

## 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.