

Mono-, Inter-, Multi- disciplinarity

Individually: What is your discipline?

- What is the primary discipline that you work within?
- Do you work within other disciplines too, if so, which?
- How do you know what your discipline is?

Groups: individual discipline

What are the particular a) 'concerns', b) 'methods', c) 'vocabularies' of your discipline? (Collini, p. iv)

Create a poster to answer this question using the flip chart.

Two people from each group to move to the next group

- Are there potential points of comparison between your disciplines as you have described them?
- Would they work together for interdisciplinary study?
- How would you define this 'interdiscipline'?

Define and distinguish between the following terms:

- Mono-disciplinarity
- Sub-disciplinarity
- Inter-disciplinarity
- Multi-disciplinarity

'Interdisciplines' (as defined by Joe Moran and Stefan Collini)

Choose one or more of these 'interdisciplines' and explain why they are interdisciplinary:

- cultural history
- literary theory
- quantum physics
- ecocriticism
- neuroscience
- science writing

'Two Cultures'

- Is it still the case that we have two cultures?
- How would you characterise F. R. Leavis's idea of his discipline 'English' (see, e.g. Collini, p. xxxvi)?
- Is the phrase 'two cultures' now 'an irrelevant anachronism' (Collini, p. liv)?

What about your own research?

- Would you say that your research is inter- or multi-disciplinary?
- If so, do you use the concerns, methods, and/or vocabulary of other disciplines?
- How useful is this?
- How far does your discipline define you?
What about our 'overlapping identities'
(Collini, p. lvi)?

Larger Questions

- Is interdisciplinarity ever really possible?
- Why has interdisciplinarity become such a buzz word in academia? What is the reality of this situation?
- Is interdisciplinarity actually 'intellectual imperialism' (Moran, p. 165)
- Is the narrowing of academic study into subfields debilitating? Can we communicate with each other?
- Does any of this matter???