



# THE MIRROR GAME: CHANGING PRACTICE THROUGH REFLECTION

*An international one-day workshop on the methods and experience of articulating practices to produce transformation*

Warwick Business School  
3<sup>rd</sup> June 2008  
10 am – 5 pm



Leonardo, Study of a woman's hands, c.1490

We know very well that errors are better recognised in the works of others than in our own; and that often, while reproving little faults in others, you may ignore great ones in yourself. ... when you paint you should have a flat mirror and often look at your work as reflected in it, when you will see it reversed, and it will appear to you like some other painter's work, so you will be better able to judge of its faults than in any other way.

**Leonardo da Vinci**

The workshop will bring together a number of scholars, researcher and change practitioners who are interested in the use of practice articulation as a way of triggering individual, group, and organizational transformation. Although they come from different backgrounds, the presenters are joined in the belief that reflection should be interpreted as a public and social conversation with one's practice aimed at opening new opportunities for action. Articulating practice through discourse, writing, video analysis and other innovative techniques becomes thus a way of generating surprise, dissonance, and contradictions which in turn create an opening where new possibilities for action can emerge.

While the idea of reflecting back practices to the practitioners as a way of triggering of change and discovering directions for the expansion of the practice is extremely intriguing, its translation in practice is not without problems. Articulative reflection poses in fact a variety of theoretical, technical, and ethical challenges that can undermine the benefits of the approach and to which different traditions of intervention respond in different ways.

The main aim of the day will be to address these challenges by presenting, comparing, and discussing side by side different methods for producing change and supporting development through reflecting back practices to the practitioners. The ethos of the seminar is to stimulate discussion and argument among people who share an interest in how to use these methods. All presentation will include an introduction to the method, an illustration of its application, and some critical reflection on the experience of use. There will be ample space for participants to interact with the presenters and to ask questions and engage in conversations. To this end, the number of participants is limited to no more than 50 and the cost of participation is kept as low as possible.

#### **Presenters:**

- Katia Kostulski**, CNAM, Paris
- Jaakko Virkkunen**, University of Helsinki, Finland
- Arlene Katz**, Harvard Medical School, Boston, USA
- Annette Stanfield and Judith Hurcombe, ID&A Jean Hartley, Davide Nicolini** (Warwick Business School)
- Angie Titchen**, Fontys University of Applied Science, The Netherlands
- Dvora Yanow**, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam

The workshop will take place at the University of Warwick, Coventry, UK and is organised jointly by the [\*\*IKON Research Unit of Warwick Business School\*\*](#) (Davide Nicolini) and the [\*\*Royal College of Nursing Research Institute\*\*](#), School of Health and Social Studies (Prof Kate Seers).

There is a small fee of £39 to cover the hospitality costs and a reduced fee (£29) for students. A registration form is attached at the end of this document.

Further details about the programme and a list of recommended readings will be sent to the participants prior to the event.



## **CONTRIBUTIONS**

**Katia Kostulski, CNAM, Paris**

### **Crossed self confrontation analysis and the approach of the Clinic of Activity: the case of French public prosecutors**

The approach of the "Clinic of Activity" builds on Vygotsky's intuition that «the human being is, at any instant, full of non-realized potentialities». These potentialities are not absent from the psychological scene, they push down on what the subject does. In any activity, what a worker does and what we can observe, is thus only the effective or realized activity. Beyond this lays what the worker doesn't do: what he tries to do, what he does not (or does not anymore) feel up to it, what he still doesn't manage to do, what he should do if the conditions were different, what he does in order to avoid doing what is expected. It is towards this aspect of the activity, that we call "real activity" (Clot, 1999), that our analysis is directed. Our effort is directed towards helping workers to make questionable the real activity as a way to renew and expand their practice.

Our presentation will build on a two years intervention at the National School of Magistrature aimed to provide public prosecutors the opportunity to reconsider their activity in view of the recent profound changes in their task, conditions and work organisation.

In our presentation we will summarize the intervention, illustrate our frame, and briefly describe the characteristics and demands of this professional group. Using a single jurisdictional activity situation, we will illustrate the different moments of our method (the "crossed self confrontation analysis"), discuss its potentialities, and propose some hypothesis emerging from the analysis.

**Katia Kostulski** is “Maître de Conférences” in Psychology, Chaire de Psychologie du Travail at CNAM, Conservatoire national des Arts et Métiers in Paris. She is senior member of the research team “Clinic of activity” and has carried out intervention in such fields as courts, education, and hospitals. She researches on the language/thought relationships, the use of language in professional activity, and dialogue as a developmental methodology in psychology



**Jaakko Virkkunen, University of Helsinki, Finland**

**Changing activity expansively through theoretical-genetic reflection – the Change Laboratory intervention method**

The Change Laboratory is an intervention method that is based on the tradition of the Cultural Historical Activity Theory. The theory maintains that higher psychological functions and human agency are socially distributed and culturally mediated. Development is seen as a process of remediation of the functions as well as forms of human activity. The cultural mediators of activity are seen as practice-relevant generalizations with varying explanatory power. The researchers in this tradition have been especially interested in what they call theoretical-genetic generalisations and theoretical genetic thinking. Change Laboratory is an intervention methodology that supports the practitioners' theoretical-genetic analysis of the developmental challenges and - possibilities of the activity they are involved in and its expansive remediation in order to open new developmental possibilities.

*Jaakko Virkkunen is Professor of Developmental Work Research at the Centre for Activity Theory and Developmental Work Research at the University of Helsinki, Finland. He has conducted research and development on management, on interaction in workplaces, and on organizational learning and knowledge management. Jaakko's current research is focused on participatory development of new service concepts.*



**Arlene Katz, Harvard Medical School, Boston, USA**

**Poetics, surprise and transformation: making practice visible from within the practice**

It has often been said that the practical (tacit) knowledge that professionals use in everyday circumstances cannot be fully articulated in language. I maintain however that, within a community of those engaged in the practice, it is possible to articulate crucial features of the practice. Using videotaped case exemplars, I shall describe a set of reflective, iterative methods, a “social poetics” approach influenced by the writings of Wittgenstein, Bakhtin, and Bachelard, though which practitioners and researchers notice striking moments, develop the capacity to engage in a mutual inquiry and become co-teachers, co-learners and co-researchers. Participants articulate their practices from within the doing of them; through visual reflection in dialog, these practices are elaborated and carried over into other practices. We shall discuss the special nature of such “resourceful communities”, and the special preparations and forms of iterative reflection necessary to create them.

*Arlene Katz is Instructor in the Department of Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School, Consultant on Qualitative Research at the Center for Multicultural Research at Cambridge Health Alliance, and consults on dialogic processes to healthcare organizations. She has published widely in the field of health care, e.g., using a “social poetics” approach to study diagnostic practices (Katz and Shotter, 1996), drawing on visual methods of reflection to illuminate the mentorship process (Katz et al., 1997), developing a “Council of Elders”, an ongoing multi-voiced reflection with community elders and professionals to address ageism (Katz et al., 2000) etc. Her current research looks at visual methods in the creation of participatory ethnographies, to make visible the changing face of healthcare, and to study minority women’s experience of pregnancy and infant mortality in an innovative healthcare organization. Dr. Katz is a published poet and photographer and has created video documentaries illustrating her dialogical work.*



**Angie Titchen, Fontys University of Applied Science, The Netherlands**

**Critical-creative companionship: Facilitating practice change through reflection, the body and creative imagination**

This session will focus on the facilitation of transformational practice development through critical-creative reflection which involves a blending of critical consciousness and creative imagination and artistic expression.

The approach stems from the International Practice Development Collaborative co-operative inquiry, through which a theoretical framework for human flourishing of all those engaged in transformational practice development and research has been offered. Praxis and professional artistry are central to this framework and can be facilitated through an approach called critical-creative companionship.

In my session I will offer participants an opportunity to reflect critically and creatively on how they have moved from a crisis, in their own work situation, towards the taking of transformative action. As their critical-creative companion, I will help them to use silence, the body and creative imagination, to blend their critical consciousness with the creative. This blending will provide substance for a cognitive-artistic critique of methodological principles underpinning facilitation of practice development within this worldview.

*Angie Titchen is Clinical Chair at the Knowledge Centre for Evidence-Based Practice, Fontys University of Applied Science (NL), Visiting Professor at the University of Ulster, Northern Ireland and an Associate Fellow of the School of Health and Social Studies at the University of Warwick. Angie is passionate about practice development and doing research critically and creatively. Her practice development work is rooted in clinical experience as a physiotherapist. She holds a PhD from Oxford University and she has published widely in the field of health care especially on the nature of person-centred practice and professional knowledge and its acquisition; the facilitation of experiential learning, work-based learning, expertise, professional artistry and; critical and creative qualitative research. Currently, Angie leads on programmes of support for practice development, evidence-based practice and facilitation.*



**Annette Stanfield, Judith Hurcombe, Jean Hartley and Davide Nicolini, IDE&A, London and University of Warwick, UK**

**Producing reflection at organizational level using structured peer review. The experiences of UK local government**

In this presentation we will illustrate and discuss the assumptions, policies, and critical success factors of organisational peer review, which is a method for triggering change through reflection at the organisational level. The methodology was developed by ID&A, (the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government) and has been successfully used for several years by English local authorities. The approach consists of a semi-structured process whereby carefully selected groups of peers (both politicians and managers) visit an organization and produce a representation of the state of the organisation that is then fed back to the senior team. The approach is particularly useful in that it goes some way to respond to the problem on how to make reflection take place at the organisational level.

Using a real life example, in our presentation we will briefly illustrate the mechanics of the approach, how it works in practice, in which cases it is appropriate or otherwise, and what are some of the critical factors that affect its success. We will conclude with some reflection on the mechanisms and processes upon which the method is based and how the method could be extended to other different domains of activity.

*Annette Stanfield is Regional Associate (North East) of ID&A, the Improvement and Development Agency of the UK Local Government Association. She has a wide range of experience in local government, specialising in organisation development and change management. Judith Hurcombe is principal Consultant at ID&A. She has been the Review Manager for a range of Peer Challenges and Peer Reviews in councils across the country. Jean Hartley and Davide Nicolini are respectively Professor of Organisational Analysis Public Management and Policy and Assistant Professor and RCUK fellow at Warwick Business School. In the last few months they have worked with the ID&A practitioners help them articulate and circulate the experience of use of peer review.*



**Dvora Yanow, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands**

**The challenges of reflection and articulation**

Dvora Yanow will serve as a ‘reflector’ on the presentations and discussions of the day. She draws in this on her own work as an ethnographer looking at organizational and policy practices from an interpretive methodological perspective, as well as reflections on Schon’s notions of reflective practice, currently worked out in a paper with Haridimos Tsoukas that seeks to extend Schon’s theorizing in a less cognitive and more phenomenological mode.

*Dvora Yanow holds the Strategic Chair in Meaning and Method at the Vrije Universiteit (Amsterdam). Her research has been shaped by an overall interest in the communication of meaning in organizational and policy settings. She is the author of How does a policy mean? Interpreting policy and organizational actions (Georgetown University Press, 1996); Conducting interpretive policy analysis (Sage, 2000); Constructing American "race" and "ethnicity": Category-making in public policy and administration (M E Sharpe, 2003, winner of the 2004 ASPA and 2007 Herbert A. Simon-APSA book prizes) and co-editor of Knowing in organizations: A practice-based approach (M E Sharpe, 2003) and Interpretation and method: Empirical research methods and the "interpretive turn" (M E Sharpe, 2006). Her published articles treat, among other topics, the role of built space in communicating meaning, and improvisation and research methods and management practices. Current research looks at Dutch organizational museums, science museums and truth claims, and the conduct of organizational and political ethnography.*

# **DELEGATE BOOKING FORM**

## **THE MIRROR GAME: CHANGING PRACTICE THROUGH REFLECTION**

**3 June 2008**

*Teas, coffees and a buffet lunch will be provided.*

### **Section 1. Contact Details**

*Surname:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Forenames:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Title:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Email address:* \_\_\_\_\_

### **Section 2. Requirements**

*Please indicate if you have special requirements e.g. dietary, mobility.*

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### **Section 3. Payment of Fees**

Workshop Fees:  £39.00 (Delegates) or  £29.00 (PhD students)

This form may be emailed to: [p.d.kent@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:p.d.kent@warwick.ac.uk)  
or faxed to: +44 (0)24 761 50643. The cheque for the fee should be posted to:

*P Kent  
PA to the Director of the RCNRI  
School of Health and Social Studies  
University of Warwick  
COVENTRY CV4 7AL*

*Tel: +44 (0)24 761 50618  
Fax: +44 (0)24 761 50643*

Please note that your place at the workshop will be only guaranteed once we receive your payment/cheque.

As the number of attendants will be kept to a maximum of 50, early registration is strongly recommended.

Please make your cheque for full settlement payable to **University of Warwick**.  
Completed booking forms and payment should be submitted by **2 May 2008**.

We are **NOT** able to send out **INVOICES** but Booking Forms will be receipted.