



# THEYEDU

an i-o-i-p graphic narrative

*PERMISSIVENESS & SPATIAL CHALLENGES IN CREATIVE EDUCATION*

**We need more wiggle room. Our wiggle room is decreasing. Education and creativity are in crisis, or so it seems to appear. The reason to be educated was once a clear question to answer, not so anymore. Education is a darling subject for which everybody seems to have an opinion that typically wanes critical of current results. What needs to be done to get it back on track? Why are we discussing how to educate a person now? What people desire from education represents very divergent interests. Obviously, there is some serious parsing to be done.**

**In an era with prudent taxpayer, public dollars, on the line, the goals of education are constrained by performance-based pressures and expectations. Yet, the bellwether of education remains centered around creativity, and one purpose for creativity is to figure a way around the tired and deeply worn pathways of institutional thinking and oblique forms of incrementalism.**

**Another way to view the issue of education and creativity may be to acknowledge that even though their crisis may be similar they seek different goals. So, instead of shoehorning creativity into a one-size-fits-all scenario of educational relevance, maybe we can recognize that the focal point would be better situated in the domain of the imagination, which would help us avoid the antithetical tidiness and the latent inclusiveness of our current educational malaise. To reside in creative education is to offer a way for oxygenating the imagination and to provide as much unfettered space to extract brilliance from the ether. I, caution.**

# Scenarios

*[about]*

an allowance for

# PERMISSIVENESS

*[/&]*

# SPATIAL CHALLENGES

through neuro-aesthetic temperance

EDUCATION IS OFTEN MUTTERED AS IF THERE IS A PARTICULAR PROBLEM WITH THE NATURE OF TEACHING. SUGGESTIVE REMEDIES FOR RESOLVING EDUCATIONS DECLINE ARE OFTEN OF A POLITICAL FASHION. [PLEASE, NAME THE PROBLEM, THEN ATTEMPT TO SEE IT FOR WHAT IT IS.] THE CHALLENGE FOR PRESCRIPTIVE EDUCATIONAL SOLUTIONS IS THAT THEY ARE ASKED TO CARRY THE FLAG FOR A LOT OF OTHER CULTURAL INSUFFICIENCIES.

WE DO THIS TRANSFERENCE ALL THE TIME. WE KNOW ABOUT PROCESSES AND UNDERSTAND THEIR USE, IMPORTANCE AND INFLUENCE. WE ACT ACCORDINGLY AND WE BEHAVE WELL. BASICALLY, WE WANT EDUCATION TO SAVE US, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF THE INTELLECTUAL FLOURISHING FROM OVERSEAS AND BEYOND OUR SELF-IMPOSED LIMITATIONS. OUR TRUST IN EDUCATION HAS BEEN WANING, EVEN THOUGH IT'S STILL THE PRINCIPAL WAY OF DEVELOPING AND FOSTERING KNOWLEDGE.

FOR THE RECORD, PRACTICALITY NO LONGER HAS A HORSE IN THIS PARTICULAR RACE BETWEEN EDUCATION AND CREATIVITY. WHAT'S AT STAKE HAS LARGESS. DEBATING, PICKING APART, OR RUMMAGING THROUGH THE BONES OF EDUCATION WOULD BE A THANKLESS TASK MERELY BRINGING US BACK FULL-CIRCLE FROM WHERE WE STARTED: EDUCATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN RIGHT, BUT IS IT GOOD?

# Body/Mind Dilemma

- a. spatial understanding of movement.
- b. the experiential effects on learning

The recent emergence of a body/mind understanding is something to note. The new physical influences of technology and the habits now garnered, at all ages, through use alone has made an immediate and astounding impact on our senses. The changes, such as in shorter attention span, a desire for constant contact with information and a heightened visual capacity for brightness, signal but a few emerging neurological behaviors to consider.

Anecdote: all sports are played on a recognizable field. The rules remain predictable from one game to the next. The players change. They get better and stronger based on the number of intangibles surrounding the game. Often the intangibles are related to equipment, training or medical technology, which gets expressed through the physical, intuitively, educated body.

Unlike sports, creativity is never played out on the same field. The field and the rules constantly ebb and flow. The players change, as do the influences, on a regular basis. In this model, the body and mind regularly reconfigure material to express behavior change.

In both, the spatial ratio of body to results remain the same, and based on how well the body understands its relationship to these intangibles that allows creativity to be the principal negotiating factor for determining success.

ANALYTICALLY, WHAT *NECESSARY* SACRIFICES SHOULD BE MADE TO KEEP THE MECHANISM OF EDUCATION HEADING DOWN ITS PREDESTINED PATH? IS THERE ANY ASPECT OF EDUCATION, AS WE KNOW IT, THAT IS WORTH SAVING? WHAT IS THE PROMISE (SOCIAL CONTRACT) BETWEEN EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMIC REWARDS, BETWEEN EDUCATION AND CREATIVITY?

SO HERE ARE SOME OTHER QUESTIONS<sup>1</sup>, WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION [MEANING PRODUCTION] AND CREATIVITY? DO THEY SHARE ANY COMMON CONCERNS? IS CREATIVITY TEACHABLE? IF TEACHABLE, WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS AND WHO IS THE BENEFICIARY? AND, A MORE TO THE POINT QUESTION MAY BE TO ASK, DOES THERE NEED TO BE A SPECIFIED BENEFIT OR OUTCOME?

WITHIN CREATIVITY, I DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN PROBLEM SOLVING AND THE IMAGINATION, BECAUSE EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE CENTERED ON CREATIVE EXPERIENCE, THEY BEHAVE DISSIMILARLY. IMAGINATION CAN COME OUT OF THE BLUE WITHOUT ANY NOTICE. IT TAKES ITS OWN SWEET TIME TO BE REVEALED WHILE THRIVING IN CURIOSITY. PROBLEM SOLVING, AS A PRACTICAL ENDEAVOR, DICTATES THAT A PROBLEM WILL PREEMPTIVELY REQUIRE CLOSURE. ANY PROPOSITION WHOSE GOAL IS FOREMOST GROUNDED IN THE NEED FOR RESOLUTION SIGNIFIES A PREVAILING ATTITUDE TO IGNORE THE PROBLEM AND SEEK AN ANSWER. IN A SIMILAR WAY, MAINSTREAM MEDICINE SEEKS TO TREAT *SYMPTOMS* WHILE MAINTAINING THE BOTTOM-LINE AS INTACT AS POSSIBLE.

# Waste As Necessity

- a. efficiencies impact on creativity
- b. an earlier for of permissiveness

Waste is a good thing. Funny concept. Waste is needed as a way to establish a value (creative currency) by differentiating the intrinsic value of creativity from expediency.

To clarify, by waste, I'm not referring to the by-product, residual matter, or leftovers of historical evidence, whether material or production. Those are areas of concern for re-purposing and recycling. It is the production of waste. Waste made meaningful, which is not waste at all. The response to the excessiveness of production is answered with a new layer of purposefulness as morality or responsibility. Being responsible for causing harm is not a good thing. Rather, the waste connected to creativity represents a surplus value of space or time. Yes, it can be seen as irresponsible, but irresponsibility is a principled impulse for creative decision-making. Creative waste has no intention, purpose, or influential power. Its irresponsibility is mandatory.

In creativity, waste has a positive value, because even if culturally interpreted as a negative or seen as uncertainty, waste in the long run hosts the greatest potential for development and growth. True unencumbered waste nurtures relationships unimagined. It is a model without parallel.



*Creativity is vulnerable to gross and subtle shifts in demographics, making the act of creativity most susceptible to cultural influence, rendering its core value inherently social, whereas, the imagination remains nuanced and innately private.*

# A cultural Sensibility

- a. seeking a more responsive compass
- b. An aggregate aesthetic

There is a growing level of stress surrounding our cultural desire to achieve resolution. Conflict is supposedly a bad thing, because it complicates the process of reaching a quick, neat and definable conclusion. The fault with conflict is that it implies negativity. In a relativist culture, nothing productive emerges from negativity, because it suggests stagnate growth, which is one reason why we bury the impulse. "If you're not growing, you're dying," the adage goes. I don't believe this simplistic view, because it offers only a single linear path of economic, or creative, growth, which is deeply troubling. Any "creative" will tell you that acknowledging risk without fear is problematic, even though this act is blindly repeated on a daily basis. Fear makes us human. Creativity and risk are connected and motivated by fear. Not all negativity needs to be seen as counterproductive.

*Bartering with the beast.* Institutions are exactly what they are. They do not surprise. Discussions about the development of new, more responsive, models of fostering learning are always being entertained. Often the intended goal of establishing a new model is to achieve a predetermined economic (incentive) based outcome, but is that what a creative education should be concerned with? A new goal should be more than novelty or vocation. Newness suggest novelty. A creative model would have to emerge through layers of error and judgment, rather than appear unsoiled, resolute and sober. Imagination cannot be learned. Creativity is messy.

Though aculturally, without a specified cultural origin or focus, relationships are starting to emerge, not as taste, but through an aggregation of interest.

Would anyone recognize a new model if they saw one? We'd like to believe we're capable of such a task, but, honestly, probably not. We are currently too entertained with ourselves. Change is a style choice we've come to accept. We are just not properly prepared. Any new model would appear flushed out and firmly in command with an eye towards the future, but accepting uncertainty. It would be knowledgeable, conscientious and undaunted by change, whether in appearance or location. This, too, is a fiction.

Acultural affluence is the richness of having many parallel cultural influences at hand, in a single space without hierarchy. This plethora of ideas can be a shocking surprise. From an educational standpoint, it is hard to teach to such a wide set of influences, because by its very nature, the field of influence avoids the purposefulness of any single educational doctrine or consensus, making it disagreeable. Stylistically, creativity is inventive, which makes it different than novelty, which owns nothing, but shares everything. Creativity, even though it benefits from the idea of newness, it is built on a deeper and more pliable historical bedding. An aggregate aesthetic is a careful compilation of cultural tendencies, which bridges the senses. There is no singularity, no center or safe haven. The ramifications are huge, because anything is possible and can happen.

Our contemporary state of creativity is currently based on a model of associations, where everything is proportionately good. Basically, it is a form of creative relativism where value is exchanged for the simplification of participating in the rules.

The main challenge for creativity in education is to stand down from a reactionary stance and to exert the core value of inventive and imaginative play, allowing acultural and aggregate forms the same status or privilege currently extended to conventional learning.

IN A CREATIVE EDUCATION, *TECHNOLOGY* AND *THE SOCIAL* ARE THE TWO EMERGING CENTRAL CHARACTERS. WHAT'S SO CURIOUS IS THESE CHARACTERS ONLY RECENTLY SURFACED AND CAPTURED THE INSTITUTIONAL IMAGINATION THROUGH THEIR ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS, I.E., VIABILITY AND TOPICAL PURSUIT SUCH AS TRENDS IN SOCIAL MEDIA, SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, ETC, EVEN THOUGH THEY HAVE NOT A SINGLE RECOGNIZABLE, OR APPARENT, AESTHETIC ATTRIBUTE. IN EDUCATION, CREATIVITY AND AESTHETICS ARE MILES APART MOVING IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.

THE RESPONSE BY EDUCATORS, WHO HAVE BEEN IMMERSSED IN THE ARTS, EDUCATION, AND CULTURAL CRITICISM FOR DECADES HAS BEEN TO LOOK AT CREATIVITY AS A SERIES OF PROBLEMS WITH ECONOMIC OR MORALISTIC SOLUTIONS TO BE FIGURED OUT IN A REASONABLE AND ACCEPTABLE WAY THROUGH PEDAGOGICAL ARGUMENTS, WHICH ARE OFTEN CIRCULAR IN NATURE. SO WITHOUT AN ECONOMIC OR MORALISTIC BACK-STORY WE ARE LEFT TO WONDER ABOUT HOW MANY ALTERNATIVE WAYS ANY PROBLEM MIGHT BE IMAGINED? THIS IS THE CORE OF CREATIVITY.

ANOTHER WAY TO VIEW THE CHALLENGE OF CREATIVE EDUCATION MIGHT BE TO GIVE THE CREATIVE PLAYERS, PRODUCERS (CONSUMERS), GAMERS, ARTISTS, MUSICIANS, SCIENTISTS AND ECONOMISTS THE LEEWAY TO DO WHAT THEY DO BEST: CREATE ANEW.

*[For Jenny]*

TYPO.  
EDU.

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<sup>1</sup> A very tangential reference about the spatial consideration given to the subject of education and creativity.

*“the question is, what and where is the skin of the whale? Already you know where his blubber is. That blubber is something of the consistence of firm, close-grained beef, but tougher, more elastic and compact, and ranges from eight or ten to twelve and fifteen inches in thickness.”*

– Herman Melville

From “Moby-Dick,” Chapter 68, *The Blanket*

Images:

*Interior* (magenta), 1-8

*Exterior* (bubbles), 1-4

This graphic narrative is constructed through a set of parallel alternating narratives, two in text and two visual. *TYPO.EDU* raises a number of questions about the dynamic relationship of education and creativity.