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Michelle McGrath and Mark Taylor

ABSTRACT

What is the experience of working-class museum professionals in the UK, and what is the Museum as Muck network doing about it? This is a conversation between Michelle McGrath, founder of Museum as Muck, and Mark Taylor, who researches inequalities across cultural and creative industries in the UK. The interview introduces Museum as Muck, which is a network for working-class museum workers, explaining their activism and work. It also discusses broader themes that explain the relative lack of working-class museum workers, including working for free, nepotism, and how entry-level roles are advertised, and moves on to discuss the mechanisms through which class inequality persists even once working-class people have entered the sector. It concludes with a discussion of how current museum professionals and museum educators can influence practice to make museums a more welcoming and supportive environment for working-class people, both in the UK and internationally.

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Introduction

This piece documents a conversation bringing together two different perspectives on social class in museums in the United Kingdom. Michelle McGrath is the founder of Museum as Muck, a network for working-class people in the museums, galleries, and heritage sector, and Mark Taylor is an academic researching social class in cultural and creative industries, including museums. "Museum as Muck" is derived from the historically derogatory term "common as muck," used to refer to someone deemed of lower social status; Muckers (members of the Museum as Muck network) describe themselves as "common and proud."

For a long time, social class was less prominent in discussions of activist pedagogies in museums and galleries than other forms of social division. While a long history of research draws attention to the museum as a classed environment,[1] this has tended to focus on collections and audiences. More recently, research has highlighted the significant class inequalities in the museum workforce, with significant underrepresentation of people from working-class backgrounds compared with the working population, and even compared with people working in other creative occupations.[2]

This partly reflects the fact that class is a more contested concept than some other forms of social division. The research described above uses the term "working class" in a fairly technical way and is based on survey data: specifically, people's answers to a question about the occupation of the main income earner in their household when they were growing up.[3] Museum as Muck uses a broader definition: "from a background of low social, cultural and economic capital."

Regardless of the definition that's used, there has been increasing awareness in museums—museums themselves, university departments, and significant bodies including Arts Council England and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)—that social class inequality is a problem. This problem is both of numeric underrepresentation and the experiences of working-class people in the sector.[4] Arts Council England has introduced the measurement of social class background for the organizations that it regularly funds;[5] DCMS now publishes estimates of the socio-economic background of the workforce of its sectors; and the Secretary of State from 2021 to 2022, Nadine Dorries, has been critical of the limited class profile of creative workers.[6]

This interview is inevitably focused on the UK context where we both work. However, social class inequalities are not confined to the UK; it just so happens that the UK is an environment where class is very much on the agenda. While we use the term "class," it may be that in other national contexts terms like "low income," "first generation," "socio-economically deprived," or whichever else, resonates more effectively.

Social class is relevant for museum educators both in terms of the workforce—or, to put it another way, colleagues—and in terms of visitors. Research clearly demonstrates that working-class families are less likely to visit museums with their children than middle-class families and that children who visited museums are more likely to grow up into adults who visit museums.[7] A museum workforce that is not representative of the communities in which the museum is embedded, even when the people working at this museum are committed to an inclusive organizational mission, has implications for the relevance of what the museum can offer;[8] for museum educators, social class is a crucial dimension that is often overlooked but that has crucial implications for practice. The small numbers of working-class people working in museums have often struggled to find one another, but the increased visibility of inequality helped people such as Michelle to seek out people in a similar position. The initial process through which working-class museum workers sought each other out, and how that led to the establishment of Museum as Muck, is where we began this conversation.

Michelle

When Museum as Muck first came about, I wasn't sure what it was going to be. It was a response to a personal need or desire to find my community. I've spent practically all of my professional life in museums, but as I spent so much time assimilating into the museum environment, it took me quite a long time to realize that I was not the same as everyone else, and I was underrepresented. I didn't know where my people were in the sector, because there are not many working-class people; there's certainly not as many as there should be. It started simply, with me wanting to find other working-class people in museums. I did that by talking to some colleagues, and then using social media as a tool to find other working-class museum workers. It grew from

there. I was amazed and delighted to see that there were lots of other people who were like me, who wanted to talk about their experiences in museums, about where they came from, and about how the two interacted.

Then what happened was that we were so energized and passionate about the issues that we were discussing that we realised we had to do something with the energy we'd harnessed, and turn it into action and make change. At that point, it then became a bit more of a formal organization that is outward-facing and that seeks to instigate change within the sector. And that grew organically through network members who were keen to be involved.

That's how Museum as Muck started. There are two strands to our work: our network is strand one. We try to provide a space for discussion, to put on events, and to provide resources, all so that we can look after our members.

But our second strand is outward-facing work with museums. That's work that we do because there should be equal opportunities and access for working-class people in museums, and museums need to change. We're here to support museums to make those changes. We do work around specific activities such as recruitment practices and organizational culture, as well as more general awareness-raising. We're here to begin that conversation and to get people to take action.

That activity includes working directly with individual museums. For example, we've worked with the Museum of the Home on raising awareness of class issues. We've worked with Tate around recruitment practices. We have worked with the Brunel Museum as critical friends on their activity plan, and we've also helped them with ways of interpreting stories that both include working-class voices and are engaging for working-class audiences.

We're an engaging, provocative organisation. And we feel that we want museums to have this conversation with us. To do that, we need to make the prospect of working with us an appealing one. We create a safe and comfortable space for people to ask difficult questions, but at the same time, we remain provocative, meaning we'll call people out when we feel that there's inequity or injustice.

One example of how we balance this provocation and encouragement is an intervention we held at the Museums Association Conference in 2018, in Belfast. That was the first large-scale activity that we did as a network. It was an intense experience and also a very positive one. Our first goal was to draw attention to the issue of class injustice in museums, while also conducting live research about the professional backgrounds of the people who are at the conference, because we wanted to try and collect some of this data around what roles people in museums are from.

The way that we did that was to create a supermarket. In that supermarket, we had supermarket shelves, and instead of food on the shelves, we had objects: we're museum people, we love an object. Each object represented a different barrier that working-class people face in museums, such as language, stress, accents, imposter syndrome, volunteering, unpaid labour, all of those things. Each object was there as a handling object; they also had an accompanying price tag as you would find in a supermarket which was more like a museum label. Each of these labels had two things on. First was a statistic related to the issue that working-class people face. Second was a quote from one of our members that explained how this issue affected them individually. This was engaging: People were walking into the supermarket to find out what was going on, they

picked up the objects and then saw the labels, at which point they were confronted with this material addressing class and human experience. Our participants found that incredibly powerful.

We did have some difficult conversations, but the Muckers leading the intervention were using our lived experience to talk about some of these issues. A couple of people said things like "class doesn't exist anymore," but we've taken it upon ourselves to challenge that position.

The second part of the intervention was the jobs board, which I used to see in supermarkets all the time. That was our data collection point. We asked people which part of the museum they worked in, and the occupation of their parent or caregiver when they were 14. This meant that we could find out about the backgrounds and current roles of people attending the conference. The final part was that people went to the till, where they got a receipt. People filled in those receipts with a pledge or an action to take forward. We had carbon copies of each receipt; we kept one and they kept one. That formed a call to action for those people to do something in response to what they'd experienced.

These receipts included prompts. Are you going to join Museum as Muck? Are you a Mucker? Are you going to tell a colleague? Are you going to donate to Arts Emergency? They're an amazing organisation that you should donate to. Are you going to include a measure for class when monitoring visitor and workforce diversity? Are you going to talk to your HR department about recruitment practices? Are you going to aim to have working-class representation on your board of trustees?

People didn't just stick to the prompts: here's some examples of pledges that people volunteered themselves. "Being more conscious of class assumptions and everyday conversations," "Make myself more aware of how class affects work in museums," "Spread the word that this group exists," "Keep referring to my working-class background," "Try and feel like less of an imposter in my role," "Talk to partner museums about class," "Scrutinize job adverts that I promote."

Another example of one of our interventions is our working-class tea party. That takes place in an informal roundtable setting where a few of us Muckers are sitting round; the audience are also sitting around, we've got tea and biscuits. As with everything we do, it's about helping people to feel comfortable talking about the issue and learning from each other. We'll start off with a few questions between Muckers. If anyone wants to come and join the table and chat with us and share their own experiences that tends to happen organically. We've found that to be an effective way of getting people to engage with us. Even though it's talking about serious stuff, it's fun.

Mark

What kinds of people have gotten involved in the network? For example, are people in the network particularly likely to be in certain roles, or are they engaged in certain kinds of activities?

Michelle

The people in the network—who we call Muckers—are varied. At the moment we have 800 members in our Facebook forum, which was the original forum that we use for the

closed network. Last year, we launched our website. And as part of that, it was really important to us to get a hold on what our membership actually looks like and feels like. In response to this, we set up a membership survey, which allowed us to ask important questions about who Muckers are. We know that the numbers of working-class people in museums are low, but we don't know which kinds of roles they're in. And it was also important to us to measure some intersectional data around our Muckers that captured other protected characteristics, such as race and disability.

Our current formally signed-up membership is about 350 people. 38% of those people work in archives, curatorial, and library roles. Behind them is learning and engagement, at 23%, followed by visitor services and security at 9%: quite a jump.

As a learning and engagement person myself, I think there's something about the role which tends to lend itself to people who come from working-class backgrounds, and that's about understanding a range of people and broad audiences. Teaching is the classic social mobility degree, and I'm sure the two are connected.

23% of Muckers define themselves as having a disability, and that's slightly higher than the working age population figure, which is 21%, and a lot higher than the 7% of people who work in Arts Council England's national portfolio organizations.[9] 13% of Muckers are from an ethnically diverse background, which compares with a figure of around 3% in the Panic! Report,[10] and around 7% across national museums, so ours is much higher than those comparisons.

Mark

To follow up on that discussion about learning and engagement: in your experience, what kinds of roles are working-class people in museums doing? Are there any other roles where there's a significant number of working-class people, or where there's not very many at all?

Michelle

In my experience, the majority of working-class people in museums are in roles such as visitor services, security, estates, and cleaning. Possibly HR, maybe finance. What we're not seeing is working-class people in leadership positions and decision-making positions. Our survey reflects that: 5% of our members are in Directorate positions or leadership positions. While there are working-class people working in museums, those people are not in a place where they can influence organizations.

Mark

The issue of the lack of representation of working-class people in leadership roles in museums means I'm starting to think less about the pure numbers, and more about the experience of working-class people in the roles you've talked about. There's a lot to this, but: what's it like being a working-class person working in a museum in the UK?

Michelle

There are two things. The first is the journey to getting into museums in the first place, and the second is continuing to be in them as a working-class person. Getting into—or even seeing—museums as something that is accessible to you or right for you is an enormous first hurdle.

That's because museums are not for working-class people. They never have been. Working-class people ask: well, why would I want to work there? It's not welcoming, it's not comfortable, it's not an option. If you don't know anyone who's worked in a museum, it's alien, you don't see it as something for you or something viable.

But if you *do* suddenly think that it might be for you, it's incredibly hard to know where to start. There are simple things like where to look for jobs, and the things that follow from that: there might be nobody in your house that can help you fill out a job application or prepare for a job interview, because they've never worked. You're doing everything off your own back and trying to find out this stuff, and you don't have the networks to support you.

We know that museums are a hugely competitive sector, where several institutions ask for certain qualifications, and we also know that working-class people are less likely to have a university education, or even further education. These qualifications aren't always necessary for people to do the jobs, and so there's another barrier.

And then if you make it to the interview stage, you don't fit the character profile. We all know people in hiring positions often go for a certain cultural capital that people from my class background don't have, as well as issues around dress, language, and accents, all of which several Muckers have raised to us.

But if you manage to get over those hurdles, and you *do* get in, you're in a hostile environment. You're not with people who understand you; instead, you're constantly trying to assimilate or feeling like an imposter. There's this pervasive assumption of shared experiences: the talk over coffee might be about where you went on holiday when you were growing up. I didn't go on any holidays as a child; how can I join in that conversation?

And then, of course, the sector is badly paid. This means it's not a viable option unless you've got additional financial support. For almost all working-class people, that isn't the case.

I'll give you some examples from our network. Starting with the recruitment stage, one of our Muckers was told visitors might struggle to comprehend their accent and that they were not dressed professionally. Another Mucker was working in a museum, and a colleague casually said, "Oh, you know, we can't be too careful with the council estate nearby, we might end up with a stabbing in the museum." And then a lot of colleagues kind of nodding to that, which of course led to that person just both alienated and furious. We've had members who've experienced discrimination and bullying within museums, directly linked to their class background.

Mark

One of the ways that we think about this in *Culture Is Bad For You* is the language of "getting in and getting on."[11] You've told us a lot there about working-class people's experience of getting into the sector, and also about what it's like once you're in, but

how do you find that promotion works (or doesn't)? Some of the people we interviewed for the book, including a lot of people working in the museums and galleries sector, had made it into the sector having managed to navigate their way through the recruitment process, expressed concerns that they were stuck. At the same time, their perception was that their colleagues from middle-class backgrounds who'd joined the sector around the same time were already being promoted and were moving up into different kinds of roles. Is this something that's reflected in your network?

Michelle

People in the network talk about feeling stuck, and it leads to people leaving the sector. As with getting a first job, it's to do with not being seen as the right fit for a leadership position or a promotion, because you just don't fit this very traditional mold of what that looks like to people. As well as that, people who can progress tend to have a lot of additional resources and time that they can plough into the sector. If you have to work part time or flexible hours because you've got caring responsibilities at home, you've got bills to worry about, you can't then spend extra time at work that would make you look more invested.

Mark

That extra time at work—which is effectively unpaid work—is something that we've written about.[12] Some forms of unpaid work are fairly explicit, such as unpaid internships, and there's been increasing focus in the sector about limiting or eliminating those roles. But working significantly beyond contracted hours for no additional money is another form of unpaid work. There are three different forms of unpaid work that we identify.

One thing that comes out very strongly, in a lot of work on museums, and creative work in general, is a passionate belief in the power of the sector, and the sector itself being a morally good thing. Because of this, you often hear the language of passion: that people are passionate about working in museums, and they're passionate about the power of museums to undertake social good. But because of people's passion, people often end up working significantly beyond their hours, and for less money than they might be being paid in another line of work, because of their belief in museums. But as you say, there are some people for whom that is easier than others. If you have significant caring responsibilities, or if you have another job, your ability to work beyond your contracted hours is more difficult. So working significantly beyond someone's contracted hours is the first form of unpaid work.

The second form is explicitly unpaid: unpaid internships. But then the third thing I want to think about is the role of volunteering, and when volunteers working in the sector are now undertaking the kind of work that 10, 20 years ago would have been done by a full-time, permanent member of staff. These three forms of unpaid work are all mechanisms through which working-class people are squeezed out. Working-class people are less able to do unpaid internships because they need money to subsist; it's less straightforward for working-class people to work beyond their contracted hours because they're more likely to have competing demands on their time. And

working-class people are less likely to be able to take on a volunteering role in the hope that it might turn into something paid, subsequently.

Michelle

Unpaid work is how a lot of people get into the sector, and that's an avenue that's closed to a lot of working-class people. As you know, in the museum world, we all do it for passion, not pay. But passion doesn't pay the bills, and the sector takes the piss.[13] If we're going to keep things like internships and volunteering, they need to be formally regulated: it can't be your nephew, or any other kind of nepotism. Who are those internships for? How are they being advertised?

Internships don't need to be unpaid. The other thing about internships is to make sure they're useful for the person doing it, rather than ask people to help with the filing: they should contribute to emerging professionals' development.

With volunteering there's a risk of throwing the baby out with the bathwater: people are passionate about the sector, and they want to give their time. Volunteering should be for those people for whom museums are purely a passion pursuit or a hobby: if they've got free time they want to spend in the museum, that's great. But volunteering shouldn't be seen as the primary route into the sector, because as we've discussed, that creates barriers for working-class people. But a big part of why museums are relying more and more on volunteering is cuts to the sector. So we need to look to policy again: in terms of the workforce, it's working-class people who are bearing the brunt of those cuts.

Mark

It's interesting to reflect on how much of this reflects long-term trends, and how much of it is due to more recent political developments. Which, unfortunately, brings me to COVID: how has the pandemic affected the museum sector more broadly, and how about working-class people working in museums specifically? While small sample sizes make it difficult to estimate the impact of the pandemic on the class profile of the museum sector however, the pandemic had a profound effect on younger people working in creative industries, with under-25s far more likely to have lost their jobs.[14]

Michelle

It had a profound effect, which is a major reason why we wanted to capture more detailed information from our members, as we knew it was likely that working-class people would bear the brunt of the effect, but it wasn't clear whether anyone was going to collect data about it. So we surveyed of our members. 44% experienced a drop in income, which is incredibly significant when you're already struggling with finances. 29% of them lost work or were made redundant. Muckers were particularly likely to be on fixed-term contracts or zero-hour contracts, and those people were hit very hard in terms of museums making redundancies. People who were on zero-hour contracts weren't even furloughed, so they weren't receiving any money at the start of the pandemic, and then they were let go a few months later. One person lost three jobs: their museum job and their other two hospitality jobs. People who were

working in multiple roles were particularly vulnerable. 5% are at risk of homelessness due to the pandemic.

Some of this information is likely to be surprising or shocking to a lot of our sector, because the majority of people don't live these lives. Another theme from the research was mental health. People were at risk of homelessness and are having to claim benefits, and the combination of factors had a catastrophic impact on people's mental health. What's the long-term fallout from this? It's too early to say, but I don't think it's looking good for working-class people.

Mark

We all know that COVID has had tremendous impacts on people in all sorts of ways. If somebody was made redundant at the start of the pandemic and is struggling to find another role, it's very clear what the impact of the pandemic has been. But some people normally would have been working in an office, who then spent very long periods working from home. I live in a house with a garden, and I have a home office. I didn't love it, I'd have preferred to have seen my colleagues in person, but it's been OK. Whereas people who live in shared houses with no living rooms, working from their bedrooms, with no outside space, the experience is very different, and it's likely to have led to very different impacts on people's mental health.

Michelle

We should also mention the impact of the pandemic on museum workers who are in front-facing roles and services. This is a group of people who can't work from home, and who have been putting themselves at risk, and the people they live with at risk, by traveling on public transport to get to work.

Mark

I want to talk about what we might describe as an increasing focus on class in museums. When you were talking earlier about when Museum as Muck was getting set up, you were explaining that you would struggle to find your people, partly because there was much of a discussion about a lack of working-class people working.

And I would argue that this has changed in the last few years. For example, Arts Council England has started measuring social class background by asking about the kinds of households that people grew up in their annual survey, to understand the fraction of people from working-class backgrounds in different art forms that they fund, and in different organizations. I think that's a positive step in terms of understanding the extent of the problem of underrepresentation of working-class people in the arts. But knowing about the problem isn't the same as doing something about the problem. Do you see this sort of increased focus in policy contexts? You know, Arts Council England (ACE) asks these questions, the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has social class as an explicit focus, expressing concerns about workforce diversity. Do you see this increased focus having results?

Michelle

It adds legitimacy. There are great people in museums who do want to enact change. But there will be some museums that don't. But of course, policy influences what happens in museums, and because of the role of ACE as a funder, museums have to play the game. We don't want it to just be a tick-box exercise, we want museums to recognize that it's morally wrong to not be representative in your workforce and audiences.

At the same time, conversations about inclusion have been going on for a long time. So far, it's just been a lot of talk; we're not seeing fundamental change. But I do think that, yeah, the class conversation has picked up in the last few years. I do think that Museum as Muck has had a real role to play within the museum sector, in terms of getting people to talk about class, because people don't understand it. They are uncomfortable talking about it. They're particularly uncomfortable thinking about their class. So our goal is to ensure people in museums are sufficiently comfortable and knowledgeable to do something about it. That starts with making people aware of the class, talking about it, and giving them the language and tools to do something.

Mark

The other side of this is to do with research: policy actors might be more able to take action in certain areas where there's a stronger research base. In recent years, there has been more and more work on social class in museums, and in creative work more generally. I've already talked about some of the work that I've done with Dave O'Brien and Orian Brook about social class: we approach social class from an intersectional perspective, to understand the dynamics of social inequalities, much as Museum as Muck does. I'd also like to draw attention to Sam Evans' work on social class and museums specifically.[15] But what I want to maybe talk about because I think, you know, the readers of this interview are likely to be people working in universities or other research roles. What kind of research do you—both as an individual and as a person working in museums and working with Museum as Muck—what kind of research do you find useful?

Michelle

The Panic! report was like a gift from the gods. We use that as a clear and evidenced data set to back up our experiences: basically, Museum as Muck is the lived experience of that report. The way that we use that kind of data is to say "here's the stat, and now we're going to tell you about how that translates into the people standing in front of you." That kind of double hander makes it much more accessible and real for people.

Unfortunately, there's not loads of it, and we could do it with research that's more specific. For example, we know the percentage of working-class people in museums, but we didn't know which departments they were in. For that reason, we did our research on that question.

Mark

I ask partly because some of the people reading this interview will be people who work in museum studies departments in universities who want to make changes. Those people might be thinking about what they could do to help improve the conditions of people working in museums, or to improve the representativeness of museums.

I'm going to give you four different imaginary characters, and I want you to think about what kind of advice you would give them. The first person is a university lecturer, they work in a museum studies department, and they teach students working on an MA in museum studies. Those students will go out into the world and become the museum directors of tomorrow. This university lecturer's from a working-class background. What might they be doing?

Michelle

By being in that position, they're offering a role model, and they're going to make working-class students feel included and welcome. But it's not just about the course content. If you're a working-class lecturer, are there things you can do to broaden recruitment? They want to create museum leaders who think about things from a more intersectional perspective than has historically been the case and make sure that museums are truly representative and for all of society. That's their aim.

Mark

Now imagine that we're staying in a university, we're staying in the museum studies department, and we're talking to this person's colleague. They're from a middle-class background, and they used to work in a museum. They got that museum job because their dad told his mate that his kid needed something to be getting on with. They worked for free in a museum for a while. They then did a PhD, and now they work in a museum studies department. That person recognizes the problems with a lack of representativeness, and they recognize issues with unfairness. But they've personally benefited from mechanisms that they recognize are unfair or unjust. What can they be doing?

Michelle

They're recognizing their class privilege, they're going to acknowledge it, and they're going to talk about it. They're going to give space where they can to people with different knowledge and voices to deliver guest lectures. They're going to talk about it explicitly in their course content around how students can also acknowledge their class privilege and how they're going to share that power in museums. They're going to collaborate with the working-class academic, they'll learn from each other.

Mark

We'll now leave the university. What should you be doing if you're a museum director?

Michelle

You need to believe in the power of having a representative museum; you've got to know why that is ethically right to do. You've got to look at your individual privilege and power and how, as a director, you've got huge influence over your organization. As a director, you can change your organization in terms of culture and in terms of workforce. You need to be looking at recruitment, pathways, you need to pay decent money, get decent funding, pay your workers. That's the first step. Finally, you need to not be afraid of addressing past issues. You need to be confident that if you address these issues, you are going to have an incredible intersectional workforce that is going to produce better museums for more people.

Mark

Finally, we're going to leave the museum and we're going to move to another part of the country. What should you be doing if you're Oliver Dowden?[16]

Michelle

Museum as Muck is addressing a microcosm of the bigger issues that are in society. The issues that working-class people face are caused by broader structures that are upheld by the government, and by policies put in place by the government. So Oliver Dowden needs to think about what you do with your power to influence policy that impacts the cultural sector, whether that policy is explicitly about the cultural sector or not.

Final thoughts

We hope that this interview format, while relatively unusual in an academic journal, has helped to set out the state of social class in UK museums and the work that Museum as Muck is doing to address social class inequality. We're particularly hopeful that this format might make the discussion of class in museums more visible.

One issue that arose throughout this interview—and through Museum as Muck's work more broadly—is the role of museum educators in confronting social class inequality, and it's for this reason that we discussed the strategy that different people might adopt. Museum as Muck often delivers sessions for postgraduate Museum Studies students throughout the UK; as this is a group where so many of the UK's future museum leaders can be found, the work that Muckers do is essential. However, the work that museum educators do in addressing class in museums can't be limited to a guest session. This special issue addresses several ways in which pedagogies can make museums more inclusive environments—including as employers, but also more broadly—and we hope that educators recognize the importance of social class in this context.

The importance of museum skills and expertise in highlighting class is another key theme of the interview. While it is important to defend museums as workplaces like any other, rather than special environments where people's passion and commitment can lead to their working significantly beyond their hours, museum workers are also skilled professionals, whose skills can be used to highlight social issues. The

Supermuckers intervention at the Museums Association conference, at which Muckers—who love an object!—produced a display that generated so much interaction is a clear case in point. Activist pedagogies are not limited to a single depressing module about social inequalities; they can be engaged joyfully throughout the curriculum.

Notes

1. DiMaggio, Paul, and Michael Useem. "Social class and arts consumption." *Theory and Society* 5, no. 2 (1978): 141–161; Tlili, Anwar. "Behind the policy mantra of the inclusive museum: Receptions of social exclusion and inclusion in museums and science centres." *Cultural Sociology* 2, no. 1 (2008): 123–147.
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11. Chapter 8 of Brook et al (2020a) is titled "How is inequality experienced?" and discusses the qualitative experience of intersectional social inequalities in creative work.
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13. In British English, "taking the piss" usually refers to playful mocking, but can also refer to "taking advantage", as in its use here.
14. Florisson, Rebecca, Dave O'Brien, Mark Taylor, Siobhan McAndrew, and Tal Feder. "The impact of COVID-19 on jobs in the cultural sector-part 3." *Leeds: Centre for Cultural Value* (2021). Available at https://www.culturehive.co.uk/CVIresources/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-jobs-in-the-cultural-sector-part-3/.
15. Samantha Evans is author of the PhD *Struggles for distinction; class and classed inequality in UK museum work* awarded in 2020, and of several other publications about social class in museums.
16. At the time of interview, Oliver Dowden was the Minister for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport in the UK Government.

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