Towards a general theory of collaborative performance: the importance of efficacy and agency
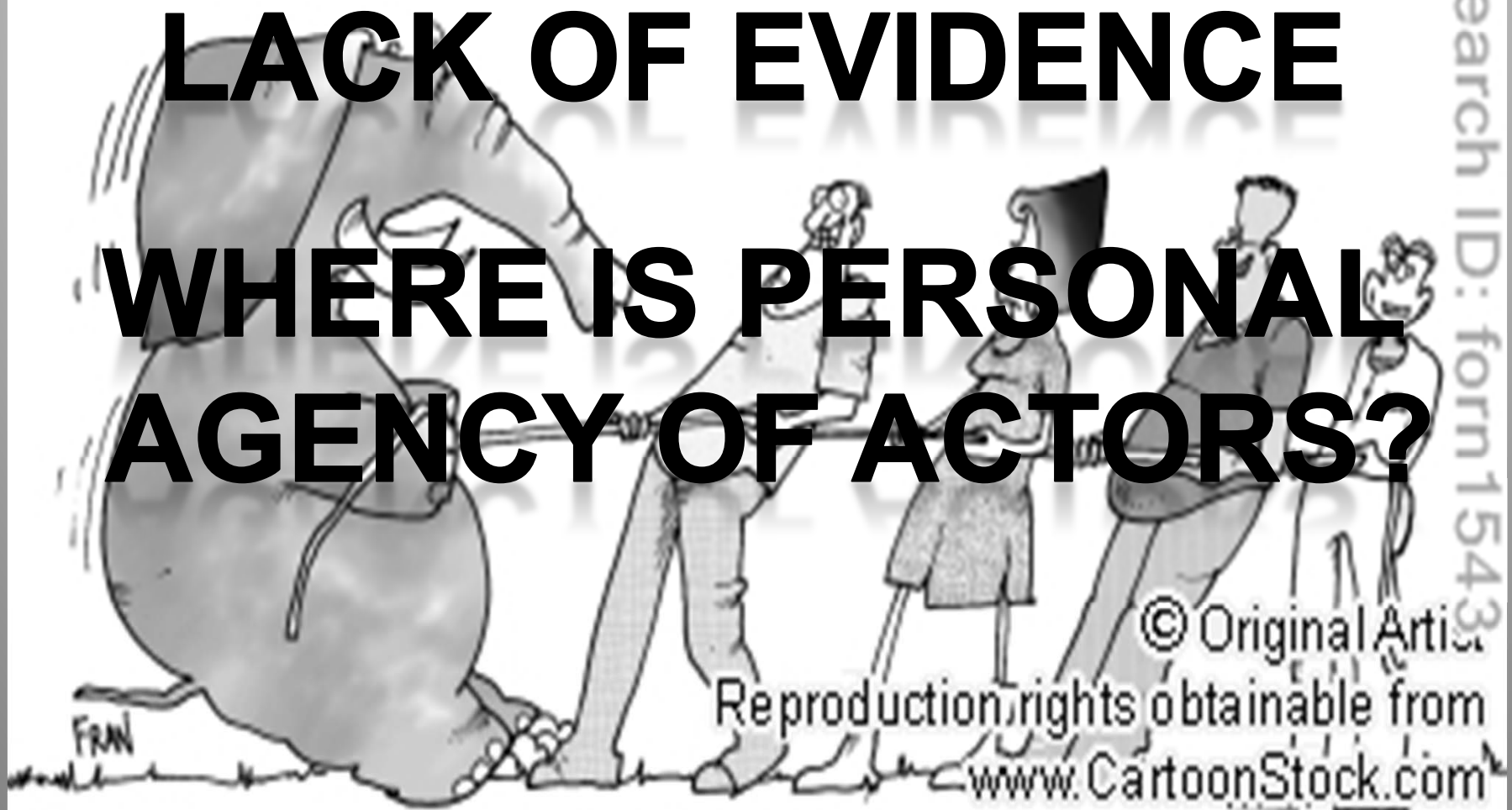
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Main question that emerges from this

How can we explain the persistent appeal of collaboration amongst policy makers and practitioners?

Three types of performance

1. **Organisational** - prioritises **efficiency**.

2. **Technological performance** promotes **effectiveness**.

3. **Cultural performance** privileges **social efficacy**

(McKenzie, 2001)

	Efficiency	**Effectiveness**	**Efficacy**
Paradigm	Performance Management	Techno-Performance. No specific paradigm although closely aligned with computer science.	Performance Studies
Tools and techniques	Setting targets, performance indicators and measures, pay for performance, restructuring.	Computers, statistical modelling, computer aided design.	Dramaturgy, reflexive practices, storytelling, ethnography.
Performance is...	Rational, it can be controlled for, predicted, managed and ultimately delivered	Satisficing, different facets of performance are weighed up against one another. It is the result of a long and open series of negotiations and compromises.	Always interactional in nature, it can both reaffirm existing traditions and beliefs or resist and adapt these.

Efficiency

☐ Some evidence to support shift of services from hospital into community settings.

☐ Although evidence that more integration can increase costs.

☐ Need to be careful about financial levers.

☐ Some evidence about impact on functional indicators in older people but little about clinical outcomes.

☐ Many large scale programmes conclude that evidence is uncertain.

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Effectiveness

- Although much joint working driven by need to share information again evidence base is inclusive.

- Evidence from standalone systems but not integrated.

- Telemedicine found some impacts but high cost per QALY.

- Professionals see centralised tendencies as way of surveilling activities.

Value of cultural performance

☐ This paradigm offers an opportunity to view collaboration differently, to explore it as 'a performance act, interactional in nature and involving symbolic forms and live bodies, [that] provides a way to constitute meaning and affirm individual and cultural values' (Stern & Henderson, 1993: p. 3).

☐ Cannot just look at the actions (and interactions) of individuals and organisations as being primarily motivated by rational motives: their meaning goes beyond this. Decisions to collaborate are likewise complex, driven by motivations that are not rational but reflective of particular values or meanings that are attached to collaboration.

☐ Exploring these motivations might provide helpful insights into why actors opt for, or persist with, collaboration in the face of limited evidence of its capacity to improve outcomes.

Efficacy

- Language
- Symbols and objects
- Emotions
- Practices
- Identity

The contribution of cultural performance

- Lack of evidence may be due to the fact that not focused on all possible forms of performance, restricting themselves to techno-bureaucratic understandings which treat collaboration as a rather rationalist intervention; a means-ends tool to bring about certain outcomes.

- There is an "added value" to collaboration when viewed in a cultural performance sense.

- Demonstrates why collaboration has persisted as an appealing concept – symbolically important and a resource for professionals.

Organisational efficiency	Technological effectiveness	Cultural efficacy
• What different forms of collaboration exist and how do their features differ from one another? • Does collaboration lead to improved services? What measures demonstrate this? • If collaboration does improve services and outcomes, which features of these collaborations produce these impacts? • Is collaboration cost-effective compared to other forms of arrangements?	• What types of technology are being used? • To what degree do technologies manage to execute their prescribed tasks? • What negotiations and compromises are made between possible technology performances?	• What discourses of collaboration are present and what performative work do discourses do? • How is the performance of collaboration designed/structured? • How do actors perform a collaborative self? • What are the affective dimensions of discourses and performances? • What kinds of metaphors and symbols are present?

Conclusions

☐ By examining collaboration through the lens of cultural performance we gain the opportunity to fill an important gap in our understanding of how collaborations perform and why actors continue to be motivated to engage in collaborative activity.

☐ Asks different questions of collaboration and actors involved – i.e. what does collaboration mean?

☐ Collaboration as an instrument of control and liberation, opportunity and constraint, creativity and conflict.

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