Representing Kamloops: IN PROCESS

CURA - Community University Research Alliances Program through the Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council of Canada

Cultural Future of Small Cities

www.cariboo.bc.ca/smallcities
Representing Kamloops

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The Research Team

Student Research Assistants: Erin Moen, Bonnie Yourk  
Faculty Researchers: Will Garrett-Petts, Donald Lawrence, David MacLennan  
Community Partners: The Kamloops Art Gallery, The Kamloops Museum & Archives

Introduction

The Representing Kamloops Project is part of a larger Community-University Research Alliance exploring the Cultural Future of Small Cities (see attached chart).

We are interested in issues of mediation and documentation; in particular, in how Kamloops as a small city represents itself. In much of the promotional literature, for example, Kamloops is touted as "the tournament capital of Canada," owing to the many competitions that have taken place in sports and other activities provincially, nationally and internationally. Other literature presents Kamloops with "the heart of a small town and the excitement of a modern city," highlighting the natural beauty of the Thompson region, together with its amenities and services. Gold and Ward (1994) term this "place promotion," an increasing part of any city or region's image and text repertoire as it develops its own capital, social and otherwise, and competes for investment and resources.

These official representations of place tell only part of the story; they leave out a more vernacular sense of personal place: how individuals represent their individual experiences, their individual stories of attachment to and detachment from Kamloops. We are seeking to document (visually and verbally) this community sense of place.

The centerpiece of our study is the creation of a Community Memory Map. The Representing Kamloops theme now features a community mapping project and offers a wonderful case study of art-as-research in action: part traveling art exhibition and part social science study of narrative attachment to place, the project integrates forms of artistic inquiry and representation traditionally excluded from formal research. Community members are being asked to construct "memory maps" detailing their attachment to Kamloops landmarks, both public and private. These visual representations form the "pretext" for oral narratives, opportunities to tell the story or stories of belonging and alienation. The memory maps and the stories are collected, documented, and displayed in exhibition format; and with each new collection the exhibit changes and grows.
In concert with the gathering of images and narratives, artist-researcher Donald Lawrence, together with a pair of students, has constructed a sculptural map of Kamloops. The map, a maquette for a room-sized final version, provides topographical landscape of space, while the narratives provide a collective story of place. The final result will be a merging of the two, where the images and oral texts are embedded into the sculpture and placed on public display in the Kamloops Museum.

Research Methods

Representing Kamloops research methods include participant observation, memory mapping, data analysis using NUD*IST programming, analysis of archival materials and media materials, interviews, photographic documentation, journaling, use of focus groups, and group discussion. The memory mapping project examines relations between visual and verbal representation.

Results

- Donald Lawrence and his visual arts team have constructed a sculptural map of Kamloops; and the research team has numerous memory maps collected through public exhibitions at
  1. the University College of the Cariboo, October, 2001, June 2002;
  2. the Canada Day Celebrations, Riverside Park, July, 2002;
  3. the Aberdeen Mall, August, 2002; and the Assembly of British Columbia Arts Councils, September, 2002.
     Future public exhibitions are ongoing.
- A discussion about the project was included in the refereed journal *AI & Society* (Dubinsky, Lon, and W.F. Garrett-Petts. "‘Working Well, Together’: Arts-Based Research and the Cultural Future of Small Cities." *AI & Society* 16.4 (2002, in press): 1-18.),

and at three conferences:


Some Thoughts on Emerging Themes and Questions

Our study began as an inquiry into the ways in which a person's "sense of place" is represented. The study has been exploratory from the outset, seeking novel ways to encourage respondents to express their personal experiences of place. What became clear as we proceeded is the extent to which sense of place and sense of self are intertwined. For many people, place idioms offer both an anchor for the self, a way of situating the self in the world, and a way of disclosing the self, giving shape to "where I'm from" and "what I care about." Mixed with accounts of momentary pleasures and discomforts are insights into more durable features of the self, and these insights are often tied to the physical contexts in which they originally occurred. The study is thus becoming a reflection on the connection between place and self, with the theme of selfhood receiving more attention as we proceed.

"Space defines landscape, where space combined with memory defines place."
(Lucy Lippard, in The Lure of the Local)

Exhibition Component

In addition to the "traveling exhibition" and the culminating exhibition at the Kamloops Art Gallery (involving all the CURA research Projects), we will stage an interim installation, one that extends our understanding of memory mapping.

Memory Maps are representations of a landscape or locale that invoke memory as a means of understanding a sense of place or self. Such representations are commonly recognizable as maps or drawings in a conventional manner, though many others exist in the varied forms of sculptures and installations, novels and stories, etc. In this exhibition, we present such a range of works and, by way of a brochure/catalogue and a curatorial statement, situate the works in a context that reflects our respective interests and expertise as, respectively, a visual artist, a literary critic, and a sociologist. Such contextual information will draw upon the understanding of memory maps, a genre of sorts, that we are familiar with from the work of such artists and writers as Marlene Creates, Helen Humphries, Ernie Kroeger, Robert Kroetsch, and Lucy Lippard.

The works for the exhibition are selected in two manners: firstly, we are working as curators to select work that we are already familiar with, ranging from work by students to works by Ernie Kroeger and Robert Kroetsch; secondly, we have a Call-for-Submissions component as well. Ernie Kroeger and Robert Kroetsch are invited participants, showing their work and welcome to take part in a panel discussion.

Subsequent to the proposed UCC exhibition of Memory Maps it may be possible to travel the exhibition to such other venues as the Surrey Arts Centre and/or the Comox Valley Art Gallery. As part of our potential proposals to such galleries we are considering a component which would involve the local communities of those galleries as well.
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Representing Kamloops
Interviewing

After participants have drawn their memory maps, they are invited to tell the story behind their maps to one of the researchers, who records their story on audiotape. First, the interviewer will ask for a general explanation of the map as a whole. Although each response varies in subject matter, length, and degree of formality, many participants will use the formal and artistic elements of their maps to frame their stories. Some participants choose to tell a particular story in a particular setting. Others choose to have a broader focus, by taking the interviewer step-by-step through the elements of their maps while sharing bits and pieces of their life stories.

As much as possible, the interviewer minimizes his/her explicit manipulation or intervention within the conversation in order to encourage the participants to take whatever directions they feel necessary in their stories. Open-ended questions such as “Could you walk me through your memory map?” or “Can you provide us with an oral picture of your map?” start off the interviewing process by immediately putting the whole ball (story) into the participants’ courts. After the responses to these initial questions, the interviewer sometimes asks for clarification, either of the stories or of the elements of the maps.

In an effort to define some of the cultural landmarks to which Kamloops’ residents feel connected, the interviewer then asks a more specific question, such as: “On your map (or in your story) is there a particularly important cultural marker, a landmark, a place to go, or anything that really stands out for you as most important or most attractive?” Some participants can immediately define a specific landmark that is important to them. These landmarks, although often shared by many other residents in Kamloops, take on personal significance to the participants by means of their stories and memories.

The final component of the interview consists of taking the participants to view the sculptural map of Kamloops and to ask questions encouraging the correlation of their individual maps with the sculptural map. Quite often the interviewer will ask the participants if they can “locate,” “find,” or “place” their own maps on top of or within the sculptural map. Many participants point out the absence of people or non-natural markers, thus reinforcing one of the primary purposes of this investigation: to saturate a map of Kamloops with cultural meaning. In essence, the participants and their stories become an active part of the creation of a cultural map of the city of Kamloops. Also, their responses in regards to what should be added to or taken away from the sculptural map, along with their general opinions regarding elements such as scale or color, will be incorporated into the final map containing the collected stories and housed in the Kamloops Museum.
The conception for the “Sculptural Map” came about during discussions at the outset of the project of a much larger sculptural construction that was and is envisioned for the 2005 CURA exhibition at the Kamloops Art Gallery. There was an early recognition, however, that to begin to construct, and even to conceive of this larger sculpture at that time would have been premature. What the Representing Kamloops research group came to understand at the time was that, regardless as to any sculptural and other aesthetic questions, such a work would not reflect any significant research or objectives from a sociological standpoint. Instead, the research group decided that a smaller, less “sculptural,” map would be useful for fieldwork – for eliciting stories and other data from interested participants.

The present model therefore, represents a slowing down of our research process and was constructed by two research assistants in the summer of 2001. They initially constructed a topographical representation of the Kamloops landscape that was pieced together from multiple layers of subsequently created halves. Each cast half folding, case-like unfolded, displays the In this manner the between its general, the less certain topography that comes rather than some other material choice reflected the research group’s interest in having a construction that is not only useful for the mapping of readily definable data but, also, one that may be more of an invitation for participants to engage the landscape in a manner that draws upon memory and imagination.
Representing Kamloops
A Photographic Record

A Memory Mapping Public Art Project

Creating the sculptural model:

Student researcher Linda Goddard working on the model

The sculptural map in process

Memory mapping in the classroom:

Artist-as-researcher, Donald Lawrence, explaining memory mapping to a third-year writing class

Student research assistant Erin Moen documenting the class’ memory mapping activities
Setting up the exhibition:

Student research assistant Bonnie Yourk preparing one of the UCC exhibitions

Faculty researcher David MacLennan helping with the Representing Kamloops exhibition in UCC’s Student Street

Arranging the sculptural model

Mapping and interviewing:

Working with two memory map participants (UCC, Student Street Exhibition)

Student participants completing their memory maps

David MacLennan conducting a post-mapping interview
A visual sequence depicting the entire memory mapping process:

- Explaining the project
- Signing the consent form
- Drawing and completing the map in 10 – 20 minutes
- Post-mapping interview, asking the participant to tell the story of her map (5 min. – 15 min.)
- Follow-up interview, asking for comments on sculptural map and situating memory map on the sculptural map
Exhibitions in a variety of public spaces, including the Aberdeen Mall and Riverside Park (during the Canada Day celebrations):

Aberdeen Mall

Faculty researcher Will Garrett-Petts explaining the memory mapping project to a group of Heritage Fair participants, Riverside Park, Canada Day celebrations
Sample Memory Maps:

Sample memory map: “Erin’s Walking Map”

Sample memory map: “The First Experience in Kamloops”

Sample memory map: “The Othersyde”

Sample memory map: “Untitled”
Representing Kamloops
Artists-as-Researchers

The "art" of representing has emerged as an especially significant area of self-referential inquiry—in both the Representing Kamloops project and in the Small Cities CURA as a whole. Although an "artists-as-researchers" theme was not highlighted in the original grant application, the commitment to a public exhibition in the gallery setting was there from the outset. Yet once the program was underway, and at our first major meeting of researchers and community partners, the co-directors presented a discussion paper, "Moving Ahead." There we reviewed our goals for:

1. collaboration and assessment,

2. new partners and alliances,

3. additional funding possibilities, and

4. communication and dissemination strategies.

In addition, we presented a brief on the potential involvement of artists:

The notion of engaging artists throughout the duration of the program is an example of how we might involve new participants, one we’d like to advocate at this time. Initially, we proposed a culminating exhibition at the gallery and other venues in 2004 that will document the projects and include work by artists that reflects project concerns. The exhibition remains in place but we now propose an integrated approach with an artists(s) attached to each project from the outset. This enhanced use of artist-participants is based on the progress of several current projects and is generally supported by an increasing interest by the contemporary art world in what we might call "community-based art." We envisage several possibilities, yet each would be contingent upon agreement by the researcher(s), community partner and artist(s) for each project. For example, some artists might participate fully as researchers with their work incorporated into, if not in some cases synonymous with, a specific project. In others cases, artists might work as more detached observers. (Moving Ahead 4-5)
Methodology

We plan to use an ethnographic approach, involving participant observation, collaborative documentation, journaling, and focus group interviews—though further work on this potential extension of our project is subject to further funding.

The overall CURA is now in the midst of working out the forms and models of collaboration involving artists, academic researchers, and community organizations—including how artists are to be chosen for each project, the role artists might play in the assessment process, and, of course, the financial implications. The Small Cities CURA will engage, at first, four artists to work with four community-based research teams, encouraging them to follow one of three inquiry models:

(1) **Affinity**—where the artist is encouraged to match existing work with issues under exploration by a particular research group;

(2) **Response**—where the artist is encouraged to create new work responding directly to the particular research group’s project;

(3) **Integrated**—where the artist works with a particular research group, becoming in effect a co-researcher by committing skills, insights, and art production to the research findings.

As noted, the artists-as-researchers strand has been identified as an emerging area of research—but, in the Representing Kamloops project, an interdisciplinary component involving an artist-researcher has been important from the outset.
Points of overlap, tension, and great joy ...

The “Representing Kamloops” research group has come to recognize the opportunities that can emerge from, as well as what can be learned from, the varied disciplinary perspectives of the three primary researchers. Such opportunities for collaborative exploration and refinement of ideas are, however, continually challenged when the limitations and parameters of any singular disciplinary perspective come to light. In particular, the methodologically-sound basis that shapes working methods in the social sciences are sometimes at odds with the experimental, let’s-try-this attitude, towards which the visual arts are often inclined.

Collectively we endeavour to look for shared thematic and theoretical links even when such approaches seem at first to be quite disparate. While such a search for points of thematic and theoretical contact represent a disciplinary approach most closely aligned with the literary critic, it is a role which we each understand to be of crucial importance if we are to work well together. In her book The Lure of the Local, Lucy Lippard has focused upon:

exposing the ways art can help us focus on existing places, how their topography and every detail reflects and generates memory and a certain kind of knowledge about nature and culture.

While we have come to recognize similar interests as points of contact, the particular mode of inquiry that Lippard engages in is one that is shaped primarily by the practice and discourse of the visual arts. The challenge for our research group is to resolve, or come to terms with, the manner in which the rigour of academic study may be worked together with such less certain modes of inquiry and representation that are suggested by Lippard’s exploration of memory, place and topography.
Appendix 1:
Maps and Storytelling

"Place history is most often recorded in maps. People from oral traditions carry
detailed maps in their heads over years; the rest of us depend on outside
sources." (Lucy Lippard, in *The Lure of the Local*)

"The map is open and connectable in all its dimensions; it is detachable,
reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted
to any kind of mounting, re-worked by an individual, group, or social formation.
It can be drawn on the wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a
political action or as a meditation." (Deleuze and Guattari, in *A Thousand
Plateaus*)

"The prevalence of the map topos in contemporary post-colonial literary texts,
and the frequency of its ironic and/or parodic usage in these texts, suggests a
link between a de/reconstructive reading of maps and a revisioning of the history
of European colonialism." (Graham Huggan, "Decolonizing the Map," in *Past
the Last Post*)

"All the great narratives of world literature contain maps, maps that we can read.
... Yet these maps remain implicit. The first maps that were introduced
explicitly into a text, appearing in extenso under their visual aspect rather than
their textual one, were probably those that corresponded to allegorical
narratives, such as the *carte du tender*, the "map of tender love," which appeared
around 1660 as an illustration in Mademoiselle de Scudery's *Clelie*. Another
such map decorated Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. (Claude Gandelman, in
*Reading Pictures, Viewing Texts*)

As Claude Gandelman notes above, maps are often implicit in the narratives we share.
This is especially true of personal narratives, where, faithful to Montaigne's notion of
"the essay," the author takes the reader on a journey, an amble through personal
experience—often looking back, capturing and exploring key moments, lingering over
intriguing details, taking detours and straying down promising conversational trails,
finding the way through to an understanding (or discovery) of an intimate landscape.
When internalized maps are made explicit, they present important prompts for narrative exploration. Constructing a visual representation is not the same thing as writing or telling a story, especially when that representation is employed as a way of capturing and communicating experience. It's more common to see visuals used in academic discourse as illustrations, as reference points subordinate to the surrounding text. Typically, visuals (maps, photographs, diagrams and tables) are appended or inserted or referenced after the fact. Elsewhere, outside the context of the academy, visual communication—in film, on television, and in the popular media generally—takes on a principal role as a carrier of meaning.

The same is true for high art practice, where visual representation is expected (in large measure) to speak for itself. Artists speak of “their body of work,” for their creations represent a kind of embodied practice, a conflation of invention with hands-on inquiry. Language may play a role in this creative process, but it does not dominate. Margaret Archer distinguishes such “practical knowledge” from linguistic ways of knowing; she maintains practical knowledge “comes in chunks or stocks rather than in linear sequences such as sentences, that it is stored by being embodied in the seat of our pants rather than in the declarative memory, and that it may be accessed by all of our senses, not just by one part . . .” If, as Archer argues, “practical knowledge authentically discloses part of reality which is beyond the limits of language,” then, as researchers interested in eliciting authentic disclosure from the Kamloops community, we needed some way to tap into non-linguistic knowledge.

Memory mapping is one way to augment our linguistic understanding of personal experience. Moving from image to narration allows our informants to “know” their subjects differently, to explore and validate that which cannot be fully expressed in words.
According to Archer there are three principal ways of knowing:

**Natural Knowing**  **Practical Know-How**  **Discursive Knowing-About**

The first two forms of knowing constitute an “embodied knowledge,” which inevitably enters into a dialogue with the discursive. In terms of memory mapping, the process of moving from drawing to talking tends to provoke a narrative of the mind in action, one moving back and forth between the hard core of visual detail (lodged in objects of memory, intuition, and practice) and the possibilities for reflection offered by linguistic expression and sharing. The personal narrative documented thus becomes a progressive transformation of initial feelings, a process where discovery occurs through a kind of conversation among the three ways of knowing.

Sample Memory Map, “Representing Kamloops Project,” The Cultural Future of Small Cities CURA

Reference:
Appendix 2:

Documentation Method

Observation

The role of documentation in Reggio Emilia Schools (Italy) is rooted in educational theory and metaphor. Children are regarded as inherently competent, as active builders of knowledge from birth. Not empty containers, children are seen as creative individuals, available to interpret the world around them. Reggio teachers speak of the children's "right" to have this awareness recognized—and about the teachers' responsibility to be curious about the child's awareness. The teacher's role, then, is (1) to recognize and respect children's learning strategies and experiences, and (2) to support children's learning processes. Rather than impose adult ways of knowing, the teachers seek to scaffold learning by making visible the children's developing awareness, their chance discoveries and interpretations (including their intellectual, perceptual, emotional, social, and physical responses).

This exercise in "Self" reflection promotes the kind of metacognitive awareness that we know precedes emergent reading and writing—and likely all other areas of significant learning.

The documentation method begins with observation. The teachers construct, often in conversation and collaboration with the children, contexts conducive to learning, in-depth projects where discovery of awareness takes place. Once the project is set in motion by the teacher, observations take place spontaneously in natural contexts: here the teachers have a dual role, co-creating the context but also participating in the context with the children. The teacher takes notes and observes, and then extracts from the observations elements that allow interaction. Again, the preferred interaction is that which encourages self-reflection and supports each child's process of constructing awareness.

Interpretation

The Reggio teachers speak of observation as "containing interpretation": background knowledge guides what we see and the meaning we bring to our observations. Here teachers remind themselves "not to notice only what the children don't know"; they look for individual strategies, remain open to surprise. The second stage of the interpretive process inevitably involves documentation, where the transcriptions and photographs are reviewed and shared with colleagues. Just as the children are encouraged to revisit their experiences via the documentation, so the teachers collectively interpret the data, going back over what has been jointly experienced and seeking insights into specific forms of learning.
Documentation is the public face of the Reggio project approach. It begins with the gathering of documents—notes, pictures, photographs, etc., providing a record of the process that can be reviewed, discussed, and used as the basis for further project planning. Documentation provides visible traces that support the learning process and allow the immediate environment to speak. The children interpret the documents, review, remember, and become drawn into the planning of new learning situations. It is a community celebration of the power of narrative.

Documentation

According to the Reggio philosophy, one principal goal of documentation is to "protect the children's words and images" by preserving their authenticity—even any initial disorder and untidyness. Documentation captures a work in progress, allowing the personality of the participants to come through.

Formally, as the "100 Languages of Children Exhibition" displays, the Reggio atelieriste opted for a "high art" presentation style, standardizing the position of the titles and images to provide a coherent—that is, predicatable—narrative. White backgrounds and black lettering is preferred; the left side of the panel is saved for commentary, generally drawn from the children's own words; the images are arranged to the right—providing a guide or template, but one, as the teachers explain, that "can be betrayed."

When computer technology is employed—scanned images, facimile objects—the teachers are careful not to distort or manipulate what they see as "the quality or presence of the real objects," the children's drawings, sculptures, and so on. Wherever possible, they want to create exhibits that represent the presence of original objects. Such a process—one of sensitive observation, creative discovery, careful selection, and faithful representation—requires fierce listening from the teachers.

The resulting documentation occupies a space between the vernacular expression of the children and the high art, academically-informed perspectives of the teachers. The objects of mass and popular culture—the Fisher-Price kitchens, Little Tikes table toys, wagons, and Disney icons—so familiar in North American pre-school settings, are virtually invisible in the Reggio schools: mass produced toys, board games, and climbing centres are replaced by hand-made objects, specially designed for the space and projects. It is as if the cultural static—the white noise of mass and popular culture—has been reduced, filtered out of the learning environment, creating a place for careful attention to original expression.

Our work with the Representing Kamloops project employs Reggio strategies to capture (self-referentially) our own research processes and to honour (through high art display strategies) the visual/verbal representations of our subjects.
Appendix 3:
CURA Interview with the Sculptural Map Makers

12/07/2002
UCC, AE 168A (CURA Office)
Interviewer: Bonnie Yourk
Interviewees: Donald Lawrence
Linda Goddard

B: So, Linda, I want to ask you: How did you find out about this project and what interested you to participate in creating this sculptural map of Kamloops?

L: I first heard about the map from Don when he talked about the CURA project. Previously I had been using maps in my own work and he asked me if I was interested in working on the project.

D: In terms of Linda’s involvement in the project, I was already one of the researchers in CURA, and so fairly early on I was trying to think of students that would be well suited for the project in two respects. Firstly, they needed to be adept at the physical construction of things – such as the maps. Secondly, in Linda’s case for example, there needed to be a correspondence between the interests of their own artwork and the ideas that the CURA group was beginning to explore.

B: Linda, could you describe the process of creating the map?

L: First of all, we looked all over town for different maps. Both Ken and I talked with Don and we came up with the idea of making a contour map by utilizing the maps we had gathered. Basically, we cut out contours and glued them into a cardboard form, which we then we placed plaster over to create a mold. Finally, we put a spray-foam insulation in to the mold to make the sculptural map you see now.

D: The map that Linda has put together, with Ken Nelson’s help, came from a little bit of a slowing down of some of the initial things that we had talked about. When we first got together, Will, David, and myself, we envisioned some kind of large scale three-dimensional construction that would somehow physically represent people’s stories. In order to create this large scale, three-dimensional model, we had to have the stories to work with and in order to elicit the stories from people about their experiences in Kamloops, we had to have some visual props for them and hence the idea of working with maps. This sculptural map is such a map and simply represents a more physical version of a conventional map. The idea of having a physical diorama of the landscape in which people live for them to respond to is the most basic premise for why to want to have the sculptural map. And, again, just to reiterate a bit: from the map and the various other things presented to people should serve to prompt stories from people which will then make their way somehow into a kind of new physical construction which we’re only beginning to conceptualize. This way of thinking about the idea of the model seems quite general to me. More specifically, I think the idea came from a conversation that David
MacLennan and I had at one time where we realized that we didn’t know enough yet to make this larger-scale model. So we started talking about having to survey different groups of people – different social groups and from different regions. We envisioned having some kind of a three-dimensional map that we could plot information on. I think this idea was a practical incentive to make the present sculptural map.

D: Linda, could you give us simply something like a play-by-play of the different stages involved in the map’s construction?

L: One of the things we were concerned with was how to represent the different contours, once we got the original topographical maps. It wasn’t feasible to represent every contour, which was our initial thought as there were just too many of them. Every twenty meters we would make one level of matt board. We took a contour map, glued it down onto matt board, taking three layers of matt board to represent sixty meters, and then we took the scroll saw and cut out these contours. Finally, we glued them all together so that we could build up this “cardboard” contour map. It was really intriguing! People would be coming in and talking about it. It’s funny the different reactions people had to that. After that process, I went down to Kelowna one day to find out how we could make a mold from this. We talked about having latex, but it was really expensive. We ended up simply putting plaster over the matt board contours. We were concerned because we had put so many hours into cutting out those contours – it was a lot of work! Anyway, it ended up working pretty well. We even salvaged some of the original contour map we had made. After making the mold, we had to find materials that we could use to go into the contours of the mold that would maintain its shape yet also allow pins or markers to be used on it. So, we experimented with a Vermiculite and plaster mixture, and tried different things. We ended up using an insulation foam. We wanted something that we could stick pins in, like Don said, so that somebody could gather information to put on the map. So, mostly Ken and I were involved in the physical aspects of creating it.

B: What kind of philosophies or thought processes influenced this map-making concept?

D: I think that there are two that come together (and this kind of takes apart my previous answer). One is a geographer’s or sociologist’s premise, which in essence is the necessity of some kind of vehicle in which to input data. We saw the map as a model on which information could be placed. The other part is that, from a Visual Arts’ perspective, we wanted something that would be both visually and physically enticing. I don’t think we knew exactly what that was, but I think we knew that what it would become through the process of making the model would have two characteristics: that there would be (as a geographer might also expect) a recognizable sense of scale; from a Visual Arts’ perspective, it would have to be a use of materials that was less precise in order to elicit an imaginative response from viewers.

B: I might be totally off on this question here, but it seems to me that each piece of artwork takes on a life of its own, kind of like a personality. If this is true for this map, what kind of life or personality or adjectives would you use to describe this map?

L: I look upon the map as a working model, something that requires an interaction with those telling the stories. There’s an ambiguity about the map, without the place names. So, it doesn’t say, this is street such and such, or this is the place where this is. There are only the contours of land and it is in the different reactions, stories and the actual physical placement of pins or markers on the “map” that changes it from land into “landscape”
and place. What I was concerned with in the map was not that it was a statement of landforms – based on scientific data – but that we took the data and changed it and gave it the potential to become an artwork. I – and everybody else – was more concerned with the relationship between the map and the viewer, so that the map wouldn’t overpower the viewer. It was really important for people to be able to speak and tell their stories. So, there’s a bit of an ambiguity to the “artwork”, which I really like, because then the viewer or the speaker talks about the areas and the places and what is important to them rather than concentrating on what is on the map. So, that’s the important aspect of the map for me, the fact that it changes with the viewer.

D: I think that Linda described the map as moving from a kind of a scientific mode, where you would expect a precision of details and things like that, towards something a little less scientific. I think it’s analogous to a way of thinking about a photograph as having high resolution versus low resolution. Photographs range from ones that are incredibly specific in their degree of resolution to ones that are quite surreal through a lack of resolution. Having said those things about this model, however, it still leans towards the science-oriented interests in having a recognizable sense of scale. I think that this shift in making the other model – the one we don’t fully know yet – which will somehow be more exuberant in the way it comes together.

B: How are maps important in your own lives?

L: I started using maps in my artwork, in terms of using them to create a sense of identity and place. I was using old family photographs and family histories and tracing their location across Canada from the East and then using maps of the same period within the artwork. I found that maps were important in the sense that they created a sense of how people placed things. They were a hierarchy, in terms of what people thought was important to go on a map and what wasn’t. There is a long history to maps. If you look at landscape paintings, they, in a sense, referred to a kind of romantic ideal of a map. But, there was also that scientific aspect: look at Timothy O’Sullivan’s survey photographs. So, there’s this really interesting history that I’m fascinated with, in terms of looking at aspects of power, prioritizing things, what’s considered important and what isn’t.

D: I’m quite interested in maps with my most specific interest coming from kayaking, where I use nautical charts. The charts are partly a way of safely getting around in the kayak in bad weather and fog, but they’re also just as interesting to me as a way of getting to know the landscape I’m in and gleaning bits of detail from the charts that I might not otherwise notice. And, also, the history of the charting and mapping is interesting, looking at different ways of perceiving the landscape in the manner that Linda spoke of. Early maps have more to do with what we would call mythology, in terms of their representation of the landscape, as opposed to the later kind of science-oriented manner of mapping that Linda has described.

B: What were some of the joys and frustrations that you experienced when you were creating the map?

L: I guess some of the frustration for me was thinking: Where is this going? What is the end product going to be? And although I like to experiment, there was this feeling that I had to produce something that was good enough for this project. So, I guess in a sense that was a frustration, but it also made it more of a challenge, too. Sometimes when I
was on the scroll saw, I would be standing there for hours on end, cutting through these contours, and that was sort of frustrating – it certainly wasn’t the most exciting part. But, then when you built and glued the layers together and actually saw the physical configuration of the map, that was really interesting. I didn’t realize how far south Peterson Creek started. I didn’t realize how deep Tranquille Creek is, and how high the hills rise up above it. I really learned a lot about the physical characteristics of Kamloops, and that was something I hadn’t really considered when I started building the contour map.

D: While I wouldn’t think of it exactly as a frustration, there was a parallel between Linda trying to figure out where we were going with this, and myself as well. Initially, as we hired Ken and Linda to make this map, the research group was thinking more towards the larger construction. But, as we began to conceptualize, and as Linda and Ken began to build this map, we realized that it was too early in the project to try and build the larger construction. It was more useful to have this slightly more predictable map built. Working out the relationship between the conceptual and the physical model of the map was something that we were trying to do as the primary researchers at the time. I can certainly understand and see how that was something that Linda had to wrestle with and that had to be negotiated between the five of us and not just Will, David, and myself. It’s quite clear to me that the more interesting – joy was the word I think you used – aspect of it was seeing those first maps coming out of the mold. There is a certain point in any artwork where the number of hours don’t really matter anymore because there is something satifying in seeing that you’ve actually produced something exciting. That was confirmed a second time when the map was presented to the broader CURA research group and people seemed really quite taken by it – to the point where there were several copies ordered – which haven’t quite come about yet. That geographers would like copies of the map speaks to the merging of interests: parts of it are surreal, but there’s clearly enough science for the geographers.

B: Are you able to situate yourself and your own stories within the map? Even when you were creating it, were you thinking of stories from your own life that came up from certain parts?

L: I think, originally, I was really involved in the physical creation of it, so even though I knew that there were going to be stories about it, I was not really thinking about my own personal stories. I was thinking about how other people would react to it, perhaps, and making sure that some parts were recognizable. But, now, having some time and some space away from it, yes there are areas particularly around Paul Lake, and Paul Creek.

D: For me, a little bit, I guess is the honest answer, because most of the things that I spend doing, either in terms of kayaking or my own artwork take place outside of Kamloops. I’m interested, like Linda said, in seeing how other people respond to the map. I think my interest is in it is to see how well the map we’ve created is able to let other people place their stories within it. I’m always interested in watching people talk about their stories in the Kamloops region and see how and if they can find the physical part on the map where the stories take place. Some people, as you would expect, are quite adept at that, and others have a hard time without there being a whole network of roads. Some people have a hard time relating to the landscape from just the shape of its topography. Without some kind of cultural markers, there’s sometimes a big blank spot on the map. Other people, I think of Byron, for example, who is a treeplanter and who is good at thinking about the physicality of landscape, has no problem with placing himself on the
map. I was just at an exhibition in Halifax where there was a show of photographs taken in treeplanting situations. Some discussion centered around how Lorraine Gilbert’s photos clarified how treeplanters have a particular way of thinking about geography. They have this bagful of trees, just thousands of trees to plant, and they can take one look at the landscape and know how they’ll move across it. That landscape is a very complex network of gulleys and ridges and things, but they have a way of reading the landscape that is very spatial and intuitive. Someone with that kind of a background responds very well to this kind of physical topography. Someone who is used to moving back and forth on a grid of streets is lost by it.

B: We ask our interviewees: “What is missing on this map?” or “How would you change or add to this map if you could?” How would you respond to these questions?

L: I’m not so sure that I would change anything with this particular map. But, I think what I would do is use the map as a lead in to create something else. Not even something necessarily with the landscape of forms, but perhaps what Don was talking about in terms of a more artistic rendering that is balanced with some cultural aspects. I don’t think I would change this particular map. I like the colors in it; I like the softness of the color. I had originally painted the river darker and it really made the landscape look kind of bland, and so when I redid the river it was less of a contrast. Also, if I were doing it again, I would like to extend the boundaries, so that it just wasn’t this particular small area but pushed in further directions.

D: Yeah, I would just add something along the lines of what Linda was mentioning. I would add to it simply by making more of them although not necessarily making a big giant one because then there would be a change in the scale and it wouldn’t have the same kind of physical presence. But, we could start to make some kind of satellite maps of different locations and perhaps in various scales. And we had talked about that, but it was more than we could manageably get done last summer. In another sense, I think that what is added to this sculptural map isn’t something that needs to be physical; what’s added are other people’s stories.

B: Are there other questions that would be beneficial to ask our interviewees about this map?

D: This is just off the top of my head, but it seems that what we’ve been doing with these questions is to ask people a few specific questions about the memory maps and then we ask them just a very general question about the physical map. One question that would be kind of interesting, as it was very much a preoccupation while making the map, would be something about scale. I don’t know exactly what I’m getting at here, but something to prompt people to think of the size of the map and the size of the actual landscape.

L: I like the idea of an extension. At one point, I think, when we were talking about this, somebody mentioned the idea of a semantic map, and so, eliciting ideas of other kinds of maps that would show peoples’ stories would be something that I would be interested in hearing or seeing. I think that they could add to one another and really create a more complex and varied view of Kamloops.

D: Another really practical question for us as a research group and for the research assistants, would be now to try to conceptualize how to make this other kind of map. It wouldn’t hurt to just ask people, if they were building a map, what kinds of materials
they would use, how big they would make it, what characteristics would it have to have. This goes back to my scale question – to think of either small-scale parts of the map or large scale parts of the map – and how they might best convey the stories. From this, we might glean some ideas that would be useful in thinking of how to make a bigger map/sculpture. With these books that you brought in, Linda, you’ve got all kinds of pages tagged. I know that during the building of this map, more than any of us, certainly more than myself, you were doing a lot of research into various sources in and out of the library. You’ve got books such as *The Lure of the Local* and *Landscape and Western Art* and books about how cities are shaped and I’m just wondering about your research and if there’s any particular things of interest to highlight.

L: Well, I think for me, most of my research was historical. I didn’t realize that there was such a long history to maps, and that was interesting. When Ernie Kroeger taught the landscape course, he talked about mapping and the concept of land becoming “landscape.” For example, he pointed out the difference between the romantic formalist aspect and the topographic. So, in terms of my own work, that was interesting, because I like accessing different ideas within my own artwork. I don’t know if they related to the map I was making for CURA, but – and certainly with *The Lure of the Local* by Lucy Lippard – it does relate to the idea of using maps to create a sense of place. In terms of *The City Shaped*, it talks about urban patterns and meanings throughout history. I sometimes stand on a hill in Kamloops, and I look at it, and I see how the road curves up, so it’s partly land based but there are roads that are gridded, too. So, this is really a combination city. Now, I don’t know if that’s true, I’m not a geographer, but what it has done is made me look through new eyes at some of the places where I live now. I’m not sure if I have answered your question, but that’s what I’m using the books for.

D: It makes me think of a question – I don’t know if this has any place in whatever you’re putting together here, but – a question that I have for David, that was brought up by Linda’s pile of books, especially *The Lure of the Local*. One of the things that seemed to be a frustration to David – certainly a question from last summer’s work – was why there was this fascination with the idea of the local and the vernacular landscape and stuff like that. He was asking a lot of questions about this and why we seemed to be have a taken-for-granted notion that this was a good line of questioning. David has recently, in a sense, answered himself by speaking of one’s identity as being formed through a sense of place. So, something in David’s way of thinking about this has come to a place of greater understanding.

B: Would you mind if we displayed your stories alongside the sculptural map, when we are doing our fieldwork? When you were talking about the materials, you mentioned choosing a material that we could stick something into it if we particularly needed it – pins or something. The idea of possibly flagging the map in areas where people have already covered that area with stories is also something that we have recently talked about.

D: Another key part of it, with respect to the choice of materials, came early on, but then carried on to the very end, was whether to make one of these maps – which could have been the cardboard map – or whether it was important to make more than one. The decision to make more than one is the decision that steered the whole process. A key part of the idea to make more than one, to cast ten for example, was the idea that each one might be flagged in a different way to show some particular kind of survey.
Appendix 4:
Correspondence: Artists-as-Researchers

The following people and electronic addresses come from an investigation and dialogue on the topic of artists-as-researchers, particularly to create an annotated bibliography on the subject (to be published in the spring of 2003):

Lise Rochon
Information Officer
Canada Council for the Arts
info@canadacouncil.ca

Katherine Watson
AIRes project
Canada Council for the Arts
watson-k@rogers.com

Solveig Gannon
MIT Media Lab
sgannon@media.mit.edu

Lynn Heinemann
MIT Media Office of the Arts
heine@media.mit.edu

Elizabeth Marzloff
MIT Media Lab
marzloff@media.mit.edu

Chris Csikszentmihalyi
MIT Media Lab
csik@imap.media.mit.edu

Brenda Abalos
Office of Research and Graduate Studies
U of Central Florida
babalos@mail.ucf.edu

Barry Mauer
Earth Echoes
U of Central Florida
bmauer@mindspring.com

Alison Shreeve
JISC
a.shreeve@lcf.linst.ac.uk

Iain Biggs
Creative Urban Space Projects (CUSP)
U of the West of England
Iain.Biggs@uwe.ac.uk
Nita Sturiale  
Art Science Organization  
nita@artscience.org

Claudia Mitchell  
McGill University  
Claudia.mitchell@staff.mcgill.ca

Stephen Wilson  
Conceptual / Information Arts  
San Francisco State University  
swilson@sfsu.edu

Mimi Gardner  
Xerox PARC Communications  
Mimi.Gardner@parc.com

David Smith  
Head of Research and Development  
School of Art, Media, and Design  
U of Wales College Newport  
david.smith@newport.ac.uk

Patrick Slattery  
Texas A & M University  
Patslat@aol.com

Maynard Collins  
Senior Policy Officer  
SSHRC  
maynard.collins@sshrc.ca

Diane Tremblay  
Program Officer  
SSHRC  
dtr@sshrc.ca

Lynn Hughes  
SSHRC Subcommittee  
lynn.huges@sympatico.ca

Diane Conrad  
U of Alberta  
dhconrad@ualberta.ca

Margie Buttignol  
OISE  
U of Toronto  
mbuttignol@oise.utoronto.ca

Gary Knowles  
OISE  
U of Toronto  
jgaryknowles@oise.utoronto.ca

Roger Malina  
Leonardo Former Editor  
rmalina@ssl.berkeley.edu

Antoinette Uhlar  
Arthouse Multimedia Centre for the Arts  
Manager  
auhlar@arthouse.ie
Julianne Pierce
ANAT – Scientific Serendipity & Arcadia
julianne@anat.org.au

Mary Blackstone
Department of Theatre
U of Regina
SSHRC (*subcommittee)
blackstm@uregina.ca

Rena Upitis
National Research Director
Learning Through the Arts
Queen’s University
upitisr@edu.queensu.ca

William Straw
McGill University
william.straw@mcgill.ca

YaLing Chen
Tout Fait Journal
Research / Managing Editor
ToutFaitJournal@aol.com

Sherrill Grace
UBC
Sherrill.E.Grace@ubc.ca

Michael Century
Author
micentu@attglobal.net

Angela Piccini
Practice as Research in Performance
U of Bristol
a.a.piccini@bristol.ac.uk

Clare Thornton
Wellcome Trust
c.thornton@wellcome.ac.uk

Denna Jones
Wellcome Trust
Curator
d.jones@wellcome.ac.uk

Ken Arnold
Wellcome Trust
Head of Exhibitions
k.arnold@wellcome.ac.uk

Marian Jones
NRC Innovation Centre
Marian.Jones@nrc.ca

Thomas Nelson
Teacher Education Quarterly
tnelson@uop.edu

Karen Buttner
Banff Centre
Karen_Buttner@BanffCentre.CA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization/Position</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sara Diamond</td>
<td>Banff Centre</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sara_Diamond@BanffCentre.CA">Sara_Diamond@BanffCentre.CA</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cindy Schatkoski</td>
<td>Banff Centre</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Cindy_Schatkoski@BanffCentre.CA">Cindy_Schatkoski@BanffCentre.CA</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian Sinclair</td>
<td>Heads Together Productions Ltd.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:together@heads.demon.co.uk">together@heads.demon.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penny Eames</td>
<td>Arts Access Aotearoa</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Penny.eames@artsaccess.org.nz">Penny.eames@artsaccess.org.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Wilkinson</td>
<td>Faculty of Music</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fwalkins@uwo.ca">fwalkins@uwo.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Marinho</td>
<td>Nigeria Highway Gallery</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tmarinho@skannet.com">tmarinho@skannet.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalia Siaulytiene</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Science</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dalia@smm.lt">dalia@smm.lt</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Langford</td>
<td>Magic Me</td>
<td><a href="mailto:susanlangford@magicme.demon.co.uk">susanlangford@magicme.demon.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vrenia Ivonoffski</td>
<td>Canadian Playwriter</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vivonoff@hotmail.com">vivonoff@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaija Kaitavuori</td>
<td>Education Curator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kaija.kaitavuori@kiasma.fi">kaija.kaitavuori@kiasma.fi</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy Milton</td>
<td>Helix Arts</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lm@helixarts.com">lm@helixarts.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Barry</td>
<td>Creative Organisation Studies</td>
<td><a href="mailto:david.barry@auckland.ac.nz">david.barry@auckland.ac.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Selman</td>
<td>U of Alberta</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jan.selman@ualberta.ca">jan.selman@ualberta.ca</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>