Editorial

In 2012, as part of the commentary section in the spring issue of *LEARNing Landscapes*, we had the privilege of audiotaping an interview with Jerome Bruner, which I invite you to visit: www.learninglandscapes.ca/index.php/learnland/article/view/Commentary-Cultivating-the-Possible

Suffice to say, it was exciting to hear from this wonderful, renowned psychologist who had so profoundly influenced many educators and researchers worldwide. A year later, Mary Stewart, Managing Editor of *LEARNing Landscapes*, and I lamented that we had not been able to videotape the interview. We decided we should thank him in person for his contribution and deliver a hard copy of the issue to him. Our request to visit was welcomed warmly. So, on a sunny afternoon in mid-spring, we were greeted at his apartment in New York City, where we shared conversation over cups of tea. This energetic and vibrant 97-year-old had just returned from Mexico to deliver a talk and was leaving imminently for Europe to deliver another. His passion for his work was palpable and obviously, unstoppable, and we left humbled by this very special encounter.

Jerome Bruner was 100 when he died two years ago, leaving an immense legacy to education (www.theguardian.com/science/2016/jul/15/jerome-bruner-obituary). It seems very fitting to pay tribute to him in this issue given his important contribution to narrative and storied ways of thinking and understanding. We owe so much to him.

Bruner suggested that there are two general ways of thinking. The first is the paradigmatic, or logico-scientific way that concentrates on similarity-based facts, or clusters of thought, used to form an argument. The second is narrative. It is the way humans account for their actions and events around them and shape their everyday experiences. It is "a dialectic between what was expected and what came to pass" (Bruner, 2002, p. 31) and "both can be used as means for convincing another. Yet, what they convince of is fundamentally different: arguments convince of their truth, stories of their lifelikeness" (Bruner, 1986, p. 11).

> The paradigmatic mode offers the power of prediction in that it sets up and tests hypotheses about the nature of reality. In contrast, the narrative mode organizes the complex and often ambiguous world of human intention and action into a meaningful structure. (Adler, 2008, p. 423)

This packed issue of very interesting work is a testament to the importance current educators attribute to the value of the narrative/storying mode of thinking in teaching and learning. As Freeman (2017) reminds us,

> We are surrounded by stories and construct stories as we make sense of the events we live and witness. Our stories are often embedded in other stories, which are themselves embedded or linked to other stories. This unending flow of meaning making, affects and is affected by human existence, whether, or not we pay attention to it … Furthermore, this form of thinking is

> action-oriented and purposeful … constituted by the human need to know how to act in the social world. (pp. 32–33)

This issue highlights the importance of story for understanding all human endeavors. It attests to how and why narrative modes of thinking and doing in teaching, learning, and research have flourished exponentially in the past 35 years. The summary of the commentaries and articles that follow shows the variety and poignant ways in which stories can be used in education to make a difference in teaching and learning contexts. As in the past, the commentaries and articles are published alphabetically in the journal, but are organized differently in this editorial for ease of discussion.

Invited Commentaries

We are very privileged to be able to include a videotaped interview with **Carol Gilligan**, who is a renowned psychologist, and currently a professor of Humanities and Applied Psychology at New York University. Gilligan rocked the research world when her book "In a Different Voice" was published in 1982. Her research "story" featured the voices of women which had been neglected and missing in psychological research. In this interview, she traces her pre- and post-journey around this pivotal book. She discusses the dramatic dissonance that existed between the relational orientation of women's voices and the emphasis on separation, autonomy, and independence that, until that time, had been reflected in psychological theory. Her work opened many doors for others. It is a story that needs to be preserved and we are very pleased to be able to document it in her own voice in *LEARNing Landscapes*.

Not long after Gilligan's work was published, University of Alberta Professor Emerita **Jean Clandinin**, known and respected worldwide for her work as a narrative inquiry researcher, teacher, and teacher educator, commenced her illustrious career. In this videotaped interview, Jean traces her narrative inquiry journey from the time she studied with Michael Connolly at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education until now, as she transitions her final, remaining responsibilities as the founder and director of the Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development (CRTED) at the University of Alberta (https://CRTED.ualberta.ca) to the current director, Professor Bonita Watt. Under Jean's gentle and skillful tutelage, CRTED has nourished, scaffolded, and supported narrative inquirers from all over the world. Jean shares how her work was informed by her childhood and a mosaic of muses (well worth reading) such as Arendt, M. C. Bateson, Dewey, Elbaz, Gilligan, Greene, Lakoff and Johnson, and Noddings, to name a few. She outlines the basic tenets of narrative inquiry in both classroom and research contexts, illustrates with some of her favorite narrative inquiry stories, and discusses the challenges, which thankfully are less than what they were, that narrative inquirers still face.

Margaret Kovach is a Professor in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan. In her compelling, written commentary, she shares how she devoured stories as a child and believes that they ignited in her an emerging social consciousness. She was born a Cree-Saulteaux but, from the age of three months, grew up in White rural Saskatchewan with adoptive parents. She shares how in 2017 she felt the need to reinvigorate herself in her academic life and did so by spending a year reading successive books at sunrise each day. She began a ritual of sharing these with her partner and realized that this event

transformed a "cerebral exercise into a relational ceremony … the stories came alive." She connected this experience to the Indigenous belief that sharing stories with others, which are animated and oral, defies dichotomy and fragmentation, connects old and new, sustains relationships, and nourishes a sense of community. She recognizes the importance of the written word in academia, but as an Indigenous academic she is compelled to "respect orality as a relational encounter that [her] community requires." She argues persuasively for the transformative power of story and suggests that through story, teaching, learning, and research can be decolonized.

Steven High is an Associate Professor of History and Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Public History at Concordia University in Montreal. We were very pleased when he agreed to provide a written commentary for this issue. Steven has been a pioneer in developing a space for oral history, which is rarely taught at universities because historians tend to study the past, rather than the present. Because oral history has been on the margins of academia, it has emerged in community contexts which have become rich and creative places for social justice advocates composed of artists, teachers, archivists, among others. This diversity among oral historians has contributed to developing a myriad of cross-disciplinary approaches for studying and portraying the work that has been enhanced by advances in digital technology. High describes how his oral history classes are driven by inquiry and active learning grounded in a deep respect for relational interaction and sound ethical practices. The results are varied and compelling and include digital and graphic stories, audio walks, live performances, music compositions, and poetry. He suggests that there is an increasing interest in teaching oral history at all levels of education. No doubt his work has contributed to this important trend.

Corrine Glesne and **Marlene Pugach** are Professors Emerita at the University of Vermont and Wisconsin-Milwaukee, respectively. In their engaging, written commentary, these authors urge educators to think about possibilities of story as pedagogy because of the powerful teaching and learning that occurs when story drives pedagogy. In their reflective essay, they draw on their own stories as examples, sharing how they came to understand through narrative and to value story as a way of thinking and seeing. They attribute that their exposure to books in their childhoods and encouragement from a parent or teacher about their reading and writing laid the foundation for narrative in their adult lives. They share in some detail the pedagogical strategies they have used to encourage storied ways of learning and argue that narrative is foundational to the development and growth of all students and should not be used solely for enrichment purposes.

Stefinee Pinnegar is an Associate Professor at Brigham Young University. The coauthors of this commentary are **Eliza Pinnegar**, who is an independent scholar, and **Celina Dulude Lay**, who is a graduate student at Brigham. They posit how stories create community and develop safe spaces for sharing. Nuanced understanding of teaching comes from stories teachers tell and it is through stories that experience can be linked to theory and course content. They share, with individual experiences of their own, how stories can help to positively disrupt preservice teachers' tendencies to teach as they were taught, can provide scenarios for analyzing teaching and learning, and can contribute to teacher identity development as preservice teachers transition and evolve in their teaching beliefs and practices. Many of the themes in these commentaries are reflected in the articles that follow.

Storying for Embodied Self-Reflection

Leggo, poet and education scholar, reflects on the notion of cliché in a life writing journey of poems, prose, and "citational ruminations." In a masterful way, he deconstructs, questions, and braids together possibilities for connection to the original idea of cliché, which was something pithy and worthy of replication/duplication, rather than something that has become "commonplace and worn out." He suggests imagination and creativity are the necessary ingredients for storying in diverse ways and provide opportunities to reach more diverse audiences. **Hoben** and **Pickett** share how, in a self-study, each explored two critical incidences in their teaching that had transformed their sense of self as teacher educators. They wrote reflectively about these experiences and ultimately transitioned this prose into poetry. This process deepened their appreciation for the important connections between narrative and poetry. Their work lessened the isolation and vulnerability they had previously felt. They intend to use their stories and poems in their work to broach difficult topics in meaningful and safe classroom encounters. **Chung** describes her narrative inquiry with three Indigenous, female youth and their families and her observations of the teaching of an Indigenous elder. In these experiences, she began to see "education as ceremony," rather than the rituals of schooling that focus on control, standardized testing, and mandatory attendance. This study gave her different and nuanced ways of thinking about and reflecting on her teaching, parenting, and self-identity, and the importance of connecting her students' classroom experiences to their personal lives. **Saleh**, **Menon**, and **Kubota** conducted an autobiographical, narrative inquiry into their names and the significance that each of their names has had in relation to their personal and social identity, and their futures. Their stories poignantly illustrate how a name can become a treasured gift, or a site of considerable pain. Names have the power to uplift or destroy, signifying the reticence educators should have about renaming a student for the sake of convenience and the importance of honoring the diverse subtleties that names imply. **Stoddart-Morrison** shares her story of being brought up by her oldest sister in Jamaica in a loving, caring, encouraging, and education-oriented, yet, appropriately structured, context. This early learning had a tremendous impact on her and her life. To this day, her sister's voice lingers in her mind—the voice of an astute elder who continues to mentor her without being present. She reflects on how the voice of her sister has become her inner voice in her classroom as she encourages, discovers possibility, and provides storied and safe spaces for all students while they learn and grow. **Choudhury**, in an epistolary approach to reflection on her developing researcher identity, traces the journey she experienced in a qualitative research methodology class while doing her PhD. She describes in detail and with visuals how her class exercises, reflections, and readings culminated in a portfolio which allowed her to claim her voice and researcher identity through a process of multimodal and embodied storying. **Jack-Malik** shares how she used the idea that curriculum making is a storied process that occurs not only in schools, but also in homes and communities (Huber, Murphy, & Clandinin, 2011) to help her weave together and understand what she was experiencing as a teacher and a pregnant mother-to-be during the tragic and brutal massacre of the 14 women in Montreal in 1989. She used and continues to use narrative inquiry to find the interconnectedness among stories that occur on the different landscapes of life, to use past stories to inform future ones, to live relationally, and to understand tensions and find resolutions when these stories collide.

Stories and Storying to Assist Preservice and Novice Teachers

LeBlanc and **Irwin** describe their work mentoring novice teachers living and working in remote, rural areas of British Columbia. These researchers have recognized that visual narratives, in this instance, comics, are an artistic and aesthetic form of storytelling. This article shares with examples how personal stories of early teaching were extracted from interview data, themes were identified and then were transformed into coherent stories through the medium of comics. These products were not only the tangible results of their study, but also were used to share with and engender helpful reflection among other novice teachers in the mentoring project. **Hirsch** uses the qualitative methodology known as portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman Davis, 1997) to create the stories of two beginning school teachers who were well prepared to teach all content of the curriculum, but discovered they were unprepared to deal with the imposed strict classroom management practices of the Charter School in which they had been hired. This produced considerable stress for them in their first year and Hirsch suggests that more emphasis needs to be placed on preparing teachers to be emotionally resilient in the face of dissonance that may occur when transitioning from preservice to the status of beginning teachers. **Baer** describes her work with preservice art majors who were required to teach a series of visual art lessons to first grade students in a local elementary school. Working in groups of four, the students then went through a design-thinking debriefing session (share and empathize; identify issues; brainstorm solutions; role-play solutions; test solutions with the class). This author suggests that the combination of design-thinking and storytelling facilitated a complex and systematic way to approach teacher reflection. **Jao** describes how she used the format of Margaret Wise's picture book, "The Important Book," to inspire preservice mathematics teachers to create their own "important" books to develop mathematical concepts for students in classrooms. The results were shared in postings on the Web and suggest that these preservice teachers were not only motivated by this creative work, but also began to think more broadly about mathematics teaching and to see the relevance in what they were learning about the curriculum in their university program. **Douglas**, **Sano**, and **Rosvold** share their results of a narrative inquiry into a two-week, study abroad program for preservice ESL teachers from Japan that took place in British Columbia. In excerpts of the narratives of five participants, they illustrate how meaningful intercultural encounters and interactions with the local community created positive experiences for the participants and that the narrative inquiry process and the co-creation of stories served as both a positive research approach and pedagogical tool.

Linking Personal and Professional Stories to Benefit Teaching and Learning

As a follow-up to an article written over 10 years ago, **MacDonald** and **Hill** examine the use of pedagogical documentation (PD) as a storied method of assessment and inquiry that they used with early childhood teachers in a graduate diploma program. The teachers used multimodal approaches to document classroom practices and created learning stories to reflect, respond, and articulate future possibilities that emerged in the process. Their study revealed that teachers used PD as a lens from which to focus intently, as a catalyst for creating next steps in their teaching, as a way for making learning visible, and as a vehicle for sharing tangible evidence of learning. **The Self-Study Group** is composed of

11 authors, members of a group of teacher educators. They discuss how they used the notion of "Bildungsroman," or the practice of creating narratives that focus on the cultivation of the self, and "Bildung," which assumes maturation requires willful engagement of the self through social interaction. The resulting narratives conceptualized their personal and professional journeys and underscored the interconnected nature of the personal and professional and importance of this in self-actualization. **Lyle,** in the spirit of post-qualitative inquiry (PQI), or the conducting of inquiry outside normalized structures of epistemology, ontology, and methodology, shares how she began to realize she was so conditioned to write academically, that her work had become formulaic and distant. She turned to autobiographical work and was determined to encourage graduate students to do the same based on the premises that teaching is autobiographical work, good teaching is inextricably linked to identity and integrity, identity is created through story, and integrity is fostered by problematizing the work. She argues that PQI offers an avenue through which teachers can move from a recipe orientation to teaching to one of an exploration of "the ingredients." **Ingersoll** describes in a short, personal epistolary piece to well-known narrative scholar, Robert Nash, how difficult it was when she was required to create first-person narratives, rather than the typical research papers or literature reviews. She argues that academic writing is much easier because it masks the self by mimicking an outside voice of authority, while personal narrative expresses a voice which must produce ideas from within, rather than a synthesis of those of others. She concludes with a poem to two other narrative scholars, Fowler and Luce-Kepler, who as Nash, believe narrative is a way of making deep connections.

Storying Curricula to Enhance Learning

Ryu shares how she used autoethnography, a creative nonfictional type of storytelling, to explore her piano teaching and learning with three young beginning students. Her interesting and reflective stories about her personal, interpersonal, and intrapersonal experiences of her teaching and their learning highlight how this process helped her become more attentive to the needs of her students and to create a connectedness with each of them. By being in "pedagogical presence" with these youngsters, she developed more artful and effective ways of teaching piano. **Gade** describes how she has used the well-known children's series titled "Le Petit Nicholas," created by Rene Goscinny and Jean-Jacques Sempe, to inject ontology into the curriculum. She illustrates how three of these stories resonated with children's own experiences of school and, as a result, they begin to see different ways of becoming as they developed their student identities. She suggests that stories like these can act as a tool for mediating students' everyday experiences. **Roessingh** discusses how storytelling in the classroom honors orality, acts as a bridge to literacy, and can be particularly helpful in promoting inclusion for diverse learners. She shares a story that she and a grade six student, Abhi, co-constructed. She highlights how using stories to link to his personal identity and experiences enhanced both her literacy teaching and his learning. **Zanazanian** and **Popa** situate their work on the landscape of historical consciousness. They present a rationale for using an interesting, narrative template which they have developed for the teaching of history. Building on the work of other scholars engaged in work in narrative competence, they share how the aim of the tool is to help students produce and validate their personal stories of belonging by

conducting original research and to assist teachers in engaging their students in learning the history of English-speaking Quebec.

Using Visual Stories in Learning Beyond the Classroom

Fendler and **Shields** describe how a group of teenagers used storytelling in a yearlong documentary film project run by the Palmer Munroe Teen Center. During neighborhood walks and attendance at local community events in Frenchtown, Florida, they mapped their routes with film and photos and then portrayed the information they gathered in documentary videos which importantly depict the perspectives of the teen producers, rather than a report on experiences of people they encountered. The authors present a series of vignettes that are linked to the videos the teens produced and discuss how this "engaged pedagogy" shows the links between storytelling and filming and the careful kind of attentiveness that these young people developed as a result. **Cook** and **Beliveau** describe their study of a collectively created theatre piece entitled, "Give Me Your Hands," based on stories from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and produced by community members and staff at the University of British Columbia's "Learning Exchange." This study shows how collective playmaking and research-based theatre can be used to portray experiences that are difficult to depict in traditional academic prose. Last, but not least, **Rosen** shares how 14 visual stories of teachers' professional learning that she created for virtual professional development, accompanied by directed activities for participants, helped to generate conversations among participants because of the resonance that resulted from viewing these visual stories. Importantly, it also helped to elicit stories of their own experiences that otherwise they might not have shared.

Enjoy listening, reading, and viewing!

LBK

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Lynn Butler-Kisber (B. Ed., M. Ed., McGill University; Ed. D., Harvard University), a former elementary school teacher, is Professor in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education in the Faculty of Education at McGill. She has held a number of administrative posts including a deanship, two associate deanships, and five directorships, and has served on numerous committees within the University and in the educational milieu. In 2007, she was appointed and continues as Outside Educator to the Board of Directors of St. George's School and also serves on the board of Explorations Camp. Her interests, teaching, and graduate supervision focus on multiliteracies, leadership, student engagement, professional development, and qualitative research. She has a special interest in feminist/equity and social justice issues, and the role of arts-based analysis and representation in qualitative research. Her research and development activities have included numerous international projects. Locally, she is currently working on the NEXTSchool Project. She has just completed stints as a visiting scholar at universities in Alberta, Vermont, and Worcester (UK), where she focused on arts-based research. She has also presented on narrative inquiry and school leadership at Hebei Normal University in Shijiazhuang, China, where she was awarded an honorary professorship. She has published and presented extensively in her areas of interest and the second edition of *Qualitative Inquiry: Thematic, Narrative and Arts-Based Perspectives* was just published by Sage.