TOWARDS HUMANISING CREATIVITY?

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ABSTRACT

Within the context of developing creativity discourse and policy, this paper begins by exploring a number of the tensions that emerged from research using an interdisciplinary framework to investigate creativity with English expert specialist dance teachers. The paper then interrogates and articulates the productive dynamics of one of these tensions that occur between individual, collaborative and communal creativity. This tension is discussed within the wider debate of individualised versus collaborative/communal creativity and the encouragement of the former by individualised, marketised creativity policies. It is argued that one constructive product of articulating how dance professionals negotiate this tension within education is a pertinent and helpful example of a more humane framework for creativity than that espoused by the individualised marketisation agenda. In turn the paper draws out the idea of humanising creativity as a productive process that has the potential to challenge aspects of the dominant policy discourse in an emergent way.

INTRODUCING CREATIVITY POLICIES & DISCOURSES

A creativity discourse and policy drive has been developing in the UK since 1999 (National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education), which Troman, Jeffrey and Raggl (2007) argue is now in the ascendant compared to the more performatively focused discourses connected to the English National Curriculum. Within this context dance artists and organisations have continued to practice in schools and other education settings responding and contributing to this discourse. Along with other artists, they are now labelled as 'creative practitioners' (e.g. Creative Partnerships, 2008) who are seen as providers of creative experiences for children and young people, often in partnership with school teachers. These relationships have their roots in the early 2000s, when increasing attention was paid to creativity in the curriculum (DfES, 2003, QCA, 2005), including the codifying of National Curriculum creative thinking skills for 5 – 16 year olds, and the establishment of the Creative Partnerships initiative in 2002[1].

More recently, dance artists have found themselves working in schemes and projects responding to the Roberts Review of creativity and economy (Roberts, 2006), to which Government responded (DCSF 2006), and which was in turn followed by a Government Select Committee (2007). The outcome of this series of reviews was recommendations for further integration of creativity in the curriculum. This focused policy developments, with close attention to arts, culture and education, with a strong emphasis on democratic or everyday creativity (NACCCE 1999; Craft 2002).

By mid 2008, the English government has designed, opened tendering and selected pilot areas for the "Find Your Talent" scheme. This scheme defines culture as closely related to the arts and creativity and will trial different ways of offering 'young people a range of cultural experiences both within schools and in professional art settings…based on partnerships between schools, local authorities and arts organizations' (Creative Partnerships website 2008). Dance artists and leading dance education organisations are partnering themselves with schools at the heart of a number of these pilot areas, as a new phase of creativity policy is born.

The creativity discourses which have accompanied this blossoming of policy are varied. Banaji and Burn (2006) draw out nine discourses of creativity, five of which are pertinent to this discussion. Firstly, they discuss the rhetoric of democratic and political creativity which offers an 'anti-elitist conceptualisation of creativity as inherent in the everyday cultural and symbolic practices of all human beings' (p. 55). Creativity is seen as strongly related to cultural politics with a key role in young people's identity construction (e.g. Willis 1990). Banaji and Burn argue that, in this discourse, it is often harnessed to policy imperatives such as social inclusion and change, for example by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (http://www.ncaction.org.uk/creativity/).

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[1] Working originally in thirty-six zones, and recently extended to include and develop Schools of Creativity and Enquiry Schools, the programme grew out of the NACCCE Report's recommendations with the aim to "develop school children's potential, ambition, creativity and imagination" by "building sustainable partnerships that impact upon learning between schools, creative and cultural organisations and individuals" (Creative Partnerships website, 2007)

Secondly, is the notion of ubiquitous creativity, which is particularly exampled in Craft's (2002) 'little c creativity'. This is the creativity of everyday life; it is driven by 'possibility thinking', which is being able to find a way round problems, to route find in a personally effective way by imaginatively asking 'what if?', and uses a framework of people, process and domain (including all domains not just the arts) to understand creativity.

Thirdly, is the creativity for social good discourse which links individual creativity to social structures (Banaji and Burn, 2006). This discourse sees arts as a tool for personal empowerment, and forefronts educational and economic imperatives for creativity, whilst emphasising the need to acknowledge and tackle cultural inequalities (e.g. Buckingham and Jones, 2001; Marshall, 2001).

Fourthly, creativity as economic imperative strongly emphasises the potential for a creative workforce to advance the economy (e.g. Seltzer and Bentley 1999). Creativity is thus collective, not individual and can encourage a creative industries workforce who are flexible, personally responsible problem solvers. And finally, there is a discourse which forefronts the connection between creativity and cognition which includes scientifically considering the relationship between creativity and intelligences in order to understand the internal production of creativity by the mind. This discourse also incorporates attempts to understand the influence of culture and context on creativity (Banaji and Burn 2006).

When beginning PhD level research into creativity in primary level dance education in 2001, the most pertinent and commonly cited 'theory of creativity in education' was Craft's (2002) 'little c creativity' version of ubiquitous creativity. Her earlier work (Craft et al 1997) is cited in the NACCCE report (1999) and as such provided part of the framework for understanding creativity in education in England in the early 21st century. Craft (2000, 2002) went on to incorporate and inter-relate a number of the existing debates surrounding creativity in education shortly after the NACCCE Report was published. These included parts of the other discourses detailed above, especially the relationship between cognition and creativity (individual and cultural understandings), and the importance of creativity as democratic or everyday. With its recognition of an increasingly globalised context pushing individuals towards route-finding, Craft's emphasis on personal effectiveness and agency also acknowledged the economic imperative of creativity in education in England at the turn of the century.

For these reasons Craft's philosophically and psychologically derived framework underpinning 'little c creativity' – that of people, process and domain – was integrated with creativity discourse in dance education with which it resonated (e.g. Smith-Autard 2002; Stinson 1998; Green 1993; Shapiro 1998; Redfern 1982; Hanstein 1986). This created an interdisciplinary theoretical framework within which to study primary level dance teachers' conceptions of and approaches to creativity (Chappell 2006a).

TENSIONS WITHIN DANCE EDUCATION

The study was a qualitative interpretive investigation of three expert specialist dance teachers' conceptions of and approaches to creativity with late primary age children (for full methodological and ethical procedure detail see Chappell 2006a, 2007a, 2007b). Using the framework described above and a multi-case case study approach, the

research investigated with specialist dance teachers who were working via the Laban Education and Community Programme in a variety of educational settings. All the teachers had extensive experience as dance educators with some degree of experience, past or present, of creating and/or performing as dance artists. One of the teachers and their situation are described here to offer an example of the scenarios being explored. With a degree and masters in dance, the teacher had taught dance in a variety of settings for just over fifteen years. She was a freelance dance teacher for the Laban Education and Community Programmes[2]; and a tertiary level Lecturer at the same institution. She was also Co-Director of a professional dance company, performed professionally for other companies, and taught in a freelance capacity for National Dance Agencies and dance companies.

During the research, she was teaching a class of 9 to 10 year olds in a project brokered between the Laban Education and Community Programme and the local Excellence in Cities Action Zone. The children were approaching their Year Six SAT's (UK National Curriculum based Statutory Assessment Tests in English, Maths and Science) and their class teacher felt the students needed more overall confidence and risk taking ability. The main project aims were agreed to provide opportunities through creative dance for the children to find ways: of asserting themselves and being pro-active; of pushing themselves beyond their usual safe boundaries; of increasing their confidence in themselves; and of understanding decision making and the consequences of their actions. The project culminated in two sharings of process, one to the rest of the school and one to parents from across the school.

As the researcher, I brought an interdisciplinary background in psychology (undergraduate degree, Oxford University) and social sciences/education/dance (Masters level study, Laban) including understanding of creativity in education theory. This was integrated with training (London Contemporary Dance School) and professional experience as a freelance dance artist and as the Projects Manager in the Laban Education and Community Programme, a role which involved brokering and managing partnerships between specialist dance teachers and schools/ community providers (including two of the projects studied within the research). It was this combination of experiences which motivated me to initially raise questions with the dance teachers about creativity policy in relation to dance education. Since completion of the research in 2006, I work as a part-time Research Fellow, as well as continuing as a facilitator, lecturer and dance artist.

Part of the research findings articulating the 'what' of creativity within the primary level dance domain will be detailed very briefly here to provide the context for the exploration of tensions below (Chappell, 2006a). All three dance teachers recognised certain personal attributes as foundational to the creative process. They were all fuelling the children, often with their own passionate engagement, so as to encourage motivation, tenacity and an attitude that valued dance. They were particularly keen to stimulate the children's curiosity and their openness to the unusual and confidence to be so. As foundational to creativity, the dance teachers also encouraged understanding of an embodied way of knowing which was layered through sensing, seeing, using a thinking body-mind leading to whole self awareness (see Chappell, 2006a, section 5.1).

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[2] This Education and Community Programme is part of Laban, one of the leading conservatoire's for dance artist training in the United Kingdom. It runs classes, workshops, projects and teacher development sessions in dance, in a wide variety of life-long educational and community settings, across London and nationwide in partnership with dance organisations, agencies and professional dance companies. (www.laban.org/home/education_community.phtml)

The research then identified four crucial activities which constituted the creative process in this setting. These were: (i) immersion in being the dance, (ii) the interrelationship of generating possibilities and homing in on possibilities (with increasingly complex relationships between these two encouraged as children progressed), (iii) physical and dramatic imagination and (iv) 'capture' – the ability to use intuition combining both feeling and knowledge to judge which ideas to choose and which to discard as part of their decision making process when developing dance ideas and dances (Chappell 2006a, sections 5.1 & 5.3).

Building on this and guided by the work of Russell and Munby (1991) and Tillema (2004), secondary analysis focused on the dilemmas that the dance teachers encountered as a result of creativity policies and practice in tension (Chappell 2006a; Chappell 2007a). The emergence of dilemmas as a secondary analytic focus mirrored an increasingly felt need within mainstream creativity in education practice and research communities to problematise creativity in educational settings as the initial afterglow of the NACCCE Report (1999) faded (e.g. Craft 2005; Jeffery 2005; Murphy, McCormick, Lunn, Davidson and Jones 2004). Similarly, as creativity was increasingly put under the spotlight in the dance education realm, concern was growing regarding the assumption that dance education labelled as 'creative' inherently engenders creativity by default of its activities. The research articulated the key tensions that the specialist dance teachers faced on a day to day basis between 2002 and 2003 responding to the creativity agenda (Chappell 2007a). Negotiation of these tensions was productive to differing degrees.

In short for the purposes of this paper – full detail including data examples can be found in Chappell (2007a) these have therefore not been included here – the research found five key tensions:

Generativity balanced against readiness and rarity. The specialist dance teachers experienced a tension between the pressure to encourage children to produce generative ideas for their own sake and encouraging them to understand that original dance ideas within the discipline need to draw on and reference dance skill and knowledge, and that they also take time and struggle. The three specialist dance teachers wanted children to be prepared and ready to be creative, and acknowledge that original dances were rare outcomes that took work and were to be treasured. This contrasted with some of the school-based interpretations of the ubiquitous and cognitive creativity discourses within which their work was being delivered which pushed for more instant and frequent creative outputs. This was perhaps the least productive of the tensions as the dance teachers needed to spend time re-addressing the children's and teachers' misconceptions about creativity in dance.

Physical, embodied ways of knowing balanced against verbal language-based ways of knowing as sources and ways of working creatively. This tension worked in both directions and arose most often where too much verbalisation during the creative process led to 'overtalking' and ill-embodied movement creations. Also, but less often, it occurred where children were so embodied in their dances that they were unable to verbally critically reflect on their ideas. Analysis showed that this tension related to underlying theoretical arguments regarding the relationship between thought/learning and language. Within the school settings there was a strong emphasis on learning as socially constructed. This cognitive approach to learning and creativity is rooted in the work of theorists such as Vygotsky (1962) who argued for learning as an active and social meaning-making process. This approach therefore favours Vygotsky's argument that thought development is determined by language. This in turn encourages schools to place a crucial emphasis on the language interactions of learners and teachers, as a means for learning. For the specialist dance teachers there was a very real tension between this school culture and their dance culture which

acknowledges the need for verbalised critical reflection, but equally values embodied forms of knowing, as well as acceptance of ambiguity and 'not knowing' as part of the creative process. Interestingly, this tension was often

productive as the dance teachers encouraged children to shift between physical and verbal ways of knowing, as well as knowing and ambiguity/not knowing, emphasising the importance for creativity of the interplay between them.

Personal/Collective Voice balanced against Craft/Compositional Knowledge. Balancing voice and knowledge productively was one of the most complex tensions – the full findings regarding this have been published separately Chappell (2006b and 2007b). In brief, the teachers were all using tasks and strategies from three core pedagogical spectra which were intricately intertwined within their practice. These were prioritisation of creative source – inside out or outside in (whether the task source was prioritised in the children's ideas or the teachers' ideas/dance knowledge) which meant responsive shifting between inside or outside as sources to ensure that the children experience the creative impulse as their own degrees of proximity and intervention (supporting and challenging creative ideas using distanced reactivity or close-up proactivity). Proximity was indicative of the amount of freedom the teachers allowed the children per se for creativity spectrum of task structures - purposeful play to tight apprenticeship. Appropriate to the situation, this meant: sharing responsibility for the creative idea gradually, immediately or passing it backwards and forwards to varying degrees, allowing differing amounts of control and freedom for 'bursts of creativity' or more sustained creative explorations

The dance teachers' responses to this dilemma relate to the expression and form debate within dance education – this encourages an equal emphasis on creativity, imagination, individuality, subjectivity and feelings, and acquisition/training of the techniques, knowledge and objective criteria of theatre dance (e.g. Smith-Autard, 2002). Again the emphasis within this dilemma on domain-based knowledge, understanding and skills alongside imagination and subjectivity was perhaps at odds with some of the implicit school-based interpretations of the ubiquitous, everyday creativity discourses. However, the necessity of highlighting the importance of skill and knowledge was productive in terms of negotiating the balance between voice and craft as a key tension in nurturing creativity in dance.

Balancing Individual, Collaborative & Communal Creativity. This pedagogical tension centred on how to successfully incorporate individual, collaborative and communal creative activity. It relates to a wider debate between conceptions of creativity dominantly influenced by individualisation and those grounded within a more collaborative and communal understanding. There is a tension between the push for individualised creative path finding (emphasised within the ubiquitous, cognitive and economic imperative creativity discourses) and the more collaborative and communal approach to creativity inherent within dance (which in terms of this aspect has more in common with the notion of creativity for social good). Negotiating this 'trilemma' to skilfully incorporate all three dynamics was also a productive process, which is considered in more detail in the next section of this article.

Polished Performance or Risk-taking? The final tension concerned the level of risk that could take place in performance. The dance teachers debated the question - when performing dances how much should be 'polished' (i.e. rehearsed for correctness) and what role might improvisation and the unknown play as part of developing the children's understanding of creativity? This related to a similar tension within tertiary level dance education. Bannon and Sanderson (2000) suggest that although once considered radical, because of shifts in understanding regarding the scope of art, improvisation, whether as a contributory aspect of a rehearsed piece or as a performance, should be

included and valued within dance education. In approaching this tension, the dance teachers were touching on the balance mentioned above, that of a school culture favouring certainty, and their dance culture which allows for greater acceptance of ambiguity and 'not knowing' as part of creativity. As with the first tension detailed, negotiating this tension was less productive as it manifested in the dance teacher's frustration when attempting to challenge the status quo regarding acceptable performance products in children's dance.

These five tensions have provided a way of mapping the terrain for this group of dance teachers, highlighting key ways in which tensions regarding creativity can be faced and negotiated in order to ward against creativity being assumed but not achieved. They have made provocative images of possible practice as reflective starting points for these and other teachers, responding to Bolwell's (1998) call for more reflective dance practice.

In further considering the implications of these five tensions, one of them balancing individual, collaborative and communal creativity – and the outcomes of its negotiation has dominantly emerged. It is pertinent because it raises and (in a particular context) addresses an important question for current creativity discourse. This is the question of how education might mediate between individualised and collaborative/communal creativity rather than polarising them. Drawing on and developing Chappell (2006c), detail of how the dance teachers mediated this tension via a more humane, and ultimately more humanising approach to creativity is given below.

MEDIATING INDIVIDUAL, COLLABORATIVE AND COMMUNAL: TOWARDS HUMANISING CREATIVITY?

In unpacking the tension of mediating between individual, collaborative and communal creativity Craft's (2005) work, drawing on Jeffrey and Craft (2001), offers useful contextualisation. She argues that the current universalisation of creativity is informed by discourse which emphasises creativity as empowering, particularly in relation to work. Banaji and Burn's (2006) articulation of the discourse of creativity as economic imperative discussed above resonates with this. Craft states that part of this process has involved a shift of responsibility for social change from government to individual, a shift reflected in how creativity is now conceptualised and encouraged within the UK education system. In addition, much creativity research is also shifting to focus on understanding cultures and climates within which individuals work, with regard to maximising performance. Craft (2005) argues that this situation represents a marketisation of creativity, grounded in liberal individualism where high value is placed on individuality and being able to think outside of societal norms.

She raises questions about a Western cultural blindness which sees creativity as individualised, 'universalise-able', answerable to a globalised market economy and over-emphatic of innovation for its own sake, asking how desirable all these facets are. Craft (2005) asks how possible it might be to address some of the tensions within the individualised, globalised conception of creativity, by conceiving of creativity within a more humane framework. As part of this Craft argues that we need to develop a better understanding of, what she refers to as creative co-construction, deepening understanding of 'being in relationship' as part of creativity.

Developing in parallel to Craft's (2005) publication, the research on which this paper is based took up the gauntlet laid down by Craft. This built on the understanding of embodied knowing, personal attributes and creative process which

were important to the dance teachers, and which are articulated at the beginning of the previous section of this article. The research probed how relationships and interactions were negotiated between individual and community, and investigated one way in which a more 'humane', less individually dominated view of creativity in education might be understood and articulated. In so doing the research also suggests that this creative activity has the capacity to humanise and change those involved.

A humane framework is seen here as one which is guided by compassion, empathy, alleviation of difficulty, and some reference to a shared value system. Humanising is the process of becoming more humane, an active process of change. In using these terms, I am not seeking to invoke person-centred humanistic psychology (e.g. Rogers, 1989; Maslow, 1954), as, amongst other reasons, its emphasis on self actualisation overly-focuses on the individual for the concept being investigated here.

The framework that emerged for mediating tensions between creativity as individual, collaborative and communal is shown in Figure 1.
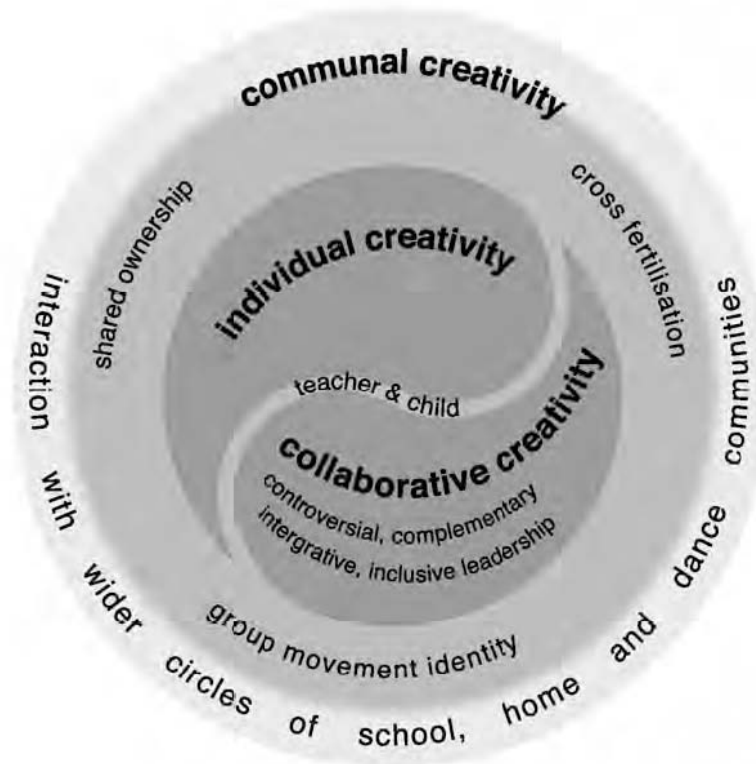

Figure 1: Creativity as individual, collaborative and communal

Individual and Collaborative Creativity. At the heart of this representation is the interrelationship of *individual* and *collaborative creativity*: self-responsibility in developing dance ideas was brought from individual creative endeavours

to inform collaborative creative activities and, outcomes of collaborative interactions were used to fuel *individual creativity*. Grounded in a socially-distributed, relationship-oriented view of knowledge and development, the work of John-Steiner (2000) was particularly useful in drawing out these findings. John-Steiner (2000) has been critical of the notion of the solitary thinker which still appeals to those moulded by the Western belief in individualism. She argues that careful scrutiny of how knowledge is constructed and artistic forms are shaped reveals a different reality, with generative ideas emerging from joint thinking and from sustained, shared struggles to achieve new insights.

In the research sites *individual creativity* was grounded in 'self-responsibility' [3]. *Collaborative creativity* involved "shared purpose" and "shared responsibility" for joint creative outcomes: "their imagination, energy and ownership ignite…It becomes more social activity, watching, responding – more democratic – we're all in this together and have to take and share responsibility" (teacher data). This demonstrates humane features of the creative process in which the children are engaged, sharing responsibility with others. Humanising is integral to the process

Interactions between *teacher & child creativity* occurred through the dance teachers ensuring that their own creativity as artists was allowed authentic space in children-teacher collaborations (see Figure 2). As a funded professional choreographer as well as a dance teacher, one of the teachers noted: "The way I work as a choreographer…isn't actually that different from the way I work with the kids…things that students come up with, you think that's really interesting…I'd never thought of it in that way". Unusually perhaps, this highlights the teacher creatively alongside, rather than always hierarchically above the children, as another member of the group to be treated humanely. These children were creatively interacting with teachers who admitted to be learning from them, potentially placing themselves at risk, and requiring the children to respond to the teacher's 'not knowing' with empathy and consideration.

Figure 2: One of the teachers and her group shaping the dance

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[3] All quotes given in this section are data from the research. *Italics indicate key categories from the research* through a dependency that goes beyond concern for the self and directs attention towards how responsibility might be shared productively for all those involved.

Within *collaborative creativity*, there were a variety of dynamics: *complementary, integrative, controversial* and *inclusive leadership collaborations.*

Complementary collaborations - using division of labour and different collaborators' strengths. Mary, one of the children stated: 'I often work with Victoria…she seems really quiet…but she's actually the one who comes up with really good ideas'. When I watched them together, their strengths were complementary: 'Victoria suggests the movement idea, Mary moulds it and gets them ready to show'

Integrative collaborations – working with similar, sympathetic collaborators on shared ideas. One of the teachers commented on an equal dynamic: 'They're working 50/50…very similar personalities'. Rachel, one of the girls: 'you choose…your friends…because you've got the same things in common...you've got the same ideas' (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: In the foreground Rachel and Clare, who worked integratively

The dynamics of these two relationships have resonance with John-Steiner's ideas; they are fledgling versions of two of the types of collaborative activity she proposed – *complementary and integrative collaboration* (hence their labels). In her study, she articulates how successful artists' collaborations often go through complementarity before entering a more intense united phase of integration, during which time common aims are developed and pursued. This chimes with the fact that, in this study, *integrative collaborations*, often seemed to be favoured by friends. This highlights the importance that John-Steiner gives to emotional support as part of integrative artistic collaborations and resonates with the notion of humanising creativity. When children are negotiating amongst complementary and integrative

ideas, learning to understand the way in which a collaborator is emotionally entwined with their own ideas and how adapting and even rejecting ideas may feel to that person is key to the process.

• *Controversial collaborations* – children had little in common in the way they created dances and experienced controversy, which they learned to overcome. For example, Lorraine, one of the children stated: 'when you work with different partners…with a different way of dancing…it's really difficult to choose because…you're very different at dancing it's just really hard'.

Controversy does not appear as a distinct form of collaboration in John-Steiner's theory, but weaves as a thread throughout; for example she highlights the importance of well-timed criticism within arts collaborations. It is possible that it appears distinctly in this study, as it was used as a way for the children to understand how to work with controversy, a kind of practice set-up. This notion of encouraging children to acknowledge and deal with conflict and controversy seems key in relation to the question of a humane framework and humanising creativity. Importantly, this kind of creative collaboration encourages children to accept and deal with conflict rather than avoid it; it moves beyond the notion that creativity is always a positive, fun experience.

Delving within Lorraine's comment above, there might be a number of useful and, in fact, humanising ways that conflict is negotiated in these circumstances. Children may push against the ideas of a fellow dancer in order to catalyse their own new ideas. Children may have their ideas rejected as a result of conflict and need to accept that this is a possibility within collaborative creativity; and children can experience this from both points of view. Children can also experience conflicting ideas juxtaposed within their dances, and learn that different perspectives work alongside each other. Learning to negotiate conflict within individual, collaborative and communal creativity in these ways therefore has the capacity to be humanising. Children investigate how to negotiate and build ideas with their peers in a way which takes responsibility for themselves, their peers and the wider groups outcomes. But this process involves acknowledging that this can be emotionally challenging, perhaps not always instantly rewarding and, as Lorraine says, difficult.

• *Inclusive leadership* – children took inclusive leading roles. One of the teachers was aware that: 'particular individuals came out as leaders…taking charge and making creative decisions on behalf of the group, usually in consultation'. Michel (see Figure 4) acknowledged himself leading, and setting up voting: 'Because I'm usually like right let's try do this, and we all try it and we all try another one and we have a vote'.

Figure 4: Michel (left) leading inclusively

The acceptance of children emerging in *inclusive leadership* roles may reflect the inter-relationship of *individual* and *collaborative creativity* in dance when a choreographer works collaboratively with dancers but maintains overall personal vision. This resonates with John-Steiner's (2000) discussion of Group Theater, a 1930s New York theatre company, as part of her family pattern of collaboration, in which creativity was a joint endeavour, but two people took on roles of leadership through democratic co-participation. By taking on this role children engaged in the humanising process, in this example learning to fairly (and although not evident in this example, sometimes aesthetically) manage and direct the activities of their peers.

The dance teachers were therefore encouraging children to be creative and to come to understand themselves through their own bodies in a variety of different dynamic creative collaborations in an empathetic environment.

COMMUNAL CREATIVITY

Referring back to Figure 1, the key factor identifying the dance teachers' conceptions as *communal* was the almost guaranteed stress on individual and collaborative outcomes wound together cumulatively into whole group dance outcomes across which children and teacher experienced *shared ownership*, a higher order whole group collaboration, structured by the interaction of the multiple dynamics and outcomes of individual and collaborative creativity.

This was rooted in shared *group movement identities*. For example, one of the group's style was shaped by martial arts movements (including kicks, arm thrusts and deep lunges, see Figure 5), street dance (including sharp isolated upper body movements, smooth hip swings and gestures) and the teacher's own contemporary style (including more varied use of spatial orientation, body part isolation and relationship, dynamics and interpersonal movement relationships).

Figure 5: Martial arts movements feeding into group movement identity

Appreciation of these new ideas could be seen *cross-fertilising* ideas. Often children could be seen working individually on solos, cross-fertilising using movements from others, to develop their own new variations. One of the teachers went so far as to label some of these movements: 'labelling... if I talked about sharp scissor blade movements – they would know that…so there's a shared vocabulary'.

The factor which accentuated group identity, making the group cohesive in relation to other communities around it, was the emphasis on communicating ideas with and *interacting with wider circles of community*. A strong example was provided by one of the teachers, who structured the project sharing to not only communicate the creative processes which the children had experienced, but also to engage them in creative interaction with the audience. This included the audience interacting with the children in different roles: audience doing abbreviated versions of the processes; and asking the audience to set the boundaries of simple improvisation tasks (see Figure 6). The teacher clearly conceived of her creative community from the project interacting creatively with their wider circles of community, as fundamental to the children's creative experience.

Figure 6: Trying out improvising in performance: the children in the background take the audience role, those in the foreground improvise a 'p' as requested by the practice audience

One of the defining characteristics of communal creativity, the developing *group movement identity*, echoes Bond (1994). She analysed the influence of an intense dance programme on social and task engagement of a group of six nonverbal children, and drew out the concept of 'aesthetic community', characterised by shared aesthetic values, heightened group relatedness, reciprocal communication, celebration and collective style. The dance teachers' conceptions of and approaches to creativity within this study show structural similarity to those found by Bond (1994). *Group movement identity* developing through *cross-fertilisation* and children's appreciation of each others' work found here are reminiscent of Bond's collective style of movement and shared aesthetic values.

Communal creativity also has strong similarities with John-Steiner's (2000) 'family collaboration'. However, in this study it seemed more appropriate to title the pattern 'communal'. Much of the evidence for John-Steiner's (2000) family pattern comes from studies of actual families who created collaboratively (for example the Van Gogh brothers) hence the title. The characteristics shared by the dance teachers' conceptions and the family pattern were: sharing group objectives; the capacity for roles to shift and be flexible; and a sense of group belonging. In this study, again, it is a fledgling version of the categories developed in John-Steiner's (2000) work that are conceived by the dance teachers.

An additional quality in this study is the creative *interactions with the wider circles of community*. This is touched upon by John-Steiner (2000) in her discussion of 'thought communities' as the context within which collaborators create their work, but is drawn out more in Sawyer's (2003) theory of group creativity. He discusses audience collaboration at its extreme as part of improvisational theatre and jazz, which, although, to a lesser extent than in improvised performance, he also sees as important within pre-structured performance. At that extreme he describes the audience as participant observers (Sawyer, 2003), much like the audience in the teacher's sharing exampled above.

Communal creativity is humanising as it encourages a strong focus on carefully considering the needs of fellow students and teachers, and negotiating between these empathetically. The dance teachers' classes provided the

opportunity for greater understanding of putting the needs of a creative group before the individual; experiencing whole group shared ownership and an embodied group movement identity developed through cross-fertilisation. Resonant with Bond (1994), the group came to share values which guided their communal decision-making. They also showed characteristics which might be described as familial rather than just collective, which brought with them a sense of belonging and identity. In stepping into this more emotionally and value-laden kind of group work the children engaged in a humanising creative process where they took responsibility for themselves and their peers and teachers in a new way, which moved well beyond a purely individualised notion of creativity.

Also noteworthy for the humanising process, is the interaction with wider communities which the dance teachers encouraged. Across the research sites, the children improvised, shared and performed to other children in their school, to parents from across their school, and to a mixed family and dance audience. This pushed the children into new learning cultures and sub-cultures which overlapped with their school culture and its internal make up, but which were also separate from it. This extended the children's creative interactions beyond their school as institution and stretched their learning into conversation with other world communities. The very interaction with dance teachers who also had roles within professional dance companies similarly stretched their communal creativity into new professional sub cultures. This is important as part of the humanising process as it leads children to consider communities and cultures with other values and responsibility systems to those within their school, their formal learning institution.

These research findings therefore articulate the humane framework and humanising process derived from the productive tension between creativity as individual, collaborative and communal. In responding to Craft's (2005) question as to how possible it might be to address tensions stemming from the individualised, marketised and globalised conception of creativity, by conceiving of creativity within a more humane framework, I would argue that this demonstrates that it is entirely possible. The findings of this study provide deepened understanding of one such framework, situated within dance education which integrates individual, collaborative and communal creativity in a humanising way rather than polarising them.

I would also add that this is just one example of this kind of humane framework, which certainly exists in other contexts. For example, within other art forms, internet communities, the environmental movement, more humane frameworks exist, each with their own histories, which are perhaps 'hidden' from view, working in an emergent way rather than being institutionally validated or government sanctioned. The tensions created by individualised, marketised and globalised policies and conceptions of creativity are being addressed in more ways than have been documented, and this provides hope that these dominant creativity policies will continue to be challenged.

CONCLUSION

We therefore see the tensions negotiated by dance teachers working within different creativity discourses. In considering the places where negotiation is productive one tension rises to the surface, that of mediating between individual, collaborative and communal creativity. In action, this mediation can be closely intertwined with teaching for a humane and humanising creativity, an antidote to the individualised and marketised conception of creativity which often takes precedence in policy and some practice discourse.

In suggesting the role of humanising creativity in this mediation process, there are a number of embedded features that should be fore fronted alongside the characteristics detailed together in Figure 1.

Firstly, although only briefly mentioned early on, the fact that this mediation is grounded in a layered embodied way of knowing must not be overlooked. By working in what might be described as an emergent or 'bottom up' way, using a thinking body mind, and developing whole self awareness as a grounding for collaborative and communal creativity, the process is sited in the very place of being human, the body. In the current global, as well as the local UK, educational environment there are increasing arguments for the consideration of embodied understanding and communal approaches as a way to challenge the status quo, and push for a more humane approach to education (Bresler 2004; Bowman 2004; Peters 2004). Embodiment and its emergence is a crucial feature of the humanising creativity described here.

Secondly is the inclusion of controversy and conflict within the humanising creativity which surfaced within the dynamics of collaborative creativity. This is important because by placing students and teachers in situations where they accept and negotiate conflict this kind of dance work does not bury difference. It moves beyond the notion that creativity is always a positive, fun experience and allows children to experience a range of different ways to be human and creative, both positively and negatively, productively and unproductively including experiencing emotional challenge and struggle, individually and collaboratively, as part of that process.

Thirdly, is the role of the children's group with its own movement identity interacting with other identified communities within and outside their typical learning environment. Children engaged with other cultures and sub-cultures brought in by the dance teachers and their worlds. This has something of the bottom up emergence of the embodiment discussed above. The creativity is not housed within the individual children in the institution of the school, but emerges within and between cultures that coincide within and extend beyond the school. The creativity is dispersed across the communal group, in the spaces between the dance teacher, the students, the school teacher, the connected institutions and their cultures. These interrelated communities are like webbed nets, stretching and connecting across 'official' institutions and influencing children, learning and creativity in an emergent way. By engaging in these as part of the communal aspect of creativity the children experience other worlds whose nuances contribute to the humanising nature of the process by engaging them with new systems of value and responsibility.

The framework of humane and humanising creativity also itself stretches across the creativity discourses detailed by Banaji and Burn (2006). It remains firmly positioned as an antidote to the creativity as economic imperative, which pushes for the kind of individualised, globalised, universalisable creativity that Craft (2005) critiques. It does maintain some of the features of the everyday creativity discourse from within which this discussion began. It also extends

further into the discourse of democratic creativity. This relates to the acceptance and negotiation of conflict as part of the humanising creative process, the idea of not burying difficulty and difference, perhaps allowing voices to be heard that might not usually be given space, and for those behind the voices to experience and influence change.

Humanising creativity also resonates with aspects of the creativity as social good discourse in that it forefronts the sense of school and wider community evident within communal activity. However humanising creativity is less dependent on the notion of 'good' as it acknowledges the key role of conflict and difference, the inclusion of which may not always lead to the support of a cohesive, common good. There is though perhaps a question to be addressed in future discussions of this concept regarding the role of conflict and notions of cultures and subcultures. This relates to Buckingham and Jones' (2001) critique of the NACCCE Report's discussion of culture as uncontested and apolitical. It might be useful to draw in what Banaji and Burn (2006) refer to as meta-critiques and social critiques to further interrogate and articulate the moral and political dimensions of humanising creativity in new contexts which were beyond the scope of the data from this study.

There is yet another creativity discourse which has developed since Banaji and Burn's (2006) review – that suggesting the need for wise creativity exercised by community trustees (Craft, Gardner and Claxton, 2008). This has developed from Craft's (2005) original question regarding whether it is possible to develop more humane frameworks for creativity. This discourse argues that a more ethical dimension is needed within our rhetoric around creativity. To address this Craft et al (2008) suggest that there is a need to better understand what might be meant by 'wise creativity'.

Numerous reflections and possibilities are suggested in their edited collection of papers. There is some consensus that the wisdom needed to temper creativity is found in the conduct of complex human affairs, that it involves intuition and the discovery of innovative possibilities that resolve conflicts. It is also suggested that it involves exercising responsibility with some moral and ethical underpinning and with value-informed systemic awareness. Amongst multiple possibilities, Craft et al suggest that what is needed is for this wise creativity to be exercised by what Sternberg (2008) calls 'micro-heroes', parents, community leaders and teachers to lead the way by carrying out good work professionally and personally utilising wise creativity.

Although this discourse is very new, with shared roots in the question of a humane framework for creativity there are obvious ways in which the humanising creativity articulated here, in a very specific and localised domain context, resonates with the discourse of wise creativity. This humanising creativity focuses on notions of shared responsibilities and values (in this case aesthetically oriented), and the acknowledgement of a role for conflict but not always as something to be resolved, although the moral and ethical dimensions of these are not overtly detailed in this research. Connected to this, there is perhaps a disparity between the 'good work' which Craft et al (2008) are espousing and the suggested role of unresolved conflict and the potential for tension between over-lapping cultures within the humanising creativity discussed here. The latter perhaps hints at an acceptance of the frailty and fallibility of the human condition rather than a potentially unattainable 'goodness'; this could be a question to consider within the meta-critique suggested above. Perhaps the specialist dance teachers in this research could, on closer analysis, be seen as community trustees, but again this is not overtly evident from the research data (Chappell 2006a).

Comparison with this last new discourse brings this discussion to the edge of the current map. The question of humane creativity which was live in 2006 continues to remain at the fore, and Craft's (2005) question has stimulated multiple responses around this central theme (in particular Craft, Gardner and Claxton 2008).

This research has journeyed from surfacing the main tensions experienced in relation to creativity by a select group of dance teachers, to recognising that the mediation of one of these tensions offered an informative perspective on the notion of humane creativity, leading to the suggestion of the importance in this context of humanising creativity. As it is, this concept is complex. It is creativity which minds others, that does not focus on the individual forging on without care for the communal undertaking, but which heralds individual breakthroughs alongside group triumphs; it features the embodied and emergent as well as the spoken and articulated; it nods to the familial with all that that implies; it recognises the importance of discipline knowledge and conflict, the productive and unproductive, the emotional aspects of creative process, empathy, reciprocity, flattening of hierarchies, shared responsibilities, and functions within 'bottom up', overlapping cultures. It is complicated and untidy, but this is surely what it is to be human.

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