

The Providence School of Transformative Leadership and Spirituality
presents

Meeting Points: Imagination and Spaces for Social Change

August 26th and 27th, 2019

Ottawa, ON

Saint Paul University

Book of Abstracts



Keynote Abstracts

Reconceptualizing Wellbeing and Social Change: Learning to Live Through the Body

Alexandra Fidyk

Drawing upon participatory research conducted with vulnerable youth, imagination, space, and relations are revisioned through an animated paradigm – a worldview that recognizes the dynamic, discontinuous, violent, yet extraordinary cosmos in which we live. What happens when imagination is welcomed through the mind and body? How might space be reconfigured when subjective experience is one of safety and trust? In what ways might relations constitute a new ethic for community and social change? In address of these questions and others, insights via research moves and participant experiences via a unique transdisciplinary praxis will be shared.

Flowers in the Potholes: Opening Space for Critical, Creative Intervention

Elizabeth Jackson

In her presentation, Dr. Jackson reflects on the ways in which creative interventions in conventional ways of using and engaging with public spaces can create hopeful disruptions and moments of possibility, offering the potential for new ways of engaging with each other and the world around us. She shares examples from her own personal-professional experience across a range of modalities, and posits that even seemingly small gestures and moments of creatively 'mis-behaving in public' - that is, of resisting or refuting normative expectations around who and how we are in public spaces - can help us to imagine and to enact the more just, inclusive, and even joy-filled futures to which so many of us aspire.

The Ultimate Inquiry: Why Are You Here?

Martin Rutte

Discover the 3 questions that lead us to our ultimate purpose on the planet. Martin Rutte explains how these questions guide us on the path to uncovering not only our true selves but also the purest essence of all humanity.

The Spaces of Musical Improvisation

Jesse Stewart

This keynote talk will discuss some of the spaces in which the mode(s) of music making known variously as free improvisation, creative improvised music, free music, or simply improvised music developed historically before transitioning to a discussion of community-based improvised music practices as spaces for imagination, hope, and social transformation.

Paper Abstracts

Imagination and Social Change: Interpreting the Rise of Fascism Through Contemporary Social Theory

Stephen Amorino

It is now accepted truth to give credence to the role of human imagination and consciousness in the process of social change. However, orthodox Marxist interpretations of history traditionally gave priority to the “infrastructural” base over the cultural “superstructure.” This is summarized by Marx’s famous statement from *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*: “It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness.” It was only in the 20th century that later social theorists such as Antonio Gramsci and Georg Lukacs reevaluated this dichotomy and found that the way in which human beings subjectively conceive of their own situation significantly shapes the historical process in a way that is sometimes counter to “objective” material processes. Thus, this movement revalued the importance of art, music, philosophy, and other cultural expressions of human consciousness in shaping the course of human history for good- or for evil.

To understand the state of contemporary social theory on the role of imagination and human consciousness in history, I argue that two primary discourses must be considered: psychoanalytic Marxism and psychological anthropology. This subject has been particularly explored by the Marxist-Lacanian philosopher Slavoj Zizek, who has emphasized the role of ideology in historical formations and social movements. Throughout Zizek’s work, there is an emphasis on the fact that imagination is not always a positive process: in fact, the role of human imagination in creating inspirational art led to some of humanity’s greatest triumphs and most horrific atrocities. This is emphatically demonstrated in Zizek’s analysis of the role of art in providing an emotional-intellectual basis for the Third Reich in Nazi Germany. This is encapsulated in Zizek’s interpretation of the work of Friedrich Schiller, the German Romantic poet and philosopher and founder of Weimar Classicism. In this extolled artistic movement, Zizek sees the roots Nazi patriarchal and reactionary values taking shape in the late 18th century. As a philosopher and poet, Schiller attempted to establish a vision of a “return” to a perfect society through his poems, but as Zizek indicates, every conception of history is interpreted through an ideological lens.

Here the anthropological concept of the “imagined community,” pioneered by Benedict Anderson enters. Anderson’s work details how nations and nationalisms are formed through this process of imagined belonging to an entity known as a “State.” Fascism is one way of imagining society, just as socialism or communism is another way of imagining society. As a corporate as opposed to individualist ideology, National Socialism in Germany, through the concept of the *Volksgemeinschaft* or “people’s community,” thrived through this appropriation of socialism- the State insured the well-being of the German people, and in turn the German people must sacrifice everything for the country. This paper attempts to bring all of these disparate theoretical elements together to form a comprehensive picture of the role of imagination in social change and cohesion, with particular emphasis on the example of art and philosophy in shaping the Nazi political imaginary.

The Relevance of G. Durand's Framework in Exploring the Complexity of Spiritual Experiences: A Heuristic Model for the Study of Spirituality

Christian R. Bellehumeur

In our globalized post-modern world, religious pluralism can make the study of spiritual experiences a complex task. According to Martínez de Pisón (1994), in Western society, there is : "(...) a kind of dialectic between a wild subjectivity—considering [only] the pure interiority of the person - and a fundamentalist (or 'integrist') traditionalism " (2008, p. 23, our translation). With the addition of the recent increase of people seeing themselves as SBNR (Fuller, 2001; Lipka & Gecewicz, 2017), the variety of religious/spiritual (R/S) experiences (Taylor, 2002) continues to appear as "spiritual wilderness" (Côté, 2003). However, according to Roy (2014), many people have transcendent experiences; he also views them positively: "in accord with thinkers who envision the human self as essentially open to the infinite" (Roy, 2014, p. xi). If the "gift" of such spiritual experiences refers to an apprehension of the infinite in a particular circumstance (Roy, 2014), because of the "imaginary", the imagination remains open (Bachelard, 1943)—on a daily basis—to explore the mystery of the "whole universe" (Durand, 1999).

In order to make sense of the complexity, the depth and width of R/S experiences, to call upon the use of imagination seems unavoidable, if not wise. Faith can not only be grasped by rationality, it needs imagination (Côté, 2003). After all, we are not only rational and social beings, we are homo symbolicus constantly influenced by the "imaginaire" (translated as the noun "imaginary", Durand, 1999). It refers to a dynamic organized complex system of symbolic images (Braga, 2007) which has an underlying repertory of images, symbols and 2 myths made of three main mythical (heroic, mystical, and synthetic) structures (Durand, 1999).

Based on previous studies linking imagination (along with Durand's "imaginary") to either spirituality, God image, meaning, or ethics (Bellehumeur, 2014; 2011; Bellehumeur & Carignan, 2018; Bellehumeur, Bilodeau & Yeung, 2017; Bellehumeur, Deschênes, & Malette, 2012; Nguyen, Bellehumeur & Malette, 2018; Yeung & Bellehumeur, 2015), this paper aims at deepening our understanding of imagination in relation to spiritual experiences. Firstly, after briefly identifying some challenges to investigate spiritual experiences in the context of social sciences, mostly within scientific psychology (Perrin, 2007), it will propose—relying on multi-disciplinary sources—an overview of some main elements (or aspects) used to operationally define spirituality per se. Secondly, it will present Gilbert Durand (1960/1999)'s framework of Anthropological Structures of Imaginary (ASI)—a culturally sensitive theory (embracing both Western and Eastern worldviews) (Wunenburger, 2013)—as a valuable forum for understanding various relevant identified elements (or aspects) of spirituality.

For Durand (1999), rationality comes second; since any given idea, whatever it is, is always elaborated from the soil of the "imaginary". Given this epistemological standpoint, and in order to capture the full essence of imagination, there is need to understand the relationship between imagination and "imaginary". By introducing participants to Durand's heuristic framework, I humbly hope to foster new insights in our quest to make sense of the complexity of spirituality (including spiritual experiences).

The Third Dimension: Córdoba's Mosque-Cathedral as Exemplary Third Space

Jessica R. Boll

"Third Space" is a complicated notion whose definition spans decades and disciplines. In postcolonial sociolinguistic theory, the "Third Space" is that facet of identity or community realized through language or education. Attributed to critical theorist Homi Bhabha, Third Space Theory – in the simplest of terms – suggests that each person or context is a hybrid, a unique product of individual affinities and identity factors. In the discourse of dissent, the Third Space has come to signify that space where the oppressed plot their liberation or the space where oppressed and oppressor come together. Third Spaces have also been linked to transgression. In the context of community building and urban planning, urban theorist Edward Soja terms Thirdspace the intersection where "everything comes together..." including "everyday life and unending history" (*Thirdspace*, p. 57). Thirdspaces thus reject dualities and enable the contestation and re-negotiation of boundaries and cultural identity. More recently, urban sociologist Ray Oldenberg coined the term "third *place*" to describe those environments distinct from the private, "first place" of home and the social yet professional "second place" of work. "Third places" are the public, recreational gathering sites that we inhabit during our free time, such as cafes, parks, libraries and centers of worship. Oldenberg asserts that such places are critical for civil engagement, and establish the very sense of place that determines the identity of a locale.

These various notions of "Third Space" / "Thirdspace" and "third place" are by no means unrelated. The processes of identification, negotiation, coalition and contention all converge in public spaces. This paper will explore the Mezquita (mosque-cathedral) in Córdoba, Spain as an exemplary Third Space that speaks to both contemporary and history Christian-Muslim relations in southern Spain. We are called to listen to this space in order to understand the controversies surrounding its operation and promotion, and the circumstances of those that use, manage and visit the site. Such controversies are symptomatic of widespread Christian-Muslim tensions in Spain, and the policies and discourse that attempt to ignore the condition of the mosque-cathedral as a space of cultural confluence reflect nationwide ambivalence as Spain concurrently celebrates its Islamic past while rejecting allusions to a Muslim identity in order to firmly define itself as Occidental. As the number of Muslim tourists and inhabitants in Spain continues to rise – alongside anxieties concerning Islam and (im)migration in general – the medieval legacy of Al-Andalus and the polemics of the built environment will increasingly shape and complicate Spain's understanding of its own heritage.

The Transformative Capacity of Imagination – Experiencing our Shared Humanity

Bianca Briciu

"My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in yours." We belong in a bundle of life. We say, "A person is a person through other persons." (Desmond Tutu)

Floating at the boundary between reality and abstraction, the individual and the collective, imagination reveals a powerful urge to transform our psychological and social structures. It reveals that curious capacity of the soul to transform itself (Jung, 1967) and the desire to make the world a better place (even if history teaches us that this urge is often filled with unintended consequences.) (Zittoun and Gillespie, 2006, 122). If imagination is an every-day process in which we inhabit distal spaces that temporarily remove us from the proximity of embodied experience, what are the conditions that make imagination transformative? How

can we articulate the image of a better self or a better society if they are not yet experienced possibilities?

We are well aware of the immense amount of suffering that many collective utopias of a better world unleashed upon the world or the personal tragedies of mental illness when the gap between imagination and reality becomes unbearable. It is for this reason that I want to examine situations of positive relationship between imagination and reality. I will explore in this talk the genealogy of transformative imagination as a connection to the essence of being human through the cultivation of compassion for the self and for others. Focusing on the particular case of metta or compassion meditation I will analyze the cultivation of an imaginary heart connection with all humanity starting with the particular experience of individual love.

I will argue that imagination holds the seed of transformation but it needs particular circumstances to grow into a loop that would recreate reality. When imagination becomes coupled with dissatisfaction about our immediate experience and a cultivated sense of agency, it becomes transformative. Zittoun and Gillespie articulate this process as rupture, transition and a looping effect of the imagination that recreates or redefines reality. Ruptures occur when routine patterns of thought and action break down or when what was taken-for-granted becomes questionable. A transition refers to the way in which a person transitions to new patterns. (Zittoun and Gillespie, 2006). The practice of compassion meditation creates an intentional connection between individual and collective. The space of imaginary is as much an individual as a collective space since it circulates between the individual mind and our social and cultural world. Imagination has an intersubjective nature that allows us to overcome the ethnocentric sense of who we are and to reach an understanding of the Other. (Glaveanu, 2017, 182) It is still unclear for many theorists how to define “better.”

Psychology defines the process of human becoming as an integration of the conscious and the unconscious, as the movement towards whole. (Grof, 2010; Siegel, 2018) Kabatt-Zin talks about “planetary consciousness,” a form of consciousness that roots our identity in our humanity, an intentional practice of transformation through meditation. (2013) Could we see the collective counterpart of this process of individual transformation as the seeds for collective transformation?

This paper responds to the thematic concerns of the conference by touching on 3 aspects: cultivating imagination, imagination and social change, dimensions of the individual and collective imagination.

Sustainable Imagination and Sustainable Innovation: A Conceptual Framework

Nakita Bruno Green

In recent years there has been increased dialogue on the role of Sustainable Innovation as a critical enabler of Sustainable Development. However, the Sustainable Innovation literature is limited by a restricted epistemology which separates Sustainable Innovation from Sustainable Imagination. Moreover, the academic literature which addresses imagination lacks unifying paradigms on the determinants of Sustainable Imagination. A more refined understanding of the underlying psychological elements which enable sustainable imagination and thus propel Sustainable Innovation will better equip mankind to transcend the existing challenges of modern day.

Sustainable Innovation is inherently a human centered construct which springs forth from the realm of the imagination, however existing studies have failed to account for its origin. Here it is proposed that Sustainable Innovation originates via a process of refined, unity perception which arises from the higher self. There a challenge is identified through a systems perspective which recognizes the individual and the environment as one so that a transformative solution can emerge from an imagination that is geared towards evolution and regeneration. This new holistic paradigm of Sustainable Innovation represents an emerging synthesis of the pertinent psychological qualities which generate Sustainable Innovation.

Numerous scholars have presented pioneering insights to clarify the role of psychological development and spiritual development in innovation. A recent study by Rimanoczy (2014) suggests that a sustainability mindset results from the higher self and may trigger individuals to generate innovative solutions to move humanity towards a flourishing economy. She describes the sustainability mindset as a lens which encompasses a systems perspective, an ecological world view, spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence. Parallel to this logic is that of Higher States of Consciousness and Vedic psychology which also differentiates the lower self from the higher self. The lower self-comprises the mind that thinks, the intellect that decides, and the ego that experiences, whereas the higher self, is consciousness itself, absolute being and infinite intelligence. Ultimately imagination springs from the higher self – the source of infinite intelligence and unbounded awareness. The relationship of the higher self with the environment is characterized by an enriched appreciation and intimacy where one experiences the surrounding environment as not separate from but as the self (Maharishi, 1967). In addition Maslow (1968) theorized that persons who experience ego-transcendence are altruistic and hold a superior perception of reality which enables them to work towards a higher purpose. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the driving force of Sustainable Imagination is the higher self which experiences unlimited awareness and infinite creative potential.

Numerous studies on Sustainable Innovation have theorized that higher levels of psychological development can propel a shift in how mankind perceives reality and performs action that drive environmental leadership (Boiral, Olivier, Cayer, Mario, Baron & Charles, 2009; Brown, 2006; Cook-Greuter 2011; Heaton, 2016 ; Rooke & Torbert, 2005). In its entirety, this paper will present a theoretical model which establishes the relationship between Sustainable Innovation and higher states of human psychological development.

Imagination, Imagery, and Morality

Jim Davies

This talk will review the state-of-the-art research from experimental psychology on the relationship between imagination and morality. Using (and not using) your imagination and imagery in certain ways have predictable effects on moral judgment and moral behaviour. I will describe experiments that show how imagination can make one feel happy or miserable, make you change your mind when judging the moral actions of others, and even influence future moral behaviour by changing one's moral self-image. This talk is related to the Understanding Imagination: Moral dimensions of the imagination theme of the conference.

Presentation on the SEED Lab of the Anchorage Museum

Julie Decker and Marek Ranis

The presentation will focus on place and community change and highlight the Anchorage Museum's SEED Lab project.

The SEED Lab of the Anchorage Museum facilitates partnerships between creative practitioners and community change agents, as well as private and public sectors, in proposing solutions to challenges facing Northern communities and in establishing the North as a catalyst for change. SEED Lab reaches into the corners of our community to address persistent challenges stemming from the North's rapidly transforming economy and environment. Anchorage is the gateway to America's Arctic and home to some of the most ethnically diverse schools and neighborhoods in the U.S. The climate is changing at twice the rate of other regions in the world. SEED Lab is driven by the power of design and informed by multiple voices and shared vision.

Across the country, changing community needs and priorities and new modes of engagement create imperatives for museums to connect with and serve the public in ways that extend beyond traditional institutional formats and settings. The mission of the Anchorage Museum—to connect people, expand perspectives and encourage global dialogue about the North and its distinct environment—responds to this imperative. The SEED Lab acts as a catalyst to spark positive change and innovates approaches to build community wellbeing and resilience.

SEED Lab projects always include a creative practitioner and a community change agent and the issues each project explores must be relevant and respond to the urgent issues facing the North. The challenges are community-identified and should lead to a change in thinking and doing. SEED Lab emphasizes doing/making/demonstrating/action as a critical and necessary step after listening/talking. Creative teams create not artworks as outcomes, but creative prototypes—models for solutions.

SEED Lab strives to bring people together who don't always come together and to be a radical and transformative space that capitalizes on human knowledge. The project is about removing barriers to participation, engaging community members, artists, designers, teachers and university professors, leaders of cultural organizations, grassroots leaders, entrepreneurs, developers, neighborhoods, and philanthropists.

The primary activities of SEED Lab include occupying a currently neglected building in downtown Anchorage in the city's emergent Design District. The building as an experimental site, which seeks to re-invent ideas around "the commons" in Northern places. SEED Lab embeds equity in community development and solutions through art and design. Anchorage is a Northern community transforming environmental, social and economic challenges into opportunities, creating solutions potentially exportable to communities around the globe. SEED Lab is where we imagine and enliven those opportunities.

Our Global Village and Unschooling the World

Richard Fransham

The year 1990 marks what might be seen as the real beginning of the social phenomenon being defined as the Digital Age. It is the year the World Wide Web was invented and since then, programs like Google Earth have virtually shrunk the planet into a global village, and others like Zoom allow us to visually visit with people almost anywhere they exist. In ways unimaginable only a couple of decades ago, innovative teachers are introducing students to endless new learning possibilities that build global citizenship, freedom of expression, and the skills of autonomous living.

The benefits are immense, but as with all technologies, there are serious downsides to consider. Ramesh Srinivasan, author of *Whose Global Village?*, goes to the heart of the matter when he says, "In thinking about our digital future, it is important to remember the social and cultural values that make us human." He warns that behind social media like Facebook and Twitter there is a small group of developers who are incorporating their values and culture into their services while being accountable to only their shareholders.

The concern he raises is not unlike that Carol Black expresses in her documentary film "Schooling the World" (2010). She asks, "If you wanted to change a culture in a generation, how would you do it?" Her answer is, "You would change the way it educates its children." In the short time since the film was produced, a more current answer would be, "Give every child a smart phone." "Schooling the World" explores what happens when we replace another culture's canon of knowledge with the curriculum of modern schooling. Digital technology now requires us to understand what happens when we replace another culture's canon of knowledge with the curriculum of the Internet, a curriculum steeped in consumerism. The Internet is a massive selling machine trying to convince people that they will be happy with more goods and services, and governments, with their fixation on "growing the economy," are not protecting us.

The Fourth King of Bhutan said, "Gross National Happiness (GNH) is more important than Gross Domestic Product (GDP)," and his country is a leader in defining and measuring what this means. Given the pervasiveness of the Internet and the pressing problems of overpopulation and climate change, we need to be looking at how to cultivate global wellbeing and the role digital technology will need to play.

Wellbeing is dependent upon keeping people in touch with what makes them human, and Peter Gray's views on "Mother Nature's Pedagogy" suggest how this might be accomplished. Essentially, the answer would be to avoid alienating children from themselves, to let them grow up naturally, to let them "Know thyself." Competitive schools that train children for jobs need to be replaced with humane learning environments. By unschooling the world, people will come closer to using digital technology to enhance their humanity rather than fall victim to the interests of a powerful elite.

Technologies of Resistance: Art as a Social Practice for Challenging Institutional Messages and Building Reparative Spaces

Lauren Howard

Contemporary educational settings are frequently rooted in teaching and learning methods that cultivate competition, fear, and shame-based educational strategies. This poses a threat to the student's ability to learn effectively and must be reclaimed by way of feminist pedagogy and epistemology. Throughout this paper, I seek to address the idea of emotions as cultural formations and the ways in which a methodology of kindness can be used as a means of interceding problematic institutional messages. Through a broader understanding of kindness in relation to feminist approaches to therapy, I seek to demonstrate the ways in which a pedagogy of arts practice holds the capacity to effectively conceptualize how feelings and affects contribute to the construction of one's subjectivity.

Through an interdisciplinary exploration of dance, art therapy, and aesthetic pedagogy, I explore arts-based learning strategies as a way of embodying internal processes of theorizing feelings and emotions. An embodied methodological praxis demonstrates the way in which artistic strategies can function as a distinctive social practice, subversively calling into question institutional messages that devalue pedagogies of kindness in favour of more normatively accepted, less "feminine" undertakings. Ultimately, this provides a visual platform for the conceptualization of feelings and affects. When situated within the broader context of feminist politics, the choreography challenges the generic presumption of art as a devalued, less serious expression of knowledge. Instead, the video seeks to position art as a sociopolitical act in itself that resists the fear and shamed-based educational strategies that have become so widely and institutionally imposed.

Public Innovation Trends in Turkey: Transformational Leadership and Social Change

Gülşen Kaya Osmanbaşlı and Erdal Akdeve

Regarding the pertaining dynamics of political spaces, this study deals with the emerging trends in the Turkish public sector on the mid-management level. Based on 30 in-depth interviews conducted with the head of strategy departments of different public sector representatives ranging from national education to security as well as from industry to agriculture, the study traces the tendencies of public innovation in Turkey. Transcribed interview data will be categorized and sub-categorized through using R Programme. The codes will be helpful to understand existing collaborations, stimulus, and barriers of public innovation vis-a-vis social change in Turkey from the perspective of mid-managers of the public sector in Turkey.

Among such a variety of tasks and perspectives of different state institutions, this study tries to build a shared understanding of the rising trends in public innovation within the Turkish state apparatus. Before dwelling on this issue, first, the concept of social change and public innovation shall be evaluated briefly. Then, the common perspectives will be underlined with particular emphasis on emerging strengths and weaknesses. Utilizing Astin's (1996) 7 C's called as the consciousness of self, congruence, commitment as individual values, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility as group values and citizenship as a community value, it is presumed that change will be gained with the juxtaposition of these pillars. Since all the managers cannot be equally open for social change, here, the scope of their transformative leadership potential plays a significant role.

Regarding the findings of the study, it is suggested to categorize public sector institutions dealing with their primary tasks of duty, whether they are operating in a more service-oriented sector (such as education and social services) or not. Further, it is seen that transformational leadership played a pivotal role in juxtaposing public innovation and social change hand in hand. On the other hand, collaboration with international organizations, universities, and other public sector organizations are perceived as an essential realm; many middle-rank managers declared that they build a certain degree of suspicion towards the collaboration between the non-governmental organizations or civil society representatives. As the findings suggest, public institutions in Turkey developed a kind of otherization towards the civil society, which was a result of compartmentalization as well as political turmoils experienced in recent years.

Imagining the End of Capitalism in the Age of Neoliberalism

Stéphanie Leguichard

During the past 50 years, and particularly since the 1980s, neoliberalism has become more predominant across the globe. As defined by David Harvey in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, “neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade.” Many political scholars, including David Harvey, have asserted that this has drastically shifted common political perspectives toward the right in the US. Harvey contends that this shift was cemented during Ronald Reagan’s administration in the US. The neoliberalization of American politics culminated in Francis Fukuyama’s declaration at the end of the Cold War in 1992 that “what we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War ... but the end of history as such ... That is, the end point of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.” Although Fukuyama uses the term “Western liberal democracy,” this serves as a euphemism for the form of free-market capitalism that has prevailed in the US since the 1980s.

In this paper, I argue that the public’s imagination regarding alternatives to capitalism, addressing environmental destruction, and ensuring environmental sustainability continues to be severely handicapped by pervasive neoliberal ideas. As Fredric Jameson famously stated, “it has become easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism.” In this paper, I delineate three primary reasons why this applies to the American public. Firstly, I argue that public education in the US fails to cultivate the political imagination necessary to envision political alternatives beyond neoliberalism and capitalism. It does so by neglecting to provide a holistic perspective of American political history and the politics of non-capitalist societies in social studies classes and textbooks.

Secondly, I posit that the mainstream media’s fixation on sensational current events stifles the public’s ability to imagine alternatives to the status quo. This is particularly insidious when this sensational content is presented at the expense of in-depth analyses of economic and environment-related policies and their potential long-term effects on the planet. For example, even mainstream media content that is regarded as left-wing has commonly neglected to address alternatives to automobiles or the horrors of factory farming, which sustainability advocates have identified as pivotal issues for saving the planet from catastrophe.

Thirdly, I use Mark Fisher's insights from his book *Capitalist Realism* to support my argument that neoliberalism restricts the public's political imagination by conditioning the public to interpret their mental health struggles as merely private and personal phenomena rather than as symptoms of the severe stressors imposed on the public by American capitalism. For example, increasingly common mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression are typically treated without exposing the victims of these illnesses to the idea that the intense competition and economic pressure inherent to capitalism may contribute to their mental illness. These patients are rendered ill-equipped to imagine political alternatives that may alleviate their personal struggles and the similar struggles of others.

Adaptive Theorizing as Imaginative Practice in Resilience Research on Transgender Young Adults

Michel Lévesque

In this paper, I discuss theorizing as an imaginative practice in resilience research on transgender young adults (TYAs) and arts activity. Drawing on my doctoral study, my paper elucidates how adaptive theorizing (Layder, 1998) can stimulate imagination with resilience theory to conceptualize TYAs' arts activities as resources that build resilience (i.e., resilience resources) against transgender stigma and stressors of young adulthood. In this regard, my paper addresses an analytical approach that can *cultivate imagination* in research aiming to explain and, eventually, inform the design of arts-based resilience resources, such as community arts projects or arts programs, for TYAs.

Adaptive theorizing enables researchers to creatively combine theory and data in the same analysis for theory development, rather than keeping building theory from data and testing theory against data as separate analytical activities (Layder, 1998). In this paper, I describe the process, benefits, and limitations of adaptive theorizing in my doctoral research, which examines the arts-based resilience of four TYAs in Edmonton, Canada. By arts-based resilience, I mean successfully coping with adversity in ways that incorporate arts activity. In my study, I have used multiple case study research as a theorizing methodology (Ridder, 2017; Yin, 2018) and two resilience theories: the minority stress model (Meyer, 2003, 2015) and the social ecological model of resilience (Ungar, 2012).

I have used qualitative data analysis as an adaptive theorizing process to imagine the TYAs' arts activities as resilience resources with both resilience theories. Using Layder's (1998) approach, I made the resilience theories and data I collected on the TYAs' arts activities interact to formulate the concept of arts-based resilience and integrate it into the theories' explanatory frameworks. I collected my data through three in-depth qualitative interviews with participant-selected arts artifacts (e.g., artwork) as elicitation devices. I applied Layder's approach through the analytic methods of causal coding (Saldaña, 2016), causal network diagrams (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2016), and analytical memoing. My application of his approach is premised on the assumption that social science theorizing (Swedberg, 2014) and theorizing through qualitative research (Anfara & Mertz, 2015) are imaginative practices significant to developing theories of sociocultural phenomena.

To conclude my paper, I reflect on benefits and limitations of adaptive theorizing. A key benefit is generating theoretical innovation by simultaneously drawing on validated resilience

theory and improving it through comparison with empirical data. A key limitation is that the explanations adaptive theorizing generates may not transfer to contexts beyond the study, thereby restricting how they can inform the design of arts-based resilience resources for TYAs in other contexts. Following Swedberg (2014), I hope my paper renders less obscure how social researchers use imagination in their theoretical work by detailing my approach to adaptive theorizing.

Creating Spaces for Transformative Leadership Practice: Contemplative Dialogue and Theory U - A Comparative Reflection

Miriam Martin

As a member of a religious congregation of women living in Canada, I have been moved and challenged by the responses of my American sisters to the Vatican Doctrinal Assessment of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious in USA (2009-2015). The call for assessment came as a shock with a confrontational and authoritative challenge to the integrity of this impressive group of women leaders and the thousands of sisters whom they represent. At this end of the difficult process, many voices were heard affirming the radical stance the LCWR leadership took throughout the proceedings. Their insistence on maintaining dialogue throughout this difficult process was significant. The emergence and development of contemplative dialogue practices not only shaped their responses but also provided a foundational method for discernment that continues to develop among many religious congregations today. It is a way of visioning and decision making not only for moments of crisis towards the future. (Gittins, 2018)

In the midst of a polarizing context, these leaders continued an agenda of dialogue and respect, setting a tone and example that echoed throughout the conferences held during those years. What also emerged from this experience were strong contemplative dialogue processes, which now permeate the landscape of religious women's discernment. As a congregation we had been introduced to Presencing by a gifted facilitator who led us in a reflective discerning process on our future with a seminal question "How do we serve what is seeking to emerge?" In this context, I had the opportunity to meet Theory U and the unfolding of contemplative dialogue processes with my own group as well as with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious.

Concurrently, my colleagues and I were in the midst of developing the frameworks for a new school of transformative leadership and spirituality at Saint Paul University. We had the opportunity to participate in the Presencing Institute's Foundational Program and were immersed in Theory U. Two of us also took part in the Advanced Presencing Program: Ecosystem Leadership. These were consciousness shifting and formative learning experiences. Theory U and reflective processes became central to the programs we are developing. As our practice continues with each new cohort of the programs, it is impressive how learners have responded to the engagement with Scharmer's levels of listening and how they have worked to integrate this social technology in their life and leadership practices. In concert with the coaching circles provided by Theory U the integration of theory and skills for leadership is evidenced in their responses.

This paper presents a reflective investigation into the experiences of contemplative dialogue processes centering on two Congregations of women religious settings and with the practices of university teaching within graduate courses and a continuing education program with a

focus on transformative leadership. These experiences offer significant opportunity for gaining insight into how these practices can offer a significant way forward for others considering transformative leadership development.

A Praxis of Aurality: Deep Listening as a Decolonial Space for Social Change

Joëlle Morgan

This interdisciplinary presentation draws on a personal praxis from decolonial theory, peacebuilding work, liberation theologies, Indigenous studies, settler studies, as well as a lifelong commitment to work for justice.

Social healing holds potential for social change and represents “the capacity of communities and their individuals to survive, locate voice, and resiliently create spaces for meaningful conversations in the midst of escalated and structural violence” (Lederach and Lederach 2010, 208). This notion is profoundly significant for healing the relations between settler and Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island. The importance of voice-ing, and creating or participating in safe spaces to speak is incredibly significant for Indigenous peoples. In turn, for settler peoples, this concept of social healing is aural. The aural is connected to the ear, to a depth of listening to the stories from Indigenous peoples and their experiences of coloniality; and thus, allow the resonance of the truth-telling to shake settlers from our sometimes-willful ignorance and into transformational spaces for social change.

The decolonial theory from which I work is grounded in the concept of coloniality, rooted in racial and economic analysis which opens a space for addressing the ongoing power imbalances in the relations between settler and Indigenous peoples. I contend that settler peoples need liberation from coloniality in order to be liberated for just relations with Indigenous peoples. From a space of epistemological conscientisation and decolonization of mental spaces, we can move into the material spaces wherein working together to overcome coloniality becomes possible.

As a feminist, liberationist and decolonial scholar, I believe that one’s personal experiences of the theories we navigate is an important part of the positioning. As such, in this presentation, I will share personal and poetic reflections, as well as the theoretical and derivative ideas on a praxis of aurality as a decolonial space for social change. My research has been grounded in and held in community as a space of learning and from which I share these restorying efforts that are part of the aural praxis essential for settler peoples – as scholars, members of society, faith communities and justice movements – to imagine, create and engage in spaces that matter for the creation of a just decolonial relations among the peoples of Turtle Island.

My work is indicative rather than definitive; the stories I share are part of larger ongoing narratives in praxis seeking to name the lived experience of coloniality and to bring individual and community engagement into healing relations between Indigenous and settler peoples through mutual commitments to liberative decolonization.

Imagination is a Place: Re-Storying Indigenous-Canadian Relations by Learning from wahkohtowin

Leslie Obol

Speaking to the theme of being responsible with imagination, I will show how entering into relation with Indigenous knowledge keepers in ethical spaces (Donald, 2009; Ermine, 2007) has supported me, as both a learner and an educator, to work collectively to re-imagine Indigenous-Canadian relations.

Indigenous peoples that lived on the Prairies practiced a specific form of visual literacy called the winter count. This mode of storytelling was a symbolic way to recall significant events that occurred in the lives of the people. Symbols descriptive of the event were created and painted on buffalo robes by community members skilled in those areas (Donald, 2018). I first encountered this way of knowing when I took Papachase Cree scholar and knowledge keeper Dr. Dwayne Donald's education course, Indigenous Perspective in Curriculum. One assignment in this undergraduate/graduate course was to create a series of winter count-like symbols for each day in class, and a finally, a culminating story of learnings. The opportunity to engage imagination, particularly in a way reverent to Indigenous knowledges and storytelling, was a powerful experience (see winter count #1).

One lesson from the course came out of meditation on Sheridan and Longboat's (2006) understanding that imagination is a place. Imagining in this sense is "minding all things" (p. 365) through an attentiveness to human and more-than-human relations. This wisdom is similar to the Cree concept of wahkohtowin, the understanding that we are all entangled and enmeshed in a series of sacred relationships (see winter count #12). Winter Count #1: Planting the Seeds/Lighting the Fire New inter-connected beginnings and becomings are invited by a grounding and liberating space that opens up to new stories and storying processes.

My experience learning through wahkohtowin, guided by Donald, worked on me beyond my time in the course. I became motivated to re-imagine the winter count assignment to inform my own teaching in design studies (see winter count #10).

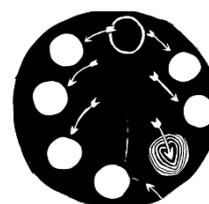
Indeed the perspective that imagination is a place gave me some hope toward a direction of better understanding where my place is— or could be—on Turtle Island, particularly as someone whose existence is bound up, for better or for worse, in the imaginary. So with Donald's blessing, along with support from kihêw waciston at MacEwan University, I introduced the winter count assignment to my design students, in my own way, from my own settler perspective.



Winter Count #1:
Planting the
Seeds/Lighting the Fire
New inter-connected
beginnings and
becomings are invited
by a grounding and
liberating space that
opens up to new stories
and storying processes.



Winter Count #12:
Everything on the
Land is In Us Four
kinds of berries found
here in
Amiskwacîwâskahikan
are enmeshed,
showing the inter-
connectivity of human
beings with more-than-
human beings.



Winter Count #10:
When Stories Sent
Work on Us
Encounters with
Indigenous
teachings—when we
are open to them—can
enter into us and work
on us in mysterious
ways.

As our course is coming to an end, I am only beginning to discern how the winter count assignment may be working on my students, and myself as an educator.

For this presentation, I anticipate sharing how engaging with Indigenous knowledges through visual meditations might support places of learning where “the encounter with imagination is a living communication within a sentient landscape” (Sheridan & Longboat, 2006, p. 369). My hope is to offer points of consideration for responsabilizing imagination by relinquishing individual creative prowess in lieu of an openness to embracing all that is offered by wahkohtowin ways of being and knowing.



Winter Count #8:
Treating Treaties as
Living and Layered The
layers of enmeshed and
incongruent worldviews
represents the schism in
understanding, or the
under-current of present
day Indigenous-Canadian
relations stemming from
e-mayikamikahk (where
it went wrong).

Thinking About Peace Education from Childhood in a Tone of Diversity, Participation and Subjectivity: The Senses that Children Give to the Conflict

Kerly Yurley Pabón Rodríguez

The proposal was made with 200 third-grade children from Los Centauros school (Villavicencio-Colombia). It was approached from a qualitative perspective from the narrative research, its objective was the comprehension of the senses that have the school children in the city have about conflict; in order that, from the recognition of the senses of the infants, the children’s school can advance actions that allow to understand in a general way the historical moment by which the Colombian society is passing. It is inferred as a conclusion that these senses have little relation to the country's peace process, their expressions of meaning were oriented towards everyday experiences arising from relations with their immediate context; Family, school and neighborhood.

Thinking about research from the senses and not from the meanings is to recognize the children as carriers of knowledge, with differentiated conditions to those of the adult, is to recognize them in the now and not only as a future enabler, as social subjects, who have a history of life and has been marked by experiences that print an identity and subjectivity. (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 276). The sense is a symbolic construction that the human being makes of the world: real and located knowledge, composed by subjective narrations confronted with individual’s attitudes in the contexts that inhabit". The sense is inseparable from the subjectivity, in this respect.

Childhoods are the protagonists of experience by multiple factors; Many of them did not directly live the conflict in Colombia, they are susceptible to manipulation, they represent the now and the future. In this sense, the concept of childhoods and not of childhood is addressed, associated in with three temporal connotations (Kohan, 2004); the first one with the Chronos, (linear time, sequential and numeric – age vs. development); The second with the Aión, linked with the experience and the becoming (recognition of the subjectivity of each being) and the third with the Kairos, dimension or state (opportunity, magic, fantasy) in which childhood reigns.

The methodology of the research was developed from a qualitative approach through the narrative that according to Ricoeur (2004) are expressions of the experience related to temporality and spatiality that affect the ways of thinking and acting of human beings. Taking into account the narratives of the boys and girls represented the trying to see the world from their eyes, from their experience. There was no attempt to address education for peace from the outside (society, school, teacher), but from the experiences gathered throughout the lives of children, from their realities. The drawings and semi-structured interviews were conceived as the main instruments for collecting information. The use of the question and the verbal and pictorial responses of the infants were the natural trigger for the construction of Communities of Inquiry (Lipman, 2002) that allowed the understanding of their knowledge and senses.

The results are presented in a book, they have to do with the organization of Pictorial, written and oral narratives, they are the senses that children give to the different conceptual categories addressed.

Other and the Same: Belonging and Connection in a Globalized, Postcolonial Context

Guiselle Starink-Martha

Cosmopolitanism entails more than a superficial sense of connection with ‘far away’ people or cultures. It is in essence about our shared humanity and shared, universal morality (Appiah 2006, Gilroy 2005). From this perspective cosmopolitanism is an issue of human connection, built on supposed universals grounded in everyday life. The focus is on what makes us similar as human beings rather than on distance or ‘local partialities’.

In this paper I look at the interrelation of these two issues: on the one hand, a sense of cosmopolitanism and on the other hand, partiality – understood here as an engagement with a specific group based on for example, ethnicity, nationality or religion. Both cosmopolitanism and partiality figure in the work of the two artists I discuss in this paper: filmmaker Shamira Raphaela and rapper Fresku. Their work is set in the Netherlands in a globalized, postcolonial social context that has been increasingly marked by nationalism and populism.

Within this complex social context, these two artists are able to open up a space in which they can connect and include a wide range of people. At the same time, both artists use tactics involving the personal, the emotional and the mundane to blur existing notions of right and wrong. Through these tactics they deal with group specific issues, humanizing the Afro-Caribbean Other and moving this subject from the margin to the center. My paper explores ways in which cosmopolitanism –as a way of creating sameness and empathy- can also be used as a strategy for local inclusion. How does this relate to the notion of ‘being seen’ and being represented as a minority?

My analysis is embedded in a postcolonial theoretical framework that views collective identity constructions within Caribbean community as strongly influenced by this sense of Otherness (Allen 2010, Ashcroft 2001). Difference, race-based thinking and the search for a way out of the margin imposed by the idea of being Other are at the core of these constructed collective identities. My interdisciplinary approach requires a constant dialogue between formalistic textual analysis of the artist’s work and discourse analysis of supporting information regarding their personal background.

Educating Imagination: Cultivating Creativity in Childhood to Encourage Social Innovation

Karmen Walther

If social innovation is the method by which social growth happens, and how new solutions to addressing forthcoming social justice issues are developed, education is the method by which the creativity and imagination necessary to innovate these solutions is fostered and matured. While imagination is an innately human trait, how it is conceived of and treated in our upbringing and education inarguably has a direct impact on how it is embraced and applied in adulthood. Creativity and imagination are often thought of as the domain of childhood; something which is perfect for playing games, but not recognizably desirable in the adult world of industry and efficiency. This conception, however, denies the fact that creativity matures into innovation, and people raised in environments that discourage independent thought, creativity and imagination, will inevitably become adults who have difficulty thinking for themselves. Not only is this a tragedy for the people concerned, who live their lives less consciously, and without their full agency, but society also loses important ideas and new discoveries, which only the fully enlightened and empowered might provide.

I have been cultivating my thoughts in the areas of art, education, developmental psychology and social innovation for quite some time, and am eager to develop a paper drawing these fields together to explore how effective education might produce adults more capable of imagining a better world in which to live, and with the tools of creativity to help them shape it. The particular research question I am interested in pursuing has to do with the ideal role of adults in a child's cognitive, social and emotional development. To that end, I'd like to consider the appropriate balance between adult-provided structure (with its attendant behavioural expectations) and the promotion of independent thinking in the child, where they are guided by their own internal compass. Where should the line be drawn in terms of having adults guide children's thoughts and behaviour, and letting the child discover the consequences of their thoughts and actions for themselves? Is it only when the child is harming something or someone that an educator should jump in, or should we intervene on the basis of other ideals instead? Should we encourage children to explore certain subjects on their own (that is, with no expected outcome), or should we emphasize the instruction to children on how to live and act in a thoughtful, ethical way? There is, of course, great wisdom and knowledge to be passed to the next generation, and leaving children completely to themselves would be considered negligent. But the vital balance between allowance and instruction, I believe holds a wealth of reflection and wisdom in examining how imagination and creativity are developed. I'd like to explore how to balance these educational goals, as a preliminary introduction to the effective development of creativity and imagination in children, and a meditation on how this might benefit society. This would inevitably lead to an exploration of what sorts of adults ideally result from education, and thus how guiding principles for educators and parents might improve society overall.

Improvised Curriculum and Pedagogy: Creating Negative Space Toward Educational Imagination

Ji Hye Yoon

If we critically differentiate education from schooling, how could we go beyond schooling to realize education? This paper starts with the question and aims to find an answer to it. Schooling is the best system for socialization to maintain current society while education is to

create better society. Drawing on the qualitative research, which explores “becoming a teaching artist of a professional artist” (Yoon, 2018) through mainly class observation and in-depth interview, this paper investigates how to engender changes in school to go toward education.

The sole participant of research, Kim is a photographer and she has been teaching photography in elementary and secondary schools since 2011. Kim does not have any educational degree, but was trained to serve as a teaching artist. At the beginning, she spent lots of time and made efforts to design perfect lesson plans as many experts strongly and repeatedly underlined the importance of lesson plan. Yet, as she experienced real classrooms more and more, she got to be aware of the myth of lesson plan as “magical formula” because her lesson plan did not fit all of her students. She discovered an old belief that we could teach the same knowledge in the same ways to all students. Yet, students are not the same but diverse. Even though her lesson plan is well made, it does not guarantee that her class goes well. The important aspect is her students rather than her lesson plan. As she became more responsive to her students instead of merely following her lesson plan, she began “ad-libbing” to teach while modifying contents, materials and methods entirely depending on her students. In short, in order to respond to unseen and unpredictable her students’ reactions and classroom situations, she customized her pedagogy on the fly.

Such improvisation implies her situated responsiveness. When she disrupted her fixed lesson plan and made it flexible in response to her students’ reactions and needs, she considered her students as co-curriculum makers. It broke down the dichotomy between a curriculum provider as a teacher and curriculum receivers as students. Teacher and students become all curriculum makers. As lesson plan comes into play as a frame of curriculum, teacher has to stay within the frame. However, improvised curriculum enables teacher to move in and out of the frame. Therefore, improvisation creates a negative space. Crammed space implemented by lesson plan forces teacher to be a controller, but negative space created by improvised curriculum allows students to become co-curriculum makers.

What we learn from Kim’s experience is, eventually, that her improvised curriculum and pedagogy dedicate to build up a *democratic* community of teaching and learning. In the very community, all of members become curriculum makers. As such, improvisation contributes to change institutional space into educational space. As the Canadian curriculum theorist, Aoki (2005) points out “curriculum improvisation” rather than “curriculum implementation”, the ability of response, i.e. responsibility, to students enables teacher to imagine education in institutional setting.

Workshop Abstracts

The Art of Song Writing: A Creative Process in the Space for Social Change

Janet Bentham

A writer takes a pen; a musician picks up an instrument. A sculptor begins a piece. Our human experience brings the artist to a response to life experience. The space for social change is a place where such creative expression is particularly evident. It involves creativity (the spirit), tapping the muse (a contemplative response) and a communal approach (the creation is resonating with a listener or an audience.) The work of various song writers and my own personal experience with writing for social concerns will serve to demonstrate that song writing is a deeply spiritual creative process and a space for imagination and social change.

The Vietnam War experience gave rise to an era of music that is an illustration of the tool of music as protest and expression of the human spirit. Consider artists such as Joan Baez who sang about her husband, imprisoned and lauded as an anti-war hero. Or, the music of Bob Dylan who was challenging the listener to consider ‘how many ears must one man have, before he can hear people cry?’ (Dylan, ‘Blowing in the Wind.’) These particular artists were most influenced by Pete Seeger who was a champion of the oppressed and a minstrel of social action. His mark on music history, and that of slave and gospel singers before him, was the thread of influence running through generations of artists to come. During the 1960’s and early 1970’s, when the Catholic Church was opening its windows to the world through the second Vatican council, this cry for a more peaceful humanity was becoming the cry of the commoner. This call for peace, which is the essence of the gospel message, was no longer the domain of the religious. This became part of secular culture.

In his book ‘Creativity’, Matthew Fox states that “chaos is a prelude to creativity.” (Fox, p. 7). The 1960’s and 70’s were a space for the creative response to the chaos of world wars and continued armed conflict. The music of Bob Dylan speaks to this tension in his song; “The Times they are a Changing.” This epic folk hymn asks listeners to gather round wherever they are and to try to understand the times. It is a cry for peace and harmony, not only in the world but in the family unit.

“Come mothers and fathers throughout the land. And don’t criticize if you can’t understand. Your sons and your daughters are beyond your command. Your old road is rapidly aging. Please get out of the new one if you can’t lend you hand. For the times, they are a changing.”
(Dylan, ‘The Times They are a Changing’)

There are countless songwriters and moments of history, which stand as examples of the creative space of song writing for social change. Life and art come together in a continual force of creation. For many songwriters this is a space to address social change.

The first phase of this workshop will be comprised of a sing-along through moments of history where songwriters have presented the listener and performer with a response to social challenges. Discussion of the history and origins of some of these compositions will be part of this phase. The second phase of the workshop will look at the response to war and the call for peace. Original compositions will be shared at this point. The third and final part of the workshop will consist of some discussion about the process of the art of song writing. We will briefly look at patterns, techniques such as call-answer and a I-IV-V folk pattern and a

standard blues structure. The discussion will address the use of poetry and rhyme patterns as well as literary techniques such as metaphors. Participants will brainstorm and have an open discussion about some of the concerns and places where there is a need for social change. What are the meeting points today? Participants will dive into the process of song writing, creating a verse, a chorus or a pattern. This collaborative space will be safe and invitational, but all will leave feeling that this is indeed a space where ideas can germinate and responses to social challenges can take wing.

Babel en Bhablóin: A Workshop to Explore Language as a Multilayered Experience in Performance

Josh Clendenin

On two days in April 2016, *Babel en Bhablóin* (*Babel in Babylon*) filled the Rutherford Library at the University of Alberta with a cacophony of rounded and clipped sounds, which mixed and reverberated off the library atrium's angular walls. This sonic bombardment was mirrored in the moving bodies of six performers, whose sounds evolved into speech in eight languages as they interacted with each other that created a differing experience based on the languages that the audience member(s) could understand. The performers were speaking their translations of Michèle Lalonde's (1974) *Speak White*, a poem about English as a hegemonic linguistic and cultural force. This multilingual and layered performance created a space where performers and spectators could explore language as rooted in the body, personal history, heritage, and identity.

In this workshop, I will take participants through a simplified version of the rehearsal process of *Babel en Bhablóin* (Clendenin, 2016), a performance forming part of my master's thesis in theatre practice. The six performers, including me, explored the connection between the suppression of language and linguistic identity through somatic movement and multilingual theatre. The piece had an improvisatory format so that the performers could play with linguistic sounds, their bodies, and the space itself in order to experience language in a more embodied way and as an interaction between majority and minority languages that triggered reflection on and shaped the performers' identities. Connecting language and the body in this way shifted the performers' understanding of language from a simple mode of communication to an embodied state and significant aspect of cultural identity.

The rehearsal process focused on moving from basic sounds coming from the body—representing the emergence of language in humans—to the linguistic identity of bilingual and multilingual speakers situated between cultural contexts. The workshop will take participants through this evolutionary process, with the purpose of generating understanding about how speaking a language is more than a simple mode of communication; It is an embodied and cultural act that is embedded in broader sociocultural dynamics between majority and minority languages.

Through exploring the performative process created in *Babel en Bhablóin*, this workshop seeks to allow participants to connect to and experience their languages and linguistic identities in a new ways. In relation to the conference theme, this workshop will create a meeting space where participants can interact with language(s) in ways that cultivate an understanding of where they are positioned in linguistic power dynamics and how they can built more informed, respectful, and engaged relations between speakers of majority and minority languages. This interaction with non-dominant language(s) within public spaces

automatically enters a political space and playing with language(s) in unique ways can insight curiosity from bystanders and thus enters the practice into the field of social change as a form of language advocacy. Exploring linguistic sounds and words in the sonic space can theatrically depict how differing political and social environments can effect an endangered language's chances of survival.

Finding One's Voice in the Midst of Complexity: Exploring Dialogue Through Puppets

Cécile Rozuel and Lauren Michelle Levesque

What does it mean to know ourselves when we feel confused about our world? What does it mean to engage with others when we struggle to articulate a clear position for ourselves? Building on these two premises, we further ask: how can imagination and creative inquiry help individuals find their 'voice'? How does the (re)discovery of one's voice help to address 'complexity' as both a concept and as an experience?

In this workshop, participants will explore what these notions of self, voice and complexity mean through imaginative, reflective and creative practice. More specifically, participants will be asked to engage with their creative selves by making and dialoguing with puppets. The goal of this engagement will be for participants to reflect on their relationships with the multiplicity of voices that make up their inner reality and sense of a complex self. Furthermore, in the dynamic spirit of bridging reflection and action, participants will be invited to draw out the unique ways in which these notions shape their work as agents of change in different contexts.

Using an interactive and participatory format, we will examine the challenges that can be encountered in the work of maintaining commitments to social engagement and transformation. We will examine what it means to maintain 'integrity' of beliefs when faced with a challenging and multi-layered reality. We will invite exploration of the role and limits of safe boundaries, and we will examine how puppets – as acts of imagination and creative expression of the usually hidden self – enable a breakthrough and a re-negotiation of spaces and boundaries. Through the creation of individualized puppets, participants will also explore the strategies that can be adopted to consolidate a sense of self and a sense of one's voice. Building upon this inner reflective process, participants will further explore how one's voice can be nurtured in a diverse yet inclusive community of social change agents.

Beginning with the at-times-ambiguous label of 'agent of change', we will reflect on how we have found our way to this role and the inherent tensions and failures inherent to the label. We will then discuss the deeply transformative function of imagination and creative inquiry that enables us to attune to the disruptive nature of living in the midst of complexity, and how to slowly befriend that complexity in a way that enriches our conscious embodiment of the possibilities that flow out of our commitments to social engagement and transformation. These experiential processes include intentional moments crafting and dialoguing with puppets.

Exploring Skills for an Ethical World Through Movement and Improvisation

Cordelia Sand

For the last three hundred years the progress of science has increasingly controlled the outlook of man on the universe, and profoundly modified (for better or for worse) the accepted meaning of human existence. Its theoretic and philosophic influence was pervasive. (Michael Polanyi, 1969, p. 64)

I am proposing to lead a movement improvisation workshop in which, as a group, we collectively experience and explore specific four scientific theories that directly challenge normative Cartesian, Newtonian, and neo-Darwinist precepts that have been structuring the dominant modernist Western imaginary for centuries. The current catastrophic state of the planet, not least that of climate change, is a story of this failed and powerful imaginary, so social change must vest its hopes in fundamentally changing imaginaries of life and planet, lest all be lost to the imminent sixth great extinction while ever greater needless suffering and social injustice unfold.

This is a somewhat unusual proposal, for—to conduct such an inquiry into an embodied experience that might challenge the Cartesian split between mind and body, rationality and embodiment, one that might upset the foundations of individualism and anthropocentrism, as well as Newtonian determinisms and utilitarian dissociations from the environment, all of which when taken as a package comprise the milieu to which we, as Western citizens, have been conditioned for hundreds of years, and to current catastrophic effect—I must merge what might be theory presented in a paper with embodied practice.

The Western world triumphs in “survival of the fittest” skills (in its Malthusian capitalist and its neo-Darwinian selfish gene ways, not in Charles Darwin’s sense of adaptation), those which through unbridled global imperialism and neoliberalism, replete with valorizations of endless capitalist growth and profit via conquest, and naturalized under the ironic guise of questionable advancements in natural science, lay waste on every front: ecologically, economically, politically, socially, culturally, and sanction the collapse of ethical care. To undo these ingrained political and social habits that “Other” others, to interrupt the legacy effects of entrenched intellectual genealogies, to dispose of the master’s tools, we will need new tools, new languages, new practices, new skills, new relationships to power. This workshop is a collective inquiry into the skills-development demanded by another imaginary we might choose, attuned to the needs of our time. It will be a struggle, but there is plenty of science to help. This workshop is a mere initial taste, a toe in the water.

The workshop includes an initial theoretical introduction, followed by four improvisations on a given theme, each building on the one before and with reflections noted and discussed. This workshop in embodied ethical theory and practice highlights the conference themes of *Cultivating imagination* and *Improvising spaces*. The two are much the same in exploring the dynamic shifts in consciousness and paradox of boundaries as an object of scientific exploration, and as experienced together through movement improvisation. In such a scenario, it would be inappropriate to define expected outputs beyond the experiences and questions articulated in the course of the workshop.