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Biographical Note

Dr Kate Carruthers Thomas is a Senior Research Fellow and Athena SWAN Project Manager at Birmingham City University, UK. She specialises in interdisciplinary enquiry into contemporary higher education, inequalities and gender and has a particular interest in spatial methods and analyses. Kate uses both poetry and graphics as methods of disseminating her research in these fields.

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INTRODUCTION

Doreen Massey's social theory spans economic, urban, political, feminist and global subjects and questions. As a geographer, she attracts multiple labels but perhaps the most all-encompassing and appropriate is that of radical geographer 'embracing openness and multiplicity while resolutely confronting dominant forms of space and power' (Christophers et al. 2018: 30). Massey's understanding of space as plural, fluid and heterogenous and her determination to 'leave openings for something new' (Massey 2005: 107) provide a powerful framework for this author's interest in researching the spaces between organisational rhetoric and lived experiences in the university and the academy.

Although Massey's social theory is now a compelling instrument with which I re-imagine HE, theoretically and methodologically, I would call myself an accidental geographer. At secondary school, I dutifully learned about glaciation and oxbow lakes, but no lasting spark was lit then. Two decades later, I studied a Level 5 Human Geography module as part of an Open University Social Sciences degree programme. The module had been designed by Massey herself, then a Professor at the Open University. I enjoyed human geography more than glaciation but had no inkling how significant Massey's concepts of power geometry and uneven development would become for me as an academic researcher, two decades later.

This chapter discusses the application of Doreen Massey's socio-spatial concepts in my theorizing of the university. It draws primarily on my research into the impact of gender and intersectional factors on experiences of the workplace and career in a post-1992, UK university (Carruthers Thomas 2019a) in which Massey's theoretical concepts shape both the research questions and the development of a methodology 'sensitized to the social as inexorably also spatial' (Massey 1993: 80). The chapter also refers to an earlier application of Massey's social theory in a borderland analysis (Abes 2009, 2012) or hybrid theorising of student belonging in English HE (Carruthers Thomas 2018a). That borderland analysis, the principle of which is to link multiple

theories … to straddle multiple theories using ideas from each to portray a more complete picture … a new theoretical space' (Abes 2012: 190) brought Massey's theoretical constructs into dialogue with those of Pierre Bourdieu and Avtar Brah to re-imagine dominant narratives of student belonging in UK higher education.

The chapter first provides a brief outline of both projects, before summarising the key concepts of Massey's social theory. These are then brought together in a discussion of my use of Massey's concepts of space and power as an analytical framework to interrogate experiences of the university. In the case of Gender(s) at Work the focus is on space, power and gender; in the case of Dimensions of Belonging, the focus is on student belonging. The chapter's penultimate section: Critical Reflections on Social Theory and Methodology, reflects on the ways in which Massey's theoretical constructs shaped my research methodology and instruments in both enquiries and the chapter concludes with a contemplation of Massey's influence on my work in the longer-term.

RESEARCH CONTEXTS

GENDER(S) AT WORK

The *Gender(s) At Work* project was conducted in and funded by the post-1992 university by which I am employed as a Senior Research Fellow specialising in interdisciplinary critical higher education studies and as the university lead for the Athena SWAN Charter, the UK's flagship accreditation system for advancing gender equality in higher education. This is an unusual dual role: working *in* gender as an organisational diversity worker and critically *on* gender as an academic researcher. The project emerged out of this dual role, initially seeking to gather qualitative data of gendered lived and living experiences of the university, to further the institution's Athena SWAN agenda. *Gender(s) At Work* is therefore institutional research in the sense that it aimed to increase corporate intelligence about gender equality and to contribute to the university's Athena SWAN agenda, but

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untypically, was underpinned by a theoretical framework, privileges qualitative methods and data and reported its findings both internally and externally.

The project aimed to explore ways in which gender positions groups and individuals differentially in relation to power relationships within the university workplace and how gender, intersected with ethnicity, age and disability, positions groups and individuals in relation to the prevailing narrative of 'career' as a linear, upward, uninterrupted trajectory. It critiqued supposedly gender-neutral narratives 'aligned to male-defined constructions of work and career success … which continue to dominate organisational research and practice' (Bilimoria et al. 2010: 727). Participants were recruited via an open call for staff participants of all genders, in academic and professional services roles and at all levels of seniority across the university hierarchy. Data collection via individual interview, took place between November 2016 and May 2017. Of the 45 participants, 28 of the 45 participants identified as female, 16 as male, 1 as gender non-binary. 31 participants were in academic/academic management roles; 14 in professional services/professional services management roles (IT, HR, Programme and Faculty Administration, Careers, Registry). 36 of the participants identified as White, 9 as Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME). 28% of participants were aged 30-39 years; 28% 40-49 years; 26% 50-59 years; 13% 18-29 years and one 60-69 years.

DIMENSIONS OF BELONGING

This doctoral research project (2016), funded by the Higher Education Academy Mike Baker Doctoral Programme (2012-2015) challenges a powerful and ubiquitous phenomenon of student belonging in the context of an increasingly complex sector and a socio-economically, ethnically and educationally diverse student body. A multiple case study of four English universities, *Dimensions of Belonging* re-imagines dominant narratives of student belonging in HE, in relation to mature, part-time undergraduates, a heterogeneous group with a very different set of characteristics, motivations and needs, as compared to their full-time counterparts. While the research focus differs from *Gender(s) At Work*, this project also foregrounds lived experiences of relationships of power in space.

However, whereas Massey's social theory provides the sole analytical framework for the later project *Gender(s) At Work*; in *Dimensions of Belonging*, Massey is part of a borderland analysis in dialogue with Pierre Bourdieu's field analysis (1988, 1990 inter alia) and Avtar Brah's conceptualization of diaspora (1996).

All three theorists share 'an interest in articulating the interaction of individuals with their social environment in which power is unequally distributed' (ibid: 39). Together, they emphasise belonging as shaped by space and power, inherently geographical. The inclusion of Massey in this borderland analysis enables not only a theoretical but a methodological re-imagining of the university as a site of power. This way of analyzing a sense of belonging among a particular student constituency 'generates a multilayered analysis of a complex phenomenon – student belonging – compatible with the contemporary diversity of the student body' (Carruthers Thomas 2018a: 42).

DOREEN MASSEY: SOCIAL THEORIST

> Doreen Massey changed geography … she initiated new ways of seeing, understanding and indeed changing the world. She launched critiques, both in the relatively small world of economic geography and the much bigger worlds of social theory and progressive politics, that would prove to be truly transformative. (Christophers et al. 2018:1)

Beginning her academic career in the field of spatial planning and industrial geography, Massey subsequently brought socialist and feminist sensibilities to economic, regional and human geography; applying her theoretical insights to regional development, globalisation, political economy and divisions of labour. While embracing post-modernism, she was nevertheless a respected critic of the masculinist gaze of fellow post-modernist geographers Harvey (1989) and Soja (1989) and towards the end of her life collaborated with Hall and Rustin on analyses of

contemporary political and cultural issues (Hall, Massey & Rustin 2015). Massey spent 27 years as a teacher, researcher and professor at the Open University, 'to which she was strongly loyal because of its accessibility to all who wanted to learn' (Wainwright 2018: 367). There she pioneered innovative ways of teaching at a distance and was 'the key mover in an extended series of remarkably influential course texts' (ibid.: 5). In later life, she was actively engaged with political struggles in South Africa and Latin America.

Massey's radical approach defines space 'as social relations shaped by power and inherently temporal … a confluence and product of histories, relationships … the sphere in which distinct trajectories coexist' (Massey 2005: 9). She challenges 'the imagination of the spatial as petrification … a safe haven from the temporal … the notion of space as surface' (ibid.: 28). Space is fluid, always under construction, 'a particular moment in networks of social relations and understandings' (Massey 1994: 5). These propositions are the basis of Massey's engagement with feminist and gender debates. Though strongly influenced by Marxism, she critiqued 'a wider failure to account for who it was that filled the "empty spaces" of so many abstract Marxian categories …the unthinking recirculations of supposed universals which "are so often in fact quite particular; not universals at all but white, male, Western, heterosexual, what have you' formulations"' (Christophers et al. 2018: 15). An analyst of gendered roles in changing industrial landscapes (McDowell and Massey 1984), uneven regional development (Massey 1988) and the meaning of 'home' (Massey 1992a), Massey is a key figure in the diverse project of feminist geography which aims 'to investigate, make visible and challenge the relationships between gender divisions and spatial divisions, to uncover their mutual constitution to problematize their apparent naturalness' (McDowell 1999: 12). Later influenced by Harding and Haraway's thinking on feminist theory and situated epistemologies, Massey was nevertheless 'wary of currents within feminism that tended towards essentialism and narrow identity politics' (Christophers et al. 2018: 8).

Massey's contribution to social theory is characterized by a grounded engagement in the notion of places as trajectories and multiplicities. She criticizes the way in which 'universalized arguments were so often decontextualized by jet-setter scholars who seemed to survey … the world from 30,000 feet, as if to project their own placelessness' (Christophers et al. 2018: 14) She observes 'much of life for many people … still consists of waiting in the bus-shelter with your shopping for a bus that never comes (Massey 1992a: 8). Massey's relational understanding of space and spatiality is central to every one of her engagements in complex debates and dialogues: on post-modernism, neo-liberalism, globalisation and feminist theory among others. This is articulated through a set of interdependent concepts which form the building blocks for my own theorisation of the university: power geometry, a progressive sense of place and heterogeneity. I outline these below and then describe how they are encapsulated in and put to work through, Massey's heuristic device of 'activity space'.

POWER GEOMETRY

The concept of power underpins Massey's understanding of space. In power geometry she articulates the differential capacities groups and individuals have in relation to flows of capital, colonialism migration, social relationships and culture. 'Power geometry does not imply any specific form (any specific geometry). It is a concept through which to analyse the world … an instrument of potential critique' (Massey 2009: 321). Through power geometry, different social groups and different individuals are placed in very distinct ways in relation to flows and interconnections. Massey developed power geometry as an instrument of critique in response to Harvey's post-modernist argument of time-space compression (1989) i.e. that the current period represents an accelerated phase of time-space compression caused by capitalism. Her argument is that time-space compression is not simply a geographical stretching-out of social relations, but that our experience of it is influenced by histories of colonialism, racism, social relations and relative wealth. If the pace and impact of physical, trade, financial and technological flows is socially-differentiated, so is time-space compression. In fact, the way an individual is positioned in relation to those flows determines

whether acceleration happens at all. 'Different social groups have distinct relationships to this differentiated mobility … some initiate flows and movement, others don't; some are more on the receiving end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it.' (1993: 61).

Massey highlights the relationality of these socially differentiated groups. 'The socio-spatial processes that help shape and define places do not operate evenly, with different social groups and individuals relatively positioned as a consequence' (Kitchen 2016: 816). She examines the power geometry of time-space compression in the contexts of labour relations industrial and regional development (McDowell and Massey 1984, Massey 1988) and diaspora where 'hitherto sharply differentiated cultures and people …. are forced to interact, often in profoundly asymmetrical ways in terms of their relative power.' (Massey and Jess 1995: 193). Revisiting power geometry two decades later, following her visit to Venezuela where she had been invited to work with the new Chavez government to contribute to the building of a new power-geometry, Massey emphasizes its dynamic character, not only politically but across all spheres of society: 'an instrument through which to imagine and maybe to begin to build more equal societies' (Massey 2009: 321).

As a researcher, I am interested in how 'specific spaces … are produced and stabilized by the dominant groups who occupy them' (Valentine 2008: 18) and apply Massey's concept of power geometry to frame the university and the wider HE sector as sites of power and knowledge in which groups and individuals are differently and distinctly placed in relation to flows and interconnections. With its origins in the monastery and the early universities: specialized, male-dominated places of knowledge-production, the contemporary university is the product of social relations shaped by geographies of power socially coded masculine: patriarchy, tradition, academic and disciplinary discourses, as well as by exclusive spatiality. Groups and individuals, both staff and students are differently positioned in relation to these social relations, these flows and connections, within the university and the higher education sector more widely. For example, female and minority ethnic staff are significantly under-represented in universities' senior academic and

leadership roles (Advance HE 2019; Jarboe 2018) and mature students are clustered in post-1992 universities (Callender and Thompson 2018; Callender, Hopkin and Wilkinson 2010). In *Gender(s) At Work*, I apply Massey's power geometry to a consideration of how gender operates as a geography of power positioning female staff in relation to flows and connections within the activity space of the university and the sector more widely.

PROGRESSIVE PLACES

Massey challenges authoritative Western philosophical tendencies which 'turn space into time and geography into history …the practice of thinking of space as a surface *over* which journeys are made' (Christophers et al. 2018: 23 original italics). She argues for a progressive sense of place in our 'global-local' times', that is, an understanding that what gives a place its specificity are not the boundaries which are drawn around it, nor a singular history, but 'particular constellations of relations, articulated together at a particular locus' (Massey 1994: 5). This acknowledgement of space and place as interconnected networks in flux also generates a sense of place as 'extraverted' ie: 'where a large proportion of relations, experiences and understanding are actually constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself' (ibid:153)

I apply this sense of place as progressive and extraverted to frame the university 'as a point of articulation of multiple social relations, each a node in the wider geography of the academy, pulling on identities and connections beyond their geographical boundaries' (Carruthers Thomas 2018a: 40). In the hybrid theorising of **Dimensions of Belonging**, there is a synergy between a progressive sense of place and Brah's concept of 'diaspora space' (2006), both imagining a wider and more flexible territory in which connection and belonging are negotiatied. This synergy enables the thesis to move beyond critique and towards a re-imagination of belonging.

HETEROGENEITY

Heterogeneity is fundamental to Massey's understanding of space 'a confluence and product of histories, relationships … the sphere in which distinct trajectories coexist' (Massey 2005: 9). Space is

not static, but plural and relational. Expanding on this theme, Massey frequently references her neighbourhood, Kilburn, North London, emphasising its diverse population and everyday global interactions to challenge a sense of a coherent, singular identity. Space, she argues is 'a simultaneity of unfinished, ongoing, "trajectories" or "stories-so-far"' (1994: 5). I mobilise this proposition of heterogeneity in highlighting the diversity of staff and students' lived/living experiences juxtaposed with organisational narratives i.e.: the stories universities tell about themselves through corporate literatures, branding and mission statements. This juxtaposition draws attention to spaces between organisational rhetorics of equality and diversity, of student belonging and individuals' lived/living experiences. This in turn unlocks a way of seeing research participants' experiences of the university as structured by geographies of power. The proposition of heterogeneity also influences my approach to the analysis of complex qualitative data. Instead of targeting thematic saturation in my data analysis, I map the university as 'a space of multiple centres experienced in multiple ways' (Carruthers Thomas 2018a: 83). This will be addressed in more detail in the penultimate section of the chapter.

ACTIVITY SPACE

Massey mobilises these key conceptual building blocks of her social theory: power geometry, a progressive sense of place and heterogeneity, through the heuristic device of 'activity space': 'the spatial network of links and activities, of spatial connections and of locations within which a particular agent operates … within each activity space is a geography of power' (Massey 2005: 55). Activity space challenges the idea of place as stable and coherent and is a versatile, multiscalar device, foregrounding relationships of power in space. It frames the university as a spatial network shaped by local geographies of power, but also as a node distinctly positioned in the wider activity space of the higher education sector, a knowledge-based labour market 'which gained (and continues to gain) at least a part of its prestige from the cachet and exclusivity of its spatiality' (Massey 2005: 75). Activity space complements the use of case study methodology, enabling

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analyses of cases as part of the higher education sector; as singular corporate entities and at the 'ground' level of spatial arrangements and campus geographies.

The multiscalar character of activity space is demonstrated in Massey's study of dualistic thinking and the construction of gender in high-technology industry in Cambridge UK (1996). In the study, Massey conceptualizes the science park as 'part of a global network of specialized places of knowledge production (elite; historically largely male)' (2005: 75) and 'a highly specialized envelope of space-time into which the intrusion of other activities and interests is unwanted and limited' (1996: 120). However 'the home … both temporally and spatially is porous and in particular it is invaded by the sphere of paid work' (ibid.). The study explores ways in which daily experiences of working in the activity space of the science park reflect a narrative of masculinity as constituting reason, logic and abstract thought and operate in complex territory between 'work' and 'home'. It provided a valuable foundation for a contemporary theorization of gender, career and workplace experiences in the university in *Gender(s) At Work*.

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON SOCIAL THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

SPATIAL STORYTELLING

In congruence with her grounded, activist approach, Massey urged others to 'think of spatiality in a highly active and politically enabling manner' (1993: 142). Applying Massey's spatial concepts to theorizations of the university has led me to develop a methodology I have called 'spatial storytelling', one 'sensitized to the social as inexorably also spatial' (Massey 1993: 80). Spatial storytelling combines two interdependent research instruments: narrative enquiry and visual mapping, in order to elicit participants' singular and particular stories of workplace and career within the social context of the university (Creswell 2007); to capture psychosocial dimensions of the interactions between individual and institution and to uncover and explore spaces between organizational rhetoric and lived/living experience.

Spatial storytelling starts with 'thinking spatially' about the university, building on Massey's concept of power geometry in which social and spatial boundaries define who belongs to and who is excluded from a place. How are spaces of HE are inhabited and by whom, who is at the margins and what constitutes the spaces between? Thinking spatially about student belonging provides a methodological language with which to articulate dominant and marginal practices of belonging; the ways in which institution and individual interact in uneven territory. Thinking spatially in the context of staff experiences of the university as a workplace, 'emphasises not only the material and metaphorical power structures of the academy, but also a psychosocial sense of gender as a geography of power in terms of peripherality, constraints and power(lessness)' (Carruthers Thomas 2019a: 202). Thinking spatially applies a spatial, qualitative lens to organisational structures and power relationships and frames a critique of organisational rhetoric.

My evolving practice of spatial storytelling involves the research instruments narrative enquiry and visual mapping. These are discussed separately but are interdependent in practice; the visual product inextricable from participants' words as they contemplate and complete the task. Massey's understanding of space as a 'simultaneity of stories so far … places as collections of those stories' (Massey 2005: 130) supports the role of narrative in spatial storytelling. Participants are 'both living their stories in an ongoing experiential text and telling their stories in words as they reflect upon life and explain themselves to others' (Connelly & Clandinin 1990: 3). Narrative enquiry therefore foregrounds the way(s) participants create meaning of their lived experiences of the university, importantly allowing for complexities, ambiguities and silences (Bathmaker 2010). In practice, the *Gender(s) At Work* project used 45-60 minute individual interviews in which interviewees gave a 'potted history' of their employment to date, then responded to a common schedule of questions and prompts exploring their experiences of working at the university and in the sector more generally. They were then asked to reflect on their perceptions of the impact, or otherwise, of gender on those experiences. The measure of participant verification and the opportunity to remove or redact information was put in place to ensure anonymity

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Used in conjunction with narrative enquiry, visual mapping challenges the coherence of university spaces and the power of dominant narratives. Massey argues classical maps position 'the observer, themselves unobserved, outside and above the object of the gaze' (Massey 2005: 107). Mapping in its dominant form is problematic in that it gives authority to simplified, selective and bounded representations of space (Carruthers Thomas 2018a: 2). But mapping as a research tool has the capacity to disrupt abstraction and neutrality; to unsettle what is taken-for-granted and to recognise the agency of the mapmaker. Rose argues: 'Participant-generated visual materials are particularly helpful in exploring the taken-for-granted things in their research participants' lives …it gives them distance from what they are usually immersed in and allows them to articulate thoughts and feelings that usually remain implicit' (2014: 27). Both *Gender(s) At Work* and *Dimensions of Belonging* employ mapping as process and product to disrupt the taken-for-granted and make sense of co-existing stories within organisational space.

I first used a visual mapping task for data collection in *Dimensions of Belonging*. In a task entitled: *Mapping Belonging*, student participants were provided with a campus map and two different coloured pens. They were invited to mark any places on campus where they felt they 'belonged' and any places where they did not. What emerged across all four case studies was a strikingly limited engagement with the campus beyond the classroom and the library; certainly not with the 'familiars' of contemporary student life: the Students' Union building, halls of residence, bars, the gym. Yet these are the sites in which the dominant narratives of 'student' life' are embedded: 'the student community it stitched together out these places; it relies on this geography' (Crang 1998:5). However, 'for many mature part-time undergraduates, empty corridors, distant satellite buildings and empty vending machines are more familiar experiences of institutional spaces' (Carruthers Thomas 2019a: 73). Participants' enthusiasm and appreciation for higher level learning were overlaid with discomfort about their perceptions of difference from 'typical' undergraduates, experiencing a lack of 'fit' in communal areas such as libraries, computer stacks and social learning spaces. Instead, they occupied spaces between; those 'less visible to the strategic centre of the

university but which … offer multiple opportunities for connection and attachment' (ibid: 76). The students' 'maps of belonging' reveal the university to be a multidimensional landscape of power and inequality within structured social spaces; territories and trajectories of privilege and disadvantage.

In *Gender(s) at Work,* I again use mapping to as a research instrument, this time to elicit psychosocial dimensions of space, place and gender in relation to spatial hierarchies and norms of organisational engagement. During the individual interview, participants were given a sheet of paper containing three shapes: a clear triangle with solid outline, a clear circle with dotted outline and a rectangle shaded blue with solid outline. They were invited to select the shape which best represented the university to them and with a pen, to position themselves in relation to it. Participants were allowed to modify and annotate their chosen shape, or to create their own. The activity was therefore both prescriptive – in using familiar shapes - and flexible. Those selecting the triangle commonly interpreted it as a representation of the university as a hierarchal organisation. The circle's dotted outline was variously interpreted as symbolising porosity, collaboration or escape. The shaded rectangle, the least frequently selected, represented for some the experience of claustrophobia or constraint in their professional roles. Where the participants' placed themselves in relation to their chosen shape triggered discussions of peripherality, centrality, career aspirations and power. These discussions formed part of their recorded narrative.

As a research methodology, spatial storytelling results in multiple mappings of the university reflecting Massey's plural and fluid understanding of space. Reading participant narratives and maps through the lens of heterogeneity articulates 'the multidimensionality of gendered and intersectional lived experiences within the contested space of the university' (Carruthers Thomas 2019a: 202). The intertwining of narrative and map uncovers spaces between corporate rhetoric and lived experience; for example, the space between a corporate flexible working policy and a female senior manager's negative experience of making use of it in a male-dominated environment. Another example: multiple examples of sexist language, attitude and practices in a workplace

egulated by equality and diversity legislation. And another: mature part-time students' sense of exclusion from large swathes of 'their' university campus labelled 'inclusive'. Spatial storytelling loosens the hold of the binary and uncovers the periphery, the hidden and the contradictory. Viewing the university through the lens of power geometry reveals *stories of student persistence under the organisational radar despite organisational othering; of negotiated belonging in peripheral, diasporic spaces,* of the continued disadvantage of women in the workplace despite equality and diversity legislation.

THE CHALLENGES OF MAPPING

There are practical and analytical challenges in the use of mapping as a research tool. As a participant activity it needs careful management. It can be time-consuming and lead to questions of relevance and validity from participants. A large minority of participants across both of my studies assumed there was a 'right' way to complete the task and/or felt insecure about its visual nature; it certainly took some academic participants out of a verbal/textual comfort zone. Once the mapping data are collected, the challenge shifts to interpretation. I make no claims to be an expert in semantics or visual culture. The visual map is, as I have stated, a constituent element of a spatial storytelling by the participant; it should not be viewed in isolation but alongside and in relation to participants' commentary. These elements can be contradictory – for example, in *Gender(s) At Work*, a senior manager placed themselves on the periphery of the chosen shape because of a perceived lack of 'fit' with the university's management culture and successful mid-career academic placed themselves outside the shape, expressing a sense of powerlessness to change anything about the university. As Massey states: 'loose ends and ongoing stories are real challenges to cartography' (2005: 107).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

I have applied Massey's socio-spatial concepts, her clear articulation of the relationality of space and power and inherent temporality of space to theorise gender as a geography of power within the university and as part of a hybrid theorising of student belonging. Massey's social theory gives me a syntax with which to interrogate dominant narratives of the academy, to problematise the 'naturalness' of university space, to examine lived experiences and uneven representations of different groups within that space. As this chapter has shown, this has led to the development of a methodology 'sensitized to the social as inexorably also spatial' (Massey 1993: 80), of thinking spatially and spatial storytelling. These have generated new theoretical and methodological spaces between; geographical, sociological and psychosocial ways of seeing the university.

I continue to apply Massey's theoretical constructs in new research and practice. *Being Between Binary* (Carruthers Thomas, forthcoming) is a visual critical auto-ethnography ie: 'not only a contemplation of the self but also an examination of systems, cultures, discourses and institutions that privilege some and marginalise others' (Lipton and Crimmins 2019: p229). The piece is a form of spatial storytelling, a textual and visual experiment combining map and memoir in the form of a collaged scrapbook. *Being Between Binary* continues the themes of my earlier research into the university: experiences of binaries and geographies; of othering, inequality and opposition but in the context of sexuality and gender. It places Massey's concept of power geometry (1993) into dialogue with personal and is structured by a creative cartography of Global North and Global South in which individuals and groups are differently positioned in relation to flows of wealth, resources, sexual and gender politics.

Academic audiences are not always inclined to think outside their disciplinary boxes and applying and presenting the work of a theorist closely identified with one discipline to topics and audiences of another can present challenges. Fortunately, the field of critical higher education studies and educational researchers in general, demonstrate a generous attitude to such boundary-

crossing. There is also a growing interdisciplinary literature in geographies of education (Gulson and Symes, 2017) which addresses a multitude of spatial concerns about HE, ranging from international student mobility (Brooks, 2018), student housing and accommodation (Holton, 2016), and remote and rural disparities in HE options and provision (Steel and Fahy, 2011). Massey's own work ranged widely across the sub-disciplines of geography and social science more generally. She framed the concept of power geometry and heuristic device of activity space as critical instruments for all spheres of society (2009), always stressing the importance of leaving openings for something new.

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