Enriching the Texture of Experience

A media ecology perspective on the Do Lectures as a case study in strategic communication

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17 OCTOBER 2017

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17 OCTOBER 2017

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17 OCTOBER 2017

Enriching the Texture of Experience

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HUGH GRIFFITHS

When we own our story,
we have the power to write our own brave ending.

BRENE BROWN

DEDICATION

IN MEMORIAM

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the role and impact of the Do Lectures, a digital platform that has its roots in both a place and an annual signature live event held in rural Wales. Based around a format of short talks, they are subsequently published online and free of charge to a global audience.

It begins with an overview of the Do Lectures, its development and general cultural context, outlining the physical and digital media forms and channels they have incorporated into their media ecology. The thesis then presents an analysis of the results of a survey of their live and online audiences and their online testimony in order to understand the impact of the Do Lectures event.

The results highlight the significance of the Do Lectures' use of the highly interpersonal connection format of the live event in combination with digital channels to establish a rich media ecology comprised of significantly contrasting and complementary media forms. It demonstrates that their ability to communicate is notably strengthened by adopting starkly contrasting forms where the properties of each medium is highlighted and appreciated because of the differences that exist between them. For the audience, meaning and significance is drawn not only from their own particularities but from their relationship to one another and the intermedium dynamics that exist between them.

The conclusion suggests that companies and organisations can increase the influence of their communications by giving strategic consideration to the design of their media ecology, actively developing a media environment whose disparities and contradistinctive qualities of form have an impact beyond the contribution of their individual functions. The thesis introduces the concept of 'media texture' to describe the contribution that these intermedium dynamics provide to the impact on an audience and proposes a four-dimensional model through which it can be deliberately explored or developed.

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I am very grateful to David and Clare Hieatt for welcoming me to the Do Lectures and for opening their home and the event to me over the last few years. Their generosity of spirit and the Do Lectures experience will stay with me.

Gratitude is also due to the many friends and colleagues I have been working with at Cardiff University's *School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies* and the *Cardiff University Press*. Working with you in teaching, publishing and in so many other ways has been a privilege and a pleasure that has greatly enriched my experience.

INTRODUCTION

The lecturer and the audience join in affirming a single proposition. They join in affirming that organized talking can reflect, express, delineate, portray – if not come to grips with – the real world, and that, finally, there is a real, structured, somewhat unitary world out there to comprehend.

ERWIN GOFFMAN

Western society is saturated with powerful digital communication technologies and it has never been easier or cheaper to create, publish or distribute media content quickly and globally. Yet despite these flexible tools and their increasingly powerful digital platforms, there remains a strong cultural appetite for 'organised talking' - the lecture – that form of communication of ideas that is perhaps the most elemental and historically established through almost every major institution in society. An individual is given a place, an occasion, a platform and the time for others to listen and share in their thoughts and feelings as they are given form and life through their words. As Goffman suggests, it is an affirming role that creates a tacit agreement or 'contract' between speaker and listener - a bond within which "a meaningful picture of some part of the world can be conveyed" (1985, p.195).

This expression of ideas through the spoken word remains a core practice of many types of societal and public communication. In politics thought is expressed through the delivery of speeches, in the academy through the giving of lectures, by the church through the preaching of sermons, within professional groups by conference and keynote talks, in the company or business organization it is expressed through presentations. Yet despite the prevalence and almost universal presence of the organized talk at the heart of almost every institution of society, the lecture form or its equivalent in another cultural setting is not without criticism. Even within the academy where it forms a mainstay of educational practice it has been severely questioned where even its efficacy of use as a pedagogical form has been challenged. In public life too, the political speech has been overshadowed by "the soundbite, the press conference, the never-ending round of interviews on 24-hour news channels" (Crabb 2013). Similarly in business, the presentation culture is also heavily criticized, both for the 'death by PowerPoint' attributed to
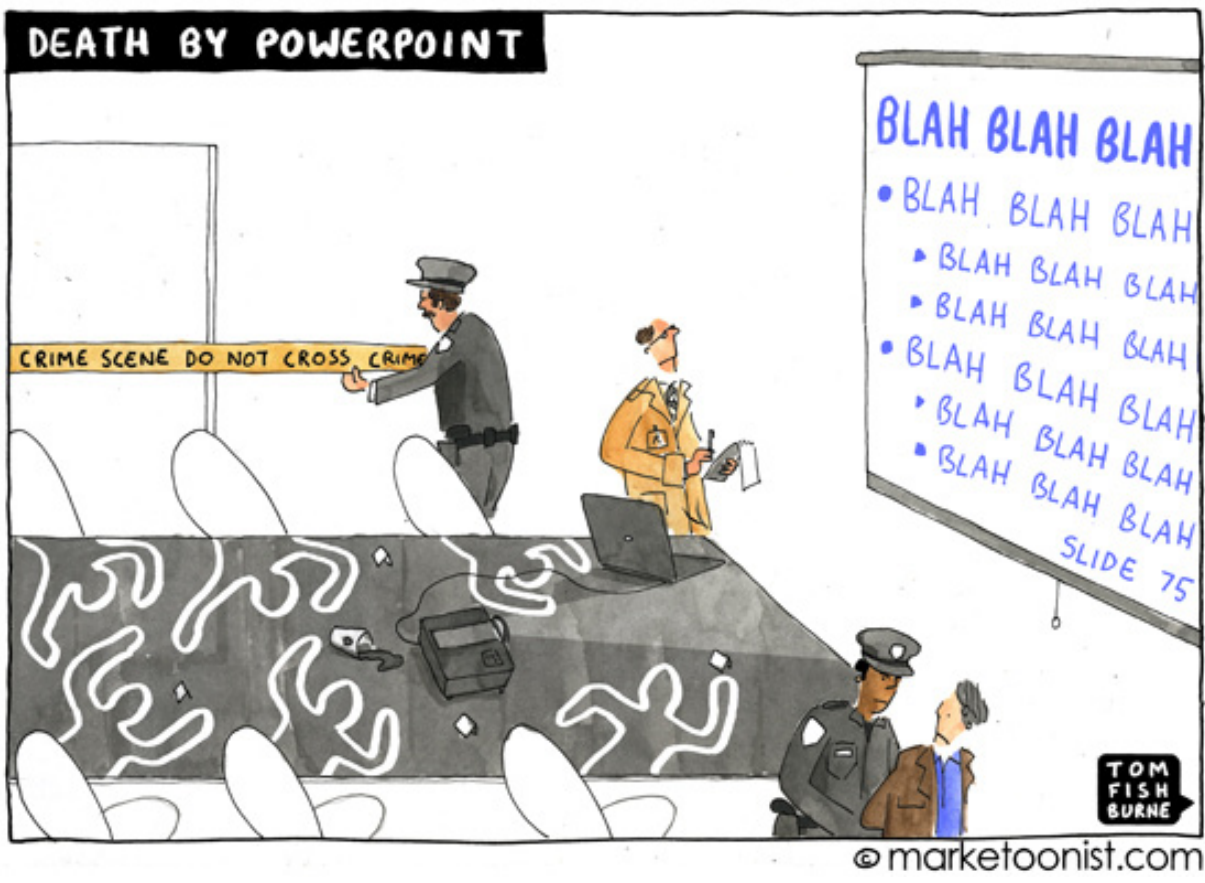
Death by Powerpoint *by*
Tom Fishburn, Do Lectures
attendee and speaker

the use of text-heavy bulleted points as well as for the distorted types or patterns of thinking it encourages as noted by the Yale emeritus professor E.R. Tufte (2006).

In stark contrast, the online space has birthed many flourishing collection of online lectures, podcasts and recorded talks from all of these institutions of society. These organisations are delivering many hours of high quality material completely free of charge to audiences around the world, often featuring interesting and prominent speakers who are already world-leading specialists, academics, authors or professionals. As well as the growing catalogues of talks, the steadily improving mobile data services and more powerful personal computing devices such as smartphones and tablets means that you can now watch or listen to lectures by streaming or downloading videos and other digital media and view in an greater range of settings, including while on the move. The spoken lecture event, originally bound to a particular place, to a specific live audience and to a single moment in time, is now available through the use of digital platforms to almost anyone, anywhere, and at any time they choose to access it.

It is within this conflicting context of some diminishing confidence or questioning of the lecture as a media form set against a burgeoning appetite for online talks that this research has taken place. It explores the influence of the lecture form as it moves across the live/online axis, first being delivered by a speaker to a live audience as part of a location based event and then being delivered online as it sits within the communications environment of the digital platform. It seeks to understand the relationship between the live and the digital, between the physical event and its global expression online. In order to explore this relationship, the research is focused on one such event – the Do Lectures, a digital change platform that holds an annual event in the UK (and previously overseas in the US and Australia) but enjoys a strong international following established through their network of event alumni, and their online channels.

In order to consider the influence of the Do Lectures, this exploration focuses on three main areas of investigation. First, to understand what the event seeks to achieve in terms of its impact on the audience, the research asks 'What are the intentions, motivations and influence goals of the Do Lectures?' In addition, it considers the various digital platforms and media forms used to help achieve them. Having identified what the purpose and goals of the event, the second major research question asks 'What impact does the Do Lectures event have on the live and online audience?' It draws on evidence of impact collected from the

prompted and unprompted testimony of the Do Lectures audience, also seeking to establish the main factors perceived as being the most influential. The third research question looks at the media ecology of the Do Lectures, examining what it contributes to the impact of the event on its audience and also exploring any wider benefit it confers on Wales and its national identity.

To provide an explanatory context, chapter one provides an overview of the Do Lectures, outlining its development and presenting a broad timeline of its key activities and the development of its media ecology since it was founded in 2008. It describes some of the main developments in its history through to its present form, including a brief biography of David and Clare Hieatt as the founders of the event as well as an introduction to some of the themes, motifs and content of the Do Lectures talks. The latter part of this opening chapter provides a more general description of the research context, by identifying the cultural context within which the Do Lectures operates and, by in broad terms, the communications environment they have established that is the main site for the research.

Following this contextual chapter, a review of some of the relevant literature will provide a theoretical backdrop to the research. Drawing on ideas from several related disciplines within the communications field, this section of the thesis will set out a framework of concepts within which to explore the influence of the Do Lectures as both a live event and an online platform. It will consider the lecture itself as a specific media form and, using the metaphor of ecology to describe a communications environment, will draw on theories from a range of media scholars to identify key issues and concepts needed to underpin the investigation. The chapter begins with a panoramic view of media influence as a key area of communications research, then introduces the ideas of media ecology from their beginnings in the thought of scholars such as Harold Innis who were interested in the impact of communication technologies. A particular focus is given to the work of Marshall McLuhan as well as more recent expressions of media ecology. It argues that the ecological perspective provides a valuable research paradigm given the interdependent, networked nature of the contemporary communications environment and some of the systemic changes in the way media function in society.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology used to conduct the research, outlining the general approach taken before presenting the specifics of the design, the phases of data gathering and general method of analysis undertaken. This will

include an account of the data types to be used and the rationale for including them in the study. This section will map the particulars of the research questions and then set out the means of investigating them, as reported on in the chapters that follow. Particularly as an examination of a real-world phenomena in a defined but dynamic context, this research adopted a pragmatic perspective and selected largely qualitative methods in order to interrogate both the event and its consequences. As a case study, this practical and exploratory strategy of inquiry provided a means of both documenting and describing the Do Lectures experience as well as analysing their media ecology as a particular area of focus and interest.

Part Two of this thesis presents the findings from the research and provides an analysis and commentary firstly on the goals and intentions of the Do Lectures; secondly on the evidence of its impact and influence on the live and online audience gathered during the research. This evidence is drawn from the two main strands of research data that are presented in chapters 5 and 6 - a detailed survey sent to the Do Lectures audience and the blogs and online articles written by those who had participated in the Do Lectures main annual event in Wales.

The third and final section presents a discussion of the main themes and ideas to emerge from the research data and highlights key factors that made the most impact on the Do Lectures audience. Chapter 7 reflects on their significance in relation to renewed interest in the future of the lecture and their relevance in the context of the use of digital platforms. Exemplified by the Do Lectures but also in evidence through other platforms such as the TED lectures, it argues that the live public lecture is enjoying a cultural renaissance, albeit in a renewed form that is played out in contrast with its publication on digital platforms. It highlights the intermedium dynamics established between the live and online contexts, observing that both their individual media affordances and the contrast that exists between them makes a distinctive and effective contribution to communications strategy.

Finally, chapter 8 sets out the conclusions of this examination of the Do Lectures and the impact of their media ecology. It notes the influence of the event in establishing a discourse of transformation and change, not only among the individuals in its audience but also by presenting new narratives for Wales that also shape perceptions of the national identity. The chapter includes a short overview of a possible application of the findings in relation to contemporary

branding, suggesting a four-dimensional model that can be used as a heuristic to undertake a structured interrogation of a particular media ecology and the strategic contribution of its component media forms.

This final chapter also briefly points towards future areas of investigation , particularly in their relevance to the development of the creative economy in Wales. To close, the thesis proposes the concept of media texture as a means of describing the experiential impact of contrasting media forms. It provides a conceptual short-hand that develops the media ecology perspective to give attention to the variation of effect and the degree of contrast between co-existent media forms. The introduction of this metaphor draws particular attention to the contribution and benefits of a hi-contrast media ecology that utilises both hi-tech and hi-touch approaches to increase the impact of communication.

The Development
of the Do Lectures

The beginnings and major milestones in the development
of the Do Lectures and an introduction to its context.

"

"The Do Lectures started life as a small creative gathering that first took place in a remote part of West Wales to give people the confidence and courage to make their ideas happen. From those early gatherings it has grown into a global community that acts as an encouragement network for creative entrepreneurs."

———

Before describing the goals of the Do Lectures and beginning to consider the influence that they achieve across their various live and digital platforms, this introductory chapter provides a descriptive account as a general context for the chapters that follow. It presents an overview of the origins of the event and an outline of its development since its launch.

The visual summary and timeline provided in Figure 1.1 overleaf shows the significant milestones in the development of the Do Lectures from its earliest form as the Little Big Voice conference in 2007 to the annual and international conferences held in several locations around the world. The chart also shows related developments in the Do Lectures media ecology, indicating their joining dates for using the major social media platforms and also noting some of the external recognition they have achieved through awards or profile in the British press.

The final part of this chapter describes an important dimension of the broader cultural environment within which the Do Lectures operates, observing the global popularity of the TED lectures as both a digital learning platform and leading example of the ideas conference as an event format.

LITTLE BIG VOICE (2007)

David and Clare Hieatt's first conference event was the Little Big Voice Lectures held in West Wales from 13 to 17 April 2007. Organised through howies, the ethical clothing company that they founded in 1995, the purpose of the event was to "provide practical tools to get media attention for your cause"(howies n.d.). According to an interview with David Hieatt published just a few months after this launch event (Parish 2007), Little Big Voice was inspired by a 'small boot-camp' run by the outdoor technical clothing company Patagonia founded by Yvon Chouinard in the early 1970s and run as a groundbreaking and innovative ethical business. Instead of choosing a conventional conference venue, Little Big Voice was held at fforest, a picturesque 200-acre farm in Cilgerran, close to the Cardigan coast and sitting between the river Teifi and the Teifi marshes nature reserve in West Wales. Fforest farm had been bought by James and Sian Tucker in 2004, just a few years earlier, and they were beginning to establish the site as an outdoor venue for holidays, functions and other events. James and Sian Tucker brought with them their expertise and experience as designers and graduates of St Martins School of Art and the Royal College of Art respectively.

Yvon Chouinard
The *New Yorker* published a biographical sketch of Yvon Chouinard, describing him in the headline as 'Patagonia's Philosopher King' (Paumgarten 2016) for his ethos and leadership of the company. The article records that Yvon Chouinard was part of a small founding group of adventurers who called themselves 'The Do Boys'.

FIG __ 1.1

Visual summary and timeline showing the development of the Do Lectures and its major milestones.

**DAVID HIEATT
LEAVES HOWIES**
October 2009

**HIEATT'S START
HIUT JEANS**
Cardigan, 2011

LITTLE BIG VOICE LECTURES
Practical tools to get media attention for your cause.
April 13th – 17th 2007

Do Lectures

DO USA
22-25 September 2011

DO USA
20-23 September 2012

**HOWIES
LITTLE BIG VOICE**
13-17 April 2007

The precursor event to the Do Lectures, held in fforest, Cardigan, Wales

**HOWIES
DO LECTURES**
4-8 September 2008

The first Do Lectures event held in fforest, Cardigan, Wales; still under the howies brand

DO LECTURES
3-7 September 2009

The first Do Lectures event held in fforest, Cardigan, Wales

DO LECTURES
16-19 September 2010

DO LECTURES
15-18 September 2011

The first Do Lectures USA is held at Campovida, Hopland, California.

DO LECTURES
25-29 April 2012

Do Lectures moves to a Spring date.

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012

**HOWIES WEE
DO LECTURES**
Various 2009-2010

Evening lecture events held in-store at howies shops in Bristol and Carnaby Street, London.

**"THE PATH OF
THE DOER" BOOK**
Published 2010

David Hieatt publishes a simple guide (illustrated by Andy Smith) on how to get things done.

DO DAY COURSES
Various 2012 onwards

One day courses and workshops, including branding (with David Hieatt)

FLICKR
September 2008

FACEBOOK
September 2008

TUMBLR
January 2009

TWITTER
February 2009

VIMEO
June 2009

ISSUU
April 2010

STUMBLEUPON
2011

YOUTUBE
May 2011

GOOGLE +
August 2012

**BRAINPICKINGS.ORG
Top 10 Cross-Disciplinary
Conferences**
4 December 2009

**NET MAGAZINE
Top 10 Websites**
2011 Award
International award for responsive website

**WIRED MAGAZINE
10 European Tech
Conferences Not to Miss**
September 2011

**THE GUARDIAN
Top 10 Festivals**
17 February 2012

**THE INDEPENDENT
10 Best Lecture Series**
23 February 2012

DO TOWN
Suggested for Cardigan for the 10th anniversary of the Do Lectures 2018

DO LECTURES FOR TEENS
12 - 14 August 2016 (Wales)

DO COSTA RICA
9-12 July 2015

INTERNATIONAL POSSIBLE VENUES
Do Lectures Germany
Do Lectures Canada

DO AUSTRALIA
24-27 April 2014

DO AUSTRALIA
19-22 March 2015

DO USA
19-23 September 2013

DO USA
18-21 September 2014

DO USA
17-20 September 2015

DO USA
28 - 31 July 2016

INTERNATIONAL

DO LECTURES STARTUP
25-28 April 2013

DO LECTURES IDEAS FARM
5-8 June 2014

DO LECTURES
4-7 June 2015

DO LECTURES
4-7 June 2016

Do Lectures (Wales) themed around startup, aiming to launch new business(es) in weekend

Do Lectures (Wales) moves to a new venue in Cardigan – 'The Ideas Farm'.

The first Do Lectures AUS is held at Payne's Hut, Victoria.

The first Do Lectures COSTA RICA is held at Puerta la Vida, Miramar

Do Ideas Day: a new format with short talks on the theme of stress and accompanied by a new publication 'The Stress Report'.

WALES

2013

2014

2015

2016
and beyond

DO BOOK CO
Launched May 2013
Do Improvise
Do Grow
Do Disrupt
Do Story
Do Birth

(eatt)

DO FOOD WEEK
16-18 November 2013
Series of practical half–day cookery workshops

DO BOOK CO
New titles May 2014
Do Lead
Do Protect
Do Purpose
Do Sourdough

DO BOOK CO
New titles April 2015
Do Beekeeping
Do Breathe

THE DO MARKET
November 2015 onwards
Pop–up event that curates and showcases brands and their founders connected to the Do Lectures

DO BOOK CO
New titles May 2016
Do Fly
Do Design
Do Preserve

DO REPORT: *Stress*
Magazine style book with articles, photos and illustrations from the Do Lectures network

RELATED

INSTAGRAM
April 2013

iTUNES
January 2014

MEDIUM
March 2015

PINTEREST
May 2013

PERISCOPE
April 2015

SOCIAL MEDIA

r

PRESS/AWARDS

James Tucker was a property developer who had been instrumental in creating the studios, apartments and live/work spaces that made Shoreditch a pioneering hub for artists, designers and other creative professionals in the late nineteen eighties and early nineties. It was this creative and entrepreneurial flair that he now brought to developing fforest as a desirable venue and destination.

This proto-Do Lectures event was funded from howies using their "Earth Tax", that is, donations from the company given to support grass-root environmental and social projects generated by setting aside 1% of their turnover. Little Big Voice gathered a small attendance of just 20 guests or 'listeners', as they were described on the event website, to hear nine speakers talk about how ordinary people who want to change things can gain a voice through using the media. The speakers were drawn mainly from the creative industries and through agencies such as Leagas Delaney and Wieden + Kennedy where David and Clare had previously worked. Despite the very small size of the audience, many contributors were prominent in their respective professional circles. For example, Jon Matthews had been the creative director at Wieden + Kennedy and was responsible for many major and memorable global campaigns for Coca Cola, Vodafone and Barclaycard. In his talk, he spoke about using photography and news images for effectively conveying your message. Similarly, Dan Germain, the long-time voice of Innocent drinks as their Head of Brand and Creative, shared about writing with impact and discovering your unique voice and way of communicating with your audience.

The feedback given by the attendees after the Little Big Voice event was published on the website www.littlebigvoice.org . Despite the relative simplicity of this first event and the limited size of the audience, this feedback revealed themes such as personal action, the potency of a story, and the impact of the rural, outdoor setting that would become important characteristics of future Do Lectures events.

Shortly after the event, David Hieatt commented on Little Big Voice, describing it in an interview as "the most amazing thing we've done" and as "a real moment in the history of howies" (Parish 2007). Perhaps his most telling observation about this precursor event was that "We've talked about trying to change things, and I felt we started something there". During that same interview, David specifically referenced the TED talks as a benchmark for the event, pointing out that there was nothing similar in the UK. He also stressed that his event was "mixed ... with some good food and good music", a feature that would remain a fundamental part of the event experience in the years that followed.

"it doesn't matter what you do - do something"

NIGEL RUMSEY

"just doing a few things well is just as good, if not better"

EMMA MORTON

"whoever thought my most inspiring moments would take place in a teepee in Wales?"

FRANCES POLIZER

"it taught me the power of the individual and the power of a single story"

BEN WHITEHOUSE

"What was formed over the weekend was a circle of exchange, a network of people from many walks of life, all fuelled by a shared passion and commitment to making things happen and making things better"

JEMIMA ROBERTS

In the following year, a further conference was arranged at the same Cardigan venue, again hosted and ran under David and Clare Hieatt's howies brand. Although they were still organising the event, the weekend's lectures in September 2008 took a very different approach to the more overtly named Little Big Voice from the previous year. Again adopting the format of a lecture-based event, the attendee numbers increased to around 60 or so seats and a more diverse range of talks were given. Using the now established name of the Do Lectures, the event was described at the time as "getting a handful of speakers together in one place in the hope that they may inspire you to go do something. To give you the tools and the desire to change the things you care about" (Notcot 2008).

The event therefore still carried something of the media activist tone set by the previous year's Little Big Voice by referring to the tools of change. But this time the goals of the event moved towards providing inspiration for change and its intention was more heavily personalised. It retained an emphasis on action but connecting it to 'what *you* care about' rather than being focused only on substantial global issues such as environmental concerns.

This greater breadth of appeal was reflected in the eclectic choice of speakers that included adventurers and outdoorsmen such as Andy Kirkpatrick and Alastair McIntoch; the climate campaigner Tamsin Ormond and surfer activist Andy Cummins; and the best-selling authors Tim Ferris (*The Four Hour Work Week,* Crown Business, 2011) and John Grant (*The Green Marketing Manifesto*, John Wiley & Son, 2008) whose books were emerging as best sellers and making a significant impact at the time. Also speaking at this inaugural Do Lectures was the inventor Trevor Baylis, perhaps best known for creating a the wind-up radio designed in response to the need to communicate health education and information about AIDS in undeveloped areas of Africa. Each of the twenty-one speakers gave a personal and impassioned talk about their own story and the ideas and values that were particularly important to them. As with Little Big Voice, potential guests had been invited to apply to attend by sending a handwritten note and, if selected, were provided with free access, with meals and accommodation at fforest under canvas in their iconic tents and tipis.

Later in 2008, the Do Lectures joined Vimeo as a broadcast platform for their video recordings of that year's lectures. They began the task of providing completely

howies website
The 2008 howies website was not available. This event description of the first Do Lectures was retrieved from a screen capture previously at psfk.com/2008/10/the-do-lectures.html [accessed January 2015] but no longer online.

Do Lectures on Vimeo
vimeo.com/thedolectures

free of charge online videos of the lectures captured at the live event. During 2008 they also joined Facebook, the platform they would begin to use the following year to post links to an embryonic collection of their lectures hosted on the Vimeo platform.

DO LECTURES (2009 ONWARDS)

The September 2009 Do Lectures was again held at fforest, the same location near Cardigan, and had a similar format but it was no longer advertised under the howies name. The howies 'Earth Tax' had supported the cost of the two previous events but this time a combination of monies raised from ticket sales, company sponsorship and amounts given by a small number of Do Lectures founding partners provided the funding. Previously free to attend for carefully selected applicants, the ticket price for the four-day event was now £1,000 for individuals or, for larger companies or corporate guests, the cost was £2,000.

Embedded into the pricing model were two distinctive features. Firstly, the money raised through ticket sales and other financial support would go towards funding an online platform where the recorded talks would be made available free of charge to the digital audience. Secondly, in addition to the 40 tickets that were available for sale, a further 40 tickets would be awarded free to students, non-governmental organisations or to other individuals and groups that would benefit from the event but did not have the financial resources to otherwise attend.

Again, the 20 invited speakers were extremely varied in their background and interests and they included Jane Davidson, who was then the Welsh Minister for the Environment, Sustainability and Housing; Tony Davidson, the Creative Director of Wieden + Kennedy; Gabriel Branby, CEO of the Scandinavian axe-makers Gransfors and Geoff McFetridge, an illustrator and graphic designer whose studio had completed diverse and varied work for many major brands, films and other cultural products. Interspersed with the 20 minutes talks were practical workshops, another regular component of the Do Lectures experience. These workshops drew on the expertise of the speakers attending the event and included running and master classes in drawing, bushcraft and axe-handling. The stated intention of the Do Lectures became more focused on providing the inspiration for action, articulated in some detail in their press release for the event:

The idea is a simple one. That people who Do things can inspire the rest of us to go and Do things too. So each year we invite a set of people down here to come and tell us what they Do.

They can be small Do's or big Do's or just plain, amazing extraordinary Do's. But when you listen to their stories, they just light a fire in your belly to go and Do your thing, your passion, the thing that sits in the back of your head each day, just waiting and waiting for you to follow your heart. To go find your cause to fight for, your company to go start, your invention to invent, your book to write, your mountain to climb.

The one thing the Doers of the world Do, apart from Do amazing things, is to inspire the rest of us to go and Do amazing things. They are the fire-starters.

THE DO LECTURES (2009)

There was now a much stronger call for people to find and pursue their personal passion, whether it was championing a cause, starting a new company, creating an invention, or completing a demanding physical challenge.

Significant in the development of the Do Lectures, shortly after the 2009 event David Hieatt announced that he had left howies, the company he founded with his wife Clare fourteen years earlier. His tweet on 17 September 2009 announced the end of the formal connection between howies and the Do Lectures that had existed since the Little Big Voice event in 2007. Even though howies had been bought by The Timberland Company in December 2006, before the Do Lectures began, David retained the Do Lectures name and he continued to organise and run the event in the years following. Although no longer formally part of the howies brand that had funded and promoted the early events, personal connections remained and these friendships and working relationships were carried over into the evolving Do Lectures project. For example, the photographer Nick Hand who had shaped so much of the distinctive look and feel of the howies brand through his photography and graphic design work for their product catalogue and marketing continued to work with David. He captured similarly powerful images of the Do Lectures event and its speakers and guests and continued to design some of their printed materials. Similarly, Anna Felton, a designer and stylist who worked with the Hieatt's at howies, helped them gain publicity and build the media profile of the Do Lectures.

howies
During 2009-2010 howies ran small occasional evening lecture events in their Bristol and Carnaby Street, London stores. Called 'Wee Do Lectures' they covered similar themes to those emerging from the early Do Lectures events and consistent with their founding company values such as product sustainability, environmental issues or outdoor adventure.

Although their live audience was small, the media attention given to the Do Lectures grew significantly from 2009 onwards. Comparisons with other much larger events were made, with one attendee describing the Do Lectures as "a cross between the Burning Man, the TED lectures and Where the Wild Things Are" and another saying it was "better than TED" (Hieatt 2009). With a growing library of recordings of the Do Lecture talks, they continued to develop their website to host and share the event with the world. During 2011, the website was granted a prestigious award by .net Magazine, placing them in their 'site of the year' list. Used to highlight developments in design and user experience, it featured their top ten websites that offered "a compelling user experience and are rich in visual flair and imagination" and "pushed the boundaries of the web" (CreativeBloq 2011). The Do Lectures website was designed and built by the US-based company Paravel in extensive collaboration with the Cardigan-based Do Lectures team as well as the Brooklyn-based designer Frank Chimero. The illustrator Alex Heslop provided hand-drawn speaker portraits that gave character to the website and her husband, Jon Heslop, worked on technical aspects of the build. The website incorporated responsive page design, then a new and radical approach to building flexible web layouts and content that is now well established. It made the Do Lectures website one of the earliest examples of its kind, allowing their content to be visually and technically effective on mobile devices as well as on desktop or laptop computers.

DO LECTURES USA (2011)

2011 also saw the first international 'export' of the Do Lectures event to the United States. Duke Stump, a speaker from the Do Lectures 2009 in Wales, organised a Do USA event that was held in Hopland, California. Previously VP of Product Marketing for a subsidiary of Nike, Duke Stump was the founder and principal of the brand consultants The Northstar Manifesto. Just as Do Lectures in the UK was held the rural setting of fforest farm in West Wales, Do USA took place in September 2011 at Campovida, an organic farm and working vineyard that provided a similarly remote rural location away from all distraction.

The owners of Campovida had previously met in person with Duke Stump and also with David and Clare Hieatt. Through those conversations they discovered several similarities between what was happening in Cardigan, Wales and in Hopland, California. In a 2011 interview, Anna Beuselinck of Campovida described being inspired by the concept of the Do Lectures and how it had particularly

Frank Chimero

Frank Chimero writes about the influence of design on our lives. Invited to speak at the Do Lectures 2011 event in Wales, his lecture *Do things the long, hard, stupid way'*is one of the most watched of the online talks. His book *The Shape of Design* was published as a Kickstarter project and sold direct to supporters and interested readers. He deliberately avoided Amazon and other online retailers and made a digital version of the book available for free at shapeofdesignbook.com

Campovida

Campovida has a relatively long history as a cattle ranch and then much later a farm, vineyard and finally the Valley Oaks food and wine education centre before becoming home for Gary Breen and Anna Beuselinck in 2010. They established their winemaking business there as well as developing the venue for weddings, conferences and other gatherings. See www. campovida.com for further background.

resonated with them as they too were "striving to revive a small town in America" (Hunter n.d.). The US event closely followed the format already used in Wales. It gathered a small audience of just forty guests and fifteen speakers into a "special and high impact" event that interspersed the lectures with workshops, included carefully crafted meals prepared with organic produce and wines from the host Campovida estate and also providing live music or film-screening during the evenings. As with the Wales event, there was a great variety of speakers that included David Hieatt who talked about his history as the founder of howies as well as the then newly launched Hiut Denim company founded to get his home town of Cardigan "making jeans again" (Walker 2012). Other speakers included the polar explorer Ann Daniels, the outdoorsman and environmental business campaigner Terry Kellogg, CEO of '1% for the Planet', Nate Stanton, a storyboard artist and supervisor with Pixar animations and also Shira Lazar, the YouTube video blogger and host of the live, interactive television show *What's Trending*. One indicator of the degree of interest in Do Lectures USA was the high-profile sponsorship provided by Bloomberg Businessweek who provided six fellowships for already "successful business leaders ... who have made their mark in different fields but are united by one common thread - that they want to make the world a better place" (Bloomberg Business Week, 2011).

DO DAY COURSES (2012) AND THE DO BOOK CO (2013)

During 2012 - 2013 two additional formats were added to the Do Lectures output. Firstly, building on some of the more popular talks and themes from the live event, several 'Do Day courses' were held. As a natural extension to the conference, these small workshops for up to a dozen or so participants were taught by David Hieatt (*How to build a brand with very little money*), Mark Shayler (*Do Disrupt*) and others in the Do Lectures network. The workshops continue to run in Cardigan, London and occasionally in New York with new day-events being added from time to time.

Do Lectures workshops
thedolectures.com/workshops

Secondly, the Do Book Company launched a series of small format books published to coincide with the 2013 event in Wales. It was founded as an independent company by Miranda West directly in response to the influence of the Do Lectures. Each title in the series is written by one of the Do Lectures speakers and is designed to showcase those "whose ideas have inspired others to go and Do. Our aim is to recreate that same positive change in book form" (Do Book Company n.d.). The

Do Lectures books
thedobook.co

series now includes fifteen titles each with a clean, contemporary design and a cover by graphic designer James Victore, a connection made when he spoke at the 2012 event in Wales. The books are presently stocked in locations such as the Tate Modern and Blackwell's specialist art and design bookshop in Oxford that have contributed to their profile among the design community.

DO LECTURES STARTUP (2013)

In 2013, the Do Lectures event (25-28 April) adopted a more entrepreneurial focus and gathered applicants and attendees who were willing to use the 72 hours of the event to collaborate and work in teams to develop new business ideas or challenges. The format was presented as 'an experiment' and in the attendee event guide each participant was invited to 'embrace the uncertainty with a smile'. Although with fewer lectures than the previous year, there was still a substantial schedule of speakers, workshops and entertainment this time supplemented by a major new element - a programme of facilitated discussions and group-based work to develop and then pitch ideas to the gathered attendees.

In addition to providing talks and inspiration from established speakers and creative specialists such as Owen Rogers of IDEO, there were a number of mentoring opportunities given to each group using the expertise gathered at the event and also by Skype. These mentoring opportunities drew on expertise from prominent technologists such as Alan Moore, Ben Hammersley and Perry Chen; writers and creatives such as the Hollywood screenwriter Bobette Buster, media technologist Craig Mod, designer Steve Edge and illustrator Marion Deuchar; brand strategists and marketers John Kearon and Russell Davies; and entrepreneurs across such diverse fields as medical innovation (Marc Koska, Safepoint), retail (James Freeman, Blue Bottle Coffee) and manufacturing (John Andreliunas, Quoddy). The available expertise was organised into 'Startup Shops' that provided onsite consultancy and advice across several key areas: website, logo, strategy, brand and marketing, funding, social media, bootstrapping and legal/intellectual property. By the end of the weekend, group ideas were presented having been shaped and developed with input from experts in social media, intellectual property, branding and other professional specialisms. There was also an evening where attendees could pitch their individual projects for feedback and review by a specialist panel made up of experienced entrepreneurs such as Michael Acton Smith (founder of MindCandy and creator of the online game and merchandising Moshi Monsters) and Jenny Fielding (then Head of Digital

Ventures, BBC Worldwide). From the 26 short presentations made, all found encouragement from a supportive audience with some fledgling businesses such as Wales-based chocolate producer NomNom and the bespoke cycle-maker Milk Bikes finding active interest from other attendees willing to lend their expertise.

Do Lectures Startup received positive comment from those who attended but there were clearly some difficulties in maintaining the collaboration between attendees set-up at the outset of the event. As a consequence, there were relatively few tangible outcomes generated by the teams.

THE IDEAS FARM AND DO AUSTRALIA (2014 ONWARDS)

The two more significant developments achieved during 2014 were the launch of Do Australia (19-22 April) and, in June, the change of the Wales' venue from fforest, the location that had been the home of the event since its inception, to David and Claire's Hieatt's home farm in Cardigan. Described in the publicity as 'the start of a new chapter', the 2014 event was advertised as 'The Ideas Farm', a 'space for ideas to be shared, questioned tested, and ultimately, put into action' (Do Lectures 2013).

This new location, Parc y Pratt, is an old Welsh working farm that has been in use since 1201 and it has one of the oldest wells that is shown on Welsh maps. It was already the administrative base for the Do Lectures where the 'Chicken Shed', literally the old poultry shed on the farm, provides working and office space for the Do Lectures team throughout the year. During the months leading up to the event, other outbuildings at the farm were renovated and the adjacent ground landscaped and developed to provide all the facilities needed. This work included preparing one of the larger stone-built barns as the main venue for each of the talks and preparing other parts of the old buildings to use as a dining, workshop and social space and also for the installation of cloakrooms and showers for onsite guests.

Much of the style and ambience of the previous events held at fforest was retained, maintaining the Do Lectures identity as a predominantly outdoor event. Notably, all of the social spaces and dining areas were designed and deliberately placed to facilitate and promote informal conversation, frequent interaction between participants and to provide relaxed opportunity to meet, talk and get to know other guests and speakers.

The priority on 'doing' and taking action on things you care about was still at the forefront of the event, but the explicit focus on start-ups was not retained from the previous year. Again, the event hosted a broad range of international speakers and attracted guests that were mainly from the UK but also from much further afield such as the east and west coasts of the United States as well as from Germany and Ireland. Some of the more prominent and well-known speakers included Evan Doll, co-founder of the Flipboard personal content and curation application for Apple's iOS, one of the most popular early iPad apps, rapidly growing to more than 100 million registered users by 2014 (Ankeny 2014); Colin Greenwood, the bassist from the band Radiohead, as a surprise speaker on the final morning of the event; and Gavin Strange, a designer and illustrator for Aardman animation studios and producer of many other creative outputs.

Nevertheless, a notable feature of the 2014 event was the profile given to Welsh entrepreneurs, businesses and founders. Speakers at the 2014 'Ideas Farm' included Peter Saunders honoured with an OBE for his services to the food industry in Wales, who spoke on 'Sure Chill' his philanthropic project to provide effective refrigeration for medicines, vaccines and healthcare use in even the most remote areas of the world; Dr Sarah Beynon, entomologist and educator, now with a research base and visitor centre at St David's in West Wales; and Nigel Annett, who transformed Dwr Cwmru from a poorly performing private company to a 'not-for-profit' company described by the Nuffield Trust as having some of the 'highest quality scores and lowest operating costs in the sector' .

Continuing to be styled as the 'Ideas Farm', the Hieatt's home has now been established as the firm venue for the annual Do Lectures event in Wales and it is also available for hire and use for company workshops and other events .

The Ideas Farm
thedo.farm

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

The signature annual Do Lectures event is still running in Cardigan Wales, and the event in July 2017 will mark a decade since it began. The international extension events continued in 2015 - Do Australia completed their second event in 2015 with Do Lectures USA reaching its fifth anniversary in the same year. During 2015 a further international venue was added to the Do Lectures events with a one-off conference in Costa Rica, South America being held from 9-12 July 2015. As with Do Lectures USA and Do Lectures Australia, a similarly unique location was chosen - Puerta a la Vida ('Door to Life'), near the town of

Miramar on Costa Rica's Central Pacific coast. This locaction is advertised as an innovative and 'intelligent living' development that combines new housing, organic farming, and community facilities as well as resort facilities such as a spa, wellness and retreat centre.

Do Lectures have continued to innovate with their event formats and in August 2016 offered the first Do event specifically for teenagers. Also held at the 'Ideas Farm' in Cardigan, Teen Do followed many of the features of the main event format albeit on a smaller scale that was more appropriate for the age-group of those attending:

> *Teen Do's purpose is to help teens learn about three things: Creativity, Confidence and Curiosity. It's a place to find out about ideas, to find out how to share them and to make them happen. In the evenings, there will be tasty local food, great music and we will share stories around the dinner table and campfire. This is where the real magic will happen and where the real thinking will be done. They will inspire each other and there will be a lot of fun along the way. It'll be a brilliant moment in time that stays with them throughout their lives. (Do Lectures n.d.)*

Evidence of continued thinking about extending the Do Lectures format was described in a 'partnership proposal' that was published to a public audience as an article on Medium (Hieatt 2015). It highlighted several new aspects of the Do Lectures being considered, including:

Do Global: they have been in conversation with potential partners to launch a similar Do Lectures event in Germany and Canada.

Do Suppers: one night events that combine 'the best elements of Do: community, food, inspiration, music and a little wine'.

Do Town: creating a Do Lectures event for thousands of people across many small local venues to 'help put an underdog town on the map' as they enjoy a 'mix of music, food, drinks, tech launches, inspirational talks'. A tweet indicated that their original goal was to hold the event in their home-town of Cardigan on the tenth anniversary of the start of the Do Lectures.

More recently, there is evidence of some challenges to this growth as Do Australia did not run an event in 2016 and Do USA announced the cancellation of their event originally due to be held in July 2017. Nevertheless, since the first Little Big Voice event in 2007 and the inaugural Do Lectures held in 2008, David and Clare Hieatt have continued to attract a diverse range of speakers and attendees to the event in their home town of Cardigan in West Wales. The addition of similar events in the United States, Australia and Costa Rica has helped them to develop an international following, strongly supported by the publishing and promotion of all the lectures through their various online platforms.

A survey of this wider media ecology and more information about the use of these platforms will follow in a later chapter of this thesis. The section that follows sets out the wider context of the Do Lectures event and locates it as emergent form of cultural experience often referred to as an 'ideas festival'.

The founders of the Do Lectures do not refer to the event as an 'ideas conference' and they have deliberately countered this label in their publicity, but it is certainly seen by others as part of an increasingly popular cultural form and event category – the ideas festival. For example, The Guardian placed the Do Lectures fourth in its 2012 list of 'Top 10 Ideas Festivals' (Willis 2012), just one place behind the SXSW Interactive event they described in the article as "the yardstick against which ideas and tech festivals are measured".

The most well-known ideas festival or conference is the TED lectures, the annual global conference first held in 1984 that gathered speakers and guests around the converging themes of Technology, Entertainment and Design that gave the event its name. Although the acronym remains as the core name giving identity to the conference in its various formats, the scope of topics has significantly enlarged to cover many hundreds of subjects and has extended itself considerably beyond these three initial themes. However, TED is just one of many ideas festivals or events that have focused on gathering an audience to hear a number of short talks or lectures, usually of a varied nature although sometimes curated into a more structured or topically themed programme. Ideas conferences are now presented or hosted by a surprisingly wide-range of institutions and organisations. These range from retailers and consumer brands to the aspirational and prestigious Aspen Ideas Festival that has hosted US presidents and international heads of state in an event their marketing has described as the "premier, public gathering place for leaders from around the globe and across many disciplines" (Aspen n.d.). Consumer brands are adopting them as part of their operation with companies such as LEGO using the ideas festival as a means of progressing their learning and education through play credentials or, at the other end of the spectrum, by IKEA to promote sales of their household products. Cities and local regions such as Bristol (since 2008) are also making use of them as a means of packaging a wide variety of events that have a mainstay programme of talks, but also includes other arts-based events such as music, exhibitions , performance, art or other forms of visual culture . For some, such as the Cambridge Festival of Ideas, the two week long series of more than 200 events held in the Autumn of each year, reinforces the city's identity as a major academic and cultural centre. With talks from many prominent academics and specialists, the festival forms a significant part of the public engagement plan for the University of Cambridge, its museums and other partner institutions.

LEGO Ideas Conference
The LEGO Foundation holds an annual Idea Conference that brings together an invited audience of academics, practitioners, innovators, government officials and social entrepreneurs for three days of presentations and debate. Further details at legoideaconference.com [accessed 26 October 2016]

Of course, ideas have always had a social life, whether in the coffee-houses of the eighteenth century, the learned societies and institutions of the nineteenth century, the burgeoning academic establishment of the twentieth century or the globalized media platforms of the twenty-first. In that sense, ideas festivals or conferences are simply a continuation of the need to establish public platforms and forums for engaging with ideas and sharing innovative thinking or new knowledge. However, with the emergence of the internet and its associated technologies, it is now very much easier to establish 'social spaces for ideas' by setting up real or virtual meeting places for people to engage with the latest thinking. The Do Lectures, along with the best of the ideas festivals, do both and allow the live event to flow into a digital experience that not only captures the content for a wider online audience but also creates a more permanent home for the ideas than an exclusively live presentation allows. The digital platform comprising both the online home of the event, any secondary platforms used to host or mirror that content such as Vimeo or Youtube, together with the ever-widening sphere of social media are all critical parts of establishing that social space by facilitating the gathering of both speakers and audiences. The ease, low-cost and near global reach of internet based communications means that speakers and audiences can be identified, connected and brought together with a speed and simplicity unknown to previous generations. Planning, organising, communicating, running and publishing conferences and festivals is no longer the exclusive privilege of major institutions and corporations using their pre-existing networks. Now the massive organisational infrastructure and connections previously necessary to establish an event can now be created, maintained and grown from free or inexpensive tools as small as a Twitter or other social media account.

THE TED PHENOMENON

The most prominent of the ideas conferences is TED, the conference created by Richard Saul Wurman and that was first held in 1984 in Monterey, California as a one-off event with a ticket price of £475 (Gallo 2014, p.3). Wurman had originally trained as an architect, graduating from the University of Pennsylvania in 1959 and working in Philadelphia alongside the noted architect Louis Kahn. After almost twenty years of professional practice, he reshaped his career and turned his attention to graphic design and particularly to the presentation of complex information. AIGA recognise that he coined the now-familiar term "information architect" and his businesses in Los Angeles and San Francisco focused on creating

AIGA
Founded in 1914 as the American Institute of Graphic Arts, AIGA is the oldest and largest professional membership organization for design. See www.aiga.org/about.

new design formats for publications such as telephone directories, timetables and atlases that would make them more attractive and effective for their users. He described the principles that underpinned his design approach in his book *Information Anxiety*, highlighting that "each way you organize information creates new information and new understanding" (Wurman 1991) emphasising that the form and structure of presentation provides significant new perspectives on existing data. He used the concept of using alternative 'vantage points' to present information, challenging us to look at things differently to find new patterns of understanding.

His willingness to reconsider the form of the communication medium that was reflected in that book was also something that he applied to the conference event. Before TED, he had already been prominent in chairing many major conferences such as the 1972 International Design Conference in Aspen, Colorado that he used to explore ideas or to push the boundaries of design thinking. It was in this professional context that Wurman conceived the first TED event by challenging the dominant conference format by "subtracting elements common to other events: introductions, lecterns, suits and ties" (Dembosky 2012). In contrast to the high-profile but very rigidly organised business conferences he was familiar with, he was seeking to create a much more open, flexible and engaging event by deliberately reshaping and reinventing the conference medium itself. This key insight was expressed in an article about Richard Wurman that appeared in *Wired* magazine shortly before he sold the TED event to the current owners and organisers, Chris Anderson's non-profit The Sapling Foundation in 2001:

> *TED itself is a triumph of information design. The meticulously tended social dynamic of the conference is the crowning achievement of a talented man—one who realized long ago that the presentation of information can be more important than the information itself. (Wolf 2000)*

Mandelbrot
Mandelbrot (1924-2010) is most well-known for his mathematical and visual work on fractals, the highly intricate geometric patterns of infinite complexity in which smaller and smaller copies of a pattern are nested inside each other.

This first TED event in 1984 brought some remarkable contributions to its stage, including one of the earliest demonstrations of the new Apple Macintosh computer and the Sony compact disc, presentations from the mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot and early digital pioneers such as Nicholas Negroponte, the founder of MIT's Media Lab. Despite "the stellar lineup, the event lost money" (TED n.d.) and the TED conference did not run again for another six years. However, it relaunched in 2000 during the millennium year and from then

onwards it became an annual event held at a much larger venue in Long Beach, California. This TED conference now gathers more than a thousand people for a five-day event to hear from about seventy speakers who each give talks of a fixed-length of 18 minutes and watch music, performance and comedy. A conference ticket is currently $8,500 of which two-thirds is classed as a tax-deductible contribution to the work of the non-profit Sapling Foundation that owns TED.

In the years since Chris Anderson took control of TED in 2001 there have been several major extensions of TED. These include TEDGlobal, a sister conference held in different locations around the world; the TED Prize, currently a $1 million award to build a project's infrastructure to help bring the winner's big idea to reality; TEDx, the heavily directed but independently organised events using a similar format held in cities around the world; and, of course, TED Talks, the audio and video podcast series that publishes the best of the conference talks online as a free resource. The very first talks were posted online in June 2006 and, although only six were made available at the time, they gathered an astonishingly large audience receiving more than one million views in just three months (TED n.d.). Further video content was added to create a collection of 44 talks which, according to June Cohen, TED director of media, had been viewed more than three million times by January 2007 (Tedeschi 2007). Based on that success achieved in just over six months, she noted that "TED pumped hundreds of thousands of dollars into its video production operations and into the development of a Website to showcase about 100 of the talks". As well as making the content available as individual talks, TED curated them into thematic collections to recreate something of the conference experience but for the online audience.

The cultural impact of TED has substantially increased as its online library of talks have gained growing worldwide attention and have reached a more general audience. Its popularity is attested not just through its growing viewing statistics but also through regular reference directly or indirectly in other forms of media and the now iconic conference features in several strands of mainstream popular culture. For example, it has been made the object of satire and comedy with presentations such as the series of "Onion Talks" that were featured in *The New Yorker* magazine and through spoof videos such as the *DED Talks* or *College Humour*. Its place within the wider culture has also been promoted as it has been featured in mainstream television drama and it has also appeared in several US network series such as the opening episode of the comedy *Silicon Valley* from HBO and it has been indirectly referenced in style and visual branding by the

TED satire and comedy
Many satirical or comedic takes on the TED lectures are graciously compiled in a blog post at TED's official website (TED 2015). See also *The Onion Tees Up TED Talks* (Morais, 2012).

fictional 'CTT' conference that appears as part of a tech-company litigation storyline in the long-running series *The Good Wife'*. The TED brand has also been deliberately incorporated into popular film by the director Ridley Scott who created an imagined TED2023 talk as part of the science-fiction epic *Prometheus,* a film in the *Alien* series. This fictional talk 'I will change the world' was heavily edited down in length for inclusion in the film but its complete version was part of TED's California live event in 2012. For the TED organisers, featuring in a major film franchise provided a powerful way to expose their brand to a much wider audience. Perhaps of most interest is that for Ridley Scott this was a directorial choice that was purposefully made, helping to anchor the science-fiction story in present reality (TED 2012).

Further evidence of its cultural impact and the now mainstream audience for its talks comes from the variety of major partnerships that the TED organisers have formed with distribution channels beyond the primary online outlets with Apple's iTunes and their own www.TED.com website. TED content is promoted on channels with the podcast hub Tunein.com, the internet TV freeware companies Roku and Boxee and curated groupings of talks are also available on demand as part of the streaming service Netflix. The TED format is also pervasive enough to have attracted an unaffiliated Twitter account @RandomTEDTalks that randomly generates a feed of talk titles using data from the real TED talks. The success of their talk format has made it a role model for spoken presentation, with the Harvard Business Review featuring a guide from TED's Chris Anderson on *How to Give a Killer Presentation* (2013) and several popular books such as *How to Deliver a TED Talk* (Donovan 2013) offering direction on the use of storytelling, slide-design and delivery based on the TED model.

However, the TED events and their talks have not been well received universally and critics have variously accused the organisation of elitism, avoidance of politically sensitive topics such as income inequality, the reductive oversimplification of complex issues and the cultural narrowness of the contributors it chooses. Certainly, the current cost of attending the events means that its audience is relatively exclusive and TED themselves acknowledge that they are elitist in that they curate both their speaker list and audience with great care (TED n.d.). One prominent voice among those critics is Nathan Jurgenson, a sociologist and researcher at Snapchat, who wrote a boldly titled article 'Against TED' (2012) for the web-based culture magazine *The New Inquiry*. He had invited Twitter responses to his question of 'What's Wrong with TED' and some of the many

responses disliking the intense Silicon Valley corporate culture of TED were noted in his article. His position and personal strength of view came across very clearly in his acknowledgement of his Twitter respondents, as he commented 'all this TED-hate is warming my heart!' . However, his article described that the main focus of his critique was 'to do with TED's epistemic style – that is, what counts as knowledge and how that knowledge is disseminated. TED is not just "engaging" and "entertaining" but is a specific type of entertainment that is increasingly out of touch and exclusionary'. Notwithstanding the strength of his personal perspective on TED and its culture, Jurgensen does point towards a significant issue – that 'there are consequences to having this style of discourse dominate how technology's role in society is understood'. His view is that the success of the TED medium, particularly its closely managed form and style of a short lecture and video/online presentation, is dominating other voices and other publics whose message or style does not fit the TED Talks format.

This twenty-minute lecture format shared by both the TED lectures and the Do Lectures is used to cover an eclectic and wide-ranging programme of themes and subjects. Both place this form of presentation of ideas at the heart of their events, with TED showcasing 'Ideas Worth Spreading' according to their tagline; the Do Lectures choosing to adopt the less passive formula 'Energy + Ideas = Change' and, more recently, 'Ideas change everything'.

This thesis explores whether the Do Lectures does facilitate change through its influence as an event and how that dynamic is expressed through its impact on the live and online audiences it reaches through its conferences and digital platforms. The premise on which the Do Lectures operates is that communication can effect change – that their lectures and the ideas or examples they present can have sufficient influence and impact to make a difference in society. However, that conviction does not rest merely on the content being presented, it also makes the communication environment itself an important and a critical contributor to that impact. The Do Lectures utilises both the intimacy of the live event and the scale and reach of the global digital platform in pursuit of their goals. This thesis, therefore, examines the effectiveness of the Do Lectures through the testimony of those who have experienced one or both of these dimensions.

Media Ecology and Marshall McLuhan

A review of the media ecology literature and an
introduction to McLuhan's 'tetrad', the Laws of Media

"

"Since 'communication' means change, any theory of communication, must naturally concentrate on the sort of public with which they felt themselves to be confronted. It is this public which always affects the structures which the performer chooses to adopt, and it is this public which he seeks to shape and alter in some way."

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MARSHALL MCLUHAN

(QUOTED IN ERIC MCLUHAN 2008 P.31)

The Do Lectures central objective is to catalyse change through the communication of ideas. They describe their strategy on their website in straightforward terms:

> *People who Do things can inspire the rest of us to go and Do things, too. So each year we invite a set of people down here to come and tell us what they Do (Do Lectures, 2013)*

Of course, many conferences are built upon the intention of change - whether at the level of only seeking cognitive change through the sharing of ideas and knowledge or, more substantially, to also attain deeper shifts in belief, attitude, behaviour or even overall lifestyle. But for the Do Lectures, an observable degree of change is the core goal and also the focus of the challenge they present to their audience. Rather than being defined by a sphere of knowledge, area of professionalism or a system of practice that normally delineates a conference type, their intention is to generate influence with highly specific and visible outcomes - substantive and identifiable action.

As a communication goal this is relatively straightforward to assess, at least in general terms, since research can be focused on behaviour and action as tangible areas of change. However, much less straightforward is the task of assessing the role of the various drivers of influence and change that exist within each component of their media strategy. It is a challenge to identify a single approach that is suitable for investigating and assessing the influence of what begins as a live public event that is then mediated through multiple primary and secondary channels. In addition, the audience connection to the lecture as the primary text varies from close, personal proximity to the speaker as the talk is delivered in person to a small group of attendees to much more peripheral engagement by a global audience connected through digital and social media networks that are one or more steps away from the original mediated source.

In this complex social and communication environment identifying, isolating and measuring individual factors and outcomes is particularly difficult. The heavily quantified limits of Berelson's famous dictum (1948) still remain, albeit tempered by a growing body of knowledge - "Some kinds of communication on some kinds of issues, brought to the attention of some kinds of people under some conditions have some kinds of effects". However, the task of discerning and correctly attributing the cause of those effects is now intensely magnified with the complexity of the current media environment.

As will be seen from the research set out in the following chapters, many people claim inspiration, direction and even life-transforming insights from their experience and content of the Do Lectures that completely change their outlook, lifestyle and orientation towards the world. But what are the triggers for that influence? Is it the ideas set out within the talks or is there something more? Is it the power of the spoken word or are there other important factors at play? Does the publication of the talks online really affect a global audience or does digital communication fulfil a different function that is beyond simply delivering the content of the lectures themselves? These are some of the questions to be explored through direct research.

Examining both the talks and the Do Lectures event as a whole requires a consideration of a wide range of literature. For example, the research focus encompasses not just the live lectures as they are delivered within the context of the original event and location in Wales but also the mediated forms of those lectures published or promoted through the various Do Lectures online channels. Also, to understand the importance of the Do Lectures in its geographical and cultural setting in Wales requires engagement with further issues relating to the context of both the event and the communications environment it uses. Therefore, this review will provide a survey of relevant literature from several disciplines that together provide a theoretical perspective to underpin the research. As well as giving initial orientation to the research by setting out ideas that help to position this specific study, the review of literature will also provide 'sensitising concepts' (Flick 2009, p.100) that help to define key dynamics and variables that will shape both the research design and the particular areas that will be identified and explored within it.

The review will begin with an outline of concepts relating to media influence before moving on to give an overview of work undertaken more specifically within the communications field. From this general survey of influence and media effects, the review will then look at media ecology as both a school of thought and as a conceptual frame within which this multi-dimensional project can be established.

INFLUENCE

Understanding influence is at the heart of communications research and its academic study, notably in relation to the medium of public speech, has a long and distinguished pedigree. Indeed, an education in the art of rhetoric to influence, motivate or inform an audience by "the power of observing the means of persuasion on almost any subject presented to us" (Aristotle's Rhetoric, Book 1 Chapter 2) was one of three key components of the trivium that underpinned Western education until relatively recently. Although scholars have identified the roots of the rhetorical arts in the early civilisations of Mesopotamia and Egypt (Hallo 2004), it is usually regarded as being 'invented' in ancient Greece (Golden et al. 2007) where skill in oratory was highly prized. Great value was attached to the art of public persuasion and ancient rhetoricians developed detailed schema for understanding and teaching its skills. Most notably, Aristotle's treatise on Rhetoric is still viewed as "the most significant work on persuasion ever written" (Golden et al. 2007, p.2) bringing together several competing schools of thought. Aristotle observed that the act of persuasion was built upon three elements of proof:

Aristotle on rhetoric
As has been observed by Walter Ong, it is interesting to note that Aristotle's work on rhetoric 'was and had to be a product of writing' that made it possible to 'organise the 'principles' or constituents of oratory into a scientific 'art'.' (Ong 1982 p.9). That is, with something of an irony, it was the crystallisation of the *spoken* word into a *written* text that allowed it to be studied and propagated beyond its original live audience.

> *Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself. Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. (Aristotle, Rhetoric (Book 1)*

The 'first kind' or mode of persuasion referred to was ethos, or the positive self-portrayal of the speaker, demonstrating practical wisdom or knowledge, credibility and empathy or good intentions toward the audience. The second mode was the use of pathos, understanding and appealing to the emotions "that so change men as to affect their judgements" (Aristotle, Rhetoric) to generate or elicit a favourable response. The third is logos, that is, the use of sound argument and the logical appeal to reason that will establish the perception of proof by the audience.

The study of rhetoric continued to dominate as 'a meticulously worked-out art' and 'the most comprehensive academic subject in all western-culture for two thousand years' (Ong 1982). However, in the modern period, the study of influence has been largely redefined by a social scientific approach that takes a more comprehensive view of the many factors involved. For example, by taking into account an individual's pre-existing attitudes and beliefs (O'Keefe 2002; Perloff 2010) the impact of social norms or other dimensions of social influence (Cialdini 2009; Gass & Seiter 2011) in addition to any direct components of the communication process. This more recent work has enlarged the study of persuasion beyond a focus solely upon the orator, author or source and their message to a more holistic view that also takes account of reception factors in the hearers or audience for that message. In line with general developments in communication theory, persuasion is no longer viewed as a linear, sender determined and transmission-orientated process.

MEDIA EFFECTS

Within the communications discipline, influence is generally studied within the field of media effects - the study of "things that occur as a result - either in part or whole - from media influence" (Potter 2012, p.38). Determining the causes of media effects and the extent of their scope and direct or indirect impact has continued as a major theme of research. For example, within mass media scholarship alone there is an extensive research literature that even in 2007 was conservatively estimated at around 4,000 separate studies (Potter & Riddle 2007). This figure has, of course, continued to grow and is certainly much larger if the rapidly growing literature on non-mass media effects or the effects of new digital media is also taken into account. However, despite this wealth of research literature there is, as Dennis McQuail points out, a significant 'paradox':

> *There is widespread belief, nearing on certainty, that the mass media are a powerful instrument of influence on opinion and of effects on behaviour. At the same time, there is great difficulty in predicting effects or in proving that they have happened, after the event (McQuail 2005, p.456)*

This is reflected in the growth of major communication-based industries and professions such as marketing, advertising, branding and public relations that have a complete reliance on media effects even though there is little agreement

about the nature and extent of those effects. In part, this is because "the media are rarely likely to be the only necessary or sufficient cause of an effect, and their relative contribution is extremely hard to assess" (McQuail, 2005, p.457). Determining the types of effect and their causality is therefore a significant complexity when approaching the subject of media influence. Nevertheless, studies have continued to suggest many different models to explicate the influence of media.

FOUR ERAS OF UNDERSTANDING

Media effects research has moved through several major phases that together provide a macro-level view of developments and a useful introductory perspective. Although an extremely broad generalisation and, therefore, simplification of the developments in the field, it describes some of the underlying trends and provides a general trajectory of understanding as it has evolved. Each author has their own defining perspective but several mass media scholars have taken similar approaches to grouping developments into general time periods. For example, McQuail notes progress through four 'phases' or 'stages in this history of the field' (2005, pp.457-42) and Baran and Davis describe them as 'eras' (2011, pp.26-38).

Typical of the initial era ' from the turn of the century until the 1930s' was a view that mass media were 'all-powerful' (McQuail 2005, p.458). The work of Lippman (1922), Lasswell (1927), and Bernays (Bernays & Miller 1928, 1929) on both propaganda and the shaping of public opinion in the cultural context of radio and film as substantial forms of mass media directly proposed a view that effective communication could generate massive effects of influence or even control over audiences. The immediate cultural and historical context of war propaganda, the use of mass media in revolution and by totalitarian states, and, closer to home, the emergence of consumer advertising all suggested that media could hold significant power over audiences. Events such as the tidal-wave of public reaction to the 30 October 1938 episode of The Mercury Theatre on the Air, when Orson Welles broadcast the drama *The War of the Worlds* seemed to reinforce the view that media had an immensely powerful 'hypodermic effect'. More recent work (for example, Hallo 2004; Bineham 1988) suggests that the powerful effects models from this era were somewhat misrepresented and simplified to provide a contrasting backdrop to later models of influence, although this view of media having a direct and immediate effect on a largely passive audience was widely accepted.

The War of the Worlds
The impact of this well-known broadcast is described in Richard Hand's 2006 survey *Terror on the Air!: Horror Radio in America, 1931–1952.* He reports that tens of thousands of people "took to the streets in panic" (p.8).

The second era is marked by a shift from conceptions of powerful media effects to minimal or no-effects as empirical research conducted from the 1940s and into the 1950s presented evidence of only a very limited impact of mass communication on opinion change (McQuail 2005, p. 459). Again, this is a somewhat caricatured view of the findings for this period, findings that were constrained by the simplicity of the models used to measure media effects and distorted by subsequent 'received history' (Pooley 2006). Nevertheless, it marked the beginnings of more sophisticated theorization as the linear and crude models of communication were modified or displaced by studies incorporating many more contextual variables. The perceived potency of the media was now giving way to a more nuanced understanding of its impact.

In a third phase of effects research, the upswing of the pendulum of contrasting ideas moved back towards a 'return to the concept of powerful mass media' (Noelle-Neumann, 1973). During the 1960s and 1970s the substantial cultural impact of television as the newest form of mass media combined with an 'upsurge of critical theory' that 'credited the media with powerful legitimating and controlling effects' (McQuail, 2005, 460) drove new interest in examining broader dimensions of change such as the role of media institutions, the impact of media on culture and society and related issues of context and power.

From the 1970s onwards, a fourth major trend appeared in effects research that had a greater focus on reception by a choice-making audience who did far more than passively consume media. Instead, there was now conceived "an active audience that uses media content to create meaningful experiences" (Ong 1982; Baran et al. 2011) and it was that construction of meaning that generated the greatest effects. However, this "transfer of power" from message to the viewer was not uncontested as it raised significant new challenges as questions of human agency and the impact of the wider social environment or other "intervening variables" on media effects were considered (Lewis 1991, p.14 ff).

ORGANISING THE FIELD

Within this broad framework of historical trends, there has been work to organise the field into a coherent discipline. For example, following his 2007 review of the literature referred to above, James Potter has synthesised the media research completed over these four eras or phases and has mapped the definitional issues encountered by scholars (2011, p.898), and the range of theories being proposed

Media effects - received and remembered history
Pooley (Golden et al. 2007; Pooley 2006) provides a valuable perspective on 'remembered history', pointing towards the undue influence of Katz and Lazarfeld's milestone publication on 'Personal Influence' (Golden et al. 2007, p.2; Katz 1955) that has shaped subsequent interpretation.

Similarly, Neuman and Guggenheim (2011) set out a strongly argued critique of the 'received history' of the media effects field, noting that the 'pedagogical allure' of a highly simplistic narrative diminishes earlier scholarship.

or tested (2012). His analysis provides a useful means of categorising the range of media effects and the many factors that underlie them. He provide a partial alphabetical list of media effects identified by communications researchers that comprises approximately 130 items (Potter 2012, pp.39-40) and suggests that to create an organizational scheme it is first necessary to make a distinction between individual level effects focused on the impact made on just one person as a unit, or macro-level effects that consider change within a particular group of people or "aggregate units ... typically the public, society, and institutions, such as the criminal justice system, the economy, the political system and so on". Having made that basic categorization, he then considers two dimensions that together create a matrix of effects. In the case of individual level effects: the first dimension describes how the media exerts its influence and the second groups the types of effect, identifying what aspects of the person were affected.

For this latter dimension, Potter creates and defines the following categories (pp.41ff) that are described as follows:

Cognitive effect: Media exposure exercising an influence on an individual's mental processes or the product of those mental processes; typically involves the acquisition, processing and storage of information

Belief effects: Media exposure exercising an influence on an individual's perception that the probability that an object or event is associated with a given attribute.

Attitudinal effect: Media exposure exercising an influence on an individual's judgements; typically providing people with elements to evaluate or shaping standards of evaluation

Affective effect: Media exposure exercising an influence on an individual's feelings, such as emotions and moods.

Physiological effect: Media exposure exercising an influence on an individual's automatic responses to stimuli

Behavioural effect: Media exposure exercising an influence on an individual's doing something.

Joshua Meyrowitz takes a substantially broader approach with his categorization of the media effects literature. In sharp contrast to the detailed multi-dimensional taxonomy constructed by Potter, he identifies the 'narratives of human experience that ... underlie three different ways of studying media influence' (Meyrowitz 2008). Although he acknowledges that this very basic categorisation is 'neither exhaustive nor universal' (p.642), it does nevertheless provide a perspective that helps to make sense of a significant body of research.

The three meta-level narratives he suggests are first, a *power* narrative that frames the media as a means of control, as "weapons in and sites of conflict over access to resources, wealth, information, symbolic representations, and power – and over access to the media themselves" (Meyrowitz 2008). He identifies both Marx and Engels as providing the foundation for this narrative through linking control of the cultural "superstructure" in society with the control of the economic "base" of production. He then moves on to describe how Gramsci's (1971) analysis of the press and other social institutions exercised hegemonic control through legitimising the dominant ideology and suppressing other alternative or resistant ideologies. This power narrative is also to the fore in the ideas of Horkheimer and Adorno of the Frankfurt School and, in modified form, in more contemporary studies of the political economy of the mass media that explore patterns of control. In an important insight, Meyrowitz also highlights how many areas of work in cultural studies still maintain a focus on the power narrative, albeit having shifted from a view of media as "unchallenged or deterministic tools of the powerful". For example, by exploring issues of representation of class, gender and so on the focus is still upon forces of power, identity and ideology. Even though research has moved on from the conceptions of a passive audience, the media and culture in general is still perceived as "a contested domain", part of the "power story" (Potter & Riddle 2007; Meyrowitz 2008).

The second root narrative Meyrowitz identifies is that of *purposes and pleasures*, of people who are "not seen as victims of each other or of their environment but rather as purposeful agents" (McQuail 2005; Meyrowitz 2008). This perspective frames people not as "targets of media", but as "active choosers and users of media". Pinpointing the uses and gratifications approach typified by Blumler and Katz (McQuail 2005, pp.457-42; Blumler & Katz 1974) to understanding media effects, Meyrowitz again shows how this underlying narrative has shaped subsequent research by placing its gaze upon the needs, expectations and desires of the public and positioning media as their partners or servants in fulfilling them.

The third narrative Meyrowitz describes is the *structures and patterns* narrative, where "systems of communication ... are seen as part of the material and symbolic environment that creates certain possibilities and encourages certain forms of interaction while discouraging others" (Baran & Davis 2011, pp.26-38; Meyrowitz 2008). Within this narrative, media effects are seen as emerging from the qualities, characteristics or particular affordances of the medium itself. He describes this approach as "medium theory" and explains it using a directly ecological comparison:

> *Just as variations in climates and soils foster the development of different sizes of communities, so do the characteristics of different forms of communication facilitate different scales of political and social organization in terms of how many people over how large a territory can be included easily in the same communication system. (Meyrowitz 2008)*

Particularly useful to the present study is his observation that "similar cultural content has different influences when placed in different media and that changes in media encourage new forms of content and interaction" (Meyrowitz 2008, p.654).

He summarises these meta-level narratives as being of 'power, pleasure and pattern'. For research that focusses on the media effect of the digital platform itself, it is the third of these narratives that is of most interest. Especially when considering the transition of the lecture from a live face-to-face communication to its mediated form online, the shift of medium is the most central variable of concern. It raises direct questions about what those 'new forms' might be and therefore what new or modified forms of influence they represent.

INTRODUCING MEDIA ECOLOGY

The pattern narrative of interest to medium theorists such as Meyrowitz has strong roots in the media ecology school of communications theory. Media ecologists maintain a substantial focus upon forms of media and their relationship rather than examining the specifics of their content or production except so far as they relate to that wider perspective.

The ideas of media ecology gained significant attention from the 1970s onwards, particularly through the work of Marshall McLuhan (1911-1980), Walter Ong (1912-2003) and Neil Postman (1931-2003). They are considered as "founding fathers" of that perspective but it is also recognised that there was a "first generation of predecessors" (Scolari 2010, p.20) that included Lewis Mumford (1895-1990), Jacques Ellul (1912-1994), and Harold Innis (1894-1952). Common to Mumford, Ellul and Innis was an interest in the various forces that shaped society, including technologies, communication and the urban environment. Although each had differing interests and outlooks that gave their work its distinctive ideas and concepts, all three sought to understand how human affairs, culture and social relationship were all affected by the technologies we create or how those technologies were themselves an expression of human affairs, culture and social relationship. The impact of their ideas and writing caused them to be labelled by William Kuhns *The Post-Industrial Prophets* (1971) in his overview of their work.

Although his early writings were in literary criticism, Lewis Mumford's work dealt with themes of urban life, technology, architecture and the shape of society, including an interest in the specific effects of mass communication upon culture. Books such as *Technics and Civilisation* (1934) and the two-volume *The Myth of the Machine* (1967, 1970) ran counter to the then prevailing anthropological views that homo sapiens was defined by his tools and instead placed man's social and cultural development at the centre. He traced the relationship between eras or phases of developments in the organic or human elements of society and progress in the inorganic, technological and mechanistic advances. Like McLuhan after him, Mumford took a considered and critical approach to our inventiveness and explored or challenged the wider implications of advancing technologies. Mumford asked:

> *What sort of society and what kind of man are we seeking to produce? About any and every machine, above all about the technical process itself, the critical question is: How much further does this instrument further life? If it does not promote human welfare, in the fullest sense, an atomic pile is as disreputable as a pinball game or jukebox. In short: we must do justice to the whole nature of man before we can make the most of our mechanical improvements. (Mumford 1954)*

Jaques Ellul was similarly concerned with technology in society and a significant part of his prolific output as a writer reflected on the relationship between humanity and scientific advances. His viewpoint was much less optimistic than Mumford's, expressing a darkening vision of man's freedom being eroded and removed by his growing reliance upon ever-increasing degrees of technology. Typical of his concern, he writes in *The Technological Society* published in French in 1954 and then in English ten years later:

> *But if technique demands the participation of everybody, this means that the individual is reduced to a few essential functions which make him a mass man. He remains 'free', but he can no longer escape being a part of the mass. Technical expansion requires the widest possible domain. In the near future not even the whole earth may be sufficient (Ellul 1964, p.207)*

Again, the dominating concern of Ellul was how we are shaped or, from his perspective, gradually enslaved by technical developments, advances in science and the products of that science. He sets up a negative view of "la technique", the rush towards "absolute efficiency" and control made possible by civilisation's progress (1964 p.xxv).

Within these concerns was an interest in the power of the media as a foremost example of how we are influenced, shaped and even dominated through communication. The breadth of analysis he presented in *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* (1965) was groundbreaking, demonstrating that the influence of communication in society did not rest on merely the effects upon the individual nor upon effects on the crowd, but on the effects on the individual within a societal setting. He described the concept of "the lonely crowd", where a person is at once isolated from others as an individual yet is nevertheless addressed as part of a mass audience:

This is the situation of the "lonely crowd", or of isolation in the mass, which is a natural by-product of present-day society and which is both used and deepned by the mass media. The most favourable moment to seize a man and influence him is when he is alone in the mass. (Ellul 1965, pp.8-9)

Again, Ellul was concerned not just about the effect of the content of communication but the effect of context or social environment where that communication process takes place. It is important to stress that Ellul's objections to technology were its potentially dehumanising effects, his concerns were about the distanciating effects of media - he "preferred the power of the word over the power of the image" (Scolari 2010)

With a very different background to either Mumford or Ellul, Harold Innis was an economist focussing initially on the effects of the railway and the fur trade in the development of Canadian society through his straightforwardly titled books *A History of the Canadian Pacific Railroad* and *The Fur Trade in Canada* published in 1923 and 1930 respectively. Some years later he relayed the histories of major empires from the perspective of the various communication technologies they used or invented, noting the relationship between the forms of media they utilised and the power they exerted through political and economic control. Just as his work on Canada had described the decisive and influential role of the extension of transport and trade, he now portrayed the shaping power of communications media on society. Notably, his two books from that period - *Empire and Communications* (Innis 1950) and *The Bias of Communication* (Innis 1951) – although emerging from his doctoral thesis examining the economic history of Canada, placed communication and, more specifically, the properties of communication media right at the heart of cultural and social change.

The contributions of these writers and theorists provided the backdrop for the development of the media ecology school. Although none used the term 'media ecology' directly, their perspective was very much ecological in thought. It was rooted in a conviction that technologies in use could not be considered apart from their influence upon society. Also, in the particular context of communications, they asserted that there was a systemic relationship between media forms and the pattern of society. Mumford, Ellul and Innis all challenged in a profound way the simpler theories of communication typified by linear or 'hypodermic' models that were prominent for much of the period in which they wrote.

Credit for shaping media ecology as an academic field is given to Neil Postman (Strate 2004, Scolari 2010). Postman established the first academic degree programme in media ecology in 1971 with his course at the Steinhardt School of Education at New York University. His defining perspective was introduced in a 1968 address to the National Council of Teachers of English, later published as *The Reformed English Curriculum* (Postman 1970), stating that "Media ecology is the study of media as environments" and then elaborating in more detail:

> *The word 'ecology' implies the study of environments: their structure, content and impact on people. An environment is, after all, a complex message system which imposes certain ways of thinking, feeling and behaving.*

> *Media ecology tries to find out what roles media force us to play, how media structure what we are seeing, why media make us feel and act as we do.*

Much later, Postman provides a much fuller definition in an address to the Media Ecology Association in 2000, drawing particular attention to the relationship of media to culture and indicating the wider sphere of interest.

> *A medium is a technology within which a culture grows; that is, it to say, it gives form to a culture's politics, social organization, and habitual ways of thinking ... we are not simply interested in media, but in the way in which the interaction between media and human beings gives a culture a character and, one might say, helps a culture to maintain symbolic balance (Postman 2000 p.10-11)*

Postman's contribution by attributing the label 'media ecology' to the field of communication was that a new conceptualisation was introduced. It provided an alternative perspective from which to understand communication in society and signalled a major shift in metaphor to be used by theorists seeking to understand how media functioned and exerted influence.

From the earliest conceptualisations of media, metaphors have been a means to describe both the process and effects of communication. Just as the idea of communication functioning as a 'hypodermic needle' or as a 'bullet'

shaped, controlled and dominated and earlier discourse around the effects of communication, the choice of metaphor has significant implications for the research paradigm. The effect of the metaphor does more than illustrate or provide an explanatory image to aid understanding, the metaphor also 'highlights certain features while suppressing others' (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, p.141). By providing a concrete point of comparison for something that is otherwise abstract, the specific choice of image carrys a degree of metaphorical entailment, importing additional meaning and bringing ideas from that external domain into that to which it is applied. For example, Krippendorf identifies that "the dominant definitions, models and theories in communication research are derived largely from container and conduit metaphors in the public and interpersonal spheres and from the control metaphor in the organizational and managerial spheres" (1993) and that this has encouraged particular forms of study that are focused on issues of transmission or deterministic control.

To introduce the term 'ecology' as a means of describing the communications environment is a helpful way of reflecting the rich and complex set of relationships and functions that it facilitates. The metaphor points towards the increasing interrelationship between various media channels as well as the reality that each of us uses an interconnected and overlapping set of media forms and tools as part of our daily experience or to advance our various social connections. The idea of an ecology appears in classical studies of natural history but the invention of the term is attributed (Stauffer 1954 p.58) to the nineteenth-century biologist Ernst Haeckel who used it to describe his holistic perspective on understanding the relations of natural organisms both to one another and their natural environment. Conceptually it is now applied to describe biological and non-biological systems wherever there are dynamically interacting components or elements. Therefore, in the context of communication studies, media ecology is a valuable concept to explore not just technologies or systems of media such as the internet, television broadcasting or newspapers and their interactions, but also the human connectedness that is established around them or the communities within which they operate.

> The term "ecology" is used here because it is one of the most expressive language currently has to indicate the massive and dynamic interrelation of processes and objects, beings and things, patterns and matter. (Fuller 2005 p.2)

Scolari, in synthesising the ideas of media ecology, distills the concept further into a single idea (2010, p.22): "technologies (in this case communication technologies, from written to digital media) generate environments that affect those who use them". This is the essence of a field of study that placed communication at the heart of cultural change and, unusually, caught the imagination of the public largely through the work of one man – Marshall McLuhan.

MCLUHAN AND MEDIA ECOLOGY

Although media ecology was established as an academic discipline through the degree programme at New York University by Neil Postman, he acknowledges that it was Marshall McLuhan who was the first to use the concept of media ecology in the early 1960s (Scolari 2010 p.18) and it is acknowledged that McLuhan is "at the centre of the field" (Strate 2004). Media ecologist Paul Levinson expressed his contribution more substantially as:

> *Without his work in the 1950s and '60s, there would be no field of study that sought to explain how the nuances and great sweeps of human history are made possible by media of communication—how media determine the thoughts and actions of people and society, in a "soft" way. (Levinson 2000, p.17)*

The seed ideas of media ecology are particularly evident in two of McLuhan's earliest and most influential works – *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962) and *Understanding Media* (1964). Both of these books focused on "understanding media as media" (M. McLuhan 2001, p.130), that is, giving attention to the impact of the media form and not just to the content. The idea was captured in his well-known aphorism "the medium is the message". In contrast to communication theories that largely disregarded the media form as merely a conduit or channel, McLuhan conceived the media in a more radical way. He asserted that media - the available technologies of communication – have a more profound effect on culture and society than any individual messages or content that they might convey. For example, in *Understanding Media*, McLuhan writes that "It is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action" (M. McLuhan 2001, p.9).

McLuhan had begun his academic career with an interest in English literature and earned his doctoral degree from Cambridge in 1943 with a dissertation published as *The Classical Trivium* (2009) that surveyed the history of rhetoric and its place in education from the time of Cicero in the first century BC up to the sixteenth century. This survey was intended to provide a fresh context and intellectual history within which the work of the Elizabethan writer, dramatist and pamphleteer Thomas Nashe could be more properly understood. A key strand of that thesis is noted by W. Terrence Gordon, one of McLuhan's more comprehensive biographers, who observed: "the notion that one of the biases of Western culture is rooted in the failure to perceive environments" (Gordon & M. McLuhan 1997, p.109). Here McLuhan is specifically concerned about the classical trivium of spoken arts and how the place of rhetoric in Western culture was significantly skewed during the Renaissance era by being framed apart from and in some ways in opposition to the other two elements of the trivium - grammar and dialectic. Implicit in his work is the view that a major part of providing the correct interpretation of specific *content* is understanding the *context* within which it is presented. In the case of Nashe, he was pointing to the largely invisible influence exerted by the particular intellectual or educational environment of his interpreters that had such a critical impact on their understanding of his work – something he described as the 'impercipience of the ubiquitous' (Gordon & M. McLuhan 1997, p.109). That is, when you are immersed in or exist within a particular cultural or academic environment you are unable to perceive it clearly.

McLuhan's exploration of the work of Thomas Nashe, a man who had a "highly unstable relationship to both elite and popular culture" (Rhodes 2009, p.382) and who was unusually creative and experimental is intriguing. In fact, some of the innovative design characteristics of Nashe's published work noted by scholars as demonstrating an "awareness of the semiotic possibilities of print" or the possibilities of "the graphics of the page" (Rhodes 2009, p.379) point towards McLuhan's own preference for stretching the usual boundaries and conventions of printed layout in books he demonstrated in works such as *Counterblast* (1969) first published as a short-run handmade magazine or, with the inventive use of graphic design by Quentin Fiore, in *The Medium is the Massage'* (1967).

Although not his first book, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* published in 1962 provided an analysis of the impact of the printing press and delineates the consequent shifts within European culture. Notably, McLuhan deliberately prefaces his book by describing the 'mosaic or field approach' that

he uses, 'a mosaic image of numerous data and quotations' (1962, p.0) that would become so distinctive of his work. Here he uses the idea of 'galaxy' not just for its alliterative impact but to "emphasise that a configuration of events had been spawned by the invention of the printing press" (p.186). An important concept is not just the idea that significant cultural and societal change takes place as a direct result of emerging changes in the technology of communication, but also that there are "new configurations of mechanisms and of literacy as ... older forms of perception and judgement are interpenetrated" (p.278) by those technologies. In *The Gutenberg Galaxy,* McLuhan maps the influence of the then emergent technology of moveable type in the middle of the fifteenth century that in an introduction to a later edition (2011) was noted to have formed "a quite unexpected new environment: it created the public" showing how the shift from an emphasis on orality in communication to an emphasis on the visuality of print reconfigured our thinking, experience and social interactions. As Lance Strate points out in his survey of the media ecology field, McLuhan's use of galaxy "functions as a synonym for system, environment or ecology" (Strate 2004, p.6) and this book prepared the way for the more wide-ranging exploration *Understanding Media* McLuhan would publish just a couple of years later.

Signalled in the closing paragraph of *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962, p.279), *Understanding Media* is McLuhan's best-known book and described as "his single most important work" (M. McLuhan 1964, p.6), its popularity and influence being at least partly responsible for establishing 'media' and 'medium' in common usage and as key terms within the growing communications field. Perhaps its most radical contribution was the view and definition of media that it presented – firstly that any medium or "new technology" is "an extension of ourselves" (M. McLuhan 1964, p.7) and secondly, through that mediative role, its form introduces "psychic and social consequences of the designs or patterns as they amplify or accelerate existing processes" (p.8). So, for McLuhan, the technology of the wheel (p.195ff) is an extension of the natural locomotive capacity of our legs and feet, the technology of radio an extension of our ability to speak and communicate with others (p. 324ff). In both these cases, as well as the many other technologies he describes in the second part of the book, McLuhan portrays the media itself as transformative, including those technologies of communication or mass media that we are more accustomed to appreciating in terms of the message content that they carry than any impact of their form.

In his introduction to the 2003 edition of *Understanding Media,* Gordon highlights additional underlying concepts that recur in McLuhan's book and he provides a synthesis of those ideas. He notes that the content of one medium is always another medium – that is, a newer or alternative medium encodes or encapsulates one that already exists. So thought is expressed in human speech that is encoded through the alphabet in words that allows writing to take place that can be reconstructed in print and then distributed through the digital world and so on. This principle leads to a second key idea – that any new media technology does not replace a former technology, instead it alters how it is used. New media forms do not leave the previous ones unchanged but, instead, modify them or use them in different ways. Thirdly, and importantly for the purposes of the present study, the particular qualities of a new medium cannot immediately be seen but their emergence throws additional light upon the qualities of their predecessors.

NEW EXPRESSIONS OF MEDIA ECOLOGY

The interest in media ecology has diminished in the last twenty years but it is still frequently taught as a major element of communication theory, particularly in the United States and Canada, where it features prominently in both mass communication and history of communication curricula as well as within cultural studies. The heritage of the media ecology tradition generated around the two academic loci of McLuhan and Postman has been carried on through their students and colleagues such as Jack Goody and Robert K Logan of the Toronto school and through Lance Strate, Paul Levinson, Christine Nystrom and Joshua Meyrowitz of the New York school.

More recently, the ideas of media ecology have found new expression as scholars have returned to the ecology metaphor in general as a means of exploring the impact of media on society. The new, networked and interconnected forms of media made possible by the internet have caused scholars to revisit this theorisation as a means of dealing with the resulting complexity and shift from linear, broadcast-type communication to the more socially-dynamic and fluid forms of communication often described as Web 2.0 when first introduced. Some of these scholars and their conceptualisations of media ecology are described in the section that follows, demonstrating that media ecology is a continuing paradigm and remains a useful perspective for communication scholars.

An ecology of communication (Altheide, 1995)

In 1997, David Altheide, already then known for his work on mediated society (1977) and (with Snow) on the impact of media logic (1979) wrote *An Ecology of Communication* that was explicitly built upon the "ideas, concepts and metaphors" (Altheide 1995, p.4) of McLuhan and Innis. However, whereas McLuhan was very much focussed on media as extensions of the human body and their impact upon the individual sensorium and Innis on the macro-levels of impact of a technology upon a nation or 'empire', Altheide considers the "relationship of information technology and communication formats to social activities" (p.7), identifying the increasingly prominent and central role of information technology within daily life and how new communication formats have caused profound shifts in social activities and perspectives (p.219). His more recent research is located in one aspect of those shifts - elements of social control through the construction and use of fear in the mass media.

David Altheide
His work on the use of fear in the mass media is in his three books: *Creating Fear: News and the Construction of Crisis* (2004), *Terrorism and the Politics of Fear* (2006) and *Terror Post 9/11 and the Media* (2009).

In *An Ecology of Communication*, Altheide describes two perspectives that are of particular interest here. Firstly, he notes that everyone lives within an "effective environment" (p.9), that is a social and physical context within which they live and their experience is based. That "effective environment" is shaped and formed by the surrounding culture which can be perceived as a "stream" that is both continuous and ever-changing where "cultural processes that are discovered, tested, altered, instituted and then reified become taken for granted" (p.5). Importantly, he highlights that it is various technologies of communication that facilitate these transitions and their embeddedness as part of the culture (p.5). For Altheide, he recognises that communications technology has a fundamental part to play in both mediating social experience and shaping it through the "rules and logics of communication".

The second perspective that is of particular relevance is that he breaks down the ecology of communication, a major component of the "effective environment", into three constituent dimensions: an information technology, a communication format and a social activity (p.9). The information technology refers to external devices that help us to create, organise, convey or retrieve information (p.11) such as tools of mass media, print or the electronic devices used in everyday life. Format is defined as "the selection, organisation and presentation of experience and information" such as the patterns, layouts and structures used in the process of media communication. Social activities are those behaviours or aspects of

conduct that are significantly mediated, assisted or even made possible through that information technology and its various formats.

These ideas are particularly useful because they provide lines of connection between the very broad concepts of an evolving culture and the media forms that contribute to that evolution. Although he does not position media technologies as determinist and absolute in their influence (p.4), he nevertheless recognises the major shaping role that they have through their use and intervention in social interactions, experience and lifeworld. Although writing nearly twenty years ago in an era when mobile and internet technologies were far removed from the ubiquity, scope and power of information technology devices and formats available today, Altheide pinpoints a core issue (emphasis his in the original text):

> *"We are in the midst of massive social changes in a number of arenas in social life. The most profound changes involve how information technology and formats of communication have altered a wide range of social activities and perspectives. ... The basic argument is **How we do things, and how we think about things, is influenced by what we do in order to accomplish them**. Increasingly, we must attend to and be familiar with a host of technology requirements and formats before we can accomplish even the most mundane of tasks, and certainly the most important ones in our lives. Contemporary life occurs through the interaction of organisations, purpose, information and communication logics. These ... form an ecological net that defines, selects, organises, presents and influences the outcome of an expanding array of activities. (1995, p. 220)*

Communicative Ecologies (Hearn and Foth, 2007)

More recently and using slightly different language, Hearn and Foth (2007) have described communicative ecologies that are built directly upon the tradition of McLuhan and Postman that takes a media-centric view of influence on individuals and society. However, they define their frame of reference in a more nuanced way. Similar to Altheide, they place increased emphasis upon the socio-cultural context within which communication occurs. Their definition of a communicative ecology is "a milieu of agents who are connected in various ways by various

exchanges of mediated and unmediated forms of communication" Drawing on their work on formal and informal communication networks in an Australian urban setting (Foth and Hearn 2007), they conceptualise the communication ecology as having three layers: a *technological* layer that consists of the devices and connecting media that enable communication and interaction; a *social* layer which consists of people and social modes of organising those people - which might include, for example, everything from friendship groups to more formal community organizations, as well as companies or legal entities; and finally, a *discursive* layer which is the content of communication - that is, the ideas or themes that constitute the known social universe that the ecology operates in.

This conceptualisation again provides some structure or categorisation to the various components of the communication environment. Although the ideas of three defined layers are not entirely consistent with the more organic metaphor of an ecology, attempting to divide the ecology into different strata is a helpful approach for the purposes of analysis. Reminiscent of Benkler's conception of the various layers that define and control internet governance, distinguishing the major components of the ecology is a helpful way to begin to map their influence. Benkler describes a "framework for mapping the institutional ecology" (Benkler 2006, p.389) that comprises a layer of "physical infrastructure" (p.396) through which the internet operates, a layer of "logic" (p.412) or code that controls that infrastructure and a layer of "content" (p.439) or information that travels across the network of the internet.

It is in including this third discursive layer that is the greatest departure from a more conventional view of media ecology that is usually less concerned about the content than the form of media. Also, in contrast to Alheide who separates the form of information technology from the specific format in which it is used, Hearn and Foth group both together into a single 'technological layer'.

Medium and Network Attributes (Poe, 2011)

Poe continues the media ecology tradition in his general survey (2010) of the origins and development of different forms of communication by drawing on McLuhan and Innis to consider the impact of specific "medium attributes". He particularly focuses on the dynamic underlying their thought and pinpoints two

directions - firstly, that "media were '*pulled*' into broad use by rising demand, not driven by rising supply" (p.7), that is, new technologies become established through adoption and increasing use not simply because the technologies are made available. Secondly, once they are substantially in place, these same "media '*push*' societies and ideas in new directions" (p.11), that is, the form of media exerts an ongoing shaping influence through their particular attributes.

From this basic position, he provides three linkages that make a straightforward conceptual connection between the medium, network and culture. His outlook is helpful because it extends the basic propositions of media ecology into the contemporary situation that, as observed by Castells, is "increasingly organised around networks" that "constitute the basic morphology of our societies" (Castells 1996, p.469). The linkages he proposes are that "medium attributes", the practical affordances and features of a particular communication form, foster by definition certain networks or points of connection to allow communication to take place. In turn, these "media networks engender certain social practices and these practices engender related values" (p.16). These simple connections allow us to draw a theoretical line between media forms and their impact on a society in a way that is more nuanced. Albeit much less detailed than Meyrowitz in his work, Poe nevertheless helps to establish a basic logic that connects sociological concerns with media properties.

Mediatization

This linkage is expressed in more sophisticated terms by mediatization scholars such as Stieg Hjarvard (2008b), Friedrich Krotz (2009), Andreas Hepp and Knut Lundby (2010) who focus particularly on new media and their technical, social and cultural properties and repercussion. Their work is perhaps the most sophisticated of recent expressions of ideas emerging from the thought of media ecology. Their efforts to understand media influence through the influence of the medium itself has generated key insights, notably recognising that media is now thoroughly embedded within daily life and is a significant factor driving cultural change or other transformative processes in society (Hjarvard 2008b). Although this connection with social theory is well established, for example by the work of Habermas (1987) and Thompson (1995), it is now being expressed in more explicit ways. Instead of a general articulation of its influence, its particular

impact has been explored through the mediatization of politics (Altheide & Snow 1979), (Asp 1990) (Stromback 2008), conflict (Cottle 2006), religion (Hjarvard 2008a), education(Friesen & Hug 2009) and science research (Hjarvard 2008b).

Each of these analyses considers the interaction between media and society in its various spheres or institutions and examines how they are shaped or adapted thereby. Hjarvard describes it as "by the mediatization of society, we understand the process whereby society to an increasing degree is submitted to, or becomes dependent on, the media and their logic." (Hjarvard 2008b) p.113 .

A useful synthesis of these mediatization processes is provided by Schulz (2004, pp.88-90) who suggests a typology of how this influence is exerted: through *extension,* as the "media serve to bridge spatial and temporal distances"; through *substitution,* as "media partly or completely substitute social activities and social institutions"; by *amalgamation* as media activities become "woven into the fabric of everyday life: the media pervade the professional sphere, the economy, culture, politics and the public sphere"; and by *accommodation* as social actors and institutions adapt themselves "to the way the media operate". What is of particular interest here is that Schulz' starting position has strong echoes of McLuhan's thought but is modified somewhat by the other components of the typology that present a less deterministic outlook, even though many of the same impulses seem to underpin the typology.

An important contribution of mediatization as a field of study is that it seeks to bridge two key areas of influence theory by giving direct regard to media forms in a way that is consistent with media ecological thought but does not neglect other dimensions of influence such as the content. This dual concern is reflected in an opening summary of the perspective presented in the journal *Communications* that positioned mediatization as a means of resolving the two major strands of influence research in media and communication studies described as:

> *"Medium theory conceptualises the relations between one medium and its socio-cultural influence too directly and neglects questions of media content. Effect research theorizes the influence of certain media contents too directly and neglects questions of media specificity and cultural context"* (Hepp et al. 2010, p.223)

The relatively recent development of theories relating to mediatization is in part a reaction to the issue of media determinism, one of the main criticisms levelled at the media ecology approach and particularly at Marshall McLuhan. As a theoretical and philosophical position, determinism is found in many fields of study including economics, history and anthropology as well in studies of technology and society. In each case, a determinist perspective "seeks to explain social and historical phenomena in terms of one principal or determining factor" (Chandler, 1995). The accusation against the media ecologists was that they had positioned technology as that determining factor in the shaping of society. For McLuhan and others, they were perceived as giving causal primacy to media forms and in doing so were neglecting other major factors in cultural and societal change. Not only were they seen to significantly diminish the role and agency of the audience, but their outlook was often situated in and limited to particular forms of media. For example, Neil Postman's work (Postman 1985) was heavily grounded in a US model of television programming that was frequently punctuated by ad breaks and shaped by commercial requirements.

In the US the cultural theorist James Carey was highly critical of McLuhan describing him as "a poet of technology" whose "work represents a secular prayer to technology" and was unequivocal in his description of him and Harold Innis as technological determinists (Carey 1967) albeit to different degrees. Similarly, in the UK, Raymond Williams, one of the founding voices of British cultural studies, began his critique of McLuhan with a review of *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (Williams, 1968) but several years later published a much more polemical rebuttal of McLuhan's views in *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (1971). Williams concluded his critique with the pointed declaration that "we have to reject technological determinism, in all its forms" (p.133) . Marshall McLuhan also attracted opposition from Umberto Eco whose technical viewpoint as a semiotician challenged the symbolic primacy of the "medium as the message" and noted that the individual still remained free to interpret the message and establish meaning in different ways (see Gordon 2010).

These responses were perhaps to be expected given the centrality of the issue of technological determinism in any consideration of the relationship between technology and society. The extent to which technological advances and innovations alter our lives and drive social and cultural change is a key debate,

Raymond Williams and Marshall McLuhan
A detailed and vivid account of Raymond Williams' increasingly critical position in respect of McLuhan is given the article '*The Technology is not the Cultural Form: Raymond Williams's Sociological Critique of Marshall McLuhan' (*Jones, 1998).

often framed in terms of a spectrum of possible positions along two fundamental directions – "hard" to "soft" determinism and "utopian" to "dystopian". Hard determinism sees technologies as the single cause of social change and that the inbuilt biases, properties or affordances of that technology inevitably drive shifts in culture and values. Soft determinism similarly accepts that "technological change might influence social change, it also responds discriminately to social pressures." (Zimmer 2005, p.3). Soft determinism also takes into account other factors acting upon and within society while still recognising the force of technological developments. The second vector relates to the overall view or outcome of that deterministic force of technology – is it predominantly benign leading society towards a better version of itself, a utopian vision; or is technology leading society towards a negative, dystopian future. Jamie Bartlett notes that these two oppositional views are ever-present with the emergence of new technologies:

> *Transformative technologies have always been accompanied by optimistic and pessimistic visions of how they will change humanity and society. In Plato's Phaedrus, Socrates worried that the recent invention of writing would have a deleterious effect on the memories of young Greeks who, he predicted, would become 'the hearers of many things and will have learned nothing'.* (Bartlett 2014)

This second vector is frequently presented as a binary position, with the positive and negative predictions regarding the internet creating their own "genre of discourse" (Howcroft & Fitzgerald 1998, p.50). This has been brought to popular attention through Adam Gopnik's article in *The New Yorker* (2011) who surveyed the kinds of books being written about the internet. He identifies the "Never-Betters" who "believe that we're on the brink of a new utopia" and the "Never-Wasers" who "think that we would have been better off if the whole thing had never happened". That this otherwise complex debate reaches the pages of a popular magazine is indicative of the cultural moment we are in when society is coming to terms with technological developments as they increase in speed, size and sophistication. The range and variety of hard/soft and utopian/dystopian viewpoints that together comprise the spectrum of positions relating to technological determinism demonstrate that there is a more considered engagement with the influence of contemporary media technologies than was perhaps present in McLuhan's era.

Although the accusations of media determinism made against McLuhan and other media ecologists were no doubt intended as negative critiques of their position, it is clear that they articulated the influence of media forms in a fresh and unprecedented way. Innis, Ong, Postman and McLuhan represented a vanguard of academics who were creating new ways of thinking about communication and so it could be expected that their positions would not only attract attention but also criticism in an era when even the most complex models for communication were modeled largely on the linear transmission of content and largely disregarded the impact of the means of that transmission. In challenging existing paradigms, there would have been the need to state a position that was both clearly separated from existing viewpoints but also in some sense clearly in opposition to it. Whatever the validity of the accusations, McLuhan made a singular breakthrough by acknowledging the profound impact of media technologies. Also, since this was a major focus of his attention there is no doubt that other commentators, academics and detractors inevitably found a significant bias that continually emphasised the shaping effects of technology on humanity rather than the other way around. However, observers of McLuhan's position such as John Culkin saw a different dynamic and summed up his viewpoint with the now well-known phrase "we shape our tools and thereafter they shape us" (1967, p.52). Although often attributed directly to McLuhan, it is worth noting that this was the conclusion of a colleague and specialist and not a crafted aphorism from McLuhan himself (Stearn 1968 p.52). If this does represent his thought in some way, it does indicate that the relationship between man and media was not entirely one way – it recognised that there was a certain transaction or two-way determinism at play. Even if a particular medium had characteristics that influenced and shaped us, the starting point for that influence was our own shaping of that tool. There was at least an acknowledgement of a dynamic relationship in place, something that later theorists would develop considerably, for example through the lens of actor-network theory and other social-constructivist positions.

Irrespective of the view taken on McLuhan's position along the spectrum of technological determinism, it is clear that he understood the subtleties of media influence and particularly the effects of different media forms. It is important to note that this understanding was developed into a view later expressed as the laws of media that not only considered an individual medium but suggested how it would interact with other media forms as they were introduced. It is these laws that will be considered in the following section.

MCLUHAN'S LAWS OF MEDIA
AND THE TETRAD

McLuhan provided his perspective on the shifting dynamics of various media forms such as the telegraph, radio, telephone and television in the second part of *Understanding Media* (1964). Although, as already indicated, some themes could be identified, there was no clear system given for the analysis he presented. In fact, the typically unstructured approach he refers to in his own terms as a 'mosaic' has been called 'challenging' (p.7) or, less politely, 'nonsensical mcluhanese' (Lamberti n.d.) or even "McLuhanacy" (Fekete 1973) As Elizabeth Eisenstein observed, "McLuhan's 'non-linear' presentation at all events has not inspired confidence in his arguments" (1980, p.40). However, in later work and in response to the general criticism of and frustration with his non-scientific method, McLuhan sought to formulate a system that expressed the broad underlying principles that informed his work in both *The Gutenberg Galaxy* and *Understanding Media*. Examining his own previous ideas he sought to identify statements that could be applied as a heuristic to all media forms and could be tested and made subject to critical scrutiny. These principles were first set out as his 'Laws of the Media' and published in essay form in the journals *Technology and Culture* (January 1975, pp. 74-78) and *Et Cetera: A Review of General Semantics* (June 1977, pp 173-178). Illustrating with a number of media examples, he presented these principles somewhat provocatively as universal laws, directly challenging readers to test them and, if possible, falsify them. These initial articles were further developed into a book that was co-authored with his son Eric McLuhan and published posthumously by the University of Toronto Press as *Laws of Media: The New Science* (M. McLuhan & E. McLuhan 1992).

The laws were set out as a tetrad of four interrelated questions that could be used to interrogate the various dynamics of any particular medium. These questions were drawn from the wider enquiry that asked: "What general, verifiable (that is, testable) statements can be made about all media?" (p.7). In response, the four questions of the tetrad ask : What does the medium enhance or intensify? What does it render obsolete or displace? What does it retrieve that was previously obsolesced? What does it produce or become when pressed to an extreme? (M. McLuhan & E. McLuhan 1992, p.7). In abbreviated key-word form, this tetrad considers what a specific medium enhances, obsolesces, retrieves or reverses

What is improved or extended?

ENHANCES

What happens when the medium is pushed to its limits?

REVERSES

Figure qualities

MEDIUM

Ground qualities

RETRIEVES

What original idea or ground is being brought back?

OBSOLESCES

What is being made obsolete?
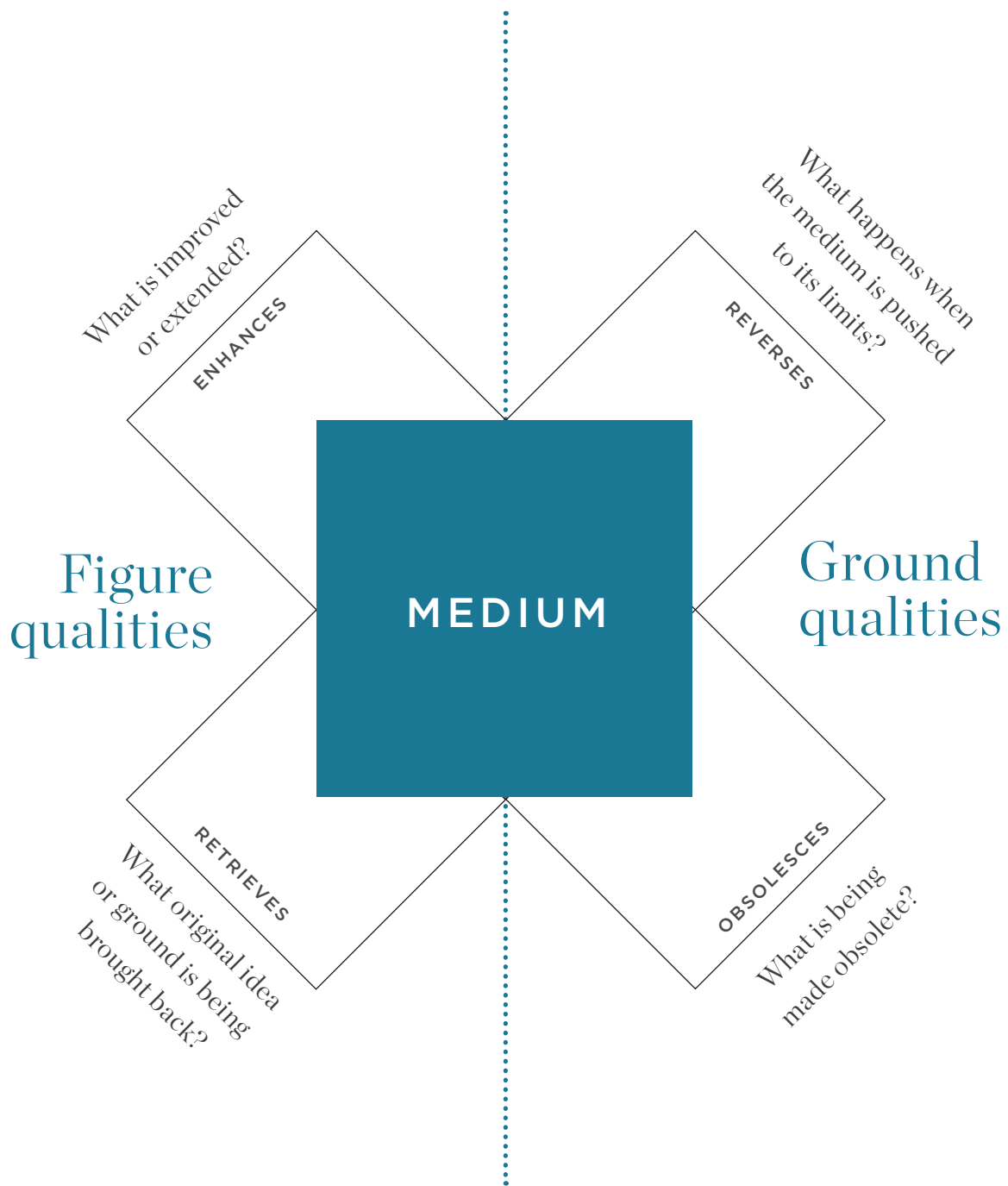
FIGURE __ 2.1
McLuhan's laws of media expressed as a 'tetrad'

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into respectively. These first two dimensions are more readily understood and are very succinctly expressed as:

> *"Enhancement and obsolescence are obviously complimentary actions. Any new technique or idea or tool, while enabling a new range of activities by the user, pushes aside the older ways of doing things" (M. McLuhan & E. McLuhan 1992, p.99)*

The latter two are "much more subtle" (1992, p.100) and the ideas of retrieval and reversal are dealt with in *Laws of Media* more by illustration than by definition, for example, with reference to information theory or as it is demonstrated in the literary analysis presented in the earlier book *From Cliché to Archetype* (M. McLuhan & Watson 1970). However, in considering retrieval McLuhan asks:

> *"What recurrence or retrieval of earlier actions and services is brought into play simultaneously by the new form? What older, previously obsolesced ground is brought back and inheres in the new form?"(p.99)*

That is, to use the language McLuhan adopted from Gestalt theory in psychology, every medium performs a transition "from ground to figure" in that a medium that was once lost, diminished or had retreated out of view is brought back through a new, metamorphosed form. Similarly, reversal also reflects a metamorphosis in the properties of the medium, this time in the negative sense of considering what happens when it is "pushed to the limits of its potential" (p.99) thus creating new problems. The medium 'flips' and creates "unexpected dissatisfactions" (Hempell 2006) or difficulties. It is a reversal in the sense that these emerging difficulties are in counterpoint to the benefits or enhancement previously identified.

It is important to note that McLuhan envisioned these questions to work together. Although he presented them as a simple ordered list in the original article, in the *Laws of Media* book the tetrad of questions is deliberately set out in an "appositional, poetic form" (often illustrated in a form similar to Figure 2.1 opposite) to indicate that each of the four "parts are simultaneous" (p.129) and do not operate in a independent or sequential way. That is, he conceived each of the components of the tetrad as functioning together to provide a more holistic picture of the dynamics of the media type being examined. His focus was on providing a systematic means of enquiry that would guide and draw out "simultaneous facets of media effects". This is reflected in Strate's overview,

indicating that these laws "represent the dynamics of a system or ecology as it reacts to disturbances in its equilibrium" (Strate 2004, p.7). For example, McLuhan highlights two particular interdependencies or relationships that exist within the tetrad. Firstly, retrieval is to obsolescence as enhancement is to reversal – that is, what is brought back, must also render something else obsolete; what is enlarged will always be so at the expense of another element in the system. Secondly, he highlights that retrieval is to enhancement as obsolescence is to reversal - what is retrieved is an outgrowth of the enhancement; what is obsolesced creates the opportunity for reversal.

There has been little use made of McLuhan's tetrad and, with recent exception (Adam 2016) or occasional online articles (such as Twiford 2011), it is not very visible even within communication scholarship. There has been some application within other fields, for example, where it has been used to explore some of the dimensions of the impact of geographic information systems (GIS) on society (Sui & Goodchild 2003). However, it is helpful as a perspective because it is not established on a linear conception of media that is underpinned by a defining metaphor of a channel, a conduit or other form of direct transmission. Instead, it acknowledges the multi-dimensional impact of a specific technology as it enters an existing media ecology and thereby affects the other components of that ecology. Established media formats such as television and radio are not necessarily displaced by those that are new; often the media ecology is instead either extended in new ways or the balance of components is modified as audiences consume a greater volume of other media in its various forms. The tetrad recognises that there is a dynamic relationship between each element of that system and "works on the assumption that all aspects of any form are simultaneously present in any part of it" (M. McLuhan & E. McLuhan 1992, p.74). The causality of media effects is therefore expressed in an appropriately complex way – instead of presenting a theoretically simplistic binary analysis around, for example, around the strengths and weaknesses or opportunities and threats offered by particular media forms, it allows consideration of both positive and negative consequences that exist in a relational and simultaneous context. The tetrad, therefore, becomes a heuristic and hermeneutic (Gow 2001) tool through which the properties of a particular medium or artefact can be considered in its connection to other media and its shifting relationship with them. For the present media environment that is continually adjusting to emergent digital technologies and platforms, where boundaries between media forms are less rigid and where content frequently overlaps or is repurposed through other connected

platforms, this model anticipates the flux and dynamic of those relationships much more effectively than a linear or sequential model of communication. In the context of this study, examining the relationship that exists between the Do Lectures live event and its online expression, the tetrad therefore provides a theoretical vantage point from which to examine different dimensions of influence exerted across this axis of investigation. The event founders, in choosing to adopt the current business model for the Do Lectures, places a premium-priced and experientially rich, live event alongside a fully open digital platform that makes those same talks available for free. In doing so, they have not only provided an example of a contemporary media environment but also, by the continuing use of this business model, have tacitly acknowledged that this is not a 'zero-sum' proposition and instead have created a media eology that leverages the different properties of each medium.

Perhaps still sensitive to the criticism triggered by the somewhat absolutist language that described the tetrad of ideas as fundamental 'laws of media' when they were originally published, McLuhan's colleague Robert K. Logan clarified that they were a 'generalisation' (2010, p.376). Echoing the language of McLuhan, he described the tetrad as 'more of an exploratory tool or probe'. It is in precisely this way that the ideas of the tetrad have been used to guide observations and shape the research methodology and design. Even though not developed by McLuhan or others into anything more than a very general approach to enquiry, the laws of media have supplied a conceptual structure that draws attention to the particular characteristics and defining qualities of different communication forms. More importantly, they begin to express something of the evolving relationship that plays out within a single media ecology. At a practical level, the principles of the tetrad have provided a "sensitizing framework" (Patton 2001, p.280) to guide observation and to provide a theoretical vantage point from which relevant points of interest can be noted. To use Eric McLuhan's expression in *Laws of Media*, "the tetrads are a means of focusing awareness of hidden or unobserved qualities in our culture and technology" (p.128).

As will be seen in the following chapter, this model has directly informed how the two main strands of the research methodology have been shaped and used. Firstly, the questions comprising the audience survey were not limited to focus on the content of the talks and questions have been careful to also elicit information about wider impact factors such as the influence of the event environment as a specific 'medium'. Secondly, the analysis of the significant volume of data about

the Do Lectures experience drawn from the blogs and articles of event attendees similarly gives attention to these wider impact factors, deliberately looking for testimony of the influence of the event design as well as the influence of ideas, talks or other content-orientated elements.

This is a conversation for books-makers, web-heads, content-creators, authors and designers. For people who love beautifully made things. And for the storytellers who are willing to take risks and want to consider the most appropriate shape and media for their yarns.

CRAIG MOD, DO LECTURES SPEAKER (2010)

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A NEW APPRAISAL OF MEDIA ECOLOGY

Aside from considering the tetrad as a sensitising framework, another rationale for drawing on the ideas of McLuhan and others is the changing context of communications and its current developments or innovations. After the landmark work by Meyrowitz was published, newer interpretations of media ecology have elaborated the relationships between media and society in a more considered way. Particularly as more social constructivist perspectives have been taken into account, the ecology of communication is more properly centred in the search for meaning rather than being motivated by the more technology-orientation concerns of earlier thinkers whose outlooks ranged from the optimistic visions of Lewis Mumford and Marshall McLuhan to the darker view of a society dominated by technology portrayed by Jacques Ellul. Certainly, as the more nuanced theorisation of mediatization is established across various intellectual fields and social arenas the polarising debate of "shaping our tools" versus "tools shape us" is likely to become moot. Instead, an appropriately complex view of the influence of the media shaped (at least in part) by the ideas of the media ecology school will drive research on the impact of the contemporary communications environment. This ecological perspective - an interdependent media environment within which we operate - is a paradigm that is a useful approach in managing communications, particularly one where the intent is to achieve change or direct influence. Several broad systemic changes in the way media function in society support revisiting this idea and reappraising it for use in the development of communication strategies.

One of these systemic changes is that media no longer operate largely within linear, producer driven channels to reach a largely homogenous target audience. Instead, media forms are increasingly non-linear, with interactive, social or participative media now forming an increasingly significant part of an organisation's media environment. The audience is no longer just passive or even active in their consumption and use of media. Instead, the audience is frequently engaged as a valued co-producer of content, for example through participation in social media or other connected media practices of generating, sharing or contributing related content such as images, videos and text-based material.

Another contemporary development is that many of the newer media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat are focused on creating and monetising new or distinct *formats* rather than the *content* itself. Innovation is demonstrated not just through the technology that makes a digital platform possible, but also in the medium itself and by seeking to establishing a *proprietorship of form* reflecting its own particular communication environment. Twitter retrieved the 140 character message limit from the SMS protocols that preceded it and created a mechanism for real-time communication; Instagram (along with Hipstamatic) retrieved the square photo format and provided a platform that prioritized a feed of single images enhanced by filters and a range of styles borrowing heavily from Lomography, Polaroid and other non-digital camera techniques; Snapchat's breakthrough approach was built on a format of ephemeral messaging and images accessed only through mobile using a highly novel interface. In each case, the new platform created a distinctively new media environment, often highly connected to the wider pre-existing digital ecology, which generated its own community and associated sphere of activity.

A further factor is that key debates are in process about choosing between emerging and established media formats - books and magazines as print or digital; programming as broadcast television or internet; and lectures or instruction as live or digital. However, the reality is that they are co-existent forms and a binary choice does not need to be made, at least, not at this stage of development. Instead the debate could focus on their complementarity; although they may both fulfil a similar communicative function, the same content distributed through different media forms has substantially dissimilar uses and effects. Therefore, rather than contest the qualities of each media form and focus on their competitive position, the affordances of each can be brought to the fore thus allowing each one to mature and develop a specific niche within the media ecology.

Another systemic factor that makes the ecological viewpoint more readily appropriate is the explicit social and interpersonal dimension of social media. Online content within a digital platform such as the Do Lectures is distributed, enhanced and embedded not only within a communication or technological network but across the social and interpersonal network that uses it. As Poe (2010) has pointed out, the media attributes give rise to particular forms of network attributes that then shape social behaviour.

It is in this context that the dialectic qualities of McLuhan's tetrad become more useful, recognising that as new media forms emerge they alter the place of one or more previous media forms in a relatively sophisticated way. For example, popular considerations about the future of the book are often prefaced by the question "Is print dead?" but the Laws of Media allow for a multi-dimensional debate that better reflects the complexity of the issues. The advent of the digital book has enhanced certain qualities - ease of storage, ease of distribution, portability and so on - but it has also displaced bulky, printed reference collections and some ephemeral books such as popular fiction. Somewhat ironically, it has resurrected an interest in books as physical objects and in the craft of the printed book as publishers create editions that are more tactile and more heavily styled, visually and aesthetically. Increasingly, many books are now given features that make them more collectible, commercial and more likely to be treasured as artefacts in their own right rather than merely a carrier for their content. In this way, when a new media form is introduced into an existing media ecology, an adaptive shift takes place that allows new qualities to emerge while others retreat or are overtaken.

The following chapter describes the research methodology in more detail, but in addition to the general rationale given above, there were several other practical reasons why the lens of media ecoloy and, more specifically, the tetrad of McLuhan's *Laws of Media* was adopted to provide a perspective to guide the research design. Firstly, prior to the commencement of the audience research, it provided a theoretical lens that was focussed on the medium rather than the content. Given that the project was founded in an exploration of an specific event design and a comprehensive digital platform that would publish several hundred talks with highly diverse content and ideas, an approach that held the format and surrounding communication environment firmly in view allowed the research to look at the Do Lectures in a more holistic sense, rather than as a compendium of the speakers it represented. Secondly, during the early exploratory phases and particularly while the event and its dynamics were observed first hand, it

became clear from experience, observation and direct conversation with the live event audience that much of the influence of the event rested in its dynamics and properties of design rather than in the content of the talks themselves. In particular, the immersive and challenging experience of the event seemed to make a potent contribution to its effectiveness. The tensions and contrasts of the highly social, outdoor environment set against the more urbane digital or knowledge-work contexts of many of the attendees was frequently commented on. Thirdly, it was also clear from early conversations with event attendees and speakers that there was an emergent relationship between the live platform and the digital platform that offered both contrasting and reciprocal value to the audience. With much research focussed on just one media form or another, few other models suggested this creative tension between different medium formats and components. Finally, and to use the language of McLuhan, at the event there was clearly a sense of 'retrieval', that is, the Do Lectures had constructed something that recovered certain values that were in some way under challenge from the major shift towards digital culture and newer means of communication that had the potential to threaten or 'obsolesce' those same values.

In terms of application, adopting this perspective shaped the overall character of the audience survey that was designed in such a way to build on these early indications of relevant factors and draw out responses that would be helpful in understanding the impact of the event platform. Questions were careful to allow for individual respondents to freely comment on content or ideas that were significant to them but incorporating a media ecology mindset gave enough space in the survey design for other potential aspects of influence to emerge through the responses given. For the consideration of the second major type of data used - the online testimony to the impact of the event - an awareness of the media dynamics suggested by the tetrad directed focus on medium effects and therefore informed some of the areas of analysis. However, in retrospect, (even without specifically using that lens) medium properties naturally came to the fore during analysis, providing a self-selecting category of leading impact factors that were also revealed within the many blog and online articles that would be considered.

In adopting the perspective of media ecology, one central concern is the media form and its particular properties and affordances. The central media element of the event is the lecture and some reflection on the nature of this form is described in the final part of this chapter that follows overleaf.

WHAT IS THE LECTURE?

The lecture is an institutionalized extended holding of the floor in which one speaker imparts his view on a subject, these thoughts comprising what can be thought of as his "text"

ERWIN GOFFMAN (1981 P.165)

Something of the earliest concept of the lecture is reflected in the etymology of the term. Derived from the Latin *lectus*, 'to read', this root also provides us with the nouns lectern, lector and lectionary. It points to the form where a *lectura* was a reading, not in the modern sense of an internalised and individual process of private reading in silence, but as a corporate activity – a shared experience where the lector would speak aloud from an existing text for the use and benefit of the gathered hearers. In the modern university, the historic overtones contained in the terminology of the lectura is still evident in the professional title of reader given to senior academics.

In this early context before the advent of printing the lecture was "linked to dictating and students served as scribes" (Eisenstein 1980, p.524). The act of reading aloud was specifically a means of transmission as students prepared full-text notes of what they heard (Blair 2008, p.39). Unlike today, these notes were not intended only for personal study and reference but were also the easiest means of reproducing and acquiring original texts in the age of manuscript (see also M. McLuhan 1962). However, as printed texts became more prevalent, the nature of the lecture changed from being the verbatim transmission of a text achieved through recitation by a lecturer and the taking of dictation by the student. Now that source texts could be accessed through the materiality of a borrowed or purchased book rather than listening to it being read, it was possible for the lecturer to move his attention to providing a more personal commentary or gloss on that text. The role of the lecture transitioned to the more enhanced task of explicating the content of a particular text rather than simply replicating it.

This fundamental transition is observed by William Clark in his study of developments in European academic practice and he illustrates the overlapping change in practice by referring to a 1642 lecture plan for the Jesuit philosophy

faculty at Ingolstadt in Bavaria, Germany . It set an ideal of dividing a one hour lecture into two halves – the first for dictation, the second for "glosses and exegesis" (Clark 2007, p.83). Notwithstanding this example, he notes that the dictated lecture appears to diminish and stop in the eighteenth century but only after a lengthy transition where both lecture styles were competing (p.85). There was, therefore, a reconfiguration of the lecture form that had a direct but uneasy relationship to the growing availability of print technology. This relationship is particularly worth noting because the lecture transitioned into a new mode not because of the intrinsic qualities of the existing form, but because of a shift in the surrounding media ecology. It was the evolving media landscape of the wider culture that impinged directly on the nature of the lecture as printed materials provided an alternative to acquiring source materials or content through the dictation of a reader. This understanding is particularly helpful when considering the contemporary situation where substantial debates exist about whether to take lectures online. Recognising that the lecture form was historically subject to development and substantial reconfiguration as new communication technologies emerged allows us to avoid pursuing an unhelpful and unecessarily binary argument. Instead of making a judgement as to whether lectures should be delivered live or online – the first consideration is to establish what the essential qualities and purposes of a lecture should be and how they are best expressed across both live and digital platforms or environments.

The media scholar Norm Friesen, who has a particular interest and specialism in educational media, has reflected on these major historical transitions of form (Friesen 2011). He makes an important observation about the pre-Gutenberg era of 'textual scarcity', noting that 'the lecture was configured in terms of the authority of the textual sources from which knowledge was recovered' (2011, p.97). In this cultural and technological context, the focal point of the lecture was not the *speaker* as would perhaps be expected but the written text the speaker (or more accurately, the *reader*) was charged with conveying. The spoken performance of the lecture had as its primary purpose the reconstruction of an authoritative text in both the minds and the manuscripts of the listening audience. As in the lecture room today, the lecturer held a mediating role as the means by which knowledge was transmitted to others in the academy, but was not seen as "the sage on the stage", to use the phrase created by Alison King (1993) as she reflected on the changing role of the lecturer .

As the available media ecology developed and printed texts became more prevalent, these new technologies allowed the nature of the lecture to change and adapt - there was now a cultural shift of emphasis from "the lecture as cultural preservation" to "the lecture as authorial performance" (Friesen 2011, p.97) as the lecturer was now more instrumental in the creation of his own text for delivery. Instead of merely acting as reader, he selected additional appropriate materials with which to explain and illuminate his subject.

These brief observations on the general development of the lecture form raise important points relating to the nature of the lecture itself and any reflections made on its function. In most considerations of its usefulness, effectiveness or place, the lecture is viewed almost exclusively from a content perspective, existing mainly as a means of conveying or imparting information even if that is supplemented by additional functions such as dialogue, debate or other pedagocical devices. For example, in the opening chapter of the provocatively titled *What's the Use of Lectures?* Bligh (1998) begins with a judgment that "The lecture is as effective as other methods for transmitting information" in summary of his statement of "Evidence of What Lectures Achieve" (p.3). To use the corresponding communication metaphor, even this otherwise positive assessment of the form applies 'conduit-thinking' which gives attention to content but largely disregards the wider attributes of the media form within which that content is embedded. In stark contrast to this view, Goffman's analysis of 'The Lecture' provides a highly effective counterpoint which naturally draws on his thinking as a sociologist. He acknowledges that in the lecture, as with other face-to-face social interactions, "the wider world of structures and positions is bled" (Goffman 1981, p.193) into the event. Among the several detailed and incisive characteristics that he recounts in his analysis are two critical points:

Firstly, the lecture is a "text" through which the audience is granted significant accessibility, a form of connection to the speaker. Just as the author of a book "encourages readers to form something like a one-way social relationship to him" (Goffman 1981, p.191), in a live lecture a speaker reveals himself not just through the transmission of his text but through visibility and presence before the audience. The vocal articulation of the content he delivers is also infused with or amplified by the rich nuances of communication achieved through gesture, expression and other aspects of delivery. All of these contribute to the formation of a meaningful degree of connection to the hearer.

Secondly, the lecture is specifically an "event", a social occasion that includes something of the "spectacle, the environing social fuss in which a lecture is delivered" (Goffman 1981, p.168). He identifies that a fundamental characteristic of the lecture is the social context within which it functions as the locus or organising rationale. That is, there are significant purposes or constructs that extend beyond the immediate form or content of the lecture itself that are nevertheless dependent on it. This could be a commemorative, celebratory or festival-type function as well as within the operational norm of their use in the academy, board room or conference event.

There is an enveloping event within which the lecture has a key role or position but the lecture itself is symbolic beyond its delivered content. Here one of Goffman's most pertinent observations about the lecture is that there "is something that is infused into the speaking on the occasion of the text's transmission, an infusion that ties the text into the occasion" (Goffman 1981, p.186). The content of Goffman's observations on communication are clearly presented from within the form of his professional identity and specialisms and they are in strong juxtaposition to the form of Shannon's observations on communication that emerged from his specialism as an electrical engineer. In contrast, Goffman's perspective provides an effective starting point to understand that the lecture is not just about the presentation of content. There are many other dimensions, including the presentation of self through the lecture, and it is a constructed text that provides a mediating form that connects the speaker to the audience and binds both to the occasion and event of the lecture. However, the relative ubiquity of the lecture or other similar oral performance and the inherent focus on the content of that text means that its wider properties as a particular format and medium are less frequently observed.

Nevertheless, in the context of examining the Do Lectures, the mediation of content does not begin with the recording of the lecture and its distribution through online channels. The first act of mediation is the lecture, the formation of the "text" and the act of speaking that encodes something of the speaker into a formal message using this choice of medium. The physical and geographically-located live platform of the annual event is, therefore, the first medium with particular affordances that must be considered for their effect in addition to any contribution of the secondary medium of the digital platform in which recordings of the lectures are published.

In this context, the location of the event in Wales is also significant.Many of the features of the event design described in the last chapter are particularly rooted in its rural location in Cardigan. Therefore, an important avenue of this exploration is to consider its 'Welshness', that is, to reflect on the significance of the Do Lectures relationship to the place where it is held and how that is manifested through their media ecology. Of similar interest is whether that connection has a particular effect on the live and online audience and influences their perceptions of Wales.

The chapter that follows sets out the research design and methodology used to explore the Do Lectures media ecology and its influence on its live and online audience. It presents the approach taken to the selection and use of relevant data, setting it in the context of the Do Lectures as a case study from which broader lessons on communication strategy can be drawn and applied, by both organisations in general and, more specifically, in Wales.

Research design and methodology

A description of the conceptual and practical elements of the overall research design and resulting methodology.

Chapter two presented the theoretical ideas and corresponding literature that were used to inform the research design and provide a perspective from which the influence of the Do Lectures could be explored. In order to encompass the different elements of the communication environment, this adopted an ecological viewpoint that is sufficiently flexible to allow exploration of the lectures in the original context of the live event, in their digital form as they are published on the Do Lectures website as well as taking account of their tertiary, more incidental expression through social media or other platforms used.

This chapter builds on the ideas presented in that review of the literature and describes the conceptual and practical elements of the overall research design. Beginning with a statement of the broad questions being addressed by the research, the first part of this chapter opens by outlining the underlying philosophical perspectives that inform the research approach, design and methodology set out later in the chapter. It briefly addresses the epistemological and ontological assumptions made and sets out a description of the research design with an overview of the general methodology that was applied, indicating some of the key characteristics of the case study approach that was selected as appropriate for the project.

The next part of the chapter describes the data selection process, outlining first of all the range of available options identified through a preliminary but comprehensive survey of the Do Lectures media ecology. A description of the major components of the research follows, presenting a practical model for the investigation, connecting the founders' goals in designing the Do Lectures and then, secondly, showing how the outcomes among its various constituents and audiences have been evaluated. A brief overview of the method used in connection with each part of the investigation then sets out the approach to sampling, data to be used and methods of data collection and recording.

The final part of this chapter concludes with some brief observations on the validity of the findings together with a short discussion regarding the ethical considerations taken into account during the design of the research process as well as its subsequent execution.

PART 1
THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The goals of this study are to understand the influence of the Do Lectures: first, as a live event, taking place in a fixed location and a specific time and then, secondly, as a mediated event as the lectures comprising the main part of the event are distributed online through the Do Lectures website and related channels.

One of the central concerns is to understand the role of the digital platform in the communication process and its outcomes, exploring how it relates to the original event and its use to further the goals and intentions of the Do Lectures for both the original live audience at their annual event in Wales and their online audience.

This exploration of the influence of the Do Lectures will address three broad research questions:

> Firstly, what are the intentions, motivations and influence goals of the Do Lectures and what are the various platforms and media forms they use to achieve them?

> Secondly, what impact does the Do Lectures event have on their live and online audience? How have they been influenced and by what factors?

> Thirdly, what does the Do Lectures media ecology contribute to that impact and, more generally, to Wales and its national identity?

Since the project is rooted in the practical context of the Do Lectures and its events as a not-for-profit company, this consideration will begin with an examination of the perspectives that have contributed to shaping the research design.

Research design rests on the underlying perspectives that inform our approach to a research problem and begin to guide how it is investigated. They provide a point of departure from which a research plan can be developed because these paradigms provide a "set of beliefs that guides action" (Guba 1990, p.17). The broadest of these guiding perspectives are philosophical assumptions, that is, fundamental convictions about the nature of the world we are investigating. They are fundamental in that they deal with basic beliefs that can be argued for and have been for centuries, but "there is no way to establish their ultimate truthfulness" (Guba & Lincoln 1994, p.107). These philosophical assumptions are brought to the research through our experience and view of the world and are often strongly shaped by the scholarly disciplines or traditions within which we are located.

The broad elements of these guiding paradigms are widely acknowledged in the research design literature and have been categorised according to several foundational positions in respect of ontology, epistemology and methodology (for example, Guba & Lincoln (1994) and more recently Creswell (2012)). The characteristics of these various paradigms define: first, how we view reality; second, how we view knowledge and our relationship to it; and then, finally, how we uncover or discover that knowledge, including the ethical principles applied in the course of that pursuit. This paradigmatic choice, therefore, serves to connect the particular goals of a programme of study to both the methodologies being utilised and also to the researcher who is applying them in pursuit of those goals.

Traditionally, these paradigms have profoundly philosophical arguments attached and, particularly in the more polarised positions, have largely dictated the researcher's choice between qualitative and quantitative methods. Martina Feilzer has expressed these two competing perspectives as:

> *"The positivist notion of a singular reality, the one and only truth that is out there waiting to be discovered by objective and value-free inquiry underpins quantitative research methods. It is contrasted with the idea that there is no such thing as a single objective reality and that subjective inquiry is the only kind possible to do"* .
> *(Feilzer 2010 p.6)*

Rather than explore each of these positions and set out a preferred choice, this project has opted to take a substantially pragmatic worldview that, as Feilzer emphasises, "sidesteps the contentious issues of trust and reality" and that "orients itself toward solving practical problems in the real world" (Guba & Lincoln 1994; Feilzer 2010). It recognises that the world is "experiential ...with different elements or layers, some objective, some subjective, some a mixture of the two" (Feilzer 2010 p.8). Consistent with that position, it utilises mixed methods to explore the phenomenon of the influence of the Do Lectures, drawing on a variety of data types based on their suitability, availability and viability as research sources. It has adopted a realist 'logic of inquiry' that approximates the approach set out by Pawson and Tilley in their book *Realistic Evaluation* (Creswell 2012; Pawson & Tilley 1997) that was adopted and refined by them to evaluate social programmes and interventions. Their approach emphasises the focus on seeking explanations for real-world phenomena by exploring the 'mechanisms', 'context', and 'outcome patterns' emergent from the programme under scrutiny. It encourages "researchers to dive into the black box and search out what it is about programmes that makes them work" (Pawson 2013). These elements will be defined and described in more detail below as the conceptual model for the research project is set out more fully.

CHOOSING A RESEARCH DESIGN

This pragmatic perspective leads naturally towards qualitative methods of enquiry that seek to capture and construct a view of reality through the process of structured, deliberate research. Rather than test theories within the tight structures of an artificial environment, an experimental setting or through a highly-controlled social survey, the aim is to capture the experience of ordinary people in an everyday, naturalistic setting.

In their introduction to the more specific research method of using grounded theory, Strauss and Corbin helpfully distinguish qualitative from quantitative research through reference to the means of analysis rather than the types of data being used. Rather than produce findings "by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. It (qualitative research) can refer to research about persons' lives, stories, behaviour, but also about organisational functioning, social movements or interactional relationships" (Strauss & Corbin 1990 p.17). It is worth noting, particularly given the research design to be used for this study, that they observe that qualitative research does not exclude data that can be quantified

but rather that the dominant analytical procedure is non-mathematical (p.18). This is the approach taken in this project so that even where some quantitative data is used, it is to support a wider design focussed on gathering and analysing individual narratives and experiences.

Qualitative research embraces a wide variety of approaches and techniques and it "is not based on a unified theoretical and methodological concept" (Flick 2009, p.16). However, in his survey and typology of the established research designs appropriate for qualitative analysis, John Creswell introduces five broad approaches to inquiry that provide a starting point for selection and use in any given project. He identifies: the *narrative study* focused on the detailed and close construction of an individual story or biography; the *phenomenological study* that seeks to understand a particular common human experience within daily life; *grounded theory research* that makes an analysis of a process, actions or series of actions with the intention of developing a corresponding theoretical understanding of that process or actions; *ethnographic study* that builds an understanding of the social behaviour of an identifiable group of people through extensive fieldwork, observation and data-gathering; and, finally, *case study research* that is defined not by an individual narrative, a common experience, a process or any defined social group – but research where the point of study is a particular and well-defined situation, event or other happening that is identified by clear and specific parameters (Creswell 2012).

To decide which of these general approaches to qualitative research is most appropriate for a given study, there is a need to match the overall research goals to the overarching unit of analysis that defines each of the methods of inquiry. In this case, the overall research goal is to understand the influence of the Do Lectures across many different dimensions of experience. There is no single story or personal narrative to explore - instead there is a need to understand multiple viewpoints and only narrow sections of biographical accounts defined by how they relate to the Do Lectures event. Neither is there a common experience that is defined at the outset of the study, rather there is a desire to understand the widest possible set of experiences across the range of Do Lectures personnel and participants. Although this group of people could become the broad unit of analysis the diversity of personnel and participants makes it difficult to define them as a single social group. Attendees at the live Do Lectures event come from an extremely diverse range of cultural backgrounds, nationalities, age-groups, professional and career groups. Although there are likely to be some common

social factors which support or emerge from a shared interest in the Do Lectures or relate to having the economic resources to participate, there is not a single ethnographic group on which to focus. The single overarching common factor in the study is the connection to the Do Lectures as an event, experienced either directly at the annual live event or indirectly through their digital platform and other media channels. The case study, therefore, is an appropriate fit with an openness of research design that allows for a suitable breadth of exploration within the Do Lectures communication environment.

Before elaborating on specific aspects of the data gathering process and their connection to the research goals and questions, the following section provides an overview of the case study as a deliberate research perspective. It is intended to provide an outline methodological context for the details that follow.

THE CASE STUDY IN RESEARCH

Case studies are frequently used in the social sciences, particularly for investigating professional fields such as business and marketing, education, public administration and in business or management studies (Yin 2013). They account for a large proportion of books and articles across these disciplines leading to an observation that "much of what we know about the empirical world has been produced by case study research" (Flyvbjerg 2012, p.171). This type of research design is both appropriate and helpful for investigating a real-life phenomenon that occurs within a dynamic and observable context, particularly one that is both complex and socially orientated.

This usefulness derives from the case study as a varied and in-depth exploration of a defined situation or event. In contrast to a survey-type design that examines a single topic across multiple spheres or sites of observation, it looks more closely at a single unit of observation, the 'case' of choice. To use the methodological distinction often employed by the multidisciplinary scholar and philosopher of science Rom Harré, the case study is an 'intensive design' in contrast to an 'extensive design' (Harre 1979, p.132 ff). Instead of considering many samples to find typical or common properties across the entire sample group, it selects a single case from which properties of the wider class can be extended or extrapolated. As a research strategy, it provides an 'in depth' approach that is particularly helpful to applied research projects where the goals of the inquiry are substantially inductive, allowing the researcher to construct a rich and varied

picture of the subject of the investigation that is not limited or predetermined by any one source of data or a particular form of analysis. Significantly, it "allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life-events" (Yin 2009, p.4), something that helps to ensure that the findings of the study are useful to the Do Lectures as sponsors as well as the subject of the case study being undertaken.

The real-life-event in question is the Do Lectures conference event and its associated and supporting media ecology. The case study approach provides a suitable means of exploring its influence and impact by drawing on multiple perspectives and varied data sources. Given the breadth of the introductory research brief provided by the funders, it allows practice rather than theory orientated research where the main objective of the study is to contribute to knowledge about the Do Lectures and the development of the event in both its live and digital expressions. However, although the Do Lectures is the focus of the research, it is also representative of an emerging trend for lecture-based conferences that are positioning themselves as 'ideas festivals' and making use of digital platforms to publish and distribute those lectures to a wider global audience. In addition, the more general learnings developed from this case study in respect of understanding the place and dynamics of a specific media ecology could have application to other organisations and businesses, particularly those sharing the Do Lectures' Welsh or rural context.

This practical, exploratory method is also a means of providing accessible and relevant data, analysis and conclusions to the business and its founders who have co-sponsored the project and have a significant interest in its findings but also to others who could benefit from the research outcomes. The case study lends itself to projects where a fundamental objective is to discover, document and describe a phenomenon as well as uncover through data-gathering and analysis more specific elements or variables of interest. As such it has an important place among research design choices and has many strengths that are appropriate for explanatory, exploratory, or descriptive studies of contemporary phenomena (Yin 2009).

There is also a further fundamental benefit of taking this approach. At the outset of the project, of course, these elements were largely unknown and for a study where there are many potential variables (or, indeed, where these variables are yet to be fully identified), the case study effectively reduces the scope of the research

to more manageable boundaries. This important function of the case study approach is highlighted by Rolf Johansson (2003) who positions it as one of three research design strategies to "reduce data in order to make the empirical world amenable to investigation" (p.4). He describes the two key factors that delimit the size and/or complexity of the research - the number of variable (qualities) that are considered and the number of cases or units of analysis to be investigated. To reduce the scale of the research there are three possible strategies - a reduction in the number of variables being considered, a reduction in the number of cases, or a reduction in both. It is therefore extremely effective for managing research scenarios such as the Do Lectures where it is simply not possible to reduce the variables or control the context sufficiently to take a 'reductive' or 'experimental' approach (Johansson 2003).

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CASE STUDY

The case study as a formal methodology has been noted by Platt (1992) as originating from research undertaken with case histories or investigations deriving from a social worker's "case work". Initially it was centred on the "case" as an object of study rather than as a form or method of study. However, the innovative work of Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed clearer procedures for the process of field study and the techniques they developed for Grounded Theory research helped to establish new inductive and explicit methodologies that were especially appropriate for the social sciences. They developed techniques to unearth social processes in the data, to construct and refine categories based on emergent findings and (to avoid pre-existing conceptualisations) provided a foundation for the case study to develop from an object of research and become a more explicit and defined method.

The case study as a general strategy of enquiry is explored in many general handbooks on qualitative research methods such as those by Denzin and Lincoln (2011, p.301 ff), or Silverman (2013, p.141 ff). More specific treatments of the case study are presented by Gillham (2000), Swanborn (2010), and Thomas (2010) but the more established texts are those by Robert Yin (1984/2008/2013) previously referred to and by Robert Stake (1995). Although they take slightly different positions, both Yin and Stake employ a broad constructivist perspective that reflects both the exploratory nature of the case study method and the dynamic and direct relationship between the researcher and the participants who are involved in the study. However, Stake is more focused on the original significance

of the case study as an object, "by interest in individual cases, not by the methods of inquiry used" (2003, p. 134), Yin has developed more detailed guidance on the specific components of research design. His original handbook (1984), now in its fifth edition (2013), outlines a more rigorous approach to the case study that has a greater focus on the analytic strategy, for example, by 'working your data from the "ground up"' (2013, p.136 ff). It is these components that have been used to guide the specifics of the methodology described in the section that follows. However, before looking at the details of this project, it is worth noting some of the general characteristics of this type of research highlighted by Yin's *Case Study Research* (2013) and also reflected in the several texts referred to above. It is these characteristics of the method that help to align it to this project to explore the influence of the Do Lectures.

1. The case study is contextual

The scope of a case study allows for the surrounding context of the object of study to be described and included in the research. Rather than initially construct a research design that is pre-emptively limited to considering only very narrow or specific factors or data-sets, the case study approach allows themes and areas of exploration to naturally emerge as the research progresses. According to Yin's definition of a case study, it is distinctively "an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon ("the case") in depth and within a real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (2013, p.16).

2. The case study is loosely designed

Because of this contextual awareness, rather than establish every research component from the outset, the case study research design is deliberately "loose" and allows for great flexibility on the part of the researcher to adapt according to data and findings as they emerge. As the study progresses, it allows for corrections and updates to be made to the research plan in order to maximize the effectiveness of the investigation, discarding, modifying or adding in research components as needed. In retrospect, this flexibility proved to be essential as initial data choices became unavailable or impracticable.

3. The case study utilises mixed methods

One of the strengths of the case study as a research approach is that it "facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of

data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allow for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood" (Baxter & Jack 2008, p.544). It provides a broad, qualitative method that is flexible enough to accommodate a variety of perspectives, allowing the researcher to select several data gathering and analysis techniques to appropriately address the questions under consideration.

4. The case study as an area of study is clearly defined
Particularly given its flexibility and exploratory nature, a critical element of this approach is to define 'the case' under investigation, that is, to delimit the subject of the research using appropriate thresholds or boundary descriptors. "Bounding the case" could be achieved through a combination of methods – constraining the study to a particular event(s); defining clear areas of investigation and limiting the specific phenomena or interests to be examined; establishing clearly defined data-sets and methodological steps to avoid unnecessary data-gathering and analysis. This definition is not only helpful to manage and constrain the research territory but also to ensure that the case-study defined by the researcher is unambiguous – the "need for spatial, temporal and other concrete boundaries" (Yin 2013, p.34) helps to ensure that the study correlates to some concrete and tangible phenomenon and is not built on an abstraction, argument or other less substantive unit of analysis.

These various characteristics are held in tension within the case study, the first three describing expansive characteristics of this approach, indicating its flexibility, scope and adaptive potential to emerging data. The fourth and final element provides an essential counterbalance and means of exercising control over the extent of the project. These characteristics so far as they relate to this project will be described within the relevant sections that follow in Part 2 of this chapter which describes the means of selecting and collecting the various data presented, reviewed and discussed in Chapter 4 onwards.

PART 2
DATA SELECTION AND COLLECTION

A significant benefit arising from the research partnership with the Do Lectures was that it allowed for direct access to the company thus allowing for a wide range of sources of data through which the influence of the event could be explored. The case study methodology was particularly appropriate for this context because of its open design that allows for multiple methods of data collection and analysis to be drawn on to explore the research questions. As a general approach, the case study is deliberately holistic in its perspective and seeks to include sufficiently broad categories of data to provide the fullest possible picture of the event as well as remain open to unexpected opportunities for available data as the project progresses.

However, this broad extensive design also needed to be balanced with the obvious resource constraints and limitations of a single researcher. So, when seeking to understand the dynamics of the media ecology that surrounds the Do Lectures and facilitates their influence, the first step was to define and map these sources and then make a focused selection of data for more detailed analysis. Particularly with the volume of potential sources, this further delineation of data helped to maximise the effectiveness of data collection and helped to clarify the extent of the investigation.

This assessment of opportunities and constraints was achieved through an initial preparatory strategy that firstly surveyed the various media used or generated by the Do Lectures; secondly, made a preliminary evaluation of them in relation to the general demands of the research questions; and then, thirdly, mapped them against the specific research questions so as to focus the data collection process towards the particular objectives of the study.

As a first step, taking a full survey of the Do Lectures media ecology established the range and variety of available sources and channels used by the company in order to engage with their potential audiences. It took into account their live events such as their annual signature event in Cardigan, Wales but also their other international annual events, and other Do Lectures branded face-to-face

events such as their one-day workshops. A second major strand of this preliminary survey looked at their digital platform including the main Do Lectures website, the associated Do Lectures blog and also their use of third party platforms used either for sharing or linking to their lecture-based content (for example YouTube, and Vimeo) or for social media (Facebook and Twitter). A final but lesser strand of this review was to consider Do Lectures media artefacts – books, posters, literature and other physical publications – that also form part of the their media ecology.

This audit provided a broad but foundational picture of the Do Lectures media ecology as a starting point to identify and catalogue potential sources of relevant data. An important output from this survey was the creation of an event map charting the Do Lectures various events and media outputs and channels. This provided the basis for the visual summary presented inChapter 1 (figure 1.1) that set out the main development milestones of the Do Lectures and its media ecology.

This initial survey identified a great many potential sources of data so a systematic review of these sources considered what could most usefully contribute to the research project. Two particular questions were asked at this stage – notably, which part or parts of the research questions does the data or source primarily relate to? Also, if relevant and useful, is this data or source able to provide a meaningful contribution to the project? In this way there was an active and purposeful delimitation of the available data.

A third step in defining the boundaries of the study was to develop the preliminary audit and list of sources by mapping them against the areas of interest within the study. This taxonomy was not just organised around the areas of investigation but also by the potential value or use of each data source. For example, sources could provide a variety of data that ranged from the simple factual information necessary to describe the event to much richer, personalised responses such as audience feedback and testimony that could be used for much closer consideration and analysis. With this in mind, three broad classifications were applied:

narrative data is that used for descriptive or narrative purposes, for example, to provide the initial background context and other factual parts of the thesis;

core data to be used as a main focus of analysis, for example, documents published by the Do Lectures that set out their goals or personal blog posts that convey the audience experience, and;

illustrative data that provides supporting information, examples or illustrations to supplement either the narrative or core data.

The annotated list of sources and areas of interest created to inform the data collection process is shown for information in Table 3.1 overleaf.

Each of the steps described above provided a deliberate and systematic means of reducing the large volume of potential data into a more purposeful set of opportunities as each source was related to specific parts of the investigation. As these sources were selected, appropriate methodologies could be applied to collate, organise and process the data gathered. Particularly with the wealth of data that could be sought, this approach was a vital part of the overall methodological process that narrowed the many potential avenues of more detailed investigation into a tightly defined plan of work that could then be executed systematically during the data collection parts of the process.

This act of defining or 'bounding the case' (Yin 2013, p.34 ff) under investigation is a critical part of the case study research design, placing clear thresholds on the collection and use of data. In line with other proponents of the methodology such as Stake (1995), Yin (2013) recommends that these boundaries can be created by delimiting the time and place of the phenomenon under investigation as well as the specific activity and context or situation within which it takes place. The rationale and details of these boundaries are described in the section that follows.

A range of Do Lectures media types are referenced to varying degrees within this study, although many of the forms outside of the main live-online lecture axis of enquiry will provide only secondary or illustrative data. There were also additional potential areas of investigation such as their overseas events and newer outputs such as one-day courses which are referenced in the narrative section describing the Do Lectures as an evolving enterprise in Wales. As will be seen in the section that follows, these wider developments outside of the signature annual event held in Wales do not form part of this investigation.

TABLE __ 3.1

*Taxonomy of data sources
mapped to areas of research
interest*

Data source	Q1 Influence goals	Q2 Media forms	Q3(a) (b) Audience influence	Purpose
Do Lectures Physical media				
Event venue		N		Descriptive
Printed brochure	C			Content
Posters		N		Priorities/values
Postcards/ephemera		N		Priorities/values
Speaker booklet	C			Content
Attendee booklet	C			Content
Do Books	N	C		Subjects, reviews
Do Giving Chairs	N			Concept
Application forms	N			Descriptive

Data source	Q1 Influence goals	Q2 Media forms	Q3(a) (b) Audience influence	Purpose
Do Lectures Digital media				
Website	C	N		Content/company expression
Facebook		N	I	Use/audience response
Twitter		N	I	Use/audience response
Vimeo		N	I	Use/audience response
Google+		I		Use/audience response
YouTube		I		Use/audience response
Stumble Upon		N		Mention
Instagram		I		Use/audience response
Flickr		N		Mention
Pinterest		N		Descriptive
Issuu		N		Mention
Do Lectures photos		N		(See Flickr above)
Kindling newsletter	C	I	I	Content/company expression Audience numbers
External Online media				
Blog posts			C	Self expressed responses
Do Lectures press		N	I	External/cultural responses
Sponsor articles		N	I	Perspective on value/brand
Questionnaire				
SoGo Survey			C	

Once this general audit and broad delimiting of the potential data was achieved and then mapped against the research questions, a further degree of focus was achieved through a more rigorous consideration of what specific data would be selected.

The Do Lectures has taken place since 2007 in Wales and has subsequently grown and developed to also include several connected events at international locations as well as some subsidiary events and activities. A brief account of the development and main features has already been provided in Chapter 1 to give a context to the data analysis that will follow in later chapters . These chapters will include a description of the specific parameters and limits of the data selected as part of the reporting of the findings. However, by way of introduction, it is worth providing a general summary here of the boundaries chosen together with the corresponding rationale.

Firstly, since the research was intended to provide a holistic view of the Do Lectures, a full narrative of their history, milestones and development has been provided as the first part of the findings. This covers their activities in Wales and internationally in the United States and Australia and particularly highlights the strategic changes that have taken place since the inception of the event. It also includes some quantitative data to convey the scope and pattern of each of their major events and give a profile of their audience and event participants. Further exploratory background to the Do Lectures and the goals of the founders is set out in Chapter 4. Next, because the research questions relate specifically to the influence and impact of the Wales annual signature event, direct audience research has been limited to those attendees or viewers. Due to the privileged access to the Do Lectures company records and archives, it was possible to extend a comprehensive invitation to participate in the research to every speaker and guest at each of the Do Lectures annual events in Cardigan held during the research period of 2011 to 2014. Lastly, it was not possible to use all aspects of the Do Lectures media ecology in equal measure as part of the exploration of the influence of the event. Particularly in respect of assessing impact and engagement through the Do Lectures use of social media platforms, the potential volume of data would have shifted the focus of this study almost entirely upon this type of media interaction. Therefore instead of seeking to use the full volume of social media data, snapshots were taken at key moments to establish the

general sentiment around the event and content used as a means of expressing or illustrating emerging views found elsewhere, for example, through qualitative data and themes arising as a result of questionnaire or interview based sources.

The practicalities and methods of data collection within these boundaries are set out in the section that follows.

DATA COLLECTION

A multi-method approach has been taken that draws on a variety of sources of evidence in order to understand the experience of architects, producers, speakers and participants connected to the Do Lectures as well as uncover its influence as both a live event held in Wales and also as digitally mediated content watched through the Do Lectures online platform. As suggested by David Gray in his description of a multi-method approach to data collection in respect of a case study, it has included field observations and document analysis (2013, p.272) as central to the methodology. Also, the KESS research partnership provided an opportunity to understand the Do Lectures through direct participation since the event founders granted full access to the event as both a participant and observer. Some data from online or social media sources has also been used from across the Do Lectures media ecology as a means of supporting, validating or triangulating the findings, analysis or conclusions of the study. The data collection methods used, including the two main tools of enquiry - a detailed survey sent to the Do Lectures audience and an analysis of online testimony written largely by Do Lectures attendees - are described in outline below. Additional information about these methods is included where relevant alongside the results presented in later chapters.

Even before the formal start of the research programme I was invited as a guest to their Autumn 2011 event in Cardigan to experience the Do Lectures first-hand. This invitation extended to their other annual events in the period that followed and allowed for a high degree of personal familiarity and involvement. A further dimension of observation and participation in the Do Lectures was also offered through some limited time working alongside the team, particularly as they prepared for each annual event. Since most of the work undertaken by the team was computer-based or online, there was very limited data to be drawn from observation of those tasks.

However, being present at the live events was important to provide a first-hand experience of the Do Lectures and it contributed to several parts of the research process. At the preliminary stages, it provided an exploratory mechanism through full and free involvement as an attendee. It allowed the experience of being part of the Do Lectures event to make a personal impact, stimulate reflection and questions and it provided an immersive familiarity with the event location and research context. Further, it provided the best possible opportunity for establishing in-person contact with speakers, attendees, staff and volunteers involved in the event. These personal introductions and the opportunity to mention the research to them provided an effective precursor to the more formal processes of data gathering that would follow. For example, introductions made in the context of the event significantly predisposed individuals to respond well to requests for participation in the research survey at a later date.

It should be noted that due to the small size of the event and the extremely high value placed on the attendee experience, it was decided not to make direct researcher-interventions during the event itself. The Do Lectures have cultivated a delicate, informal and highly personal environment for their event that is so sensitive to individual interactions that any form of activity that is more formal and not relational – for example, the sharing of business cards – is deemed inappropriate. Particularly given the high-ticket value of the events and an ethical responsibility not to affect the effectiveness or atmosphere of the event, the main focus of research activity was first to experience the event and then, second, to develop meaningful contact with the other attendees and speakers through conversation and normal participant interactions. Interviews, extensive note-taking and more overt research activities were deliberately avoided. A key part of that involvement was to build rapport with the Do Lectures team and, to a degree, with those involved in any specific annual event. This very informal approach recognised that although the researcher could not be a "complete insider", I needed "to inspire enough trust and acceptance to enable ... research participants to act much as they would if the researcher were not present" (Guest et al. 2012, p.65).

Participant observation was highly valuable in the opening stage of the project when gaining an understanding of the nature of the event and increasing familiarity with the location, activities and experience was critical to shaping the research design. It allowed time to interact with the research environment in order to capture the essence of the event as well as witness the various

dynamics and personal interactions that took place. In addition, during later phases, this experience also helped to provide the necessary perspective to understand and interpret audience and participant data drawn from the more structured approaches that followed. Direct experience of the Do Lectures event as a participant-observer allowed the analysis of qualitative data to be placed alongside the researcher's own subjective and reflective position. It particularly allowed the more experiential aspects of the event such as the mood, atmosphere and environment to be better understood and appreciated.

REACHING THE AUDIENCE

One of the challenges in researching an online video audience is the identification of individual viewers sufficiently to gather a representative sample of interviews. For some online video platforms, the most evidently engaged audience can be notionally identified through the screen names of individuals posting comments or responses or otherwise contributing to that online space. However, for the Do Lectures online videos, at least within their website, there is no social or comment space and therefore no immediately identifiable audience for a researcher to connect to. Although comment and interaction is possible with the Do Lectures content published on third party video platforms such as Vimeo, a preliminary survey of the responses there indicated that there were very limited viewer numbers and extremely low comment rates. For example, even the most popular Do Lectures video published on their YouTube channel at the time of the preliminary survey received only five comments from around 6,000 views. As a result, these sources were deemed insufficient for finding a workable, much less a representative, online audience with whom direct research could be undertaken.

In the absence of a single, well-defined source of viewers that could be quickly identified through the various digital platforms, an alternative strategy was needed to find the online audience and seek to engage them in the research. The goal was to identify the largest possible body of potential viewers who could potentially provide a rich source of data giving details of their experience of how the Do Lectures online videos have influenced them. This process was carried out in several sequential stages as follows:

Step 1: Outreach

To reach the most engaged audience, the first step was to identify viewers using the Do Lectures own communication channels. It was at this point that the close research partnership with the company was invaluable since it provided access to several strands of outreach that were only possible due to the access and positive cooperation they gave. These possibilities for outreach included setting up invitations to participate through the following means:

• An online appeal from the Do Lectures and the Do Book Co. inviting their audience to participate via a link provided on their Twitter and Facebook accounts

• An email invitation sent to their events list of participants and attendees for all their annual events

• An email invitation sent directly to their wider 'Kindling' mailing list, the Do Lectures e-newsletter

It was also planned to establish a feedback or questionnaire link that could be appended to each viewing of a lecture on their website. However, due to the loss and deletion of their website and video platform by their hosting provider in March 2014, it was not possible to pursue this latter option since a link to this exit survey could not be coded into the function of the third party platforms such as Vimeo and Youtube.

Step 2: Response and self-selection

Embedded within each form of invitation was a link for the recipient or viewer to follow a link to an online questionnaire (see step 3 below). The proportion of responses gathered from each of these means of invitation to participate was deemed to have some significance for the purposes of establishing influence since a respondent's action to self-select themselves to participate was itself an indication of engagement. The number of respondents could be contextualised within the overall size of the mailing list and other data sources.

Step 3: Online questionnaire

By following the provided link, invitees responded and self-selected themselves for initial participation by completing an online questionnaire that was designed to elicit basic information about both the viewer and their experience of the Do Lectures. This questionnaire was set-up using the SoGo Survey online platform to gather as many responses as possible during the invitation window. The passive gathering and organising of this data was automated using the inexpensive but expert tools of the SoGo survey platform that not only collated the responses but also provided flexible data outputs to assist with further analysis or for import into other tools.

THE ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire invited participants to share their own experience of the Do Lectures and its influence upon them. The online context of that survey was a deliberate choice given the subject of the research, choosing an environment that online video users are likely to be most comfortable using. A single modular survey was designed for all participants, inviting all respondents to use the same instrument to standardise where possible the gathering of data and to provide continuity between the main two main target groups – the live audience and the online audience. These modules or sections within the survey were developed to include question logic and question branching so that following earlier answers, respondents were not presented with questions not relevant to their circumstances. This was done intentionally to make completion of the questionnaire as straightforward as possible and minimising the response time.

The underlying questionnaire sequence was developed to follow the output components identified by McGuire (Rice & Atkin 2012) as indicators of increasing influence or persuasion in communication campaigns. Although the final questionnaire was orientated specifically towards the Do Lectures experience, the underlying question framework moves in a broadly similar direction, dealing first with issues of general attention and interest and then moving on to explore more significant changes such as shifts in knowledge, attitude or behavior. This general progression is outlined in Table 3.2 opposite which shows how each of McGuire's persuasion steps relate to the general progression of questions developed for the survey.

Based on this sequence, the online questionnaire was designed with the following sections or modules, each beginning on a new page within the survey to facilitate clear navigation and use of the survey:

The *invitation* set out in the email or link to the survey ensured consent to participate was given by the respondent by choosing to follow the survey link. It also included a brief outline about the research project and points of contact where potential respondents could request further information or ask any questions about participating.

The first section requested information to generate a *general demographic profile* from the following information:

•   Their general profile, indicating the respondent's age band, gender and level of education achieved .

•   Their geographical location (country dropdown)

The second section sought to capture *an engagement profile* with the Do Lectures and its media ecology. Using a radio box checklist, the respondent's use of each Do Lectures media channel was surveyed, including a a simple categorization of the nature and frequency of their use of the Do Lectures' platforms. It also asked for some contextual information about the respondent's original connection to and interest in the Do Lectures. Using a mixture of multiple choice and open text-field formats, this explored:

•   How did you first come across the Do Lectures?

•   Have you attended one of the Do Lectures live events?

•   Have you watched the Do Lectures online?

For those who had attended a Do Lectures event, a third section explored *the live audience experience* and to describe what, if anything, had made an impact on them. Since conversations with many Do Lectures attendees previously suggested that many were experienced conference or event participants or speakers, a question was included to try to draw out what they perceived were distinctive characteristics or qualities of the Do Lectures compared to other events.

PERSUASION STEPS MCGUIRE (2001)	GENERAL PROGRESSION OF SURVEY QUESTIONS
Tuning in	What is your familiarity with the Do Lectures?
Attending to the communication	Have you attended a live event? Do you watch the online lectures?
Liking it, maintaining interest in it	How often do you watch the online Do Lectures?
Comprehending its contents (learning what)	Has any particular lecture made a particular impact or been especially helpful?
Generating related cognitions	
Acquiring relevant skills	
Agreeing with the communication's position (attitude change)	How have the Do Lectures affected your thinking or attitudes?
Storing this position in memory	
Retrieval of the new position in memory when relevant	
Decision to act on the basis of the retrieved position	Are there any changes in you, your work or your life you would directly attribute to the influence of the Do Lectures?
Acting on it	
Post-action cognitive integration of this behavior	
Proselytizing others to behave likewise	Have you recommended the Do Lectures to anyone else? Have you written about the Do Lectures?

TABLE __ 3.2
*Progression of persuasion
steps and indicators
(McGuire 2001)*

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The fourth section looked at *audience use of the Do Lectures videos*. Questions here covered whether they were being watched for entertainment, education, information or for social sharing – as well as frequency of use, context and any particular interest in specific lectures.

The final main section included open questions designed to elicit more personal details about t*he influence of the Do Lectures*. Using largely free format responses, this section of the online questionnaire allowed the respondent to give their own account of how they believe they have been influenced. It was deliberately unstructured so as not to guide the respondent or give prompts that could lead or limit their reply. This part of the questionnaire, therefore, invited a breadth of response that was potentially as open as the project brief dictated, allowing respondents to reply with relative freedom. Following were questions that explored sharing, recommending and using the Do Lectures in other settings, included as another evidence of influence. Also included was an open-ended sub-question to pursue the research question regarding Wales, asking what perception they have of Wales and whether it has changed through their connection with the Do Lectures.

The response formats were reasonably varied with many questions allowing for a limited-length free-format text answer to be provided. Particularly where the questions aimed to establish individual and personal responses without guiding or eliciting particular forms of answers, these open replies allowed the respondent to give as little or as much information as they were comfortable to provide.

The details of the questions are recounted alongside the results of the survey given in Chapter 5 and a copy of the full survey is included for ease of reference in Appendix 1 at the close of this thesis.

A further strand of data collection was to make use of existing documents as part of the enquiry into the influence of the Do Lectures. Since documents are social constructs, an examination of relevant texts has been incorporated into the methodology since their content contains "insight into people's thoughts, ideas and beliefs" (Prior 2003, p.122). They provide an invaluable supplement to data prompted and collected through survey and interview and are particularly useful as a crystallised expression of intent, purpose, influence or other form of interaction between the producer/author and their audience(s).

These documentary sources were in two main categories, some of which were hard copy items such as booklets, brochures or other printed materials, others of which were available online or stored as electronic files and PDF documents.

In the first category were documents relating to the intent or influence goals of the event architects, such as published booklets, promotional materials or other print artefacts. These documents included items that provided published descriptions of the aims and objectives of the Do Lectures as well as books and articles authored by David Hieatt that give clear expression of his approach to branding, influence and purpose or other insights into the event design. These sources provided much of the data used in Chapter 4.

In the second category were online documents such as articles, blog-posts or other web-based content that related to the Do Lectures and its influence on their authors. Most of this type of data comprised either blogs or other written content authored by the Do Lectures online or live audience and some articles written for press purposes including reviews, news items or other material in the public domain. Online documents and other content related to the Do Lectures was systematically sought using several approaches to maximise capture of relevant material. Further details of this process of capture and analysis are described in Chapter 6 as a short preliminary to the results that follow.

PART 3
RESEARCH VALIDITY AND ETHICS

One of the challenges of qualitative research design is to ensure that its data and corresponding analysis is valid and that its findings and conclusions are well founded and established upon relevant applications of the available data. In case study research where there is a comparatively loose design and a very large number of potential variables, it can be seen as lacking in rigour or focus and therefore open to criticism regarding the validity of the results. However, Yin (2013) provides a very direct challenge to that viewpoint, highlighting that the case study provides a more complete picture of the subject being investigated since it takes a holistic outlook that is open to all available data and remains flexible to adjust to the changing environment it is concerned with.

However, it is recognised that there are limitations in all research designs, particularly for those intended to capture a holistic picture of a complex and multi-faceted event. Some of these limitations arise from the inevitable constraints of resource available through a single researcher. Others arise because the brief provided for the research project dictated for an extensive exploration of the Do Lectures as a whole rather than an intensive focus on just one element, for example, its use of Twitter or of photography.

Of course, there are also some inherent weaknesses within specific parts of any methodology. For example, it cannot be assumed that reactions, responses or other dimensions of experience while a participant-observer at the Do Lectures can be extrapolated to reach conclusions about the experiences and degrees of influence of others. Nevertheless, direct first-hand involvement means that although this form of data collection is unique to the individual researcher, a deeper engagement with the Do Lectures means that interpretation of other data is undertaken with a higher degree of awareness and understanding of the area of inquiry. As Maxwell points out, "intensive, long-term involvement" (Maxwell 2009) makes an important contribution to overall research validity.

A further step taken to support the validity of the findings was to triangulate findings across multiple sources of evidence, bringing data from different areas of investigation into dialogue with one another as part of the analysis. For example, data from the online questionnaires and author-initiated testimony are brought together into the later analysis to provide a more substantial evidence base.

ETHICS AND ESRC PRINCIPLES

Within the research design and its associated methodological components, careful attention has been given to ensuring that it is carried out responsibly and within an appropriate ethical framework. Particularly given that the research concerns data drawn from the personal lives and experiences of those connected to the Do Lectures, it has been important to put in place suitable boundaries of confidentiality, participation and data-gathering and use. Also, since the research has been invited by the Do Lectures to investigate their audiences and participants, the researcher has been granted a high degree of trust. As Stake points out in his chapter 'Case Studies' (2012), "qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict". Research professionalism and a careful and diligent approach to practice ensures that these are respected fully as each part of the project is constructed and designed in accordance with ethical standards.

This project has therefore applied the ethical framework established by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) that gives guidance designed to protect all groups involved in the research "throughout the lifetime of the research and the dissemination process" and "methods for maintaining high ethical standards in research in light of the new developments" (ESRC 2010 p.2). This framework has been used as a means of reviewing this research project in several ways.

First, the scope of the proposed project was reviewed against the ESRC checklist of issues and research areas (p.34) that involve a greater degree of ethical risk. This was done at an early stage of the design process so that an appropriate application for ethics approval could be completed and put in place prior to any formal data collection. This preliminary step was undertaken to identify potential areas of the research that may require either a full ethics review or consideration by an external specialist ethics committee. However, none of the risk areas specified by the ESRC was relevant to this project.

Second, following this review against the ethical risk checklist, the research proposal was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee of Cardiff University's School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies for their consideration. Following their review of the proposed project in accordance with the ESRC procedures set out in the framework document referred to above, full approval was granted for the research to proceed without any amendment or requirement to undertake any non-normative steps to mitigate risk.

Thirdly, at the stage when the specifics of the individual components of the research methodology were being developed, the details of the research were assessed against the six key principles of ethical research set out by the ESRC which underpin their framework and associated guidance. (2010).

No issues arose from this assessment but, for completeness, further details of this consideration against these general principles are set out in Appendix 2.

PRIVILEGED ACCESS

Potentially one of the most sensitive issues in research developed in partnership with a company is any sensitivity in respect of the commercial interests, reporting of activity or interactions with their customers or audience. When a researcher is working closely within an organisation rather than as an outside observer, the behind-the-scenes access is extremely privileged and needs to be handled with care and respect for the organisation and its interest.

The Do Lectures founders offered completely open access not just to their public event but also to their working environment. In addition to being able to work closely with their staff and team and be a first-hand observer of much of their activity, unrestricted access to their network-shared company folders and files was also provided. In response to this unprecedented level of access to the company, great care was taken to treat all information gained through privileged access as confidential. While information and data in the public domain was treated with care through accurate and reasonable reporting and use within the research project, much greater responsibility was taken with information gained from the company records. Data drawn from these private sources, such as contact information or documents in their company records, was treated as completely confidential and used within the body of research only with the appropriate permissions being obtained.

A particular consideration was the potential impact of the publication of research relating to the Do Lectures, either within the thesis or beyond through any public engagement activities that involved the dissemination of findings, analysis or conclusions arising from the project. Clearly these could have an impact upon the commercial activities, reputation or brand profile of the Do Lectures. Even though the event founders demonstrated complete openness in relation to the project and never sought to limit research access or influence either the particular enquiries or conclusions being drawn, it is recognised that the findings may be sensitive.

PLACEMENT WITHIN THE RESEARCH SETTING

A further pertinent issue was the researcher's own relationship with and position towards the Do Lectures. Since the project was established as a joint research initiative under the KESS (Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships) programme, it was important to retain a respectful independence through the whole investigative process. However, being alongside a small, informal and close-working team required a viewpoint and attitude that could not be entirely aloof or purely observational. This would not only have prevented gaining relaxed access to information, situations and perhaps even to the events themselves, it would also have been extremely unhelpful and damaging to the formally and informally established working relationships. However, it was also necessary to retain a critical position in order to provide an appropriately candid view of the Do Lectures.

A researcher in the humanities is frequently embedded in their research context, the social setting or the community they are investigating to a greater or lesser extent. In these situations, a tension exists between securing the necessary and beneficial proximity to the research subject and maintaining an appropriate, objective distance for reasons of independence of perspective and validity (for example, see Letherby et al 2013). For this project, working closely with the Do Lectures and, in particular, with David and Clare Hieatt as founders did provide for a deeper engagement with the event and secured otherwise privileged access to both the event and those involved. However, it was necessary to take a careful and reflexive position in respect of both the research design and the data collected as a result.

In the early stages of developing the project, this position was established through maintaining an open dialogue with both David Hieatt of the Do Lectures and the academic supervisors, particularly where there was a risk of unintentionally creating a conflict of interest. Although the Do Lectures founders were part of the project initiation process they did not seek to guide, influence or shape the details of the project. Further, as the research progressed, the founders were not invited to review the data and were not involved in the selection, analysis or choice of presentation of its findings. Nevertheless, full, unqualified support was also given to the project by their employees and volunteer team in the various conversations and interactions that took place during the period of the research.

Within the overall methodology, care was also taken to use a majority of data provided by the audience, for example, through the direct survey rather than through an auto-ethnography of the researcher's participation. That participation provided some important explanatory insights into the nature and dynamics of the event and it also helped interpret the responses of the audience. However, there was a deliberate choice to place most emphasis on the data provided by independent sources and so researcher observations or those of others heavily embedded or invested in the Do Lectures were not used as the most significant sources of data. Nevertheless, that involvement did facilitate and secure positive relationships with both the Do Lectures and a substantial proportion of their live audience, a factor that directly enabled a greater depth of data to be collected and a positive orientation toward involvement in the research. In addition, direct participation as an attendee at the event also provided a valuable context for making sense of the data and allowed for a more holistic perspective on the Do Lectures for the purposes of analysis and evaluation than would be otherwise possible. As a further step, choosing to use and analyse the unprompted testimony supplied by all available online articles written by the Do Lectures audience was also a specific choice intended to limit or avoid pre-selection of data by the researcher. A fuller explanation of this contribution to the validity of the findings is described in Chapter 6 where that data is presented.

Beginning with an outline of the goals for the study and the questions to be explored within it, this chapter has set out the major components of the research methodology adopted for this project in three main sections: firstly, presenting the case study as the choice of research design and the underlying perspectives that provided the rationale for this approach; secondly, a description of the process used to make a selection of appropriate data together with an outline of the methods used to collect that data during the research phase; and thirdly, an account of the consideration given to the ethical issues and potential risks associated with this project.

The findings from that research are described in the next main section of the thesis with three chapters that are broadly organised by the methods used:

Firstly, the intentions, motivations and influence goals of the Do Lectures are set out in Chapter 4. Drawing significantly from documentary analysis but also on other lesser strands of data such as the Do Lectures social media accounts and profiles, it also describes the Do Lectures activity online and their use of digital platforms in pursuing those goals.

Secondly, Chapters 5 and 6 move from a focus on the Do Lectures and David and Clare Hieatt in their intentions as co-founders and event architects to a presentation of the results of the two main strands of research undertaken in respect of their audience - the online survey described in detail above, and the analysis of testimony written by Do Lectures speakers and attendees in blogs, articles or other online material.

The goals of the Do Lectures

The objectives for the Do Lectures Wales event and the
digital platforms used within their media ecology

ENRICHING THE TEXTURE OF EXPERIENCE

"

"A thing I've always loved
- business.

But I've always thought
that business can do good
and I think I've always thought
that a business can be a tool
for some kind of change
you believe in.

_____

DAVID HIEATT (2015A)
CO-FOUNDER, DO LECTURES

Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the Do Lectures and outlined its development since its inception, beginning with the precursor Little Big Voice event held in 2007 and then the first Do Lectures event held in the Autumn of 2008. That overview gave a brief initial context and a short descriptive account of its development to date. This chapter presents a more in-depth consideration of the Do Lectures and its goals in organising and running the annual conference in Wales. It provides a response to the first research question 'What are the intentions, motivations and influence goals of the event architects?' in respect of both the core event and its associated online platform.

The first section looks at the objectives of the founders of the event and presents data drawn from a wide range of documents and other materials gathered from both public and private sources. In addition to considering materials in the public domain, the data sources included items not available to the general public, such as booklets provided to the small number of speakers at each live event, as well as internal documents held within the company archives and furnished by the Do Lectures for this research. As will be seen in the section that follows, the more widely available documents such as general brochures and publicity materials presented perspectives on the broad objectives as presented to a general audience. However, the inclusion of company materials or documents only available through more privileged access provides deeper insights into the founders' specific motivations and vision for the Do Lectures and the influence they intend it should achieve.

The second part of the chapter considers the online channels used by the Do Lectures within their wider media ecology. Earlier sections of this thesis provided a brief introduction to theses digital platforms and the timeline included as part of chapter one provides a visual summary of the various dates each of those platforms was adopted. As outlined in the research methodology, it is outside the scope of this project to deal with each of them in detail and the survey sent to the Do Lectures audience was used as the primary means of investigating the impact of their online lectures. However, this latter part of the chapter provides an overview of the main platforms used by the Do Lectures to publish their video content, notably their website and Vimeo that both host the recorded talks. Where most relevant, that overview includes some limited illustrative data.

Although some of the ways the Do Lectures goals have been outworked has developed since they were founded in 2008, the clearest insights into their founding intentions come from the brochure that advertised their first event. Their goals were explicit – howies, the Hieatt's clothing business, was to use some of their 'earth-tax' profit to "put on a series of lectures with the aim of inspiring people to go and try to change the things that we all care about" (Notcot 2008). The event was orientated very firmly towards encouraging deliberate action for change and not just as a platform for presenting ideas. The brochure cover featured in bold, unapologetic script "Dick Dastardly was right, don't just stand there DO something' as it announced the Autumn 2008 dates for these first Do Lectures. Very simple in its expression, the choice of name for the event emphasised the priority given to action as an intended outcome, building on the previous year's *Little Big Voice* goal of helping people pursue change. As well as making a slightly off-beat reference to the quote from Dick Dastardly frequently repeated in *The Wacky Races* animated cartoons by Hannah-Barbera in the late 1960s, the brochure continued its emphasis on action by adopting other punchy slogans such as "Do is not putting up with stuff', 'Do is the action behind your beliefs', 'Do is progress' and 'Do beats don't'. Overall they expressed a strong, direct and personal call to action albeit not towards the pursuit of any specific change agenda.

The brochure also addressed the question "Why are we doing the lectures?" and revealed the motivating rationale. David Hieatt described that their company howies was founded in 1995 with 'a couple of aims', the first of which was to "make the highest quality clothing for our sports and for our daily lives ... and to make it in the lowest impact way that we possibly could". Their other stated aim was "to use the company to try and make people think about this amazing planet we all live on". The ethos that was already inherent in the howies brand that they had previously established and a significant part of the driving values of the company was now also a shaping force in the founding of the Do Lectures. David Hieatt further acknowledged this connection in a promotional documentary completed shortly after the event in 2008. In a brief presentation to camera, he said "For a company that was set up to make people think, to do a series of lectures is like a bit of a dream for me" (Do Lectures, 2008). In some respects, the Do Lectures therefore extended the core purposes of their existing clothing business and the event provided a new platform through which they could be expressed. It was a new and vigorous medium through which the values it sought to embody as a brand could be extended.

So, the first Do Lectures in 2008 carried a measure of the activist tone of the Little Big Voice event of the previous year, but this time the event was more individualised in its appeal. It expanded the previous focus on interests relating to major global concerns such as sustainable living or protecting the environment and moved towards providing encouragement and inspiration to each of the guests to pursue with a passion the things that they each cared about. These expectations were set out in the advertising: by attending this event, you would learn 'Some practical tools, Some inspirational thinking. A different point of view on stuff. New ideas. Old ideas that have been re-thought to work better." (Notcot, 2008). The founders' vision for the event was distilled into a motif that would be repeated in the years that followed:

> *Let the Doers of the world inspire the rest of us*

This somewhat aphoristic statement of purpose provided a caption for the event that would be used in its promotional materials over the next few years. The generality of the intent 'to inspire' does provide a broad conceptual hook on which the event can be sold to a wide audience, reflecting something of David Hieatt's background in copywriting. However, published materials elsewhere provide much more detail that is helpful in understanding more about this otherwise vague goal. For example, in a video segment recorded to introduce the concept at the opening of the first Do Lectures event in Australia, David Hieatt replies to the rhetorical question 'Why does the Do Lectures exist?':

> *To help others realise their potential because not everyone truly understands what they can do. Why does the Do Lectures help with that? That is really simple ... you can spend a bunch of time around people who've dreamt big .. the purpose of the Do Lectures is to stretch that dream back into shape. (Hieatt 2015b)*

To attend the Do Lectures and hear about the achievement of others who acted on their ideas, as articulated by a review for The Guardian, "offers a suggestion of how you can be the change in your own life and a bracing challenge to those of us who spend too much time in bed feeling inadequate. This year I leave feeling inspired." (Jeffries 2010).

An early and unpublished *PR Guide,* kept in the company archives as an internal document to help the Do Lectures team respond to press enquiries, elaborates

on this shorthand statement of vision to reveal more of the origin and motivation for the event:

> "The Do Lectures started from a conversation between David and Clare Hieatt over the dining table one night. They wanted know what to Do about the things they cared about. Out of that came the idea that the Doers of the world can inspire the rest of us to go Do something. They show us what is possible. They leave a trail that we can follow. Knowing how they did it helps us to connect the dots about how we can do it. They give us the inspiration, the final push we need to go and do our thing. Whatever that might be. From starting a new business, to inventing something that hasn't been done before to fighting for your cause, ... so a set of talks for Doers was born." (Hieatt 2009)

The goal of inspiration, therefore, is orientated towards a non-prescriptive goal of 'our thing. Whatever that might be' and this observation provides an important insight into the thinking behind the event. The goal of the founders is not just to provide inspirational *content* through the Do Lectures but, importantly, to create an inspirational *format* for a lecture-based event. They have stated that "there isn't a set of talks like it in Britain" (Hieatt 2009) and the press attention they have received demonstrates interest in the approach they have taken bringing together an eclectic mix of international speakers to tell their story in a small, intimate but unusual event environment - a tent in a field on a farm in a small town on the coast of rural Wales. Their hope was that speakers would share as much of themselves as possible, presenting their story as well as their ideas by recounting the ups and downs of their experience, their learning and personal journey. Ideas are very much at the heart of the conference, but the Do Lectures' goal was very much about designing and giving a platform from which people who were creating positive change in the world could share powerful stories and individual testimony.

The speakers for the event were shortlisted and chosen from diverse sources, using a personal network of contacts from around the world as well as from researching "who has written the most interesting books, written the most thought provoking articles, who is doing the bravest thinking in their field" (Hieatt 2009). Although the Do Lectures speakers were given travel expenses and accommodation, unusually no lecture fee or other honorarium is given. Also,

instead of just being invited to deliver a talk, they were encouraged to stay for the whole event, participating in the event fully and mixing with the organisers, attendees and volunteers over food, conversation and entertainment. Instead of the more usual 'conference hierarchy' that either segregated, privileged or otherwise demarcated the status of conference speakers, the emphasis was very much on sharing in the experience with all the other attendees and not being a platform-only guest. Unlike almost every other speaker-based conference, the Do Lectures did not provide name badges or segregate speakers from delegates or create any other form of in-event social hierarchy – instead each person was left to introduce themselves and find their own personal connections and relationships to everyone else at the event.

The press release for the following year's event held in September 2009 continued to use similar shorthand language to express its goal, "Let the Doers of the world inspire all of us to Do amazing things" (Do Lectures 2009). It also highlighted what would become a consistent feature of each year's programme – an unusually eclectic mix of speakers whose various subjects ranged "from business to technology, from sport to illustration, from saving the planet to saving time, from the famous to the unknown, from the inspirational to the downright practical". The intention was to present talks whose common factor was not thematic or topical but told an inspiring and engaging story that would "light a fire in your belly to go and Do your thing, your passion, the thing that sits in the back of your head each day, just waiting and waiting for your to follow your heart" (Do Lectures 2009).

This intention is strongly reflected in the brief given to invited speakers that has remained almost constant in its advice each year up to the present. This guide (Do Lectures 2014a) is a checklist of ten points to help them develop and prepare for their talk shown in Figure 4.1 overleaf. Personal conversations with many of the speakers revealed that when they are invited to speak, David Hieatt also stresses in his personal communications with them that they should avoid their usual or well-tried presentations, especially if they are experienced conference speakers. Instead, they are invited to give "the talk of their lives" with content that is fresh, very personal and stretches them well beyond their usual presentation styles or content. In informal interviews with some of the more established and experienced conference speakers met at the event several had commented that this is equally both the most refreshing and the most difficult aspect of delivering a lecture in this setting. Some were both unsettled and challenged by the brief

Do
Lectures

A Speaker's Do List

Do's and Don'ts

1, Do tell your story.
It will inspire others more than you will ever know.
The purpose of the talks is to film them and share them with the world.
Don't say stuff that you don't want to share.

2, Do inspire yourself too.
Don't do the talk you always do. Leave your comfort zone.
Be vulnerable. It lets everyone see the real you.

3, Do tell us of your struggles as well as your successes.
Failure is often a better teacher than success.

4, Don't read it. You know your story off by heart, so let it come from the heart.
You will touch more people that way.

5, Do tell us your dreams, your passions, what you stand for, your crazy new idea or your
brave new thinking. We need to know what drives you.

6, Do entertain. We cover some serious subjects but that doesn't mean we have to be
serious. Entertainment is good. People learn a lot while laughing.

7, Do disagree. Debate is important. You don't have to agree with other speakers.

8, Don't steal other speakers time. It's a 20 minute talk.

9, Do give the best talk that you have ever done. No pressure.

10, Do stay around. The food, the beer, the music and the fire-side conversation all go to
make The Do lectures so special.

David Hieatt

Co-founder of The Do Lectures.

FIG __ 4.1
The guide issued privately to
Do Lectures (2014a) speakers

that asks them to "leave their comfort zone" and talk very personally about their "struggles as well as ... successes". Even having fully prepared on this basis before arriving at the Do Lectures, some speakers choose to significantly rewrite, reshape or even completely abandon their prepared material having listened to other speakers ahead of them in the programme. Although already intending to deliver a very personal account of their story and ideas, the raw vulnerability of other speakers on the Do Lectures platform caused them to rethink their own lecture, pushing either the content or presentation style into much more personal, intimate territory. As an observer at several of the annual events from 2011 onwards, it was interesting to note that following these guidelines was not just useful advice but essential for speakers if they wanted to match the tone and setting of the event. Those speakers who were received most poorly were those who either used pre-existing and well-rehearsed content (ignoring rule 2 of the speaker guide) or, worse, chose to read from or were seen to closely follow a script for their talk (ignoring rule 3). Those who were most well-received by the audience were those who showed authenticity and humanity, adopting a warm, strong and conversational tone in their talks.

Although this brief is provided as guidance to the speakers in advance of their talk, the direction given is nevertheless broad and flexible, inviting very personal viewpoints and asking for original presentations. Having met with organisers of a local TEDx events and also having spoken to one Do Lectures speaker who had previously given a talk at the main annual TED event, this openness regarding content is in sharp contrast to the TED model that aims to closely manage and produce every aspect of their talks. Whereas TED demands extensive pre-screening, permissions and very detailed review and contractual paperwork prior to an event, the Do Lectures deliberately does not seek to exercise this level or form of control. Instead, there is a very high degree of trust given to speakers that does not ask them to submit their specific content to be pre-approved nor require them to stick rigidly to the reason, idea or enterprise that caused them to be invited. In this way the Do Lectures succeeds in cultivating an unusually open and exploratory attitude – not just with their audience but also with each of their speakers – they are willing to provide a platform and opportunity for ideas to be presented, without needing to exercise control other than the most basic of constraints such as respecting the event schedule and the other speakers by keeping to their allotted time.

TED and TEDx
Some sense of the tight control required by TED can be gained from the extensive rules (TED n.d.) governing the independently-organised TEDx events.

The detail of these guidelines given to speakers reveals a combination of two underlying principles; firstly, that there is unusual freedom of latitude in respect of the particular *content* of their lecture; and secondly, this latitude in content is combined with very focused direction about the *form* of their lecture. There is emphasis strongly placed on the format, that is, those aspects of the lecture beyond the subject, content or information contained in it are considered critical parts of the experience of the Do Lectures. To begin to draw a comparison with social media platforms, although the content of a post, Tweet or other content item is the fundamental starting point for the function of the digital platform, the social and technological affordances within the overall experience made possible by the format is also significant. As with the particular form of the lecture, the form of presentation and design of the platform within which it is delivered has profound consequences in terms of the audience experience and, importantly, the strength or type of connection it creates between speaker and hearer. Some of these consequences arising directly from the design of the Do Lectures event format are more particularly revealed through the responses provided by the live audience recounted in the next chapter.

This goal of providing inspiration for change has underpinned all of the subsequent Do Lectures annual events and activities. A key component of that goal has been the use of online video to share the talks more widely with a global audience and so the Do Lectures digital platforms formed a critical part of the event model from the outset to "spread the knowledge as much and as far as possible" (Notcot 2008). At each annual event, a recording of each lecture is captured professionally with a minimum of two or three cameras and broadcast quality equipment and sound. Each talk is then edited and made available free of charge across the various online platforms it is published to. Again, the comments from David Hieatt in that first Do Lectures brochure clearly convey his ethos and rationale:

> *"Ideas need oxygen. The internet provides that oxygen. So if you see a talk that really inspires you, you will send it on to a friend. Good ideas spread quickly. Great ideas spread even faster" (Notcot 2008).*

Providing open and free access to the talks from the live event was given much greater emphasis the following year. Encouraging access to the live event remained a key priority but in 2009 not all the tickets were being made available free of charge to suitable applicants. Although half of the places were still going to be awarded to "students, ngo's etc who make the best short film (23 seconds) about

what they want to do" (Do Lectures, 2009), the other tickets were going to be charged at £1,000 each. In their materials promoting the event, the Do Lectures wisely connected the premium price of a live event ticket to the broader funding of their online platform. For example, a letter to supporters and enquirers made it clear that "The Do Lectures is not a business, but it has to pay its way in the world … To that end, we sell tickets for the event so the rest of the world can see the talks for free".

Securing a sizeable online audience, as well as attendees for each live event, continues to be a priority with recordings of each lecture being published to the Do Lectures website and other digital platforms such as Vimeo within a couple of months of the original talk. Alongside building an audience ("Great talks get talked about. They go viral", Hieatt (2010)) through this steadily growing online archive of talks, the collection is also intended as a "resource for Doers. And to supply that knowledge for free for the world to use" (Hieatt, 2009). Quite boldly, at a time when the TED lectures were becoming more well known and reaching an ever-widening global audience, the Do Lectures also set out that "the talks will over time become an important set of talks, respected throughout the world" (Hieatt, 2009).

The founders also set out to achieve several other horizons of development for the Do Lectures, including "a series of How to Do books" and "Global talks. The talks will take place all over the world" as a five-year goal (Hieatt, 2009) and "to build a Do school" as a 20-year goal. As the event has become further established, clear progress has been made toward these three goals. Comfortably achieving the five-year target, the Do Book Co. was founded in 2013 and in each year since several new titles have been written by Do Lectures speakers based on their talk at the event. So far, this series of books includes fifteen titles with many being reprinted due to demand such as David Hieatt's 'Do Purpose' (2014) and Mark Shayler's 'Do Disrupt' (2013).

Significantly, the Do Book Co is itself an independent start-up, founded by Miranda West in conjunction with the Do Lectures that operates as a stand-alone business that contributes a 5% royalty from its sales to support the funding of the core event. Although also offered as e-books, it has been the innovative 'pocket-book' format that has made an impact. At their launch, one reviewer observed that "The spirit and flair of the Do Lectures are embodied in the simple design of the books" (Oppenheim 2013) that are each brought together into a coherent

style with book cover illustrations by the New York MOMA-exhibited designer and Do Lectures speaker James Victore.

'The importance of place' is another important dimension of the Do Lectures values that David Hieatt consistently refers to with the goal of "creating a world stage for new ideas right here in Wales" (2010 Business Case Document). As an event location, the Do Lectures has made a virtue out of its venues in rural West Wales, using the advertising copy 'Difficult to get to helps. Middle of nowhere helps too' (Do Lectures 2014c). It maximises the use of an outdoor environment, with all the talks at the events being held in a tent in a field until 2013 and then in an unheated barn on a farm from 2014 onwards. Meals, conversations and almost all social interactions throughout the three or four days of the event take place outside, under canvas or, perhaps, in a converted farm outbuilding with most speakers, volunteers and attendees staying under canvas. Under the heading "Never in a conference centre', they describe that "The place needs to put you back in touch with nature ...No air conditioning. No square box. Nope, none of that. You need to feel the elements around you. The magic of the place takes you far away from your day to day routines'.

The rural location, away from the usual domestic and business context for most of their audience, has been an significant factor in the design of the Do Lectures events held overseas too. The annual events held in California, Australia and, most recently, in Costa Rica all have 'signature' venues that have several features in common: picturesque rural locations with beautiful surrounding landscape or natural environment; fairly remote destinations but still accessible by car; and self-contained venues that can provide space not just for the lectures but also on-site accommodation, shared meals and social spaces for conversation, workshops or music and other cultural performances. In all the Do Lectures venues there is an intention to provide an immersive, stimulating and sometimes challenging environment for the event - a setting which in itself contributes to the effectiveness of the Do Lectures and its impact on its live audience.

However, the Do Lectures desire to express the 'importance of place' extends far beyond what is needed to create a rich event experience within a memorable and attractive setting. Also in evidence is David and Clare Hieatt's convictions about keeping business local and, in particular, in finding business, creative and economic opportunity in their home town of Cardigan and the many other rural economies it typifies. In a presentation to the local Cardigan Chamber of

Commerce (Hieatt 2013), David recounted his determination to keep howies, the company he had founded and run from Cardigan, in the town even when selling it to a much larger global company. Steve Case, the billionaire founder of AOL, had made a generous offer but wanted to move the company to the US and so his bid was declined. Instead the clothing company Timberland bought howies and allowed it to remain headquartered in Cardigan. Conversations with David Hieatt about his twenty-year goal of a 'Do school' mentioned above included his intention to raise 200 companies through his initiatives in Cardigan. He describes that "We have the capacity to make things happen ... belief is important and we need to engender that entrepreneurial mindset".

This distinctive, bold goal for the Do Lectures and its related projects is reflected in the event itself which has prominently featured entrepreneurs and start-up businesses to inspire and motivate both appetite and energy for new projects to emerge. Over the last few years, to give an indication of the variety of businesses and sectors represented, speakers or companies in Wales and featured at the Do Lectures have included:

- David & Alison Lea Wilson, Anglesey based entrepreneurs (Halen Mon)

- Shan Williams, Cardigan town councillor

- Anna Felton of Pembrokeshire's Trevayne Farm and Monkstone Knitwear

- Scott Davis of cnwd, profiling Welsh food and produce

- Mark Boulton, Cardiff-based digital designer

- Peter Saunders OBE, entrepreneur, business angel and philanthropist

- Irfon Watkins, founder of video data-platform Coull

- Kasim Ali, founder of Waterloo Tea, Cardiff

- Sarah Beynon, entomologist and owner of Dr Beynon's Bug Farm, St Davids

- Roger Pride, Wales brand marketing specialist and director of Heavenly

- Nigel Annett CBE, former managing director of Dwr Cymru

In addition to the opportunity this provides to showcase Welsh business founders, entrepreneurs and companies to speak in front of an influential and international

audience, their talks are also recorded and published on the Do Lectures website thus also providing ongoing visibility and promotion of their companies to a global online audience too. Also, many other Welsh products and businesses have been directly or indirectly promoted through the event, for example through their sponsorship including Non Nom Chocolate (Carmarthenshire), Melin Tregwynt (woollen mill and wool designs, Pembrokeshire), Penderyn whisky (Brecon Beacons), S.A. Brain beers (Cardiff) and Orangebox (Cardiff-based designers and manufacturers of office furniture and interiors). Beyond the connection established through these speakers and sponsors, the Do Lectures has also proved attractive to many local companies, businesses and individuals from around Wales who have chosen to partipate as guests.

Although it is a global event attracting an international audience, the Welsh language is introduced where it can be accessible and relevant to the audience. For example, where speakers are Welsh-speaking some will use it in their welcome or to introduce their talks. However, the event does provide a further platform for Welsh, for example, within the live music used at the event. For example, in 2012 the writer and musician Fflur Dafydd who is well known for her performances in Welsh at literary and music festivals around the world performed at the Do Lectures. Also in 2013 the Cardiff-based band Colorama played the opening live music set, performing songs in both Welsh and English.

Wales is, therefore, a major factor in the Do Lectures thinking and aspirations – it's priority in the minds of the founders is a great deal more than an appreciation for the coastal setting of Cardigan as a beautiful rural venue for the event. Instead, Wales is respected for its more deeply-rooted value as a resource that provides a creative environment and a stimulating context for home and work. There is a demonstrable commitment to the immediate community of Cardigan as well as acknowledging the particular contribution that Wales can make to support business and entrepreneurship. The Do Lectures also articulates their contribution to place, expressed by David Hieatt as 'Why the Do Lectures matters to Wales' (Hieatt 2014):

> The Do Lectures is here to tell the world that entrepreneurs and their ideas matter. If Wales wants to create a culture of creativity and of entrepreneurship, the best way to do that is to attract the new business pioneers to Wales.

> *The Do Lectures is doing that already. We have built an international reputation for bringing some of the brightest thinkers and doers to Wales. It is a unique global gathering for change makers.*

> *The future for Wales is to become a nation of entrepreneurs. We are about entrepreneurs and their ideas. It has a small footprint in terms of a physical event, but in terms of its footprint online, it can become Wales' most important event.*

This article made very explicit the founders' goals that were also described elsewhere in similar terms: "Bring the pioneering entrepreneurs to Wales", "Provide a networking event that is a meeting of minds, money, ideas, passion for entrepreneurs and their ideas" and, in doing so, "Show Wales off as a great place to do creative business. Why be in London when you can be in Wales" (Hieatt 2014).

These convictions permeate David Hieatt's thinking, not just in relation to the Do Lectures, but also in connection with his other projects. For example, being interviewed about the Welsh economy by the BBC in December 2014 on the day of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement and the announcement of the devolution of business rates to the Wales government, he spoke about his jean-making business Hiut Denim. There were two major emphases he conveyed: first, the importance of the Hiut company to the town of Cardigan; and, second, the "one thing that has changed everything … the internet" because of the entrepreneurial opportunity it provides for small makers and businesses. Speaking more widely about Wales, he observed that:

> "There is a Welsh disease, and it is that thing of confidence. I think Wales needs to create a spirit of the entrepreneur. …. I think the thing we lack more than anything is the confidence that we can actually go and do it. If we could get into that mindset, we would change the Welsh economy. We kind of played too small and we played too small for too long. There is a new world going on and actually we need to be in it" (BBC 2014)

Although an examination of entrepreneurship and the contribution of the Do Lectures and its network is not the focus of this study, some reflection on the ways on which influence in this area is exercised is perhaps relevant here. As already noted, the Do Lectures provide generous freedom to speakers to choose the content of their talk, the curating of the event does exert several dimensions

of power or relationships - the relevance being that they emerge from the event pattern or design of the format itself.

The most evident line of influence exerted by the Do Lectures is through the function of curating of the live event. It is established by owning and creating the Do Lectures and building the associated programme of activities and participants that involves a deliberate selection of speakers and therefore very direct control over the choice of people and ideas that are given a platform at the event and online. The decision as to which speakers are selected or not selected is a fundamental means of controlling the choice of content to be presented. Because of the latitude that is given to speakers in their choice of presentation, there is not the same degree of overt control exerted by, for example, the TED talks, but there is still control over the specific types of narratives or perspectives that are given public visibility through the event. As was seen earlier, the particulars or talking points of a lecture may not be known in advance, but the selection of a speaker is made with some knowledge of their work, expertise or experience. Although frequently working by recommendation, the speaker choice is heavily facilitated by the digital and social media platforms that provide a substantial means of discovery, connection, contact and review of the potential contributor even prior to any invitation to participate in the Do Lectures. In this way, choices are made about the values, ideas and examples to include through the process of speaker selection, thus providing a direct and fundamental means of control over the content that will be presented to the audience.

The curation of the programme reveals some thematic connections that are established at the Do Lectures through its selection of talks. Reviewing the several hundred talks that are now online show that there are several more common interests or backgrounds among the speakers given a platform:

• Craftsmen, makers and artisan businesses

• Artists, photographers and graphic designers

• Chefs and restauranteurs, food growers and producers

• Environmental, nature and outdoor champions or adventurers

• Local champions and place-makers

• Digital platform entrepreneurs and technologists

These categories, though emergent through a consideration of the library of talks, are not directly described in Do Lectures publicity. Although repeated, they do not limit the highly eclectic scope of subjects presented that have so far covered themes as diverse as story-telling (Bobette Buster), child-birth (Caroline Flint), mine-clearance (Massed Hassan) and consumer activism (Sarah Corbett). Nevertheless, they do point towards the cultivation of an overall thematic outlook that has been described as 'retrospective ... coupled with prospective' (Land and Taylor 2014), that is, connecting nostalgic values such as community or craft with a forward thinking interest in technology or in social and economic progress. It presents a particular 'spirit of capitalism' (Weber 2005, and, more recently, Boltanski and Chiapello 2005) that is not motivated primarily by consumerism but by a more substantive purpose; a form of corporate social responsibility that looks to create other forms emotional, experiential or social value that go beyond making financial profit.

'Firms of Endearment'
The concept of 'doing good is good business' has been articulated by an increasing number of business and economics writers such as Mackey (2013) and Sisodia (2014).

How that purpose is particularly defined is not made explicit in the event, but a relevant description emerges elsewhere, in David Hieatt's book *Do Purpose*:

> *"For me, the most important brands in the world make you feel something. They do this because they have something they want to change. And as customers, we want to be part of that change. These companies feel human. The founders tell us how the world could be. They bare their soul to us.*
>
> *These companies have a reason to exist over and above just to make a profit. They have a purpose. Yes,we admire the product they make. But the thing we love the most about them is the change they are making. ... We love purpose-driven brands." (Hieatt 2014, p.7)*

A second major dimension of influence wrapped within the Do Lectures event format is more nuanced, arising from several aspects of patronage that the event provides. In addition to the control over content and ideas described above, the process of curation also determines who is able to secure access, visibility and association with the event. The judgement that begins with direct oversight of *what* is presented also selects *who* will be presenting and is granted the privileges and benefits that the event platform provides. The act of inviting a guest to deliver their talk in person bestows on them a 'power gift' of visibility and the attention of an audience where many are influential in their own fields. This second strand of influence is significantly amplified by the high-quality recording of that talk that

is made at the event and then distributed online. This opening up of both a live and online audience to the speakers provides a significant level of prominence, as well as the benefits of association with the Do Lectures and its reputation.

The patronage provided in this way also operates more broadly, providing not merely the individual benefits of visibility but also a degree of access to the Do Lectures network and its existing participants. Particularly since the design of the event provides for close interaction and conversation, this is an important component of influence. The Do Lectures has an indirect function beyond curation of the talks as also the curator of the participants, bringing together their choice of speakers with their selection of attendees in an environment where positive and beneficial connections can be made easily. The speaker roster frequently includes individuals who are either already well-known or established in their respective professions or who are rapidly gaining public or professional attention for their innovation or other ideas. Therefore, being welcomed into this community provides a means of building social, professional or cultural equity.

Observing the event, it is apparent that many of the connections forged within the event are maintained beyond the event, often signalled and nurtured through contact within social media platforms. Although those connections and extensions to the Do Lectures network are initiated by the invitation to speak or attend, they become firmly established through the context and social design of the experience. For example, for those speakers who are less well known, being associated with the event and positioned alongside more prominent speakers provides them with much more than the opportunity for visibility – who they are '*seen with*' provides value in addition to who they are '*seen by*'. Further, the inclusion of their talk in the Do Lectures online platform with all its affordances within social networks provides 'social proof' and builds the personal equity and reputation of the speaker. Even for those with greater social or cultural equity and exposure such as the speakers with a proven reputation, the Do Lectures provides them with further opportunities to extend their network, the diverse nature of both speakers and attendees, creating new connections or perhaps more unexpected links and partnerships. The uncommon nature of the Do Lectures conference experience allows them to forge new professional links or relationships as the relaxed, egalitarian and highly-personal atmosphere of the event encourages new perspectives and the formation of valued friendships or partnerships.

In this way, the Do Lectures is an effective means of creating or strengthening a

network of personal and professional relationships. This network is distributed and, as the survey responses will show in the next chapter, is a significant factor in the live event experience that is important to the audience. However, it is also significant in its function to develop the network that exists around the Hieatt's themselves and their businesses.

Perhaps less obviously, a further strand of power exerted by the event is through their provision of place, in terms of both a physical geographical location as well as the design of the event environment that facilitates the other strands of influence described above. Particularly since the annual event in Wales has moved from its original location in the independent commercial venue of fforest farm to being held at the Hieatt's family home and farm, the bonds and personal network that surrounds them is considerably strengthened.

Although this study is focused on the influence of media form, these power-related factors are significant in respect of their impact on content. Although speakers have latitude of content *after* they have been selected, the Do Lectures event priority of form is applied only following pre-event priority of content. Attention is given to the event design but this does not mean that who and what is presented from their lecture platform is unimportant. The process of curation functions as a 'membrane or purposeful filter' (Bhaskar 2016 p.85) which has its greatest effect at the point of pre-selection of the speakers who will provide the event programme. It effectively defines the subjects, themes and ideas that will be presented and so it is relevant to make some observations on the relationship between that content and the form of the event.

Somewhat notoriously, the media ecology perspective does not usually give attention to the message that is carried within a particular media form. For example, a recent summary of McLuhan's thought from one of his friends and colleagues made clear that:

> *Media ecology entrails a study of the social, cultural and psychic impacts of media, independent their content, thus embracing McLuhan's defining one-line: "The medium is the message"' (Logan 2016)*

However, for the Do Lectures, the coherency between the themes and ideas of the content and the design of the event itself is directly observable. For example, consider that speakers who are environmentalists, sustainability specialists and ecologists deliver their talks in an outdoor, rural setting; the adventurers, explorers and extreme sportsmen speak to an audience who are camping outdoors at a relatively inaccessible location on the coast of Wales; founders of community-orientated projects or social innovators share stories of their work in an intensely social setting where high levels of personal interaction are purposefully included; disruptive ideas of innovation and entrepreneurship are presented in a setting that is greatly contrasts with most people's everyday experience and routine; accounts of the professional and personal journeys of designers, photographers and artists are presented in a highly stylised environment surrounded by the drama and aesthetic pleasure of a rural landscape; Welsh entrepreneurs, musicians, politicians and other cultural participants are given profile on an international platform in Cardigan, the birthplace of the Eistedfodd instituted by the 12th Century Welsh prince Rhys ap Grufydd. In this way, the themes and categories of speaker described earlier in this chapter are directly reflected to some degree in the real-world context of the event, establishing a degree of meaningful connection between form and content.

Walt Disney held a philosophy of design for his theme parks that gave attention to every detail. It is encapsulated in the aphorism "everything speaks" (Snow 2010 p.63) meaning that every element of a setting has a role in generating, conveying or sustaining meaning for an audience. This ethos gives attention to the aspects of form because of their part in creating an immersive and engaging experience. The Do Lectures' innovation in event design is noteworthy, therefore, not only because of its contrast to the more usual urban settings and locations for international conferences, but also because of its correspondence with the subject of its talks. There is an important alignment between form and content, such that the form provides an additional surface on which key messages were inscribed, carried or reinforced.

This coherency between form and content is at the heart of contemporary brand thinking which aligns key corporate messages and values to its visual identity and, importantly, to more experiential forms of corporate expression such as designed environments or even staff behaviour. 'Brand lands' or 'staged habitats' (Mikunda 2006; Moor 2003, 2007) have become a standard element of the leisure environment, for example, as branded spaces are established in

connection with retail, entertainment or other experience-based commercial and non-commercial settings (Twitchell 2005). The core functionality of the destination (such as a shop, hotel or museum) is enriched with an emotional and complementary overlay (such as a tourist attraction, lifestyle destination or place for meeting and socialising respectively). In this way, the messaging or 'content' that is conveyed through marketing or corporate communication channels is supplemented or even actively constructed through the deliberate design or 'form' of the environment. For the Do Lectures this coherency appears to be achieved through the natural alignment of the founders' personal values with their business interests, goals for the event and the surroundings of the farm which is home in many senses of the word. Nevertheless, it is striking to consider the additional impact that can be achieved through the authentic pairing of form and content.

A further important outcome from this exercise of power is in the context of the construction of a successful creative network. The Do Lectures brings together several critical components of the creative economy - creative people, who are themselves representatives of creative businesses and organisations into a creative community (DeNatale & Wassall 2007). Although perhaps slightly unconventional, for the duration of the live event, this community has an identifiable albeit temporary home in the physical location of Cardigan while it is formation. Thereafter, that community is expressed at least in part through the digital platforms where the Do Lectures own website and social media accounts provide a common hub of content and connections, but also through the individual online activities of Do Lectures alumni as they find each other on Facebook, Instagram or other common digital platforms.

The next section of this chapter examines some of these online activities and begins with a consideration of the video produced at the event and published within the Do Lectures digital platform as a central part of their online strategy.

THE DO LECTURES ONLINE

The internet has changed the world. It has leveled the playing field for the small guy. There are many tools to tell the world we are here now. They are very powerful. And very free. But also available to everyone else. So we have to learn to use these tools well. Or die. (Hiut Denim Co 2014)

DAVID HIEATT

ONLINE VIDEO

Online publishing of the talks from each of the Do Lectures live events has been a strategic priority from the very first event. Audio-only recordings from Little Big Voice in 2007 were published to their website and, from the first year of the Do Lectures in 2008, each talk was professionally filmed, recorded and edited so that it could be made available for an online audience. David Hieatt's aim was explicit: "to spread the knowledge as much and as far as possible" (Notcot 2008) by publishing the talks to a potentially global online audience. As well as being a key strategy for building awareness, visibility and audience numbers or geographical reach, it was also made a significant part of its advertising. A transparently stated rationale for the four-figure ticket price to the live event in Wales and then in other locations was that it "pays for free". As such, the online platform was a major strategic component of the company business plan, leveraging the income from the rich experience and high-engagement dynamics of the live event to develop a digital strategy that could potentially provide a global platform for the Do Lectures and the ideas and talks presented each year.

Today this approach seems both obvious and necessary but in 2008 when the Do Lectures began to stream their content, it demonstrated considerable forward thinking since the general web platforms for video were not strongly established. The digital infrastructure, bandwidth and the web technologies needed to store, host and distribute streaming video to individual users were still developing and at that time were far from ubiquitous. For example, the Vimeo and Youtube video

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platforms that are now readily accessed on phones and other mobile devices were only launched in November 2004 and November 2005 respectively and were in their infancy when the Do Lectures first began publishing video content. TED talks, too, were very young and had only just begun publishing online in June 2006, beginning with a selection of just six recorded talks. It was also only in 2007, the year that the first Do Lectures event was being planned, that TED redesigned their website to reposition it almost exclusively around the videos of their talks.

So, just over a year or so after TED began regularly publishing their talks to a digital platform, the Do Lectures chose to do likewise and began to stream their content from their website at www.dolectures.com. Originally announcing each speaker (before the event) and then playing the video (after the event) each talk was presented on its own page providing a speaker biography and a short synopsis for each one. Alongside each video was 'Brainfood', a selection of links to other resources that included websites, organisations or publications relevant to the talk or the speaker. Basic tools for sharing the content were also included such as a visible embed URL for sharing the content on your own website or blog together with a form to allow you to email a link to the video in order to share it with a friend, colleague or another contact. Again, these seem obvious today, but web pages with native mechanisms for users to easily share video content were only just emerging. In 2009 and with the addition of a further collection of talks from that year's live event, the video platform was developed further with the introduction of some basic content filters to allow you to choose a talk by a speaker, year or one of the broad subject areas. These themes - business, design, sport, technology, environment and food - provide some indication of the main topics curated by the event at that time. In this early version of their website, there was the opportunity for people to comment and provide their response to each lecture – a feature that was not subsequently carried forward to the next version of their website built by US-based Paravel in 2011 described in chapter one.

In April 2014 the Do Lectures suffered a complete loss of this website. Their content and all associated data, including metrics and analytics, were deleted by their hosting provider and unrecoverable. This sudden loss of their main web presence was a critical issue but what happened next provided a notable insight into the creativity and resilience of David Hieatt's mindset. A post was published on the Do Lectures blog (Do Lectures 2014b) with the following words: "For some of us life will have taught us to see the catastrophe in things but for the rest, we're programmed to see the opportunity". Remarkably a completely

new site was back online within just eight weeks just in time for the main Do Wales 2014 event with a fresh, modern look and more appropriate structure. In addition to using it as an opportunity to undertake a complete overhaul of the website, this potentially catastrophic problem was deliberately woven into the Do Lectures ongoing public story – a technical failing was consciously repurposed as a 'narrative asset' as the tragedy was heroically turned to triumph.

DO LECTURES ON VIMEO

Following this rebuild, the Do Lectures content is presented on their own website as embedded content streamed mainly from their account on Vimeo. They joined Vimeo in October 2008, shortly after the first live event was held in Cardigan, Wales and uploaded each of the talks for the online audience. Unlike many other platforms, Vimeo rarely chooses to disclose the number of users and subscribers that use its service, but a Reuters news article noted that in 2013 they had an audience of 100 million unique users viewing the site with 400,000 paying subscribers (Saba 2013). Although the platform is free and open for anyone to view or to post video content to, the Do Lectures used a paid premium service intended for more serious users that includes more comprehensive video editing and management tools within the platform. In contrast to Youtube, Vimeo has a more focused body of users that has been described as a "small, niche community of film enthusiasts" (Larson 2013) who have adopted it largely because of many of the distinctive features of the platform such as the clear layout, quality of video and presentation of content in an ad-free environment, are particularly beneficial to creative filmmakers. The Do Lectures currently use the Vimeo platform in two ways – firstly, as a host from which their talks can be streamed and embedded through their website or on other websites such as those of the individual speakers or guests; secondly, it functions as a Do Lectures library of talks that can be played within the Vimeo.com platform itself.

There are several factors that can be used to determine the influence of the Do Lectures on the Vimeo platform, although overlapping metrics and the impact of dark social does mean that these can only be general indications of the level of audience interaction with the content. These interactions are measured across a spectrum of engagement activities, moving from more 'passive' indicators such as loading a particular video within a web page through to more 'active' indicators

such as leaving a comment on the Vimeo page hosting specific video content. As at June 2015, the Do Lectures had available 241 publicly available videos, almost all of which are individual talks recorded at the live events. The most personal and deliberate interaction with each Vimeo hosted video is the user comment. As with other social media platforms, here are two primary dimensions of exploration that each provide some indicators of influence – first, the volume and frequency of comment interactions, and second, additional insights gained from reviewing the individual comments. A review of each of these videos showed that there were surprisingly few individual comments left against their talks. Just 21 of the 241 publicly available videos received any comment at all, with a total of 41 comments recorded by Vimeo analytics. Five of these comments tracked in the analytics were not available to view and it appears they may have been deleted prior to the project's commencement. A further 10 of these comments were left against a Do Lectures promotional video rather then the Do Lectures talks themselves. Subtracting these, just 26 comments were left across the entire Do Lectures library of talks in almost seven years of publishing to the Vimeo platform.

Looking more closely at these remaining comments, many of were extremely brief such as 'SO powerful', describing Maggi Doyne's lecture about her work with children in Nepal, or 'Loved this and so inspired ... what energy' about James Alexander's talk about his testimony as a convicted murderer. There were some more lengthy comments that demonstrated greater engagement by the viewer. Five of these reflected on one or more details from the video of the talk and another referred viewers to related material elsewhere on the web. Also among the comments was some limited evidence of the online video's ability to attract people to the event with two viewers responding with "I'm gutted I didn't make these last year" and "One day we'll make it to this!" respectively. Someone who had been at the live event left the comment "Wonderful, great memories and once again, thanks", the online lecture clearly providing a personal reminder of the live conference and eliciting a highly positive recollection of the experience. Even this relative paucity of comment indicates that engagement with the online platform is for significant types of use beyond the distribution and consumption of the lecture content. It also serves a 'souvenir' function for the live audience that serves to remind them of their experience of the Do Lectures and also highlights the Do Lectures as a specific geographical and time-based destination rather than just a content platform.

Platform	Adoption date	Followers
Facebook	*September 2008*	5,474
Twitter	*February 2009*	21,900
Instagram	*April 2013*	4,191
Medium	*March 2015*	5,100

Date	Article	'Heart'	Responses
24/03/2015	How to Kill Momentum	7	0
26/03/2015	Ideas Farm	27	1
26/03/2015	Do Lectures	19	0
2/05/2015	6 Things to Look For in a Mentor	53	2
8/05/2015	There are only two types of advice	1	1
8/05/2015	Finding a Co-founder	16	0
20/05/2015	Lessons From the Track	7	0
30/09/2015	10 Principles of Storytelling	11	0
17/11/2015	This is One Busy World	6	1
8/01/2016	Manifesto of a Doer	297	8
13/01/2016	Tancrede Melet	5	0
27/01/2016	23 Ways to Increase Failure	10	0
16/02/2016	Kill your Ego, loser	26	1
25/02/2016	The Best Event You've Never Heard Of	20	2

In addition to their own website and their use of Vimeo to host the talks, the Do Lectures uses a significant number of other online media platforms to reach and develop their audience. These were reviewed as a preliminary stage of the research and brief timeline showing the timeline of their adoption was included earlier in the thesis. However, during the period of the research, several new platforms were adopted by the Do Lectures. Although they opened Facebook and Twitter accounts and began using them in late 2008 and early 2009 respectively and their use of them is therefore relatively established, other platforms such as Medium and Instagram are more recent and have come to greater prominence during the last couple of years. Instagram, in particular, has become more prominent as a platform as it has expanded its core features to include 'Stories' (to compete with the ephemeral video feature on Snapchat) and an increasingly sophisticated messaging service. Two other web-based publishing tools used by the Do Lectures - the article-based Medium and live-stream video platform Periscope (founded by the Welshman Geraint Davies and since acquired by Twitter in March 2015) – have only been used by them more recently. Periscope was used during their 2015 event to provide short live to camera 'reactions' by some of the Do Lectures speakers immediately following their talk. Each video provided a very brief 'talking-head' segment with some immediacy to anyone following the event, for example, through published tweets and links. During 2016, some live streaming has been done using Facebook now that it has been added to its user features and its very established base of users.

Among the various digital platforms available, the Do Lectures use of Medium has been particularly noteworthy during the research period. They published their first article on 24 March 2015, and by 11 May 2015, a mere six weeks later, 3500 people had 'subscribed' to their account, choosing to follow their content as it was published. To put this rate of growth in context, the follower counts on their other platforms in February 2016, about a year after launching on Medium, provide a helpful comparison (see Table 4.1 opposite).

Although the rate of growth within Medium has been substantial, at least as indicated by the overall number of followers, other artefacts of engagement provide evidence of the levels of interest and interaction with their collection of articles. The fourteen articles published to the same date (26 February 2016) had accrued the number of 'hearts' (the number of people who had clicked to show

MANIFESTO OF A DOER

1, If you find something that you want to change, you have two options. One, is to talk about the change you are going to make. Or, two, stop talking and begin.

2, Avoid easy deadlines. Deadlines serve you best when they are short, hard and, at first glance, impossible. Urgency gets things done.

3, Follow through. On the big things. On the small things. Create a habit of always following through. As habits go, it's a good one to have.

4, Focus on the task. If you are doing something that isn't pushing the task forward, that is called a distraction. Distractions are plentiful. But remember, distractions stop you from doing.

5, Obstacles will come your way. Guaranteed. Think of them as a gift. They will make you stronger. They will make you more creative. Rather than break you, they will define you.

6, Ideas change things. But ideas by themselves change nothing. An idea needs effort to make it happen. Do the work.

7, Leverage your energy. You can't increase the number of hours in a day, but you can multiply your effort. Understand the power of the influencers: The few influence the many. Find your multiplier. The person, the company, the organisations who can accelerate the change you want to make.

8, What you are doing is hard, but not impossible. Practise optimism.

9, What is the priority today? Ask yourself this every day. It's your job to keep the main thing the main thing.

10, The energy available to get things done is directly proportional to how much they matter to you. Only commit to things that matter.

11, Perfection comes over time. Not at the beginning. Start where you are. But start.

12, Sprint. Rest. Sprint. Rest. People get more done in bursts followed by rest. Getting things done isn't about who does the longest hours, but who does the smartest hours.

13, 80% of your time is spent on things that you are not good at. 20% of your time is spent on the things you are very good at. In order to get more done, flip that.

14, Teams multiply change. Teams with a clear purpose, and a clear sense of the change they can make, get the most done.

15, Keep your energy for pushing forward. The past is done. Things out of your control cannot be changed. Energy spent being angry, jealous, or cynical is negative energy. Stay positive.

16, Make a plan. Then accept it can and will change. Making something happen is about being nimble and adaptable.

17, Say no. And say it often. As David Allen says: "You can do anything, but not everything." Protect your time.

18, Making things happen is fun. Making things happen that matter with a team as crazy as you are, is the best fun of all.

19, Little actions repeated relentlessly result in big change. Don't underestimate the importance of 'small' multiplied by 'often'.

20, Make a pact with failure early on. Respect it. But don't fear it. If it occupies your mind whilst doing, it can stop you from winning. Free your mind.

21, Even though you are busy, make time to help others who are at the start of their journey. Give back. It will help you.

22, All teams want to be part of history. Have something big that you want to change. This is bigger than you. Your purpose multiplies the teams stubbornness to get this thing done.

23, If you are going to make change happen, make it a good one. This planet needs as many friends as it can get.

ᵍDOᵍ

that they liked the item) and 'responses' (the number of individual comments left against each article) shown in Table 4.2 above and overleaf):

The very unusual level of activity around the Medium article 'Manifesto of a Doer' (Hieatt 2016) provides a prominent example of how David and Clare Hieatt make use of social media and integrate it with other forms of the Do Lectures media ecology. The 'Manifesto' presented in this article was also produced as a lithographic printed poster, first in a black version (shown in Figure 4.2 opposite) then in white, both of which sold out within a couple of months. Despite these posters being sold in their online shop at the same time as the Medium article was available, unusually, a hi-resolution PDF file of the poster of a high enough quality to output as a professionally producced print was attached to the Medium article for any online reader to download without cost. As well as illustrating the potential impact of integrating the content presented within the digital platform with a more tangible, equivalent physical medium, it also shows a deliberate use of highly contrasting media – the ease and ephemerality of the Medium article being linked with the rich texture of a high quality print on heavy stock designed as an artefact for display.

This approach is in microcosm a parallel to the Do Lectures event strategy – to sell high-priced tickets for the live event but also to give away the Do Lectures talks online . As with this poster, the generous, free distribution of the content within a digital platform did not undermine sell-out sales of its material equivalent. As a startling point of comparison, at the same date in February 2016, the equivalent post on the Do Lectures own Facebook page had attracted just 25 likes and only 5 shares; very considerably less than the sales of the poster that had already sold more than 100 copies and was already being reprinted. This example does not only reflect the Do Lectures use of the poster as one of the more traditional media forms, but also demonstrates an understanding that it too can become social media of a non-digital kind. As an artefact, it is a social object that has value beyond what is wrapped up in its aesthetic appeal or functional, decorative use. Describing the impact of printed posters, Elizabeth Guffey notes that "Even – perhaps especially – in a digital age, the materiality and life of a poster can maintain a powerful hold on us" (2014, p.37). Perhaps most poignantly, and drawing on the concepts of the anthropologist Alfred Gell who attempted to understand the qualities that set art aside from other objects (1992), she highlights the relationship that exists between the producer and consumer of these artefacts, concluding that they are "the outcome of a network that wraps together a maker or conjuror, the

enchanting object and the people who will be enchanted by this object" (p.32). Similarly, for the Do Lectures and their audience, both the paper poster and its digital counterpart on Medium serve as artefacts that are an outcome of the network that wraps them together.

Four image-based digital platforms are used by the Do Lectures – Flickr, Issuu, Pinterest and Instagram. The first two of these are relatively unused and were already largely inactive prior to the start of the study. For example, the Do Lectures group with Flickr set up in 2008 to capture images from their annual events in Wales has a relatively high number of 1,600 images. but these arise mainly from a handful of contributors who have each uploaded several hundred pictures. Recent activity is almost non-existent with only 64 members in the group and just 10 'discussions' or threaded comment attached to the image. The most recent comment was dated 14 September 2009 from the Do Lectures admin who was inviting uploads from the 2009 annual event but there has been no subsequent interaction with the images. There was also some minor use of Issuu, the platform for "digitally bound content" such as magazines, brochures, booklets or other material designed in a paginated form or print-layout. The Do Lectures used Issuu to upload and shared just three publicity items – the most recent being a 2011 event guide and brochure and also a copy of David Hieatt's booklet *The Path of the Doer* (Hieatt & Smith 2010). There have been a mere 20 followers and 10 likes (predominantly against *The Path of the Doer*) but the last activity was more than four years ago. Page impressions and viewing of the content also have been extremely low, with a monthly average of 45 'loads' and 14 'reads' across the five years or so to June 2015 that the account has been active. The Do Lectures account on Instagram is much more active since joining the platform in April 2013. Announced in 2010 as an app exclusively on Apple's iOS platform, Instagram has since seen spectacular growth and achieved more than 400 million global users within five years of its launch. This has placed the platform at the centre of what has been described as "a war of eyeballs" (Abidin 2014) as various platforms and the individuals and brands working within them compete for attention. The Do Lectures have adopted many of the standard forms of Instagram content with photographs from the live event, speaker portraits, the now-ubiquitous quotes placed over images and a few brief introductory videos. However, David Hieatt has also adopted a more experimental approach and used Instagram to host micro-interviews with Do Lectures speakers, running questions and answers in the comments section of a post alongside a suitable image of the interviewee. This is just one example of a non-formulaic approach to social media

that is designed to explore the potential application of a social media platform and create interesting new approaches to its use that are particularly novel or attractive to users and allow the Do Lectures to stand out within the specific environment of that medium.

David and Clare Hieatt as the founders of howies, The Do Lectures and most recently HIUT denim are well respected within the creative industries and also within the digital design community. The Do Lectures has also featured talks by many contemporary innovators in the use of digital platforms, whether as designers, users or strategists and consultants. Although deliberately connecting to this particularly influential part of the online community has certainly contributed to building their online reputation, the Hieatt's have consistently shown a focus on making the best possible use of digital and social media for their projects. As well as being featured within Wired Magazine articles and editorial columns, Clare and two other members of the Do Lectures team also made the front cover of the April 2010 edition. David in particular is also in demand as a conference speaker outside of the Do Lectures, particularly at digital media related events such as the annual Online Influence conference or the more recent Digital 2015 conference, both of which have been held in Wales. He has also been a speaker at other design or 'maker' led events such as the 'Authenticity' conference held at London's RIBA headquarters or the 'Meaning' conference held in Brighton, already a major centre for digital and creative services and now also designated one of the four Digital Catapult centres for developing the UK's digital economy. Their businesses are frequently held up as exemplars of digital or social media strategy, and yet they do not use an agency or regularly employ a 'community manager' or other online communications specialist. However, as PR Week wryly noted, they have a 'secret comms weapon not available to most startups: themselves' (Benady 2014).

Within the business models adopted by the Hieatts, the online platform plays a fundamental and critical role across their companies and interests. Although this is clearly demonstrated in the publication of the Do Lectures online, this is also an essential component of his main current business of Hiut denim. At the most basic level, the company website is, of course, central to a business strategy that allows him to sell directly to individual customers. However, it is important to note that the online strategy is much more developed than simply creating a digital platform through which their denim products can be sold or sales marketing can be delivered. David Hieatt notes that 'It took us a while to figure this (one) out'.

but '...the reality is our coffee budget is bigger than our marketing budget' and so he talks about starting a 'second factory' - the first is the one that manufactures their jeans, the second is a 'content factory' to give 'customers a reason to come back and say hello' (Hiut Denim Co 2014). He recognises that alongside a platform for sales, there is a parallel need of a platform for media content, to 'give reasons to your customers to remember you'. The article continues by describing briefly but explicitly his thinking around the various social media platforms used by HIUT denim such as Twitter, Google +, Instagram, and others. The brief advice in this short article provides additional insights into his objectives, for example, speaking of Google+, he writes:

> "Our job is to be found. Google+ helps get us found. Being 'searchable' matters. Google will never drop search. Be searchable. Google+ helps you do this" (Hiut Denim Co 2014)

In a social media context where Google+ is not heavily used by individuals or businesses compared to other platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, it is significant to note that the Do Lectures founder has not highlighted its properties of *content* but instead recognised its properties of *medium* - that is, being part of the Google 'spine' or family of linked digital products that is designed to connect the powerful search algorithms of their core search engine to other parts of the digital ecosystem, including individual user accounts. This same sensitivity to the particular properties of each platform is demonstrated with his comments about Vine and other social media formats, looking for approaches that maximise their affordances but also demonstrate originality and allow him to explore an element of creative use. For example, this is epitomised in his innovative use of a Twitter account to connect followers directly to his factory environment. Follower tweets to a dedicated @HiutMusic Twitter account allow customers to contribute their suggestion to a playlist of music for the Hiut Denim factory. Powered by a Raspberry Pi processor attached to a music system in the manufacturing workshop, each tweet creates a request that draws on the Spotify music service to generate an additional item in a playlist that is then queued to play in the HIUT factory.

Further innovation from the company is to include a numbered 'History Tag' on each pair of jeans, allowing the manufacturing history (including the person who made the specific item) to be uploaded and then the purchaser to attach their own 'pictures and memories' as a digital record to enrich the ownership

@HiutMusic
Hiut Music has won several awared and has also been featured by Twitter as an example of 'connected products'. The idea has been showcased in several IOT (internet of things) conferences. See hiutmusic.co.uk

FIG __ 4.3
Cartoon from Scriberia
illustrating the Hiut Denim
'History Tag' concept

experience . The 'history tag' not only adds an additional digital 'layer' to the physcial garment, it also expresses skilled artisanship, a connection to the maker, and narratives of ownership as well as strongly signalling that the jeans are not disposable but they have an identifiable provenance and record of ownership that is to be highly valued. Although an ephemeral and digital application, it connects to the growing trend for 'slow fashion', lasting craftsmanship and a strong brand narrative.

There is some similarity in the strategic principles that are applied to the Do Lectures online platforms more broadly, using them primarily to create interest and value for the user and to strengthen the broader network rather than only viewing online channels as predominantly a means of sales or marketing. This is reflected in the Do Lectures' preferred emphasis on creating smaller numbers of high quality articles for Medium or curating interesting and varied content for their email newsletters rather than merely producing a high volume of brief posts to Facebook. In each case, they are seeking to provide additional dimensions of value usually expressed through an extension of the media forms adopted in the course of business. Particularly when these initiatives are in striking contrast to the normal media or business environment they are part of or, like Hiut Music, have surprising application, they become particularly effective. Some of these contrasts were noted in the survey data and online testimony collated and presented in the following chapters, particularly in relation to the event experience.

This chapter has provided an overview of the Do Lectures goals and objectives in establishing the annual event in Wales and considered the aims and intentions of its co-founders David and Clare Hieatt. Looking behind the event publicity and drawing on data from company documents and other sources that help to illuminate the wider purpose in establishing the Do Lectures, it has also outlined their online strategy and highlighted some of their more innovative use of digital platforms. Chapter 5 moves away from this examination from the perspective of the Do Lectures and presents the perspective of their audience, explored through a detailed survey of both those who had experienced the talks at the live event and those who only watched them online.

Impact and Influence
The Audience Survey

The results of the survey examining the impact of the
Do Lectures event and the online platform on their audience

"

"I could talk forever about what a great experience I had ..."

"I ran out of time filling this in ... can I continue it later?"

———

One of the primary research tools used to reach the Do Lectures audience was a comprehensive online survey that was designed to help understand what influence the event and its lectures had on both their live and online following. The overall design and general structure of this survey have already been described and this chapter provides a systematic overview of the results of that survey . It begins to gather the findings into emergent themes, ideas and other organising concepts that will contribute to the discussion and analysis presented later in this thesis.

The opening section of this chapter summarises the key survey parameters and elements of its administration , presenting a picture of the overall level of response and the general demographic profile of the respondents. This background provides an initial context for the detail of the survey results that follows and forms the main body of this chapter. As far as possible the survey responses are presented in the order of the questions asked. Although not included in the online survey form displayed to the respondents, specific question numbers are referenced in these results so that the corresponding part of the survey is clearly identifiable.

The numbering follows the sequence used by the supporting SoGo survey database and, for consistency, is also carried forward to the copy questionnaire provided for ease of reference in Appendix 1. It is worth noting that many of the survey responses asked open questions and so free-format verbatim answers formed a significant part of the available data. Given the volume of these replies, the results do not set out all responses for reasons of both space and clarity. However, typical or illustrative quotes are frequently given to provide supporting detail and clear examples of the available evidence. To preserve the general anonymity of the respondents, these quotes do not include individual names even where identifiable in the data set or given in reply to the survey. However, the respondent number automatically allocated by the survey software is provided so that there is a coding to the source data should it be required at a future date. For example, "this is my response" (121) would indicate a direct quotation from the individual survey respondent indexed as 121 in the survey database and whose name, details and other responses are stored in that part of the table.

The survey results set out below are organised in the sections and question groupings described in Table 5.1 overleaf. This structure was designed on the basis of the underlying questionnaire sequence introduced in Chapter 3 that was developed on the basis of McGuire's 'persuasion steps' or indicators of deepening influence or audience engagement.

Section	Description	Survey question numbers
Survey parameters	Details of the issue, circulation and response rates to the survey	
1 Respondent profile	Broad demographic information about the respondents	27-30
2 Engagement with the Do Lectures	How respondents first came across the Do Lectures and use of their online platforms or other media	1-5, 11
3 The Do Lectures live event experience	Respondents' experience of the Do Lectures live event, including any impact factors.	6-10
4 The Do Lectures online lectures	Respondents' viewing of the Do Lectures online videos and their reason to watch	11-14
5 The influence of the Do Lectures	Individual testimony of the influence of the Do Lectures, specifying individual lectures	15-16
6 Sharing and using the Do Lectures	Exploring recommendations, sharing and use of the Do Lectures with others	17-22
7 Wales and the Do Lectures	Respondent's perceptions of Wales and whether the Do Lectures have affected them	23-26

TABLE __ 5.1

Structure of the Audience Survey
Main sections of the survey and
their associated question groupings

SURVEY PARAMETERS

The online survey was launched on 15 December 2014, shortly before the Christmas break, and ran for a month until 16 January 2015. The survey timing was coordinated with a promotion in the Do Lectures' weekly newsletter asking for readers to contribute to the research and then personal invitations to participate were sent to the full Do Lectures mailing list. It was anticipated that the holiday period would allow more time for respondents to both read the invitation email as well as give appropriate time for them to reply to the more open-ended questions survey with their personal responses and detail. Part of the design was also to provide a public or open access link to the survey for embedding in the Do Lectures social media channels so that non-mailing list viewers or audience members could also contribute. However, this option was not taken up by Do Lectures although the link was used in the Twitter account of The Do Book Company, the publisher of books based on Do Lectures talks, for circulation to their Twitter followers.

The Do Lectures email list is comprised of subscribers to its weekly email newsletter as well as contacts gained through individual participation in the Do Lectures annual event or related activities such as workshops. With a total of 6187 email addresses, it represents the widest possible target audience being those who have expressed an interest in the Do Lectures and, primarily generated through their website, and so it is likely to contain individuals who watch and use their online videos. Using the SoGo Survey online platform for the administration of the survey, an invitation to participate was sent to each email address in that database that contained a personalised link to the questionnaire. As a result, it was possible to connect these responses to a particular email address so that, if required and permitted by the respondent, replies could be followed up at a later stage of the research.

Of the original mailing list of 6187 email addresses, it was possible to deliver 6071 of the survey invitations with the remaining one hundred or so email addresses being no longer valid or rejected by their host/domain server. A small number of further invitations, though delivered to valid email addresses, could also not be included in the survey since the email address was no longer used by the recipient. For example, many of these related to changes in job or workplace email addresses where the individual had changed employer and so were no

longer viewing messages sent to that address. However, these were relatively few, being just 27 of the 6071 valid email addresses used.

In total, there were 212 survey responses received – 204 in direct reply to the email invitation plus a further 8 through the public link to the survey which gave an overall response rate of 3.1%. Of these responses, eighteen were partially incomplete although omissions were mostly of a relatively minor nature and included at least one caused by a lost internet connection while submitting answers via a mobile device.

This response rate was not untypical for an approach relying on the use of a bulk customer list for contacting its recipients. Bryman has noted some of the problematic features of using online communications, particularly that web-based surveys generate far lower response rates than more direct methods such as postal surveys (Bryman 2012, p.674). This lower response rate is reflected in the proportion of email invitations opened and read by the recipients, tracked by the unique embedded link to the survey sent to each invitee. In this case, 33.5% of the email invitations were marked 'read' by the 6071 invitees, meaning that only a third of the intended recipients viewed the message. So, in this more carefully described context, 212 survey responses received from a total of 2072 email invitations that were viewed or read indicated a more acceptable response rate of 10.23%. Approximately one in ten responses is certainly a much more normative proportion ofthe number of individuals who have seen the email invitation and then chosen specifically to reply to the survey.

SURVEY RESULTS

1. RESPONDENT PROFILE

Part of the survey (questions 27 to 30) invited participants to provide information about themselves to obtain an elementary picture of the respondent's demographic profile. Given the nature of the survey and the unknown composition of the audience, these questions asked only for basic details about their home country, their age within broadly specified age-brackets, their general level of education and their gender. Although these questions were intended to provide some degree of insight into the general characteristics of the audience, the information requested was kept to a practical minimum and designed to be as non-intrusive as possible because the Do Lectures had generously provided their email mailing list as the basis for the invitations. Potentially more sensitive questions, for example about earnings or employment roles, were not included to try to ensure that there was no possibility of reputational damage by asking for personal data that would be inconsistent with the degree of privacy expected from being part of the Do Lectures general mailing list.

These questions were placed at the close of the survey rather than at the opening to avoid them being a potential barrier to participation. Also, being more straightforward to complete, they would be less vulnerable to possible respondent fatigue. Nevertheless, an overview of the respondent profile is given in the tables overleaf ahead of the more specific results so that there is some general context to the responses to individual questions as they are presented in this chapter.

Significantly more men (122) than women (73) responded to the survey invitation, although 17 people chose not to give a response to identify their gender. The strong majority of respondents who chose to give their age were 30 years of age or older, spread across the proportions given in the table below. A notably high proportion of those who replied were educated to degree level, with eight out of ten respondents holding an undergraduate/Bachelor degree or above, with a third also holding a postgraduate/Master's degree or above. To provide some general context, the 2011 census for England and Wales recorded that less than three out of ten (27.2%) of the general population were educated to undergraduate degree or above.

Q30. Please indicate your gender below			
Responses	**Count**	**%**	**Percentage of total respondents**
Male	122	57.55%	
Female	73	34.43%	
(Did not answer)	17	8.02%	
Total Responses	**212**		20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Q28. What age bracket are you in?			
Responses	**Count**	**%**	**Percentage of total respondents**
Under 18	0	0%	
18-29 years old	21	9.91%	
30-39 years old	63	29.72%	
40-49 years old	75	35.38%	
50-59 years old	28	13.21%	
60 years and older	6	2.83%	
(Did not answer)	19	8.96%	
Total Responses	**212**		20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Q29. What is the highest level of education/qualifications you have completed?			
Responses	**Count**	**%**	**Percentage of total respondents**
No formal qualifications	3	1.42%	
Upper secondary/college	6	2.83%	
Trade/technical/vocational training	11	5.19%	
Undergraduate/Bachelor's degree	98	46.23%	
Postgraduate/Master's degree and above	74	34.91%	
(Did not answer)	16	7.55%	
Total Responses	**212**		20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

The other general profile information asked for was the respondent's country of residence (Question 27). Choosing from a standard, drop-down list already programmed into the survey, replies came from a total of seventeen different countries, the majority (118 respondents, 61%) from the United Kingdom and further substantial proportions from the United States (23 replies, 12%) and Australia (18 replies, 9%), the other two countries where there was a Do Lectures event at the time of the survey.

Country of residence	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
United Kingdom	118	61%
United States of America	23	12%
Australia	18	9%
Netherlands	8	4%
Ireland	6	3%
Canada	3	2%
New Zealand	3	2%
France	2	1%
Germany	2	1%
Norway	2	1%
South Africa	2	1%
Spain	2	1%
Switzerland	2	1%
Afghanistan	1	1%
India	1	1%
Italy	1	1%
Sweden	1	1%

TABLE __ 5.2D
Respondent's profile
Country of residence

The first major section of the online survey was concerned with how each respondent first came across the Do Lectures. It asked people to identify whether the various digital platforms were instrumental in that discovery or whether other routes such as recommendations by friends, colleagues or other personal contacts were the principal means of connection to the event and its talks. A further question then enquired about individual use of the various Do Lectures media channels and digital platforms.

Question 1
How did you first come
across the Do Lectures?

Based on preliminary data from other parts of the research this opening question provided five pre-defined options for respondents to state through which of the major communication routes they first encountered the Do Lectures. These choices were developed following conversations at previous Do Lectures events and included a spectrum of responses ranging from personal recommendations, through traditional print-based publications as well as digital or social media routes. An open, free-format category was also included to provide for 'other' means of first discovering the Do Lectures not covered or anticipated by the previous response options. A summary of replies is shown in the table overleaf. It is worth noting that a very high proportion of these sixty-six respondents discovered the Do Lectures through personal contact or the recommendation of a friend, colleague, Do Lectures speaker or attendee. Also, many of the 'other' responses given, also demonstrated the place of personal connection in finding the Do Lectures. Blogs and other online articles were also a significant point of first contact (60) with press, magazine or other print articles (20) also being an important source of discovery. Perhaps surprisingly, Facebook and other social media channels were a relatively low initial touchpoint for survey respondents, with just over 6% of the survey respondents indicating this was how they first came across the Do Lectures. A more detailed breakdown of these responses is shown in Table 5.3A opposite:

A large number of people, nearly a quarter of the total number of respondents, selected the 'other' category. When these were reviewed individually, some of these verbatim responses provided more specific descriptions of replies that could have been placed in the specified categories. However, there were several emergent groupings among these 51 'other' replies. Many individuals expressed that their first connection to the Do Lectures was through being a customer or fan of howies, the clothing company David and Clare Hieatt founded but had

TABLE __ 5.3A

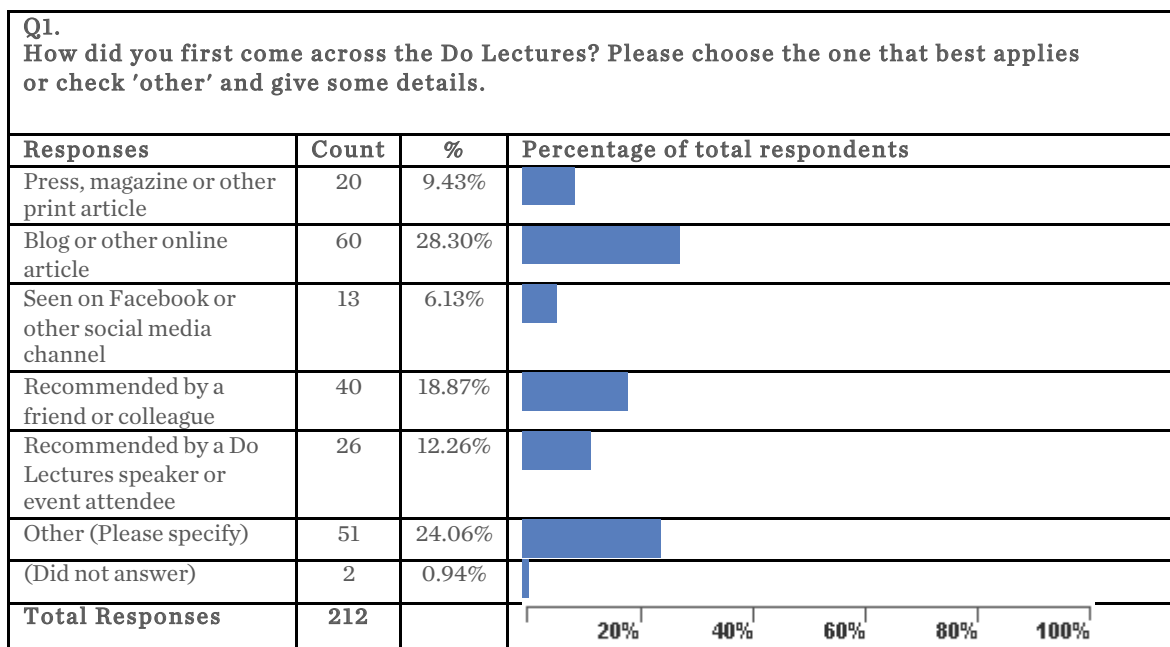*Finding the Do Lectures*

Respondents' means of first discovery

Q1. How did you first come across the Do Lectures? Please choose the one that best applies or check 'other' and give some details.			
Responses	**Count**	**%**	**Percentage of total respondents**
Press, magazine or other print article	20	9.43%	
Blog or other online article	60	28.30%	
Seen on Facebook or other social media channel	13	6.13%	
Recommended by a friend or colleague	40	18.87%	
Recommended by a Do Lectures speaker or event attendee	26	12.26%	
Other (Please specify)	51	24.06%	
(Did not answer)	2	0.94%	
Total Responses	**212**		20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

TABLE __ 5.3B

Finding the Do Lectures

Specific 'other 'responses

Response	Number of mentions	Sample response
Howies	22	*"from being a howies customer years back"*
Hiut denim	6	*"via a search for an ethical jeans company"*
David or Clare Hieatt	7	*"kept reading about David in magazines I bought"*
fforest	4	*"avid howies, fforest and path of a Doer fan"*

left back in 2009. A significant additional number of individuals noted their first contact with the Do Lectures was through existing interest in other work or projects of David and Claire Hieatt such as Hiut denim, their most recent business enterprise. Some of these mentions and responses are given in Table 5.4B above.

There were also several verbatim responses that were very explicit in noting the part that traditional media items served in connecting them to the event. For example, some respondents did also point towards the Do Lecture's poster *Say Yes More Than No* (illustrated opposite) sold in their online shop or to the influence of David Hieatt's book *The Path of the Doer* (Hieatt & Smith 2010) co-authored with the illustrator Andy Smith. These responses reinforced the place that other non-digital elements had within the overall media ecology and had relevance in attracting the audience.

Also identified in this opening section of the survey was whether each respondent had attended a Do Lectures live annual event and whether they had watched one or more of the lectures online. Since all were on the Do Lectures email subscription list, it was anticipated that most invitees would have watched online content but a key part of the assessing the influence of the event was to establish how this was exerted between the live event and the digital platform. So, Question 6 asked, "Have you attended a Do Lectures live annual event in Wales, The US or in Australia?" The majority of respondents (58%, 124 respondents) had not been to a live event, but a significant proportion (42%, 88 respondents) had attended one or more of the Do Lectures conferences. In total, there were 102 attendances in the live events from 87 respondents indicating that several people had attended an event more than once. A breakdown of the event participation is shown in Table 5;4A below, most of the respondents had attended the Wales event but also a significant proportion of attendees from the inaugural Do Australia 2014 event chose to participate in the survey.

To develop the enquiry, a sub-question asked the respondents to state the capacity in which they had attended the live event; whether as a paying guest, as one of the guest speakers or as a volunteer assisting with the running of the Do Lectures conference. This breakdown of the type of participation by year is shown in Tables 5B overleaf.

FIG __ 5.1

One of the Do Lectures series of art posters purchased by a significant proportion of the audience.

Which of the Do Lectures annual events have you attended and in what capacity?

Q6. Location

		Wales		USA		Australia		Did not answer		Total
(a)	2007	2	0.94%	0	0%	0	0%	210	99.06%	212
(b)	2008	3	1.42%	0	0%	0	0%	209	98.58%	212
(c)	2009	6	2.83%	0	0%	0	0%	206	97.17%	212
(d)	2010	7	3.30%	0	0%	0	0%	205	96.70%	212
(e)	2011	13	6.13%	4	1.89%	0	0%	195	91.98%	212
(f)	2012	9	4.25%	4	1.89%	0	0%	199	93.87%	212
(g)	2013	19	8.96%	4	1.89%	0	0%	189	89.15%	212
(h)	2014	21	9.91%	4	1.89%	11	5.19%	176	83.02%	212
	Total	75		16		11				

Q6. Capacity

	Count (by year of participation)								Total
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Paying attendee	2	1	3	3	11	6	9	20	55
Speaker	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	7	10
Volunteer/other	0	2	3	2	3	6	8	9	33
Total responses	2	3	6	5	15	14	17	36	98

TABLE __ 5.4A, 5.4B
Attending the live event
Respondents who have
attended a live Do Lectures
event and in what capacity

As well as trying to identify each respondent's first point of contact, a further question asked about their use of the Do Lectures various online channels, particularly their website and more popular social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook. As part of bounding the case study, some platforms that had previously been in use but were passive during the period of research and not updated by the Do Lectures team were deliberately omitted from the survey. For example, the Do Lectures Tumblr profile was started on 8 January 2009 but it had not been updated since 15 December 2011.
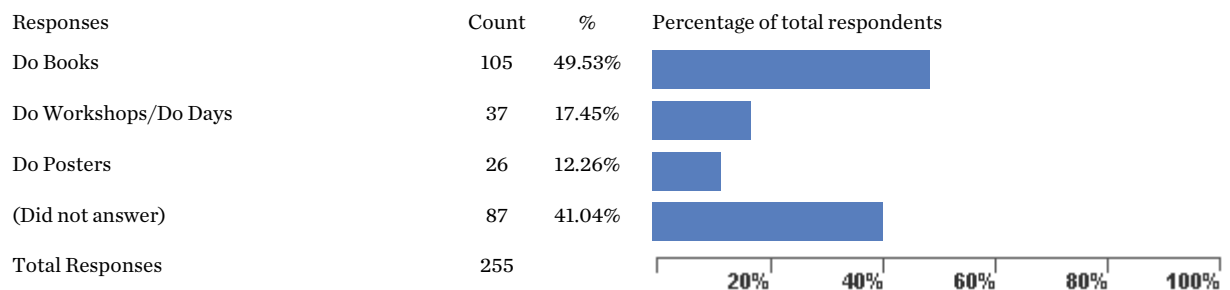
Question 2
Which of the Do Lectures online channels do you know, use or contribute to?

Question 3
How often do you visit or use these channels?

On reviewing the responses given to this question, the replies indicated that the question was substantially misunderstood and revealed a weakness in the survey design. The question was designed to elicit information about the specific use of the Do Lectures channels by individual respondents but the replies given are inconsistent with information provided elsewhere in the survey. It appears that the respondents have described their use of these channels in general, for example, their use of a platform as a whole rather than the specific use of Do Lectures account within it. Since this question and the responses given are unreliable, the detail of these replies has not been included in these results.

Question 4
What other Do Lectures media/events have you bought/participated in?

Question 4 enquired about other elements of the Do Lectures media ecology that respondents had engaged with. The goal was to find out what other Do Lectures media and events were purchased or attended. Overall, the responses were as shown in Table 5.5 below:

Responses	Count	%	Percentage of total respondents
Do Books	105	49.53%	
Do Workshops/Do Days	37	17.45%	
Do Posters	26	12.26%	
(Did not answer)	87	41.04%	
Total Responses	255		

Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

TABLE __ 5.5
Other Do Lectures media and events

Although the majority of purchasers of the Do posters (19 of 26 respondents) and attendees of the Do Workshops (34 of 37 respondents) had attended a Do Lecture annual conference event, proportionally, there was a much greater uptake of the Do Books by the online audience with just over half (53 people) purchasing one or more of the titles.

3. THE DO LECTURES LIVE EVENT EXPERIENCE

Of the 212 respondents, a total of 87 people had attended a Do Lectures live event. They were then asked about aspects of the live event that had the most impact on them. It is important to note that at this stage, no attempt was made to pre-define the nature of that impact, for example, by reference to long-term change or shifts in thinking or perspective. The nature of the impact was left as a personal and subjectively defined issue, although some of the triggers for that perceived impact were suggested within the question. These aspects were chosen and selected for inclusion in the survey based on the researcher's observation and participation in the event as well as from feedback gained from other sources such as informal interviews, attendee blog posts or other online materials. These preselected choices were combined with an open 'other' category' to allow respondents to describe other relevant aspects of the event. The results are shown in Table 5.6 opposite.

Question 8
What aspects of the event
had most impact on you?

Nine responses were received in the 'other' category to describe impact triggers not previously defined or given in the preset checklist of potential responses. However, when these verbatim responses were examined, all stated that it was a combination of factors already listed in the question that gave the event its impact or 'magic' and no additional factors were suggested. One of these attendees stated specifically that the particular impact of the Do Lectures arose from "the interplay between strong, diverse inspiring content and the conversations that leads to with other people". While it was encouraging that the pre-survey work had correctly identified impact triggers, it was interesting to note that two fundamental elements in the Do Lectures event experience were not ranked as having the most impact – food and accommodation. A third factor, the workshops, were identified by just one person as having the most impact but the respondent provided no further detail to elaborate on their response (see question 9 below).

The question that followed invited a more thorough answer and asked people to "Tell us more about the impact this factor made" (Question 9) with the intention

Question 9
Tell us more aout the impact
this factor made.

TABLE __ 5.6

Impact factors from the Do
Lectures live event

Q8. What aspect of the event had the most impact on you?			
Responses	Count	%	Percentage of total respondents
Talks	27	31.03%	▇▇▇▇
Meeting the speakers	10	11.49%	▇
Location and setting	8	9.20%	▇
Accommodation	0	0%	
Food	0	0%	
WORKSHOPS	1	1.15%	
Conversation with others	31	35.63%	▇▇▇▇▇
Other (Please specify)	9	10.34%	▇
(Did not answer)	1	1.15%	
Total Responses	87		20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

of exploring in more depth the impact of these stated factors. All but 10 of the live event attendees chose to answer this open, free-format question and they provided further descriptions to support their previous answers. Although some of these responses also included comment or observation about factors other than one they had previously pinpointed as having most affected them, this greater level of details provided some rich insights into the dynamics of the live event and how it was influencing the audience. There was a great deal of variety in the responses, but they can be grouped by the primary impact factors described by the respondents. To consider them in the sequence of factors listed by the survey question:

Talks

The talks or lectures were the second largest factor identified as having the most impact on the live audience. Although several respondents referred to the interest, variety and breadth of subjects included in the Do Lectures talks, no-one at this point described particular talks or the specific content of what was shared within them.

Despite the many engaging themes or topics as well as the prominence of certain speakers, when describing the influence of the talks, it was not the spoken narrative or informational content that was reported to have made the impact. Instead, factors in the broader environment created at the event were described as the main contributor to the impact – the buzz, the excitement, the reflection, conversation and so on. Also, a particular note was made of the significance of speakers who were engaging by "telling real stories rather than their canned talks" (53) and who were "passionate, open, emotional, soul-baring" (128). The physical environment too was given credit as critical to the experience. For example, one response given stated that "there is nothing to beat listening to wisdom from three metres away" (37) and another described "the humbleness of the environment" as "crucial" (31). These comments are of interest because they directly reflect the contribution of the setting within which the talks were presented that itself added certain qualities to the experience. Although medium effects are most obviously associated with content delivered through the use of broadcast or online channels, even this low-tech (and what could be described as a non-mediated) setting of a tent or a barn was recognised by the participants themselves as having an impact on the reception of the lectures.

The talks themselves were regularly highlighted as an important impact factor, but the live audience was significantly affected more by the general environment created within the lecture event, than by specific content. The responses given showed that this impact was achieved across several vectors of the experience of listening to the lectures. Some of these verbatim responses are shown in Table 5.7 overleaf, grouped by the themes that emerged from answers given to this question.

Meeting the speakers

10 of the 87 respondents indicated that it was meeting the speakers that had the most impact on them. Their verbatim responses to provide more detail about that impact disclosed one key theme – that "access to speakers" (29) was a notable part of the experience. As with other aspects of the event design, this is in purposeful contrast with other events where keynote speakers or higher profile guests are frequently sequestered from the main audience rather than staying on site alongside other attendees. Another respondent noted that this access "helps to create a bond" (29) and another that it allowed them to make "connections that have continued and built since" (149).

Location and setting

Eight survey respondents chose 'location and setting' as the factor that had the greatest impact on them and six of them provided further comment about that impact, including:

> *"The locations made the conversation with others special. It gave focus and space for reflection" (18)*

> *"Fforest is an incredibly beautiful place, run by insightful lovely people. I found the location really inspiring" (85)*

> *"The natural, welcoming and beautiful setting created an atmosphere where anything seemed possible" (6)*

As with some of the other factors, it was interesting that about 1 in 10 of the respondents that had attended a live Do Lectures event found that it was not the talks themselves that were most influential – instead it was a contextual factor, in this case, the physical environment in which the event took place.

Theme	Example responses
Provided inspiration	*"very motivating to listen to other Do-ers journeys" (24)*
	"Inspired to learn more, do more, achieve more" (174)
Generated new thinking/outlook	*"inspired me to think about myself and my life in new ways … before I went to the event I felt very lost" (13)*
	"a lot more open to new ideas and experiences " (13)
Triggered conversation/connection	*"Inspired new thinking and led to conversations with other speakers and attendees" (180)*
Enhanced self-belief	*"you find that everything is possible if you want to make it" (145)*
	"great moment of reflection that restored my belief in my own path and that of others" (196)
	"opened … to new potential" (203)
Stimulated personal redirection	*"I effectively changed my entire path from that weekend" (81)*
	"helped to clarify and support my plans, ambitions and next steps."
	"Inspired to do something different with my life"(202)
	"Allowed me to believe that I didn't have to follow the path expected of me" (59)
Motivated personal action	*"made me leave the event buzzing and full of good intentions (that I did follow up – I started an all women's mountain bike club" (165)*

Food and accommodation

Most guests and attendees stayed onsite at the Do Lectures Wales, camping in a fairly unique setting and more unusual accommodation. The meals were also distinctive being freshly prepared from locally sourced organic foods, often including fish caught in the local river or grown and produced within just a few miles of the event. Simple dishes using fresh produce, some of which was grown on-site, provided high-quality food prepared by local professional chefs. Although the researcher's observations at the event were that both the food and accommodation provided were distinctive elements of the Do Lectures experience, within the survey, none of the respondents described the food or the accommodation as making the most impact upon them.

Workshops

At the event, the practical workshops led by some of the speakers were a prominent part of the programme. However, just one Do Lectures attendee noted them as the most influential component of the event, but gave no further elaboration or more specific details.

Conversation with others

This factor had naturally emerged as being a major contribution to the event from the researcher's own observations and experience. Although expecting to appreciate the context of the talks as well as the lectures themselves, the opportunity and space given to conversation was a dominant feature of the event. As a result, this element was pre-selected for inclusion in the survey as one of the impact factors for respondents to identify with. It is worth observing that for conference event reviews, informal, unstructured and non-front-directed conversations between participants are not necessarily included as part of the evaluation process. However, it was clear that at the Do Lectures this was an important and formative part of the live conference experience that made a crucial contribution to the perceived impact of the event.

Within the survey responses for this question, 31 of the 87 respondents identified 'Conversations with others' as being the most influential component, although several answers highlighted that this factor interacted heavily with other components. These 31 responses included repeated motifs that explained in

more detail why their conversation with others was such an important factor in the influence of the event: it allowed connection with others and a sharing of experience, it encouraged openness of expression and the sharing of thoughts and ideas.

Connection to others was something expressed by a half of the people who had highlighted the conversation sub-factor. The relationships described varied in their intensity and, being an open verbatim response, also in the level of detail supplied. Many wrote in general terms about being inspired or energised by these conversations, once commenting that it had a 'profound influence' (111). Others described more of the depth of those connections, some of which were only more fully recognised after the Do Lectures event. These were recorded variously as resulting in a long-term business relationship(21), regular ongoing contact as well as more personal outcomes such as finding new friends or mentors. The significance of these was strongly expressed by some of those individuals; for example, one person replied: "it has led to one of the most exciting friendships in my life" (190) and another "I met people there who I know will be long term friends and mentors" (127). Given that these were reflections on their experience of the Do Lectures a minimum of a year or more after the event (and in one case, five years later), there is no reason to doubt that these are longer-term effects and not just immediate post-event enthusiasm towards the people they have met there.

Some respondents also reported on the contributory dynamics of the conversations they had found so influential during the event. Two particular dimensions described were firstly the contribution of shared experience and, secondly, the environment in which those conversations were set. The importance of participating in the event itself as "memorable shared experience" (22) was one aspect of this, but more common was the recognition of others who were "like-minded but highly individual people"(155) and who were "grappling with similar questions – one that it is often difficult to discuss in everyday life" (42). Clearly for these participants, the discovery of other people like them or the experience of "finding the others" was a crucial part of the Do Lectures experience. One guest (169) described it as:

> *"Amazing to share stories and experiences with people that 'get you'. One of the first times I've been ever surrounded by people that are similarly quietly ambitious, dedicated, driven and have the ability to think big. So many people think so small it can be crippling."*

In addition to finding kindred thinkers, the second dimension affecting the impact of conversations described how the radical change of context had a direct effect, describing "conversations in such an amazing space" (15), for others it allowed them "to open up and talk" (194) and that "the environment allows you to be free and open, which means it is impossible not to connect" (127). As well as the Do Lectures surroundings and location, a further contributory factor was given in the observation that "there was no air of competitiveness" (55) and that because there was "no pecking order, conversation is very open and analytical" (164).

Unsurprisingly, some respondents found it difficult to select a single influence factor but, despite the survey deliberately pushing them for a specific choice, there was a clear acknowledgement of the interaction between the conversation and the Do Lectures talks. In itself, this is not at all surprising since it is perfectly natural for the topic of a shared experience to form the basis for conversation with others. However, the significance attached to it by the attendees is particularly relevant and demonstrates an impact or use beyond simply supporting a personal or social connection to others attending the event. One attendee from the live event expressed it like this:

> *"I really wanted to pick two of the above – which would have been speakers AND conversations with others ... because they go together. The conversations that happen, as a result of what has been shared in the barn, spark some magical interactions" (127)*

This was a view and a sentiment repeated by several others, for example, an attendee at the Wales event replied: "It was both the talks and the meeting other people that had equal impact" (136). Others focused their reply more carefully and gave further explanation of their experience: "conversation ... adds considerable additional value to the content of the lectures" (164) and "it was the conversations in such an amazing space that really made the talks stick with me" (15). Both of these comments specifically highlight that there was perceived value in creating the space and environment for conversation, but that they also made a direct contribution to the impact of the lectures themselves. That is, the deliberate conversational environment created within the event both reinforced and enhanced the formal content of the Do Lectures talks. Further, when having to make a choice, their conversation with others was selected as having the most impact on the greatest number of respondents and by more respondents than had selected the talks themselves at the primary impact factor. Moreover, in

addition to any other outcomes noted elsewhere in the survey responses such as friendships or connections that emerged from those contextual conversations, they were also viewed by a significant proportion as directly enhancing and contributing to the impact of the lectures.

The final question asked specifically of the Do Lectures live audience and their participation at the event was to "describe anything that you think is unique about the Do Lectures experience" (Question 10). In addition to seeking to identify memorable aspects of the conference, it also attempted to draw out distinctive characteristics of the Do Lectures experience. From personal conversation with many of the attendees during the period of the study, it was clear that most participants were fairly regular conference attendees. In addition to following their industry or corporate events, many were also highly motivated in their pursuit of professional or personal development, strongly evidenced by their investment in the ticket price of the Do Lectures event.

77 of the 102 respondents who had attended a live event chose to provide further details. These reinforced many of the features and dimensions of the experience they had previously noted as impact factors in the previous question, but there was a helpful elaboration of some of these, either by providing additional detail or a fuller description of their 'uniqueness'. Some couldn't identify one or more single factors; several respondents felt that "Everything is unique about Do" (126) or that it was "A package deal!" (87) and pointed to the entire experience as being different to other conferences and festivals. For these (also 6, 117, 168, 173) it was clear that they had been affected by the combined impact of the event, with one attendee refusing even to place the Do Lectures alongside any other conference by stating "There is no comparison" (170) and another "What isn't unique!" (53). For one, it was their inability to put into words the uniqueness of the event that made it unique:

> *"You can't explain it – that's exactly what makes the Do Lectures different. I have tried and failed on several occasions but there is no easy way of describing it other than the Do Lectures" (59).*

However, in general, the individual responses were more specific and identified individual factors. By far the most common theme was the uniqueness of the location that was mentioned in almost half of the replies. In many cases, there was no further description although several people made it clear that it was the

remoteness of the location "in the middle of nowhere" (155), being outdoors and without good wifi or phone signals that "makes you feel more present and not check your emails or not go off and do work" (181). The importance and uniqueness of the outdoor venue were also emphasised by others, some who commented that "the connection to the landscape was special" (103) or similar. Even though some conference organisers would baulk at the remoteness of the Do Lectures events, all of which are held in rural locations with limited facilities, several of the attendees found this a positive factor. One was drawn by the challenge of travelling to the venue ("you really have to want to go there" 189), another commenting on its "distance/edge" (200) being a critical factor, that is, being located in a comparatively remote setting just on the boundaries of comfortable travel and transport arrangements. The Do Lectures was described specifically as having "a humble vision … to bring people together in hard to reach places and let it all unfold" (127).

It was interesting to note that many recognised the distinct effect of a conference held in a natural setting and mainly in an outdoor environment. They felt that this enabled the Do Lectures to "immerse you into the event" (79, also 202). Even those who found the outdoor experience of the Do Lectures more of a challenge were able to see the positive effects of this particular event environment. For example, one individual observed its impact on their presentation of self in that "camping and using more basic facilities … forces us to be more genuine" (133); a delegate from the United States noted the "harshness of the setting" but also stating that it had the benefit of bringing people together and "added to the charm of how cosy everyone is with each other" (133). The challenge of camping and being in an outdoors environment and a comparatively remote and unfamiliar setting was not just seen as key to some of the social dynamics but also to individual attitude.

> "The setting, the format, the openness and the content make the Do very unique. The Do Lectures portray the unconference experience. And it's because one if out of a comfort zone on so many levels, that one becomes receptive to all and everything during those four days" (37)

Albeit not ranked as the most important factor (Question 9), the quality and simplicity of the meals were repeatedly mentioned as a valued part of the experience, sometimes with great feeling such as "the food and drinks are exceptional and a key part of the formula" (180). Those who noted it did not

usually provide further detail itself except to mention its contribution to the "social atmosphere" (18) and wider dynamics of the event. For example:

> *"everyone eating together was unique ... removed the 'them and us; vibe most other conferences would have" (27)*

> *"food and time at the table at mealtimes is so crucial for the event and for conversation" (98)*

Other factors were also similarly praised as making a strong and unique contribution, with ten attendees appreciating the 'smallness' or 'intimacy' of the event that allowed them to 'get to know pretty much everybody' (51). For one person, they described this sense of social connection formed over a short period of just a few days of the Do Lectures event as being 'like being part of secret club' (41).

These various factors all contributed to creating a rich audience experience. The design of the event, the medium provided by its environment and the structure of its timetable had created conditions where strong interpersonal connections could begin to form, develop and solidify. For many respondents this was a unique strength and a very obvious contrast to other conferences they had attended, Instead, at the Do Lectures 'wanky corporate bullshit was left at the door' (169) and there was an 'amazing feeling of community' (32, and others) and 'togetherness' (129). This sense of inclusiveness and connection was particularly evident in comments about the Do Lectures speakers. Many respondents noted that the variety and mix of quality speakers and themes made the event unique, but interestingly there was a greater weight of commentary about the impact of the social context of those speakers. Around 1 in 10 of those who answered, mentioned that the unique aspect of the Do Lectures was its 'flat structure' and the deliberate lack of hierarchy that had made the impact. Speakers and attendees were all guests that shared the same event experience, engaged in peer-style conversations and shared meals together around the same large tables without any need for badges or other indicators of status often conferred by other event organisers.

The responses to this question were varied and in some senses repeated observations made earlier in the survey. However the greater detail given here indicated that, despite being difficult to explain or isolate into separate factors, the Do Lectures had created a unique experience for their guests – unique not just because of its setting, but because the design of the event had such a major impact on the interpersonal dynamics and social connections that would form. The absence of environmental factors such as a warm, comfortable indoor setting or name badges or a 'green room' and other privileges afforded to speakers and normally taken as a given by conference organisers actually made a profound and effective contribution to the event. What was said and by whom was an important part of the event experience, but when asked about the 'uniqueness' of the Do Lectures, this was a much less significant element and it was the social atmosphere and other less tangible contextual conditions that were most appreciated and noted in the responses. Repeated throughout the verbatim replies were comments that suggested that the major innovation of the Do Lectures was to give much attention to crafting the audience experience, maximising many aspects of the lecture event by creating a surrounding context that was physically, emotionally and socially more challenging than most other conferences. Each element contributed to the shape of the event as a distinct medium form, influential because it also provided the opportunity for deeper individual engagement as well as facilitating a myriad of social interactions.

The second major section of the survey investigated the online dimension of the Do Lectures media ecology - the recordings of the talks hosted and accessed on online platforms such as Vimeo, YouTube as well as through their website. This part of the survey opened with a question about frequency of watching (Question 11) and suggested a range of responses from 'never' to 'daily'. Although these response categories are imprecise measures, they were deemed sufficient to gain a general understanding of the frequency with which the audience chose to engage with the Do Lectures online. Mainly as a retrospective survey of previous experience, these general measures provided a quick and straightforward means for each respondent to give an estimate of their individual viewing behaviour.

Question 11
Roughly how often do you watch one or more of the Do Lectures online?

Seven of the 212 respondents did not answer this question and, perhaps surprisingly for those responding to an online survey, a further 14 stated that they never watched the Do Lectures online (split almost evenly between the two main audience segments). The remaining 191 watched with varying degrees of frequency, almost all of those viewing online lectures just monthly or, even less often, just 'occasionally'(see Table 5.8 opposite). The viewing frequencies split by audience type - those who had attended a Do Lectures event and those who had only watched online - is shown in figure 5.2 opposite. There were some differences, particularly in the proportion of each audience segment who viewed the Do Lectures weekly. This was 9% of the live audience compared to 4.4% of the online only audience, indicating stronger weekly engagement with the online platform among those who had attended the Do Lectures.

Also of interest was the range of devices used for watching the Do Lectures online videos and the preferred type (Question 14), whether a mobile device such as a smartphone or tablet or a larger device such as a laptop or desktop computer. Also included was the option to note viewing on television, for example, by using built-in smart features or an attached internet-enabled device such as an Apple TV box. Given the trend towards mobile browsing, it was unsurprising that the majority of viewing of the talks took place on portable or mobile devices with around a third of respondents stating that they did not use a desktop computer to view the Do Lectures.

Question 14
What type of device do you use to wach the online Do Lectures?

Further details of the frequency of watching and the device-types used are shown in Table 5.9 overleaf.

TABLE __ 5.8
Frequency of watching the
Do Lectures online

Q11. Roughly how often do you watch one or more of the Do Lectures online?			
Responses	Count	%	Percentage of total respondents
Never	14	6.60%	
Occasionally	108	50.94%	
Monthly	69	32.55%	
Weekly	14	6.60%	
Daily	0	0%	
(Did not answer)	7	3.30%	
Total Responses	**212**		

FIG __ 5.2
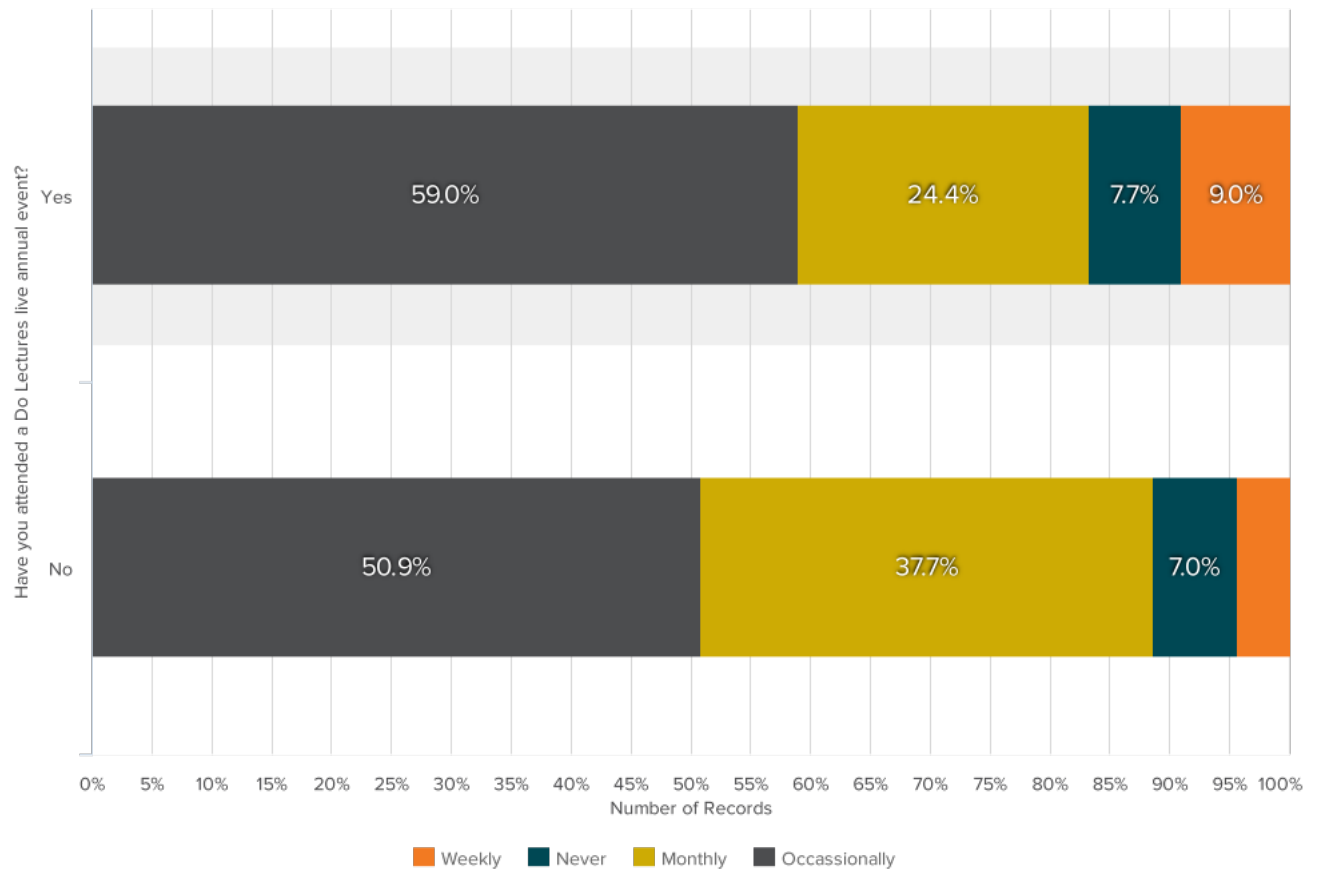*Frequency of watching*
split by live and online only
audience samples

TABLE __ 5.9

Type of device used for watching the Do Lectures online

What type of device do you use to watch the online Do Lectures?						
Q14. Choice of device						
		Mainly	**Sometimes**	**Never**	**Did not answer**	**Total**
(a)	Mobile or smartphone	[26] 12.26%	[61] 28.77%	[40] 18.87%	85	212
(b)	Tablet or iPad	[47] 22.17%	[50] 23.58%	[46] 21.70%	69	212
(c)	Laptop or netbook	[119] 56.13%	[3 6]16.98%	[11] 5.19%	46	212
(d)	Desktop computer	[42] 19.81%	[34] 16.04%	[69] 32.55%	67	212
(e)	TV (smart TV/Apple TV etc)	[3] 1.42%	[17] 8.02%	[99] 46.70%	93	212

TABLE __ 5.10

Reasons for watching the Do Lectures online

Why do you watch the online Do Lectures? Click a response for each suggested purpose for watching. If you have other reasons for watching, you can let us know in the question that follows.						
Q12. Reason to watch						
		Mainly	**Sometimes**	**Never**	**Did not answer**	**Total**
(a)	Entertainment or leisure	[41] 19.34%	[94] 44.34%	[15] 7.08%	62	212
(b)	Information or facts	[55] 25.94%	[82] 38.68%	[14] 6.60%	6	212
(c)	Inspiration or new ideas	[162] 76.42%	[24] 11.32%	[1] 0.47%	25	212
(d)	Business or professional	[66] 31.13%	[76] 35.85%	[20] 9.43%	50	212
(e)	Education or learning	[100] 47.17%	[62] 29.25%	[7] 3.30%	43	212
(f)	Other (please specify below)	[5]2. 36	[8] 3.77%	[26] 12.26%	173	212

Before asking more explicitly about how they had been an influence, a general question asked about the reason or motivation for watching the Do Lectures online. Although giving the option to provide 'other' reasons, several broad categories of answer were provided that captured existing patterns of watching. By far the majority (162) of the combined audience that responded categorised their main reason for viewing as to get inspiration or new ideas, strongly followed by those watching mainly for education or learning (100). Viewing the lectures for leisure or entertainment was much less given as a primary reason to watch, although this was a secondary motivation for just over half of the respondents.

Overall, around 90% of the audience watched the Do Lectures for inspiration or new ideas with just 25 of the 212 viewers not selecting this as a reason to watch. There was also a strong interest in watching them for business or professional purposes with 80% of the respondents describing their motivation in this category to a greater or lesser degree. In total, 142 replies gave this as their primary or secondary reason to view the online lectures. The two main audience segments responded in very similar proportions across the pre-stated reasons for watching. However, there were some additional 'other' reasons for viewing the Do Lectures online reported in the following verbatim replies:

curiosity (23)   *to share with others (43)*

To see and hear about the things other people have done (46)

Helping others see that there are authentically beautiful
thinkers out there (53)

Reminder of what I learnt in Wales 2013 (59)

networking (82)   *sense of community (158)*

Because I want to be a doer (177)   *positive vibes (178)*

because you're guaranteed to learn something
and no-one is ever boring! (190)

Some of these statements could have been placed in one of the pre-stated categories, but it was interesting to note that at least one person was using them

as a 'reminder of what I learnt in Wales 2013', making use of the online video as a means of keeping their experience at the Do Lectures live event alive. Also of note was the primary reason 'to share with others', particularly since this aspect is explored more fully in a later section of the survey and will be detailed below.

5. THE DO LECTURES INFLUENCE ON RESPONDENTS

The two questions in the following section moved the focus of the survey onto more individual testimony about the Do Lectures' talks. The first question asked respondents to identify talks that 'have influenced you ... and how they have affected your thinking or attitudes' (Question 15) and the follow-up question invited them to describe in their own terms 'changes in you, your work or your life that you would directly attribute to the influence of the Do Lectures' (Question 16). By inviting respondents to recall specific talks and providing very open questions about their impact, this part of the survey was designed to provide minimum prompts and definitions of influence in order to gather what was deemed important by each respondent rather than provide pre-selected responses.

Within the 212 survey responses, 133 provided a reply to Question 15 and around two-thirds of these identified one or more particular speakers or talks that had influenced them in some way. Across these 84 replies, it was interesting to observe that there was a high degree of individuality in the responses as 83 different Do Lectures talks were mentioned specifically or described sufficiently to be identifiable. At the time of the survey, with 245 Do Lectures having been delivered across their various events, this meant that about a third of the speakers were noted by one or more respondents as influential. As well as indicating a consistent breadth of appeal and degree of impact on the annual roster of speakers, there was a relatively even spread of endorsements with the theme as well as the speaker's name being clearly recalled. Of the 83 Do Lectures speakers described in the free-format responses given to this question, about half of them received just one (45 of the speakers) or two (13 speakers) mentions each but there was a small number of more frequently noted lectures. These are shown in the table opposite, ranked by the number of mentions describing them as influential and includes the given title of the lecture to provide an indication of the content of the talk.

Question 15
If any of the Do Lectures have influenced you, which one(s) and how have they affected your thinking or attitudes?

Speaker	Event, Do Lecture title	Number of mentions for influence
Mickey Smith Photographer, filmmaker and surfer	2011 (Wales) Do trust in the things you love	15
Maggie Doyne Founder, Blinknow Foundation	2010 (Wales) How the human family can do better	10
Mark Shayler Eco-design consulting	2011 (Wales) Why we need to design better things, not design better	5
Zach Klein Co-founder Vimeo, DIY.org	2013 (Wales) Build the company you wouldn't sell	5
Alastair McIntosh Writer, social activist	2008 (Wales) The importance of hope	5
Steve Edge, Brand guru, design	2010 (Wales) Why you should have a party everyday	4
Alison Holden Food grower	2010 (Wales) How to get young people to love the land	4
Tim Smit Co-founder Eden Project	2012 (Wales) Why is beauty such an important word?	4
David Allen Productivity (GTD)	2010 (Wales) The mind is for having ideas, not for holding them	4

TABLE __ 5.11
*Individual talks mentioned
as influential*

Especially given the very large number of speakers across the various annual events, it was surprising to see such a significant proportion and topical variety of the talks recalled by individual respondents. Although some of the speakers noted are already prominent or influential (such as David Allen, author of *Getting Things Done* and Tim Smit, of the Eden Project), many of them are relatively unknown but were mentioned as memorable for either the originality of their projects (Alastair Humphries and weekend 'mini-adventures') or for the distinctiveness of their presentation (Gavin Strange of Aardman, delivering at an intense and highly energetic pace). In addition to so many individual speakers being described as personally influential, there were many respondents who demonstrated almost a reluctance to pinpoint individual talks because they had benefitted from 'many different ones' (60), had 'loved them all' (54), 'too many to mention' (40, similarly 168, 169) or that 'overall every talk I watched and heard at Do was inspirational, encouraging or interesting' (123), a response that was not isolated or unique.

Particularly given the wide spread of attention and with only two of the 83 speakers gaining more than five mentions in response to this question, an analysis splitting these responses into the two main audience segments provided little meaningful additional data. However, the number of mentions for the impact of Mickey Smith's talk from Do Lectures Wales 2011 was slightly higher among the online-only part of the audience. This may be because a major portion of his talk, even when presented in the live setting comprised a video segment of his award winning documentary that carried particularly well online in conjunction with the link to his website.

Mickey Smith
Mickey Smith's Do Lectures talk featured his award-winning short documentary *The Dark Side of the Lens*. It can be viewed at vimeo.com/mickeysmith

The responses to the second part of this question that asked 'how have they affected your thinking or attitudes" were much less developed and the majority of the replies simply provided highlights of personally memorable themes or ideas discovered in the talks. However, there were several striking descriptions of effect among the 133 respondents. The strongest of these were predominantly given by those who had attended a Do Lectures event in person, for example:

> 'It was a profound experience. I showed up high strung from being a workaholic, with some challenging stuff happening in my life ... and left with a pretty dramatic new outlook. (...) A good friend of mine said this to me when I returned home "What happened to you on that trip? You seem at peace"' (127)

As suggested by responses to other parts of the survey, it was very clear that the perceived influence of the Do Lectures was attributed much more to the experience of the live event as a whole rather than to the impact of individual speakers. For example, one prominent and repeated reflection was that:

> *'it's very hard to pick out individual talks against the experience of being there and it all forming some kind of overall experience/influence on you'* (200)

> *'there wasn't a particular lecture, it was more the overall set of lectures'* (201)

> *'all had an impact no single lecture effected (sic) me more a cumulative effect' (202)*

One statement emphasised that 'for me they are more relevant and useful than TED' (175), noting the combination of experience and insight presented at the Do Lectures. It typified many of the responses that reflected on the influence of the event by expressing a feeling of connection to the speakers and their stories of struggle and success. Perhaps in contrast to much larger events or more corporately styled conferences, there were also many comments that indicated that this sense of connection was not only established with the speakers but also to other attendees and the wider "community" of people with a shared experience of participating in the Do Lectures.

> *There's a spirit of community at DO that I connected w/ (sic) this year and is why I will be back (91)*

This sense of community also had a practical impact on future relationships and connections for some Do Lectures attendees. One stated that 'I now have a tribe of Doers that support and inspire' (155); another, even having suffered an accident at the event that resulted in time off work, described those he met as "exceptionally good friends, an "extended family" of Doers' (108). Although some people noted the value of being part of the informal Do network of event alumni, connections were more often described in terms of friendships.

Question 16 was a key enquiry of the survey to elicit more outcome focused details of changes that respondents attributed directly to the influence of the Do Lectures.

For the live event audience, there were many clear indicators of substantive change. Many of these were expressed in statements that were strong but fairly general in nature, for example:

> *The Do Lectures has been an amazing catalyst for change in me personally and professionally (22)*

> *The Do Lectures changed my life not just professionally but also my outlook on work as a whole - no doubt about it - the single most influential moment in my life. (59)*

> *Friends and family have commented that after Do I've taken life to another level (193)*

Within these statements, the most frequently reported area of change was in respect of work or professional projects or responsibilities. As one respondent summarised it "I have thought a lot about my work ... I am now a lot more thoughtful about options and what I want out of things" (13). The influence of the Do Lectures was described across a spectrum of impact that ranged from shifts in attitude or perspective to much more substantial outcomes such as beginning new projects, jobs or companies.

A closer analysis of these comments about changes in thought or perspective indicated several thematic groupings. Within the limits of the question, the types of change often related to:

- Finding confidence, courage and bravery

- Motivation to action and a decision to create

- Adopting a mindset of openness and reflexivity

- Seeking purpose and vocation through work

The second most reported area of tangible impact was focussed on the people they had met at the event. Particularly noticeable was that the words used to frame their responses did not come from the language of business (network, contacts, collaboration) but expressed a more personal connection and relationship, such as, friendship, community and connection. For example, "I now have a tribe of Doers that support and inspire. I feel I can do more" (155). Another more detailed reply gives a heartfelt account:

> *Since 2011 an important handful of people have become good friends, some of them incredibly good friends and even colleagues. That may not sound like many but it is incredible, that at this stage of life (50 plus) one can find and make such deep and connected friendships. And a handful is a huge number. From four days!" (198)*

Among the various descriptions of change given were some substantive indicators that were much more tangible than the changes of perspective or personal connection described above. There were some significant and major changes reported as outcomes that profoundly affected their work and employment. For a few, this was a change away from a more corporate role towards more personally fulfilling work or projects, for example:

> *After going to the Do Lectures I completely changed direction (79)*

> *Change of job to do something more entrepreneurial (201)*

> *I began an artistic career .. the Do Lectures directly influenced me by showing me that life can be about more than a 9-5 and a mortgage (27)*

> *I left a well paid senior management job ... and now help run a small technology business (11 people) which gives back more than it takes from the world (79)*

Notably, 5% of the live event attendees who responded stated that the influence of the event was sufficient for them to start a new company (3, 32, 42, 81). Also, a further number mentioned that they had since begun new initiatives or personal side-projects alongside their existing work. Although it is inherent in the nature of a survey that those most positively affected will respond, for 1 in 20 of respondents to report such tangible and radical shifts in their working life is significant.

A further observation particularly relevant to the research was that a few respondents focussed their account of change on Wales itself. Their reply was focussed on both an appreciation of the Cardigan region where the event is held but one also provided a very concrete change that had emerged from their attendance at the Do Lectures - 'I do more work in or for Wales' (21).

Not everyone reported immediately positive outcomes, although their observations were not directly critical of the event and related more closely to their private context and personal response. One person found that they "really struggled and was quite frustrated having heard all these amazing things people have done, but not know what I could do or offer the world" (167). Another, that the inspiration of the event "died pretty quickly when I returned to the normality of habit, routine, career and stupidly long working hours' (201). However, these were the only two among more than eighty people who otherwise gave favourable and reasonably specific accounts of the impact of the event experience.

The 'digital only' audience reported some limited evidence of effects similar to those reported by the audience for the live event. Although they had only watched the talks online, they too reported the Do Lectures as providing inspiration, reassurance or a sense of confidence, albeit expressed without such intensity or detail. Some more tangible outcomes were reported by a few, for example, for one person "the Do Lectures gave me the push" (33) to go out on his own in business. A respondent from the US reported founding a popup 'dry' bar (brilligfrybar.com) in Ann Arbor, Michigan having been 'DIRECTLY POSITIVELY INFLUENCED by the Do Lectures' (186). For her, regularly watching the Do Lectures was part of devoting a regular investment of time "to inspiration to keep me moving forward". Nevertheless, despite some noted shifts in thinking or attitude similar to those reported by the live audience, the changes described by the online audience were far less tangible.

An important point of interest in the responses to this question that emerged from the responses of the online audience was that the impact of the Do Lectures was not just a product of watching the talks but of also their wider media ecology. This was not prompted in any way by the terms of the question, but within the free-format responses given by the audience segment that had only viewed the Do Lectures online several chose to highlight the influence of David Hieatt's books *The Path of the Doer* and *Do Purpose*, the Do Lectures 'quotes on Twitter' (188), or their Do Lectures blog and email newsletter:

'I think some of the blog posts have potentially been more powerful than the talks for me personally' (192)

'There are not many emails that I consider 'must-read' but the Do Lectures ones make that list' (175)

Additionally, one person described having been changed in his business decisions having encountered Hiut Denim through the Do Lectures, the key being that the ethos and values of the annual event appeared to be reflected in the Hieatt's operation of their main day-to-day business.

6. SHARING AND USING THE DO LECTURES

This section of the online survey was designed to gain an understanding of whether the Do Lectures audience were recommending the event and the talks to others. As well as examining the degree of sharing of their content and asking for the reasons for doing so, it also sought to discover the more detail regarding the specific context and applications. In addition to providing a picture of how the Do Lectures content was being used by the audience in social contexts, the readiness of the audience to recommend, share or use Do Lectures material beyond their personal use was being used as an indicator of their influence upon them. This was to reflect the step of 'prosletysing others to behave likewise' suggested by McGuire (Strate 2004, p.6; Rice & Atkin 2001) as the final step of a persuasive communications campaign.

Although some respondents did not answer this question, less than 1 in 10 of the Do Lectures audience said they had not recommended them to others (Question 17). A very significant proportion of more than 8 out of 10 people had recommended the Do Lectures to friends, family members or work colleagues (see Table 5.12 overleaf).

A follow-up question (Question 18) asked respondents who had recommended the Do Lectures for further details about why they did so. Most people only gave comment in a few brief words, but many gave relatively detailed testimony, not just about their rationale for sharing but also, in some cases, the practical outcome. Popular among the replies were many comments that highlighted the general

effect of the Do Lectures such as "everyone needs some inspiration" (54), with some citing it in more tangible terms such as "I knew it would inspire them to a new spot in their life and it did" (168). These were fairly equally spread between both the live and online audiences.

For the live audience, there was one clear grouping of replies that cited the largest general rationale for sharing the Do Lectures with others- the experiential impact of the Do Lectures as a result of attending the event. Within this rationale were some straightforward motives - they "loved the experience" (18) or it was "somewhere happy" (29), but some responses conveyed that their time at the Do Lectures was something more profound. For example, several noted the intensity or uniqueness of the experience, with three participants describing it as "lifechanging" (6, 21, 79). Several further comments highlight the degree of impact of the experience (rather than the specific talks or ideas) that strongly motivated their recommendation of the Do Lectures:

"the thoughts they have over those few days will change their life" (59)

"an intense experience you will never forget" (155)

"something you have to experience once in your life"

A cluster diagram that summarises and illustrates the most dominant groupings of reasons given for sharing or recommending the Do Lectures is shown in Figure 5.2 opposite. As noted above, the experiential impact was of course particular to the live audience, but otherwise, the reasons and groupings were similar across both audience segments, differing only by their intensity of expression.

Social media platforms provide an obvious location for individuals to share and disseminate their experience of the Do Lectures, either as a participant at one of the live events or as part of the global online audience. A consideration of some dimensions of social media sharing will be considered later in this thesis. However, two questions about sharing were deliberately included within the survey instrument: Question 19 asked whether the respondent had written, blogged or published anything about the Do Lectures and, if so, invited them to include an online URL or to email details of their article or post (Question 20). Again,the question was designed to establish at least some crude indicator of influence – if the individual felt strongly enough to document their experience

Questions 19 and 20
Have you written, blogged
or published anything about
the Do Lectures?

TABLE __ 5.12

*Recommending the Do
Lectures to others*

Q17. Have you recommended the Do Lectures to anyone else such as a friend, family member or work colleague?			
Responses	Count	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	174	82.08%	
No	21	9.91%	
(Did not answer)	17	8.02%	
Total Responses	**212**		

FIGURE __ 5.3

*Thematic cluster: reasons to
recommend the Do Lectures*
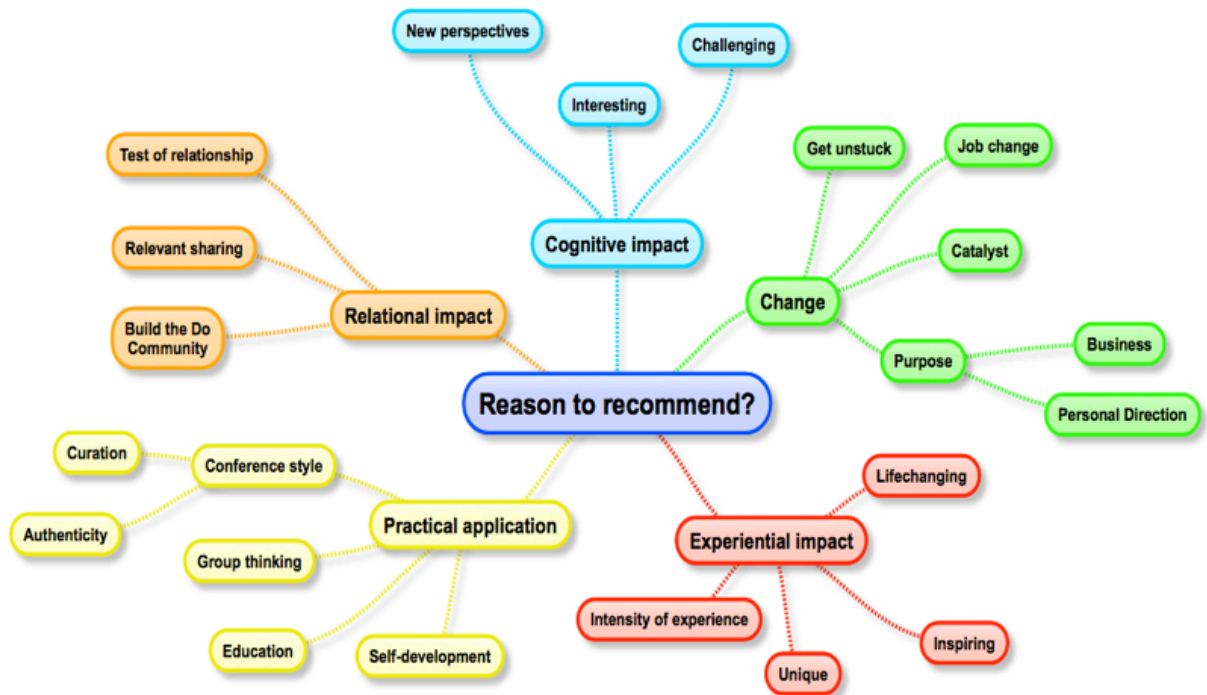
of the Do Lectures, this act of writing and creating provided some evidence of practical effect. Also, the request for a link to or copy of any published material also ensured that the content of those articles could be included in another part of the media analysis thus using the survey as an opportunity to extend the scope of the research data.

From the 212 survey responses, 51 (24%) people replied that they had written, blogged or published something about the Do Lectures. The majority of these (37) had experienced the live event either in Wales, the US or Australia. The remaining respondents either answered 'no' (142, 67%) or chose not to answer (19, 9%). For almost one in four of the respondents, the Do Lectures was sufficiently influential to cause them to write one or more articles about their experience. Of the 51 people who had said 'yes' to publishing something about the Do Lectures online or in print, 44 provided a link or further comment to point towards their material. Some of the material could not be followed up – for example, older blog entries were no longer available online (6 responses), the items posted were only extremely brief comments providing not much more than a link to the Do Lectures (3 responses) or were only referenced generally and could not be further identified (8 responses). Most of the other links and descriptions provided did point to some online blog posts, one academic article and one book in print that referenced the Do Lectures experience. Almost all of these had already been identified and captured through the use of systematic searches and previously set up Google alerts that were running for the duration of the data gathering period. The blog posts varied enormously in their content and, in some cases were very detailed accounts, including a series of articles from Curtis Jones, an attendee at the Do Lectures Wales event in 2014 who wrote a series of 26 brief articles *Examining the Atoms of the Do Lectures* between June and November 2014. The Do Lectures made such an impact on him that he wrote on the Somewhere.com collaboration platform that:

> *"I've never been into sharing my writing, despite writing a lot and leaving it in notebooks, but have been so inspired by the Do Lectures that I've been writing everyday and sharing on notkindacool.com It's really made my days and week so far."*

These posts and articles along with other online content identified through the responses given to this question will be explored in the next chapter.

The other form of sharing explored in the survey was any use of individual online Do Lectures talks in contexts other than for personal use. Particularly given the purpose of the online archives to provide full and open access to the event content, Question 21 asked: "Have you played one or more of the online Do Lectures in a professional, education or business setting in order to share them with someone else?". 43 of the 212 respondents said that they had shared the Do Lectures content in this way, the majority using them in a professional setting (20 people) but others also using them in the environments of education (14), business (5), and a community group (1).

One observation to arise from a comparison of the responses to this question between the live and online audiences was that about 1 in 3 of the event attendees had shared a Do Lectures video in a non-personal setting. This compared to the very significantly lower proportion of sharing of videos in these settings by just 1 in 8 of the online-only audience. Despite the ease of access and use of the online content, this was a very marked contrast, and there was a much greater correlation between experiencing the Do Lectures live and using the online version of one or more of them in another setting to share the content with others.

Since this question was open to some interpretation as to the definitions of each type of setting described, an open-ended follow-up invited people to provide details of 'which lecture(s) have you used and for what purpose?' (Question 22). Perhaps due in part to the potential time gap between experiencing the event and the completion of the survey, of the 37 people who answered this question six responded with 'too many to mention' or similar and seven people could not recall specific lectures. However, the most closely described settings for sharing the Do Lectures related to education programmes and courses:

> *Teaching college course "Climate Change and Film Production" at the University of Colorado Boulder. Used Do Lectures quotes and the Bobette Buster lecture in a presentation about storytelling (176)*

> *Collyn Ahart ... to a group of MBA Professional Arts Management Students and also to a group Arts Management Undergraduate students. They loved it. (58)*

There was a more unusual occasion for sharing Do Lectures content shared by one attendee who took a much more personalised approach and sent on links to specific talks as a pastoral or supportive response:

> *'If I know someone is struggling somehow I find a particularly suitable video and hope it motivates them on' (59)*

7. PERCEPTIONS OF WALES

Towards the end of the survey was a section designed to elicit audience responses about their perceptions of Wales as a result of either attending the Do Lectures or watching them online. The opening question of this section invited people to respond firstly with whether they already knew that the Do Lectures was based in Wales (Question 23).

Question 23
Did you know that the Do Lectures was based in Wales?

As would be expected, most of the 212 respondents recognised that the Do Lectures is based in Wales, with almost 9 out of 10 reporting a 'Yes' response and just eight people replying 'no' (the 17 remaining respondents not completing this question). Notably, there was not a significant difference between the responses of those who had attended a live event and those who had only watched the Do Lectures online demonstrating that even through the online platform alone there was very clear recognition that the event was based in Wales.

The next questions invited respondents to provide information about their personal impressions of Wales and also to make an evaluation as to whether those perceptions had been influenced by their experience of the Do Lectures, whether online or in person. The survey asked for a verbatim response to ensure that each reply was as unprompted as possible, although the question did limit the length of those responses by asking for 'up to five keywords or short phrases that best describe your impression of Wales' rather than a longer free-form response. This approach was chosen specifically to provide sufficient flexibility of response, but also to allow those completing the survey to reply quickly and with a certain degree of instinct or feeling. By being prompted for just a few keywords, it was hoped that this would evoke more direct responses compared to a question that required a more complex, descriptive answer.

Question 24
Please provide up to five different keywords or short phrases that best describe your impression of Wales.

It is recognised that these responses are limited in their value and application since the survey did not include contextual questions about how these perceptions were formed, for example, through personal experience, holidaying in Wales, tourism marketing or other potential formative factors. It was also clear from three of the replies given that some of the Do Lectures audience were born in Wales or lived in Wales and so the perspectives given were not exclusively drawn from outside Wales. For example, one very positive respondent wrote "I Live Here, From Here, Love Here: (112). Nevertheless, irrespective of how those perceptions were formed, the keywords provided and their subsequent analysis did provide some insight into how Wales in seen, particularly by those experiencing the Do Lectures. The repeated themes or stronger statements provided at least a crude picture of some of the brand associations or attributes of Wales held in the minds of the audience.

The analysis was completed using a basic three-stage process that began with importing the survey responses into a text editor to manually clean-up the replies to remove any superfluous text entered by respondents but not relevant to the keywords given. The resulting text was then submitted to the online text analysis tool *Word It Out* to generate word frequency results that could be manually reviewed and filtered to create a word cluster based on those results.

The responses were extremely varied, and the final list of keywords included more than 136 different descriptors given by the Do Lectures audience. The results of the analysis are shown in the word cluster visualisations overleaf showing the keywords provided at least twice in the responses and given visual weighting by their frequency of mention within the compiled responses. Using the same analytical variables, a visualisation was prepared from firstly from the responses of the live audience, then those of the online audience and then all responses by the combined audience. Each of these visualisations is shown in Figures 5.4A and 5.4B overleaf.

Dominant across all groupings of keywords was the view that Wales is "Green, wet and beautiful" and, by the number of repeated terms, it is clear that there were many similarities between the perceptions of those who have viewed the Do Lectures live and those who have only watched online. However, some interesting contrasts emerged between the keyword associations provided by each category of respondent.

Word It Out

Word It Out is an online created by Enideo.com that uses JQuery to deconcatecate text strings, collate them and present them in a word cloud as a visual summary of the analysis. It is similar to the popular Wordle online tool but has several additional benefits such as the ability to vary the frequency count thresholds of words to be included, the visual display attributes of the final word cluster and easy manual editing over the generated concordance of included words.

FIGURE __ 5.4A
*Keyword s describing Wales
with visual weighting
(live audience)*

FIGURE __ 5.4B
*Keyword clusters describing
Wales with visual weighting
(online audience)*

The online audience included more keywords that might be considered stereotypical responses such as 'dragon' 'rugby' and (Welsh)'language' that were not provided by the live audience. However, they also included language specifically associated with the Do Lectures or its founders such as 'Do adventure' or 'Do Lectures', 'HIUT', 'denim', 'howies' or (in the original responses) 'Do One Thing Well' as one of David Hieatt's oft-quoted phrases. Using such specific language as keywords associated with Wales for an online audience who had never visited the country indicates that the Do Lectures has successfully been able to anchor their identity to Wales.

Among the online audience, there were a few surprises found within the perception descriptions given. Several respondents provided very positive words about Wales' beauty but there were also some extremely negative keywords relating to poverty, backwardness ('frozen in the 1950s' 162), 'frustrating negativity' (66, someone born in Wales) and even 'politically corrupt' (162). However, it should be emphasised that overall, negative perception keywords were provided by just seven people most of whom also provided some positive mentions such as the beauty of or landscape of Wales. For example, even the most negative comment was qualified:

> *Wet, depressed, manual labour jobs, under the guidance of a larger neighbour, small glimpses of stunning creativity, passion and economic progress. (73)*

Having used these responses to gain some sense of the audience's impressions of Wales, a further question (Question 25) asked whether those perceptions had been influenced by the Do Lectures. These replies were invited across a Likert-item five-point scale that ranged from 'very positively affected' to 'very negatively affected', including the neutral response of 'not been affected'. The overall response from the combined audience is shown in Table 5.13 overleaf.

Figure 5.4 overleaf compares the two main audience segments that replied to this question and illustrates the variation in response between them. For those who had not attended a live event and only experienced the Do Lectures online, there was some variance in the proportion of those who were 'very positively affected', although unexpectedly, the proportion 'positively affected' remained almost constant, despite not experiencing the Do Lectures in person. This variance is illustrated in Figure 5.5 overleaf.

TABLE __ 5.13
Perceptions of Wales
(combined audience)

Responses	Count	%	Percentage of total respondents
very positively affected	43	20.28%	
positively affected	76	35.85%	
not affected	75	35.38%	
negatively affected	0	0%	
very negatively affected	0	0%	
(Did not answer)	18	8.49%	
Total Responses	**212**		

FIGURE __ 5.5
Perceptions of Wales
(segmented by live and
online-only audiences)
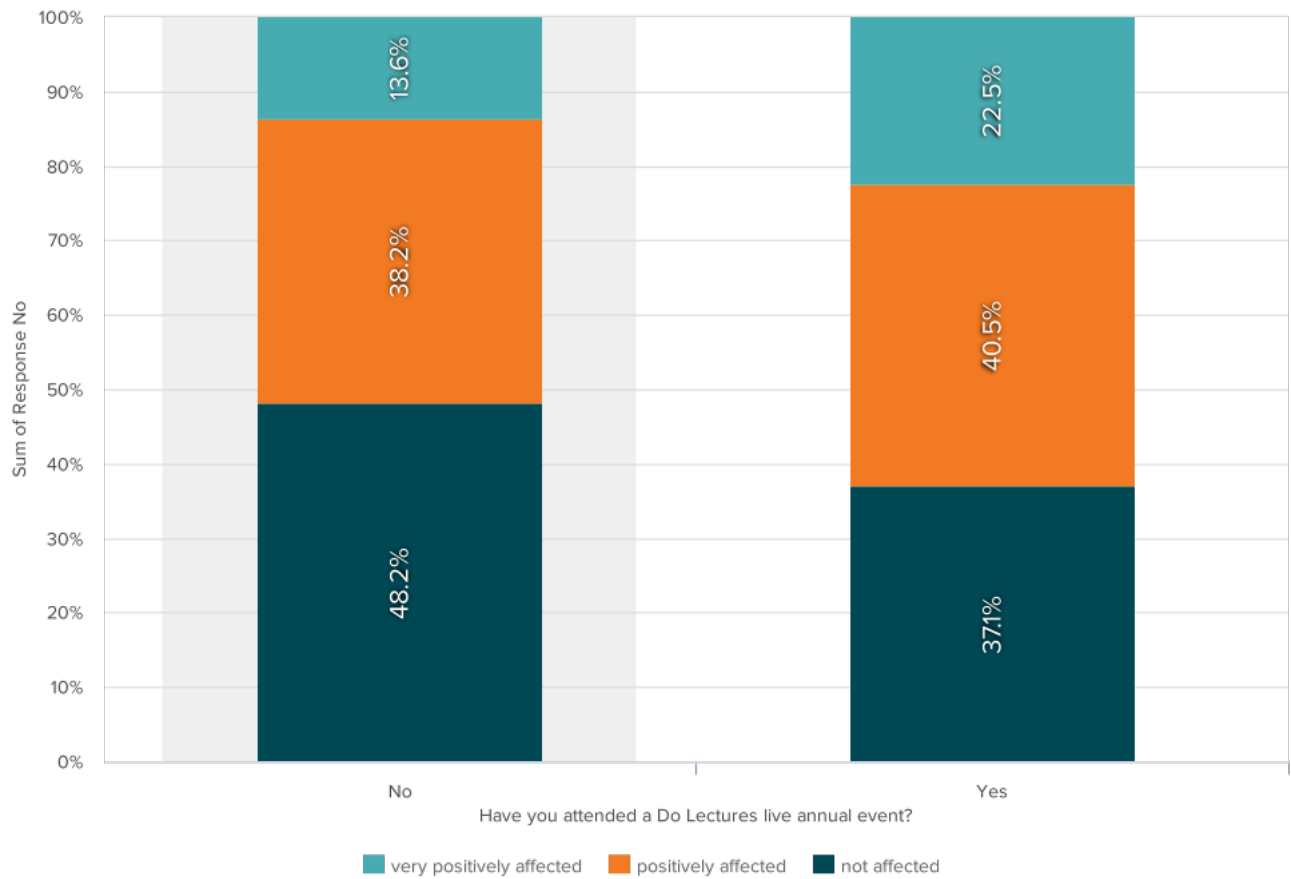
The proportion of those who were 'positively affected' in their impressions of Wales as a result of the Do Lectures was almost identical with the combined and online audiences. However, there was a strong upward overall increase in positive sentiment so that those who were 'very positively affected' rose to 32.18% and the proportion which remained unaffected dropped to 21.84% compared to 35.38% for the online audience and 44.72% for the live audience. Even with the limited number of respondents who completed the survey, it was clear that the Do Lectures was having an influence on audience perceptions of Wales irrespective of whether they were experiencing them online or in person. A greater part (67.81%) of the live audience expressed being positively affected or very positively affected than the online audience (48.79%). However, it was more surprising that nearly half of online viewers felt that they were positively affected or positively affected in their perceptions as a result of the Do Lectures. Further, there were no respondents from any part of the Do Lectures audience that felt that their perceptions of Wales had been negatively or very negatively affected.

From the researcher's first-hand knowledge of the event, the overwhelmingly positive impressions of Wales formed by the Do Lectures experience was not unexpected. Many conversations with attendees from all around the world had frequently turned to the impact of the setting and, especially, the West Wales landscape. So, anticipating this feedback, respondents who had provided a non-neutral answer, were directed to a more exploratory open question. Whether their response was positive or negative, there was the opportunity to give more information in reply to the question "If your view of Wales has been affected by the Do Lectures, in what way?" (Question 26).

Question 26
If your view of Wales has been affected by the Do Lectures, in what way?

Of the 119 respondents who said their perceptions of Wales were affected, 102 chose to provide more detail with half of this number coming from each of the live and online audiences. Some of these comments provided substantially repeated observations already made in prior questions about those perceptions, or as one person put it "just reinforced what I already knew" (17) and another that the event had the effect to "confirm and amplify" already positive feelings towards Wales. For example, several respondents referenced the 'pure, honest, rough and real' beauty (87) of the 'incredible' (176) Welsh landscape or its 'extraordinary coastline' (22). However, there were also some very strong responses that indicated that participating at the Do Lectures had created a very positive shift outlook towards Wales as a desirable destination, noting it as "a place to visit" (22), "I loved what I saw" (65), "a very unique place" (127) or "taken aback at the beauty of Wales"

(37). Attendees described the impact on them more specifically, noting the impact the Do Lectures had on their choice of future destination. Some of the clearest statements of this shift were: (also similar from 134, 167, 187, 201):

> *"Fell in love with Wales. Went there for summer holiday this year and will return many more times" (30)*

> *Wales wasn't on my long travel bucket list. I've since been 3 times and spent many GBPs! ... I'm intrigued to visit often and to explore some more ... (193)*

A further strong theme reflected in the number of comments was how their view of the people of Wales had changed. Some comments were broad and general such as 'great people' (22) or 'I was taken aback at ... the friendly attitude of its people' (37 and, similarly, 176). However, noteworthy within the context of the Do Lectures experience was much more specific comment:

> *"It's not just a tourist destination ... there are clever people doing clever stuff. You don't need to be in London to make stuff happen" (79)*

> *"I didn't know we had such forward thinking people!" (27)*

> *"Wales is (at least with Do) on the cutting edge of change" (170)*

> *"Shows Wales as a location for innovation and ideas" (152)*

These and several other similar reflections demonstrated that the Do Lectures was not just a showcase for Wales as a destination for holidays, leisure and tourism but also shaped perceptions of Wales as a place of ideas and innovation.

These responses reflect the general values of the conference itself, but it was interesting to note that several of the attendees also drew much more specific conclusions from their experience:

> *"Now view it as a place to do business and meet potential partners. Not just a holiday place." (155)*

"previously unaware of the hotbed of entrepreneurialism there ... positively affected by the breadth and wealth of small Doers and achievers – especially those connected to the Do "Family" (108)

"You can run a successful business from a place where your heart is" (190)

The Do Lectures in acting as a venue for hosting Welsh entrepreneurship, these examples (as well as the event itself) were moving audience perceptions of Wales to view it as a viable business location.

Similar shifts in perspective were also being created through the experience of simply watching the recordings of the Do Lectures online. Although the responses of those who had not attended the event were, as you would expect, neither so intensely described nor as detailed as those from those attending in person, all of the 51 respondents who had not attended a Do Lectures event but replied to this section of the survey and reported positive shifts of perception.

Even among those only experiencing the Do Lectures through their online platform, the recordings of the talks had clearly opened up their interest and curiosity towards Wales that, for several people, was their first introduction to the country. One remarked "I never paid attention to Whales *(sic)* prior to Do Lectures" (92), another "it put Wales on my radar a little more" (131) and one viewer expressed surprise 'I wouldn't have thought Wales would host this sort of international event/organization" (110). Some comments highlighted the natural beauty or landscapes of Wales, but many noted other strong elements of identity including some very closely aligned to the particular distinctiveness of the Do Lectures:

"it definitely paints Wales in a positive light" (67)

"as the Do Lectures are so cool, they have made me feel positive about Wales as a whole too" (177)

"knowing it is home to an inspirational hub like the Do organisation has definitely influenced by opinion of innovation in Wales"

"Wales is definitely now associated as a land of craftsmanship and creation in my mind now" (206)

"It is a small nation making a big noise about important stuff (154)

"added intellect and inspiration to the Wales package of beauty and landscapes" (142)

For some, it was very clear that the online platform was having a strong effect on perceptions about the desirability of Wales as a location

"Just makes me want to go there so badly" (186)

"Want to see more of the amazing landscape" (192)

To close the survey, there was a final summative question enquiring about the personal value of the event (Question 31) and also an open invitation to contribute 'anything you want to add about the Do Lectures, your experience of the impact of the event or the online lectures' (Question 32).

Of the 143 responses given to question 31, several either repeated or summarised observations or replies given earlier in the survey. For example, themes relating to the importance of connection to others re-emerged - some of these in the context of collaboration and coworking, some describing the event bringing people together and creating a community of 'like-minded' others who could provide a supportive network, mutual encouragement and friendship. Overall, strongly in evidence was the overwhelmingly positive view of nearly every one of the respondents. Only one person made a negative comment, albeit directed at themselves, that the event 'highlighted my weakness of meeting new people' (7) but all other comments provided supportive and energetic testimony to the value of the Do Lectures. This represented about three-quarters of the total respondents for the survey, the remaining quarter perhaps choosing not to give repeated information from detailed replies given to prior questions.

However, this deliberate prompt in this question to describe the personal value did draw out from some a greater focus on the individual significance of the Do Lectures rather than its general value, particularly among those who had attended a live event. Although there was a clear difference in the degree of impact and the factors described by each audience based on whether they had attended the event or just viewed the online lectures, there were many highly complimentary statements. Several of these were brief but boldly stated, such as 'simply awesome' (171), 'simply the best event I've attended' (90) or that the value of the online lectures was 'huge' (66) or 'great' (136). However, many responded with similarly adulatory comments that indicated that the Do Lectures had had a more radical impact. For example:

> *The value has been massive, so much so that I can't really put it into words (172)*

> *A priceless experience and something I will keep forever (37)*

One attendee (54) expressed that the personal impact of the Do Lectures was 'So hard to put into words but it is the single most influential event in my life so far'. She said that the event 'taught me a new meaning to the word 'value'. It has given me some form of moral code which I now try to live my life by and meeting everyone there gave me the confidence to know I am not the only one with those views'.

This was just one statement among many that provided evidence that the influence of the Do Lectures is more than just general inspiration or motivation to pursue individual passions, projects or business ideas. Replies such as 'I look at life through a "Do" lense now' (158) and 'I now aspire to do good, rather than just make money' (29) show that at least some participants have found that one dimension of the influence of the event is a fundamental shift in outlook and values. For example, one respondent spoke of the event presenting an alternative 'economic ideology' (146) and another that the Do Lectures would 'shape the evolution of meaningful projects and businesses' (140). So, for some at least, the many interesting "stories of Do" were reshaping perspectives as well as providing inspiration or encouragement towards personal goals. One of the repeated dimensions of how this inspiration functioned was that attending the event provided the space and opportunity to 'refresh, reboot' (19) or 'reset my attitude to life and work (122).

Again, very evident within these replies were comments that reinforced the positive contribution of the Do Lectures to perceptions of Wales. Particularly for those who attended the event in Cardigan, it provided the introduction to Wales and was described by one as 'a great showcase for Wales' (15). However, notable even among those who only watched the talks online was some strong sentiment:

> *'Appreciate what the Do Lectures are doing for Wales' profile world-wide and for Ceredigion in particular' (9)*

> *They give a positive impression of Wales both as a place to do business and as a place of beauty (60)*

> *'Do' for me is wrapped up in a creative grouping of Creativity, Howies, Forest, Do and Wales (126)*

> *'It is a hugely valuable name and idea within Wales' (139)*

It was interesting to note the responses from the digital audience who described the impact of the Do Lectures experienced only through their content posted online. Just like the live audience, they highlighted the motivating aspects of the ideas being talked about, the freshness of the ideas presented or the provocation of the stories told. However, for this segment of the audience, three aspects of the value of the event came through prominently.

Inspiration

Despite only watching online and not participating in one of the immersive live events, 32 of the 78 respondents directly described the value of the Do Lectures as 'inspirational' with others expressing similar concepts, albeit with different language. Although this was a feature of a high proportion of the replies, it was interesting to note that in contrast the comments from the live audience there was comparatively little detail or explanation as to why they were inspiring. The relative ease of making this comment is obvious, and certainly, inspiration is a theme promoted through the Do Lectures articles and posts. Nevertheless, it was clear that the experience, even within the limits of the digital platform, was positive and provided some form of cognitive or emotional lift to the audience as a result of watching online.

Intention to attend

Less common but still expressed clearly by many respondents was an intention to attend a Do Lectures live event, often linked directly to the inspiration felt by watching them online. Although not prompted to do so, about one-fifth of the online audience that replied to this question stated directly or indirectly that they wanted to go to one of the annual events. There was a strongly aspirational tone to some of these responses, for example:

> *Do Lectures has inspired me both spiritually and intellectually. I would love to participate at least once in my lifetime. (82)*

Comparisons with TED

Notably, none of the respondents among the live audience expressed direct similarity with the TED talks even though it was clear that they appreciated and enjoyed the growing library of Do Lectures online. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of the online audience made direct comments about the value of the Do Lectures in specific contrast to the TED talks.

I've particularly enjoyed the Do lectures because it's felt like a more real and accessible version of TED or the like (45, non-attendee)

TED might make me hopeful for the future, world and humanity … Do makes me want to take part (62)

DO is what TED would be if it wasn't trying so hard. (73)

I like them as a place to go and find inspiration or educated, like I do with Ted talks. (104)

It works with every day people. It has an accessibility to it that something like 'TED talks' doesn't. (161)

To make a comparison with TED is expected because of the similar media format and may be attributed in part to the effect of some of the press and review descriptions of the Do Lectures that made a similar comparison. Notably, none of these comparisons such as those reflected in the comments quoted above was unfavourable, and as the responses show, individuals expressed a preference for the Do Lectures.

In response to the last question inviting 'anything you want to add about the Do Lectures' (Question 32), a total of 87 people provided a reply. A small number of these simply stated there was nothing further they wanted to add. However, despite this being the last question of a lengthy online questionnaire with a high proportion of open-ended questions requiring verbatim answers, there were many fairly detailed responses including one that asked: 'I ran out of time … can I continue it later' (208) or declared 'I could talk forever about what a great experience I had' (190). Among those responses were a very few critical comments, for example, relating to the price of the tickets (80, 116), but almost all were positive or constructive, demonstrating real warmth towards the Do Lectures. Some used the opportunity to thank the event founders and the rest of the Do Lectures team and more than a few encouraged 'Keep up the good work!' (57, 58, 106, 122), 'Keep going!' or similar (6, 27, 155, 157, 173). Others just were simply enthusiastic with comments such as ' Love it, love it, love it' (81) or 'Amazing work!' (7).

Question 32
Is there anything you would like to add about the Do Lectures, your experience of the impact of the event or the online lectures?

However, there was one more critical comment that stood out because it reflected one dimension of exploration that was not generally evident within the data:

> *Some of the speakers really do not live up to the true spirit of the event ... That would be my main criticism - the values promoted there are not wholly upheld. (194)*

The process of curation described in Chapter 4 brought together a highly eclectic cohort of speakers that privileged certain interests, subjects or types of speaker and excluded others. This comment highlighted that there was an awareness among the live audience that, with these exceptions, there was observable alignment between the form of the Do Lectures event and the content delivered by the speakers. In this case, the respondent had noted that there was a conflict between the values being expressed through the event as a whole and the particular content delivered by these speakers. In this case, that conflict related to the overly commercial and (in the words of the respondent) exploitative nature of the business venture being showcased in the talk. This was a singular and perhaps unrepresentative reaction from that year's audience but it did highlight that content as well as form was important and that there is an inherent expectation that it should be consistent with the Do Lectures wider goals and objectives.

In addition to these supportive final comments there were several strands of response that could be grouped into three broad categories. The first strand related to an appetite for extended Do Lectures events, media or other activity (expressed by a total of 16 respondents); the second strand emerged largely from that part of the audience that only viewed the Do Lectures online, but strongly reiterated their view of the online talks as 'great', 'amazing' or similar (7 respondents); and the final and third strand of response expressed views that were highly protective of the format of the Do Lectures live event. This first strand of responses, looking for new expressions of the Do Lectures, proposed several ideas for variations based largely on extending the experience of the live annual conference event. The ideas proposed included:

•   New geographical locations – Do Lectures to be held in England (102), Scotland (123) or overseas in Brazil (29) or even a 'world tour' (174)

•   New secondary event formats – for kids (16, 102, 106), taster sessions (152), regional/satellite groups (56)

- Creating a stronger 'alumni' network (31, 169) or find ways for speakers to maintain contact with attendees (155)

The second strand of comments from the online audience provided more detail to describe the particular impact or their use of the online content:

> *'I like to start my week with one of the lectures. It kind of sets the tone' (37)*

> *'I love the online resources – it means I can live it all over again' (59)*

> *'Based only on the online presence, I can already experience the authenticity of team and the community' (92)*

> *'Having the lectures available online is an amazing resource, especially for those who can't attend live' (146)*

The third strand of comments emerged from the Do Lectures audience who had attended one of their live events. Several respondents valued the format of the event and expressed in fairly strong terms that they wanted to make sure that it was 'kept' (70) as it was and not 'diluted' through growth as had been the TED lectures experience (53). They wanted the 'intimacy' of the Do Lectures to be maintained (155) along with keeping the right balance of spontaneity and rigorous preparation in the way speakers presented their talks (103).

Taken together, these three strands of replies provided a critical recognition of the value of the shape or format of the Do Lectures. With the exception of a criticism of one individual speaker, it was interesting to note that among these responses there were no content-related comments or proposals for the subjects or themes of future Do Lectures. Instead, these closing suggestions and commentary were substantially around gratitude for the specific *form* of the Do Lectures experience or related to how it could be extended to more geographic locations or to provide other variations of the live event.

The following chapter provides an important counterpart to the results presented so far and complements the analysis of the survey set out above. Beginning with some context about its importance to the study, Chapter 6 considers evidence for the impact and influence of the Do Lectures drawn from testimony of blogs and other online articles written by their audience.

Impact and Influence
The Online Testimony

A thematic analysis of the impact factors described by
the Do Lectures audience in blogs or other online articles

ENRICHING THE TEXTURE OF EXPERIENCE

"

"In a desperate attempt to keep the smell of burning wood alive ... I find myself needing to write.

To write and write and write ... I am earnestly missing the atmosphere that was truly magical on that little farm in that little field in Wales"

———

LUCY HARPER[1]
DO LECTURES WALES ATTENDEE

One of the more significant forms of media expressing the influence of the Do Lectures on their audience are the many online articles and blogs that review, reference or otherwise describe the event. Some of these articles emerge as formal reviews, for example, published in the online versions of newspapers or other media outlets. Most are written as individual responses following participation in a Do Lectures event or, very occasionally, from watching the Do Lectures via one or more of their online platforms such as Vimeo. As indicated in the research methodology described in Chapter 3, these online sources provide many valuable data.

Perhaps the most useful for the purposes of this investigation are the articles published on personal or corporate blogs that present narratives describing more intimately the individual experience of the Do Lectures. Blogs are a well-established form of online journal, usually taking the form of individually dated entries written and published to a website using blogging software such as Wordpress, Tumblr or another online platform. As has been noted in blog-motivation research (Jones & Alony 2008) it is important as a form of written self-expression that is both highly personal and, in the majority of cases, free of external influence being self-published and independent of intermediaries such as editors, employers or other corporate interests.

Individually written blogs or other similar online articles, therefore, provide an important strand of research data because they provide wholly unprompted testimony regarding the impact of the Do Lectures. Instead of the information being given as the result of question-led prompts given through other means of enquiry such as a survey or even the informal conversation that was possible through personal involvement of the researcher in the event, the articles are the result of a personally motivated decision to write an account of the experience. This writing may be for personal consumption, for reflection, to express "deeply felt emotions" (Nardi et al. 2004) or merely to fulfil an individual's desire to publish, something that was expressed bluntly by Brad Graham who said 'I get off on seeing my words in print ... More than that, I like the notion of leaving my words behind – even given the relatively ephemeral nature of the web – for others to find and enjoy' (Graham 2002).

Whatever the individual motivation to blog, there is within the process several dimensions of deliberate action that provide very clear evidence that the Do Lectures has exerted a degree of influence on the author.

Firstly, and at the most basic level, the individual writer has felt strongly enough about their experience of the Do Lectures to spend time documenting aspects of that experience and publishing it online. That is, the event has had sufficient impact upon them to stimulate a particular form of creative output and to cause them to choose to invest the time, thought and energy in the article. They have specifically chosen to put into an externalised, written form their response to the Do Lectures – something that was previously only internalised and not made public. As one participant at the 2012 event wrote:

> *"In a desperate attempt to keep the smell of burning wood alive … I find myself needing to write. To write and write and write … I am earnestly missing the atmosphere that was truly magical on that little farm in that little field in Wales"* [1]

Secondly, as thoughts and reflections that are written a greater or lesser period after the Do Lectures event experience, many of these articles provide much more than a basic, factual and contemporaneous account. Their evidential value lies not only in their production as a tangible outcome of the influence of the Do Lectures but also as a considered and careful account of an experience that has been first reflected upon and then further refined through the process of writing and publication. Both the deliberate mechanism and inherent process in publishing articles online has meant that the filters of both time and thought have brought together initial responses, reflections, and personal judgements about the Do Lectures into a coherent piece of writing that has been sufficiently crafted for the consumption of other readers.

Thirdly, since blogs are 'personal but they are not private' (Hookway 2008) they are predominantly public documents that are subject to the scrutiny, feedback and response of the online audience. As such, the articles demonstrate the willingness of the author to choose to write and reflect on their experience *and* also to express themselves in this way in the online public sphere. Although taking the form of a personal account or journal entry, the exposure of that content through online publication demonstrates a willingness to provide open, public testimony of their experience and not merely to express it privately.

Together these three properties mean that the many articles written provide a substantial source of online data that gives unique, detailed evidence about the influence of the Do Lectures. To a researcher, there is also additional relevance and

value in them because, unlike the survey, personal blogs and other online narratives are completely framed with the individual's choice of language, perspective, and testimony. Instead of individual accounts being drawn out or invited according to the predisposition and methods of the researcher or constructed through the actual process of research, the unsolicited and naturalistic narratives provided through these blogs convey insights that are otherwise unguided, unstructured and unprompted by external requirements. Wakeford and Cohen describe blogs written by researchers about their own work as 'Fieldnotes in Public' (2008), yet this is also an apt description of how online content generated by those the subject of research can be treated. The 'fieldnotes' may not be written or recorded by the researcher himself, yet they represent a direct and individual record of experience that can yield fruitful and relevant insights that are perhaps more powerful and unique than a researcher may otherwise capture through observation and conversation within the strictures of a predefined methodology. As Adam Reed notes in his article 'My Blog is Me', these online journal entries provide 'a space in which persons can be themselves, free of constraints and able to say what they think and feel about everyone around them' (Reed 2005 p.229). Blogs are 'first and foremost a platform for individual authors' (van den Boomen 2009 p.139) and so represent an advantageous source of material for a researcher endeavouring to capture the impact of the Do Lectures on the lives of those who attend. These personal accounts are not only 'uncorrupted' by the effects of a researcher's interventions, they are also voiced in original and authentic terms by the individual writers as the authors of their texts. Being placed online, these posts and articles leave what Kozinets refers to as 'a more permanent trace' of the in-person interactions that preceded them, providing research content that is 'easily observable, recorded and copied' (2015).

Those who post online are not entirely free of constraints and certainly blogging is part of their presentation of the self online and may itself contribute to an individual's wider goals. Hookway, for example, draws on the ideas of Erwin Goffman (1959) and describes blogging as just another 'stage' where bloggers "may strategically select and write into existence convincing life-episodes that frame themselves as having desired qualities" (Hookway 2008, p.96). Whatever the motivation, the question of authenticity and trustworthiness of those online accounts could be a concern to the researcher. However, as Hookway goes on to highlight, "how can the truth be ensured in any research scenario? How do you know, for instance, if someone is being honest in an interview, and for that matter, how someone ticks boxes on a survey questionnaire?" (2008, p.97). In the

case of this research project, it is worth noting that there are increased levels of reliability in the data provided by online blogs in that they were not written by unknown or anonymous sources. In the case of all articles used, they were written by identifiable and named attendees many of whom were known to the researcher through shared attendance and conversation at the Do Lectures events in Wales.

In addition to this broad rationale for their significance arising from the general nature of blogging, online articles also gain further validity and particular relevance within the specific context of this project. Not only are online platforms one of the major foci of the project, blog articles and other online sources were noted by a major proportion of audience as their initial point of connection to the Do Lectures. The survey of their live and online audience revealed that for almost of a third of them this was how they first discovered the Do Lectures. In addition to providing a fundamental source of data, their inclusion is significant because of their important place and value within the overall Do Lectures media ecology. The personal testimony and narratives provided within the articles present more than evidence of some of the dimensions of influence the event exerts upon its participants - it also one of the means by which that influence is broadcast to a much wider audience through the channels of online networks.

This chapter therefore summarises and reviews this online content, looking particularly for indicators or descriptors of influence and the corresponding contributing factors. It will begin with an outline description of the methodology used and a short summary of the type and volume of online blog or article data captured for the purposes of this investigation. This will be followed by a description of the analytical process that was applied and a presentation of the resulting data, organised by some of the dominant themes emerging from its examination. Further discussion of some of these trends will follow in the next chapter which builds on the results presented here.

The blog sample was constructed using several forms of online search, beginning with a search for the term "Do Lectures" using Google as the primary search engine at the start of the project period. This was supplemented using the 'meta search engine' DEVONagent Pro that provides a systematic search interface to Google as well as other major search services such as Yahoo and Bing. These searches yielded an initial index of results that were scanned manually to identify relevant materials. However, to maintain up to date searches and to capture newly published or indexed materials, several Google alerts were put in place at the start of the project to provide ongoing monitoring of online sources for the duration of the research. To provide an appropriate span of alerts, the keywords used were 'Do Lectures', 'David Hieatt', 'Ideas festival', and 'Do Book Co'. This ongoing selection of material was reviewed according to three gradually narrowing factors:

Contextual relevance

Is this article relevant to the general context of the research? For example, does it relate to learning festivals, TED or another similar theme?

Subject relevance

Is this article about the Do Lectures or its founders?

Question relevance

Does this article relate to or give testimony of the influence of the Do Lectures?

Once identified, blog posts, articles and other relevant materials were captured as individual documents, retaining a record of the source URL, and stored in an offline DEVONthink database to ensure that content could be indexed systematically and would remain available even if the source was changed, deleted or became otherwise unavailable prior to analysis.

This collection phase resulted in the capture of over 200 blog or press articles relating to the Do Lectures experience, of which 169 were written by speakers or attendees at the Do Lectures annual events. Prior to analysis each captured item was individually considered and reviewed for its specific usefulness in specific relation to the research questions and articles that provided little or no insight into the impact of the Do Lectures were set aside - for example, there were

many brief posts that merely mentioned and linked to the Do Lectures website or one or more of their talks. Since these posts provided no direct narrative, recollection or personal testimony these were excluded from closer study and analysis. Although the creation and posting of content does, of course, provide some evidence of influence, it provided little or no data of relevance to this largely thematic study of the online testimony.

THE ONLINE DATA

The significant volume of online content is itself testimony to the impact of the Do Lectures. Some of the articles written by Do Lectures participants (either speakers or attendees) related to the precursor event 'Little Big Voice' held in 2007 or to international events such as Do USA that were outside the primary research focus. Therefore a subset of these articles that gave online testimony in respect of the Do Lectures annual events held in Wales between 2011 and 2015 was selected for closer review and analysis, being the main subject of the research. Some online articles gathered as part of this process, particularly those written for online 'magazines' rather than personal blogs, have been used elsewhere in this study. For example, to provide supporting information to the overview of the Do Lectures and its development presented earlier in this thesis. However, this chapter focuses on the articles written substantially for self-publication on personal blogs or personal websites. A summary of the number of these articles broken down first by year and then by whether the post was written by a speaker or general guest is shown in the table below:

Year	No. speaker written articles	No. attendee written articles	No. individual writers	Total no. articles
2011	3	11	13	14
2012	1	20	17	21
2013	0	8	7	8
2014	1	10	11	35
2015	3	9	12	12
	8	58	60	90

TABLE __ 6.1
Blog articles by Do Lectures participants

In general, blogs have a great variety of styles of presentation and variety of expression within the general format. They are often rich, multimedia texts that combine any central written content with supporting photos, images, audio or video, hyperlinks and other forms of embedded material drawn from elsewhere on the web such as illustrative tweets and other social media content. Most of the articles included in the sample chosen for analysis included one or more photographs taken at the event but were otherwise relatively straightforward texts that mainly comprised a written account. In most cases, and with the exception of several notable media-rich posts, the volume of other multimedia content included was very limited, in most cases just a simple hyperlink to the main Do Lectures website or a particular content item within it. The dominant focus for analysis was, therefore, the written content, to consider the individual narratives, reflections and descriptions given rather than any external links or multimedia they had chosen to include in support of the articles. Some writers chose to provide simple, factual (and usually) very short summaries of the talks themselves. Although these notes or précis of content is some evidence of impact sufficient to record some elements of the content, this type of entry has not been the subject of the analysis presented this section. Because the style and brevity of this type of article provide little insight into the influence of the Do Lectures, instead the focus has been placed on the majority of writers who provided some personal reflection and therefore direct testimony of perceived impact or any resulting personal change.

It is important to note that only a small number of blogs mentioning the Do Lectures were written by that part of their audience who only viewed the talks online. A few writers briefly referred to them as suggested viewing, but these were always highly concise, short recommendations or links and none of them included detail as to any specific impact made on the blog author. The recommendations pointing readers to the Do Lectures online content came almost exclusively from those writers who had been attendees at the live event and who were now posting links as part of their recollections. In terms of reference to the video content, there was only a small amount of generalised comment about the impact of the Do Lectures online, so again this does not feature in the thematic review presented in this chapter. Where these mentions are significant is that they highlight two important functions of the digital platform: firstly, it was a clearly acknowledged as having been a contributing factor in leading people towards attending an event; secondly, it became a shareable that not only served to provide some relevant additional multimedia content for the blog, it also served as evidential material

to enable the bloggers to demonstrate to their own online audience the quality of the event, the speakers and the sorts of themes being presented. Therefore, although this content was not being shared for the direct purpose of sharing the individual lecture or lecture content, it remained a vital part of the Do Lectures ecology, providing an important bridging component used by individual attendees to connect their own audience and online network to the Do Lectures event and introduce at least a flavour of their experience through their online articles.
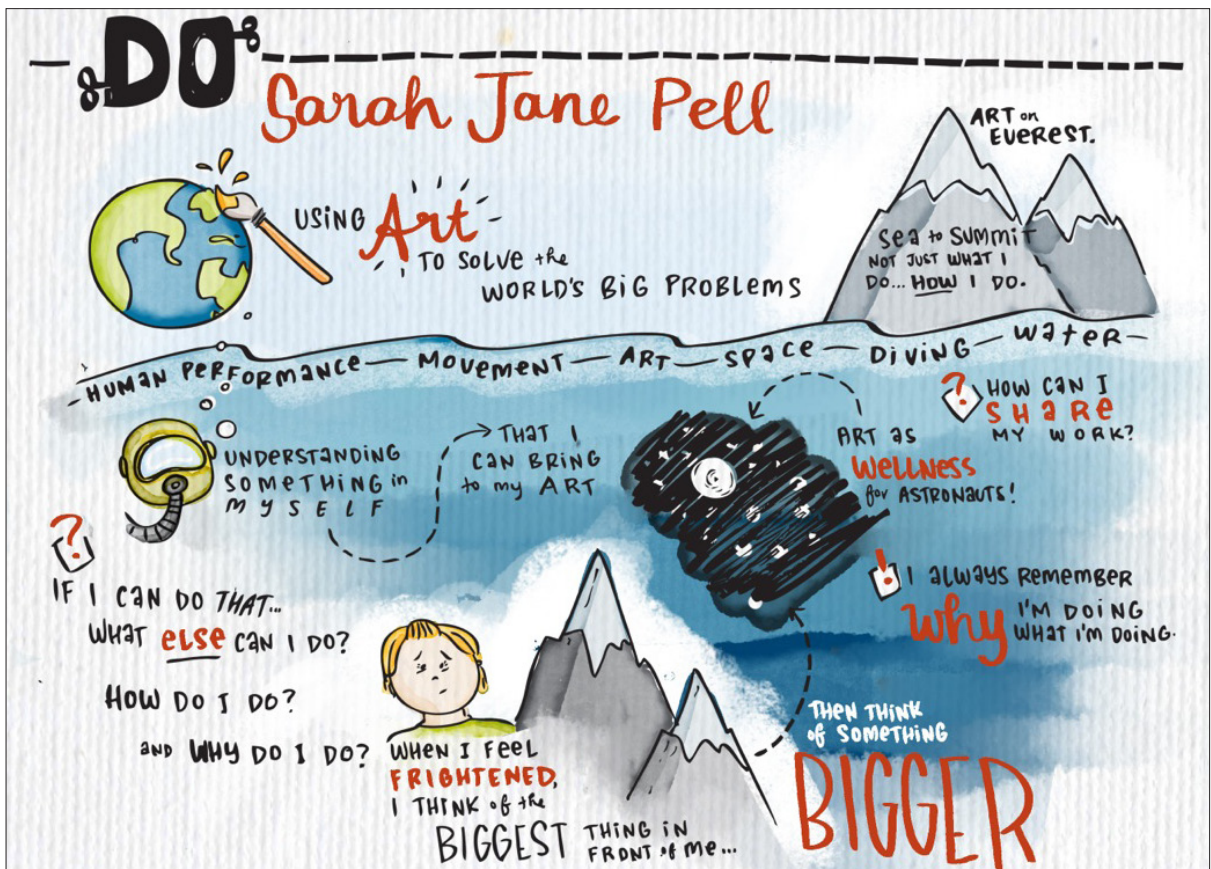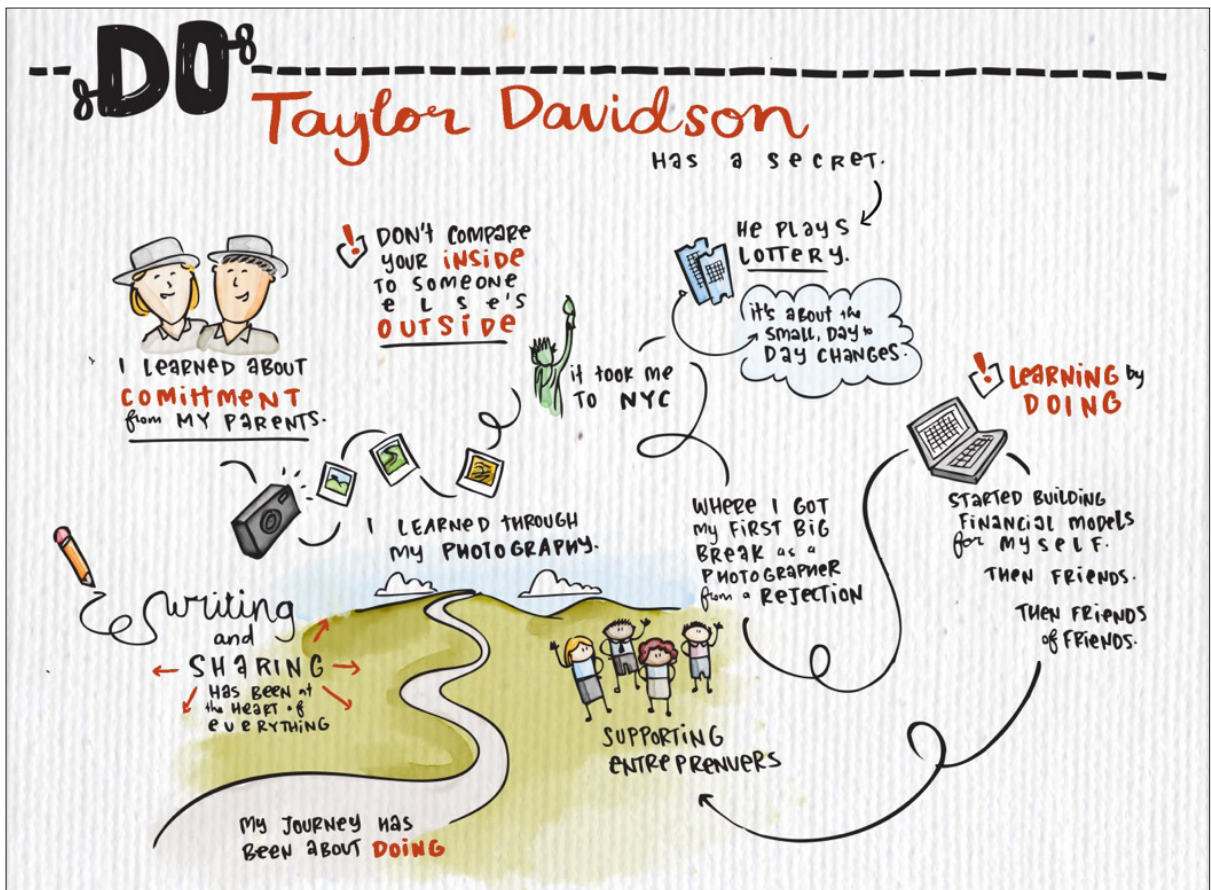
The content of the more developed narrative and experiential-based articles selected for closer analysis was extracted from the research database into a series of text files that could be reviewed systematically. Initial readings of these texts sought to identify the impact factors noted by attendees at the Do Lectures event, also looking for how they had affected them. Building on this review and further closer readings of the texts, a range of themes, repeated or related ideas and other clusters of similar observations were identified that were then organised into the broad thematic groupings presented below. Beginning with some general commentary on the data, the summary that follows presents this analysis around the three dominant themes emergent from this examination of what had influenced the speakers and attendees who had written online about their experience of the Do Lectures at one of the annual events in Wales between 2011 and 2015.

1. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The proportion of attendees choosing to write about their experiences at the Do Lectures was very significant and indicated a high-level of engagement with the event, with one in ten guests publishing at least one blog post or other online article. Most used a blog format, either self-standing as part of a personal online journal and a few participants who were self-employed attached their articles to a website for their company or business. However, there were also a few attendees such as Ella Saltmarsh who wrote short articles that were subsequently published on third party websites such as Wired magazine and Stanford Social Innovation Review. These review articles provide some insight into the Do Lectures experience but being published commercially they were not specifically included in this survey of blog articles, particularly since most aspects described in them were also reflected on more fully by individual attendees writing for non-commercial purposes.

FIGURE __ 6.1 OPPOSITE

Examples of the visual summaries of Do Lectures talks in 2014 prepared by the illustrator Jessamyn Gee.

DO

Taylor Davidson

Has a secret.

He plays lottery.

It's about the small, day to day changes.

DON'T COMPARE YOUR INSIDE TO SOMEONE ELSE'S OUTSIDE

I LEARNED ABOUT COMITMENT from MY PARENTS.

it took me TO NYC

LEARNING by DOING

I LEARNED THROUGH MY PHOTOGRAPHY.

WHERE I GOT MY FIRST BIG BREAK as a PHOTOGRAPHER from a REJECTION

STARTED BUILDING FINANCIAL MODELS for MYSELF.

THEN FRIENDS.

THEN FRIENDS of FRIENDS.

writing and SHARING HAS BEEN at the HEART of EVERYTHING

SUPPORTING ENTREPRENUERS

MY JOURNEY HAS BEEN ABOUT DOING

DO

Sarah Jane Pell

USING ART TO SOLVE the WORLD'S BIG PROBLEMS

ART on EVEREST.

Sea to SUMMIT NOT JUST WHAT I DO... HOW I DO.

HUMAN PERFORMANCE — MOVEMENT — ART — SPACE — DIVING — WATER

UNDERSTANDING SOMETHING in MYSELF

THAT I CAN BRING to my ART

ART as WELLNESS for ASTRONAUTS!

HOW CAN I SHARE MY WORK?

IF I CAN DO THAT... WHAT else CAN I DO?

HOW DO I DO?

AND WHY DO I DO?

WHEN I FEEL FRIGHTENED, I THINK of the BIGGEST THING IN FRONT of me...

I ALWAYS REMEMBER why I'M DOING WHAT I'M DOING.

THEN THINK of SOMETHING BIGGER

In some cases the blog posts were fairly brief and mentioned just a few personal highlights, noting either particular speakers, subjects or ideas mentioned at the event. For example, one or two maintained bulleted lists of quotes that were either memorable or capture the central idea or ideas in each of the lectures. As noted above, this has not been the focus of the consideration and analysis in this section except where those summaries were developed as the basis for further reflection and therefore provided more useful data about how individual attendees at the event had been affected. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that three people were consistent to publish brief notes on nearly every one of the talks given in the annual event they attended. Further, several authors chose to write more than one post about the Do Lectures and, notably, Curtis Jones opted to reflect at length about his time at the 2014 event. Curtis Jones specialises in workplace ethnography and his business Fieldwork uses photography, interviews and observation to unearth the 'beliefs, behaviours and values that make up a company's culture' (www.wearefieldwork.com). He wrote an extended series of 21 articles posted over a six-month period under the collective heading 'Examine the Atoms of the Do Lectures'. Although these articles are no longer online, they outlined his "thoughts on around 26 key ideas that hit me in the heart, head and gut"[2]. With titles such as *Learn what uncomfortable is* and *Social Collisions need time and space* his articles pinpointed many themes that would emerge through other people's writing online and so they are considered in context in the thematic sections presented below. Although no other blogger was as lengthy in their write-up of the event, there was one particularly rich account of attending the Do Lectures from Christian Payne who integrated tweets, audio captures, photographs and a personal commentary to record his experience[3]. A visually rich blog post came from Abi Goodfellow, a 2014 attendee, who chose to share her visual notes in the article 'Doodles of Do' on the Medium platform[4]. Similarly, visual summaries of the Do Lectures 2015 event in Australia were professionally captured by Jessamyn Gee, an illustrator and graphic recorder to present in a single image the structure, main ideas and concepts presented in each talk. Two examples are shown in Figure 6.1 above[5]. A further uncommon form of expression within the data was a poem that strongly conveyed why the Do Lectures was significant (this is presented in full in Appendix 3).

In considering and analysing the various accounts given, it is interesting to note the reasons given by Do Lectures participants for the impact the event had on them. Despite the bulk of testimony about individual experiences at the Wales'

event, the lectures and the specific ideas they contained were rarely remarked upon as a source of influence. This is not to say that the lecture content and talks were not commented on, in fact, in many cases memorable phrases or quotations from speakers were noted as part of the recollection of experience. However, in almost every case where individual writers or bloggers wrote in more depth about the Do Lectures the material of the talks were not in the foreground of their accounts. Instead, the most significant stated impact factor was the broader event design and the particular dynamics that it conferred on the conference experience. The Welsh setting, the particular location, the practical and physical arrangements such as the event location, layout and aesthetics were all seen as contributing to the sense of personal impact felt by many. Although the quality and variety of speakers were undoubtedly important components of the experience - and, for many, a clear reason to choose to attend - it was the surrounding context of those talks or the medium in which they were delivered that was repeatedly highlighted as influential. It was the particular form of the Do Lectures conference medium was described as inspirational - creating positive feelings and expectations - as well as facilitative - encouraging, triggering or supporting certain behaviours and interactive dynamics among the participants.

The testimony to these major aspects of the Do Lectures was repeated in the many online articles - the event design, the connection felt to the speaker and to the rest of the audience, and the sense of learning and change encouraged by the talks - is reviewed in the sections of this chapter that follows.

Carefully, beautifully designed to create the conditions for magic to happen. Go and you'll know what I mean.[6]

PAUL KAAN, SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIST (DO LECTURES WALES, 2013)

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The Do Lectures event design was particularly striking to many and was featured strongly in their writing. Set in the outdoors on a farm near the west coast of rural Wales it is in bold contrast to the usual urban, comfortable and corporate locations such as hotels and conference centres chosen for most speaker-focussed events. As a result, several people struggled to begin to describe the event, even after they had attended. For example, Drew Brisely wrote that "It's an event that's difficult to categorise, from the people, to the presenters, to the overall experience. ... to call it a conference is a misnomer"[7] (Do Lectures Wales, 2013). This resistance to easy categorisation is at least in part due to the founders' refusal to define the Do Lectures by any one category, whether event or festival, conference or even the relatively new label of un-conference. For example, although no longer available online, the promotional material for the 2015 event in Wales stated "We are not a conference. We are not a festival. There are no badges. The venue takes place on an old farm. In fact, after 6 years of doing it, we still have no idea how to describe the event. But, we do know this, that people who attend tell us that it's the best thing they have ever been to". As noted by some of the survey respondents, this did establish a degree of perceived uniqueness for attendees that in itself made an impression on speakers and attendees. Damon Klotz, who attended the 2013 event, wrote "When it comes to my own professional development, I no longer spend my hard earned money on conferences. I spend my money on an experience ...this experience will last longer than any bit *(sic)* sized piece of wisdom that you will hear at any conference"[8]. As for many other attendees, the impact of the overall experience carefully shaped for them by the Do Lectures was a significant factor in the perceived impact of the event. Unsurprisingly, other events have taken on some aspects of the Do Lectures event design including Phoot-Camp and Eat-Retreat, both of which are organised and run by Do Lectures alumni.

Within the online testimony, several elements of the Do Lectures Wales conference design were more prominently highlighted - the general event environment, the dynamics of the event agenda and timetable, and the curation of the choice of lectures and their running order within that timetable. For example, one attendee described that "the unique environment of Do is an essential part of why it gets underneath your skin so comprehensively. You're immersed in every aspect of it"[9]. The highly social design created a very different event environment that boldly distinguished it from the usually comfortable experience of a corporate conference. It was described as a "no frills' approach with "a subtle undercurrent

of controlled chaos"[10] that created a safe but more personally challenging context for the event. The discomfort and disruption of living under canvas for a few days in close proximity to everyone else within the closed setting of the Do Lectures were for many key contributors to its impact. To illustrate, a strategy director for a brand consultancy found even the journey to the Do Lectures uncomfortable - "the idea of a car share with strangers shook my reserved English nature to the core"[11]. Another similarly recorded, "staying within your comfort zone won't help you think differently"[12].

A related element commonly observed was the perceived disruption to the attendees' usual routine and the abrupt contrast with their normal working environment. Guests at the Do Lectures, attendees and speakers alike, were stepping away from their usual office-based work environment into an open-air event with all the 'micro-challenges' of living for four days with strangers on a campsite. For most this was a radical and complete change of setting - more than just being away from home, but shifting from urban to a rural setting, from comfortable home to chilly tent, from an indoor to an outdoor setting, from familiar surroundings and people to unfamiliar and new:

> *"There's something about being away from the rest of the world that gives you moments of perspective"[13]*

> *"Sometimes we forget to take time and look for the beauty in things, our brains become cluttered with the day to day. We get tunnel vision surrounded by the same people, places, jobs."[14]*

> *"The uncomfortable process of completely removing yourself from your normal life and your comfortable sofa and addictive HBO series is exactly what makes the Do Lectures a good idea"[15]*

> *"If it was comfortable, there would be no point. If it was a day like any other we'd be less inspired, less excited and less likely to be innovative"[16]*

Even the challenge of making the travel to the Do Lectures became a factor that made an impact, turning the journey to this rural Welsh destination that is difficult to access by public transport into a virtue and part of a memorable weekend.

> *"Everybody was committed to this event, because of the long way they had to travel to get there, because of the bad reception … we chose to be there, because we chose to invest this time in being there."* [17]

Once at the event, the daily agenda was centred on the schedule of twenty-minute lectures punctuated by extended breaks for refreshments, food and practical early morning and afternoon workshops that were considered by a number of attendees to be the most valuable part of the event. Although the talks provided the rationale to gather in Cardigan, as one writer put it "the Do Lectures is not about the lectures … it's about the stuff that happens around the lectures"[18]. The space that was deliberately given in the event for people to talk and build relationships through conversations over coffee, the extended meal times and long evenings of music and entertainment all had a profound effect. As will be seen below, creating this space and shared opportunity for serendipitous conversations to take place allowed both speakers and attendees to make connections to others at the event that were deeper than would be normally possible within the design of more traditional conference settings.

Often repeated at the event and also reflected in the written online testimony was the impact of the curation of the lectures in terms of their interest, diversity and contrast. There was a "smorgasbord of expertise, with a cross-discipline mix of the good, the uplifting and the unexpected"[19]. As well as this variety, there were also pairings of talks that were noted because of their significant contrast in content such as the consecutive lectures from Zac Smith, co-founder of the 3D printer company Makerbot, talking about the leading edge of product printing followed by Nick Hand, a photographer and designer who had cycled the coast of Britain to document highly skilled men and women maintaining now disappearing crafts such as walking stick making. Col Duthie, an attendee who helped launch Do Australia a couple of years after attending the Wales event in 2011, wrote that he hadn't "been as inspired by a group of people collectively and individually for a long time" and observed specifically the inherent tension in these lectures that contrasted the hi-tech with the hi-touch, computerised making with the handmade, the future with the past - noting both the paradox and the insight gained by "holding both stories together in tension"[20]. Many commented on the diversity of both the talks and those who had gathered at Do Wales. This broader curation of speakers, topics and themes was for them an important contrast to their normal experience of conference or industry events.

One observation was that these more typical events became "merely an echo chamber of the same conversations on loop" and, in any case, they "can get all the latest industry news from my favourite blogs"[21]. This observation that the ease and breadth of access to online sources demonstrated that some are looking for other reasons to attend events or conferences beyond simply keeping up with the latest news and developments in your professional interests or area of business. The unusual variety of the talks, themes, speaker and attendee backgrounds all contributed to a broadening of outlook that:

> *"Doctors, designers, programmers, surfers, chefs, world travellers - the whole spectrum - they were all there. That diversity made the experience so rich, because we all came with something unique to contribute. This diversity sparked something unforeseen, gave the gathering a whole new life, as opposed to a normal conference - something that really couldn't be planned"[22]*

3. THE SPEAKER AND THE AUDIENCE

As well as noting the impact of the diversity and contrast of topics and themes talked about at the Do Lectures, the specific dynamics of the lectures was also something that left a deep impression on many of the attendees who wrote about their experience. As with some of the survey responses, parallels were drawn with the TED lectures that use a similar compact 20-minute format for each main talk. However, as described by Tim Ineaux (2012 attendee), the surrounding conference environment provided a very different setting from the very corporate and comfortable setting of the global TED events:

> *"I have to draw a parallel with TED. They bring together some of the world's most inspiring and influential speakers to present to a specially selected audience of likeminded folk, and put the presentations online. That is pretty much where the parallels end."[23]*

As highlighted in Chapter 4, the event founders specifically challenge the speakers to focus on their individual stories and to give honest accounts of their struggles and accomplishments. For the audience, this created an unusual atmosphere of authenticity and honesty and framing each lecture as predominantly a personal narrative rather than as a corporate-style presentation of ideas was very effective:

"The talks were stories, not lessons or hypothesis, just recollections of how, what and why"[24]

"You will be reminded that the best communication is just storytelling and even though it's your story, others will recognise themselves in the narrative" [25]

However, these stories, from accomplished people who "get on and make stuff happen"[26] with clear, socially beneficial achievements or businesses, created a profound sense of discomfort and dissatisfaction among some listeners. Abi Goodfellow's reflections on her response were typical of how many others felt:

"It happened at Do Lectures, Wales. Surrounded by people who worked on Afghanistan landmine elimination projects, collaboration for social good initiatives and art for dementia sufferers schemes, when asked over and over again 'What do you do?' I started to feel a bit, well, ashamed. I started to question my work." [27]

The impact of these stories was magnified by the setting of the event and by the deliberate choice to minimise the differentiation between the speakers and attendees. Although there is a platform from which speakers give their talk, many writers remarked on the lack of hierarchy and that speakers could not be readily identified among those attending until they gave their lecture. Perhaps unusually, most speakers attended the event for the whole weekend as guests sometimes with their spouse or partner. Instead of taking on the role of a slightly aloof 'sage on the stage', attendees hear a speaker and then "eat dinner with them afterwards"[28].

Tom Eldridge remarked on this unusual degree of proximity and personal access to the speakers like this:

"When I think of lecture, a passenger of information comes to mind. Quietly absorbing words. Questions can be asked but there is distance between the speaker and the audience. The Do Lectures takes the opposite approach. There is no distance. You break bread, you drink, and you talk." [29]

This close, levelling with the audience - something at odds with the normal function of a lecture that by definition normally separates speakers and audience

by the platform or podium - also made a strong impact on those who were invited to speak. For example, Sasha Dichter, a New York based innovator in philanthropy and also a TED speaker, spoke at Do Wales 2012 and he subsequently wrote:

> *"giving lectures in a small unassuming tent ... created an incredible egalitarian spirit and shared sense of community. You don't just have the chance to ask one of the great speakers a question: you probably have dinner together at a communal table, then make your way over the pub for a few beers" [30]*

The event design brought speakers and audience together at a 'common table', both literally and figuratively, in a way that went beyond the usual arrangements for a conference event.

> *"There is simply no way that the event would be the same run in a hotel or conference centre. The shared experience of camping, eating together and drinking beer together by the light of the fire-pits lifted the whole event from the simply amazing to the truly magical" [31]*

This egalitarian approach to guests, irrespective of their role within the event, together with the dynamics encouraged by the event design encouraged many social connections to form at the event. As a result, a significant proportion of writers reported the impact of the friendships and collaborative or work-related relationships that were formed at Do Lectures Wales. Stepping out of the tent or barn lecture venue to queue for refreshments together, or sitting down at long shared tables or gathering outdoors in the early morning for breakfast and coffee and the evenings of live music created an easy and natural starting point for conversations that often developed into deeper connections.

This non-hierarchical approach to the event design affected the attendees in several ways that went beyond the influence of the talks themselves. By giving repeated emphasis to the importance of personal passions, interests and ideas and by establishing a social context that places everyone (including high-profile speakers) in a peer-to-peer setting had a powerful effect. For example, in a blog post titled *Why no conference will ever be the same after the Do Lectures,* Matt Spry described the impact of this shared experience where "the people beside you are just as interesting and amazing as the people up on stage in front of you"[32]. By avoiding the categorisation of the speakers as a separate group of people

and by doing as much as possible to create a level, even-handed setting for all participants, the Do Lectures indirectly reinforced the equal value of the everyone at the event. Somewhat paradoxically, it also seems to convey individuality and unique personal identity that helps to creates a common bond and facilitate a significant depth of connection. Matt Spry concluded his blog post by describing the very pragmatic outcome of this element of the event design, "I had the chance to speak to a true industry leader ... I spent over 5 hours with her and her partner during dinner and drinks ... It's so rare to build that sort of a true relationship at a conference"[33]. The strength and opportunity of connection expressed by Matt Spry was far from being a singular observation Similar sentiments were expressed by many others:

> *"It's all part of an alchemy of innovation that encourages participants to build friendships rather than to network"* [34]

> *"The friendships and insights I had over the 5 days will be with me forever"* [35]

> *"I met brilliant people at the Do, in an environment that immediately offered a high level of trust and purpose. Our relationships had instant context. We had the opportunity to talk, read body language, share a pint, a plate and table. The shared experience ... deepened that context. It was a human experience, one where strengths and frailties were shared"* [36]

Repeated among these testimonials was how "David and Clare (Hieatt) have created a wonderful thing of authenticity"[37] that encouraged surprising levels of trust that enabled strong social connections to be made despite the short, temporary nature of the event.

> *"Approachable people, lacking in personal agenda. The corporation has no relevance"* [38]

> *"The layers that we sometimes have to sift through to get to the core were instantly discarded by all. We shared freely, we shared transparently"* [39]

As a result, this sense of becoming part of the Do Lectures community was one of the outcomes most frequently noted. The role of social media in these new relationships was particularly emphasised by an attendee from Australia who reflected on the place of digital in those connections:

"How do we replicate this using digital? I don't think you can. We don't need to separate digital and physical, they're symbiotic, they enhance and amplify each other. Touch, sense, conviviality, laughter, looking into a person's eyes, dirt under our fingernails, these things make us human, bond us. Digital keeps those experiences alive, deepens relationships" [40]

Particularly for the focus of this study, this is a critical observation about the intertwining functions of the live event and any expression of it online. Testimony such as this demonstrates the contribution of one to the other, that digital enhances the experiences and connections made in person and allows them to continue beyond the event. As noted in the earlier chapter describing the Do Lectures media ecology, the most prominent participants in their social media networks are those who have already participated in one of their live events. This activity reflects not only a general interest in and support of the Do Lectures but also very intentional contact with other attendees using individual social media accounts. This was very clearly expressed by one attendee who wrote:

"The connections have been consolidated and kept warm online through interactions on Twitter, Medium and other digital networks. Deeper understanding has been driven through the sharing of our digital profiles as individuals, members of businesses and other communities" [41]

4. THE STORY OF CHANGE

The bulk of the online testimony focused on the impact of the event design and, within it, the lectures that encouraged a strong connection between the speakers and the audience. However, within those accounts was a frequent reference to the power of the many stories shared from the platform. Because speakers were asked to share their individual narratives rather than just present ideas, their personal accounts - frequently populated with honest statements about their challenges, difficulties or failures – usually conveyed a very human perspective on their achievements or breakthroughs. Although the speakers were people who "get on and make stuff happen" [42], it was the vulnerability with which the talks were shared that moved people. It helped them to identify with the stories and caused them to feel able to pursue their own ideas or possibilities. Several articles

referred to how hearing the speakers' talk passionately about what motivated and inspired them served to create a sense of conviction about the necessity of personal change and growth. Across the audience, there emerged the "belief of the crowd to install the idea that anything is possible"[43]. As another person vividly expressed it, the stories of change gave you "the courage to win your life" [44] and choose to pursue a similar sense of vocation or more demanding personal goals.

There was further detail in some of these accounts that provided some insight into why these stories of change made an impact on the audience. Because they were written from many individual perspectives, the articles were extremely varied in how they attributed this impact. However, two underlying themes were more prominent in these accounts.

Firstly, attending the Do Lectures was "part of the courage gathering process"[45] that for one person had started with a ticket to one of David Hieatt's workshops. Attending the Do Lectures was then a step towards leaving salaried employment to start up a new and independent business venture. One participant, a web-developer for a non-governmental organisation, wrote that during the course of the weekend he began to reframe his identity as "founder of a publishing startup"[46] to reflect a side-project that had been occupying his energies and attention. Others too found that the talks were motivating them to find the courage to act, often beginning with a conversation.

You will hear yourself confidently tell a stranger about an idea that you've had but never dared whisper before. You will feel audacious ... you will find your excuses are gone.[47]

DJ FORZA, GENEVA SCHOOL OF DIPLOMACY

Secondly, the example of the speakers and their consistent call to pursue ideas with greater social purpose created a "sense of urgency ... to do something of significance"[48]. More than merely delivering the infectious enthusiasm of men and women who spoke with conviction about what was occupying their work and thinking, the talks encouraged a questioning of personal priorities and values. One talk after another contained the common thread expressed by the

Roman politician Appius Claudius Caecus (ca. 340 BC-273 BC) as *Faber est suae quisque fortunae* – 'Every man is the artisan of his own fortune'. For some, this stirred a sense of restlessness, the event giving an opportunity to rethink careers, choices and interests. Surrounded by many people who spoke boldly about the purpose and meaning they have found in their work, the event provided a significant opportunity for everyone to talk and reflect on their deeper passions and motivations. For example, D.J Forza, then a doctoral candidate at the Geneva School of Diplomacy, wrote "You will rediscover yourself and in doing so unlock the mystery of your purpose in the world"[49]. Another expressed their new-found determination as: "I can no longer coast along in my comfort zone ... if I really want to stand for something I need to start with me"[50].

Among the many individual testimonies expressed online, there are three examples for which there is both more detail and a fuller account of the impact of the Do Lectures over time. Each one of these individuals - Matt Lane, Tom Fishburne and Miranda West - has not only provided in their blogs and articles an account of how the Do Lectures changed them but also returned to the event as a speaker a few years after first participating as an attendee. Their stories are included here because, in addition to the weight of their example, they also reflect aspects of the importance of the media ecology that surrounds the Do Lectures. In each case, the online lectures or other media format have had a critical role in their experience and, more specifically, in the radical changes they have undergone in their working lives and the direction of their careers.

Matt Lane
An overview of Beerbods and the main milestones in its development is online at beerbods.co.uk/about

The first of these three exemplars, Matt Lane, is one of the more prominent attendees who directly credits the Do Lectures with helping him discover both the courage and motivation to launch the start-up company Beerbods almost immediately after attending the Do Lectures in 2012. He found that the event motivated him to start his company after hearing and meeting "so many examples of incredible people doing amazing things". Beerbods is an online subscription company whose members each pay £3 a week to receive a specially selected collection of beers every three months. Starting in 2012 with just an idea, a very basic website to gather contacts plus some practical support from friends and credit offered by a few interested breweries Matt quickly gathered more than a 1,000 subscribers by the Autumn of 2013 and was voted "one of the 100 most innovative, disruptive and resourceful small businesses" in the UK in a competition run by O2 and Smarta.

Beerbods is more than a supplier, it also operates as a virtual tasting club. Subscribers are encouraged to drink the beer on a Thursday evening and compare notes using social media such as Twitter and Facebook. Just ahead of that evening, members receive some background notes on the 'beer of the week' by email and are encouraged to share their reactions and responses through their social media channels. This online conversation has become so popular that by the end of December 2015, #beerbods was trending on Twitter during their 'tasting' slot of 9-10pm each week.

Matt Lane described the Do Lectures as being the determing factor in his decision to leave a marketing job he enjoyed to create the Beerbods start-up. A personal recommendation pointed him towards the Do Lectures and he first started watching the talks online, something he described in his blog as "This type of learning is right up my street. Clever people challenging the ways we do things and using ideas to make the world a better place". Matt then visited Cardigan in Autumn 2012 to participate in the Do Workshop "How to build a brand with very little money" by David Hieatt and began to form a plan for his business idea. When he attended the main Do Lectures event in April 2014 with the deliberate intention to hear from others with new ideas, he found that "Another thing happened whilst I was there. A grenade went off in my head. The plan I had been working on wasn't finished but I needed to start this project now. So I started telling people my idea as if it already existed. Then weirdly, it did exist. I registered it as a business the day after I got home."

Although Beerbods is less than five years old, it has gradually expanded the brand's media ecology around the core subscription product. There was already a social dimension around the conversations on Twitter and elsewhere as subscribers tried the weekly beer. This media ecology has been significantly extended and developed with live-tastings and other recorded content published on *Beerbods TV* (YouTube), a quarterly print magazine, an online shop and also a series of *Beerbods Live* events. Returning as a speaker to Do Lectures Wales in 2015, Matt Lane shared this story of the birth and growth of his business, as well as introducing the attendees to some of the craft beers through informal tastings and workshops. Speaking of the influence of the Do Lectures on him, he described the courage he drew from other attendees to launch a live online sign-up for people interested in subscribing on the Friday night of the 2012 event. In conversation with one or two others, he shared his idea, gained his first customer and, following a tweet by @documentally who was also at the event, secured his first 250 email sign-ups.

Echoing the thoughts of many other people who attend, he was unequivocal about the impact of the Do Lectures:

> "You don't know what you've let yourself in for coming here, honestly!" (7'29")

His online writing and subsequent talk at the Do Lectures provides personally unambiguous evidence of the impact of the combined Do Lectures media ecology and a strong example of a highly tangible outcome arising from its influence. Although the idea for the Beerbods business was already in place, it was a suggestion from a friend that connected Matt Lane to the online Do Lectures which he watched first and then followed up by attending one of David Hieatt's Do Lectures workshops on *Building a brand with very little money*. As a result of attending this workshop, that was the result of watching the online lectures, he chose to go to the main annual event in Cardigan. As a result of the talks and the conversation and encouragement provided by the surrounding event he found the courage to make his idea public (in person and online). He effectively launched his new business at Do Lectures Wales and directly because of the influence of the event.

In 2015, Matt Lane effectively completed the cycle of impact when he returned to the Do Lectures as a speaker. His account of the impact of the event and its contribution to a rapidly growing and innovative business not only added his story of change to the live event but also to the online collection of lectures available on the Do Lectures platform to encourage others. This useful and visible example of the influence of the Do Lectures reflects the effect of their media ecology and the intertwined role of the live event and the online platform.

Tom Fishburne
A profile of Tom Fishburne and many of his *Marketoonist* cartoons are on his website *marketoonist.com*

A second example and further evidence of the impact of the story of change presented by the Do Lectures is provided by the experience of Tom Fishburne, the Californian business 'marketoonist' who draws cartoons to highlight or satirise trends in marketing, branding, social media and other business-related themes. He is a highly relevant example, being described by *Wired* magazine as someone who 'embodies the mix of craft, innovation and action that characterises the Do Lectures (2011). In his personal blog, written shortly after the Do Lectures first event he attended in 2008, Tom recounted:

I'm still shaking the Welsh mud from my hair and clothes after an intense and thought-stirring four days at the Do Lectures. It's kind of like a sustainable TED, though much more intimate and we all slept in tents.

Already making a comparison with the more well-known TED talks, he noted the contrasts of both the size and setting of what was then a new event in Wales. Tom Fishburne returned as one of the speakers at the Do Lectures Wales in 2011 and in his lecture he strongly highlighted the profound impact that the first Do Lectures weekend had on him. Joking that "I don't know what they put in the tea here", he specifically pinpointed his attendance at the 2008 event as the turning point in his career.

This first attendance at the Do Lectures in 2008 was as a representative of Method, one of the sponsors of the inaugural event. Method had launched a few years earlier in 2001 and was recognised by Fast Company for their highly innovative products. At that time Tom Fishburn was Managing Director (International) and of the company and a founding member of the team that launched Method products into the UK market. Again as a representative of Method, Tom attended Do Lectures Wales a second time 2010 and then, having since begun his own business as Marketoonist, returned as speaker in the Autumn of 2011.

Tom attributed this profound change of career and direction from a very senior role at Method to pursuing his passion for cartoons directly to the influence of the Do Lectures. In personal correspondence with the researcher, he wrote very openly about his experience (Fishburn 2011);

"The Do Lectures is the one event I've attended that I can honestly say left me changed. A lot of events claim that, but when I first attended the Do Lectures ... I left with a changed worldview that manifested itself in chasing my life.

I think that part of what makes it so powerful is that much of it is not a digital platform. As we turned the car into Fforest, the GPS navigation screen read "Off the digitised road", which I thought was so appropriate. To get to the Do Lectures, one has to travel (sometimes a long distance), unplug from the grid (stop twittering and phoning) and really immerse oneself in the experience. It's a potent few days."

In a follow-up interview, when asked further about what had caused the Do Lectures to have such a profound impact, Tom Fishbone pointed mainly to the overall dynamic of the experience. He compared some elements of the event to the activities of the 'Bohemian Grove' club based in San Francisco. Although very much an elite organisation, it particularly welcomes creative professionals alongside business, political and society leaders to create fresh, balanced events. The highly private nature of the Bohemian Grove club means that there is very little information about the organisation and its activities available. However, in an account of this and other similar retreats it was observed that:

> *In return for their patronage, the wealthy are handsomely entertained by the talented members at the Grove and the clubhouse. They also have the privilege of rubbing shoulders with people of very different abilities from their own, which enhances both their self-image and their public image. Some even develop fast friendships with the artistic and professorial members, friendships they never would have developed if the Bohemian Club and its Grove hadn't provided an institutional setting in which the rich and the talented were able to interact on a cooperative and fraternal basis. (Domhoff 1974)*

Although at a very different scale and without such an elite audience, there is some similarity with the Do Lectures who also choose a natural outdoor setting for their events, a context where connections and friendships can easily be made across the eclectic mix of professions, abilities and means represented by their live audience.

One final example drawn from the online testimony to the impact of the Do Lectures is that of Miranda West, founder of the Do Book Company that publishes a series of books based on individual Do Lecture talks. Her first encounter with the Do Lectures was when she had been forwarded a link to one of the online videos from the 2010 event in Wales for the talk *'Considering the Future of Books'* by Craig Mod (2010). Craig is a writer and essayist who reflects on the impact of digital formats on print publishing. His twenty minute Do Lectures talk considered how the book was being redefined as a point of convergence for the digital and analogue object. Having watched the talk online, Miranda West sent a speculative 'on instinct' email to David Hieatt to see whether books of the talks were being published. From the conversations that followed, she founded a start-up business of her own that she described as her 'personal biggest Do' (West n.d.) and is

*The Do Book series and
sample page layout
illustrating the attention
given to the medium desgn*

now regularly publishing new titles written by speakers from the Do Lectures events. She had worked in a variety of editorial publishing roles with Routledge, André Deutsch, and most recently, as a senior commissioning editor (adult non-fiction) with Penguin Random House. The series now has several international distributors in the US and Australia as well as in the UK. Miranda West and many of the books have been featured in the national press such *The Guardian* and the *Financial Times*. The Do Book series has won two industry plaudits - first, as one of the top ten Creative Entrepreneurs in the UK (2014) awarded by the British Council/the Hospital Club ; and, shortlisted for the brand identity category of the 2015 British Book Design and Production Awards. The design of the books all with covers from James Victore, himself a Do Lectures Wales speaker, was recently featured in Elle Decoration Magazine (October 2016) who wrote that this "new generation of self-help books is pint-sized and punchy, as well as boasting a strong graphic look" (p.55). Much attention has been given to the specifics of the medium that is carrying a wide range of titles and Miranda West has created a set of fresh, contemporary design within an appropriately compact, well-produced book that has positive, tactile qualities - these affordances that define a physical book and distinguish it from a PDF or e-book have been acknowledged and made an important part of the communication design.

As with Matt Lane and Tom Fishburn, Miranda West returned to Do Lectures Wales as a speaker and spoke about her experience at the 2015 event. In her talk (West 2015) she spoke passionately about "books that change lives" and her fundamental conviction that "the right book in the right hands at the right time can change the direction of their lives". The practical advice and tone of each title in the series reflect this conviction, with their website describing the pocket-sized books as focused "on the 'doing' rather than the background theory. Concise, practical guides that make it easier to Do stuff". The founding of the Do Book Co company represents a very clear outcome of the influence of the online platform as it formed the initial connection to the event for Miranda West and was the starting point for the later attendance and then development of the book project. Although there is some irony in that the initial point of influence in the creation of this book publisher was an online video from Craig Mod speaking on the seismic shift from print to e-books, the Do Books represent a major new strand being added to the Do Lectures media ecology. Even though these books are not available for sale at the Do Lectures event, the last chapter described their contribution with very close to half of the survey respondents purchasing

one or more titles and the positive feedback online indicating their value to the Do Lectures community.

The online testimony collated in this chapter adds some depth and detail to the picture that emerged from the survey of the Do Lectures audience already presented. Those survey findings indicated that the most significant and universal influence factors for the live audience were the elements of the Do Lectures event design rather than the content of the talks themselves. This has been reinforced by the analysis of the online testimony of event speakers and attendees given in this chapter, again demonstrating that it has been aspects of the medium rather than the details of the message that have been dominant as individuals have reflected on what from the Do Lectures experience has made the most impact on them. The volume of unprompted accounts written by a large percentage of the live audience is in part due to the nature and composition of that audience, many of whom have businesses or profiles that are already well-established online. However, for 1 in 10 participants to choose to record detail of their experience and, for many, the strong impact made on them by attending the Do Lectures provides compelling evidence and is an outcome that would be highly attractive and valued by any cultural event organiser. Both the survey and online testimony have drawn out important aspects of the various influence factors and has illustrated the intermedium dynamics that exist between offline/online activity and communication. The careful and deliberate design of the Do Lectures event format has created a medium that is designed to facilitate dialogue, encourage positive social dynamics and support interpersonal connections all within an environment that provides a vibrant, emotional experience filled with personal narratives and stories of change, some of which are very profound. This 'high-touch' communication of the live event has facilitated a proportionally large volume of 'high-tech' communication online and provides a clear example of the functional axis that exists between them.

Except for some brief mentions or pointers towards the Do Lectures collection of online videos of their talks, there was little evidence of the impact of the Do Lectures digital platform on its own. The almost complete absence of self-declared testimony from that part of the audience who had only viewed the talks online is in very stark contrast to the volume and depth of material published in blogs and other articles following participation in the live event in Wales. This is significant given the quality and fidelity of the online talks in respect of the speaker's content and ideas that were captured and presented as professionally produced media packages that are faithful to include the entire, usually unedited, talk. Despite the

attention given to implementing this major part of the Do Lectures media ecology and the potential viewing numbers available through digital platforms, evidence of influence on the online audience was extremely limited. Although the responses of the online audience prompted by the survey gave some indication of influence, they disclose other dimensions of use beyond presenting the talks themselves. In connection with the live event, the digital platforms have a demonstrable role as a critical part of the Do Lectures media ecology, facilitating connections prior to participation as an attendee and afterwards, helping to initiate and then sustain relationships formed at the event or a degree of participation in the network of alumni and Do Lectures community.

Through the example of the experiences of Matt Lane and others that could be explored in more detail due to their longer-term involvement with the Do Lectures, the close interplay between the live/online elements of the Do Lectures is clearly illustrated, as well as highlighting the more limited role of books and other media formats used in support of the network. The online testimony presented in the final sections of this chapter relating to these three individuals gives distinctive evidence of the impact of the Do Lectures and, especially, the function of the surrounding media ecology in facilitating that impact. All three of these testimonies delineate the connection between the online platform, the live event and the contribution one makes to the influence of the other. In the chapter that follows, the relationship between these two primary elements will be explored more fully, drawing on the themes that emerged from the survey responses and online testimony described above.

ENDNOTES

The Do Lectures attendees quoted in this chapter originally published their testimony of the impact of the event at the following websites or blog accounts. Due to their ephemeral nature, not all of these articles are still available online.

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2. Curtis James, www.notkindacool.com, 2013

3. Christian Payne, https://storify.com/documentally/the-do-lectures, 2011

4. Abi Goodfellow, https://medium.com/@abigoodfellow/doodles-of-do-a6564860828f, 2014

5. Jessamyn Gee, http://www.think-in-colour.com.au/2015/04/03/do-lectures-australia/, 2014

6. Paul Kaan, http://paulkaan.com.au/brain-disruptions-from-the-do-lectures-2013-second-bit-design-critical-consequential-thinking/, 2013

7. Dew Brisley, http://www.triginnovation.com/tangents/2013/5/9/left-to-my-own-devices-thoughts-on-the-do-lectures.html, 2013

8. Damon Klotz, http://damonklotz.com/2013/09/20/why-no-conference-will-ever-be-the-the-same-after-do-lectures/, 2013

9. Katie Moffatt, http://prandsocial.com/2012/08/30/the-do-lectures/, 2012

10. Alex Morris, http://mistermorris.tumblr.com/post/11099520582/the-do-lectures, 2011

11. Nick Pearce, http://www.thinkjpc.com/blog/2014/06/24/do-lecture-diary/, 2014

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30. Sasha Dichter, https://sashadichter.wordpress.com/2012/05/01/the-do-lectures-and-tim-smits-nine-principles-of-management/, 2012

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32. Damon Klotz, https://damonklotz.com/2013/09/20/why-no-conference-will-ever-be-the-the-same-after-do-lectures/, 2013

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Renaissance, Retrieval and Reimagination

"

"McLuhan ... looked ahead
from the moment of print to its
surpassing in electronic media,
in which he glimpsed a kind of
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Previous chapters have set out the background to the Do Lectures since its inception in 2008. It has explored the central areas of investigation for this case study - the goals and aspirations of the event founders and architects, and the impact of the event on its live and online audiences. The broad thematic analysis of articles and blogs written by many of the speakers and attendees reflecting on their experience at the event together with the detailed survey responses provided evidence that the Do Lectures is making a tangible and, in some cases, very substantial impact on its audience. The live event, in particular, is inspiring, facilitating or crystallising varying degrees of personal change for many who attend the annual event. However, it is also evident that the online platform also makes some similar contribution but with much less effect, offering different but complementary properties of use for the audience.

This chapter brings together some of the strands of that testimony and presents a synthesis of its dominant themes. The first part considers the renewed place of the public lecture in the light of the experience recounted by the Do Lectures attendees, highlighting not just its cultural renaissance as a particular medium form but also the additional dimensions of experience that are being created and recognised alongside it. Moving on to then consider the role of the digital platform, several aspects of the audience use of the online medium identified from the research data will be presented.

The second major section of the chapter considers the two main components of the Do Lectures media ecology and reflects on the relationship that exists between the live and online platforms. Noting aspects of the dynamic that occurs between them, it applies the theoretical perspective that Marshall McLuhan developed as 'laws' of media and draws on the concepts described in the literature review. In addition to observing these intermedium factors, this section will organise and present them around the four directions of the tetrad to illustrate some of the dimensions of the Do Lectures media ecology explored within this thesis.

The final part of the chapter will consider the Do Lectures in relation to its local context and its role in respect of Wales' national identity and brand. This closing section, based on the data provided by participants at the Do Lectures annual event in Cardigan and their online audience, acknowledges the event's geographical location as a specific medium and considers its impact and contribution.

A TALK RENAISSANCE

The survey responses and the online testimonials both provide evidence that the Do Lectures creates a high degree of impact on many of those who attend the live event. The personal accounts, many of which were written after considerable thought and reflection, contained many superlatives about the inspiration, provocation and motivation provided by the event. The replies to the survey were almost entirely positive and gave a significant indication of the degree of enthusiasm for the Do Lectures, including their digital platform for their live talks.

As was noted earlier in this thesis, the Do Lectures does resist categorisation, but their successful use of the short form lecture-format to cover themes of innovation, technology, creativity, and entrepreneurial or social enterprise earned them recognition as one of best ideas festivals. In addition to demonstrating that this type of event is an important emergent form of cultural experience, the Do Lectures and the more widespread rise of the ideas festival points towards a renewed public appetite for the presentation of 'good thinking' both in live face-to-face events and through online video. This popular appeal was expressed by CNN as "intellectual Viagra", comparing the ideas conference to the nineteenth-century salon as a place for intelligent conversation and 'provocative discourse' (Busari 2013). This appetite for the lecture is perhaps surprising in a context where established institutions such as the academy and the church have been seriously questioning their long-established use of the form as a central, critical element of their function. Approaches such as the 'flipped classroom' and the success of the online video-based Khan Academy have received significant attention causing many to ask 'Is the lecture dead?' and pursue alternative means of engaging with students. This question has been a repeated theme in *The Atlantic* magazine (Gunderman 2013), recently framing the issue with a slightly more hopeful question 'Should Colleges Really Eliminate the College Lecture?' (Gross-Loh 2016).

However, the impact of the Do Lectures indicates that there is a renewal of interest in the lecture as a form of oral performance that lies at the heart of this type of conference. The cultural prominence and commercial success of the TED Talks that enjoy a very substantial audience, high levels of brand recognition and online visibility also point towards this renewal. Benjamin Wallace writing

about the rise of "those fabulous confabs" (2012) concluded that "Smart talk has never been such a valuable commodity". This commodification is true not just in the sense of the obvious commercial value of such enterprises but also the status values attached to participating either as a speaker or as part of a relatively elite audience defined by the high price of attending a live event such as TED Global.

These wider dimensions of value are also shown by the example in the article of a crime that had mystified local police in Long Beach, California. A photographer was threatened, physically attacked and robbed, unusually, 'by a well-kept white guy'. Instead of demanding the many thousands of pounds of lenses and camera equipment the photographer was carrying, the attacker wanted the all-access lanyard he had for the TED conference. The victim's own words were "It's easy to think that money is the currency of the world ... but there are other currencies". Although somewhat overstated in the book 'Talk Like TED' which opened with a chapter that asserts "Ideas are the currency of the twenty-first century ... There's nothing more inspiring than a bold idea delivered by a great speaker." (Gallo 2014), it is true that conferences such as the Do Lectures have given a new vitality to the public lecture within contemporary culture.

Chris Anderson, president of TED and its lead curator, describes this as a "talk renaissance" and emphasises that "however much public speaking skills matter today; they're going to matter even more in the future". When Chris Anderson first attended a TED event in 1998, he "thought of conferences as necessary evils. You put up with hours of tedious panels and presentations in order to meet the people from your industry that you need to meet." (2016, p.228) but the energetic short-talk format captivated him, particularly as it moved through a varied and eclectic range of topics, themes and ideas. However, although trained as a writer and journalist, he now concludes that "great public speaking matters" - not primarily as a presentation of knowledge but because it allows people with valuable ideas to connect with others and to a wider network of disciplines and insights. Although Anderson's role as 'head of TED' means that his commitment to the importance of the talk cannot be impartial, his background as a journalist and then as a major magazine proprietor means that his observations come from someone who also has a strong understanding of the written word and presentations in print as well as through voice and video online. He contends that "one of humankind's most ancient abilities is being reinvented for the modern era" (Anderson 2016). It seems that the 'ancient abilities' of rhetoric, the locus of McLuhan's doctoral work and the genesis of many of his ideas that followed, are

being recovered in the contemporary setting through the emergence of speaker-led events such as the Do Lectures that put oral presentation at the heart of a live conference experience.

> *"McLuhan ... looked ahead from the moment of print to its surpassing in electronic media, in which he glimpsed a kind of backwards transition from the linear, spatial world of Gutenberg's "typographic man" to the "audible, tactile" world that preceded print and even preceded writing."* (Guillory 2015)

The "talk renaissance" is also demonstrated in other areas of culture. Just as one of the Do Lectures attendees wrote: "I so much wanted to be up there ...", being a speaker at an ideas conference has taken on more mainstream value as both a means of shaping personal identity as well as being an aspirational role. There is a growing number of YouTube videos themed around or referencing 'My TED Talk' and even websites such as tedtalkfantasy.com that ask "So what would you want to say to the world if you had the opportunity to present your ideas or message to millions of people?" The popular recognition of the format is being adopted as a 'thought experiment' to help individuals motivate themselves and guide them towards personal fulfilment. In this way, the twenty-minute platform-based 'good thinking' talk is more than a performance genre - it is also a highly specific form of self-expression and a cultural measure of popular success.

> *"Until recently, the universal self-actualising creative ambition was to write a novel. Everyone has a novel in them, it was said. Now the fantasy has changed: Everyone has a TED Talk in them."* (Benjamin Wallace 2012)

This inspirational dimension is reflected in advertising for the newly redesigned Renault Mégane (Renault 2016) that features the car's owner speaking at a TED-style conference as a central element of the attractive, desirable lifestyle they want to portray. As a cultural barometer, the advert expresses current consumer interests and values; as a car advertisement, it also portrays some of the imagined ideals of contemporary living. The choice to build the advert around a fictional speaker whose talk is titled *(R)Evolution: A Simple Idea That Pushes the Limits* (seen on the cover of a lifestyle magazine shown in the opening sequence and the backdrop of the speaker's platform) is a further indicator of the place of the ideas conference within contemporary culture and in public aspiration.

A COMMUNITY OF STORY

Although the talks provide the main focus of the Do Lectures event, the evidence from the survey demonstrated that the ideas presented were not the most prominent source of inspiration. The range of factors described in the responses (for example, in question 9) indicated that many broader elements of the lecture context such as the location in Wales, the event design, the surrounding conversations and social interactions were critical components of an experience described by some as 'profound' or 'lifechanging'. It was noteworthy that even though some speakers were well-known individuals such as Tim Smit (Eden Project), Michael Acton-Smith (Mindcandy's Moshi Monsters) or Tom Herbert (The Fabulous Baking Brothers) and most lectures presented bold, stimulating ideas, the content of individuals lectures were generally recalled by attendees only when prompted to do so (question 15). Instead, much of the overall impact was attributed to multiple factors in the event environment as a whole, something one blogger pithily described in the title of his article as 'the Do Lectures is not about the Do Lectures'. Goffman's conception of the lecture described in Chapter 2 is helpful here, focusing on its qualities as a 'text' - a vehicle of connection that brings together the speaker and the hearer into a shared 'event' (Goffman 1981). In that analysis, he describes the lecture as "mingling the living and the read", with the spontaneous aspects of oral performance blending with the mental or physical scripting needed to prepare for delivery. The lecture framed as a text and event in this way emphasises that the speaker and listeners are brought together in a common, unrepeatable experience. That experience is something that is unique and in sharp contrast to the ubiquity of an online version of that same lecture shared with an audience that is scattered across time and place.

The lecture, therefore, is the first act of mediation as the concepts, illustrations and narrative content previously only in the mind of the speaker is delivered through the final shape of the talk. It carries and expresses their chosen words and ideas but, importantly, also the personal characteristics and qualities of the author. The speaker does not merely *present* but *is present* - to use biblical language, the lecture is "the word made flesh" (John 1: 14). It is these qualities of presence that seem to have made the most impact on attendees many of whom commented on the 'buzz' of the live event as well as on the privilege of meeting, conversing and sharing a meal with the speakers or other listeners over the

weekend. As one survey respondent (29) remarked, this "helps to create a bond", not just with individual presenters but also (to varying degrees) with the rest of the Do Lectures audience.

The writer Ursula Le Guin, heavily influenced by the work of Walter Ong and his distinction between primary and secondary orality (1972), makes a strong case for this linking of speaker and hearer through oral performance in the previously unpublished essay "Telling is listening" (2004, p.185 ff):

> *'Listening is not a reaction, it is a connection. Listening to a conversation or a story, we don't so much respond as join in – become part of the action. … Oral performance uses time and space in a particular way of its own, temporary, physical, actual timespace, a sphere containing a speaking voice and listening ears, a sphere of animated vibration, a community of body and mind.*
>
> *… people seek the irreproducible moment, the brief, fragile community of story told among people gathered in one place. … The living response has enabled that voice to speak. Teller and listener, each fulfils the other's expectations. The living tongue that tells the word, the living ear that hears it, bind and bond us in the communication we long for in the silence of our inner solitude.' (p.196, 205)*

'The story' each speaker is briefed to present is the starting point and reason for people to gather at the Do Lectures, but it is then becoming part of this 'community of story' that was strongly reflected in the feedback. The highest-ranking impact factor (recalled in question 8 of the survey) for most people participating in the live experience was the conversation with others that also led to close connections and even friendships or mentoring relationships. This creating of community within the event, gathering around the lectures as a central locus, was amplified by other shared aspects of participation that also formed an influential part of the conference experience. Each aspect was strategic, encouraging the intermingling of speakers, attendees and organisers without control or hierarchy and often until the small hours of the morning. This dimension of the Do Lectures gathering was more than creating a forum for dialogue and public thought around ideas shared from a platform. Although those ideas stimulated people's thinking and brought them together around the concepts presented, the formation of community here was a more profound process. The Do Lectures had created a space and an

event format described as a 'container for your community' (Cole 2016) where everyone was a participant and became a 'Do-er', the shared linguistic shorthand for all those became event alumni. This sense of community felt by attendees is in extreme contrast to the far less significant interactions through digital and social media that saturate much of our daily experience. Far from being a problem, the almost complete lack of wi-fi and the poor mobile signal at the Do Lectures helped to curtail the habitual distraction of smartphones and social media and, from observation at the event, this was certainly a relevant factor and supported the attention necessary to stimulate conversation and connection.

In the book *Deepening Community*, Paul Born conveys the importance of making these interpersonal connections as a means of shaping our identity and "quenching our thirst for belonging". He points out that "in the chaos of modern life, community ties have become unravelled, leaving many feeling afraid or alone in the crowd" (2014). Perhaps it is surprising that an event such as the Do Lectures can provide a measure of belonging but it is an increasingly important trait for organisations, one that the marketing consultant Seth Godin describes as the key to organic and viral business growth. Particularly significant in the context of this research, he notes the Do Lectures as a specific exemplar of a key underlying mechanism:

> "Invent a connection venue or format, but give up some control." (Godin, 2015).

A community forming around a talk is very well established as a regular feature of religious life where the sermon is at the heart of the gathering and, similarly, in the academy where the lecture too crystalises an identifiable body of students. As with the Do Lectures, there is evidence that this feature is becoming a central and motivating part of other forms of gathering too.

Echoing the traditional roles of the church and the academy are *The Sunday Assembly* and *The School of Life* respectively, both of which use short-form talks at the core of their events. As well as providing further evidence of the talk renaissance already referred to, they are also indicators of a cultural shift towards alternative means of social connection driven by values as well as by common interests. *The School of Life* was set up in 2008 by public philosopher and author Alain de Botton and Sophie Howarth, a former curator of the Tate Modern with a focus on placing " learning and ideas back to where they should always have

been – right in the middle of our lives". Like the Do Lectures, the School of Life extends its programme of talks into longer workshops, books and a range of other products described on their website as "objects of affection for everyday life". Initially, a major part of their activity was the 'Sunday Sermon', a weekly secular talk 'exploring the values that we should live by today' that deliberately copied some of the polemic and theatrical style of its religious counterpart. Writing about the difference between lectures in the academy and sermons in the church, Alain de Bottom notes that preachers instinctively recognise that people have 'a perplexing tendency to know what we should do, combined with a persistent reluctance to actually do it', that we 'all possess wisdom that we lack the strength to enact in our lives'. Religion 'proposes that the central idea for education is not so much how to counteract ignorance - as secular educators imply - as how we can combat our reluctance to act upon ideas which we have already fully understood at a theoretical level' (de Botton2012 p.124). This provides an interesting parallel to one of the primary goals of the Do Lectures described in an earlier chapter– to help give the strength to enact in our lives a degree of positive and self-fulfilling change.

The speakers were drawn from a network of cultural figures such as Ken Robinson who spoke on education and Brene Brown on vulnerability and courage, who had both also delivered them previously as TED Talks. Similarly, The Sunday Assembly has weekly meetings that are structured "around a central lecture/ sermon, delivered in bite-size chunks". The event was started in January 2013 by comedians Sanderson Jones and Pippa Evans who "both wanted to do something that was like church but totally secular and inclusive of all—no matter what they believed." . From an initial gathering of around 200 people who met in The Nave, Islington (that is somewhat ironically, a deconsecrated church in North London) the weekly attendance rapidly grew to more than 600 people. The Sunday Assembly now has weekly events in more than 70 of the larger cities around the world. The rapid growth of this short-talk conference format and the emergence of new styles of event such as the School of Life and The Sunday Assembly is due in part to the 'ideas and inspiration' ethos pioneered by TED Talks but also because of an appetite for gathering where the lecture is the focal point or rationale but community and identity also have a role.

These wider relational aspects of the lecture that were observed in the success of the event provide important additional indicators about the future role of the

lecture. Although the content dimension - lecture as information - frequently comes to the fore, these significant social functions are extremely valuable and are becoming more apparent in an era of greatly increased mediatization and technological access to content. As Richard Gunderman, a professor at Indiana University, wrote in response to the question 'Is the lecture dead?':

> *"The core purpose of a great lecturer is not primarily to transmit information. To the end, other techniques, such as assigning a reading in a text book or distributing an electronic copy of the notes, can be equally effective. The real purpose of a lecture is to show the mind and heart of the lecturer at work and to engage the minds and hearts of learners. A great lecture is not a rote mechanical reading of notes, but a kind of dance, in which lecturer and listeners watch, respond to, and draw energy and inspiration from each other"* *(Gunderman 2013)*

This conception of the lecture reflects the historical development of the form presented earlier in this thesis that noted its shift in function as new media technologies were established. The lecture moved from a role in the *cultural preservation* and distribution of an original text to that of *authorial performance* because the means of reproduction of that text was now achieved through the technology of print rather than through live dictation. In a similar shift, contemporary media technology is able to preserve and distribute a significant part of the authorial performance in addition to its textual content using, for example, online video platforms. As a result of this new media context there is a further movement of emphasis possible in the function of the lecture - a role in *community formation.* These qualities of social connection go beyond the richer qualities of lecture communication in person noted by Gunderman and were clearly observed in the data drawn from responses to the Do Lectures.

Benefits frequently commented upon by those attending the event such as gathering to the speaker and their performance and joining with others through the lecture event as a 'community of attention' help to create a common sense of identity. Those who first share in that event through the reception of its text and the narratives it presents then become a 'community of story' because of their shared participation. In this way, gradually creating a 'community of belonging' is a potent by-product of what begins as an oral performance- it serves to knit an audience to a deeper or more long-term commitment to the organisation, brand or other corporate entity. Establishing a 'community of attention' in this way

who then share in a 'community of story' is a trend that is now appearing more widely within the commercial arena. Although it is seen in the Do Lectures and programmes such as The School of Life and The Sunday Assembly, community is also emerging as an important characteristic of other businesses. The Harvard report *How we Gather* identified many types of company that function more as social organisers than as businesses, catering for a hunger among Millennials for those who feel "more globally connected and more locally isolated than ever before" (Thurston & Kuile 2015).

Companies such as CrossFit are constructing a network of affiliates and creating a culture whose common focus of attention is fitness but with a strong additional layer of community formation that facilitates and amplifies the commitment around that central activity. Members of each Crossfit 'box' will not just share a gym location as individual members of that club, they will also hold one another to account over attendance and performance, encourage physical and mental change in one another and enthusiastically evangelise others to join their community.

The *How we Gather* report pinpoints some of the characteristics that recur throughout these organisations and feature in their mission statements or, increasingly, 'manifestos' that reflect the deeper purpose-driven underpinnings of their activities. It describes (Thurston & Kuile 2015, p.8) six values or priorities that are common:

- community
- personal transformation
- social transformation
- purpose-finding
- creativity
- accountability

These characteristics are also present in the Do Lectures to varying degrees. As well as being represented strongly within the themes and values that permeate their talks, they are also reflected in their books and publications. For example, with significant overlap of values, the books *Do Purpose* (Hieatt 2014) and *Do Fly* (Strange 2016) both address questions of finding purpose and direction in your work and personal life; the books *Do Disrupt* (Shayler 2013) and *Do Improvise* (Poynton 2013) cover areas of transformation in business and life; and *Do Design* (Moore 2016) and *Do Story* (Buster 2013) give particular attention to creativity

and the drive to find compelling and guiding personal narratives. The importance of the interpersonal dynamics created at the event acknowledged by the majority of the attendees points towards a "broader cultural shift towards community" (p.20) outside of more traditional institutions such as the church or the local neighbourhood. Instead, events such as the Do Lectures have recreated it and reimagined it for the twenty-first century, community formation being initiated through their main events and then sustained through the extension of those emergent relationships into the surrounding media ecology.

It is in this highly interpersonal context of creating a particular conference format and event medium that the Do Lectures has made use of the digital platform to publish their talks for an online audience. In a marked contrast between the intensity of the community of attention and story created by the event, the digital platform provides different qualities of both attention and story as it engages the wider global community, as well as those who have already attended one of the Do Lectures events. In addition to contributing to the talk renaissance, this complementary part of the media ecology provides other additional dimensions beyond achieving visibility and reach to the lectures.

THE USE OF ONLINE VIDEO

As was described in the opening chapter, the Do Lectures was one of the first conferences to adopt online video as a significant part of their function, and they have consistently released recordings of the series of lectures from all of their live events in Wales, the US and Australia. As was noted earlier, their use of online video was a strategic and fundamental part of their pricing design where the relatively high cost of tickets for the live event 'pays for free', ensuring that open access to all their talks could be given to the global online audience. The popularity and financial success of the TED Talks that has come to prominence since the early years of the Do Lectures has drawn a significant baseline for the online lecture. It has "established a preeminent status marker for the digital economy" (Wallace 2012) and The Do Lectures early adoption of streaming video through their digital platforms has placed them firmly within that digital economy, providing them with unprecedented opportunity to extend their geographic reach, grow their audience and provide a significant resource through which they can connect to the social media networks of all those who engage with them. Significantly, the foresight to establish a consistent digital platform for their speakers has been achieved from the constraints of the 'Chicken Shed', an outbuilding on a farm in rural Wales and not from within a hi-tech urban hub.

Although the ideas conference as an event has fuelled the renewed interest in public lectures and given new status and prominence to speakers, the corresponding digital platforms have also made a significant contribution to the 'talk renaissance' described above. They have become an important component in the social media ecology, providing video content with substance, variety and interest. Although major social media channels such as Youtube and Vimeo have an established role in hosting and distributing video content, other mainstream platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are also prioritising video content as a core part of their publishing strategy. For example, Twitter's early high-value acquisition of Vine soon after its launch in 2012 combined with significant changes to their infrastructure to allow users to create and post videos was symptomatic of a rapid move towards video content that has now been incorporated even by social media platforms such as Instagram that otherwise prioritised stills and photographic content. Similarly, Facebook has advanced their platform to go beyond publishing or embedding video to streaming it live and, lik Instagram and Snapchat, allowing

The Chicken Shed
In complete contrast to the digital materials published from here, this is an old converted poultry house now used as working and office space for the Do Lectures team. During live events it also functions as a base for the organisers and a 'green room' for the speakers.

users to create video stories with the minimum of expertise. The inbuilt tools of the software used in combination with basic recording equipment and an internet connection have made it straightforward to capture and broadcast a live event with ease and immediacy. The immediacy of the Facebook Live format lent itself particularly to the fast-moving series of ten 10-minute talks that made up part of the Do Ideas Day on the theme of 'Stress' that was held in London on 14 October 2016. Although the capture was crude in comparison with the recordings from the main signature events it demonstrated the Do Lectures on-going determination to experiment with any new opportunities provided by digital platforms.

In his 2010 TED talk, Chris Anderson quoted the network company Cisco who estimated that more than 90% of the web's data would be video within four years. Anderson joked that "If it's all puppies, porn and piracy, we're doomed" and noted that the band-width capacity of the web has radically changed the role and reach of the lecture:

> *It's not too much to say that what Gutenberg did for writing, online video can now do for face-to-face communication (Anderson 2010).*

This shift has provided a major new outlet for oral performance of all kinds, whether informal and ephemeral such as a Snapchat video or the polished, professional recording of a talk published by the Do Lectures or by TED. Technical developments within the digital platforms themselves, their increased capabilities for hosting and streaming video enabled by substantial developments in codecs, media devices and mobile connectivity further extend social media's insatiable appetite for visual media. The short form talk of about twenty-minutes that is at the heart of the Do Lectures event, similar in style and eighteen-minute format demanded by TED Talks, is now a mainstay of that media environment. Not only does the compact length encourage and discipline speakers to focus their talk only on their most important points, it is also short enough to hold people's attention online. Commenting on this format, Chris Anderson is quoted as saying "It's the length of a coffee break. So, you watch a great talk, and forward the link to two or three people. It can go viral very easily" (see Gallo 2014, p.146; Crystal 2016, p.20).

An online video certainly does not capture many of the most important characteristics of the live performance such as the presence of the speaker, the nascent 'community of story' identified by Le Guin or the many other contextual

elements that contribute to the event experience. However, the shift of the lecture into the digital space provides a substantial 'extension of man' (M. McLuhan 1964), the digital platform giving the speaker a reach to a much larger online audience. Creating these digital "texts' of the lectures removes them from their original setting and introduces several important changes to the dynamics of the communication process. The speaker is separated from direct contact with the audience and, equally, the audience is separated from direct contact with the speaker - there is a "double eclipse of the reader and the writer" (Ricoeur 1981, p.147). Instead, the content is mediated through the digital platform. In doing so, the change of medium means that there is an immediate loss of some dimensions of the experience. For example, Goffman identifies the ritual of performance, the interpersonal connections and shared experience, the social value of involvement and access to the speaker and a celebrative occasion as characteristics of the live lecture as opposed to experiencing simply the text itself (1981, p. 186ff)

However, although the use of a mediating digital platform distantiates the speaker and the audience, the text is also "emancipated" (Ricoeur 1981 p.148) and available to a much wider audience than can be present at the live event. Most of the constraints of geography, cost, opportunity, capacity or other factors that limit participation in the live event are overcome, subject to the inherent prerequisites of language and resources that limit online access. In this respect the change of medium means that there are certain benefits and gains not associated with the medium of the live event. As the lectures are placed into a completely different media environment from the original oral presentation, one immediate consequence is that they are now extant within a wider digital media ecology that includes all the various websites, social media and other online content that reference or interact with the Do Lectures and its associated digital media. In addition, the connections and relationships formed and maintained through the live event are supported by and flow into the connections and relationships that exist online and vice versa. Both digital and live dimensions of this network of relationships underpin its influence in both spheres.

It should be emphasised that the survey responses from the online audience provided little evidence that the digital platform *alone* was significant in influencing personal change or making a high degree of tangible impact. People who had only watched the Do Lectures online reported that the talks had been informative, enjoyable or entertaining and several people watched one or more of the videos as a regular part of their online viewing habits. Watching the talks did

provide some degree of 'inspiration' and highlighted new perspectives or ideas, but the main value of the online platform appears to have been in its various functions beyond this straightforward consumption of content.

These functions were explored in the later sections of the survey (question 11 onwards) and the replies demonstrated that these uses were extremely varied and, importantly, not limited to the most obvious online activity of simply sharing the content through social media accounts. Although distributing and promoting the Do Lectures content in this way was a major characteristic of its use, there was also evidence of more nuanced functions and a spectrum of varied engagement, most substantially by those people who had attended one or more of the live events.

The outreach functions of digital platforms for marketing, promotion or to provide visibility and engagement with businesses and organisations are well established (Qualman 2009, Tuten & Solomon 2014, Dahl 2014). Many of these general properties of online video have also been recognised for their role in supporting events, conferences and festivals. For example, digital is a means to "greatly expand the audience for the event and to gain more coverage and exposure" and notes that the online version provides, at least in part, an alternative to attending the event, something that is "further enhanced through blogs and photo-sharing" (Bolan 2015, p.205). This is a critical contribution of the Do Lectures digital platform and the survey indicated that online content was the first touch-point for more than a third of the respondents in their engagement with the Do Lectures. This 'evangelist' role of their online activity - gaining visibility before new audiences is significant albeit obvious. However, the survey revealed an additional use of the online platform by those who were present at the live event -they made it a purposeful extension of their experience, using it to strengthen the interpersonal connections and relationships formed at that time.

One of these additional and purposeful uses most strongly in evidence among those surveyed was the sharing of one or more of the Do Lectures online talks as a means of bringing attention to their personal involvement with the event. Much of this took place as a normal part of their online activity, for example, through their use of personal blogs or social media platforms, but there was also considerable sharing of the talks in live, face-to-face settings such as the workplace or other business settings. The descriptions given of how they were used indicate that the use of the online platform in shared 'off-line' contexts stepped beyond mere general-interest sharing of what had caught their attention, and, instead

was effectively providing a personal endorsement of the Do Lectures. A major reason those who had attended the event chose to share online content was because of the degree of personal impact they had experienced at the event and so the video did much more than serve as promotional, standalone content. The online platform also performed an 'ambassadorial' function, equipping someone to easily use the lecture content in a wider social context where the individual's testimony and connection to the Do Lectures formed an important part of the presentation. The ready availability of online video not only enabled easy sharing of the content across social media networks, it also facilitated wider use outside of those networks supported by the social endorsement of those who played the talks, for example, in interactions with friends, family or colleagues. A part of the ambassadorial use of the digital platform in this way, although using online content, was within 'offline' contexts such as using Do Lectures content in the workplace, for a corporate presentation or within another setting where neither use nor sentiment can be measured easily by social media metrics.

Although beginning to be identified in this case study, this is another component of 'dark social' media activity that is not immediately apparent. The volume of survey responses that described situations where almost one in four viewers also sharedDo Lectures online content in personal, social, education, or work settings was highly significant. It highlights the offline/online dynamics that are so frequently considered in isolation, yet are firmly brought together in a wide range of social contexts. As is being increasingly recognised, "if you think optimizing your Facebook page and Tweets is 'optimizing for social' you're only halfway (or maybe 30 percent) correct" and it is estimated that up to two-thirds of content referrals come from friends and other connections without using the main social media platforms (Madrigal 2012).

A further common application of the online video content Do Lectures noted from the online articles and blogs was its use within their commendation of the event. The rich, descriptive content of several of the longer posts was centred on the narrative provided by the author's account of their experience at the Do Lectures but was often punctuated with links to favourite talks or to speakers that had made a particular impact. At one level these links provided a functional means of adding multimedia content and interest to enrich the articles. However, the content and tone framed the link as a 'trophy' - it was not included to convey the substance of a particular talk but, instead, as part of the evidence of individual participation.

In this way, the online talks seemed to operate with a 'souvenir' function, that is, becoming part of an individual's recollection of their experience. Within the public sharing of their memories, the digital content was an object that functioned as a visible token of their participation as well as a practical link that directed others to the content. Choosing to include a specific hyperlink, embedding a particular video in their web page or sharing a talk that they felt was compelling or personally noteworthy was an act that, at least to some degree, helped them to memorialise their experience and make it public in their own networks.

In this context of a growing and varied use of digital platforms, the qualities of personal interaction that are a part of the event and deliberately scoped into its design are being recognised and rediscovered. Having considered these two dimensions of the audience experience in the sections above, the connection or relationship between these different components of a media ecology are considered in more detail below.

FIG __ 7.1
Firestarters *poster sent
to potential Do Lectures
speakers by David Hieatt*

We think you have a great story. And we want you to come and tell it. So you can pass that knowledge on. Like these sticks, you are a firestarter too. You remind the world of what's possible. You light up people's imagination. You show them what they could be too .

INTERMEDIUM DYNAMICS
AND MARSHALL MCLUHAN

Perhaps somewhat taken for granted in the past, the unique qualities of face-to-face communication and the value of participating in the lecture as both event and community of 'attention' or 'story' is being more clearly seen within a culture of increasing mediatization. Opportunities provided by evolving and increasingly sophisticated digital platforms are throwing a spotlight back onto the oral performance such that the qualities of direct conversation and the connection to others it affords is being newly perceived and more highly valued. As communication events such as the lecture become more frequently mediated or distributed through technology, the role and particular qualities of face-to-face interaction are brought from the background to the fore, enhanced in this new media formation rather than diminished or superceded. Set against a potentially global but remote audience, substantial privilege is attached to participating in the live event and being observed as doing so through personal or social media –a privilege that arises from both the participation in the *irreproducible moment* that uniquely occurs at a specific time and place, but also from the additional aspects of experience that only direct participation in the live event provides.

These qualities of presence arising from physical proximity to both the speaker and the audience generate a tension of effects within the overall communications environment established by the Do Lectures. This dynamic is established between the many different elements that set up within the media ecology several major contrasts and media tensions such as online/offline, digital/physical, hyperlocal/global and hi-tech/hi-touch. For example, to receive a beautifully designed letterpress card from the Do Lectures makes a more potent statement when most other interactions have been through the use of digital platforms and perhaps only the ephemerality of Twitter. Similarly, delivering thought provoking physical objects such as pine 'firestarters' with a handwritten note seizes the attention of guests or speakers you want to recruit for the next Do Lectures event in a cultural context where most people receive only electronic media such as emails, texts or social media messages. In each case, what creates the impact is not merely the novelty and occasion of receiving something so tangible, it is the dramatic semiotic contrast of medium it provides against our usual experience. As more interactions take place on social media or through our smartphones,

Do Lectures 'firestarters'
In 2014 the Do Lectures sent a ribbon-wrapped bundle of pitch pine kindling sticks to potential speakers, accompanied with a small poster (shown opposite).

tablets and computers, there is a much greater appreciation of the physical experience with its alternative sensory richness in conveying multiple layers of meaning. Handwritten correspondence has value not only because of its textual content but, in very stark contrast to the ubiquity of the email, it is the medium attributes of the letter as a physical object that are brought into view. A handwritten letter suggests a degree of thought and care has gone into the communication, a deliberate and more intentional action that is strikingly distinct from the ephemerality, convenience and ease of a digital medium. Further, the letter not only embodies the individual choices of the sender regarding the words it contains, but also the preferred selection of materials and the haptic or visual qualities they afford. Even in the handwriting and style of presentation of the letter there exists a very personal expression of the writer.

Current consumer trends highlight this new appreciation for the medium and for making choices that are perhaps surprising when the use of digital devices, apps and other electronic forms increasingly dominate our attention. For example, sales of fountain pens are growing very rapidly despite the wealth of digital tools readily available on smartphones and the almost negligible cost of a disposable biro. In 2012 Amazon reported that they sold four times as fountain pens as just two years earlier in 2010 and Parker Pens also acknowledging a major 'resurgence' after a period of strong commercial decline (Brocklehurst 2012). Similarly, many people have chosen to move away from using the feature-rich software and wealth of 'productivity' apps available for their smartphones or computers and are adopting hand-written journals. Instead of using pre-designed planning tools and products or even the paper diary organisers and inserts that were popular in the 1980s and 1990s, users are making individually designed 'bullet journal' or 'BuJo' notebooks with handwritten entries, planning grids or other drawn components, frequently incorporating calligraphy, illustration or other creative elements. These elaborate personal journals often adopt luxury notebooks such as those by Moleskine, Leuchturn or even the simple, highly tactile leather cover system of the Midori's Traveller's Notebook whose popularity is attested by the many imitations produced by the Etsy craft community. Popular first in Japan, the Midori notebook is the antithesis of paper or digital complexity. It uses very basic materials and a minimal design consisting of just a fold of quality leather with internal elastic cords to hold one or more small notebooks. These and other similar changes in consumption are indicative of a wider cultural shift - as new digital technologies become more pervasive and the volume of impersonal mass-produced goods increases, people are seeking products with greater tactile,

BuJo
A 'BuJo' is a 'bullet journal', a personal organisation system that functions as planner, notebook, sketchbook, to-do list or any other paper-based application. Ryan Caroll, the designer credited with the system of notations used to structure the journal, describes it as "an analogue system for the digital age" (bulletjournal.com)

emotional or individualised features. It reflects a greater recognition of the media qualities and functions of material artefacts and a renewed use of more personal, individual or semiotically-rich media. This is noteworthy in the context of the increasing use of digital platforms that are often presented or discussed in a binary way when compared to their analogue counterparts. There is a tendency to see each sphere of activity as distinct and in opposition to each other, for example, with fears that new technology may eliminate or displace the old. Debates around themes such as the future of the book in the age of the Kindle or whether lectures in the academy should be largely abandoned in favour of video content both demonstrate a perspective that Nathan Jurgenson has termed 'digital dualism' (Jurgenson 2012). He critiques popular books such as *The Shallows* (Carr 2010) and *You Are Not a Gadget* (Lanier 2010) for their slightly reactionary tone against the growth of social media and other digital platforms. They express a tendency to see them as displacing or damaging offline experiences or face-to-face interactions that are deemed 'real'. For example, in her most recent book *Reclaiming Conversation,* Sherry Turkle writes "even a silent phone disconnects us" (Turkle 1985, p.22).

This tendency towards dualism does not only emerge from cyber-dystopianist viewpoints but also from digital utopianists who hope to delegate critical areas of human responsibility to technological systems and interventions in order to advance society and ameliorate its problems. This is a position firmly rebutted by Evegny Morozov in his book *To Save Everything, Click Here* (2013) who is critical of the two dominant ideologies that pervade this position - technological solutionism and internet-centrism. The debate about the role of technology is far from new, but the conceptual divide has perhaps been encouraged partly by some of the long-standing terminology carried forward from early studies of the impact of the internet (Turkle 1985). Referring to the 'second self' has so often been accepted to imply that there is also a 'first self' that is somehow distinct and that people have two distinguishable identities, one in the 'real' world and another in the 'digital'. However, as Nathan Jurgenson emphasises, "people are enmeshing their physical and digital selves to the point where the distinction is becoming increasingly irrelevant" (2011) and "our lived reality is the result of the constant interpenetration of the online and offline" (n.d.).

This 'enmeshing' of the physical and digital and the inevitable tensions that exist between them is experienced by the Do Lectures audience who move between various digital platforms they employ both before and after attending the live

event, using social media and web-based content to interact along a spectrum of engagement. This continuum of interaction with the Do Lectures is enriched by purchases of other physical Do Lectures media objects such as posters and printed ephemera, collecting titles in the Do Books series and, for some, the take-up of other related events such as Do workshops or courses. Each activity within the Do Lectures media ecology provides varying dimensions of media experience, the qualities of each providing a greater or at least varied depth, direction or intensity of engagement. As the Do Lectures adopts additional platforms or media formats, they are creating an increased range of semiotic surfaces on which they can inscribe meaning for their audience. Each surface, whether physical or digital, has its own media properties that make a particular form of contribution to their media ecology. Instead of conceiving the live and the digital as alternative platforms to choose between, they are utilising the differences that exist between them. There is no competing duality between online and offline - instead, there is a continuity of mutual support and interaction between these realms. The evidence in this case study is that the Do Lectures does not demonstrate a dualism that is manifested as a conflict or a zero-sum equation between the high-cost ticketing of the live event and the cost-free sharing of the talks online. Instead, each element creates a positive and symbiotic contribution to their overall media ecology where each supports and enhances the other - the properties of one highlights and illuminates the qualities of another. As the media ecology is developed or extended, the experience of their audience is similarly developed and extended, each medium making its own varied contribution to that experience.

This tension and the dynamic relationship that exists between coexisting forms of communication within a single media ecology was recognised by Marshall McLuhan and his tetrad of laws expressed something of the complex, multi-dimensional inter-medium dynamics that can be much more easily observed in today's communications environment. His goal was to do more than understand a single medium (notably television), instead, he considered the wider context of its use and, in particular, thought deeply about its relationship to, and impact upon, other media forms. For television, as with any other medium, he sought to know what human function it 'enhances' or extends; what former technology it 'obsolesces' or displaces; what older form it 'retrieves' or recovers from the past; and, if the technology was pushed far enough, what 'reversal' or negative transformation it flips into. In an era largely dominated by the linearity of the Shannon-Weaver model of communication with its focus on the transmission

of content, thinking in this way provided a radical perspective from which to interrogate not just the media but also the medium.

Observing the lines of relationship between media types highlighted by McLuhan's laws helps to define and acknowledge the properties of a specific media form within its wider ecology. For example, it provides a perspective that avoids the oppositional and dyadic views that simplistically pitch a physical object such as a book, CD or other media artefact against its digital counterpart. Instead of forcing a choice towards one or the other, the tetrad of principles provides the beginnings of a structured instrument with which to examine the relationship between them. When the content - the text or the music - can be presented, reused or republished in so many different forms across the range of available technologies, the use of the laws of media helps to move attention to the properties of each one and thus more efficiently navigate both the possibilities and the opportunities to be seized. McLuhan's precepts provide a means of understanding the ever-changing dynamics of a media ecology where platforms are rapidly evolving or reinventing themselves and new media forms are emerging or being reimagined as the consequence of digital progress and innovation.

For the Do Lectures, the starting point for the core of their online content is the live oral performance, and rhetorical platform of the annual event in Wales. However, as technology has enabled wider distribution of recordings of that performance to a growing online audience, being part of the live lecture and its immediate community becomes more exclusive and more highly valued. The online experience not only provides for new forms of expression through digital and social media platforms (including interaction, sharing and other behaviours), it also throws into relief the qualities of its other forms of expression. Of course, this relates particularly to the original lecture, that "irreproducible moment" described by Le Guin, but also to the other formats within which content is expressed, such as a Do Book, workshop or poster. In entering the new modality, there is a dual benefit - the new opportunities offered by that new modality, plus the enhancement that accrues to the particular qualities of the previous modality that are not present in the new. So, the online distribution of content does not only serve to provide a means of visibility, advertising or publicity - a further enhancement offered by the virtual experience his that it highlights the exclusive benefits of the live experience, and in doing so increases both its desirability and perceived value. Far from undermining the value of buying a ticket for the live event, the privilege of actually attending is increased

as the online audience grows and recognises its unique quality. In this way, the digital platform acts as a *multiplier* of the value in the original event as well as an *amplifier* of its messages to a wider global audience. The movement of content onto a digital platform not just extends its reach and its audience, it also visibly privileges the live performance - the ubiquity and freedom of access to the Do Lectures talks online provides a generosity of context that affords exclusivity and a more elite status to those who were able to attend and enjoy the fulness of the live experience. The ease of access to the Do Lectures online, therefore, achieves more than publicity through the distribution of their content, it serves to establish a broader set of properties and attributes.

Some of those additional functions of use were described above but there is also a further dimension of benefit as the qualities of the digital environment create a dynamic relationship to the live event that is characterised by contrast - fixed time vs. anytime, localised vs. globalised. It is partly these sets of contrasts that appear to be a contributing factor in the impact of the Do Lectures. McLuhan anticipated the fact of a relationship between one media form and another, and stimulated thought through the laws of media about the individual properties of any new medium, bringing them into dialogue with the old. To use the language of the tetrad, the renaissance of the live lectures is a clear retrieval of the rhetorical event that has occurred because of rather than in spite of the new possibilities of the digital medium. Further, the digital medium has enhanced the lecture through the increased reach, audiences distributed across place and time and has presented new and varied uses of that oral performance in ways that were previously unanticipated. In addition to examining their differentiating qualities, the research has shown that ubiquity of the digital platform has enhanced the privilege of the live and, in a contrasting dynamic, the intimacy of the event has fuelled online engagement.

On 17 July 1978 Marshall McLuhan addressed the teachers' college of Columbia University with the admonition:

> *Media ecology means that if print, or if the written word, is in danger, it can be rescued by some other medium. Or propped up. Don't just let something like that go down the drain without any counteractivity."* *(Lum 2006, p.163).*

This is what is now being seen, not just within the Do Lectures media ecology but also other areas of application. The lecture as oral performance was being challenged by the promise and opportunity of technology, particularly in its benefits of cost and reach to wider audiences through the use of digital and social platforms. However, that threat of obsolescence from the greater use and distribution of video content has not materialised - instead, as technology has matured, it has also provided the necessary 'counteractivity' for the oral performance to be recovered. This phenomenon is also seen in other arenas described above such as the renaissance in the use of fountain pens and notebooks when smartphones are highly normalised, everyday items. The anticipated obsolescence of the old has been replaced by a respect for their qualities, perhaps only fully recognised in relation to those of the new. There is, as McLuhan recognised, a moving landscape of different medium forms that interact with each other in a sophisticated, non-linear way. Even an early assessment of McLuhan's work concluded that "Most of McLuhan's theories may, over time, collapse; he is too incorrect too often to be his own best apologist". However, Kuhn also noted that "no one can deny that McLuhan may be the greatest gadfly of our age; opening doors that would have otherwise have gone untouched, despite his tendency to stumble once inside" (1971, p.201). His tetrad of laws is perhaps one of those doors that have been left substantially untouched but the intermedium dynamics that they attempt to describe may yet be useful in the design of communication ecosystems. As the Do Lectures have demonstrated, the impact of the contrasts, tensions and relationships that exist between different media forms (as well as the individual media properties of those forms) can be very effective in creating a spectrum of engagement. The closely combined use of both hi-touch and hi-tech approaches to communication is not only functionally effective, but culturally appealing as it combines technological innovation with more varied sensory and emotive surfaces to create a fuller texture of brand experience. Perhaps this is one of the reasons for the great success of the Kickstarter platform and many of the creative works that are published using its crowdfunding mechanisms. The wide range of items offered as 'rewards' to those who pledge to support a project often span a highly diverse but related continuum of media types with more ephemeral or less tangible digital products being paired with physical, tactile or experiential products as part of a menu of rewards. In each case the base product for which funding is being sought is supplemented by an ecology of related media which together provide a greatly enriched offering to the purchasers. The tensions and dynamics of the various media forms and their interplay is a critical part of the mechanism alongside the content itself.

Impact through intensity of experience

'Generative' source for media and production of brand/semiotic resources
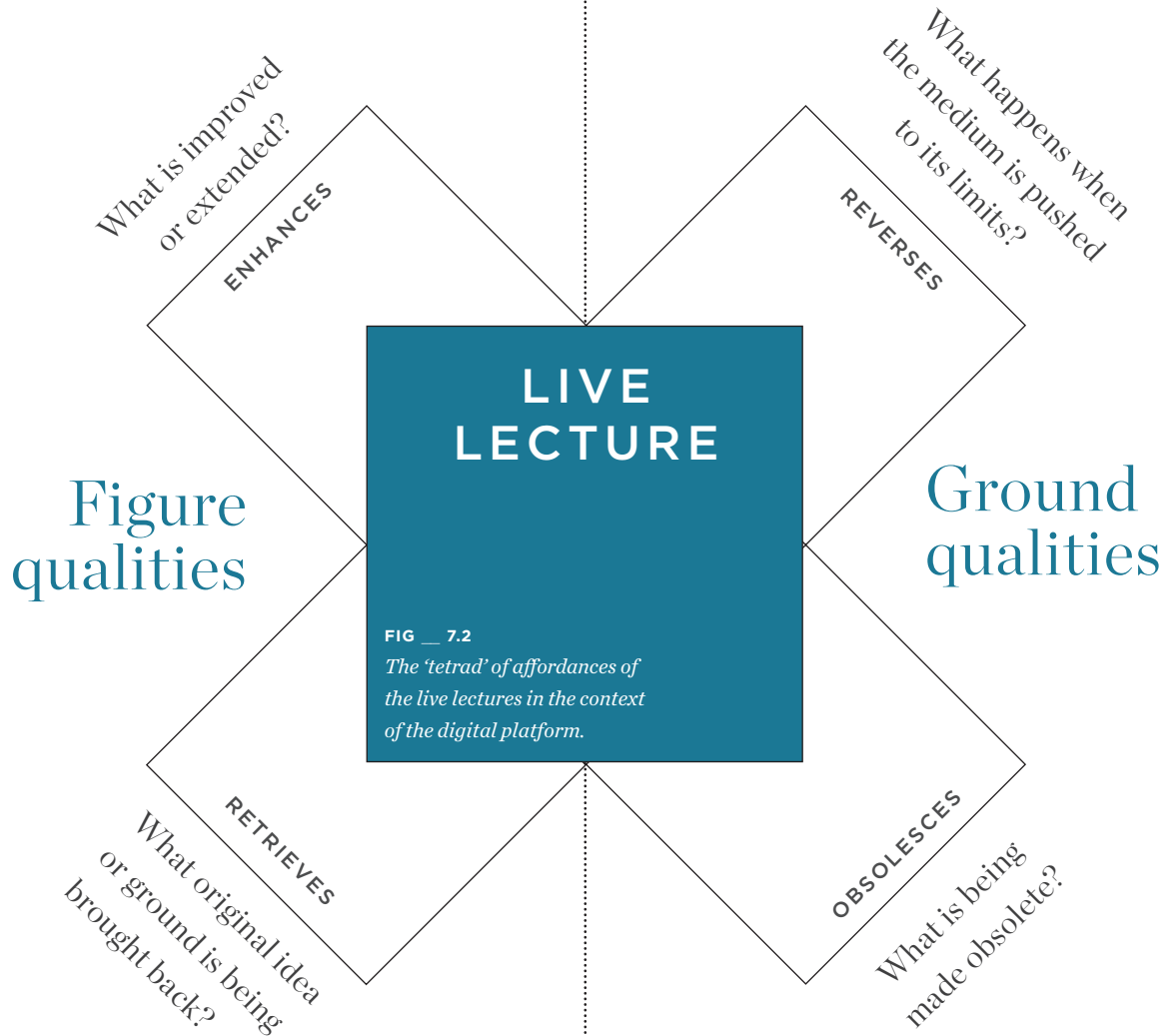
Strong formation of network/community

Lecture as a medium with specific qualities in its live context

'Human' component of the lecture with social and interpersonal affects

Restricted size and defined location prevents audience growth

Closed environment without public visibility or cultural engagement

'Generative' aspects of event limited to its temporality and geography, not leveraged through online channels and networks

What is improved or extended?

ENHANCES

What happens when the medium is pushed to its limits?

REVERSES

Figure qualities

Ground qualities

LIVE LECTURE

FIG __ 7.2
The 'tetrad' of affordances of the live lectures in the context of the digital platform.

RETRIEVES

What original idea or ground is being brought back?

OBSOLESCES

What is being made obsolete?

Lecture as 'event' and occassion

Social and interpersonal or community dimensions of the lecture experience

Importance of place, environment, living context

The 'presence of the word' and the significance of live delivery

Benefits of speaker/audience proximity

Removes potential dualism between live and online contexts

Defuses technological utopianism

Removes fear of human displacement through advances in communication

Although referring to the progressive evolution of the form of the book and other physical texts and documents, Ewan Clayton highlights the shifting balance of media forms available at any moment in our history. He reflects on the development of technologies whose primary goal was to treat documents merely as content or as information and that there was either a lack of understanding or a lack of respect for their wider and less obvious function as three-dimensional communicative artefacts and social instrument. While attention and consideration was being given to the content as it was being repurposed into an alternative format or system, the properties of the document as a functional and social object were being lost or remained unrecognised. He reflects that this issue, at least in part, was due to the choice of controlling metaphors that dominated perceptions:

> *"Our graphic culture is diverse, unfolding through all the possibilities that the materials and technologies, the social, political and economic facts allow at any one time, constantly reconfiguring itself - and delicately balanced. The theorising that informed the upcoming digital technology took little account of these aspects of material culture and the human behaviours and social structures that interacted with them. The controlling metaphors for the theory of information developed by Claud Shannon in the 1950s had evolved for handling wireless telegraphy"* (Clayton 2013 p.338)

Contesting this content-orientated metaphor was something challenged by the media ecologists described in an earlier chapter. Particularly with the tetrad of his Laws of Media, McLuhan does more than simply challenge - he actively shifts focus to the role of the medium with a 'tetrad' of questions that allow the shifting dynamic of a communication environment to be interrogated. The two diagrams opposite and overleaf gather and organise some of the observations made within this study and maps them onto the pictorial representation of the four dimensions of the tetrad illustrated earlier in this thesis. Both illustrate the dynamics within and between the Do Lectures main platforms - the first (Figure 7.2 opposite) summarises the dynamics of the live event in the context of the digital platform, the second (Figure 7.3 overleaf) summarises the affordances of the online lecture in the context of the live event. Although there are inevitable overlaps in the ideas expressed, considering each perspective in turn allows for a more systematic presentation and the properties and possibilities of each can be brought into dialogue with one another.

Privileges relative uniqueness of live attendance

Increased geographic/temporal reach

Social endorsement and sharing in networks

Pre-information and marketing

Visible curation and established library of talks establishing thematic values

Availability of content for brand use and audience consumption

Neglect of the live experience as the originating format

Online network is too intangible without meaningful offline connections

Lack of deep or experiential engagement

No 'generative' core of event and experience to fuel online engagement and media output

What is improved or extended?

ENHANCES

What happens when the medium is pushed to its limits?

REVERSES

Figure qualities

ONLINE LECTURE

FIG __ 7.3
The 'tetrad' of affordances of the online lectures in the context of the live event.

Ground qualities

RETRIEVES

What original idea or ground is being brought back?

OBSOLESCES

What is being made obsolete?

'Word of mouth' sharing in personal networks and (online) communities

Lectures as active part of cultural conversation and component of the public sphere

'Souvenir' or 'evangelist' functions previously carried by pamphlets, published talks or audio recordings

Traditional marketing and audience outreach

Requirement of size or reputation to gain visibility or achieve impact

Cost overhead for publishing/distribution

Need of media professionals or inaccessible technology to publish/distribute content

This pragmatic task of giving strategic attention to medium qualities is something that businesses, entrepreneurs and individuals can take account of in their practical construction and management of their communication channels. Particularly with the ever growing variety of tools to use, there needs to be a much more deliberate choice of what media forms to adopt or experiment with, which ones to abandon. Each new form of media adds a further layer of complexity that doesn't simply provide a new opportunity or advantage but also subtly metamorphoses previous forms bringing into relief both the positive and negative aspects of their properties. This consideration of both media form and ecology extends beyond finding additional ways of extending audience numbers - although that is relevant - it also has an impact on the degree of impact or engagement achieved.

The strategic implementation of new or emergent media channels is usually considered in the context of how best to take real-world aspects of their business into the online context but there are growing numbers of entrepreneurs who are shaping their business 'in reverse'. That is, the physical environment of their business is being redesigned in order to accommodate the specific media properties of online channels, for example, to meet the visual appetite of Instagram users. One business, the 1888 Hotel in Sydney, has attracted social media users with complementary check-ins for Instagram users with more than 10,000 followers, incorporated 'selfie-spaces' into their general areas as well as displays of digital feeds of social media content geo-tagged with the hotel location (Kirkova 2013). This is now being significantly extended with restaurants not only serving 'unicorn foods' designed with Instagram in mind, but with entire photo-friendly interiors being created specifically with a brief to maximise the visual experience and therefore stimulate brand-interest and attention through being shared on social media (Newton 2017). This change of direction of thinking is significant for two reasons: first, the physical environment is being utlised as an active and influential medium, not merely to define the immediate experience of those present within it but also those for those who experience it vicariously though online platforms; second, the physical environment is being 'reverse engineered' specifically for their effectiveness as they are expressed within digital networks. As with the Do Lectures, such examples show that the relationship between form and content can be intentionally established and powerfully leveraged using the media axis that exists between the live event and the online audience.

Unicorn foods
A trend for highly-decorated food items such as coffee, cakes or desserts that are lavishly coloured and embellished in order to be 'Instagrammable' and provide a valuable source of social media images.

In this way, the choice of medium is gaining increasing significance and requiring very specific consideration in the development of effective approaches to communication by companies or other organisations. That consideration goes beyond an understanding and application of the properties of a particular medium in isolation or in parallel with other media forms, and needs to include an appreciation of those media forms as they function *in relation to one another*. The environmental design of the original site of engagement, whether an 'Instagrammable' restaurant or the venue for the Do Lectures, creates an initial vector of impact in respect of the immediate experience of the customer as the aesthetics, immersive setting or other elements of their surroundings is shaped to elicit a particular response. There is also a further vector of impact that is derived from the potential of those surroundings (as the initial medium for the customer experience) to carry into the digital space and to be transformed into user-generated content within another medium. The physical experience is repurposed and also enriched as it is used to generate check-ins, photographs, a live-stream or to provide social media comment or commentary. This second vector of impact is not only based on the individual qualities of each of these media forms - whether of the physical environment or of the digital platforms into which it is relayed - it also rests on their dynamics that exist between them. For example, although the senses of taste, smell and sight all have critical contributions to make to the dining experience, it is only the visual that can be carried directly into Instagram and there is therefore a degree of influence that is only achieved by the relationship between a visually stimulating interior and the photographic digital platform into which it is conveyed. An understanding of both these individual media domains *and* the connection that exists between them allows both to be used to greatest effect as a rounded and purposeful communication strategy.

However, as well as highlighting the potential of these intermedium dynamics, evidence from this research suggests that there is also a third but related vector of impact to be considered. In addition to the strategic use of individual medium properties and also making use of the complementary relationship that exists between them, there is a further dimension of influence exerted through the degree of contrast that they provide to one another in that relationship. The Do Lectures has demonstrated that their ability to communicate is significantly strengthened by the use of starkly dissimilar media forms. Part of the impact is achieved by bringing together the combination of the live and online, the physical and virtual, the material and digital in order to create a rich and varied media ecology where the diverse qualities of each element are brought into dialogue

and appreciated for their particular contributions to the audience experience. Therefore, any reflection on the impact of intermedium dynamics does not only consider the practical interaction between different medium forms but also the degree of contrast that is set up between them. The Do Lectures setting in hard-to-reach rural Wales in which lectures are valued for their raw authenticity is powerful because it provides an additional dimension of experience to the virtual gloss of digital communication *and* each provides a strong counterpoint to the other. In a digital world that prizes convenience, global reach and non-time bound interaction the Do Lectures contrast this with an event that celebrates the virtues of inconvenience, the uniqueness of place and the value of an unreproducible moment. It has impact not because it is offered as a rejection of digital culture and the emergence of its various platforms and technologies but because it offers a way to enhance and retrieve those aspects of experience that cannot be easily found within it.

This perspective is perhaps also relevant as an important factor underpinning the cultural resurgence of 'makers' in the creative industries and the concepts of craft, artisanship and the other physical skills of work. The degree of growth as a sector and the level of commercial appeal they enjoy would appear to have some relationship to the virtualisation or digitisation of so many other areas of activity. This is seen in many of the stories told from the Do Lectures platform as entrepreneurs whose businesses and interests are fashioned from the space that exists between contrasting media forms. Dan Rubin, a highly commercial photographer, specialises in the messy and unpredictable uniqueness of a photographic print hand-developed from a large format camera. The value of these images emerges from their relationship to and contrast with the ubiquity and consistency of the digital photo we can all achieve with a smartphone camera. The illustrator Marion Deuchars creates prints and posters celebrated for their hand-lettering in her unique style in the context of a saturation of typeset materials, many of which can be achieved by the masses with basic design skills and the use of their home-computer or the easy to use digital templates offered by Canva, Envato or other online tools. David Hiatt adopts this strategy too, with both product and communication - the handmade, individually signed Hiut jean digitally tagged with a unique history and narrative is promoted with a £10 annual yearbook that is collected in its own right as a magazine and design artefact. All these media forms derive their meaning and significance not only from their own particularities and individual qualities but from their symbiotic and contrasting relationship to one another.

WALES - A JOURNEY
WORTH MAKING

Within the testimony gathered as part of the research, a major repeated theme was the contribution of the Welsh location to the event design and also its effect as a medium on participants. Many of the specific characteristics of the Do Lectures including its communal, outdoor design and the choice of a comparatively remote location means that it has completely challenged the 'Posh, Predictable World of Business Conferences' (Garland 2012). Placing the event in a location that is a challenge to reach with communal accommodation under canvas in a damp, Welsh field is severely disruptive for an audience that is used to the conveniences of twenty-first-century living. The discomfort is compounded by arriving to join a gathered crowd of intelligent, articulate strangers – an experience that one survey respondent likened to the 'first day at school' (7). For a significant proportion of that crowd, many of whom are knowledge workers, creatives, online specialists or small business owners and entrepreneurs working in the digital domain, their working lives are saturated with technology and they have an almost constant connection to the internet through their smartphones and other devices. So, to come to a location with almost no mobile phone signal or wi-fi access and even the occasional loss of sat-nav signal is both novel and uncomfortable. These are aspects of the notably disruptive event design that has made such an impact on the Do Lectures guests and speakers. As one attendee wrote, "The Do Lectures hasn't just broken the conference mould. It's turned it outside in. Diverse, inclusive, unbranded, organic, fluid, honest". Almost surprisingly, the disruptive challenge to everyday routines provided by staying under canvas in rural Wales was viewed almost exclusively as a positive contributor to the event experience. Even the challenge of travelling to the more remote location was seen as preparation, a part of stepping away from everyday mindsets as well as everyday routines. One person described it as 'a journey worth making', a sentiment often repeated by those who attend the event.

The West Wales setting is, therefore, a core component of the Do Lectures identity, not just in terms of its setting as a venue or choice of location, but as an influential part of the event context and medium. Wales contributes its own qualities that go beyond being a superficial, geographic element of the brand to be manifested in communications. It is also central to the experience (as well as

the perceptions) of the audience and particularly to those who attend the event. There is significant drama in arriving at an old working farm set against the scenic backdrop of the rugged, coastal beauty of Cardigan and each participant is immediately exposed to a prototypical view of Wales and its landscape. The atmospheric images of this iconic setting are certainly a part of the Do Lectures media ecology as they permeate the mixture of online and print media - on arrival the locations and landscape, previously experienced by most people only through a digital lens, are now fully alive and in view. The setting which they only experienced through a limited lens is now the setting in which they will become immersed for the duration of the event, Wales being a fundamental and intrinsic part of the overall experience.

In this way, Wales itself is a medium brought into service of the event - its landscape, beauty, the stimulus of the outdoors and even the relatively poor mobile or wi-fi connectivity are all deliberately utilised as brand assets that provide specific form and context to the event. At one level, connoting the rural idyll, these factors help to convey perceptions of authenticity, timelessness, artisanship and other values embodied by David and Clare Hieatt in their business ventures such as Hiut Denim - but also values that are enjoyed by much of the Do Lectures community and were reflected in feedback on the event. However, in addition to their symbolic value most evident in the communication outputs, they also exert a direct emotive and physical effect that was part of what made the Do Lectures compelling to its live audience. In this sense, Wales and its particular qualities of place have been leveraged to become a potent offline and online medium within which the Do Lectures functions, providing an evocative and effective provenance to the brand. Wales is therefore a critical part of their overall image and identity, the rural backdrop providing a powerful counterpoint to a strong digital identity and reputation. Wales provides them with a field - both literally and figuratively - as a situated context from which the cultural production of the Do Lectures and its associated values and value can emerge.

As well as place shaping the event, there is also a transfer of value in the other direction - the event also shapes the place, and there is a dynamic two-way communication and expression of brand that connects the identity of Wales and the identity of the Do Lectures. The responses to question 25 of the survey presented in chapter 5 and the other related questions that followed demonstrated that the memorable and compelling experience of the event caused many attendees to shift their perceptions of Wales and to view the nation much more positively

than previously. The affective impact of the location, the event aesthetics and visual form were amplified by the personal and social meaning gained through the Do Lectures experience. Perhaps most significantly, similar shifts (but to a lesser extent) were also noted and remarked on by the survey respondents who had only encountered the Do Lectures online. A very high proportion of the live audience stated that the Do Lectures had 'positively' or 'very positively' affected their perceptions of Wales. But this was also expressed by much of the online audience who had never attended the event - merely through the digital platform, almost half of the online-only audience recorded that their perceptions of Wales were 'positively' or 'very positively' affected.

These and other responses indicate that the Do Lectures provides much more than 'touristic' value to the Wales brand. The perceptions expressed by the keywords given by both segments of the audience indicated that the Do Lectures was creating associations beyond the more normative strands of identity leveraged or developed in marketing Wales such as mentions of its unspoilt beauty, a place away from the crowds, its dramatic landscapes and other similar themes. From the detail of the responses and testimony provided, it is apparent that the lectures and not just the landscape reflected back onto perceptions of the nation as a whole.

Writing about their exploration of the impact of festivals and events in rural Australia, Gibson and Stuart describe how an event "creates an association with place that lingers in the national imagination" (2009, p.29). Similarly, the Do Lectures sets up an association between Wales and the themes of entrepreneurship, radical creativity, innovation and other pioneering ideas that are deliberately curated within their online and offline event platform. When these themes are showcased alongside successful Welsh companies, businesses and individuals, perceptions of the nation are shifted in a valuable new direction – instead of the nation being presented primarily as a touristic resource to be visited and enjoyed, Wales is presented as place where ideas can grow into successful enterprises. It is a place where value is *created* and not just *consumed*. Giving a platform to the entrepreneurial activities of small family run companies such as Halen Mon in Anglesey that now has global attention, featuring the high-quality products of Penderyn Whisky or profiling the award winning businesses and philanthropic projects of Peter Saunders OBE all goes beyond simply providing a means of visibility – it helps to position Wales as a location for successful entrepreneurial activity and where both profitable commercial activity and a rich quality of life can co-exist. The detail of the survey evidence showed that the formation of these

associations is especially true in the live event audience but is also true to a more limited extent of the online audience. Of course, seeing selected highlights from Wales' entrepreneurs and businesses through the event or through the online lectures does not reflect the full picture. The stimulus of the landscape and the lectures cannot "mediate the active experience of the insider" and its beauty can be deceptive (Cosgrove 1984, p.271). The temporary acquaintance that event guests see through the window of the Do Lectures weekend experience or perhaps glimpse occasionally through a carefully managed gallery of Instagram images or other media output does not present a full picture. As John Berger, noted for his influential book 'Ways of Seeing' (1973), observed:

> *"Sometimes a landscape seems to be less a setting for the life of its inhabitants than a curtain behind which their struggles, achievements and accidents take place. For those who, with the inhabitants, are behind the curtains, landmarks are not longer geographic but also biographical and personal." (1967, p.15)*

However, with this in mind, it is useful to note that the current 'ideas farm' location of the Do Lectures event is more than an hosting venue that provides a stage – it is also the Hieatt's family home. Their recognition as creative entrepreneurs who have started influential businesses such as howies and Hiut Denim and their central role as hosts of the event allows guests to see something much more "biographical and personal" too. Their involvement along with the frank authenticity of most of those they invite to speak means that the curtain behind the platform is lifted, at least partially, for those who attend. The Hieatts both exemplify and showcase other businesses that have demonstrated the idea that "you can run a successful business from a place where your heart is". The strong sense of place that motivated the founders to re-establish the jeans business in Cardigan and show that rural Wales is a viable location for quality work is combined with a passionate vision for an 'Ideas Farm' where businesses can be birthed and developed. The presentation of new narratives and exemplars through the Do Lectures event combined with the reality of the Hieatt's commitment to their home locality helps people to reimagine Wales. Perceptions of the nation are extended beyond their usual touristic, historic or aesthetic values so that it is also seen as a setting where innovative ideas and entrepreneurship can exist and flourish.

IN A FIELD,
IN A TENT,
IN A SMALL
CLEVER
COUNTRY
CALLED WALES

FIG __ 7.4

Visual motif incorporated
into the publicity and video
idents for the Do Lectures

REIMAGINING WALES

Although the evidence from the survey indicates that the Do Lectures is reshaping perceptions of Wales, some responses given in the survey (question 24) described some strongly negative views. Although very much in the minority, they reveal that uncomfortable stereotypes persist even among those who choose to visit, many of whom are forward thinking, well-travelled people with much higher levels of education than the population average. Although these negative statements were qualified or balanced by some positive expression of the landscape, some of the keyword perceptions quoted by respondents described Wales as depressed (73) or backward (162).

Yet elsewhere among the other perceptions of Wales described by the Do Lectures audience were many highly positive statements observing Wales to be a place that is creative, innovative, unique and passionate in its values. Although more frequently stated by the live audience, these qualities were similarly observed by those who had only watched the Do Lectures online. The Do Lectures are not be solely responsible for the formation of these perceptions, but it is relevant to note that many of the positive keyword associations repeated within the survey responses correlate with the descriptions of the impact of the Do Lectures highlighted in other parts of the survey and, especially, within the online testimony reported in the last chapter. Together, this evidence suggests that the Do Lectures is actively and positively shifting perceptions of Wales – it is helping to reframe the nation and strengthen its reputation as a place of creativity, innovation and opportunity. As a prominent showcase for ideas, innovation and entrepreneurship the event is reinforcing the association of those values with Wales.

This connection was expressed and constructed more overtly by the Do Lectures when they adopted the phrase *A Small, Clever Country* (Figure 7.4 opposite) as part of their central messaging in their communications. The phrase was previously used on a number of occassions by the late Rhodri Morgan when he was First Minister of the Wales Assembly, a phrase personally important enough for him to use in his final speech of that tenure (Shipton 2009) to highlight the achievements gained through devolution and Wales' response to economic recession. For a period, the Do Lectures repeated it frequently in their online activity within items such as website articles and newsletters and also featured

prominently in the ident attached to their online videos as well as the opening visual for the live talks.

Drawing on its evocative setting and creating a live and online platform that curates a particular set of themes and ideas, the Do Lectures is harnessing the emotive power generated through the event to present Wales as a context for more economically-driven, future-orientated aspirations of innovation and entrepreneurship. While benefiting from the natural appeal of a nation that already draws many visitors because of its beauty, history and heritage, the event provides a bold new layer of narrative that directly challenges some of Wales' negative associations that persist according to several comments from the Do Lectures audience. In this way, the Do Lectures helps to reposition Wales as a place that is forward-thinking, that is a natural home to new and radical ideas and that provides a welcoming environment where new enterprise can succeed. As one respondent observed "It's not just a tourist destination ... there are clever people doing clever stuff. You don't need to be in London to make stuff happen". This is exemplified by the Hieatt's commitment to Wales demonstrated by their rebuilding the jeans manufacturing business in Cardigan that was once 'obsolesced' through changes in global manufacturing and supply but 'retrieved' through their innovation with the Hiut Denim Company. The Do Lectures presents a narrative that strongly confronts problematic stereotypes and, as recognised by those who have described the impact of the Do Lectures, they have helped to redefine the place where it's held, presenting Wales as somewhere more than a visitor destination. Through the creation of the Do Lectures live and online media ecology, Wales is shown to be an aspirational location, a strong and positive environment for life and work that helps to create tangible value for the businesses that choose to be there. This provides an important and powerful strand to the brand positioning of this 'small, clever country', allowing it to stretch beyond service-sector goals of increasing tourism and hospitality and, instead, envisioning fresh, highly substantive areas of business development. Rather than present Wales as a consumer resource to be used by guests and visitors, the nation is repositioned as a generative location that makes a direct value contribution as a fundamental asset for business. Although this challenger narrative is most clearly experienced through the live event, the online platform too has an acknowledged role in presenting this globally where the communication of the lecture content also carries a communication of the values they more generally represent.

The opportunity for the Do Lectures to help shape the Wales' brand was tentatively anticipated by Roger Pride, then marketing director for the Welsh Government's Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks, when he first visited the Do Lectures event in 2009. Quoted in a feature article written in the regular 'Go Green' supplement to the *Western Mail* that covered themes relating to the environment, sustainability and other 'green' issues to the Western Mail, he expressed the potential contribution that the event could make to national identity:

> *"I certainly think that as the lectures grow in scale and influence they can have a positive effect on Wales's reputation ... it's great that such brands can be born in modern Wales"* *(Williams 2009, p.19)*

Since those first years following the birth of the Do Lectures, each annual event continues to weave new and contemporary threads of identity into the existing cultural fabric of Cardigan as well as into the wider nation of Wales. Much of this is achieved by giving a live and digital platform to the hundred of personal stories and narratives of change presented through the Do Lectures talks that are broadcast to a global audience. As each speaker demonstrates original thinking, new approaches to social issues or champions business successes or opportunities the vitality of those ideas and insights is projected back on Wales, shaping its reputation accordingly. The many new entrepreneurial projects presented on or through the platform as well as the entrepreneurial activity inspired or motivated in its audience reinforces that identity. This is a more substantive outcome than creating aspiration or providing encouragement through the Do Lectures. Very tangible examples of success are personified in many of the Do Lectures speakers (and also some of the attendees) who provide credibility not just through their lectures but by their presence at the event. The impact of their words on an attentive lecture audience is amplified through the sharing of conversation, coffee or even a meal with these thinkers, innovators and founders.

In 'Republic' Plato called for the stories told to the young to be deliberately guarded and controlled. As he deliberated on the 'topic of tales' he was concerned about the education of 'guardians' or leaders within society and the need to promote storytelling that reinforces certain qualities such as 'courage' and 'moderation':

"My dear Adeimantus, you and I are not engaged on writing stories, but on founding a state. And the founders of a state, though they must know the type of story the poet must produce and reject any that do not conform to that type, need not write them themselves"
(Republic II 379a)

He recognised the power of storytelling was an important part of building a nation, that its character and qualities were shaped by the type of narratives it produced and circulated. If certain virtues were to be achieved, the minds of those who would lead in society needed to hear appropriate stories that would affect their outlook and begin to guide or frame the values intended to be established. This is an element of what is achieved by the new narrative for Wales shaped by the many stories presented at the Do Lectures and lived out by its founders in their other enterprises. Their building of a specific media ecology - a deliberately crafted live event in rural Wales combined with an effective online platform - has been a critical part of finding, showcasing and publishing those stories to a global audience. Their focused curation and giving a public platform to stories of authentic achievement told with unusual passion, honesty and conviction provides compelling but alternative templates for life and work. Although attention has been given to form in this thesis, the content carried by that form is significant in this respect. The selection of speakers and the overall content within the programme presents a particular sets of values to the audience through these stories. As noted in Chapter 4, many of these are centred on Wales as place of ideas, entrepreneurship and business as a direct counterpoint to other presentations of Wales where the narratives are focused on, for example, on leisure or tourism.

This need for alternative narratives is an important argument presented by Justin Lewis in *Beyond Consumer Capitalism* (2014) that draws attention to the ways in which advertising, news journalism and the built-in obsolescence epitomised by the media and communications industries keep us bound to consumerism. However, as the book's subtitle suggests, there is a need to change the 'limits to imagination' provided by capitalism, to consider a different world where it is possible to "lessen our involvement with consumer culture and focus on those things - relationships, fitness and health, social and civic participation - that provide meaning and contentment." (p.160). A fundamental strategy is to tell different stories, to pull back from the level of commercial messaging that has "spread like cultural knotweed across the media and cultural industries"

(p.167). Changing these limits is one area where the impact of the Do Lectures is most clearly observed, they are breaking free from a "limited, repetitive set of stories" (p.168) by deliberately gathering and presenting new narratives across their media ecology. They systematically provide alternative ways of seeing the world or of doing business and embody an outlook that seeks deeper meaning and purpose, particularly through our work and creative outputs. As some of the online testimony gathered by this research has established, these stories of change have the potential to shape individual perspectives and visions of self or work.

> *(Stories) give each of us a visual template of what to expect, a map of the 'wilderness', but most of all the best stories provide a sort of psychological preparation for life's inevitable struggles. In short, stories are prescriptions for courage. They illustrate how to run the race. And win. ... Stories embolden, strengthen, and establish how we can become our very best. (Buster 2013 p.72)*

Some of the testimony of its impact on the audience related to its challenge and provocation to their thinking or attitudes towards their work or employment but for some participation in the Do Lectures resulted in the founding of new projects, business or even complete changes of career. In addition to this audience centred impact, those same stories also help to establish a bold, new narrative for Wales and its many rural communities. The Welsh businesses participating as speakers or sponsors in the event (some of which were highlighted in Chapter 4) provide tangible evidence that it is possible to build highly successful and profitable businesses in Wales. More significantly, much of the testimony given by those businesses credits their Welsh location and provenance as a valuable and formative part of their brand identity. The online platform, in particular, helps to ensure that these new narratives are not only broadcast through the limited platform of the live lectures but also show that Wales can participate in and sometimes lead the global conversation about many important contemporary issues. Simon Anholt, the leading specialist practitioner and academic focused on nation branding, points out the importance this has in establishing reputation:

> *"If a country wants to be admired, it has to be relevant, and in order to be relevant it has to participate usefully, productively and imaginatively in the global 'conversations' on the topics that matter to people elsewhere and everywhere" (2012, p.30)*

This participation is strongly enabled through the Do Lectures online talks that publish and maintain a significant collection of lectures that allow Wales to "participate usefully, productively and imaginatively", involving their audience in that conversation as it unfolds. Inviting prominent innovators such as Perry Chen founder of Kickstarter to speak about crowd-funding, Professor Steve Evans on sustainable design, Justin Drake on Bitcoin or Dan Kieran of Unbound to speak about the future of book publishing all help to connect Wales to this dialogue and make an active and visible contribution to the global debate around many rapidly emerging themes or cultural developments.

There is, therefore, an intertwining of the brand identities of the Do Lectures and its home in Wales. The rural location of Cardigan is brought into service of the event as a fundamental, influential component of the live conference medium. Similarly, the Do Lectures identity as an innovative and forward thinking organisation is inextricably linked to the nation with which it is associated. This connection is not just formed in the context of the live event but further established through the media ecology within which those identities are expressed in language and imagery. Some of the practical implications of this relationship and the resulting flow of value will be described in the concluding chapter of this thesis that follows.

Following the examination of the influence and effectiveness of the Do Lectures media ecology presented so far, the next chapter will elaborate further on the main lessons established by this case study. It will propose that there is a significant degree of potential for their application to communications strategy, suggesting that an intentional and dynamic media ecology can become an effective component within the overall toolkit of communication approaches used by companies.

Conclusions

"

"Words are events, they do things,
change things.

They transform both speaker and
hearer; they feed energy back and
forth and amplify it. They feed
understanding or emotion
back and forth and amplify it"

———

URSULA LE GUIN (2004)

This study set out to explore the intentions, motivations and influence goals of the Do Lectures, an annual event held in rural Wales, and its impact on its audience. In addition to the signature event in Wales, it has launched similar events internationally and has developed a growing media ecology centred around its digital platform where each one of their talks is freely available and provides global access to their content. The research brief inviting this exploration of the Do Lectures and its impact directed its consideration across several areas of interest - learning, change and nation branding. This final part of the thesis, therefore, brings together conclusions drawn from the data presented, synthesised and analysed in earlier chapters and, beginning with some reflections on the nature of the lecture within the current media environment, has organised them under these key themes.

The chapter also proposes the specific application of media ecology thinking and, more specifically, the use of contrasting media and communication forms as a deliberate strategy. Using the framework of ideas outlined in Chapter 2, it suggests a media affordances model that can be adopted by companies, organisations or places in order to create more effective communications and deliver an enriched or more meaningful experience for their audiences. In addition to providing this guiding heuristic for application in developing their own media ecology, it highlights the importance of media forms and especially the contrast the exists between them.

In the closing section, there is also some brief comment about the challenges presented by the scope of this study and acknowledges its consequent limitations. It is in that context that it also suggests possible directions for future research or further study, fully recognising that the media affordances model arrived at as part of these conclusions requires testing and development through the application of its core concepts to other organisational media ecologies.

THE LIVING LECTURE

The oral performance has consistently been a critical component of achieving change in society. The speech, the lecture or the sermon have not only stimulated thought in the political, scientific and religious spheres but also generated action and consensus. In addition to presenting new or important thinking, the talk also creates a forum for dialogue and public thought, a gathering of minds and individual perspectives around the platform. The opportunity of the lecture as an event creates a moment of shared attention that allows for the formation of a community around the ideas presented. However, the emergence of digital platforms to capture and publish oral performance has brought a new focus on the lecture as a form of medium with particular attributes that are distinct from any recording of it available online. While a lecture may be captured and endlessly reproduced across time and geography, the unique moment of the delivery is within a specific context that joins both speaker and listeners into a community gathered for the event. Just as the ebook and Kindle have caused publishers to refocus on the physical qualities of a book's design, its haptic qualities as a physical artefact or its properties as a social object (rather than just as a container for the written word), the digital platform draws attention to the other dimensions of its performance beyond functioning as a 'container' for the spoken word. The 'presence of the word' cannot be mediated in the online environment and it is those unique qualities of personal presence, proximity to others in that community of attention and the privilege of experiencing the live occasion that can be celebrated and championed. As Walter Ong described, when a speaker stands before the audience, "My voice really goes out of me. But it calls not to something outside, but to the inwardness of another. It is a call of one interior through an exterior to another interior" (Ong 1967, p.309).

The data drawn from both the online testimony and the survey of the Do Lectures event and online audiences has emphasised these qualities, demonstrated in the contrast between the impact of the live event and less influential but more varied uses of the online platform. The digital platform has clearly neither diminished nor replaced the importance of the live platform but, in providing the recorded lectures free of charge, the Do Lectures has extended the audience and generated a high degree of positive interest towards the live event. For those who attended one of the Do Lectures annual signature events, the digital platform also provided

an extremely valuable extension to their participation. The affordances and availability of the online content equipped them to champion and celebrate the Do Lectures through their personal and social networks as well as helped to maintain their connection to the Do Lectures community and the many informal relationships formed at the event.

Further, although the live and the digital experience provided many complementary benefits within their distinct spheres, the tensions that exist between these domains of experience generated additional positive dimensions to the communications. For the live event, the vitality of the spoken word, the presence of the speaker and the direct proximity of the audience created a dynamic that was rich, inspirational and motivating toward personal change. The privileged moment of the lecture as an unrepeatable event surrounded by a live community of attention gathered in that moment contrasting strongly with the potentially vast but distributed attention of an online audience connected across time and place only by their shared consumption of the content. Although there are many who are concerned about the death of the lecture as 'content' or information, the example of the Do Lectures and other similar events signals its renaissance as an 'event' or experience. The ease of access and ubiquity of the digital content helps to ensure that the privilege of proximity to the speaker and the audience afforded by the live event is amplified, maintaining its value and uniqueness.

Digital platforms are effective for many functions, but there are compelling and intrinsic qualities of the lecture medium that cannot be 'media delegated'. The growth of digital platforms such as TED and the Do Lectures has contributed to a talk renaissance, but in doing so has brought to the fore some of the most significant qualities of the live experience. Just as the advent of ebooks through the Kindle and other digital platforms has moved the attention of readers from the textual content to a renewed focus on the book as physical and social artefact, the online lecture platform has highlighted the media properties of the live event and in doing so has enriched the overall experience by creating a dynamic relationship between them.

In the same way as the form of the book requires renegotiation in the digital age, the form of the lecture, too, requires a reconsideration so that its unique qualities and affordances are optimised for the particular setting where it is found. As was noted in the literature review, the lecture has not been in a constant form throughout its history of use. It has been required to adapt to the technical

innovations of the surrounding culture, shifting yet extending the role of the speaker according to the communication ecology of the day within which the lecture exists. The 'new media' of the book as it first emerged in Europe redefined the role of the lecturer - their role was previously to dictate to students an authoritative version of content that was not otherwise available.

The content was now being divested from the lecture through textual reproduction and the lecture form took on a new mode where the speaker provided commentary or additional material to help understanding or interpretation rather than just conveying the content of the text alone. Subsequently, these extra-textual oral contributions were then embedded in versions of the original text, either informally as personal annotations and marginalia or, for the best of them, as accepted glosses and scholia. Again, the role of the lecturer shifted, instead providing a wider expert synthesis of content, bringing these extra-textual contributions into dialogue with one another for the benefit of their hearers or students. Although the most obvious focus of these changes has been in relation to the reshaping of the content of a lecture, the use of the digital platform has brought attention back to the dynamics of the live setting. It raises the major question that if the delivery of content or information can be successfully separated from the live experience, what remains of the live lecture? Or, as is sometimes asked, 'Given the recent invention of the printing press, why do college professors continue to lecture so much?' (Cashin 2010).

In response to this challenge, the move towards a digital delivery of content needs to be accompanied by an increased focus on what are the unique opportunities and strengths of the live lecture. If these qualities are not evident or made use of in the live setting, then the online platform will obsolesce those lectures that deliver nothing but content. If a speaker is reduced to a content delivery system and a lecture to mere information that can be replicated by a recording, then we have reduced the person to the medium. The word made flesh reverts to word alone, and the speaker - the primary mediating form and embodiment of the message - can be easily replaced.

Among those who have attended the Do Lectures are some substantial examples of people who have been significantly changed in their thinking because of the event. Individuals such as Matt Lane (Beerbods), Tom Fishbone (Marketoonist) and Miranda West (Do Book Co.) given particular profile in this thesis, all point towards the Do Lectures experience as both formative and lifechanging.

Marginalia
In *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books* (Jackson 2001 p.46) provides clear examples of these textual additions where speech moved to text, referencing the Rosenthal Collection of early books that are annotated with teachers' complete commentaries.

Their testimonies, as well as the success of their business enterprises, have demonstrated that the Do Lectures provided them with the inspiration, courage and affirmation to pursue very significant changes of career and life goals. They are strong exemplars of the enthusiasm with which the audience have received the live event in Wales and used the online talks to continue their connection to the Do Lectures and the supportive virtual community that exists around it. For them, as well as for many of the attendees who responded to the survey or wrote online articles recounting their experience, the Do Lectures is achieving the founder's goal of being 'the encouragement network', the tagline that now prominently subtitles many of their activities.

The testimony from the Wales event and other ideas conferences is that the lecture is not dead and that it still provides an effective vehicle for the communication of ideas. In addition, the use of a corresponding digital platform to publish those talks online and give them visibility and attention across social networks has contributed to a 'talk renaissance', where oral performance is more greatly valued. It has become an aspirational activity as well as an inspirational source. Far from undermining the place of the live spoken presentation, digital platforms have provided a substantial new outlet for the lecture where it has become a highly visible genre within online and social media. As these virtual audiences grow and the majority of the total audience for an event such as the Do Lectures consume the content online, being able to participate in the live event will be a privilege available only to those who are able to access it through location, availability or the means to purchase a ticket.

Although the online content is identical in terms of the stories told, the words presented and the ideas conveyed, it does not hold the same transformational possibilities as hearing the speakers within the wider medium of a live, immersive event. The use of online video has revived the lecture as a living form whose particular importance lies in the joining of speaker and listeners in a dynamic community of attention and the qualities of presence and proximity that affords. The digital platforms and technologies that become increasingly effective at publishing lectures and other event-based content will continue to evolve but it is the source experience, the lecture as an event, that will be substantially more influential. As with other major advances in communication technology such as print, new medium developments will continue to cause a shift the role of the speaker or lecturer. There is an accommodation necessary as new platforms become more capable of carrying some of the functions of the teacher, their

task moves towards those aspects of the task that the medium cannot. As with some of the factors recognised in this case study, these aspects could be 'human' interventions such as encouragement, hospitality, connection or community; or 'professional' interventions such as critique, analysis, discussion or perspective and judgement, all of which are necessary functions within an effective learning environment.

In an era when the ease and low cost of generating content have led to an unprecedented volume of lectures and talks online, our interest should perhaps be weighted towards a new question. Instead of only asking 'How can we maximise the use of online content?' there should also be the question 'How can we maximise the live experience?' and in this way fully utilise the affordances and possibilities of both.

The Do Lectures have created a media ecology that successfully incorporates the lecture and the online lecture, fully respecting the attributes of both and illustrating the dynamic relationship between medium forms that particularly interested Marshall McLuhan. The overwhelming response of the Do Lectures audience to the event design shows that the setting is a medium in itself and forms a very significant part of their experience, providing a highly immersive environment where learning can take place. The semiotic richness of place of the 'Ideas Farm' in rural Wales, the emotive connection forged between speaker and listeners as well as the relational bond initiated by the shared experience of the event are qualities that cannot be conveyed to any significant degree by technology. Once recognised and maximised, these values that are intrinsic to the live context mean that digital platforms can only extend or enhance the value of the live oral performance rather than obsolesce it.

So, a close attenuation to the properties of each medium is fundamental to any reconsideration of the lecture and the learning environment. Somewhat ironically, it is through the advancement of technological solutions that we recognise that learning is best situated in a human, social context; instead of defining our progress either negatively or positively, technology is in fact securing the necessity of our human involvement. As developments in online platforms and other digital media gradually lift away those tasks which can be achieved without us being present, what remains are the human qualities that can only be conveyed in person - technology has caused there to be an intensifying of 'the presence of the word'.

A THEATRE OF CHANGE

The Do Lectures have established a platform for their talks with an imaginative, stimulating event format. They have created a forum where the discourse of transformation is played out to an enthusiastic, receptive audience who will not just respond to the dialogue but also be moved to action. Permeating the stories of change they hear is a conviction that individual endeavours, work, businesses and collaborations can make a positive difference to society as well as the individuals within it.

The Do Lectures have fostered change and transformation through a process that begins with a personal narrative, delivered 'up close and personal' through the particular dynamics of the event. The speakers and many of the attendees provide demonstrable examples of alternative approaches for life and work, their example providing first-hand evidence of personal change. Hearing them and meeting them as people who have achieved success fuels a compelling and achievable vision for a better, future version of 'you'. The encouragement of their achievements and the lessons of their failures provides a degree of psychological and emotional permission to pursue a personal 'grand narrative' and find some sense of renewed purpose or vocation. Although ideas and stories lie at the heart of the Do Lectures event - something that can be captured and carried by a digital learning platform and broadcast to an international audience - the essence of the event is not the content but the experience, the medium not the message. The event design stimulates change and challenge, not just as a nudge or an incremental idea, but as a fundamental push to bigger transformations fuelled by the energy of the moment, supported by a cheerleading crowd of those who do and those who are striving to do across a wide range of interests and disciplines. These stories are not delivered as abstract concepts from a distance, but from within a community - people coming together from multiple nations and backgrounds, forged into a group by sharing in the irreproducible moment of the event as they gather purposively around the speakers and their talks. The unfamiliar environment, the emotionally disruptive intensity of being among strangers, sharing the relative discomfort of the outdoors is warmed by conversation and meals together in the beauty and sensory stimulation of the West Wales landscape. In this context, there is a community in formation with the potential to create more than a notional network; it creates supportive

relationships that can continue and be extended through the many digital connections now possible as individuals stay in touch with the Do Lectures through their digital platforms as well as with each other.

As well as presenting stories of change, the Do Lectures embodies the spirit of change and the potential of ideas, especially through the profile of its founders who have successfully maintained their roots in Wales. The Hieatts have demonstrated that both opportunity and success can be realised in a Welsh rural community. This spirit of transformation is stimulated through the setting and location of the conference itself and fuelled by the dynamics of its informal, outdoor and intimate environment. Their example, as well as the constant messages of opportunity and hope delivered by the speakers ,makes a continual call for positive action and change that permeates every aspect of the Do Lectures media ecology. Its founders, the growing repertoire of events, its offline and online community and network of Do alumni are all vitally connected through multiple social and digital media channels to reinforce a message of bold innovation and progress.

At least some of the impact of this discourse emerges because, unlike traditional conferences, the Do Lectures presents an eclectic and diverse range of ideas, personalities and perspectives. In contrast to the more homogeneous events that are organised around a single theme, a narrow field of view or from within a closely defined range of interests and professions, the Do Lectures creates an environment where ideas can collide, challenge and provoke. It provides a stimulating and motivating experience, particularly for high-achieving professionals who are otherwise comfortable in their respective fields. Participants at the Do Lectures are exposed to ideas generated in spheres of knowledge and experience that are usually vastly different to their own and the context of hearing of them is in a setting where a fresh thinking is supported by the radical change of context of camping in a rural setting. Together, these factors combine to provide the opportunity to find what Steve Johnson calls 'the adjacent possible' (Johnson 2010), the innovative insights that occur when positive ideas or experiences from different fields come together to produce yet more useful outcomes.

The Do Lectures has therefore set up a bold 'theatre of change' across both their live and online platforms where the discourse of transformation is continually broadcast and reinforced – a discourse that presents a reimagination of you, your work and even the nation of Wales itself.

NATION BRANDING

This discourse of transformation extends beyond the personal aspects of learning and change described above - it also contributes to perceptions of Wales and its national identity. At a superficial level, the Do Lectures provides exposure to some of the most appreciated aspects of rural Wales such as its natural beauty and landscape. Certainly, the comments and positive perceptions expressed by both the survey respondents and those who had written articles online demonstrated an appreciation of the event setting in Cardigan, with some indicating a clear intention to return. However, the character and nature of the Do Lectures event also communicated something much more significant - that Wales was a place of ideas, innovation and possibility.

One of the dimensions of impact was that the Do Lectures event "creates an association with place that lingers in the national imagination" (Gibson & Stewart 2009, p.29). The example of the companies the founders have created in Cardigan - first howies, and now Hiut Denim - both emphasise the underlying ethos of the Do Lectures, demonstrating that the rural context in not necessarily a limitation. All of these enterprises have effectively reframed any potential limitations to create an alternative story for similar businesses such that 'Made in Wales' could become much more than a nostalgic endorsement or a 'lowest common denominator' label of geographic provenance.

The Do Lectures has attracted interest and support from many who appreciate the rural beauty of Wales, something which is a highly valuable asset in an 'Instagram' generation that is increasingly influenced by visual aesthetics and attention gained through digital platforms. However, in commenting on a weakness in place marketing and the shaping of a national brand, Keith Dinnie (2015) emphasises that "There is a need to ensure that an exaggerated focus upon traditional rural imagery does not obscure the fact that a country can have tourist-attracting scenery as well as a vibrant, modern economy that is also an attractive destination for inward investment and so on". This is not the case with the image presented by the Do Lectures. Although the event has highlighted the desirable and photogenic qualities of the location, it has also presented confident examples of successful innovation and influential businesses that add credibility to Wales's desired identity as a forward thinking nation. While the landscape may be a fundamental

component of cultural expressiveness and national identity, the Do Lectures and those they profile through their speaker platform demonstrate both a positive reputation for ideas and creative authority expressed through the design of their event and supporting media ecology.

Beyond their success as a showcase for ideas, the Do Lectures has also brought together makers, businesses and other enterprises in Wales who are connecting first in this shared community of attention around the lectures and then joining a relational network of Do alumni. Although these connections are greatly facilitated through the unusual dynamics of the live event, they are developed and sustained through the digital media ecology surrounding the Do Lectures. These relationships are very diverse in nature and established between individual attendees as friendships, partnerships or collaborations and, importantly, to Cardigan as the event location. The event has connected Wales to a global network of tastemakers, trendsetters and entrepreneurs who are influential in the cultural landscape. Although achieved personally and informally without a deliberately framed networking event, friendships are formed, partnerships are discussed, and other relational ties and opportunities are created within the relaxed serendipity and happenstance dynamics of the event. This combination of close personal interaction, the creative stimulus of the event and the skill, variety or creativity of those attending is forging new opportunities for business such as the now annual Do Market that showcases individual businesses or collaborations.

Connecting Wales to this wider network of innovators and influencers is an important secondary outcome from the Do Lectures events. In relation to public social policy, Paul Ormerod proposes the concept of 'positive linking' and suggests that 'altering the structure of the network might itself be a policy target' (Ormerod 2013, p.29), that is recognising that people function within a social context. Although his reference was to economically disadvantaged or unemployed people who were part of social networks that were similarly disadvantaged, there is no reason why this perspective could not also be applied to improve the connections of Welsh businesses to a wider international network. The Do Lectures as a highly desirable conference that is able to attract a wide range of notable speakers who are influential or on the leading-edge of ideas is an effective way of 'altering the structure of the network' in Wales and making those connections. Instead of trying to initiate those connections with collaborative projects and partnerships, relationships are forged in the informal surroundings of the event and across a shared meal table or over a beer around a campfire.

It is from those personal connections and friendships that more substantial long-term working relationships or creative networks can emerge. In this way, the Do Lectures is not so much an event but the locus of a functional and enlarging ecology of connections, the source of a network that is then developed and sustained through the social, personal, business and technological interactions that follow. It represents a generative nexus of cultural activity where much of its ongoing value derives from the relationships that emerge or develop from within it. Many of those relationships centre on David and Clare Hieatt as founders of the event but they also extend to benefit local businesses such as their own company Hiut Denim or to fforest, the holiday retreat venue where the Do Lectures was originally based or their sponsors and service providers.

More broadly, the event serves to extend the national and international connections of the creative economy in Wales, linking it to a wider variety of influential individuals, entrepreneurs and innovators than would be otherwise possible. These are frequently the speakers or more high-profile guests, but the principle also applies at other levels of reputation and influence, for example, among the guests who find common interests or mutual values through joining the Do Lectures audience in Wales. John Howkins emphasises the importance of this function as follows:

> *"A creative ecology is a niche where diverse individuals express themselves in a systematic and adaptive way, using ideas to produce new ideas; and where others support this endeavour even if they don't understand it. These energy-expressive relationships are found in both physical places and intangible communities; it is the relationships and actions that count, not the infrastructure. The strength of the creative ecology can be measured by these flows of energy and the continual learning and creation of meaning. The quartet of diversity, change, learning and adaptation mutually enhance each other"* (Howkins 2010, pp.11-12)

The Do Lectures has generated such a 'creative ecology' through and around the event, providing both a physical place where those relationships can be formed and also a more intangible community expressed through the digital platforms connected to it. The values of the Do Lectures, focussed on both relationship and action, creates the 'energy-expressive relationships' that fuel the creative economy. Ian Hargreaves, professor of digital economy at Cardiff University has

commented on the importance of these connections, particularly in the context of digital platforms:

> *"If the specifics of place and the particularities of any given community are not also heeded and harnessed, digital communications risk being associated with distance and even alienation, rather than connectivity and collaboration."* *(Hargreaves 2016)*

The Do Lectures is an exemplar of an emergent form of cultural experience that is centred on the delivery of a carefully curated series of short talks, usually on entrepreneurial or disruptive ideas related to technology, culture, business or design. Combining the structure of a lecture series with the atmosphere of a festival, it has created a strong and effective live event format that has left many people who have experienced it challenged, inspired and, in some cases at least, completely transformed in their work and outlook. It typifies the entrepreneurial outlook and optimism of its founders and it is rooted deliberately and formatively in the context of their home in rural West Wales. Through the values it expresses by its choice of talks, guests and by the event design itself, the Do Lectures demonstrates a confidence in Wales as an inspiring and generative location where values of community, sustainability, craftsmanship can be respected and nurtured. The steady, international interest in the Do Lectures gained through its annual events and its digital platforms demonstrates that, despite the challenges of economic recession and in a season of turbulence with national identity (both in terms of the devolved nations and our wider place in Europe), there is the opportunity to forge an alternative identity based on creative entrepreneurship that can be showcased to the world through events such as the Do Lectures. Its consistent appeal to all those who speak at the event, including those who have taken the platform at TED or other major international events, demonstrates that it has the potential to continue to win a significant share of international attention and provide an environment that helps to forge, strong personal and collaborative connections to the international creative and technology communities.

The degree of success and impact achieved by the Do Lectures is evident from the substantial number of detailed, positive online testimonials and enthusiastic responses given to the survey. Together, they demonstrate that it is possible to create a global signature event in a remote location with relatively small funds and the effective use of the properties of both place and digital technology. However, creating this sort of 'destination' event does require the harnessing

of opportunity and the careful building of a growing network of influential relationships and positive reputation. This is something that can only easily be done by individuals such as the Hieatts who have sufficient creative authority and reputation to lead and help to form those networks. Although there is much that the public sector can do by way of support or financial investment in such events, a government initiative cannot achieve the same effect. Unfortunately, one of the difficulties of obtaining relevant funding can be the need to crystallise a business plan and very specific, tangible outcomes and objectives ahead of the event being supported. However, one of the most important aspects of the Do Lectures is that the freedom it provides for natural relationship building and the unexpected ideas, connections, business opportunities or other positive outcomes of the event cannot be predefined by a measurable set of objectives. Although the Do Lectures environment is carefully designed, crafted and managed in order to maximise the quality of the experience and the associated social interactions, the exact nature of those interactions and any consequent outcomes is unknown. While the Do Lectures creates "a space for the magic to happen", what happens next is the result of serendipity and opportunity. Nevertheless, Wales itself has a central and varied role in creating that context - the natural beauty and constraints of Cardiganshire providing a striking contrast for most attendees from the business of ordinary life. It is a context that becomes itself a 'generative' environment, a place for exploring new thinking, reflecting on life and work and not just a relaxing backdrop for a conference weekend.

These qualities of place that are so appealing to the Do Lectures audience find particular resonance with some of the cultural trends that are moving away from simple consumerism and interest in products towards an appetite for experiences and meaning. The current popularity of Kon Marie's focus on being mindful of what you own and ensuring that your possessions *Spark Joy* (2016) and have emotional resonance as well as utility together with critiques on consumerism such as *Stuffocation* (Wallman 2014) or *Goodbye, Things* (Sasaki 2017) place greater emphasis on the considered place of artefacts and materiality in individual experience, experience that is otherwise becoming increasingly saturated with digital media. Similarly, the surge of popular interest and growing aspirational value of the 'artisan lifestyle' typified by the aesthetic of the various *Kinfolk* books and magazines also reflects a move away from mass consumption and throw-away products. Instead, alternative but slightly nostalgic consumer values focus on 'slow' living that embraces simplicity, quality and intentionality.

Kinfolk's founder Nathan Williams emphasises the counterpoint set up by these values in contrast to the digital elements of daily life

> *We're on our laptops, on our phones all the time, that in itself is fine. But the flip side is that it does create an appetite for real life, for relationships, for genuine bonds with the people around us. Kinfolk leverages that appetite. (Chayka 2016)*

As well as reinforcing some of the conclusions regarding the relationship between the physical and the digital and the creative tension that can be created within a media cology, these other indicators suggest that Wales is strongly placed to be able to take advantage of these appetites. Instead of attempting to catch up or compete with hyper-connected centres of creative industry such as Shoreditch or other highly-digital centres of commercial or entrepreneurial activity, the Do Lectures has demonstrated the possibility and merit of developing new forms of communication across a contrasting landscape. The qualities that cause the Do Lectures audience to especially appreciate its location in Wales could be reappropriated as part of the nation's brand positioning and an authentic expression of its identity.

Although this has been done in very small part through tourism campaigns that have included tongue-in-cheek messages such as 'Area of outstandingly bad mobile reception' (2005), these values have not necessarily been adopted to promote the particular sphere of entrepreneurship and lifestyle typified by David and Clare Hieatt and the Do Lectures event. However, they have shown that adopting innovative digital strategies is not just possible in a small community on the west coast of Wales, but that its juxtaposition with that context and setting provides both interest and competitive advantage. The associations of authenticity, craftsmanship and physicality most appropriately gained from their rural setting are in no way compromised by developments in digital media but instead are broadcast and amplified. The desirable and photogenic aesthetics of their location provides additional benefits to help establish attention and prominence through online platforms that are now more significantly driven by strong photographs and arresting images. Their celebration of very human and environmental values that is so visible in their use of media is especially powerful against a background of technological advancement and rapid advances in digital media that are gradually permeating everyday experience.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Even in studying a single annual event - the Do Lectures - and its digital platform there were significant challenges in effectively researching the media environment of a highly informal organisation that was continually reinventing its approaches within the context of rapidly evolving communications landscape. In order to help manage the potential scope of the work, the study has focussed on just two primary and largely qualitative areas of investigation - the goals and intentions of the founders and architects of the event and the impact of that event on their live and online audience.

Because of the more recent limits to cost-effective or permitted harvesting of online data sources effected through legal changes to user agreements, the withdrawal of open access APIs or the high-value monetisation of social media data, the research methodology adopted two major data-gathering techniques in respect of the audience research. The first required the active involvement of the audience and was conducted via an online survey that was sent to the largest possible target group; the second, an analysis of online testimony, only required the passive involvement of the audience who had already blogged, written or otherwise left written evidence of the impact of the Do Lectures. These dual approaches provided a valuable mix of prompted and unprompted data in order to manage the inherent limitations of audience research which can be skewed by the researcher's involvement or questioning.

That audience research has demonstrated that the Do Lectures media ecology contributes directly to an ecology of social or business relationships formed around it. Some of these relational aspects emerging, for example, from the curation of the event or the sense of connection encouraged by its design, have been clear within the data. However, further work could helpfully map and explore in detail a *community ecology* that is nurtured, sustained or developed by a specific *media ecology*. Although this study has started to consider the formative connections made between the Do Lectures, their speakers and audience, and Wales, future research could address the place-making aspects of an event and the formation of creative, entrepreneurial, economic or other communities connected to that place. From academic disciplines particularly related to corporate or brand communications, it would also be possible to make a more

detailed examination of the visual, linguistic or other semiotic resources adopted in the construction and interpretation of those connections. These projects and their further enquiry would have specific benefit and application in the context of studying the creative economy in Wales and the specific components that contribute to its growth, development or cultural and economic value. Reports such as *Improving the Economic Performance of Wales* (Jones 2016) have identified economic, infrastructure, individual skill or company knowledge drivers as fundamental to stimulating growth. However, the report does not draw attention to the importance of the relational networks, cultural capital, brand development and other types of value clearly generated by the Do Lectures that are other material factors in growth. Perhaps McLuhan's perspective is necessary here too - the medium and constraints of measurement chosen to be included in the report have directly shaped the message and the limits of its recommendations. Some factors evident in this study, but much more difficult to assess or quantify, have remained much less visible, even though they may not be any less critical or economically useful.

Nevertheless, this project has identified some practical conclusions through its study of the Do Lectures. Although there has been a perceived threat to the lecture as a media form posed by the opportunities of the digital platform, this study has established that there is a renaissance in the lecture as a live event and that it is being renewed through events such as the Do Lectures. The talks are being distributed widely through an online platform but the original live experience is not compromised, devalued or negated by the subsequent publication on a digital platform. In fact, the digital platform is not only securing visibility and a growing audience, it is also provides a more ubiquitous context whose free availability enhances and privileges attendance at the live event. Moreover, the immersive and highly interpersonal aspects of the event design are not only highly valued by those who pay the high ticket cost to attend, they have also been shown to be the most influential elements. The active participation of the both speakers and attendees in this focussed but very temporary audience of attention has created a space where they are brought together in a community of story which presents dynamic narratives of change as well as exemplars and templates for new approaches to work and life.

The Do Lectures media ecology has been shown to be a fundamental means of initiating, enriching and sustaining that community as the components of the media environment interact and support one another to create a rich, varied

and multi-dimensional experience. Each individual medium lends its practical affordances to that ecology and the inherent contrasts, tensions and competing qualities of each as they work together creates a positive new dynamic. The emergence of the digital platform has certainly brought enhancements to the Do Lectures ecology by providing valuable benefits of visibility and audience reach, but it has also highlighted those qualities of the lecture that cannot be achieved within it. The personal interaction with others or with the speaker, the sense of event or occasion and other aspects of the context surrounding the talk itself perhaps normally taken for granted are brought more clearly into view. Further, the rich, multi-sensory or 'hi-touch' nature of the live event experience is a powerful catalyst for creating 'hi-tech' engagement using their digital platforms and channels as well as those of their audience. The evidence of a triggering of substantial engagement with and use of their digital platform by the live audience is significant and points towards critical principles anticipated by McLuhan's tetrad. Although the normal marketing proposition is that online visibility and interest drives off-line engagement, a more fundamental proposition has emerged - that off-line engagement drives greater online visibility and interest. The Do Lectures have not only understood this dynamic in the construction of their media ecology but have amplified it through the many contrasts it embodies. The research was initiated to explore the use and relative strengths of the live and online platform but an important outcome has been to recognise and appreciate of the way these forms work in relation to one another. This case study on the Do Lectures has demonstrated that the ability to communicate, its impact and tangible influence is significantly strengthened by using starkly contrasting media forms.

The responses of the Do Lectures audience gathered, analysed and presented through this research have shown that the construction or design of a media environment is 'generative' and acts as substantially more than a container or place-holder for the content it is intended to carry. For the Do Lectures, it has been seen that the event or conference medium itself was the primary carrier of influence. Despite the high quality of original, compelling content delivered by an eclectic range of speakers (many of whom are well-known or reasonably high-profile within their respective areas of interest), it was the setting and environment 'in a tent, in a field in a small clever country called Wales' that had the most substantial impact. The immersive and highly interpersonal affordances of the event design created the conditions where individuals were able to discover new narratives to redefine their life and work and also make connections joining
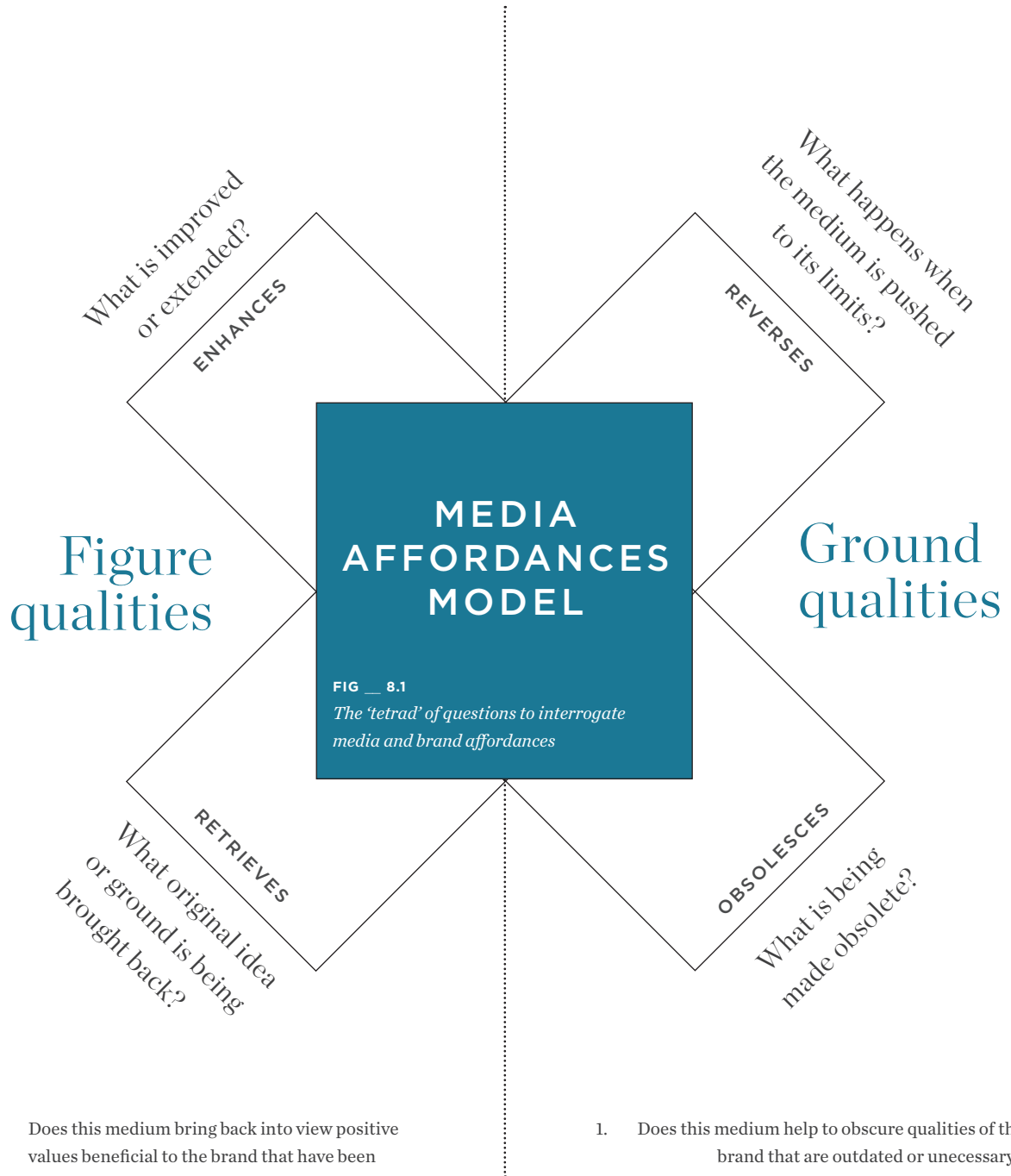
them to a supportive and encouraging Do Lectures community. For some at least, this was effective enough for them to enact very substantial personal change that was demonstrated in pursuing new projects, making major career changes or initiating new companies or other entrepreneurial activity.

In this sense the effectiveness of the Do Lectures media ecology creates tangible value that is more fundamental than creating specific perceptions or brand associations for themselves or Wales. The highly tangible outcomes such as commercial activity, the conversion of ideas to enterprise or the founding of new businesses demonstrates that the conference provides value ontologically as well as representationally or epistemologically. The construction of the Do Lectures and their curation of the live event as the core of their media ecology is significantly creative in its generative qualities as well as in its originality or innovation compared to most conferences. As well as deliberately choosing, framing and bringing to the foreground a particular set of ideas represented by the speakers, it has also actively created a setting where disciplinary boundaries or personal self-interests are removed that allows for fruitful dialogue, interaction and community to form among the various actors. The orientation towards action reflected in the name of the event, saturating its media ecology and maintained as a core value throughout its choice of speakers and other Do Lectures activities such as highly practical Do Books or Do Day workshops is a clear contributor to the direct and observable outcomes of their activities. Their focus on the 'makers' who are active in producing physical objects, products or artefacts or skilled artisans in their own diverse fields is noticeably in tension with digital culture whose own 'artefacts of engagement' such as likes, comments and shares are fleeting and ephemeral.

Examining the Do Lectures as a case study, looking first at their goals and intentions and then at the impact on their live and online audiences has provided some important lessons about the dynamics of an effective media ecology. The laws of media become the starting point for a tool with which to explore a business or communications media ecology and proactively plan or design it. Building on the example of the Do Lectures and the dynamics of its media ecology presented in this thesis, the illustrative tetrads and discussion included in Chapter 7 point towards a number of practical questions that can be applied to interrogate any media ecology. These exploratory questions organised around the 'probes' of McLuhan's Laws of Media are shown in the general tetrad illustrated in Figure 8.1 opposite.

1. What are the properties of this medium and how can they enhance the brand or make a more significant contribution to its identity or success?

2. What brand qualities do I want to promote and which medium would serve or be most appropriate for that purpose?

1. What potential risks does the more extreme use of this medium (either by the brand or by its audience) pose to the values of the brand?

2. Are there brand qualities that this medium would amplify to the extent of being damaged or resulting in unwanted outcomes?

What is improved or extended?

ENHANCES

What happens when the medium is pushed to its limits?

REVERSES

Figure qualities

MEDIA AFFORDANCES MODEL

FIG __ 8.1
The 'tetrad' of questions to interrogate media and brand affordances

Ground qualities

RETRIEVES

What original idea or ground is being brought back?

OBSOLESCES

What is being made obsolete?

1. Does this medium bring back into view positive values beneficial to the brand that have been lost or diminished through changes in culture or communication technology?

2. Are there brand values or attributes (especially those that are nostalgic or culturally retrospective) that could effectively be revived through a specific choice of medium?

1. Does this medium help to obscure qualities of the brand that are outdated or unecessary?

2. Do the attributes of the brand deem this medium unecessary or outdated (and so could be retired from the media ecology)?

Each pair of questions is centred on two closely-related considerations: the first, begins with a focus on the attributes of the particular media form and asks about its affect on the brand across the four dimensions of the tetrad; the second question in each pair, instead of beginning with a focus on the medium under consideration, starts with the attributes or values of the brand and ask about how a medium within the ecology can be utilised to support those values. Beginning at either one of these different starting points - the medium attributes or the brand attributes - allows for a multi-dimensional consideration of their various affordances or opportunities. The choice of starting point, could be defined according to need or particular type of analysis required - for example, starting with a consideration of the medium would be appropriate for a situation where a company or organisation was undertaking a platform review to assess their use of a particular social media platform and its impact or contribution to their business. In doing so, the examination of the four directions of the tetrad would firstly provide them with a perspective that is not exclusively centred on their media content; secondly it would allow for structured thinking about the media affordances present in the platform under consideration; and thirdly, it brings those dimensions of impact into dialogue so that they can be brought into service of the brand. Alternatively, by taking the attributes of the brand as the starting point, this tetrad of questions allow for a more deductive or exploratory review based on the business or company objectives and, more specifically, their strategic communications. These values or associations can become the basis of a media ecology design that is perhaps most appropriate at the early stages of media planning but would be an appropriate exercise in a later strategic review of their existing channels or platforms.

A full development of these questions suggested by the conclusions of the research, and a testing of their usefulness, would require a separate project but they do propose a means of structured analysis of any media ecology. They provide a starting point for an instrument to bring critical awareness of the different affordances provided by each medium adopted for communications. Especially when digital platforms provide an increasing number of choices and channels for communication, anticipating the evolving relationships between the components of a media ecology is increasingly valuable. As new communication strategies or the opportunities of emerging digital tools are being considered, the heuristic provided by the tetrad allows for a medium strategy to be developed towards the construction of a media ecology that is responsive to both new and old media formats .

MEDIA TEXTURE

Among the collection of essays *Concepts and Categories,* the Russian-born philosopher Isaiah Berlin reflects on the nature of scientific history, observing that facets of experiential knowledge 'criss-cross and penetrate each other at many levels simultaneously, and the attempt to prise them apart, as it were and pin them down, and classify them, and fit them into their specific compartments turns our to be impracticable' (1978, p.119). Such a viewpoint is also true of the 21st century media environment in that physical and digital platforms and the many channels, media forms and content elements they comprise are significantly enmeshed and can no longer be considered independently or in isolation of one another. Therefore, as observed earlier in this thesis, there is a growing need to adopt an ecological mindset that reflects the interconnectedness of media and, importantly, the degree to which it permeates contemporary life and society. Adopting the phrase from Isaiah Berlin (p.114), Roger Silverstone leads his response to the question *Why Study the Media?* (1999) by emphasising its contribution to the 'general texture of experience' and the 'role of the media in shaping experience and, vice versa, the role of experience in shaping media' (p.9) . For their audience, the Do Lectures have succeeded in first penetrating and then enriching this 'texture of experience' through the innovation of their digital strategy working in combination with the immersive nature of the live experience. In examining the Do Lectures media ecology, identifying the particularities of each medium and the emergent dynamic between them, the research has observed approaches that take advantage of intertwined physical and digital communication platforms and, in doing so, effectively connect them to multiple dimensions of human experience. The act of purchasing a poster as a manifesto of shared identity, the replaying of online content as a souvenir or to use with others as an informal ambassador of the event, to share and like Instagram images of the rural location, the joining and participating in online and offline social or business networks - all these are facilitated by a developed and highly engaging media ecology.

Within the Do Lectures communications environment, these multiple strategies provide texture in Berlin's general sense of reflecting the varied and complex nature of human experience. The sophisticated dynamics of the audience response represented in both the survey data and the online testimony used for

analysis reflects a rich spectrum of use, interpretation and meaning achieved through the Do Lectures media ecology. This ecology also provides texture in a secondary and more nuanced sense of media specifically being woven into the fabric of personal, social and cultural life. As Silverstone describes, 'our daily passage involved movement across different media spaces and in and out of media space' (1999 p.8) and our experience is permeated by the surrounding media ecology.

However, a key conclusion arising from this examination of the Do Lectures is that a media ecology has texture in a third, additional sense of having and providing dynamic and responsive diversity in medium form. This case study has demonstated that there is an observable benefit to utilising a broad spectrum of hi-touch and hi-tech media forms to both enliven and enrich the audience experience. From the macro-scale use of Wales and their rural setting in Cardigan to provide a backdrop and image-source for the event to the micro-scale ephemerality of Twitter, the founders have adopted multimedia and intermedia approaches to the expression of the Do Lectures. They have seized a broad range of semiotic opportunities to create a rich, multi-sensory media ecology that provides contrasting and complementary qualities of interaction, particularly for those who participate in the live event.

This variation or *media texture* created through the use of a diverse media ecology is significantly amplified by the highly contrasting elements within it that provide breadth of interest, depth and vitality in communication. There are many starkly differing components whose deliberate juxtaposition strengthens their ability to communicate and connect with an audience. There is a noticeable contrapuntal effect achieved by the use of vastly different media forms that bring together the small, intimate gathering of the live event and the remote, distanciated gathering of the online audience into a single media ecology. For the audience, this offers much more than multiple, varied forms of engagement and experience that can help to defy the constraints of opportunity imposed by time and place or the somewhat capricious masters of personal taste and cultural trend. Such *media texture* - deliberately suggested here as a means of describing the experiential variation within a media ecology and the interplay between its component media forms - enriches the overall experience of those who touch it.

As was seen in the survey of the literature, the choice of metaphor adopted to describe the various processes and effects of communication are influential.

An important legacy of the media ecologists was their conceptualisation of communication as an interrelated environment and its value is becoming more evident as the number of concurrent media forms increases. The emergence, co-existence and readjustment of these forms within a single media ecology and their particular qualities of use within that environment is being more clearly seen in the developing context provided by rapidly advancing digital technologies and channels. However, this study of the Do Lectures suggests that the overlay of this further idea of *media texture* as both an explanatory metaphor and descriptive label would be a valuable extension to media ecology thinking. It provides a conceptual short-hand that develops the media ecology perspective beyond giving attention to the effect of the properties of an individual medium and specifically highlights their functional relationship within a single experiential context. The metaphor of texture gives explicit attention to the variation of effect and, in particular, the degree of contrast that exists between them. It is a means of expression that describes how these variations and contrasts in form contribute to how media is experienced and 'touched' as well as how it is 'seen' or 'heard'.

The concept of media texture conveys that a media ecology provides an active environment whose disaparities and contradistinctive qualities of form have a sensory impact beyond their individual characteristics. That is, what we 'feel' across this media texture makes a contribution to the meaning and significance conveyed in communication. Media texture is expressed in the experiential contrast between the weight and flow of a well-chosen fountain pen and the utilitiarian repetition of keyboard input; the haptic qualities of a handwritten journal against the intangibility of a digital file; the heft and physicality of single well-made book against the many hundreds that can be stored weightlessly in a Kindle; the sensory impact of an outdoor rural event on knowledge workers based in an urban office; the depth of personal connection possible over a shared meal compared to the remote, ephemeral contact of digital and social media. All these provide vital texture and a richness of experience that emerges from their contrasting forms as the attributes of both digital and physical media become more greatly appreciated in the presence of one another.

The specific example of the Do Lectures shows that the relationship between a live lecture-based event and its online platform creates a set of media dynamics that build, sustain and amplify one another. In addition to leveraging their particular qualities of medium, the divergence of those properties and the contrast that exists between them enriches the texture of experience for their

audience and makes a distinctive and effective contribution to communications strategy. As representative of a business in Wales, their example suggests a very particular approach to communications strategy that builds on the tension between contrasting media forms which is particularly apparent in their local rural context. Using the available qualities of place and setting them against new, innovative forms of communication creates a dramatic playspace between digital creativity and resurgent forms of physical authenticity for which there is considerable cultural appetite. Examples such as the creative use of Twitter to run a music station, incorporating a 'history tag' to document and memorialise the ownership of Hiut jeans, or the free online access to talks given in a field in Wales all point towards the opportunities presented by establishing a contrasting and dynamic media ecology that enriches the texture of experience for those who participate in it. For a location such as Cardigan, it is unrealistic to expect that it can compete on the same terms as the major digital and creative hubs established in hyper-connected metropolitan areas. But in the context of a society that is increasingly saturated by digital technology, the Do Lectures has demonstrated that Wales is strongly placed as both a destination and a medium that can directly enrich the texture of experience for their audience.

For the discipline of media ecology, the concept of media texture provides an additional metaphor to express or explore the impact of the media forms particularly in respect of the intermedium dynamics that exist within a communication ecology. It helps to further erode the boundary between considerations of form and content, recognising the contribution that choices of medium make to the impact of the delivery of content. This contribution is to be understood not just in terms of the general qualities or affordances of a particular medium but a further and more specific role in supporting messages or other elements usually confined to considerations of content. For the Do Lectures, a very deliberate choice of medium forms for both their live event and digital platforms conveys important aspects of their ethos and business outlook. Many of the values, themes and ideas presented and promoted through the platform of the Do Lectures are reflected in their choices of medium used to express them. In a similar way, companies and organisations have the potential to increase the influence of their communications by giving strategic consideration to the design of their media ecology, actively developing a media environment whose disparities and contradistinctive qualities of form have an impact beyond the contribution of their individual functions.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1
AUDIENCE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Set out below is the text of the audience survey invitation and online questionnaire. Question display logic was used to hide sections or modules not relevant to individual respondents, so the numbering is not absolute and was not presented to potential survey respondents.

INVITATION AND CONSENT

Thank you for your interest in contributing to this research into the influence of the Do Lectures. Your responses will help the Do Lectures to better understand the impact of their annual event and their lectures published online.

Completing this survey will only take about 20 minutes. It begins with asking for brief background information about you and how you came across the Do Lectures. Other questions ask about your experience of the Do Lectures and what personal impact it has made.

As a thank you for your time and contribution, at the end you will be redirected to a link where you can read or download David's powerful little book 'The Path of the Doer'. Also, if you provide your name and email address, we will enter you into a draw to receive a signed copy of his latest book 'Do Purpose'. The winner will be announced after the close of the survey later in the year.

This research is being completed by Hugh Griffiths of Cardiff University through their School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies in partnership with David and Claire Hieatt of the Do Lectures. It is being supervised by Professor Justin Lewis and Professor Ian Hargreaves CBE and is funded by a Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarship grant. If you have any questions about the project contact Hugh by emailing GriffithsHN@Cardiff.ac.uk.

If you consent to take part in this study, please click the link below to open the survey in your browser window. If you prefer not to take part, simply disregard this email invitation.

Tell us more about your familiarity with the Do Lectures and their online or social media channels

Q1. How did you first come across the Do Lectures? Please be as specific as you can.

Do Lectures website

Do Lectures social media   - -
Twitter   Facebook   Instagram   Other

Press/article - -
Print   Online

Personal recommendation - -
Friend   Work colleague   Attendee or speaker

Other (please specify)

Q2. Which of the Do Lectures online channels do you know, use or contribute to?

I don't know it   I know it but don't use it   I use it   I contribute to it

Website/Twitter/Facebook/Vimeo/Youtube/Google+/Instagram/Flickr/Pinterest

Q3. How often do you visit or use each of these channels?

Never /Sometimes/Weekly /Daily /Several times daily

Q4. What other Do Lectures media/events have your bought/participated in? Please select all that apply

Do Books / Do Workshops/Do Days / Do Posters

Q5. Have you attended a Do Lectures live annual event?

Because you have attended a Do Lectures live event, this section asks more about your experience of the conference

Q6/Q7 Which of the Do Lectures annual events have you attended and in what capacity?

Cardigan, Wales, UK / Hopland, California, US / Victoria, Australia

Year / Attendee, Speaker or Volunteer?

Q8. What aspect of the event had the most impact on you?

Q9. Tell us more about the impact this factor made

Q10. Compared to other conferences and festivals you may have been to, please describe anything you think is unique about the Do Lectures experience.

This section asks you more about your experience of watching the Do Lectures online

Q11. Roughly how often do you choose to watch the online Do Lectures?

Never   Sometimes   Weekly   Daily   Several times daily

Q12. Why do you choose to watch the online Do Lectures?

Entertainment or leisure / Information or facts / Inspiration or new ideas / Business or professional / Education or learning / Other (please specify)

Q13. If you responded 'other', please give your reason(s) to watch

Q14. What device do you use to watch them?

Mobile or smartphone / Tablet or iPad / Laptop or netbook / Desktop / On a TV (Smart TV/Apple TV etc)

PART D: THE DO LECTURES AND THEIR INFLUENCE

Whether you have experienced the Do Lectures live or online, this section asks more about how they may have influenced you

Q15. If any of the Do Lectures have influenced you, which one(s) and how have they affected your thinking or attitudes?

Q16. Are there any changes in you, your work or your life that you would directly attribute to the influence of the Do Lectures? If so, please describe them.

This section explores whether you have recommended the Do Lectures to others and how you may have used them in a shared setting such as the workplace

Q17. Have you recommended the Do Lectures to anyone else such as a family member, friend or work colleague?

Q18. If you have recommended the Do Lectures to someone else, explain in a few words why you did so?

Q19. Have you written, blogged or published anything about the Do Lectures either in print or online?

Q20. If available online, please provide a link or URL for your article.

Q21. Have you used or played one or more of the online Do Lectures in a professional, educational or business setting in order to share them with someone else?

Q22. If so, which lecture(s) have you used and for what purpose?

PART F: WALES

Q.23. Did you already know that the Do Lectures was based in Wales?

Q24. Please provide up to five different keywords or short phrases that best describe your impression of Wales

Q25. Has your view or perception of Wales been affected as a result of your experience of the Do Lectures?

Very positively affected / Positively affected / Not been affected / Negatively affected / Very negatively affected

Q26. If your view or perception of Wales has been affected by the Do Lectures, in what way?

To help us understand the Do Lectures audience, please tell us some basic information about yourself.

Q27. In what country do you live?

Q28. What age bracket are you in?

Under 18 / 18-29 years old / 30-49 years old / 50-64 years old / 65 years and over

Q29. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

No formal qualification / Lower secondary or high school / Upper secondary school or college / Trade, technical or vocational training / Undergraduate or Bachelor's Degree / Postgraduate or Master's Degree and above

Q30. Please indicate your gender below

Male/Female

PART H: OTHER INFORMATION

This is the last section of the survey and allows you to give any final comments or other feedback.

Q31. Summing up your experience of the Do Lectures, either live or online, please say in your own words what you think has been the value of the event generally as well as to you personally.

Q32. Is there anything you want to add about the Do Lectures, your experience of the impact of the event or the online lectures?

Thank you for completing this survey

You can download David Hieatt's book, 'The Path of the Doer' from the following link: http://issuu.com/dolectures/docs/the_path_of_a_doer

APPENDIX 2
ETHICS AND ESRC PRINCIPLES

The research was assessed against the six key principles of ethical research set out by the ESRC (2010) which underpin their framework and associated guidance:

1. Research should be designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency.

2. Research staff and participants must normally be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved.

3. The confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected.

4. Research participants must take part voluntarily, free from any coercion.

5. Harm to research participants and researchers must be avoided in all instances.

6. The independence of research must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit.

In the specific context of this project, these principles were addressed as follows:

INFORMED CONSENT

Where individuals have been asked to participate in the research, for example, through a questionnaire or other means of soliciting data, all participants were provided with sufficient information about the project and its goals so that they could make an informed choice about their participation. The web-based survey incorporated an opening screen that explicitly indicated consent by choosing to respond and click through to complete the questionnaire.

All data gathered has been handled and stored confidentially with password protected access for both online sources and also any materials stored or backed up offline. In addition, access to this data has been strictly limited to the researcher and the supervisory team involved with the project. In particular, access to names, telephone numbers, postal addresses or other identifying personal information has been restricted, and the processing of such data has been processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. For this project, there was no sensitive data gathered or sought that required any special treatment or consideration. All questionnaire material and responses were hosted and stored by SoGo Survey, a professional online survey company with secure servers and also the appropriate eTrust data certificates to ensure that UK legislation regarding the security and handling of data was adhered to in addition to managing the ethical issues involved.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

In all cases, there was transparency about the research and where individuals have contributed their views, data or made other contributions they have been acknowledged openly. Where data has been collected from online sources such as blogs, this has been gathered only from openly available sources where the author, producer or other source has been put into the public domain and can be accessed freely and with unrestricted access. Further information about the considerations for online or social media data built into the design is set out in the following section.

USE OF INTERNET DATA

Particular attention was given to the ethical use of data gathered from online sources. In general terms, data gathered from the internet has been treated as Hookway observes as "personal but not private" (2008). In accordance with this principle, as well as applying the principles set out in the ESRC guidelines, the professional recommendations provided by the Association of Internet Researchers in their detailed guidance *Ethical Decision-Making and Internet Research* (Markham 2012) were also observed. Their process approach

recognises that different ethical issues arise at each stage of a research project and full consideration was given to the questions and challenges they describe.

The key considerations raised by this AOIR guidance were addressed as follows:

How is the context defined and conceptualised?
The specific context for all data gathered is that it was within completely public domains where not only was open-access available to all, but the specific intent of individual contribution in those arenas was with the expectation of exposure to a public audience, interaction and, usually, specifically published for a universal audience. Also, the methods used to capture data, for example, from Twitter or other social media sources, was within the terms of service and did not conflict with any regulatory constraints on the use of that data.

How is the context being accessed?
All stakeholders in the data sources are operating in an open context that is not only publicly available, but also there are no expectations regarding privacy. For example, the sources from which data was drawn uniformly encourage sharing and redistribution of their materials either through built-in mechanisms such as sharing, retweeting or public listing of their content.

What is the primary object of study?
Care was taken to delimit the data extracted used through the process of data selection and deliberate bounding of the case study to avoid including information outside the scope of the investigation.

APPENDIX 3
The Best Event You've Never Heard Of

Maybe it's because it sits in the in-between.
Because it's not simply a product, but an experience.
Because it's the ordinary people that shape its impact.
Maybe it's because at the end of the day, it's just a farm.

Because it's easily dismissed as romanticised accounts of
everyday happenings.
Because it's far, far away from home and the way things
are traditionally done.
Maybe it's because it forces you to put your phone down
and be present.
Because it changes you, shakes up the status quo, and
creates disruption.
Because it poses questions, challenges answers, and re-
sparks the passion buried by the 9 to 5.

Maybe it's because the magic happens somewhere
outside the structure.Because it reminds you that people
are human and that community is something we're all
craving.
Because it provides the space to rest, talk, think, reflect,
explore. And then act.

Maybe it's because the value isn't in the amount you pay.
Because it alters your vision instead of providing a
means of distraction.Because it focuses on all aspects of
your life instead of one tiny piece of it.
Maybe it's because all of these things combined make it
all a bit odd. And even harder to articulate.

It's not a festival, retreat, camp, or conference. It's a collective.
A meeting of minds where the people sitting beside you teach you as much as the ones on stage.
It's a space where silos are knocked down and people remember their potential. Where casual conversations leave wisdom ringing in your ears and dreams are shaken awake.

It's a place where simple, honest, and game-changing connections make you take a long look at what you really want, and what it takes to get you there.
It's tucked away, separated from the norm. But that's what makes it beautiful.

Things that are different, things that aren't easily covered, marketed, or distributed in bulk; things that don't fit into boxes.
These are the things that are difficult to explain.
They're the things that are even more difficult to understand.

100 people. 4 days. 1 farm in West Wales.

Maybe that's why you've never heard of it.

Words by Kacie McGreary
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