

REANIMATING DATA

experiments with people, places & archives

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What really counts? A worm hole

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One of the ways that we have been thinking about our methods of reanimation is through the metaphor of the ‘worm-hole’ (thanks to Caroline Bassett at our kick-off event for this). The definition of a worm-hole is something that connects two points in space-time – allowing travel between. We think that this is a great way of thinking about the different experiments that we have been making in this project – using documents from the Women, Risk and AIDS project as a medium through which to connect now (2019) and then (1989). Wormholes can take many different forms. Auto-biography is one way of doing it – maybe the easiest for me: connecting me-then and me-now. But it is a bit exclusive. Opening up a worm-hole so that others can join in is where the action is.

On October 21st 2019 we showcased one of our worm-hole experiments as part of the [Brighton Digital Festival](#). We shared our work with fragments of original audio recordings in which young men and sociologists talk about sex (collected as part of the Men Risk & AIDS Project). The aim of this experiment was to communicate something of the 30 years of time encompassed by the project – a period characterised by a revolution in technology alongside spectacular yet elusive changes in sexual culture and values. The question of ‘what really counts’ focuses attention on number and marking time – including a sensitivity to timing in making a relationship; how the passage of time makes things look different; and the struggle over time that underpins an attention economy.

In creating this worm-hole we have layered and combined different practical strategies for connecting moments. It is a ‘spell’ that brings together heterogeneous materials with focused intention. We have included *biographical time* (by inviting original interviewers to re-speak and record questions with questions first asked in interviews in 1990). We have included *material time* (by changing analog into digital and digital into analog), *methodological time* (counterposing two generations of feminist methodology) and *aesthetic time* (connecting a 90’s ‘cut and paste’ aesthetic to a contemporary cut and paste political economy). Paradoxically, the intensity of the mash-up creates space – between questions and answers, between contexts and media and between generations. We hope to have forged a worm-hole that is inviting, inclusive and collective.

At the showcase we invited people to view our installation and talk with collaborators Rachel Thomson, Alex Peverett and Janet Holland. A recording of the installation can be viewed [here](#).

What really counts?

