

November 11th 10.30
Sheffield Hallam University
Robert Winston Building
Broomhall Rd, S10 2BP
Room 515

Agenda:

1) Who is interested in this material and who might we draw on for help (space, money, skills, research potential, dissemination)? What might we do with it? What is a priority to get us started?

AHRC: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Pages/Home.aspx> Do we know of other sources?

2) Is a specific archive necessary or should we approach somewhere that already has some of the stuff or somewhere with a linked interest that we can identify? It looks as if there are three projects: oral history; digital archive; physical archive, plus the research outcomes that may be derived from these.

3) What we might be looking at – what is there and where is it all? How might the criteria for inclusion be established?)

4) Update from Jess/Lucy on workshop for Fedfest.

Notes

1) Jess Pauszek (who may join us on skype) is coming over to the Fedfest to meet some people, and possibly again in the summer to get around to meet and interview others. She would have a week to do this and it would be great if people could suggest who is around, while many of the people already in this list would be good for her to connect with.

2) Syracuse has a digital sound archive. One of the things that would be of interest is getting copies of the recordings that Roger Drury made of FWWCP members during the 1990s. I'm going to put together a box of duplicate texts from the Fed archive for Jess to take back to Syracuse to help secure this initiative. Syracuse has a project called 'this we believe' twb.syr.edu/ that could be something that might be extended to the Fed as a resource for people to upload their oral history. I have contacted Roger Drury and he is looking for copies of the tapes.

3) Steve and I are interested in developing some kind of exchange, we don't see why this should not be widened out since this list now includes people from a number of academic institutions and disciplines, and it may enable us to find graduate students who could be involved in archive work or other research. We've included Eli Goldblatt from Temple University in Philadelphia in this list as well, so there might be scope for some transatlantic involvement from both Syracuse and Temple. Does this idea interest/seem possible for other people?

4) With this in mind, our view is that while the FWWCP is a starting point, it would make better sense to have this contextualised with other material from the FWWCP's travelling companions or similar stuff that has been going on – some of which is represented amongst

the people in this emailing. In any case the material I have already includes much that is not from FWWCP groups. The FWWCP was one strand amongst many. This also seems to accord with an email conversation Ray Hearne and I had.

5) Louise Glasscoe will be present from the current Fed exec

6) Met with Steve Earnshaw (Head of English here at SHU) who proposed other useful contacts, one a local organiser for arts and the other a working class historian. Have contacted the organiser but need to discuss involvement of more academic institutions with the group before proceeding:

The Fed archive is very diverse, which may mean that it can be difficult to package clearly. It's strength is that it is a national movement but that it had strong bases in several geographical locations, London, Brighton, Bristol, Manchester, Liverpool in particular could also prove useful. Some potential partners could for example want to take certain elements of the collection but then that would fragment the federation-ness of it. A coherent project could make the links and might need therefore to have people identified in these communities that can talk to this. The key issue for funders might be **what is the impact of the Fed work and what does it mean now?**

It looks as if much of that meaning might be the intergenerational possibilities arising from the material it contains about British lives in all our communities between 1900-2007. If we were to apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund, for example, it is important to think about the dissemination of Fed materials and practices rather than to present it as an academic exercise. So the Fed material might be about reflecting community back to the communities.

Therefore it is important to identify 'centres' of Fed activity both geographically and in terms of themes (writing about migrant experiences; mental health; women's experiences; regional cultures; adult and basic literacy, for example).

A key thing to do – perhaps an obvious one – is to contact an archivist about the project and get someone to come and look at the 'stuff in the garage', to give an objective view of what might be involved. Another key thing to do is to identify local champions as it were, such as local MPs (Steve did an archiving project on the Sheffield Floods of 1864 and was at the time able to enlist a couple of government ministers) who might be of use in lobbying for this project.

He reminded me that there might be a medical humanities interest in some aspects of this. Steve Parks has already identified some of the aspects Syracuse will be particularly interested in for when Jess Pauszek comes over – these are materials about Afro Caribbean experiences and mimeographed and Xeroxed publications.

I think some of these issues, such as following up some of the leads he has given me as regards potential interest, are things to talk over on November 11th. However, he was pretty sure there would be a lot of goodwill for such a project – so we should try and reach out and see who our fellow travellers might be.

Jess Pauszek will come to Pecket on the 14th November and 15th November and attend the Fedfest on the 16th. I am unable to come to the Fedfest as Linda's grandmother has been very ill, there has been no time to see her until that weekend.

It would be useful to know what the FED exec thinks. For example, since 2007 there has been another 6 years of published outputs and these also need to be collected. It needn't be an archive restricted entirely to the FWWCP Fed.

I will update everyone on the issues we discuss on the 11th and 14th with regard to the archive. In the meantime I am contacting the Sheffield Archive to see whether there is any interest – I hadn't approached them previously because I was thinking of this as a national thing – perhaps I can get a professional opinion of the stuff and see where that takes us.