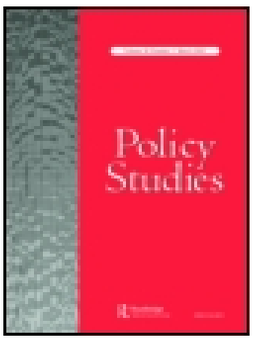

Policy Studies

ISSN: 0144-2872 (Print) 1470-1006 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cpos20

NEW LABOUR'S SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE MUSEUM

Anwar Tlili , Sharon Gewirtz & Alan Cribb

To cite this article: Anwar Tlili , Sharon Gewirtz & Alan Cribb (2007) NEW LABOUR'S SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE MUSEUM, Policy Studies, 28:3, 269-289, DOI: 10.1080/01442870701437634

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/01442870701437634

NEW LABOUR'S SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE MUSEUM
Roles, functions and greater expectations

Anwar Tlili, Sharon Gewirtz and **Alan Cribb**

This article examines the ways in which recent UK governments and related policy agencies have extended, multiplied and refracted conceptions of the social function of museums. It observes that over the last ten years in particular policy discourses have continuously layered ever greater and ever more diverse expectations onto the museum sector and museum professionals. It is no longer sufficient for museums to work with their collections, nor even for them to focus upon their own problems or shortcomings (e.g. of unequal access) and seek to resolve them. Museums are increasingly being expected to orient their work towards what can be described as social policy objectives, and work with and help 'fix' the problems of individuals, communities and the broader society around them. It is argued that although official policies have always constructed museums as social and ethical instruments, New Labour policy discourses on museums have redefined them as a public service, with social inclusion as one of their central functions. The article brings into question the coherence and feasibility of this partly reconfigured and partly re-imagined museum sector and assesses its implications.

> Museums, archives and libraries have a central role to play in sustaining and developing cultural, social, educational and economic well-being (MLA, 2000, Re:source Manifesto, p. 7)

> Probably no more useless public institution, useless relative to its cost, was ever devised than that popular ideal, the classical building of a museum of art, filled with rare and costly objects. And it adds to its inutility a certain power of harm. (Renowned American museologist J. C. Dana, 1920; quoted in Ginsburgh and Mairesse, 1997, p. 15)

Introduction

The museum sector does not obviously conform to typical constructions of a public service, in the way that the health, public transport and, to a large degree, education services do. But within New Labour discourses the distance between the museum as a repository of self-sufficient cultural artefacts oriented towards a ritualized connoisseur gaze, and the broader functions of social policy has been brought into light, questioned and closed. In what follows we will trace the policy genealogy of the production of a new public service, and the accompanying expansion of expectations and duties, by reference to key policy texts and the discourses and arguments within which they are embedded.

Policy Studies, Vol. 28, No 3, 2007
ISSN 0144-2872 print/1470-1006 online/07/03269-21
 DOI: 10.1080/01442870701437634

This genealogy has been constructed to illuminate the incremental way in which museums have been putatively transformed into agents of social policy with responsibilities that extend well beyond their traditional cultural role to encompass functions related to lifelong learning, identity and community building, public health, economic regeneration and social integration. This article questions the coherence and feasibility of this partly reconfigured and partly re-imagined museum sector and assesses its broader implications.

Towards Social Inclusion?

Prior to the formal introduction of the social inclusion agenda into the museum sector as part of a larger government policy framework, museums had already started to seek and experiment with audience development strategies aimed at widening access to their collections, and recruiting new audiences from non-visiting constituencies. This move was necessitated by the emergence of new competitors to the museum sector, particularly new modes of 'infotainment' associated with new technologies, as well as the expansion and internal differentiation of the museum sector itself (Dodd & Sandell, 2001). Equally important, cuts in public funding for the museums (Boodle, 1999; Morton, 1988), part of a larger trend affecting many parts of the public sector since the early 1980s (Clarke *et al*., 2000), led museums to seek to boost their ticket sales revenue by widening their customer base. This was manifest in the 'communicative turn' of museum practice whereby museums were moving away from an exclusive concentration on collecting, preserving and interpreting, and towards focusing more on the communication to the public of messages derived from the museum's collection (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994a). Museums thus became concerned about how to widen their audiences and attract non-traditional visitors.

This novel attention to the visitor, to the demographic landscape surrounding the museum, gave rise to what came to be known as the new museology. The new museology signalled a shift in museological philosophy and practice, from a traditional mandate-driven approach to market-driven approaches to museum management (Prentice, 1994; Seagram *et al.*, 1993). It is at this stage in the early 1990s that the notion of responding to community needs emerged, with some documented successes of attracting non-traditional audiences (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994b), especially by local museums located in ethnically and culturally diverse areas. The Group of Large Local Authority Museums (GLLAM) reported that *all* local authority large museums had 'some strategies for social inclusion, although the terminology and levels of explicit commitment varied' (GLLAM, 1998, p. 11). The GLLAM Report noted that among local large museums:

> . . . there is a general awareness of collections belonging to the public, of residents being entitled to something they are already paying for, of a need to serve the whole population, responding better to their needs and aspirations. There is a wish to serve users and non-users alike, to combat elitism, and to be of use to the city. (*ibid*., p. 13)

It comes as no surprise that local museums were pioneers in pursuing widening access policies. Given their location within small cities, their position and weight in the field of museums, and their lack of access to the tourism market, local museums are dependent on

local authority money, local visitors, responding to local interests, and indirectly on local voters. They therefore have a much stronger incentive than national museums to *make sense* locally, and get perceived as relevant and worth the space they occupy. In contrast, national museums can afford to overlook local interests and communities. In fact, their position and location make it more likely for them to see tourists as their primary audience, or target group. Responding to local needs and cultures can undermine the museum's appeal to tourists, including tourists from inside the UK.

Museums for the Many – The Widening Participation Agenda

The Government's expectations about the social role of the museum are contained in several documents that have appeared since the late 1990s (DCMS, 1999, 2000a,b, 2001, 2005; Hooper-Greenhill *et al*., 2004). New Labour's social inclusion agenda was first formally extended to the museum sector via the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (henceforth DCMS) in the 1999 document *Museums for the Many* (DCMS, 1999). This document was formulated in the wake of the publication in 1998 of *Attitudes of Ethnic Minority Populations towards Museums and Galleries* (Desai & Thomas, 1998), commissioned by the Museums and Libraries Commission (which was replaced by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council [henceforth the MLA] in 1999). This research set out to find out why minority ethnic visitors were underrepresented among audiences and visitors of museums and galleries. Despite some problems to do with the sampling of respondents (the absence of people with disabilities, for example), this is probably the most authoritative qualitative study of constructions of museums by minority ethnic people in the UK.[1]

The findings show that some perceptions of the museum, some positive but mostly negative, were found to be common to all ethnic groups, whilst others are specific to minority ethnic groups. It was also found that the 'profile of museum visitors and non-visitors among ethnic minority people mirrored that of the general population' (Desai & Thomas, 1998, p. 2). Among the barriers more related to class, education and lifestyle were cost, lack of time, interest, awareness and effort, and fear of not understanding the exhibitions. Common to all groups were perceptions of museums as old, imposing and intimidating buildings with dull objects-in-glass-cases enclosed in a 'quiet, reverential and unwelcoming' atmosphere and more suited to educated upper class people. The characteristics of frequent visitors, irrespective of the group they were from, were found to be: 'better education; in professional jobs; likely to take an active interest in their children's education; [and] interested in culture and history generally' (*ibid*.). An additional demotivating factor for some minority ethnic group members was their lack of proficiency in English. Minority ethnic visitors tended to regard the museum as 'white people's territory' where history is represented from a narrow Western angle, containing hardly any recognition of the achievements and contributions of non-Western cultures, as well as minority ethnic people in the West, and echoing prevalent media and common stereotypes, especially about Africa.

Another major theme that emerged from these focus groups is the perception that much of what was on display in museums had been looted from colonized territories

under the British empire, including from their countries of origin, which, whilst true in many cases, was assumed to be true in all instances (which could also be explained by the absence of information on the provenance of objects and how they were acquired and collected). Minority ethnic participants wanted to see objects that told different and multiple stories that related to their own lives, cultures and histories. Where relevance to their lives and cultures was perceived, they were motivated to visit and take part in events. Despite the many negative perceptions of the institution of the museum as it stood, there was general agreement among participants, including non-visitors, that museums were a valuable resource. Museums were viewed as educational and cultural institutions that had a number of roles to play, such as preserving the past, providing an educational resource (especially for children), and enhancing people's general knowledge, especially of other cultures, and thereby contributing to mutual tolerance and understanding.

In contrast, *The Popularity of UK Museums* (MORI, 1999), a large-scale MORI study that came out a year later, funded by the (mainly DCMS-sponsored) *Campaigns for Museums*, arrived at different results, due to its quantitative nature and its distinct focus and aims. The 1999 MORI Report found that 'museums are socially inclusive' given that '[o]nly one in a hundred say that they feel intimidated by museums and galleries'. In proportionate terms, it was found that there was no significant difference between the frequency and number of visits from minority ethnic groups and the rest of the population (MORI, 1999).[2] However, another MORI study published two years later, which was commissioned by the MLA (MORI, 2001), examined the disaggregated make-up of minority ethnic visitors, and found that there was a similar percentage of white and Asian visitors (around 30 per cent of overall respective populations), whilst only 10 per cent of visitors were black (African and Afro-Caribbean) (although in aggregate terms white visitors represented 95 per cent of all visitors).

In retrospect, *Attitudes of Ethnic Minority Populations towards Museums and Galleries* seems to have had a much bigger impact on DCMS policy circles than the MORI findings. Indeed, the first report lends itself more readily to New Labour's attempt to find some justification for more regulation, management and auditing of museums as public sector organizations. Following the *Attitudes* Report, the Government's policy initiated what can be seen as a limited and modest expectation – to widen access to museums' collections and the knowledge and expertise of its staff, based on the DCMS's view that 'the underlying objective for all museums and galleries should be to strive to offer the widest possible access to their collections and to the knowledge and expertise of their staff' (DCMS, 1999, p. 6).

DCMS's attempt to widen access posed a challenge to received museological philosophy. The museums' attempt at audience development prior to New Labour's policies was market- and cost-driven. They still placed the exhibitions and collections at the centre of their audience development, and saw the public as a means to obtain better public valuation of their activities and exhibitions at a time when their value began to be questioned. DCMS policy initiatives, in contrast, aimed at placing the taxpaying public centre stage, even if that meant adapting and reinventing exhibitions and museum practices to enhance their public appeal. Hence, whilst museums assumed a comprehension deficit in the public and tried to make their collections accessible and more effectively

communicable, DCMS assumed a deficit in existing museum practice, and sought to regulate the museum sector so that it placed widening public access as a top priority. *Museums for the Many* (DCMS, 1999) set access standards for DCMS-funded museums and galleries; it required them to conduct monitoring and data-gathering research on their visitors as well as non-visitors, to 'monitor the effect of access initiatives by establishing targets and performance indicators based wherever possible on both quantitative and qualitative measures' (DCMS, 1999, p. 6), and to set out a clear set of access targets in their three-year Funding Agreements with DCMS.

In addition to the financial barrier that DCMS tried to address by allocating funds to support free entry for children and pensioners, and to ensure free-entry institutions would remain free, a number of other barriers to access were identified (which echo Dodd and Sandell's typology [1998]). Physical and sensory barriers, including the 'intellectual' inadequacy of display, interpretation and explanation, disadvantage people with disabilities, older people as well as people with responsibility for children, and children themselves. Cultural barriers involve the failure of the exhibitions and collections to reflect the cultural diversity of actual and potential audiences, and therefore to appeal to these audiences and instil in them a sense of ownership towards the museum. Staff attitudes can constitute a barrier – an attitudinal barrier – when visitors are not made to feel comfortable in a welcoming environment. Putting visitors centre stage demands not only developing accessible, inclusive communication strategies and reactively responding to barriers, but also proactively attracting non-visitors from what DCMS describes as priority groups. The latter requires new skills, competences and professional resources that are modelled on marketing and publicity strategies, to 'sell' the significance and worthiness of the museum as a leisurely, cultural and educational resource to sections of the public who usually do not see museum-going as part of their lifestyle activities. This widening participation model remained within the broad limits of the politics of representation and traditional audience development policies. Conceptions of the social role of museum had not yet stepped beyond the cultural and educational domains.

Museums as Agents of Social Change

The qualitative move in policy discourse beyond the politics of representation and towards a social policy role for museums was signalled by *Centres for Social Change* (DCMS, 2000a), a document that set the terms of the debate for the museum sector's expanded social role and social responsibilities. *Centres for Social Change* made it clear that the new social role envisaged for the museum was part of a larger concerted strategy to tackle *social* exclusion, i.e. the ultimate objective is social, rather than discretely cultural or educational. [3] In the foreword to this document, Chris Smith, the then Secretary for Culture, Media and Sport, states that the Government intends to mobilize the museum sector to achieve its objective of combating social exclusion:

> Combating social exclusion is one of the Government's highest priorities, and I believe that museums, galleries and archives have a significant role to play in helping us to do this. They are often the focal point for cultural activity in the community, interpreting its

> history and heritage. This gives people a sense of their own identity, and that of their community. But the evidence is that museums, galleries and archives can do more than this, and act *as agents of social change in the community, improving the quality of people's lives* through their outreach activities. This policy aims to stimulate and direct that role [our emphasis]. (DCMS, 2000a, p. 3)

The 'overarching objective' of the new policy framework is framed thus: 'Social inclusion should be mainstreamed as a policy priority for all libraries, museums, galleries and archives'; and '[m]useums, galleries and archives should develop projects which aim to improve the lives of people at risk from social exclusion' (DCMS, 2001, p. 8). The aim now is not simply to widen access to museum collections, and get more people to visit the museum and take advantage of the informal learning opportunities offered by museums. *Centres for Social Change* states:

> Our objective is wider than simply encouraging under-represented groups to come into museum, gallery and archive buildings. If museums, galleries and archives are to make a difference, their goal should be to act as vehicles for positive social change. (DCMS, 2000a, p. 9)

In the same vein, the MLA makes a distinction between 'access' and 'social impact' or 'social policy', insisting that they should not be conflated:

> . . . one distinction is important – that is distinguishing between 'access' and 'social impact' (or in the terminology used by MLA here, 'social policy'). In essence, 'access'. . . is about organisations themselves being accessible and inclusive (i.e. in their culture, policies, practice etc.), something that is often seen in terms of tackling barriers to access. 'Social policy' – in an MLA context, at least – is about the sector's ability to impact on wider social concerns (e.g. community cohesion and health outcomes). (MLA, 2005a, p. 2)

Social impact or social policy here refers to the museums' contribution to tackling *social* – and not merely cultural – exclusion, i.e. their contribution to tackling the multi-faceted aspects of exclusion that relate to crime, unemployment, health, education, and urban regeneration and neighbourhood renewal.

Individual and Community Identity Building

A museum's potential positive contribution to individual lives can be categorized as educational, therapeutic, civic, emotional and relating to the formation and affirmation of identities. In relation to the latter, it is suggested that museums can help individuals gain or regain a sense of self-esteem and form a sense of their place in community and society (DCMS, 2001, 2004; Hooper-Greenhill *et al*., 2004), which is seen as a prerequisite for active engagement in social life in general:

> Museums, galleries and archives, with their unique collections, represent one of the most significant resources in the community . . . They can play a role in generating social change by engaging with and empowering people to determine their place in the world,

> educate themselves to achieve their own potential, play a full part in society, and contribute to transforming it in the future. (DCMS, 2000a, p. 8)

The emphasis on the museums' role in individual identity formation, as Newman and McLean note, is premised on the ideas that '[a] sense of identity in an individual is considered the main precursor to inclusion' (Newman and Mclean, 2002, p. 57) and that the self-esteem and self-confidence that museums can equip individuals with is transferable to wider social contexts. It is suggested that in order to contribute to building individuals' self-esteem, the museum needs to distance itself from the image of an imposing, exclusive institution, and instead should provide a safe environment where individuals can actively engage with and contribute to the cultural contents that the museum provides.

According to DCMS, museums can play a similar role in relation to communities. What museums are expected to do is, to use Zolberg's phrase, to 'right the exclusionary wrongs of the past' (1994, p. 188); to contribute to the enactment of some form of recognitional justice whereby social and cultural attributes that have been held in a low position – in what Weber calls a hierarchy of social worth – are revalued, asserted and celebrated (DCMS, 2004). An equally important objective is to bring community members to consciousness about their community; to help the community become a community-for-itself, so to speak, i.e. a self-conscious collective actor. New Labour aims to institute a certain community pedagogy as part of the core functions of the museum as well as other public sector organizations. It is stated that:

> Through the special combination of enjoyment and learning that they offer, museums, galleries and archives can provide many opportunities for overcoming social exclusion. Programmes can draw in specific groups within the communities that they serve, including marginalised groups. Exploring the context of their community can allow people to come to a greater understanding of themselves and stimulate their interest in society more generally. Being involved in creating an exhibition, including hands-on creation of objects to go in it, can help enormously to increase individuals' sense of self-worth, value and motivation. It can also release latent creative abilities and enhance imagination, vocabulary and self-expression. This in turn gives them the confidence to engage more fully in society and helps to reduce their experience of exclusion. (DCMS, 2000a, p. 8)

Communities, in the DCMS's vision for the museum sector, should be engaged not just as visitors and users, but also as producers of the collections on display, and as consultative partners on what museums are doing and intend to do. Policy Action Team 10 (PAT 10), set up by the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) to look into the ways in which cultural institutions could contribute to social inclusion, produced a report (DCMS PAT 10, 1999) that 'recommends that there should be more systematic community consultation and that local authorities should develop plans for community based culture and leisure activities' (DCMS, 2000a, p. 7). Underlying this vision is not merely New Labour's communitarianism (Martell & Stephen, 1997; Worley 2005), but also an attempt to recast the citizenry as customers of public services championed by the Government. In the case of the museum

sector, it seeks to reconfigure the relationship between museums and the tax-paying public so that the customer can exercise choice in relation to museum services. As stated in the SEU's *New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal*, cultural institutions should develop 'outreach, especially to excluded communities, to make them aware that they have the chance to express their views and directly influence service providers' (SEU, 2001, p. 52). The happy side-effect of mobilizing this mix of communitarian and consumerist discourses is an empowerment of communities and 'a sense of belonging, trust and civic engagement' (DCMS, 2004, p. 4).

On a broader level, it is envisaged that museums can and will have a positive impact on society as a whole. It is suggested that museums can play a part in re-energizing the public realm by fostering inter-community dialogue, engaging communities, and making a positive contribution to integrating individuals and various communities into the broader society. It is noted that regeneration is not only about the public physical environment, but also about the public sphere (DCMS, 2004, 2005), the public space where people enact their citizenship through association and inter-communal engagement. The museum is assigned the task of informal citizenship education, so to speak, especially for those who are at risk of social exclusion. As cultural institutions, museums can act as purveyors of 'bridging capital' (DCMS, 2004, p. 31), offering an opportunity for people from various economic and socio-cultural backgrounds to interact, and thereby forge a sense of common belonging. But this of course presupposes that museums have broken with their history of elitism, and made themselves relevant to multiple economic and socio-cultural groups.

Museums as Agents of Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning is flagged up as an important aspect of the socially inclusive museum. In addition to the enhancement of their self-esteem and their disposition to engage actively in public life, the lifelong learning opportunities that can be proffered by museums, it is suggested, are convertible into economic returns for the individual, the community and British economy (DCMS, 2000b; Hooper-Greenhill *et al*., 2004; MLA, 2002a,c). The key policy document in this regard is *The Learning Power of Museums: A Vision for Museum Education* (DCMS, 2000b), produced by DCMS with some input from the then Department of Education and Employment, which set out the Government's vision for the museums' potential to support and enhance formal education as well as to feed into informal, adult, independent lifelong learning, and help bring about 'the learning society' that the Government was trying to fashion. In the preface to *The Learning Power of Museums* Chris Smith and David Blunkett wrote:

> Learning is at the heart of this Government's agenda because it is the key to a rich life for individuals and prosperity for the nation. Through its programme of education reform, the Government is seeking to create the 'learning habit' across the country. (DCMS, 2000b, p. 3)

In *Centres for Social Change* (DCMS, 2000a), it is argued that museums' contribution to lifelong learning can provide individuals with new skills in a safe learning environment free from the pressure of assessment, and thus make them more employable:

> For those on the margins of our society, the potential benefits of enhanced information and communication often make no impression or are viewed as 'not for us'. Significant or growing gaps between those who have access to information and those who don't are unacceptable. Museums, galleries and archives have a role to play in helping to exploit the new technologies to generate social cohesion, community involvement and participation, and to aid lifelong learning. (DCMS, 2000a, p. 8)

It is worth noting here that, whilst there is a strong case to be made for the necessity of democratizing access to lifelong learning opportunities, the New Labour discourse is characteristically premised on a rather asocial picture of the unequal access to lifelong learning. It reduces inequalities of access to information either to a communication/access deficit on the part of the institutions that act as producers, repositories or communicators of information, or to a motivational or ideational deficit on the part of those who view knowledge as 'not for the likes of us', lacking the 'learning habit' that museums are expected to develop across society. This picture edits out, and safely insulates, much of the sociality of the complex processes and circumstances that can account for the unequal distribution of the enabling conditions for lifelong learning.

The argument about the museums as agents of lifelong learning is framed against the background of 'the information age' and 'the knowledge society', and the idea that learning, i.e. employment-oriented learning, is not a one-off thing but a lifelong process, whereby people can keep up with the latest technology-driven and technology-based skills and knowledge. Simultaneously, new technologies are represented as a resource that museums should take advantage of to make their lifelong opportunities more accessible. Indeed, the extent to which a museum has brought its service in line with the new technologies is set as one of the performance indicators that can be used to measure the overall performance of the museum service (DCMS, 2000a).

Framing the case for the museum's central role in promoting lifelong learning as an information age imperative throws up some tensions, and can in some ways be seen as an unrealistic expectation. For example, the economic argument for lifelong learning is here being unproblematically conflated with the ethical imperative of social inclusion. The crux of the problem is that an ethically grounded contribution to the lifelong learning of the socially excluded will not necessarily produce the cutting edge skills that the Government sees as necessary for the British economy to compete in the global market. Policy documents seem to suggest that both are one and the same thing. This conflation is manifest in the recent partnership formed between the MLA and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) which was meant to feed into the Government's 'Skills Strategy' (MLA, 2005c).

The reverse side of this problem is that those who can develop cutting-edge skills are already experts in various fields, i.e. in some strong sense part of the included, who do not need the basic lifelong learning the museums can realistically provide. It is unlikely that those who need to update their skills to keep up with the latest technological

developments are the socially excluded, or those at risk of social exclusion, however defined. Learning is not quite the same as lifelong learning. Most of the learning likely to be acquired in museums – about one's own and other cultures and histories – is quite useless as far as one's immediate employment needs are concerned. Further, through fieldwork conducted with four science centres and museums, we have noticed that what could be characterized as lifelong learning programmes were targeted at young people out of formal education, aimed at equipping them with some basic initiation into technical skills (such as website design, music production and media skills). In any case, if museums were successful as agents of lifelong learning, it is unthinkable that they could provide anything beyond what can be characterized as elementary forms of literacy of one sort or another, whether artistic, historical, technical or scientific.

Museums and Public Health

Policy advocates for the social role of museums also argue that museums have significant potential to play a role in relation to health and mental health in particular. Silverman argues that '[o]ne promising pathway to an expanded social role for museums lies in recognising their therapeutic potential' (Silverman, 2002, p. 69). Similarly programmatic statements are found in policy documents produced by the MLA:

> . . . [t]his is an important time for museums, libraries and archives to articulate and communicate the unique contribution they already make and have the power to make to health agendas and to become recognised partners for the new developments. (MLA, 2005b, p. 1)

The health agenda, it is argued, offers 'real opportunities [for] museums, libraries and archives to become actively engaged in promoting the health and mental health of society' (*ibid.*). Several health policy documents that adopt a 'multi-agency' approach to health and mental health allow a great deal of room for cultural institutions to step in and complement mainstream healthcare institutions. Examples of such policy frameworks are *Delivering Choosing Health: making healthier choices easier* (2005), produced by the Department of Health and the NHS, with some input from DCMS, the Social Exclusion Unit's *Mental Health and Social Exclusion* (2004), and *Anti Stigma and Discrimination Plan* (2004) by the National Institute of Mental Health Education.

Underpinning the vision of the museum as a serious contributor to individual and community health is an understanding of health conditions that breaks with the purely medical conception of what it is to have a health condition, i.e. with 'a narrowly conceived medical model of health that places responsibility squarely with the medical profession alone and that relies on their diagnosis and treatment of physical symptoms' (Dodd, 2002, p. 183). Dodd suggests that museums can intervene very early in the social exclusion process to tackle the interrelated processes through which health inequalities are produced, and at a later stage can play a therapeutic role and make up for the limits of medical expertise that is focused narrowly on the 'doctor's prescription pad' (Dodd, 2002).

Whilst the museum can play a complementary role *vis-à-vis* health care institutions, it seems unrealistic for them to take up a health care function in relation to a broad range

of medical cases. It seems to be the case that the therapeutic potential of museums is particularly relevant to mental health. Suffering a mental health condition is commonly viewed as a major cause of social exclusion. Indeed, there is a strong sense in which people with mental health conditions are the prototype of the socially excluded (Foucault, 1967). Over the last two decades there have been attempts in UK mental health policies to rethink and move away from the 'mental asylum model' of dealing with mental health (Bates, 2001; Dodd, 2002). This led to the closure of the majority of traditional mental hospitals and the emergence of multiple modes of mental health care provision most of which are embedded within local communities (Bates, 2001; Dodd, 2002). The policy-driven redrawing of the boundaries and reach of the mental health institution has opened up some space for museums and other cultural institutions to enter partnerships with the mental health profession.

The socialized conception of health, however, tends to be interpreted so narrowly that the social conditions that help or militate against good health, whether prior to the illness event, or during the treatment process, are obscured and displaced into something that organizations such as museums can discharge. Portraying the museum, and cultural institutions in general, as organs capable of actualising this socialized conception of health should not be enlisted as an alibi for shifting the focus of attention away from the issue of health inequalities, and stratified access to a stratified health care provision, and towards expectations that take little account of the limits of what museums can do – organizational, logistical, ethical and professional limits. Although the MLA acknowledges the social dimension of health inequalities, including the relation between infant mortality and teenage motherhood, between mental health and living conditions, between health inequalities and educational inequalities, *Health Policy and Museums, Libraries and Archives* (MLA, 2005b) contains hardly any guidance to museums as to how they can take advantage of the putative opportunities opened up by this broad conception of health conditions and health care. Recognising that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach, it is left to the museums to explore these opportunities and imaginatively devise ways of getting involved in health care provision:

> In addition to developing a healthy workforce, there is room for museums, libraries and archives to explore, identify and define areas for involvement, not least in health and mental promotion and anti-stigma programmes. (MLA, 2005b, p. 9)

In relation to physical health conditions, it is very difficult to conceive of any role that a museum can realistically fulfil other than a preventive role centred around health awareness raising and promoting a healthy culture among its audiences.

Re-invigorating the Local Economy

The emphasis on the potential economic role of museums is not a new thing, and can be traced at least as far back as the Conservatives' report *Pleasure, Leisure and Jobs: The Business of Tourism*, produced by the Cabinet Office Enterprise Unit in 1985 (MacPherson, 2006). However, under New Labour the economic function, insofar as it is presumably capable of feeding into social inclusion through neighbourhood renewal and local

regeneration, has been redefined as one of the core functions of both local and national museums, and has become integral to the rationality of governing and regulating museums. In the MLA key document *UK Museums Needs Assessment*, it is stated that 'work is required . . . to enable museums to maximise economic development of their communities' (MLA, 2002b, p. 1). This is proposed as one of the performance indicators for the museum sector that should be rendered measurable in terms of its impact. The need to develop imaginative ways for museums to have a positive economic impact is coupled with the '[n]eed for more accurate economic impact information about museums . . . [and the n]eed to develop a better knowledge of the effects of museums by undertaking quantitative economic evaluation' (MLA, 2002b, p. 76).

The museum is expected to play an active economic role by (a) contributing to the gentrification of the local area, making it a magnetic place to work and live in; (b) providing work for local communities; (c) furnishing employable skills for users from local communities; (d) placing the local area on the national map, and the tourism map; and (e) contributing to the creative industries. As stated in *Renaissance in the Regions*, '[m]useums and galleries will have an increasingly important impact on such standard economic indicators as employment, sales, incomes, and the balance of payments' (MLA, 2001, p. 50). In addition, museums are expected to act as a magnet for tourism and a nucleus around which other job-creating economic activities can cluster at the local level. Museums, it is argued, can serve as a generative economic resource for areas where local communities face a dearth of opportunities stemming from economic and neighbourhood decline:

> Culture, whether as a central part of a regeneration initiative, or as a substantial component of a broader programme, can play a distinctive role in bringing economic benefits to an area. It does not just bring direct economic improvement by providing employment and generating revenue, but can have a wider economic impact on the general prospects of an area, by making it a more desirable place to live and work, and, subsequently, for business to invest. (DCMS, 2004, p. 37)

Several examples are invoked where museums and galleries, once part of the local landscape, have sparked off a great deal of economic activity that has benefited the local community and provided them with employment opportunities, in addition to the cultural, leisurely and civic benefits that the existence of the museum within the local community can offer:

> Museums act as catalysts for urban regeneration, as elements of specific redevelopment schemes or as part of the wider renewal of a city's profile. Museums in places such as Walsall, Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham are attracting national attention and are helping to develop a favourable image for their host cities. In the South West of England a study has shown that museum-related tourist spending has made a significant contribution to the region's economy. (MLA, 2001, p. 8)

With regard to their economic role, museums are caught up in a tension traceable to their objective – one that has been laid down by Government policies – of acting as a focal point and a magnet for tourism, and simultaneously responding to the social inclusion agenda. However, acting as a tourist attraction that can generate income and business for

the city and the UK does not always sit very comfortably with the expectation that they should be responsive to the social inclusion agenda. This can be described as the paradox of localization (responding to the local as social inclusion): if the museum localizes its mode of functioning – by closely linking the museum's exhibits, activities, events, and its economy of representation to local interests, concerns and priorities – it will then incidentally be sidelining people from outside that area (i.e. tourists). If it leaves tourists outside its core priorities, then it misses out on an opportunity to generate income for the local area, energize the local economy in many ways, and respond to the Government's expectation of the museum as a catalyst for local economies. If the museum were to earmark resources and pursue operational strategies oriented towards attracting tourists to generate new sources of revenue locally, and incidentally induce clusters of economic activities to emerge around the museum, then that would almost inevitably be at the expense of localization, and the focus on local constituencies.

The Museum and the Social – Tensions on Exhibit

The DCMS policies make it clear that the ultimate aim of social inclusion in museums is not about getting underrepresented, non-visiting individuals and communities to develop an interest and investment in museums and visit the museums, or to visit more frequently. The ultimate outcome envisaged is social and societal, and not merely educational or cultural in the discrete sense of these terms. It is to a role that directly or indirectly improves *the quality of life* for individuals, communities and society that museums are now to orient themselves. At least according to official policies the *telos* of the museum sector has thereby shifted and expanded. The sweeping languages centred around individual and social well-being have displaced the more specific languages of cultural transmission. Museum staff are increasingly constructed not as working on collections with the aim of bringing people to them, but as working with people with the aim of bringing about broad social policy objectives on the back of the museum's cultural remit. The steps through which this putative transformation has taken place all have a plausible rationale – a concern with audience, and thus a concern with access, and thus with social inclusion and thus, finally, with social impact and social change. The New Labour discourses of 'joined-up' policy and, in particular, those discourses that make up the giant policy umbrella of 'tackling social exclusion' have provided the medium for this discursive repositioning of the museum sector. In addition, New Labour's museum policies emphasise the fact that museums are no different from, and are indeed part and parcel of public services, to the extent that they owe their existence to the tax-paying public of citizen-consumers, and to this extent, museums have to be brought in line with New Labour's policy script for public services and the practical philosophy that ought to underpin their governance, funding mechanisms, practice and relationship to the users.

But there are evidently a rich variety of tensions and contradictions embedded in the idea of the new museum as an agent of social policy. These tensions and contradictions expose the rhetorical nature and the hollowness of some of the museum policy formulations analysed in the body of this article. However, after acknowledging, and briefly illustrating, these sceptical readings, we will conclude by reiterating the validity of

asserting a socially responsible role for museums, and the scope for museums as public services – albeit that these aspirations must refer to a role and a form of service that is hard to discern and hard to realise once we look outside the all-encompassing generalities of New Labour discourses.

Museums 'can do more' (DCMS 2000a, p. 3) but they cannot do everything at once. First, there are very different senses and kinds of social inclusion in place here, which point in somewhat different directions. Choices need to be made between extending the reach of the museums' historical cultural transmission role and extending their remit into new forms of cultural engagement. More fundamentally still, there are severe limits to how far 'inclusion' – in the sense of greater involvement with museums (whatever their remit) – is what is either wanted or needed by those who are deemed excluded. Many of the causes and effects of social exclusion lie well outside the cultural domain and it simply does not make sense to place great expectations on museums in relation to them. Secondly, even the narrower call for inclusion in the cultural life of the museum is built on the presupposition that it is the fault of museums that the marginalized public is turned off, neglecting thereby wider socio-cultural factors that shape people's perception of museums, and their preparedness to engage in the museum-going game. The government documents avowedly set out to counter the presumed paternalism and elitism inherent in the museum institution. However, this paternalism comes back through the back door, manifest in the idea that people have needs that could be met by museums, and that they should develop an interest in the museum. In other words, whilst traditional museum professionals argue that the museum is good because of its collections, the DCMS argument is that the museum is good for the public provided it simplifies its messages, departs from its exclusive mode of communication and makes itself relevant. What this discourse leaves out is the intimate relationship between access to formal education, and socialization into the value system – in a sense part of the hidden curriculum of formal education – that makes a virtue of a disinterested, non-utilitarian investment in culture. The fact is that people have differential access to educational opportunities, formal and informal, that can socialize them into the gazing posture that the museum visitor requires, produces and reproduces.

Equally important, paternalism also steals back in through the idea that museums should establish relevance, narrowly defined as the values, interests and iconography of distinct communities. The museum's function is thus to recognize, facilitate and reinforce community identities. It is as if 'communities' – a coded, optimistic and aggregated way of referring to minority ethnic and low socio-economic groups – can never aspire to develop the cultural and motivational wherewithal to tap into 'irrelevance'; that is, those values, artefacts and knowledge of the museum that have no relevance to any community-building role, nor to the existential/experiential immediacy of community members, but which still have an educative and cultural role, if only through the opposition they generate, and the inter subjective communicative rationality (Habermas, 1984) that results therein. The discourse confines communities within the ontological horizon of their community. Now the excluded live in communities (by no means social classes according to New Labour); they have community needs, community identities, and are in need of some community development, a sense of self, both individual and collective, to raise their

aspirations; they need to be made to feel, or consciously feel they have become, what they already are – members of their communities. The underside of this cultural policy is that it can foster an ethnic, cultural or regional parochialism, and incidentally exclude the excluded from cultural and educational benefits.

This view is premised on a certain communitarian populism – which is a discursive leitmotif underpinning New Labour's policy in relation to all other areas of the public sector – that does a disservice as much to the culturally and educationally deprived as to the educational and cultural values housed in the museum. The emphasis on localising museum cultural activities, i.e. designing them in such a way as to reflect and respond to local concerns, interests and values, builds on and feeds back into what Bernstein (2000) describes as the restricted code associated with dominated social classes. The restricted code shapes and encourages local context-tied communicative resources and cognitive structures, as opposed to the elaborated code that predisposes its holders to think their way from the local to the universal to the abstract – that which transcends local experiences and lays a strong claim to universality – both the aptitude to produce and receive the universal.

On another level, whilst recognition – such as the inclusion of ethnic minority cultural objectifications on museum displays, for example – is an important stepping stone, to the extent that it goes some way towards countering silences, prejudices, misrepresentations and groundless devaluations of minority cultures, it should not be seen as an end in itself, and should not slide into an unconditional celebration of cultural identity. Cultural activities should aim at combining affirmations of cultural identities with challenges to them (Gewirtz & Cribb, 2006), creating thereby a cultural context in which people can negotiate and live with difference, rather than complacently hold on to their cultural anchorage, which may easily shade off into one sort or another of a certain cultural and ethnic narcissism. Further, these re-valuations of oppressed and misrepresented cultures, if they are to have any substantive effect on the regimes of representation that devalue minority cultures and histories as well as the unequal relations of representation that sustain these regimes, should in principle have as their anticipated audiences people from outside the cultural group that has been subjected to a lack of recognition, more than the insiders of that group (Bourdieu, 1991). It is, in a very important sense, the people who are from outside a given community who need to acquire a sense of the value of that community, rather than the insiders to it.

The discourse about the expanded social role of museums is not simply about expanding the role of museums for the putative reasons advanced in policy discourse. The expansion of the museum's social role to contribute to the areas of health, formal education, crime, neighbourhood renewal, etc., can be seen, at least in one important dimension, as part of a larger New Labour tendency to mobilize alternative institutions to step into the social policy void that has emerged in the wake of the partial or in some cases near total withdrawal of the neo-liberal state from many social policy areas under the New Labour Government. Whilst the museum can act in more imaginative ways to reflect on and revise its established practices in such a way as to have a more positive social impact, this more imaginative and more responsible role should not be co-opted into New Labour's neo-liberal ideology of governance – limited government, small welfare

state – to show that many of the social policy functions traditionally discharged by the social-democratic state can be successfully redistributed among many public sector institutions, through what can be described as a functional de-differentiation of the various regions of public policy and its objects, i.e. the public sectors. The New Labour government-driven expansion of the role of the museum should be seen in the light of the broader mode of governance that New Labour has been trying to roll out across the public, private and voluntary sectors, whereby the boundaries of the traditional (social-democratic) state are pulled back, and its tasks are redistributed among public, private and voluntary organizations as well as communities themselves. This, it should be noted, is achieved through a double movement whereby the interventionist, regulatory welfare state is pared down precisely by actively intervening in the regulation of the public sector, as in the case of new museum policies.

What can also account for this set of social policy expectations placed on the museum sector, in addition to the ideology of governance and the de-differentiation of public policy and sectors, is the conflation of two operational meanings of the concept of social inclusion – social inclusion as a performative slogan in politicking discourse and as a referent to what is to be done, and can be done, on the ground. The culture of politicking discourse, and its immanent *modus operandi* – where words aim primarily at persuading, mobilising, and outmanoeuvring one's opponents, etc. – is hurriedly projected onto the culture of museums, creating a surreptitious disjuncture between the illocutionary force (Austin, 1962) of 'social inclusion' inside the political field, and the specifically locutionary role (*ibid*.) the concept of social inclusion has to play in museum practice. The grammar of politicking discourse operates in such a way as to push political parties towards outbidding each other, irrespective of the practicability of the bids made amid the heat of political polemics. These bids – the bid that the peculiar institution of the museum can be made to make sense socially according to an instrumentalist logic – owe their logic to specific struggles within the political field (Bourdieu, 1991). New Labour set out to show that it was the party of efficiency, instrumentalism and social inclusion. In radicalising the social inclusion agenda to an unrealistic degree, New Labour is trying to outbid not so much its traditional rivals in the political arena, as its social-democratic past with respect to the imperative of social justice.

Without discounting the fact that there are serious social justice issues surrounding conventional museological practices, and the peculiar institution of the museum, we should seek to avoid being carried away by the ethical glamour of the social inclusion agenda, and take a critical distance from the Government's push for social inclusion and the obligation placed on publicly funded museums to meet social inclusion targets. Characterising the museum sector as socially exclusionary tells little about how to include the excluded, what other related, causal circumstances and factors need to be changed in preparation for this inclusion, and what other values should be taken into account when including them. Responding to these questions always implicates a very complex combination of one's social ontology and ethics. New Labour proposes *one* version of inclusion grounded on *one* possible way of responding to these questions. It is crucial that we do not rush to an advocacy of the existing model of social inclusion. Furthermore, we must engage with the possibility that the social inclusion agenda in relation to the

museum sector intersects (a) short-term politicking objectives internal to the struggles and stakes of the political field, (b) a disciplinary mechanism to closely supervise the museum sector and undermine its cultural and professional autonomy, (c) a population management technique and part of a broader rationality of governance enacted through public policy, (d) an economistic logic projected onto the cultural sector, and (e) a dramaturgical exercise played to the gallery of taxpayers who are being repositioned as customers of publicly funded institutions that have been brought under stringent regulations to deliver an exchange value back to the taxpayers.

In Conclusion

The social role of museums and the social inclusion concern have a validity that goes beyond its recent party political expression, its embeddedness in New Labour's contingent politicking stakes, and beyond the instrumental argument that museums should give a return to the taxpayer who pays for them. Admittedly, bringing an ethical egalitarian viewpoint to bear upon the way we view the work done by the museums is, essentially, an attempt to superpose a new language game that is in many ways non-native to the cultural language game. But this is not to say that the cultural world should not be interrupted by the ethical/social world. The conventional work of museums has long been implicated in the social and ethical language game, and consciously so, as Bennett (1995) shows, through civilising anti-social behaviour and, as Benedict Anderson (1991) notes, in constituting and glorifying the nation and its constitutive iconography, and conveniently representing the 'Other' (colonized peoples, women, people with disabilities and gays). This is the core of the social reform function that nineteenth century cultural policy-makers envisaged as central to the role and place of the newly instituted museums in Victorian society (Bennett, 1995; Hooper-Greenhill, 1988). The genealogy that we have sketched, around the multiple axes of social inclusion, merely unpacks New Labour's contemporary re-working of this social policy function.

Museums ought to exercise social responsibility, and to be responsive, not so much to the regulatory measures of the government of the day, but to a range of competing ideals and voices that go beyond historical and political contingencies. To the extent that they exist in the public space, museums have social functions in any event. Museums need to become increasingly reflexive about their broader social role and functions, rather than either conceive of their role as an asocial and discretely cultural one, or succumb to pressures to dumb down their messages in the name of social inclusion.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported by the National Science Foundation – Center for Teaching and Learning, grant ESI-0119787 – awarded to King's College London in collaboration with the Exploratorium and UC-Santa Cruz.

NOTES

1. The research employed focus groups involving both visitors and non-visitors, men and women, all aged between 25 and 50, from five minority ethnic groups, and one group drawn from the majority ethnic group, and from London, the Midlands and the North of England, all with children at school.
2. After the publication of the MORI Report, Timothy Mason, Director of the Museums and Galleries Commission, sounded very upbeat about the inclusiveness and social value of the sector: 'This research shows the popularity of our museums. Museums are more than just a form of entertainment, they are socially inclusive and they play a vital educational role' (quoted in MORI, 1999).
3. The Government's vision for what museums can do to contribute to its priority of tackling social exclusion was set out more clearly in the 2001 *Libraries, Archives and Museums for All* (DCMS, 2001) which was drafted by a policy review group that contained professional practitioners and academics. The document states that it revised some of the policy objectives in the light of the sectors' responses to the *Centres for Social Change* consultation article but no subsequent revision seems to have been made.

REFERENCES

AUSTIN, J.L. (1962) *How to Do Things with Words*, The Clarendon Press, Oxford.

BATES, P. (2001) 'Museums and mental health services', in *Including Museums: Perspectives on Museums, Galleries and Social Inclusion*, eds J. DODD & R. SANDELL, Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, University of Leicester, Leicester.

BENNETT, T. (1995) *The Birth of the Museum*, Routledge, London and New York.

BERNSTEIN, B. (2000) *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity*, Rowman and Littlefield, New York and Oxford.

BOODLE, C. (1999) 'Shake your money maker', *Museums Journal*, June, pp. 28–31.

BOURDIEU, P. (1991) *Language and Symbolic Power* (trans. by G. Raymond and M. Adamson), Polity Press, Cambridge.

CLARKE, J., GEWIRTZ, S. & MCLAUGLIN, E. (eds) (2000) *New Managerialism, New Welfare?* Sage, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi.

DCMS (DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA, CULTURE AND SPORT) (1999) *Museums for the Many: Standards for Museums and Galleries to Use When Developing Access Policies*, London: Department for Culture, Media and Sport, [online] Available at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/3AAE4537-7A7F-4767-927E-3CD7D56CD5B3/0/museums_for_many.pdf

DCMS (2000a) *Centres for Social Change: Museums, Galleries and Archives for All. Policy Guidance on Social Inclusion for DCMS Funded and Local Authority Museums, Galleries and Archives in England*, [online] available at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/D5C247C2-8BAB-4CB4-80E9-DEB168AFE8D5/0/centers_social_change.pdf

DCMS (2000b) *The Learning Power of Museums: A Vision for Museum Education* (jointly with Department for Education and Employment), Department for Culture, Media and Sport, London, [online] available at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/

archive_2000/vision_forMuseED.htm?properties=archive_2000%2C%2Fglobal%2Fpublications%2Farchive_2000%2F%2C&month=

DCMS (2001) *Libraries, Museums, Galleries and Archives for All: Co-operating across the Sectors to Tackle Social Exclusion*, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, London, [online] available at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/PDF/libraries_archives_for_all.pdf

DCMS (2004) *Culture at the Heart of Regeneration*, [online] available at: http://www.mmu.ac.uk/regional/culture/reports/heartofregeneration.pdf 2004.

DCMS (2005) *Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st Century Life – The Value of Museums*, [online] available at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/31419198-35C1-4A00-8C12-CB0572EC9B57/0/UnderstandingtheFuture.pdf

DCMS PAT 10 (1999) *Art & Sport. A Report to the Social Exclusion Unit*, London: Department for Culture, Media and Sport, [online] available at: http://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=216

DESAI, P. & THOMAS, A. (1998) *Cultural Diversity: Attitudes of Ethnic Minority Populations Towards Museums and Galleries*, Museums and Galleries Commission, London.

DODD, J. (2002) Museums and the health of the community, in *Museums, Society, Inequality*, ed. R. SANDELL, Routledge, London and New York.

DODD, J. & SANDELL, R. (1998) *Building Bridges: Guidance for Museums and Galleries on Developing New Audiences*, Museums & Galleries Commission, London.

DODD, J. & SANDELL, R. (2001) *Including Museums: Perspectives on Museums, Galleries and Social Inclusion*, Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, University of Leicester, Leicester.

FOUCAULT, M. (1967) *Madness and Civilisation* (trans. by R. Howard), Tavistock Publications Limited, London.

GEWIRTZ, S. & CRIBB, A. (2006) *Identities: What Should Educators Do? CILS Working Article*, Centre for Informal Learning and Schools, King's College London, London.

GINSBURGH, V. & MAIRESSE, F. (1997) 'Defining a museum: Suggestions for an alternative approach', *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 1, pp. 15–33.

GLLAM (1998) *Museums and Social Inclusion: The GLLAM Report*, [online] available at: http://www.le.ac.uk/museumstudies/rcmg/GLLAM.pdf

HABERMAS, J. (1984) *The Theory of Communicative Action*. Vol. 1 (trans. by T. McCarthy), Polity Press, Cambridge.

HOOPER-GREENHILL, E. (1988) 'Counting visitors or visitors who count?', in *The Museum Time Machine*, ed. R. LUMLEY, Routledge, London and New York.

HOOPER-GREENHILL, E. (1994a) 'Education, communication and interpretation: Towards a critical pedagogy in museums', in *The Educational Role of the Museum*, ed. E. HOOPER-GREENHILL, Routledge, London and New York.

HOOPER-GREENHILL, E. (1994b) 'Audiences: A curatorial dilemma', in *The Educational Role of the Museum*, ed. E. HOOPER-GREENHILL, Routledge, London and New York.

HOOPER-GREENHILL, E., DODD, J., PHILIPS, M., JONES, C., WOODWARD, J. & O'RIAIN, H. (2004) *Inspiration, Identity, Learning: The Value of Museums*. Report to DMS and DfES, [online] available at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/F1C597B8-FCCC-4FFB-8C68-ACD7-FE9DD98A/0/Thevalueofmuseumspt1.pdf

MACPHERSON, G. (2006) 'Public memories and private tastes: The shifting definitions of museums and their visitors in the UK', *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 21, pp. 44–57.

MARTELL, L. & STEPHEN, D. (1997) 'New Labour's communitarianisms', *Critical Social Policy*, vol. 17, pp. 27–49.

MLA (2000) *Re:source Manifesto*, The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries, London.

MLA (2001) *Renaissance in the Regions: A New Vision for England's Museums*, [online] available at: http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//R/rennais_pdf_6853.pdf

MLA (2002a) *Inspiring Learning for All*, [online] available at: http://www.inspiringlearning.gov.uk/default.aspx?flash = true

MLA (2002b) *UK Museums Needs Assessment 2002*. Report by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Resource in association with ABL Cultural Consulting, [online] available at: http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//M/museums_pdf_4390.pdf

MLA (2002c) *Neighbourhood Renewal and Social Inclusion: The Role of Museums, Archives and Libraries* (report by S. Parker, K. Waterston, G. Michaluk and L. Rickard), [online] available at: http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//N/neighbourhood_pdf_8870.pdf

MLA (2005a) *New Directions in Social Policy: Communities and Inclusion Policy for Museums, Libraries and Archives* (by R. Linley, Social Policy Adviser – MLA), [online] available at: http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//N/ndsp_communities_inclusion_doc_6648.doc

MLA (2005b) *New Directions in Social Policy: Health Policy and Museums, Libraries and Archives* (report by M. Weisen, Health and Disability Adviser – MLA), [online] available at: http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//N/ndsp_health_doc_6646.doc

MLA (2005c) *Knowledge for Life: How Museums, Libraries and Archives Contribute to the Skills Strategy* (with some input from the Department for Education and Skills), [online] available at: http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//K/Knowledge_for_Life_8848.pdf

MORI (1999) *The Popularity of UK Museums*. Report to the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC), [online] available at: http://www.mori.com/polls/1999/mgc99.shtml

MORI (2001) *Visitors to Museums & Galleries in the UK,* report to the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries (MLA), [online] available at: http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//M/mori3_pdf_6872.pdf

MORTON, A. (1988) 'Tomorrow's yesterdays: Science museums and the future', in *The Museum Time Machine*, ed. R. LUMLEY, Routledge, London and New York.

NEWMAN, A. & MCLEAN, F. (2002) 'Architectures of inclusion: Museums, galleries and social inclusion', in *Museums, Society, Inequality*, ed. R. SANDELL, Routledge, London and New York.

PRENTICE, R. (1994) 'Perceptual deterrents to visiting museums and other heritage attractions', *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 13, pp. 264–279.

SEAGRAM, B.C., PATTEN, L.H. & LOCKETT, C.W. (1993) 'Audience research and exhibit development: A framework', *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 12, pp. 29–41.

SEU (2001) *A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal National Strategy Action Plan*, report by the Social Exclusion Unit. Cabinet Office, [online] available at: http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/displaypagedoc.asp?id=85

SILVERMAN, L.H. (2002) 'The therapeutic potential of museums as pathways to inclusion', in *Museums, Society, Inequality*, ed. R. SANDELL, Routledge, London and New York.

WORLEY, C. (2005) 'It's not about Race. It's about the Community: New Labour and community cohesion', *Critical Social Policy*, vol. 25, pp. 483–496.

ZOLBERG, V.L. (1994) 'Museums face to face with the millenium: The view of a sociologist', *Museum Management and Curatorship*, vol. 13, pp. 184–190.

Anwar Tlili, Centre for Informal Learning and Schools/Centre for Public Policy Research, Department of Education and Professional Studies, King's College London, King's College London, Franklin-Wilkins Building, Waterloo Road, London SE1 9NN, UK. Tel: +44 20 7848 3163. Fax: +44 20 7848 3182. E-mail: anwar.tlili@kcl.ac.uk

Sharon Gewirtz, Centre for Informal Learning and Schools/Centre for Public Policy Research, Department of Education and Professional Studies, King's College London, King's College London, Franklin-Wilkins Building, Waterloo Road, London SE1 9NN, UK. Tel: +44 20 7848 3138. Fax: +44 20 7848 3182. E-mail: sharon.gewirtz@kcl.ac.uk

Alan Cribb, Centre for Informal Learning and Schools/Centre for Public Policy Research, Department of Education and Professional Studies, King's College London, King's College London, Franklin-Wilkins Building, Waterloo Road, London SE1 9NN, UK. Tel: +44 20 7848 3151. Fax: +44 20 7848 3182. E-mail: alan.cribb@kcl.ac.uk