Editorial

*T*here is a growing interest in the role that creativity can play in education to keep up with the fast-moving, 21st Century knowledge society. The definition of creativity has been somewhat elusive as understandings have evolved and changed over the last millennium. It was once thought that creativity was solely a partner of intelligence, and an innate quality found only in highly intelligent people who, during their lifetime, drastically changed the thinking within a particular domain. Largely by studying the lives of such renowned thinkers in many disciplines (see Gardner and Csikszentmihalyi below), it has become apparent that what has been called "Big C" creativity, or eminent creativity, involves knowledge, motivation, perseverance, nurturing/scaffolding, and frequently a good deal of time (Craft, Jeffrey, & Leibling, 2001). Thinking has changed, however. There is an understanding now that "Small c" creativity is a feature possessed by all people and can be developed and taught (Vialte & Verenikina, 2000, p. 112). Individuals have different kinds of propensities that lend themselves to novel ways of using their talents (not only in the arts) to find new and effective solutions in everyday problem solving. These can be nurtured, are context dependent, and culturally shaped. This democratic understanding of creativity is what permeates this issue of LEARNing Landscapes. We are proud to say that it is our eleventh and largest issue to date, and represents the work of university researchers, graduate students, and practitioners from nine different countries. This rich array of work is organized alphabetically in the issue, but for the purposes of the editorial overview, the submissions have been clustered according to themes that emerged while I was immersed in the excellent work of these authors. As in the past, our issue begins with invited commentaries on creativity from luminaries in the field.

Commentary

We are extremely honoured and privileged to have commentaries from some very eminent people. **Howard Gardner**, known worldwide for his theory of multiple intelligences, is the John H. and Elisabeth A. Hobbs Professor of Cognition and

Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. His interest in creativity has its roots in his own music education. He turned his attention away from music for a number of years while he explored the notion of multiple intelligences. In the 1990s, he shifted his focus back to creativity and studied the lives of "seven creators of the modern era." He recounts in our interview how he was most surprised about their personalities—ambitious, wanting to make a mark, and willing to take risks and fail along the way. He realized during this research, contrary to what had been thought, that creativity was not a one-shot thing in a particular moment, but more the product of a way of being. He discusses his current focus on "good work," on the moral and ethical implications of creativity, and suggests that the task of educators in fostering creativity is to stimulate young minds to pursue inquiry in ways that lead them to trying to do, and ultimately doing, the "right thing."

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi is the C.S. and D.J. Davidson Professor of Psychology at the School of Behavioral and Organizational Sciences, and the Peter F. Drucker Professor in the Graduate School of Management, at Claremont Graduate University. He is renowned for his long-time work on creativity and the theory of "flow" within the creative process. Initially, he was surprised when the highly creative people he studied repeatedly talked about how childhood "boredom," or a restriction due to isolation or illness, stimulated their creativity. He suggests that creativity is fostered by solitude, scaffolding, and passion. He cautions that technology has a tendency to steal important childhood moments, which otherwise would give rise to creative activity, because it is so constantly accessible and distracting.

Jessica Hoffman Davis is the founding director of the Arts in Education Program at Harvard's Graduate School of Education, and continues to research and write passionately about art and children's development. In her commentary she discusses the widely varying definitions of creativity that range from small everyday acts, to more global contributions. She recounts how, as a student, she pushed back against the demands of academic conformity which resulted in reprimand, rather than encouragement. Then, as a teacher herself, she lamented when she saw this conformity in youngsters who tended to copy each other's work. She poignantly highlights how her son taught her an important lesson about creativity at age six when he produced a drawing to explain an event at school rather than telling her about it. Excited by both his approach and product, she framed the picture and hung it up proudly to showcase his creativity. The important insight occurred when her son, some years later, confessed that he had "copied" his friend's drawing from memory. As a result of this experience, she began to question the very fixed notions of creativity that many educators hold, ones that do not permit replication, even though, she argues, that

replication develops aesthetic judgment, vocabulary acquisition, and new possibilities of thought.

Jane Piirto is the Trustees' Distinguished Professor at Ashland University. Well known for her research in talent development (Piirto Pyramid of Talent Development), she is also a poet and novelist. She lives a full life fueled by thinking, talking, writing, teaching, and presenting about creativity. In this commentary she provides a lively overview of what a week of "living creativity" looks and feels like by describing her daily activities. These are predicated on five key attitudes for the creative process—openness to experience, risk-taking, tolerance for ambiguity, groups trust, and self-discipline—and seven necessary dimensions which include inspiration, insight, imagery, imagination, intuition, incubation, and improvisation.

Before becoming an inspirational Art teacher at St. George's Elementary School in Montreal, **Zenia Dusaniwsky** taught in a range of remote and International School settings around the world. These experiences ignited her passion for teaching art and developing creativity in young children. She believes that creativity is present in everyone and needs to be fostered by providing spaces within structured parameters for play and experimentation, for celebrating mistakes, and for learning to collaborate. She shows, with interesting student examples, how she promotes creativity as a form of critical literacy.

Promise of Creativity

A theme cutting across several of the submissions for this issue of LEARNing Landscapes is the "promise of creativity." **Connery** and **John-Steiner** suggest that the power of imagination is best understood by using a cultural-historical lens based on the work of Lev Vygotsky. Their approach, known as CHACE (cultural-historical approach to creative education), is the *mindful, intentional nurturing of a system of activities resulting in novel interpretations, enhanced understandings, imaginative problem solving, critical innovations, and artistic creations achieved with the support of a community of learners and teachers*. They describe, with lovely examples, how creative learning environments can be established to scaffold student learning and development, to encourage play, imagination, and innovation, to promote self-worth and resilience, to cultivate competence and cognitive pluralism, and to encourage an apprenticeship approach to content development through meaningful and real-life social justice projects. **Treffinger**, **Selby**, and **Schoonover** argue that it is not how creative one is, but more importantly, how one is creative. They juxtapose stories of two students, Michael, who gravitates toward novelty, and Lucy, who embraces structure, to

illustrate two very different ways in which each demonstrate personal creativity and problem-solving styles. They suggest that educators must seek and embrace the differences in students' approaches to tasks in order to foster four categories of personal creativity: generating ideas, digging deeper into ideas, fostering an openness and courage to explore ideas, and listening to one's inner voice, and three dimensions of problem-solving: orientation to change, manner of processing, and ways of deciding. **Sprague** and **Parsons** suggest in a review of the literature that current thinking about creativity is culturally rooted and biased in the Western world toward individualism, genius, eminence, and fine art. This limits extensively how creativity is defined and viewed. They argue that an expanded and inclusive, or ecological notion, of creativity is needed to create spaces in which the promise of creativity can be realized in each and every student.

Power of Self-Study/Practitioner Inquiry

Self-study has been used extensively to help practitioner inquirers (Cochran-Smyth & Lytle, 2009) to study questions about which they are passionate, and get a deeper understanding of their teaching and learning practices. It requires extensive reflection (Brookfield, 1995) and frequently involves the engagement of "critical friends" who offer both feedback and support in the process. **Dobson** shares how two incidences in her educational practice inspired her to look more deeply, using the lenses of Arendt, Bergson, and Damasio (her "critical friends"), to understand how the "essential identity" of a teacher is what creates the necessary caring, respectful, and playful space in which creativity can be nourished and flourish. **Seiki** discusses how by creating "sound stories" of her American Japanese family's imprisonment experiences during the Second World War she was able to uncover counter stories of agency and resistance. These stories gave her a "powerful reliving" of what had transpired and a way to counter the pain she experienced as a result of these racist events. She discovered that this innovative form of representation not only invoked deep empathy from others, but also provided important suggestions for classroom practices. **Russell** and **Owen** describe how practitioner inquiry can include students as researchers. In their research at Deacon High School in Northeast England, teachers worked with students to develop research skills that would examine creative practices across five departments in the school. Using interviews and photographs, and arts-informed representational forms, the students were encouraged to identify new ways of looking at their school context and practices. The inclusion of student voices in the research process enhanced and widened the lenses for looking at creative activity and exploring ways for change. **Ingersoll** delves into stories of her own schooling to show the disruptive, discouraging, and silencing nature of correction and enforced conformity. She

juxtaposes these stories with her experience as a graduate student where writing without censure was encouraged and allowed her stifled creativity and voice to emerge and grow. **Zepeda** reflects on stories of her experiences as a novice Kindergarten teacher to show how she grappled with classroom management and moved from a "punitive" to "instructive" form of discipline. Her candid accounts of her evolution as she moved to accepting, understanding, and involving students in learning, rather than reacting negatively to problems, have helped her to develop creative pathways for fostering meaningful learning, especially for students with particular challenges.

Fostering Creativity in Classrooms

Cline and **Pope Edwards** et al. describe, with delightful examples, a day in Filastrocca Preschool in Pistoia, Italy. They show how a library teacher in this Reggio Emilia-based school supports literacy development through imagination, creative activities, and social interaction, all of which foster a special empathy among these preschoolers. The Reggio Approach is based on the work of Dewey, Piaget, and Vygotsky, among others. It encourages collaboration among children, teachers, and parents, the co-construction of knowledge, the interdependence of individual and social learning, and how the role of culture is an important part of this interdependence (Rankin, 2004). **Jindal-Snape**, in her work at the University of Dundee, explains how theories of self-esteem, resilience, and emotional intelligence help to explain the psycho-social processes that children use when going through transitions. She illustrates, with examples, how various creative activities can help to make the thoughts and feelings of students more transparent than words, and with these new insights can help educators make student transitions much more positive. **Martínez-Álvarez**, **Ghiso**, and **Martínez**, in response to the educational policies in the United States that support standardized testing and decontextualized curricula, studied first-graders' second language learning that was culturally and contextually grounded. Their findings show that second language learners thrive when immersed in relevant and creative activities that honour their cultural and linguistic identities. **View**, **Hanley**, **Stribling**, and **DeMulder** used oral history interviews of the schooling experiences of five people of colour to create videotaped, found poems around issues of race that had emerged in the interviews. Subsequently, 60 in-service teachers viewed the videotapes, and created and shared their own poems in response to what they had seen. This endeavour provided increased empathy for others' experiences, encouraged creative agency among these teachers, and underscored the powerful dimensions of creative activity.

Creative Lenses in Higher Education

Using interviews, reflective sketchbooks, and observational notes as data, **Watson** explored undergraduate student perceptions of working in a creative learning environment at the University of East Anglia. Her study showed that the students benefited from working collaboratively, pursuing their own avenues of inquiry, and demonstrating their knowledge using different modalities. She suggests that performance-driven universities need to change the status quo and to experiment with creative pedagogies if they wish to keep pace with the 21st Century knowledge society. **Pinard** describes the resistance she encountered as a junior faculty member in a state university in the United States when she attempted to convince colleagues to revamp a Principles of Education course by using students' existing philosophical understandings and identities as a point of departure. She shares, using student examples, her experience of struggling to move away from standard curricula and assignments, and how she was able to inspire some to become more creative thinkers, learners, and teachers, while others were less able to take risks in the same way. She suggests that perhaps those who were unable to take risks were inhibited by personal philosophical orientations, and/or by the anticipated demands of the educational job market. This is a tension that resonates with other higher education contexts. At the University of Queensland in Australia, **O'Brien** echoes the work of Craft (2003) and Sawyer (2011) by positing that creativity is not fixed, but rather can be taught. She describes how pre-service teachers learn to use Storythread, a pedagogical program that grounds learners in real-life issues and events, and applies curriculum content using story, drama, inquiry, games, play, deep reflection, and engagement with the environment. The feedback from the students has been very positive and poignant. Much like Pinard discusses in her article, O'Brien underscores that this mindset may be counterintuitive, and therefore resisted by many who choose education as a profession. **Norris** criticizes the binary notions about work and play, and shows with interesting examples how he integrates play into his higher education teaching at Brock University to inspire both creativity and artistry. He acknowledges, though, how this type of teaching/living is often more difficult than it looks. **Lipszyc** describes how in a higher education writing course at SUNY Plattsburgh she used previous student models of writing to try to stimulate creativity among her students and to help them develop strategies to become autonomous writers. She suggests, as does Hoffman Davis mentioned earlier, that by mimicking or applying writing models used in the work of previous students, these writers gained self-confidence, aesthetic judgment, and the vocabulary and practices of the writing genres, and were scaffolded into new areas of possibility. **Badenhorst**, **Moloney**, **Rosales**, and **Dyer** at Memorial University describe the negative experiences that graduate students have with thesis writing because of the literacy demands that are expected of them, and because of an

implicit "othering" they experience in the process. Through an extended workshop with a total of 22 students over two semesters, they presented research genres, rules and conventions and at the same time encouraged creativity, choice and the inclusion of the "self" in research writing. The outcomes were positive, productive, and liberating, suggesting that the "cohortness" of the group, along with an adept balance of structure and flexibility, help to build confidence and to scaffold possibility in thesis writing. **Clarke** et al. examine how they worked with five undergraduate social work students to bridge the gap between mainstream and Indigenous social work by interrogating the dominant Eurocentric thinking that exists in academia. They illustrate this journey visually by representing their work in a "social work tree," a metaphorical representation for the past, present, and future of social work, and elaborate in some detail in their discussion showing concretely how the use of metaphor enhances understanding.

Creative Spaces for Professional Learning

In the fast-moving world of learning and technology, there is a growing demand for innovative professional development that will meet needs, and build capacity and sustainability in educational contexts. **Johansson**-**Fua**, **Ruru**, **Sanga**, **Walker**, and **Ralph** describe an interesting professional learning mentoring initiative among leaders from Fiji, Tonga, New Zealand, and Canada. They based the work on their beliefs that all mentoring is fundamentally relational, and that metaphors help to explain and create mental images by connecting the familiar and the strange and result in clarifying meaning, evoking emotions, and guiding action. They describe a series of three workshops held in the South Pacific and attended by a total by 94 educational leaders from a variety of disciplines and professions. Their study showed that the participants were able to use cultural metaphors to adapt generic mentoring principles meaningfully to fit specific contexts, and that the collaborative, cross-disciplinary nature of the groups enhanced the overall process. **Córdova**, **Hudson**, and **Kumpulainen** share how the Cultural Landscapes Collaboratory (CoLab), made up of educational researchers interested in innovation for 21st Century learning, used their theory of innovation and action called *ResponsiveDesign* as a basis for a summer leadership institute. The institute comprised a National Writing Project, a school district, and museum leaders in St. Louis Missouri in the United States who worked on the use of *ResponsiveDesign* (a model for exploring, envisioning, prototyping, and enacting teaching practices) to explore creatively the development of partnerships among formal and informal learning contexts. They describe with rich visuals a number of the activities in which they were involved, the enthusiasm of the participants, and the interesting ideas that emerged as a result. Their work attests to the potential

synergy that exists when leaders from formal and informal contexts collaborate. **Davis**, **Aruldoss**, **McNair**, and **Bizas**, researchers at the University of Edinburgh, building on the work of Csikszentmihalyi (1990), Sawyer (2012), and others, describe the CREANOVA project. This was an investigation involving 507 participants from technical and creative industries in four countries on how relational issues diminish or enhance creativity in learning/working contexts, and how creative learning environments can be promoted. Their quantitative and qualitative results highlighted the collaborative nature of creativity. Their findings indicated that creativity is motivated internally and externally, by a number of different factors, and often is generated from a wish to help others rather than for individual gains. Furthermore, environment, learning, freedom (within flexible frameworks), and interaction were significant factors contributing to creativity and innovation. They conclude with an interesting discussion on how their findings have implications for teaching and learning in schools.

Reprinted Article

Last, but certainly not least, **Adler**, from the Faculty of Management at McGill University, suggests persuasively that we need to focus on creativity and beauty at the macro level of society, rather than on mundane aspects at the micro level. She argues convincingly, with a range of examples, that our aspirations should be grounded in careful observations, rather than assumptions, that will inspire and result in creative, courageous, and innovative possibilities. These will contribute to a peaceful and prosperous world for the future.

LBK

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