

Sometimes Connect

Public Pedagogies Institute Conference
November 24 – 25, 2022

Location

Victoria University Polytechnic, Footscray Nicholson Campus
238A Nicholson Street, Footscray

Registration

To register visit www.publicpedagogies.org

Conference Abstracts

Connections through Knowledge

Karen Charman and Mary Dixon

The Knowledge Projects coming from the Public Pedagogies Institute have been focused on the relationships between knowledge and community. These communities have been determined by their spatial connections. The research projects were located initially at Footscray and then later Werribee, Point Cook, Port Arlington and Wyndham Park. To this end the Institute has an ongoing interest in and commitment to the recognition of specific geographical knowledge—what a community knows and values as its significant knowledge.

We approached these projects with a reading of the nature of knowledge in particular its constitutive nature as it constructs and reconstructs the other and the place. We argue knowledge is dynamic in its inter-action with other pedagogical forces in the pedagogical encounter. It speaks to the learner. It is reconfigured and reconstituted by the learning. It is not an inert stable object. Knowledge is a creation and a creative process. Knowledge is a performance of the world and in that performance, knowledge exceeds the performance.

The learner creates the knowledge; and at the same time the knowledge creates the learner. Spaces and objects inter-act with learner and knowledge – all vibrant in this process of becoming.

This reading of knowledge brings focus to the learner and to their encounter with the other- with community. Communities often doubt their knowledge, specifically those that have been read as deficit. Communities are often encouraged to deny their own knowledge. Resistance in engaging knowledge/s and subsequent authority actually held by individuals and/or communities is indicative of the damage caused by the wholesale negation by institutions and their use of knowledge as power.

In our projects attention was all on the knowledge held and valued by communities. These knowledges were then 'taught' in public events called Pop Up Schools. Here the public brought their valued knowledge held in their community. The pop up schools were performances of knowledge and community. The knowledge emerging and valued in this project demonstrated knowledges which are less about transferable and useful skills for employment or success, but more about the meeting of zones of contact and past, present and future, as sites of affordance of possibility. These are not reducible to lists of facts and expertise but are written into the streets and the lives of its population. In community, the language of knowledge is dislodged from its sovereign position. At the pop up schools, sounds circulated unhooked from the meanings of words. Bodies moved through the space—objects were produced, burnt, slashed. Knowledge mattering was present as a flow of matter. Knowledge was clearly part of the connecting forces of the community.

Dr Karen Charman is a Senior Lecturer in Education Studies at Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia. She is the founder of the Public Pedagogies Institute and editor of the *Journal of Public Pedagogies*. Dr Charman's research interests are in the intersections of public pedagogy, curriculum, memory, psychoanalysis and public history.

Dr. Mary Dixon is a founding member and researcher with the Public Pedagogies Institute. Her research interests include pedagogy, public pedagogy and curriculum. Her career as a researcher has included a significant methodological contribution to post humanist research and to the visual turn.

Commoners Press: On public print workshops and the emergence of interpretive micro-communities through letterpress printing

Dr Neal Haslem, Dr Jan Hendrik Brüggemeier, RMIT University

Commoners Press is a small, newly established experimental letterpress studio in North Coburg, Merri-bek, Australia. As part of the Melbourne Design Week for 2022, Commoners Press held a series of public workshops titled 'these three words' in response to the festival's theme of 'civic spaces'. The Press is also working on another project '10Press', working with creative practitioners to provide an eclectic series of moments of creative practice within and about the city of Merri-bek.

This presentation discusses the 'these three words' workshop series and the '10Press' project as examples of a mode of public pedagogy (Charman & Dixon, 2021), which enable moments of collective reflection, community activation, local knowledge sharing as well as collaborative making.

In an historic twist Commoners Press uses letterpress printing machines – once powerful instruments of the rise of the modern nation-state in the West (see Anderson's print capitalism), now redundant and somewhat anachronistic – to facilitate a coming-together in community. Stranded assets of a former industrial era, liberated from their former commercial and "mono-technological culture" (Hui 2020), these letterpress machines now facilitate participants to enter a discursive being-together and form temporary micro-communities.

Reflecting on the resulting interactions with and among the participants, we notice the 'discursive artefactuality' generated through printing, resembling elements of what de Sousa Santos might describe as "interpretive community" (2017).

Renowned for his critique of the cognitive empire of the West and the Western-centric approach to knowledge as knowledge-as-regulation de Sousa Santos argues in *Decolonising the University* (2017) that "the principle of the community and the aesthetic-expressive rationality are thus the most unfinished representations of Western modernity" (2017, p55) and therefore promising starting points for a rebuilding of solidarity and decolonisation. In the formation of an 'interpretive community' the social domain of the community and the practice of aesthetic-expressive rationalities come together allowing for collective interpretation and we suggest in the work of Commoners Press, facilitate becoming political – albeit micro – communities.

Dr Neal Haslem is a communication designer, design educator and a practice-led researcher into communication design. He has a background in design studios across a wide range of projects and media. He commenced his Masters by Research with RMIT in 2004 and following this his PhD, completed in 2010. He has been a full-time lecturer with RMIT since 2011. From 2014-2018 Neal was Program Manager of the Bachelor program. In 2018 he became Associate Dean, Communication Design. Neal's research lies in the intersection of design practice

and the community and the intersubjective action with which design reveals and actualises possible futures. His projects include the design action group *PPPPP*, *Homefullness*; an international interdisciplinary project tackling the intractable problems of housing stress and homelessness and *Flowers of War*; an international collaborative commemorative artwork involving public participation. Neal is a founding member of CDEN (Communication Design Educators Network).

Dr Jan Hendrik Brueggemeier is a media producer, creative-practice researcher and lecturer in Media and Communication at RMIT, Melbourne. His artistic interests lie in sound design, environmental activism and experimental media art. His sound design includes podcasts, media art installations and film scores. He holds a MfA in Media Arts and Design from the Bauhaus University Weimar and he relocated from London, where he worked for the AA School of Architecture, to Melbourne to complete a Creative PhD at the Centre for Creative Arts, La Trobe University. Jan has been part of diverse international media networks and has curated numerous art festivals and exhibitions. He is the co-owner of the boutique production company *2 Genres* and a member of *Commoners Press*, an experimental print studio in North-Coburg. His work has been shown internationally at venues like M+ in Hong Kong, Sonohr festival in Switzerland, Marakech Biennale, Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, Goethe Institute Rome, National Aquarium in Baltimore, MD; and Federation Square in Melbourne.

Collaborating with community services organisations to address power differential

Engela Van Der Klashorst

Working in the community services industry an understanding of the inherent power differential between clients and workers is widely acknowledged. Although this differential is not necessarily negative, it can affect how community service workers relate to their clients. Faced with the question of how students can become skilled in the use of power, I realised that teaching in class with placement in the workplace at the end of a qualification is not the answer. An alternative solution was needed, and a possible answer was to engage community services organisations in providing the Department of Community Services students with opportunities to work with volunteers and clients. The study asked the question: *'How can engaging in community services events and programs facilitate the positive use of the power differential?'*. Students in one group were presented with a variety of opportunities to participate in various community service organisation's events and programs. Participants used a reflection diary to reflect on their experiences. The result of this experiential learning study showed that working on projects with – and not for –

clients and other volunteers could facilitate an understanding of how the power within a relationship can be used effectively.

Engela Van Der Klashorst is a Teacher in Community Services at Victoria University

Scholē and fatigue in emancipatory education: contemplation, immersion and democracy

Dr Liana Psarologaki

This paper will explore Aristotle's notion of scholē (leisure that accommodates contemplative life, *vios theoretikos*) against Gilles Deleuze's concept of fatigue which he articulates as constitutive part of contemplation in *Difference and Repetition*, and their ramifications in a utopian connective education of democracy; an emancipatory erudition. Contemporary studentship in Universities has radically changed in the last twenty years with the repercussions of private neoliberal norm, the professional frameworks' requirements for accreditation, and morally dubious admissions processes and KPIs that affect the very core of curriculum design, delivery, and pedagogy. The last three years of the occasional lockdown-imposed absence from campus led to constant urgency for adaptation, agility, and fast turnaround of decision-making for educators and students alike with the later collectively characterised by symptoms of anxiety and stress manifesting in hypersensitivity to academic critique and a syncope of creativity – what Mark Fisher calls reflexive impotence, due to mental fatigue (what Anson Rabinbach calls the scholar's syndrome) and indifference in connecting with the educational act itself. The paper will examine those symptoms philosophically looking at neurological, ecological, and pedagogical approaches to learning. It introduces a symptomatology of the absence of contemplative time and the affordance of immersive experiences in the contemporary University curricula and will propose ways to re-claim this lost culture of being reflexive in order that we (both teachers and learners) re-educate ourselves and learn from the tactics explored in a time of cultural apnoea and crisis. This paper is part of the wider pedagogical research that became the basis for the book *Cultures of Erudition and Desire in University Pedagogy: Thoughts on Practice-led Curricula Before, Through, and Beyond Deleuze* (Routledge, 2022).

Dr Liana Psarologaki is a Greek architect, artist and academic based in the UK. She is the founder of the Architecture department and a former associate professor at the University of Suffolk. Dr Psarologaki completed one of the first practice-led PhDs in the Creative Arts for the University of Brighton (2015) conducted with scholarship at the Centre for Spatial Analysis UCA Canterbury. She trained at the National

Technical University of Athens and practiced Architecture before commencing an academic career in the UK. She is a recognized Deleuze scholar, and her work has been exhibited and published internationally. She is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and the author of *Cultures of Erudition and Desire in University Pedagogy: Thoughts on Practice-led Curricula Before, Through, and Beyond Deleuze* (Routledge, 2022). Her latest project is an interdisciplinary collaboration with award winning novelist Amanda Hodgkinson called *Spring Cleaning* which in June 2022 was presented at ACT RA Symposium for the London Festival of Architecture. Her creative portfolio is at www.aylostopos.com

What can a monument be?

Kate Golding

Traditionally, a monument can act as a memory-keeper, a locus for remembering, a site for commemorating dominant histories chosen by those in power at the time. More recently, settler colonial monuments have been seen for what they are - an apparatus of white supremacy. We face a point in human history where a global pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement have brought the inequity in our world into sharp focus. We have witnessed monuments to troubled, contested histories fall, be removed, reinvented and reassessed on a global scale.

This presentation will address contemporary thought on the role of the monument and ask *what can a monument be?* How can we keep memory alive and reimagine the monument? Through years of ongoing artistic practice-led research I have experimented with this idea through forming alliances within and outside of dominant institutions. From the proposition of a camera obscura as a counter-monument, to co-authoring *BLAK COOK BOOK* with Dr Paola Balla and Dr Clare Land as a response to Cooks' Cottage for the City of Melbourne. I have suggested plants as anti-monuments and created the public art commission *Near this spot* for PHOTO 2021. The presentation will also discuss an upcoming collaborative commission responding to a Captain Cook memorial for the City of Yarra, plus ideas for memorialising birth-giving and care through collaborative art-making in the domestic sphere. The proposed presentation will give an overview of these recent artistic projects to encourage critical discussion around the past, present and future of monuments and memorialisation, and demonstrate how connections can be made through creative practice.

Kate Golding is a settler Australian of English ancestry based on unceded Wurundjeri land. She is a mother artist, educator and researcher. Golding

completed a Master of Fine Arts in 2018 at the Victorian College of the Arts where her research focussed on critiquing the memorialisation of Captain Cook.

Golding has exhibited both nationally and internationally. Golding presented her first public art commission *Near this spot* in Gordon Reserve for PHOTO 2021 International Festival of Photography in Melbourne. This commission was supported by a City of Melbourne Arts Grant. Most recently she co-authored *BLAK COOK BOOK: New Cultural Perspectives on Cooks' Cottage. A set of provocations* with Dr Paola Balla and Dr Clare Land, published by the City of Melbourne.

Golding has previously worked as a high school teacher in Japan, England and NSW, a sessional lecturer in Alternative Photographic Processes at RMIT University and a Masters program mentor at Photography Studies College. She is a regular guest speaker and a primary caregiver to a pre-school aged child.

Developing a pedagogy of care through co-experienced embodied (CBL) strategies

Belinda MacGill

Co-creating 'authorial presence and agency' through public dialogue (Sandlin, O'Malley et al. 2011) can joyfully be achieved when grounded in an ethic of care and embodied strategies. Creative Body Based Learning (CBL) is a method that utilises arts based strategies to mobilise the aesthetic, cognitive and affective domains of participants. Using embodied arts pedagogies to promote engagement (Dawson and Lee 2018) through meaning making strategies is a creative response to advance the power of collective community knowledge in the public sphere. This workshop will use CBL strategies with participants to explore the affordances of public pedagogy and ways in which to mobilise arts-based strategies in public sites as an enactment of a pedagogy of care. This workshop is underpinned by relational aesthetics through co-construction that will culminate in a set of strategies for participants to mobilise in their own sites.

Dawson, K. and B. Lee (2018). *Drama-based Pedagogy : Activating Learning Across the Curriculum*. Chicago, University of Chicago.

Sandlin, J. A., M. P. O'Malley and J. Burdick (2011). "Mapping the Complexity of Public Pedagogy Scholarship: 1894-2010." *Review of Educational Research* 81(3): pp. 338-375.

Dr Belinda MacGill is a Senior Lecturer in Arts education at the University of South Australia Education Futures and is a contemporary artist. Dr MacGill's research

interests draw upon the fields of Contemporary art, Indigenous education, Postcolonial theory, Visual methodologies, Arts pedagogy and Critical race theory. Much of her work is focused on decolonisation through arts based practices and creative methodologies.