

2009-1



**EDUCATION EDUC 850 (G031)**  
**Creativity & Education**  
**(Enroll #10284)**

Spring Semester 2009	Instructor:	Carolyn Mamchur
Meeting Dates: To be confirmed by instructor January 9/10; 23/24 February 13/14; 27/28 March 13; 27/28	Telephone:	604-734-4072
Times: Fridays: 4:30-8:30 pm Saturdays: 9:00-3:00 pm	Email:	mamchur@sfu.ca
Location: Rotary Centre for the Arts, Kelowna Okanagan College		
Room:		

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

**In the Shadow of the Vapors of Consequence**

The vapor of consequences spreads as the story widens, as the art work reaches its audience, as the teacher works with students, and this magical vapor casts a shadow over the field of the tale, the art, the classroom. Not unlike the reflex to a soft fog rolling in off the coast, the physical and emotional triggers we all possess activate an intuitive response to the vapors' pale shadow.

This course on creativity examines the influence we have as story tellers, as artists, as educators. It is a vapor that spreads, silent and powerful. It has consequences. We will study those consequences and how to create them with integrity and generosity and skill.

**As Writers**

A good plot changes the characters, and well developed characters change the audience. This is the gift and the power of great stories, films, plays. As writers we must face the importance of the change that affects our characters, and thereby our audiences. When we write our narratives, something must be "at stake". Story contains "emotional contradiction -the journey of discovery and growth. Of loneliness even in the middle of a crowded life. Of isolation due to feelings we cannot trust. Of building and tearing down the walls that protect us."

As writers, we need to embrace the emotional contradiction along our journeys. Students must be prepared to engage on a journey that is serious, examining the truth of their own stories. Our stories will provide a vapor of consequence.

**As Artists**

If art reveals truth of some kind then it leads to thought, and a more thoughtful world is a better

word. It is our job as artists to incite thoughtful contemplation. More vapor of consequence.

### **As Educators**

Creating meaningful relationships with students, creating opportunities for students to develop their own voices, has powerful consequences. Just as not creating meaningful relationships, not creating opportunities does.

This course will focus on the vapors of consequence in the three domains of writer, artist, educator. It takes creativity seriously. What we do counts. Let's do it well. Let's do it wisely.

## **COURSE DELIVERY AND EXPECTATIONS**

**Students will be expected to complete 3 major assignments for grading: (each will be worth 25% of the final grade)**

As Writers: Create one piece of narrative writing that demonstrates ability to capture a truth and present it in a plot.

OR

Write a poem which includes a significant contradiction.

As Artists: Create a piece of art in preferred domain (music, visual art, photography, dance, creative writing, film) which explores a topic of personal significance to the artist.

As Educators: Read the chapter from *The Well of Being*. And

- Explore one major or several related aspects of teaching that you believe create/or hinder opportunities for being creative and present them in any format that will inform your colleagues and hopefully inspire them in their own classrooms. Support your ideas with data gleaned from study of the literature and from personal experience. You may discuss your being creative as a teacher in the school system; or students being creative in a classroom.

OR

- Write an essay (bringing in 5 different sources (art, philosophy, current news, psychology, music, education,)) defining the child in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

OR

- Create a collage or altered book of the child in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **Classroom Activities**

Students are expected to attend all classes and complete tasks related to our journey together in the classroom 25%

- Watch and analyze the film “The Professional” or the film “The Frozen River” for its emotional structure. Warning: “The Professional” contains violence.
- Lecture – 4 elements of creative process
- Personal reflection – Archetypes – What story am I living?
- Seminar discussion of various readings (often a hands on assignment accompanies each

reading)

- Collaboration via First Class – discussion and peer editing.

## REQUIRED READINGS

Dunne, P. (2007) *Emotional Structure; Creating the Story Beneath the Plot*, Quill Driver Books, Sanger, CA.

“The Primordial Child” in Kennedy, D. (2006) *The Well of Being*, State University of New York Press, Albany NY. (copies provided in class)

“Whatever Happened to the Humanities in Education”, Bullough, Jr. in *Educational Researcher*, 2006, Vol 35, Number 8, p.3-10. (copies provided in class)

Additional readings may be brought in as the class progresses.

### Readings offer the following

1. *Emotional Structure: Creating the Story Beneath the Plot*: (Understanding the power of story to tell the truth and of the plot to make the story happen. Applying the principles of writing screenplays to all creative processes)
2. *The Well of Being*: (Using themes of and perspectives from the history of childhood, mythology, psychoanalysis, art, literature, philosophy, and education, the selected chapter focuses on how we have perceived children through the ages. Though only one chapter is required reading, I recommend you actually purchase this expensive and brilliant book...you will return to it again and again. For the purposes of this course, the chapter provides the most difficult reading – it is very dense – and requires careful attention. I have selected it because it forces one to examine assumptions one has made about childhood and how one deals with the child. It helps us to understand why we might have some of the attitudes we do. And just as importantly, it pulls together data from so many aspects of humanitarian thinking. It becomes a model of creativity through synthesis.)
3. *Whatever happened to the Humanities in Education*: (Research based discussion of why the humanities are not taken as seriously as they need to be in education today – providing opportunity to discuss the role we play as educators.)

## ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT

All members of the University community share the responsibility for the academic standards and reputation of SFU. Academic honesty is a condition of continued membership in the university community. Please review the Policy at <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/t10-02.htm>