The Ethics of Engagement

• TCG AudRev15 Plenary session
9:25 am, March 26, 2015

• Designed and Led by Michael Rohd

Michael.rohd@gmail.com
www.sojourntheatre.com
www.thecpcp.org
The Ethics of Engagement

• Or...
• How do we talk about what we do in relation to what we value and believe as individuals, as organizations and as a field?
Our three main questions

• Why do we engage?

• What sort of decisions do we make on a daily basis in the process of doing engagement work (which means many things to many people)?

• What ethical dimensions, seen and unseen, intersect with the decisions we make around this work?
Our three main goals

• Hear from different people with different experiences and perspectives;
Our three main goals

• Hear from different people with different experiences and perspectives;

• Surface ideas, examples, questions and provocations that may be useful as we move through this convening’s conversations;
Our three main goals

• Hear from different people with different experiences and perspectives;

• Surface ideas, examples, questions and provocations that may be useful as we move through this convening’s conversations;

• Consider the distinction between difference of opinion and clashing values...maybe we have both. Which makes for interesting dialogue.
First, what do we mean when we use the term Ethics?
Defining Ethics

- a system of moral principles;
  the ethics of a culture (the not for profit theater field?)
Defining Ethics

• a system of moral principles; *the ethics of a culture (the not for profit theater field?)*

• the rules of conduct recognized in respect to a particular class of actions or a particular group, culture- medical ethics; Christian ethics, *(Engagement Ethics?)*
Defining Ethics

• a system of moral principles; 
  the ethics of a culture (the not for profit theater field?)

• the rules of conduct recognized in respect to a particular class of actions or a particular group, culture- medical ethics; Christian ethics, (Engagement Ethics?)

• moral principles, as of an individual: 
  (Her ethics forbade betrayal of a community partner.)
And when we talk about engagement

• For a moment, what impulses drive us to
• “Engage”...?
• If you would, put your hand up each time you feel like the statement I read strongly represents the impulse that leads you and/or your organization to Engagement work

• (doesn’t have to be the only one, but put your hand up for ones that feel like driving impulses, not just that seem agreeable to you)
We engage because we’re saying-

• Let's get more people in here
We engage because we’re saying-

• Lets get different people in here
We engage because we’re saying-

- Lets get people more deeply connected to the work we produce here
• Lets get out of here and make work for people in other spaces
• Lets get out of here and make work with people in other spaces
• Lets make our community a healthier more equitable place not just through the plays we produce but through other tactics as well
• Lets be a theater that makes great art and impacts our community
• Lets be a community resource that uses theater to impact our community
• Let’s make change
In what contexts do you make decisions in your daily work?
Hands up if-

• You make the art
Hands up if-

• You develop strategies, write text or create images used to persuade/invite people to attend things
Hands up if:

- You initiate partnerships in the community
• You maintain partnerships in the community
• You set ticket prices
• You lead work in community settings
• You raise money
• you design education programs
• You manage people
Our three main goals

• Hear from different people with different experiences and perspectives;
• Surface ideas, examples, questions and provocations that may be useful as we move through this convening’s conversations;
• Consider the distinction between difference of opinion and clashing values...maybe we have both. Which makes for interesting dialogue.
Cast

• Panelists
• Cameos
• You
Panelists

- Martha Lavey
- Seema Sueko
- Shay Wafer
- Doug Borwick
YOU
Sara Zatz,
Associate Director
Ping Chong & Company

• Cameo group 1
Tim Jennings
Managing Director/CEO, Children's Theatre Company

• Cameo group 1
Madeline Sayet, 
Resident Artistic Director, 
AMERINDA
Panelists

• Martha Lavey
• Seema Sueko
• Shay Wafer
• Doug Borwick
Brianna Firestone
Director of Marketing,
Denver Center Theatre

• cameo group 2
Samuel Roberson,
Artistic Director
Congo Square Theatre
Courtney Perez
Marketing Director,
Two River Theater Co

• Cameo group 2
Panelists

• Martha Lavey
• Seema Sueko
• Shay Wafer
• Doug Borwick
YOU
Roberta Wells-Famula
Director of Education,
The Old Globe

• Cameo group 3
Lydia Fort
Executive Artistic Director,
Mo`olelo Performing Arts Company

• Cameo group 3
Rebecca Novick
Director of Artistic Engagement, California Shakespeare Theater
cameo group 3
You
Panelists

• Martha Lavey
• Seema Sueko
• Shay Wafer
• Doug Borwick
Two resources on this conversation-

Michelle Hensley’s

* All The Lights On

&

Jan Cohen Cruz’s

* Engaging Performance