VISUAL, AUDIAL AND ARTISTIC METHODS IN SOCIAL RESEARCH: THE YOUNG PEOPLE CREATING BELONGING PROJECT[1]

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Abstract

This article reflects on the use of sensory and creative methods to explore feelings of belonging among young people in state care across Scotland. The concern was to understand how these young people, many of whom move frequently between short-lived placements in foster families and residential units, construct a sense of belonging in circumstances that differ considerably from conventional and often idealized notions of 'home'. Sensory and creative methods, employed here within relatively unstructured interviews, proved invaluable to understanding difficult-to-articulate, ambivalent, emotional, and aesthetic aspects of belonging. Their use illustrates the potential of moving beyond a reliance on the verbal and textual in qualitative research. Notably this article demonstrates how the use of such methods in data collection and representation can highlight the significance of research participants' agency and creativity however difficult their affective and financial circumstances. As such, these methods also facilitate a greater appreciation of the complex personhood of research participants who may otherwise 'appear' in research outputs only as exemplars of particular social problems.

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Visual, Audial and Artistic Methods in Social Research:
the young people creating belonging project

This article examines the use of sensory and creative methods in a project ('Young People Creating Belonging: spaces, sounds and sight') that explored the complexity of belonging among young people living in state care in Scotland. Through this discussion, the article also points to the broader potential of such methods in sociological inquiry. In both substantive and methodological terms, the project discussed was influenced by May's (2011) concept of belonging as playing a central role in connecting the person to the social. Her notion of belonging is 'person-centred' and focused on everyday lived experience. It further emphasizes the importance of sensory experience and of agency, however regulated, limited or 'thinned' (Klocker, 2007) by difficult circumstances.

It would be difficult to explore such a complex phenomenon in such a sensitive context using only conventional interviewing techniques. Indeed, there has been much criticism in recent years of the widespread reliance on the verbal and textual in qualitative work. Mason argues that sociologists must pay attention to the 'connections, charges and energies that cannot be contained within, or done justice by, existing sociological modes of thought' (Mason, 2018: 3). Decolonising theorist, Rivera Cusicanqui has also pointed to the way that 'images have allowed [her] to discover feelings that elude the censorship of official language' (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2020: 68). Rose contends that photos can 'carry flesh and blood', convey the 'texture' of places and objects, and encourage talk that would not be possible in their absence (Rose, 2007: 237-48). Such 'talk' may involve difficult topics but also issues for which everyday language is lacking. Such critiques have led to the greater use of visual, sensory and creative methods in qualitative research.

The ethical dimensions of such methods are also important. Pink (2009: 9) points to the possibilities of 'understand[ing] and engag[ing] with other people's worlds through sharing activities, [and] practices. These activities remove some control from the interviewer who must respond to the photos and potentially to sounds and other artefacts produced by the interviewee. These methods also engage with the creative and emotional and, as such, may be able to convey the 'complex personhood' (Gordon, 2008) of participants rather than reducing them to exemplars of social problems (Wilson, 2018). As such, while these methods have often been associated with research with young people, they might be considered in projects with any age group.

The flexibility of these methods should also be noted. Visual and creative methods may be folded into a more conventional interview structure, while the written transcript of the conversation provoked by the materials produced may be analysed alongside answers to more standard questions. Furthermore, such methods might also be combined into quantitative methods, drawing on online resources, by uploading photos and videos to surveys, for example.

Introducing the project

As mentioned, this article relates a two-year Scottish study -the '**Sight and Sound Project**'- that employed sensory and creative methods to explore the relationship between the senses (visual, audial and touch) and participants' feelings of belonging (or

not) while 'looked after' (in state care) and as careleavers[2]. In this project therefore, the concept of 'belonging', which is often used in relation to faith or ethnic groups (Yuval-Davis, 2011), is applied to home spaces. Research suggests that 'sensory experience can provide a strong sense of belonging' (Adams et al, 2007), and that sounds, textures and what people see in and from the places they live are important in terms of making a person feel 'at home'. For example, participants in studies of parental substance misuse did not feel at home in houses dominated by loud music and arguments (Wilson et al., 2012). Research has also pointed to the significance of personal items in building and maintaining self-identity and relationships (Miller, 2008), and of sounds – including music (DeNora, 2000) – to making spaces feel safer (Wilson, Milne, 2013).

22 young people (13 young men and 9 young women aged 10-23) recruited through relevant third sector agencies from across mainland (14) and island (8) communities participated in the project. All 22 young people took part in the initial interview, 14 in the second, and six were involved in creating films and music to disseminate project themes. Each young person had different supervision and residential requirements and one quarter of the participants moved between one type of living arrangement and another over the two years. (These living arrangements included residential homes; secure accommodation (for those at risk of harm to themselves or others); foster care; kinship care; with their parents but under supervision; and on their own in social housing.) These transitions, in addition to the timing of school exams and transport issues, affected participation in the second and third interviews/activities. The names used throughout are pseudonyms suggested by the participants, all of whom gave permission for their comments, photos and drawings to be used.

The instructions given to the participants are summarized below. The methods employed included photo elicitation, what might be called sound elicitation, drawing, and mapping. We met with each participant prior to their decision to take part to discuss project aims, technical and ethical issues, including a request not to include recognizable images of other people. Participants were given the choice as to which methods to engage with, and the results suggested varying degrees of comfort with each method. Analysis was thematic, aesthetic and conducted alongside the transcript of the recorded interview discussion of each artefact produced.

Instructions to participants

Activity/Interview 1:
Take photographs of:
- Your 2 favourite places (any space inside or outside, from different angles)
- Your 2 least favourite places (any space inside or outside, from different angles)
- The door/ entrance to your favourite and least favourite spaces.
- 1 room which is used by you and by others where you live
- 3 objects or 'things' that are most important to you
Make 1-3 minute sound recordings of:
- 3 sounds that are positive or make you feel good inside. Include at least one music track

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[2] Scotland is a constituent nation of the United Kingdom. Its legal system including that relating to child welfare differs considerably from that of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

that makes you feel good or that you play the most
- 2 other sounds which are important to you or which you want to tell us about

Activity/Interview 2:

My dream home or room
- Tell us what your dream home would look like. If you want you can make something in advance or, if you prefer you can do it with us.

Music with a Message
- Choose 2 pieces of music with words which are important to you or with lyrics that you would like someone else to hear.

The Place I Live
- Make a map of the place you live or spend most of your time. Add stickers showing where you like, don't like and the spaces you use and don't use.

Activity 3:

All the participants who had taken part in activities 1 and 2 were invited to take part in film making, song writing or art workshop days to communicate their experiences of being in, transitioning through and leaving care. The young people were supported through these days by the research team, three of the participants' key workers and SWAMP media in Glasgow (Wilson, Houmoller K., Bernays S, 2012).

Major Findings

The complex nature of belonging

Overall, the spaces in which the participants felt they belonged included places and people not conventionally associated with ideas of 'home' or 'family'. Many participants worked hard to maintain these connections across different spaces. However, access to important places was often fragile, dependent on strained relationships and sometimes lost, with consequences for their emotional wellbeing. In the absence of such access to space, personal and portable items gained great significance.

Spaces and belonging

Ideas of 'home' are commonly related to one living space associated with a 'nuclear' family. Several participants described such arrangements. They spoke of strong relationships with their carers and with pets, access to comfortable, private bedrooms, and feeling at ease in shared rooms and with the environment around their homes. Maylak (12, kinship care) identified how '*happy*' he felt '*just going into my house*'; Tiger (10, foster care) identified his comfortable bed, his bedroom, 'his' seat in a communal room that he had helped decorate and 'his' space in the garden as his favourite places. Several others spoke at length about how they had decorated their rooms. Leah's room (20, adopted) reflected her love of bright, sparkly colors and objects, while Steven's (16, secure accommodation) posters of New York represented his dreams of future travel. For Plankton (12, foster care), emotional security came from living in small, rural community where she had come to know the local people well. She identified her bedroom, her foster carers, and their house, not only as her favorite spaces and 'objects', but also as her 'dream place to live'.[3]

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[3] Drawing one's 'dream home' was an activity in the second interviews. (See the instructions to participants.)

Some respondents in residential care felt generally that they belonged, but were ambivalent about some aspects of these units. Often shared spaces such as living rooms were associated with unwanted noise and conflict. Marissa (10, children's unit) feared another resident and avoided his room: '*You feel a bit cautious. Like a time bomb's going to go off*'. However, some residents associated workers' officers with comfort and safety, while bedrooms were particularly important. Marissa's bed and bedroom were among her favorite –and safest- spaces '*because I can go there any time and it's just me, nobody else.. and it's got all my books and my bed and things in it.. I just stay on the inside and there's a sort of lock which you can turn easily*'. Security was often mentioned. Like others, Marissa highlighted the importance of small, private often 'secret' spaces, in which to be alone. For her, these included an alcove in her bedroom and a shed and tree in the garden. '*My space is the shed outside.. it's really quiet and nobody thinks of looking for me there.. sometimes I want to get away from it a bit*' (Wilson, Milne 2013).

'My dream
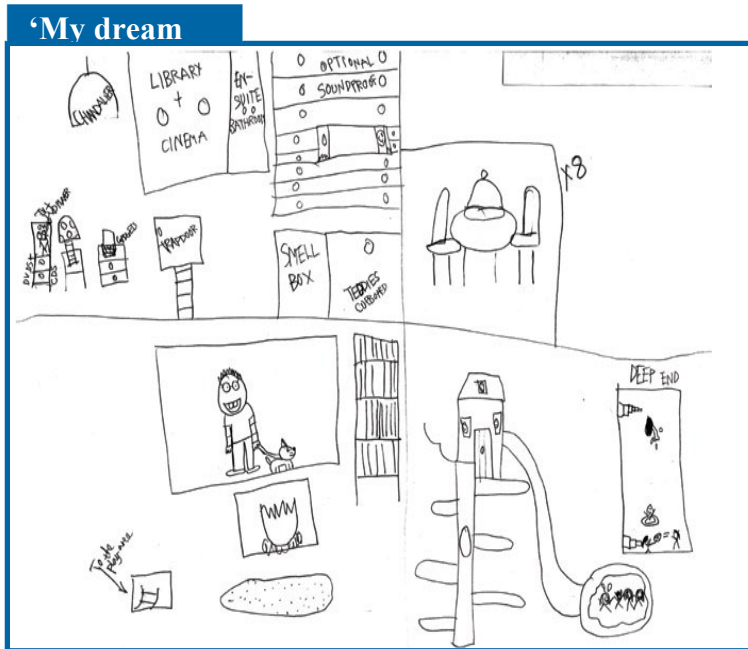
The importance of physical comfort (beds, rugs, smell box), privacy (secret bed, soundproofing), personal items (books), in addition to a desire for safe, communal spaces (chairs and tables for the friends she could not usually invite to tea in the unit) is obvious in Marissa's imaginative drawing of her 'ideal space' (see above). For secure unit residents with limited freedoms, such a sense of belonging was difficult (and potentially undesired). Thomas' (14, secure unit) favourite places were his mum's room, her house and garden and a nearby park where he met his friends, none of which he could access at the time of his interview. He had '*[taken] all the decorations down*' in his room at the unit. He did not want '*to make it homely or roomy.....It's not my home*'.

Several older participants hated the places where they officially lived, preferring to move between different points of networks of inside and outside spaces. In the islands, friends' places provided a degree of privacy and shelter from strong winds. In mainland Scotland, outside spaces were often important. In her network of favourite places, Channel (17, foster care) included a beach and buses: '*I don't argue with anyone…all my feelings just go whooooooo..away from my head. I feel relaxed when I'm on a bus'.* Reggie (23, independent living) meanwhile chose a park close to his former residential unit: '*I still go there every week, walk through, just spend time there. It's nice and peaceful..even when it's busy*'.

These spatial networks often included places with family significance (Channel's aunt's house near the beach mentioned above; Reggie's mum's place), but also friends' flats, where they often slept. These networks were fragile however and by the time of the second interview, Channel had lost access to her aunt's and friend's places, and Reggie to his mum's, after arguments (Wilson, Houmoller, Bernays 2012).

The importance of objects to belonging

The importance of 'transitional objects' has long been recognised in social work practices with children in care such as 'memory boxes' and 'life story work'. Our questions around 'important objects' produced a wide variety of responses. Teddies and other soft toys were often identified as important, even by older respondents, as someone to talk to and as sources of cuddles and familiar smells. They were also important visual mementoes of significant people, as were many other objects including photos (of birth family members, former foster carers, siblings), guitars, a family tartan, and several (broken) clocks. Tiger had few things from before his placement but had taken up his 'adoptive' brother's hobby of collecting animal ornaments: '*I just like lions, I like big cats as well, ..all animals really*'. Participants' histories of moving between numerous placements over time, or between points in a network of places, made portable objects especially important (Wilson, Milne 2013).

Reggie preferred not to have too much: '*I think it's partly to do with the move-ability.. Having too much just slows you down*'. His tattoos, which he saw as permanent, visual representations of his life story can be seen as the ultimate portable object. Many objects identified initially seemed less personal; however the importance of often multi-functional technologies (mobile phones, computers) became clear. Computer games were often used to calm down and to socialise (often over the net). As Penfold (14, foster care) explained '*you don't need to think of anything that's worrying you, just get on Xbox and it'll calm you down… I play people from China, people from America*'. Mobile phones allowed contact with siblings living elsewhere and also stored photos. Toni (16, part time foster care) emphasised that her phone allowed her to 'carry' her family with her as she

moved between foster care and home each week. Access to TV programmes, youtube, music and books, was also important. Five respondents were passionate readers, using books as a means to escape or to process experiences through empathy with fictional characters. One girl (13) in foster care emphasised: '*I was always thick [stupid] ... I couldn't read for anything until I was nine, and.. I got given this book by .. my therapist.. and I was like .. ,'wow I want more!', so I ended up getting addicted.. I felt like I was so there ..part of the family [in the book] and I knew it all. They have to move away cause the dad's abusive and that happened to us*'. Similarly, music was very important to most participants as a source of encouragement, to cheer themselves up and blank out upsetting thoughts, but also to explore complex experiences or feelings (Wilson, Houmoller, Bernays 2012).

Building strong relationships and belonging

Analysis of the artefacts produced or identified by the young people often illustrated very strong relationships with current and former carers, as well as suggesting practices that helped to build such relationships in new placements. Some of these factors are discussed above; including being involved in decision-making around the decoration of communal spaces and bedrooms, and being able to listen to music, play computer games, read or lie on their beds there. Finding quiet places to be alone was also identified as significant in negotiating new care relationships. The front porch was somewhere that Penfold found that he could think in the early days of his [foster care] placement. '*Out on the front porch, that's where I feel safe.. When I first came here I used to always run away and then eventually when I got brought back.. I wouldn't come into the house, I'd just sit there and I'd get used to it.*' Later his favourite place became 'his' corner of the conservatory where he had his gaming chair, computer and games and could calm down, alone or with a dog [as discussed and see image above]. Similarly, Liz (12, foster care) remembered: '*When I was at my first carers..whenever I got really stressed or angry they put a cardboard box in the front porch for me and I'd go and like step on it and ...vandalise it [laughs]...got my anger and stress out*'. In contrast, other respondents pointed to difficult placements where they had been unable to find or create such places or to listen to the music they liked.

Animals were often important in new placements, allowing respondents to give and receive physical affection. Mackenzie (14, living with mother under a supervision order) explained: '*that's my favourite cat.. He's so cuddly and friendly..you can just pick him up and cuddle with him.. I just sit there and talk to him!*' Some animals also had biographical significance. Maylak talked to the dog that had previously

Dylan's cat

belonged to his late mother. Penfold spoke of his carers' dogs in very human terms, describing them as 'his' and looking after them throughout the interview. He also liked the dogs being with him when otherwise alone in his corner of the conservatory. '*That gaming chair's exactly where I sit, and Charlie'll come up and sit on me while I play it…he'll just lie across me and I'll play the Xbox*'. None of the participants in residential or secure units spoke of pets, but Steven loved a new bee-keeping and gardening project in a secure unit (Wilson, Houmoller, Bernays 2012).

Difficulties associated with transitions out of care
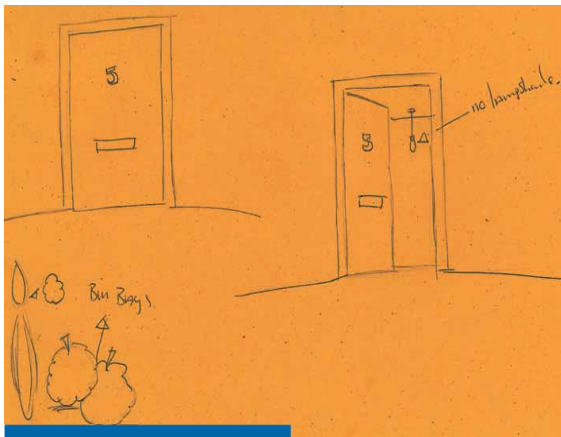
Arriving at my new flat, David

Several older respondents were dealing with transitions to semi- or independent living. The happiest of these were two respondents who lived in purpose-built supported accommodation. Although security was a problem (one had been burgled, the other kept a baseball bat handy in case of intruders), these young people felt relatively 'at home'. In contrast, none of the respondents who had left care entirely felt 'at home'. Often they reported a lack of money and practical help to decorate, furnish, heat, deal with repairs and utilities. Kayden (16, independent living), interviewed a week after moving into a tiny council flat, had found a broken table, broken blinds, and a door he could not open - which later revealed a broken hoover. His attempts to contact the council were hampered by the lack of credit on his phone: '*I've not got minutes to phone. I've only got text and you cannae [cannot] text council[4]*'. Reggie, who

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[4] Councils (or 'local authorities') are responsible for allocating and repairing social housing. They are the main form of government under the national (UK) and devolved governments (including the Scottish Parliament.)

had not known where he would be living until the day of his move, found on arrival that a previous resident had left large debts to utility companies. He had received a lot of advice prior to this move, but much less support afterwards in dealing with these debts and council tax and housing benefit forms[5]. A foster carer emphasised angrily how she felt that successful foster placements could be undermined by young people being given information about transitioning to independent living on the basis of age, rather than any consideration of a person's emotional or practical ability to live alone, or of the type of living arrangements they were used to.

All four participants who were living independently hated where they lived, but felt obliged to stay due to housing law provisions on 'intentional homelessness'[6]. One respondent suffered panic attacks when alone in her flat, another was on medication for anxiety. After previous positive experiences of living in busy residential units, Dylan (18, independent living) and David both hated the silence of living on their own and spent most of their time at friends' places. Dylan tried to eradicate the silence with loud music and pet animals. David described a feeling of desolation and absence of care– symbolised in his drawing by the lack of a lampshade after arriving at his bedsit with his belongings in plastic rubbish bags. After two years, he he was still unable to decorate the flat: *'I think it's the isolation, I think it's being by myself but I hate the place. I hate it. ..I didn't decorate it but I know it won't help [laughs].. I just don't feel good there'.* Another participant told us *'I took a wee freak out/ black out sort of fit thing and chucked my bed out, so I've only got a mattress now [laugh]!.. I just hated everything in the house'.*

As a result of 'the local connection' test employed by local authorities, respondents were sometimes obliged to live in towns, or in Ned's case (17, part time foster care) on an island, where they did not feel they belonged. The location of flats could also be alienating; participants spoke of violence in surrounding streets or of keeping weapons hidden by the door for protection, while another disliked looking out on a landmark where young people who were in care had committed suicide (Wilson, Houmoller, Bernays 2012).

Caring and non-caring relationships with significant agencies, especially the police

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[5] Housing benefit forms part of the UK social security system: the state pays the rent of those in the most difficult circumstances. Council tax is a local tax that funds local services. Council tax benefit exempts those with the least resources from payment. (All these benefits have been reduced in recent years however by the Conservative UK government. Social security is a 'reserved matter' and so is controlled by the UK and not by the Scottish government.)

[6] Local authorities have a duty to allocate social housing to careleavers with a 'local connection' to their area. However, if they turn down the accommodation offered they can be ruled to have made themselves 'intentionally homeless'. In this case, the local authority has no further duty to them.

My least favorite place: the police station, Thomas

Police Station Least Favourite Place, Toni

Our methods prompted the participants to talk about their relationships with various agencies. Many paid tribute to the practical support, care and fun provided by a variety of statutory and voluntary sector workers. However, several respondents from Glasgow [the largest Scottish city] and the islands identified police stations as their 'least favourite spaces'. Four island participants felt targeted by the police. One young woman (16) explained: *'I'm known to them now..they just pick me up instead of anyone else'*. She also felt that the police were abusive: *'They throw you on the floor..they take your blanket and your mattress away..They take your shoes off, take your belt off, take your jumper off, and if you refuse to do it they'll pin you down, and they'll actually take your bra off.. They ask you 'have you ever self-harmed?' 'no' and then they do it anyway'*. Similarly a Glasgow participant compared the police unfavourably with secure unit staff *'[The police] always try and hurt you..they don't care, they just pure squeeze yer heid [head] down..In here [secure unit]..they try to keep you safe... They're putting you down on the ground but they're placing you down safely and they're just like that 'come on ..just calm down'..and they point out good things'*.

Jodie (15, children's unit) and Mackenzie, whose only contact with the police came as witnesses to the incidents that led them into the care system, criticized how they had been left scared, tired, hungry and thirsty in police stations very late at night. Jodie felt as if *she* were the one who had done something wrong. Mackenzie recalled that *'[the police] called the social work but it took them two hours to do that…and then after that it took about an hour for the taxi to get there, and then another hour to get to the place (emergency house) that I was going, so I was there at about three o'clock in the morning and I had school the next day.'* She also criticized the police's response to her contacting them on behalf of a friend who was thinking of committing suicide: *'they said 'we'll call you back' and I was waiting up until [2.15am] and they still didn't call me, they've still not called me now'*.

The advantages of creative, participatory methods

The second part of this article will discuss the advantages of the methods used to explore this complexity of belonging. As mentioned above, these methods included taking photos,

recording sounds and music, drawing the places the participants spent most of their time, designing their ideal homes, writing and recording their own songs, and making a film about their experiences of transition. The participants told us (and their enthusiasm certainly suggested) that they enjoyed using these methods. The focus on 'doing' allowed them time to reflect on their personal situations, and seemed to put them at greater ease than more formal question and answer interviews. The potential of these methods was also commented on by foster carers and keyworkers who found that the artefacts produced enabled them to open up conversations which the young people they looked after had previously avoided, or which the carers had not known how to discuss.

The use of these methods transferred a degree of power to the participants who could decline to do any of the activities, and whose photos and sounds directed our discussions. While some participants struggled a little with technical aspects of the camera and sound recorder, most needed little assistance and went beyond the project instructions exploring film and editing functions. A few respondents also used the equipment for their own purposes beyond the project aims. Channel, for example, took many photos connected to her friends for use in a college project. All the respondents were extremely happy to receive copies of their photos after the interviews, especially those who had so few photographs of their own and no access to cameras.

From a research perspective, these methods helped us to make connections we were unlikely to have made in the context of a conventional interview in the absence of the visual or verbal prompts chosen by the respondents. Taking photos of objects important to the participants often led to rich perspectives on associated relationships. Liz took a photo of a wrapped Christmas present and card to represent her younger brother. Through the ensuing conversation Liz told us: *'I only see him once a month…, that's why we* **really** *get on [laughs]'.* As the discussion progressed, transitions in her brother's living arrangements, and hence her reduced contact with him, also became apparent: *'I dinnae ken [do not know] where he lives. He just moved too, so, and .. I normally see him once every single month, but I couldnae [could not] see him in November.. because November they were moving house'.*

Many of these insights were produced through looking at photos together in the interview. For example, Liz identified a tiny bike helmet as a memento of her first foster carers from eight years previously after being asked about its presence in a photo of her room. Channel's cumulative answers to questions about objects visible in the photo of her aunt's living room led to the realisation that this house (and the dog there, and the picture on the wall) had previously belonged to her late grandfather,

Channel's favourite place, her late grandad's living room

perhaps the most stable relationship in her life.[7] Furthermore, photos of rooms she had decorated at her friend's flat revealed that she had reproduced a similar aesthetic there. These insights further helped to understand Channel's disarray in her second interview by which time she could no longer access these places. She recounted that on losing access to her aunt's house, she had ripped off a piece of the wallpaper pictured below as a keepsake.

Channel's decoration of her friend's flat

Sometimes discussion of the photos produced led to a further appreciation of the importance of respondents' audial experience, reinforcing our use of sound elicitation. Dylan's photo of a cat with a bell around its neck reflected both his feelings of insecurity in his flat but also his hatred of the silence there after moving from a noisy -and much loved- residential unit. Several respondents recorded silence; some as their favourite sound, others because it made them uncomfortable. Water was another commonly recorded sound. For some, this related to a love of relaxing in hot baths, in the one room in a house from which others could be excluded. For Leah, the sound of rain conjured a sense of security and comfort. Reggie was soothed by the sound of water; it reminded him of the more natural lifestyle that he craved.

Our request to record a musical track also produced important insights, drawing on technologies and interests relevant to the participants' everyday lives. It became clear that the respondents used music in various ways. Sometimes music provided a source of identity. Reggie used it to disassociate himself from his birth family's tastes; Drab (12, children's unit) listened to musicians with geographical connections to his birth family, while Leah, Dylan and others, recorded music that evoked memories of their birth parents. Music was also used to create a comfortable, safe place; to cheer themselves up (Stereohearts 'Gym Class Heroes'; Cher 'Is it in his Kiss?'); as a source of inspiration (Wagner 'Ride of the Valkyries'; Jessie J 'Laserlight'); and motivation (Eminem, 'Lose Yourself' and Chumbawumba 'I Get Knocked Down..But I Get Up Again').

Sometimes lyrics were used to work through and communicate difficult emotions. Like several others, Thomas carried a song around with him which enabled him to process the death of a close family member. Having had friends die through, or attempt, suicide, Vincent (16, living with his mother under supervision) used the Papa Roach song 'Last Resort' to express his powerlessness and frustration with agencies around self-harm and suicide, and to advocate for greater publicity and funding for services for young people. One of Drab's musical choices combined the visual with the audial. He filmed himself watching an excerpt of the video for Professor Green's 'Read All About It' (ft Emeli Sandé), a track that he used to reflect on his lack of relationship with his own

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[7] Social housing tenancies may be passed to an adult relative when a tenant dies.

father and siblings, and related sense of loss and anger. Drab had been obliged to attend 'anger management classes'. His discussion of this song and video suggested that he wanted some acknowledgement of a right to anger. At the same time, he also emphasised that over the years he had become less angry, but felt that this hard-earned personal development was not recognised by others.

Several young people played instruments with friends and key workers, and in bands and orchestras. Steven was very proud of having built his own guitar. A few participants played instruments during their interviews, to relax and demonstrate their skills. Penfold had written music which provided the soundtrack for a game. Bob (13, foster care) played his guitar and wrote songs each day after school. His foster carer explained that this therapeutic process of song writing and playing was *'how you can understand some of his feelings..some of the songs that he does sing are quite sad but then they have happy endings, because he's making up his life journey. If something's happened to him, likes if he came in from school and he felt he was getting bullied, he sang a song about bullying'.* Bob recorded himself for the project playing *'The Black Rose* Song' which he had written to reflect his journey through foster care. On first arrival, his heart was a black rose, symbolically dead. However, later lyrics refer to a beach (his favourite place) where his carer had taught him to sit and process his feelings. The song ends optimistically with the words '*now my rose is turning red, my heart is no longer dead, anymore, anymore*'. Asking Bob direct questions about these experiences in a conventional interview would have raised numerous ethical concerns. In any case, reflecting on his songs facilitated a much richer understanding of his experience of foster care and its positive emotional impact through the identification of spaces of security and a strong relationship with his carer.

Conclusion

This article draws on a project that explored the complexity of belonging among young people living in the care of the state and careleavers in Scotland. The data collected highlighted participants' often ambivalent feelings of belonging and how their sense of 'home' space sometimes differed considerably from conventional notions of one, interior, and tranquil, space. The importance of spaces that incorporated reminders of

important people and good memories, while supporting the possibility of imagination and creativity was emphasised. Similarly, many participants identified items that connected them to people they could not always see, provided comfort through texture or smells, or helped them to reflect or escape. The data also foregrounded difficulties associated with the transition to independent living not only because of a lack of support from relevant agencies but also because of a sensory environment so different to those previously experienced and associated with feeling 'at home'.

The use of sensory and creative methods proved critical to understanding some of the intricacies associated with belonging in this context. Their use in data collection enabled discussion of sensitive, difficult-to-articulate issues and facilitated engagement with emotional, aesthetic and ambivalent aspects of belonging. It is argued that the use of conventional interviews tied exclusively to verbal expression and textual analysis could not have produced this data. Furthermore, the display of the artefacts produced in research outputs promotes recognition of the participants' 'creative personhood' rather than reducing them to anonymized exemplars of the particular social phenomenon under examination.

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САРА УИЛСОН, ЭЛИЗАБЕТ-ДЖЕЙН МИЛН - *Визуальные, аудио и художественные методы в социальных исследованиях: молодежь, создающая проект.* - В статье рассматривается использование сенсорных и творческих методов для изучения чувства сопричастности среди молодых людей и подростков, находящихся на попечении государства (на примере Шотландии). Задача исследования состояла в том, чтобы понять, как эти молодые люди, многие из которых часто чередуют кратковременное проживание в приемных семьях с размещением в квартирах-интернатах, формируют в себе чувство принадлежности к условиям, которые значительно отличаются от обычных и часто идеализированных представлений о «доме». Сенсорные и творческие методы, использованные авторами в относительно неструктурированных интервью, оказались крайне эффективными для понимания трудновыразимых, амбивалентных, эмоциональных и эстетических аспектов принадлежности. Их использование иллюстрирует потенциал выхода за пределы опоры на вербальные и текстовые данные в качественных исследованиях. В частности, статья демонстрирует, как использование таких методов при сборе и представлении данных может подчеркнуть значение свободы действий и творчества участников исследования, какими бы сложными ни были их аффективные и финансовые обстоятельства. Как таковые, эти методы также способствуют лучшему пониманию сложной личности участников исследования, которые в противном случае могли бы «появляться» в результатах исследования только как примеры конкретных социальных проблем.

Ключевые слова: *Качественные методы, визуальные методы, сенсорные методы, принадлежность, молодежь на государственном попечении*

ՍԱՌԱ ՎԻԼՍՈՆ, ԷԼԻԶԱԲԵԹ-ՋԵՅՆ ՄԻԼՆ – *Տեսողական, ձայնային և գեղարվեստական մեթոդները սոցիալական հետազոտություններում. նախագծեր ստեղծող երիտասարդությունը* - Հոդվածն անդրադառնում է Շոտլանդիայում պետական խնամքի տակ գտնվող երիտասարդների շրջանում պատկանելության զգացումները ուսումնասիրելու զգայական և ստեղծագործական մեթոդների կիրառումը: Նպատակն էր հասկանալ, թե ինչպես են այն երիտասարդները, որոնցից շատերը խնամատար ընտանիքներից հաճախ տեղափոխվում են սոցիալական ծառայությունների կողմից հատկացվող կացարաններ, իրենց մեջ ձևավորում սոցիալական պատկանելության զգացում այնպիսի պայմաններում, որոնք զգալիորեն տարբերվում են «տան» մասին ընդունված և հաճախ իդեալականացվող պատկերացումներից: Զգայական և ստեղծագործական մեթոդները, որոնք հոդվածում կիրառվել են պատանիների և երիտասարդների հետ հարցազրույցների ժամանակ, խիստ արդյունավետ են պատկանելության՝ դժվար արտահայտվող, երկիմաստ, զգացմունքային և գեղագիտական կողմերը հաս-

կանալու առումով: Դրանց օգտագործումը բացահայտում է որակական հետազոտու-
թյան մեջ բանավոր և տեքստային եղանակներով չսահմանափակվելու նոր հնարավո-
րություններ: Հոդվածում ներկայացվում է, թե ինչպես տվյալների հավաքագրման և
ներկայացման ժամանակ նման մեթոդների կիրառումը կարող է ընդգծել հետա-
զոտության մասնակիցների ստեղծագործական կարողությունների նշանակությունը,
որքան էլ դժվար լինեն նրանց կեցության աֆեկտիվ և ֆինանսական հանգամանքները:
Կիրառված մեթոդները նպաստում են նաև հետազոտության մասնակիցների բարդ
անհատականության ավելի խորքային ըմբռնմանը, ինչն այլ պայմաններում կարող էր
«հայտնվել» հետազոտական արդյունքներում միայն որպես որոշակի սոցիալական
խնդիրների մասին վկայող տեղեկություն:

Բանալի բառեր՝ *որակական մեթոդներ, պատկերավոր մեթոդներ, զգայական*
մեթոդներ, պատկանելություն, պետական խնամքի տակ գտնվող երիտասարդներ

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