



Being Engaged: Being Heard

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Co-Inquiry Research Associate

- Social Anthropologist at PEALS
- Public Engagement (PE) with Science (funded Northern Rock Foundation)
 - Models of PE with science
 - Processes - how and why
 - Critical sociological analysis of PE
 - Identify possible ways to improve PE
- Was community activist for 20 years



Outline of Presentation

- What is 'Public Engagement'?
- 'Hard to reach' Groups
- Examples of Public Engagement with Science
- Reflections and Questions



Models of Public Engagement

- Co-Inquiry – deliberative, participatory processes (‘democratisation’ of knowledge) **Involving people**
- Knowledge exchange (2 way communication)
- Knowledge transfer (so-called ‘deficit’ model or outreach) **Informing people**
- Education (public lectures, schools, displays, Café Scientifique)
- Info-tainment (whiz, bang, smell)!



'Hard to Reach' groups

- Who are these 'hard to reach' groups?
 - Young people? Older people?
 - Women? Black and Minority Ethnic Communities?
 - Communities that experience multiple forms of socio-economic deprivation and exclusion?

**AGE, GENDER, ETHNICITY
'RACE', CLASS, SEXUALITY,
DISABILITY**



'Race' and Ethnicity: UK context

- On-going debate re: terminology
 - Black/ African-Caribbean
 - Asian
 - Mixed race/Dual Heritage
 - Ethnic Minority/Minority Ethnic
 - Immigrant
 - Asylum Seeker
 - Refugee
 - BME (Black and minority ethnic)
 - British



Ethnicity and Identity

“When I am on the school playground with a group of my English friends, I am black. When an African-Caribbean girl joins us, I become an Asian. When an Asian girl comes along, I become a Pakistani. When another girl from Pakistan joins the group, I become a Mirpuri, and when finally a Mirpuri friend comes in, I become a Bradford schoolgirl again”

Personal communication, Sondhi, 2003

What is public engagement?





Rural Cumbria Community x-Change

- Funded by Northern Rock Foundation and PEALS
- Rural Area – Geographically isolated
- Young people aged 12-20, older residents inc 80 year old
- Youth workers, PEALS co-inquiry staff
- Rural issues
- Technology: Mobile phones
- European Citizens' Panel

Brussels: European Parliament



Voices: Being heard






Community x-Change, Liverpool

- Funded British Science Association and PEALS
- Toxteth, Liverpool
- Diverse communities met with scientists
- Genetically Modified Food
- Animal testing
- Local Health issues
- Respected local activist, Dave Clay
- Community Networks

TRUST and CREDIBILITY

Community x-Change, Liverpool





You-Tube: Community x-Change, Liverpool

5 minute video
made with and by young people who
were participants

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbsXNxJ1c9A>



'Hard to Reach' Groups?

- Policymakers, Politicians and Government?
- Funders? Trades Unions?
- Scientists? Universities?
- Private Sector/Businesses?

How easy is it for communities to reach these groups and engage in decision-making?

How can the above 'hard to reach' groups contribute to long-term sustainable productive and equitable relationships with communities?



Public engagement with science

- Many forms of public engagement
- Who benefits?
- Who sets agendas?
- Whose knowledge is legitimised?
- What power dynamics may hinder engagement?
- What resources are needed?
- How are decisions made?
- **Whose voices are being heard?**