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Editorial

Creative Writing in Literary Education

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Years of misconceptions have led to the assumption that creativity is a skill possessed by only a few. For many people, the word “creative” brings to mind images of novelists, poets, composers, and visual artists and there is a general tendency towards creativity being more associated with the arts than the sciences.

This assumption couldn't be further from the actual truth: we are all creative. As Glăveanu and Kaufman (2019) share, the ability to be creative is one of the most important traits human beings possess. Long ago, our ancestors used their creativity and saw a grinding tool in a stone, or a mechanism for moving things in a round wheel-shaped object. They started passing information on to future generations by telling or engraving oral tales, and ultimately, they discovered new ways to record these tales via writing. They identified principles of geometry and the physics of force and its mechanisms and proceeded to build pyramids and temples. They painted on the inside of caves by using natural colors such as charcoal, and discovering much later fresco, oil, and acrylic. A long chain of creativity extends from them into the past right up to us in the present and the future. Some of our important current creative people discover biological principles, develop computers, design techniques for further space research, imagine new worlds, or pass on the experience of beauty via

novels, and other written forms. We may have different creative styles, but creativity is evident in all areas of life; one way or another.

The idea of art itself aligned with nature, diverse communities and the notion of inclusion as well as free self-expression is the very heart of storytelling and, hence, at creative writing. The use of storytelling and engaging with the story to develop new perspectives and create self-awareness, has been on the rise in several fields, especially those linked with caregiving nursing, teaching and social work regularly incorporate storytelling and creative writing activities in their practices (Fairbairn, 2002). Digital storytelling, and the agency offered through new modes of story creating, is discussed as a way to connect our common humanity in an increasingly digital world (Maney, 2008).

Even though our backgrounds, personalities and readings can be very different from one another, the artistic process behind the philosophy of storytelling and creative writing offers countless and equal possibilities to be generated and shared, creating a safe space for collectives and learners (Burwitz-Melzer, 2001, p. 42). Creative Writing reflects a whole principle of life and art: starting from a rather lonely place of embracing what is within your creative soul and producing it leads towards a mutual feeling of deeper connection via the concept of readership. Creative writing offers a reactive space between the individual and the communal, between the subjective and the social (Millán-Scheiding, 2023). Heinemeyer (2020) considers how artistic practices, including storytelling, are considered to suspend the regular norms, “unite a disparate group around an intense experience, and bring individuals’ and groups’ perceptions to the attention of a culture, which succeed in generating moments of creative confluence between different perspectives” (213).

Storytelling as a whole, and specifically Creative Writing, can be viewed as a tool used towards a fairer and kinder society which builds empathy, and which includes human imagination and experience at its core. As writers and teachers fight for a better present and future, their creations and teachings respectively will enrich and inform each and every generation. Storytelling and the use of creative writing have been proven to promote intercultural awareness and competences, from cultural and world view self-awareness to the understanding of the complexity of other collectives’ and individual’s cultures and their link to beliefs, structures of power, values, economy and history (Deardorff, 2020).

In the current issue of *Journal of Literary Education*, we have tried to present the multifaceted, diverse and inclusive nature of Creative Writing with a view to immerse ourselves in a fruitful dialogue that aims to shed light on not only creativity in both the scientific and artistic fields, but also on the importance of storytelling and our creative response to it as fundamental elements of past, present and future generations.

In this issue, Esa Christine Hartmann talks about Multilingual, Multimodal, and Multivocal Creative Songwriting based on Tomi Ungerer's Picturebooks. With the cooperation of a group of hip-hop artists she deals with the challenge of writing songs from picturebooks in a multilingual context.

Francisco Antonio Martínez-Carratalá and José Rovira-Collado present research on silent picturebooks and its didactic potentiality in Wordless picturebooks and creativity: didactic proposal in teacher education. Maria Kalouptsi approaches the creative writing in the unique context of a correctional institution in Creative writing in the Correctional Institution: the Greek case. She presents work as a response to a particular topic: the truth.

Karo Kunde, Christian Arenas-Delgado and Mariona Masgrau-Juanola open the miscellaneous section with an article about the paratexts in picturebooks. The authors use the theoretical term in order to investigate its hermeneutic functions. On the other hand, Stefania Carioli speaks about the digital influences in picturebooks. Considering two representative books, Carioli explores the relationship between the digital language and the picturebooks language.

Rosy Triantafyllia Angelaki deals with some forgotten characters in historical novels taking as a starting point Penelope Maximou's historical novels about Byzantine period in Redefining the margins: intertextual and secondary characters in children's historical novels.

Literary learning: A proposal for using literature for the acquisition of emotional competencies and their linguistic expression, an article by Isabella Leibrandt, talks about ways to increase empathy through literary reading. Jason DeHart focuses on the reading aloud activities during the COVID-19. Using a narrative inquiry, DeHart describes the decision-making process of a 6th grade teacher to design her literature classes.

Grammeni-Eleni Pourni in The Depiction of the Loser Teenager in the Film and Television Adaptations of Young Adult Novels by John Green, analyses two adaptations: Paper Towns (2015) and Looking for Alaska (2019) and the strategies used by the creators of the audiovisual products. Finally, Milan Mašát, in Analysis of Simon Stranger's novel Lexicon of Light and Darkness, deals with the model reader of this novel. With a qualitative methodology, the author tries to determine the limits in defining the implicit reader with the theme of the Shoah in relation to their goals.

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