

The SAGE Encyclopedia of
Out-of-School Learning

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2

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ability to create increasingly higher order conceptual frameworks as problems are reformulated at more complex levels: Rise-above notes encompass previous rise-above notes; more inclusive views provide a view of subordinate views. Notes and views can be revised at any time and appear in multiple views. Emergence of big ideas and deep principles is through progressive refinement across the network of participants. They bring distributed expertise to the challenge, linking views and notes in new ways and encouraging lateral, cross-boundary thinking. Knowledge Forum involves self-organization around idea improvement, rather than organization through a system of manager-defined structures and scripted action.

Knowledge Building Analytics and Linking Discourse Spaces

Knowledge building analytics work in the background of Knowledge Forum to automatically record activity. There are endless possibilities for visualizing the landscape of ideas from different perspectives. For example, users can easily find the subset of ideas judged most promising or most connected. Social and semantic network tools provide indication of social and knowledge growth patterns over time. Thus, ideas in near and distant communities that share semantic profiles can lead to important new insights and contexts for ideas under development. Results from analytic tools can be fed directly back into work as it proceeds, providing concurrent, embedded, and transformative assessment.

Users collaborating in a Knowledge Forum database constitute an “innovation network,” which like other innovation networks exhibits decentralized structures, rotating leadership, and self-organization around idea improvement. An open source community is forming to extend Knowledge Forum capabilities in order to support common discourses across media and across community, school, work, and play boundaries. Free and open software, customizable features, and modifiable code will allow users to fine-tune the environment to their needs.

One means to engage different communities is to create a view-of-views—a view that links work across sectors and multilevel groups. Another is to use knowledge building analytics to support more

opportunistic and emergent bases for linking discourse spaces. For example, semantic analyses can be used to locate near and distant neighbor notes and communities (those most alike or different in conceptual content). Visualizations can then be provided to show different connections and perspectives in order to enable participants to go beyond sharing and scripted frameworks to operating as high-level agents in collaborative innovation.

Marlene Scardamalia

See also Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning; Learning by Making; Learning Sciences; Online Communities

Further Readings

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KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

See Transfer of Knowledge

KRUMP CULTURE

Krumping is a form of hip-hop street dance that originated in the early 2000s in South Los Angeles.

It is highly expressive and frenetic, full of sharp, angular, energetic movements such as stomps and jabs. Krumping takes place in “battles” or “sessions,” in which large groups of up to 30 or 40 dancers congregate in a circle, while single dancers take turns dancing in the center. It is considered a positive way to release pent-up aggression and anger, providing a nonviolent alternative to gang involvement. Of interest to educational researchers, krumping is a community of practice that exists entirely outside school contexts, initiates new members gradually without rigid hierarchies or mentorship structures, and promotes collective agency. Producing videos of krump performances also allows youth to practice video production and editing skills. This entry discusses the origins of krumping, what krumping involves, and the educational implications of krumping.

Origins of Krumping

Krumping grew out of “clowning,” another form of street dance that emerged in Los Angeles in the 1990s. Growing up in Los Angeles, Thomas “Tommy the Clown” Johnson fell into trouble and spent some time in prison. After he was released, a friend asked him to be a clown at a child’s birthday party. He realized that getting involved in a dance community could help kids avoid drugs, violence, and gangs—to avoid the cycle that he fell into as a young man. Thus, he started spreading his new dance form, clowning, to youth in the Los Angeles area. Ceasare “Tight Eyez” Willis and Jo’Artis “Big Mijo” Ratti are credited with breaking away from clowning and creating the new form of krumping in the early 2000s in South Los Angeles. Whereas clowning is less aggressive and is more geared toward performing for audiences, including children, krumping is more dramatic and energetic, and takes place in the context of battles or sessions rather than on a stage. The two are still deeply intertwined, however, and both clowning and krumping crews dance and compete at the clowning academy founded by Tommy the Clown. Both often involve face painting as an additional form of expression. Both are also offered as direct alternatives to gang life and violence, but krumping is considered a positive, nonviolent way to express aggression and rage that might otherwise come through in gang violence, whereas clowning does

not emphasize this aspect as much. Aspects of krump dance and face painting draw inspiration from traditional African dance and war paint.

Krumping grew more widely popular beyond Los Angeles through its use in hip-hop music videos and received mainstream attention with the release of David LaChapelle’s documentary *Rize*. It is now widespread, with krumpers found all over the world.

The Krumping Process

Krumping proceeds in much the same way as other hip-hop street dances: Dancers gather in a circle, and one by one, a krumper goes to the middle of the circle to perform. This is called a “session,” and while the number of dancers forming the circle varies, it can be as large as several dozen. When one dancer goes up to another to challenge him or her to a competition or “battle,” it is called “calling out.” This challenge normally takes the form of aggressive, attack-like movements. The two dancers then show off their moves. The crowd’s reaction determines the winner, when they surround one dancer rather than the other in what is called a “kill-off.”

Each krumping session is unique, consisting of new combinations of moves and dancers, each reflecting personal expression. Because innovation is greatly valued in the krumping community, krumpers gather to invent new moves or adapt other moves they have seen in what is called “labbing.” However, the ultimate goal is not necessarily performance but expression. This is why krumping tends to take place in sessions rather than on stages.

Educational Implications

The krumping phenomenon represents a community of practice that exists entirely outside schools. Its membership structure is fluid and nonhierarchical. All members of a dance circle can feel like they are taking part, even if they do not take the floor in the center of the circle. This provides a point of entry for new participants, whose spectating is a form of “legitimate peripheral participation.” Eventually, as they learn from watching others, they may feel inspired to participate more fully by dancing in the center of the circle. Despite the

“battles” that take place between dancers, krump culture is largely positive and good natured to maintain the spirit of its opposition to gang violence; conflicts do not extend off the dance floor. This is another way by which new dancers can be made to feel welcome.

In addition, the “product” of krumping is fluid just like the membership structure; the form is constantly evolving, and within each session, dancers improvise and freestyle, drawing inspiration both from personal emotions and from other dancers, so that no performance is the same as any other. This focus on innovation, expression, and a constant work in progress rather than on one specific way of getting it “right” is a valuable approach to a constantly changing world.

Numerous videos of krump battles and sessions have been posted online, and the technical skills required to produce such videos can be another site of learning related to krumping. Young people must learn how to properly handle the recording equipment, how to direct the recording, how to edit the video with editing software, and so on. Observations of youth involved in krumping and production of krump videos showed that the youth moved fluidly between roles based on their skills, strengths, and the community’s needs. Some were dancers, some were directors, some were video editors, and they switched roles when the situation called for it.

The form of learning just described contrasts with the type of group learning often seen in schools, usually called collaborative learning. Even though learning how to collaborate in small groups is important and relevant to many professions, learning within krump culture is a different phenomenon. It is more a form of *collective* rather than collaborative agency, as it involves larger,

more flexible, less defined groups that move fluidly between roles rather than having assigned roles, and produce “artifacts” that are in constant flux rather than having a definite end point. Krump culture provides an interesting grassroots model of collective agency and learning.

Sophia Bender and Kylie Peppler

See also Grassroots Organizing; Hip-Hop; Performance and Dramatic Experiences; Performing Arts and Out-of-School Learning; Race and Ethnicity in Out-of-School Learning; Urban Settings

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