsight and space to reflect that I can come to some of the conclusions I come to here. More broadly my own limitations in how I engaged with other ways of knowing, embodied in many ways in the professional stance taken in proposals such as that for the

community data librarian and rejection of working with other participants, have to be seen as a major factor in these limited moves towards realising a *convivial library*.

Ecotones

I think it is worth revisiting the idea of situated knowledges that cropped up briefly earlier. This way of understanding knowledge seeks to reground the idea of “rational knowledge” away from ‘nostalgia for the presence of the one true Word’ to one ‘ruled by partial sight and limited voice - not partiality for its own sake but, rather, for the sake of the connections and unexpected openings situated knowledges make possible’ (Haraway, 1988, p. 590). This resonates strongly with Illich’s (1981, pp. 77–78) call for a ‘science *by* people’ as opposed to a ‘science *for* people’, a term he adopted to refer to research occurring outside of conventional R&D facilities, i.e. the universities, that generally had an ecological focus, but was done by people to directly impact on their lives, the aim being to ‘unplug its practitioner from the market’. The production of science by citizens does not guarantee that the value produced by such knowledge practices remains with the citizens (Bates et al., 2016). Of course examples do exist where forms of *commons* based governance have been enforced which prevent the commodification of data (M. J. Madison, 2014). Attempting to look beyond this, *convivial* knowledge practices recognise, what Callahan (2012, p. 18) refers to as an “ecology of knowledges”, and contest the hegemonic position of *Cheap Information*. This ecological turn of phrase has resonance both with the overarching subject matter I’m concerned with, the climate crisis, and also allows us to take one final step towards a metaphor that may be of use in understanding how these potentially opposed ways of knowing might interact.

As Callahan (2012) notes ‘dialogues are not possible until there is a recognition of an “ecology of knowledges,” or the epistemological diversity that parallels cultural diversity’. If the *convivial library*

is a set of practices that allows the cultivation of the *commons/vernacular* then it needs a space, metaphorical and literal, in which this dialogue might happen. Thinking back to chapter one, “Conviviality, crises, community resilience and the commons”, we can see how this understanding of knowledges as plural might work alongside an expanded, Illich inspired idea of a knowledge commons. Following the motif of ecological metaphors, and on the prompting of one of my participants, I’d like to use Haraway’s (2007) concept of the ecotone, those edge areas in ecology where different habitats come in to contact and intermix. This bears some similarity to the analytical concept of libraries as boundary objects, ‘frameworks for organization and understanding situated between groups of practitioners that do not necessarily adhere to the same norms and values, nor work in the same way’ (Powell, 2015, p. 381). The difference can be found in the use here of ecotone as a normative category towards which the library should aspire, as opposed to an analytical category that ‘develops organically’ with which the library might be understood in its current condition, and which attempts to capture the complexity of such a situation where this meeting of different ways of knowing might be purposeful and political (Powell, 2015, p. 380). The purpose of this space would then be to explore the tensions produced when ways of knowing meet; ‘In ecotones things are happening that can’t happen in the comfort zone of any of the species in question’ (Haraway & Reti, 2007, pp. 31–32). We can find an example of what this might look like in Anderson’s (2005) depiction of indigenous knowledge centres. Here the desire for the library to record and reproduce material in a particular manner, its industrial knowledge practices, runs up against the knowledge practices of the indigenous community. In response to this the library had to develop ‘a particular strategy, quite specific to the community’ (J. Anderson, 2005, p. 91). The material in question was that produced by the meeting of these two ways of knowing; essentially records from research on these communities and not the knowledge of the indigenous group themselves as their system ‘manages that fine and there is no need to mess around with those materials’ (J. Anderson, 2005, p. 91). Leaving to one side the unquestioned use of “an indigenous community” as a homogenised group, and while we can’t directly transpose the idea of indigeneity

to the situation in the UK, we can certainly imagine collective subjects, i.e. the working class in all its diversity, which might constitute in this space outside the industrial, all of those categories we find ourselves bundled within as cheap inputs to the process of capital.

It is only as I finish writing this chapter that the thought really hits me that this is probably already happening somewhere. That what I've struggled to understand here is a known reality for many. That I haven't seen it because it is hidden from me for precisely the reasons I've explored. That I haven't looked in the right places because I did not know exactly how to look or how to listen. And so here is the central lesson for my own *praxis*: to take this knowledge and to look for where there is evidence of these other ways of knowing, where they come into contact with the library, how they are dealt with when they do. The question is what to do when and if I do encounter these places. How I might work, with others, towards creating the space in which these other ways of knowing might be able to express themselves fully alongside hegemonic ways of knowing. Some have extended this metaphor of ecotone to informational spaces, specifically modern academia where the precarious and multiple roles and spaces in which researchers are often required to work are rapidly becoming the norm (Hubbell & Ryan, 2016). Understood in the light of the legacy of colonialism, ecotones are spaces for 'forging dialogic exchange, rather than monologic flows of information, [which] remains the core challenge for post-colonial societies of the Anthropocene' (Hubbell & Ryan, 2016, p. 10).

Concluding thoughts

Looking back at my first research question, "What is a *convivial library*?", I can say that a *convivial library* would be a place which cultivates differing knowledge practices that will be in productive

tension with one another. That tension is mediated by the ecotonal quality of the democratic structural norms embodied in the daily practices of "libraring". It is at the same time a *convivial tool* for the construction of use-values through the interplay of these complementing and contrasting knowledge forms. In contrast to this ideal, the modern library is, predominantly, an industrial *tool* because of the form knowledge practices take, *Cheap Information*, and its need to respond to that form. This fact doesn't reduce its importance as a safeguard against social inequality. While a *convivial* society will have a balance of both industrial and *convivial tools* this thought refocuses the discussion around what might be possible within the confines of a library as it is, and what structural changes might have to occur to move towards a *convivial* society, to enact *convivial* transformation.

In responding to the second research question, "How does this understanding of a *convivial library* emerge from *praxis*?", we can see how the methodology used in this thesis, a novel combination of autoethnography with dialectical coding, has helped draw out this understanding of the *convivial library* from my everyday practice and theoretical reflections, demonstrating the methods utility for other researchers interested in this sort of work. It has helped develop my understanding of my own, and potentially other library workers, role in this wider process of *convivial* transformation. The role of the librarian, or we might say library worker, in a *convivial library* is to have an overview of diverse knowledge practices and maintain an open space in which the collective subjects that are reproduced through "libraring" can expand. The implications for how the library is organised are plentiful, but to reiterate a point from earlier, the recognition of a plurality of ways of knowing is not to reject the hegemonic industrial system out of hand. What is perhaps called into question is the professionalisation of library work. The collective subjects reproduced through "libraring" should, ultimately, not be separate from library work and those who do it. But we have to get from here to there. Libraries would retain part of what we would recognise but in addition would have aspect to them that will differ across society according to the collective subjects which engage with the

process of producing these spaces and practices; a garden, a workshop, a kitchen, etc. In this ideal we return to some of the ideas discussed in previous chapters around a library of things and demonstrate how this dialectical interplay of theory and practice continues, generating new ideas and possibilities and gives us concrete examples of what a *convivial library* might be.

The final question I set myself was "How might a *convivial library* be realised in our communities?". The uncovering of what a *convivial library* might be, through the methodology outlined, has pointed to a development in my own thinking on organising for change on the scale required. That the emergence of a *convivial library* would be part of a wider transformation of our communities was always a factor in my thinking. What has shifted is the focus of where that change must come from, the mechanisms that need to be engaged if we are to see such changes before the climate crisis goes beyond our capacity to mitigate its worst effects. The process of *praxis*, understood through the unique methodology outlined above, has deepened my understanding of the structural factors that sit on and beyond the edges of my own experience. The capacity for the necessary change to happen everywhere in a just and equitable manner points to the need for some centralised system of redistribution, for this to be part of a wider project focussed on social and climate justice. The work of Moore, alongside Illich, has helped provide a theoretical starting point for this expanded view. I have developed this into the concept of *Cheap Information*, a new contribution to understanding the current state of libraries and information and data as it exists under capitalism. While projects such as the Sheffield Solidarity Centre and other, more fully realised, social centres might provide a model of sorts, they will remain exclusive due to all the factors previously discussed. It transpires that, in order to foster the kind of plurality imagined by Illich, there may be some role for the State after all. Practically, at this scale, we might look for inspiration towards policy proposals emerging from new, left-wing think-tanks such as Common Wealth that promote a public-commons partnership when they state:

'We must create the conditions from which commoners can decide what they value most, that is to say, what they really consider wealth to consist of. Those involved are the ones who can best decide on their common values through which they wish to organise their commons and their lives. At long last people will be able to really ask: what sort of lives do we want to live?' (Milburn & Russell, 2019, p. 19)

Cultivating hope

‘Nobody has ever lived without daydreams, but it is a question of knowing them deeper and deeper and in this way keeping them trained unerringly, usefully, on what is right. Let the daydreams grow even fuller, since this means they are enriching themselves around the sober glance; not in the sense of clogging, but of becoming clear. Not in the sense of merely contemplative reason which takes things as they are and as they stand, but of participating reason which takes them as they go, and therefore also as they could go better. Then let the daydreams grow really fuller, that is, clearer, less random, more familiar, more clearly understood and more mediated with the course of things. So that the wheat which is trying to ripen can be encouraged to grow and be harvested.’

(Bloch, 1995, pp. 3–4)

There’s a library in Margaret Killjoy’s (2014) utopian novella, *A Country of Ghosts*, that represents a certain ideal that I held close throughout the process of completing this thesis. The library is situated in the anarchist polity of Hron, in a homestead occupied by a peripheral character in the story. It is not a public library in the conventional sense, nor is it exactly a private collection, although it appears as one to those not familiar with the customs of this imagined world. In some ways it echoes Benjamin’s (1986) paean to the private library, wherein he elucidates on the joys of the book collection whilst acknowledging, as a good Marxist, it’s political inferiority to the public library. Killjoy attempts to find the ground beyond the public and the private by envisioning a society in which the distinction no longer exists, or at least is not the binary across which institutions, and therefore relations, are understood. In doing so she gets closer to a truth I’m interested in here, at least as I have come to understand it, than Benjamin. The library she imagines, essentially a personal

collection of books open to all who want to come and study there, is *convivial* because of the society, an anarchist one where relationships based on mutual aid predominate, of which it is a part. The library's somewhat old-fashioned style and form is mitigated by the fact that the function of "librarying" I identify as central to a *convivial library*, the creation of the capacity for the democratic co-determination of the use-values of *tools*, is spread throughout the society imagined in the book.

Utopian visions such as this are, I believe, vital to inspiring and constructing new ways of understanding and living in the world. They are necessary, in fact, for challenging hegemonic, normative positions that I have encountered both externally and, vitally, within my own ways of thinking and acting. They are not, however, sufficient for their own, even partial, realisation. It is easier to conceive of a utopia than it is to imagine the transition from here to something close to there. A key strand of the anarchist thought in which I felt most comfortable for a long period holds that we can and should build these structures, and so create these relations, here and now, and in doing so, create the conditions for a revolution, by building 'the structure of the new society within the shell of the old' (Industrial Workers of the World, 1905). *Convivial* transformation certainly requires a revolution in the system of needs, but that's very different from an extension of what is currently held to constitute a need, let alone the meeting of needs necessary for bare survival here and now. Each of these points are important and interrelated, yet the urgency with which we might address each specifically will be determined by the material conditions with which we are presented at a given moment in history. Such an understanding is felt individually but must be understood collectively if it is to provide the impetus for *convivial* transformation.

As I step out the door to head off on the morning school run I check to make sure the air quality meter is attached firmly to the bag. We're taking part in a trial, to see what the pollution is like on our walk to school and to what extent the knowledge enabled through this device changes our behaviour. I don't own a smartphone, so, later that day, I have to check my partner's phone to see the results. It makes for depressing reading. Our walk to school is a highly polluted walk. This isn't a surprise, queues of cars, engines running, line our route. It simply puts numbers, which I struggle to make immediate sense of, to an already acknowledged fact of living in a busy city where nearly everyone seems to own and use a car for nearly every trip they take. It doesn't affect our behaviour at individual level; we still have to get to school, we still don't own a car, so we still have to walk through clouds of pollution. It can, of course, be a spur to collective action. The council is talking of closing roads outside schools in efforts to address exactly this sort of problem, the school has been increasingly proactive in asking parents to turn their engines off and not park on the double yellow lines outside of the gates. We discuss the results from our experiment with other parents and local residents, wonder about what we could do to tackle this problem. Yet this doesn't get at the underlying reason people feel compelled to use cars, the wider societal framework in which we have to operate. The capacity to unplug from that, for example by choosing to not have a smartphone or a car, is one based on certain privileges that accumulate through being on a particular side of so many of the binaries across which capital creates value.

One thing that mediates our ability to use this data, that renders it industrial as opposed to *convivial*, is the fact that the specific forms the *tools* we need to use it take are commodities, like the monitor hanging from my bag on the walk to school. And they're not cheap. We have our one on loan but some people we know bought one and are using it to decide where to buy a house. There's a lot going on in that last sentence, but the chain of relations rendered as individualised commodity purchases, and the fact that this option clearly isn't available to everyone, stands out clearly. The

ability to engage or utilise data in this way is not evenly distributed. This isn't finger wagging at those who can and do use these *tools* to improve their lives, it's an attempt to open up a space where we can think about how we might use these *tools* differently, or if we want to use them at all. Part of the focus of this thesis has been on whether this is an inherent part of the form (i.e. data as *Cheap Information*) that this way of knowing takes; the extent to which it is an industrial *tool* rather than a *convivial* one. Coming to the conclusion that it is indeed industrial doesn't preclude its use in a *convivial* society, it simply flags it as a thing on which we must set limits. This means politicising it, not just in the sense of making its use subordinate to a democratic, open process, but also recognising that this has to include its production and within that the question of whether it should be produced at all.

Right now we live in the capitalocene, the era of *Cheap Information*. This most evident in increasing levels of data saturation within our daily lives; the quantification of our relation to our environment. This process of datafication, I contend, is "knowledge" being pulled across an imagined frontier between Nature and Society. This frontier emerges as necessary to the continuing of the social relation we recognise as capital through enabling spatial fixes to the problem of overaccumulation (Moore, 2015, pp. 226–227). This form of "knowledge" now acts as a use-value to "map", "find" and "own" other cheap things (food, work, energy, etc.) whilst simultaneously being a resource which an itself be subject to commodification. Data, as a result of its form, cannot challenge the assumptions of the social relation, capital, which is the core of Illich's industrial. This doesn't mean it cannot highlight injustices and be used to challenge the logic of capital on its own terms. However, it can allow for and encourage, to the extent that they are easier to enact, solutions to the problem it now frames which are unjust and would work against any sense of *conviviality*. By conceptualising the knowledge practices we find in data and information process as *Cheap Information* I am providing a

new analytical concept with which to pursue the creation of a *convivial library*, as well as the wider concerns associated with that task, prioritising the issue of climate justice.

It's the morning of the 2019 UK election and I'm stood in the rain trying to prevent the Labour party leaflets I'm holding from disintegrating. As I wait for my canvassing partner, a fellow parent from my kid's school, I wonder about what led me to this point. If six years ago, when I began work on this thesis, someone had told me I would be actively campaigning for the Labour party, I would have laughed in their face. I'm not alone. I've lost count of the number of my apparently anarchist friends, most of whom found their politicisation in opposing the Labour government of the late 90's and early 00's, who've thrown everything at this election. This turn towards electoral politics on the left is, I believe, part of the reason projects like the Sheffield Solidarity Centre faded from sight. On the one hand it's a response to material conditions; the possibility of a left-ish government, and the space that it might create for *convivial* projects, feels closer now than at any point in my life time. At the same time there has to be a willingness to accept that promise in good faith; for all the years of rejecting the possibility of change through currently existing institutions, those of us who have been committed to an anarchist politics have had to rethink some deeply held convictions. This thesis has come to represent that process for me. It is an exploration of the entanglement of the personal and the political, the co-determinants of how we act in these fields, and an attempt to make that relevant to others.

The extent of what it is possible to say from an individual's experience of the world is determined by the extent to which that individual attempts a process of critical reflection on that experience.

Through the methods used I have developed my own understanding of a *convivial library*. Ultimately this is a process of decentring that sits in tension with the centring of the researcher that occurs through autoethnography. This is achieved through theory, through the reflective process of *praxis* which develops theoretical positions to be tried and tested in further iterations of the very same process. Critical autoethnography centres the researcher to acknowledge that all generalisations emerge from that point through their relation to the world. Dialectics provides a structure to the process of understanding the concepts that emerge from this process and their relation to one another. What all this is trying to uncover is the often hidden process by which normative assumptions are buried under claims to objectivity. In doing so it recognises that there are a multitude of centres, each engaged in this process of being and doing and reflecting to the degree possible according to the material limits of their lives. What I conclude, in terms of theory that might be useful to others, can only be useful to the extent that others have the capacity to engage with it. That is not an individual capacity as such, but a further reflection of this tension between the individual and the collective; the material conditions for the capacity to reflect on these points have to be brought into being for any kind of action taking place.

‘They all want the impossible, i.e. the conditions of bourgeois existence without the necessary consequences of those conditions. They all fail to understand that the bourgeois form of production is an historical and transitory form, just as was the feudal form. This mistake is due to the fact that, to them, bourgeois man is the only possible basis for any society, and that they cannot envisage a state of society in which man will have ceased to be bourgeois.’ (Marx, 1975)

I'm eleven years old and starting secondary school. I passed a test called the 11 plus, the only boy from my primary school to do so. This means I get to go to a grammar school, a form of state selective schooling at this point in time, the early nineties, still existent in some parts of the UK. My parents are overjoyed. I, like most eleven year olds, am somewhat more sceptical. A hangover from a previous era in many ways, I see teachers wearing gowns, hear accents posher than mine and I try to adapt. On one of my earliest bus journey's home I stand to get off, the first to do so from the crowd of maroon blazered boys inhabiting the top-deck, and one of my new schoolmates' comments, in a plummy accent:

"Ah, you live on the wrong side of the tracks!"

And in a sense he's right. Everyone else on that bus lives literally the other side of the railway line. Houses at least twice the size of where I grew up. Let's just say I didn't invite people home often.

I'd never really started putting all this together before, not until undertaking this thesis. I assumed my upbringing was normal. That it was middle class to have your electricity and gas on the key, for your parents to borrow money from the meagre savings your Nan left you, for the house to be crowded, shared bedrooms and so on. And of course it is normal, it just wasn't the norm for so many of the people I was now interacting with. To be clear, this wasn't poverty, not in any sense that we might recognise it. We had food, we had clothes, we had a house, we had savings, however meagre. But at the same time there was this constant tension, money was always a worry, and it was a worry because there were certain things that we had to have to be who we professed to be. This was the tail end of the Thatcherite dream; a meritocratic, classless society. As much as I later rejected this idea, I hadn't fully appreciated how deeply it had embedded itself in my own ways of seeing the world.

This might seem strange for someone who professes a long-term affiliation to radical politics, but I'd really never considered the roots of my strongly held beliefs. If anything I felt embarrassed by who I was; by my perceived class position, a result of the social mobility that offered me, the son of working class parents who both had left school by 16 etc., a quality of life not available to them, by the relative ease with which I seemed to be able to secure my education and my employment. In reflecting deeply on my own position in relation to the kind of claims I've been making, in trying to understand my *praxis* and modify it, I've enabled myself to uncover some of the forces that pushed me towards the politics of rebellion and revolution. The anarchism I felt most drawn to was often that which had an individualistic streak to it, found in the work of groups such as crimethinc. (2001), that took that initial feeling of dislocation I experienced as a child and as well as grounding it in a wider critique that sought out what I had in common with others, simultaneously nurtured it as an iconoclastic quality to keep others at a distance; a subcultural inflection to politics, rejecting the efficacy or necessity of mass movements, if not explicitly then implicitly through tactical choices. Over this last decade or so, but especially in the last 6 to 7 years of working on this thesis, what I had felt as a tension, between who I was and what I believed, has somehow melted into a new understanding that these things were never in really conflict with one another. Put another way, I've come to the conclusion that the conflict I felt was a personal expression of the wider political and social tensions that permeate our society. That in affirming, as Weiss (2019, p. 51) says, 'we are not, and have never been, middle class', that "middle class" is really an ideological position, I'm not trying to carve out some subaltern position to justify my guilt or to deny the privileged position I hold in relation to so many others, but that I'm finally reaching an understanding that so much of what I thought I knew, I didn't. This is what theory can do. The personal is the political.

The relations of class and identity, our understanding of where we sit in relation to them and how that frames our capacity to act in the world, permeates the LIS through the discourse of professionalism. Illich (1978, 1987) picks apart this ideology and the way in which it constructs needs according to its own preconceived worldview. The professional, “middle class” person is a worker whose skills are defined by their relative scarcity (Carlsson, 2008, p. 36). A scarcity (re)produced by and through *Cheap Information*; by the creation of particular forms of knowledge which can only be addressed through the professional’s skills. Despite my own scepticism I carried the seed of this ideology into the attempt to start a project outlined in my findings. Working at that thread has untangled a larger knot for me, or at least started that process. This is something that has coalesced late in the day as far as the analysis is concerned and, as such, perhaps represents a field of further study. Attempting to push this back out of the realm of the personal, it would be interesting to explore the intersection of professional identity within LIS with particular solutions to problems, that is to say use of particular *tools*. This could be achieved through the application of the methodology set out, but expanded to include multiple participants who have a stake in the question of professionalism within library work.

This working through of tensions such as this in a productive way is at the heart of my *praxis* as it moves forward. It informed my methodological approach, building on the work in critical autoethnography to formulate a system, using dialectical pairs, whereby it can be utilised in the coding process of any ethnographic study (Guyotte & Sochacka, 2016). A novel extension of thematic coding, this is really an application of a particular epistemological position, one of monism that recognises the historically contingent nature of the ontological facts we have to negotiate, to a familiar method. The combination of autoethnography with this dialectical coding method represents this thesis’s original contribution in terms of methodology. As such it hopefully provides a useful tool for those who wish to further explore the possibilities mapped out by this thesis. The

novelty of the methodology has to be hedged by the awareness of its limitations and its ties to a particular type of project with a particular type of politics. I accept that as such there are those who will simply see no value in what I have produced, and that the feeling may be mutual with regard to their work. Drawing lines like this, provoking confrontations, highlighting tensions is central to the kind of research that takes seriously the political problems at the heart of addressing the climate crisis.

Any work that continues from the line emerging here has to pick this thread up first and foremost. For people such as myself, who find themselves in a privileged position with regards to so many of the binaries that capital utilises, it is first an exercise in listening. Going to those places that seem as if they might hold the possibility of change and paying close attention to what people are saying and doing there. From my own experience I know there is also needs to be a strong element of reflection, not only to understand better the privileges that come with certain identities, but to uncover the facts of who I am in relation to these constructed identities. In addition to listening this requires a degree of silence on my part. Silence is, as Illich (1983) reminds us, a *commons*. Such silences are tactical and specific. Here I hope to enable a productive silence which might, in its own small way, allow other worlds to become possible (Kanngieser & Beuret, 2017). The question of silence, particularly when we step back and consider the library in this frame and its association in the popular imagination with this concept, is worthy of further exploration. There are other spaces and times where I need to speak, where my silence will represent a complicity in the continuing reproduction of the industrial. This will inevitably lead to failures. But failures are fine so long as we acknowledge them as such and listen to what they tell us. Research *is* a dialogue.

What then is a *convivial library*? It is a process which cultivates differing knowledge practices that will be in productive tension with one another and allows for the democratic choice of use-values within society. In this context the library should be understood in the extended sense of a process, as “libraying”, which encompasses not just the institution, those who work there and those who use it, but other acts of knowledge making within society as a whole. To the extent that it can be realised in our society as it exists now, it is a potential institution in a process of *convivial* transformation. Its realisation is part of that wider process of *convivial* transformation that will happen differently in different places according to the material conditions found there. *Conviviality* is precarious; ‘it needs continual negotiation, conflict and compromise, as well as an acceptance of the mutual dependence of all participants, non-human and human’ (Given, 2018, p. 71). I am not offering a blueprint, not in any conventional sense, but, through the theoretical concepts explored here and in highlighting how they relate to my life directly, a set of tools which might be of use to those also following this path.

The *convivial library* is an ecotone. Ecotones are spaces defined by tensions, they are meeting places. They are not necessarily *convivial* in that they are often weaponised by capital, e.g. the differential that is central to Moore’s (2015, 2017b) unpicking of the climate crisis, that of Nature vs. Society. Differences can become differentials, the borders across which *Cheap Information* flows, solidifying what was once a relation and mapping that which was previously unknown to the expanded circuit of capital accumulation. This process confronts us, as Marx (1981) pointed out, as ‘the rule of the object over the human, of dead labour over living, of the product over the producer, since in fact the commodities which become means of domination over the worker (but purely as means of the rule of capital itself) are mere results of the production process’. This is the industrial and its shadow. The capitalocene ‘is the name for the making-productive of all these ecotones, and the mode of management that endeavours to preserve them as productive differentials’ (Clover &

Spahr, 2016). The purpose of the *convivial library* is to block and reverse this “making productive” of difference. At the same time it also acts as a rubric, a normative value against which knowledges might be held up to in this process of democratic decision making; this decision ‘may be based on the principle of autonomy, but does it meet the values of interconnectedness, responsibility, respect of the rest of nature, etc.?’ (Robbins & Kothari, 2018). Within this there is a possibility for library workers to redefine their purpose, to shake off the ideology of professionalism and pursue a role wholly given over to building the new society in which institutions such as the *convivial library* will emerge.

I started this thesis talking about the emotions and actions that define me, that push me into doing this type of research. Of anxiety and my reactions to that. Following through on my methodology, and the epistemological and ontological considerations that form its foundation, I want to end with a little bit of what sits in tension with this. Hope. The hope I find in books, whether it be works of fiction such as Killjoy’s (2014) or works of theory such as Illich (1973) and Moore (2015), and the hope I find through others, such as the friends and comrades both visible and not in this thesis, finds its expression in my attempts, however flawed, to act despite that underlying anxiety. What I attempted here, across the course of the two years described in previous chapters, failed, at least in the sense that a *convivial library* didn’t emerge from the process. But was that ever a realistic expectation? Perhaps not given all the limitations in my approach to the problem that I have uncovered. My understanding of what *conviviality* is, what a *convivial library* might look like and the ways in which we might go about achieving that goal have shifted. Through *praxis*, that interplay of theory and action, I have developed new theoretical insights and methods of applying those insights for my own future action and, hopefully, those of others. I have let my ‘daydreams grow really fuller,

that is, clearer, less random, more familiar, more clearly understood and more mediated with the course of things' (Bloch, 1995, p. 4). The capacity to project into the future, to act despite failure, derives its engine from hope. Without hope, we're finished. So yes, it may be that it is 'easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism' and that, in attempting to do so, we will often fail (Fisher, 2009, p. 1). That shouldn't stop us from trying.

Appendix 1: Code Book

deductive codes / **inductive codes**

praxis: action / theory (OR process / content)						
library / librarian	convivial / industrial	non-trans. comm. res. / trans. comm. res.	community / society	doing / thinking	nature / Cheap Nature	dystopia / utopia
ecotone / liminal	decolonial / colonial	catastrophe / hope	included / excluded	talking / acting	information / Cheap Information	catastrophe / hope
unprofessional or amateur(?) / professional	vernacular / capital	“local” knowledge / “expert” knowledge	structure / structurelessness		“local” knowledge / “expert” knowledge	vernacular / capital
	use value / exchange value	disaster / crisis	freedom / equity		Anthropocene / capitalocene	convivial / industrial
	“local” knowledge / “expert” knowledge		ecotone / liminal		vernacular / capital	decolonial / colonial
	thou / it				use value / exchange value	
	needs / Needs				relative surplus value / ???	
profession / craft	activist / researcher	commodity / commons	phd / everyday	freedom / agency	needs / wants	humiliation / dignity

work / volunteerism	abundance / scarcity	commons as things / commons as process	failure / success	material / immaterial	planned / spontaneous	debt / jubilee
work / no work	friendship / citizenship	reciprocity / pooling	researcher / citizen	structure / agency	humiliation / dignity	play / work
space / practice	thou / it OR other / self?	debt / jubilee	citizen / person	space / frameworks	vernacular / fungible	ecotone / liminal
work / labour	humiliation / dignity	unconditional / universal	dialogue / monologue	spatial / temporal	relational / discreet	pragmatic / utopian
Public sector / voluntary sector	vernacular / fungible	expert opinion / discussion	narrative / dialogue	planned / spontaneous	measurement / understanding	
volunteer / professional	technology / tool	change / stasis	interview / dialogue	possessing / doing	values / functions	
work / play	convivial / industrial	expectations / reality	expert opinion / discussion	process / goal	other / self	
material / immaterial	technology / politics	pragmatic / utopian	leader / equal	accident / intention	change / stasis	
abundance / austerity	technology / behaviour	safety / danger	community / centralisation	beginning / joining	researcher / citizen	
pragmatic / idealistic	commodity / commons	usability / openness	inside / outside (institutions)	intuition / evidence	citizen / person	
change / stasis	commons as things / commons as behaviour	micro / macro	institutions / processes	pragmatic / utopian	unconditional / universal	

expectations / reality	planned / spontaneous	complexity / simplicity	community / library	expectations / reality	profession / craft	
failure / success	change / stasis	total / partial	commons / nation-state-market	attention / boredom	work / volunteerism	
pragmatism / utopianism	pragmatic / idealistic	“good” information / “bad” information	community / society	micro / macro	work / no work	
attention / boredom	safety / danger	data as neutral / data as biased	individual / community	complexity / simplicity	space / practice	
usability / openness	usability / openness	atomisation of information / accessibility of information	community / State	phd / everyday	work / labour	
micro / macro	micro / macro	open data / closed data	margins / centres		Public sector / voluntary sector	
“good” information / “bad” information	complexity / simplicity	private data / communal data	ecotone / liminal		volunteer / professional	
data as neutral / data as biased	total / partial	knowledge as play / knowledge as work	commoning / enclosing		work / play	
atomisation of information / accessibility of information	“good” information / “bad” information	embedded data / global data	vernacular / rootlessness		material / immaterial	
open data / closed data	data as neutral / data as biased	in libraries / outside libraries	local / worldwide		epistemology / ontology	

private data / communal data	atomisation of information / accessibility of information		business / community		expectations / reality	
knowledge as play / knowledge as work	open data / closed data		safety / danger		completeness / incompleteness	
embedded data / global data	private data / communal data		usability / openness		pragmatic / utopian	
libraries as “anti-capitalist” / libraries as “capitalist”	knowledge as play / knowledge as work		micro / macro		safety / danger	
libraries as book warehouse / libraries as community hub	embedded data / global data		community data librarian / privatised data		usability / openness	
community data librarian / privatised data	expert opinion / discussion		atomisation of information / accessibility of information		micro / macro	
in libraries / outside libraries			open data / closed data		complexity / simplicity	
ecotone / liminal			private data / communal data		total / partial	

			community data librarian / privatised data		“good” information / “bad” information	
			embedded data / global data		data as neutral / data as biased	
					atomisation of information / accessibility of information	
					open data / closed data	
					private data / communal data	
					knowledge as play / knowledge as work	
					embedded data / global data	
					in libraries / outside libraries	
					commodity / commons	
					commons as things / commons as process	
					reciprocity / pooling	

Appendix 2: Sheffield Solidarity Centre Library Working Paper

This document aims to make recommendations which can address the aims contained within the SSC business plan to provide a “resources library services on community activities and activism, relevant events and support available to grassroots community action” in keeping with the core values of the project: “solidarity; self-help; mutual aid; social justice and community resilience.”

Governance

The structure and working practice of the library needs to reflect the sense of solidarity and mutual aid which it is aiming to promote.

The governance of the library should be handled by a separate working group, which will work according to rules governing the structure of the SSC.

A recommended model for the wider governance of SSC is a system that aims to provide decision making by consent in line with deep democratic principles. In essence it separates:

- policy, in which all affected by the decision being made partake in the discussion, aiming towards a decision based on consent, from
- operation, which is dealt with according to logistical capacity and is policy-led.

Following this, within the working group the ideal will be to maintain a flat structure, with work to be done allocated according to the library’s target community’s need and individual volunteer’s abilities. Accordingly:

- individual volunteers will be identified to lead on particular projects and will have a delegated authority from the wider working group
- the group will also authorise delegates as necessary to coordinate with the wider governance structure of the SSC

Accessibility

All policy decisions made with regard to the operation of the library need to be made with consideration given to accessibility. The development of an accessibility policy should mirror any wider policy across SSC, and be conducted by a diverse group of individuals who have a concern, and who the policy will affect, in the running the library space.

The adoption of a ‘safe space’ policy developed by those involved in the day-to-day running of the library space and the wider SSC space should also be considered.

Activities

Provision of knowledge/information/data – to provide knowledge/information/data is not a neutral act. Traditional models of library service, that emphasise the special capacity of librarians and a transactional approach to information, are not universally appropriate for an organisation that strives to encourage community resilience and mutual aid.

As such a model for information requests might be mutual enquiry, whereby the library worker engages with the information need in collaboration with the community member who raises it. This works both ways encouraging engagement with the issue in question on the part of the library worker and engagement with the necessary task of finding information on the part of the community member.

Such an approach is labour intensive and practically may pose problems for what will be a volunteer led service. As such it may be necessary to first gain a wider understanding of the target community's needs vs. the SSC's capacity to meet them in order to craft a workable model.

Creation of knowledge/information/data – it will be desirable to manage the creation of knowledge/information/data within the library and SSC as a whole in a manner that reflects the deeper democratic principles of the organisation. As resources are developed it will be necessary to create formal ways in which these can be held in common among the community that surrounds SSC and at the same time prevented from commercial exploitation.

The aim here is not to replicate the types of service found in public libraries, i.e. business support and intellectual property hubs, or in job centres, but to encourage alternative, that is to say mutual aid, models of subsistence for those engaging with the service. The library service must be something *new*, not only in what it does, but in how it does it - not an attempt to pick up services already delivered by local government or business.

Establishing this at the outset would also put the library in the position of being able to document the emergence of SSC and the types of service and information it provides.

Identifying a target community – the stated aim of the SSC is to create a “resources library services on community activities and activism, relevant events and support available to grassroots community action”. This raises the question of how, and by whom this service can be accessed. There is a tension between providing a service to grassroots organisations and those who might be in need of help from grassroots organisations.

There is a pragmatic element to this; it appears more manageable to organise an information service for the organisations/events, rather than those who might access help

from such organisations/attend such events. The danger here is that the library, and by extension SSC, becomes insular in its scope, reaching out those only already committed to grassroots activism.

Alternatively, the library acts a signposting service pointing people towards groups, campaigns and organisations. The question then is how do we reach out beyond those already involved in such attempts and what can we do that differs from already existing resources, e.g. alt-sheff.

This is not a tension that is necessarily resolvable, but it should inform the working model of the library as it is set up.

Visits to other 'radical' libraries – to examine best practice, scope of other services, etc. A potential source of funding for such visits has been identified.

Volunteer skills – the capacity to provide any service is dependent on a particular set of skills and an understanding of the core values amongst volunteers who staff the library. This being the case it is proposed that one of the early acts of the working group might be to collectively explore how such an approach can be trained or taught.

Outreach – an area of policy to be developed would be the manner in which any services available are made known to the target communities.

Training sessions for targeted communities – as part of the mutual enquiry service, it would be desirable to examine how volunteers within the library can target training sessions around resources and skills for specific campaigns/organisations.

Summary

This document, by necessity, only sketches the outline of any library service for the SSC. Decisions about its precise structure and function must be the result of a democratic process, as expected to be defined in the wider constitution of the SSC. As such the key points for discussion/action are:

- to define the governance structure of the SSC library service
- to recruit volunteers to staff the service
- to define the target communities of the service
- to define the scope of activities possible/desirable with those communities

Dan Grace - 01/09/16

Bibliography

- Adloff, F. (2016, August 2). Degrowth Meets Convivialism: Pathways To A Convivial Society. *Countercurrents*. <http://www.countercurrents.org/2016/08/02/degrowth-meets-convivialism-pathways-to-a-convivial-society/>
- Akena, F. A. (2012). Critical Analysis of the Production of Western Knowledge and Its Implications for Indigenous Knowledge and Decolonization. *Journal of Black Studies*, 43(6), 599–619. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934712440448>
- Albers, M., & Deppisch, S. (2013). Resilience in the Light of Climate Change: Useful Approach or Empty Phrase for Spatial Planning? *European Planning Studies*, 21(10), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2012.722961>
- Alexander, S., & Yacoumis, P. (2018). Degrowth, energy descent, and ‘low-tech’ living: Potential pathways for increased resilience in times of crisis. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 197, 1840–1848. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2016.09.100>
- Alissa. (2018, January 21). An entitlement to knowledge. *Cataloguing the Universe*. <https://lissertations.net/post/707>
- Almedom, A. M. (2013). Resilience: Outcome, Process, Emergence, Narrative (OPEN) theory. *On the Horizon*, 21(1), 15–23. <https://doi.org/10.1108/10748121311297030>
- Anderson, J. (2005). Indigenous Knowledge, Intellectual Property, Libraries and Archives: Crises of Access, Control and Future Utility. *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*, 36(2), 83–94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00048623.2005.10721250>
- Anderson, L. (2006). Analytic Autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 35(4), 373–395. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241605280449>
- Antonelli, M. (2008). The Green Library Movement: An Overview and Beyond. *Electronic Green Journal*, 1(27). <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/39d3v236>
- Antrobus, D., & Grace, D. (2015). *Data librarian project: Notes from 30 June meeting*.

- Archer, M. (2007). The private life of the social agent: What difference does it make? In J. Cruickshank (Ed.), *Critical realism: The difference in makes* (pp. 17–30). Routledge.
- Arel, D. (n.d.). *Scott Crow: Armed Community Defense* (No. 40). Retrieved 21 February 2018, from <https://www.spreaker.com/user/danarel/armed-community-defense-with-scott-crow>
- Asara, V., Profumi, E., & Kallis, G. (2013). Degrowth, Democracy and Autonomy. *Environmental Values*, 22(2), 217–239. <https://doi.org/10.3197/096327113X13581561725239>
- Bailey, I., Hopkins, R., & Wilson, G. (2010). Some things old, some things new: The spatial representations and politics of change of the peak oil localisation movement. *Geoforum*, 41(4), 595–605. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2009.08.007>
- Baker, S. C. (2014). Library as a Verb: Technological Change and the Obsolescence of Place in Research. *Informing Science: The International Journal of an Emerging Transdiscipline*, 17, 95–101. <https://doi.org/10.28945/1955>
- Bales, S. (2015). *The dialectic of academic librarianship: A critical approach*. Library Juice Press.
- Bartlett, N. (2020, February 5). *Brutal Tory library cuts slash 10 million books from shelves*. Mirror. <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/brutal-tory-library-cuts-slash-21440101>
- Bates, J., & Goodale, P. (2017). Making Data Flow for the Climate Risk Market. *Television & New Media*, 18(8), 753–768. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476416677114>
- Bates, J., Lin, Y.-W., & Goodale, P. (2016). Data journeys: Capturing the socio-material constitution of data objects and flows. *Big Data & Society*, 3(2), 2053951716654502. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951716654502>
- Bay, U. (2013). Transition Town Initiatives Promoting Transformational Community Change In Tackling Peak Oil And Climate Change Challenges. *Australian Social Work*, 66(2), 171–186. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2013.781201>
- BBC News. (2003, March 11). Cyclist's anti-war protest at US airbase. *BBC News*. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/2840143.stm>

- BBC News. (2020, January 23). M1 services plan for ancient woodland site dropped. *BBC News*.
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-51227087>
- Beagle, D. (1999). Conceptualizing an information commons. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 25(2), 82–89. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0099-1333\(99\)80003-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0099-1333(99)80003-2)
- Beilin, I. (2018). Critical Librarianship as an Academic Pursuit. In K. P. Nicholson & M. Seale (Eds.), *The Politics of Theory and the Practice of Critical Librarianship* (pp. 195–210). Library Juice Press.
- Béné, C., Wood, R. G., Newsham, A., & Davies, M. (2012). Resilience: New Utopia or New Tyranny? Reflection about the Potentials and Limits of the Concept of Resilience in Relation to Vulnerability Reduction Programmes. *IDS Working Papers*, 2012(405), 1–61.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2040-0209.2012.00405.x>
- Benjamin, W. (1986). Unpacking My Library. In H. Arendt (Ed.), *Illuminations* (pp. 59–67). Schocken Books.
- Berkes, F., & Ross, H. (2013). Community Resilience: Toward an Integrated Approach. *Society & Natural Resources*, 26(1), 5–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2012.736605>
- Bhamra, R., Dani, S., & Burnard, K. (2011). Resilience: The concept, a literature review and future directions. *International Journal of Production Research*, 49(18), 5375–5393.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00207543.2011.563826>
- Black, A. (2017). From Voluntary to State Action: Samuel Smiles, James Silk Buckingham and the Rise of the Public Library Movement in Britain. In K. B. Roberts & M. Towsey (Eds.), *Before the Public Library: Reading, Community, and Identity in the Atlantic World, 1650-1850* (pp. 349–369). BRILL. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sheffield/detail.action?docID=5124248>
- Bloch, E. (1995). *The principle of hope. Vol. 1: ...* (N. Plaice, Trans.; 1. MIT paperback ed). MIT Press.
- Bloom, G. (2013). Towards a Community Data Commons. In Brett Goldstein & Lauren Dyson (Eds.), *Beyond Transparency: Open Data and the Future of Civic Innovation* (pp. 255–270). Code for America Press.

- Bollier, D. (2013, August 3). The Quiet Realization of Ivan Illich's Ideas in the Contemporary Commons Movement. *David Bollier: News and Perspectives on the Commons*.
<http://bollier.org/blog/quiet-realization-ivan-illichs-ideas-contemporary-commons-movement>
- Bollier, D. (2014). *The Commons as a Template for Transformation*. Great Transition Initiative.
<http://www.greattransition.org/document/the-commons-as-a-template-for-transformation>
- Bollier, D., & Helfrich, S. (2012). Introduction: The commons as a transformative vision. In D. Bollier & S. Helfrich (Eds.), *The wealth of the commons: A world beyond market and state* (pp. 8–19). Levellers Press.
- Bottrell, D. (2013). Responsibilised Resilience? Reworking Neoliberal Social Policy Texts. *M/C Journal*, 16(5). <http://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/view/708>
- Bradley, K. (2018). Bike Kitchens – Spaces for convivial tools. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 197, 1676–1683. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2016.09.208>
- Brown, K. (2014). Global environmental change I A social turn for resilience? *Progress in Human Geography*, 38(1), 107–117. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132513498837>
- Bryson, J., Usherwood, B., & Proctor, R. (2003). *Libraries must also be buildings? New library impact study*. The Centre for Public Libraries and Information in Society, Department of Information Studies: University of Sheffield.
- Buckland, M. K. (1991). Information as Thing. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 42(5), 351–360.
- Budd, J. M. (1997). A Critique of Customer and Commodity. *College & Research Libraries*, 58(4), 309–320. <https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.58.4.309>
- Budd, J. M. (2003). The Library, Praxis, and Symbolic Power. *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy*, 73(1), 19–32.
- Bulley, D. (2013). Producing and Governing Community (through) Resilience. *Politics*, 33(4), 265–275. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9256.12025>

- Buschman, J. (2005). On Libraries and the Public Sphere. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-Journal)*.
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/11>
- Caffentzis, G. (2013). *In letters of blood and fire: Work, machines, and the crisis of capitalism*. PM Press.
- Callahan, M. (2012). In defense of conviviality and the collective subject. *Polis. Revista Latinoamericana*, 33. <http://journals.openedition.org/polis/8432>
- Callahan, M. (2019). Repairing the community: UT Califas and convivial tools of the commons. *Ephemera: Theory & Politics in Organization*, 19(2), 369–387.
- Calzada, I., & Almirall, E. (2019). *Barcelona's Grassroots-led Urban Experimentation: Deciphering the 'Data Commons' Policy Scheme* (SSRN Scholarly Paper ID 3359268). Social Science Research Network. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=3359268>
- Cannon, P. (2017). A review of professionalism within LIS. *Library Management*.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/LM-07-2016-0053>
- Carlsson, C. (2008). *Nowtopia: How pirate programmers, outlaw bicyclists, and vacant-lot gardeners are inventing the future today*. AK Press.
- Carr, W., & Kemmis, S. (1986). *Becoming critical: Education, knowledge, and action research*. Falmer Press.
- Carrington, D. (2020, June 17). Pandemics result from destruction of nature, say UN and WHO. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/17/pandemics-destruction-nature-un-who-legislation-trade-green-recovery>
- Carspecken, P. F. (1996). *Critical ethnography in educational research: A theoretical and practical guide*. Routledge.
- Cavanagh, C. J. (2017). Resilience, class, and the antifragility of capital. *Resilience*, 5(2), 110–128.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21693293.2016.1241474>
- Chandler, D. (2014). Beyond neoliberalism: Resilience, the new art of governing complexity. *Resilience*, 2(1), 47–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21693293.2013.878544>

- Chuang. (2020, February 26). Social Contagion. *Chuang*. <http://chuangcn.org/2020/02/social-contagion/>
- Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a Landscape of Narrative Inquiry: Borderland Spaces and Tensions. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 35–76). Sage Publications.
- Clover, J., & Spahr, J. (2016). Gender Abolition and Ecotone War. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *115*(2), 291–311. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-3488420>
- Cohen, A. K., & Schuchter, J. W. (2013). Revitalizing Communities Together. *Journal of Urban Health*, *90*(2), 187–196. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-012-9733-3>
- Cohen, O., Leykin, D., Lahad, M., Goldberg, A., & Aharonson-Daniel, L. (2013). The conjoint community resiliency assessment measure as a baseline for profiling and predicting community resilience for emergencies. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *80*(9), 1732–1741. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2012.12.009>
- Colyar, J. (2013). Reflections on Writing and Autoethnography. In S. L. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams, & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of autoethnography* (pp. 363–383). Left Coast Press, Inc.
- Cook, K. E. (2008). Critical Ethnography. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 148–151). SAGE Publications.
<http://search.credoreference.com/content/title/sagequalrm>
- Coulthard, S. (2012). Can We Be Both Resilient and Well, and What Choices Do People Have? Incorporating Agency into the Resilience Debate from a Fisheries Perspective. *Ecology and Society*, *17*(1). <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-04483-170104>
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed). SAGE Publications.
- Cretney, R., & Bond, S. (2014). ‘Bouncing back’ to capitalism? Grass-roots autonomous activism in shaping discourses of resilience and transformation following disaster. *Resilience*, *2*(1), 18–31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21693293.2013.872449>

- crimethinc. (2001). *Days of War, Nights of Love: Crimethink for Beginners*. crimethinc.
- crow, scott. (2014). *Black flags and windmills: Hope, anarchy, and the common ground collective* (2nd edition). PM Press.
- Crutzen, P. J. (2002). Geology of mankind. *Nature*, 415(6867), 23–23.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/415023a>
- Cumming, G. S., Barnes, G., Perz, S., Schmink, M., Sieving, K. E., Southworth, J., Binford, M., Holt, R. D., Stickler, C., & Holt, T. V. (2005). An Exploratory Framework for the Empirical Measurement of Resilience. *Ecosystems*, 8(8), 975–987. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10021-005-0129-z>
- D’Alisa, G., Demaria, F., & Kallis, G. (Eds.). (2014). *Degrowth: A vocabulary for a new era*. Routledge.
- Danny. (2015, March 2). *Interview with Danny* [Audio].
- Darrel. (2015, March 10). *Interview with Darrel* [Audio].
- Davenport, T. H., & Prusak, L. (2000). *Working knowledge: How organizations manage what they know*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Davies, T. (2012, July 20). Where co-operatives and open data meet. *Tim’s Blog*.
<https://www.timdavies.org.uk/2012/07/20/where-cooperatives-and-open-data-meet/>
- De Angelis, M. (2017). *Omnia Sunt Communia: On the commons and the transformation to postcapitalism*. Zed Books.
- Defilippis, J., Fisher, R., & Shragge, E. (2006). Neither Romance Nor Regulation: Re-evaluating Community. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 30(3), 673–689.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2006.00680.x>
- Deitering, A.-M., Stoddart, R. A., & Schroeder, R. (Eds.). (2017). *The self as subject: Autoethnographic research into identity, culture, and academic librarianship*. Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association.

- Delamont, S. (2009). The only honest thing: Autoethnography, reflexivity and small crises in fieldwork. *Ethnography and Education*, 4(1), 51–63.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17457820802703507>
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport. (2010). *The Modernisation Review of Public Libraries: A Policy Statement*. Stationery Office Books : [distributor] Stationery Office Books.
- DeVerteuil, G. (2015). *Resilience in the post-welfare inner city: Voluntary sector geographies in London, Los Angeles and Sydney*. Policy Press.
- Dietz, T., Ostrom, E., & Stern, P. C. (2003). The Struggle to Govern the Commons. *Science*, 302(5652), 1907–1912. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1091015>
- Dijck, J. van. (2014). Datafication, dataism and dataveillance: Big Data between scientific paradigm and ideology. *Surveillance & Society*, 12(2), 197–208.
<https://doi.org/10.24908/ss.v12i2.4776>
- DiSalvo, C., & Kozubaev, S. (2020). The Future of Public Libraries as Convivial Spaces. *GROUP '20: Companion of the 2020 ACM International Conference on Supporting Group Work*, 83–90.
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3323994.3369901>
- Doloriert, C., & Sambrook, S. (2012). Organisational autoethnography. *Journal of Organizational Ethnography*, 1(1), 83–95. <https://doi.org/10.1108/20466741211220688>
- Drabinski, E. (2016). Valuing Professionalism: Discourse as Professional Practice. *Library Trends*, 64(3), 604–614. <https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2016.0005>
- Dudley, M. (Ed.). (2013a). *Public libraries and resilient cities*. American Library Association.
- Dudley, M. (2013b). The library and the city. In M. Dudley (Ed.), *Public libraries and resilient cities* (pp. 1–33). American Library Association.
- Edwards, B. W. (2011). Sustainability as a Driving Force in Contemporary Library Design. *Library Trends*, 60(1), 190–214. <https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2011.0030>
- Edwards, P. N. (2017). Knowledge infrastructures for the Anthropocene. *The Anthropocene Review*, 4(1), 34–43. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053019616679854>

- Ellis, C. (2007). Telling Secrets, Revealing Lives: Relational Ethics in Research With Intimate Others. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13(1), 3–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800406294947>
- Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2010). Autoethnography: An Overview. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12(1). <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589>
- Ellis, C. S., & Bochner, A. P. (2006). Analyzing analytic autoethnography: An autopsy. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 35(4), 429–449. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241606286979>
- Endnotes. (2010). Communitisation and value-form theory. *Endnotes*, 2. <https://endnotes.org.uk/issues/2/en/endnotes-communitisation-and-value-form-theory>
- Esteva, G. (2014). Commoning in the new society. *Community Development Journal*, 49(suppl 1), i144–i159. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsu016>
- Esteva, G. (2015). Time To Enclose The Enclosers With Marx and Illich. *The International Journal of Illich Studies*, 4(1), 70–96.
- Fincher, R., & Iveson, K. (2009, July 16). *Public Libraries in Cities of Diversity*. Australian Library and Information Association Summit.
- Fisher, M. (2009). *Capitalist realism: Is there no alternative?* O Books.
- Fisher, M. (2012, July 16). Why mental health is a political issue. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/jul/16/mental-health-political-issue>
- Floridi, L. (2002). What is the Philosophy of Information? *Metaphilosophy*, 33(1–2), 123–145. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9973.00221>
- Folke, C. (2006). Resilience: The emergence of a perspective for social–ecological systems analyses. *Global Environmental Change*, 16(3), 253–267. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2006.04.002>
- Folke, C., Carpenter, S., Walker, B., Scheffer, M., Chapin, T., & Rockström, J. (2010). Resilience Thinking: Integrating Resilience, Adaptability and Transformability. *Ecology and Society*, 15(4). <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-03610-150420>

- Franzen, J. (2019, September 8). What if We Stopped Pretending the Climate Apocalypse Can Be Stopped? *The New Yorker*. <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/what-if-we-stopped-pretending>
- Fraser, B. (2011). Why the spatial epistemology of the video game matters: Metis, video game space and interdisciplinary theory. *Journal of Gaming & Virtual Worlds*, 3(2), 93–106. https://doi.org/10.1386/jgvw.3.2.93_1
- Frazier, T. G., Thompson, C. M., Dezzani, R. J., & Butsick, D. (2013). Spatial and temporal quantification of resilience at the community scale. *Applied Geography*, 42, 95–107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apgeog.2013.05.004>
- Freeman, J. (1972). The Tyranny of Structureless. *The Second Wave*, 2(1). <https://www.jofreeman.com/joreen/tyranny.htm>
- Gabrys, J., Pritchard, H., & Barratt, B. (2016). Just good enough data: Figuring data citizenships through air pollution sensing and data stories. *Big Data & Society*, 3(2), 2053951716679677. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951716679677>
- Genovese, T. R. (2016). Decolonizing Archival Methodology: Combating hegemony and moving towards a collaborative archival environment. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 12(1), 32–42. <https://doi.org/10.20507/AlterNative.2016.12.1.3>
- Given, M. (2018). The precarious conviviality of watermills. *Archaeological Dialogues*, 25(1), 71–94. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1380203818000089>
- Goraya, J. (2015, June 29). *Re: Tomorrows meeting* [Personal communication].
- Gordon. (2015, March 30). *Interview with Gordan* [Audio transcript].
- Gorman, M. (2000). *Our enduring values: Librarianship in the 21st century*. American Library Association.
- Grace, D. (2014). Reading for a Better Future: Books For A Better Future (BFABF) and Sustainability Literacy in a U.K. Public Library. In M. Morrone (Ed.), *Informed agitation: Library and information skills in social justice movements and beyond* (pp. 45–54). Library Juice Press.

- Grace, D., & Sen, B. (2013). Community Resilience and the Role of the Public Library. *Library Trends*, 61(3), 513–541. <https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2013.0008>
- Graeber, D. (2011). *Debt: The first 5,000 years*. Melville House.
- Gramsci, A. (2007). *Selections from the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (Q. Hoare, Ed.; G. Nowell-Smith, Trans.; Reprinted). Lawrence and Wishart.
- Gray, S. W. (2013). Locating librarianship's identity in its historical roots of professional philosophies: Towards a radical new identity for librarians of today (and tomorrow). *IFLA Journal*, 39(1), 37–44. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0340035212472946>
- Greene, M., & McMenemy, D. (2012). The Emergence and Impact of Neoliberal Ideology on UK Public Library Policy, 1997–2010. In *Library and Information Science Trends and Research: Europe* (Vol. 6, pp. 13–41). Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [https://doi.org/10.1108/S1876-0562\(2012\)0000006005](https://doi.org/10.1108/S1876-0562(2012)0000006005)
- Gregory, L., & Higgins, S. (2018). In Resistance to a Capitalist Past: Emerging Practices of Critical Librarianship. In K. P. Nicholson & M. Seale (Eds.), *The Politics of Theory and the Practice of Critical Librarianship* (pp. 21–38). Library Juice Press.
- Guyotte, K. W., & Sochacka, N. W. (2016). Is This Research? Productive Tensions in Living the (Collaborative) Autoethnographic Process. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 15(1), 1609406916631758. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406916631758>
- Guzik, E. (2014). Representing Ourselves in Information Science Research: A Methodological Essay on Autoethnography. *Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science*, 37(4), 267–283. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ils.2013.0025>
- Hall, R. (2010). Public Praxis: A Vision for Critical Information Literacy in Public Libraries. *Public Library Quarterly*, 29(2), 162–175. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01616841003776383>
- Halpin, E., Rankin, C., Chapman, E. L., & Walker, C. (2013). Measuring the value of public libraries in the digital age: What the power people need to know. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 0961000613497746. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0961000613497746>

- Hansson, J. (2017). Professional value and ethical self-regulation in the development of modern librarianship. *Journal of Documentation*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JD-02-2017-0022>
- Haraway, D. (1988). Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective. *Feminist Studies*, 14(3), 575–599. JSTOR.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/3178066>
- Haraway, D., & Reti, I. (2007). *Edges and Ecotones: Donna Haraway's Worlds at UCSC*.
<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9h09r84h>
- Hardin, G. (1968). The tragedy of the commons. *Science*, 162(3859), 1243–1248.
- Hardt, M., & Negri, A. (2003). *Empire* (13. printing). Harvard Univ. Press.
- Hartel, J. (2019). Turn, turn, turn. *Proceedings of CoLIS: 10th International Conference on Conceptions of Library and Information Science*, 24. <http://informationr.net/ir/24-4/colis/colis1901.html>
- Hauke, P. (2017). *Green Libraries Towards Green Sustainable Development—Best Practice Examples from IFLA Green Library Award 2016–2019*. <http://library.ifla.org/2562/>
- Havens, M. E., & Dudley, M. (2013). Public libraries, peak oil, and climate change. In M. Dudley (Ed.), *Public libraries and resilient cities* (pp. 137–145). American Library Association.
- Hayano, D. M. (1979). Auto-Ethnography: Paradigms, Problems, and Prospects. *Human Organization*, 38(1), 99–104. JSTOR.
- Hayward, B. M. (2013). Rethinking Resilience: Reflections on the Earthquakes in Christchurch, New Zealand, 2010 and 2011. *Ecology and Society*, 18(4). <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-05947-180437>
- Hess, C., & Ostrom, E. (2007a). Introduction: An Overview of the Knowledge Commons. In C. Hess & E. Ostrom (Eds.), *Understanding knowledge as a commons: From theory to practice* (pp. 3–26). Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, c2007.
- Hess, C., & Ostrom, E. (Eds.). (2007b). *Understanding knowledge as a commons: From theory to practice*. Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, c2007.

- Holling, C. S. (1973). Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems. *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics*, 4, 1–23.
- Holling, C. S. (2001). Understanding the Complexity of Economic, Ecological, and Social Systems. *Ecosystems*, 4(5), 390–405. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10021-001-0101-5>
- Holman Jones, S. (2016). Living Bodies of Thought: The “Critical” in Critical Autoethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 22(4), 228–237. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800415622509>
- Holt, G. (2013). Exploring public library contributions to urban resiliency. In M. Dudley (Ed.), *Public libraries and resilient cities* (pp. 37–56). American Library Association.
- hooks, bell. (2003). *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope*. Routledge.
- hooks, bell. (2015). Theory as Liberatory Practice. *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism*, 4(1).
<http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/yjlf/vol4/iss1/2>
- Hopkins, R. (2006, December 22). “Happy Relocalisers”, Doomers, Wheelwrights and the concept of Resilience. Resilience. <http://www.resilience.org/stories/2006-12-22/“happy-relocalisers”-doomers-wheelwrights-and-concept-resilience>
- Hopkins, R. (2008). *The Transition Handbook: From Oil Dependency to Local Resilience*. Chelsea Green Publishing.
- Hoyer, J. (2013). Finding room for everyone: Libraries confront social exclusion. In M. Dudley (Ed.), *Public libraries and resilient cities* (pp. 57–65). American Library Association.
- Hubbell, D., & Ryan, J. (2016). Scholarly Ecotones in the Information Landscape. *Landscapes: The Journal of the International Centre for Landscape and Language*, 7(1).
<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/landscapes/vol7/iss1/24>
- Huzar, T. J. (2013). The public library, democracy and Rancière’s poetics of politics. *Information Reserach*, 18(3). <http://www.informationr.net/ir/18-3/colis/paperC15.html#.UwuHeIWJPSj>
- IFLA. (n.d.). *IFLA - About the Environment, Sustainability and Libraries Special Interest Group*. Retrieved 6 February 2018, from <https://www.ifla.org/about-environmental-sustainability-and-libraries>

- Illich, I. (1973). *Tools for conviviality*. Calder and Boyars.
- Illich, I. (1974). *Energy and equity*. Calder & Boyars.
- Illich, I. (1978). *Toward a history of needs* (1st ed). Pantheon Books.
- Illich, I. (1981). *Shadow work*. M. Boyars.
- Illich, I. (1983, Winter). Silence is a Commons. *CoEvolution Quarterly*, 40, 4–22.
- Illich, I. (Ed.). (1987). *Disabling professions*. M. Boyars : Distributed in the U.S. by Kampmann.
- Illich, I. (2002a). *Deschooling society*. Marion Boyars.
- Illich, I. (2002b). The Cultivation of Conspiracy. In L. Hoinacki & C. Mitcham (Eds.), *The challenges of Ivan Illich: A collective reflection* (pp. 233–242). State University of New York Press.
- Illich, I. (2005). Needs. In W. Sachs (Ed.), *The development dictionary: A guide to knowledge as power* (11. impression). Witwatersrand Univ. Press.
- Illich, I., & Cayley, D. (2005). *The rivers north of the future: The testament of Ivan Illich*. House of Anansi Press ; Distributed in the U.S. by Publishers Group West.
- Industrial Workers of the World. (1905). *Industrial Workers of the World Preamble*. Industrial Workers of the World. <https://iww.org.uk/preamble/>
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2014). *Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (p. 151). <http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/syr/>
- Janssen, M., & Zuiderwijk, A. (2014). Infomediary Business Models for Connecting Open Data Providers and Users. *Social Science Computer Review*, 32(5), 694–711. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439314525902>
- Jones, G. (2018). *The Shock Doctrine of the Left*. Polity Press. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sheffield/detail.action?docID=5502956>
- Jones, G. (2019). Autonomy-supporting reforms. *Autonomy*. <https://autonomy.work/portfolio/autonomy-supporting-reforms/>

- Kahn, R. (2009). Anarchic epimetheanism: The pedagogy of Ivan Illich. In Randall Amster, Abraham DeLeon, Luis A. Fernandez, Anthony J. Nocella, II, & Deric Shannon (Eds.), *Contemporary anarchist studies: An introductory anthology of anarchy in the academy* (pp. 125–135). Routledge.
- Kanngieser, A., & Beuret, N. (2017). Refusing the World: Silence, Commoning, and the Anthropocene. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *116*(2), 363–380.
<https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-3829456>
- Karatani, K. (2014). *The structure of World history: From modes of production to modes of exchange* (M. K. Bourdaghs, Trans.). Duke University Press.
- Käte Hamburger Kolleg / Centre for Global Cooperation Research (KHK/GCR21). (2014). *Convivialist Manifesto. A declaration of interdependence (Global Dialogues 3)*. 1–38.
<https://doi.org/10.14282/2198-0403-GD-3>
- Kennedy, H., Poell, T., & van Dijck, J. (2015). Data and agency. *Big Data & Society*, *2*(2), 2053951715621569. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951715621569>
- Kerchner, C. (2014). Peak-Oil. In G. D’Alisa, F. Demaria, & G. Kallis (Eds.), *Degrowth: A vocabulary for a new era* (pp. 129–132). Routledge.
- Kerschner, C., Wächter, P., Nierling, L., & Ehlers, M.-H. (2018). Degrowth and Technology: Towards feasible, viable, appropriate and convivial imaginaries. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *197*, 1619–1636. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2018.07.147>
- Killjoy, M. (2014). *A Country of Ghosts*. Combustion Books.
- Kimmerer, R. W. (2002). Weaving Traditional Ecological Knowledge into Biological Education: A Call to Action. *BioScience*, *52*(5), 432–438. [https://doi.org/10.1641/0006-3568\(2002\)052\[0432:WTEKIB\]2.0.CO;2](https://doi.org/10.1641/0006-3568(2002)052[0432:WTEKIB]2.0.CO;2)
- Kingsnorth, P., & Hine, D. (2014). *Uncivilisation: The Dark Mountain manifesto*. The Dark Mountain Project.
- Kiran. (2015, March 30). *Interview with Kiran* [Audio].

- Kitchin, R. (2014). *The Data Revolution: Big Data, Open Data, Data Infrastructures & Their Consequences*. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473909472>
- Knight, K. (2020). *Practitioner psychologists and the trauma of climate change. An open letter demanding immediate and effective action.*
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdU6L3NM12ikT-34ZPlp1yv-6nHcM5aqhmid6nK-M3plZGu3A/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&usp=embed_facebook
- Kosciejew, M. (2019). Information's Importance for Refugees: Information Technologies, Public Libraries, and the Current Refugee Crisis. *The Library Quarterly*, 89(2), 79–98.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/702193>
- Kovel, J. (2014). Dialectics as praxis. In B. Ollman & T. Smith (Eds.), *Dialectics for the new century*. (pp. 235–242). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kranich, N. (2007). Countering Enclosure: Reclaiming the Knowledge Commons. In C. Hess & E. Ostrom (Eds.), *Understanding knowledge as a commons: From theory to practice* (pp. 85–122). Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, c2007.
- Krause, B., Cook, M., & Lomas, K. (2007). Environmental performance of a naturally ventilated city centre library. *Energy and Buildings*, 39(7), 792–801.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enbuild.2007.02.010>
- Krüger, O. (2019). The Paradox of Sustainable Degrowth and a Convivial Alternative. *Environmental Values*, 28(2), 233–251.
- Kugelmann, R. (2002). Economy, Subsistence, and Psychological Inquiry. In L. Hoinacki & C. Mitcham (Eds.), *The challenges of Ivan Illich: A collective reflection* (pp. 73–87). State University of New York Press.
- Kunstler, J. H. (2005a). *The Long Emergency: Surviving the Converging Catastrophes of the Twenty-first Century*. Grove Press.
- Kunstler, J. H. (2005b, March 24). The Long Emergency. *Rolling Stone Magazine*.
<http://www.resilience.org/stories/2005-03-24/long-emergency>

- Kurbanoglu, S., & Boustany, J. (2014). From Green Libraries to Green Information Literacy. *Information Literacy. Lifelong Learning and Digital Citizenship in the 21st Century*, 47–58.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-14136-7_6
- Lambertini, M., Mrema, E. M., & Neira, M. (2020, June 17). Coronavirus is a warning to us to mend our broken relationship with nature. *The Guardian*.
<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jun/17/coronavirus-warning-broken-relationship-nature>
- Lanier, J. (2014). *Who owns the future?* (Simon&Schuster trade paperback edition). Simon & Schuster Paperback.
- Lazzarato, M. (1996). Immaterial labor. In P. Virno & M. Hardt (Eds.), *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics*. University of Minnesota Press Minneapolis.
- Lebel, L., Anderies, J., Campbell, B., Folke, C., Hatfield-Dodds, S., Hughes, T., & Wilson, J. (2006, June 1). Governance and the Capacity to Manage Resilience in Regional Social-Ecological Systems. *Ecology and Society*. http://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/sms_facpub/52
- Leckie, G. J., & Buschman, J. (2010). Introduction: The Necessity for Theoretically Informed Critique in Library and Information Science (LIS). In G. J. Leckie, L. M. Given, & J. Buschman (Eds.), *Critical theory for library and information science: Exploring the social from across the disciplines* (pp. vii–xxii). Libraries Unlimited.
- Letiche, H., & Statler, M. (2005). Evoking Metis: Questioning the logics of change, responsiveness, meaning and action in organizations. *Culture and Organization*, 11(1), 1–16.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14759550500062219>
- Lilley, S. (2012). The Apocalyptic Politics of Collapse and Rebirth. In S. Lilley (Ed.), *Catastrophism: The apocalyptic politics of collapse and rebirth* (pp. 1–14). PM Press.
- Lloyd, A. (2015). Stranger in a strange land; enabling information resilience in resettlement landscapes. *Journal of Documentation*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JD-04-2014-0065>

- Lor, P. (2004). Storehouses of knowledge? The role of libraries in preserving and promoting indigenous knowledge. *Indilinga African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems*, 3(1), 45–56.
- Lyon, C., & Parkins, J. R. (2013). Toward a Social Theory of Resilience: Social Systems, Cultural Systems, and Collective Action in Transitioning Forest-Based Communities. *Rural Sociology*, n/a-n/a. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ruso.12018>
- MacDonald, G. (2020, March). Time to end a decade of library austerity. *CILIP: The Library and Information Association*. <https://www.cilip.org.uk/news/491310/Time-to-end-a-decade-of-library-austerity.htm>
- MacKinnon, D., & Derickson, K. D. (2013). From resilience to resourcefulness A critique of resilience policy and activism. *Progress in Human Geography*, 37(2), 253–270. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132512454775>
- Macmurray, J. (1950). *Conditions of freedom: Being the second lectures of the Chancellor Dunning Trust, delivered at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, 1949*. Faber.
- Madison, D. S. (2005). *Critical ethnography: Method, ethics, and performance*. Sage.
- Madison, M. J. (2014). Commons at the Intersection of Peer Production, Citizen Science, and Big Data. In B. M. Frischmann, M. J. Madison, & K. J. Strandburg (Eds.), *Governing Knowledge Commons* (pp. 209–254). Oxford University Press. <https://www-oxfordscholarship-com.sheffield.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199972036.001.0001/acprof-9780199972036-chapter-7>
- Mahony, M., & Hulme, M. (2018). Epistemic geographies of climate change: Science, space and politics. *Progress in Human Geography*, 42(3), 395–424. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132516681485>
- Marc. (2015, March 31). *Interview with Marc* [Audio transcript].

- Marx, K. (1975). Letter from Marx to Pavel Vasilyevich Annenko. In *Marx Engels Collected Works* (Vol. 38, p. 95). International Publishers.
- https://marxists.catbull.com/archive/marx/works/1846/letters/46_12_28.htm
- Marx, K. (1981). *Capital: A critique of political economy* (B. Fowkes, Trans.). Penguin Books in association with New Left Review.
- Marx, K. (2002). *Theses On Feuerbach* (C. Smith, Trans.).
- <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/theses/>
- McQuillan, D. (2017). The Anthropocene, resilience and post-colonial computation. *Resilience*, 5(2), 92–109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21693293.2016.1240779>
- Mealy, D. (2020, June 15). “To Halt Climate Change, We Need an Ecological Leninism”: An interview with Andreas Malm. *Jacobin*. <https://jacobinmag.com/2020/06/andreas-malm-coronavirus-covid-climate-change/>
- Michels, D. H. (2010). The Place of the Person in LIS Research: An Exploration in Methodology and Representation/ La place de la personne dans la recherche en bibliothéconomie et en sciences de l’information : exploration des méthodologies et des représentations. *Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science*, 34(2), 161–183.
- <https://doi.org/10.1353/ils.0.0001>
- Michelsen, N. (2017). On the genealogy of strategies: Resilience in the revolution. *Resilience*, 5(1), 61–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21693293.2016.1228159>
- Milburn, K., & Russell, B. (2018). What can an institution do? Towards Public-Common partnerships and a new common-sense. *Renewal*, 26(4), 45–55.
- Milburn, K., & Russell, B. (2019). *Public-Common Partnerships: Building New Circuits of Collective Ownership* (pp. 1–27). Common Wealth. <https://www.common-wealth.co.uk>
- Monbiot, G. (2018, May 15). The UK government wants to put a price on nature – but that will destroy it. *The Guardian*.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/may/15/price-natural-world-destruction-natural-capital>

Moore, J. W. (2015). *Capitalism in the web of life: Ecology and the accumulation of capital*. Verso.

Moore, J. W. (2016). Metabolic Rift or Metabolic Shift? Dialectics, Nature, and the World-Historical Method. *Theory & Society*.

https://www.academia.edu/28214380/Metabolic_Rift_or_Metabolic_Shift_Dialectics_Nature_and_the_World-Historical_Method_final_

Moore, J. W. (2017a). The Capitalocene, Part I: On the nature and origins of our ecological crisis. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 44(3), 594–630.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2016.1235036>

Moore, J. W. (2017b). The Capitalocene Part II: Accumulation by appropriation and the centrality of unpaid work/energy. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 45(2), 237–239.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2016.1272587>

Moore, J. W. (2017c). World accumulation and planetary life, or, why capitalism will not survive until the 'last tree is cut'. *IPPR Progressive Review*, 24(3), 175–202.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/newe.12055>

Nakata, M. (2002). Indigenous Knowledge and the Cultural Interface: Underlying issues at the intersection of knowledge and information systems

Indigenous Knowledge and the Cultural Interface: underlying issues at the intersection of knowledge and information systems. *IFLA Journal*, 28(5–6), 281–291.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/034003520202800513>

Nelson, S. H. (2014). Resilience and the neoliberal counter-revolution: From ecologies of control to production of the common. *Resilience*, 2(1), 1–17.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/21693293.2014.872456>

Ngunjiri, F. W., Hernandez, K.-A. C., & Chang, H. (2010). Living autoethnography: Connecting life and research. *Journal of Research Practice*, 6(1), 1–17.

- Nicholson, K. P., & Seale, M. (Eds.). (2018). *The Politics of Theory and the Practice of Critical Librarianship*. Library Juice Press.
- Nitecki, D. A. (2011). Space Assessment as a Venue for Defining the Academic Library. *The Library Quarterly*, 81(1), 27–59. <https://doi.org/10.1086/657446>
- Norris, F. H., Stevens, S. P., Pfefferbaum, B., Wyche, K. F., & Pfefferbaum, R. L. (2008). Community Resilience as a Metaphor, Theory, Set of Capacities, and Strategy for Disaster Readiness. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 41(1–2), 127–150. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-007-9156-6>
- O’Hare, P., & White, I. (2013). Deconstructing Resilience: Lessons from Planning Practice. *Planning Practice and Research*, 28(3), 275–279. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2013.787721>
- Ollman, B. (2014). Why dialectics? Why now? In B. Ollman & T. Smith (Eds.), *Dialectics for the new century*. (pp. 8–25). Palgrave Macmillan.
- O’Malley, P. (2010). Resilient subjects: Uncertainty, warfare and liberalism. *Economy and Society*, 39(4), 488–509. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03085147.2010.510681>
- Open Data Institute. (2019, April 15). Data trusts: Lessons from three pilots. *Open Data Institute*. <https://theodi.org/article/odi-data-trusts-report/>
- Operation Ivy. (1989, March). *Knowledge* [Vinyl]. Lookout! Records.
- Out of the Woods. (2014a, April 3). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and its latest report. *Libcom.Org*. <http://libcom.org/blog/intergovernmental-panel-climate-change-its-latest-report-03042014>
- Out of the Woods. (2014b, May 8). Disaster communism part 1—Disaster communities. *Libcom.Org*. <http://libcom.org/blog/disaster-communism-part-1-disaster-communities-08052014>
- Out of the Woods. (2014c, May 14). Disaster communism part 2—Communisation and concrete utopia. *Libcom.Org*. <http://libcom.org/blog/disaster-communism-part-2-communisation-concrete-utopia-14052014>

- Out of the Woods. (2014d, May 22). Disaster communism part 3—Logistics, repurposing, bricolage. *Libcom.Org*. <http://libcom.org/blog/disaster-communism-part-3-logistics-repurposing-bricolage-22052014>
- Out of the Woods. (2016, March 16). Human nature. *Libcom.Org*. <http://libcom.org/blog/human-nature-16032016>
- Out of the Woods. (2017, March 31). Lies of the land: Against and beyond Paul Kingsnorth’s völkisch environmentalism. *Libcom.Org*. <http://libcom.org/blog/lies-land-against-beyond-paul-kingsnorth’s-völkisch-environmentalism-31032017>
- P. M. (2014). *‘The power of neighborhood’ and the commons*. Autonomedia.
- Pangrazio, L., & Selwyn, N. (2019). ‘Personal data literacies’: A critical literacies approach to enhancing understandings of personal digital data. *New Media & Society*, 21(2), 419–437. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818799523>
- Patel, R., & Moore, J. W. (2018). *A history of the world in seven cheap things: A guide to capitalism, nature, and the future of the planet*. Verso.
- Patel, S. S., Rogers, M. B., Amlôt, R., & Rubin, G. J. (2017). What Do We Mean by ‘Community Resilience’? A Systematic Literature Review of How It Is Defined in the Literature. *PLoS Currents*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.1371/currents.dis.db775aff25efc5ac4f0660ad9c9f7db2>
- Peck, J., & Tickell, A. (2002). Neoliberalizing Space. *Antipode*, 34(3), 380–404. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8330.00247>
- Pike, A., Dawley, S., & Tomaney, J. (2010). Resilience, adaptation and adaptability. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 3(1), 59–70. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rsq001>
- Pinto, L. G., & Ochoa, P. (2017). *Public libraries’ contribution to Sustainable Development Goals: Gathering evidences and evaluating practices*. <http://library.ifla.org/1946/>
- Pitts, F. H. (2017). Beyond the Fragment: Postoperaismo, postcapitalism and Marx’s ‘Notes on machines’, 45 years on. *Economy and Society*, 46(3–4), 324–345. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03085147.2017.1397360>

- Polanyi, K. (1985). *The great transformation*. Beacon Press.
- Polanyi, M. (1983). *The tacit dimension* (Reprinted). Smith.
- Popowich, S. (2017, April 20). Intellectuals, Labour, and the Anthropocene [DRAFT]. *DRAFT*. DRAFT.
<https://redlibrarian.github.io/assets/docs/IntellectualsLabourAnthropoceneDraft.pdf>
- Popowich, S. (2018). 'Ruthless Criticism of All that Exists': Marxism, Technology and Library Work. In K. P. Nicholson & M. Seale (Eds.), *The Politics of Theory and the Practice of Critical Librarianship* (pp. 39–66). Library Juice Press.
- Popowich, S. (2019). 'The Power of Knowledge, Objectified': Immaterial Labor, Cognitive Capitalism, and Academic Librarianship. *Library Trends*, 68(2), 153–173.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2019.0035>
- Powell, A. (2015). Open culture and innovation: Integrating knowledge across boundaries. *Media, Culture and Society*, 37(3), 376–393.
- Price, W. (2013, April 2). An Anarchist Critique of Marx's Critique of Political Economy. *The North Star*. <http://www.thenorthstar.info/?p=8263>
- Quinn, K., & Bates, J. (2017). Resisting neoliberalism: The challenge of activist librarianship in English Higher Education. *Journal of Documentation*, 73(2), 317–335. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JD-06-2016-0076>
- Radical Librarians Collective. (n.d.). About – Radical Librarians Collective. *Radical Librarians Collective*. Retrieved 16 January 2018, from <https://rlc.radicalibrarianship.org/about-2/>
- Raseroka, K. (2008). Information transformation Africa: Indigenous knowledge – Securing space in the knowledge society. *International Information & Library Review*, 40(4), 243–250.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10572317.2008.10762789>
- Reed-Danahay, D. (1997). *Auto/ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social*. Bloomsbury Academic.

- Reed-Danahay, D. (2017). Bourdieu and Critical Autoethnography: Implications for Research, Writing, and Teaching. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 19(1), 144–154.
<https://doi.org/10.18251/ijme.v19i1.1368>
- Reid, R., & Botterill, L. C. (2013). The Multiple Meanings of ‘Resilience’: An Overview of the Literature. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 72(1), 31–40.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8500.12009>
- Ripple, W. J., Wolf, C., Newsome, T. M., Barnard, P., & Moomaw, W. R. (2020). World Scientists’ Warning of a Climate Emergency. *BioScience*, 70(1), 8–12.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/biosci/biz088>
- Robbins, P., & Kothari, A. (2018, October 2). RED Conversations Series – The Emerging Idea of “Radical Well-Being”. *Radical Ecological Democracy*.
<https://www.radicalecologicaldemocracy.org/red-conversations-series-the-emerging-idea-of-radical-well-being/>
- Roberts, J. M. (2014). Critical Realism, Dialectics, and Qualitative Research Methods. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 44(1), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12056>
- Robinson, P., & Mather, L. W. (2017). Open Data Community Maturity: Libraries as Civic Infomediaries. *URISA Journal*, 28(1), 31.
- Robinson, S. M. (2019). Critical Design in Librarianship: Visual and Narrative Exploration for Critical Praxis. *The Library Quarterly*, 89(4), 348–361. <https://doi.org/10.1086/704965>
- Rogers, P. (2013). Rethinking Resilience: Articulating Community and the UK Riots. *Politics*, 33(4), 322–333. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9256.12033>
- Rooney-Browne, C., & McMenemy, D. (2010). Public libraries as impartial spaces in a consumer society: Possible, plausible, desirable? *New Library World*, 111(11/12), 455–467.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/03074801011094831>
- Rose, J. (2010). *Intellectual life of the British working classes*.

- Roth, M. (2019). Digital Modes of Exchange: Structural Relations of Commodity, Control, and Community. *Asiascape: Digital Asia*, 6(1–2), 110–134. <https://doi.org/10.1163/22142312-12340104>
- Russell, B. (2014). Beyond activism/academia: Militant research and the radical climate and climate justice movement(s). *Area*, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12086>
- Sahavirta, H. (2017). *Set the Wheels in Motion – Clarifying “green library” as a Goal for Action*. <http://library.ifla.org/2568/>
- Samuel, S. (2012, September 12). In Defense of Vernacular Ways. *Viewpoint Magazine*, 2. <https://www.viewpointmag.com/2012/09/12/in-defense-of-vernacular-ways/>
- Schroeder, R. (2017). Evaluative Criteria for Autoethnographic Research: Who’s to Judge? In A.-M. Deitering, R. A. Stoddart, & R. Schroeder (Eds.), *The self as subject: Autoethnographic research into identity, culture, and academic librarianship* (pp. 315–340). Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association.
- Scott, J. C. (2008). *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed* (Nachdr.). Yale Univ. Press.
- Seal, R. A. (2015). Library spaces in the 21st century: Meeting the challenges of user needs for information, technology, and expertise. *Library Management*, 36(8/9), 558–569. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LM-11-2014-0136>
- Seale, M., & Nicholson, K. P. (2018). Introduction. In K. P. Nicholson & M. Seale (Eds.), *The Politics of Theory and the Practice of Critical Librarianship* (pp. 1–20). Library Juice Press.
- Sherman, H. (1976). Dialectics as a Method. *Insurgent Sociologist*, 6(4), 57–64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089692057600600408>
- Sherrieb, K., Norris, F. H., & Galea, S. (2010). Measuring Capacities for Community Resilience. *Social Indicators Research*, 99(2), 227–247. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-010-9576-9>
- Shiva, V. (1992). Women’s Indigenous Knowledge and Biodiversity Conservation. *India International Centre Quarterly*, 19(1/2), 205–214.

- Sikes, P. (2015). *Specialist Research Ethics Guidance Paper: Ethical considerations in autoethnographic research*. The University of Sheffield.
<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/rs/ethicsandintegrity/ethicspolicy/further-guidance/special-guidance/papers>
- Slater, T. (2014, January 28). *The resilience of neoliberal urbanism*. OpenDemocracy.
<http://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/tom-slater/resilience-of-neoliberal-urbanism>
- Slone, D. J. (2008, March 7). After Oil. *Library Journal*.
<http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2008/03/ljarchives/after-oil/>
- Smith, H. A., & Sharp, K. (2012). Indigenous climate knowledges. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 3(5), 467–476. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.185>
- Solnit, R. (2009). *A paradise built in hell: The extraordinary communities that arise in disaster*. Penguin Books.
- Stark, M. R. (2011). Information in Place: Integrating Sustainability into Information Literacy Instruction. *Electronic Green Journal*, 1(32).
<http://escholarship.org/uc/item/1fz2w70p#page-2>
- Steffen, W., Broadgate, W., Deutsch, L., Gaffney, O., & Ludwig, C. (2015). The trajectory of the Anthropocene: The Great Acceleration. *The Anthropocene Review*, 2(1), 81–98.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2053019614564785>
- Steffen, W., Crutzen, P. J., & McNeill, J. R. (2007). The Anthropocene: Are Humans Now Overwhelming the Great Forces of Nature? *Ambio*, 36(8), 614–621.
- Tactical Technology Collective. (n.d.). *Info activism*. Tactical Technology Collective. Retrieved 6 May 2019, from <https://tacticaltech.org/projects/exposing-and-shaping-issues/>
- Tansy, E. (2016). Archival adaptation to climate change. *Sustainability: Science, Practice & Policy*, 11(2). <https://sspp.proquest.com/archival-adaptation-to-climate-change-3f245c06d9c0>
- Taylor, C., & White, S. (2001). Knowledge, Truth and Reflexivity: The Problem of Judgement in Social Work. *Journal of Social Work*, 1(1), 37–59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/146801730100100104>

- Taylor, M., & Murray, J. (2020, February 10). 'Overwhelming and terrifying': The rise of climate anxiety. *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/feb/10/overwhelming-and-terrifying-impact-of-climate-crisis-on-mental-health>
- The Economist. (2009, December 10). The peak-oil debate: 2020 vision. *The Economist*.
<http://www.economist.com/node/15065719>
- The Economist. (2018, July 7). Data workers of the world, unite. *The Economist*.
<https://www.economist.com/the-world-if/2018/07/07/data-workers-of-the-world-unite>
- The Guardian. (2003, February 24). Greenpeace protest closes Esso pumps across UK. *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2003/feb/24/antiwar.uk>
- Thomas, J. (1993). *Doing critical ethnography*. Sage Publications.
- Thorpe, K., & Galassi, M. (2018). Diversity, inclusion & respect: Embedding Indigenous priorities in public library services. *Public Library Quarterly*, 37(2), 180–194.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01616846.2018.1460568>
- Tierney, W. G., & Sallee, M. W. (2008). Praxis. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 676–681). SAGE.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909.n337>
- Tyler, S., & Moench, M. (2012). A framework for urban climate resilience. *Climate and Development*, 4(4), 311–326. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17565529.2012.745389>
- UK Cabinet Office. (2011). *Strategic National Framework on Community Resilience*.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60922/Strategic-National-Framework-on-Community-Resilience_0.pdf
- UK Cabinet Office. (2019). *Community Resilience Development Framework*.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60922/Strategic-National-Framework-on-Community-Resilience_0.pdf

- Ulichny, P. (1997). When Critical Ethnography and Action Collide. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3(2), 139–168.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/107780049700300201>
- Veil, S. R., & Bishop, B. W. (2013). Opportunities and Challenges for Public Libraries to Enhance Community Resilience. *Risk Analysis*, n/a-n/a. <https://doi.org/10.1111/risa.12130>
- Veronica. (2015, March 31). *Interview with Veronica* [Audio transcript].
- Vetter, A. (2018). The Matrix of Convivial Technology – Assessing technologies for degrowth. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 197, 1778–1786. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2017.02.195>
- Walker, J., & Cooper, M. (2011). Genealogies of resilience From systems ecology to the political economy of crisis adaptation. *Security Dialogue*, 42(2), 143–160.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010611399616>
- Walljasper, J. & On the Commons. (2010). *All that we share: How to save the economy, the environment, the Internet, democracy, our communities, and everything else that belongs to all of us*. New Press.
- Wark, M. (2015a). *Molecular red: Theory for the Anthropocene*. Verso.
- Wark, M. (2015b, October 15). The Capitalocene. *Public Seminar*.
<http://www.publicseminar.org/2015/10/the-capitalocene/>
- Wark, M. (2015c, October 27). Inventing the Future. *Public Seminar*.
<http://www.publicseminar.org/2015/10/inventing-the-future/>
- Watt, A. J. (1981). Illich and Anarchism. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 13(2), 1–15.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.1981.tb00481.x>
- Weiss, H. (2019). *We have never been middle-class*. Verso.
- Welsh, M. (2013). Resilience and responsibility: Governing uncertainty in a complex world. *The Geographical Journal*, n/a-n/a. <https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12012>
- Werner, K. U. (2013). Sustainable buildings, equipment, and management—A checklist. In P. Hauke, K. Latimer, & K. U. Werner (Eds.), & K. Latimer (Trans.), *The green library: The challenge of*

environment sustainability = Die grüne Bibliothek: Ökologische Nachhaltigkeit in der Praxis
(pp. 395–404). De Gruyter Saur.

Yapa, L. (2013). Ivan Illich: Theories of Poverty And The Politics of Agency. *The International Journal of Illich Studies*, 3(2), 17–36.

Yuen, E. (2012). The Politics of Failure Have Failed: The Environmental Movement and Catastrophism. In S. Lilley (Ed.), *Catastrophism: The apocalyptic politics of collapse and rebirth* (pp. 1–15). PM Press.

Zuiderwijk, A., Janssen, M., & Davis, C. (2014). Innovation with open data: Essential elements of open data ecosystems. *Information Polity*, 19(1,2), 17–33. <https://doi.org/10.3233/IP-140329>

Zylinska, J. (2014). *Minimal Ethics for the Anthropocene*. Open Humanities Press.
<http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.12917741.0001.001>