Productive Margins: Regulating *for* Engagement
Scoping Study: Phase II

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Introduction

Phase II of this short research project for Productive Margins aims to reorganize and add to the materials presented in Phase I. I have attempted to restructure and thin out the first section on co-production by defining it in positive terms rather than simply bringing all the different approaches to co-production together. Section two offers some brief notes on the idea of regulating for engagement, and then provides a list of techniques of engagement and links to videos that showcase co-production-in-action. This is in response to the idea that the term, 'regulating *for* engagement' needs more elaboration, using examples, to illustrate to programme partners what it is intended to mean. Section three has been expanded to focus more on forum *development* rather than simply (initial) forum setup, and highlights some of the more useful criteria for co-produced/participatory research, along with some ideas on what the forum could be and how it can be made most effective.

The result is a report that should be easier to share (and stimulate discussion) with non-academic partners. I have tried to balance this with the usefulness of a narrative form and openness that is suited to those not familiar with the literatures, who would benefit from extra context for purposes of orientation to new literatures.

Part I: What is Co-Production?

Pohl *et al.* (2010) describe co-production as what occurs in what they describe as the *agoras* between science and non-science – that is, the public spaces where "science meets the public" and "public speaks back to science" (Nowotny *et al.*, 2001: 247, cited in Pohl *et al.*, 2010: 269).

The demarcation here between science and 'the' public is too neat and binary, and assumes a relationship between science and the public that we will question below. Nevertheless, it conjures an image of the kinds of tensions that emerge in co-production, where different knowledge bases and modes of inquiry interact and move forward together. These spaces congeal around shared stakes or *matters of concern*, which are the productive engines driving the co-production of new knowledge. Not only are shared stakes or matters of concern 'boundary objects' in the sense that they allow disparate knowledges and inquirers to bridge with one another, but they are problematic – they are problems or clusters of disputed issues, rather than facts as such. The problem is the shared context of co-inquiry.

It is worth bearing in mind, as Sheila Jasanoff (2004) insists, that co-production is more usefully considered as an idiom than a fully-fledged theory. We might then ask, what are the key themes particular to this idiom if it is to be made useful for the Productive Margins research programme?

1.1 Performing experiments around key stakes and problems

'Controversies' in matters of science and society do not threaten democracy, but on the contrary enrich it if they are used to launch 'collective explorations' (Callon *et al.*, 2009). Such explorations occur when new actors arrive on the scene and the controversies, which are inherently both technical and social, "reveal the multiplicity of stakes associated with one issue, but also…make the network of problems it raises both visible and debatable" (*ibid.*: 31). Controversies reveal uncertainties (particular kinds of problems), and these uncertainties drive experimentation.

From the outset, it is important to focus on how both controversies and experimentation can operate through so-called 'beyond-text tools' (Purcell, 2009; Boeck and Thomas, 2010; Jones, 2006; Scearce, 2011, Beebeejaun *et al.*, 2013), including performative concepts, methods and outputs, which allow us to co-produce more than propositional forms of knowledge. For instance, we can use forum theatre techniques to focus on stories (Brookes *et al.*, 2012), art and photography (Beebeejaun *et al.*, 2013). According to Beebeejaun *et al.* (2013), the *ethos* is more important than the techniques *per se* when devising beyond-text tools (see also Noorani *et al.*, 2013). Such beyond-text tools should not be understood as 'without text' – tweeting, for example, is beyond-text as is conventionally understood. These tools can be used both to supplement and to critique the range of participatory and deliberative techniques.

Sensitivity to the 'beyond-text' is not just about broadening the methods we use in co-produced research. It also emphasises non-representational approaches to co-

production – rather than trying to explain or describe what the world *is*, we should be seeking to evoke poetically what cannot be said, in order to make us question who we (think we) are and what we (think we) ought to be doing (Phillips and Kristiansen, 2013: 269).

Finally, attending to co-production as the performance of experiments requires focusing on the ways in which failing to perform effectively leads to doubt and mistrust (Clarke, 2006), which can trouble effective forms of collaboration, participation and collective, reflexive research. The fields of performative social science and community arts highlight how 'learning through co-production' demands expansive conceptions of learning, beyond the simple lexicon of *analysis*. Here again, the idea of learning-by-doing links learning and experience, taking stock of the fact that experience is far more multi-faceted than the acquisition of propositional knowledge, involving feeling, hearing, tasting, touching, seeing (for example, Doornbos, 2008).

1.2 Co-production is not opposed to regulation but requires it

What do we mean by experimentation? Stengers (2008) describes it as the (difficult) work of holding some things still while moving other things, in order to produce *significant* differences, which can be communicated and verified within a community of co-inquirers. The systematicity and carefully controlled way in which experimentation holds some things still while moving other things requires careful regulation of the process. Meanwhile, the notion of a community of co-inquirers brings to mind the importance of shared standpoints over universal conceptions of objectivity in research and knowledge production (*cf*. Harding, 1993).

Regulation is never neutral and it cannot be evaluated in general terms (by opposing it to grass-roots 'freedom', for example). Ben Barker from the Productive Margins forum meeting makes the point that the need for public toilets illustrates the challenge of making the regulatory powers of *things* more explicit – if a public space has no public toilets, this effectively prevents people being there, affecting some demographics more than others. In another example, regulation by the university, or through the university, proceeds according to specific ethical and bureaucratic processes that privilege particular ways of seeing and doing research and these should be made explicit in extra-university collaborations such as the Productive Margins programme.

Regulation exists wherever structures are put in place or altered, including the habits of individual and collective bodies. Thinking at this level of 'habits', of the everyday regulation of our lives, there is a literature emerging around how we change habits, and the importance of keeping our forms of self-regulation loose so that they are adaptable, capable of incorporating and being changed by diverse and dissenting practices. We should not over-emphasise rational cognitive analysis at the expense of other (sensory and non-sensory) aspects of experiencing (Doornbos, 2008).

Thus co-production is a regulated process of holding certain things still while changing others in order to produce knowledges around the significant differences. Also, in the process of research, we might discover or invent forms of regulation that facilitate engagement in ways not recognized by formal political or economic structures, nor

accorded value through market mechanisms or bureaucratic authority. Particular stakes or matters of concern perform a regulatory function in holding the co-inquiry together.

New institutional theory offers a typology for thinking about the way that collaborative research is regulated. For instance, Scott (2001, see also Barnes *et al.*, 2007) identifies three interlinked 'pillars of institutions':

- Regulative – systematized rules that frame and monitor action;
- Normative – prescriptions for appropriate behaviour in given value sets;
- Cultural-cognitive – common constructions of meaning-producing templates of 'how we do things'

(Scott, 2001: 52-8; see also Barnes *et al*, 2007: 58-63).

Barnes *et al.* apply this three-fold distinction to the institutions of representative democracy and to public participation initiatives, to show through cases studies how the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive pillars have arisen, how they have shaped current understandings of deliberation, and how they may be renegotiated. New institutional theory helps to illustrate the double bind of regulation in both enabling and constraining participation:

> "...the way in which institutional rules and norms that operate within the public bodies sponsoring such [deliberative] initiatives influence what it is possible to achieve, and how such processes themselves develop their own rules (both formal and informal) that determine who can take part and how participation can be performed" (*ibid*: 2).

The rules and norms that both facilitate and constrain processes of engagement produce institutional dynamics that Barnes *et al.* use in offering three categories of institutions: sources of support; sites of challenge and opportunity, and prisons (enacting little change in the institutional culture, norms or rules while providing a "thin veneer of symbolic conformance" (*ibid.*: 192)). Participatory action research operates through cycles of action and reflection that provide a regulatory framework for the co-production of research (see for example, Pain, 2011).

Mechanisms of accountability can regulate research processes in potentially helpful ways, making sure that those involved in the research are acting appropriately and with legitimacy. However, accountability according to a delegate model is not the only (or even necessarily most appropriate) form of regulation – there are those who are otherwise authorized, such as users in service provision contexts. Those who constantly renegotiate their positions in offering 'authenticity' (Chapman and Lowndes, 2009) to the research process such as faith leaders might also be 'regulated in' on contingent but ongoing grounds.

Finally, without forms of regulation that have teeth, the fruits of co-produced research can end up having only tokentistic effects, when put up against powerful corporate interests for example. Regulation is required both for successful co-produced research and for acting upon the research findings.

1.3 Collaborative/collective spaces and experimentation

Pohl *et al.* (2010) describe the structure of co-production agoras in terms of the need to advocate for the co-existence of 'thought collectives' with their respective 'thought styles' (Fleck, 1935) when it comes to the issue(s) at stake. Using the metaphor of thought-styles and thought-collectives risks eliding questions of power by focusing too narrowly on problems of language. Nevertheless, Pohl *et al.*'s case studies point to several key values that need to emerge in successful co-production, including trust and respect between different thought collectives. Trust in co-production can be hard to develop and easy to erode. The Authority Research Network has explored the centrality of the cultivation of trust and honesty in the production of relations of authority (Blencowe *et al.*, 2011; Brigstocke and Noorani, 2012).

The nature of the collective turns on the idea of which voices, persons and claims are able to present themselves, making themselves visible, audible or otherwise-experienced. The concepts of presence/visibility/voice has been central to various formulations of participatory practice. One set of literatures celebrate the coming together of a plurality of presenting bodies/minds into a unified body/mind (for example, Berleant, 1991; Thomas *et al.*, 2011). This can take a mystical feel, where participatory experience is characterized by a loss of self-consciousness – it becomes a totally integrated experience, devoid of subject-object duality (Thomas *et al.*, 2011; for a review see Brigstocke and Noorani, 2012: 37).

The notion of co-experimentation here does not require such a definitive sublimation of the research partners and the research objects into new and unified wholes. Certainly, the project teams will form new unities, but these will continue to exist alongside the contestation and internal inquiry of the groups and individuals that comprise the overall programme. Thus the 'activist-academic' *hybrid* (Durose *et al.*, 2012) is not the only 'figure of co-production' – indeed, demanding that co-production requires the reduction to a unity of a plurality of inquirers sets a very high bar of what count as success. Rather, co-production allows for the simultaneous testing of collective and individual sets of hypotheses and assumptions.

Moreover, insofar as the different research partners do not become unified, it is crucial that the outputs of the co-produced research are useful for *all* partners. This includes having ongoing resources for all partners that build practical knowledge *and* foundational knowledge (Facer *et al.*, 2012), as well as non-knowledge forms. This can be described in terms of generating social capital for all involved (Lesser, Prusak *et al.*, 2000), or through creating 'joint' practices or shared repertoires (Wenger and McDermott, 2002 – see the Communities of Practice literature).

Facilitating effective research co-production through experimental inquiry requires enough agreement to decide what to research and how to do it. One way to probe these issues is through the analysis of dialogue (for example, Phillips, 2011; Jensen, 2000). Jensen (2000) provides an example of a Bakhtinian analysis of the sharing of stories in peer support groups. For Bakhtin, dialogue requires multiple voices to be cultivated, as a voice can only exist in relation to an 'other'. For Bakhtin, 'monoglossia' describes a single perspective that rejects all other viewpoints but in so doing, denies the existence of an other with equal rights and responsibilities. Thus, the need for plural mutually-

contesting voices, rather than a single united collective voice, is an obligation stemming from the metaphysical demand to recognize the rights of the other.

1.4 Mattering and measuring

What do we mean when we say that the objective of co-production is the gathering of knowledge about *significant* differences? This means differences that *matter* – in both the sense of being of value, and of reconfiguring material arrangements and capacities – or in other words, that make themselves *present* through matter (Stengers, 2000; Lury and Wakeford, 2012; Barad, 2007). Barad's onto-epistemology emphasizes the role of apparatuses in defining what can be measured, and the act of measurement as the 'cutting' of the world into subject-object dualities. Things must be made measureable, but the apparatus that renders something measurable changes it in the same moment.

The key concept of 'presence' does not mean that co-production should be solely focused on binding co-producers as a new unity, as the separation between knowledge producers is central to measurement and knowledge production (Barad, 2007; Noorani *et al.*, 2013). Orr and Bennett (2012) explore the importance in co-producing (or as they describe it, 'co-creating') research of paying attention to situated and unsettling interactions rather than striving for communion between the different researchers. The very ideal of openness (i.e. co-production as always being open to the 'other' participating) is in tension with a need for boundaries in order for measurement to occur. For example, citizens juries close off the number of people involved, and multiple-day workshops and retreats need to hold the boundaries of the event still for long enough for a sense of shared context to emerge.

The act of measuring through material apparatuses is not innocent when the apparatus of measurement interacts with the value of the outputs. For instance, pushing people for answers to questions about how they feel can end up changing (in the least, by demanding an exact response as to) how they feel. However, the question of matter goes deeper still, as the material aspects of collaborative inquiry remain actively constitutive throughout the research process. We must remain vigilant as to how the material apparatuses are always and actively in-forming the processes of participation. Marres and Lezaun (2011) take on this challenge:

> "Set against the background of post-Foucauldian perspectives on the material dimensions of citizenship and engagement – perspectives that treat matter as a tacit, *constituting* force in the organization of collectives and are predominantly concerned with the fabrication of political *subjects* – we outline an approach that considers material engagement as a distinct mode of performing the public."

The challenge they set for themselves is to escape two unsatisfactory traditions for thinking about politics – on the one hand, as a space over and above the material where disembodied 'voices' compete, contest, co-produce etc; on the other hand, as dynamics that the material world contributes to but does not actively engage in. On this second reading of materiality and politics, materiality refers to the props that set the stage but remain inert throughout the performance. Instead, Marres and Lezaun offer an agenda to understand matter as actively performing roles in participatory spaces. They suggest

approaching the material world using three tropes, of material entanglement versus disentanglement (what is connected to what and how), effort versus effortlessness (depending on the material setup, some processes or outputs will require a lot of effort and others will be effortless – either could be politically attractive depending on what is at stake: for example, the value of self-mastery versus the easiness of intervening) and experimentation as about creating singular spaces versus experimentation as being concerned with self-repetition and generalisability.

What about the very material outputs of the research – what could they look like? Using creative analytic practices such as layered texts, creative non-fiction, fiction, poetic re-presentations and personal narratives, allows us to destabilize the authority of the researcher and create space for the 'voice' of others not already legitimized by dominant epistemologies:

> "The claim is that they present multiple truths which highlight the lived experiences of participants from their own perspectives, draw attention to the contingency and partiality of researcher truths and invite multiple interpretations by audiences" (Phillips and Kristiansen, 2013: 276).

Such practices complement the usual range of reporting techniques by helping to keep the knowledges produced open and contestable, reminding us of the possibility of 'cutting' the world in other ways. Additionally, centering ourselves on the *processuality* of inquiry can change the framing of the issues at stake. For example, by focusing on the process of 'wondering', what might otherwise be fairly static unknowns or uncertainties can be dynamised, transformed into the drivers of co-inquiry. This expands the possibilities for working with what we know, even in cases where what we know is that 'we do not know something'. A second methodological maxim, from actor network theory, is to enact figure-ground reversals in order to see 'chronic problems of the community' as instead 'sustainable community solutions' – changing the framework by changing the point of view of the measurement.

1.5 Making, producing and creating, not trading, exchanging or transferring

Sometimes we should accept the knowledge of a particular kind of expert in the research forum, where it is clear to all at that time that they know best. The different knowledge bases that are brought to the table provide backdrops against which co-produced hypotheses can be tested in collaborative and pro-active ways. However, co-production only begins when the different knowledges that are brought together begin to synergise and produce something new. The knowledges that emerge from co-production will be multi-modal and multi-disciplinary, drawing on several kinds of expertise and authority and building new and/or hybrid forms of expertise. This requires experimental *work*, part of which is to connect the patchwork of existing knowledges together so that they can be drawn upon and reformed when co-inquiring around key stakes or matters of concern.

Callon suggests that in 'wild' hybrid forums where no great effort has been made to discipline and organize, collaboration does "…not amount to simple agoras…They are the products of hidden struggles" (2009: 154). He suggests background forces tend

towards the 'double delegation' of representatives standing in for collectives and specialist scientists standing taking over from hybrid groups. These processes of making therefore require regulatory frameworks to ensure that they are non-dominating, inclusive and open processes, able to combat the pressure to create research silos full of the 'usual suspects'.

Co-production also includes the training of students involved and of community partners interested in research methods. This evokes the imperative in action research and communities of practice literatures to draw upon existing university resources in engagement with communities. In both offering, and using, such resources, trainees might take the position of boundary-crossers themselves, in which case reflexive tools should be built into their approaches. For instance, boundary-crossers might emerge from situating researchers in the community partner organizations rather than at the universities. There are many lists of training requirements for effective co-production (for example, Pohl *et al.*, 2010), including:

- Pluralist understandings of cognition and interpretation
- Sensitivity to underlying power relations
- Skills in integrating different interests
- Practices and values and skills in facilitating learning processes

Folding this section back into the last, this could be understood as apparatus-development in a general sense – building the skills, capacities and other tools necessary to be able to engage in effective co-production while recognizing that these very tools delimit something of the range of possible ways that the research can unfold.

Pain *et al.* (2013) offer an example of how the experiences of co-producing research with communities can form a teaching aid through its retelling – echoing the importance of maintaining and being aware of differences, disagreements and tensions between research partners.

Moreover, if we are going to guard against researcher constructions dominating the research process, we need to incorporate methodologies that consider how community members co-construct the research relationship through their own sense of what their involvement means (Bell, 2011, see also Pearce, 2008 on the need for critical understandings of intersubjectivity). Their understandings, together with their skills, knowledge and capacities, could be considered a resource rather than merely 'misunderstandings' or 'partial understandings' (Boyle and Harris, 2009: 11).

In terms of methodology, impact-work should be understood to include the labour of generating ideas and integrating knowledges (Antonacopoulou, 2010). Communities and community groups can be understood as systematic inquirers (if not scientists) in their own right. One of the tasks of impact work is to take their inquiries seriously as distinct forms of knowledge-generation, and to act upon them as such.

Callon's treatment of translation might also be useful, as a process that takes us from t1 (macrocosm to microcosm) to t2 (a series of equivalences in 'laboratory'-microcosm) to t3 (from the microcosm back to the macrocosm). In order for t3 to succeed, t1 must reconstitute the networks of interests at the microcosm, rather than lose them in a sort of experimenter will-to-abstraction. This certainly applies in the context of translating

the research problem through a specific instantiation in order to set up the research, but also applies to the research process as well, as one that seeks to augment the world that produced it. This labour is an example of trying to identify, in actor network terms, what knowledge can be connected with what knowledge, at what cost, and changing what in the process.

The shared problems of collaborative inquiry might not be expressed in textual terms, meaning not that they could or should not be reproduced and represented in textual terms, but that the act of reproduction and representation requires translating between different modes of expression.

1.6 Multiple knowledges, expertises, authorities

Co-production forums bring together multiple knowledges, expertises, authorities, claims to legitimacy and ways of seeing, feeling and doing. According to a growing literature around 'post-politics' (Tsouvalis and Waterton, 2011), participation in co-produced research initiatives can end up *depoliticising*, by transforming often-broader political questions into often-narrower technocratic questions and detailed choice-making.[1] Against these concerns, we suggest co-production is about multiplying the ideas of objectivity that can be called upon by knowledge claims (Blencowe, 2013), and in particular, recognizing those that have been hitherto excluded. Science and technology studies and feminist science approaches to knowledge generation, posthuman performativity and participation encourage us to critically re-engage with the nature of objectivity by pluralizing it, and the knowledge that is staked upon it (e.g. Barad, 2007; Harding, 1993; Brigstocke and Noorani, 2012, Blencowe, 2013). According to these literatures, we need to develop approaches that include, and encourage sensitivity to, the ways in which we can understand how the objects of research follow their own autonomous paths, and to work with them rather than dominate them (for example, Bastion, 2013).

Jasanoff (2003) describes 'technologies of hubris' as the methods of high modernity designed to increase management and control in society, especially in areas of great uncertainty. According to Jasanoff, these technologies cannot engage with questions of the unknown, with the fact that counterarguments and contrary ideas need to be *translated* into the dominant discursive framework (which itself is a unitary objective framework), nor with the presuppositions of that dominant framework. She prefers the task where "scattered and private knowledge has to be amalgamated, perhaps even disciplined, into a dependable civic epistemology" (2003: 240), and suggests that this can be done through 'technologies of humility' that "make apparent the possibility of unforeseen consequences; to make explicit the normative that lurks within the technical; and to acknowledge from the start the need for plural viewpoints and collective learning" (*ibid.*). She suggests technologies of humility might be organized according to how stakes are framed, who is vulnerable, the distribution of ethical concerns across the process of co-production and the need to learn from experiments. Non-specialised and non-representational forms of expertise, such as that of experts-by-

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[1] See also Mahony and Clarke, 2012 for deascriptions of abject and audience publics as distinct from agentic publics.

experience, carers, those providing front-line services and so on, as well as performative approaches, are candidates for such technologies of humility.

One narrative thread from the first Productive Margins forum meeting minutes questioned the problematic term of 'hard-to-reach' groups. As Durose *et al.* put it,

> "Defining communities in such a way relies on constructing a dichotomy between the mainstream and the marginalized. For co-produced research, this focus brings a welcome challenge to why research may be exclusionary, but also raises the problematic definition by the relatively powerful of who is 'hard to reach' and selected for attention and the structures which create this distance; as well as the question of why particular communities might 'choose' to be marginalized" (2012: 5-6).

By bringing co-production into contact with 'marginalised communities', the Productive Margins programme will need to engage with these issues. The diversity of knowledge-holders that are invited to take part in the forum prompts questions about representation. Representation often presents itself with great force – it is standard to ensure that participants 'represent' the full diversity of the population, and yet it is necessary to posit 'good enough' measures as this is never fully achievable. Saward (2009) describes representation not as a fact, but as an ongoing relationship for which elections are not a necessary condition. It is about constant renegotiation, suggesting that representation can be thought of in more loose terms than that of precise procedural delegation (see Chapman and Lowndes, 2009). Representation as claims-making might include the claim to represent 'people like me' or 'those I spoke to'; representatives might make claims based on experience or based on knowledge of a locality (Barnes *et al.*:196). The challenge for co-produced research is to juggle provocations that push against embedded hierarchies of expert versus laity with ensuring that the research process and outcomes retain some version of integrity (Durose *et al.*, 2012; Porter, 2010).

1.7 Embracing serendipity and emergence

Facer (2013) asks, how can and do we accelerate serendipity in productive encounters? This includes techniques based in serendipity, such as improvisational approaches, and luring serendipitous encounters, such as accepting the need to cede control and develop instead sensitivities to the unexpected, in the hope that that might encourage them to make an appearance. We might press further and consider if there are ways to regulate spaces in certain ways so that they are able to embrace the contingent, the emergent and the unexpected. Etymologically, serendipity conveys both luck and *sagacity*, the latter indicating a role for technical knowhow.

Pearce (2008) describes how all participants in action research methodologies that attempt to co-produce research recognize that ceding control gives rise to creativity in research. On this account, participation is necessary for co-production. Moreover, not being open to the contingent, or as Pearce puts it, "[not] making progress through getting lost", is not *real* participation – at best, it is mere consultation (see also Boyle and Harris, 2009: 17; Lather, 2007, 2008 on 'working the ruins'). Co-production must be

more than consultation, and cultivating an ethics of serendipity that engages with the uncertainties might be part of this.

An improvisational framework allows us to view co-production as a set of practices built around the moment of collective participation, as a moment that both requires and demands improvisation. By viewing the community as a growing and changing 'improvisational performance ensemble' that is seeking to perform relationships on new stages (environments) without a strict conception of outcome or product, even former antagonists are able to develop new partnership relationships (Farmer, 2005). In an improvisational framework, professionals or facilitators take on a role akin to theatre directors, welcoming the unexpected and discovering new ways of building and creating together. There may be a lot to be gained from drawing on the input of 'experts in contingency', whether theatre directors, cruise directors or party organizers.

Methodologies and approaches that draw upon an openness to contingency and emergence often emphasise reflexive analysis. This is particularly rich in the experimental processes, as experiments are always opening onto new hypotheses. We might also find that feedback events become sites for further research co-production, as when participants watch videos of themselves and offer comments (Homanen, 2013). We should consider how we might prepare the methods we intend to use so that they are capable of being reiterated and/or extended.

One natural consequence of embracing the emergent is that what is co-produced might not fit into pre-established categories or frameworks. This can create discomfort, and sometimes even suggest the 'experiment' has 'failed'. However, if there is discomfort in producing something new that cannot be immediately understood or responded to via precedent, then the discomfort is actually a sign of success.[2] Even more, it is a rich source of data (Horst, 2013) – what does the discomfort reveal about researcher expectations, for example? Thus what might have thought of as failure can in fact become useful, as a both a sign (of contingency and novelty) and as a resource (for reflexive engagement).

Sometimes embracing contingency can be difficult for other reasons. In collaborations, research partners may not be what we expect them to be. For example, they might not be eager inquirers of new knowledge, seeking partners and the resources to facilitate engagement. Indeed, one challenge is to develop specific and novel grounds for legitimising community involvement instead of relying on traditional/conventional beliefs in legitimacy that may smuggle in other sorts of expectations (Connolly, 2001; Haikio, 2012). Haikio (2012) suggests that the model of involvement often relied on within scientific studies presupposes citizens who seek consensus and who are cooperative, consequently tending towards the exclusion of those who are neither.

Barnes *et al.* (2007) offer an instance of this problem and the reverberations upon perceived legitimacy when they highlight examples where:

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[2] Perhaps this could be understood as an instance of flipping what could be perceived as a chronic problem into a sustainable solution (see section 1.5).

> "Participants who 'played by the rules' and were able to 'get on' with other participants were more likely to be perceived as legitimate representatives, while those who were 'difficult' could find their position challenged" (p.197).

Embracing contingency and emergence is not always easy, and can lead to quite fractious politics within the co-production team. Referring back to the previous section, it is worth bearing in mind Saward's (2009) idea of representation as in constant renegotiation.

Review of term, 'co-production'

Having completed phases 1 and 2, it is clear that the term co-production has many meanings, in addition to the different positive and negative connotations it has had across service provision, corporate culture, and research. Through seven categories, I have tried to offer a positive description of how the term might be used the term in Productive Margins.

If you think the term 'co-production' covers too much, too little, or will require too much work to make a Productive Margins term, we could replace it with a new term that allows Productive Margins to somewhat side-step the complexities of how 'co-production' has been used. Drawing on the key elements outlined above, options include:

- Experimental co-inquiry
- Collaborative experimentation
- Ludic action research (see p.20)
- Poststructural participatory action research

Or some other combination?

Part II: Regulating *for* Engagement

How do particular methods of engagement or participation work in particular times and spaces? How are non-researchers best taught research skills? (How) can the experimentation that emerges from positions of dissent and contestation be scaled up? How does coming at questions with particular methods in mind help in unseen ways to constitute the range of possible answers to the questions themselves?

Our aim is not to avoid regulation, but to design regulatory regimes that begin from the capabilities of communities excluded from the mainstream, and finding ways of powerfully supporting the knowledge, passions and creativity of citizens. How do we regulate *for* engagement? There are many ways of exploring this question. One is to circumscribe what the roles are that participants can take in the research – Martin (2010) offers five such roles, of informants, recipients, endorsers, commissioners and co-researchers. Martin's co-researchers may be understood in terms of Durose *et al.*'s (2012) activist-academics, although under our emerging co-production agenda, perhaps we should at least distinguish activist-academics from academic-activists, so as to acknowledge the *becoming* of different groups without suggesting they form a new unity (see 1.3 above for a critique of the assumption of unity). Martin (2010) suggests that creating roles with greater levels of engagement increases the chance of their research being utilized but risks politicizing the research process:

> 'The challenge is then to find ways of co-producing studies in order to enhance the prospects that it will be useful to and used by practitioners while minimising the threats to academic freedom and the integrity of the research process' (Martin 2010, 213).

There is a literature around the practicalities of designing and regulating research projects so that they are able to effectively co-produce research (for example, see Hewison, 2012). One challenge is to avoid the recuperation by mainstream frameworks, structures and institutions of the co-produced knowledge created within the research projects. Particular artistic interventions may help to do this, summoning unexpected publics around the issues at stake.

There are a variety of videos depicting co-produced research, especially in relation to performance and the arts. Here is a showcase of a range of participatory/co-production approaches:

Research between universities and communities

Knowle West's University of Local Knowledge
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LlkolRR914

Co-production with communities in co-design, aiming to encourage 'unusual suspects', including tips on how to do coproduction:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8YQ74imYRh4

Participatory action research example – Polling for Justice at CUNY's Public Science Project:
http://player.vimeo.com/video/22363812?byline=0&portrait=0&badge=0" width="400" height="300" frameborder="0" webkitAllowFullScreen mozallowfullscreen allowFullScreen
(over 10 minutes – see first half?)

Action research method
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WHMPZ6WAiY

Method for conducting participatory evaluation process:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0u4t_4Tn5o

nef on co-production in service provision, esp as tapping assets (up to 3.45)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKATrzUV2YI

Participatory design including illustration of the importance of beyond-text tools
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4npftEf3_n4

Participatory design with 5 tips for beyond-text methods
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vXUCNlicQQ

Pushing issues by creating deliberative encounters

Suzanne Lacy's Crystal Quilt , focused on older women in public arena, working on issues through a focus on translation:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ieBUiGF7684

Unusual strategy of dissemination by projecting data onto building – Stop and Frisk with Morris Justice Project
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mliuISC2hJk&feature=player_embedded

Kinds of events

Deller – re-enactment
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eG5-OmXSpdM
Deller – procession
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPTeFTCAFEk

They Shoot Horses – clip of 7 hour dance marathon in Ramallah, with echoes of Depression-era dance marathon crazes:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b88FwjYcnQc

Tino Sehgal's Unilever Series, creating live encounters
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=er0GG6mX0d0

The flashmob, for instance
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXh7JR9oKVE

versus Duncan Speakman's 'subtlemobs' at
http://productofcircumstance.com/new/index.php/videos/

Part III: Productive Margins Forum – Setup, Qualities, Processes

How do we sustain the forum as a (set of) knowledge space(s)? What should it look like? Where and how should it be assembled? Lots of different literatures could feed into this. I kept lists of criteria spanning the literature that are helpful in setting the stage for us to approach forum design and operation in a distinctive way. Of course, the amount of resources allocated to the forum will significantly affect its nature, role and remit, but that has not been brought to bear on these considerations.

3.1 Setup

However the forum is set up, it should be clear from the outset to all involved how the Productive Margins programme *itself* is regulated. The case for support and the impact goals should always be available at programme events and should be easily distributable. A short video might (also) be useful. This is likely to build trust through a feeling of transparency (see the Strong Interaction Social Research model), and encourage potential partners to engage with the programme, rather than simply focus on how the programme/projects can engage with potential partners.

The Communities of Practice literature warns against building something totally new, beginning by imagining or conceptualizing it in some ideal form. Rather, it promotes drawing upon the co-productive relationships and resources already present amongst programme partners, and building from them a forum that is closely connected with existing capacities and builds off them. Gabrielle Ivanson's bicycle might be an example of this, which she reported worked well as a boundary object that connected her to a potential research community: relations between her and the youths existed virtually, through the bicycles that connected them (see Pearce, 2008: 19 for other examples). Hart and Wolff (2006) reflect upon Brighton University's Community University Partnership Programme, and offer advice on different practical aspects of forum design, including choosing spaces carefully and managing a balance between the evolution of the core and the periphery of the forum.

In terms of building a forum space where knowledges meet and co-produce through new and collective experimentation, Callon offers one of the clearest expositions in defining hybrid forums:

> "*Hybrid forums* - forums because they are open spaces where groups can come together to discuss technical options involving the collective, hybrid because the groups involved and the spokespersons claiming to represent them are heterogeneous, including experts, politicians, technicians, and laypersons who consider themselves involved. They are also hybrid because the questions and problems taken up are addressed at different levels in a variety of domains, from ethics to economic and including physiology, nuclear physics, and electromagnetism."

Hybrid forums are spaces where different expertises come together, and delegative and dialogic democratic forms meet. New knowledge is created through translations, and a persistent challenge is to co-produce research 'in the wild'. Callon has written extensively on how to organise and evaluate hybrid forums. He warns,

> "To leave hybrid forums to develop without any rules of the game for organizing the debate would leave the field free to the logic of relations of force, it would allow the reproduction, without discussion, of the exclusion of the weakest, precisely all those who seek to make their voices heard and to be listened to" (154).

In contexts where it is usual to leave technical specialists to conduct the research, and formal (possibly elected) representatives to make decisions, we must actively counter these 'relations of force' in the name of allowing multiple voices to speak and be heard.

'Peer support' setups might inform forum practices. Here, individuals and groups with different skill- and knowledge-sets share experiences, and in so doing cultivate a set of skills around 'active listening', 'empathy', 'ethical sensitivity' and ability to step outside of comfort zones. They develop 'experiential knowledge' (Borkman, 1970), sharing experiences in ways that attempt to ensure that all voices are heard and that conversation does not get stuck on side-issues. In part this is done by respecting certain groundrules. Peer support and self-help spaces are sites where experience is worked upon and developed into a kind of experiential expertise that commands authority, suggesting that experience does not come pre-packaged and self-evident. The forum setup could always include the quick and easy organizing of sub-groups to incubate and consolidate incipient thoughts, perspectives and practices when needed.

The critical pedagogies and activist literatures question the power-neutrality of facilitators and chairs, and the technocentricism of toolkits in the field of participation. They have developed practices for destabilizing the hierarchies in organizations, and bringing subaltern voices to the fore in meetings. They also use creative visual communication grammars to enrich dialogues without interrupting speech. For instance, see the Occupy hand signals as a way of setting up communication in forums: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement_hand_signals

The Creating Publics website at the Open University and Participedia in the United States offer two examples of participatory websites that the Productive Margins website could consult, as they have both spent time thinking about developing their sites for a range of audiences in as organic a way as possible. Other large institutionally-housed websites, such as Brighton University's Community University Partnership Programme website, might have much to share on the challenges they encountered and the creative solutions they came up with. Online tools available include techniques of collaborative tagging, linking, correcting/modifying content, transcribing, recording and creating content, commenting, critical responses and stating preferences, categorizing, cataloguing, contextualizing, mapping, geo-referencing and translating content for different audiences/users (Dunn and Hedges, 2012). The field of deliberative democracy through the use of online tools is growing fast, especially in the United States. Leighninger (2011) provides 10 tactics for using online tools for engaging communities, which might be useful for devising a generic or baseline forum online outreach strategy.

Again, there is always a danger of technocentricm here, so reflexive practices should be built into the use of these tools.

Do we need to consider the aims of the festivals, and what they could look like? The festivals are aimed to share ideas, experiments and knowledge with wider communities, policy-makers and businesses. The Bakhtinian idea of the 'carnival' could provide a way of thinking about structuring (parts of) the Productive Margins forum and/or festivals in carnivalesque form. This would be about making sure that events are open to the future, and meanings are produced in the interplay of voices that have a centrifugal force towards difference and a centripetal force towards unity. This approach to festivals conceives them as collective experiments and moments of co-production in their own right, keeping research projects open to feedback and refinement.

At the outset, the programme needs to be capable of enabling unintended consequences that act as starting points – alternative visions of spaces of access and restriction, and other such reorganisations and reproblematisations. The £800 seed corn money is potentially an important tool for doing this, depending on how effortful/effortless the application process is (see section 1.4) and how the implementation and accountability protocols are designed.

To illustrate a commitment to the idea of 'regulating for engagement' early on in the programme lifecycle, it could be useful to sketch out histories that inject a feeling of openness and possibility into the current research topics. For example, what can we can learn from alternative groups and ideas such as feminism, micro-finance and restorative justice, that were once seen as marginal but now are adopted by the mainstream? Forum members could co-produce histories/an archive of analogous or otherwise-similar matters of concern to the ones they are focusing on, both to provide inspiration and to create a foil against which to draw similarities and contrasts.

One way of disrupting participants' surety in their own expertise is to organize events where all expertises are put 'on ice' (e.g. McGill's Institute for the Public Life of Arts and Ideas' *Thinking Art* event[3]), in order to foster play and break established knowledge hierarchies. These events are useful for generating trust quickly, as all participants are vulnerable and are patently learning together and from one another. The spaces will still be marked by inequalities of power and authority, as those most confident in performing outside of their comfort zones tend to be those with fewest stakes in temporarily relinquishing their authority/expertise (a professor may feel free to throw herself into the role of a clown knowing full well that the authority she has with her students the next day will not be compromised). Ludic events where everyone is recognized as an inexpert in certain contexts might best be used to shake up the expert-laity distinction, clearing the field for enough time to experiment with other knowledge practices such as mutual and reciprocated learning (see Ward, 2006: 500).

Forum practices that seek to erect walls or build incubation chambers might be usefully informed by the slow-thinking retreat format developed by the Authority Research Network,[4] the practices of presencing developed in Theory U,[5] Future Workshops[6] and

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[3] http://www.mcgill.ca/iplai/events/thinking-art
[4] At http://www.authorityresearch.net/about.html
[5] At http://www.ottoscharmer.com/publications/summaries.php

other such techniques, depending on the needs of the forum at that time. These and similar techniques can be slow and resource-heavy (in particular in relation to the amount of 'incubation' time required); as a result, we should remain aware of how exclusionary such sites can be – whether for those seeking a low-cost intervention, those who cannot take a week out of their schedule to attend a retreat etc.

The Productive Margins programme will need to develop methods of decision-making and the engagement of wider communities in deliberation and decision-making. Practices of representation are always tricky, such as when representative positions get hijacked by the 'usual suspects', or where insular processes of jargon-creation set and turn others off from participating. The aims of representation can be frustrated when people feel compelled to speak on behalf of their employing organization, whether a university, a community or other, rather than from their 'own perspective'. Chapman and Lowndes (2009) make the case for opening up the term representation to include permanently-renegotiable criteria of admission, over and above (mere) mechanisms of delegation.

Perhaps then the forum need not be a stable advisory board, nor a strict partnership model, but a 'site of experimentation', acting as a dynamic set of spaces for co-producing knowledges, enhancing exchange and dissemination and developing 'innovative methods'. This includes bringing different (aspects of different) projects into conversation/dialogue. Indeed, focusing on the forum space as the exclusive space of co-production in the programme risks leading to a situation where co-production is not embedded but occasional, transitory and only for an emergent/privileged group, where access is limited for most and forum meetings amount to an extra layer of bureaucracy.

In part or in whole, the forum could avoid the risk of becoming a time-consuming and superfluous site in its own right (mirroring Facer *et al.*'s suggestion that 'co-production' not become a field in its own right, but should be about enhancing conversations and meta-networks (2012: 3)). Instead, the forum could find ways to incorporate reflexive conversations, possibly including offering a resource bank for all community partners to bring and share resources. The latter can be taken up (in part) through the website; the former could be arranged by establishing that the forum can play a role at all levels of the programme, rather than just be the point of connection of the seven projects. Every meeting within each of the seven projects could have 'programme-wide issues' as one of the agenda items, allowing a space to ask what would benefit from, or be useful to, a wider public than those who are present to that (part of that) project at that time?

The abstract point is that the Productive Margins research programme require careful assembling around the different points where matters of concern coalesce. These cares and putting-togethers (co-productions) should be rendered explicit, attended to and understood (Latour, 2004) if they are to be sustained. In this sense, the programme-as-assemblage should actively create its own assembly as a kind of evolving self-awareness. However, rather than the forum exist as the 'point of reflexivity' of the whole programme, we can invent ways of diffusing the forum functions across the programme as it develops its own reflexive practices.

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6 At https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Future_workshop

In this spirit, one forum function might be to ensure that at each project meeting, someone from another project than the one being discussed can act as a discussant or commentator during that meeting, whose role would be to think through how the issues raised by the one project could productively engage with the other project(s). This draws upon a notion of outside eyes being useful for picking up problems, connections and possibilities that project members are too closely involved with to pick up on. Work on creating and mediating publics might orient us to thinking about how to develop certain modalities of attention that bridge the different projects, and/or to consider the mediators and the role they play in keeping the forum vibrant or 'agentic' (Mahony and Clarke, 2013).

In addition, a potential aim is that the programme matures to a point where a separate forum structure is dissolved. The spaces of the community partners themselves could incorporate the forum functions. Indeed if the forum met in the spaces of the community partners, programme partners would get a better understanding of the sites of research. However, over time, rather than 'meet' in 'spaces', the forum could itself *be* a function of the community partner spaces, where people come and go and which persists beyond organized meeting times, manifesting in 'conduits' – technologies and practices – that allowed the reflections, comments and thoughts of the community members of one project site to be made visible/audible/felt (or otherwise amplified) by the partners of the other projects. This lends itself to a distinct idea of co-production where communities help research one another directly, rather than through influencing some central structure that in turn directs, or otherwise regulates, research and engagement in the other projects. University researchers, on the new model, act more like catalysts for research by communities upon themselves *and* each other. This raises the spectre of sloppy research and lessons of participatory research, where communities are given the tools to research themselves, will be important. However if this mode of co-production is put into practice, Productive Margins might aspire to the 'pre-figurative' politics of the Zapatistas, Situationists, anarchists and Autonomist activist/scholars/activist-academics in attempting to 'consciously resemble the world you want to create' (Osterweil, 2003).

3.2 Qualities and Processes

Pearce (2008) lists the qualities of effective co-production in action research as follows:

- Personal, circular and contradictory processes of knowing (see also Rowan and Reason, 1981: 136)
- Contingent possibilities
- The intelligent agency of the researcher and the well-informed 'other'
- Engagement with critical and constructed intersubjectivities
- Extended epistemologies encompassing not just propositional knowledge, but experiential knowledge, practical knowledge and presentational knowledge (from Heron, 1981a&b, see also Raymond *et al*, 2010 for a different typology)
- Direct links to action
- Democratizing both the research content and method

These all apply here, although we are keen to be less binary about the distinction between the researcher and its 'others', in line with post-structural commitments to an ontology of becoming and processes that blur clear identitarian distinctions.

Phillips and Kristiansen (2013) offer criteria of quality in assessing reflexive collaborative research, including a concern to record who participates and who does not, whose interests are furthered and whose are not, and which subaltern voices are heard and given the capacity to speak? They also refer to Herr and Anderson (2005)'s five key goals of action research:

- Generation of new knowledge and theory,
- Attainment of action-oriented outcomes,
- Education of all participants,
- Production of results relevant to the context of study, and
- Solid and appropriate research methodology.

(From Phillips and Kristiansen, 2013: 278.)

Callon *et al.* (2009: 160) distinguish between various criteria that describe the degree of dialogism of research procedures:

Criterion	Sub-criteria	Value	
Intensity	Degree of earliness[7] of involvement of laypersons in exploration of possible worlds	Strong	Weak
	Degree of intensity of concern for composition of collective		
Openness	Degree of diversity of groups consulted and degree of their independence vis-à-vis established action groups	Strong	Weak
	Degree of control of representativity of spokespersons of groups involved in debate		
Quality	Degree of seriousness of voice	Strong	Weak
	Degree of continuity of voice		

Callon *et al*. note that acquiring a greater degree of dialogue in each of these six sub-criteria requires the investment of time and money, as well as training (*ibid.*: 161).

Conventional management forums can be spaces where conflict and disagreement settle and spaces become uncomfortable, ossified, heavy or tiring. It is vital to be able to talk openly about emotions, including feelings of discomfort, as part of the research process, from start to finish. As we saw in section 1.7, these ostensibly negative emotions can be extremely helpful for the co-production of reflexive knowledge-generation (Horst, 2013). We need to devise ways of bringing discomfort into the open and allowing disagreement to play out in productive ways. Part of the answer is to ensure that everybody involved has research support to help them handle and even embrace the contingency:

> "With respect to research design, it seems important to be able to go with the flow and re-organize the research process if new situations emerge. We suggest on this basis that most researchers need a critical friend or good colleagues to maneuver in processes which they may sometimes experience as messy and chaotic" (Phillips and Kristiansen, 267).

Perhaps it is all the better if this friend is an 'expert in contingency' (see section 1.7), who is able to engage and improvise in chaotic situations. Their outsider perspectives might help in developing "ethical understandings of how tensions and conflict can be addressed creatively" (*ibid.*).

Drawing on speculative design, Michael (in press) offers an 'idiotic methodology' to the field of action research (coining the term, 'ludic action research'), drawing on Garfinkel (1967) and Stengers' (2005) conceptual character of the idiot, who does not make sense,

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[7] There is a growing literature around the practice and value of 'upstreaming' research which is captured under this sub-criteria. For example, in relation to developing governance structures within the research process, see Ackerman (2005) on the importance of upstreaming forms of co-governance.

or, *makes non-sense.* To develop an idiotic methodology, then, is to present non-sense, in order to provoke new framings, reproblematisations and mutual becomings. Research processes and events are designed in ways that allow for interruptions that challenge the dominant sense-making mode, forcing researchers to slow down (see also Whatmore and Landström, 2011) and attend to the becomings-with of the research object and the researcher. For example, Michael describes energy probes placed in participant homes that ask participants to record the sound of the energy in the hallway, or the smell of the energy in the living room. The point was for participants to playfully engage, not with the closed question of how to reduce energy demand, but with reimagining their relationship to energy, and indeed what energy is (becoming-expended?) and who they are (becoming-energised?).

We can offer this as a direct answer to Facer's question of how can we accelerate serendipity in our research (see section 1.7). By designing objects (probes) that are idiotic (ambiguous, uncertain, playful), participants cannot simply accept or reject pre-framed questions but are forced to engage in 'inventive problem-making'. This then is about design in the sense of *de-sign* – to loosen or pare down the degree of intentional and/or directed aspects of the research, in order that the unexpected can emerge (and can be productively recognized as such).

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