Unions Opening Up Space in Regions

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Where is North West Tasmania?

- Isolated
- Deindustrialising
- Contested narratives about its future
- High levels of disadvantage
Space as a Social Construct

• Space as a social construct (Harvey, 2000)

• Multiple interpretations and meanings
  – Relationship with place (Harvey, 2000)
  – Opening up of ‘institutional space’ (O’Brien at al., 2004)
How Can Unions Influence Regions?

• Influence of neo-liberalism
• Regional development as a participatory practice
• Unions can participate in regeneration in a number of ways
  – Embedded in the community (Tattersall, 2005)
  – Emphasise the need for balance between objectives
  – Promote development sensitive to region’s concerns (Pike et al, 2007)
• Lock-in as an inhibitor
But How Do Unions Influence Regions?

- Peak union bodies
- Trade and Labour Councils
- Individual unions
- Representation on government bodies
- New forms of union organisation
  - Community unionism?
Governance – An Opportunity?

• Cradle Coast Authority
  – Devolution of governance
  – Some Councils possibly withdrawing

• Councils
  – Economic Development

• Fragmentation of governance
New Forms of Union Space?

- Unions sharing offices
- Revitalisation of traditional union celebrations
- Campaigning
- New Unions Tasmania secretary
- New forms of union organisation?
- Fragmenting of governance - an opportunity?