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Humanizing Creativity: Valuing our Journeys of Becoming

Kerry Chappell
University of Exeter, UK

with

Anna R. Craft
University of Exeter

Linda M. Rolfe*
University of Exeter

Veronica Jobbins
Trinity Laban, UK

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Abstract

In this paper we explore the relationship between creativity and identity in dance education. We consider how, when creating dance, young people can go on a 'journey of becoming'; how in the process of making dance, they are also being made. We draw on the Dance Partners for Creativity research, a qualitative in depth study of creative partnership practice in secondary level English dance education, to develop these ideas. Understanding the journeys of becoming within this research has helped us to refine the concept of 'humanising creativity'. This is an active process of change guided by compassion and shared values. It comes from people engaging in collaborative thinking and joint action to imaginatively develop new ideas which are valuable to them and their community. The research and conceptual development

leads us to suggest that educationally, we might better recognise and value the journeys of becoming at the heart of humanising creativity, not only within dance but perhaps more widely.

Introduction

In this paper we explore the relationship between creativity and identity in dance education. With reference to our recent qualitative empirical research, we consider how, when making dance, young people are also being made. They go through a process of 'becoming'. These explorations were originally provoked by professional and academic circumstances and episodes that prompted us to ask: 'What is creativity?' and 'What is it for?' within dance education. In responding previously, we developed the idea of 'humanising creativity' (Chappell, 2006), and our most recent research findings allow us to now further conceptualise humanising creativity here, and consider its implications.

Our work extends the humanising creativity concept that originated through research into creativity within English primary level dance education. Prompted to investigate the nature of creativity in dance education, Chappell (2006) sought to address disparities between the creativity at play and discourses driving creativity initiatives in the dance education projects on which she worked.[1] In this paper we detail the refinement of the concept between 2008 and the present. We firstly explain the origination of the idea and position it in relation to the English and some American creativity discourses to which it is associated. We then build the conception further by reporting and discussing the qualitative findings from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) (Grant number: AH/F010168/1) funded Dance Partners for Creativity Research Project (DPC) (2008-2010). In particular we concentrate on the importance to humanising creativity of the 'embodied process of becoming' and explore how the relationship between identity (seen as socially constructed, fluid, multiple and in process) and creativity drives creators' 'journeys of becoming'. But first, the background to the concept and the research project.

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[1] Chappell was working within a niche of English dance education where expert specialist dance artist/educators were collaborating in partnership with teachers (dance and none dance specialists) in schools and community settings (underpinned by various initiatives such as Creative Partnerships: www.creative-partnerships.com; Creativity: Find it Promote it, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2002). For a full articulation of the research, see Chappell (2008).

Background to the Concept

Humanising creativity is an active process of change guided by compassion and reference to shared values. Change comes from people engaging in collaborative thinking and shared action to imaginatively develop new ideas, which are valuable to them and their community. Shared action means that humanising creativity is embodied; it is grounded in the very place of being human, the body. While individuals' ideas contribute to the creative process, individual advancement is not the dominant driving force behind the creativity. Communal development is equally important. This means that humanising creativity involves developing new ideas whilst empathetically negotiating others' needs, shared ownership and group identity. This is not always a smooth or 'fun' process as it involves conflict and difference. Humanising creativity often requires creators to engage with others' differing values (Chappell, 2008). The concept of humanising creativity emerged from empirical research and existing discourses of creativity. In many ways, the concept of humanising creativity is inclusive of its predecessors and in other ways, it extends and confronts notions of creativity.

Similar to the notion of humane creativity (Fischman, 2007), humanising creativity addresses mindfulness and the consequences of work for others. Humanising creativity, however, makes distinctions between the individualised focus of intent, highlighted in humane creativity, to include collaborative and communal intent within the creative act. Drawing from broader cultural explanations between concepts of individual and communal, Lim (2004) and Ng (2003) have articulated some of the individual/communal cultural nuances in studies into distinctions between 'Western' and 'Eastern' creativity. In contrast to Australian, Western, individually dominated creativity, Ng's work suggested that Eastern 'confucian' creativity was more collectively focused with a duty to conform to group ideals. Günçer and Oral (1993) highlighted how Turkish educational contexts are much more collectively-focused and students who act differently from the group when creating are seen as non-conformists.

Humanising creativity is situated somewhere in between the individualized notions of Western creativity and the conforming, collective creativity of the Eastern and Turkish ethos. Humanising creativity also resonates with democratic creativity (Banaji, Burn and Buckingham, 2010), which suggests that creativity is "inherent in the everyday cultural and symbolic practices of all human beings" (p. 55). Like democratic creativity, humanising creativity recognises that accepting difference is crucial for allowing those who may otherwise be silenced to have active voice. This suggests that creativity is not the reserve of geniuses (big C creativity), but is inclusive in everyday activity and contexts (such as education). Furthermore, both collective creativity and democratic creativity agree that multiple voices are key to negotiating conflict as part of the creative process. This line of thought is further extended, by considering discussions about the moral and ethical underpinnings of creativity (Craft, Gardner, and Claxton, 2008). Their emphasis within 'wise'

creativity on intuition and innovative possibilities that resolve conflicts is complimented by the compassion, empathetic negotiation and communal as well as individual advancement that guides humanising creativity. Those involved in humanising creativity create responsibly, mindful of the consequences and their use by others.

People creating in a humanising way in dance make movement through their senses: sensing, seeing, and using an integrated thinking body-mind (Chappell, 2006). This is in contrast to creativity driven by dominant cognitive approaches that distinguish between mind and body (Cropley, 2001). As such, humanising creativity connects more strongly to concurrent arguments for greater consideration of embodied and communal educational approaches, which offer a more humane approach to education (Bresler 2004).

Humanising creativity also exists in tension with conceptualisations of creativity with an economic imperative. These perspectives suggest advancing the economy through a creative workforce made up of flexible, personally responsible problem solvers (see, for example, Seltzer and Bentley 1999). Craft and Jeffrey (2001) have identified that this focuses creativity on individualized achievement, which negatively harnesses creativity to market forces. Their argument for transferrable creativity that can serve the global market economy negates the role of cultural difference. Humanising creativity does not follow this type of economic imperative, but instead, is a more communally-focused, localised creativity that prioritises less economic and more humanly-focused values. Humanising creativity can be firmly positioned as an antidote to an individualised creativity driven by a global economic imperative.

Although theorising within English dance education had considered creativity, it had done so in relative isolation from the above discourses and debates. The dance education discourses are therefore briefly considered next. At the turn of the century, Smith-Autard (2002) provided the most influential creativity discussion within UK dance education. She advocated creativity (alongside imagination and individuality) as requiring equal balancing with the acquisition of dance theatre. Her Midway Model is a way of melding expression and form to generate original and valuable dance products. This situation of an arts-focused conceptualisation somewhat disconnected from the above discourses may have occurred because it was only when government funding was made available specifically for creativity in education from 2000 onwards, that creative dance education came so actively into contact with the other discourses. The conceptualisation of humanising creativity was able to build on Smith Autard's work by clarifying some of the contradictions between what creative dance education was required to deliver and what it might actually be doing (see Chappell, 2006 for further detail).

In looking beyond the UK in dance education, humanising creativity also connects to Stinson's (1998) and Shapiro's (1998) dance creativity theorising in the United States. Both researchers are influenced by socialist feminism and critical pedagogy seeing creativity not as a "narrowly defined…artistic ability", but "in a much broader sense…as the underlying power to re-envision and recreate the world in which we live" (p. 11). For Shapiro (1998), creative power is about allowing for "expressions of who we are and who we want to become" (p. 11). Similarly, the humanising creative process is closely intertwined with a developing sense of voice and self but set ethically in the context of others.

The idea of humanising creativity therefore grew out of a very particular cultural and art form context. Because of this, the first investigation into it mainly prioritised the UK and US creativity in education discourses most relevant to that context. The conception is not a 'right answer' but aims to offer an empirically, qualitatively researched perspective on creativity within a discipline and cultural context.

In 2008 the opportunity arose for us, as a team of researchers, to further investigate the concept. We were working as university-based researchers, together with practitioner researchers, on the DPC project. Within the project, we, the university-based team, used humanising creativity to frame our strand of the work. This led us to refine the concept through the articulation of 'journeys of becoming', the theme of this paper. Details of DPC follow next.

Dance Partners for Creativity

We initiated the project in 2007, essentially because of the challenge acknowledged by many English researchers and practitioners: that creativity was being stifled by the pressures of performativity[2], accountability and standards (Ackroyd, 2001; Ofsted, 2006). We were also responding to a powerful policy and practice agenda around schools arts partnership (Roberts, 2006; Creative Partnerships, www.creativepartnerships.com). In this context, by researching with expert practitioners, we were keen to explore the extent to which partnership might contribute to how creativity can be successfully fostered in dance in secondary education.

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[2] Performativity is a term coined by Ball (2003) which refers to outcomes-orientated teaching and learning. It is centred around mechanisms such as annual reviews, report writing, the regular publication of results and inspections.

Our study spanned two years between 2008 and 2010 and was funded by the AHRC. The over-arching research question was, 'What kinds of creative partnerships are manifested between dance-artists and teachers in co-developing the creativity of 11 – 14 year olds, in dance education and how do these develop?'. A large team of researchers included us (the four university-based researchers), alongside five research assistants and ten partner practitioner researchers located in four research initiatives across England. Different sub-questions were led by us and by the partner researchers (Chappell, Rolfe, Craft and Jobbins, 2011). Chappell led the four university researchers' work on the question of what kind of creativity was at play in the dance creative partnership practice framed by the idea of humanising creativity.

Our rationale for further researching humanising creativity was that dance, as an art form, has huge creative potential. We felt that the renewed space for partnerships between dance professionals and teachers in English schools, in some pockets, was connecting classroom practice with that creativity. If we could research these pockets of excellent practice with the practitioners, we could use the findings to develop more nuanced understanding and practice of creativity. The partners who researched with us in DPC were therefore included because of their reputation for producing some of the most original and creative dance education work in secondary level English education at the time. Because humanising creativity had been generated from previous similar dance education research, it provided a relevant framework for studying with them. Importantly this judgement was grounded in professional experience, which for all of us has involved university and practitioner roles. These include: dance artist, educational researcher, arts education researcher, school teacher, dance education manager, university lecturer, dance teacher, and dance teacher trainer.
So within this strand of the DPC project, we were aiming to further develop understanding of the nuances and practice of humanising creativity. Before considering how the findings did this, methodological information is provided.

Methodology

We used a qualitative methodology and took an epistemological standpoint that acknowledged the social construction of reality. Our approach was broadly informed by critical theory oriented toward critiquing and changing (McCarthy, 1991) through reflexive thought and practice (Giroux, 2003). We aim to see knowledge as emancipatory, partial and "constructed from the bottom up and in a participatory … fashion" (Ellsworth 1989; p. 42). Thus we were working to find space for change in how everyone in the researcher role interacted.

In order to do this, we (Chappell and Craft) methodologically developed the idea and practice of Living Dialogic Spaces[3]. Human geographers, Massey, Allen & Sarre's (2005) approach to spatiality has been rich in helping us to understand how we go about opening these spaces. Their work highlights the relationship between the social and the spatial: the recognition that not only is the spatial socially constructed but that the social is also spatially constructed. We have also drawn directly on Lefebvre's (1991) idea of lived space and Bakhtin's (1984) work on dialogue to help us represent the Living Dialogic Space methodology.

To create Living Dialogic Spaces, and allow for all researchers to contribute data and reflections to our further investigations of humanising creativity, we used creative learning conversations. These are grounded, cyclical conversations conducted between researchers through different media. They encourage partiality, emancipation, working from the 'bottom up', participation, debate and difference, openness to action, embodied and verbalised exchange of ideas. These are highly reflective conversations cyclically generating and based on data, with a focus on developing understanding and stimulating change.

Research Methods

Data was generated through creative learning conversations and traditional qualitative research methods including interviews, fieldnotes, observations, photography and video, alongside more innovative methods, such as conceptual mapping. This kind of mapping developed Veale's (2005) work on sociograms in participatory research. We designed this mechanism to encourage partner researchers to think about and show how they saw their dance education partnership roles, relationships and creativity. Maps were created on a large scale using coloured pens, with those mapping recorded talking about ideas being represented. In each site we asked partner researchers to map at least twice, and asked drawers to compare current and previous maps. Figure 1 shows the first and last East of England partner researchers' conceptual map.

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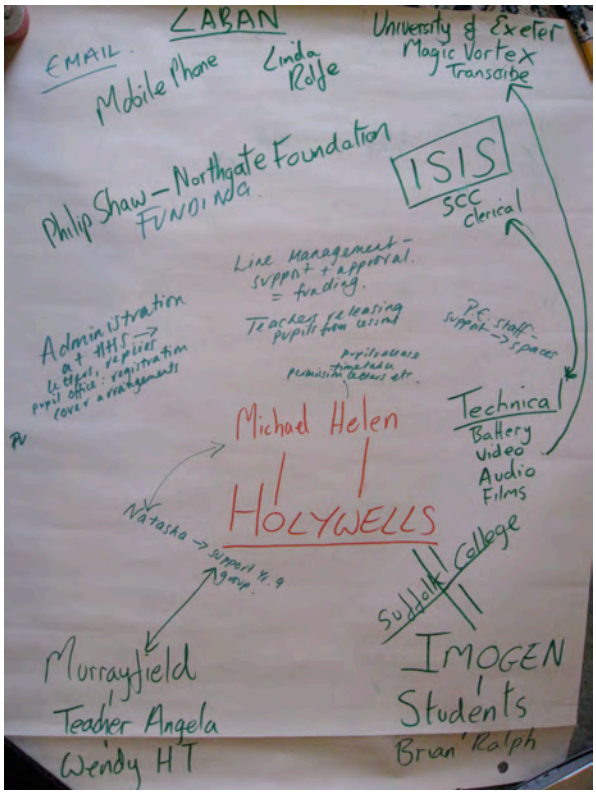
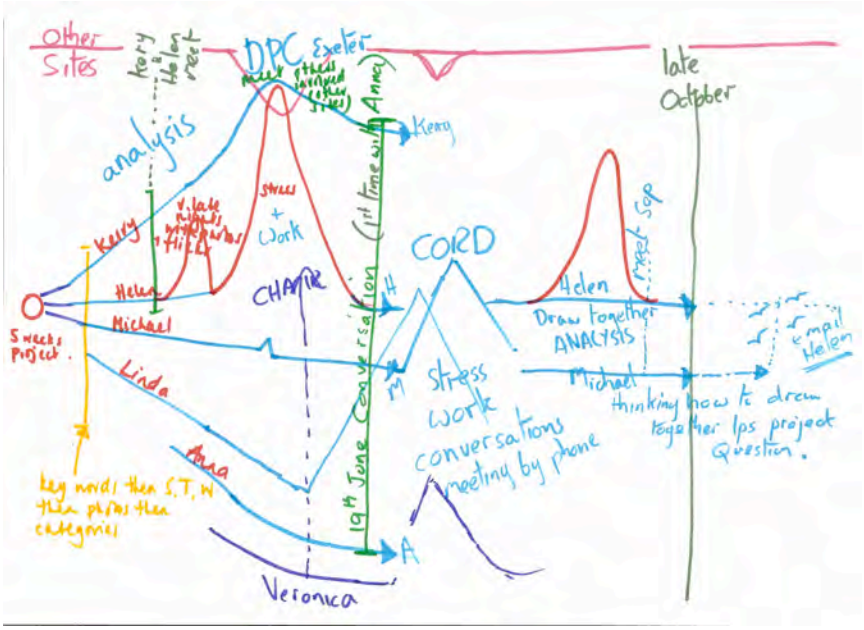
[3] The detailed methodology journey of the whole DPC study are provided in Chappell et al (2009), Chappell et al (2011), Chappell and Craft (2011) and Craft, Chappell, Rolfe and Jobbins (2012), but those relevant to the humanising creativity research strand are detailed here.





Figures 1a and 1b. Two East of England partner researchers' conceptual maps.

The mapping tool allowed us to capture changing views over time, with Figure 1b departing from the more static representation in Figure 1a. Where possible, we asked other people in the site (for example, students) to map. The different forms that the maps took demonstrate the difference and partiality of people's views without expecting a 'right answer'.

The mechanisms we used for analysing and representing ideas within learning conversations and for the humanising creativity thematic analysis included: photographic montage, conversation-style conference presentations (Bannerman, 2004), constant comparative analysis (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), and the see/think/wonder photographic analysis tool (Tishman and Palmer, 2006).

Our thematic analysis involved four layers. Firstly, we and the partner researchers carried out open coding within sites. Secondly, triangulation involved a university-based researcher (external to the site) blind coding data and discussing/resolving analytic commonalities and differences with the site team. The outcome was an agreed set of codes pertinent to the humanising creativity question. Kerry Chappell, the university researcher leading on this question, then axial coded the open codes from all sites. The finalisation of categories and themes involved another university researcher (Linda Rolfe) and a research assistant, blind-analysing an analysis slice in relation to the humanising creativity question and dealing with commonalities and discrepancies. We followed this with a whole team confirmation of these categories.

Research Logistics

Our research on humanising creativity drew on three of the four DPC research sites in the South, East and Greater London area in England. In those three sites, collaboration occurred between the school partner (teacher), the external partner (dance artist or company) and a university researcher. With limited space, this paper focuses on data drawn from two of these sites.

Southeast of England

Brockhill Park Performing Arts College (BPPAC) is an 11-18 Performing Arts status comprehensive school. For nearly 30 years, BPPAC has offered Dance and in 2008 was awarded National School of Creativity Status. BPPAC has 5 full time dance teachers, including Sian Goss, one of the project's school partners. The second school partner was Vice Principal, Jackie Mortimer.

The partnership with Lîla Dance (local professional company) developed through the formation of a youth dance company at Brockhill in 2006, The Mayakaras. The company of

dancers aged 11 to 18 create a new dance work with Lîla Dance. The project runs over 4-5 intensive 2 day periods within and beyond school. Lîla Dance Artistic Directors Abi Mortimer and Carrie Whitaker lead community based projects/programmes, tour work, and lecture at Chichester University. For Lîla Dance working with the Mayakaras enables the company to investigate how their professional practice "translates" to younger dancers. Abi, Carrie, Sian and Jackie, collaborated with university researchers Linda Rolfe and Veronica Jobbins.
In this site, the data set consisted of 14 interviews with the 4 partners, 6 interviews with 6 students, 15 conceptual drawings/maps, 2 detailed observations, 15 photographs, 1 interview with the school's headteacher and 1 with accompanying musician and 6 written reflections by the partners.

East of England

University researcher Kerry Chappell collaborated with partner researchers Michael Platt and Helen Wright. Helen was Joint Acting Head of Expressive Arts at Holywells High School, with responsibility for re-integrating Drama (her specialism) into the curriculum. Michael was a Learning and Teaching Adviser for Suffolk County Council's Inclusive School Improvement Service. His role included leading and evaluating arts projects in Suffolk schools.

A challenging 11-16 mixed comprehensive school in Ipswich, Holywells' catchment largely comprises inner-city social housing. The research focused on partnership developed over several years between school staff and Michael, as well as its surrounding primary schools and local sixth form college. The project ran intensively for five weeks in early 2009 culminating in an integrated performance involving over 70 children and young people.
In this site the data set consisted of 8 interviews with the 2 partners, 19 interviews with 16 students, 8 conceptual drawings/maps, 4 detailed observations, 258 photographs, 3 interviews with other teaching staff and 19 reflective audio-diary entries.

Ethics and Trustworthiness

Research ethics were negotiated within the University of Exeter Ethics Committee guidelines. Committee colleagues supported and advised us throughout. We were also guided on interpretation and implementation by our partner researchers.

Initially, we felt it was appropriate to adhere to qualitative principles of trustworthiness, quality and rigour (Ely with Anzul, Friedman, Garner, & McCormack Steinmetz, 1991). The acceptance of multiple realities means we acknowledge a lack of 'objectivity' but seek to ensure credibility, transferability, and dependability/ confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), whilst allowing for ongoing debate regarding purpose and outcome.

Increasingly we also found Sparkes (2009) useful in offering a more nuanced perspective on trustworthiness within qualitative research. He acknowledges a turning point of representation in qualitative research, and argues that readers "need to make informed, principled and responsible decisions about the criteria they use to judge different and novel forms of representation" (p. 301). We applied this when generating research processes, outcomes and accompanying trustworthiness criteria, which acknowledge partiality.

We are therefore clear that the research has specific limitations. Our findings do not provide a 'right answer' regarding what creativity is within dance education. They provide analysis from our research, which has been carefully triangulated to ensure that the picture we represent is as close as possible to the experiences. During this analytic journey we found that some concepts were not absolute or evidence was disconfirming. We recognise this in the findings below. Also, highly successful creative activity did not happen for every participant all the time. Our Findings detail the best exemplar incidents of humanising creativity within the research. We do not claim that the findings are automatically 'transferable' to general dance education (however that might be defined) and beyond. We are aiming for transfer of concepts to happen by the reader taking particulars and seeing how they might aid understanding of their situations with similarities to those we studied here. We have employed our findings within our work in UK dance education, but hope that, in parts, they will also be provocative for those working in different settings and art forms.

DPC Findings

Before beginning, we would like to note that alongside our investigation of humanising creativity other researchers' conceptions of creativity manifested metaphorically through discussions or were embodied in practice. For example, one partner researcher saw the creative process as a kit bag of possibilities and another group framed their thinking around what they termed "creative engagement" (Mortimer, Mortimer, & Goss with Rolfe, 2011; p. 46). Our research sits in parallel to those conceptualisations.

The orientation of the overarching DPC research question towards partnership provided an effective mechanism via which to better understand the dynamics of the individual, collaborative and communal elements underpinning humanising creativity. Therefore we firstly discuss the emergent partnership characteristics and their relationship to pertinent theory. We then move on to discuss the ensuing creativity characteristics and resonant theory.

Partnerships of Multiple Shifting Identities

There were four key partnership characteristics strongly related to identities development which laid the ground for humanising creativity: students as partners, multiple shifting identities, multiple leadership positioning, and inclusive leadership.

These particular characteristics are important to humanising creativity because of the ways they reflect identities, as they were enacted in creative partnerships, as socially constructed, fluid, multiple and in process (Moje and Luke, 2009). The identity-shifting and leadership positioning within the two research sites resonate with what Moje and Luke (2009) call the metaphor of "identity as position". Rooted in the theories of Foucault (1977) and Bourdieu (1990), this is a discourse that demonstrates the ways that power relations shape identities by calling on people to occupy a particular position (or not). Moran and John-Steiner (2004), take this a step further by emphasising how shifting identities has implications for how and where people might be socially positioned. This opens up new possibilities for some individuals to develop their identities in creative encounters.

Students as partners

Our initial research question assumed that we were exploring partnerships between teachers and artists, however, upon closer investigation we discovered that students were also essential partners. In the South East site, especially, students were considered as essential partners – Abi, one of the external partners, described the relationship as a 'two way street ….we still learn from them…it's not about hierarchy'. There, teachers took a supporting role to artist-student relationships. This was perhaps possible because the partnership often worked outside the curriculum allowing greater ease for students to be positioned as more equal partners to Lîla Dance Company than in the East of England site where hierarchies were not always flattened.

Students as partners was not, therefore, always absolute. One of the East of England students discussed how a hierarchy had been created which did not help the creative process.

> **Adrian:** Michael put me as a leader, and I think that wasn't good.
> **University Researcher:** Because?
> **Adrian:** Because it didn't give the kids much choice, and they had to follow me.

In contrast, Helen the East of England school partner was able to discuss a time when a flattened hierarchy allowed students to work alongside adults to create a bridge of hands to support another dancer's weight.

> They didn't seem to mind that I was normally their teacher ...They seemed quite happy working with me… the idea that really there wasn't the sense of leadership within the groups that maybe there had been before. With the bridge-building exercise …I think that was, is this going to be safe, are we doing this right, how do we hold our hands so this person doesn't fall?

Multiple identity shifting.

All the partnerships were characterised by participants engaging in multiple identity shifting. This shifting was very often obviously spatial and embodied. In terms of creativity, students moved beyond their usual spatial expectations to construct their identities, giving them freedom to imagine new future social position and identities for themselves. In turn, this empowered them to create new ideas and possibilities (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Student taking the teacher identity:
an East England site student carefully being helped into taking the teacher identity.

Other available identities included performer, maker, choreographer, surrogate family member, facilitator, artist, learner, manager, rehearsal director. Again this identity shifting

was not absolute. What was important was that identity-shifting was appropriate to the person and the partnership project. Some took on particular roles more than others and not everyone took on every role. Students and staff were facilitated to let go of their normal identities and step into new ones, however difficult this was, particularly for younger students. The South East school partner discussed how this letting go of some of the control of her usual 'teacher' role (e.g. by using tasks that did not have a defined goal) was difficult and involved 'trusting in each other'.

Multiple leadership positioning.

Also people were fluidly positioning themselves in different leadership identities. Again these were very obviously spatially evidenced and manifested in an embodied way. There were four leadership positions: leader, co-leader, inclusive leader and no leader.

Leader entailed one person guiding progress; co-leading meant two or more individuals collaboratively guiding activity. An inclusive leader flattened the hierarchy, which incorporated different voices within a small group.

Figure 3. Inclusive leadership: Adrian, an older college student in the East of England creates with two 8-year-old students through guiding and inclusive incorporation of ideas.

No leader meant that no-one was identified as leading; leadership was present but dispersed. This often happened around performances. An East of England student commented before the performance, 'I don't think anybody's leading now. I think we're all working together'.

Shared creative group identity.

Moran and John-Steiner (2004) emphasise the importance to successful creative collaboration of developing a shared identity or 'figured world'. Within the DPC research, we found these worlds were temporary during projects but they provided a communal, safe, artistic space within which participants could have and become exciting creative ideas.

Across sites, the shared creative group identity provided safe places to create identities that were self-identified as artistic. Abi, a South-East England external partner, described her connection with the student group as 'fundamentally artistic'. In addition, 'The Mayakaras', a youth company at the heart of the South East England site, defined their relationships as artistic.

Relationships within the artistic group were often referred to in family terms, which involved considerable empathy whereby the social relationships allowed participants to work through people's sense of responsibility to each other. Helen, the East of England school partner, described herself as 'a mother hen, a surrogate parent, more than just teacher/pupil, [a] different sort of relationship'. She stated, 'The students developed their own sense of support for one another to support Siobhan [figure 2] creatively. When she's leading, there's this, yes, sense that they don't want her to fail and so they're helping her out'.

The above examples demonstrate how participants were invited to step into new, unusual identities, allowing them to "experience certain positions [and] come to imagine future positions and their future selves moving within and across these positions" (Moje and Luke, 2009; p. 431). Although identities shifted, they were not absolute or a given and could become problematic. Similar to Moje and Luke's suggestions, identities were fragmented, worked in parallel and were enacted within the contexts of temporal shifts.

Collaborative physical generation: stretching inside-out and outside-in

Crucial to students having and becoming new creative ideas was the relationship between their 'inside' and 'outside'. Through conversation, movement between the inside and the outside occurred, as participants shared themselves and their ideas (inside) with other people, their ideas and the developing artistc idea (on the outside). Notions of dialogue and relationships as they relate to educational creativity are increasingly common, internationally. For example, Espeland's (2007) ethnographic micro-analysis of Danish compositional music

education illustrated that musical compositional processes are characterised as highly relational and circular. The dynamic nature of relations between musical actions, outcomes and contextual elements create a kind of circulating conversation driving small group creative processes in music classrooms. This resonates with the notion of inside-outside dialogues, which drove creativity within the DPC research sites.

We analysed how the young people in DPC physically crossed each others' boundaries and entered embodied dialogues in order to generate new collaborative ideas. Wegerif (2010) suggests that dialogic relationships are at the heart of creativity and notes how they function *within education*. He argues that the inside/outside dialogues allow for education that is "about understanding ideas, not just learning how to repeat them" (p. 27). This allows, for example, the students within DPC to generate their own new understandings and creative ideas.

In the East of England site, for example, students discussed how working together on a particular creative task, which they viewed as 'high risk', led to exciting collaborative creativity.

> **Chris:** It opens doors
> **Ella:** -- [you] pick up ideas and you have to listen to each other --
> **Adrian:** You need to see other people's views
> **Elisa:** -- to be able to get the creative side

Additionally, Helen, the East of England school partner said, '…the creativity is….still within me and I've still got it there, it's just a way of drawing it out'. An East of England student described how internal conversation stretched outside into a collaborative physical generation:

> Because you've got to think about how you're going to link it…it's not just one person's idea, it's everybody, so you're trying to link everybody's ideas into it…Well the college person, she thought of the stepping and then the jazz man thought of the turn, and then I thought of the jump. So then we done a step, so we crossed over then stepped, then we turned and then we jumped.

Michael, the East of England external partner talked about conversing with the artistic idea:

> there is a sense of commitment to the movement which isn't just…an external thing. I think they were trying to communicate the essence … they were being…internally creative there… I think they'd internalised that …and I think that that is a creative process because it's about connections between what their

> body is doing and how's it looking on the outside and awareness of what it feels like.

Importantly, moments of collaborative physical generation should not be characterized as an anything-goes approach to developing movement material. In both sites, the dance partnerships' work was clearly grounded in what Smith-Autard (2002) refers to as the balance between creativity and imagination on the one hand and dance theatre knowledge on the other. The external dance partners stressed rigour, discipline and high expectations within their work. Exciting, relevant dance was not sacrificed to the inside-outside conversation. This is evident in the quality of the Mayakaras' (youth company at the heart of the South East England site research) dance pieces viewable here: http://www.instepdance.co.uk/film20.php. In the East of England site, the primary school Headteacher who watched her students perform alongside the Holywells School students said afterwards, tears in her eyes:

> I really was overwhelmed...because of the professionalism of the children...They ...undertook it as a completely professional exercise...the way they've all worked together, and remembered all their moves and the lines they created...it was that good.

This inside-outside conversation integrated with dance knowledge and professionalism led to high quality dance works in the research sites. Thus, the openness to possibility and dialogue, in the creative process, points to important considerations for humanising creativity.

Briginshaw (2001) makes clear distinctions between binary thinking characterised by separation and opposition and a more ambiguous space of interaction which contains the potential for opening up new possibilities rather than closing them down. The "potency of the inside/outside interface" (p.18), that is articulated in her writing about professional dance, suggests that interrelating different views from inside and outside the body provides transformative "potential for new world views" (Bahktin, as cited in Briginshaw; p.18) and disruptions to dualistic notions of inside/outside. In DPC we do not quite see new worldviews, but we do see new ideas relative to students' peers. Within DPC, students discussed how their collaborative interactions opened doors, stretching their ideas from the inside to the outside and back again, taking them out of their comfort zones into new, less limited territory. This outcome illustrates extensions beyond dualistic conceptions of inside/ outside.

Merleau-Ponty (as cited in Wegerif, 2010) suggests that to be creative, we need to not only listen to our voice-which is expressing ourselves-but to listen to the artistic ideas being expressed. The gap, between the individual and the world, that we inhabit when being creative "opens up into the space of possibilities in which the creative artist can re-imagine the world

differently" (Wegerif, 2010; p.63). In the DPC project, Michael refers to this kind of dual listening and interaction, earlier, when students are trying to 'communicate the essence' of the artistic idea and think about what that dance looks like from the outside.

Looking back across this inside-outside theme, there is a complex, multi-layered ongoing conversation at the heart of the creative process. Regarding how we understand creativity in education, it perhaps points to a wider shift towards the dialogic and the relational.

An embodied process of becoming

Returning to the findings, it is not just that the young people were collaboratively developing new ideas. What we found in the data was that when this inside-out, outside-in dialogue was most successful young people become the process, and in turn engaged in the process of becoming themselves. They were making and being made. The process of becoming is an abstract idea, but is perhaps best exampled in Figures 4 to 6 and the accompanying collated fieldnotes below.

Figures 4, 5, & 6: Sarah's bridge crossing

> I watched as Sarah nervously took hold of the long sticks; her attempts to hide behind her long fringe seemed futile but she kept trying. I imagined her thinking 'why me? It's too scary…I might fall off'. I was beginning to wonder myself why they'd asked the students to do this. They'd given them a few props, long sticks and big old bent carpet sample books and asked them in groups of about ten, to make a bridge to get one student across the room without them touching the floor. The idea had come from a character's journey in the Indian myth they were working on. Helen was part of Sarah's group and was nudging them along with their ideas but having spoken to some of the students they were nervous about hurting and embarrassing themselves. Although a couple of them had also said 'if' it worked it would be pretty amazing. Helen and Michael had already stretched them quite a long way that day by asking Siobhan, one of the Year 8s to lead the warm up for all the students. This included a group from the local college who were a couple of years older than her. At the time I'd wondered if she'd pull it off, but after a false start when one of her friends had reminded her of the sequence, she'd done OK.
>
> With the help of Elsa and Aarti, Sarah pushed herself up and stepped onto the bridge of hands. Michael had asked them to make the journey slow and careful looking out into the distance, so Sarah couldn't just hurl herself along. With Elsa and Aarti taking some of her weight through the long sticks Sarah started to make her way over the interlocked hands, flicking her fringe out of her eyes as she went. After trying out various ideas from different people, the group had decided that once Sarah had passed them each pair should run to the front to extend the bridge. In reality this meant that they had to sprint down the side of the line otherwise Sarah was stepping onto nothing. When she had nearly reached the other side of the room the hands underneath her weren't locked properly and her footing started to slip. I was sitting very close to them and lurched forward to grab an arm but Cara who was right next to her managed to get underneath her and with Helen's help caught her as she came down. Sarah looked completely relieved. She looked up and realised that she'd made it to the other side. As she slid back behind her fringe, the smile on her face said it all.

Here we can see the young people as the physical substance of the ideas. We see Sarah in particular making and being made. There were numerous visual and verbal references to young people 'becoming' responsible, independent and owning their ideas. The East of England site's Acting Headteacher stated:

> [Adele] is very self conscious….but I noticed that towards the end of the day she…was smiling at the visitors, and actually almost trying to catch their eye…because she wanted, I think, her contribution to be acknowledged… here was a girl who's really revelling in what she was doing. And I frankly wouldn't have thought that she'd have made that degree of progress.

In the same way that I observed the change in Sarah as she crossed the bridge, he saw Adele going through the process of becoming. These students' journeys provide two examples of the relationship between identity and creativity at its most successful.
But not every student experienced this degree of transformation. Our study took place in normal secondary schools where students have good days and bad days, ups and downs. For example, Isme in the East of England site found it very difficult to engage in the depth of process being required. Our fieldnotes captured the following:

> [when asked to work with someone new who might have different ideas to them] Isme and her partner are holding hands and hiding [behind the curtain] so that they can work together. Helen and Michael split them up and get her to work with Adrian. In a later session, the researcher noted: Isme folds her arms during the swing sequence. Expression on her face says 'can't be bothered'. Hands on hips in between exercises. Interviews with this student also suggested that she was not keen to engage in the kinds of identity-shifting and idea stretching detailed above. When asked about how she felt that another student had taken the lead in a particular part of the class she said: 'Good….So I didn't have to do it.'

This data, collected over several weeks, shows that perhaps because of humanising creativity's complexity and the need for personal investment, young people sometimes stopped short of fully engaging and did not always complete their creative journey. However, although some struggled to engage, many of the young people involved in the dance projects had the opportunity to experience at least some change. The following quotes are from students in all three of the DPC sites. They perhaps describe their journeys of becoming best:

> I felt different because I haven't done anything like it before…
> I felt like I have changed…
> I feel creativity is when you expand as an individual…
> I think creativity can change people….
> Creativity helps people to, you know, it helps people to change…

Michael, the East external partner reinforced the importance of this change by often referring to students 'becoming' more independent, more responsible; as did Abi, a South-East external partner when she discussed 'students becoming artists, the school as a place of becoming'.

Identities developed by doing

Through becoming, we saw young people 'doing' their identities – what Moje and Luke call developing their "identity in activity" (p. 429-431). Although Isme's example shows how difficult it is to facilitate all students to go through this process, Sarah's example shows that with effort, it is possible for some students. Sarah became the lynchpin of the group's creative dance idea as she crossed the bridge of hands. She simultaneously became a maker and a performer. She embodied the group's original movement idea and answered the creative question of how to cross the physical bridge. Here we see embodied ideas and identities feeding each other. Researching professional practice, Moran and John-Steiner (2004) have shown that creativity and identity reciprocally develop each other.

Through analysis we came to see that embodiment is vital to this process. As the body philosopher Shusterman (2008) stated: "our body constitutes an essential fundamental dimension of our identity… our dynamic symbiotic selves are constituted by relations with others" (p. 2). Briginshaw (2001) emphasises the bodily basis of becoming within her analyses of professional dance works. Specifically she references Deleuze and Guattari as providing "an altogether different way of understanding the body in its connections with other bodies…it is understood…in terms of…the linkages it establishes, the transformations and becomings it undergoes" (Briginshaw, 2001; p.79). She is clear that the value of this idea of 'becoming' is its power to destabilise "recognisable patterns of organisation" and "indicate new possibilities in self transformation" (p.79).

This underlines the importance of our earlier point regarding the partnership characteristics of identity shifting and leadership positioning. These can give young people the freedom to imagine new social positions and identities for themselves. This can then give them the power to create new ideas and possibilities. In the critical example above, we see the inter-relationship between identity and creativity cyclically completed as they feed each other through the embodied process of becoming.

Discussion: Humanising Creativity and Journeys of Becoming

Chappell (2008) articulated humanising creativity as an active process of change guided by compassion and reference to shared values. Change derives from people's collaborative thinking and shared action. This imaginatively develops new ideas, which are valuable to those people and their community. Humanising creativity engages empathy, shared

ownership, risky emotional journeys, negotiating conflict and difference, social responsibility and rigorous artistic intention. Our analysis in this paper deepens and builds on this.

The partnership characteristics detailed above allow us to better understand the dynamics of the collaborative and communal elements of humanising creativity. Students were included as partners to different degrees. At its most potent, this offers young people a respected position alongside the adult creators and includes their needs within a communal endeavour. Multiple identity shifting and leadership positioning meant that power structures were working fluidly.

In humanising terms this opens up multiple tensions and conflicts regarding creative direction and control, but means that difference is not buried. At their most influential, fluid power structures give new voices the opportunity to contribute to shape ideas. Identity and leadership shifting can provide more humane and humanising power structures within which young people can create individually and with others. The shared group creative identity within which this takes place provides a safe, but often challenging arena in which young people can negotiate their needs and ideas alongside those of their peers and the adults.

The ensuing collaborative physical generation developed from stretching young creators into conversation with what is outside of them, adds another layer to humanising creativity. As the students themselves said ‘you have to listen to each other…to see other people’s views’. The conversations between their inside, other people, other people’s ideas and the developing artistic idea require empathy, tolerance and negotiation to develop a collaborative creative idea.

These inside-outside conversations occur through a focus on dialogue. At its most powerful this creates a possibility space in which the unknown and the other are accepted rather than being seen as threatening. As young people enter into inside-outside dialogues in an embodied way, they can quite literally inhabit an in-between unknowable place where surprising creative ideas arise. Within an artistic communally-focused group, these ideas are injected with social responsibility and consideration of humane ways of creating.

By going through this process, by making and being made the young people are 'becoming'. They are growing their identities in a socially responsible, empathetic and communally informed way. This is embedded in their shared creative activity of which they are the embodied substance. The ‘embodied process of becoming’ for us, is most pertinent to young people creating in a humane way as well as the creative process having a humanising influence back upon them. At its most potent we saw a process of change for them and their collaborators, driven by the reciprocal relationship between their identity and their creativity.

We have found support for the embodied nature of this humanising dialogue in Dewey's (1981-1990) work. He reaches the heart of these physical inter-relations, when he says we "live…as much in processes across and 'through' skins as in processes 'within' skins" (p.119).

Drawing on Dewey's work Shusterman (2008) has argued for a kind of humanising which understands that

> in our bodily actions we are not self-sufficient agents but stewards and impresarios of larger powers…the relational self acquires and deploys its powers only through its enabling relations…and we are…charged with caring for and harmonising the environmental affordances of our embodied selves (p. 214).

This argument applies to humanising creativity where there is a strong embodied reciprocal connection between the creative ideas, the developing identities and their collaborative, communal and ethical essence. Figure 7 represents these connections using a mobius strip (a single continuous surface) of connected bodies. If you were to draw a line with your finger along this strip featuring creativity and identity, you would return to your starting point along the surface without stopping. This capacity to keep journeying through bodies and cycling through the interaction between creativity and identity, between inside and outside, encapsulates the conversation at the heart of humanising creativity and becoming.

Figure 7: Humanising creativity – journeys of becoming

Throughout the investigations of creativity as 'humanising', Chappell and our larger research team have consistently referred to the 'humanising' process rather than the traditions of Humanism. From our research it is clear that those with whom we studied create in a humane and humanising way. Humane in that they are being communally mindful of the consequences of their creative activities. Humanising in that through 'becoming', people are empathetically making and being made.

However for us, it is less clear that these processes are connected to Humanism. 'Humanising' is a term often used in relation to the role of arts creativity within education. For example, the drama in education specialist, Neelands (O Connor, 2010) positions imagination, creativity and the arts as core to a more humanising curriculum where art has a human imperative. This curriculum pays "more attention to developing compassion, tolerance, highly developed interpersonal skills and respect for difference" (p. 125). Our research shares this take on 'humanising'.

However Humanism includes different worldviews advocated by various thinkers (e.g. Maslow, 1987; James, 1905). Humanist writings encompass the idea that humans can have a rational worldview, and that through progress and science they are in control of and can make a better world (Gray, 2002). Others focus on phenomenology as central to psychological understanding; people have free will and personal agency, are essentially 'good' and have an innate need to make themselves and the word better (Rogers, 1951).

We are not connecting the evidence and ideas formulated here with such a vision of humanly driven progress and world salvation. Humanism has been heavily critiqued by seminal thinkers, including Gray (2002). He draws on Taoism to argue that human beings need greater humility, to believe much less in our power to control and change. He urges for more time spent contemplating in order to see what is happening, than in striving to act upon a world which contrary to the beliefs of Humanists, we will never be able to own or control.

Humanising creativity is about being communally mindful of the consequences of our creative activities and engaging in personal change. However the conceptualisation also takes account of Gray's argument that human beings are not necessarily innately 'good' and cannot and should not assume supremacy over the environment and other beings alongside which they exist.

We continue to develop the humanising creativity concept and this study marks a point along a conceptual journey. It should be said that, whilst we position the concept of humanising creativity against debates around Humanism, we are aware too that the 'humanising' idea is a contested one. Bourke (2011) critiques and discusses the idea of what it means and has meant

to be human across history. She deconstructs different racial, cultural and gender-based manifestations of what it means to 'be human'. And she makes the key point that the distinction between human and not human is about power, which can be vied for and manifested in multiple ways.

Similarly we can question what it means to humanise creatively through journeys of becoming. We have noted that humanising creativity is about imaginatively developing new ideas which are 'valuable' to the creators and their communities. Within the dance education sector that we studied humanising value revolved around people creating empathetically with one another, being compassionate, sharing and being collaborative, and acting in a communally-focused as well as an individually-respectful way. In terms of the dance produced, ideas were valued because they acknowledged dance discipline knowledge and they were interesting and new for those involved. They were appreciated because they contributed to people's 'becoming' and because they meant something to their creators and their audience. In the East of England site we saw the dance idea of the bridge of hands supporting Sarah as being highly valued in these ways.

However in a different cultural context, different humanising attributes and power relations might be valued. We present our findings in the context of our research sites. Our intention is that others might be able to shed light on their own creative situations by comparing these settings with their own. Our findings may also raise new questions. In considering value and ethics as important to humanising creativity we continue to ask 'whose ethics, whose values?' These are complex and difficult questions which mark the next step on our own journey as researchers. And which we hope will provide provocations to others too.

Conclusion

In this paper we have developed the notion of humanising creativity by articulating how identity and creativity interact to allow creators to make and be made. We have framed this within the notion of 'journeys of becoming' to characterise the creative development of the ideas and the people involved. At its most influential, this development is humane as well as humanising. We would like to conclude by suggesting that it would be helpful to recognise and more actively value these journeys of becoming both within dance but also more widely in education.

Firstly we return to the theoretical debates that triggered the investigations into humanising creativity. We are in little doubt that with the recognition of journeys of becoming, the concept now counters even more strongly the discourse of individualised, marketised creativity. Successful partnerships were characterised by identities underpinned by social

responsibility which could be shared and inhabited by adults and students alike. Inside-out/outside-in creative dialogue were democratic and ethically guided. Creativity was mindful of its communal consequences and equally valued product, the processes of collaboration and becoming.

This way of thinking about creativity has not been given dominant space within the UK or some other countries' educational landscapes, for example Saudia Arabia (e.g. Aziz Al-Horr, 2008) Hong Kong (e.g. Wong, 2008) and China (e.g.Vong, 2008). We are clear that while there is a need to create with a view to the economy and the individual this should not be to the detriment of considering the ethics and values underpinning that creativity and its cultural context. We urge that we could all more actively value journeys of becoming, and the potential accompanying humanising process. The contrast between Sarah's and Isme's journeys above shows that even within creatively successful practice, it is difficult to engage all students in this way. If more attention, time and space could be given to creative work which values becoming, more students would benefit from the humanising process.

We must, however, also be wary of the pendulum swinging too far the other way. Historically within the UK, Smith-Autard's (1999) work was timely when it argued for a 'midway' balance between dance knowledge and creativity. But the DPC project was initiated because of concerns that in the ensuing years an imbalance had developed: that dance knowledge was taking over from young people's own ideas and voice (Jobbins, 2006). In the best examples within this research we have evidence of young people's powerful journeys of becoming alive within dance pieces and products that are still highly valued as exciting, professional and very watchable dance. We are not arguing for dance education practice which overly values humanistic creative processes, but which integrates these with dance knowledge. This is difficult to achieve and our evidence shows it will not occur for every student. But it seems better to push for this kind of integration than to 'make do' with creations dominated by overt dance knowledge which hides students' voice.

Secondly we hope the research might converse with and contribute to creativity debates in other cultures. For example, in a Western context in the United States, Reimer (2007) questions how the arts community can consider the ethics of artistic creativity within education. He suggests that arts educators are likely to be dealing with the issue of "what is proper, positive, generative, even humane, to do in the creative act" (p. 1226). Connecting authenticity with ethicality, he asks "How to characterise the authenticity achievable when the creation of art is whole-heartedly pursued?" (p. 1226). He concludes that questions such as this should be based in research evidence.

Responding to Reimer we offer evidence of how young dancers can be facilitated to connect their personal development journey to their own authentic creative dance activity. This is a response from a particular setting but it might provoke thinking for other arts educators as to what humane and humanising arts creations might entail.

The research findings also relate to earlier discussions of collective creativity, for example, Eastern conceptualisations of creativity (Lim, 2004; Ng, 2003). Unlike Eastern collective conceptualisations, those exampled within DPC allowed space for less-conformist personal journeys of becoming within the group's undertaking. However, the strong collaborative and communal elements of humanising creativity are not dissimilar to the collective approach to creativity described by Lim and Ng. And interestingly Eastern philosophies were, in small ways, informing creative work within the dance education research projects discussed above.

Michael Platt (external partner in Holywells School) supplements his practice with Eastern martial arts training, Kerry Chappell (lead researcher in Holywells School) is second level blackbelt in the martial art, Aikido and Lila Dance Company (www.liladance.co.uk) the external partners in Brockhill Park School, draw their name and something of their company spirit from Sanskrit, the liturgical language of Hinduism and Buddhism. This obviously represents cultural connections beyond Lim and Ng's 'Confucian' grounded discussions of collective creativity. However the dance education work and research are certainly influenced in some way by various non-Western philosophies which have been integrated with more traditional Western ideas about art and how young people create it. The resulting humanising creativity therefore perhaps contains a subtle blend of Western arts and Eastern influences.

In comparing our findings with collective conceptions from other cultures we have however found quite a sharp contrast with the kind of creativity found in African societies. Mans (2007) describes how dance and its creativity are seen as an integral part of African life. Creative, dance-based individual and collective identities pervade life and come from very different cultural knowledge systems (Asante, 1996) to those studied here. In English dance education, as a precursor to creativity, it is often necessary to establish the group identity and collective ethos, as well as to introduce some dance knowledge into the dominantly individualised school structures. In looking to better value our journeys of becoming there are perhaps practices that we can learn from the African ethos. In particular, regarding the place of dance and its creativity that would help to better embed our art form within our culture and education.

Thirdly, since the DPC research finished, arts education based creativity research evidence has become increasingly politically important within the UK. We are offering rigorous research into humanising creativity, which we continue to use to try to counter-balance and question

the UK's dominant political educational drives. With a government change in late 2010, the educational environment and philosophy shifted dramatically away from the kind of culture within which the research began in 2008. Creative Partnerships, the flagship educational programme was cut and significant percentages of Arts Council England and local government arts education funding were removed. The government's review of the English National Curriculum during 2011 detached the notion of 'entitlement' and the aims and purposes of education from provision. It occurred alongside the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (e-Bac), which excludes the arts.

This shift towards a new National Curriculum, reflects a conservative-liberal democrat philosophy which focuses on globally-transferable propositional subject knowledge, and competing within international league tables. This National Curriculum, is at the time of writing not yet revealed however it is due in place by 2014. Together with a concern with national and international comparison, it would seem likely that this National Curriculum will push us back towards a schooling model in which students are valued for how their attainments contribute to the school's organisational performance rather than their own growth.

At a time when the arts appear to be very low on the UK government's agenda, we are using humanising creativity and its central role within intensive arts-education initiatives to highlight the benefits of such work to policymakers. The research may also offer rationales and examples for practitioners and researchers in other disciplines and cultures looking to strengthen creative practice in an unsupportive (or indeed a supportive) climate.

Finally, as stated above, we are marking a point along a conceptual journey here and continue to develop the idea. Whilst we have mainly researched to date within dance education research, we have also found the concept has relevance and use within student voice research and practice (http://elac.exeter.ac.uk/aspire; Chappell and Craft, 2011). Drawing on the connections made with Shusterman's and Gray's work above we can also see potential in future research which aims to understand the concept from a more embodied perspective, and connecting to Lim's and Ng's work perhaps also from a perspective informed further by Eastern philosophies and research.

Drawing these ideas together, Chappell and Craft with Rolfe and Jobbins (2011) have extrapolated the humanising creativity concept for developing alternative educational futures. We have argued that through valuing our journeys of becoming, humanising creativity has a potential role to play in a 'quiet revolution'. We can value, articulate and action more sustainable, embodied and culturally-grounded educational futures. This highlights the ongoing need for us to keep asking the question 'what is creativity?' and 'what is it for?',

rather than accepting conceptualisations that have developed by default within increasingly politically and economically driven educational models. Humanising creativity and the process of becoming provide one ongoing response to these questions; but we still need to continue critically asking the questions and acting in response to what we find.

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About the Authors

Kerry Chappell (PhD) is a part-time Lecturer in the Exeter University Graduate School of Education. She is the MEd Creative Arts dance specialist and the Deputy Programme Leader of the Secondary Dance PGCE. Her research investigates creativity and developing this meaningfully within educational futures. Most recently this has centred on DPC, and the Aspire student-led school change programme (www.education.exeter.ac.uk/aspire). Kerry is also a

Research Fellow on the C2Learn European-wide research project at the Open University. Kerry's research and teaching is informed by her practice as a dance artist and previously as an aikido practitioner, as well as her time as a dance education manager at Trinity Laban.

Anna Craft is Professor of Education at the University of Exeter and The Open University. Anna leads studies on Possibility Thinking, learner voice, and creative partnership. At Exeter she teaches Masters and doctoral students and leads the CREATE research group (http://www.education.ex.uk/create). At the Open University she works on the foundation degree programme, the Master's programme, supervises doctoral students and co-leads the creative teaching and learning research group. She is co-Founding Editor of the journal *Thinking Skills and Creativity* and co-convenes the British Educational Research Association SIG, *Creativity in Education*. She publishes extensively in the area of creativity and educational futures.

Linda Rolfe trained as a dance teacher, working in schools and as an advisory teacher. She also directed youth dance companies for many years. She was a senior lecturer at the Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter, and led the Secondary PGCE Dance and Masters in Creative Arts courses. Linda had been an OFSTED inspector for dance and was a lead assessor for the Council for Dance Education and Training. Her publications include books and articles on dance education and she was the editor of the international journal Research in Dance Education.

Veronica Jobbins (MA, FRSA) is Head of Professional and Community Studies at Trinity Laban where she directs the Education and Community Programme and lectures in Dance Education. She worked as a specialist dance teacher for 20 years in London secondary schools, including time as advisory teacher with the Inner London Education Authority PE Inspectorate. Veronica was instrumental in forming the UK National Dance Teachers' Association in 1988, of which she was Chairperson until 2008. She regularly writes for dance and arts journals, and serves on a number of dance, arts and education panels and working groups concerned with dance education.

**Our dear colleague Linda Rolfe passed away suddenly as this article was being prepared. Her insightful, practical thinking weaves through our ideas, analyses and words here. It was a privilege to collaborate with her. We miss her but she stays with us in our writing and our ongoing research, which will continue to be informed by her extensive experience in dance education.*

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