



# Minutes of Meeting

Thursday 2nd February 2017

Glasgow School of Art

## Attendees:

Adam Kesby	Sustrans	
Claire Martin	University of Edinburgh	
Clara Boeker	EAUC	
Conall McGregor	Edinburgh Napier University	
David Charles	University of Strathclyde	
Faith Rhodes	Glasgow School of Art	
Jamie Pearson	Edinburgh Napier University	
Jane Stickley-Woods	Glasgow School of Art	
Jennifer Jamieson	Scottish Funding Council	
Julian Manley	University of Central Lancashire	Speaker
June Graham	Keep Scotland Beautiful	
John Thorne	Glasgow School of Art	Convenor
Kate Thornback	SRUC	
Patrick Mason	University of Dundee	
Spela Raposa	University of Strathclyde	
Stewart Miller	University of Glasgow	
Tom Kemsley	Queen Margaret University	
Viola Retzlaff	University of Glasgow	
Zara Kitson	Who If not Us?	Speaker

## Apologies:

Kim Young	Zero Waste Scotland
Miriam Adcock	Zero Waste Scotland
Philippa Cochrane	SSN
Sarah Ford-Hutchinson	University of Edinburgh

<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b>  <i>John Thorne, Convenor</i></p> <p>Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and introduced themselves.</p> <p>Learning about why people are apathetic to climate change is not about being a psychologist but instead about being an environmentalist who understands the psychological backgrounds of people’s behaviour towards climate change action. Connecting psychology and climate change is a new approach for this Community Engagement TSN.</p> <p>One could make the controversial statement that climate change is not an environmental issue but a cultural, social, ethical and psychoanalytical one. Humans have impacted on our environment for thousands of years, which has changed our perspective on what is natural. Climate change is making humans anxious, which leaves many individuals immobilized to act upon the knowledge that we need to change our behavior in order to combat the repercussions of climate change. This is why it is useful to turn to psychology to help us understand society and its behaviour better. As everyone is causing climate change through their individual actions, there is a universal guilt on society which further increases anxiety and hence inhibits individuals to take actions. Responses of individuals towards climate change are marked by apathy, anxiousness and transferring blame to other individuals or institutions. However, there is a silver lining as Universities and Colleges can be the solution to all these problems as they are research centres as well as being able to educate individuals and influence their behaviour.</p>	
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>From denial to disavowal. What does a psycho-social understanding bring to our ability to face the challenges of climate change?</b> <a href="#">See slides here</a>  <i>Dr Julian Manley</i></p> <p>Climate psychology is concerned with understanding the non-rational dimensions of our collective paralysis in the face of worsening climate change. The psychosocial approach can be a very handy tool when used in sustainability and community engagement as it is important for both disciplines to get a holistic view of the different events happening all over the world affecting individuals to be successful in changing their behaviour. Whereas we often would like to think that everyone is working together to stop climate change, it is also important to keep in mind that there are people whose lives are based around carbon production, e.g. people working in the oil industry. Those individuals are not just ignorant on climate issues but have no choice to act differently. The majority of people accept that climate change is happening but they do not prioritise it as a main issue or duty to act upon. This lack of action is amplified by people often feeling that they have no real power to stop climate change as it is inevitable.</p>	

### Psycho-social approach

People often carry negative attitudes towards psychology and psychiatry, which makes them hesitant to interact with these two studies.

Climate change is a global issue affecting global societies. Addressing these global societies and the psychology behind their behavior is the psycho-social approach.

[The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IGPC) is now also interested in the psycho-social approach to incur behavior changes. This is a consequence of the failure of using hard-facts to change behaviours within society. The hard-facts approach to change people's behavior regarding climate change has caused many people to be annihilated towards climate change and left them with the feeling that there is nothing individuals can do anyway.

Other approaches towards addressing people's behavior towards climate change are the ecopsychological, ecopsychanalytical and ecosophical. These three different approaches share the underlying believe that connecting people with nature can help to change their behaviour.

The book [Engaging with Climate Change, Psychoanalytical and interdisciplinary Perspectives](#) looks at the various issues that make it difficult for people to interact with climate change and to combat it through behaviour change. It uses the psycho-social approach to explain denialism, negation and disavowal of individuals towards climate change. It addresses the problem that anxiety paralyses individuals and leads to individuals creating an escapism response into virtual realities to avoid the truths of reality.

The book also makes the distinction between melancholy and apathy as both patterns of behaviour require different approaches to incur changes within individuals.

The book [In Time for Tomorrow – The Carbon Conversation Handbook](#) is a helpful tool for implementing behaviour changes within smaller groups as it contains practical actions to facilitate the desired change. This approach is particularly useful as it gives individuals support from peers who are going through the same changes and fears of climate change while being in a safe place.

Targets towards carbon reactions need to take into account what these changes mean for individuals as otherwise they will simply cause apathy as individuals agree that change is needed but do not know how translate this into real action.

The IGPC also recognizes how the arts and culture have the potential to incur the desired change towards low-carbon behaviour. This is as arts and culture work with emotions rather than cognitive facts.

Hard-facts alone have failed to bring the desired change within society and one reason could be as the cognitive neglects emotions, which are an important factor in human behaviour.

**The Art Video – The Second Breath by Mish Weaver** was shown, which illustrated apathy towards facts on climate change.

### Social Dreaming Session

During a Social Dreaming Session individuals present their dreams and/or their association

	<p>about a relevant topic within a group. From a psycho-analytical view dreams contain relevant deeper and inner information and emotions, which individuals are less likely to share as they are non-rational and non-conscious.</p> <p>A social dreaming session is interested in the emotions, feelings and attitudes towards certain issues rather than just cognitive thinking.</p> <p>The meaning of social dreaming lies in the association and amplification of ideas and emotions in a group setting. What is expressed in social dreaming is akin to a certain topic, in this case climate change. The result of social dreaming is a collage of images inside the participants' minds, which enables individuals to express attitudes which they have not been able to express before. This is important as often people do not speak about the things they really worry about. Therefore the social dreaming session gives an opportunity to participants to channel emotions and worries in an open focus group discussion.</p> <p>The Climate Psychology Alliance provides a forum for people wanting to make connections between depth psychology and climate change, as we all face the difficult truths of climate change and ecological crisis. There is currently only a regular meet-up group in London but there is the potential to setting a CPA hub up in Scotland.</p>	<p>JM: Set up a CPA hub in Scotland</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Possible Application of the psycho-social approach to HE/FE sector. <a href="#">See slides here</a></b>  <i>John Thorne, Convenor Community Engagement TSN</i></p> <p>Traditional approaches are not fast enough in creating the required behaviour change which means new approaches are needed.</p> <p>Universities and colleges create future leaders who will then later be able to influence even more people. Hence it is important to start changing people's behaviour while they are in education.</p> <p>Small actions such as recycling and energy saving methods are not enough to combat climate change; they also give the false impression that climate change can be prevented through minor behaviour changes rather than a holistic behaviour disruption.</p> <p>Having a limited level of anxiety can be useful to motivate individuals to take action but too much can paralyse people and make them apathetic.</p> <p>Universities and Colleges serve as safe places which encourages people to experiment in their respective fields of study and provide academic freedom.</p>	
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Social dreaming workshop and discussion</b>  <i>Julian Manley</i></p> <p>The taster session of Social Dreaming gives participants new ways of engaging with others on climate change and provides different information than just cognitive thinking. Social dreaming can lead to more transformative and meaningful decision-making.</p> <p>For a Social Dreaming session chairs are arranged in the middle of the room in a snowflake pattern. The snowflake seating is supposed to make people forget that they are in a space with others, helping to avoid a confrontational way of speaking and creating a more natural flow of communication. The ideal atmosphere for Social Dreaming is free-flowing and free of hierarchies and pre-set social orders - this helps to encourage disturbing the</p>	

	<p>normality of speaking one-to-one. Social Dreaming is not about personal dreams it is about the open space of thoughts, emotions and associations.</p> <p>Participants are asked to express a dream which is relevant to this moment or climate change. The sharing of dreams might cause others to be reminiscent of similar dreams. Others who do not dream might have relevant associations in mind.</p> <p>A Social Dreaming session contains no interpretation or judgment about the presented dreams or association; instead they are simply opened to the space of the group. The presenting of dreams and associations is followed by a discussion of what has been experienced to make more cognitive sense of the non-rational sharing of the associations and dreams.</p> <p>Even though the social dreaming might sound very abnormal and abstract to people, it is a normal process as everyone is reflecting and non-consciously thinking and dreaming.</p> <p><b>A Social Dreaming Session was held</b></p> <p>Common Images, thoughts and feelings from the Social Dreaming included water, ice, the individual vs. the crowd and the complexity of things such as a tiger, which can be both beautiful and dangerous.</p> <p><u>Post-Matrix Discussion of the Social Dreaming</u></p> <p>KT: Social Dreaming might be useful to connect with students as many have mentioned they experience emotions of depression. Addressing fears might be beneficial for students. The Social Dreaming Session might also encourage students to define their own learning and help with deciding what they want from life. Social Dreaming encourages a different way of thinking.</p> <p>JG: Social Dreaming creates a safe space for encouraging more emotional approach to rational issues.</p> <p>DC: Social Dreaming might be useful to open on climate conversations.</p> <p>TK: Social Dreaming gives a more honest report of what people are thinking and feeling but what do you do afterwards?</p> <p>JM: Social Dreaming can be used in different ways either as a therapeutic tool to speak about non-rational emotions and fears or as a way or as a tool to increase meaningfulness and of decision-making processes. Action plans are more likely to be fulfilled if they include also non-cognitive features and emotions.</p> <p>JG: Social Dreaming can be useful in combination with the ISM Framework to create campaigns and initiatives with meaning.</p> <p>DC: It would be interesting to see a case study of how a Social Dreaming session actually was implemented in creating an action plan.</p> <p>FR: Is it possible to create the snow-flake and social dreaming into the virtual world?</p> <p>JM: There is a current social dreaming group, which is taking place in the virtual space.</p>	<p>All – send ideas for application of social dreaming to JB</p>
5	<b>Lunch</b>	

<p>6</p>	<p><b>‘Who If Not Us?’ – See link to the book website <a href="#">here</a></b>  <i>Zara Kitson</i></p> <p>‘Who if not us’ started in 2013 when Vincent Herr and Martin Speer got funding to talk to young Europeans from Generation Y to find out if they have similar values and hopes. They found out that young Europeans share the same feeling of uncertainty. There was a big discrepancy between Generation Y being the most educated, wealthiest, most connected and powerful generation so far and the lack of feeling of empowerment. Herr and Speer were inspired by the French philosopher Hessel who wrote the essay ‘Time of Outrage’ in the 1960s and wanted to create a similar essay for Generation Y. However, Herr and Speer thought it would be more powerful if this essay was created from a collective of young Europeans. Hence, they founded the Young European Collective, which consists of 12 people from 11 different countries and resulted in the publication of the essay ‘Who if not us?’.</p> <p>The book contains four steps to make changes in individual’s life:  Step one: be critical  Step two: overcome your fears  Step three: discover your power  Step four: group up</p> <p>‘Who if Not Us’ is supposed to be a wake up call for Generation Y as well as a tool for empowering people. Even though the book is freely available for everyone, it was also important for the authors of the book to have a paper copy available. Since the book has been originally written many things have happened in politics, i.e. Brexit and Trump and the world feels like it has turned upside down. This however makes the book even more relevant.</p> <p>Universities and Colleges can help to spread the book and the idea behind it with students and young people. This is supposed to be an organic movement, through word of mouth.</p> <p><u>Comments and Questions</u></p> <p>JG: KSB and the Young Reporters Initiative as well as the 2050 Climate Group may be able to help with the distribution of the book.  CM: How is the impact of the book measured?  ZK: There is no procedure in place to measure the real impact of the book, instead focus is in further distributing book, also internationally as the book has been translated into German, French and Italian.  KT: The book could be a really good tool for the environmental awareness module that students have to take at SRUC in their first year.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p><b>‘In the Loop’ Board Game – See web link <a href="#">here</a></b>  <i>Clara Boeker, EAUC Communications and Events Intern</i></p>	<p>All – Zero</p>

	<p>In the Loop is a unique engagement tool and is based on the research of Katherine Whalen on critical raw materials as part of her graduate work in Industrial Design Engineering at Delft University of Technology. The game was financed through a kick-starter campaign and was partly funded by Zero Waste Scotland.</p> <p>The game incorporates principles of the circular economy and can be used for education purposes on the circular economy. It is a good example on how creative initiatives can help to influence behaviour and make people think about issues around the production-consumption circular loop without being patronising.</p> <p>It is a great tool for introducing people to the concepts of the circular economy. Find out more about the game <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>The game was then played to experience the learning benefits first hand.</p> <p>Thank you to the University of Edinburgh who kindly lent their 'In the Loop' board game to the EAUC-Scotland for this Community Engagement TSN.</p>	<p>Waste Scotland is happy to lend their 'In the Loop' board games to other institutions. Contact <a href="#">Miriam Adcock</a></p>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>AOCB and Close</b>  <i>John Thorne, Convenor Community Engagement TSN</i></p> <p>No AOCB was discussed.</p>	

Minutes prepared by: Clara Boeker  
EAUC-Scotland Communications and Events Intern  
February 2017