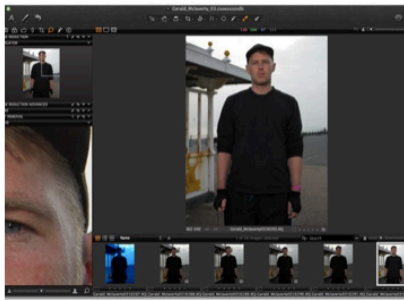


Representing Homelessness

Anthony Luvera: Frequently Asked Questions / Assembly

(Resource 1 of 3)

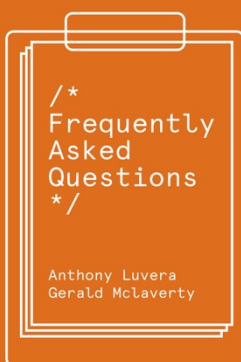
These resources have been produced in support of two exhibitions about homelessness, at The People's Republic of Stokes Croft in Bristol, and at The Gallery at Foyles in Foyles Bookshop, Charing Cross Road, London. Both shows are by Anthony Luvera, an Australian artist, writer and educator based in London. For dates, further insights, activities and discussion points, visit photopedagogy.com/representing-homelessness



Frequently Asked Questions...

Both exhibitions feature an ongoing project, Frequently Asked Questions, created by Luvera in collaboration with Gerald McLaverty, a man who has experienced homelessness. The project was initially intended to provide useful information for homeless people but, when responses from councils failed to materialise, the project became about a worrying gap in the system of social care, further highlighting the challenges facing people experiencing homelessness.

Consider this: Imagine you are approached by a homeless person in your own neighbourhood. You are politely asked the following questions:



- Where can I go for something to eat or drink?
- Where can I find shelter when it is raining or snowing?
- Where can I go to the toilet during the day?
- Where can I go to the toilet during the night?
- Where can I get a bath or shower?
- Where can I get clothes, footwear, and a blanket?
- Where can I wash my clothes?
- Where can I sleep during the night that is safe?
- Where can I go to use a computer?
- Where can I go to use a telephone?
- Where can I go to see a doctor?
- Where can I go to see a dentist?
- Where can I access facilities for my pet dog (food, bags for waste, vetcare)?

For discussion:

- Which questions would you feel fully confident in answering correctly? Which answers would you consider a priority for a homeless person?
- If a homeless person was to put these questions to your local authority, what answers or quality of support should they expect?
- Have you ever considered what it might be like to be homeless in your local area? Where might you sleep during the night that is safe?

For further information visit photopedagogy.com/representing-homelessness

Representing Homelessness

Anthony Luvera: Frequently Asked Questions / Assembly

(Resource 2 of 3)

Frequently Asked Questions was first presented in 2014 as part of a photography project created with over 50 homeless people in Brighton called **Assembly**. This multifaceted community-centred project included photographs taken by homeless participants, **Assisted Self-Portraits**, documentation of Anthony Luvera working with participants, and installation and performance work.



Left: Assisted Self-Portrait of Odette Antoniou. Above: Image taken by participant, Brighton 2014

Frequently Asked Questions demonstrates that even the most seemingly straightforward questions can remain unanswered by those in authority. Why is it that some local authorities (or more broadly, those in positions of power) might fail to respond sufficiently? In what ways might being homeless or poor hinder opportunities for satisfactory answers?

Below are some suggested activities to respond to these issues:

- Which societal concerns - local, national or global - do you feel need addressing? Construct a list of questions and address them to an organisation or individual who you imagine should be able to answer. For example, you might wish to ask questions about your school to the headteacher, questions about climate change policy to the prime minister, or questions about lack of facilities for young people where you live to the leader of the council. **How might your questions be represented visually, for example as a set of photographs, a photomontage, or a short film?**
- Imagine you are the recipient of your own questions. Research possible answers and create a written or visual response.
- Explore your local area with your camera. Consider how you might take photographs that represent the frustrations of not being listened to or responded to. What might you photograph that represents a: dead-end; an endless wait; a sense of vulnerability; a lost cause; a sense of time passing; a lack of control?
- How might you use or share your photography to provoke others into thinking about these issues?

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Representing Homelessness

Anthony Luvera: Frequently Asked Questions / Assembly

(Resource 3 of 3)

Socially Engaged Practice

Photographs do not just record the world around us, they influence our behaviours, actions and understanding. Since its invention - for good and bad affect - photography has played a significant part in shaping culture and societies. So today, how might photographs help us to understand an issue or problem in society so that we can change it for the better?

Socially Engaged Practice describes a deliberate attempt by artists and photographers to empower people to represent themselves, to participate as equals in the process of making images and to have a say in the ways these images are shared with a wider audience.



Left: Assisted Self-Portrait of Ben Evans. Above: Anthony Luvera and Ben Evans, Brighton 2014

Anthony Luvera collaborates with marginalised members of the community, providing cameras so that they may photograph themselves, rather than being documented solely by him. He often acts as a technician, providing support for how to use the cameras he provides. The process of making these collaborative images is also captured, often with single use, disposable cameras, and the resulting photographs are distributed and displayed in unconventional ways. Luvera exposes the ethical issues at the heart of the documentary tradition of photography, the imbalance of power between photographer and subject and the tendency to objectify the 'other'.

For discussion:

- Is it okay to profit from a photograph of a person experiencing homelessness? In what ways might the photographer/the subject/the viewer benefit?
- From security cameras to encounters with wannabe street photographers, in what ways do you think a homeless person might be photographed or recorded each day?

Activity:

- Create a fictional timeline - a fictional day-in-the-life of a person experiencing homelessness. Tell a story via images only. Take to the streets and try to document life as you might imagine it, through the eyes of someone challenged with homelessness. Consider how objects or alternative viewpoints might represent particular experiences or challenges encountered by your fictional character.

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