

# Your Place or Mine? Crowdsourced Planning, Moving Image Archives and Community Archaeology

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**Zusammenfassung** – „Know Your Place“ ([www.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace)) ist ein innovatives, web-basiertes Werkzeug, das lokale Gemeinschaften darin einbezieht, die Geschichte ihrer Nachbarschaft zu entwickeln, indem sie Informationen und Medien den Planungskarten der Stadt Bristol hinzufügen können. Eine intuitive, karten-basierte Schnittstelle ermöglicht den Zugriff auf eine breite Palette von ortsbezogenen Daten, einschließlich historischer Karten aus dem Archiv der Stadt Bristol und aus dem „Bristol Historic Environment Record“ (HER). Das Projekt ist in Teilen finanziert durch British Heritage und arbeitet mit den lokalen Gemeinschaften zusammen. Ziel des Werkzeugs ist es, Menschen zu befähigen, auf ein breites Spektrum an historischen Archivalien zugreifen zu können und sie zu nutzen, um auf der Ebene von Nachbarschaften über Planungsentscheidungen zu informieren. Darüber hinaus ermöglicht es der Öffentlichkeit, Bilder und Informationen über Stätten des kulturellen Erbes hoch zu laden, und führt über diesen Crowdsourcing-Ansatz auch zu einer Verbesserung der Daten im HER.

Der Beitrag schildert die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den einzelnen Gemeinden in Bristol, der Stadtverwaltung und der Universität Bristol, die gemeinsam bemüht waren, das Werkzeug „Know Your Place“ mit mündlichen Überlieferungen, Fotos und bewegten Bildern zu bereichern, die während einer Reihe von über die Stadt verteilten Arbeitstreffen im Jahr 2012 gesammelt wurden. Insbesondere wird der Hintergrund der Schnittstelle zu „Know Your Place“ dargelegt und das Potential erörtert, das in privaten und selbstgedrehten Filmen und Videos steckt, um auch für die Archäologie relevante Informationen zu gewinnen. Durch die Einbeziehung und Validierung von privaten und informellen Bildquellen - vom Familienfoto über Kleinbilddias und Super-8-Filme zum privaten Video auf Youtube - verändern wir potentiell die Beziehungen zwischen den Gemeinschaften und den administrativen Planungsprozessen, indem das professionelle Wissen der Fachleute mit lokalem Wissen verknüpft wird. Der Weg, auf dem ein Konsens über den Wert von Orten erreicht wird, ist wichtig für der Schaffung von Umgebungen höherer Qualität und für eine bessere Fürsorge für unser kulturelles Erbe.

**Schlüsselwörter** – Bristol (England, UK), lokale Archäologie, GIS, Familienfotos, private Filme, Stadtplanung

**Abstract** – Know Your Place ([www.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace)) is a highly innovative web-based tool that engages local communities in shaping the stories of their neighbourhoods by allowing contributors to add media and metadata to the City of Bristol's planning site. The intuitive, map-based interface provides access to a wide range of place-based data, including historic maps from Bristol's archive collections and the Bristol Historic Environment Record (HER). Part-funded by English Heritage and working with local communities, the aim of the tool is to enable people to access a wide range of historic archive material and use this to inform decisions about planning at the neighbourhood scale. It also allows members of the public to upload images and information about heritage places and by doing so takes a user-generated, crowdsourcing approach to HER data enhancement.

In this paper, we discuss a collaboration between Bristol's communities, Bristol City Council and University of Bristol that sought to enrich Know Your Place with oral histories and still and moving images gathered during a series of workshops held across the city in 2012. Specifically, we will outline the background to the Know Your Place interface and discuss the potential of home movies and videos to produce archaeologically relevant information. By including and validating domestic and informal image production – from the family photograph to the 35mm slide to the Super8 film to the home movie uploaded to YouTube – we potentially alter relationships between community and formal planning processes by utilising the strengths of specialist and local knowledge. How we reach a consensus about the value of place is essential in creating better quality environments and better care for the heritage of our places.

**Keywords** – Bristol (UK), community archaeology, GIS, family photographs, home movies, planning

## Introduction

On being asked, 'Your place or mine?', most people would have reason to be optimistic about how the rest of the evening might pan out. The question would probably be posed towards the end of an evening and likely suggest that your luck was in. If somebody does come back to your place and the relationship develops, leading on to frequent visits to one another's places, at what point does your place become his? Or her place become yours? At what point does a place become shared or take on a significance for more than the individual? Who are the people involved in making place? How does the involvement of different people affect the quality of a place and the significance that place already has for an

individual? We use these questions as starting points for our story of archives, home movies, the built environment and a sense of place in Bristol, a mid-sized UK city located at the point where the M4 and M5 motorways cross, a city in the west of England, a city that sits in the lower third of the British landmass, east of Wales, north of Cornwall, south of Scotland.

*'Place = Space + Meaning... meaning is attributed by people'* (Andy Gibbins, Localism and Heritage Conference, Bristol 2012)

The literature on place as multiple, as event and as practice is significant. It ranges across philosophy, geography, heritage studies, social policy and beyond. Key critical writers about place

might include Martin Heidegger, who asks what it is to dwell and considers this in terms of the human propensity to build as a form of thinking about what it means to be in place (1971). Michel de Certeau (1984) explores on the practices of everyday life that make place. Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1991) focuses attention on the human and non-human interpolations of practice that literally make place. Edward Casey (1993) offers a phenomenological account that situates our experience of place as fundamental to what it means to be human. Geographer Doreen Massey (2005) suggests that place-making is an entanglement, a 'throwtogetherness', of people and the material environment and that place incorporates different times simultaneously. In the field of the built environment, scholarship and the public sector took a turn towards place at the end of the twentieth century in the context of critiques of globalisation and the asserted disappearance of local character (cf. ENGLISH HERITAGE 2000). Taken together, the scholarship suggests that place does not pre-exist human activity, nor is it entirely produced or controlled by people. We might attribute meanings to place, but place always exceeds those meanings, even though the very act of referring to 'your' place produces a frame that seems to exclude other inhabitations - of former tenants, mice, books, furniture, silverfish, crockery, electricity, friends.

The meanings of place derive in part from the interactions of people and material culture. These interactions can relate to historic associations or aesthetic values or a combination of factors. For example, from a UK perspective, Stonehenge had a significance to our ancestors that we can only guess at, but the place has significance today because of the monument's history, the wonder and awe that we feel with an understanding of the structure's age, the look and feel of the place and its landscape context. In Bristol, Clifton Suspension Bridge is iconic because of its landscape setting and its historical association with one of the great Victorian engineers. The city's College Green in appearance is a triangular bit of grass, but is a significant space in part because it is surrounded by historic buildings: Bristol Cathedral, the Council House, the Lord Mayor's Chapel. It was also the site of the recent 'Occupy Bristol' movement, chosen because of its prominent position (visible and political) but also because College Green provides a green oasis in an urban environment. All of these examples can have significance because of our experiences or memories of these places and at some level we

feel a personal connection to them. But at what point do these places become 'ours' and what are the processes by which places may be 'ours' but not 'theirs'?

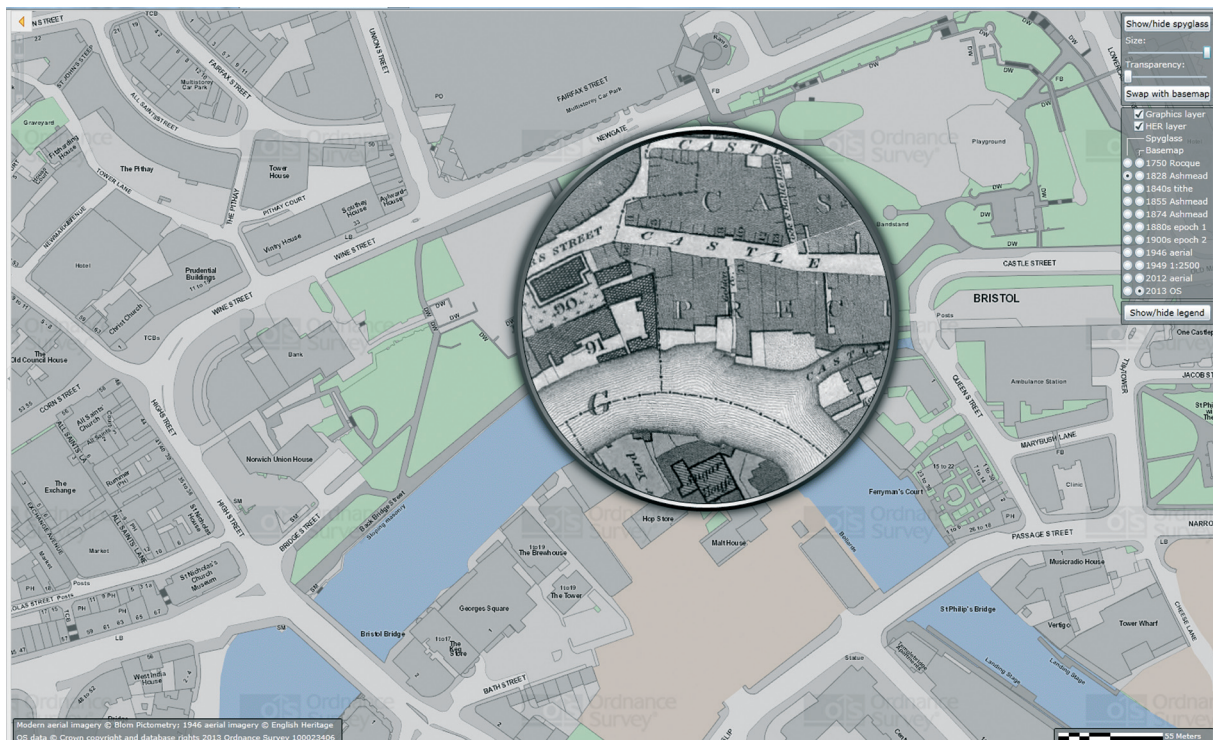
Stonehenge is a national monument, it is designated as such, it is part of the British national identity and Britain as a nation and its citizens have a responsibility to it. As a World Heritage Site also, the sense of collective responsibility extends beyond the UK such that on some level that notion of 'our' heritage is global. At a local level, whether it is your nearest park, your street or the house where you live the level of importance of these places, and who has control of them, is harder to judge. For example if your house is in Britain and is Listed Grade I, II\* or II some of your control over what you can and cannot do to the building has been removed in the national interest. But what about other places in local parishes and neighbourhoods? Our houses, our front gardens, where we park our cars make a contribution in some way to our place, but deciding when this contribution or interaction with a place takes on a significant meaning is a challenge.

Interactions with places and the potential meanings attached to these places is consequently complex. However, a detailed understanding of these interactions past and present during any place-making or planning process will contribute to the creation of quality places for the future. A combination of an open approach to place-related data that recognizes and involves diverse communities of use and meaning and effective crowdsourcing can help to create a process that is collaborative and well informed.

*A more inclusive urban landscape history can also stimulate new approaches to urban design, encouraging designers, artists, and writers, as well as citizens, to contribute to an urban art of creating a heightened sense of place in the city.*

Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place*, 1995, 12.

In this paper, we will discuss a collaboration between the City of Bristol and University of Bristol that sought to augment the city's existing online place-based data interface with oral histories and still and moving images gathered during a series of workshops held across the city in 2012. Specifically, we will detail the background to the accessible and interactive web-based interface and suggest that home movies and video have the potential to produce archaeologically relevant information that can be incorporated into the planning process. The active framing



**Figure 1** Screen shot of Know Your Place, showing 'Spyglass' tool overlaying historical mapping information on top of contemporary data. (Reproduced with permission from Bristol City Council).

and transformation of place by the camera lens and through editing sits in productive tension with the evidentiary status of the image, with the ability of the image to show the built environment apparently fixed in a specific time. Home movies as both practice and as evidence are, we suggest, under-explored material culture that can usefully inform community planning. By including and validating media in the home mode, the city potentially radically alters relationships between community and formal planning processes.

### Know Your Place

The Know Your Place web resource ([www.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace)) launched in March 2011 presents as much place-based data as possible via an easy-to-use web interface (Figure 1). It is a GIS-based resource that layers historic maps of Bristol overlain on modern Ordnance Survey Mastermap digital mapping. The concept and design brief for the resource was created by Peter Insole in Bristol City Council's City Design Group in partnership with Andrew Ventham of the Council's Corporate Geographic Information Systems (GIS) team. Historic maps include nineteenth-century plans by George Ashmead;

nineteenth-century parish tithe maps; and 1881-3 and 1902-3 Ordnance Survey maps. Added to this mapping information are images from Bristol City's Museums and Archives, including images from the Braikenridge Collection, which show the city and its buildings in the 1820s. The web platform is further augmented by data from the Bristol Historic Environment Record (HER). Know Your Place also enables users to contribute written commentary, photographs and a range of digital files to the unique 'community layer' (Figure 2).

Initiatives such as Know Your Place create an online interactive environment for people to learn about, share and contribute to understandings of place. By locating the platform within the City Council's Planning Office, the materials that communities contribute in the 'community layer' come to be verified and validated, thus formally informing the planning process. This becomes an even more open and interactive initiative when the web resource is taken out to communities who have yet to engage with the website. The reasons for lack of engagement are multiple and complex: issues of internet access; not connecting local values of place to 'official' narratives; culturally, generationally and economically specific



The screenshot shows a web form titled "New HER asset". The form is organized into several sections:

- Name of asset or feature:** A text input field with the prompt "How do people identify this asset?".
- Type of asset:** A dropdown menu with the instruction "Select from the list or enter your own value."
- Description:** A large text area with the prompt "Try to give us a description of the location, and an idea of date or age of the feature. Is this asset of value in terms of neighbourhood identity? Is it unique or part of the street scene?".
- Risk to asset:** A text input field with the prompt "Is this asset under any kind of threat?".
- Nominate for Local List:** A dropdown menu with the prompt "Do you wish to nominate this asset for inclusion on the Local List?" and the selected option "No".
- Photograph of asset:** A section with a "[Select an image to upload] ->" button, a "Select image..." button, and a "Remove image" button. A note below states: "Please note: only JPEG, GIF, PNG or TIFF files smaller than 4MB can be accepted."
- Your name:** A text input field with the prompt "Do you belong to a local society or community group?".
- Your organisation:** A text input field with the prompt "Please provide your email address or telephone number. These details won't be published on the website."
- Your contact information (confidential):** A large text area for providing contact details.

**Figure 2** Screen shot of Know Your Place, showing community layer contribution form. (Reproduced with permission from Bristol City Council).

perceptions of and attitudes towards heritage. By taking Know Your Place out in to communities we attempt to acknowledge the agency of community members in determining what is of value (or not) in their places. The web interface provides access to and active engagement with data that should be in the public domain. Know Your Place has won the ESRI UK Local Government Vision Award (<http://www.esriuk.com/aboutesriuk/pressreleases.asp?pid=668>) and was a finalist at the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Awards as a result of the resource's contribution towards neighbourhood planning and the Localism agenda. The website is currently being used in schools and will be one of the key vehicles for delivering the Bristol Curriculum initiative that will create a locally relevant learning resource for Bristol.

### Lockleaze 2012

When an open approach is combined with a neighbourhood planning activity such as the 'place check' event Lockleaze 2012, the link between understanding past and present interactions with a place directly informs visions for future change. Lockleaze is a post-war housing estate of lower middle or working class families with no designated or apparent heritage value in their place. The community was invited

to participate in an oral history collection event followed by a separate context mapping exercise and place check event. The act of mapping the physical characteristics of an area by the community can be an enjoyable exercise and produced immediate, meaningful and useable results. The activity often results in aspects of the environment being recorded that residents have never previously been aware of and yet are features that are fundamental to the way in which the neighbourhood looks and feels. For example building heights in one area were recorded by the group as being predominantly three storeys. When the suggestion that any future buildings should be of a similar height an initial response was that three storeys was too high. It was then pointed out from the context mapping that this was in keeping with the existing structures.

Undertaking this mapping in a structured and visual way makes the process accessible and at the same time allows for gathering of detailed data. The learning and understanding journey that we undertook in Lockleaze is the way we want to collaborate with community partners in the future. Embedding these types of activities within the process helps to create a shared experience that is founded on empirical evidence, whether that is evidence of how the streets, spaces and buildings once operated or how the area looks today. The mapping work allows participants to

begin to understand urban design principles such as building line, set-back, block structure, scale and massing. This contributes to the development of a common language and shared understanding that allows professionals and the community to discuss design concepts without the risk of misinterpretation despite potential design complexities. The same approach can be applied to undertaking Historic Area Assessments as well as neighbourhood planning exercises. The process therefore becomes transparent, which allows members of the public to understand explicitly what informs planning decisions. In the instance of Lockleaze, the data gathered by the community also allowed for planning proposals to move forward constructively.

A tool like Know Your Place makes place-related data more accessible and also enables people to work with and interrogate that data more easily. Consequently the resource is used for planning submissions, heritage statements, archaeological studies and neighbourhood planning events. All these processes draw on the data allowing the historic background and meanings of place to inform proposals and thereby contribute to the creation of quality places at any scale. In this way the web resource is contributing to processes that better respond to the historic context of places.

The public contribution function of the site uses a crowdsourcing approach to enable new records about the heritage of the city to be created or existing records to be enhanced by members of the public. There have been over 670 submissions to the site since Know Your Place went live in March 2011. Contributions to the site include: a street filled with children (possibly photographed for the first time) posing on VE (Victory in Europe) Day with mums desperately trying to keep the ranks in order whilst the children appear to be being distracted by some activity at the back; Victorian scare posts in St Werburgh's that record the flood level in 1882 and which remain in situ today, doing their job in these days of flood risk; a series of five late eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century limekiln relics of an industrial and agricultural past that were only visible from a private field and were previously unrecorded by any map or document. These contributions submitted to the site become part of the Historic Environment Record (HER), the primary heritage evidence base as detailed by local planning policy, and therefore become a material consideration of any planning application process. This direct link to policy provided by the relationship and

validation provided by the HER is one of the main strengths of the community interaction with Know Your Place and sets it apart from similar web resources like History Pin (<http://blog.historypin.com/>) with Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com/>), Google Maps (<http://maps.google.co.uk>) etc.

### **Academic partnerships**

A recent Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded Connected Communities project, led by Professor Robert Bickers enabled a partnership with the University of Bristol that involved a series of community workshops to draw more personal archive material in to the website. The *Know Your Bristol* (<http://bristol.ac.uk/public-engagement/events/know-your-bristol/>) workshops visited seven different parts of the city where attendees contributed oral histories and were able to have their family photographs scanned and objects digitally photographed and, where appropriate, added to Know Your Place. The project also sought to explore the potential for people's home movies and videos to enter into the HER. This will be discussed in more depth, below. Interviews with members of the public were undertaken and audio recorded and the edited results were added as an audio layer to the website. Individual stories included the pet monkey behind the counter at the local off licence (Know Your Hillfields); the lemonade machine at the vicarage (Know Your South Bristol); and believing that the lights of the Avonmouth industries were a fun fair (Know Your Kings Weston). These stories make a powerful link between place and personal memories. Moreover, these narratives effectively add a spatial layer of meaning to the web resource that is accessible to other members of the community to interpret.

Another collaborative project, *City Strata* (<http://www.react-hub.org.uk/heritagesandbox/projects/2012/city-strata/>), has begun to explore the potential to publish this type of information from mobile phones to Know Your Place and to stream data from Know Your Place to mobile phones. The project was created by Charlotte Crofts at the University of the West of England and developed with the software company Calvium. The ability to tap this data from the related physical location and enable users to create their own data as on the website will help people develop a greater understanding of and connection to these places.

The development of a mobile tool will increase the wide scope of learning potential that Know Your Place can offer. The use of the web resource as an effective classroom learning tool has been demonstrated on many occasions. Prior to the launch of the site, Know Your Place was successfully used by Year 6 (10-11 year-olds) pupils at St Michael's on the Mount Primary School in central Bristol. The short exercise aimed at helping the children learn about the historic development of their local area and they were delighted to make some of their own discoveries about their neighbourhood: '...it was really fun to see when your house was built' (Betzy) and '...that's where your house is now, let's see it in 1828, whoah look at that...the old circus...' (Khalid and Ased). As part of the Local Learning Stokes Croft community learning project delivered by Myers-Insole Local Learning (<http://www.locallearning.org.uk/strokescroftmenu.html>) the website was used with children in Year 4 (8-9 year-olds) at Sefton Park Primary School, Ashley Down where the use of the historic maps helped the children produce a poem based on Robert Louis Stevenson's *From a Railway Carriage*, (1913 <http://www.bartleby.com/188/138.html>) about a journey to Bristol in the nineteenth century through fields and past farms where now there are streets of houses.

*In the background there is a mill,  
And nine elm trees on a hill,  
Here is a hot air balloon above the churches,  
And there is a river beyond the circus.*

Years 2 (6-7 year-olds) and 5 (9-10 year-olds) at St Barnabas Primary School in central Bristol used the site at the beginning of a local studies mapping project. Year 2 went in search of an old boundary stone marked on a map of 1880 that was once at the edge of their local park.

The above examples effectively demonstrate that the website can promote learning outside the classroom as well as work in class or an ICT (Information and Communications Technology) suite. Such approaches help children as young as six-years-old begin to make the connection between historic developments and their own neighbourhoods. Ultimately this should encourage the next generation of place-makers to work with a deeper understanding and sense of place. As the Bristol Curriculum initiative by Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives and the Heritage Schools initiative from English Heritage develop, Know Your Place should become a

significant learning tool for local studies in and outside the classroom. A recently successful application by the Bristol Central Library to the Arts Council Designation Development Fund to digitise and upload material held in the local studies collection in the Central Reference Library will further increase the learning opportunities on the site.

### **Know Your Place and the 'home mode'**

As outlined above, there are potentially important intersections between the informal, local knowledges produced and circulated via social media and domestic media in the form of home movies, home video, family photographs and slides. These are described collectively as the 'home mode' (Chalfen, 1987: 8). Moving images remain a relatively under-explored artefact assemblage for archaeologists and heritage professionals. Beyond the representational allure of the image, Standard 8, Super8, VHS, miniDV, HD and iPhone cameras, reels of celluloid, plastic tapes and DVDs, heavy steel projectors, monitors and hard drives now clutter attics and cellars and find their way into the landscape as discarded and lost material culture. In short, the materialities of home media intervene in people's everyday lives. Media in the home mode are currently invited for submission to the Bristol Record Office, in recognition of their social and historical importance. However, we suggest that both the information that home media can provide about changing practices of place-making (i.e. what we see in the frame) and the significance of home media as material culture swiftly entering into the archaeological record provide insight into the multiple meanings of place that can usefully contribute to planning processes.

Within the *Know Your Bristol* project we asked how moving image archives can enact multiple historical and archaeological narratives and provide new information about specific everyday spatial and material practices. Since the 1980s, family photographs and home movies have been understood variously as documents of the everyday, as materialising the impact of camera technologies on domestic life, as expressing cultural norms and as documents of the ongoing social reproduction of ideology. Julia Hirsch's *Family Photographs: Content, Meaning, Effect* (1981) and Richard Chalfen's *Snapshot Versions of Life* (1987) were early considerations of the importance of family photographs and home

movies. Chalfen, as an anthropologist, recognised that kinship, material culture and aesthetic preference are encapsulated in the constructed image and argued that cultural meanings are essential to the mode rather than technologically contingent (CHALFEN 1987; MORAN 2002: 35). That is, home movies are almost ritual objects that signify underlying socio-cultural norms and that photographic representation directly indexes how the subjects featured in these films see themselves. Here, the home movie documents and unproblematically circulates an ahistoric worldview. Patricia Zimmerman's *Reel Families* (1995) was the first book-length study of the home movie and argued instead that the home mode reproduced bourgeois ideologies of the capitalist heteronormative family via the advertising and training manuals associated with amateur film-making technologies. In other words, the images that we see in home movies are ultimately constrained by historically specific ideologies that determine what can be represented and shown.

James M. Moran critiques both Chalfen and Zimmerman's arguments as overly monolithic and attempts to counter the inflexibility and stasis of ideological accounts of the home mode by producing a taxonomy that draws on the sociological theories of Pierre Bourdieu in order to discuss the home mode as practice. In other words, Moran is interested in what the home mode does and how it performs:

- The home mode provides an authentic, active mode of media production for representing everyday life;
- It constructs a liminal space in which practitioners may explore and negotiate the competing demands of their public, communal, and private, personal identities;
- It provides a material articulation of generational continuity over time;
- It constructs an image of home as a cognitive and affective foundation situating our place in the world;
- It provides a narrative format for communicating family legends and personal stories.

(2002, 59-61)

Pierre Bourdieu's work on family photography (1996) suggested that all we see are the happy moments due to the entanglements of habitus, or the human dispositions towards particular practices, and the field, which 'grounds agency within structured social relations without succumbing to

determinist objectivism' (MORAN 2002: 54). In this way, human practices are neither the unthinking actions of the cultural 'dupe' nor are they mere expressions of what the technological apparatus enables or prevents. For Bourdieu and for Moran habitus and field mediate what is at any specific time recognisable and intelligible as practice. However, we would go further than this socio-cultural emphasis on social relations to suggest that the home mode importantly articulates and enacts specific material-discursive practices that connect film-maker, film-making technologies, human subjects and the built environment as an entangled assemblage of boundary-making practices. In this way, we situate discussion of the home mode within archaeological concerns and, more broadly, within the theoretical contexts of performative materialities (see BARAD 2007). That is, home movies are key participants in the active shaping of the world.

While a turn to the home mode as evidence has characterised more recent scholarship (SHAND 2008, 46-47) and has informed the *Know Your Bristol* workshops, we do not suggest that film, video and photography can be treated as 'innocent' artefacts that give access to a pro-filmic world. In other words, these materials do not provide direct access to an imagined world happening outside the frame. Rather, the phenomenon of this domestic image-making mixes cameras, places, people, memories, boxes of old reels, dust, families and so on – a rich set of always material relations that produce what it is that we describe as 'social'. Home mode media are central players in how we come to differentiate the social and the material, the holiday and the everyday, the family and the landscape. How we make sense of those relationships is complex. Mörner suggests that in order to better understand how home movies and videos do this work, some form of ethnographic practice alongside attention to the home movie is necessary (2011). She argues that in the vast majority of cases there is simply not enough evidence to support contextual accounts or solid conclusions about the significance of moments of home movie production and reception. Ethnographic methods are useful in terms of adding detail and specificity to social histories and can problematise the more textually driven analyses developed by scholars like Chalfen and Zimmerman. In the *Know Your Bristol* workshops, clear links were made between the oral histories and material culture with both added to the *Know Your Place* website.





**Figure 3** Still from video of projection of Ken Jones' 1950s Scouting Standard 8 film, Know Your South Bristol, June 2012. (Video: Angela Piccini).

Connecting oral testimony with material culture and the archaeological record allows us to move beyond questions of intentionality and social practice to look at specific material relations that evidence the changing uses and transformations of the built environment. In short, we are interested in how home media both show archaeological landscapes and contribute to the archaeological record. The narratives and aesthetics of these media are shaped by habit and by the manuals and magazines that instruct the image-maker on appropriate subject matter and framing (ZIMMERMAN 1995). They are also shaped by the technologies themselves. A 2-and-a-half minute roll of Super8 film situates the film-maker differently than does an hour of videotape or the endless record-delete-store-download of born digital images (see ORGERON AND ORGERON 2007). A film projector in a dark room that requires constant attention from the projectionist to prevent the mechanism from sticking and the film from burning aligns viewers to what they see differently than does a VHS player and a TV or a video gallery posted up on Facebook and viewed on a smart phone. However, those differences are themselves not homogeneous or monolithic. So, it is here also that ethnographies and oral histories can be particularly useful. They can help to identify the gaps between performed memory and the practices within the photographic frame and on screen. Oral histories can also sit in proximity to the aesthetics and the genres that home movie

makers referenced, and point towards the specific practices of place acceptable in different locations. This adds to our archaeological and historical understandings of the built environment.

In *Know Your Bristol*, we focused on home movies, video and slides in the 'Know Your South Bristol' event, held at Knowle West Media Centre. The aim of the workshop was to investigate the potential and limitations of working with moving image media across a range of formats – all requiring different (and often defunct) technical apparatus. The workshop was also intended to bring together a range of South Bristol local history and archaeology groups. The south of the city is geographically spread out, with a number of infrastructural and socio-economic challenges. Ill-served by public transport and with lower Quality of Life indicator scores than more northerly neighbourhoods (BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL 2011), the communities of Knowle West, Brislington and Bedminster share histories and yet face obstacles to sharing local expertise. Bristol City Council has worked actively with both Bedminster and Brislington to augment the Know Your Place data and we wanted to connect these initiatives and also involve Knowle West. Furthermore, we wished to focus on moving image collections in these neighbourhoods in order to highlight a more heightened form of image-making practice. Finally, the authors' individual personal and professional involvements in these neighbourhoods in the context of public





**Figure 4** Still from video of projection of Ken Jones' 1950s Scouting Standard 8 film, *Know Your South Bristol*, June 2012. (Video: Angela Piccini).

engagement, outreach, volunteering and friendship made the South Bristol event an ideal context for trying to develop this strand of the research.

Focusing on the material-discursive practices of both the act of filming and the subject matter within the frame potentially intervenes in the ahistoric discussion of the form. An archaeological approach to attending to the specificities of the *mise-en-scene* and the granular, contingent practising of place and material culture that appears both within the frame but also in the relationship between the camera operator and the situations being filmed contribute insight into the ways in which we come to know places – ways that usefully illustrate and perform local expertise. This local expertise might then be formalised within *Know Your Place*, thus contributing to formal planning processes. Take, for example, **Figures 3 and 4**. Both show Scouting activities and are taken from Knowle West elder Ken Jones' personal collection of Standard 8 films from the 1950s. Scouting is very well represented in the home mode and we could easily discuss such films in terms of the way in which they validate and reproduce Scouting as a practice regulating mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century male behaviour, specifically in the film's focus on the relationship between the boys and their Scout Master. From the perspective of *Know Your Place*, however, this film creates an interesting echo between the unseen filmmaker as technical expert and the people within the frame learning how to shape and transform

their surroundings using saws and axes. The film provides an establishing shot to indicate place and then focuses in to linger on sequences of wood-cutting.

The home mode comprises still images, too, however. At the 'Know Your South Bristol' event, Ken Jones showed his 35mm slides, which documented the changing landscape of Knowle West from the 1950s-70s, in particular, sites of religious worship. Slides provide a further format of interest to the archaeologist.

The conventions of the slide show – its staged format more in keeping with the home movie than the family snapshot, its large image format and its association with educational contexts – potentially encourage detailed discussion of material features in the frame. Certainly, this was the case at the 'Know Your South Bristol' event. We gathered around the projected image and freely touched its apparent surface. Where the marks of its making and use may be on the slide, there is no need to treat the projected image as artefact. Where we handle old photographs with care, avoiding touching anything but the edges, the projected image invites touch. Yet, unlike the moving image, the slide can be lingered upon and returned to; it is stilled time. Moving images can of course be stilled – either by looking at individual frames of celluloid on a light box or by pausing the video – but their value here is around duration and the practising of time and space.

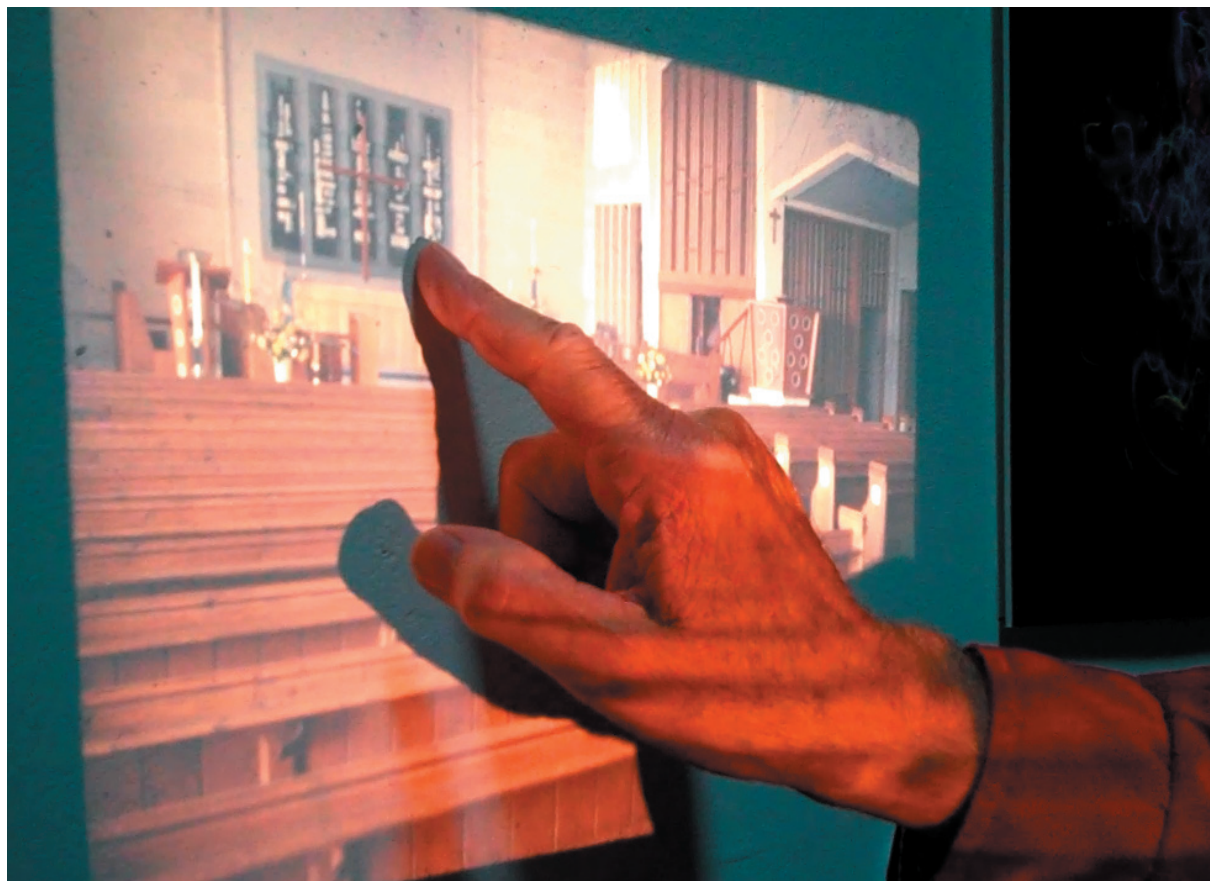


Figure 5 Still from video of projection of Ken Jones's 35mm slides, Know Your South Bristol, June 2012. (Video: Angela Piccini).

### Valuing the ubiquitous: or, when have I seen enough of your place?

At other *Know Your Bristol* workshop events, still photographs and objects were digitally photographed for archival preservation and for uploading to the Know Your Place website. Managing moving image collections is a more complex undertaking due to the specialist projection and transfer equipment required and the server space implicated in any video archiving project. We knew that it was not feasible to digitise people's home movie and video collections but we wished to see something of the scope and variety of the material out there in people's homes and to ascertain the value of such collections to the city's crowd-sourcing approach to characterising and valuing the built environment of Bristol. Where we could, we augmented Know Your Place with still images and oral histories. However, we also located the significance of personal photographic collections and home movies within the history of the city rather than in the personal only. Rather than attempt excavations of images, their interest

for us is their future-forward import in terms of how they potentially inform our collective decision-making about the way our city changes over time.

The Know Your Place website and *Know Your Bristol* workshops all seem to provide communities with unprecedented access to planning and policy and to the formal structures that value memory and personal archive as historical resource. Yet, we remain cautious about taking as given the emancipatory aspects of online archaeology (see MORGAN 2012, RICHARDSON 2012). Such concerns are not limited to digital media, however: historically, 'new' media have been greeted with a mixture of scepticism, fear and hyperbole. In 1970, Hans Magnus Enzensberger wrote that media practice takes on radical potential in new social settings (1982). This was at the heart of the late 1960's-70's community media movement. Taking together video, radio, cable TV and timesharing computers, Enzensberger wrote that 'for the first time in history, the media are making mass participation possible in a social and socialized productive process, the practical means of which are in the

hands of the masses themselves' (ENZENSBERGER 1982, 48). Such utopian claims for participation are what Zimmerman discusses in terms of the failure of the home mode to intervene radically and oppositionally in dominant ideology (1995). That failure might be located, too, in the ubiquity of images and their circulation:

*Never before has any age been so informed about itself, if being informed means having an image of objects that resembles them in a photographic sense...But the flood of photos sweeps away the dams of memory. The assault of this mass of images is so powerful that it threatens to destroy the potential existing awareness of crucial traits...Never before has a period known so little about itself.* (KRACAUER 1993 [1927], 432)

Writing in 1927, Siegfried Kracauer echoes popular contemporary anxieties about the impact of social media on memory and knowledge. Both Enzensberger's and Kracauer's positions return us to the importance of practice, rather than the mere fact of the existence of these ubiquitous media. While the specific moments in time at which the Bristol home movies were made perhaps do not materialise participation in the political, what the Know Your Place website offers is a point of entry where the ubiquitous materials of family and community group can begin to operate in ways that have measureable impact on the planning process. The formal valuing of these materials sets up a relationship between local, community production and central policy structures and it is the relationship between these, rather than the primacy of either one over the other, that ensures meaningful participation.

What is it that the conjunction of home movies, family photographs and social media do? The radical potential of bringing home movies in to a space like Know your Place is that the personal of the home movie is historicised. While there is a significant body of documentary films that employ the home mode – including, for example, Michelle Citron's *Leftovers* (2012), Jonathan Couette's *Tarnation* (2003), Péter Forgács' 'Private Hungary' films (1988 - date) and Andrew Jarecki's *Capturing the Friedmans* (2003) – such materials are generally not afforded the status of the formal archive or drawn in to planning and policy regulatory processes. While the institutional appropriation of these materials might be critiqued in terms of who gets to own and circulate community stories, the potential of Know Your Place is the activation of these records as newly powerful agents for social change. Home movies, videos, 35 mm

slides and online media intervene in the singular narratives afforded by the planning process. They document the multiple practices of place, offering both diachronic and synchronic analyses of place-making necessary for involved, responsive planning. The press of material discursive practices appearing in films of boy scouts, church groups and housewives demonstrate how making place is a powerful tool for community-led planning.

### **Conclusion: Your Place and Mine**

While a short-term pilot project, *Know Your Bristol* demonstrated the potential for building in significant digitisation work to enable home movies, video and 35mm slides to enter the Know Your Place dataset and contribute substantively to an emerging culture of co-produced city planning. Future proposed developments to the website will enable greater public involvement with Know Your Place; it will be used to create a Local List for Bristol and to manage the Heritage at Risk Register. This latter example will allow volunteers to undertake surveys of Listed buildings that are threatened by vacancy or lack of care. Both these initiatives will further identify issues around the heritage of the city and help to inform processes that better care for our heritage and create better places.

From a film studies perspective, the workshops presented an effective way to engage with the moving image beyond questions of representation. Our emphasis on the details of material-discursive practices produced a space in which such highly diverse practices might be considered in the context of a built environment characterised by both tradition and flux. By focusing on a city and a finely grained diachronic and synchronic approach to the home mode we aimed to expose the overly neat conclusions presented by ideological accounts of technology. However, time and technical resourcing are major issues in this kind of work. The flickering image produced by having to project standard 8 on a super 8 projector and the movement of the images from one scene to the next resisted substantive archaeological discussion in the workshop setting itself. In order to achieve the kind of analyses necessary in the planning process requires a longer-term project that combines ethnography with the technical expertise and resources to digitise and archive home movies and to provide communities and individuals with both online and personal access to these archives. Such a



project also requires archaeological approaches to developing finely grained accounts of what appears within the frame.

The overlapping archives, memories, artefacts and technologies that were in circulation through the *Know Your Bristol* workshops demonstrate that crowdsourced histories and archaeologies can highlight the multivocality and flux of what we describe as 'the past' and meaningfully involve different communities in decision-making. Of course, such multivocality also demands effective communication. In any successful relationship, good communication and openness leads to fewer misunderstandings and an appreciation of each others' values. By publishing a range of spatial heritage related data and encouraging a community interaction and dialogue with this data, Know Your Place is helping to create a shared understanding that will lead to a shared sense of the city of Bristol, and others like it, as both your place *and* mine.

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## **Filmography**

*Capturing the Friedmans* (dir. Andrew Jarecki, 2003).

*Leftovers* (dir. Michelle Citron, 2012).

'Private Hungary' series (dir. Péter Forgács, 1988-date).

*Tarnation* (dir. Jonathan Couette, 2003).

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