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## REVIEW OF *CULTIVATING THE ETHICAL IMAGINATION: PERSPECTIVES FROM THREE PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS*

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Carl Leggo  
University of British Columbia  
[carl.leggo@ubc.ca](mailto:carl.leggo@ubc.ca)

**Carl Leggo** is a poet and professor at the University of British Columbia. His books include: *Arresting Hope: Prisons That Heal* (co-edited with Ruth Martin, Mo Korchinski, and Lynn Fels); *Arts-based and Contemplative Practices in Research and Teaching: Honoring Presence* (co-edited with Susan Walsh and Barbara Bickel); *Hearing Echoes* (co-authored with Renee Norman); and *Sailing in a Concrete Boat: A Teacher's Journey*.

**ABSTRACT:** A review of Hannah Spector's (2017) article "Cultivating the ethical imagination in education: Perspectives from three public intellectuals" published in *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* and presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial Provoking Curriculum Conference at McGill University, Montreal, on February 19, 2017.

**KEYWORDS:** Art/Research reviews; Imagination; Education; Arts-based research

I heard Hannah Spector present some of the key themes of her article, “Cultivating the ethical imagination in education: Perspectives from three public intellectuals,” at the 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial Provoking Curriculum Conference at McGill University, Montreal, on February 19, 2017. I was deeply impressed with the sophistication of Hannah’s discussion of ethical imagination, and I was reminded how arts-based researchers need to devote more attention to the ways we theoretically position our inquiries, goals, and methods. After hearing

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Hannah’s presentation, I read the article with keen enthusiasm. In her article, Hannah reviews the work of Hannah Arendt, Maxine Greene, and Henry Giroux. In arts-based circles, Maxine Greene is, of course, frequently cited, but arts-based researchers ought to pay more attention to scholars like Arendt and Giroux, too.

Hannah’s focus is on imagination. Of course, arts-based researchers acknowledge that imagination is integral to the arts and arts-based research, but do we attend adequately to what is meant by imagination? Do we actually think about imagination philosophically, ethically, politically, ideologically, and pedagogically? Just consider some of the modifiers examined in the article in order to understand imagination: ethical

imagination, dark imagination, radical imagination, disimagination, productive imagination, reproductive imagination, impotent imagination, and phantasmagoric imagination. Like Hannah, arts-based researchers need to think about imagination imaginatively.

In the conclusion of the article, Hannah writes: “If there is to be any real hope for significant change in the way we live our lives and the way we do education, we must begin by imagining something other than what is” (p. 56). Is this not the invigorating call of arts-based research? We are engaged in imagining creative ways of conceptualizing and conducting research, and analyzing and interpreting research, and mobilizing and disseminating research. Hannah calls for research that involves being committed “to becoming better human beings” (p. 56). Arts-based research needs to be theoretically sophisticated, aesthetically startling, intellectually critical, imaginatively creative, and prophetically activist.

## REFERENCES

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