Situating Method: Accountability and Organizational Positionings

Isabel Shaw

Preface

The aim of this working paper is to discuss and initiate a practice of accountability as part of the research process. By this, I mean the processes by which research findings are found and represented: the conceptual tools that inform this, the relationships that are negotiated as part of ethnographic research, and the discriminations that are performed as part of research in processes such as methodological considerations and analysis (McLean and Hassard, 2004: 508-511). This is the first of a series of three papers, which addresses these concerns. In this paper I discuss research method and introduce related perspectives to be taken up in the next two papers. In the second, I consider my experience of being a researcher employed by the same organization that was also the focus of study (Tate Britain). I discuss this experience in relation to the ambivalent status of Tate Encounters Research Project as independent research project and a programmed project within the organization. I give an account of how this experience informs my understandings about the organization and analysis. In the third paper, I continue with this discussion and focus upon the production of expertise and knowledges within Tate Britain. I will look at the different conditions and processes (e.g. strategic, political, organizational, and economic), that either support or constrain the production of knowledge, and its ability to travel across and outside of the organization. I reflect upon the relative mobility of knowledge in relation to the alignment and/or differentiation of certain individuals, departments, projects, and/or organizations within Tate Britain (Strathern, 2004: 30).

Introduction

In the Tate Encounters Research Project Programme (2007), it states the aim of the organizational case study is to examine "whether and how notions of Britishness are reproduced through the professional practices by which the collection is continually produced" (Tate Encounter's Research Programme, 2007: 28). In the development of the project, 'Britishness' was understood by the project's founders as related to a number of different processes, such as government led cultural policy strategies and debates concerning 'citizenship' and 'national identity', in addition to organizational debates about the role and future of Tate Britain as a public institution. In these different examples, 'Britishness' is both an object of governmental policy, and organizational Tate Britain strategy; it is multiple and contested. Both are intrinsically related, for example through public funding initiatives and policy, yet empirically, the forms in which both emerge, and the relationships and socio-economic and organizational processes by which they are mobilised, are varied and of significance for study.

From the outset 'Britishness' was understood as one of a variety of conceptual and material means potentially generated and mobilised in the transformation of organizational processes and practices by employees at Tate Britain. Designed as organizational case studies, which took the development of an exhibition as its initial focus, we sought to develop a methodological approach that could account for how different professional practices and relationships (internal and external to Tate Britain), affected the development of an exhibition and two displays[1]: their meanings, objects, arrangements, and effects. This commitment to an empirical investigation of an array of practices and relationships at, and to Tate Britain culminated in an organizational ethnography carried out over 17 months[2].

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[1] Two displays were included as part of the ethnography because of the institutional relevance attributed to their association with the exhibition by employees across departments.
[2] I have worked as a researcher on the Tate Encounters Project at Tate Britain since April 2007. I began my ethnographic study of the development and opening of the exhibition and displays in December 2007 until October 2008. The organizational ethnography continues until April 2009.

Organizational and professional challenges

The effects of de-regulation have impacted upon the professional work and relationships in the museum and gallery sector in terms of the navigation of multiple public-private relationships (Lee and Hassard, 1999: 394). Within Tate Britain, departments have complex relationships with organizations and individuals (e.g. British Council, Arts Council, artists, politicians, private and public sponsors and patrons, and academics) in relation to diverse work. According to Lee and Hassard, "economic conditions are such that strong organizational boundaries can no longer be treated as short hand for success. Responsiveness to market conditions is the clarion call, and this responsiveness is sought by maximising the flexibility of organizations' internal and external relationships" (Lee and Hassard, 1999: 394). Public institutions such as Tate Britain compete for funds from an array of private and public sources and patrons. Tate Britain is majority funded by private patrons and part-funded by governmental bodies such as the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS). Notions of the 'audience' or 'public' are central to practices of competition for financial support.

For example, one source of funds is built through the programming of paid exhibitions, referred to as 'blockbuster' shows throughout Tate Britain, and is a means by which institutions such as Tate continue to exist financially by attracting paying audiences[3], and private patrons and sponsors. Another source of funding is given by governmental bodies such as the DCMS, who provide recommendations for arts sector strategy, which attempt to inform the development of institutional practices (e.g. exhibition and display programming) and culture (e.g. the encouragement of 'creativity' and 'innovation'[4]) in the museum and gallery sector, and seek to effect and 'diversify' audience attendance. DCMS perform a regulatory role in a provision of public funding that is related to the demonstration of the institutional achievement of such goals. For example, regulation is encountered by museum and gallery professionals in the enactment of auditing practices, which encourage the demonstration of work in relation to set goals, the provision of visitor attendance statistics, and funding applications. Ideas about audiences are central to these and other related practices such as: budgetary planning, programming of exhibitions and displays, acquisition development, and so on.

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[3] 'Blockbuster' exhibitions are the only exhibitions at Tate Britain that have an entrance fee. The majority of the collection is free admittance.
[4] See 'Supporting Excellence in the Arts', McMaster Report, 2008, DCMS Publication

The recent DCMS Report (McMaster Review, 2008) has hinted towards a change in their approach to the arts sector, witnessed in a so-called move away from bureaucratic modes of exchange, and promoting instead, the encouragement of "excellence, innovation, and risk-taking". This is supported by a supposed shift in practice from:

> Measurement to judgement … (intended) to free artists and cultural organizations from outdated structures and burdensome targets, which can act as millstones around the neck of creativity… The time has come to reclaim 'excellence' from its historic, elitist undertones and to recognise that the very best art and culture is for everyone; that it has the power to change people's lives, regardless of class, education or ethnicity (Purnell, 2008: 4).

This suggested move away from practices of measurement, such as targeting, carried out in relation to categories such as ethnicity (e.g. 'BME': 'Black, Minority, Ethnic') and class, in the pursuit of audience development and diversification, contrast with the existent material and conceptual 'tools' mobilised in practices such as market research, marketing, and strategy making, which are related to 'diversity' initiatives, amongst other processes at Tate Britain. These practices situate (rhetorically and discursively) so-called stable and measurable notions of potential audiences at the centre of their practice. There exists a tension between these forms of (contested) economic audience measures, and their enactment in, and relationship to, a variety of professional work and knowledge within and across departments at Tate Britain.

Tate Encounters is not exempt from these tensions that arise from differences in professional practices, disciplines, work, and processes (such as funding applications), that exist in the museum and gallery sector and Higher Education, of which the Tate Encounters Project is located, and comprised of as an inter-disciplinary project. From the initial Arts Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funding application, to the conduct and presentation of research practices inside and outside Tate Britain to audiences such as academic, civil service, policy, and governmental, the Tate Encounters research project was developed, and is situated in relation to (though not necessarily compliant with) certain discursive objects (e.g. the audience, research, diversity policy) and relationships: governmental (e.g. Department for Culture, Media and Sport), organizational/professional (e.g. Tate Britain, London South Bank University, and Wimbledon College of Art), and financial

(Arts and Humanities Research Council); relationships and positionings that we continually seek to account for as part of our own research practice.

Tate Encounter's ambivalent position as a research project within an organization that is also the focus of study requires a reflexive methodology that continually accounts for existent and potential organizational positionings and relations. For example, type 'Tate Encounters Research Project' into Tate's intranet, and it appears in minutes from Tate's diversity forum[5]. Such institutional positionings have and continue to inform an organizational ethnography at Tate Britain, of which I begin to discuss in the next paper. In and through my own encounters with the research project as part of the organizational study, I have begun to ask whether, in this context, Tate Encounters acts as a 'boundary object'. Strathern describes boundary objects as "entities at the borders of discourses" (Strathern, 2004: 45). Bowker and Star (2000) suggest a 'boundary object' emerges when integrations are developed across multiple locales between standards (e.g. audience measurements and classifications) and local constraints (e.g. diverse work practices, objects, and knowledge). Boundary objects are shared objects, and arise through the mediation of relationships across different social worlds. They enable the management of diverse knowledges and viewpoints. There are two problematics that arise from this work, which are especially relevant to the investigation of organizational processes at Tate Britain, inclusive of the Tate Encounters research project: "1. How objects can inhabit multiple contexts at once, and have both local and shared meaning, 2. How people who live (or work) in one community and draw their meanings from people and objects situated there, may communicate with those inhabiting another" (Bowker and Star, 2000: 292-3).

By framing the Tate Encounters Project as a boundary object, I try to draw attention to the various means through which the project navigates multiple professional relationships and institutions during the course of the research process. Focus is placed upon how Tate Encounters is positioned and positions itself in relation to: Tate Britain, the organizations and associations that are part of its professional networks such as DCMS, the Tate Diversity forum, and Gallery Education, to name a few, and the discourses to which the project is situated in relation to (e.g. 'audience', 'diversity', 'research') (Strathern, 2004b: 32). By reflecting upon the mediation of the Tate Encounters Research Project as part of the organizational ethnography, we

5 A forum dedicated to the institutional discussion of policy and strategy in Tate Britain

continue to ask: how, in relation to whom, and under what conditions, does the research project 'overflow' into the organization? Morally, and ethically, this question is crucial to a method that accounts for the conditions under which we as researchers negotiate the social world that we study, and are able to make judgements in relation to these experiences and relationships (McLean and Hassard, 2004: 511). As Strathern suggests referencing Haraway (1988), "objectivity turns out to be about particular and specific embodiments, not transcendence… From this point of view, rational knowledge would not pretend to disengagement; partiality is the position of being heard and making claims, the view from a body, rather than the view from above" (Strathern, 2004: 32). These questions and concerns over practices of accountability and locatedness inform the organizational study's research approach, which are outlined in the following sections.

Research approach

A brief overview of research conducted to date

Our research is concerned with how organizational processes develop, are enacted, and sustained, by and for whom, and through what means. Specifically, we are interested in the practices by which different professional knowledges are formed, translated, and validated, and ask with what institutional effect? As a premise of our research, we rejected a rational-functional model of the organization, and developed an approach, influenced by understandings about human-object relatedness from actor-network-theory, that was concerned with how organizational boundaries, discriminations, and objects, are arranged, performed, and negotiated (Lee and Hassard, 1999: 398-9) in processes such as exhibition and display development, organizational strategy and policy, and the transformation of professional knowledge(s). Focus was placed upon the mundane and everyday interactions, experiences, and enactment of these processes.

The study consisted of 30 unstructured interviews with Tate Britain employees across different departments: curatorial, education, interpretation, visitor services, development, marketing, publishing, online media, development, and press. Tate Britain employees who acted as representatives of these departments as part of a dedicated project team for the exhibition, were selected as an initial group of interview informants. Subsequent informants were approached using the snowball

technique to gaining interviews (Arber, 2001: 63). Using this method, interviews were carried out with additional Tate Britain employees, and informants 'external' to Tate, who were involved in the development of the exhibition and displays through association with Tate employees in collaborative work. Fieldwork included observation of exhibition team, and departmental meetings that were differentiated by employees within the organization in relation to the performance of certain roles.

These meetings can be broadly summarised as: a) exhibition and display programming, b) project team meeting, c) and a research group organised for the purpose of information gathering, evaluation, and consequent assimilation into the exhibition process. Additionally, the ethnography is informed by my experience as an employee of Tate Britain working as a researcher, and situated in the Education and Interpretation Department now known as 'Learning'. This partial, though embodied experience, contributes to my understandings of organizational processes, for which I continue to be employed to investigate and represent as part of the Tate Encounters Research Project.

A socio-technical approach to understanding organizational processes

> Organisation is an achievement, a process, a consequence, a set of resistances overcome, a precarious effect. Its components – the hierarchies, organisational arrangements, power relations, and flows of information are the uncertain consequences of the ordering of heterogeneous materials (Law, 1992: 8).

Law describes organization as a process of 'heterogeneous' ordering, which is both relativist and materialist. Technical and social change is understood as a mutual constitutive process whereby the 'social' cannot be explained at the exclusion of material things – be they performances, objects, and knowledge etc. (Latour, 1993). This approach does not assume that objects are either neutral or stable. Attention is focused upon how objects are contested and defined; how we can account for their constitution and contingent stability (Barry and Slater, 2005: 10). In this view of social-technical change, an object, be it an exhibition, concepts of 'Britishness', or knowledge, is understood as a process than a definitive, stable 'thing'. To account for an object's temporal stability, theorists from the sociology of science and technology studies have attempted to understand the processes by which objects are 'black-boxed'; the networks of (socio-material) relationships and arrangements that hold an object together, or, separate it out. Notions of human-object relatedness from actor-

network-theory have been influential to the study of the transformation of economic and organizational forms and practice.

For example, the term 'cultural economy' refers to a set of current debates about how to account for the reproduction of contemporary economic and organizational practices and processes (see Du Gay and Pryke, 2002, and Amin and Thrift, 2004). It marks a significant theoretical and empirical shift away from viewing economic and organizational realities as rational and functional, whereby so-called cultural, qualitative elements are strategically appropriated into practice. For example, governmental narratives attribute 'culture' as important to 'the economy' and rhetorically position both as separate entities. These narratives also locate museums and galleries as generating and sustaining the culture industries with the aim of positively impacting upon 'the economy'. The process of bracketing off 'culture' from the 'economy' entails an assumption about the naturalization and stability of 'economic' and 'organizational' practices and products (e.g. strategy, policy, targets, consumer segmentations etc.), and positions other objects and work as so-called cultural and qualitative. Instead, Law argues that organizational and 'economically relevant' activity was always cultural (Law, 2002: 21). Amin and Thrift suggest that neo-classical notions of economic (and organizational) practice ignore the "performative and non-rational" elements of economic activity" (Amin and Thrift, 2004: x). Both conclude that research should pay attention to the local processes of organizational and economic practices. ANT is a useful approach to make visible the arrangement of actors and infrastructures implicated in these processes, which contribute to the reproduction of organizations, and may otherwise be hidden or ignored.

Emerging from these debates arise an emphasis and commitment to situated and practical investigations of organizational and economic practices, whereby ethnographic investigation into these processes is welcomed (Du Gay and Pryke, 2002). Barry and Slater have heeded this call towards a focus upon the practical and empirical, and argue that to understand the rate and impact of creativity and innovation in (economic) practice, "we have to attend to what is inventive about invention itself" (Barry and Slater, 2005: 6). In other words, if we are to understand artistic and technical change, then we cannot ignore the practices and objects (knowledge, performances, and infrastructures etc.) that constitute, and mutually transform organizational and economic practice (Barry and Slater, 2005: 6).

Processes negotiated as part of exhibition and display development include (though not exhaustively): professional subjectivities, training, time, budgets, meetings, the arrangement of gallery space in relation to notions of professional jurisdiction, expertise and work, exhibition and display programming, policy and funding strategies and directives, governmental and non-governmental bodies and relationships, ideas about audiences, and the technical capacities of mundane technologies. In the next part of this paper I discuss our approach to research strategy and introduce specific areas of interest for analysis of data.

ANT and the study of material infrastructures

> ANT is characterised by an antipathy to self-definition… by making itself as 'blank' as it can, it prepares itself to record the discriminations that are performed and the boundaries that are constructed in the activities that it studies… for example, the emergence and deployment of centres and peripheries (Callon, 1986), the separation of ontological categories (Latour, 1993) and the relationships between boundaries and flows (Mol and Law, 1994) in the areas it is applied to. In short, ANT is ontological realist in that it allows that the world may be organized in many different ways, but also empirically realist in that it finds no insurmountable difficulty in producing descriptions of organizational processes (Lee and Hassard, 1999: 392).

The value of actor-network-theory (ANT) as a research strategy lies in its insistence upon ontological relativism and analytical flexibility as part of the research process, which enables us to account for a vast array of material arrangements and infrastructures (Lee and Hassard, 1999: 392-3), that, in relation to the museum and gallery sector, encompass professional and regulatory bodies such as the DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport), the Arts Council, and the British Council, among others.

As Lee and Hassard argue, such an approach acknowledges that certain boundary-work exists, but research is focused upon how organizational forms, processes, and boundaries emerge and are performed (Lee and Hassard, 1999: 399). From this perspective, objects within the museum and gallery sector, such as cultural policy, cannot be understood independently from the processes and agents by which they are performed, negotiated, and materialised in diverse forms (for example, PowerPoint presentations, governmental statistics and targets, visitor questionnaires, and internal and external audits, marketing and education budgets etc.). By the same premise, 'the audience' is not a stable concept or 'universal' category, but instead multiple and contested (Trentmann, 2006).

Consequently, our research strategy focused upon the different work, practices, and forms that were configured as part of exhibition development. For example, ideas about potential audiences frequently emerged during the ethnography. In these instances, we recognised that notions of audiences were relative and contingent to the material and professional relationships and practices of specific actors. For example, we looked at the various ways that marketing professionals classified and differentiated potential audiences in relation to different motivations and 'needs', and how this related to processes such as exhibition and display programming. We asked how such categories were developed, by whom, how they were mobilised in the specific work of marketing at Tate Britain, and the conditions under, and extent to which employees worked upon these categories across departments. These questions led us to the work and resources of regulatory and governmental bodies such as the Arts Council, and the DCMS, and internal organizational strategies for practices such as audience development. Ideas about potential audiences are offered, in the form of market research segmentations, by these regulatory bodies as (commercial) audience prototypes to be enacted within and across different departments. We recognised that market research is an intrinsic method of audience research for marketing work, and we sought to understand if and how these recommendations could relate to the diverse work of a variety of departments within Tate Britain (and vice versa). In short, we were attentive to the different strategies, means and resources by which various professionals within different departments carried out their everyday work.

Issues of power and effect

By focusing upon these strategies and resources, we were also concerned to address political questions of power and effect within the organisation, such as (potentially uneven) access and resources to initiate change (McLean and Hassard, 2004: 513). This concern was an expression of an interest in the degree to which the translation of different professional work and knowledge occurred across departments, the conditions needed for it to be able to 'travel', or conversely, be deleted, ignored and/or dispersed as part of the exhibition and display development process. ANT raises a central question about human relationality and power by its claim that an actor's identity is an effect of the networks in which they are a part (Law, 1994: 100). Although sometimes criticised for its tendency to 'flatten out' the embodied experiences of the actors of which it strives to describe, ANT is useful to

us as a research strategy in that it informs an analytical approach to the issue of human relatedness; it draws attention to "the ways in which people find themselves able or unable to make claims upon one another because of, their awareness of their position within or outside a social or socio-technical network" (Knox et al, 2006: 128).

In the process of exhibition and display development, numerous departments across the organization are involved, each with their own practices, socio-material networks, and knowledges. On the one hand, we were interested in understanding how different departments worked together to develop the 'same' exhibition; if and how they articulated their knowledge and practice, and how other members of departments received this. This was a relevant line of enquiry as we sought to better understand the processes by which certain kinds of knowledge were generated by different departments, and their potential effects upon the shaping of the exhibition. Whilst on the other, we were also interested in the sorts of relationships between certain departments in Tate Britain and their work with 'external' organizations and bodies, in terms of how, potentially, the formation of certain professional allegiances affected the direction and form of professional work. As Abbott (1998) suggests, 'expert' knowledge is often generated as part of the making of professional boundaries, boundaries that are made in relation to the production and monopoly of certain kinds of knowledge, work, and practices (Abbott, 1998: 63). Making 'expert' knowledge is therefore often tied to culturally defined processes whereby certain groups or communities occupy the right to act and solve certain problems (Abbott, 1998: 62).

Gaining insights into how this process occurs - the concepts, materials, techniques and relationships that are established and made, to contest and define certain forms and/or aspects of knowledge - is of interest to us, as it reveals the practical use of certain kinds of knowledge within Tate Britain; the processes through and in which knowledge is made, distinguished, used and transformed. As a result, we were interested in how departments were differentiated by themselves and others in relation to certain kinds of work, problem solving and knowledge production.

For example, during the research process, it emerged that there were multiple, contested approaches to certain (related) objects that include audience development, exhibition and display programming, exhibition, content, and notions of the 'art' object, between departments. We were interested in how respective departments understood and valued their own and other's work, how this affected professional

differentiation, and how this potentially affected organizational processes and vice versa.

Tensions surrounding differing notions of professional value between departments were observed in the selection and arrangement of the content of the exhibition, and negotiations over the levels of engagement and effect that certain internal and external individuals, departments, and organizations possessed in relation to the shaping of the exhibition process. We view, therefore, knowledge production as a (epistemic) process (Knorr-Cetina, 2001:180), which is intrinsically linked to, and revealing of, the practical work of organizational actors (Knorr-Cetina and Preda, 2001: 31). During the research process, I focused upon whom employees from different departments worked most closely with, how they worked with each other (if at all), at what point in the process this occurred (if at all), to attempt to understand if, and how, these relations, actions, and considerations shaped the exhibition process.

The audience as uncertain resource

As part of these exchanges and negotiations, which I observed in team meetings and smaller inter-departmental meetings, it became apparent that the question 'who is the audience?' (See Oudshoorn and Pinch, 2003: 6) was especially pertinent. To think of 'the audience' as a potential member of the public was often a red herring, this was because in processes such as exhibition design, certain curatorial practices, elements of the design of digital and analogue interpretation, to name a few, the 'audience' or 'user' - as potential members of the public - was often absent. In such instances, we were interested in the ways in which the audience was appropriated as a discursive object, with which employees mobilised to refer to, and negotiate with, certain professional organizations and colleagues. We therefore acknowledged the heterogeneity of 'audiences' implicated in the process of exhibition and display development, and the locality of their participation and/or inscription in practical work. Although referring to 'users' rather than 'audiences', Oudshoorn and Pinch raise similar points in their consideration of technology development, and emphasise the need to recognise the heterogeneity of both makers and users in the production process:

> Different groups involved in the design of technologies may have different views of who the user might be, and these different groups may mobilize different resources to inscribe their views in the design of technical objects (Oudshoorn et al., forthcoming)… Because of this heterogeneity,

not all users will have the same position in relation to a specific technology. For some users, the room for manoeuvring will be great; for others, it will be very slight (Oudshoorn and Pinch, 2003: 6).

By focusing on the variety of ways in which employees understood, generated, and mobilised objects such as audiences (as concepts and materials) in their work, we looked at if, and how this affected the meanings and materiality of objects such as interpretation, the selection and arrangement of certain paintings, the use of categories to delineate exhibition structure, and so on. As Suchman (2000) argues, there is an important relationship between discourse, materiality, and the demonstration of competence within organizations:

> Within organizational settings there is an intimate relation between forms of discursive and material practices, and action's rational accountability. Learning how to be a competent organizational member involves learning how to translate one's experience, through acknowledged forms of speaking, writing and other productions… Demonstrations of competence are inseparable in this sense, from artful compliance with professional and technological disciplines, reflexively constituted through those same demonstrations (Suchman, 2000: 313).

Suchman suggests that being competent is demonstrated reflexively in and through the performance of certain professional discourses, practices, methods, and technologies. Strathern (2004) makes a similar point in relation to the demonstration of organizational accountability, whereby she suggests (referencing Latimer forthcoming) that expertise and authority can be asserted through the "commandeering (of) discourses and materials" (Strathern 2004: 82). Moreover, that this act of commandeering can occur especially in interdisciplinary work (such as work generated in exhibition development from the multiplicity of professionals and departments involved), where individuals and/or professional communities often find themselves dealing with those from outside their discipline. Instead of interdisciplinary work promising "a utopia of shared perspectives, better problem-identification and more democracy", materials are purposely aligned with social practices from multiple domains, which can be used to "hold people to account even when they have no formal authority over the person concerned" (Strathern, 2004: 82). In these situations, discourse, materials, and the demonstration of expertise and competence are intimately linked. Audit practices are just one example, whereby an array of professional work (e.g. programmed education events, exhibitions and displays, visitor statistics, consumer segmentations) is creatively aligned to government set policy targets (e.g. DCMS and audience development targets); this

process can validate both professional practice and knowledge, justify and fulfil claims to public funding, in addition to the demonstration of internal and external organizational competence.

In the exhibition development process, I observed situations in which demonstrations of competence occurred on an inter-departmental level, such as team meetings, whereby departmental members described and accounted for their work and decisions to each other, some with the intention of attempted collaboration, and others determined to remain independent. Attention was paid to the means (materials and discourses) through which collaboration was attempted and also resisted. In other words, we were interested in investigating the opportunities and processes, such as team meetings, in and through which different kinds of professional knowledge was negotiated and validated. Strathern highlights an important, yet simple observation about collaborative (interdisciplinary) projects; that the act of placing knowledge and ideas into an interdisciplinary context and thus initiating a critical appraisal sometimes serves to validate knowledge. The questions we posed were, therefore, how, and under what conditions, did each departmental representative account for its knowledge practices, in relation to whom, and through what materials and means? These questions were relevant as the interdisciplinary project of exhibition development, and the meetings dedicated as 'team' were not necessarily communal; there existed competing interests and work (Strathern, 2004: 44).

Coming full circle: Tate Encounters Research Project

The focus of research and analysis outlined in this paper is also relevant to an analysis of the Tate Encounters Research Project. Although the project is a different form of collective effort than exhibition and display development, it has common components such as its interdisciplinary nature, its location in relation to 'the same' overall organizational entity that is Tate Britain, and has contingent relationships to various institutions that have emerged as part of the professional networks and discourses implicated in the organizational study to date. In my next paper, Tate Encounter's ambivalent status an independent research project and an embedded organizational project within Tate Britain is discussed, as is my association with the location of the research project in the education department, in terms of how I experienced a sense of contingency in relation to associations between departmental locations, organizational identities, and professional practices within the institution

(see Suchman, 2005). I speak from my experience of 'doing research' within the organization. I will discuss how, and when, research practice was appropriated as, and/or affiliated to, certain institutional processes (e.g. audit trails, diversity policy), and for what aims, purposes, and effects. I reflect on the act of conducting interviews with informants across departments as it became distinguished as an achievement by my informants (and myself) in relation to (lack of) organizational time, related definitions of what constituted 'work', and the means to traverse different departments to conduct interviews. Taking such specific examples and discussing them in relation to an event or a particular moment of ethnographic experience, I use these instances to reflect upon the practice of my knowledge production at Tate Britain.

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