

Total word count	2,104 words
Tutorial tickets word count (discounted)	679 words
Net word count	1,425 words

The option to write to 1,500 words offered by Louisa was exercised

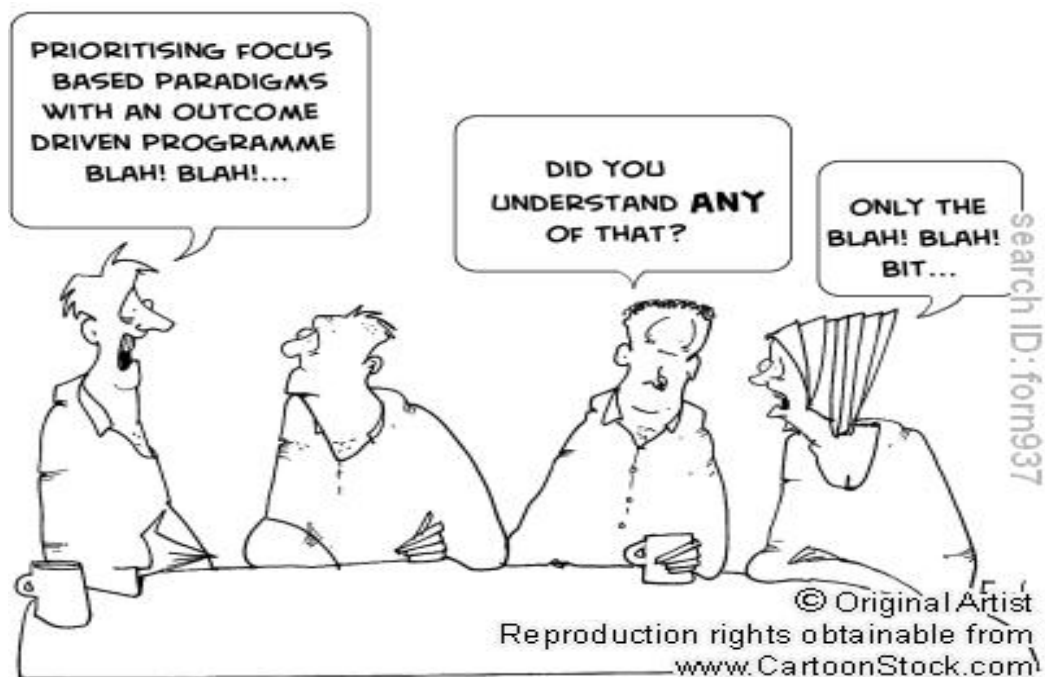
Learning Portfolio - Part 1

My disciplinary and personal influences force me to frame this portfolio as not merely my reflections, but as a document that will serve as a manual for somebody about to embark on a knowledge-creation endeavour.

The topics covered so far have stretched me from creativity, literature and critical thought through to the sciences-humanities dichotomy and Pacific knowledge. By connecting the most powerful message from each of these topics, a robust model of knowledge creation can be constructed, that isolates true determinants of sound knowledge creation from extraneous detail i.e. detail relevant only in the respective disciplinary or regional contexts.

This document first distills each topic to an absolutely key message to share with the reader – the most important thing someone should consider in this topic. It then connects these messages through a conceptual model of a knowledge-creating endeavour. This model is not designed to be the single, infallible piece of literature in knowledge creation; it is instead supposed to be the compilation of these ‘useful distillations’ into a single ‘useful distillation’. This is referred to as an ‘Executive Summary’ in my discipline, but that term would be inappropriate in this case as the distillation requires one to read the entire document before they may understand it.

Please be aware that the brevity of this document forces some learning from the course to be excluded, and that the purpose is to boil the content down to simple advice I would give to somebody in the capacity of being a student in the course.



Creativity

Initial Impression (tutorial ticket)

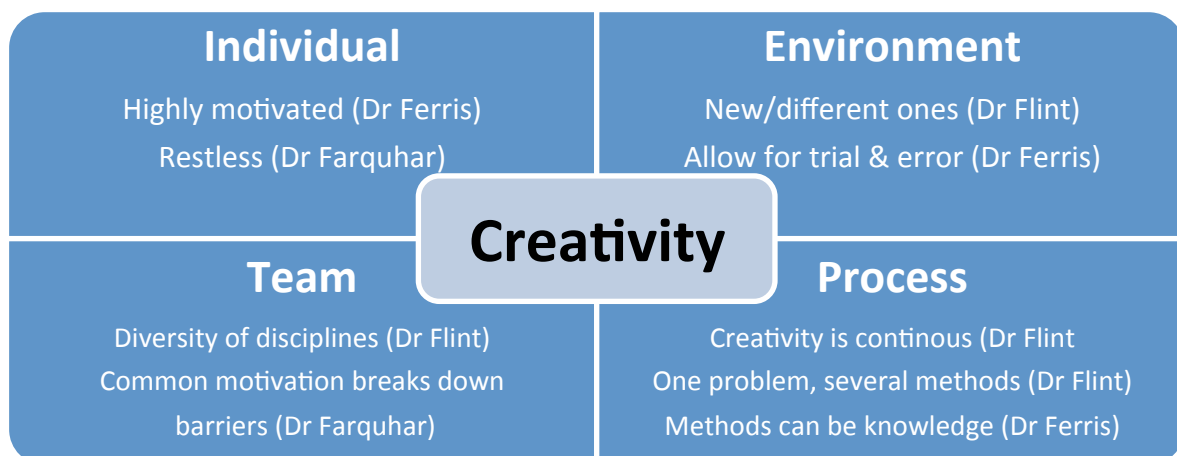
The science gallery website was more of an example of creativity. The crochet coral reef is what I see as the 'final product' of creativity. It is a brilliant appreciation of the coral reef.

The McIntyre article however left a very different impression. It gave meticulous detail into the process of how a new and creative song was constructed. I think something is perceived as being more creative when only the 'final product' is viewed. This is because it leaves the process as a mystery, and therefore allows the viewer to appreciate the work more. A creative endeavour I think is often perceived as being something to which I would respond "I could never do that".

Final Reflection

The tutorial served to relax me and remove the inclination to produce the 'correct' answer. Through the discussions, it became clear that creativity requires this kind of attitude and environment.

In the panel, the speakers all alluded to essential ingredients of creativity, despite discussing very different things. The following is an assemblage of the ingredients discussed:



“eating the same breakfast every day is not creative, but it allows you to think about something else while you eat breakfast”

- Dr Graham Farquhar

Panel Question

Should one simply get the right team in the right environment and let the rest happen organically?

My question to the panel was to test if environment and motivation are enough, if more is required such as guidance, a mission, etc. Unfortunately, time ran short and the question remains unasked.

Distillation of Topic:

Creativity is contextual and a continuous process. I infer that it has two preconditions: a highly motivated individual/team and a conducive environment

Great Critical Thinkers

Initial Impression (no ticket required)

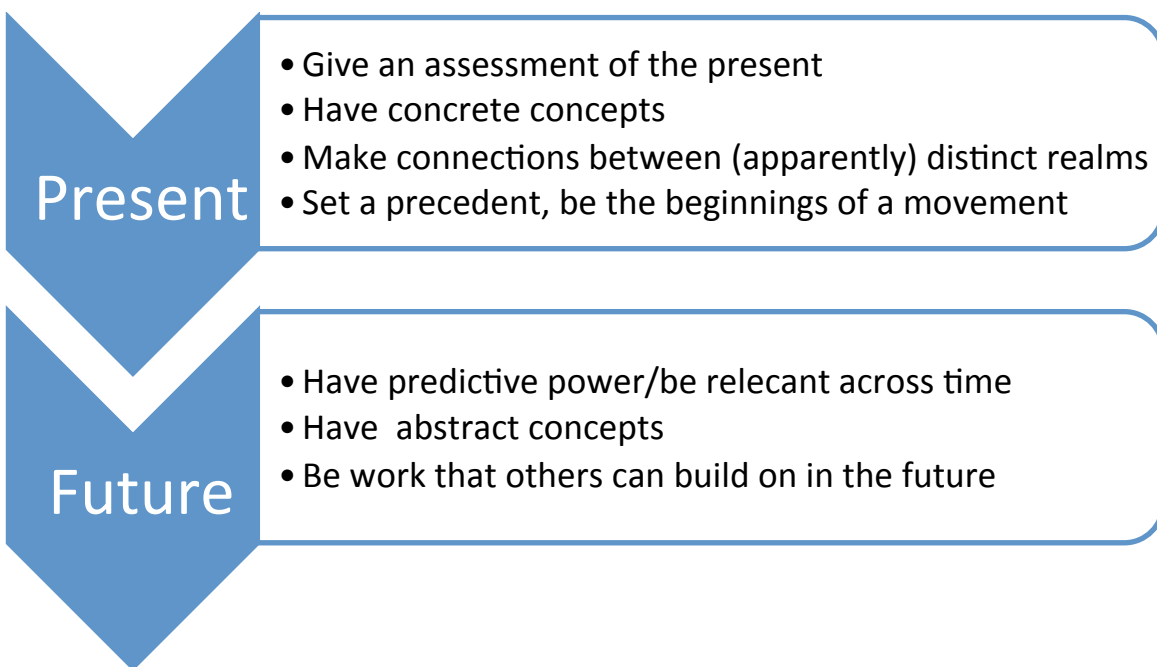
When reading Manifesto of the Communist Party and A Vindication of the Rights of Women, I thought they were well constructed evaluations of their respective societies. In particular, Marx's work was more appealing as it set out a narrative as well as a positive viewpoint – that things could be better as opposed to Wollstonecraft's work, which was more of a cry for help.

My lasting impression was that both texts were filled with what Professor Greig described as teleology. The texts did, to a large, speak to me as if they had worked out an infallible solution and that the reader should simply surrender to and support their cause(s).

Final Reflection

The panellists were quite biographical and allowed us to dismiss the teleological elements in favour of appreciating the great critical nature of the texts. This gave way to discussion about how a great thinkers' work comes to be 'great'.

The texts, I believe have both of the following streams of quality:



My unasked (was unable to attend) question to the panel was “do you think the works of Marx and Wollstonecraft are great because they were the first or early works in a long-lasting movement?” This question was a product of the teleology; I hadn't felt before listening to the panel recording that the works were 'great'.

Distillation of Topic:

The work of great critical thinkers gain traction by having a robust critique of the present but they also have relevance over time

Ways of Writing Human

Initial Impression (tutorial ticket)

My discipline (business) views humans, humanity and the human condition as being dynamic (i.e. not static) and as a perpetual struggle to gain advantage. The underlying goal, it seems to enhance one's human condition is to position oneself to be able to take advantage of opportunities and manage risk in the pursuit of goals as success is scarce by nature.

The literature this week has to some extent validated this view, but also highlights areas in which the discipline omits some of the essential elements of the human condition. For example, Dostoyevsky's distinction between men of action and men of contemplation runs true in business. To merely contemplate, without action is of no utility. It is only a rationalisation and cannot be used to further one's position. Rationalisation is only encouraged to the extent that some utility can be derived from that contemplation. Similarly, the Maugham and Tompkins texts show how meaning is controlled and owned by the interpreter of information/knowledge. My discipline acknowledges this, however focuses on adjusting the delivery of information in order to control as much of that interpretation as possible, and thus, retain control of the meaning of what's written.

Tutorial Ticket Question

What does your discipline have to say about 'humans, 'humanity' and the 'human condition'? How does this differ from what you've seen in the literature?

Final Reflection

When taking the context of the authors into account, it becomes evident that the authors were challenging a societal norm.

Professor Greig explained that Dostoyevsky was member to a powerless intelligentsia in Russia looking to break down people's ignorance of the benefits of collectivism. He intertwined his message with the universal need to feel human, allowing the reader to associate his message with this profound need.

Similarly, Maugham uses the human condition as a way of establishing a powerful connection with his readers. He sought to undermine the white mission of imperialism by telling a story of the failure of the colonial system. He stimulates readers by portraying universal human characteristics in a story and allows the reader to doubt the merits of imperialism through their interpretation and understanding of that story.

Likewise David Pope's political cartoons accomplish ends in the same fashion. His work enables the public to feel comfortable challenging the incumbent powers that set and embody societal norms.

Panel Question

All the literature discussed this week seems to be challenging societal norms, is literature most powerful when it is rebellious?

The panel question (above) was quite simply an invitation to accept or reject this theory of literature being the rebels' best vehicle, which I had developed in the panel.

Distillation of Topic:

Literature is an exceptional stimulus, but the meaning derived from it is dependent on the reader. When little of the message needs to be controlled, literature is a powerful medium to use as it stimulates thought and discussion.

Sciences-Humanities Gap

Initial Impression – Tutorial Ticket

The differences between sciences and humanities? I would say that science has a priority and even a requirement to have absolutely no errors in its models and theories. Science has to be perfectly accurate as the theories have to be used for prediction in potentially risky situations. It is probably for this reason that society puts more value on science than the humanities. Science has the stigma of reliability and perfect accuracy, something that can be relied on without going into the details. If a scientist says "x", it must be true. The humanities differ in that they are exploratory and not 'relied on' to the same extent. Humanities are more concerned with the nature of problems rather than perfect models of understanding, allowing them to attack different problems, but yielding less utility and trust in the end.

Tutorial Ticket Question

What are the differences between the sciences and humanities? Which one do you think society places more value on?

**“Science ignores the outliers, which are usually the most interesting cases” –
Professor Toni Makkai**

I guess my classification of a science is that it is precise, out of necessity and based on the end use; and that humanities are imprecise as the end use is more about understanding dynamic situations. Their respective approaches to a problem relates back to this 'end use'. One would take a more scientific approach if the end user was to trust, and humanities approach if the end use was to explore.

Final Reflection

In the tutorial, there was almost a consensus that science and humanities were both “hedgehogs” who burrow deeper, and that the “third class” of polymaths predicted by C.P. Snow are the “foxes” that run between the two and share the benefits from one to the other.

The panel largely confirmed this. All the differences explained by Professor Byrne and Professor Makkai seemed to stem from the fact that science seeks to understand nature and humanities seek to understand the human condition, not that they were fundamentally different in any other way.

Panel Question

Is there more scope for collaboration between the sciences and the humanities through an intermediary than directly?

My question to the panel was misinterpreted and left largely unanswered, though I believe the answer to be the latter, where the intermediaries are this “third class” of polymaths.

Distillation of Topic:

When a knowledge-creation team require the contributions of very different disciplines, introducing a polymath allows the team to reap the benefits of specialisation and collaboration.

Pacific Ways (tutorial facilitation topic)

Initial Impression

My impression was that the readings were quite complimentary. Both served to broaden the view of the Pacific to develop a synthesis of pre- and post-colonial viewpoints. The Hau'ofa article was a useful narration of the Pacific, allowing me to understand why the current viewpoints exist whereas the Wendt article explores in more depth how rich Pacific culture really is i.e. how much is being left out at present. This also serves as a good platform for synthesising these viewpoints. The tutorial ticket question I set for the group that *"Is knowledge tacit simply because it is not written? Can knowledge be translated between languages and schools of thought without losing meaning?"* The responses in the ticket were informative, giving examples from other cultures where the same media for knowledge are more 'recognised'.

Final Reflection

The tutorial facilitation process yielded a different type of insight into Pacific Ways. By not being able to participate, and instead considering and guiding the whole class, it was like surveying other people's understanding of the readings and reconciling everybody's understanding to shape yours, rather than taking particularly interesting thoughts and adding/incorporating them to yours.

By facilitating I also found that the task of constructing activities to enhance the learning of others made me consider the maximum learning and engagement someone could get out of this topic. Thus, in order to find a way of maximising their learning, I had to first explore the absolute maximum so on a personal level the experience was highly enriching.

The panel was delivered in a novel format, embodying the cultural norms but still having the academic teacher-student experience. Learning the dance showed how much meaning we could embed in what we would normally define as a leisure activity. The speakers also identified how this culture-specific knowledge was not simply an appreciation but made an equal contribution to what we would consider 'conventional knowledge', for example, Pacific architecture's storm durability and the integration of Samoa's hierarchical culture with democracy.

Distillation of Topic:

Knowledge can be neatly integrated in cultural practices. This makes it harder to isolate and explicitly communicate, but serves as a rich source of knowledge as well as an incubator for knowledge creation.