

Research- Past and Present (Session A), University Classroom

Session Host and Moderator- Carin Walsh, Gallery Guide, Nasher Museum of Art

Carolyn Halpin-Healy, Executive Director, Arts & Minds

Laurel Humble, Associate Educator for Community and Access Programs, MoMA

Mary Jane Knecht, Manager, Creative Aging Programs, Frye Art Museum

Carolyn:

- Research is exciting in this emerging field, but there is still much more to be done. How do we connect it all together?
- Study out of University of Iowa in 2009 induced emotions in patients through use of film clips- found that the patients did not remember the film afterwards, but the emotions that the film induced lingered.
- Arts & Mind project - numbers are quite small; self-reporting participants in programs claimed reduced apathy and improved mood.
- Caregivers are interested in programs for themselves as well as for patient; they see a real value in program facilitators as imparters of knowledge.
- Anthropological study at the Studio Museum in Harlem of staff. Study interviewed staff from security to COO about the effects of their Alzheimer's program on them: a theme of change emerged (improved understanding of the circumstances of Alz and Dementia and how it relates to their own lives); Respect for the program and institution as a whole (understanding that the programming was necessary) and an emerging understanding and enthusiasm for accessibility of museums for all.
- A study was done using the Dementia Attitudes Scale (DAS). In a study of pre-med students who saw an Arts & Minds program, their level of empathy towards the dementia population increased, hopefully contributing to entrance into fields of Geriatrics and Neurology (shortage of these types of doctors in the U.S.).

Mary Jane:

- Exploratory study with the University of Washington using visual arts institutions looking at artworks to evoke empathy
- Healthy aging study of Aleut elders- interview elders to clarify important elements of healthy lifestyles as one ages. One important element is *optimism* and *need to share that with younger generations*. Many Aleut elders see diseases like dementia as a gift, another consciousness.
- Study by Janelle Taylor, chair of Anthropology at University of Washington who did research on recognition- are we giving patients our recognition? Importance of friendship, moral experiments in art and friendship; how does one continue to have friendships as they age?

Laurel:

- Looks a lot to the UK for research- Helen Chatterjee is developing scales that are visual rather than textual.
- Campaign to End Loneliness- social isolation is as much a risk as smoking 15 times a day; found out that TV is the most frequent form of company for many.

Questions and Answers:

Q: What research has inspired change in programs?

Mary Jane: Feedback from participants about comfort in galleries (temperature) and parking has made them aware of language to be shared ahead of time. Recognition of joint respite- patient and caregiver can have a shared experience but separately stimulating; growth experiences.

Group: Abstract art can be just as comfortable/ stimulating as narrative art; patients can actually be more open to it (less of a test and more open to interpretation).

Q: What search terms should we use to find cross-disciplinary research?

Group: Different fields use different terms, so can be difficult to find what you want.

Research Gate= online community of scholars.

Q: Any research on later stages and museums?

Group: Bridges Program- pilot program works with people offsite, inspired by "Opening Minds with Art." Teaching artist works one on one with advanced stage patient for 6 weeks- measuring level of interest and engagement as program progresses

Q: Groups are diverse. Should we group like with like or mix groups?

Group: Discussion among participants of pros and cons, although seem to lead toward like with like model.