



Commissioning Editor: Norman Jackson

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Issue Number 14 2019

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Curators: This issue of Creative Academic Magazine was compiled and edited by Dr Jenny Willis (Executive Editor) and produced by Neda Tomlinson (Editorial Assistant).

INTRODUCTION

Every year the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) holds a 'Get Creative Festival'. It's aim is to shine a light on all the great cultural activity that takes place on a regular basis in local communities and encourages people to try their hand at something new and creative. This huge nation-wide annual celebration of creativity aims to give everyone the chance to get actively involved in a creative event in their local area. We felt we wanted to involve our community as well so Creative Academic and #creativeHE hosted our own Lets Get Creative Festival on the #creativeHE Facebook forum.

Our contribution took the form of an invitation to the members of our community to do something creative and to share what they did with other members of the forum. We were also interested in encouraging participants to talk about their creativity as its only through the sharing of perspectives that we develop our understanding of what it means.

This issue curates the conversation and some of the resources that were used in the discussion. Posts were collated by Executive Editor Jenny Willis and the Magazine was produced by Neda Tomlinson.

Commissioning Editor

OUR PORRIDGE MAKER IN RESIDENCE

A special thank you to Chris Tomlinson. Every morning Chris makes a large bowl of porridge and decorates it with a pattern or a picture that has symbolic meaning. He shares his daily creations with the world via Instagram and his photographic posts are accompanied by a few words that share what they mean. Chris's posts provided food for thought and gentle stimulation each day as well as providing a nice simple example of personal creativity in action. They remind us that we can all create a little space for our creativity in a busy life.



DAY1 Sunny Day time to get creative! The joy of nature!



My daughters were in a dance production this weekend that brought a whole group of different people together to celebrate

the joy of watching them put on a show! A celebration of creativity

In quietness and confidence shall beyour

from traditional wisdom sayings.



Thank you for the music! How we can be inspired to greater things through



Getting things in order! It's easier to be creative when I am organised!



Love that feeling! Sense of reaching a destination!



Joining the dots Making sense of this gift of life. Sharing experiences!



Editor: During our Let's Get Creative Festival I came across a blog post by Felica Semple in which she explained the difference between making something in which her creativity was involved and making something in which little-c creativity was involved. I thought it offered a useful insight that we could draw upon in our discussions and I drew attention to it. I also wrote to her and asked her if we could publish a version of her article in our magazine and she responded positively and enthusiastically. This article combines two posts that she wrote on the subject.

Making Is Not Inherently Creative



Felicia is an Australian craft activist. She is well-known within the crafting world through 'The Craft Sessions', which is a virtual home for her blog and the actual home of her inspirational annual retreats. Her eloquent writing often explores the way hand-crafting garments can lead to a greater understanding of the true value - and cost- of what we wear. Not content just to inspire, she is also the instigator of 'Stash Less', a challenge to practice mindful consumption that has been taken up by makers worldwide.

Creativity is one of those words that gets bandied about in our culture as a way of making us all feel good..... Creative - yes! "I'd love to be more creative". Or "my organisation needs more creativity". Creative thinkers! That's what we all need. And that's great. All power to everyone - creativity deserves it's recognition. It's fun, it's sparkly, it's clever.

But creativity is a word that also divides us because by default we create a two-tiered system of people, some of whom are creative, and those of us who aren't. So many of us feel that we aren't creative, or if we are creative then we aren't quite as creative as the next tiger we see on instagram. And because we don't have any creativity, or don't have enough of it, or can't find it on the day we need it, then we end up feeling a bit unfulfilled and disappointed with ourselves.

Our crafty creativity is often commented on when someone admires our work. Which would be fine, except that I worry that people are opting out of craft making because they feel they are not creative. I hear it all the time as I wander around making in public - from people that make already but who wish they could make something better or something different, but also from people that don't make at all. The line is often "I wish I could but I'm not a creative person".

What I want to say is "you are creative, we all are" but as that's something many people can't swallow without a lengthy discussion, what I often say is "....but you don't need to be creative to make". They um and ah a bit, but then I try (often unsuccessfully) to walk them through my point......

Creativity has become a bit of a catchall buzz word. We use it a little too often, a little too flippantly and often totally incorrectly.

In the immortal words of Inigo Montoya in the Princess Bride, "You keep using that word. I do not think it means what you think it means".

"Creativity is the use of imagination or original ideas to create something; inventiveness." — Google...

How often do you hear something like "you're so creative' when someone realises you have made the dress you are wearing? But how do they know that I've used any creativity in the making of said dress? They don't. However, they believe that making something crafty, sewing , knitting, quilting etc is inherently creative. But here's the thing... often my making is simply a process I've fol-

SOME SKILLS ARE CREATIVE, SOME SKILLS ARE NOT?

I DON'T THINK

CREATIVITY MEANS

WHAT YOU THINK IT

MEANS

lowed which involves little, if any, creativity. Because making is not inherently creative.

Hear me out.

In life there is a basic set of skills we assume that all people have. All people will be able to write their name, drive a car, wash a dish, put a sheet on their bed, use a shovel, change a light globe, tie their shoe laces, put on mascara. These are the surface skills we have which are visible. Underneath those skills are a whole heap of truly

> amazing things we have learnt to do, like balance and walk and talk and coordinate our fingers.



However, in our culture, in this decade, we don't assume that all people can knit a sweater or sew a dress - when the simple fact is that of course they can. It might take time and practice - as it did learning to drive a car - but all people are capable of knitting a sweater in the same way that all people are capable of writing their name.

So why have we segregated the skills involved in making/craft and slapped them with the label creativity? What makes the skills involved in knitting, sewing and quilting different, and deserving of such a label?

Consider this different example - we don't often refer to garment workers in a factory as creative. We see them as skilled, yes. They can make beautiful things that are beautifully finished! But creative? No. They are following a process - just like most of our making is following a process too. And yet our making is often deemed to be creative. Why?

And what about creating a loaf of bread using someone else's recipe - is that a creative act? I don't think so - I think it is a process. Maybe you do too?

I wholeheartedly acknowledge that within our crafty fields of endeavor there are many opportunities to involve our creativity. Some projects might even be almost solely a creative act. But I know that within most of my making, and most of the making I see around me, that creativity only plays a small part in the project.

While some making is incredibly creative, making itself is not an inherently creative act.

The majority of my making is simply using my skill as a sewer or a knitter. In fact, I would ballpark guess that for most projects I tackle over 90% of the decisions I make are skill based rather than creative.

BUT OF COURSE MAKING CAN BE CREATIVE

Most of the making I do does not involve my imagination, nor does it involve original ideas. I am often not being inventive. I am (generally) following a pattern to achieve a result.

My making skills - using a sewing machine and wrapping yarn around sticks - are like many other skills I have. I can also use a computer and tie my shoe laces too. Each of these skills use my hands and my head in a particular way. Each of these skills requires practice and have seen me become more proficient over time.

I will illustrate what I mean

I'm currently making this beautiful sweater by Orlane (@tete_beche) called the Volo Pullover which you can see in the photo overleaf on the left.

In making it I followed a pattern and a well used and known process for making using my skills. I want to hypothesize that there is only 1% of this sweater making that involves any form of creativity.... and that is choosing the colours and imagining what such a sweater might look like when it has been made using these colours. I would then also want to contradict myself by stating that I'm not even sure that this is a creative decision,

bounded as it was by what scraps I had available, and supported by my many years of practice of choosing colours. Again choosing colours could be said to be a learned skill? But at least I involved my imagination in my decision mak-

Colourwork in knitting: Using two different coloured strands of yarn at a time enables the knitter to create designs, or motifs, in the knitted fabric

The making and creation of this sweater is not an inherently creative act. It is a skills-based act that is as skills-based as doing the dishes. I could have made

this jumper without making any sort of creative decision by using the same colours as Orlane used in the pattern. And it would still have been beautiful.

But we can involve our creativity in our making - when we stretch ourselves and come up with original ideas that are new to us. As an illustration I offer the sweater on the right below in Figure 1. I made this sweater without a pattern, a plan or a model for what it should be. It evolved and was shaped by my imagination and the circumstances I found myself in.

Figure 1 Examples of non-creative and creative making. Left - the Volo pullover I made that did not involve my creativity in making. Right - the colourwork sweater I made without a pattern that involved my creativity in making.



This cardigan was made during a six month camping adventure we were on in Europe where we drove, with our three kids, from Denmark to Greece. We were two days into our camping trip when we visited a farm that did natural dyeing as part of a Tudor reenactment. They took wool from their own sheep, and dyed it using camomile and madder and woad and pussy willow. The skeins were so beautiful I couldn't leave them in the farm shop.

One of my daughters saw the colours (she LOVES colour) and kept asking over and over "are they for me....could they be for me?" "Course they could love." "A cardigan?" "Sure."

OK. So I'm making a colourwork cardigan. I set a few parameters; Keep it simple. Think of it as a learning experience - I don't know that much about colourwork. Only use one or two colours per pattern. Make it stripey four rows between each pattern - one big pattern then one small. I decide to think of it as a colourwork sampler of sorts; a place to practice my skills.

Final rule - I can't procrastinate - I have to just start. I have a tendency to procrastinate when using materials I love. I don't want them to run out and so I plan and plan and don't make. So I decide not to plan. We were camping and I have the time to do something a little challenging. I make up some starting numbers for the body of the cardy and start knitting.



This cardy was the craft project that came out of our adventure. Like the adventure, I made no plans. I picked patterns by using spotty wifi to do a quick google search for "colourwork images" to find something I liked. I'd quickly scribble it down, and knit some more. Sometimes there was no wifi and I would make a pattern up as I needed to keep knitting. I ripped and ripped and ripped this thing. I did the yoke at least six times to get the shaping to work. In doing so I used a whole heap of personal qualities I'm not that practiced at - like patience and sitting with uncertainty. Doing something so uncertain, and so unlike my normal making, made it addictive. I wanted to see if I could.

Technically it is a bit of a disaster. I don't have that much experience with colourwork. I have made a few things but never taken the time to learn the rules. Even (especially) if you plan on breaking them, having a basic understanding of the rules is helpful. For example, I used a two-stitch seam of the natural coloured yarn on the underside of the sleeve. This lead to many interesting tangled sloppy stitches that are really obvious if you are up close (see below). A bigger error was that I didn't pay enough attention when I was buying the yarn. I assumed it was all DK and just thought that some of the skeins had been spun a bit thin. I realised about 3/4 of the way through that actually three of the colour skeins were fingering weight. It works. Kind of. I also realised at the end of the cardigan that I'd been holding what I wanted to be the dominant yarn in the non dominant hand. Whoops..... And then there is the fact I used a 4mm needle with dk yarn to knit a colourwork cardigan for a child that "runs hot". It is a thick coat, not a cardigan. Plus it's too small. Technically I might get a fail if we were looking at it from a technical point of view. Luckily we are not.

This cardy is more than just a pretty handmade garment. It is full of personal meaning. It holds the memories of our trip and many places we camped. I cast on in England, I redid the yoke in Albania and I crocheted the steek in Greece. The girl child and I sat together at our camp table under the trees in Umbria and cut the steek. I put the buttons on only this week - maybe finally accepting that it is over and we are home (In Australia!). It almost feels like this came together through some kind of magic. I don't believe I would have been able to sit down and "design" something I like this much. One uncertain leap lead to another uncertain leap. Such an unusual process for me; I surprised myself.

Some conclusions I draw from my experiences of making these sweaters

Due to cultural confusion around words like creativity, making, art, and craft there are many people who would believe that you have to be creative in order to make both of the garments I made. My perspective is different. Creative making where I wrote the numbers, chose the colours, chose the colourwork pattern and designed the sweater as I went, is a vastly different process to knitting a sweater using someone else's pattern. In creative making I combined my skills as a maker with my imagination, imagination that was inspired by the things that were happening in my everyday life. Because of this the garment I made is invested with deep personal meanings for myself and the daughter for whom it was made.

So why do we segregate our making/craft skills from other life skills we have and label them as being inherently creative? Why do we talk about craft as if it is an inherently creative act, rather than one within which we can use our creativity if we so choose? What is the difference between sewing a dress and riding a bike?

Is it simply that we think of "creating" something like a sweater as inherently creative because we are confused by the word "creating"? Yes we are "creating" something. Yes, we are taking materials and creating an object, but the creation of that object doesn't necessarily involve our creativity inspired and shaped by our imagination.

Do we label craft as creative to increase the status we get by engaging in craft? So people think of crafters as "talented" or as people who possess that extra special creative spark? And there is a kudos that comes from being a creative person. Is that what we seek? Is that what someone is trying to bestow on us when they are being kind and admiring our work?

Have we just not thought about it?

MY CONCERN!

I want more people to consider making something, anything, as a way of finding joy and satisfaction. And I think the false label of creativity can be discouraging. My issue is how many people we exclude from our sport when we label craft as creative.

The cultural belief is that "Some people can craft - because they are creative - and some people can't - because they aren't."

It's just not true! Because we can make beautiful meaningful things without a creative bone in our bodies.

By labeling all making as creative, we make craft seem less learnable, more complicated and more woo-woo-secret-sauce than it actually is.

Knitting and sewing and quilting are processes that use my skills. A process where I can, if I want, engage with my creativity, but I don't have to.

As always, love to hear your thoughts, even and especially if you think I'm totally off base.

Acknowledgements

This article combines two posts I made on The Craft Sessions website.

"I Made This", The Craft Sessions posted November 14, 2014 available at: http://thecraftsessions.com/blog/2014/11/14/i-made-this-felicia-semple

"Making is not inherently creative" posted July 27, 2018 available at: http://thecraftsessions.com/blog/2018/7/27/making-is-not-inherently-creative? fbclid=IwAR0GFVFPWboJPN9jSiW283G43OmIqPl7nd9wYA2mSazo3UF12pndBtoR

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Creative Academic's invitation to contribute to the BBC's annual Get Creative Festival began with the following Facebook announcement, posted by Norman Jackson on 8 May 2019:

LET'S GET CREATIVE FESTIVAL MAY 11-19TH

The BBC's annual Get Creative Festival begins on Saturday 11 May and continues to Sunday 19th May. Hundreds of organisations and community groups across the UK will be putting on events to help you get creative - and they're free or have just a small fee to cover costs.

We decided to offer our own event and WE INVITE YOU to do something creative and share what you have done and what it means to you in the <u>#creativeHE</u> forum. Tell us what inspired you and how you involved your creativity. If we have enough contributions we can create a magazine of exhibits. We can also connect to the exhibition space on Twitter #GetCreativeFestival

YOUR CONTRIBUTION CAN TAKE ANY FORM - traditional artistic or anything that you believe involves you in a creative way. It can involve making something or making something happen.

TO FIND OUT MORE https://getcreativeuk.com/



The post was viewed 179 times and 14 responses were made immediately, indicating intentions to take part.

Each day of the festival period was launched by a post from Norman on a specific theme and related porridge art by Chris Tomlinson. The following pages attempt to capture the threads and key points of discussion and include many of the illustrations that accompanied it. Comments are reproduced verbatim, but some minor spelling and punctuation errors have been corrected. As always with a curation of this nature, decisions have had to be made on what to include and exclude. Interested readers are therefore encouraged to refer to the Facebook conversation itself where the unedited material can be found (#creativeHE).

Thank you to everyone who took part in the week's exchange.

Jenny Willis

DAY 1

Thread 1, How do we begin?

Norman Jackson started the first day's discussion with the following post, in which he explains how he intends to create a daily movie and how he anticipates that 'unexpected things will happen'.

DAY 1 OF OUR LETS GET CREATIVE FESTIVAL

One of the nice things about our conversational projects is we never know what is going to happen or where they will take us. The only thing we do know as we launch our 'lets get creative' week long project is that things will happen and probably, at some point, we will be surprised and inspired. So let your creative juices flow and invite anyone you know who might be interested in joining in.

HOW DO WE BEGIN?

My daily post will try to create a structure to the overall week and encourage lots of personal narratives to emerge. My prompt for today is called 'how do we begin?'. It's hard to be creative on demand because the motivation has to come from within. I find I have to work myself into anything that is going to challenge me so I have spent a few days toying with different thoughts about what I might do. I woke up this morning and faced with the prospect that day 1 is here I decided I will focus my creative effort on making a movie of my garden and the life in it over the next week. I will add a bit of movie each day and I have a couple of clips I made last week to get me started.



Start with an idea that motivates you.

Although the post was viewed 169 times, only two direct responses were made.

Craig Andrew Hammond talks of how he is inspired by music, which takes him in unexpected directions, some hidden in his unconscious memory:

For me, music is usually the start point of a fresh idea, a new word (a formative neologism), or a pattern of thought that sometimes - but not always - formulate the makings of a productive train of associations. Particularly fruitful scenarios tend to be prompted on my 70-minute daily drive to and from work. The monotony of my journey, predominantly on the motorway, is punctuated with reflections, moments and thoughts. Sometimes I just listen to music, but sometimes the music elicits a poignant response, a catalyst prompted by my many and eclectic music playlists.

I remember reading, a number of years ago, a collection of anecdotal accounts from Disney Imagineers - reflections on the work that they do, and how they manage to maintain regular and productive levels of creativity. One of them recounted a similar experience: the routinised activities and muscle memory associated with driving, of being enclosed the capsule of the car, which together, operate to create an environment ripe for daydreaming and imagination.

For me, the rhythmic routine of the car journey, in conjunction with the shuffled and eclectic song lists, act as quite a potent initiatory experience.

I have always attached meanings, events, people, hopes, losses and disappointments to snapshots of music, (music and occasionally lyrics that happen to resonate with me at the time). Rather like Walter Benjamin in even years, before I revisit or rediscover a particular piece of music; but when I do, the thoughts and associations that come flooding back can be moving and powerful. Also akin to Benjamin in 'The Image of Proust' I use these as reflective catalysts, not as a maudlin or regressive resignations; the spark of memory prompts me to creatively navigate the archived debris from the past, to divine some form of redemptive possibility that is latent in the now and the possibility of tomorrow.

'Unpacking My Library', it might be months, or even years, before I revisit or rediscover a particular piece of music; but when I do, the thoughts and associations that come flooding back can be moving and powerful. Also akin to Benjamin in 'The Image of Proust' I use these as reflective catalysts, not as a maudlin or regressive resignations; the spark of memory prompts me to creatively navigate the archived debris from the past, to divine some form of redemptive possibility that is latent in the now and the possibility of tomorrow.

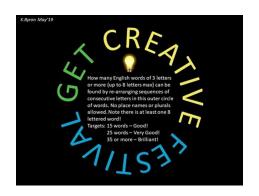
Jenny (Jennifer) Willis replies with an explanation of how her creativity will centre on an analysis of small c activities which may contribute to personal wellbeing. She writes:

I put up a case for mini and small c forms of creativity during our manifesto discussion. Since then, I have been trying to analyse the different manifestos, and have a particular interest in how the small/mini forms contribute to our personal wellbeing. I have therefore decided to spend the Creative Festival period not on attempting one creative project but, rather, on recording the small acts of creativity that I have engaged in each day. For example, today, I created model KS2 SATS questions for and with an English class (SATS take place next week); I made a cake to take to my father when we visit him tomorrow; I wrote some words for my husband and am contributing to this discussion. All 'trivial', but they have made me feel valuable and hence better. I will submit the result at the end of the festival.

An Undemanding Task to Oil the Wheels of Creativity! *Kevin Byron's* response to Day 1 was to set a word game to engage the

Kevin Byron's response to Day 1 was to set a word game to engage the community:

In a recent research study: 'Inspired by Distraction: Mind Wandering Facilitates Creative Incubation*', it was shown that being engaged in an undemanding task during breaks from a creative activity can boost your performance in that activity. Such a task is offered below for your amusement this week! (Note: The sequences of consecutive letters can span the end of one word in the circle and the beginning of another.)



Light narratives

A discussion arose around *Holly Warren's* post that featured a series of photographs taken of young children's artwork.







A step Inside Experience as a call to demonstrate the strength of the creative drive in the early years and how this can ignite creativity in the middle and senior years of us all. Artwork by the Early Years. Curated by Holly Warren and the Art Committee.

Jean Edwards I love these themed time limited projects for creating. I have an ongoing challenge to make a drawing every day. Along the way I sometimes take part in these activities as they crop up. Last September I took part in one set by The House of Illustration where the challenge was to post a one inch square drawing every day for month. This was such an interesting experience: at first a one inch square seemed too small but then I adapted and when I returned to a "normal" sketchbook it seemed vast! Some of the ideas I developed in that month have continued to inform the rest of my art, not just my daily drawing. The social media sharing around projects like this are also interesting and motivating.

I do like the way you are presenting them on google slides

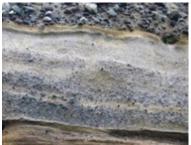


Thread 2, Building foundations: start as you mean to go on *Chris Tomlinson's* porridge artwork for Day 1 (shown right) inspired a lively discussion of its possible meanings.

Norman Jackson: It's like an outcrop of sedimentary rock.

Christopher Tomlinson I was thinking that if you get the layers of experience right you build a life.

We have new veterinary surgeons coming to us at the beginning of their career and we want their experience to be as positive as possible so that the skills they have acquired can be used for a lifetime in the professional rather than getting disillusioned and demoralised and leaving.



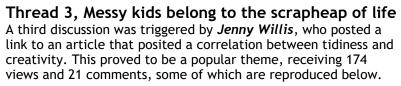
Norman Jackson So the geological analogy is apt. Just in the way a river deposits its sediment on its

bed. We carry and then lay down our experiences so that they provide a foundation for our future life. I guess the analogy breaks down in so far as our memory and imagination enable us to interact with our past experiences and that's what makes us human rather than just being a bowl of porridge.

The conversation led to the following culinary creation:

Norman Jackson to Christopher Tomlinson I took your idea of using food as the medium for creative action and I took from Holly Warren the idea of Celtic Knots - which I think are interesting ways of connecting things and combined them in a new rice dish copied from my wife. Needless to say she was not very impressed with my attempts to be creative.

'creativity is making a third 'thing' from two existing entities or ideas' Erica McWilliam Holly Warren concluded: Creativity is about connecting.





I've just read an interesting article by Giles Coren in The Times (11 May 2019), which has set me off thinking about another dimension of creativity. He writes:

"In the minds of many messy people ... lies a false association between mess and creativity, the notion that genius is compromised by menial tasks and that keeping things shipshape is bourgeois and petty."

He argues that his creativity is possible because he is organised and tidy. I wonder what Creative Academics are like? Is there a correlation between creativity and being organised?

Holly Warren I agree creativity is about connecting. A path that joins dots in an organized way. Being organised means a plan has been drawn. Messiness is a primordial state of creativity before the connection point.

Jennifer Willis Thanks Holly Warren. So creativity is about bringing order to chaos? This is contradictory to the risk-taking, rule-breaking associations we often have! Not iconoclast but meaning-makers?

Heather Somewhat The way I see it is that we need to make our brains open (without imposed order) in order to allow new neurons to connect - ones that haven't already been joined up in an organized way. As for the link between that and a messy desk, I'm not sure. So being rigid or controlling about tidying up (or anything) does seem a mindset that's opposite to the creative mindset - unless it's possible to be organized at one point, then let go of order in your mindset later on. Possible I suppose...

Jonathan Baldwin I'm messy because I'm lazy, not because I'm creative! When my desk is tidy it's like opening the window on the first warm day of the year. Shame I get hay fever...

Jonathan Baldwin The research long ago did away with the creative genius myth. It still won't go away though $\textcircled{\square}$

Nathalie Sheridan Sounds a bit defensive to me ... If you do not make a mess you won't be able to see the inter-relational connections because you are limiting possibility thinking by design. I agree that creating order out of mess can be creative process.

Nathalie Sheridan I didn't explain this very well. It's the other way around if you are digging deeper trying to understand mess is inevitable. If you only follow the asking the predefined boundaries you will only learn as much as can be learned within a certain form. Not sure that makes more sense now.

Kevin Byron The neural structure of the brain and its operation is an almighty mess. Indeed so is the universe at all hierarchical levels from galaxies right down to the zoo of particles that make up the nucleus. Its only humans who are in possession of an illusion of order!

Anon: Kevin Byron could you perhaps point me to the research to justify that?

Kevin Byron Anon —Ha ha - if you point me first to the research that opposes this view, I may be able to answer your question - or maybe not. If it's 500 years worth of Western science I would suggest that is a wrinkle on a pimple on a flea's left toe in terms of what we know about the chaotic universe. Of course there are physical laws and even absolutes in maths, but in my view they have no intrinsic existence in the material world. That is what I understand by illusory! With regard to research someone once said 'We start off confused, and end up confused at a higher level!'

Anon: Kevin Byron um. I didn't think that was how research worked. I usually have some evidence to back up my assertions. Forgive me, but as this group is about creativity in HE I assumed it would be talking about evidence based research. Could you point me towards it?

Kevin Byron - **Anon**: You haven't provided any evidence for your opinion that I requested earlier! This is how research progresses - a challenge is first backed up by evidence and then the debate begins. And on research, to quote the great rocket scientist Wernher Von Braun: "Research is what I'm doing when I don't know what I'm doing!" Do good researchers express their impatience with animated Gifs? And for the record a lot of material here is not evidence based. In areas like creativity where there are a lot of known unknowns, and unknown unknowns, a more pragmatic approach is called for in teaching and learning.

Holly Warren We need both...from the big bang to spherical ordering. Once we connect there is a linear pattern that then evolves. Margaret Boden's conceptual spaces include exploratory creativity and ordinance in what she illustrates as map reading. We are lost and the found.

Kym Drady Your post aroused my interest, I used colour and the metaphor of colouring over the lines. As children in school one of the first things we are taught is that it is important to colour within the lines, for me the message is that we must follow accepted protocols and not to do so is seen as deviant. Our education is based around the notion of conformity. My son (then 10 year old) asked if my PhD was about colouring between the lines, this struck a chord for me creativity is about being able to colour over the lines. Following my creativity module I asked the participant nearly a decade later if they believed the module had impacted them. Without exception my research suggested that creativity had provided them with the 'permission' to try new things and break the mould and new found freedom and confidence to be what they wanted. This led me to construct a metaphorical 'lens' to help understand my findings, this is the 3 T's of the creativity process as I saw it unfold. The three T's are the creative TECHNIQUES they were taught, the individual cognition and learning TRANSFER that followed and the personal TRANSFORMATION that they reported.

Jennifer Willis Thanks Kym Drady, this is a lovely story! I agree with you about how we are taught. It is the same with writing, children learn to write within certain lines according to whether it is upper or lower case. I wonder if there is an innate need to escape which most of us suppress/repress? Two examples: I am obsessively tidy and hate mess yet have lived with the most untidy person in the world for 25 years. Not only does he leave every door and drawer open, he hoards, making entire rooms inaccessible. Why have we not left each other? Maybe we complement some missing or suppressed characteristic in each other.

Second example is my father. He grew up in a military family and went into the armed services himself. I grew up within this very strictly controlled environment, which he continued after retiring from the RAF. However, since my mother died, 15 years ago, he has revealed a different side to his character through his garden. Once closely controlled, it is now more rampant and he likes unwieldy plants. Is this a part of him that was hitherto suppressed or is he changed with age? A difficult question to answer with any accuracy.

Summary, Day 1

Day 1 produced a lively discussion with up to 21 people actively participating and 174 viewing. It is clear that diverse perspectives are held, and these are argued strongly. Key points raised during the day were:

Music can unlock hidden memories

Small c creativity supports personal wellbeing

Taking a break for undemanding activities can boost performance in that activity Creativity at different stages of life

Memory and imagination enable us to interact with the past

Creativity is about connecting

Constraints can be conducive to creativity

Creativity entails making order out of chaos

Creativity requires planning and practice as opposed to innate genius

Need for evidence based research in the context of creativity



DAY 2

The second day of the festival was a Sunday, which may explain the low level of active participation: a maximum of 164 views were recorded, but only 6 people posted.

Thread 1, Different perspectives

Norman Jackson started the day's discussion with the following post, which featured a video in which the speaker demonstrates how we need to be prepared for our task, but what we actually want to achieve may emerge only over time. It reminds us of the multiple perspectives from which we can view an issue.

Although the post was viewed 160 times, no direct responses were made.

DAY 2 OF OUR LET'S GET CREATIVE FESTIVAL

I woke up to a brilliantly sunny morning and I just had to get up and get into the garden and make a start on my creativity project. Timing is important. Everything has a time and often we miss it because we are not prepared or not aware. This is certainly true where nature and light are concerned. I know, if I want to photograph or video the wild life in my garden I must be patient. I know if I want particular sorts of light such conditions are only likely at particular moments in the day, then I need to present in those moments.

Professional photographer Dewitt Jones illustrates these principles really well explaining how, if we want to engage with nature, we much put ourselves into the space and time of highest potential. So too with our creativity projects we must put ourselves into the right time frame and mental and physical space, have access to the right tools and resources, and think and act in the space in ways that are more likely to produce the results we want, often not knowing what exactly we want until it happens, and hoping we will recognise it when we see and experience it.

The second thing Dewitt Jones teaches us is there is 'no one right answer' but many possibilities from which we can select, but only if we keep looking and we keep searching for fresh perspectives.

Perhaps, while we are engaged in our creative projects, we can be conscious of these sorts of things and share our perspectives with each other.

YOUTUBE.COM

Keynote Speaker: Dewitt Jones • Presented by SpeakInc

National Geographic Photographer. Through his photography, Dewitt helps people see the world with...



Thread 2, The joy of nature

Chris Tomlinson made his daily porridge art post:

Sunny Day time to get creative! The joy of nature!

Norman Jackson Yes it's a brilliant morning here too Christopher Tomlinson and it got me out of bed and into the garden to start my creativity project. Such natural beauty inspires acts of creativity.



Thread 3, Ripples of imagination

Norman Jackson posted the video he had made for the first day of the festival:

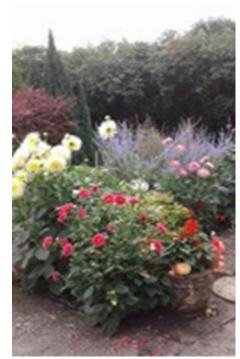
Here is the first part of my 'Week in the Life of a Garden' project. I had decided I was going to make the movie over 5 days but wasn't sure how to start until I woke up this morning and the sun was streaming through the window. The bright sunshine and early morning mist compelled me to go into the garden and take some photographs which I turned into the opening scene of my



movie. Unfortunately, I was almost out of battery on my phone so half way through the photoshoot my phone went dead and I had to come in and recharge and then go out again half an hour later. So my timing was right, I was in the right place at the right time, but I wasn't properly prepared.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=650ZPUjlqjQ

The movie captures some moments in the life of my garden during a week in May 2019



Holly Warren Peaceful and atmospheric....meditative.

Norman Jackson Thank you Holly Warren yes I did feel these things and more. I think the power of these sorts of movies is in the way they preserve some special moments in a busy and often routine life.

Jennifer Willis Thank you Norman Jackson. I have just shared your beautiful images and bird song with my father, another keen gardener, but on a much smaller scale! I shall be able to relive the scenes as I drive home and get stuck in the inevitable motorway queues! They will calm my frazzled nerves...

Norman Jackson Thanks Jennifer Willis perhaps you could, with dad's permission, share some of his garden creations. We take for granted gardening as a medium for our creativity but I recognise in my own garden that I am the beneficiary of someone else's creativity.

Jennifer Willis Norman Jackson Yes, we are all learning and building on predecessors. My father's grandfather was a head gardener, and he must have absorbed much during his (my father's) summer holidays in Scotland. It's difficult to give a taste of his garden when I have so many images! Here is one that shows a small corner.

Norman Jackson It's beautiful Jennifer Willis

Summary, Day 2

Despite efforts to engage participation, the conversation on this day flagged. The interaction that took place had a different tone from that of Day 1: it was more personal, building the community rather than probing the issues Norman was trying to raise in his first post. Some points of discussion:

- We need to be appropriately equipped for our creative task
- Timing is important
- What we are aiming to achieve may not be predetermined but emergent
- The perspectives on an issue are infinite
- Creative artefacts help preserve memories
- Creativity is built on predecessors' creations
- Small acts of creativity e.g. gardening bring joy to both the creator and 'consumer'

DAY 3

Norman Jackson invited the community to comment on the contribution of others make to our creativity, and whether dedicating time each day to creating makes creation easier.

DAY 3 LET'S GET CREATIVE FESTIVAL 'THOUGHT FOR THE DAY'

Thanks to all of you who have shared your creativity projects. I am struck by the contributions from people who try to create something everyday like Christopher Tomlinson's porridge art and Jean Edwards 1 sketch. I am wondering how many other members of our community try to dedicate some of their time everyday to a particular creative task and whether once a routine has been established it becomes easier to create? What is the answer to the why question for those of you who do this?

Chris Tomlinson's porridge art post provided my thought for today. Chris has set himself the discipline of inventing a picture or pattern for the top of his porridge everyday using the fruit and seeds he has in his kitchen. Today's picture represents a scene from his life in which his daughters were performing in a dance and he commented on how a lot people helped and enabled his girls to create. It got me thinking of the Nigerian proverb, 'it takes a village to raise a child' to which I attached the thought that it takes a village of supportive people to help a child become the creative human being they have the potential to be. I wondered to what extent this idea features in the creations we are producing this week. I guess we are a sort of village.



This sparked a lengthy conversation comprising 45 posts. For ease, the two separate issues are grouped as individual threads.

Thread 1, Creativity and routine

Kevin Byron Norman in response to your question: "....how many other members of our community try to dedicate some of their time everyday to a particular creative task and whether once a routine has been established it becomes easier to create" Isn't it the case that creativity is never easy? or maybe the terms easy or hard shouldn't be applied to creativity? There's a difference between learning a skill- which makes repetitive tasks easier- and behaving creatively. Initially in a creative task that draws on kinaesthetic skills, the creative thinking is tightly coupled to the actions that bring that idea to life, and the acquisition of the skill is a challenge. However, over time that coupling is diminished as reflex reactions are learnt, and the skill is sublimated to conditioned behaviour. In Chris's example the big creative idea was making images in a new medium, but subsequent practice of that is not the same as that initial idea. In a sense those of us who are not performing a daily creative task, are actually mechanically performing tasks that were creative at a much earlier time. This raises the question: When does a so-called creative task cease to be creative? I would suggest that creativity is only concerned with freshness, and indeed in breaking conditioned habits (though some habits are essential, for example I have no desire to bring creativity into the way I drive my car on a public highway). If of course we are talking about small 'c' creativity, then we are all drawing on that all of the time, if only in our imagination; though sometimes it enables us to make a mechanical task slightly more interesting. Maybe, when we discuss our creative lives in this context, we really mean those ideas that we are putting into action, rather than the potential ideas that are swarming around in our heads. I know it's a less exciting term that we tend to associate with business and industry, but the term 'innovation' concerns creative ideas that are being acted upon.

Nathalie Sheridan Hm this is an interesting argument Kevin. I write poetry--not a daily but a regular practice--and create mixed media art. I don't think any skill can make the poem writing process less challenging, and I still create poems that just won't work properly. Mixed media art has elements of skills that become easier. However, what does not become easier is how to translate, what I want to communicate into different mediums for it to make sense to people who want to engage with it. Does the originality still lay within the translation of the creator's ideas into which ever medium they have chosen? Even if skills become mechanic?

Kevin Byron Hi Nathalie - I fully agree with what you say. My comments were confined to creativity enacted through kinaesthetic skills. Anything else like writing poetry etc I would argue is more tightly coupled to creative thinking and can't be sublimated or detached in the same way. Though I believe all things become easier with practice. The benefits of practice often work in an inverted way inasmuch as we know better those things that don't work rather than what will work in this instance. Then again we should never say never!

Norman Jackson Thanks for your provocation Kevin Byron. Yes to some extent I agree that once we have automated a set of skills or developed a technique it might pose 'less of a challenge' to produce something again using the same medium and techniques. But as Nathalie Sheridan this is not necessarily true. As painters show us they use similar media and techniques over and over again but it is what they choose to paint, what they choose to select and leave out and how they choose to draw or paint it is where meaning is created. For me, that is where our unique everyday creativity lies. I think Vygotsky, as so often, provides us with an interesting perspective.

Any human act that gives rise to something new is referred to as a creative act, regardless of whether what is created is a physical object or some mental or emotional construct that lives within the person who created it and is known only to him. If we consider a person's behavior and all of his activity, we are readily able to distinguish two basic types. One type of activity we could call reproductive, and is very closely linked to memory; essentially it consists of a person's reproducing or repeating previously developed and mastered behavioral patterns or resurrecting traces of earlier impressions. (Vygotsky page 7)

Aside from reproductive activity, we can readily observe another type of activity in human behavior, what can be called combinatorial or creative activity. When, in my imagination, I draw myself a mental picture of, let us say, the future life of humanity under socialism or a picture of life in the distant past and the struggle of prehistoric man, in both cases I am doing more than reproducing the impressions I once happened to experience. I am not merely recovering the traces of stimulation that reached my brain in the past. I never actually saw this remote past, or this future; however, I still have my own idea, image, or picture of what they were or will be like. All human activity of this type, activity that results not in the reproduction of previously experienced impressions or actions but in the creation of new images or actions is an example of this second type of creative or combinatorial behaviour. (Vygotsky page 9)

LEV SEMENOVICH VYGOTSKY Imagination and Creativity in Childhood Journal of Russian and East European Psychology, vol. 42, no. 1, January-February 2004, pp. 7https://www.marxists.org/.../works/1927/imagination.pdf

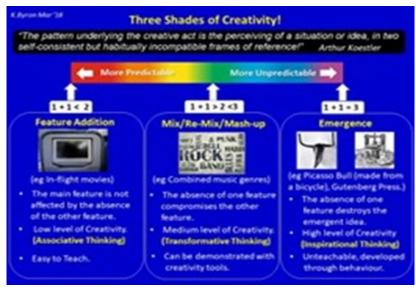
Jennifer Willis I tend to share Kevin Byron's caution on routine whilst also agreeing with Norman Jackson's point about every human act. My hesitation brings me back to something I have raised previously: creating on demand. Like being poet laureate. I feel if I dedicated a set space/time daily to an activity, it would undermine its true creativity.

Christopher Tomlinson But it might push you into things you didn't imagine! Necessity is the mother of Invention!! Many of my porridge pictures aren't very special but its amazing what comes out and I feel it encourages others to have a go!

Jennifer Willis Absolutely I am aware of my own prejudicial assumptions, which contradict my own belief in small 'c', and the issues of personal values. I still question whether creativity is qualitatively different when forced through what Christopher Tomlinson describes as necessity. That brings us back to problem-solving whereas something creative may have no practical value but appeals immensely to our emotions. These are questions I have struggled with for years and still have no peace with.

Christopher Tomlinson But it might push you into things you didn't imagine! Necessity is the mother of invention!! Many of my porridge pictures aren't very special but its amazing what comes out and I feel it encourages others to have a go!

Kevin Byron Although what is regarded as creative is culture-bound in qualitative terms especially in the arts, there are some underpinning gradations of the creative act as illustrated below (apologies to those who have seen this before). Also many original ideas outside of academia are subject to a peer review process with regard to their suitability for Intellectual Property Rights. For example in engineering an idea cannot be patented if it doesn't have an 'inventive step'. That is to say a discontinuity in earlier thinking, and even if it gets through that first stage, it can still be rejected on the basis of 'Obviousness'. Geinrich Altshuller made a study of over 200,000 patents and was able to rank them in terms of the degree of



inventiveness (or the magnitude of the inventive step) - results summarised below. The big problem with discussing degrees or grades of creativity in the context of T&L is that it can be interpreted as divisive. I fully understand that, because the aim is to nurture the creativity of all without any reference to whether or not it is of a certain quality.

Nevertheless academics are fully aware that their own creativity is assessed in their own research, because it has to undergo peer review in order to be published. Within that peer review process there are higher and lower status journals of course, and very few people would even think of publishing in Nature or other highly ranked journals because of the high rejection rate - ie not creative enough! In other words academics know when they have done some research - whether or not the creativity is ground-breaking, or a small contribution to existing knowledge or something in-between.

Norman Jackson I completely agree about the discipline needed for creativity. If you want to write a book within which there will be numerous opportunities for imagination and creativity you have to dedicate a big chunk of life and sit down and just do it. Demand is self-imposed Jennifer Willis Motivation has to come from within and it emerges as interest is kindled and our



imaginations become entangled with the imaginations of other writers and thinkers. Of course this doesn't stop us from being creative spontaneously, but long and difficult projects require self-discipline.

Sue Moron-Garcia Hmm, interesting discussion. I wonder if my creative activities: journaling everyday and crochet would be considered creative with the former being reportage (although creative use of language) and following a pattern - repetitive techniques - but creating something beautiful and allowing thoughts to come and go and settle. Then there's the regularly intermittent creative writing ...

Kevin Byron Hi Sue - I think writing is different. See my comment on Nathalie's post.

Sandra Sinfield When at the coast it is my habit to swim in the sea if the tide is in, the sea not too rough and I am not ill. Having this as a habit means that I need not waste time worrying about whether or not to swim - I don't distract myself by parsing my need to swim with my resistance to swimming - or my desire to not actually freeze. I will never be an Olympic swimmer - but that is not the point. I swim. I know that when I started each day at work with a ten minute water colour I became happier, more-centred, joyful - and on one definition - more creative. Sadly, I have not kept that habit - I so want to start it again!

Norman Jackson You are absolutely right Sandra Sinfield a habit that brings us joy is of great importance to our wellbeing and to our sense of who we are.

Norman Jackson has raised the issue of motivation, which I think is important. It is implicit in many of the comments we have been exchanging, and accounts for differences between creativity, necessity and creativity for affective reasons.

Kevin Byron This question has been raised before, but I have to ask it again: What is not Creative?

Jennifer Willis Maybe it's a question of intention Kevin Byron?

Kevin Byron Hi Jennifer - Could you expand on that please? Do you mean an intention to come up with something original? If so that would mean anything is creative, even a spectacular failure. Also if anything is creative, it renders these discussion a bit futile. I think there is a lot of ambiguity around what we mean by creativity here, even though we have debated it over and over. Fundamentally creativity concerns the act of combining existing things (ideas, thoughts, media, methods, objects etc) to arrive at something new. It seems to me that creativity and creative behaviour as described here are very different. The latter seems to be associated with an emotional experience resulting from some kind of activity that doesn't necessarily have a creative outcome in the combinatorial sense defined earlier. Such an activity might be enjoyable, cathartic, joyous etc, but that doesn't make it creative.

Jennifer Willis Kevin Byron did you mean what is 'not creative' or what isn't creative? I understood it as the latter. I quite agree with you: if it is the latter, then it does make our discussion redundant. Agreed,, simply bringing about a sense of pleasure/wellbeing, does not satisfy the definition of creative.

Kevin Byron Jennifer Willis I don't see the difference? - I was getting a sense from the discussion that any kind of random activity is creative, irrespective of outcomes. I have no issue with ideas that are creative that are based on some kind of inner dialogue that explores possibilities for meeting a pre-prepared challenge. However the default setting of the mind is one of daydreaming, and everyone does that a lot of the time, and most of the time it leads nowhere, probably because we haven't taken some kind of challenge with us into the imagination. In other words most of the activity in our imagination is not worth discussing. For sure Eureka moments occur spontaneously from the unconscious, but they are a latent response to a challenge that was set earlier. It was identified many years ago that creativity undergoes four stages: Preparation, Incubation, Insight and Evaluation. Preparation is all about identifying a challenge for which we seek creative solutions. However if we have no challenge, we have no meaningful creativity in my view.

Norman Jackson Hi Kevin Byron I have just swept and scraped my drive for 2 hours and I can honestly say that there was nothing creative about that activity and I resented having to do it. Yes my thoughts wandered but the act itself, like so many 'have to do activities', contained little opportunity to be creative.

I also spent 30mins waiting to see some rabbits come out of their hole to film them but they were more patient than I was. Again I couldn't see anything creative about it but I needed to do it to make the film I want to make. So, as Jennifer Willis points out sometimes we have to do stuff that is not creative in anticipation that we might be able to do something creative with it.

Kevin Byron Hi Norman - I get the intention is for creativity in the garden project, and by that I understand it's about recording something unexpected. However I question if catching the unexpected is a creative act. It's more akin to serendipity, and you are merely a witness to that. I would argue the same applies to big Nobel Prize winning discoveries, because whoever witnesses the phenomenon hasn't made this happen by some kind of mental act. In brief, discoveries are always accidental and not acts of creativity. If person A doesn't witness the event then person B might. In other words personal creativity is not a pre-condition for witnessing the discovery.

Norman Jackson But Kevin Byron if you see creativity as an ecological phenomenon in which it is distributed between people, their environment and the things they are trying to achieve, the person puts him/herself into the place/space where they are more likely to achieve and witness what they are looking for (or the unexpected). Because they are aware they recognise it when they see or feel it. Dewitt Jones illustrates this in the context of his craft as a photographer. Whoever, witnesses the phenomenon does so because they have created the ecology in which such phenomenon are more likely to emerge - now that is creativity in action.

Roger Caldwell Even the most menial of tasks have worth, someone has to do them. Laying out geophones can be the most repetitive of tasks, it's surprising how you can improve your technique, become quicker more efficient. You could be creative leaving patterns in the path. Much depends on your perspective and imagination.

Norman Jackson I agree Roger Caldwell but its whether we see the worth or value in a particular activity and we have the will to try to create new value. Sometimes / often 'we just can't be bothered'. I would not be making my 1minute movies this week if I didn't see the value in the process or have the will to do it. I would spend my time doing something else.

Kevin Byron Norman Jackson I agree with what you say about ecology but I simply wouldn't call it creative. Surprise, serendipity, the unexpected maybe - but these are external events not the result of some effort on behalf of the witness. If we accidentally fell over in the garden and bruised our knee is that a creative act?

Norman Jackson No Kevin Byron falling over and hurting your knee would be careless act.

I am talking about creativity not as an accidental haphazard act but as a purposeful ecology in which unique individuals work with and within a unique environment, using their senses, cognition and emotions, connecting their intentions to the things in the environment that matter to them, using tools and techniques in a skilful way to achieve something they (and others might) value, and creating (making) something of value (aesthetic, practical, financial, conceptual, ideological... whatever).

Kevin Byron Norman Jackson I can concur with your last sentence which is how I understand creativity, which at an abstracted level involves actively combining existing ideas/knowledge etc. However some of the things described here appear to me to be passive inasmuch as one is waiting for something to happen in the external world, and that is then captured on some form of medium. I don't regard that as creative at all. It may require some praise-worthy observational and other skills, but the creative work, if indeed it fits the bill with regard to combining, is out of the hands of the observer. I also don't regard play as creative, but an outcome of such random activity may or may not produce a combination of something that is original and indeed of value. Much activity purporting to be creative is not so until something original has been produced in the mind of the observer themselves. I'm fully aware of the difference between personal and historical creativity, and small 'c' and big 'C' creativity, but I really think we need to put some clear boundaries around these things so that we are not confusing one thing with another. My perhaps more hard-nosed attitude (which I'm aware is a minority view on this site) to creativity is a result of what I do in my consultancy to earn a living. I work largely with Ph.Ds and postdocs and R&D people in industry. These clients are more focussed on historical creativity. That is to say they are seeking new (original) knowledge through research which is publishable, or they are developing new inventions that can be patented, or setting up new businesses that require them to create and develop new products and services and develop original Trade Marks etc. There's no ambiguity in these respects with regard to what is or isn't creative because their success depends on it, and it is always subject to scrutiny by other people who can assess these outputs in terms of originality. What these clients do in their garden sheds at night to relax, that they might call personal 'c' creativity is of little interest to me.

Norman Jackson I appreciate that you are focusing on significant creativity Kevin Byron and when you frame it like this there is a significant gap between your concept and the more inclusive everyday creativity that we embrace. But I would be surprised if many of the participants in this community do not engage, from time to time, in the more significant acts of creativity in their various roles. Such things are well nigh impossible to capture in a short conversation. Perhaps we should try to hold a conversation that is devoted to significant creativity?

Jennifer Willis I've been musing on a similarly necessary but non-creative action Norman Jackson. This morning I sprayed my cobble-stone drive to kill the weeds and moss. I was being destructive in order to create something, but does a neat drive count as a creative product? A rhetorical question! Nevertheless, as I was spraying, my thoughts were very active as I reflected on this week's conversation.

Thread 2, Creativity and community support

Anon: To return to your op, Norman, I think that it does take a community to support creativity. For one thing, as Hobbes might have said, you can't be creative if you don't have the security to do it. And you can be as creative as anything, but having a community to appreciate it really helps.

Peter Shukie I have an alternative view - I started painting in a very precarious housing space, the flat two floors below was being unofficially knocked through to the flat next door to allow a party space/ crack lounge. There were new 'residents' who had dogs and the whole block was in states of terror, anxiety, abandonment to fate, and at best uncertainty. As this all unfolded over weeks and months, I took to art, using some paints that had been donated by a flat across the landing as they fled. mainly I used bits of anything, including food stuff that I mushed up with water. I had not painted before - school knocked that out of me - but this period of isolation, fluctuating terror and engagement with a wild universe led to artistic creation that has stayed with me. I have no grand vision of this as a theoretically based concept it felt entirely natural, like the development of multiple art works - some as paintings on board, others as sculptures, wood. refuse, all sorts - came as sanctity/ sanity/ meditative escape from reality. I would like to say we all came together as a community and all worked out, we overcame our issues together. In truth, I painted a lot for months and found a brilliant outlet. The refurbishment downstairs lasted months, had evenings with dozens of 'guests' and ended, as these things tend to, with a raid of black mariahs, lots of shouting, silence and a visit from a bloke in suits with clipboards three days later. In summary, creativity can come from absolute terror and in my experience, often has. I appreciate that perhaps the safety of a space ever so slightly removed is still a form of relative security though, so maybe something in that too.

Peter Shukie I agree Norman, but I guess if creativity happens with support, and without it, and with every variation of levels of support between these poles then might it be fair to suggest support is not a variable that can be considered useful?

Peter Shukie We have just had a beautiful module, Alternative Education, on which I added a session on Art Brut. We turned the seminar room into a studio, every student brought a canvas and I brought paint, brushes, tools. The work created was great, but the discussion was the intention, the purpose, the valuable thing related to the course. Students largely loved this session, it reappeared in end of module assessment presentations a lot. Perhaps the course 'enabled' it? But I think not, it would be easy to say the art was the creativity - but it was not (in my opinion), the discussion was the creativity, the recognition of curtailing practices and how we might overcome them. The art was the means of accessing that thought, a process that enabled new thoughts to emerge. To what extent are these organisations acting as enablers? and to what extent are they practitioners ignoring the strait jackets of organisations and using their relative invisibility in the class rooms and seminar spaces to do things differently? This is important, as with my terror in a tower block, it is not enough to retrospectively say that organisations are enabling because things happen. Very often, it is in the gaps, the spaces, the forgotten shadows and the channels created by authorities squeezing too hard that generate the most creative responses. This sense of urgency and aliveness is often one generated by resistance and leads to creativity - this need not be isolation or hostility as such, but a perception of idle conformity and compliance, dullness of spirit that needs identifying as fake creativity and challenged as such-like table tennis in an office with bean bags and 'thought showers' and bicycles on the wall and pinball tables and lego and slime in pods with doodle spaces and chillout zones next to call centre cubicles, creativity gurus, breakout yoga and 60 second jazz hand get-togethers with spritzers and productivity tables. I think creativity is not a commodity but a sense of individual space and might not always look' like we want it to. Day dreaming is one of my favourite creativity spaces - but to anyone else it looks like I've nodded over over my pot noodle.

Norman Jackson No I don't think we can say that support is not an important variable Peter Shukie I think the big variable we haven't discussed is confidence. Some people thrive on being different and ploughing their own furrow. They have the confidence to throw themselves into or at anything and the resilience to pick themselves up when they get knocked down and try again. For others confidence is fragile, their creativity flourishes when they are encouraged to take risks and supported by peers and a wider community or organisation. In any case there is value in building and being part of supportive and enabling communities for everyone regardless of whether your confidence and resilience is strong or fragile. We all need that sense of belonging to something that is much bigger than ourselves.

Norman Jackson Much food for thought Peter Shukie your module sounds great I would like to have been there. I quite agree in social settings (like this forum or your module) participation in making stuff is really a stimulus for thinking and discussion and the real creativity is in the new insights gained through thinking about the doing and the experience, in ways that perhaps have not been thought of before as a result of someone saying something or sharing a resource that introduces you to a whole new world of ideas. You are also right that regardless of whether an organisational culture encourages creativity people find or create their own spaces within which to create.

I have just finished editing a book where they idea of ecotones is proposed to describe particular pedagogical spaces where innovation and transformation can flourish. In nature these are marginal spaces that connect two ecosystems like for example a marshy margin to a pond links aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Such spaces are zones of change and diversity and contain different affordances (opportunities) to either of the main ecosystems. Perhaps the sort of spaces you have in mind are of this type?

Peter Shukie Norman, I think so yes. Donald Schon (no umlaut but should be) talks of the messy swamplands in research, action research, with something of a negative take I think. I always found the swamplands metaphor to be a positive, undefined, escapist in the sense of being apart from the solid ground that was defined and understood (no matter how wrongly understood). Ecotones I have not heard of before, but I will look up. I recently read an article by Darren Webb about bolt-holes and breathing spaces in HE, in institutions. He describes an under-commons, a network that lies beneath/ beyond the 'official' networks and a place where resilience is formed and resistance planned. More everyday, these places are where people feel welcomed and unthreatened by a standardising, alien force I think.

I am not sure if these are places of security and belonging or something quite different - a recognition of being 'apart'? which one leads to the creative urge? the belonging? or the apartness?

Norman Jackson Well that is a good question Peter Shukie WHAT ARE THESE SORTS OF SPACES?

Peter Shukie Every space Norman Jackson, every conceivable space and circumstance can herald creativity

Norman Jackson I agree Peter Shukie but my question wasn't clear - I will reframe it - 'How do members of this community perceive this space? Does this space encourage their creativity?' 'If the answer is not really, then 'what can we do to make it more hospitable and enabling?' My perception of the space might be very different from yours..

Thread 3, Porridge art, celebrating creativity

Christopher Tomlinson My daughters were in a dance production this weekend that brought a whole group of different people together to celebrate the joy of watching girls and 1 boy put on a show! A celebration of creativity which worked as everyone one was invested dancers helpers and audience

Norman Jackson I like the way you draw inspiration from your every-day life Christopher Tomlinson. Also your story illustrates well the foundation principle that it takes a village to raise a child... it takes a village of supportive people to help a child become the creative human being they have the potential to be.



Thread 4, Celebrating family

Norman Jackson My project is to make a movie - a week in the life of my garden. Following the example of Chris and others I have taken on the challenge of making a 1 minute movie each day. Picking up one of the topics in the conversation, today's movie celebrates the family as a social structure for protecting and nurturing the young and enabling them to flourish. Canada geese are the most attentive parents but their offspring do not have a village to support their development.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGmbE6CuHSU&feature=youtu.be

YOUTUBE.COM Celebrating family

A one minute movie of the family of Canada geese that live in our garden

Jennifer Willis Another beautiful piece Norman Jackson. Thank you.

I am interested in your process - did you begin with the film, then look for a piece of music to edit it against? Or did you begin with a piece of music in mind associated with the water?

Norman Jackson Hi Jennifer Willis I listen to a lot of music while I work and I go through phases of listening to particular types of music. When I find a piece I like I save it ready for using in my movies. My movies become tools for curating the music I like. I love kora music and have discovered that it produces the sort of music that works well with my nature movies.

Having chosen a theme for my movie I go outdoors and start collecting photos and video clips that relate to the theme until I have enough material to make the movie. This will involve several trips into the garden over several days, but for this movie the time scale was much shorter. I compose and edit the film with the photos and clips I have curated at the same time deciding what music will go with it. Last night I searched for and found a piece I hadn't heard before from a concert given by Catrin Finch & Seckou Keita called Llongau Térou-bi. I had to extract a clip from the concert. So to answer your question its a messy and iterative process guided by a rough idea. The movie cannot be predicted in advance it emerges as the process unfolds. I share my garden movies through You-Tube and so I think I'm participating in the great mashup that this platform supports. I always give credit to the composers and musicians at the end of my film I will do the same when I have created the full movie.

Jennifer Willis Thanks for explaining this Norman Jackson. Creation is a messy business and it is difficult to disentangle all the strands. As we have discussed previously, we may start out with a vague idea of what we want to create, and gather all sorts of things which we sense might contribute. In the process, we refine our original idea. The final product may be far removed from our original idea.

I look forward to seeing your final piece!

Thread 5, Creative satisfaction delayed?

Paul Kleiman Norman's lovely garden project made me think about creativity and time. Gardening is one of those pursuits where time is of the essence. Rarely is there anything like immediate gratification. Often it's a matter of months, years and decades....sometimes centuries.



We've been in our house 30+ years, and the original garden was an overgrown disaster area. Slowly, over the years, we got it into some sort of shape, built a small rockery and put in a very small pond - about the size of a bathtub - at the base of the rockery.

I've always taken a somewhat haphazard approach to garden maintenance. Basically if I like it it stays, if I don't it goes.

Originally we had some fish in the pond, and I looked after it carefully. But that never really worked out, and I let nature take its course. The fish disappeared but the pond was overtaken by plants, frogs (loads of them) and other pond life.

Today, with the sun shining, I went out into the garden and just looking at the pond and thought it's probably looking nicer and giving me more satisfaction now than it has ever done.

We tend to think about creativity as action/making/doing etc. I wonder if there is creativity in the act of not 'interfering' and actually doing nothing.

Jennifer Willis What a peaceful image Kevin Byron!

Like yours, our garden had tended to be a haphazard creation, dependent upon the time and money available to care for it, and constrained by having a large oak tree with a preservation order on it. You suggest that inactivity or not interfering may be creative in itself. This links to a question that I have just posed elsewhere in the exchange: does it matter whether the inaction/action was intentional or not? The outcome may

be the same, but this will change the responsibility for the thing created. And on that note - mother nature is so beautiful without intervention!



Kevin Byron Welcome to the Garden of Creativity (with apologies to Donald Rumsfeld)!!

Jennifer Willis Brilliant Kevin Byron!

Kevin Byron Hi Jennifer - It's Paul's garden but for the record here's some colours from my garden taken recently. I don't claim one atom of creativity in these photos or the garden itself - nature did all that!

Jennifer Willis Oops! Sorry to you both Kevin Byron! And thanks for sharing some more of nature's wonder creations.

Sandra Abegglen Paul Kleiman your pic reminded me of our - somehow less peaceful- garden figure



Thread 6, A provocation

Anon: Kevin I was wondering what your opinion about this was. I have drawn it as a response to a daily prompt. However, this is tomorrow's prompt and I just drew it because I had an idea. It came from my imagination. What is your assessment?

- Not creative because I use a pen every day?
- Not creative because I have obviously used coloured pencils quite a bit before?
- You can tell me I am not wonderfully talented.
- You can tell me that (although it would be a bit rude).
- Can you tell me I am not creative?
- It's (only) a doodle. I doodle often. When did my doodles stop being creative?
- Who made you the arbiter of my creativity?

Kevin Byron In answer to your last question it appears to be you!

Anon: Nope. I am trying to show something that cannot be said (Wittgenstein)

Sandra Sinfield I think that if we exercise our creativity we may or may not become another Da Vinci or Frida Kahlo, but if we are denied our creativity we become less than ourselves...

Jennifer Willis Anon- For me your picture meets the criteria of being novel to you i.e. mini 'c', and of bringing you a sense of pleasure, thereby feeding in to your sense of personal wellbeing.

Your questions to Kevin touch on another feature in the literature of creativity e.g. Csiksentmihalyi: the creation occurs at the interface between the individual, the field and domain, where it needs to respect the conventions of that discipline. We may not agree with this need for something to stand up to external evaluation

Norman Jackson Anon- your doodle's creative if you, and you alone, think it is. If Kevin thinks it creative because he has a particular emotional reaction to it, with or without understanding the context, then that extends the value of your creativity into the social system we are part of.

I am a great fan of Carl Rogers and his essay on creativity is well worth reading. This blog post by Jonathan Rowson pulls out some of the most important perspectives he offers https://www.thersa.org/.../carl-rogers-creativity-and-the...

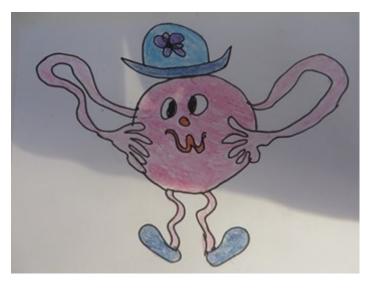
Here is one of his perspectives that addresses your concerns and connects back to the Vygotsky quote I cited earlier in the conversation.

PS I think Kevin Byron is being deliberately provocative

THERSA.ORG

Carl Rogers, Creativity and the RSA - RSA

"Perhaps the most fundamental condition of creativity is that the source or locus of evaluative judgment is internal. The value of his/[her] product is, for the creative person, established not by the praise and criticism of others, but by himself [herself]. Have I created something satisfying to me?... If to the person it has the "feel" of being "me in action," of being an actualization of potentialities in himself [herself] which heretofore have not existed and are now emerging into existence, then it is satisfying and creative, and no outside evaluation can change that fundamental fact." Carl Rogers



Summary Day 3

In contrast to the previous day, the third day of discussion was very productive. Views were generally 166-167, and the number of active participants grew.

Whilst there were still some social exchanges, most were focused on a specific theme. Duologues took place, then they opened up into wider discussions. Some key points of discussion were:

- Creative skills may become just conditioned behaviour
- Innovation is ideas that are acted upon
- Creativity = making
- Reproductive vs combinatorial creation
- Creativity on demand
- · Motivation for creation
- Valuing creativity peer review
- What is not creative?
- Intentionality
- · Creation and purposeful ecology
- Should we differentiate 'significant creativity'?
- We can think imaginatively without creating something
- We can be creative with and without support
- Some people thrive on being different
- Space for creativity
- The messiness of creativity
- Creative satisfaction may be delayed



BBC Get Creative Festival 8 May 2019

Groundbreaking new research has shown that taking part in even a small amount of creative activity can improve your wellbeing. And now researchers know what's happening in the brain when you get creative. Take our new Feel Good Test to discover how to reboot your creative hobbies. https://nguire.org.uk/mission/the-feel-good-test/contribute

DAY 4

Thread 1, Creativity, perception and reasoning

Norman Jackson introduced the theme for the day:

DAY 4 LET'S GET CREATIVE FESTIVAL 'FOOD FOR THOUGHT'

'In quietness and confidence shall be your strength. Creativity starts within.' In today's food for thought symbolically embedded in his porridge art, Chris Tomlinson highlighted the connection between creativity and wisdom. While imagination is an essential ingredient to creativity it must be accompanied by perception and reasoning in order to create deeper meaning. Wisdom, and the deeper meanings and insights it contains, is a manifestation of the



productive entanglement of imagination, perception and reasoning, coupled to our emotional responses to what we are thinking. It is often captured in simple story that can be communicated in ways that transcend language/culture. Here is a wonderful example by illustrator Brian Chalkley

Only one direct response was made:

<u>Chrissi Nerantzi</u> "'In quietness and confidence shall be your strength. Creativity starts within." This explains my absence and also reminds of something <u>Jennifer Willis</u> mentioned a little while ago when we worked on the creativity manifestos;)

However, Norman's post had been based on Chris' porridge art, shown right, which did stimulate some discussion.

Christopher Tomlinson In quietness and confidence shall be your strength. Creativity starts within. Drawing from traditional wisdom sayings.

Norman Jackson Indeed Christopher Tomlinson and your porridge art captures some of that wisdom. We drew on the - 'it takes a village theme' yesterday. Kevin Byron raised the issue of the creator and their environment so perhaps we might develop the theme that it is through wholesome interactions with our environment and making sense of such interactions, that 'wisdom' emerges. Chris's porridge art is visually pleasing and engaging, but it is also symbolic, and it is in the deeper making of meaning (wisdom) where our creativity lies.

Jennifer Willis I really like today's porridge Christopher Tomlinson. It is a beautiful image and I wonder how we are each interpreting it (coming back to Sunday's theme of different perspectives). Is it a fan? A peacock? Sunshine? Whatever you intended, it is both visually attractive and thought -provoking.



Jennifer Willis I really like today's porridge Christopher Tomlinson. It is a beautiful image and I wonder how we are each interpreting it (coming back to Sunday's theme of different perspectives). Is it a fan? A peacock? Sunshine? Whatever you intended, it is both visually attractive and thought-provoking.

Coming to Norman Jackson's response, and picking up on a discussion we had yesterday about values, I want to challenge the word 'wholesome'. Not only is this value-laden, it also implies that only 'positive' interactions can lead to wisdom. This is clearly untrue since we learn from trial and error. At the risk of repeating something I have said before, I attach a video clip of Oppenheimer speaking about the moment they launched the atomic bomb.



Apart from the learning aspect, this is an intriguing question for me as there is such a contrast between the beauty of the mushroom cloud and its devastating effect.

Norman Jackson Thanks Jennifer Willis By 'wholesome' I simply mean as a whole person - not just our head. It does not cannot only positive emotions. Our interactions with our environment trigger a multitude of emotions and these change as our relationship unfolds whether its trial and error or planned and controlled or a mixture. This TED talk by Alan Watkins really brought home to me the diversity and complexity of our emotional world (especially from about 13 mins where he describes a universe of 34,000 emotions)https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-rRgpPbR5w

Jennifer Willis Thanks Norman Jackson, an interesting talk. I do take issue though with describing some of his 'planets' as emotions. Are they rather characteristics, dispositions? But then, are these predicated on emotion?

Watkins argues that we can take control of who we are but then says 'if we want to'. This is the crux, as always: we need to have the motivation to do so. And all sorts of things can intervene to make this a complex matter, not least the factors in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. I might ideally want to be cheerful, but if I am starving, my body/physiology may be overriding my ability to be so.

Getting a bit far from creativity, though....

Norman Jackson everything has the potential to connect Jennifer Willis

Thread 2, Daily art meditation

Sandra Sinfield #creativeHE Let's get creative Day 4: Joining the challenge late - but hoping to use it to restart my daily art meditation. I started this some while ago after hearing a castaway on Desert Island Discs saying that he started every day with a ten-minute watercolour as a meditation to de-stress and find his joy. I dusted off an unused box of water colour paints and started - and everything changed. My watercolours are elsewhere - so this week I have decided to do a daily collage. So here's collage #1





Norman Jackson love the fishes Sandra Sinfield sorry to hear you haven't been well but very glad you are able to participate now.

Chrissi Nerantzi Hi Sandra and all... I am catching up now...

Chrissi Nerantzi Wonderful idea Sandra Sinfield.. I have started using Mod Podge... and have made some creations to seal them... it all started when I made (well, decorated) some Easter eggs, but I have now moved to using bits of paper and sort of dry flowers to make little artwork. How will you use your collage? I love all the fish;)

Sandra Sinfield I can use the collage to seed creative writing - or sometimes they become greeting cards...

Chrissi Nerantzi Sandra Sinfield also a lovely idea, the greeting cards.

Thread 3, Beauty is in the eye of the beholder

Simon Rae offered a series of pictures produced using different materials, but related to a single subject. This was an open statement, which aroused interest.

Simon Rae People coming to stay so bought some flowers to brighten the kitchen:

- 1) What they actually look like
- 2) Pastels view
- 3) White acrylic plus yellow & green overpainting
- 1) photographed in situ
- 2) standing holding sketch pad and trying those pastel that I bought and hasn't ever used
- 3) done from (1) at monthly art club where we all (5 or 6 of us) sit quietly in the local library after hours and draw (or paint) something.

And (4) is the people that came to stay ... sitting in the sun at Bletchley Park.



Norman Jackson Thanks Simon Rae I know you are not asking us to vote but I like #3 perhaps because it's a bit more abstract. It's so subjective though isn't it.

Simon Rae Norman Jackson ... Yes, I was thinking that after I watched a bit of the photographer video that you posted.

Some wonderful photographs, especially the white lily fields and the Scottish salmon fishing. Any one of those images I would have been over the moon to have taken. But the speaker seemed to assign greater value to some over and above the others.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder they say, is it the same with creativity? Is it a dimension that has to be decided by others?

Christopher Tomlinson What joy!

Jennifer Willis Lovely start to my day Simon Rae. I agree with Norman Jackson, I love the creaminess of the acrylics.

What a stark contrast to the associations Bletchley Park holds for me.

Simon Rae Jennifer Willis - thanks. Doing a small painting with household acrylic paint was a first for me, and, as you say, a nice creamy experience!

I have to ask what associations does Bletchley Park hold for you? Is it the historical ones tied up with WW2 and code-breaking, or do you have other personal ones? Living here in Woburn Sands, just down the road from BP, I've come across it quite a lot ... I was at a dinner last week sitting next to a woman whose father had worked at BP, apparently several of the 10,000 or so code-breakers had been billeted in WS, and the whole area around here is pock-marked with buildings (mostly ex stately homes) that were used as part of the Bletchley Park 'industry'.

If necessity is the mother of invention ... then I think it is also the mother of creativity. Some of the creative work that those code-breakers did was amazing, some of the tricks they came up with ... and some of the

Jennifer Willis Yes Simon Rae, those are the associations. What a lovely story about the couple!

I've never been, but I have a particular interest as my father was in the RAF and involved in the nuclear side of things. He is as tight-lipped as the couple you cite. As an engineer, he was (and still is) very creative. One of his Heath Robinson's was a machine designed to clear snow off the runways. It was nicknamed Willis' Folly!

I will have to pay BP a visit and combine it with another part of my family history: my paternal grandfather was born in Woburn Workhouse. For some years now, my creativity has been channelled in researching and writing up our family history. I am up to about 4 bound volumes by now!

Thread 4, Creative benchmarks

Kevin Byron challenged the validity of small c, sparking a techy exchange, seen 161 times and eliciting 8 comments.

Kevin Byron Creative Benchmarks?

Whilst we are still in the garden, this is a folding garden bench that I designed and constructed for a friend. It was a re-use of some old decking, and I also made the stencils. The Buddhist quote on the horizontal strip of wood at the top says: "Three things can not be long hidden, the Sun, the Moon and the Truth".

And the Truth in this case is that it is an example of personal, small 'c' creativity. I made the design up as I went along, and a yet every mechanism in it is as old as the hills. The stencils designs were not original either. It caused me a lot of hassle to design, build and paint, but I was quite pleased with the result and even then I immediately spotted ways of improving it. Throughout the entire design and build process I can't say it felt creative except perhaps when I



finally got the folding mechanism to work, but that may have just been a sense of satisfaction. My benchmark for comparing the sense of feeling creative is that of doing original research or writing a paper or developing new training exercises etc, which are more a nod in the direction of historical creativity (but nothing of any great note).

Christopher Tomlinson I think the work of our hands is equal to the work of our minds! I know many practical people who wouldn't see themselves as anything special but the way they solve practical problems I find very creative!

Kevin Byron I don't see how they can be separated - for that matter neither can 2000 years of philosophical thought! However all creative ideas are initially formed in the mind, and are executed or transformed into different artefacts through the body in different ways. There is of course continuous recursion between what is made/produced and what is thought as the thing evolves.

Jennifer Willis Like you Kevin Byron, I appreciate my creativity more in the less-tangible world of ideas and research. What you have created here is quite different and should not be judged against other forms of creativity.

I like the way in which you had a general idea of what you would create, but no fixed plan of what the ultimate object would be. I found this Zen quotation that seems appropriate:

"Don't think of what you have to do, don't consider how to carry it out!" he exclaimed. "The shot will only go smoothly when it takes the archer himself by surprise."

— Eugen Herrigel, Zen in the Art of Archery

Kevin Byron Jennifer Willis I think my overall issue with discussing personal 'c' creativity on this community of over 200 academics, is that it doesn't pass the So What? test in terms of relevance to the group. If everyone posted what they do in their spare time this FaceBook group would then be indistinguishable from FaceBook itself with videos of playful kittens and self-help slogans purporting to be wisdom. I only reluctantly put the bench image up to try and draw attention to that!

Kevin Byron Maybe we need to ask: Why is it only the same half dozen or so people regularly posting stuff? - maybe we have put ourselves in an ethnographic zoo and are the subject of academic research by all the other members of this group. If so I look forward to hearing the findings!

Jennifer Willis Owtch!

Chrissi Nerantzi Kevin Byron you make some interesting observations about what you noticed is shared here, mainly hobbies, out-of-work activities. What else could this mean? I am wondering how fulfilling work is or not? Can being creative in the sense of making something, be an act of seeking wellbeing? Is it good for us? We say 5 fruit a day keeps the doctor away? What about the role of creativity for our personal wellbeing? I have noticed that I reach out far more now than ever to things outside work to find peace and balance but also do something I have full control over and can mould the way I want to? Does any of this make sense to anybody?

Jennifer Willis Yes Chrissi Nerantzi, I do believe creativity contributes to our personal wellbeing and actually spoke about this in a presentation at the BMA last week.

For those not familiar with the model, the NEF came up in 2007 with the 5 ways to wellbeing. It is based on the principles of having a healthy balanced diet: by engaging in a bit of the 5 dimensions regularly, we can optimise our sense of wellbeing.



Thread 5,

Norman Jackson 'Something fishy' 1 minute video

My project is to make a movie of a week in the life of my garden. Following the example of Chris and others, I have taken on the challenge of making a 1 minute movie each day which will be combined into the complete movie at the end of the process.

Picking up on the conversation that in order to be creative we need to put ourselves into, and interact with, the place/space with the highest potential for our creativity to be engaged. Today I tried to film the fish in my pond. So I put myself in a place where I might, if I was lucky, catch sight of the fish and waited patiently for my subjects to appear. Of course, having no interest in being photographed, they failed to appear. Every so often I did catch sight of a blur in the murky water and I realised that I might wait all day for them to come to me.

But we all have the agency to manipulate our environment, so I tossed a bit of bread into the still, brown, murky water and watched it come to life a few seconds later as the fish surfaced and got into a sort of feeding frenzy. Of course it didn't last long as the Canada geese spot a free lunch, showing me that other organisms have agency to interfere with my ideas and actions.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0pTTu7PCLZU

YOUTUBE.COM

The pond is full of fish mainly rudd and tench and three large and very old carp

Sandra Sinfield Thank you for this. There was something so majestic about those strange grey shapes...

Norman Jackson Yes Sandra Sinfield those big old carp have had plenty of practise - they have been doing it for over 30 years..

Jennifer Willis Thank you for another tranquil experience, Norman Jackson. I particularly enjoyed the reflection of the grass and its fixedness contrasting with the movement of the carp. The music made him like a confident matador striding out.

Norman Jackson Thanks Jennifer Willis perhaps the key to tranquility is to slow everything down (half speed) and that's why the carp looks so serene he lives life at a much slower pace

Summary Day 4

The exchanges on the fourth day of the festival were less extensive than previously, but the number of 'lurkers' remained steady. The nature and tone of the day's discussion were also different: Norman's introductory theme did not take off, and there was more social interaction between individuals than analytical discussion. There was a clear divergence emerging between perceptions of personal creativity.

Some notable points were:

- Meaning-making and wisdom is developed through interaction with the environment
- The range of emotions and their role in creativity
- Motivation for creativity
- A practical example: using daily artwork to seed creative writing
- Valuing creativity- it is in the eye of the beholder, like beauty
- Social discussion around Bletchley Park
- Small c creativity vs. original research: practical vs. intellectual creativity
- The functioning of this Facebook group
- Creativity as a contributor towards personal wellbeing
- Interaction with place and space

Value is in the eye(s)
of the beholder(s)

DAY 5

Thread 1, Making sense of life

Norman Jackson proposed the following theme for this day's discussion:

DAY 5 LET'S GET CREATIVE: FOOD FOR THOUGHT

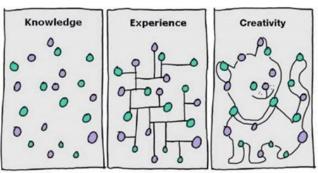
'Joining the dots Making sense of this gift of life. Sharing experiences!'

Christopher Tomlinson, our porridge maker in residence, has made my job as facilitator very easy by posting a really good prompt at the start of each day. His food for thought for today connects very nicely to my illustration yesterday of ecological thinking from which we ultimately become wiser. Life is most definitely a gift, and it is brought home to you when some one close to you is very ill or dies. We cannot take life for granted and the older I get I find myself saying - we must count our blessings. So we have to make the most of it and I guess this is where our creativity comes in - it helps us accomplish the things in life that are important to us.

The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard once said 'Life can only be understood backwards but it must be lived forwards'. Steve Jobs expressed the same idea in a different way, 'you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future.' But it's not just a matter of trust, we are quite adept at creating a narrative of our life that explains to us and others, how seemingly random dots join up to form a coherent story of how we came to be the person we are and provide a platform for who we would like to become. In this way we author our life... storifying the past in ways that provide us with purposes for the future. And research shows that creating narratives of ourselves from our experiences is a pathway to deeper learning about self and to the type of personal wisdom we touched on yesterday. It's also the pathway to identity or to creating a new identity - neither of which may be fully recognised by others.

The question perhaps for us, is 'what sort of dot is this?', how does this shared experience of being part of this community connect up and integrate with the rest of our life? How do our simple acts of personal creativity, connect to our identity? In what ways do the things we are doing here contribute to a meaningful





This proved to be a popular topic, receiving 173 views and 21 responses.

Jennifer Willis I will come back to your questions later Norman Jackson. For now, as we are in the realm of Zen, a couple of things to reflect on:

"Just as a snake sheds its skin, we must shed our past over and over again." - Buddha

"The past is already gone, the future is not yet here. There's only one moment for you to live, and that is the present moment." - Buddha

Heather Somewhat Eric Booth in his wonderful book called Everyday Art or similar, says it's by allowing our sense of wonder to lead us down the path towards our entelechy. I'm misquoting, but I see creativity leading to individualism and to fulfilling out true potential, just like any animal or plant, but we have a greater capacity to modify our environment I suppose.

Sue Moron-Garcia Hello Norman Jackson, this resonates very strongly with me and is making me think about Jenny Joseph's woman In purple who had reached the life stage when she felt free to be herself. While we're striving, "getting on with life" creativity can be stifled through conformity. Life threatening illness or personal tragedy can concentrate the mind wonderfully and shift perspective, shining light on the most enriching and meaningful parts of our life. I know that connecting with likeminded colleagues is restorative for me as is engaging in creative activities. I may not be eating porridge at the moment but I think meal making can be a creative and calming process.

Chrissi Nerantzi Very true Sue Moron-Garcia feel very much like that too. It does help me keep calm and excited at the same time and free. It just energises me in a different way.

Jennifer Willis I suspect interpretations of what this dot is will be as diverse as our personalities Norman Jackson. Once again, are we not talking about motivation for participating and our expectations of its value?

As Kevin Byron suggested tongue-in-cheek, are we active contributors part of some malevolent experiment, with outsiders voyeuristically looking into the minutiae of our lives? Or are we hoping to add some more dots to our experience, and through dialogue gain greater insight?

Narrative-making is important to our sense of identity, but I would not say that it is confined to a later life stage Sue Moron-Garcia. I do agree, though, that profound experiences can make us appreciate what we may take for granted. Why do these lead to creativity for some, whilst others deal with them internally? Or is it that the internal pain is just a stage, and in due course it will be translated into creativity?

I remember the night my mother died suddenly, I kept wanting to press the undo button, a metaphor that has stayed with me for 15 years, but I have not yet been able to turn this into art. random thoughts!

Sue Moron-Garcia Wasn't suggesting it was confined to a later life stage Jennifer Willis, but picking up on the question and suggesting that life events can be freeing / deliver other perspectives. Also reflecting on other comments on later age creativity, on using creativity as therapy. Some of us are cautious and have been taught to tone down our creativity (also thinking about Ken Robinson paper clip you tube story, can post if folks don't know it), life shocks can release us. Does internal processing indicate less creativity, sorry maybe I've missed something from earlier conversations, but this suggests creativity can only be public and shared, not private and a source of solace. Now metaphors, now you're talking ...

Holly Warren Life well explained and researched. Carpe Diem and Phanta Rei.

Dr-Muhammad Arif Wow.....really wonderful differentiation among knowledge, experience, and creativity.

Simon Rae Knowledge, Experience, Creativity ... stages from Seeing through to Believing.

Like Star Charts.

This one is The Herdsman from c. 1250, an explanation of the night sky by the Persian scholar al-Sufi (included in Map, a book from Phaidon.com).

Is that what Creativity is ... making other people see your vision of things?

Jennifer Willis A clever joining of the dots Simon Rae!but, do we all perceive the same? Take Christopher Tomlinson's daily porridge art - some are open to individual interpretation.

Kevin Byron It's worth noting that the bogus science of astrology was all based on joining up dots in the sky in a very random way, and impressing some kind of image on them like a bear or a scorpion!

Simon Rae Hi Kevin Byron ... I take your point about bogus science, but I suspect that joining the dots and assigning imagery to the various constellations served more than just astrology. Pictures being worth a thousand words etc, as an aide-mémoire for budding navigators or hunters in the dark ages (or earlier), looking for The Plough and the Pole Star would have probably been invaluable.

Zodiac

Zodiac

I saw a TV program about the building of Stonehenge recently which suggested that the knowledge those ancient builders (not that they were all old, just that it was a long, long time ago) had of geometry and astronomy was immense to be able to build the stone circle so that it aligned so perfectly with the rising sun etc.

Kevin Byron Simon Rae - I can buy the idea of the pole star and its alignment with two stars on the plough, but I'm not convinced that the other shapes had any navigational merit. Also the Southern hemisphere sees a different sky. Thanks though - Something to research on an Autumn eve

Norman Jackson I think creativity exists because we don't all see the same thing Jennifer Willis and Simon Rae perhaps it's not making as in forcing people to see the world differently, but it is about showing that some aspect of the world can be perceived differently and that is the same for all domains of knowledge.

Kevin Byron Throughout history humans have tried to impose some kind of order on what they saw in nature as unpredictable, and sometimes threatening disorder. This was expressed as a variety of different belief systems that not only tried to join up the dots of the unknown, but extrapolated to where the dots led beyond life in order to allay the fear of nothingness. All beliefs are a product of the imagination, and yet many millions of people subscribe to seeing the world in only one way - the extant belief system of the culture into which they were born! We need sometimes to undo other people's imposed 'joining of the dots' so that we can make our own connections based not just on imagination but experience too!

Jennifer Willis Yes Kevin Byron, it never ceases to amaze me how my husband and his family (Tamil Hindus), he a psychiatrist and the others all highly educated, still believe in the position of the stars at the time of their birth for influencing their major life events. You can take the man out of his culture, but you can't take the culture out of the man!

Christopher Tomlinson That's what the world needs at present to be able to hear other people's point of view. I for one would love to see an open and respectful discussion about Brexit!

Norman Jackson And here we are having a respectful discussion about creativity in which we encourage and embrace different points of view in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Perhaps our next discussion should be on Brexit? I suspect the atmosphere might change. Surely we are in the mess we are in because political leaders lack the creativity to deal effectively with the wicked problem they have created.

Kevin Byron Norman Jackson I agree with what you say about the discussion, but Brexit has no ultimate truth - nowhere to travel than multiple 'equally right and equally wrong' destinations. The abstracted political process might be interesting but there would still be polarised views. Politics is like religion and if one has subscribed to a particular view it's very hard to restore flexibility.

Simon Rae Hi Jennifer Willis, amazement shared ... although perhaps not surprising if I think about it. If a child is born with a beneficial positioning of the stars then they are likely to go through life as 'the child' person born under a good sign' and will attract all the complimentary comments and attention due to a person of such high status. This is likely to affect their major life events!

Is this much different from the case of two boys I knew in the past ... one at school (the motto for which was: To make Leaders of Men - it was a minor public school that I had the displeasure of attending) and one when I was doing Teacher Training in a school in the Meadows, Nottingham (a fairly run-down area of back-to-backs in the process of being demolished). Both boys exhibited similar personalities and traits ... both well built and physically imposing, both charismatic and both natural leaders to whom other kids were attracted, both 'group-leaders' not followers. One had been born to well off, upwardly mobile, middle class parents and ended up as Head Boy ... the other to poorer, working-class parents who was seen as a disruptive influence and was expelled. I'll leave it to you to guess which was which.

My point being is that we can't control where, when, to whom or under what star sign we are born ... but people make allowances for, encourage and enable certain people for no other reason than their birth circumstances.

Jennifer Willis This is true Simon Rae. But my school teaching experience was all in areas of social deprivation, and I spent 20 years trying to raise aspirations (some may ask what right I had to do so!) in children whose cultures and social circumstances did not value education. My point being that we can encourage for both those born with a proverbial silver spoon and for the polar opposite. Once again, though, we return to values and motivation.

Before going to bed last night, I received a text informing me that a young Tamil girl I have tutored since she was 7 has just gained a place at Tiffin School (we are a selective borough with many prestigious schools, of which this is one). Twice before, at ages 7 and 10, she passed the exams for a neighbouring girls' school, but her parents were unable to pay the fees, so she was unable to take up her place. I was

overjoyed at last night's news, but it is another reminder to me of my ambivalence. I am delighted that she is now on a conveyor belt to academic success, but recognise this conflicts with my professional experience in comprehensive state schools. In this particular case, I am able justify my pleasure by recalling the hard work and resilience this young girl has shown.

Thread 2, Porridge art: Sharing experiences



The porridge art that stimulated the above conversation produced a more personal exchange:

Christopher Tomlinson Joining the dots Making sense of this gift of life. Sharing experiences!

Norman Jackson Another great stimulous for the day Christopher Tomlinson what is the big brown blob?

Christopher Tomlinson Its a pickled orange slice!!

Norman Jackson I don't think I have ever had or seen one before!

Jennifer Willis Beautifully profound Christopher Tomlinson!

Thread 3, Cats posts: social interaction

Ignoring some earlier comments on #creativeHE's use of Facebook and suggestions this should be for more than social posting, Sandra Abegglen persevered with a daily image of her cat. A few participants turned this into an opportunity for creating amusing captions.

Sandra Abegglen Day 5: Wait and see

Norman Jackson 'Hey look at the camera'

Sue Moron-Garcia Can I get no peace? / Has she brought me dinner?

Thread 4, 1 minute video, a metaphor for distributing ideas

Norman Jackson SEEDS ON THE WIND

I continue my work in progress with another 1 minute movie. I noticed the air was full of fluffy seeds which seemed to emanate from the small clump of white willow trees over 50m away. It's possible to watch the seeds leave their catkin and dance away on the wind until they are out of sight. I slowed the film down so that I could see more clearly how they danced on the wind. There must be a poem there if only I had the will and talent!

I guess from a creativity perspective they might provide a metaphor for the way ideas are distributed in the swirling information flows of life, dancing hither and thither and just a few of them will land on ground that is ready for them and they will grow into something bigger in that new context. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jkNpngCFJ1c



YOUTUBE.COM

Seeds on the wind

The willow is dispersing its seeds on the wind. This is a work in progress - the fourth in the series of 1 minute movies I am making of a week in the life of...

Jennifer Willis An apt metaphor and another beautiful film Norman Jackson.

Summary Day 5

Although posts were being read up to 173 times, the same small group of active participants kept the conversation alive. There was one dominant theme discussed on this day: meaning-making through 'joining the dots.' Different positions on the nature of discussion this site should be having were becoming consolidated, and some previously raised issues were now recurring.

Some points of note from the day:

- We cannot join the dots forwards, only in retrospect
- What impact is the current Facebook discussion (dot) having?
- Creativity leads to achieving one's potential
- Narrative making as a means of creating identity
- Is creativity making other see your vision?
- Creativity exists because we don't all see the same
- Beliefs are the product of imagination
- Impact of being born into a privileged family
- Sharing experiences
- Social chat e.g. cat pictures
- How ideas are distributed

The senses don't just make sense of life in bold or subtle acts of clarity, they tear reality apart into vibrant morsels and reassemble them into a meaningful pattern.

Diane Ackerman

DAY 6

Thread 1, Creativity from mini to big C

Norman Jackson posted a prompt for the day based on the 4 'C' model of creativity:

SHARING OUR EVERYDAY CREATIVITY - DAY 6 LET'S GET CREATIVE FESTIVAL

I am enjoying the unfolding conversation and the sharing of ideas and artefacts this week and I know that many members of the community are following this conversation.

Chris Tomlinson reminds us today that our energy and desire for acts of creativity often originate from a spark that ignites our interest and emotions. It is very hard to be creative on demand but the main purpose of the BBC's Get Creative Festival is to encourage people everywhere to have a go at being creative and to share the results of their creativity with others. Our festival comes to an end on Sunday so please do look around and try to find something that inspires you to do something which feels creative to you and share it in this space.

In our context we are talking about everyday creativity - the mini-c & little-c creativity in the four-c framework that James Kaufman and Ronald Beghetto developed to explain creativity across the whole spectrum of human experience and achievement. In this you-tube clip they discuss their model https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=79&v=oR70dV53jBM

Kaufman, J. C., & Beghetto, R. A. (2009). Beyond big and little: The Four C Model of Creativity. Review of General Psychology, 13, 1-12.

For more background on research into creativity this post by J T Velikovsky provides a helpful synthesis together with the authors own interpretation and development of the 4c model.

StoryAlity #6 - What is creativity - and How Does It Work? Posted by J.T. Velikovsky

December 6, 2012 https://storyality.wordpress.com/2012/12/06/what-is-creativity-and-how-does-it-work/

YOUTUBE.COM

FourCs (with James C. Kaufman)

Discussing the Four C model of creativity with James Kaufman

There was only one direct reply to this:

Jennifer Willis It is interesting to view this Norman Jackson AFTER our manifesto discussion and the production of our collective manifesto. They touch on so many of the issues we raised - assessment, responsibility, can creativity be taught, domains etc. As I have concluded in CAM#13, the most glaring thing to emerge for me was the lack of recognition for our creativity, false assumptions that creativity has to be at the big C end of a spectrum.

I am developing a model that analyses the 4cs against the 5 dimensions of wellbeing (see my post of last night and attached image). I will share the results at the end of this week.

Thread 2, Porridge art: being inspired by the creativity of others

This was a more productive topic, receiving 155 views and 6 comments;

Christopher Tomlinson Thank you for the music! Being inspired by others creativity

Norman Jackson Another great prompt from our porridge maker in residence Christopher Tomlinson The question of what inspires us to put ourselves into a project or situation in which we can use our imagination and create something that is valuable and meaningful to us, and perhaps others, is very important. Because underlying everything we do is 'will': without the will to think about and do something, nothing will happen. Ideas will remain in the mind of the individual and there will be no manifestation of those ideas in the world. This prompt is very apt for our community project this week -what inspires us to make the effort to create and share what we have created?



Jennifer Willis Another inspirational bowl, Christopher Tomlinson.

Do we have an inherent need for recognition? Does it matter if other people don't appreciate our creations? Validation is certainly a theme that emerged from our manifesto discussion, and the Beghetto video for today's conversation asserts that it is sufficient for us to value our own creations.

Let me raise another point: how one person's creation can spark creativity in another domain. A good example was Norman Jackson's seeds video of yesterday. He, himself, recognised that it invited a poem, and I found myself spontaneously playing with words as I watched and listened to the film.

To answer Norman Jackson's question, what makes me participate in this discussion is fundamentally to learn, to add to my evolving conceptualisation of creativity. This is followed by a sharing of my ideas, to test others' responses, I think I have come full circle to the issue of validation!

Sandra Sinfield BTW - that was positive *laughing with* the porridge art (not at) - you just made me laugh out loud with pure pleasure - thank you!

Christopher Tomlinson That's why I do porridge art for the fun of making others smile!

Norman Jackson Do you think we each have within us Jennifer Willis a desire to create new value .. to add to or improve whatever already exists and on rare occasions, invent new things? That includes making better versions of ourselves? Perhaps we are programmed to search out and make use of these opportunities.

Jennifer Willis Maybe so Norman Jackson. Perhaps it's linked to our survival needs.

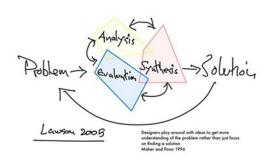
Incidentally, I was intrigued by the research referred to in the 4 cs video, looking at creativity in other species. Again, is this just some instinct to outperform others, or is it based on a pleasure instinct? Clearly this depends on the degree of consciousness the species has.

Thread 3, Creativity = hard work or inspiration?



Paul Kleiman Kevin's story about his garden bench, reminds me of that cliché about creativity being 90% perspiration and 10% inspiration (or something like that). I had a similar experience designing and making a folding roof for the front of our narrowboat. Starting with a few small bits of folded card, to making a half-scale prototype, to making and fitting the actual roof. It was a constant iterative process of trial and error, learning from the errors, seeking always to improve. It's an approach that most closely resembles Bryan Lawson's description of the design process as 'a negotiation between problem and solution through the three activities of analysis, synthesis and evaluation'. Unlike many descriptions/diagrams of design processes it is a non-linear, iterative process, in which the 'fun' bit of playing around with ideas is accompanied by the 'not so fun' frustrations and anxieties.

I'm pretty sure there's some creativity or creative processes at work in there somewhere! \bigcirc



Sandra Sinfield And a great second year module on any 'academic' course so people experience the slow and often frustrating process of playful problem solving?

Thread 4, Collages

Sandra Sinfield #creativeHE #Festival Day 6 - Collage 3: Table?

Sandra Sinfield #creativeHE #Festival #Day6 Today Thomas Burns joined in - and made his collage...





Paula Mdx Nottingham like this a lot!

Thread 5, Cat image: looking out/forward



Sandra Abegglen Day 6: Looking out (or forward)

Sandra Sinfield the texture of the fur is amazing - you really want to reach in and touch...

Norman Jackson or backwards depending on where he has come from Sandra Abegglen having watched a lot of animals recently I think they see with their ears so is he 'seeing with his ears?'

Sandra Abegglen Norman Jackson that might well be the case. It's probably the same with creative work: we sometimes need to look backwards to actually see - what has happened - and what might happen.

Thread 5, Garden notes

Norman Jackson Rabbits and Foxes

Here is the fifth of my 1minute movies which I am assembling into a 7 mins week long movie. You can find the movie and the little story that goes with it on my Garden Notes blog. http://www.normanjackson.co.uk/garden-notes

NORMANJACKSON.CO.UK

Garden Notes

Sandra Sinfield I could have watched that loping fox for many more minutes!

Sandra Abegglen I love this video! There's a Canadian fairytale called: How rabbit deceived fox

Norman Jackson I used to love the Bre'r Rabbit stories Sandra Abegglen The message in the stories was you don't have to rely on physical strength for survival or to get by...because your creativity can get you out off difficult situations - which invariably Brer Rabbit was

Jennifer Willis It's also a cautionary tale, designed to propagate moral behaviour. The Canadian tale ends:

He escaped with his life, but his eyelids were singed, and his sleek black coat with its silver spots was scorched to a red-brown color. He was in great pain. He concluded that Rabbit was too clever for him to cope with, and he resolved to leave him alone and to forego his revenge, for he was glad to get away with his life. But he decided never again to live on friendly terms with Rabbit. And since that night Rabbit and Fox have never hunted together. And to the present day the descendants of this Fox have red eyes and a red-brown coat, because Rabbit scorched their ancestor in the olden times.



See https://fairytalez.com/rabbit-deceived-fox/

Sandra Abegglen Jennifer Willis most fairytales are very moral... This one is no exception.

Jennifer Willis Bien sûr!

Jennifer Willis Irresistible Norman Jackson!

I've just been analysing my week's activities against the 5 ways to wellbeing, and notice I am a bit lacking in 'noticing'. You, on the other hand, would score very highly in this. A chicken and egg situation: your choice of medium requires this, or your predisposition to notice led you to choose the medium?

Norman Jackson Well that's good to know Jennifer Willis it is my hobby and it gives me pleasure to notice and record in an interesting way. Perhaps it's the geologist in me.

Jennifer Willis But my question is, are you a geologist because of your character, or has being a geologist formed your character Norman Jackson?

Norman Jackson It's a bit of both I think and one of the reasons I chose geology or it chose me was to be outside in the natural environment so that disposition connects too.

Jennifer Willis It also connects with your drawing/painting Norman Jackson.

Norman Jackson SEQUEL - As I tiptoed around the woods this afternoon I caught a young fox cub foraginghttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPEV7V1xrUk&feature=youtu.be

Sandra Abegglen Norman Jackson this this incredibly beautiful.

Thread 6, Teachers explore with light

Holly Warren Workshop for teachers in infant and primary on exploring light.



Jennifer Willis Can you explain how you use this Holly Warren?

Holly Warren As simple as it is.

Fairy lights and torches were left at their disposal for them to experiment with. They had their phones to take picture and were encouraged to leave conventions behind and deeply get into discovering what they could do with a string of lights. Also asked to take pictures by leaving the "still" habit and move to "dynamic" effect in order to experiment with photography. This workshop wanted to create the foundations of thinking and acting "as children" when faced with a new material and its interaction with the environment

It is part of presentation: Dialogue, Culture and Ecology. How the Reggio Approach can create new visions.

Jennifer Willis Thanks Holly Warren

Norman Jackson Quite magical Holly Warren I bet the teachers had a lot of fun. Did part of the workshop involve them discussing how they could use what they had learnt?

Thread 7, Home movie maker

Emma Gillaspy We entered a competition when taking our 4 yo son to Legoland Manchester the other week and check out our prize (a) I don't know who's more excited to make our first film!







Norman Jackson Many congratulations and what a wonderful prize Emma Gillaspy I'm sure you will have many happy hours making your movies.. Perhaps you can try your hand this weekend and share the results with us?

Emma Gillaspy Norman Jackson absolutely, I'm planning to give it a go 📦

Thread 8, Intention and creativity

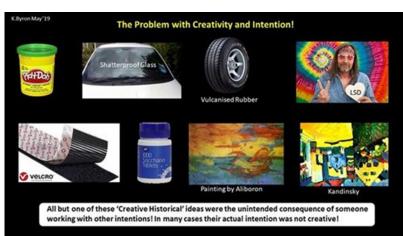
Kevin Byron With the best of Intentions!

Discoveries are always accidental, and they are not in my view acts of creativity because they do not arise from the imagination, they are not part of a pre-conceived challenge, neither are they based on the ability to combine one or more things, objects, processes which is what defines creativity. That's not to say when someone has witnessed an unintended outcome that it doesn't kick-start their creativity with a shed-load of other questions like: 'How can I develop this observation?' etc. Also given that the examples shown here were the product of un-intention, it doesn't imply that the observer who developed the idea was engaged in an intended act of creativity elsewhere. In many of the serendipitous scientific discoveries the observer was actually engaged in doing routine (ie non-creative intentions) experimental work, which is a big part of research activity.

In the paintings featured here, the one by Kandinsky shows one of his conventional paintings turned upside down. Apparently a colleague had accidentally placed his painting this way, and when Kandinsky saw it he was so taken by what he saw that it launched him into painting abstract art.

The other painting by Boronali reveals another aspect of unintended consequences. The idea behind the art was indeed intended because the creator - art critic Roland Dorgelès - intentionally tied a wet paint brush to a donkey's tail and placed a canvas near its tail so when it waggled about, paint was splashed on the canvas. Several paintings were produced this way and Dorgeles called his art movement 'Excessivism'. They were exhibited in France and he sold the work featured here for 400 Francs. The name 'Boronali' can be rearranged to 'Aliboron' which is French for donkey!

So with regard to all but Aliboron's work we can be clear that intention is not a necessary pre-requisite for creativity. To suggest that any intention, even that which leads to unintended consequences is necessary for creativity is simply wiseacring in my view.



Dorgeles was not intending to produce good art, but just anything that the donkey happened to slap on the canvas. His intention was to poke fun at the art world, but this was not the intention of those who appreciated and purchased the art, because the joke was revealed much later. So if the creative has one intention and the person appreciating it has a very different intention, what does that say about the need for intention in creativity?

Jennifer Willis Thanks Kevin Byron for setting me off on a few minutes' pleasurable surfing about this case.

I agree with you that discoveries don't meet the criteria for creativity, nor does the donkey's 'creation'. (Aliboron was the donkey's name - it doesn't mean 'donkey'.) Pushing it, I might suggest that the intention to produce a painting was at one remove (Dorgeles), but as your rightly say, Dorgeles' intention was not to create art, rather to ridicule the affectations of the art world.

This is a fascinating dilemma!

And what should we say about Kandinsky's paining? Is it still art even when hung upside down? From the perspective of creativity, it should be even more so, given this novel perspective. For me, though, it has lost any claim to attractiveness that it may have had. It falls into the same category as Boronali's work!

Kevin Byron Actually the imaginary artist was called 'Boronali' and this can be re- arranged to get aliboron which is French for donkey. I got that the wrong way round and have corrected it in the text. The real name of the donkey was Lolo and the photo below shows said artist at work.

Holly Warren I would categorize this process as mind wandering (Corballis) when the brain connects dots at an unconsciousness level and when the path is complete ...eureka!



Kevin Byron Thanks Holly -What prompted this post was an issue I've raised twice before concerning: 'What is not creativity?'. If anything goes, and we are all being creative all of the time, albeit at a personal level, then there's nothing more to discuss. Or rather we could equally have a website devoted to talking about breathing or other human functions and behaviours that are running in the background all the time. I tend to think that creative acts can be distinguished from habitual behaviour. Indeed one of the drivers behind HE Creativity is the desire to bring more creativity into teaching and learning. This suggests that we are not being creative all of the time. Maybe you didn't equate mind wandering with creativity, and the default state of the mind is one of an idle wander in the imagination when external stimuli don't focus our attention to a specific challenge in hand. I would argue some of the discoveries described above were made at a time when the person was focussed on externally on something else. The discovery is a shock event that fires up the imagination.

Thread 9, Baking an assignment



Kate Burke Baking is my creativity outlet - I seem to use food a lot in my teaching 'Baking an Assignment' and 'The cake of reflection' These cookie monsters would be a bit of a marking escape/treat!

Lucie Hutson Would love to know more about baking an assignment. Used bread making before and soup but that sounds tasty!

Norman Jackson Love them Kate Burke very scary. What are they made of? Is this assignment the first time you have made them?

Kate Burke Just cupcakes with icing - I make a fair few bakes whilst I am marking, a bit of respite and recharge from being in front of the laptop!!

Here is what I took inspiration from for 'baking an assignment' we do cupcakes instead though http://www.doceo.org.uk/tools/baking.htm

DOCEO.ORG.UK Baking an essay

Norman Jackson Love the baking analogy to preparing a written assignment. Someone has used their imagination and made the connections Kate Burke I particularly liked this phrase. 'What is the personal angle which will make it rise above simply being a re-hash of other people's ideas?' Very apt.

Lucie Hutson That's great we use the bread analogy and make it to represent the mixing of 'ingredients' and encouraging students to actually enjoy the smell of the bread. But this is great for first year students to grasp hold of the fact writing assignments can be a pleasure!!! Thank you so much for sharing - those cupcakes are wonderful!

Sarah Jamieson I'm still disappointed you don't make these for the office on a Friday!! Loved baking an assignment from the first time I clamped eyes on it.

Johanna Payton Love the baking analogy too! I teach fashion journalism and have used a fashion themed 'bake-off' at the end of third year courses to encourage student creativity - and to link fashion/food as trend driven industries. We've had some epic disasters and some absolutely fabulous (ahem) triumphs...but loads of fun.



Summary, Day 6

There were 9 threads of potential discussion on this day, but some of them failed to trigger a response, while others produced a response but did not add substantially to the question of creativity. The final strand (baking an assignment) is notable as it attracted a range of new respondents, apparently colleagues of the person who launched the discussion, indicating the way in which personal loyalties can enhance a conversation, and adding a new dimension to the debate.

Posts were viewed up to 160 times and a total of 14 people contributed to the discussion.

Issues raised included:

- The 4 c model of creativity, Kaufman and Beghetto
- Consistency between #creativeHE's Manifesto and Kaufman's interview
- Being inspired by the creativity of others
- Creativity on one domain inspiring creativity in another
- Is a need for recognition inherent in creativity?
- Why are people participating in this conversation?
- Is there an inherent need in us to improve our environment?
- Creativity as the product of hard work vs inspiration
- Collages offered as examples of creativity
- Looking backwards to see (understand)
- Fairy tales
- When work becomes a hobby
- Choice of profession and personal disposition
- Teaching teachers to act like children

DAY 7

Thread 1, Weekend space and creativity

Norman Jackson's post for this day anticipated the end of the creativity festival

DAY 7 THE BEGINNING OF THE END -LET'S GET CREATIVE FESTIVAL

The best things often emerge towards the end of a process. As Christopher Tomlinson reminds us it's the end of a working week in the UK and the start of the weekend when people are able to exchange their work spaces and habits for a different sort of environment containing different people and different things. Perhaps the weekend space contains more time and more opportunity for doing things we like to do - like baking, gardening, going for a walk, meeting friends or just messing around. So does this mean we have

more time and opportunity to be creative? Or is it our work that provides the main context for our creativity? Where do we feel we have the greatest opportunity for our creativity to flourish? What sort of environments encourage us to try to become a better version of our creative selves?

We are planning to round off the conversation on Sunday May 11th so we are now at the beginning of the end of the lets get creative festival. I do encourage you to join the conversation and perhaps share a little bit of your own creativity over the weekend. Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far without your presence this would not be happening.



Although the post was viewed 149 times, there were no direct responses. Chris Tomlinson's related post (below) was more effective.

Thread 2, Achievement and the weekend



Christopher Tomlinson Friday Love that feeling! Sense of reaching a destination! #theweekendisinsight!

Norman Jackson Yes Christopher Tomlinson we are coming to the end of our Let's Get Creative Festival which we will start rounding off tomorrow. Thank you for your daily prompts and symbolic designs.

Jennifer Willis You say reaching a destination Christopher Tomlinson but your image is circular, more like a mandala! Off we go again!

Norman Jackson Perhaps Christopher Tomlinson needs a different shaped bowl?

Christopher Tomlinson Very true! However there are two things getting to the centre could be seen as the destination - the bullseye as everything about the week

is tied up and put to bed before the weekend and we can celebrate this achievement with a well earned treat on Friday night - fish and chips, a glass of wine, watching a film, going out for a meal! It's the sense of having done something in space and time over a particular period that gives structure to our lives which help us thrive! But again stuff rolls on week to week the seasons change our lives change we grow older and children grow up! (3) a

Jennifer Willis And in retirement, the weekdays merge with the weekends so I end up working every day!

Norman Jackson But Jennifer Willis you enjoy your work and it seems to me it's more like a hobby than work

Jennifer Willis Twas ever thus, Norman Jackson. Always been a workaholic!

Norman Jackson so retirement enables you to do what you have always wanted to do Jennifer Willis

Thread 3, A daily collage



Sandra Sinfield #creativeHE #Festival #Day7 My quest - to re-start my daily 'art meditation' habit... Here's my third collage - Bridge.

A reflection: I joined the #Festival a bit late - and decided to use it as said. That first collage that I made! I was sweaty, anxious, flooded with nerves - my hands were shaking and I could barely breathe... By the second collage i had completely calmed down... and today - it was that meditative moment.

Thread 4, Cat of the day

Sandra Abegglen Day 7: Please, let me in!
Seen by 146 but no responses.



Thread 5,

Kevin Byron Nobody seems to understand it - but then he would!

The story goes that a man once lived in a small cottage adjacent to the old village church. The church bell would loudly ring out the time on the hour every hour. Eventually the man got used to the loud ring of the church bell and could sleep as soundly as anyone. One night however just before the stroke of midnight, the church clock mechanism broke down. The bell didn't ring and the man immediately fell out bed in shock shouting "What was that?"

And then there was the farm that was located on a windswept plain. In fact a strong wind blew right across the farmyard and never let up all year round. The farmer kept chickens, and they had all learned to compensate against this relentless wind. One day however the wind suddenly dropped momentarily, and all the chickens fell over.

In both these stories nothing was responsible for what happened!

If anything anyone does is a creative act, then doing nothing must surely be included in the portfolio, and it won't take up much space. Nothing is indeed a powerful creative force, and the images on the right below are about an art exhibition that took place at The Hayward Gallery in London in 2012. This exhibition was celebrating in effect a recent history of nothing in Art. There was a series of blank canvasses, the rectangular plinth on the right was the support for the invisible sculpture seated on top of it. And the bottom image shows people walking around an invisible labyrinth. Interestingly this exhibition was crowded for the entire time it was shown, indeed people were queueing up to see it, or should I say not see it? In London's West End a play called 'Art' was a great success, and it was based entirely on a piece of art that was nothing more than a blank canvas.

The 'blank canvas' takes on many forms and is much more than nothing. It is the domain, or the context into which creativity is directed. For example the Internet was originally the blank canvas that has enabled countless creative ideas taking many different forms. In physics nothing is an enigma because it doesn't exist. Even the vacuum of space is teeming with virtual particles popping in and out of existence. There would be no electronics had it not been for a deep understanding of a form of nothing called a hole. A hole is an absence of an electron, which has both mass and mobility. In short nothing is a great source of creativity, and I love writing about nothing!

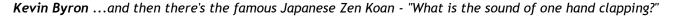


Norman Jackson Not quite the same as nothing but 'Ma' - negative space in Japanese art forms has some similarities Kevin Byron

Kevin Byron Japanese culture has a better understanding of nothing or at least minimalism in their art in my view.

Lucie Hutson Have you seen the 'children's' book Sound of Silence, it looks at the concept of 'Ma' and offers a depth that I have found children can understand but HE students don't get the meaning of.... at first! https://www.amazon.co.uk/Soun.../dp/0316203378/ref=sr_1_1...

AMAZON.CO.UK The Sound of Silence



Paul Kleiman For over a century in art, the challenge - for critics and audiences as well as well as artists - has been the shift away from a focus on the finished 'creative' object to a focus on the 'creative' idea. You can blame Duchamp and his Fountain (the famous/infamous urinal).

Sandra Sinfield I have blamed him for my approach to collage-making ;-)



Simon Rae I question your assumption that Nobody is a He.

Kevin Byron I was waiting for that and after some pondering left it as it was - nearly put 'they' but stuff it we dont have to be BBC PC all the time! It was a 'he' and he was Mr Nobody!

Kevin Byron https://youtu.be/1QxvPXK3Gv4

Jennifer Willis In the words of my favourite anti-psychiatrist, Thomas Szasz: Boredom is the feeling that everything is a waste of time; serenity, that nothing is.

Simon Rae Hi Kevin Byron, here's another example of Nothing to add to your list - well actually a double dose in that it's a recreation of Nothing, but that could get too confusing ...

https://t.co/f0QM6JfxwQ OPENCULTURE.COM

John Cage's Silent, Avant-Garde Piece 4'33" Gets Covered by

Thread 6, Respecting each other

Norman Jackson 'OH DEER' - Here is my 6th 1 minute movie of life in my garden. I think you can guess what it's about.

http://www.normanjackson.co.uk/garden-notes

Jennifer Willis I couldn't help referencing this to Christopher Tomlinson's comments about respect. It's striking that the deer, geese and other wildlife all peacefully co-habiting your beautiful garden. Thanks for the daily insights Norman Jackson.

Norman Jackson Yes and I have the utmost respect for them. I am only the temporary custodian of their space and they, and their descendants, will be here long after I have left it Jennifer Willis



Summary, Day 7

Perhaps because it was approaching the weekend and the end of the festival, the interaction was reduced on day 7. Posts were viewed up to 151 times, and, although there were 6 threads to the discussion, only 2 comprised substantial conversations. There were 9 active participants, one of whom was new.

Points of discussion:

- Does the weekend provide opportunities for different forms of creativity for those of the week?
- Bringing things to a close and starting anew
- Small, personal rewards for achievement
- Developing self-confidence through daily practice
- Cat of the day
- Nothing is a force for creativity
- Japanese art and perceptions of nothingness
- Children's perceptions of silence
- Creative product has been replaced with valuing the creative idea

The poet is at the edge of consciousness of the world, finding beyond the suspected nothingness which we imagine limits our perception another acre or so of being worth our venturing upon

Guy Davenport

DAY 8

Thread 1, Turning a daily habit into an act of giving

Norman Jackson referred to a film and related article about Chris Tomlinson's daily porridge posts:

MAKING PORRIDGE WITH MEANING

This week we have been entertained and nudged into thinking about small-c creativity by our porridge maker in residence Christopher Tomlinson I would like to say a great big thank you to Chris for sharing his daily creations with us.

I know Chris well and on a visit to his home last year I filmed him making his daily bowl of porridge. This is exactly the sort of activity that the BBC Get Creative Festival is trying to encourage so. I would be interested in your views on how creativity does or doesn't feature in this simple act of making.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytFtrgZT9qU&t=1s

There is an article about the creativity in Chris's porridge making in Creative Academic Magazine CAM 12A

Making Porridge: Turning a daily habit into an opportunity for creative self-expression and a giving to the world Chris Tomlinson

http://www.creativeacademic.uk/magazine.html

YOUTUBE.COM Making porridge with meaning



Thread 2, Being organised

Christopher Tomlinson Getting things in order! It's easier to be creative when I am organised!

Jennifer Willis This brings us nicely back to a question we examined at the start of the week, Christopher Tomlinson, whether we are tidy or not. I need to be organised, like you. But does this limit my creativity?

I wonder how people would respond to your porridge of today if one of the pear pieces was upside down? Would its asymmetry appeal to them? I notice a hint of a rebellion in your porridge: there is one blackcurrant amid all the red ones! Was this a deliberate choice, or did you run out of red ones? What I am trying to tease out is whether people prefer symmetry and neatness to risk-taking disorder.

Anon I think we are hard wired to look for patterns, and that might explain our preference for symmetry.

Christopher Tomlinson Jennifer Willis generally people prefer a degree of symmetry.



Thread 3, Physical impact on creativity

Hilary Cunliffe-Charlesworth Experiencing the results of creativity on my commute: the physical experience has impact on how and what we create.





Hilary Cunliffe-Charlesworth This is experience in creativity and feeling the physical of creativity

Norman Jackson I quite agree. There is a great little story in this movie Hilary Cunliffe-Charlesworth I wonder whose idea it was and how that idea evolved as it was implemented.

Hilary Cunliffe-Charlesworth Norman Jackson the film producer Mark Herbert shared it - he tells stories of how creativity is enabled by negotiating and appreciating the context.

Norman Jackson I like that idea . I think context is essential to understanding someone else's everyday creativity Hilary Cunliffe-Charlesworth

Thread 5, Mind wandering

Holly Warren Creative Mind Wandering shared with a group.

https://vimeo.com/manage/282107463/general



Thread 6, What is/is not creative?

Norman Jackson DAY 8 LET'S GET CREATIVE FESTIVAL: WHAT IS/IS NOT CREATIVE?

We are an inclusive community sharing the value of creativity and an interest in seeking to understand it better, although we might hold different conceptions of what it means.

Earlier in the discussion Kevin Byron provoked us to think about what is and what isn't creative. It's my belief that we are working along a continuum. At one end is a highly inclusive, democratic and everyday concept of creativity, 'we are all creative' embodied by Lev Vygotsky's position...'Any human act that gives rise to something new is referred to as a creative act, regardless of whether what is created is a physical object or some mental or emotional construct that lives within the person who created it and is known only to him.' At the other end of the continuum is a concept of creativity that is more exclusive and rarer phenomenon performed by relatively few individuals the effects of which have significant impact on the world. We mentioned the 4C model developed by James Kaufman and Ronald Behgetto to explain this continuum.

Prompted by this question of what is and what isn't creative? I came across a post by Felicia Semple, a maker on the Craft Sessions website, in which she explores the idea that making is not inherently creative. Using the illustration of two pullovers that she had made she argued that one involved her creativity the other did not. I wonder to what extent this reasoning could be applied to the artefacts we have made, or artefacts you might have made in the past, or to the making of different sorts of artefacts. For her the question seems to come down to the role of imagination in making or making something happen, but I suspect this is not as simple as having an idea and turning the idea into a thing.



Creative This is an important question. Please share your own perspectives.

Making is not inherently creative by Felicia Semple

http://thecraftsessions.com/blog/2018/7/27/making-is-not-inherently-creative

Lucie Hutson This is so true I set up a little Etsy shop to share some items I made or personalised. None incredibly skillful or creative in many spaces but allowed me a justified outlet for sitting and making. A friend asked for Mrs Hinch style bottles and I have been making lots of these lately. It is essentially the same processes and materials but it is making and not creating. Fascinating to recognise and try to explain!

Norman Jackson How interesting Lucie Hutson you might also be interested in the story of how Felicia made the cardigan

I Made This - Felicia Semple November 14, 2014

http://thecraftsessions.com/.../i-made-this-felicia-semple

Holly Warren Making could be seen as a repetition, a pattern of something already consolidated, creating could be giving the item a personalized outlook?

Norman Jackson so personalising an item Holly Warren could mean taking a standard pattern and improvising to a degree that made it different? ie adapting a pattern to make what is being made more meaningful

Holly Warren Mmmm not necessarily improvising but making it a "reflection" of the individual that is making it

Norman Jackson but it does mean changing/adapting the pattern in a way that has personal meaning? I am trying to get at - does creativity involve the invention of new meaning?

Holly Warren ... you might be a different individual from one moment to the next.

Holly Warren Some say that we are forever changing.....nothing stays the same.

Jennifer Willis Implicit within your exchange Holly Warren and Norman Jackson is a question of values. Something can be of value to the individual even though it has no external validation. It meets the individual's needs, whatever they may be.

Holly Warren Little c creativity can lead to a community of fulfilled people and can go beyond.

Jennifer Willis It can, Holly Warren, but then it is moving along the spectrum of impact from left to right, towards professional and big C. See Kaufman and Beghetto's model, reproduced in the paper I posted this morning.

Holly Warren Thanks Jennifer Willis I read your manifest and it is inspiring.

Creativity indeed infuses wellbeing. No matter the size of the c we feel in tune and emanate positive vibes that then resonate further. If you consider M.Boden 's conceptual spaces there is fertile ground for movement and development.

Jennifer Willis Many thanks, Holly Warren!

Chrissi Nerantzi Hi Holly Warren I am wondering if repetition can also be seen as practising to refine, perfect (don't like this word, but making something better)?

Chrissi Nerantzi Norman Jackson was just writing something similar and then saw your response Norman. I find repetition really useful in the creative process as it helps me to focus in on certain aspects. It develops creative confidence and helps me refine certain aspects I know I need to work on.

Chrissi Nerantzi I do think that even trying to replicate something does need skill as mentioned in the video but also creativity to solve problems along the way? I think it is actually more difficult to be creative within parameters. I used to be a translator of novels... one could claim what is creative about this? I had a ready and successful text in one language and I translated it into another. If you have ever done any translation of literary work you will know that actually translating such a text is more challenging than writing an original piece, but the end product in the target language will be an original piece that needs to stand on its own without the original in the source language and should be of equal value? Is this possible? Is this creative or just a mechanical repetition of human activity? I don't think any human activity is mechanical or just requires skill as we also use our criticality and creativity in each task... I think. Does any of this make sense?

Holly Warren Mmm not sure. Repetition requires a different approach to the creative process. Repetition smooths the edges when the goal is to perfect what was made. But creativity implies new visions. It is a different route with different levels of energy and maybe commitment. What do you think?

Jennifer Willis Chrissi Nerantzi Your question about translation is interesting. As a fellow linguist, I have spent many a year translating to and from English. I have always tried to read a work in its original language,

James C. Kaufman Chrissi Nerantzi I personally think it can be very very creative -- capturing the beauty, language, ideas does involve basing things off of the original writer's words but the choice of words and expressions and trying to keep double meanings, rhythms, etc -- I think doing that well requires a lot of creativity. I love Threepenny Opera and have heard so many different translations of it and they vary wildly in quality, emotional impact, aesthetics, etc....

Chrissi Nerantzi James C. Kaufman thank you so much for this. I also feel that it does require a lot of creativity and the text in the target language may even exceed the original. It is about creating the atmosphere of the original, the flavour and give the target reader a taste of something that may and will sound exotic at times as well. Translating is also a big responsibility and trust when I was translating works of living authors I was always trying to get in touch with them and we had a wonderful relationship during the time I was translating their work. Thank you for commenting.

Chrissi Nerantzi Jennifer Willis I have translated novels, kids' books and poetry too. All have their own challenges and opportunities. I think if we approach translation with care, sensitivity and understanding of both cultures, source and target, our interpretation of the original (it will always be an interpretation) can be a creative act and the output of equal or even more value, I think. The work of the translator is double hard and they often don't get the recognition they deserve what they put into the work, I think.

Jennifer Willis I quite agree Chrissi Nerantzi, the translator's job is difficult and requires a special talent, with all the cultural and linguistic knowledge you mention. I personally don't think poems translated have the same quality as the original - it is a different creation from the original. Ultimately, it is a personal judgement whether they are equal or simply different.

Chrissi Nerantzi Jennifer Willis Thank you Jenny. I think translated poems can succeed even the original. Not sure it is about being equal, perhaps of equal value. I suspect this is what you mean. Definitely a different creation from the original as you say and always an interpretation. Translating literature is not the same as translating medical texts and we all know this.

Simon Rae Hi Norman Jackson, an interesting end to our conversation: asking what is/is not creative?

Cards on the table, I'm at the Vygotsky end of your continuum ... I think that we are all naturally creative, our brains create new thoughts, feelings and ideas all the time ... and as soon as we have created them we start to edit them to fit the context.

This editing process is where I begin to worry. Who teaches us to edit our creativity?

During our discussions over the last few days, weeks and years several people have observed that the natural creativity that children display often seems to dry up as soon as they enter the school system. This hardly seems in keeping with our professed aim of developing creativity in our students! Are our best efforts killing creativity?

The Maker video on knitting and some of your contributions Kevin Byron express (I think) a Big C view that not all creativity is equal, that some examples are 'more creative' than others ... which is OK as long as the judgement is fair, not paternalistic, not restrictive and not elitist ... criteria which I'm increasingly of the opinion are rarely met either in school, HE or life.

Rather than teach students how to be creative, I think we should be teaching students how to nurture their creativity. And I think that we should be teaching people who are in positions of relative power (ie teachers, administrators, employers, parents etc) how to afford, facilitate and recognise other people's creativity.

Kevin Byron Open and Closed Systems!

In common with everything else in life, all creativity is definitely not equal. If it was there would be no such thing as Patents, Trade Marks, Registered Designs, Citations, Oscars, Baftas, School Grades, Degree Classifications, Nobel Prizes, The Booker, Perrier Comedy Awards, The Turner Prize, Eurovision, The Dragons Den, The Apprentice, Britain's Got Something or other, etc etc. Now it could be argued that some of these recognition schemes are not testing creativity per se, for example school grades and degree classifications. Indeed part of the raison d'etre for HE Creativity is to either get rid of classification in education, or at the very least have a greater creativity content in it. Many of these schemes that do assess are very biased and subjective eg The Turner Prize (if you ask a wider audience about what good art looks like).

There's no benefit in hiding the fact that creativity has levels of quality because it gives people something to aim for. There is also a good deal of zero creativity in our lives. If everything, everyone does is creative what is the point of discussing it? This only encourages trivial examples of alleged creativity and imagine if all of the subscribers here started doing that. If that happens, we may as well have a FaceBook page called Breathivity HE or Digestivity HE.

Creativity needs to be set against a reference point of 'not creative' in order to distinguish it in my view. If I take a photograph of a wheelbarrow where is the creativity in that? If on the other hand I turn the wheelbarrow into a seat like Rowena Cade (designer of the Minack theatre) did when she was having a rest, then that has a measure of creativity. Oh! and the photographer of said image was not being creative because most people can take a photo. They were however witnessing someone else's creativity, which is not in itself a creative act (that comes under the category of discovery). If the ordinary photograph of a wheelbarrow was accompanied by a story, poem or a humorous caption then that might be creative if it passes the 'combine' test and is not just a simple description of a wheelbarrow.

I'm very comfortable with the notion of different levels of creativity and indeed zero creativity, but I have made no allusion in my postings on this website to being an arbiter of the creativity of particular individuals.

An example of zero creativity would be if a student has learnt by rote the times table, and becomes very adept at doing calculations with pairs of numbers up to 10. Learning and remembering the times table doesn't involve any creativity and neither does multiplying two numbers. However if the student is then exposed to say trigonometry, geometry and calculus, they have to apply their times table to a whole new range of new concepts, and solving problems in these offers a lot of opportunity for creativity. The times table is a closed-system, whereas the other branches of maths are open-systems so there is the potential for lots of (personal) creative work.

Our daily lives are full of closed-system activities where no creativity is required (eg filling in a booking for a hotel, trying on a new pair of shoes, tidying up the desk etc). There's not much benefit in accessing the background ramblings of the imagination in these tasks, if they demand us to focus on the task in order to avoid mistakes. Our lives are also enriched with a lot of open-system activity too where we may exercise our personal creativity.

Chrissi Nerantzi Also wondering if creativity can be seen as something very subjective too?

Jennifer Willis I completely agree Simon Rae.

One of my creative interests (passive!) is dance. I've been watching the BBC's annual competition for young dancer of the year, which reached the finals last night. The competitors were the winners of four different genres of dance. Each was excellent, and I thought hard about how to judge such diverse forms of dance. Eventually, I concluded that it came down to more than technical competence: it was their ability to evoke a strong emotional response in the audience. This was more difficult than it appears, as ultimately I found my emotional response was to some extent conditioned by the form of dance I related to most.

Even though the winner would not have been my choice, I felt the competition was successful because it valued each individual. And strangely, as the final round unfolded, it was clear that ballet was incorporating much of street dance, and vice versa. I thought of Kevin Byron's sponges!

Norman Jackson I think you have hit the nail on the head Jennifer Willis when you say the ability of a performance or artefact for that matter to evoke a strong emotional response and that is exactly where value and meaning come into this. That is why I add the music I really like to my garden movies. It adds value and enhances the meaning to give me a deeper emotional response when I watch it. As you say because of our cultural and experiential histories and orientations we tend to prefer certain forms more than others.

Moving beyond the artistic domain I have been exploring the idea that we are more likely to be creative when participating in work that is meaningful and evokes deep emotional responses.

Jennifer Willis Taking up your last paragraph Norman Jackson, here you are approaching the work I have been doing on personal wellbeing. If we use Maslow's model of self-actualisation (wrongly often described as a hierarchy), we find that motivation stimulates our drive for self-fulfilment, which intricately binds emotions as both stimuli and outcomes.

James C. Kaufman I've been thinking a lot about these issues for a new paper I'm working on with Vlad Glăveanu. I think replication can be creative if it is someone's own way of doing it -- so rote repetition is not creative (IMO), but making your own copy of a painting in a local museum or making your own version of a meal (so not copying a recipe step by step, but doing something to make it your own) -- that "counts" as creative to me. I have been also working on how mini-c/little-c is connected to meaning -- from coming to terms with one's past, appreciating one's present, and valuing one's future.

Norman Jackson Thank you James. I agree. I wonder whether rote repetition is actually a necessary route to creative practice in the sense that certain ways of knowing come from practising the same or similar things over and over again, perhaps in different contexts and circumstances, and this state of being then provides a platform for improvisation.

Anon I think repetition and remix are hugely creative. Big c, little c, any c.

Sandra Sinfield I feel Simon Rae's point the most. I think that in education particularly the overarching atmosphere of conformity begins to stifle and choke creativity generally - let alone in re subjects are supposed to be 'creative'! As we've said before - the whole emphasis of our Higher Education Orientation module - was not to teach students 'skills' - but reacquaint them with their creativity - and thus with their whole selves. I had a graduand of that module pop in last week, saying that she is worried about her six year old because he is already having the creativity choked out of him. She is planning to take him out of school as soon as possible - to de-school him - so that he can find again his joy of learning - and learning should be a creative process.

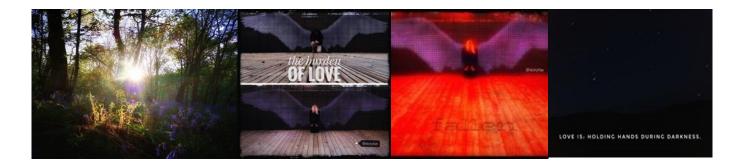
Sandra Sinfield My mum was a craftswoman - she could knit and crochet - she made wonderful clothes and terrifying draft excluders. She did not see herself as creative. I did! Fortunately she did not let the fact that she 'was not creative' stop her... But I think that that separation into creative/non-creative boxes does stop many people from engaging in these acts. And they are the poorer for it.

Simon Rae I'm beginning to wonder if there's a generational aspect to this? My father (1914-2004) wouldn't have thought of himself as creative, but he would lay the most beautiful crazy paving and make wonderful use of any old bits lying around, and after pruning the trees he would knock up lovely bits of rustic seating from the cut branches. And neither would my mother (1914-1981) who baked the best ever chocolate sponge cake and could knit and dressmake beautifully. The 'creative' in the family (who people thought I 'took after') was Uncle Eric who produced fabulous woodland oil paintings and wore bow-ties.

And I agree with you Sandra Sinfield, the separation into creative/non-creative boxes does stop too many people from engaging in creative acts. And I don't think this is helped when others impose value judgements on creativity (ie THIS is good and creative but that isn't so good and isn't really creative (so you can't join our club)).

Thread 7, A personal perspective

Nathalie Sheridan First time sharer ...so I have worked creatively ever since I held my first job, and tried to translate the creativity into my HE pedagogy. Privately, creative practice is around mixed media art, photography, poetry, dress making, pattern design...so here are some examples. To me creativity is putting a magnifying glass on aspects of life, or looking through binoculars the wrong way round.



Lucie Hutson powerful thinking points. What wonderful skills and sure useful in HE as well

Nathalie Sheridan Lucie thank you. I love using creative approaches, change of perspective to create some cognitive dissonance and encourage my students to think more deeply. But also to create meaningful experiences

Christopher Tomlinson Some beautiful images

Thread 8, A story-telling community

Anon a friend of mine has an idea for a creative community.

https://geoffrey-gevalt.squarespace.com/onwriting/digital-community-4-the-community-leaders-dive-in-

GEOFFREYGEVALT.COM Contact — Explorations in Storytelling

gg explorations in storytelling writing photos on writing





Thread 9, A week in my garden, full movie

Thread 10

Kevin Byron Day 8: Plumbing the Depths!

This is a simple analogy that I initially developed in my work with Ph.Ds for helping to understand knowledge bases in different disciplines, and for differentiating between cutting edge research that expands into new knowledge, and adaptive research that fills gaps in the existing knowledge. Here I'm going to apply the Byronic 'Theory of Ever-Expanding Sponges' in more general terms to any kind of knowledge, and also describe the role of creativity.

Imagine a finite body of knowledge of any kind as resembling a sponge. There are many different kinds of sponge including street wisdom, arts and crafts know-how, specialised academic knowledge in any discipline, general professional knowledge based on experience, fashions in all forms (art movements, literary and musical genres etc.), cultural mores etc. Each of these sponges is being nourished by the collective power of the minds of people who work with that particular sponge, and as a result the sponge is becoming more dense and expanding out into the unknown, and transforming that into the known. As the sponge expands however, voids appears in its main body, and these represent gaps or anomalies in the existing knowledge. The driver that results in new sponge material within and without this porous structure is creativity. Creativity combines different pieces of knowledge that already exist and fuses them together. At the expanding edges of the sponge accidental discoveries (because there's nothing out there to join up) enable further expansion of the sponge.

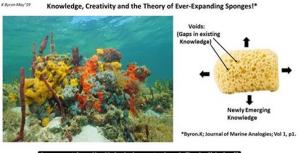
Many activities within the sponge however are not filling the voids, but merely repeating what was already known. This kind of activity is known as personal creativity, and it doesn't contribute to the growth of the sponge, at least in the short term. However personal creativity activity has latent value to the individual, and one day may lead to the creation of new sponge, or an ability to reduce the size of the voids. Indeed all learning is latent personal creativity. When we are grappling to understand a new concept in any field, in a sense it is new (ie creative) to us even though the idea may have been established many years earlier.

Three other points need to be noted with regard to the Theory of Ever-Expanding Sponges:

- 1) In common with the universe and its dark matter, there is a lot of dark sponge too. Dark sponge is tacit or intuitive knowledge. This is not some mysterious entity, but more like 'know-how' that can't easily be articulated. Dark sponge can be acquired however by practice and working with someone who already has it. It's not clear whether or not dark sponge can contribute to the expansion of the sponge at the perimeter but people who witness discoveries there do seem to have a lot of tacit knowledge in their field.
- 2) Knowledge in any field is defined and bounded by the three dimensional shape of a particular sponge. Some of these sponges however will be inter-penetrated by others (eg in the context of research this would be described as inter-disciplinarity).

3) It's not only creativity that enables the creation of new internal sponge, but more a combination of creativity and other thinking skills like analysis and evaluation. Both work together in any sponge development project (which is what ultimately drives us to do things). There are times when we need to switch off the creativity and times when we need to apply it in other areas to ensure the sponge will be suitable.

Any new sponge contributions to this post are most welcome, especially if they can be framed in a marine analogy. Whiting patiently for your creative inputs!



Any comments framed in a Marine Analogy most-welcome! – There's a Plaice for all!

Jennifer Willis I couldn't resist your invitation Kevin Byron

Kevin Byron Good to see you have dived in and I get your drift! $\ \square$

Jennifer Willis So, I reeled you in Kevin Byron!

Kevin Byron Jennifer Willis My boat is afloat!



Thread 11, Creativity and personal wellbeing

Jennifer Willis MY CONTRIBUTION TO THE CREATIVE FESTIVAL



I decided that I would create something different: a conceptualisation of how mini and small c creative activities in our daily lives contribute to our personal wellbeing. I recorded my creative activities over a week and analysed them against a model I had envisioned. I attach the results and welcome comments.

Creative Festival Jenny Willis.pdf

Norman Jackson A really interesting analysis Jennifer Willis and a great contribution to our Let's Get Creative festival. I think we could all make use of your tool.

Summary Day 8

Perhaps counterintuitively, this penultimate day of the conversation produced the greatest number of different topics, and the longest exchange (45 comments, What is/isn't creativity?). One new active participant engaged, amongst 13 contributors on this day.

Some of the themes discussed had been raised previously, as the following list of significant points shows:

- How creativity features in simple acts of making
- Creativity when organised
- Symmetry vs unconventional/risk-taking
- Physical (environmental) impact on how and what we create
- Mind-wandering image
- What is/isn't creative is on a continuum
- Making is not inherently creative
- Making is repetition, creation involves personalising
- Is creation invention of new meaning (change)?
- Who values a creation? Moves along a widening spectrum from mini to big C
- Creativity infuses wellbeing
- Repetition is practising to refine, leading to greater confidence to create
- Creativity implies a new vision
- Creativity in translating texts
- Who teaches us to edit our creativity?
- We should teach students how to nurture their creativity rather than how to be creative
- Forms of creativity are not equal
- Closed-system activities in daily life entail no creativity
- Creativity evokes strong emotional responses
- Mini c connects past, present and future through meaning-making
- Is there a generational aspect to how we appreciate mini/small c creativity?
- Creativity is examining something from a new perspective
- Story-telling to build community
- Cutting-edge research expands knowledge; adaptive research fills gaps in existing knowledge
- Tacit/intuitive knowledge in everyday activities
- A model for assessing mini/small c acts of creativity and their contribution to personal wellbeing



DAY 9

Norman Jackson formally concluded the week's conversation:

We have come to the end of our festival but I can see the conversation is still going strong. I just wanted to say a GREAT BIG THANK YOU to everyone who has participated and especially those of you who have had the courage to share your creations and talk about them.

I would also like to thank other members of the facilitation team Jenny, Kevin, Paul, Chrissi and Sandra for their considerable contributions and Chris our porridge maker in residence who contributed in a thoughtful way everyday.

We will carry on the conversation and welcome further gifts of creativity as long as there is interest but we will officially close the festival here.

Jenny Willis who is the Executive Editor of Creative Academic Magazine will be curating the content of this conversation in issue #14 of the magazine to be published in July. Any additional posts made that contribute to this discussion about everyday small-c creativity will be included in the magazine. Norman



Holly Warren Thanks for creating this opportunity, for facilitating and encouraging us to draw out and illustrate the this magnificent aspect of our complex human ability.

Norman Jackson Thank you Holly Warren for your significant contributions to the discussion.

Holly Warren Thanks Norman Jackson. I am just a simple person with a great passion and enthusiastic about learning.

In a separate posting, Paula Mdx Nottingham recorded how the week had impacted on her:

Paula Mdx Nottingham As with other members of the creative community (e.g. DAY 8) this way of thinking about creativity is yet forming but I am inspired to think differently about creativity....

Going from earlier comments from Jennifer Willis and Craig Andrew Hammond - among others - my small 'c' creative "making something happen" this week is about bringing people together.

In my educator's role this week, I have brought people together for a viva from Cyprus on Monday, a programme approval board for a candidate in Singapore on Wednesday, and a progression meeting with someone in Qatar on Thursday. These events are so important for the people involved, they have dedicated a lot of time and effort in busy lives for their studies - so having these communications go well has taken many emails, phone calls and Skypes to ensure the processes and presentations go to plan. With online events like these - there are often others besides the participators involved - inevitably family members are there to help with the technology or to support caring for children while others are online. Those precious moments online belie weeks and months of preparation. Each step of the way in these global conversations - now so frequent - are none-the-less each a small miracle of bringing people's lives' together. The creative part - working with people and a personal investment in Zoom, which I am still trying to learn, so expanding my visitor status http://daveowhite.com/vandr/ with yet another software to connect - it is what we do in today's busy world.

This week has been a difficult one as we have had a bereavement. The focus has been to make sure everyone has been contacted, to share and pause to think about our loss and the younger members of the family. While there has been the sense of not knowing, there has been the sense of knowing as emails, phone calls and visits have brought us together.

DAVEOWHITE.COM Visitors & Residents

Visitors and Residents is a simple way of describing the range of ways individuals can engage with the Web. It's a continuum of 'modes of engagement' not two distinct categories. ...

Norman Jackson thank you Paula Mdx Nottingham I think there is significant creativity in connecting and bringing people together. I used the term 'broker' to describe my own professional work in several HE organisations - the act of bringing ideas, people, resources and contexts together and creating spaces



within which people could interact for a particular purpose. You capture well some of the detail in the deep level of engagement and preparation, empathy, ways and means of connecting and facilitating interaction, communication and curation, and ultimately growing new understanding, artefacts and meaning through the process so that ideas, practices and relationships could be advanced. Creativity is truly in the pro-c domain. On a personal note I'm very sorry to hear about your bereavement. Our thoughts are with you and your family.

Simon Rae Paula Mdx Nottingham, thanks for posting the Visitor & Resident blog post, I remember reading Marc Prensky's papers in the early 2000s and thinking how well they articulated the situation as I saw it at the time. Things change, it's even difficult to be a visitor these days without registering or logging on.

And the communication aspect of creative education is so true ... indeed the whole 'facilitation' aspect of creativity - enabling other to be more obviously creative, Creative Administration, is something that we haven't discussed much this week but it's still so important.

Even at this late stage, a new contributor came forward and started an exchange on a popular area of creativity: food.

Sandeep Raina I tried to be very creative in this week.

First, I tried the garden, but did nothing extraordinary, other than pruning and clearing. Then I tried writing, but it decided to come when it wanted, nothing creative poured from my pen. Desperate, I tried something really creative in the kitchen.

This was the most creative I could get; an old traditional Kashmiri side dish: grated white radish in yogurt, (helpful when you have lots of spicy meat dishes). Wondering where is the creativity? Well, I decided to rename it from- Mujj Chutney, (which is what it was confusingly called in Kashmir), to Exotic

White Radish Salad dressed in Plain Yogurt, with a tang of Green Chillies, served in a Mini Glass. 💛 :)



Nathalie Sheridan Are you secretly German? We are accused of the long words. Looks yummy. Making food is always creative in my opinion:)

Sandeep Raina Once in Berlin when a restaurant chef showed me how kohlrabi was made into a smooth soup, I was very impressed. All through our growing up years in Kashmir, mum cooked kohlrabi as chunks. I thought the chef was quite creative:)

Norman Jackson Thanks Sandeep Raina I love the idea that your creatvity comes when it wants to and not when you want it to. As you might know I have run into a lot of trouble with my family over renaming the hill behind our house with a chalk quarry in it. On the map its called Boxhill but with a liitle bit of imagination I created a story for my grandson and called it Chalk Mountain - I was amazed at the adverse reaction I got to my poetic invention.

Sandeep Raina I love the sound of Chalk Mountain- it has a higher level of adventure promise in it. The rugged kind:)

Norman Jackson It certainly did and for me and my grandson it was a far bigger challenge to climb up Chalk Mountain than Box Hill.. sadly the other members of my family are brain washed into believing that you can't change a name on a map even though there is no name at the point in question.

So the conversation for the week drew to an end, but it has continued and is still continuing. To enjoy the latest comments, please visit #creativeHE.

Reflections on my movie making project Norman Jackson

Introduction

At the end of every #creativeHE conversation I facilitate I try to look back on my experience and make sense of it. As a facilitator I try to keep the conversation going with a daily post and respond to the contributions that others make. I use my creativity to try to make it happen and one of the things I do is try to illustrate the process I am trying to involve others in. This week's theme was 'do something that feels creative to you and share it and your thoughts about how your creativity was involved'.

I decided to make a movie of a week in the life of my garden. I chose this medium because I know how to make such movies and I have a blog called Garden Notebook to which a movie could contribute. But I was also I interested in using the experience to explore what creativity might mean in the making of such movies. I didn't know how I was going to make the movie at the start or what I would make the movie about but I was confident that my garden would inspire me. On the first day of our #creativeHE discussion someone talked about the 1" drawings they make everyday and this gave me the idea of making a 1 minute movie each day. So that gave me a structure to the movie I would make. I *imagined* I would create a new theme everyday and try and make a movie about that theme - so that was my basic principle of design. In reality, although I focused on a new theme every day, I would also photograph and film other things that were not part of this theme to build up a pool of resources I could draw on throughout the week. I filmed between May 9-16th and made my movies between May 11-18.

What is/isn't creative about my own involvement?

As the discussion evolved it became clear that some people felt that some of the artefacts being shared did not fit their understandings of creativity. I 'happened to come across' a blog post made by Felicia Semple who runs a craft making workshops business in which she said 'often my making is simply a process I've followed which involves little, if any, creativity. Because making is not inherently creative.'(1)

I tend to assume that because I make something, I bring that something into existence, therefore I have created it (in the sense that creativity is about bringing entirely new things into existence. I reason they are new to me and new to the world because I am unique and my contexts and circumstances are unique). But Felicity Semple argued that bringing something into existence is not enough, the idea for what is brought into existence must come from your imagination. A similar point was made by Kevin Byron. So at the end of the festival and discussion I posed the question what is/isn't creative? And here I explore it in the context of my own experience and the 1 minute movies I produced.

My perspectives

Creativity is a process and it is not just about making the little dots, the individual activities, makings and doings, but about how these individual dots connect and combine in a way that produces a larger more significant form, which in turn, over longer periods of time may connect to other forms to produce a larger whole. We can think of connecting the dots as a mechanical exercise or we can think of it as a skilful process of 'weaving' or 'knitting things together' so that isolated events become a meshwork of more meaningful relationships, interdependencies and significance. I am also a great fan of Tim Ingold's ideas about how creativity emerges from our interactions with our environment.

'what people do with materials is to follow them, weaving their own lines of becoming into the texture of material flows comprising the lifeworld. Out of this, there emerge the kinds of things we call buildings, plants, pies and paintings' [and in my case 'movies'] (2: p97)

Day to day we might only see and appreciate the individual dots, and this is important, but our imagination is also working at a larger temporal, relational meaning making scale, and it is at this scale that the significance of creative work can be truly valued and appreciated rather than only the micro scale of the individual dot. This is the way I view my projects within which my creativity resides be it a book, a social enterprise, a body of work or my garden notes blog. So while my 1 minute movies and narratives were an attempt to generate content for the purpose of our #creative conversation, they also served the bigger purpose of contributing to the unfolding story of me and my garden an important part of the narrative that is my current life, a narrative from which I learn about myself and explore ideas about learning ecologies.

Are my 1 min movies novel (new and original, never been seen before)? I have made many movies but the movies I made this week are new to me and they have never been seen before and therefor must be new to anyone who views them on YouTube. So I am replicating a process that isn't novel to me but the process produced content that is fresh and new to me.

Are they a product of my imagination? - No the content of the movie did not come out of my imagination, although the design principle of 1 minute a day did. But my one minute movies are nested in a bigger structure and enterprise - My Garden Notes blog whose conception and on-going development is definitely the product of my imagination. The 1 minute movies are the dots (the unfolding narrative) in my blog that originated in my imagination.

Are my movies the product of my interacting with my environment? Most definitely. They are the result of me deliberately and repeatedly putting myself into my environment. They are an improvisation in which decisions are made in the garden about what to film and what not to film in real time and these decisions are founded on feelings as much or as more as rationality. But there is also another process going on the emergence of a story or narrative that guides decisions about what to try and film so the process often evolves from one of spotting and filming something to deliberately searching for something because that is telling a story that I would like to tell. Perhaps this is where my imagination is involved. It's entangled with perception, rational thinking and emotion. Through this entanglement the process shifts from 'point at and shoot a nice scene', to 'weaving a series of scenes into a story that has meaning'. What these short movies are is a way of creating and sharing meaning and creativity is all about creating meaning.

You might say "well you were lucky finding the animals to film" and I won't deny this. On May 9th sitting having my dinner I looked up to see two deer outside my window. Such a situation has nothing to do with my imagination or agency. But in the words of Louis Pasteur 'In the fields of observation chance favours only the prepared <u>mind</u>'. In my case being prepared involves having access to the right tool at the right time - my phone camera.

My movie is in the domain of observation and perception, and being aware of possibility and being able to make the most of the opportunity when it happens, is an important part of this type of movie making. I know my garden and the animals in it and their daily rhythm and I follow photographer Dewitt Jones' advice - I try to put myself into the zones of highest potential and look for possibilities and more than one right answer within the limitations of the time I set myself to film and produce the movie. This is the way you have to work with the photographic medium in a natural environment. It is not only a matter of chance but of skilful placement of presence in the environment at the most likely time to witness the acts that can be woven into your story. As for the editing it gives me real pleasure to assemble the photos and video clips in movie maker and try to put them together in a story. If I have done my job in filming I already have the elements of a story but the editing enables this to be shaped into a form that will be more interesting and emotionally engaging. Most of the 1min movies are made over several hours as I take bits out and move scenes around. The music I use or natural sound effects are very important. I listen to a lot of music while I work on the computer and I go through phases of listening to particular types of music. When I find a piece I like I save it ready for using in my movies. In this way my movies become tools for curating the music I like. This is one of the ways I create value for myself and create a deeper emotional response to the film. I love kora music and have discovered that it produces the sort of music that works well with my nature movies. Early in the week I searched for and found a piece I hadn't heard before from a concert given by Catrin Finch & Seckou Keita called Llongau Térou-bi. I watched it over and over again there was so much chemistry between the two musicians. It was a long concert so I had to extract a clip from it, something I hadn't done before.

SO BACK TO THE QUESTION WHAT IS/IS NOT CREATIVE?

Are the 1 minute movies valuable - yes they are to me, they gave me pleasure making them and forced me to get outside and pay attention to what was happening in the world around me. I also enjoyed editing them and deciding where to cut, where to add and how to transition between scenes. When I watch them and listen to that lovely Kora and Harp music I smile and I am happy. That in itself is a value.

The discipline of 1min was a bit of a challenge but once I got into it I thought it was a great way to make a short story and overall the collection seems to hang together reasonably well. At the larger scale I have in my imagination that when this garden passes on to the next owner I will always have access to it via my Garden Notes blog - I consider this a creative solution to offset the loss I will undoubtedly feel when it is gone and I can no longer physically be in the space.

I don't know whether my 1min movies have social value but I do know that lots of people look at my garden notes blog so I guess it must have some social value. Regardless of whether it has social value I do share my movies through YouTube, my blog and with the Wildlife Facebook Forum - in case they might have value to others.

So as always, it's a matter of how we interpret creativity. My interest is not just in the creative idea but in how such ideas emerge, along with other thoughts, and are given tangible meaning and expression in the process of a unique person interacting with a particular environment as they try to accomplish something they value. The creation of value is in the eyes of the maker and its up to the maker to share what he has made so that others can see whether it has value to them.



Ideas go nowhere without the creation of a process that enables someone to do something with them. We often work with rough ideas which may not be original in themselves and create a process (I would use the term a learning or practice ecology). As we participate in a process that has meaning to us we create something that has value. We 'trust' our well used processes that they will deliver something meaningful and in the process we 'undergo' to use a John Dewey term. We become a little bit different and that little bit of difference leads to our sense of wellbeing and living a meaningful life.

I always come back to Carl Rogers concept of a creative process, 'the emergence in action of a novel relational product growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, or circumstances of their life' (3 p.350). I think my 1 minute movies are novel (to me). They are relational products growing out of me a unique person (my interests, motivations and interactions) and the materials, events and circumstances of my life (my garden is an important circumstance in my life) as I engage in a process that means something to me - a process that gives me pleasure and a sense of fulfilment.

Not long after I completed my 1min a day movie making project I came across a doctoral thesis written by Marta Ockuly (4) in which she proposed a definition of personal creativity that is dynamic, imagination-informed, and phenomenon-based namely, "Creativity is the person-centered process of imagining possibilities and taking embodied expressive action to make your idea(s) real." (4 p ii). This definition is entirely consistent with that proposed by Rogers and I like it because it emphasizes the personal embodiment of the act, rather than the product or outcome which is all too often the focus when creativity is being discussed. Marta argues (4 p173) "Products are possible artifacts of creativity. Creativity lives in embodied process, not products. Ideas are important, but ideas alone are not creativity. The literature is full of definitions of creativity that build on the premise that creativity is an outcome to be evaluated rather than a dynamic phenomenon and lived human experience to be developed and appreciated."

The idea of a 1min a day movie is just an idea until it is given substance through the embodied and personal acts that enable that movie to be brought into existence. *Embodiment* - the representation or expression of something in a tangible or visible form, is not something that can easily be unpacked into components that are creative and components that are not creative. Its manifestation must be seen and appreciated in its entirety as an indivisible whole.

Sources

(1) Making is not inherently creative by Felicia Semple

http://thecraftsessions.com/blog/2018/7/27/making-is-not-inherently-creative

- (2) Ingold, T. (2010) The textility of making, Cambridge Journal of Economics 34, 91-102.
- (3) Rogers, C.R. (1960) On becoming a person, Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- (4) Ockuly, M.D. (2019) Reimagining the way lived experience of creativity is defined, inspired and encouraged in the 21st century: A creativity practioner/educator's heuristic inquiry. Doctoral Dissertation Saybrook University California. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net-publica-

tion/334286254_REIMAGINING_THE_WAY_THE_LIVED_EXPERIENCE_OF_CREATIVITY_IS_DEFINED_INSPIRED_AND_ENCOURAGED_

SYNTHESIS Jenny Willis

Having studied the conversation in detail, are there any conclusions that can be drawn? The following is a personal analysis.

Did the conversation achieve the aims of #creativeHE?

The Facebook conversation was intended to contribute to the annual British festival, Get Creative, whose aims are set out in the box below.

About Get Creative

Get Creative is a campaign run by a group of cultural organisations to celebrate and support the everyday creativity happening in homes and public spaces.

From guerrilla gardening in your street to paint by numbers in your local library, via nail art, yarn bombing and singing in a choir, we're building an actively creative UK that caters for people of every age, background and ability. It aims to inspire people to try something new at home or at a Get Creative event, and to share their own examples of everyday creativity.



Welcome to Get Creative

A celebration of British arts, culture and creativity. WHY?

This country is bursting with culture. Some ten million of us take part in a form of regular craft and activity each week, and that's thought to be a conservative estimate. We want to make that number even bigger, showcasing the enormous range of diversity and creativity across the UK. Get Creative will provide a platform for that wonderful imagination, inventiveness and individuality; and help others to get their creative juices flowing.

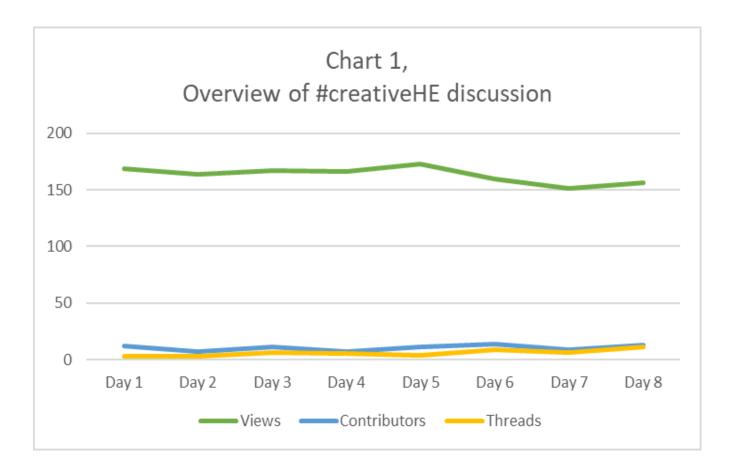
In order to assess the success of #creativeHE's Facebook discussion, we can look at two dimensions:

The rate of participation
The nature of the conversation itself

1. The rate of participation

The curated text has identified the maximum number of views achieved daily, the total active participants, and the number of threads covered during the day's interaction. Whilst the former are objective, identification of the threads is somewhat subjective, and a stark number does not capture the richness or otherwise of a thread. Nevertheless, it is useful to collate the date for the 8 days to seek any emergent patterns.

Chart 1 shows the results of this analysis. The green line represents the number of views (not viewers, which may be quite different) by day; the blue line is the number of active participant; the orange line is the number of threads in each conversation.



The first observation is that the overall views was relatively static, ranging from 173 to 151. The views rose to a peak on day 5 before falling to a low on day 7 then beginning to rise again on the final day.

The number of active contributors varied from 7 to 14, and appears to fall and rise on alternate days. This does not correspond to the relative level of viewers (e.g. day 1 had 169 views and 12 participants, whilst day 2 had 164 views and only 7 participants), suggesting that engagement was encouraged by the individual appeal of topics raised.

The final element, the number of threads arising in each day's conversation, shows a daily rise to day 3, fall over days 4 and 5, a rise on day 6, fall on day 7 before reaching its peak (13) on the last day. As noted above, quantity does not equate to the quality of discussion and some threads were more focused than

2. The nature (themes) of the discussion

At the end of each day's curated conversation, I have extrapolated key points of discussion. Again, this is subjective and readers' own analyses may differ.

The nature of comments fall readily into 2 categories: those relating to values, and those focused on process. Arguably, the third category I have identified, meaning-making, could belong to either or both of the first two, but in my analysis, I treat the three as separate dimensions.

It was noted during the curation that themes recurred on some days. In order to start a process of analysis, I copied each day's significant points verbatim into a table (Table 1). This provides a textual comparison by nature and by day.

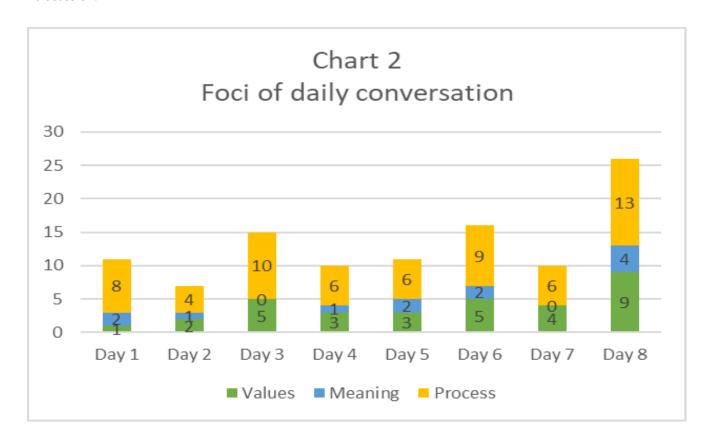
Once more, it should be acknowledged that a decision had to be taken on which column a comment best fitted with e.g. on day 5, 'Narrative making as a means of creating identity' could be viewed as the process of telling stories or as the objective of making sense.

Table 1, Content analysis of #creativeHE discussion

Theme Day	Values	Meaning-making	Process
1	Small c creativity supports personal wellbeing	Memory and imagination enable us to interact with the past Evidence based research in the context of creativity	Music can unlock hidden memories Taking a break for undemanding activities can boost performance in that activity Creativity at different stages of life Creativity is about connecting Constraints can be conducive to creativity Creativity entails making order out of chaos Creativity requires planning and practice as opposed to innate genius Education is about conformity - creativity is diminished
2	The perspectives on an issue are infinite Small acts of creativity e.g. gardening bring joy to both the creator and 'consumer'	Creative artefacts help preserve memories	We need to be appropriately equipped for our creative task Timing is important What we are aiming to achieve may not be predetermined but emergent Creativity is built on predecessors' creations
3	Valuing creativity - peer review What is not creative? Should we differentiate 'significant creativity'? Creative satisfaction may be delayed Who judges creativity?		Creative skills may become just conditioned behaviour Innovation is ideas that are acted upon Creativity = making Reproductive vs combinatorial creation Creativity on demand Motivation for creation Intentionality Creation and purposeful ecology We can think imaginatively without creating something We can be creative with and without support Some people thrive on being different Space for creativity The messiness of creativity
4	Valuing creativity- it is in the eye of the beholder, like beauty Small c creativity vs. original research: practical vs. intellectual creativity Creativity as a contributor towards personal wellbeing	Meaning-making and wisdom is developed through interaction with the environment	The range of emotions and their role in creativity Motivation for creativity A practical example: using daily artwork to seed creative writing Social discussion around Bletchley Park The functioning of this Facebook group Interaction with place and space
5	Creativity exists because we don't all see the same Is creativity making others see your vision? Beliefs are the product of imagination	We cannot join the dots forwards, only in retrospect What impact is the current Facebook discussion (dot) having?	Creativity leads to achieving one's potential Narrative making as a means of creating identity Impact of being born into a privileged family Sharing experiences Social chat e.g. cat pictures How ideas are distributed

Theme Day	Values	Meaning-making	Process
6	The 4 c model of creativity, Kaufman and Beghetto Consistency between #creativeHE's Manifesto and Kaufman's interview Is a need for recognition inherent in creativity? Why are people participating in this conversation? Is there an inherent need in us to improve our environment?	Looking backwards to see (understand) Fairy tales	Being inspired by the creativity of others Creativity on one domain inspiring creativity in another Creativity as the product of hard work vs inspiration Collages offered as examples of creativity When work becomes a hobby Choice of profession and personal disposition Teaching teachers to act like children Intention and creativity, mind wandering Analogy of baking and preparing a written assignment
7	Japanese art and perceptions of nothingness Children's perceptions of silence Creative product has been replaced with valuing the creative idea Respecting nature, coexisting		Does the weekend provide opportunities for different forms of creativity for those of the week? Bringing things to a close and starting anew Small, personal rewards for achievement Developing self-confidence through daily practice Cat of the day Nothing is a force for creativity
8	What is/isn't creative is on a continuum Making is not inherently creative Who values a creation? Moves along a widening spectrum from mini to big C Creativity infuses wellbeing We should teach students how to nurture their creativity rather than how to be creative Forms of creativity are not equal Closed-system activities in daily life entail no creativity Is there a generational aspect to how we appreciate mini/small c creativity? A model for assessing mini/small c acts of creativity and their contribution to personal wellbeing	Is creation invention of new meaning (change)? Creativity implies a new vision Mini c connects past, present and future through meaningmaking Cutting-edge research expands knowledge; adaptive research fills gaps in existing knowledge	How creativity features in simple acts of making Creativity when organised Symmetry vs unconventional/risk- taking Physical (environmental) impact on how and what we create Mind-wandering image Making is repetition, creation involves personalising Repetition is practising to refine, leading to greater confidence to create Creativity in translating texts Who teaches us to edit our creativity? Creativity evokes strong emotional responses Creativity is examining something from a new perspective Story-telling to build community Tacit/intuitive knowledge in everyday activities

An immediate impression of the relative importance of the 3 dimensions of discussion is visible from the text, but Chart 2 reproduces this graphically. Daily totals are broken down into the 3 different foci of discussion.



The chart shows the daily rise and fall in themes discussed, with a significant increase on day 8. It may be that participants felt a need to bring a conclusion to their own participation, whether this had been intermittent or consistent.

Turning to thee 3 different foci, it is clear that meaning-making is of least importance in this discussion. What is more interesting is the fluctuating level of value-related comments. These reach a peak on day 8, but are present to some extent on each day. The level on day 8 may indicate that the focus on values has been recognised as more significant as the week progressed, or alternatively is another reflection of participants' desire to record their views on tis before the conversation officially ended.

Conclusion

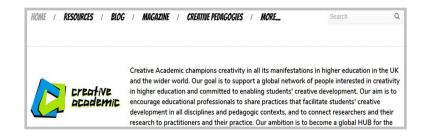
To answer the initial question, then, it appears that the Facebook discussion was a positive contribution to the annual Get Creative festival. The number of active participants was disappointing, but the number of views suggests that many people may have been following the conversation and gaining from it.

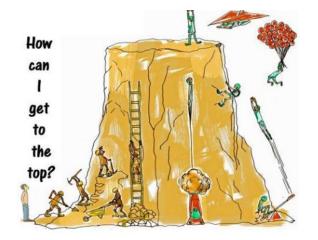
A final point should be recorded: there is much evidence during exchanges of a growing sense of community, where participants exchange personal messages beyond courtesies. Although diverse standpoints emerge, members of the active group are able to interact creatively and positively.

As if any further proof of the success of this discussion were needed, exchanges are continuing as I write this account (June 2019) and perceptible advances in our understanding of issues can be seen.

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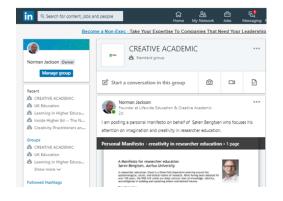


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.The Magazine is sponsored by Chalk Mountain, Education & Media Services Ltd.

