Decolonising Spaces and Places of Learning

Workshop with Lucy Panesar

Welcome! Please sit in groups of six, ideally with people teaching same subject.
Decolonising the Arts Curriculum: Perspectives on Higher Education

Exhibitions and events across Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon College of Arts through November to January 2019.

Find information and the Zine online on: decolonisingtheartscurriculum.myblog.arts.ac.uk

An Arts SU and Teaching and Learning Exchange co-production

‘...perhaps the project of decolonisation is less about seeking out authentic culture as such but more about the opening up of creative spaces to facilitate the production of culture informed by indigenous thinking and doing. As George Sefa Dei* notes, the recognition of indigenous knowledge as legitimate in its own right requires that we rethink institutional spaces in which philosophy is done and envisage new ‘non-hierarchical’ spaces of knowing.’

Activity #1 - Work in teams to adapt these two terms for your purposes:

...perhaps the project of decolonisation is less about seeking out authentic culture as such but more about the opening up of creative spaces to facilitate the production of culture informed by

**indigenous** // Translate re: your teaching context

Dei* notes, the recognition of indigenous knowledge as legitimate in its own right requires that we rethink institutional spaces in which

**philosophy** // Replace with your subject discipline

hierarchical’ spaces of knowing.’

(10 mins - post your team response to wall)
Quoting Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012, p.7)*:

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‘Indigenous peoples’ is a relatively recent term which emerged in the 1970s out of the struggles primarily of the American Indian Movement (AIM), and the Canadian Indian Brotherhood. It is a term that internationalizes the experiences, the issues and the struggles of some of the world’s colonized peoples. The final ‘s’ in ‘peoples’ has been argued for quite vigorously by indigenous activists because of the right of peoples to self-determination. It is also used as a way of recognizing that there are real differences between different indigenous peoples.’
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Workshop generated responses:

**DIFFERENCE**

- INDIGENOUS
  - ‘The others’
  - Local identity, intrinsic

- INDIGENOUS
  - Marginalised
  - By cultural capital
  - By (New Zealand) systems
  - Philosophy: Art/ethnic hair
Activity #2 - On the understanding that our colleges are spaces of creative knowing:

Identify spaces students use in your subject areas that are hierarchical and ‘non-hierarchical’

And discuss, how are these spaces facilitating the production of culture informed by indigenous* thinking and doing?

*Using your replacement term
For example – the MakerSpace:

The distributed, diverse and accessible nature of MakerSpaces across London provides a rich and exciting art making and learning eco system for all. Those who stand to benefit the most are learners from non-privileged backgrounds and young people and adults who have no formal FE/HE education. Equally the maker movement brings huge benefits to students, graduates and early career artists and designers. The growing digital maker movement highlights a widening gap between formal pedagogic practices (institutional) and the informal emergent practices (Grassroots) within arts learning & teaching. An area being explored at University of the arts London:

CCW Digital MakerSpace (Camberwell, Chelsea & Wimbledon colleges of Arts) is a growing informal, cross-disciplinary community exploring and supporting emergent digital making practice. The CCW MakerSpace community aims to foster a collaborative approach across disciplines, HEIs, industry, projects, enterprise and is open to explore all collaboration possibilities. The community at present includes staff, students & external collaborators who aim to openly share experience, knowledge and interest in experimentation with physical/interactive tech and traditional making practice. Also see more our
Activity #2 – On the understanding that our colleges are spaces of creative knowing:

Identify spaces students use in your subject areas that are hierarchical and ‘non-hierarchical’

And discuss, how are these spaces facilitating the production of culture informed by ‘indigenous’ thinking and doing?

(20 mins – one A4 sheet for each space reflected on – post to wall)
Workshop generated responses:

**DIGITAL SOCIAL MEDIA**

**THE LIBRARY**
- Where is social design? Not in this design section!
- Find a blue book you like!
- The internet has more range than the library
- Be an advocate!
- Indicators: Academic knowledge?
- Google hierarchy
- The archives of others.

**STUDIO SPACE**
- Often non-hierarchical until staff enters
- Designing space - this list to students + 'space rep'

**NON-HIERARCHICAL**
- OPEN STUDIO
- CANTEEN (WCA)
- LIBRARY

**ASSESSMENT SPACE**
- Issues re: over-assessment
- Is grading necessary?
- Can we not grade?
- Consistent, individualised feedback from students
- Changing how the project ideas take others to present ideas
- Using workshop & break down barriers

**CRITS**
- Facilitating a space for feedback
- Create the structure

**SPATIAL TOURETTES**
Workshop generated responses:
Workshop generated responses:

- Visibility does not = power; hierarchy still exists without visible figures.
- Have open dialogue going amongst themselves (away from hierarchical figures).
- Invite students to set their own brief agenda.
- Allow them space to focus on something other than their others.
- Build open collections which represent all voices - i.e., Zines.
- Have better understanding of what "international" means (how do we become an international university?)
- Stop fitting everything round buildings / spaces. Put students at top of hierarchy.

- Use hierarchy/authority positively for production of new knowledge/ideas.
- Inflexible systems reflect preoccupation of publishing/art industry.
- Less / unknown artists get lost in collections.
- Library - space / collections.
- Inflexible systems reflect preoccupation of publishing/art industry.
- Students at inaccessible 10 international students.
- Exams.
- Digital O&Ps.
- Facilitator.
- Lecture Hall.
- Inflexible.
- Lecture vs. Audience.
- Loss of control.
- Cant see what, cant reconfigure.
- Students at doing.
- Burges in Space.
- and in translation.
- Programs as content motifs.
- Elements.
- Do I believe it? Fail.
- Workshops.
- Emergent.
- Emergent Environments.
- Environments.
- Reading Rights.
Closing / meta-reflection:

To what extent has this workshop facilitated the production of culture informed by indigenous thinking and doing?
Exhibition from 4-21 December 2018
In the Camberwell College of Arts library

Launch on Tuesday 4 December 6-7.30pm
Starting with a tour of the library exhibition at 6pm followed by drinks and talks in the canteen from 6.30pm.

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