

Citation for published version:

Allan Jepson, and Alan Clarke, 'Introducing Power, Meaning and Authenticity', in Allan Jepson and Alan Clarke, eds., *'Power, Construction and Meaning in Festivals'* (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2018)

DOI:

[Link to published version](#)

Document Version:

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Introducing power, meaning and authenticity

Allan Jepson and Alan Clarke

Our book contains contributions from 20 researchers, all of which are intrigued by the prospect of what events can achieve positively for their stakeholders', and the ways in which power, meaning and authenticity are central concepts to achieving potential positive outcomes in the creation of events.

We begin in [Chapter 2](#) with “A Q-study of Organisers’ Perspectives on Factors of Festival Success in Crete” by Dimitrios P. Stergiou and Eirini Pehlivanidou, from the Hellenic Open University, Greece and David Airey, from the University of Surrey, United Kingdom. They observe that regional events play an important role in the Cretan tourism product with many communities hosting regional festivals. Exploring these from a managerial perspective, the authors note that these festivals provide a range of entertainment and activities and identify many factors that determine their success. The study used Q-methodology to uncover festival success factors based on the subjective perceptions of festival organisers in Crete and identify clusters of participants sharing common viewpoints. The Q-analysis identified two factors representing different perspectives of festival organizer opinion about success factors in the Cretan festival market: A Communitarian/Person-oriented focus and a Pragmatic/Traditional Management focus.

In [Chapter 3](#) Zoe White and Raphaela Stadler from the University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom raise some interesting challenges to what is seen as one of the most successful

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events. The chapter is entitled “I Don’t Think They Give a Monkey’s about Me”: Exploring Stakeholder Power and Community Alienation at Glastonbury Festival”, and they argue that it is becoming more and more recognised that the needs of the host community need to be met and satisfied in order to ascertain their support for future music festivals. Empowering the host community, including them in the decision-making process, or co-creating the event experience with them have all been found to be essential elements of the planning process and in ensuring the long-term success of a festival.

Moving on, [Chapter 4](#) takes us to Australia, as Karine Dupre, from Griffith University, Australia, presents a study entitled “Event Evolution and the Planning Process: The Case of the Finnish Housing Fair”. She observes the Finnish housing fair is an event that promotes the quality of housing and living conditions in Finland by displaying building products and buildings in a different city across the country each year. For five years, it has attracted more than 110,000 visitors. The study details how this community event is planned, constructed and valued. The focus on processes shows that early strategy, flexibility and adaptation are the key elements to ensure long-term sustainability. Overall, this case study provides a greater understanding into the relationships, dynamics and planning processes of festivals and events and the impact this has with the local communities they serve.

In [Chapter 5](#), Susanna Heldt Cassel from Dalarna University, Sweden offers a powerful analysis of performances of nation, gender and rurality in the sporting and heritage festival of Landsmót in Iceland. She argues that events and festivals celebrating national identity or the uniqueness of the cultural and traditions of a specific region or place may be interpreted as arenas where identities of both people and places are staged and performed. Sports and cultural events may enhance and play with identities, such as the co-construction of gender identities and

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national identities, as a part of the event or festival itself. These co-constructions and expressions of identity discourses as part of events and festivals are not least reinforced with the impact of social media and the posting of images by many other actors than the organisers and managers of the event.

David Jarman, from Edinburgh Napier University, United Kingdom, offers an intriguing analysis entitled “Personal Networks in Festival, Event and Creative Communities: Perceptions, Connections and Collaborations” in [Chapter 6](#). This chapter introduces the application of ego network analysis methods to the study of perceived personal networks in the festival, event and creative industries. From an opening critique of traditional stakeholder analyses, which it is argued lack the detail necessary to adequately reflect the experiences of individuals in these industries, two case studies are used to introduce and apply this form of social network analysis. Examination and comparison of the cases reveals compositional and structural elements of the two networks, providing evidence of the individuals’ social capital and brokerage potential. The potential for network analysis to reveal a person’s power within their community is considered.

[Chapter 7](#) offers a discussion of innovation and empowerment, or rather disempowerment by Grzegorz Kwiatkowski, from Koszalin University of Technology, Poland and Anne-Mette Hjalager, from the University of Southern Denmark. Based on an empirical survey among 315 Danish rural festivals, this chapter addresses the opportunities for the management of festivals to provide continuous innovations. Taking into account that festival management is largely a bottom-up process occurring in a multi-actor environment, the authors conclude that local and external collaboration tend to limit an innovative capacity, and festivals’ management needs to proceed gently with more radical categories of changes. The chapter distinguishes between self-

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empowerment, community empowerment and bridging empowerment aiming finally to establish a collective innovative orientation.

[Chapter 8](#) by W. Gerard Ryan, from the University of Salford, United Kingdom, and Stephen Kelly, from Staffordshire University, United Kingdom, take the focus in “The Effects of Supply Chain Management (SCM) Activities and Their Impact Upon Festival Management and the Customer Experience”. They observe that as the number of festivals and the need to provide more satisfying customer experiences continue to grow, the challenges faced by festival managers have become more complicated than ever. For them, this means that festival organisers are becoming progressively more reliant on their inter-organisational/delivery partners to sustain and improve their ongoing operational activity. Supply Chain Management (SCM) provides a new dimension to a traditional perspective on the management of festivals, as collective co-operation can lead to the provision of superior value to customers. Through data collected from multiple semi-structured interviews with directors and employees at UK-based music events and festival suppliers, this chapter offers insights into how the effective and efficient management of SCM carries additional benefits to festival delivery.

For [Chapter 9](#), our attention is drawn to Canada by Mohamed Reda Khomsi from the University of Quebec, Canada. Montreal was the first Canadian city to host major international events such as the World Fair of 1967 and the Olympic Games of 1976. The impact of these two events remained very limited or even negative if we consider skepticism observed among citizens regarding the hosting of major events. Unlike these two events, the celebrations of the 350th anniversary of the city celebrated in 1992 will be shown to have important spin-offs for the city. This chapter aims to explain how an event with lower value, cost and international influence can

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generate greater benefits for the host community than hallmark events and is called “The Importance of the Stakeholder Relationship for the Success of an Event; The Case of Montreal”.

In [Chapter 10](#), Trudie Walters, from the University of Otago, New Zealand addresses themes central to this collection in a contribution entitled “‘Power Wrestling’: The Life and (Untimely) Death of the Real Food Festival” (which is a title the editors would have loved to have come up with first!) The author notes that the life cycles of local community events and festivals and the attendant role of power in these life cycles is not well understood, particularly when a festival ceases to exist. This chapter examines the evolution of a local community food festival in Southeast Queensland, Australia, and investigates the changing nature of power relations during its existence. ‘Power to’ (as an enabling force) was explicitly implicated in the conceptualising and creation of the festival, whilst ‘power over’ (as a constraining force) shaped its life course and contributed to its (untimely) death.

Ruth Dowson and Ian Lamond from Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom, turn their attention to religion and politics in “Event, Authenticity and Meaning: A Dialogical Approach”, [Chapter 11](#). This chapter transgresses the old adage, ‘never discuss religion or politics’. Taking a dialogical approach, the similarities and differences in how we can understand the articulation of events within church and social movement communities are discussed. Adopting the format of a conversation, the authors’ examine their differing conceptual positions and practical experiences, establishing points of similarity and difference. They argue that contemporary social movement and religious discourses and practices frequently find expression through formal and informal events, and they conclude that maybe the two are not as far apart as we may have first thought.

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Joanna Fountain and Michael Mackay, from Lincoln University, New Zealand offer “Commemoration, Celebration, and Commercialisation: Akaroa’s French Festival” as [Chapter 12](#). They explore how the township of Akaroa has held a community festival celebrating the French heritage of the town for more than two decades. In 2015, the festival was larger than ever before, marking 175 years since the first French settlers arrived. Based primarily on in-depth interviews, this chapter explores the meanings this festival holds for a range of festival stakeholders. The analysis reveals that different stakeholders attribute varied meanings to the event, ranging from the largely commercial to the personally significant, with a clear distinction evident between meanings framed around ‘celebration and spectacle’ and those centred on remembering the region’s cultural heritage.

Jelena Đurkin, from the University of Rijeka, Croatia, and Nicholas Wise, from Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom, take us to Croatia for [Chapter 13](#) in their chapter titled “Managing Community Stakeholders in Rural Areas” by assessing the organisation of local sports events in Gorski Kotar, Croatia. This chapter explores the complexity of organising small-scale sport events in rural areas by analysing important characteristics of rural areas and the overlapping of stakeholder categories. These findings are supported by empirical evidence from a case study and new insights on distrust and different desired social and economic outcomes of local organisers have come to light.

In the final contribution in [Chapter 14](#), the editors return to reflect on the contributions contained in the volume and defending the cause for greater research of the kinds found here. They argue that there is still much work to do in deepening our understanding of the forces behind festivals and events.

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We very much hope that you will enjoy reading this collection as much as we did working with the contributors. The chapters are thought provoking and tease out many of the themes which contribute to a critical understanding of festivals and events.