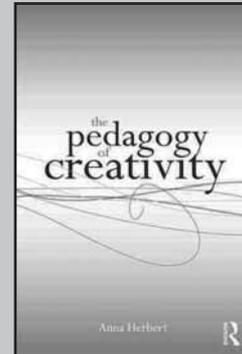


Review

The Pedagogy of Creativity

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Authors:	Anna Herbert
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The book is very interesting in that the author Anna Herbert attempts to use the views of a number of psychological analysts to explain how different theories can be used to develop creativity in the classroom and overcome factors that prevent a creative environment. Taking a classroom-based example of post-structuralist methodology as a starting point, she explores the relationship between creativity as seen in psychological activity, such as dreams, and creativity as seen in the classroom. She asks the following questions:

- What might a methodology which taps into different forms of creativity look like?
- Could such methodology support current neuropsychological theories of memory and learning?
- What are the consequences of imaginary and symbolic orders of knowledge for understanding of both conscious and unconscious creativity in the classroom?

However, the first question to address is what is meant by post-structuralism. This is an issue that anyone reading this book, and hoping to use it to develop the pedagogy of creativity in the classroom, must themselves explore further as it is not fully explained in the book. Essentially, post-structuralism is a label formulated by American academics to denote the diverse works and intellectual thinking of a series of French intellectuals who came to dominances in the 1960s and 70s. Herbert bases the development of her views expressed in the book on their work and the influence of a psychology lecturer on her at university.

My view is, that though it is an interesting book, any reader would need first to clarify for themselves the psychological theories referred to in the book, as without this background understanding they would struggle to fully appreciate what is being suggested for classroom use. The book looks at issues such as dreaming and the subject of creativity, knowledge and creativity, the interaction between students and teachers in the classroom, what can make creativity 'stall', the impact of ego on behaviour and finally Herbert

presents some new methods that could be used and the importance of student-teacher relations on the development of a creative organisational climate.

Herbert concludes that creativity is inherent to all human beings and is not dependent on IQ or genetic inheritance. These factors might help to emphasise creativity capacity but they are not necessary. She argues that creativity is best achieved through a release of control, something that many teachers are uncomfortable with and many educational institutions do not condone. She continues that creativity is rarely at a high premium in educational organisations that favour the production of knowledge and excellence and little value is placed on creative endeavour, unless it is part of the curriculum.

This thinking is very pertinent to teachers in the classroom as they attempt to foster creativity in their classrooms. However, any changes in pedagogy must be in the context of curriculum change and some uncertainty, together with requirements to meet the needs of their pupils and the schools in which they teach. As I have already said, this book does require additional reading around the subject of post-structuralist methodology to fully appreciate its message. Readers with a specific research interest in creativity in the classroom would certainly benefit from exploring Herbert's presentation of her groundbreaking study linking pedagogy of classroom creativity with psychoanalytical theories.