

Navigating Belonging: Exploring settlement for South Asians in Hong Kong through narratives and participatory photography

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THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

RESEARCHER CAFÉ, SOLKI, 14 NOVEMBER 2024





About the Project

1 - Christian Action

2 - HKUST

3 - Dream Impact

The Team, Partners & Supporters

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<https://www.navigating-belonging.org/>

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navigating belonging: //

Navigating Belonging: Exploring settlement for South Asians
Hong Kong through narratives and participatory photography

// 為歸屬感確定方向：通過敘事和參與式攝影探索在香港的南亞群體的聚

Why *belonging*?

Belonging: a major concern in public and political debate

Associated with arguments about social integration and immigration

Belonging, non-belonging, not-yet-belonging, no-longer-belonging ...

... prominent issues for migrants and people from marginalized communities

Belonging in applied linguistics research

Immigration and citizenship regimes

Extra, Spotti & Van Avermaet 2009; Shohamy & McNamara 2009

Employment structures

Duchêne, Moyer & Roberts 2013; Gumperz 1982

Learning the societal languages

Cooke & Peutrell 2020; Simpson & Whiteside 2015; Simpson & Cooke 2008; Simpson & Pöyhönen 2024

NB: Belonging as an intersectional concern

Yuval-Davis 2011

Navigating belonging for South Asians in Hong Kong

Identity

O'Connor 2018a,b; Ng et al. 2019; Chen and Yip 2015

Language use and learning

Dhaliwal & Cariola 2021; Gao 2018; Lai et al. 2015; Gu et al. 2019; Lui 2011

Media and online representation

Jackson & Nesterova 2017; Lai & Tai 2021; Leung 2021

Language-based minoritisation in education policy

Bhowmik et al. 2018; Gu & Patkin 2013; Fang 2019; Li 2017

Racial discrimination; its challenge and agency

Crabtree & Wong 2013; Bhowmik & Kennedy 2016; Perez-Milans & Soto 2016; Gao and Gube 2019



Research questions

- (1) How does belonging emerge in and through narrative and photography?
- (2) How can we develop innovative approaches to researching belonging?
- (3) How can our understandings of belonging be used to inform policies, practices and debate on social integration?

Outline

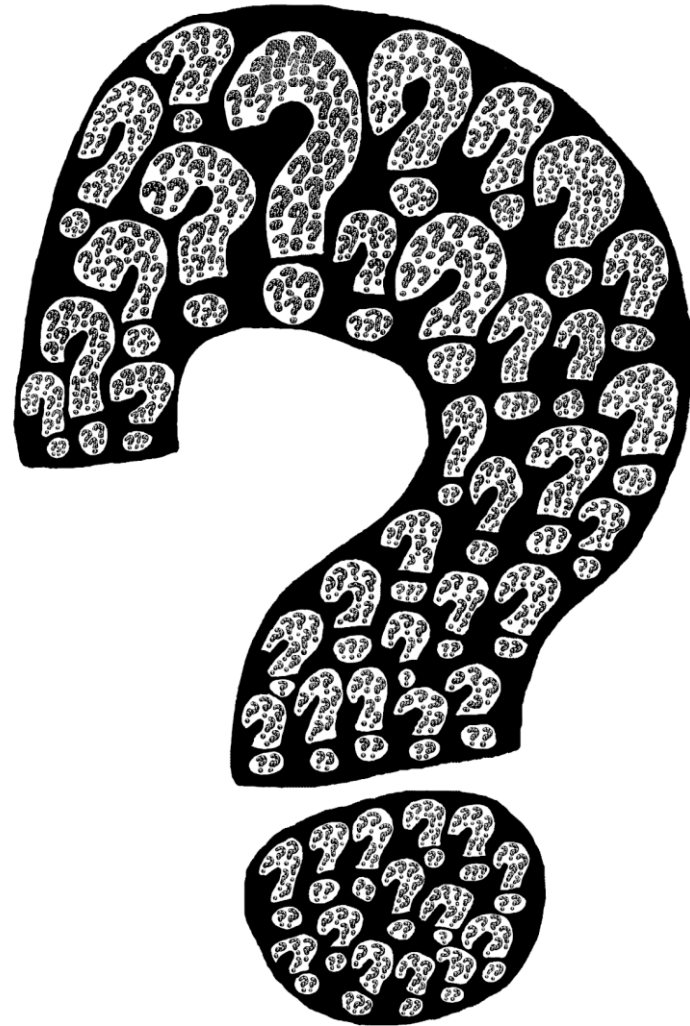
Methodology

Research workshops

Digital Stories

Narratives of belonging

Research ethics



Approaches and methods

Linguistic ethnography (Rampton et al 2004 etc)

Visual ethnography (Pink 2013)

Collaborative ethnography (Lassiter 2005)

Photovoice (Wang & Burris 1997) & Digital storytelling (e.g. Robin 2008)

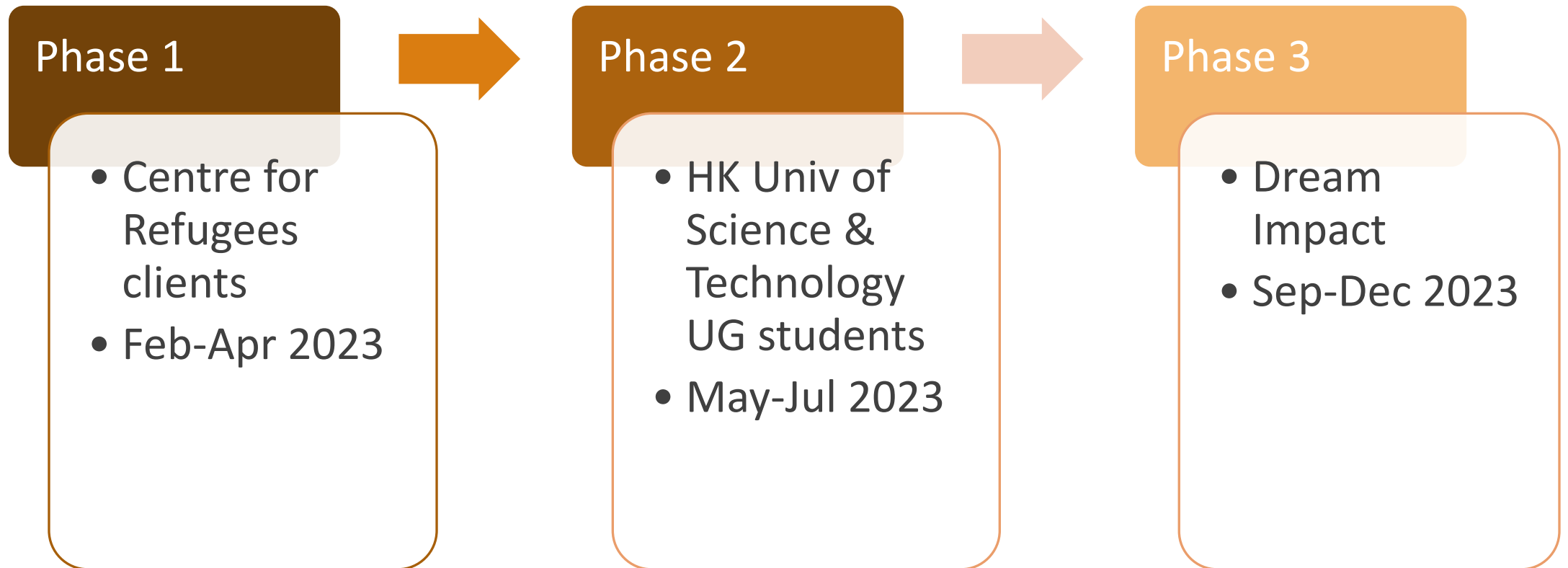
Participatory Narrative Inquiry (Kurtz 2014)

Mediated Discourse Analysis (Scollon 2001)

Narrative-in-interaction (De Fina & Georgakopoulou 2012)

Belonging-in-Interaction (Simpson & Bradley 2024)

Participants and settings





When taking a picture of a human subject or their personal property you must ask their permission first. Make sure that the images you take will accurately represent the situation

- Assess the situation. Can you approach them safely or are they engaged in a dangerous activity (e.g. driving)
- Explain the project and your involvement
- Ask for consent! Ask if it would be acceptable to use images from them to discuss the themes of your project in a group setting.

photowalk activity #3 photowalk ethical concerns regarding photography

1. What are the ethical concerns regarding photography?

2. How can we ensure that we are taking ethical photographs?

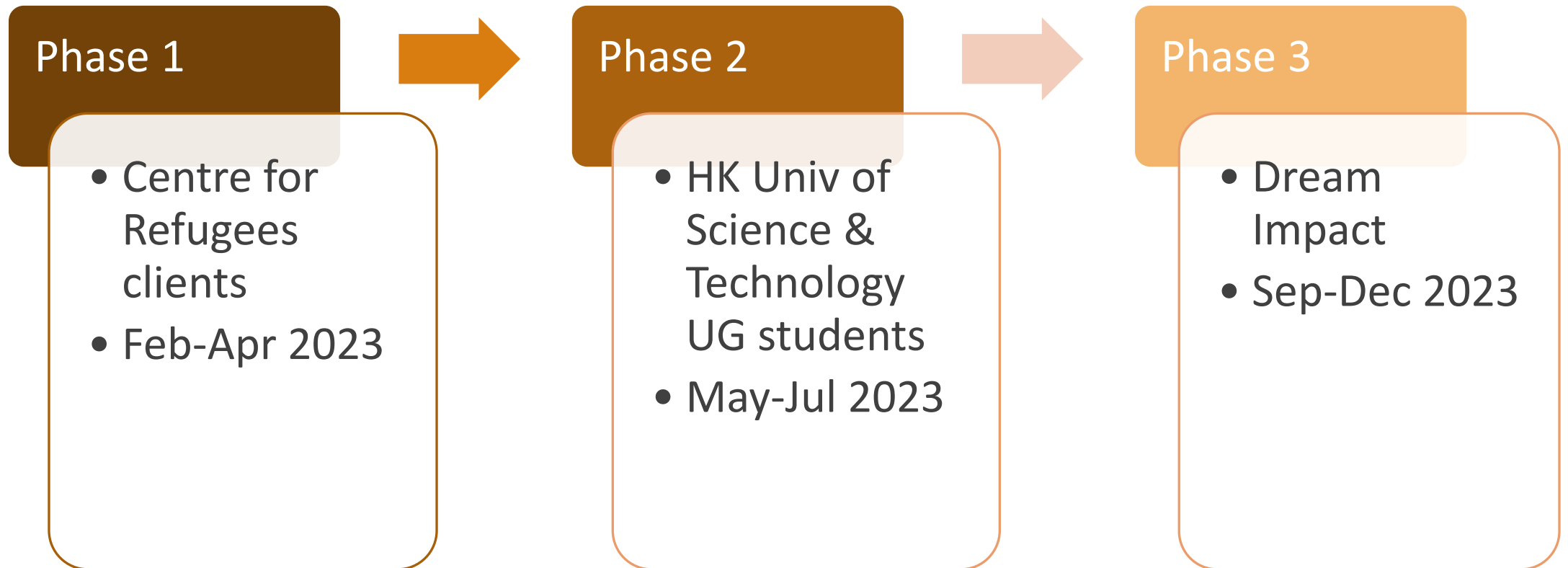
3. What are the ethical concerns regarding photography?

4. How can we ensure that we are taking ethical photographs?

5. What are the ethical concerns regarding photography?

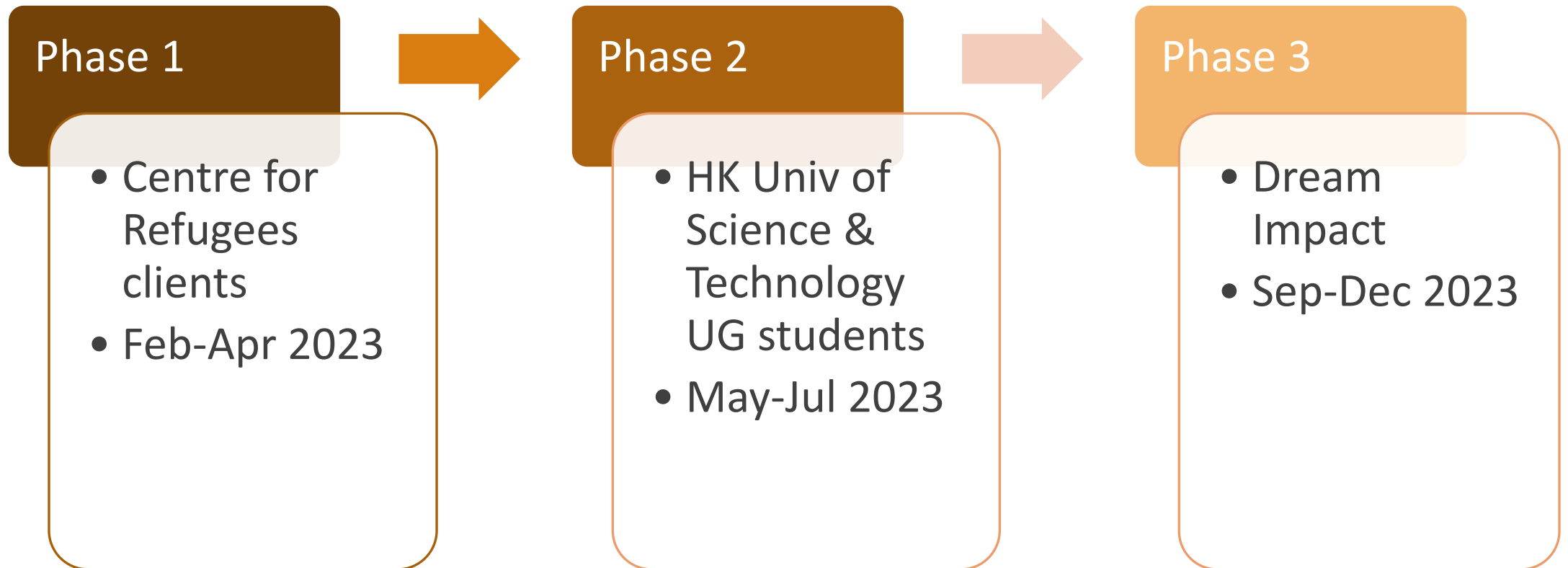
6. How can we ensure that we are taking ethical photographs?

Participants and settings





Participants and settings





Eight research workshops

FIVE SESSIONS

Photovoice
workshops

THREE SESSIONS

Digital
Storytelling
workshops



Photovoice and digital storytelling workshops

Photovoice Workshops
led by Christine Vicera

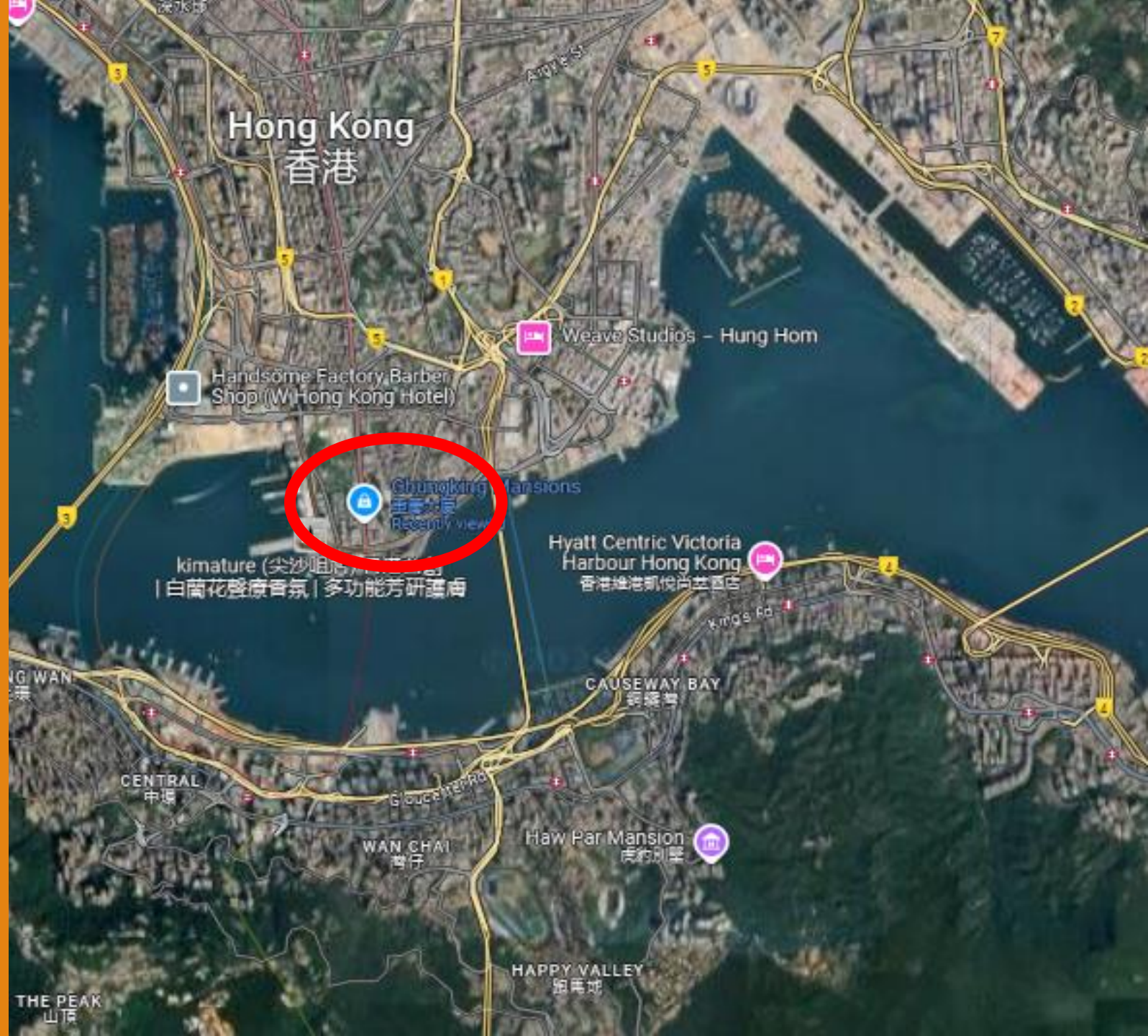


Digital Storytelling
Workshops led by
Michelle Pang



Phase 1:

CENTRE FOR REFUGEES,
CHUNGKING MANSIONS, TST





Welcome.



CENTRE FOR
REFUGEES

<https://www.cfr.org.hk/>

NEW ARRIVALS

You've just arrived in Hong Kong and you're not sure what to do.



OUR PROGRAMMES

Supporting our clients in Hong Kong and cultural awareness programmes including Chungking Mansion tours.



GET INVOLVED

Find out how you can help.



Engaging with belonging through photography

Arts practice provides an important space for critical reflection, 'offering a public site for the abstracted discussion of contentious issues' (Stupples & Teaiwa 2016:11), for example the issue of what it is to belong.



Photowalk

JAMES' FIELDNOTES, WORKSHOP 3

12.58 We have uploaded our photos to the Padlet, and end the session by talking about it.

A, talking about her photos, comparing HK with home (Pakistan). Inevitable comparisons? She makes these spontaneously. More or less everything she says, it seems, prompts her to compare HK with 'my country'.

Rosy took a photo of a waterfall in the park, and tells us of being at the same place 28 years ago, when she accompanied her husband to HK on a business trip. She took a photo there at the very same place with her son who was 3 years old at the time.

CHRISTINE'S POST-WORKSHOP NOTES, WORKSHOP 3

Photowalk

Teaching them the photolock on the phone + lighting

- As we were walking to Kowloon Park, we noticed how Sam Bhai opened up a new store. A and D stopped by to see the pani puri stall.

- Suggestion that we do our next photowalk at CKM

- A agreed saying that there are things at CKM reminds us of home

- Rosy says she'd rather not think about Sri Lanka, home is where she is now. Home was painful for her, the kidnapping, the torture

R's photo of the waterfall and her story about her visiting Hong Kong with her son and husband in the 1980s



R: and one is very important one this one this this waterfall
I remember for 28 years back (.) when I my son [was

J: [really really

R: yeah when my son elder son three years so we will come
back to the Hong Kong to visit

J: yeah

R: then that time same place I took the photo I have with me
next time I will bring in show to you

J: tell us more about the first time you saw this pho- this waterfall

R: waterfall really my son very loudly and he said mom I want take photo come come then yeah he's very young and small yeah three years old (.) that time

J: was this when you first arrived in Hong Kong

R: no no my son yeah 28 years back when my son was three years old so my husband take us visiting to Hong Kong

J: so you visited

[...]

R: **visiting I went many times (xxx) yeah Singapore Malaysia Thailand India and China Hong Kong so er that time I carry with my son also because he's alone three years old so my husband always used to bring me and my son together when he was doing business**

J: so he was working and you were with your son just to be tourists in Hong Kong

R: yes because my son er order goods from China you know there so many material and er textile we have shop also in [home country] so that time my son want to purch-

[...]

R: so he's ask me to okay let's go together three of us then visit Hong Kong and go China and

J: and did you like it when you [visit it

R: [yeah yeah really

J: yeah

**R: I I thought safe that's that's ri- that's the reason
I came back to again**

J: and that's why you came here

R: yeah came

J: you what you thought of [Hong Kong as a place to come

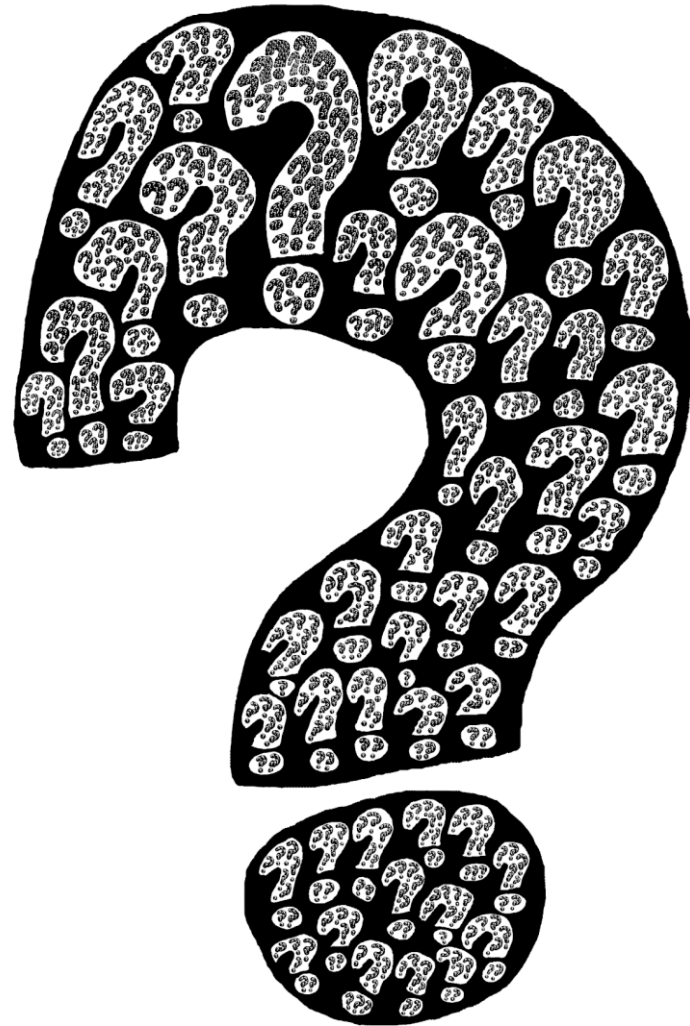
R: [yeah yeah yeah

J: when you left XXX

JAMES' FIELDNOTES, WORKSHOP 4

Today's atmosphere in the workshop is very friendly, familiar. Rosy brought in photos of her family in HK from 25 years ago, when she came as a tourist/accompanying her husband on a business trip. She took photos of her little son, then aged three, in Kowloon Park. Last week, we took photos in precisely the same place, 25 years later. The photos she showed us were old, battered, water-damaged...





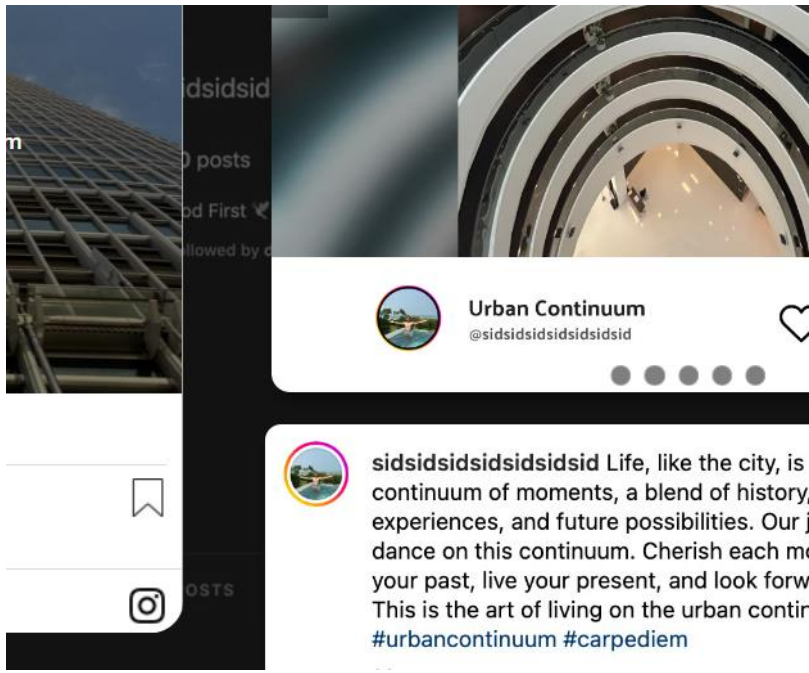
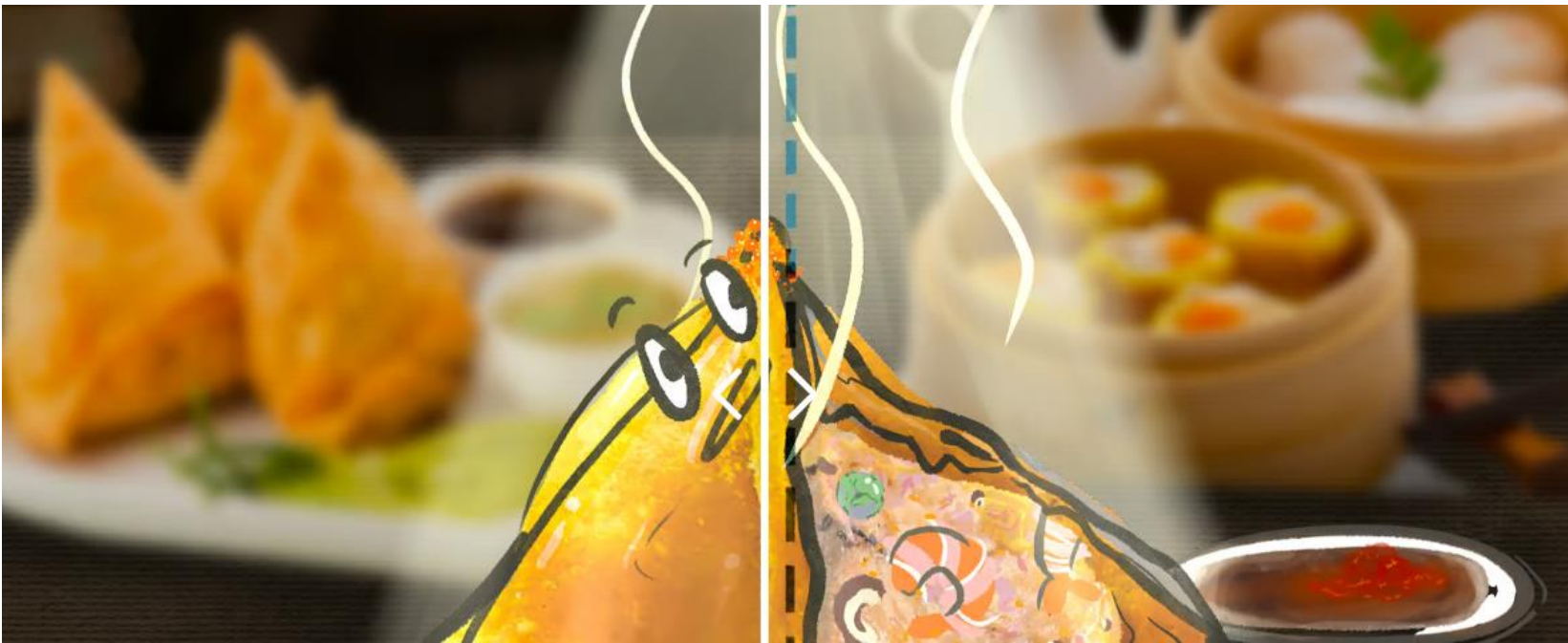


<https://www.navigating-belonging.org/>



Challenging the
single story:
Narrative and
belonging in
interaction







The danger of a single story

38,449,297 views ⓘ | Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie | TEDGlobal 2009 • July 2009

JAMES' FIELDNOTES

4.36 Chimamanda's TED talk - Christine will show us the first five minutes. The danger of a single story. Khalil has seen this video - he thinks on a marketing course.

How is it today? Participants are busy in their lives, and are giving up quite a lot of time to be here?

4.42 - that was the excerpt I wanted to show you ... what are your initial thoughts?

Sumeet: The roommate was not being racist, it's just that they only have one story about me. When people hear that I'm Indian, they tell me how much they like curry. I don't think that's racist.

CHRISTINE'S REFLECTION

As usual, we started off this segment of the workshop by showing them the first 5 minutes of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's talk. [...]

Khalil mentioned that his takeaway from this was the issue of unconscious bias.

Sumeet on the other hand shared her experience about Indian food being pigeonholed into the category of "curry" to which Sid agreed. I recall Meenakshi's poem, "Curry" which came out of the pilot workshops. It might be worth sharing this with our participants at one point. Khalil then shared about how he himself was also guilty of understanding folks around him from the single story he knows about them.

1 S: I think this whole time (.) one thing I noticed
2 was how she:: was able to identify that (.)
3 her partner was not being racist and her roommate was
4 not being racist (.) but rather it was just the one story
5 that she knew of Africa (.) and immediately that made
6 me think of anytime perhaps I've communicated with
7 someone who was a local (.)
8 C: mm
9 S: and they told me they loved curry [cos they
10 C: [oh no
11 S: thought I was [Indian
12 P: [laughs
13 S: and so it was really:: like at that point like
14 I don't get offended or anything cos I assume that's
15 just all that they know about my culture but then
16 C: yup
17 S: but then (.) it's now that I know OK it's because of
18 all these stories (.) that they've possibly heard from (.)
19 people around them that makes them think OK India
20 equals curry or something
21 C: yeah yeah
22 S: [and it
23 P: [it does
24 all: [[laughter]]

1 S: I think this whole time (.) one thing I noticed
2 was how she:: was able to identify that (.)
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19 people around them that makes them think OK **India**
20 **equals curry or something**
21 C: yeah yeah
22 S: [and it
23 P: **[it does**
24 all: ((laughter))

1 S: **I'm loving it honestly** like it's it's been one journey
2 like I said earlier actually like which allowed me
3 to kind of reflect on (.) how my past experiences have
4 possibly changed or how I felt about belonging

6 S: um and honestly like the very first workshop like um
7 **I know we were supposed to bring like an object right**
8 M: mhm
9 S: so **like something that tells you about the sense of belonging**
10 but then **I was so confused** because I was like
11 I don't really know if like
12 M: mm
13 S: **do I really like call myself a Hong Konger: or like an In:dian**
14 M: mm
15 S: because I- I felt like you know it was (.)
16 even others touch upon this topic it's like you know
17 that feeling of (.) **either I'm both or I'm none really**
18 M: mm:
19 S: so it was just that and then I'm really hoping maybe
20 by the end of this workshop series **I'll be able to know**
21 **what exactly belonging is or how I want to define it**
22 M: mm
23 S: so I'm looking forward to more yeah

24 M: do you feel like you're starting to get a better sense of
25 that or are you even more confused
26 S: oh [[both laugh]] I feel like it goes both ways [because um
27 M: [mm
28 S: when we do like exercises like **the river thing** so
29 M: mm
30 S: like when you're thinking back you're like okay **I definitely**
31 **see in different phases of my life**
32 M: mm
33 S: **I identified as a different like with a different community**
34 M: mm

35 S: but then when you start to realize that you're like okay
36 so **maybe I can define where I want to belong** but then
37 at the same time **it doesn't really help you get**
38 **a clear picture as to (.) what that looks like for you**

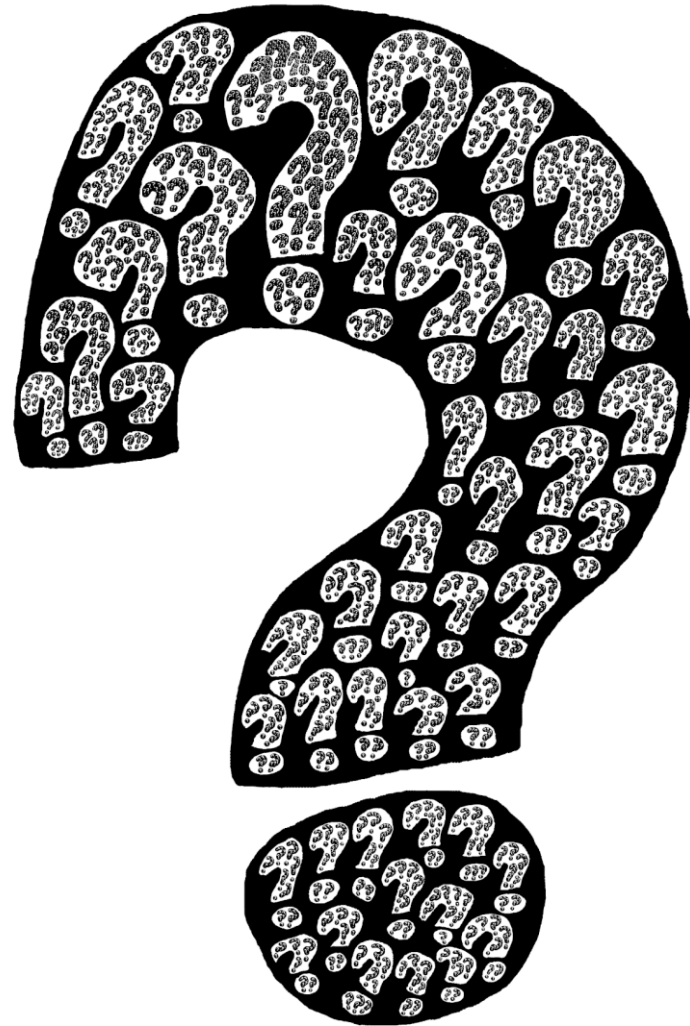
Summary

How participants negotiate the legitimacy of their belonging

How they challenge the single story of belonging typically available to minoritized students in Hong Kong

Resistance to being positioned as the linguistic, cultural and ethnic *other*

Established ideas of belonging in terms of cultural and linguistic homogeneity are inadequate



Ethics and our participatory research

Ethics of collaborative community-based research

Researcher positionality

Coloniality at a macro-scale:

Coloniality in research practice : epistemic decolonization

Decolonization is a process which engages with imperialism and colonialism at multiple levels. For researchers, one of those levels is concerned with having a more critical understanding of the underlying assumptions, motivations and values which inform research practices.

(Linda Tuhiwai Smith 2013: 20)

nexus: |
BELONGING RESEARCH NETWORK

/navigating
belonging: /

{ /navigating belonging: / Digital Stories & Emergent Findings }

Exploring Settlement for South Asians in Hong Kong Through Narratives and Participatory Photography (Research Grants Council Funded Project: GRF16600322)



AN ONLINE SYMPOSIUM

presented by the Nexus BRN Navigating Belonging Team

15 NOV 2024 (FRI) | 4:30 - 6:00 PM (HKT)

@ ZOOM (ONLINE) // ALL ARE WELCOME!

← REGISTER HERE AND WE'LL SEE YOU ON ZOOM!

“


> What does it mean to 'belong'? <


What does it mean to belong, for people from South Asian backgrounds in Hong Kong? Using **linguistic** and **visual ethnography** and **co-production**, the project addresses this question through the sociolinguistic study of narratives and through participatory photography. In so doing, it offers enhanced understanding of belonging and settlement to inform practice and policy. This online symposium presents digital stories and emergent findings from the Navigating Belonging project, which aims to understand how people in South Asian communities in Hong Kong define, find and negotiate their belonging.


> Organizer <

nexus: Belonging Research Network

nexus: Belonging Research Network is a forum for discussion of research and practice on what it is to belong in Hong Kong. Convened by **James Simpson** (Division of Humanities, HKUST) it brings together: NGO support organizations; the people they support; policy activists in social inclusion; arts and cultural bodies; academics; students; and other friends and supporters.

 <https://nexusbrn.hkust.edu.hk/>

 brn@ust.hk

 [nexus.brn](https://www.instagram.com/nexus.brn)

> In Collaboration With <

 be/longing

be/longing is a community arts-for-education lab that harnesses the transformative power of storytelling and the creative arts to co-create cultures of inclusion in Hong Kong. Through participatory storytelling and the creative arts, be/longing reimagines the way in which we reflect on what it means to belong to Hong Kong.

 <https://belonginghk.wordpress.com/>

 [belonging.hk](https://www.instagram.com/belonging.hk)

Navigating Belonging: Digital Stories and Emergent Findings

15 November 2024, 16:30-18:00 (HK)

90 minutes, online via Zoom. Link for registration:

<https://hkust.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUucOivpzwsHNUozYeaGuGUqMVdl0mM6ToG>

Thank you!

hmjsimpson@ust.hk

<https://huma.hkust.edu.hk/people/james-simpson>



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