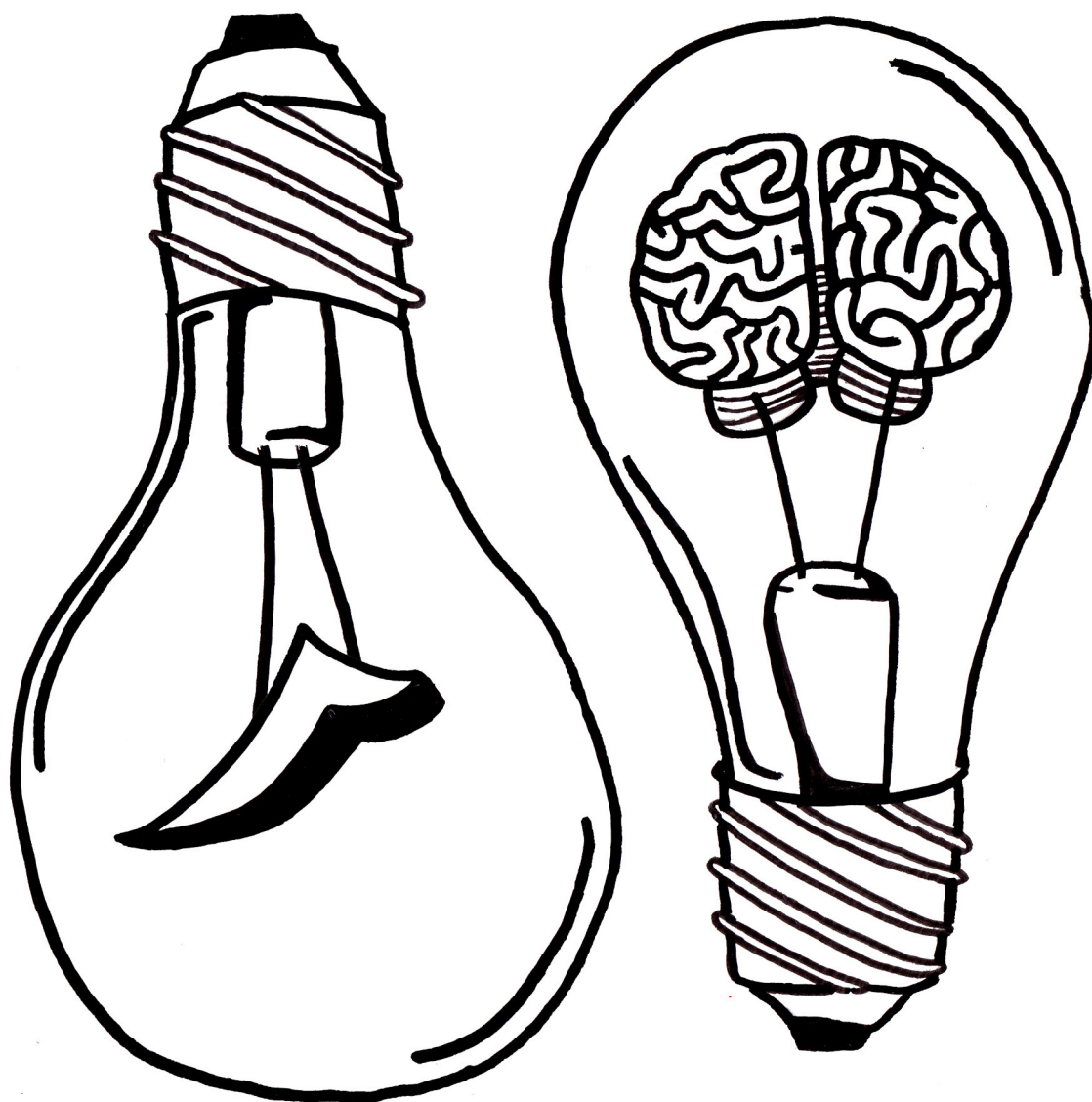


# art **vs** rehab

Criticality and Evaluation within a Culture of Optimism



**Critical Tool Kit**



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

# Introduction

**ART vs REHAB is a platform for people working in art and rehabilitation; including those working creatively in addiction, the criminal justice system, homelessness and mental health. It is a catalyst for criticality and change in the field, based on the principles of open innovation and collaborative practice**

The ART vs REHAB tool kits are the result of an ongoing conversation between over one hundred artists, therapists, academics, service users, service providers, funders and commissioners. They include contributions from...

Aidan Gray, Aidan Moesby, Ailsa Hollond, Alberto Duman, Alison Rooke, Antenisio Santos, Beth Elliott, Chloé Gayet, Christopher Wait, David Clegg, David Fried, Dean Whittington, Eleanor Shipman, Emilie Taylor, Errol Francis, Hannah Hull, Ian Patel, Ismail Ali, Jacqueline McCullough, Jamie Griffiths, Jane Fradgley, Jenny Price, Jenny Richards, Jessica Akerman, Jodie Sadler, Jonathan Banks, Kim Keith, Lesley Oakley, Linda Bartoli, Louise Prince, Louise Shelley, Manjinder Sidhu, Mark Prest, Martyn Cheesman, Matthew Taylor, Michelle Baharier, Myles Stewart, Paddy Gormley, Patricia Ferguson, Rhiannon Evans, Richard Ings, Sam Curtis, Sara Kewly Hyde, Sarah & Thomas Tobias, Sarah Jay, Scott Farlow, Silvia Battista, Simon McCormack, Sophie Hope, Susan McNally, Tam Joseph, Theresa Nash, The Vacuum Cleaner and Will Essilfie

This initiative was conceived by artist and researcher, Hannah Hull, and is supported by Arts Council England, TCCE [The Culture Capital Exchange], ICCE [Institute of Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship, Goldsmiths] and C4CC [The Centre for Creative Collaboration]

Graphic facilitation and design by Jo Buchan

## Other ART vs REHAB Tool Kits

- Artists vs Art Therapists
- The “Other” and the Mental Health History of Practitioners
- Providing and Promoting Social Inclusion: One in the Same?
- The Role of Art Institutions in Art Outreach
- The Role of Art Practitioners’ Own Art Practice

For more information about ART vs REHAB please visit [www.artvsrehab.com](http://www.artvsrehab.com)

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# Criticality and Evaluation within a Culture of Optimism

**This tool kit will look at how current evaluation processes may hinder the critical reflection needed to improve practice in the field. It will ask how it might be possible to be both inclusive and critical**

## Using this Tool Kit

The tool kit is designed to be used by a mixed group of practitioners working within art and rehabilitation. This may include artists, therapists, academics, service users, service providers, funders and commissioners

If you are working as a group, it is recommended that the group is as diverse as possible. However, many activities can be undertaken alone or in pairs

The amount of time you will need to complete tasks will depend on the size of your group. As a guide, a group of ten people should allow 30 minutes per task, approximately three hours per tool kit

The content of this tool kit has been contributed by a range of practitioners on the basis that it is freely available to support development in the field. You may not sell or charge for access to any tool kit content

# Active Listening

Sophie Hope

This task is designed to help us to consider the specific moment of critique: the point at which we give or receive criticism, and how this feels. It is based on the idea that we must have a good understanding of this moment in order to talk about criticality in more general terms

In pairs, one person talks to the other about their experience of hearing, giving and/or responding to criticism for three minutes. Then, swap roles for a further three minutes

Feedback to the group what your partner has said

**Follow with a group discussion. You may wish to consider these questions...**

- How does it feel to hear criticism?
- How does it feel to give criticism?
- Where do difficult [critical, honest] conversations happen?
- Where can't they happen?
- What would be the benefit of increased criticality, and how can we make this happen?



# Mapping Task

Hannah Hull in response to Sophie Hope

**This task is designed to help us to visualise the relationships between everyone involved in the evaluation process, from funders to participants. It also helps us to see which relationships and environments encourage or prevent critical dialogue**



## Materials

Big paper, pens, scissors  
Resource Sheet for **Mapping Task**

Cut out the images on the Mapping Task resource sheet

Place the images on a big piece of paper

Think about how these elements link to each other in your evaluation process

Use words and arrows to indicate these relationships

## While you are mapping out your evaluation process...

- Consider the 'direction' of evaluation

*Who asks for it?  
Who pays for it?  
Who sets the terms?  
Who reads it?*

Which of these parties are able to be critical of one another?

- Consider the 'site' or 'environment' of evaluation

*Where do conversations about evaluation happen?  
Where is the evaluation process designed?  
Where is it delivered?*

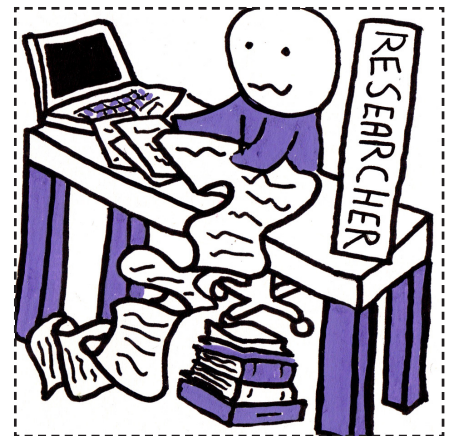
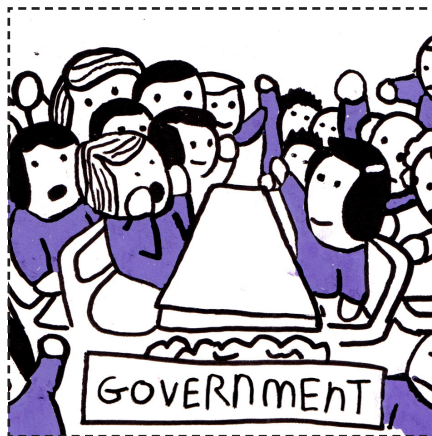
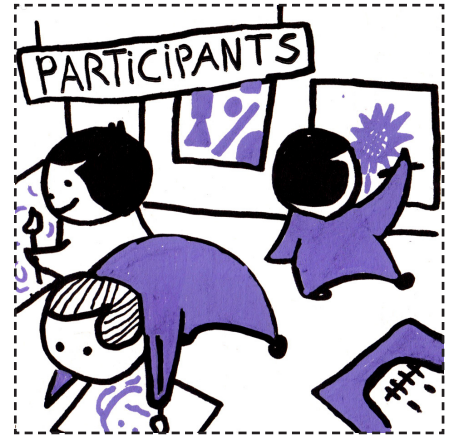
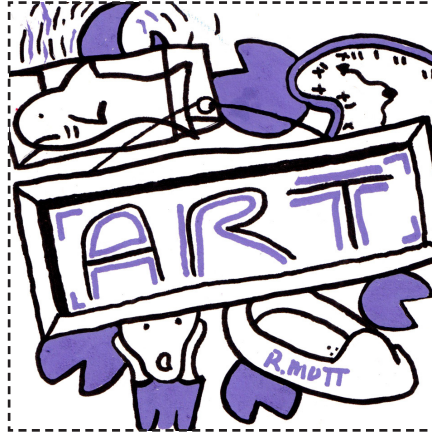
Which of these environments are conducive to critical thinking?

- Consider the use of evaluation

*Who does it directly support?  
Who does it indirectly support?  
How do you benefit?  
Is it public or private?  
Who does it secure funding for?  
Whose practice does it improve?*

Who would benefit from a more critical approach?

# Resource Sheet for Mapping Task



# Collecting Happy and Unhappy Accidents

Silvia Battista

This task is designed to help us explore the difference between positive and negative mistakes that have happened within our art projects. Can we create a language that expresses the value of making mistakes?

In pairs, discuss mistakes that have been made within projects you have worked on

Consider the short and long term effects of these mistakes, on your participants and yourself...

- In what ways were they damaging?
- In what ways can they be seen as positive?

Each pair feeds back to the group

Follow with a group discussion. You may wish to consider these questions...

- How do we observe failure?
- How do we observe success?
- How do we communicate failure?
- How do we communicate success?
- How subjective is success/failure? Is it different for our participants, our commissioners and ourselves?
- Are there both acceptable and unacceptable risks? And how do we define this boundary?



# From Newspeak to Truespeak

Matthew Taylor

This exercise encourages reflection on how words can be used to reinforce structures of power. It suggests that, to avoid doing more harm than good, we should unpack the words with which we describe our work. It aims to reverse the simplification of abstract terms that we - as optimistic practitioners - may sometimes accept as useful

The Newspeak project described in George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty Four is a playful way of introducing this task

"Newspeak is a fictional language that refers to the deliberately impoverished language promoted by the state. Newspeak is closely based on English but has a greatly reduced and simplified vocabulary and grammar. The totalitarian aim of the Party is to prevent any alternative thinking — "thoughtcrime" or "crimethink" — by destroying any vocabulary that expresses such concepts as freedom, free enquiry, individualism, resistance to the authority of the state"



## To begin

Four or five quotations are read out to the workshop participants...

*"We don't see things and then define them, we define them first and then we see them"*

**Walter Lippmann**

*"The beginning of wisdom is to call things by their proper names"*

**Confucius**

*"During times of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act"*

**George Orwell**

*"The most important Manhattan Projects of the future will be vast government-sponsored inquiries into what politicians and the participating scientists will call 'the problem of happiness' — in other words, the problem of making people love their servitude"*

**Aldous Huxley**

*"It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society"*

**Jiddu Krishnamurti**

If time allows, each quotation can be discussed by the group

*Task continued on next page*



# From Newspeak to Truespeak con.

## Word association

The participants are then asked to collectively draw up a list of words that they think are closely associated with the concept of rehabilitation. If there is a shortage of time, then the words can be pre-selected. Here is a possible list [note that, ideally, the words should be as abstract as possible]...

- Rehabilitation
- Well-being
- Growth
- Education
- Work

## Unpacking

Each pair takes a word. Spend two minutes each telling your partner what you think the word might mean. Try to stretch your understanding of the word as far as possible and to think of different ways in which different people, under different aspects of 'power', might think about the word

## Reporting to the group

At the end of the five minutes the facilitator asks each participant to report to the group as a whole on what their partner thought about their given word

## Wrapping up

The purpose of the exercise can be summed up as a means of alerting us to the ever present dangers of sliding into a Newspeak mode of thinking when it comes to the practice of rehabilitation, and as a way of bringing us back to the virtues of what Orwell called Oldspeak

W O R K

EDUCATION

GROWTH

WELL-BEING

REHABILITATION

## Materials

Pens, paper

# 'Tools' for Evaluation

Hannah Hull

This task is designed to help us think more laterally about what tools we use when evaluating projects. You will need a selection of simple objects, such as the ones drawn on this page

Each person selects an object they like the look of and states what attracted them to it

Next, think of a project you have all worked on together, or have all heard about

Going clockwise around the group, each person suggests one way in which their object could be used to evaluate the project. Go round the group three times [i.e. each person will have said three uses for their object by the end]

## Examples

### Twig

*"I'd use it to ask whether the project was organic, had grown naturally. You can examine the details of the bark, as well as the whole shape"*

Richard Ings

### Peg

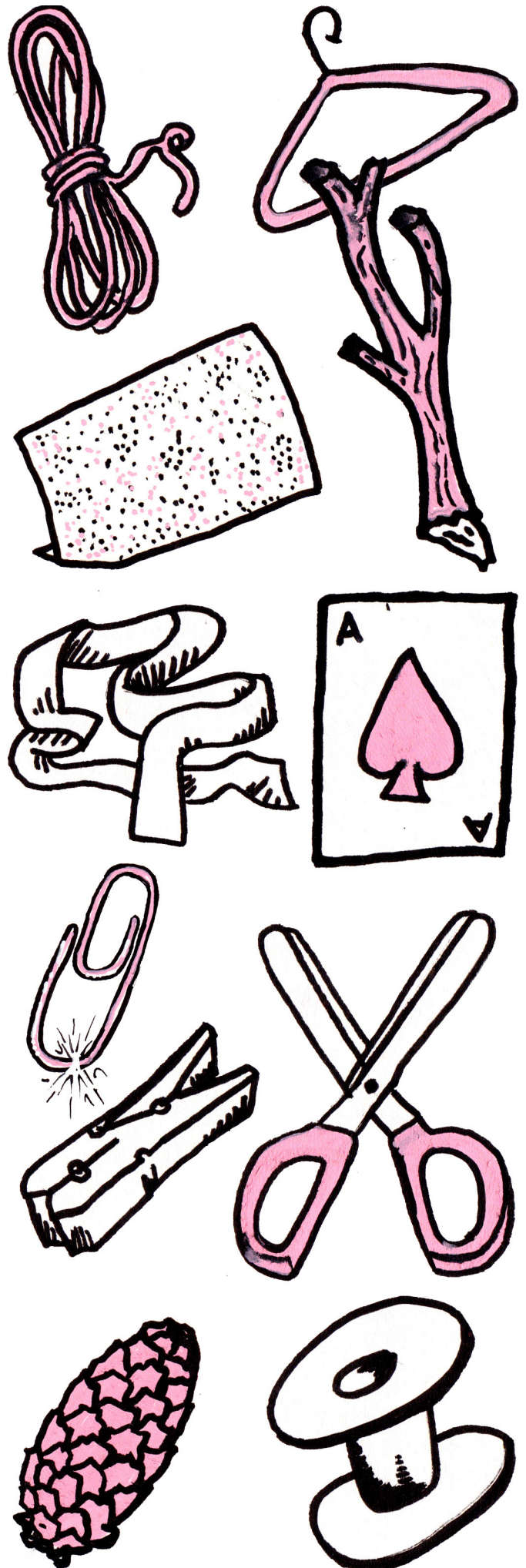
*"Participants could use it to pinch anyone they thought was not being interesting"*

Jenny Richards

### Sand Paper

*"With this, people could sand away the things they wish they hadn't said"*

Matthew Taylor



## Materials

Selection of simple objects

# Provocations for Group Discussion

As a group, discuss the following questions...

You may wish to listen to the Criticality and Evaluation in a Culture of Optimism podcast available at [www.artvsrehab.com](http://www.artvsrehab.com) to stimulate your thoughts

**What is the difference between criticism and criticality?**

**How can we develop critical thinking in young people?**

**Is there a distinction between acceptable and unacceptable risk?**

**Where do collective critical spaces exist?**

**Where have we made mistakes and can their value be communicated to our commissioners?**

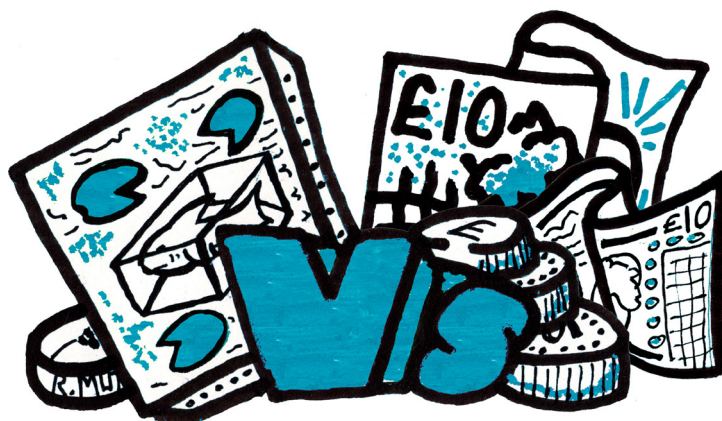
**Who supports critical thinking within projects?**

**Can we evaluate without referring to economic value?**

**Who sets the terms for evaluation/are we happy with the terms?**

**When is evaluation not advocacy?**

**Is there a conflict in agendas between those commissioning and those delivering projects?**



# Postcard Task

Print and cut out enough postcards for everyone in the group

Each take a postcard. Considering the issues you have addressed using this tool kit, think of three things you want to change about your practice/the context of your practice by this time next year

Write these three things - and your address - on the postcard

Put everyone's postcards in a big envelope and send them to...

**ART vs REHAB, ICCE, Goldsmiths,  
University of London, New Cross, London,  
SE14 6NW**

We will post them to you in a year

## Examples

*"To create channels of communication between those who run the system and those who want to change it"*

**Silvia Battista**

*"Make an alternative evaluation framework available online"*

**Matthew Taylor**

*"Find ways to voice criticism more bravely when working within 'the system'"*

**Jenny Richards**

## Materials

Scissors, pens,  
big envelope, stamp

Resource Sheet for **Postcard Task**



POST CARD



POST CARD



# USEFUL QUOTES

*"It appears, therefore, that the attempt to produce specified behavioural changes which can be measured and for which the processor can be held accountable is just one side of a coin, whose other side is the pacification of the new generation within specially engineered enclaves which will seduce them into the dream world of their elders"*

**Ivan Illich**

*"...sometimes we have to descend into hell imaginatively in order to avoid going there in reality. If we can experience something through art, then we might be able to change our future, because experience engraves lessons in our heart through suffering, whereas speculation leaves us untouched"*

**Sarah Kane**

*"It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society"*

**Jiddu Krishnamurti**

*"Learning without thought is labour lost; thought without learning is perilous"*

**Confucius**

*"Something good is unfortunately not eternally good, for otherwise there would be nothing better. If the better is to come, then the good must stand aside [304]"*

**Carl Gustav Jung**

*"The proliferation of auditing culture in post Fordism...where information has little meaning or application outside the parameters of the audit"*

**Mark Fisher**

*"Who has the right to ask who what questions; who has the right to answer; who has the right to see what; who has the right to say what; who has the right to speak for whom?"*

**Anna Deavere Smith**

*"Whenever illness is associated with loss of soul, the arts emerge spontaneously as remedies, soul medicine"*

**Shaun McNiff**

*"Citizens as conceived by governments are persons who admire the status quo and are prepared to exert themselves for its preservation. Oddly enough, while all governments aim at producing men of this type to the exclusion of all other types, their heroes in the past are of exactly the sort that they aim at preventing in the present. Americans admire George Washington and Jefferson, but imprison those who share their political opinions. The English admire Boadicea, whom they would treat exactly as the Romans did if she were to appear in modern India. All the Western nations admire Christ, who would certainly be suspect to Scotland Yard if He lived now, and would be refused American citizenship on account of His unwillingness to bear arms"*

**Bertrand Russell**

# FURTHER READING

## **Capitalist Realism**

Mark Fisher

## **Caring Culture... Art, Architecture and the Politics of Public Health**

A. Phillips & M. Miessen, eds [SKOR/Sternberg Press, 2011]

## **Conversation Pieces**

G. Kester [2004]

## **Critical Art Practice, Policy and Cultural Democracy... Opportunity in Contradiction**

Kate Dumbleton

## **Curating and the Educational Turn**

Paul O'Neill & Mick Wilson [De Appel, 2010]

## **Illusion and Reality**

David Smail

## **Mapping the Terrain**

S. Lacy [1994]

## **Must Have**

Geoffrey Miller

## **Nineteen Eighty-Four**

George Orwell

## **No Room to Move**

Josephine Berry Slater and Anthony Iles [Mute Publishing, 2011]

## **Participating in the Wrong Way? Four Experiments by Sophie Hope**

S. Hope [2011]

## **Pedagogy of the Oppressed**

P. Freire and M. Bergman Ramos [1970]

## **Repressive Tolerance**

H. Marcuse [1965]

## **Shakespeare Comes to Broadmoor**

Edited by Murray Cox

## **Social Works**

Shannon Jackson [Routledge, 2011]

## **The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude... Global Art, Memory and Post-Fordism**

Pascal Gielen [Valiz, 2010]

## **The Upside of Down**

Thomas Homer-Dixon

## **We're Not All in This Together... Public Space and Antagonism in the Wake of Capitalist Realism**

Mark Fisher [Verso, 2011]