

Provocation workshop 3

So what's so different about creativity and health?

There were twelve other successful bids for the 'Nature of Creativity' awards (see http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/apply/research/sfi/NCA/nature_of_creativity_awards.as).

The Institute for Capitalising on Creativity have particularly good documentation on their series of workshops running under the title 'The Discipline of Creativity: Exploring the Paradox' (see <http://www.capitalisingoncreativity.ac.uk/research.html>).

The first was titled "Inherent Unknowability': Recognising Creativity and Successful Endeavour'. Themes within this day were 'The Process of Creativity' and 'Creating Creative Processes'.

The second session looked at "Art for Arts Sake?': Responses to Commercialisation' (sic) and included a session on 'Creativity as Carnival: The Clash in the Aesthetic Economy from 1976-85'.

The third was called "Infinite Variety': Variety in Creative Production, the Role of Audience Responses and the Possibilities of Standardisation' and included a session on 'Education and Communication: Multiple Models of Engaging with an Audience'.

The fourth was focused on "This Motley Crew': Managing 'Creatives and the Creative Unit' and included sessions on 'Defining 'Creative Partnerships' in Education: Concepts, Contexts and Conflicts' and 'Management - the Missing Link? Exploring the Creative Labour in the Cultural Industries'.

The final meeting was titled "Ars Longa': Establishing Value' and included sessions called 'Is Creativity Always Creative?' and "Towards Transformation': Conceptions of Creativity in Learning and Teaching'.

Looking over this programme there is a challenge to consider what is particular about our project.

Perhaps it is about the metaphors that we use? In seeking to combine creativity with health perhaps we might use phrases such as those suggested by Beattie who speaks of "new choreographies of health and wellbeing" and develop new ways of expressing what a creative approach to the area might offer?

Perhaps it is our awareness of the importance of space - both intellectual and physical - which may arise due to our concern with the institutional apparatus of the NHS and the way in which, as Foucault terms it, they "spacialise" discourse? Other co-ordinates of creativity have also been in our thinking alongside space - both time and scale. We have considered whether it is possible to 'fast-track' creativity and whether there should be a differentiation between 'big' and 'small' creativity. Again, it is interesting to think whether and how these concerns relate particularly to the organisational

context of health and care within the UK. Bardram notes that “Within most organisations, the time period, and not the task, is the focal unit of production” yet is there something particular about the NHS and its “temporal co-ordination” that might affect the application of creativity? Kazanjian et al discuss how organizational learning generally takes place through a complex interplay of the micro and macro. Is there something about what Kazanjian terms the “organizational architecture” of the NHS that may resist within team, between team and system-level interdependencies?

Such considerations perhaps lead to a primary concern with the organizational/institutional structures of health and care and how they promote or hinder creativity. Yet this does not quite seem to capture the full scope of our project. At the beginning we considered how creativity in health and care could perhaps be seen to occupy the overlap between personal and organizational creativity and that humanistic values of the creative spirit and the significance of self-actualisation remain important when considering the working practices of those involved in the provision of health and care. Our discussions around education seem to have brought this up most strongly - i.e. what does it mean to train creative practitioners? - so perhaps it is the particularities of the activity of health and care provision that makes this exploration into creativity unique?

Around all of these issues the notion of risk has been significant and it seems that this has particular currency in an area that is concerned with people who are in a vulnerable position in some way - perhaps because they are ill and in receipt of healthcare or because they are in low-status jobs as providers of healthcare.

It does seem that we are dealing with a particular set of issues that inter-relate in interesting ways and now we just need to think of what to call a symposium that brings them together!

Bibliography

Bardram, Jakob ‘Temporal Coordination -On Time and Coordination of CollaborativeActivities at a Surgical Department’,
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Beattie, Alan ‘Moving Beings: Dance and the Re-metaphorisation of Health’, *Through the Looking Glass: A Critical Connections Summit*, Leeds, 2007.

Foucault, Michel. *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*. Alan Sheridan (trans.). London: Routledge, 1973; 1997.

Kazanjian, Robert et al ‘Creativity and Technological Learning: The Roles of Organisation (sic) Architecture and Crisis in Large-scale Projects’, *Journal of Engineering and Technology management*, 17, 3, 2000: 273-298.