

Rethinking creative educational experience through affect studies

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In this paper I rethink creative educational experiences through the lens of affect studies. This involves dissolving Cartesian divisions between mind and body and theorising creativity as novelty emerging through relational, affective encounter that disrupt habits of thinking and feeling and animate embodied thought in new directions. Creativity is thus expanded beyond the boundaries of the thinking human as all objects in the space of learning affect and are affected by one another. To illustrate the role of these material and affective happenings on the emergence of creative educational events, I draw on a case study exploring the relationship between empathy and creativity in theatre devising workshops. Through empathy, embodied connections develop as students are granted access to thinking and feeling beyond their personal experiences, leading to the co-creation of new ideas and understandings. By holding space for and experiencing with others, hierarchies are reduced and diversity of understanding and ideas becomes a driver of creativity and learning. This highlights the need to attend to the affective, material happenings in spaces of learning and examine how they impact students' capacity to affect and be affected, and therefore to create together.