

# The Grenfell Curriculum:

## Centring the disaster-affected community to promote education for social justice

**Wonyong Park**  
University of Southampton

**Hanan Wahabi**  
Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission

15 October 2024  
Southampton Education School  
Education Research Seminar



# Disaster headlines

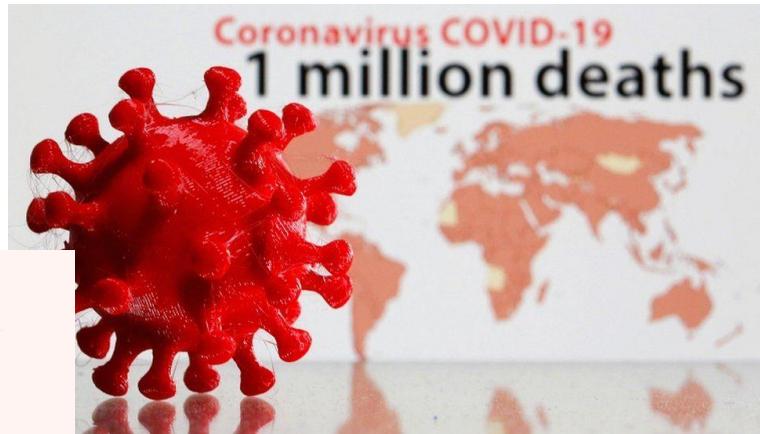
## Analysis

**Hillsborough law: government leaves victims' families disappointed again**  
*David Conn*

The relatives of those who died have been denied the positive legacy they have relentlessly sought, but they resolve to keep going



Margaret Aspinall – whose son James, 18, was killed on 15 April 1989 – called for the full implementation of the families' 'Hillsborough law' proposals. Photograph: Peter Byrne/PA



**PM apologises after infected blood scandal cover-up**

① 20 May

UK infected blood inquiry

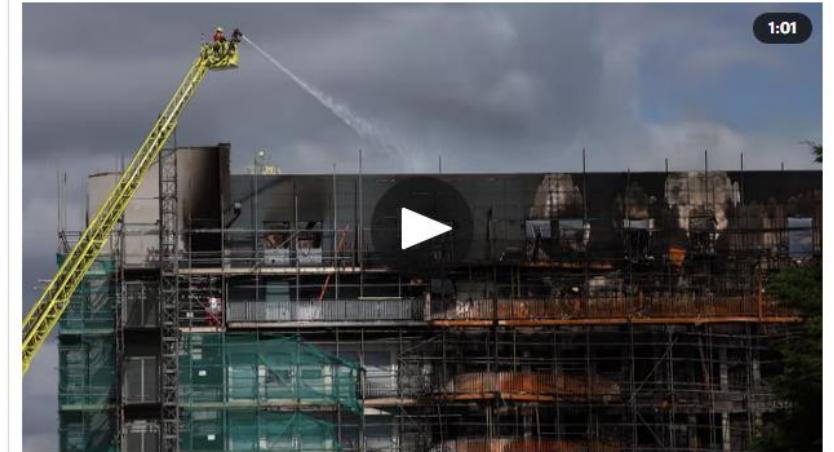


Rishi Sunak: 'Unequivocal apology' for victims of infected blood scandal



**Questions over cladding after fire at Dagenham flats brought under control**

FBU calls for urgent investigation into blaze in east London as another fire begins at tower in nearby Poplar



London firefighters tackle blaze at Dagenham tower block – video

SI: DISASTER EDUCATION



## 'We Often Forget It Was a Disaster': Cross-Curricular Teacher Collaboration to Develop a Curriculum Unit on the Titanic Disaster

Wonyong Park<sup>1</sup> · Neta Shaby<sup>1</sup> · Rachele Newman<sup>1</sup>

JOURNAL OF CURRICULUM STUDIES  
2023, VOL. 55, NO. 5, 580–597  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2023.2239887>



OPEN ACCESS

## "Safety" and "integration": examining the introduction of disaster into the science curriculum in South Korea

Wonyong Park<sup>a</sup>, Hyunju Lee<sup>b</sup>, Yeonjoo Ko<sup>b</sup> and Hyunok Lee<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Southampton Education School, University of Southampton, Southampton, UK; <sup>b</sup>Department of Science Education, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea; <sup>c</sup>Research Center for Hazard Literacy Education, Ewha Womans University; <sup>d</sup>Division of Liberal Studies, Kangwon National University, Chuncheon, South Korea

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Blog post

## How South Koreans remember tragedy through education

Wonyong Park, Lecturer in Science Education at University of Southampton  
Sunyoung Lee, Educational researcher at 4.16 Institute of Democratic Citizenship Education, Republic of Korea  
Eunhwa Lee, Team Leader and Archivist at 4.16 Institute of Democratic Citizenship Education, Republic of Korea  
Jiseong Lee, Director of 4.16 Memory Archives and Team leader at 4.16 Institute of Democratic Citizenship Education, Republic of Korea  
21 Jul 2023

ORIGINAL PAPER



## Exploring the intersection of disasters and science education with preservice science teachers through a disaster case study

Wonyong Park<sup>1</sup> · Insook Lim<sup>2</sup> · Jinwoong Song<sup>3</sup>



International Society of  
the Learning Sciences

## Reimagining Justice-Oriented Science Education through Disaster Memories: Evidence from the Buffalo Blizzard of 2022

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What is the role of education in recovering from disasters and preventing future disasters?

What should be taught about disasters, and how?

From whose perspective should we teach about disasters?

How can teaching about disasters help us make a more just and resilient society?



Home > DRR Community Voices

19 April 2024

## Disasters in the classroom: Lessons on talking to students about extreme climate events

Author(s): Wonyong Park, Lorenzo Miani, Olivia Levrini

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# Cross-disaster learning



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Education after Grenfell: A conversation with WonYong Park and Ian Byford

WONYONG PARK  
University of Southampton

IAN BYFORD  
MP for Liverpool Wavertree

By Hanan Wahabi, one of the Memorial Commission's community representatives



As part of the Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission's research process, we have been working with partners across the UK and overseas including Manchester Glade of Light, Aberfan Memorial Centre, and the National Memorial Museum.

Grenfell Tower  
Memorial Commission

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Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission  
Korea



# DISASTER EDUCATION FOR A JUST & RESILIENT FUTURE

An International Conference

25-26 January 2023 | 09:30-18:00

National Oceanography Centre, Southampton

How could education contribute to disaster justice and resilience? Can the study of past and current disasters inform our response to future disasters? What should we teach about disasters in school?

This interdisciplinary conference brings together disaster experts, education researchers and disaster communities to explore ways to tackle various natural and anthropogenic disasters through education.



Find out more:  
[teachdisasters.com](http://teachdisasters.com)



# Introduction of Grenfell Tower



- A 20 storey residential building build in 1974, located in the West London
- Major renovation announced in 2012 and conducted over a couple of years 2015 – 2016.
  - This included new windows, a water-based heating system for individual flats and new aluminium composite rain screen cladding.
- A compact residents' group (6 people) was created during this time to fight changes during the refurbishment and to be a voice for residents for all the wrong doings that was happening.
  - Boiler – Windows – Floor numbering plus stairwell wrong numbering – Lifts always broken – New Gas pipes drilled through the only stairwell – Kitchen fans on windows – No space for firefighters to get to the tower should there be a fire.
  - After the renovation the building jumped from a 20 storey building to a 23 storey building
- Without knowing we ended up documenting the meetings between us the residents and the council.

# GRENFELL: THE UNTOLD STORY

In 2021's powerful insider film of the years leading up to the devastating fire, artist Constantine Gras created a powerful record of the residents' safety concerns as they struggled to be heard

No episode available to watch on demand

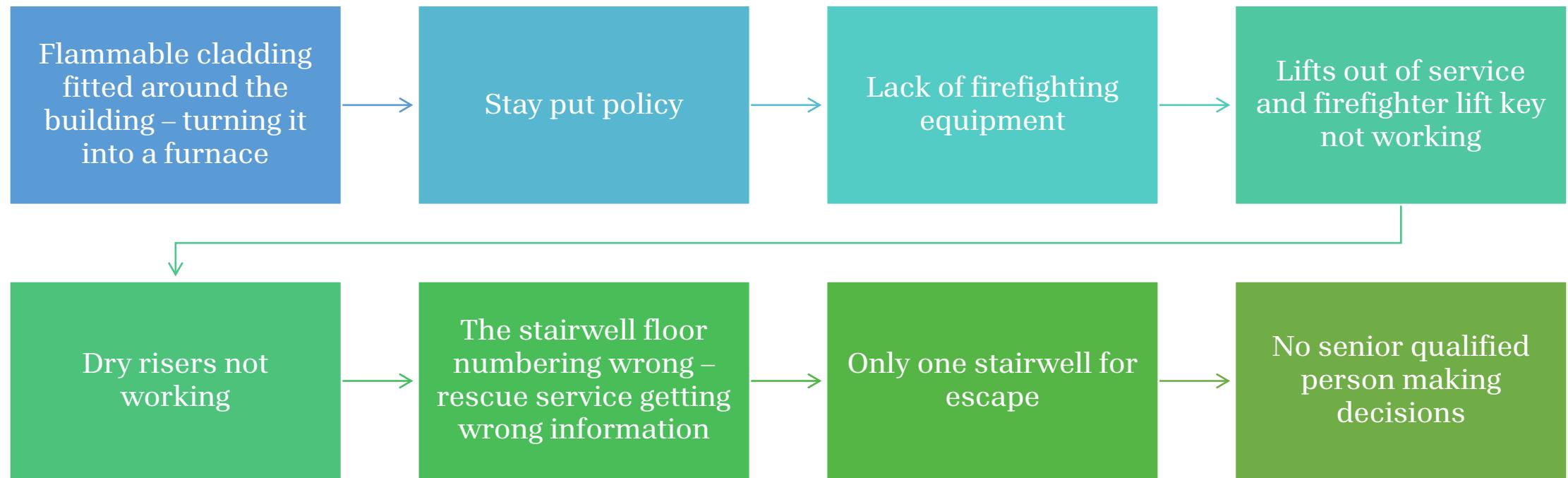
+ My List

<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/grenfell-the-untold-story>





# What went wrong?



# Grenfell Tower facts

- 72 Innocent souls died as a result of the Inferno, the oldest being Sheila 84 years old
- 18 being children, the youngest being Logan Gomes 0 (stillborn)
- 41% of those that passed were disabled
- 35 different languages spoken in the tower
- 85% of the 72 people who died in the fire were from black and minority ethnic backgrounds
- The Tower was on fire for over 60 hours





# Social Injustice: The Aftermath

Tower was perceived as being a poor tower on benefits

False promises by the powers that be

Living in hotels for months and years

False stories within the media

Fraudulent claims

If it was in the richer area the response would have been different

**Grenfell Tower**  
Memorial Commission

# Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission

## Remembering Grenfell

Recommendations and next  
steps to a memorial

November 2023



# Who are we?

Commission is made up of 10 community reps : 5 bereaved, 3 survivors and 2 local residents.



**Abraham Abebe**,  
former resident



**Adel Chaoui**,  
bereaved family  
member



**Andrea Newton**,  
Lancaster West  
Estate resident



**Hanan Cherbika**,  
former resident



**Hanan Wahabi**,  
bereaved family  
member



**Hassan Awadh  
Hassan**,  
bereaved family  
member



**Mohammed Rasoul**,  
former resident



**Nabil Choucair**,  
bereaved family  
member



**Sandra Ruiz**,  
bereaved family  
member



**Susan Al-Safadi**,  
Lancaster West  
Estate resident

We are supported by 2 co-chairs – Thelma Stober and Lord Paul Boateng



# Community engagement



# Artists' response





Greenhill Primary

# The story of Grenfell involves ...

active listening

what it is to be a good  
neighbour

accountability

capitalism

how the victims were  
treated

change and justice

how it was avoidable

social cleansing

state violence

loss and  
remembrance

how the community  
stood with each other  
without the support of  
the government

corporate manslaughter

engineering  
ethics



# The Grenfell Curriculum project

Surface the community's experiences, views, emotions and hopes related to Grenfell

Develop a set of priorities and approaches for disaster justice education in the context of Grenfell

Produce actionable policy recommendations for disaster justice education in the context of Grenfell

Grenfell Tower  
Memorial Commission

THE GRENFELL FOUNDATION



UNIVERSITY OF  
**OXFORD**



Research  
England



Economic  
and Social  
Research Council

# Project team



**Wonyong Park**

Associate Professor of Science Education  
University of Southampton



**Hanan Wahabi**

Community Representative  
Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission



**Nigel Fancourt**

Associate Professor of Education and Values  
University of Oxford



**Ruaa Al Rubaye**

Undergraduate Project Intern  
University of Southampton



**Arzhia Habibi**

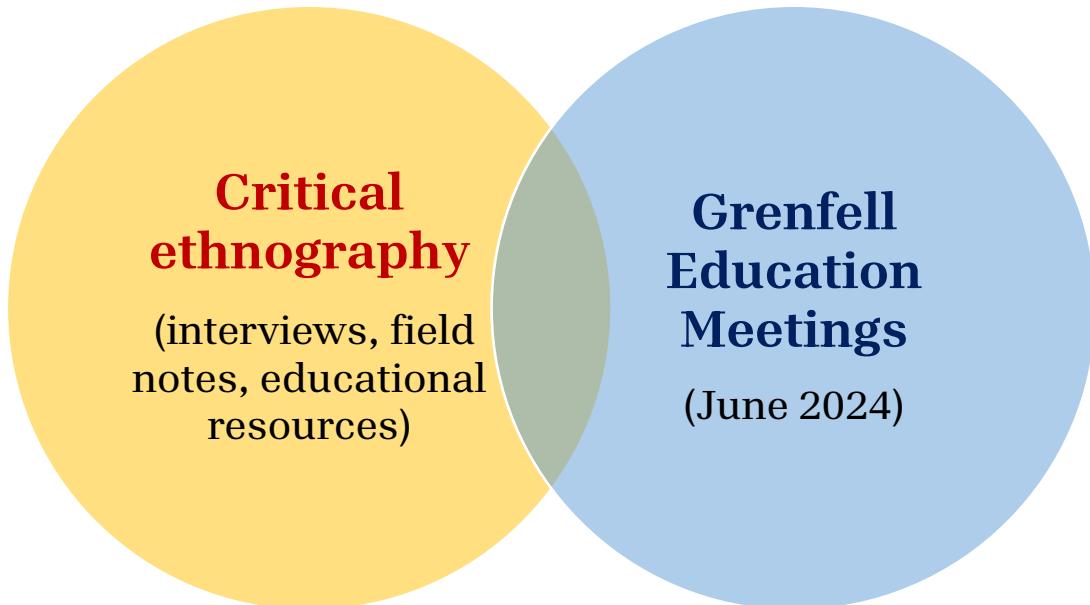
Postdoctoral Researcher  
University of Oxford

# Community-engaged educational research

- Engaged scholarship is ‘done **with**, rather than **for** or **on**, a community’ (Furco, 2005).
- Engaged scholarship enables bringing together different kinds of expertise about the issue, leading to equitable knowledge production and action.
- Epistemic justice
  - It is primarily the interests of capital and the ruling class that are served by disaster preparation and recovery (Klein, 2008).
  - Decisions about disaster preparation and recovery are “left to historically powerful actors rather than the likely beneficiaries of such actions” (Rumbach & Nemeth, 2018)



# Project activities



	Young people (16-20)	Children (11-15)	Bereaved & Survivors	Teachers
Attendees	8	6	16	10
Duration	2h30m	2h	2h30m	2h30m
Activities	Project introduction Group Brainstorming Quote Reflection Future Learning Capsule	Project introduction Group Brainstorming Future Learning Capsule	Project introduction Group Brainstorming Quote Reflection Teaching Resources Review	Project introduction Group Brainstorming Teaching Resources Review Quote Reflection

## WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT GRENFELL? Get your voice heard!

### WHO ARE WE?

We are a team of researchers who want to help UK schools and educators to teach about Grenfell, so that young people understand and remember it.

**Team:** Wonyong Park (University of Southampton), Nigel Fancourt, Arzhia Habibi (University of Oxford), Hanan Wahabi (Grenfell Survivor and Bereaved)

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

What we learn from the Grenfell community will be shared with schools, teachers and teacher educators across the UK. We will also send it to education policy makers.

### HOW CAN I HELP?

Sign up for one of our Grenfell Education Meetings!

#### YOUNG ADULTS (16 TO 20)

5TH JUNE | 6PM TO 8.30PM  
@MUSEUM OF BRANDS\*



#### CHILDREN (11 TO 15)

6TH JUNE | 6PM TO 8.30PM  
@MUSEUM OF BRANDS



#### BEREAVED & SURVIVORS

7TH JUNE | 6PM TO 8.30PM  
@MUSEUM OF BRANDS



#### TEACHERS

7TH JUNE | 6PM TO 8.30PM  
@MUSEUM OF BRANDS



\*111-117 Lancaster Rd, W11 1QT

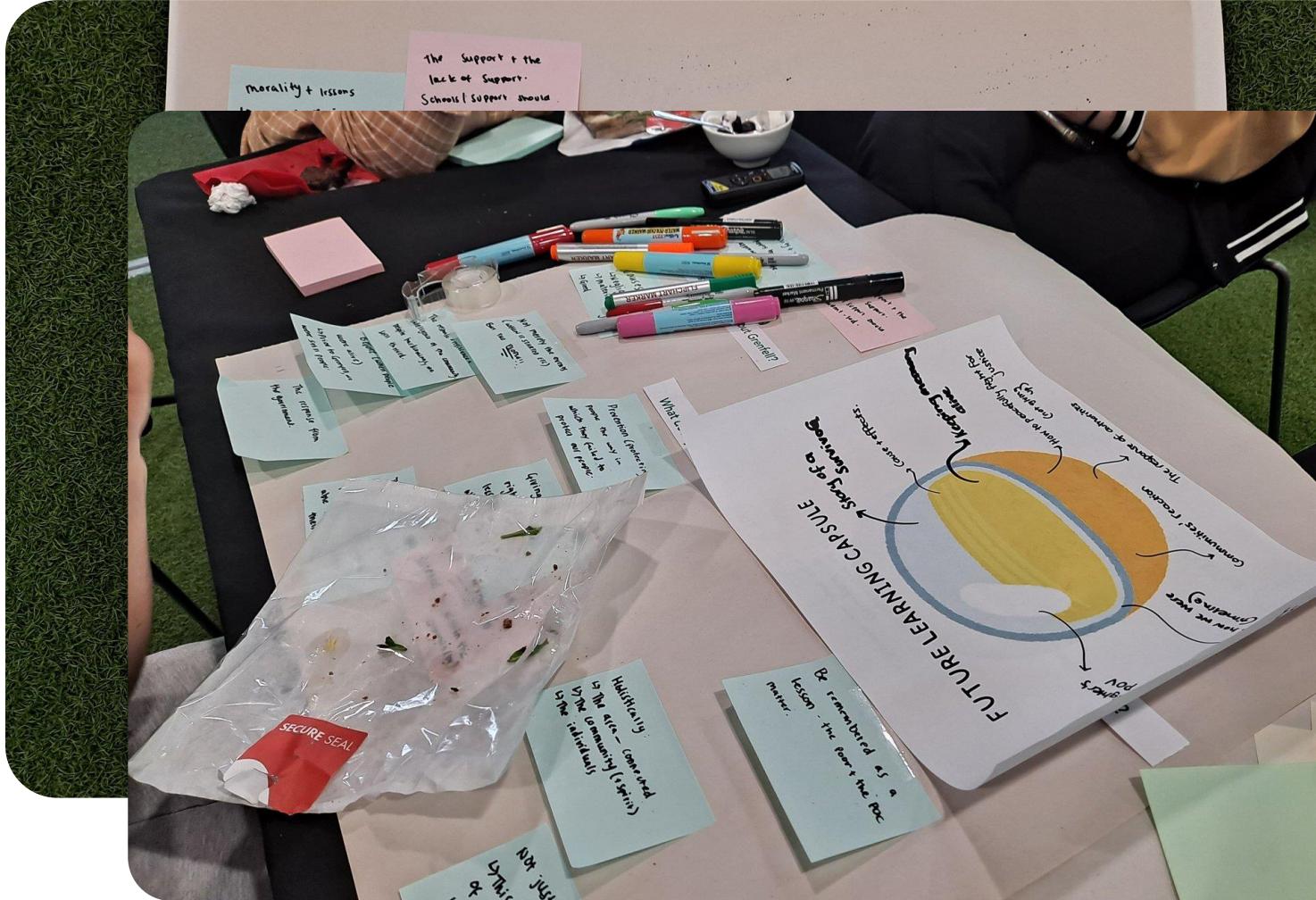
Scan QR code, or visit  
[linktr.ee/teachgrenfell](http://linktr.ee/teachgrenfell)

Food and refreshments will be provided.

### ANY QUESTIONS?

[teachgrenfell@gmail.com](mailto:teachgrenfell@gmail.com)

# Grenfell Education Meetings



## GROUP BRAINSTORM

(25 minutes)

- What should students learn about Grenfell?

- Grenfell be remembered?  
What does justice mean to you?



## FUTURE LEARNING CAPSULES

(40 minutes)



A Future Learning Capsule includes items and ideas that symbolise the key lessons and values we want future students to learn from Grenfell.

Even in lower school, I would learn about disasters happening around the world, often involving government wrongdoing, money, and harm to people of lower socioeconomic status. But in the end, all you learn are some facts about a single event. For me, putting this into an educational setting needs to be more than just remembering one image and five facts, then put it in an essay using examples. It's hard for me to recall the disasters I learned about that way.

- A Survivor -

Even after hundreds of years, we still learn about the Great Fire of London. It's so distant for many of our children now. It's a different world. Grenfell, however, happened within their time. As they grow up and eventually become parents themselves, I believe it's crucial to teach our children about how decisions are made in society, what the consequences are, and why understanding these decisions is important.

- A Bereaved Family Member -

## QUOTE REFLECTION

(30 minutes)



- Each card has a quote about Grenfell and education.
- Take a moment to read your card, and then read it to your group.
- What does the quote suggest in terms of education about Grenfell?
- Do we all agree with the quote?

\* Some quotes were paraphrased to protect identity.

# 1 A-Level English (Functional Skills)

## GRENFELL TOWER

Look at the picture below and then attempt the challenges that follow. Remember to respond in full sentences

**Challenge:** What is the name of the building?

**Super Challenge:** Can you remember what happened?

**Mega Challenge:** Who was to blame for the incident

**Teacher's Top Tip**  
You don't need to know everything about the topic to identify a language used for each statement

## GRENFELL TOWER

**Fact or opinion?**

- Seventy-Two people died due to the fire
- The fire occurred in a block of flats in London
- The fire was probably started on purpose
- The firefighters did a bad job of putting out the fire
- It was to blame for the fire

## 2 Key Stage 3 Geography (Human Geography in the UK)

### A tale of two boroughs

The wealth divide in the borough  
Grenfell Tower was in the 10% of the most deprived areas in the UK.

**Sentence starters...**  
Grenfell tower is located in.....The fire happened on.....  
The Grenfell tower fire was caused by.....Another cause was....A final cause was....  
One effect of the fire was.....Another effect was.....

**Describe the causes and effects of the Grenfell tower fire**

Causes	Effects

**Explain why inequality caused the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy.**

**Introduction:**  
What does inequality mean?:  
Where is Grenfell Tower?  
Facts about inequality in the area:  
  
The causes of the fire were....

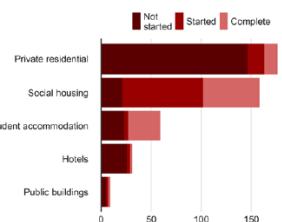
**Sentence starters...**  
One cause of the fire was....  
This caused the tragedy because....  
This is linked to inequality because.....  
Another cause was.....

## 6 AS-Level Economics, Mock Exam Paper

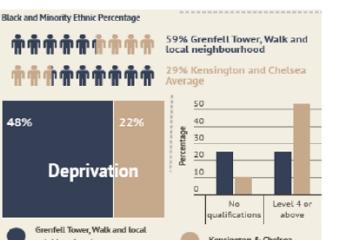
### THE GRENFELL TOWER FIRE

#### Extract A:

The number of high-rise\* buildings with dangerous cladding which have not started, started and completed repair work to resolve potentially lethal cladding



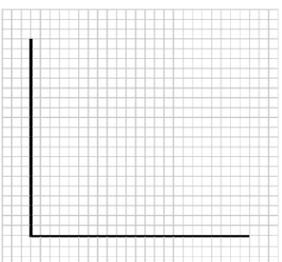
A breakdown of the population of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, compared with Grenfell Tower's local neighbourhood



#### Q4.

The UK Housing Market, Extract C (lines 17 to 19) states 'those long-term loans would have been unattractive to potential buyers and dragged down property prices, as they would have been tied to the flat, not the owner.'

Draw a diagram to show the effects of implementing this suggestion on the market for cladding affected flats.



[4 marks]

# Feedback from community

“

I thought the meeting was very helpful and comforting as we were heard and able to express our thoughts, views and feelings on this sensitive topic, I am extremely grateful to work alongside the team and looking forward to continue working together and making further change.

”

A young survivor

“

This meeting was great as we had a chance to hear directly from survivors and bereaved about their views and thoughts on what should be included in the curriculum as well as having the views of the teachers and the North Kensington community. This is part of the Grenfell legacy that we want our children to learn about when they grow up.

”

A bereaved family member

# Positionality and ethics in disaster research

## *Becoming an Insider and an Outsider in Post-Disaster Fukushima*

KAORU MIYAZAWA

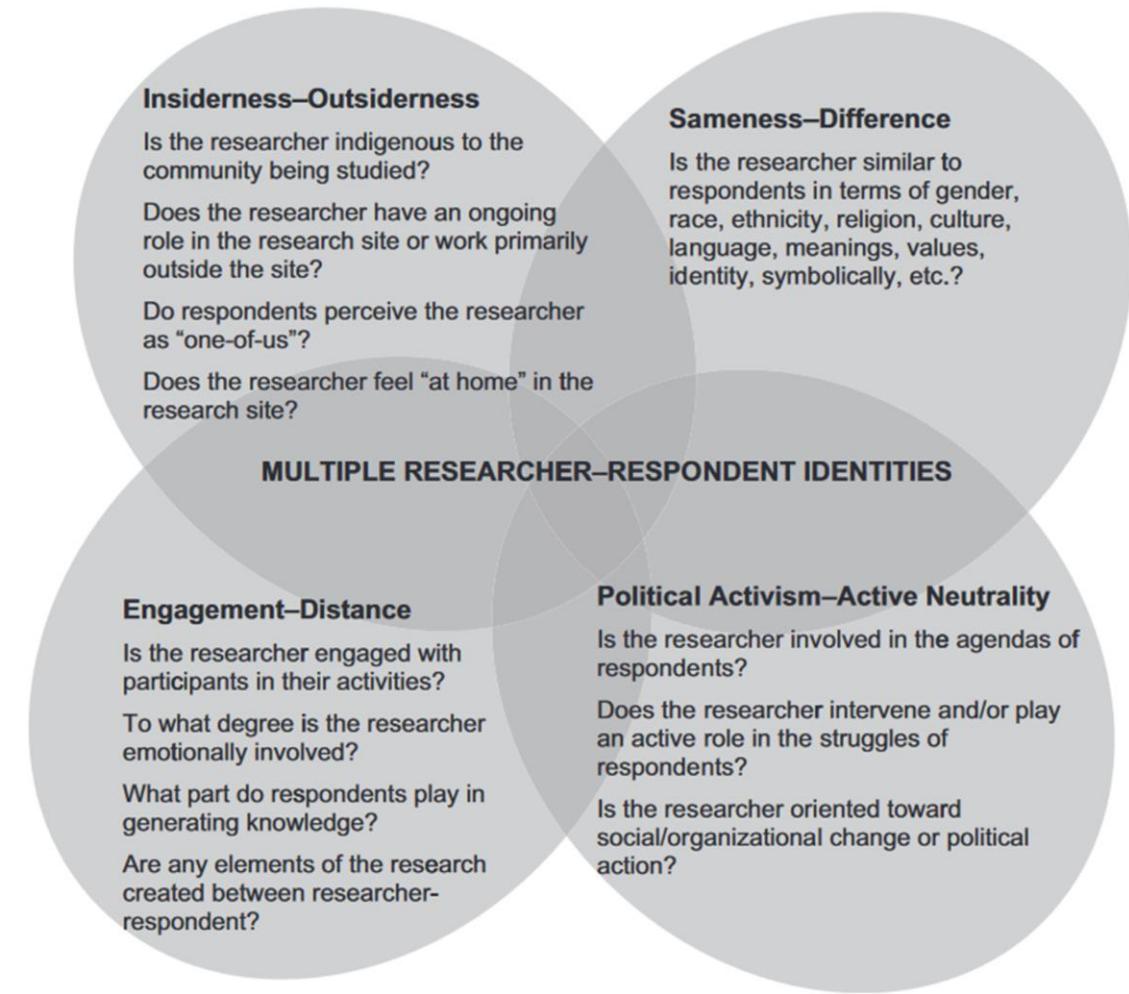
*Gettysburg College*

Regular Article

### **Researcher Positionality in Participatory Action Research for Climate Justice in Indigenous Communities**

Kaori Kitagawa<sup>1</sup> 

International Journal of Qualitative Methods  
Volume 22: 1–15  
© The Author(s) 2023  
DOI: 10.1177/16094069231205178  
[journals.sagepub.com/home/ijq](http://journals.sagepub.com/home/ijq)



Cunliffe A. L., Karunanayake G. (2013).

# Positionality and ethics in disaster research

## Representation

*Who has the right to tell the story?*

## Exploitative processes

*People 'helicoptering in' to the community*

## Re-traumatisation

*Research with people with traumatic memories*

# Positionality and ethics in disaster research

For the community, 'who gets to tell the story of Grenfell' is inextricably linked to 'who gets to teach about Grenfell' (i.e. the question of representation). In the meeting with the bereaved and survivors, [participant name] looked at the teaching materials (in particular the AS level economics exam paper on Grenfell) and asked who had written these papers, pointing out that they had not asked the community to write them.

(Wonyong's reflection, 8th June)

Delayed reflections from interviews with the young people - Quite a profound experience. Thinking about the ethics of self-care with vicarious trauma and the layers of (unspoken) grief that were present in the room. This can take an energetic toll on the researchers/those holding the space.

(Arzhia's reflection, 22nd May)

# Disaster's temporality: Grenfell as slow disaster

**NEWS**

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England | Local News | London

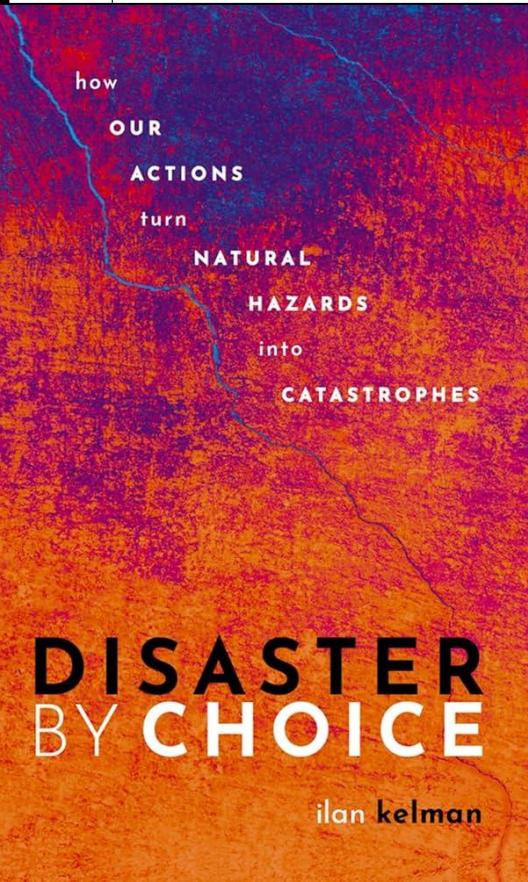
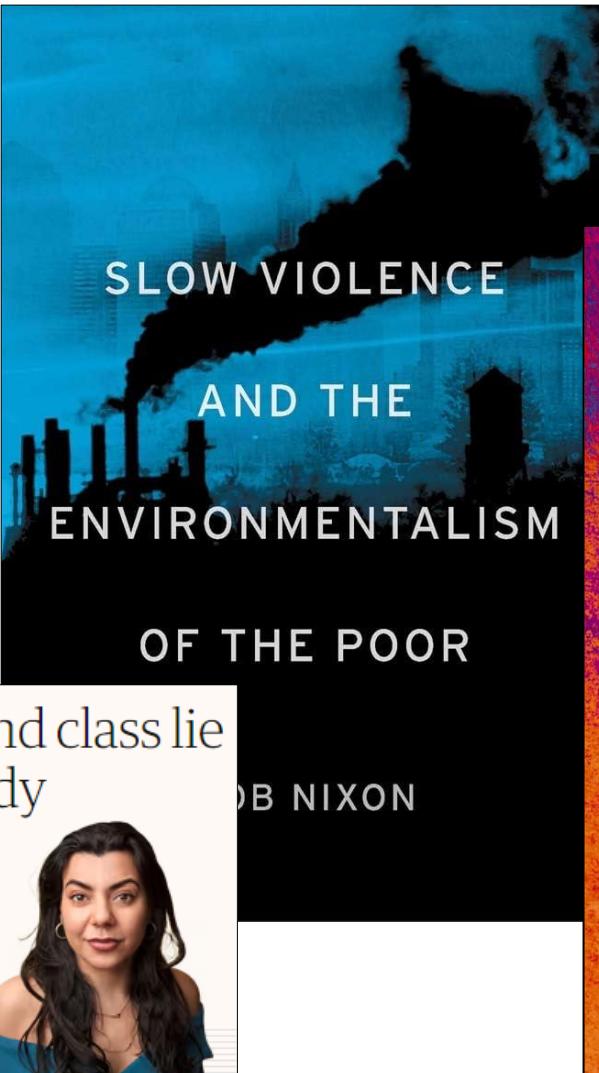
## Grenfell victims 'walking unhealed' seven years on



The twinned injustices of race and class lie at the heart of the Grenfell tragedy  
*Kieran Yates*

PA MEDIA

Flowers continue to be placed



## 15 Slow disaster and the challenge of nuclear memory<sup>1</sup>

Scott Gabriel Knowles

tools we have for making  
memories and the traditions  
to insight into the ways that  
disaster, what gets learned  
most commonly memorialised  
stems provoke memory and  
monuments. In songs and  
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—Hiroshima, Nagasaki,  
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es the maintenance of nu  
memorials effectively convey  
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slow disaster methodology,  
way to think about the nu  
so as an assemblage of ideas  
and nightmares. Nuclear  
rical record, so full of era  
approaches to disaster gov  
ons of the Anthropocene.

.4324/9781003227472-15

The Next of Kin group is right: the inquiry will be missing a core

# Disaster's temporality: Grenfell as slow disaster

## The experiences of time for the survivors and bereaved

“ I agree ... **when time goes on, time heals you, because there is no other choice.** Before I could not speak about it at all. I'd try to change subjects or whatever, **but now** I speak fine, and a lot of people are getting to that stage, and some people aren't, which is okay. **And everyone thinks differently** - because people start to accept it, because it's very hard to swallow. (Young Survivor) ”

## Unfinished business

“ I think there is a risk of **teachers not feeling equipped enough** to be able to deliver a social justice teaching element of it when **there is still so much unfinished** ... You can create curriculum, but actually can a teacher fully and adequately equip themselves to be able to facilitate a discussion when **there are still so many unknowns?** (Educational Services Professional) ”

# Disaster's temporality: Grenfell as recent disaster



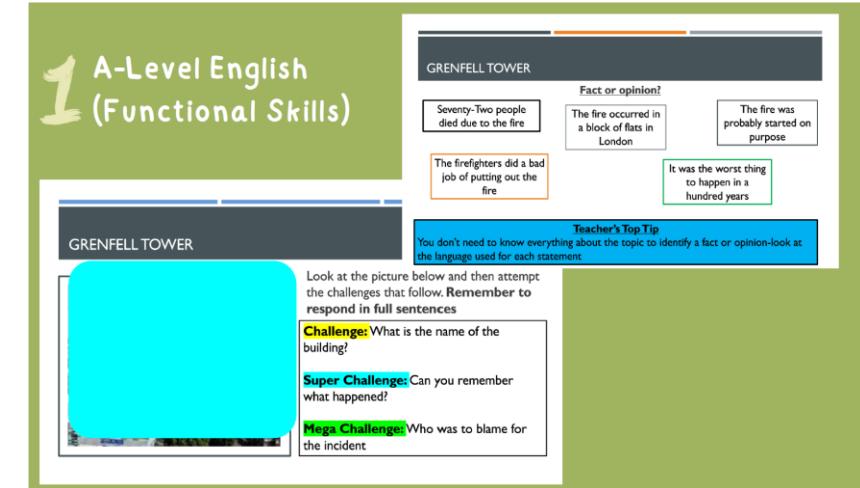
## History lessons, the past and Grenfell:

“ We looked at **the Great Fire of London** ... like experiencing history lessons ... and there is a similar structure in which we were taught stuff, [which] I think is more acceptable for like ancient history. **But with modern history** ... because it's got a clear message that this affected our life (and I think you should be very educated when you present this type of modern history) ... **You have to have a clear objective on why you are teaching it.** (Adult Survivor) ”

# Graphic pedagogy: Unethical or essential?

“ This year, I realised, ‘I need to start using some pictures of the night’. The audience doesn’t know or remember, and often words aren’t enough. **Before**, I felt like I couldn’t do it; it was just too raw to discuss something so personal. **But now**, I think it’s necessary because they don’t understand anymore. So, yes, I’m going to need some pictures and other visuals. (**A bereaved family & teacher**) ”

“ If I **told** them about a block on fire from **a person in Scotland**, they wouldn’t understand, but if I **showed** them, they would appreciate it. Same as going to the Middle East, I showed them the pictures so they would understand (**An adult survivor**) ”



This graphic organizer for A-Level English Functional Skills focuses on the Grenfell Tower fire. It includes a large image placeholder for the fire scene, a section for facts and opinions, and challenge questions.

**GRENFELL TOWER**

**Fact or opinion?**

- Seventy-Two people died due to the fire
- The fire occurred in a block of flats in London
- The fire was probably started on purpose
- The firefighters did a bad job of putting out the fire
- It was the worst thing to happen in a hundred years

**Teacher's Top Tip:** You don't need to know everything about the topic to identify a fact or opinion—look at the language used for each statement.

**Challenge:** What is the name of the building?  
**Super Challenge:** Can you remember what happened?  
**Mega Challenge:** Who was to blame for the incident?



This worksheet for Key Stage 2 English controversial issues uses the Grenfell Tower fire as a case study. It includes a title image, a 'Think-Pair-Share' section, and a 'Your Task' area.

**5 Key Stage 2 English (Controversial Issues)**

**Controversial Issues**  
Title: The Grenfell Tower Dis

**Think-Pair-Share**

What tense would you choose to use to describe a witness account of the Grenfell Tower Fire?

Why would you choose to use this? What effect would it have on the reader?

**Your Task:**

**CHALLENGE!** How do you go about describing a catastrophe as large as this? What devices would you use?

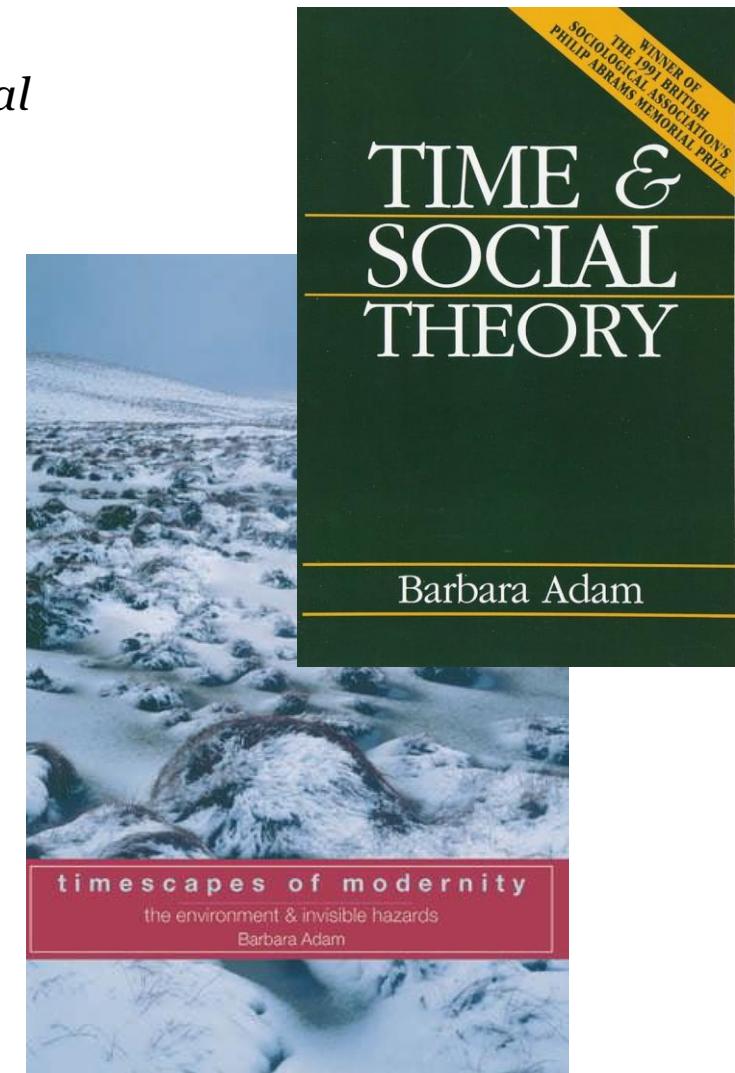
**Learning Objectives:**

**ALL:** To understand the context behind the Grenfell Tower fire.  
**MOST:** To be able to order the events that happened during the fire and in the following days.  
**SOME:** To form an opinion on the actions of the government in response to this fire.

# Timescapes of Grenfell

*“First, temporal frames are not given but chosen, and secondly, the temporal framework we impose determines what we can and do see.”* (Adam, 2008)

Dimension	Features of Grenfell	What it means for families	Educational significance
<b>Duration</b>	A slow, rather than fast, disaster	Grenfell as an avoidable disaster; voices ignored	Teaching about long-term injustices
<b>Temporal modalities</b>	Unfinished, ongoing, “Happening within our time”	Campaigns for awareness; continued support	Teaching with respect and sensitivity; High relevance
<b>Timeframe</b>	Subjective	Experienced differently by individuals	Forgotten by the public faster than families
<b>Timing</b>	7 years since the fire	Still vivid and raw; Gradually accepting and looking towards future	Critical timing for teaching; Building a collective memory for future generations
<b>Cyclicalty</b>	Patterns of injustice across disasters	Solidarity with other disaster families	Learning across disasters



# Lessons learned

- The possibility of '**disaster education**' as a field of enquiry and a social justice movement, with implications for
  - Inclusion of Grenfell across the curriculum
  - Memorials, museums, artistic/media reproductions
  - How Britain will remember Grenfell
- **The knowledge of disaster-affected communities** as a foundation for education for disaster justice
- **Timescapes and temporality** as lenses for describing disaster victims' experiences and guiding pedagogy for disaster justice



# Centring the community

“ However, for us, **students should learn about the actual individuals like survivors, bereaved people, and the local community, not just from the news.** To keep their memory alive, it is important to do that, and having someone who is bereaved speaking about them and their spirit in the classroom is how students should learn rather than just from the news and discussing the individual. **(An adult bereaved & survivor)** ”

“ **We should be the resource** because we are not represented in the media; they change the narrative and don't put the full story in the media. **(An adult bereaved & survivor)** ”

“ We talked about **how might teachers feel about delivering something like that**, and the response they going to get and able to response to the reaction of young people and they might not have the facts in central London **they don't know enough** it would be respectful if **you have a team went to school and school to deliver this which it feel more respectful way.** **(A local teacher)** ”

# Next step: Teacher CPD for disaster education

- A research-informed online CPD course on disaster education using the Grenfell Tower fire as an example, which can be applied to other disasters
  - Featuring bereaved/survivors' stories and voices
  - Approaches to disaster education in different subjects
  - Age-appropriate and trauma-informed pedagogy
  - Lesson and activity examples
- Funding from ESRC Impact Acceleration Account & The Grenfell Foundation



# Thank you!

## Contact

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## More about the project

<https://www.wonyongpark.com/projects/grenfell/>

