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Beyond the "linoleum colon": performance as research into the constructed narrative of the public hospital space

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ABSTRACT

A theory of performance-making is presented through this study that contributes to the body of performance studies research. The consideration of looking "beyond" the "linoleum colon", as the research title suggests, positions this study to respond to the research question:

To what extent can a constructed performance narrative provide the potential for audience transformation in reading, knowing, and understanding the public health site as an ally to health care practice?

The "performance-making process" is forwarded as a possible model for creative research. The collaborative process leading to the performance *Beyond the linoleum colon* is an experiment in performance-making. I frame this experiment as a "collision course" (Pollock, 2010: 203) that presents a convergence between performance studies, urban spatial praxis, and narrative theory. The performance-making process as a model presents a formula for a theory of performance-making.

A performance-making theory can be derived from the ways in which a *citing* of site took place and will be presented as part of this study. I have connoted the action of 'digestion' from the metaphorical element of the 'colon', an incorporation of supportive theoretical ideas that develop into a model for a theory of performance-making.

The research to follow is informed by writers in performance studies including Schechner (2002), Conquergood (1995, 2002a, 2002b), Pollock (2010), and Warren (2010), urban spatial praxis from the perspective of Lefebvre (1991), and narrative theory with reference to Braid (1996), Bruner (1986), and McArthy (2007).

The implications of performance-making on the field of performance studies will be addressed, underscoring the importance of a performance-lens to the creative endeavour of the current study. Urban spatial praxis will be stressed, as a consideration of space within the performance was twofold: the citing of site in a theatrical space emerged, as well as a foregrounding of hospital site as a space for the culmination of experiential accounts that developed the Expressionist theatre work. A framing theory on space and the circumstances for its production will be emphasised, leading to an imperative to what I reinforce as narrative construction and narrative performance. The way in which the research has developed in response to these key theoretical perspectives informs the process, progress, and concluding findings of the performance experiment: *Beyond the linoleum colon*.