(IM) POSSIBILITIES OF CREATIVITY IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

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http://youtu.be/2QWG_z9076k
• The Popularity of Creativity
• What is Creativity? Different Approaches
• The Creative Economy
• Taming Creativity
• The Impossibilities of Creativity in the Corporatized University
• The Possibilities of Creativity
LOTS OF TALK ABOUT CREATIVITY

*Reinvesting in Arts Education: Winning America’s Future Through Creative Schools* (2011, USA)

How to Books:

http://www.creativecity.ca/
Creative Education Foundation
American Creativity Association
CREATIVITY AND POLICY MAKING

“The creative economy has the potential to generate income and jobs while promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development.” (UN, 2008)

UNESCO (2012) – “recognizes creativity as a precious resource with a potential to generate economic benefit”

“As well as generating economic growth, the creative industries are built on core skills that also act as a broad stimulant to innovation” (Creative Industries, a Strategy for 21st Century Australia, 2010)
WHAT IS CREATIVITY?

Novelty - synthesizing info and see old problems in new ways
Distinguishing between new combinations

An act of the subliminal self, which is “capable of discernment; it has tact, delicacy; it knows how to choose, to divine” (Poincaré)

CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION
CREATIVITY THEORIES

- Products
- People/Personality
- Processes
- Economic
PRODUCTS PERSPECTIVE

This research examines inventions, publications, works of art, etc.

Aim: to count and judge/evaluate these creative products in an objective way.
PERSONALITY PERSPECTIVE

Some characteristics typical of creative people
1) Physically energetic, yet quiet and at rest
2) Smart, yet naïve.
3) Disciplined, yet playful
4) Imaginative, yet grounded in sense of reality
5) Extroverted and introverted
6) Humble and proud
7) Rebellious/independent, yet know their field
8) Passionate and objective
10) Open and sensitive
11) Intrinsically motivated
COGNITIVE PROCESSES PERSPECTIVE

Focus on cognitive processes that may lead to creative performance (e.g. Wallas,)

4 stage process:

1) Preparation
2) Incubation
3) Illumination – Eureka!
4) Verification or revision
LIMITS TO PERSONALITY AND COGNITIVE PROCESSES APPROACHES

Examining personality characteristics and processes useful, but limited. Prediction based on these factors left much of the variance in creative achievement unexplained. Factors are only correlates of creativity, conditions that facilitate its occurrence. They don’t tell us what creativity is.
Creativity: judgments based on criteria that change from domain to domain, culture to culture, and over time

“Without a comparative evaluation of art historians, Rembrandt’s creativity would not exist.”
(Csikszentmihalyi, 1990)
ECONOMIC THEORIES OF CREATIVITY

1) Impact of creativity on economic growth
2) Developing markets for creativity
3) Generating income, jobs, $$$
That driving force is the rise of human creativity as the key factor in our economy and society. Both at work and in other spheres in our lives, we value creativity more highly than ever, and cultivate it more intensely. The creative impulse ... is now being let loose on an unprecedented scale.
THE NEW CREATIVE ECONOMY

INFORMATION AGE, NEW KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY, CREATIVE ECONOMY

Shift industrial to knowledge society
CREATIVITY NO LONGER VIEWED AS A TRANSGRESSIVE PHENOMENON. “IT MUST BE MAINSTREAMED AND DOMESTICATED...IN WHICH INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS BECOME SELF-INVESTING AND SELF-MANAGING SUBJECTS.” (HAY AND KAPITZE, 2009)
CREATIVITY & THE CORPORATIZED UNIVERSITY

CREATIVITY ≠

Corporatization of higher education
CORPORATIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- funding-based economic incentives
- emphasis on entrepreneurialism
- quantification of time and output
- monitoring and measurement
- competitive ranking of personnel and institutions
- performance appraisal & performance pay
- contracts with incentives to partner with industry and commercialize research
- accountability and audit regime
- casualization of labour (contract faculty)
IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH?

Emphasis on accountability – less time for research

What kind of research is valued, funded?
- practical and measurable outcomes

UK – Research Excellence Framework – no funding of “pointless research” in higher ed

“Compliant research imagination”
(Kenway & Fahey, 2009)
WORK INTENSIFICATION AND CREATIVITY

THE CREATIVE PROCESS REQUIRES TIME, RELAXATION
MULLING OVER A PROBLEM
BROODING
MENTAL RELAXATION

ENVIRONMENTS CONducIVE TO CREATIVITY
NOT THE ENVIRONMENTS WE FIND OURSELVES WITHIN IN ACADEMIA
POSSIBILITIES OF CREATIVITY IN OUR RESEARCH

1) FIND A CONDUCIVE PLACE
2) SLOW DOWN
3) ENGAGE IN POINTLESS RESEARCH
4) KNOW YOUR FIELD OF STUDY/DISCIPLINE, YET CROSS BORDERS
5) TAKE RISKS AND BE REBELLIOUS
6) TINKER AND PLAY
WHERE DOES CREATIVITY FLOURISH?

Social environments that are stable enough to allow for a continuity of effort, but also diverse, open and flexible enough to foster creativity.

IS THIS WHERE YOU WORK?

“Getting out of life”
THE SLOW PROFESSOR: CHALLENGING THE CULTURE OF SPEED IN THE ACADEMY
I have never done anything 'useful'. No discovery of mine has made, or is likely to make...the least difference to the amenity of the world... Judged by all practical standards, the value of my mathematical life is nil ...

I have just one chance of escaping a verdict of complete triviality, that I may be judged to have created something worth creating. And that I have created something is undeniable: the question is about its value. (G.H. Hardy, 1940)

“If at first the idea is not absurd, then there is no hope for it.” (EINSTEIN)
KNOW YOUR FIELD OF STUDY/ DISCIPLINE

- HISTORY
- DEBATES IN YOUR FIELD (METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL)
- MAJOR FINDINGS
- KEY THINKERS
- ABSENCES AND GAPS

CROSS BORDERS- inter/cross/trans-disciplinary research
RISK TAKING AND REBELLION

RADICAL BREAKTHROUGHS IN KNOWLEDGE → PARADIGM SHIFTS

Risk-taking - anxiety, fear, terror, humiliation and social shame

Non-linear, non-predictable and messy

Defiant research imagination (Kenway)
PLAYING AND TINKERING

“We need more tinkering: Uninhibited, aggressive, proud tinkering. We need to make our own luck. We can be scared and worried about the future, or we can look at it as a collection of happy surprises that lie outside the path of our imagination” (Taleb, 2007)
CREATIVITY AND PLAY
PLAY, TAKE RISKS, AND SCALE NEW HEIGHTS!