

SightLines Initiative

Registered Charity No 1087834



# Everyday Freedoms

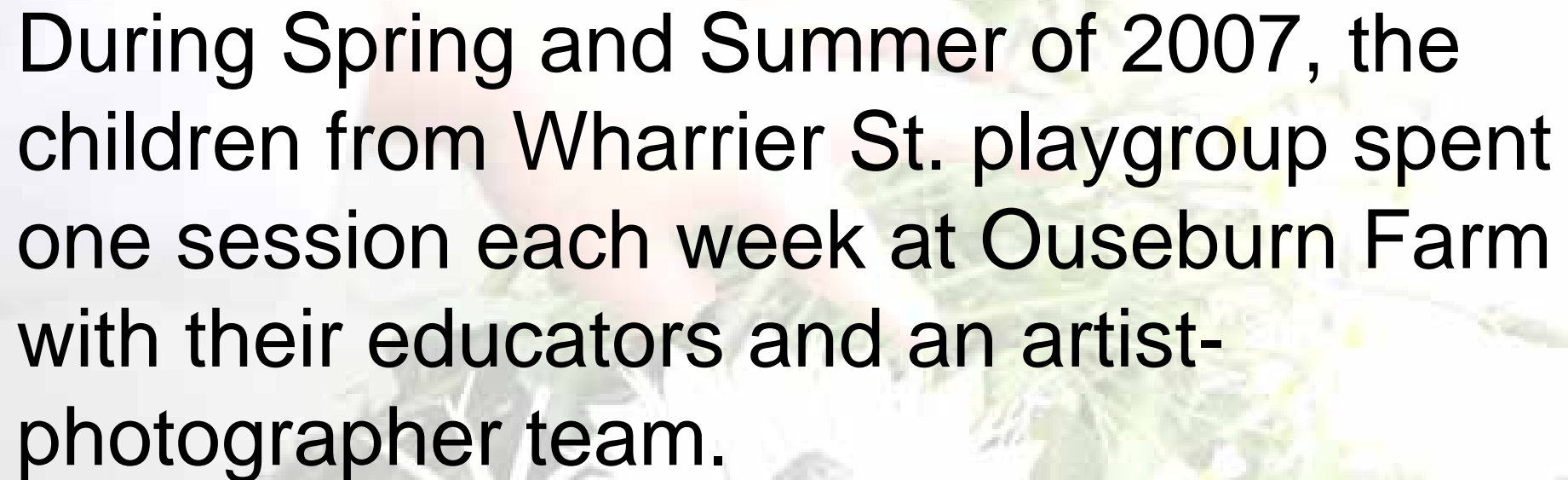
A project with the children of Wharrier  
Street Playgroup in Ouseburn Farm  
Spring – Summer 2007

supported by

newcastle  
neighbourhood  
renewal



  
**SureStart**  
Learning, Skills and Progress



During Spring and Summer of 2007, the children from Wharrier St. playgroup spent one session each week at Ouseburn Farm with their educators and an artist-photographer team.

The interests and fascinations that emerged there were supported back at playgroup by the adults, and became the focus of the children's work.



At Playgroup







The children are shown pictures of the farm before their first visit.



What do they think they might find there?

Marlie 'There might be a monster.'

Kieron 'It might be a scary farm!'

Abbey 'We might see some animals.'

Paige 'Sheep in there.'

# First Encounters



Marlie 'That big, right up there!'





Abbey 'I was the leader!'



Abbey 'Marlie do you want to help me sort the rocks out?

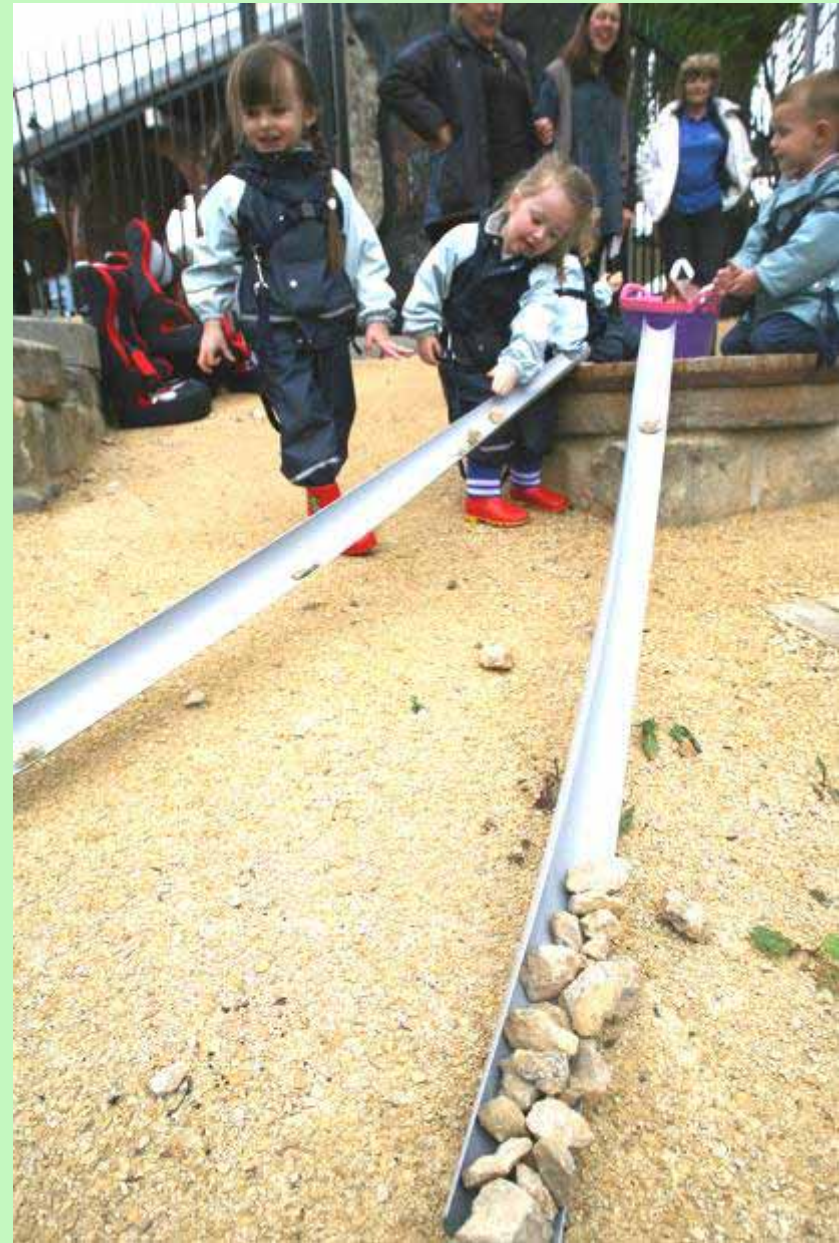
Marlie 'I got another stone. I'm sorting the rocks out.'





Back at nursery photos of their play are shared with the children, and the materials which interested them are offered for further exploration.





The work with moving and arranging stones continues and develops back at the farm.





Kieron seems very interested in up and down, and loves using these materials to explore movement.

‘I have to do lots.  
The big un’s on here.  
Big one’s under here!  
Fell off, we need some  
bigger ones!’



The farm offers the children real physical challenges.











Abbey 'I been in the hole.'



Shannelle 'I hoyin it!'

Kieron 'I getting mine!  
You need to get it up. I'm  
paintin!'





At playgroup the children spontaneously recreate these physical challenges.



# The Finds



The environment of the Farm offers the children opportunities to become collectors and arrangers.



Shannon's shell









Kieron 'I'm getting a fishy!'



The seasonal changes bring new wonders for the children.







Sophie opens a poppy seed head.  
'I opened it, look!  
Them are hard. What's inside?'  
She sees the tiny poppy seeds.  
'Flower eggs!'





Marlie ' Little baby  
flowers. Aaaah!'





The children are offered acetates and pens to capture images of the poppies and other flowers.











# Planting a garden at playgroup









# Birds and nests



The children are becoming more empathetic



Kieron 'Look at him!  
It's dead.'

Marlie 'It's poorly.'

Kieron 'It needs the doctor.'

Marlie 'He's tickly.'

Marlie 'We'll have to find another one. Cover him up.'

Kieron 'Watch his mouth and eyes. Will he wake up on Sunday  
and fly a little bit?'

Kieron 'I'm havin a good  
look.

What name is it?'

Marlie 'He won't talk.'

Kieron 'Should we look for  
some that are flying?'





The children become interested in the birds they can hear but never see .

How can they tempt them to come down to earth?

The children decide to offer bird seed.

Abbey 'The birds will sing for it.'

Sophie 'This grass is lovely and soft.'

Sophie is the most interested in the idea of birds.

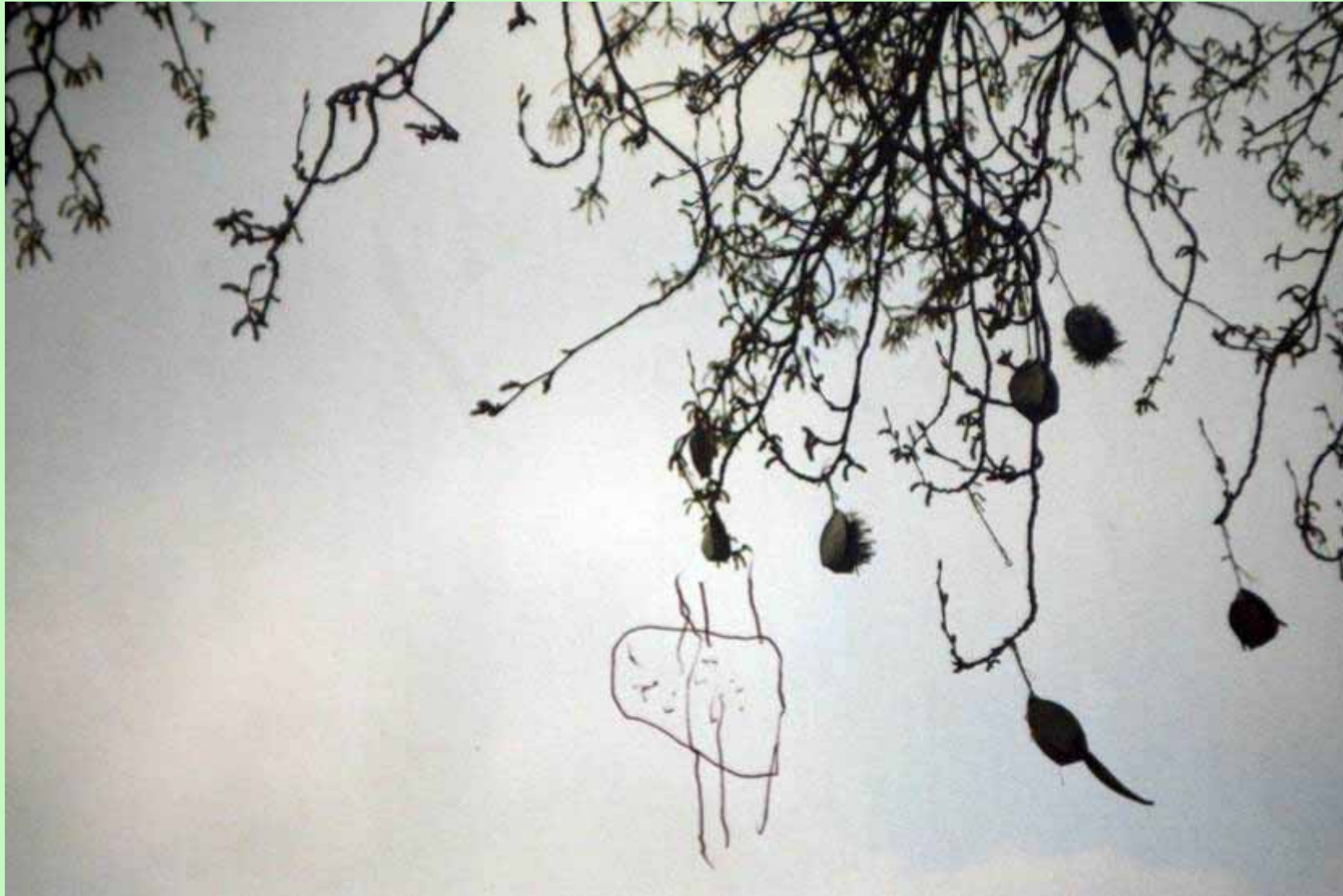
' I can hear the birds.'



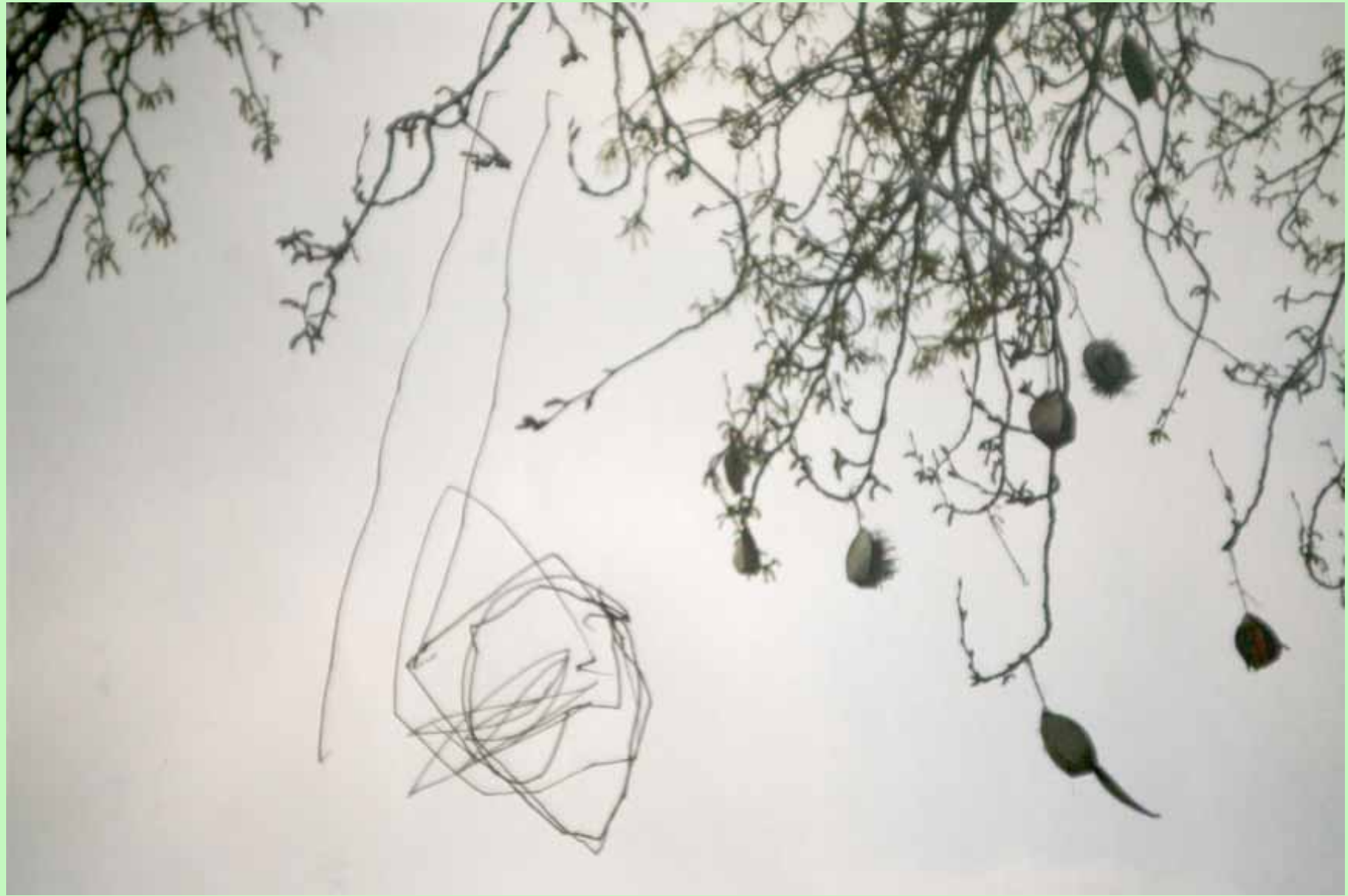


Marlie 'That one's going to come out. There's birds over here in the flowers. In the flowers!'









Back at nursery  
the children are  
offered an  
'invisible bird',  
and create  
nests for it from  
photos and  
stones.





Libby's nest



# Drawing and recollection

The children realise that their ideas are important, and begin to join in the documentation process, scribing and drawing like the adults.







Abbey is offered pictures and books to create her own record of the farm.

Abbey 'That's my book, all about the park. That says 'park.' That says 'ladybird.'



I need photos of flowers, ladybirds, apples and pips. A den. And what about a bee?' It's the story of the park. I'll tell you when it's finished.

Abbey always has her  
book and pen.





The children realise that the camera is a useful tool.

They look at photos to help remember their work and share their experiences with their parents.

It can also help them answer questions.

Kieron 'What do I look like with my eyes closed?'





# Children as experts



One wet day the children decide they need a shelter.

A sculptor is invited to playgroup and then to the farm to help them build a den.



Paige 'I want a bigger house. I need some nails'





Shannon 'I go through. You do it!

Kieron

‘What about this? You need  
to have it all over.

I know how to do this! I  
know how to do it!

I putting the screws and  
everything!’







On the next farm visit the children build themselves a bigger den.

Kieron is now an expert builder.

‘I want the hammer and nails.’

Sophie ‘It needs a chair and a chimney.’







More Creature Fascinations:  
Ladybirds, worms and snails.









Marlie 'Put him in the grass. He needs his Mam.'



Marlie 'There's a daddy, a mammy, a baby a little girl.'  
Oh, she's nice. Look she's cracking! No! Don't let her fly.'



## Sophie makes a Lady bird House

Sophie 'It's a house. It needs some dinner. Some more dinner. He has to have lots of dinner or we might lose him. A bed. Another bed. A chair.

The ladybird might be happy.

He needs a fridge! Milk.

There's the milk.

A telly!'





Marlie 'Where's that boy gone?

Sophie 'Where's he going? He's drinking his milk.'

Photos of the farm are offered and the children draw their ladybirds in situ, describing them as they sketch.

Shanelle's ladybird is all action, leaving a trail behind.

Libby's ladybird is tiny and soft 'It's like a circle.'

Marlie 'Her's a good girl ladybird. She's got legs, little legs, big wings and eyes.'







Back at nursery the children make more and more ladybirds



To support the interest in ladybirds, one of the parents makes ladybird outfits for all of the children. Now they become ladybirds themselves, and inhabit the farm and playgroup.







Finding creatures is a big interest in the group now.

Abbey 'It's a baby, a little girl called Moulin.'

Kieron 'Look! Snail!'  
Paige 'Look at the boy!  
Marlie 'He's getting big!  
He's getting faces!'





Marlie 'He's doin  
hiccups.'

Paige 'He's got googly  
eyes and he's got his  
ears as well.'  
Marlie ' He's in a mood.  
I'm the mammy and I'm  
the doctor.'  
Paige 'We two are the  
doctor in the house.'







Kieron 'I'm going to make him a blanket.'

Marlie 'He's going to sleep.'

Marlie 'He's laughing.'

Shannelle 'Put him in the soil.'



On the final day the children host their parents on a visit to the farm and celebrate with a party.





