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CULTIVATING 21ST CENTURY LAW GRADUATES THROUGH CREATIVITY IN THE CURRICULUM

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Based on our experience of implementing two creative projects within a legal clinic setting, we explore the concept of creativity and the theoretical and market justifications for incorporating it within the law curriculum. Today's graduates are entering a highly competitive job market and the law curriculum needs to evolve to ensure it cultivates the skills and attributes employers want. A 21st century law graduate needs more than just a working knowledge of the law and fostering students' creativity could help develop a range of non-academic skills. However, significantly, our projects suggest that students need to be encouraged to develop their creative potential. As academics we therefore have an important role to play in facilitating creativity and in producing modern, work-ready graduates. This paper should be of interest to anyone engaged in the teaching of law but also to any academics in other disciplines who are exploring ways of unleashing their students' creative potential.

Introduction

In higher education, words like 'creative' and 'innovative' are frequently and casually used in marketing literature, focus days and staff meetings, and funding applications. Yet, as educators, we rarely explore in any detail what being creative entails and why it is important for our students.

We are supervisors in a law clinic known as the Student Law Office. Clinical legal education is based on the idea that law students learn best when they are doing law, rather than learning theory with no appreciation of how it is put into practice. Law clinics allow students to provide free legal advice to the public. In the United Kingdom, the move to this type of educational model first emerged in the 1970s. However, even twenty years later only 8 out of 79 universities had some form of legal clinic (Giddings et al, 2011). More recently, however, clinical legal education in the United Kingdom has gone through a dramatic period of expansion. The 2014 LawWorks Law School and Clinic Pro Bono Report reported that at least 70% of all law schools in the United Kingdom were now engaged in some form of clinical activity.

The Student Law Office at Northumbria University is one of the longest running live client law clinics in the United Kingdom (Hall et al, 2004: 40). Today, all students enrolled on the four year degree at Northumbria Law School must take the Student Law Office module in their fourth (and final) year.. This means that approximately 180 students each year arrive at

the Student Law Office, a purpose built legal office, ready to provide pro bono advice and representation to members of the public. They are supervised by senior lecturers who are also qualified solicitors, barristers and clinical caseworkers. Students are divided into teams (known as 'firms') of six. Each firm deals with a specific area of law (employment, welfare benefits, housing etc.) and is led by a supervisor who is experienced in that area. Our firms deal with company, commercial, intellectual property and information technology issues. They are typically known as the business and commercial firms or the Business Law Clinic.

On face value, one might argue that students engaging in the provision of free legal advice is already a creative endeavour. In this fluid environment, dealing with real people with real issues, students (and staff) must be flexible to the needs of the client. Students cannot retreat to the library for days on end, head stuck in a book. In contrast, they must be ready to react to correspondence from their client and/or opponent. They must be present in the clinic on a regular basis developing a strategic direction for their client's case. They must work together, pursuing the common goal of the provision of accurate and timely advice. Nevertheless, it is questionable as to whether this in itself is enough to claim an *active* quest for the development of creativity in our students. Creativity does not just mean letting students use coloured pens and post-it notes. How does this prepare our students for 21st Century employment? Creativity manifests itself when we give students the freedom to make their own decisions and create something of their own. By doing this we helping to create modern graduates who are able to satisfy employers' requirements for innovative thinking and an ability to develop business.

Our goal was to create explicit opportunities for students to be creative and thus develop attributes required of a 21st Century graduate. We developed two projects within the Business Law Clinic setting: a student-led blog and student-led team meetings. In this paper we set out theoretical conceptions which informed our understanding of creativity and bring this together with a reflective exploration of the outcomes of the projects. In Part I, we consider the meaning of creativity as a term. In Part II, we discuss the educational and market justifications for the encouragement of creativity in higher education. Part III sets out who we sought to inculcate creativity through the use of a blog and student-led meetings. Finally, Part IV links theory with practice, noting the parallels between students' conceptions of creativity and the outcomes of our projects.

Part I: Conceptions of Creativity

Before we start to discuss the justifications for creativity in the law curriculum and the framework we have used to promote it within our teaching, naturally we must first consider what we mean by the term 'creativity'. This may be more difficult than one would first assume as, according to Jackson and Sinclair (2006: 119), 'one of the problems with creativity it that it is difficult to understand and explain'. The Oxford Dictionary of English defines creativity as 'the use of imagination or original ideas to create something; inventiveness' (Stevenson, 2010). Whilst this may be a helpful starting point, dictionary definitions such as these are arguably of limited use as they do not take into account how people's conceptions of creativity may vary according to the context in which they are

operating. Clearly what a law student in higher education would view as being creative is likely to vary from that of an art student. Dellas and Gaier (1970: 57) also argue that different types of creative talent might exist stating that 'the scientific creative probably excel[s] in different abilities from the aesthetic creative'. Accordingly, rather than searching for a conclusive 'textbook' definition of creativity, it may be more useful to explore the ideas and concepts generally associated with creativity by both students and academics.

Firstly, we will consider students' conceptions of creativity. A study conducted in two UK universities as part of the Imaginative Curriculum project[1] has helped to shed some light on the question of how students in higher education experience and understand creativity.[2] Oliver et al (2006) reported that many students engaged by the study struggled to explain what they thought creativity was and, rather than providing an explicit definition of creativity, typically employed 'ideas' to do so. Oliver et al present the findings of the study by grouping these 'ideas' of creativity together as follows: 'freedom from routine'; an 'expression of imagination'; 'something personal' i.e. which could have only been created by that person; 'independence'; 'risk'; 'superficiality' (primarily concerned with being free from having to justify decisions); 'commonplace' (as in everyone is creative every day) and, lastly, something which is 'infectious'.

In interpreting the results of the study Oliver et al suggest that generally they perceived a desire on the part of the students for courses which allowed them some space to take risks 'free from the need to justify decisions and where failure was an opportunity for learning rather than a problem' (Oliver et al, 2006: 57).   Whilst the study would perhaps have been more insightful for our purposes if the students sampled had specifically been law students[3], these 'ideas' of creativity appear to be as relevant to law as to any other discipline. Certainly the desire of the students to break free from the traditional constraints of didactic teaching is something we personally have experienced and will discuss further shortly.

Next we turn to our own conceptions of creativity as academics and consider if, and to what extent, they differ from that of our students. Two separate studies help us understand how academics conceptualise creativity. It should be noted that both studies involved law academics but it is not possible to distinguish their particular contribution from the overall results, which would have been particularly useful for our purposes. Firstly, a 2006 study explored UK National Teaching Fellows'[4] perceptions of creativity (The Creativity Centre Ltd, 2006).[5] Whilst many aspects of creativity were suggested by the National Teaching

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[1] According to information available on the Imaginative Curriculum Resources Archive the aims of the Imaginative Curriculum project were to encourage creativity in higher education and to provide practical help and advice to academics who wished to do so. The project was apparently driven by the belief that creativity in students' learning is undervalued, and generally not recognised in UK higher education (except for areas like the visual and performing arts). Available at:
http://78.158.56.101/archive/palatine/resources/imagincurric/index.html (accessed 15 July 2015).
[2] For discussion of the methodology employed in the study please refer to Oliver et al (2006: 43).
[3] The sample was of a broad range of disciplines.
[4] The aim of the National Teaching Fellow Scheme in the UK is to recognise and celebrate academics who have made an outstanding impact on student learning and the teaching profession.
[5] For discussion of the methodology employed please refer to section 5 of the report.

Fellows (NTFs), the four aspects of creativity most cited were reported as: 'imagination' (90%); 'seeing unusual connections' (86.7%), 'original ideas' (80%) and 'combining ideas' (80%).[6]

A separate study conducted under the auspices of the Imaginative Curriculum project also explored the academic's perspective of creativity and the curriculum (Edwards et al, 2006).[7] Edwards et al note that creativity is a "complex, contested concept" and reported that some academics in the study appeared confused by it and referred to the concept inconsistently (Edwards et al, 2006:60). However, most participants in the study considered that creativity included a number of 'features' including things like 'originality' and 'breaking with tradition'.[8] Whilst Edwards et al refer to these as 'main' features there were in fact 13 reported in total suggesting that the key features of creativity are hard to state concisely. Also, interestingly, the key features did not all coincide with the findings of the NTF study. Moreover, when we compare the results of these studies with the result of the student study, there appear to be some aspects of creativity that the academics have overlooked but which the students placed emphasis on: taking risks; being free from having to justify decisions and, something we personally have experienced, the infectiousness of creativity.

Whilst all the studies discussed above suggest some common conceptions of creativity, for example originality and imagination were both explicitly mentioned in two out of three of the studies , creativity is clearly subject to various interpretations and difficult to conceptualise, even for academics. Rather than being frustrated by this we believe this should be seen as an opportunity. Academics should feel empowered to construct their own conception of creativity, to interpret it as they wish and to introduce creativity in their courses in whatever way they feel appropriate. Our view is that creativity in teaching facilitates students to become more creative themselves and to develop some important life skills.

Part II: Theoretical and market justifications for creativity in the law curriculum

Theoretical justifications

One of the strongest justifications for inculcating creativity in the law curriculum is the pedagogic benefit for the students. In particular, it supports a constructivist approach to learning. This is where students are given the opportunity to build their own understanding, knowledge and learning, instead of "acquiring it pre-packaged and ready made" (Exley & Dennick, 2004: 5). The role of the tutor is commonly seen to be that of authoritarian knowledge deliverer. Their function is to stand at the front of the class dispensing knowledge

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[6] The percentages in square brackets reflect the extent to which each aspect matches the NTFs' concept of creativity. The other remaining aspects were: innovation (76.2%); thinking processes (72.2%); discovery (66.7%); invention (61.1%); generative thinking (53.3%); self expression (52.2%); valuable ideas (52.2%); sudden inspiration (51.1%); analytical thinking (44.4%); awareness of beauty (25.6%); aesthetic products (21.1%); unconscious activities (21.1%); tangible products (18.9%); mysterious processes (14.4%) and other (14.3%).

[7] For discussion of the methodology employed in the study please refer to Edwards, M. et al (2006, p.59).

[8] Other suggested main features were: 'a quality of newness', 'related traditions of work', 'different by degree', 'personally new', 'expressed through a product', 'recognised', 'useful', 'ethical', 'trivial', 'hard', 'motherhood and apple pie'.

to students who should merely swallow as much of that data as they can, ready to regurgitate it at a later exam. Constructivism, in contrast, puts the student at the centre of the learning process. As Campbell (2015a: 9) notes, a student-centred approach leads to a move from surface (or superficial) to deep learning, an active rather than passive student body, a high level of student choice, and the encouragement of creativity. It is a positive cycle: creativity supports constructivism in teaching which in turn encourages creativity.

Figure 1: The Creativity and Constructivism Cycle
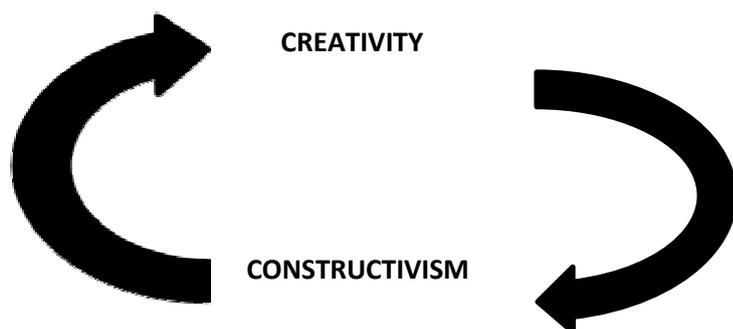
It is easy to believe that contemporary teaching methods will automatically align with constructivism. The theory of constructivism is widely taught as part of professional development courses for academics working in higher education. Indeed, it was introduced at one of the first sessions that we attended as new teachers in our university. The majority of teachers in higher education want to position themselves as modern educators and act as consultants in learning rather than dictators. However, as Owen (in Collier, 1983: 93) notes, "a teacher may take the putative role of 'consultant' while in reality, acting merely as a 'postman' who dutifully delivers worksheets to his students each week before disappearing to be 'available for consultation'". This is not satisfactory. For a truly constructivist approach to teaching we must go beyond dipping in and out of the consultancy role and look closely at how we can instil student centred learning activities into all aspect of our practice.

Other justifications can be found in the 2006 National Teaching Fellow report (The Creativity Centre Ltd, 2006). It concluded that most NTFs believed two things. First, that creative capacity helps students to achieve success. Secondly, that it was important that educators assisted in the development of that creativity. These principles closely align with the views of Norman Jackson, who argues that expression of creativity leads to greater student satisfaction and "students' experiences of higher education and their future lives will be enriched if teachers help them recognise, experience and develop more of their [creative] potential" (Jackson in Jackson et al (eds), 2006:1).

Market justifications
Whilst academics may be interested in the theoretical justifications for introducing creativity in the curriculum, students are of course much more concerned with the practical benefits

their education brings. Today participation rates at university are higher than ever (Biggs and Tang, 2011) and market factors in the UK such as increased tuition fees have arguably led students to demand more than just a good degree at the end of their course. As Woodall et al (2014: 48) recently put it 'in the United Kingdom …students are increasingly demonstrating customer-like behaviour and are now demanding even more 'value' from institutions'. One way we can add 'value' is to ensure that law graduates are equipped with the skills and attributes they need to obtain good quality jobs on graduation. This is particularly important for law graduates given the significant gap between the number of professional training opportunities and the number of law graduates.

Recent data published by the Law Society indicates that the number of students graduating from a first degree law course in England and Wales rose to a new high of 16,120 in summer 2014 (Law Society, 2015). Conversely the number of training contracts registered for the period 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2014 was only 5,001, 6% lower than the previous 12 months (Law Society, 2015). Whilst it is acknowledged that not all law graduates want to enter the legal profession many do and the problem is further exacerbated by the fact they face competition from students who have undertaken their first degree in another subject but do a law conversion course. Clearly, in light of this highly competitive job market we need to ensure that law graduates have the skills and qualities that legal employers want but also that they have transferable skills they can 'sell' to a wide range of employers. A 21st century law graduate needs much more than a working knowledge of the law.

Employers will still be looking for traditional skills like good written and verbal communication and it would be hoped that any traditional law degree would help develop these. However, today's law graduate may need a wider skill set than ever before. As one magic circle firm puts it 'as law becomes more international and commercial in its focus and nature, our lawyers need to have a diverse set of skills and abilities' (Clifford Chance, 2015). It is not just the legal profession that appears to be demanding a wide skill set from graduates either. Reports suggest employers generally, not just legal employers, are seeking a wide range of skills and attributes including: team work, ICT competency, commercial awareness (Hughes et al, 2013) and even creativity itself (Kaplan, 2014). For example, all of the 'magic circle'[9] firms in the UK (Allen & Overy, Clifford Chance, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Linklaters, and Slaughter and May[10]) state on their websites that they want commercially aware applicants. Some of them also mention other qualities like 'a challenging thinking style' and that they want to attract students who have 'an interesting take on things' perhaps alluding to aspects of creativity.

Whilst 'commercial awareness' and 'team work' are by no means new recruitment buzzwords, it is questionable if traditional lecture and seminar teaching really give students an opportunity to develop them. In terms of ICT, employers may expect more of graduates than just a familiarity with word and online legal resources. As a recent newspaper article

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[9] The magic circle is an informal term for what are generally considered the five leading law firms headquartered in the UK.

[10] These are the firms normally viewed as constituting the magic circle as confirmed by Hickman (2004).

suggests, employers may expect graduates to have their own digital footprint which may mean 'setting up a LinkedIn profile, starting [their] own blog or website, joining Twitter' (Page, 2014). These types of ICT skills are not usually honed in law degrees and creativity is certainly not something one would usually associate with a traditional law programme. We would argue that the skills and qualities employers are seeking may be hard to develop using 20th century teaching methods alone and accordingly to meet the needs of 21st century law graduates we should look to develop a more creative law curriculum.

Part III: How we seek to develop creativity within our experiential business law clinic

As supervisors we are tasked with assessing our students' performance throughout the year, providing formative feedback on an almost daily basis. At the end of the year, the student receives a summative mark for the contribution they have made to the Student Law Office. Naturally, this includes an assessment of the quality of the legal work that that they have carried out for their clients – their research skills, written and oral communications, and their adherence to professional conduct rules. Yet, they are also assessed on their performance from a holistic point of view. For example, supervisors will provide a grade for the level of independence or autonomy the student has developed through the course of the year. Similarly, they are assessed on the way that they worked with their peers and their supervisor. A first class grade for teamwork is given where the student has exhibited a 'very good relationship with supervisor/partner/peers… provides ideas and support to others and effective leadership but does not dominate others' (Student Law Office 2014 -15 Practical File Assessment Matrix, 2014). Students do not just receive marks linked to their academic skills, they are also graded on their personal contributions to the Student Law Office.

As the only supervisors in the Business Law Clinic, we work closely together in order to devise teaching activities and projects which benefit our students. We have always felt that, from a teaching perspective, providing students with client cases is not enough. We are compelled to look for other ways in which we can enhance our students' knowledge, understanding and experience beyond traditional case work. Much of this is informed by our backgrounds as solicitors in leading national commercial law firms. In those firms, we saw that employers were looking for graduates with more than academic skills. They were also searching for well-rounded individuals who could, for example, explain what commercial awareness was and give an example of how they had been commercially aware. They wanted graduates who understood how to develop business, not just wait for that business to come to them. From our point of view, the Student Law Office environment is the perfect place to provide students with the chance to build more than purely academic knowledge. In addition, we want to ensure that our students are given the opportunity to excel when it comes to assessment. From our perspective, both of these aims were fulfilled by allowing our students to be creative. To that end, we devised two projects designed to be student-centred or student-led and which had creativity at their core. The first was an internet blog called We Take Care of Business. The second was student-led firm meetings. In this next section we describe the origins of the projects in more detail. We also set out our experiences –positive and negative – of encouraging our students to be creative.

We Take Care of Business Blog

We had spoken about developing a blog for our Business Law Clinic for some time. However, we were concerned that we would not have the time to draft posts of sufficient quality on a regular basis. In truth, we were looking at the blog from an authoritarian teaching perspective – we would start the blog and we would draft the majority of the posts. The turning point was when we started to view the blog as a way of allowing our students to be creative. It moved away from a blog that we would develop into a blog that the students would be responsible for.

In summer 2014, we registered with free blog publisher Wordpress and created https://wetakecareofbusiness.wordpress.com. We wrote a page about ourselves, called Meet the Supervisors, so that we could start developing a relationship with students joining the Business Law Clinic in the September term. We also drafted a 'welcome' post which set out the aims of the blog:

"*This blog is brought to you by the students and supervisors of the Business and Commercial firms at Northumbria University's award winning Student Law Office.*

Over the coming months, we'll be telling you more about the work of the Student Law Office and what it is like to be a student involved in a clinical legal education programme. We'll be providing you with some hints and practical tips about key areas of company, commercial and intellectual property law and posting any other information we think might be of interest.

We hope you enjoy reading and interacting with our blog. Please keep an eye out for future posts. We hope to start posting regularly from August 2014 onwards." (wetakecareofbusiness, 22 July 2014)

When we met our Business Law Clinic students at the start of the academic year, we explained in a firm meeting and in an email the purpose of the blog. We stressed that whilst we had prepared the template, we would not be responsible for drafting posts. We explained that this was their blog and that they would be responsible for populating it with content. Whilst we made some suggestions about what that content could be to give them some ideas, we told our students that they should try and think of their own ideas for posts and that our role would be as facilitators, offering advice and guidance where necessary. We encouraged them to participate but explained that the blog was voluntary. We also warned our students that they could not mention any client names or include any information which could lead to a client being recognised unless that client had consented to the publicity.

Table 1: A list of each post published on the We Take Care of Business Blog between October 2014 and July 2015.

Month/Year	Title	Author: Student or Supervisor
October 2014	ABS: Will it create law firm ABS?	Student
	Visit by Jude Kirton-Darling MEP	Student
November 2014	What's so good about in-house?	Student
	Whose website is it anyway?	*Supervisor*
January 2015	Tax doesn't have be taxing	Student
	Does your website need a healthcheck?	*Supervisor*
February 2015	The new Consumer Rights Bill: What's the Impact on Businesses?	Student
	Don't be caught out by fake business registers	Two students
	Law in Action! What's it like working in the Student Law Office?	Two students (one from a civil litigation firm)
March 2015	How important is a law firm's reputation?	Student
	Editor's note: a series of three reflective pieces	*Supervisor*
	The Legal Hunger Games	Student
April 2015	Stay ahead of the game and think digital	Student
	10 TED talks to make you more commercially aware	Student
	Keeping yourself informed in the digital age: a quick guide to copyright	Student
	Victoria and Elaine speak at the CLEA conference	*Supervisor*
	A legal tune worth hearing!	Student
	Business & Commercial supervisors nominated for Student Led Teaching Awards	*Supervisors*
	Clinic Collaboration with qLegal	*Supervisor*
	FIRST class legal advice	Student
May 2015	The end of one road, but the	Student

	beginning of another	
July 2015	*Business & Commercial firm students graduate in style!*	*Supervisor*

As Table 1 shows, it took some time for students to feel comfortable creating blog posts for publication. We spoke to our students about the blog on a regular basis. However, we both felt that our students were hesitant to get involved. One student was very enthusiastic about the blog and he drafted the first and second posts in October 2014. Nevertheless, the next student didn't write a post until November 2014. By that time, the blog had been live for nearly four months and we started to become concerned that it would, as we put it, 'fizzle out'. Therefore we decided to supplement student posts with content of our own. The idea was the students could then see the way that we wrote short pieces and might then feel more confident modelling that style. Elaine wrote two short pieces designed to tell potential clients about our clinic – one in November 2014 and another in February 2015. By February 2015, 4 students had written 3 blog posts. In February, however, there was a sudden increase in student authored posts. Without any prompting from us, students decided to write together. One co-authored piece was written by a student in the Business Law Clinic and another student who was working in a firm specialising in civil litigation. They interviewed each other about their experiences in the Student Law Office and created in a question and answer style blog post.

From February to April 2015, 12 students wrote 10 blog posts. The content of those posts differed significantly. Some students reflected on their experiences in the Student Law Office (for example, the competitive nature of law school, working with different supervisors and managing client cases alongside other university work). Others wrote about events they had been to or resources they had accessed on the internet. Some provided information about legal issues they had come across whilst advising clients in the Student Law Office. Whilst we continued to add our own short posts, the purpose of those pieces changed. Instead of creating posts to try and keep the blog current, we wrote to thank our students for nominating us for Student Led Teaching Awards or to note that we had spoken about the blog at the Commonwealth Legal Education Association Conference.

Student led firm meetings
In the Student Law Office, students have compulsory weekly firm meetings. The content of firm meetings is dictated by the supervisor. They are invariably used to feedback on client case work, develop skills, talk about office procedure and engage students in discussion about clinical legal education, social justice, careers and pro bono practice (Campbell, 2015a: 8).

In 2013, Elaine attended another business supervisor's firm meeting, as part of our institution's peer review programme. In that meeting, one of the students took the lead. She led discussions and engaged us with exercises. Earlier in the year, the supervisor mentioned that if a student wanted to control a firm meeting they could. Every student in her firm led a

firm meeting that year. Elaine later replicated student led firm meetings in her own firms (Campbell, 2015a; Campbell, 2015b).

When Victoria became a supervisor in the Student Law Office, we decided that we would make student led firm meetings a key part of the Business Law Clinic. We told our students at the start of the year that for one week, each of the students would be expected to take control of the firm meeting. We made it clear that we would fully participate in that meeting. For example, if there was preparation to be done then we would complete it like any other student. We also encouraged students to use their firm meeting as an opportunity for them to do something that was totally their own work, and of their own creation. When students asked us what they should do in their firm meeting, we held fast to the notion that we should not be part of that creative process. We gave moral support, but made sure that we both said to our students that it was *their* firm meeting and that we had entirely handed control of content and delivery of that session to them.

Photograph 1: A photograph of a bespoke board game based on Cluedo, with rooms being spaces in the Student Law Office, characters being members of the firm, and weapons being elements of pro bono practice.

Photograph 1 provides a good example of the creative projects that our students embarked on before and during student led firm meetings. In the photograph you can see that the student leading the firm meeting has obtained a Cluedo board and customised it to reflect the firm members and the Student Law Office itself. During the game, students were given the opportunity to reflect on the spaces in the Student Law Office, their relationships with each other and their supervisor, and the 'weapons' (such as Reflection, Practical Legal Research and Letter Writing). It was also an excellent team bonding exercise. Some of our students did not produce tangible evidence of creativity like a board game, but that does not mean that their work was not creative. For example, in one firm meeting a student led a discussion on stress reduction. She had researched mindfulness techniques, the use of drawing or colouring to decrease anxiety, and reflexology. She taught us reflexology massage and produced handmade cards with positive quotations for each person. We would argue that this is just as creative as the production of a game.

Part IV: Theory meets practice

Rather than look at our own ideas of creativity and judge our projects against them, it is important to return to students' conception of creativity. If we revisit the results of Oliver et al's (2006) study, we can see clear parallels between the outcomes of our projects and students' ideas of what creativity should involve. Yet, we can also see how the theoretical and market justifications are realised.

- *Freedom from routine:* Both the blog and the firm meetings allowed students to deviate from the 'norm'. The blog in particular gave students an opportunity to be creative at will; they could choose when (and if) they created a blog post and what that blog post was about.

- *Expression of imagination:* We provided very little guidance on the content of students' blog posts and firm meetings. We left it completely open to the students to use their imagination. The fact that students chose to sing a song, create board games and develop multiple (multimedia) materials is evidence of their freedom to express themselves in whatever way they felt comfortable.

- *Something personal:* This links with the two points above. We repeatedly told our students that their blog post/firm meeting was 'their' innovation – something that was personal to them. This meant that they could speak to potential employers about something that went beyond doing a presentation. The public nature of the blog allowed students to show employers a tangible piece of work that evidenced their ability to work with social media and help develop business for their 'firm'.

- *Independence*: One of our students commented that they hadn't had the opportunity to create something that they had complete control over whilst at university. We suspect that many students anticipate that higher education will be a sanctum of independent thought. The reality is that lecturers tightly control the work that students do. We decide on the

lecture slides, the workshop materials, and the content of meetings. Autonomous learning, embedded in our projects, is something which the students told us was rare. Here, we see how this approach to learning and teaching leads to the positive circle shown in Figure 1.

- *Risk:* This was inherent in the fact that students were engaged in something that was 'different'. For example, there was a risk that the other students in the firm meeting would be bored/ambivalent/disruptive. With the blog, there was a risk that we, as supervisors, would dislike what the student had written or that a member of the public might react negatively to it.

- *Freedom from justifying decisions:* This is similar to independence. Many students wanted to check with us that what they were doing was 'right'. Again, we allowed students the freedom to do what they wanted to do.

- *Commonplace:* The idea here is that everyone is creative every day. It was interesting to watch our students struggle with the concept of being creative. The notion of leading a meeting made some students very nervous. However, once they had watched other students' firm meetings, they told us they hadn't realised that it was as 'simple' as that. One student told us that she would have little concern leading a meeting in her new job as she realised it wasn't really that different from other activities she engaged during her normal day.

- *Infectious:* The development of the blog is a good example of creativity being infectious. After a few months, a sense of competition arose (especially as one student was publishing a number of posts) and the number of posts increased dramatically. We would argue that students wanted their voice to be heard. Hesitant at first, once a few students got the ball rolling, others would say 'I want to do a blog post'. The use of technology also seemed to have a profound effect on some students. One student blogged about an event that she had attended. The events organiser read the blog and contacted her. The blog post was shared on their website. That student later went on to use twitter and LinkedIn accounts (her digital footprint) in order to assist her search for employment.

When we reflected on the two projects and our efforts to cultivate creativity in the curriculum, we reached a significant conclusion. This was that students need to be given permission to be creative, and to be actively encouraged to do so. When the blog was first set up, we were concerned that we would have too many students wanting to write for it. We were therefore surprised when we had to supplement it with posts of our own. However, once a small number of students started to write for it others followed suit. The diversity and creative range of posts also increased. With student-led firm meetings, we both experienced the phenomenon of fourth year law students looking uncomfortable when faced with being allowed to do anything they liked. We had to repeatedly give reassurance that their ideas had value. This has important implications for the notion of the 21st Century graduate. This generation are often assumed to be the most creative, innovative, and at one with technology

yet our experience is that students need to be encouraged to unleash their creative skills. By doing that, we are also cultivating modern, work-ready graduates.

Conclusion

We have explored the concept of creativity and found that it is difficult to define, even for academics. We would argue that this should be seen as an opportunity for academics to construct their own conceptions of creativity without worrying too much about semantics. Inculcating creativity in the law curriculum aligns with student-centred, constructivist approaches to learning but also appears to be justifiable from a market perspective. With the recent rise in tuition fees and an increasingly competitive job market, students are now acting more like consumers and demanding added value from their courses. As Jackson puts it, "individually and collectively we need to be creative to continually adapt…in an ever-changing and increasingly complex world" ((Jackson in Jackson et al (eds), 2006:1).

One way we may adapt to this challenge is by being creative with our curriculum design and actively seeking to embed opportunities for student creativity within our law degrees, thereby helping to nurture the creative and other non-academic attributes employers are demanding. In a nutshell, we believe creative teaching can facilitate creative learning. Whilst we have explored our experience of developing creativity in a module which utilises clinical legal education as a pedagogic method, we believe that non-clinical teaching is equally susceptible to this kind of innovation. For example, within specific modules students could be encouraged, or required, to set up blogs or websites and contribute articles on legal developments or proposals for reform. Alternatively, rather than dictating the content of every seminar for a module, one seminar could be left open for students to choose a topic to research and present giving them an opportunity to work more independently and to express themselves.

Some people will of course argue that they do not have the time or resources to engage in this kind of teaching. Whilst undoubtedly, as when you make any change to the way teaching is delivered, there will be an initial input of time, the activities should by their nature be student-led. We found that, particularly with the blog, once a few students got the ball rolling, the other students became eager to participate and the necessity for our input was reduced accordingly. We also found ways of implementing projects which did not involve any costs. It is possible to set up a website/blog for free which is the approach we decided to take rather than paying for a website with lots of functionality we did not need or to go through the internal red tape of having a website designed by the University's IT department. Clearly creativity does not have to be expensive but it does need some commitment by the academics involved.

Whilst the current generation of students are often assumed to be more creative, innovative and technology savvy than their predecessors, we have not always found this to be the case. Our projects suggest that students need to be encouraged to unleash their creative skills. As academics we therefore have an important role to play in facilitating creativity and ensuring we are meeting the challenge of cultivating work ready 21st century law graduates. As

discussed above, we have observed that creativity does indeed appear to be infectious. We hope by reading this article you have been infected with the creativity bug.

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