Liverpool-Capital of Culture: an interdisciplinary opportunity?

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Four themes:
- Capital of Culture
- Liverpool 2008
- CoC Research
- Interdisciplinarity and CoCs
European Capital of Culture

Officially:
- a city designated by the European Union for one year
- given a chance to showcase its cultural life and cultural development.
- cities have used the City of Culture year to transform their cultural base and
- the way they are viewed internationally
European Capital of Culture

- launched June 13, 1985 by the Council of Ministers
- initiative of the Greek Minister of Culture Melina Mercouri
- cultural and socio-economic impact (Garcia, 2005)
- major events can be used for widespread urban regeneration (Garcia, 2004)

Liverpool
European Capital of Culture 2008
Liverpool - Capital of Culture Years

- 2003 - Celebrating Learning
- 2004 - Faith in One City
- 2005 - Sea Liverpool
- 2006 - Performance (Sports, Art, Business)
- 2007 - 800th Birthday
- 2008 - European Capital of Culture
- 2009 - Environment
- 2010 - Innovation
Liverpool Capital of Culture 2008: goals

- **Positive place marketing**
- ‘Rocket Fuel’ for **regeneration**
- Increase in investor interest and confidence
- **14,000 jobs supported**
- **over £2bn investment in the city to support Capital of Culture**
- **at least 1.7 million extra visitors by 2008**
- **World Discovery Centre** - a huge arts and heritage centre
Liverpool 2008: Main Objectives

- world class programme of artistic events
- re-position the city
- sustainable
- template for European city regeneration
CoC Research: the issues

- urban entrepreneurialism and community involvement
- re-branding of Liverpool as 'The World in One City' threatens to transform the real city into culture as economic development
- Stobbard (2002) reminds us that the same was true in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, with a resulting loss of cultural space

Reason and Garcia (2007) examine Glasgow’s year as European City of Culture in 1990 as told through the news media. They explore the **successes and failures** of the approach taken and assess its potential for development and employment in other contexts.

Image of Liverpool and CoC is addressed by Shukla *et al.* (2006)

Nobili (2006) compares the ‘place branding’ in the marketing mix of Liverpool and Genoa as CoCs


Nobili V (2006) The role of European Capital of Culture events within Genoa's and Liverpool's branding and positioning efforts, Place Branding (2005) 1, 316–328
CoC Research: the process

- Favre (2004) focuses on the success factors of the bid by Liverpool, exploring challenges faced to create and sustain a long-lasting and distinctive appeal to ensure long-term benefits.
- Ben Tovim (2003) explores the present and possible futures for Liverpool.
- Binns (2005) explores issues related to capitalising on culture in terms of urban regeneration, with a plea for holistic policy.

Ben Tovim R (2003), futures of Liverpool, in Munck R Reinventing the City?: Liverpool in Comparative Perspective, 227-257, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press
**CoC Research: the outcomes**

- **Symbolic** capitals (Aiello and Thurlow, 2006)
- Kokosalakis *et al.* (2006) review the projected image campaign and the influence of the *media* and the promotion of culture on city regeneration in Liverpool

CoC Research: culture and cities

- **convergence** between culture and economic development (Miles, Hall and Borden, 2003)
- culture more important – for economic returns
- **City is an event** – actors and spectators
- Ideas formed and transformed - create our way of life – architecture, fashion, travel

Miles M, Hall T and Borden I (eds.) (2003), The City Cultures Reader, Routledge
City as Culture (Bianchini, 1999)

- reinvent the ‘industrial’ city into a creative knowledge economy (Landry, 2000)
- selling the place, images of place
- culture as a source of urban renewal
- hallmark infrastructure (waterfront)
- major events
- ephemeral versus permanent activity
- local and international focus

City as Culture (Zukin, 1996)

- Economy based on tourism, media, entertainment and education
- Culture as ethnicity
- Culture as aesthetic
- Culture as marketing
- Redevelopment of city centre spaces

City as Culture (Scott, 2000)

- culture produced through unique urban communities
- anchored to particular places
- social relations between economic functions
- cultural experimentation and renewal is high in these locations

City as Culture

- consumption from further away ... globalisation
- **issue of retaining character** – competitive branding – often artificial, not authentic (Miles *et al.*, 2000)
- consumers want unique experiences
- theme Park versus original (Kearns and Philo, 1993)

Miles M; Borden I and Hall T (Eds.) (2000), The City Cultures Reader, Routledge, London
Kearns G and Philo C (1993), Selling Places: The City as Cultural Capital, Past and Present, Pergamon, Oxford
What research has been done?

- Historical
- The Achievement
  - News and media
  - The application
- Impacts
  - Marketing – image and brand
  - City as culture
- Effects and implications
  - Political - transformation
  - Economic - regeneration

Absence of an interdisciplinary approach
Interdisciplinarity

- What it is?
- Why consider it?
- How does it relate to Capitals of Culture and higher education?
Interdisciplinarity: what is it?

Confusing terminology:

- Transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary are all used.

They all:

- describe the organisation of knowledge geared to the solution of practical problems.
- seek to overcome disciplinary boundaries.
- draw on different fields of expertise.
Interdisciplinarity: what it is NOT?

Confusing terminology:

- **Multidisciplinary** research occurs when several disciplines work in parallel
  - Normally with independent goals
  - With minimal communication

- **Transdisciplinary** activity is integrated where functions and expertise overlaps
  - Implies the act of crossing disciplinary boundaries
  - Explain one subject in the terms of another
Interdisciplinarity

- Disciplines collaborate in an **integrated** way in the research (and learning) process
- **Integration of knowledge** from the disciplines being brought to bear on an issue
- Disciplinary knowledge, concepts, tools, and rules of investigation are considered, contrasted, and **INTEGRATED** in such a way that the resulting understanding is greater than simply the sum of its disciplinary parts.
Interdisciplinarity: what is it?

- real interdisciplinary thinking means the use of each discipline as a valid source of knowledge in its own right and a valuable contribution to the discussion at hand
- Interdisciplinary approaches typically focus on problems felt by the investigators to be too complex or wide-ranging to be dealt with using the knowledge and methodology of a single discipline
Interdisciplinarity: definition

- What it is?
- Why consider it?
- How does it relate to Capitals of Culture and higher education?
Interdisciplinarity: why consider it?

- **discipline-based model** dominant in most universities
- controls resources for teaching, research, and other activities

Bologna changes in education and training imply:

- a redesign of educational management
- reform of learning (student-centred)
- some authors (Barnett, 2003; Dawson, 2003) consider a **lifelong learning** perspective is essential
- the learner is engaged in the lifelong process of trying to live in the world fully and engage with its paradoxes and contradictions
Interdisciplinarity: why consider it?

Under Bologna:

- **new courses** that provide relevant skills and approaches for **employability** within European society
- the Council of Ministers (2000) stated that Europe needs academic approaches which are increasingly interdisciplinarity
- European Student Association (ESIB, 2004) suggest Europe needs academic approaches which are increasingly interdisciplinarity
- students need a **conceptual tools** to understand the modern world, while contributing to the social and economic development of member states and the establishment of democratic citizenship.
- higher education has so far paid **little attention** to this and to this point paid it has struggled to come to grips with these needs


ESIB (2003), Bologna and interdisciplinarity, National Union of Students in Europe http://www.esib.org
Interdisciplinarity: why consider it?

- **Market-orientation** directs universities towards practical, entrepreneurial objectives that will increasingly engage them in an interdisciplinary world.
- Murray (2004) suggests that universities need to remove barriers to and create mechanisms for much more interdisciplinary undergraduate and postgraduate education.
- Many courses remain within traditional boundaries.
- Academics seek to protect their own space to exclude others.
- New demands on education has resulted in activities that merge or combine fields, thus pushing the limits of academic activities into new territories.
- Working in a genuinely interdisciplinary way is considered to be extremely challenging and thus worthy of significant interest (Barnett, 2003).

Interdisciplinarity: why do it? (Nisani, 2006)

Creative Breakthroughs:
- involves linkage of previously unrelated ideas

Cross-disciplinary Oversights:
- Errors or omissions can be best detected by people familiar with two or more disciplines

Intellectual, Social, and Practical Problems:
- Many problems require holistic approaches.

Unity of Knowledge:
- Impossible to become an expert in everything. But we should not forget how much we don't know or cannot know.
- interdisciplinarity can help us see the various components of human knowledge for what they are: pieces in a panoramic jigsaw puzzle

Interdisciplinarity: Capitals of Culture?

- What it is?
- Why consider it?
- How does it relate to Capitals of Culture and higher education?
To experience Europe

To understand Europe

Capital of Culture
Interdisciplinarity and Capitals of Culture

- An opportunity for members of UNeECC to consider the sort of research should we be undertaking?
- Should UNeECC seek to create such interdisciplinary research teams?

If the answer is ‘yes’
- What sort of preparation for interdisciplinarity should we be trying to provide in our universities?
Interdisciplinarity: how might we deal with studying Capitals of Culture?

Some interdisciplinary research approaches that could be tried include:

**blended research**, with an emphasis on academic enquiry
- blending perspectives from different subject areas, bringing in experts (Evenback and Williams, 1998)

**linking viewpoints**
- drawing in materials and expertise from cross-disciplinary sources
- comparing and contrasting approaches and blending perspectives

**linking studies** in different disciplines
- to establish a “research community” approach, to cement connections between researchers and their students (Davis, 1996)

Evenback S and Williams G (1998), Learning communities: An instructional team approach, Metropolitan Universities, 9, 35-47
Interdisciplinarity: Conclusions

- Literature almost entirely relates to the USA, little or no research or analysis has yet been undertaken in a European context.
- European Capitals of Culture provide us with an opportunity.
- Discussion ....
Invitation to you and your students to visit Liverpool
The Big Hope - June 2008
http://www.hope.ac.uk/thebighope

HERODOT Conference
4-7 September 2008
http://www.herokuapp.net