

Green New Deal Art and Storytelling Generating a Cultural Shift

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In neoliberal times narrative research can be seen as a source of activism in its own right. Green New Deal Art enacts a cultural shift by using artforms for social change. Drawing from the American Abstract Expressionist movement that characterized New Deal Art, this form of democratic art emerged during the Great Depression under President Roosevelt. Green New Deal Art has the ambition of inspiring social change in a similar way. The global situation requires systemic transformation. Green New Deal storytelling is an artform that can contribute to social transformation. As we are storied beings we need new stories to initiate social change processes. Narrative research gives value to human experience as in autoethnography, eliciting self-transformation. Relational being entails acting in mediated social networks, where self and other interplay. By elevating personal questing to artform, the author's words become future forming vessels, giving value to art as experience. Writing becomes an emancipatory process where life trajectories find new fly ways. Experiential learning includes forms of pilgrimage where life-long learners go to places that ground symbolic representations. The Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center offers visitors an inside view of the creative process that changed both art and society. Through the spontaneous creative act, 'action painting' American culture was transfigured.

In "Homing *In*: An Adopted Child's Story Mandala of Connecting Reunion, and Belonging", transmission or passing on the good life is a central theme. Growing up in Nebraska where the license plates read, "Nebraska the Good Life", enkindled an autoethnographic narrative inquiry tracing the showings of what might be perceived and understood as good and beautiful. Notions of the good life build on chapters that move from remembering, to landscapes of meaning where beholding transforms the image. Beautifying the story mandala takes the pilgrim on a pathway, where past eras inspire and direct future trajectories. Willa Cather, a famous Nebraska writer also addressed what a life well lived might be in, "Death Comes for the Archbishop", where narrative patterns life and death, making it meaningful ¹. In "O' Pioneers", she addresses notions of progress. Her narrative themes are guideposts for contemplation.

In *Homing In*, recollecting a reunion story evolves into a form of activism, where narrative struggles for the good and beautiful lead to visions of belonging on 'Earthship'. Green New Deal Art and storytelling can hopefully contribute to a cultural shift, inspired by an era of New Deal Art, that ushered in Abstract Expressionism. In reference to the *Blue Rider Almanac* by Franz Marc and Wassily Kandinsky humanity continues to quest, searching for what is spiritual in art as well as what constitutes a more beautiful storyline.

Sara Cobb approaches narrative conflict resolution as a method that opens up new flyways. She also questions what constitutes a better storyline as well as criteria that can be used to determine a more desirable narrative. Storying our lives is a powerful tool for self-transformation. As we are storied beings, our life stories have the potential of enkindling individual and societal metamorphosis, shift-shaping life trajectories and even planetary relatedness. Kenneth Gergen's social constructionist approach points to research as 'future forming'. While Thomas Berry's work calls for a new story, a cosmology that incorporates scientific knowledge as well as stories inspired from world religions.

¹ Accessed February 12, 2020.

<https://cather.unl.edu/scholarship/catherstudies/1/cs001.archbishop>

Becoming a grandparent and growing old requires a reflexive space of ‘intergenerativity’ to evaluate what is worthy of passing on to the next generation. Stewardship implies commitment to future generations. Autoethnography can open up space for healing conversations enkindling *intergenerativity*. The relationships between generations provide a connection that can sustain us while we home *in* to humanity’s bright future. How can we live in/on *Earthship*? What new stories can generate a cultural shift to support the Green New Deal, uniting world citizens in a global and systemic change process?

Green New Deal storytellers enter into an emancipating, life storying process that ripples out with the intention to imagine and dream new human-earth relationships. Using the mediums of storytelling and art, world citizens can write new storylines and etch out new sketches. How will we collectively represent and give form to the Green New Green Deal in murals, in exhibits, in paintings, and in novels?

The power of the novel to transform Western civilization has been addressed by Milan Kundera, “Don Quixote set off into a world that opened wide before him. He could go out freely and come home as he pleased.”² How can our intention to contribute to a cultural shift be understood as a form of activism especially when compared to New Deal art and storytelling that had an important influence on society’s becomingness? *Earthship* art goes beyond democratic art as it intends to use relational practices from social psychology to engender new ways of going on together.

When working with adult learners, transformational education can use methods like autoethnography and duoethnography to cultivate holistic approaches to lifelong learning and journeymanhood. Stories use words as vessels of transportation, taking us to new landscapes of meaning. Our storied lives become *transformagrams*, creating a space of flexibility for change. Though the waters appear to be troubled, and the struggle to find a safe shore is before us, let our creative power be unleashed like strong winds in our sails, as we navigate in to a hopeful future, using the homing *in* mechanism as a compass.

<https://creativeaction.network/pages/contribute-art>
<https://livingnewdeal.org/the-new-deal-worked/>
<https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hres/109/BILLS-116hres109ih.pdf>

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2 Kundera, Milan, *The Art of the Novel*, Harper Perennial, New York, 2000, p. 8.

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