

CREATIVE IN YOUR COMMUNITY 2020

CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS 1

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AN-DIUGH / TODAY

- Some questions around **socially engaged art + community participation** in the Highlands and what this means for you + your project
- Fieldwork + **interview** style/preparation/ethics
- **GDPR** – put your mind at rest!
 - **Example documents**

WHAT DOES 'SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART' MEAN TO YOU?



how you are making art + with whom, really matters...

FIELDWORK & RESEARCH

folklore
ethnology
anthropology

SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART

community art
participatory art
social practice

ORAL HISTORY

heritage projects
local history
reminiscence

“We don’t care for others by treating them as objects of investigation [...] We care by bringing them into presence, so that they can converse with us, and we can learn from them. That’s the way to build a world with room for everyone. We can only build it together”

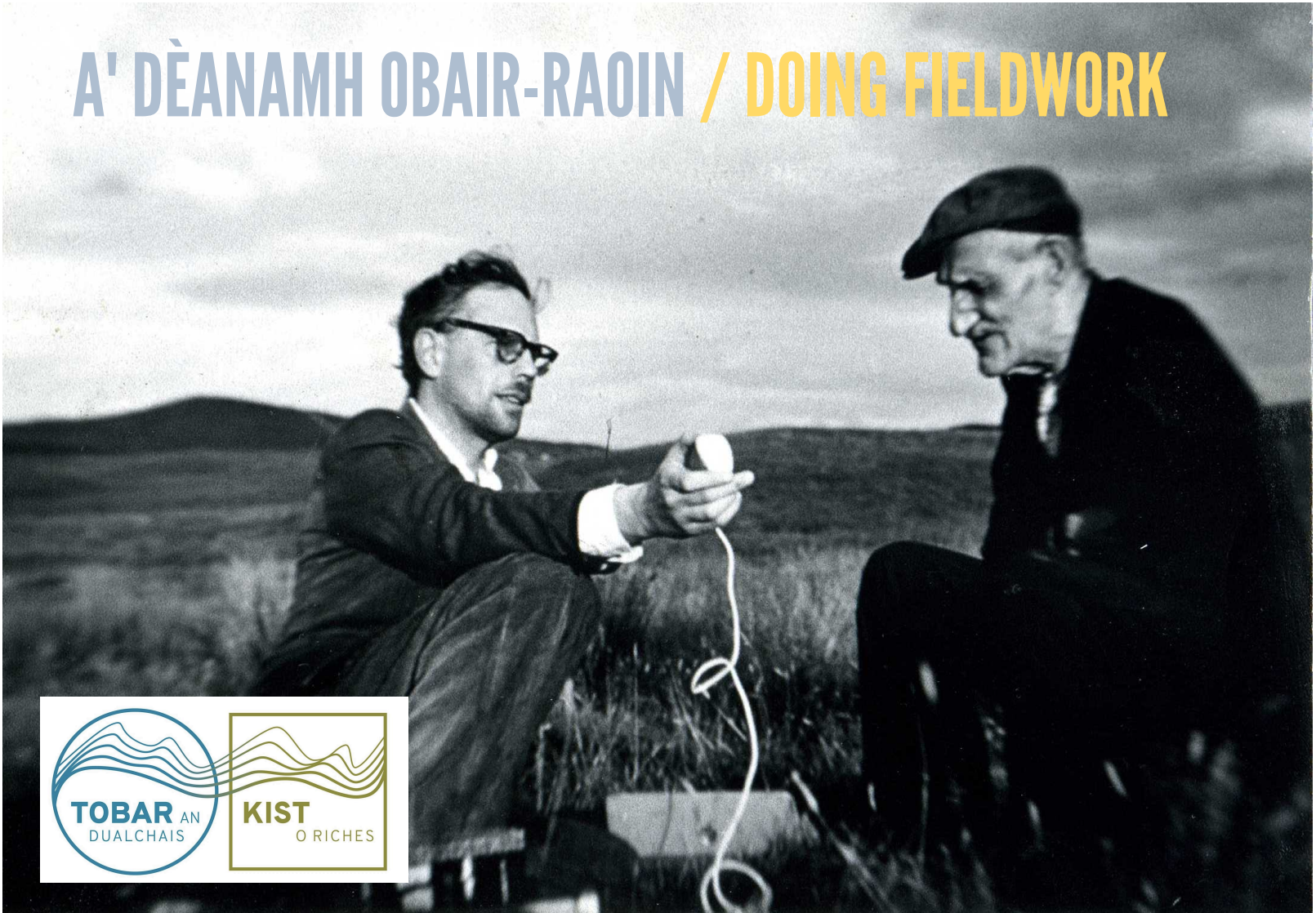
Ingold, *Anthropology: Why It Matters*, 2018: 131

Working towards an ethic of mutuality

CÒMHRADH / CONVERSATION



A' DÈANAMH OBAIR-RAOIN / DOING FIELDWORK



<http://tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/32522>

A' DÈANAMH OBAIR-RAOIN / DOING FIELDWORK

- Role of the fieldworker
- Tools of the trade
- The interview –
preparation + style
- Pitfalls in preparation
+ in practice
- Ethical challenges
- Reflection
- Transcription
- Representation
- Creative expression /
performance

A' DÈANAMH OBAIR-RAOIN / DOING FIELDWORK

“If you believe as I do that the goal of the folklorist – as essential to pursue as it is impossible to achieve – **is to discover, understand, and represent people on their own terms**, then the work of the folklorist is by definition **a work of advocacy.**”

Carl Lindahl, Folklorist, Appalachia

**Dig where
You Stand** 

“The fieldworker’s **personal roots** ...
become part of the research apparatus”
(Fenton & Mackay, 2013)

A' DÈANAMH OBAIR-RAOIN / DOING FIELDWORK

RELATIONSHIPS

- What is your relationship to the community you are working with?
- Who are you to the interviewee?
- What is your duty of care?
- 'Informed consent'
- How can you build relationship of mutual trust?

RECIPROCITY

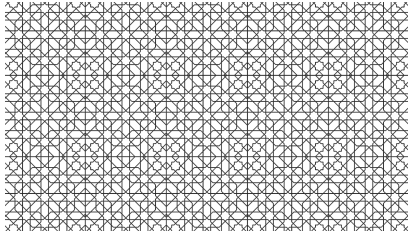
- How can you/should you 'give back' to the interviewee?
- Who does the material belong to?

RESPECT

- Respect the interviewees + their wishes before, during + after the interview encounter

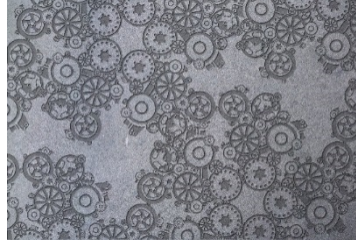
AN T-AGALLAMH / THE INTERVIEW

STRUCTURED



- Questionnaire-type
- Prescriptive list of Qs
- Standardised, led by interviewer
- Every question asked

SEMI-STRUCTURED



- Follows a list of prepared Qs or template
- Led by interviewee
- Loose order of questions
- Responsive
- More like a conversation

UNSTRUCTURED



- No list of Qs
- Led by interviewee
- Spontaneous
- Unpredictable
- Can be interesting but can lead nowhere!

AN T-AGALLAMH / THE INTERVIEW

SEMI-STRUCTURED

- Devise an interview template with research questions / themes
- What makes a good, open non-invasive question?
 - open-ended
 - neutral
 - short
 - avoids 'two-part' questions
 - avoids technical terms

“Was it because of your life-long interest in folk music that you play the guitar so well?”



“Can you remember what inspired your interest in the music you play?”



HOW TO START?

Contextualising questions:

- Name, time and date
- Biographical information
- Grounding in context

HOW TO END?

Winding up questions:

“Is there anything you think I’ve missed?”

“Is there anything else you think is important?”

“Is there anything you would like to ask me?”

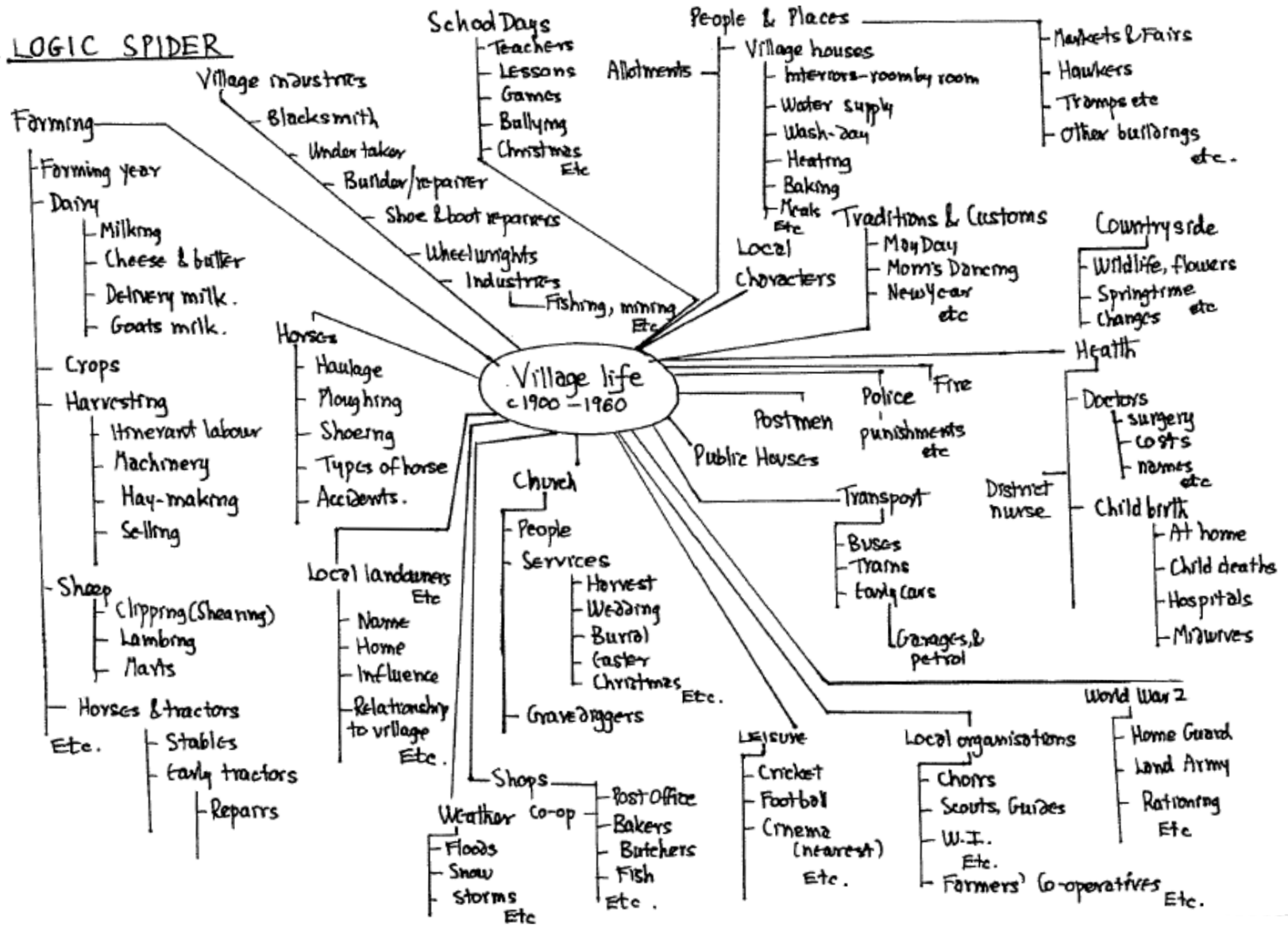
Bringing it back to **now**...

AN T-AGALLAMH / THE INTERVIEW

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Overall **length** of interview
 - Your own stamina
 - Your interviewee's stamina
 - ...suggestion 1.5 - 2 hours max
- If you are transcribing – this takes a long time!
- Beware under-preparing / over-preparing
- Be sensitive to cultural, generational or other differences (avoid temptation to debate/argue with interviewee!)
- How do you / should you make notes?

LOGIC SPIDER



COMHAIRLE MU TEICNEÒLAS / TECHNICAL ADVICE

- Choice of recording device + format (see end slides)
- Make test recordings + listen back to them
- Regarding the microphone:
 - position on solid surface
 - keep away from background noise
 - try to get as close to the subject as possible with the mic (within reason!)
 - if recording a group, try to keep the mic equidistant
 - take care with noises of rustling paper, jewellery, coffee cups etc. when making recording

A' DÈANAMH OB AIR-RAOIN / DOING FIELDWORK

“...a form of **enrichment** that requires as much **expertise** as any **delicate craft**.”

“Almost everybody is good, almost everybody is really interesting, and all I have to do is to put myself in the way of other people and they’ll bump into me and teach me.”

– Henry Glassie

NITHEAN AIR A BU CHÒIR DHUINN A BHITH MOTHACHAIL

/ PITFALLS IN PRACTICE

- Technological mishaps...
 - batteries!! take back-up if possible
- Extraneous noise
 - Situational, and you!
 - Get good with your eyebrows...
- Listening!!
 - Give people space to speak – don't get too excited!
- Reliance on notes...
 - Can be distracting + disrupt the flow – try and be in the moment

A' CNUASACHADH / REFLECTION ON PROCESS

- Did I prepare well enough?
- Did I listen to the questions + ask relevant follow-up questions?
- Were there areas I missed? Should I arrange a further interview?
- Did I give the interviewee enough time to answer my questions + also enough space to make their own points?
- What could I have done differently and how might I change my approach in the next interview?

A' CNUASACHADH / REFLECTION ON CONTENT

- What is important here?
- What is unexpected? what is familiar?
- What does this material tell us about this subject, this time, this place?
- Where does this lead to? What direction should future research/interviews take?



GDPR

PERSONAL DATA is any data about a person that you could use to identify them – name, address, what they do for a living, hobbies, opinions, photographs etc.

DATA PROCESSING is any activity that involves something or someone looking at, organising or using that data - collection, recording, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, use, dissemination by any means (creative or otherwise)

Data protection is organised around 8 core rights:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/individual-rights/>

GDPR

- **Working in social contexts + doing fieldwork of any kind, we are collecting personal data about our interviewees**
- It's important to take steps to collect information properly, allow participants to give informed consent + set up processes for data processing when research is finished.

YOU NEED TO KNOW:

- what kind of data you hold
- what you intend to do with the data
- who will have access
- how will it be stored

GDPR: YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- **You need to keep a written record of when + how individuals consented to take part in your project. You will need:**
- **A PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET** which includes:
 - information about you + a brief summary of your project
 - what personal data will be collected
 - where it will be stored
 - how it will be used and the ‘legal basis’ for its use
 - how the participant can contact you *see example
- **A signed PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM** *see example
 - *Children under 13 – a parent or guardian need to sign it on their behalf
 - *Special cases guidelines here for learning differences etc.
<https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/manage-data/legal-ethical/consent-data-sharing/special-cases>

A' LORG COMPÀIRTICHEAN

/ FINDING PEOPLE TO TAKE PART

- Direct connections - family and friends
- Word of mouth
- Advertising in local places
- Flyers or posters
- Addressed postcards
- Project website/blog/social media

BEUS-EÒLAS / ETHICS

- The most important ethical **self-knowledge** for socially engaged artists need is to know their own values and commitments, to whom they are accountable, why + how
- The most important ethical **capacity** is awareness
- The most important ethical **aim** is to bring out the full complexity of a situation, including all of its contradictions and ambiguities
- The most important ethical **skill** is the ability to engage everyone in a way that is enlightening to all, that uplifts the moment into true learning and creates maximum possibility for everyone to feel heard, respected and included

MP3 VS. WAV

Mp3 = 'LOSSY' format

- Uses 'masking' algorithms to trick your ear into hearing a near-replica of the original source (removes parts of the sonic spectrum human ear cannot hear)
- Compresses audio to smaller file size to make distribution more manageable for purposes of:
 - downloading / streaming songs from internet
 - sending by email
 - mass storage on mp3 players
 - acceptable for easy accession by public (subject to bit rate chosen)

MP3 VS. WAV

WAV = LOSSLESS

- **High resolution archive format**
- CD quality or better
- Used for professional recording
- Essentially maintains as much of the original audio capture as possible (relative to settings employed)
- Large file sizes

GUR MATH A THÈID LEIBH!
GOOD LUCK!