Forming a Pedagogy that Develops Creativity in Undergraduates Working at the Junction of Art and Science

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ABSTRACT

It is crucial that we move away from the Industrial Revolution production model of education and recognise the need to facilitate idea development and creative practice in our future generations to meet the needs of our fast changing societies.

Can we release ourselves from current deep-rooted pedagogic paradigms to flatten lecture theatres and break the lines and rows that govern our practices?

Are we shackled by a belief that the ideology of the recent past is the 'nature of good education'?

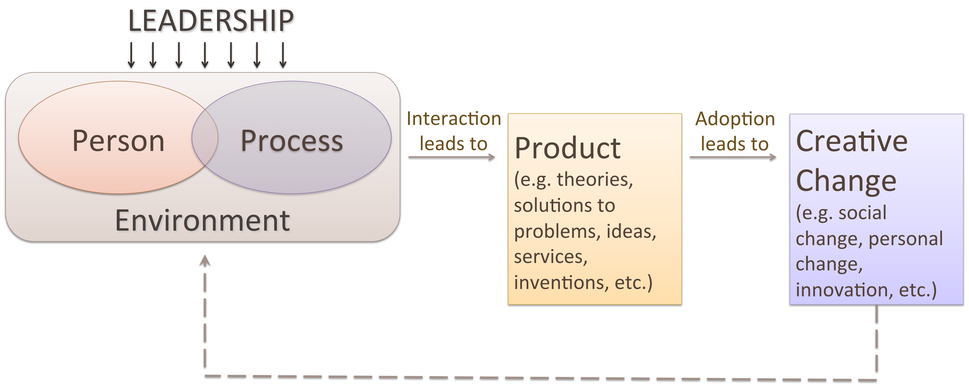
How do we prepare new generations to, not just cope with, but lead the way through constantly shifting environments; where cultures mix and morph, information is everywhere, knowledge no longer concerns a notion of certainties but empowers those who can use it as a tool?

The intention of this study is to investigate current understandings of creativity, emerging methodologies for teaching creative processes, and analyse current practices. The intended outcome is to develop a strategy for enhancing creativity in undergraduates working in convergent domains such as digital media, video games and television. A secondary intention is to foster creative thinking in undergraduates as a transferable skill; enhancing problem finding/solving, adapting to or even initiating change, identifying and harnessing the assets of environments and communities to broaden possibilities.

METHOD

This study utilises a systems model to investigate the factors involved in the dynamics of creative change. *(The model presented by Puccio et al (2007) and provided below)* A small pilot study involving a survey of recent graduates has been conducted and it is anticipated that a longitudinal case study will be carried out investigating the experiences of a wide variety of stakeholders involved in the learning and teaching process. The outcome of which will feed back into practice and form the basis for a set of recommendations.

CREATIVITY: A SYSTEMS MODEL



(Puccio, Murdock & Mance, 2007)

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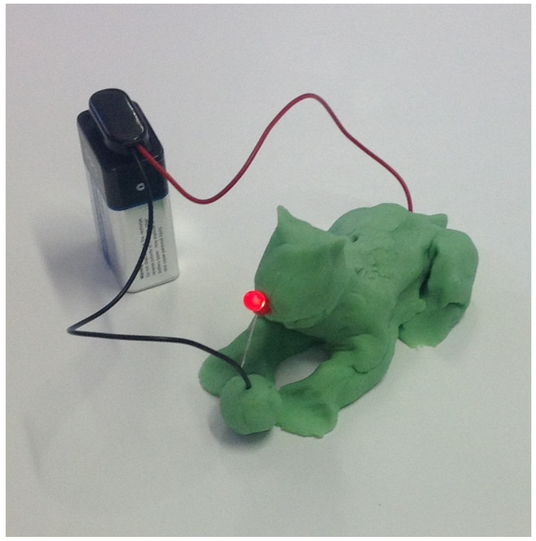


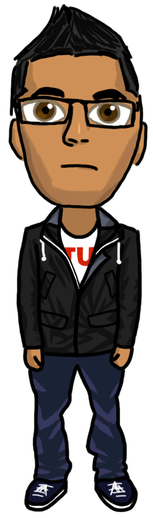
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Current thinking identifies the importance of creative attributes in our graduates to cope with the speed of change and the emphasis on innovation as a core work place skill. Also, that these attributes are best fostered in collaborative endeavours constrained by a requirement for an outcome that is fit for purpose but unconstrained by heavy handed hierarchies. These attributes include; a willingness to explore and cross boundaries, openness to ideas, confidence to experiment, providing the freedom for peers and colleagues to do the same, the confidence and self discipline to take on ill-defined problems and see them through to an end point, domain specific expertise and cross-domain awareness.

Undergraduates need to practice the processes that both lead to particular cogent outcomes and foster the attributes outlined above. Notions of mystery or individual non-conformity and inspired genius are counterproductive in enabling undergraduates to develop creative identities and enabling teaching staff to identify constructive pedagogies.

Considering the systems approach the lecturer needs to provide leadership setting the environment as far as possible, encouraging the person and facilitating the process by which collaborative activities can lead to appropriate products, and where formative and summative assessment supports creative change that feeds back into the qualities of person, process and place.

Challenges include; inappropriate physical environments, students with under developed or repressed creative identities, getting the leadership right.



References for images provided on request