

Open Space Breakout J

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Session Title: How can instructors of higher education better serve the community?

Convener: Paul Teruel and Andres Hernandez

Participants:

- Paul Teruel – Columbia College Andres Hernandez – SAIC

Session Notes: Reciprocal Reciprocity “Good Fit”, Theory vs. Product – connect with your community. Working within bureaucracies.

Community Arts Field, Old and New

Recent phenomena: academic instruction to formalize community arts. We are starting to see colleges/universities to create majors/minors in community arts.

Academia is theory-based—can you mix both theory and practice in community arts? How does that work?

How can we stay true to our community?

While working with community arts, Andres decided that he needed to go back to school to learn the theory. However, when you are only in school are you in a vacuum? How do we structure our program to avoid this? We want it to honor existing theory and practice and be open to new theories and practices.

Idea of SAID, different role of intellectual: certain arts schools push product base: People push you more when you say you do community art versus when you say you do sculpture.

Two fold challenge. You go into a community to do work, and discover what the institution means to community. We need to make a place where we are accepted.

How do you form a reciprocal relationship to avoid students simply acting as culture vultures. How do instructors feed faculty?

Theory is enjoyed; people at grassroots theory are not necessarily there for quality, I see it more as a meeting ground.

We need to find a neutral ground for the program.

It really comes down to reciprocity. You can be in a partnership but never assume you are in the same place. Organizations change. CBO = Community Based Organization. Partnerships aren't cemented. Are good practitioners good writers? Are good writers good practitioners? Communities are not the same. Colleges and Universities are different communities.

Sometimes there is not a good fit between institutions and organizations.

Some of what we do is value pedagogy. The wax CBO's have an upper hand because they know how to pull resources and move.

Small institutes and large instates have things other than money have to offer.

Sometimes instructors don't necessarily connect or fit with community.

Weakest partnerships are where the money comes first and the vision comes second.

Can higher academic institutions work together? (example: DePaul, Columbia, Northwestern, etc)

Getting around bureaucracy is a problem. We assume institutions are well oiled machines.

So how do bureaucracies complicate partnerships? Each institution works in its own way.

You have to sculpt your education but those things have to be offered or secured.

Could we have somewhere where we could have a place, space, and have people learn? Art education curriculum management.

Work responsibilities stay the same. Having exposure to that environment before you graduate might lessen the shock.

Should the program focus on skills? Is this important?

Should it be called "service learning" or "community learning"?

Is it worth it for these schools to go into partnerships?

People with a passion for the subject are essential to these programs.

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