

Queen's Law Virtual Symposium, Session 9, 24 June 2026
Encouraging Critically Reflective Practice in Law

(Sharry Aiken – back up moderator) Lisa Bliss, from Georgia State, was going to be our moderator, but unfortunately is experiencing some power access issues right now. Lisa is with us. She's right there in the Zoom room, and she will be joining in the conversation after the formal presentations. But we just thought it would be better for someone with a more stable internet connection to do the housekeeping logistics around the moderation. So that's what I'm going to do, to step in. And as before, with the other sessions, every presentation will be about 11 or 12 minutes. I will briefly introduce our speakers with the top line of their bios, but I do encourage everyone to look at the more detailed program for bios, and also full abstracts for each presentation. The presentations are going to be presented in the order they appear in the program.

It's my pleasure to introduce Judith Franklyn Harrison, who is a senior lawyer as well as a doctoral student with Charles Darwin University in Australia. Judith will be presenting their paper called "*Epistemic Urbanism and Law's Reflective Governance*." So over to you, Judith.

1:13 (Judith Franklyn Harrison)

Thanks so much. I'll just share my screen. Thank you very much, everybody, for the fantastic virtual symposium. So far, the sessions that I've attended, which is most of them, apart from when I've needed to be asleep, have just been inspirational. I'm in Canberra in Australia at the moment, and it's 1:03 a.m. my time. And I just appreciate the logistical effort, the organising, the care that's gone into this event, and for people around the world to be able to participate like this. It really is a remarkable achievement. I'd also like to acknowledge First Nations people involved in this event, including Sharry and other organisers.

My presentation has got the word epistemic in it, and I imagine that for First Nations people who are working in law schools, or who are engaged in pedagogy of some kind, that is probably a key word. It's probably a concept that you're finding useful to try and explain not being listened to, and knowledge systems attempting to dominate, and so forth. I'm speaking from the lands of the Ngannawal and the Ngambri people. My university is a long way away. It's about 2,000 kilometres away. I'm currently in the southeast corner of Australia, but my university is in Northern Australia, and I'll show you some maps that have got Northern Australia on them during this presentation.

The title of the presentation is "*Epistemic Urbanism*." And I don't know whether people would have heard that term before. In a way, I hope not, because I hope I've actually coined it. So, you can probably imagine that epistemic urbanism is trying to say something about how urbanism might be something which is controlling a narrative, or is characterising a narrative, is possibly characterising knowledge systems. It doesn't mean that it's necessarily a bad thing, particularly if it operates in a beneficent way. But it might not be something that everybody thinks about all the time, or even ever. So, it might be something that, for some people, is kind of new. And I'd be really interested if people want to post to the chat about whether you think that the term has any resonance, what it might mean for you. So, it's a term that is inviting meaning to be put to it. I'll suggest probably some meanings as I go through, but it's an open space, really, for people to think what this could mean and how it could be relevant in legal education, law curriculum, reflective practice, legal practice, access to justice, rule of law, and so forth.

The rest of the title is "*and Law's Reflective Governance*," which is leaning towards other limits to what we reflect on. What do we choose to reflect on? Who tells us what the parameters for our reflections actually are?

So, I'm probably an over-reflector. I like reflecting a lot. But sometimes I feel like I've exhausted myself, and maybe you feel that way sometimes as well. So, there are limits to what we can think about at once, maybe depending on what frameworks we're using. But I'm wondering, really, whether people are bringing questions of urbanism, and possibly adverse effects of urbanism, into their courses and curriculum, and into their reflections and guidance for students. So that sort of gets me off the first slide. And now I'm going to try and move on.

So, the rich conversations that have been happening about reflection and reflective practice, and all the wonderful things that come from it, I felt like I wanted to say something about individuals who mean so much to me, who I kind of keep with me. Not physically. They don't know. But something about these people, and what they've written

and what I've taken from it, or what they've said and what I've taken from it, has been important to me at different times, and continues to be so when I'm having low moments.

I go to Lucie White, whose photo is the one to the left of the three that you can see. I looked up Lucie to see how she was, by just sort of googling, and found that she's having an existential crisis. So, she was telling her Harvard Law School group last year that she doesn't believe what she has been working on for so many years. I think, okay, everyone has an existential crisis. That doesn't change anything about what I think of her and her work, and how important it remains to me.

The next person is First Nations academic Irene Watson, who's an Australian academic who's done remarkable work about decolonisation. She's very staunch. She tells terrific stories. And I remember things that she writes, and I love to have her stories with me.

And the last person, who Sharry mentioned she knows, and maybe other people also know, is Shin Imai, and I'm probably not saying that correctly. I've had a couple of emails with him, but he has been with me for about 15 years in terms of how important his work has been to my thinking. He wrote an article called "*A Counter-Pedagogy for Social Justice: Core Skills for Community-Based Lawyering*," which, when I read it, I just thought, oh, we're related. Like, you must stay in my orbit. I must be in your orbit. I must know you. I don't actually need to even have conversations with him. I just know that there are things that he says that I just think are remarkable. They're remarkable for me.

So, this slide is really about just honouring some of the people who are inspirational, for different reasons and at different times, and to acknowledge, and it may apply to you as well, that there are some people whose ideas are so important, for whatever reason, that they stay with you. So, they're part of your world as you're going about attempting whatever it is and reflecting on it as you go.

The next slide is a segue. So, based on Lucie White, I just wanted to touch again on her three dimensions of lawyering. And this table just summarises what those dimensions are. They basically are, the first dimension is, use law if it's propitious. So, if it's good for your client, if it's good for the issues, if it's good for justice, use it, go for it. The second is, well, if it's not so good, or if it happens to be terrible, then change it. So, the activity is around, let's get this organised, let's get this sorted, if we can. The third dimension is about creating power, contributing to the power, empowering the subordinated groups that have been done over by the system, by the law as it stands. And I think Lucie says in her article, but if she doesn't, I think she would agree, that everything is about building the power of subordinated groups. So even when the law seems to be okay, it's about building power. Even when there's an attempt to change it, it's about building power. And everything's about building power. But, having said that, Lucie's existential crisis is that she wonders whether she's been building the power of the wrong people, that things have become so fragmented and complex in the US that she's really questioning the approaches that she has been advocating.

However, I still think that this framework is good for so many reasons. So, this framework is a counter-pedagogy. So, going back to Shin, what is this about? It's about changing dominant paradigms, or it's about trying to help clients or groups survive or do better in systems which are oppressing them. It means that it's a counter-majoritarian model. So, it's not coming from the majority telling the minority, the subordinated, what's going to happen, what justice will be for them. So, they get to define justice for themselves. And it's a counter-utilitarian model, meaning it's not a model which is about justice for the greatest number. It's about justice for each and every person. So, it's a universalist approach to justice.

However, in trying to apply this model, we would be doing some reflection about who are we, and what's our relationship with the client, and how are the decisions being made, and how are external factors, like other resources that the legal service has available to it, coming into play in making decisions.

So now I want to show you a map of Australia. This was a clipped map from the web in 2017. Nothing's much changed, including, the name of Tasmania is still wrong on this map. This is showing you approximately the location of Australia's law schools. There are now 36 or 37 of them. Some of them only teach in person, but probably most teach both ways, you can choose in person or online. But there's something about the location of these law schools which is quite distinctive. The law schools are firstly mainly in the capital cities. The Northern

Territory, where my university is, the capital city of the Northern Territory is Darwin, and that's where the smiley face is, right at the top there in the middle. That is the only law school that is based in the Northern Territory. And I won't go around all of them, but some people have visited Australia, maybe extensively. There are probably people from Australia in this conversation. Many people will know where the capital cities are. The capital cities correspond with historical colonisation. They correspond with economic hubs, and they correspond with economic and political power.

So, in looking at this map, it tells us something about urbanism in Australia. If I showed you a subsequent map, it would be about levels of disadvantage in Australia, which correspond with non-urban areas. The most disadvantaged areas are in non-urban areas. So, the question that I'm posing here is, to what extent are law schools, legal academics, reflection, curriculum, engaging with issues about epistemic urbanism? Do we understand that it potentially exists? So, we're starting to think about it. Are we concerned about issues about access to justice in non-urban areas, and workforce supply? And how does that connect with the norms that our law schools and our professions are projecting?

I think I can wrap it up there. Thank you.

(Sharry Aiken) Okay. Thank you. Very interesting context. All right.

And let me introduce Angbeen Atif Mirza, who is Assistant Professor with the Shaikh Ahmad Hassan School of Law at the Lahore University of Management Sciences in Pakistan. And it looks like you're ready to roll, Angbeen. Over to you.

16:10 (Angbeen Atif Mirza)

Thank you, Sharry. Thank you so much. I'd like to also thank Michele and all the organisers of this fantastic symposium. I have learned so much over these past two days. I've been reading the comments as well, people agree, that I think it's going to take months to just ponder and mull over everything that we've taken. And I really look forward to seeing the papers and the presentations as well. Another thing that's happened in this symposium, but also in my reading for this paper, is that the more I read, the more I realised how unoriginal my thoughts are.

I work in Lahore, Pakistan, I work in Street Law and community legal education more broadly. That is what informs my research today. And I'm hoping that if I were to share that here, it will allow others with so much more experience and knowledge than me to guide me to a place where I might be able to actually make a contribution.

So, my outline. So, quickly, just going over how I propose to proceed, is that I begin with the purpose of education, as I understand it, and my role within it as an instructor. I want to then share challenges that I feel that I face, but I feel that we all face in our own contexts. Then I'll recap very quickly the benefits of reflection.

I don't propose to develop a framework. I don't think that I need to. I think there are very excellent frameworks out there which can be adapted for usage across the curriculum. Instead, I wish to emphasise the importance of reflection to maintain individuality in learning. And I will end briefly by talking about what I think our role could be in supporting this individual experience.

So, just quickly, the purpose of law school education: Students come to law school for a variety of purposes. But for us as legal instructors, the idea is for us to develop students into legal professionals, to teach them the nuts and bolts of being a lawyer, and hopefully get them to leave law school with a more critical approach to their life and their work than when they came in. And if we're lucky, we also help inculcate values of ethics, responsibility and reflection. In his fantastic TED Talk in 2013, the late Sir Ken Robinson described the role of a teacher as one of facilitating learning. He went on to point out that the education system today is focused more on assessment than on teaching and learning. And while he was talking about K-12 education, I think that holds true for higher education and law school education as well. Students come to college for a variety of reasons. As the capitalist world has become increasingly powerful, a college education has become a prerequisite to social mobility, to a stable income and a more comfortable life. This has meant that students who would otherwise have chosen not to come to college at all don't have a choice in the matter. And now we have classrooms populated with students whose driving

consideration is the ability to gain employment, rather than engaging in education for the benefits of knowledge itself. We find all types of students in our classrooms, and our job is now to help them all along their individual journeys.

A diverse classroom in Pakistan means a variety in socioeconomic class, in gender, in ethnicity, and if we're lucky, in religion. In other places, I understand, of course, that diversity also includes diversity in race. This diversity makes our classrooms richer. It provides for deeper conversations, but it can also be challenging for instruction. And so, John Biggs helps us think about teaching for diverse classrooms by focusing not on who the students are, or what we are doing with them, but rather on what we are helping the students do for themselves. And so, by constructive alignment, we are able to ensure that our teaching and learning activities and our assessments are aligned with our objectives, and assessments are aligned with our teaching and learning activities, so that students who are from diverse backgrounds and are there for a variety of reasons are also forced to engage in all the activities, including reflection, that we want them to engage in. In their paper, "*Building a Self-Reflective Muscle in Diverse First Year Law Students*," Anna Cody and Sandra Noakes encourage universities to help students develop their academic and professional identities in parallel. This can be done in part, they say, by encouraging reflection amongst diverse students. Incorporating reflection into our assessments is one possible way of encouraging diverse classes of students to reflect upon their learning.

Now, some challenges, and a lot of these things have already been spoken about, especially in Anna Pivaty and Aurora Canova's presentation just earlier this morning. So, a classroom full of students with diverse expectations is not a new phenomenon in law school. These challenges have been associated with education forever. But we also know, and we've heard this before, that research is showing us that legal education is creating professionals for competitive, adversarial environments, who are unhappy, and they look to serve rich clients, and they also engage in self-harming behaviours. Which brings me to the other thing that law school is doing, and it's been doing this for years, is that it is training students to serve a particular type of client. As Wexler had noted back in 1970, law schools prepare us for clients who are otherwise living regular lives within the law, and they come across a problem. They need a divorce, or they need to enter into a contract. And our job is to help them engage with the law, after which they will go back to their regular lives within the law. Unfortunately, most people in the world do not fit this description.

Much has already been said in academia about these challenges, but I just want to note these issues here, because they may be addressed by structuring our curriculum in a manner that forces students to carve out time to reflect upon the kind of lawyer they wish to be, and the kind of world they wish to contribute to. This practice will help students develop their individual professional identity. Research has shown that instilling a sense of purpose early on amongst law students has also been linked to stronger mental health in law students, and in the lawyers that they eventually become. And yesterday somebody was talking about how lawyers who work for a vocation and a calling, rather than just a job, are happier, and I tend to agree with that. In addition to these cultures of competitiveness, our classrooms, like all classrooms across the world, are now populated by students who are very well versed in artificial intelligence and its use. So if you are like me, you have received at least one, or perhaps two, assignments where students have forgotten to remove their AI bot's offer to help them further. And so we now at least understand how AI works. And we know it's here to stay, and it can potentially be a very useful tool. But our concern is common. We want students to not outsource their critical, or any kind of, thinking to artificial intelligence, and that adds a layer of challenge to our instruction.

Another phenomenon, also widely discussed in this symposium, is the reduction of space for exchange of ideas. Universities are under greater pressure to conform to state narratives, and students are also less willing to have their worldviews challenged inside classrooms. The case for invocation of critical thinking, which is one of the basic goals of a legal education, critical thinking skills that are crucial to development of law graduates, have the potential to degenerate into what Peter Gabel has described as *bifurcated critical thought*. The ability to point out a disconnect between the law and its values is a useful skill, but without providing a constructive way forward, it's not critical inquiry, it's just questioning. It's not helping students develop a critical lens, it's just criticism for the sake of it.

The restriction of spaces of free inquiry also leads to a need to conform. Power structures are reinforced when students begin to self-censor for fear of asking the wrong questions. One fear is state repression. Another fear is social censure and vicious retaliation from citizens, which is also something that we experience in greater numbers, I think, now than before. As pointed out by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in her Reith Lecture on freedom of speech in

2022, we now live in broad, settled ideological tribes. Our positions are already assumed based on our tribal affiliation. The basis for conformity is not faith and not reason. We cannot speak out loud thoughts that do not align. Many young people are now growing up in this tribal existence, not asking questions for fear of asking the wrong questions. I think that the law school classroom often acts as such a tribe, as does the larger university campus. This new culture portends the death of curiosity, the death of learning, and the death of creativity. Nothing needs more freedom than creativity.

A final problem that arises out of the closing of spaces for conversation is a reification of us versus them.

And so, reflection. We know that reflection has long been understood as a way of deepening a student's engagement with their learning. There are many vocations that benefit from reflection, as we also heard yesterday. In law schools, reflection has mostly been the domain of clinical legal studies, and I think clinic has led from the front in guiding and teaching students how to reflect in their interactions with clients, in their interactions with social structures, as well as their experience of being in a trial. There is one simple but crucial layer that reflection adds to critical thought. That is the importance of looking inward. It is not just about asking questions. It is about looking inside to find one's bearing and become mindful about one's personal position. Reflection allows us to become critically aware of our own assumptions about the world, and this is the first step to breaking barriers between us versus them. Freire said that true emancipation through education is emancipation. We can't become like the oppressor. We have to free ourselves. Then we have to free the oppressor. But how do we become free when we are afraid to ask questions, for fear that they may be the wrong questions? And if we continue to tolerate classrooms which create a need to conform?

Reflection also sharpens one's critical insight. Today, I want to propose that it does more, by allowing students the space to reflect individually on their own learning, on what they brought to the experience, how their individual circumstances affected their response, and what insight they have to offer to the concept. Reflection is an inherently individual process. Students sitting in the same class, attending the same clinical trial, will necessarily have unique reflections on their learning. At the same time, the experience is a shared one. It arises from the same learning opportunity, but it breaks the narrative and the need for conformity. In a reflection, you're only answerable for your own experience. Your questions are your own. It is a political act.

So, in order to protect our students and our vocation of education, we need to bring back individuality into the learning experience. By incorporating reflection into the constructive alignment framework, it can become habit, and enhance the individual learning experience, by allowing each and every student to sit with their experience and hopefully force them out of the sameness of dominant ideologies.

And so, in our role as an instructor, I want you to refer to Michele Leering's work. But, out of time, I've had to restrict myself. But I think that she notes three worlds of student reflection, all of which overlap with each other to create the integrated reflective practitioner. So, these are self-reflection, critical reflection, and reflection on practice. All of these align in a larger domain of reflecting in the community. As faculty who are aiming to inculcate strong values of reflection in our students, it is our job to provide our students with this community for their reflection. I believe that providing students with a framework, giving them prompts when needed, and providing a safe space in which to express themselves, are essential elements that create this community of reflection.

In addition, and this might be obvious, we must reflect on our own practice. And I know this has been said before, but the last time I ran my own clinic, I was struck by how many thoughts I had which later escaped me. And as I was sitting in our van going from the prison back to the campus, I would be encouraging students to jot down their own thoughts and later realised that I had lost my own in the process. And so that's something that I've learned from.

But I think that for clinical courses, some aspects of reflection can also be conducted jointly. And the final thing that we must do as instructors is to always be aware of the power dynamics in the classroom. Even when we try to democratise our classrooms, it must be very mindfully done. These seemingly small measures create a space for inclusion of students who might otherwise be marginalised. If you want to encourage individuality of thought, we must create a safe space for it to develop and flourish.

We must think about the hidden curriculum that we are presenting to our students. And in order to save reflection from being a formulaic and checkbox activity, we have to work hard to create the space for it, and equip students with the tools for it as well.

So, my final thoughts. Reflection is uniquely placed to counter the challenges that we face today, including the outsourcing of thinking to AI, but also self-censorship. It is an important way that we can encourage individuality in learning, so that we aren't graduating lawyers who are afraid to think for themselves and are afraid to ask questions.

And so, in all the benefits, I think this is another benefit that I've really come to value. And so, we should really, I think, finally just think about ourselves and our role, and how we can encourage that, and how we become more reflective ourselves. Thank you very much.

(Sharry Aiken) Thank you so much. And Angbeen, really a rich presentation, and lots to think about for those of us who are instructors.

It's my pleasure to introduce Gillian Calder, Professor with the Faculty of Law at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada, who will be addressing "*Embodiment as Critical Reflection, Images and Art in the Law School Classroom*." Over to you, Gillian.

30:28 (Gillian Calder).

In the spring of 2025, UVic Law's Faculty Council decided to change our foundational first year course, *Legal Research and Writing*, from the graded course it had always been to pass/fail. The primary goal was to alleviate some of the stress that students articulate in our first-year curriculum, bearing the risk that it would also send the message that LRW is less important than other substantive law offerings. And so, I decided to teach it - for two reasons. The first was that I'm a scholar of legal education, and I have a long commitment to critical pedagogies, ways of being and knowing that are disruptive to the general norm of first-year legal education, and, in my view, well suited to fostering engagement in the course, so essential to the work of becoming a dynamic, contextual, empathetic and effective legal advocate. The second was my desire to shift the orientation of the course, from one that had historically focused on the formalistic production of correct legal documents, to a course that centred on the development of core competencies, including putting into action my strongly held view that reflective practice is integral to legal education.

What I witnessed in this pivotal year for law at UVic Law was that, by shifting the frame on some of the pedagogies used, I was able to evince emotional and affective responses to the work, facilitate active and deep learning, and promote the kind of knowledge transfer that enables students to apply information and skills in different future contexts. It became clear that when students approach learning with the kind of conscious attention that embodied reflection elicited, they became carefully observant of nuance and subtleties. And so, I argue here that embodiment is one means of putting critical reflection into action, of weaving ethical professionalism into the learning of law.

What I hope to do here are five things. First, talk about the way the course was reimagined. Secondly, share the reasoning behind situating critical reflection as one of the five competency pillars. Third, offer some of the ways that reflective practice was integrated. Fourth, provide detail on one of those examples, the visual gallery. And conclude with some reflections on the magic that happened.

My contribution to this important symposium on reflective practice for legal professionals, building on the work so far, is to offer some thoughts on things I've tried, to argue that embodied and arts-based practices are examples of critical reflection, and important tools in the toolkits of legal educators seeking to integrate the competence of reflective practice into the law school classroom.

In the summer of 2025, I set out to restructure LRW as a means through which to introduce the key competencies of a legal education, and to reimagine perhaps the most important course the students will take at law school as a dynamic learning opportunity. The course was ultimately redesigned around five competencies: legal research, analytical reasoning, communication, critical reflection, and interpersonal engagement. And within each of those pillars, a series of sub-competencies, ranging from purposeful reading to technological acuity, in the context of both the common law and Indigenous legal orders. With amazing research assistance, I identified eight checkpoints,

beginning with, what is LRW and why does it matter, through interrogation across difference, to storytelling as persuasive practice.

The course was evaluated through two portfolios, one in the fall with four components: a critical reflection, creative writing, scaffolding in legal research, and a legal memo. And a final portfolio with five components: a case comment, client consultation and opinion letter, a visual project, and a final factum. All assignments were assessed on the rubric of required competencies achieved to an articulated standard.

To introduce this work seamlessly, the overall arc of the course was set to meet the terms of problem-based learning, one that would offer students the opportunity to work creatively through complex, realistic and messy problems, often as a team, and in ways that are inherently complementary to the work of reflective practice, to centre the lived experiences of people impacted by law.

This year, the problem the course set out to address was law's regulation of youth health. In the fall, the entire first year class worked with issues connected to transgender youth, including gender-affirming care. In the spring, the students were asked to engage with Jordan's Principle and the delivery of government-funded health care to Indigenous children. And finally, the course focused on questions tied to deemed consent in the context of involuntary psychiatric care.

Critical reflection, as we've heard throughout this symposium, is essential to the development of ethical professionals in the practice of law. My goal in this course was not only to highlight that importance, but to integrate the principles of reflective practice throughout, to create space for students to evaluate their assumptions, recognise their feelings, and use their ethical imaginations in ways that are valuable, healthy, responsible and kind. This was done through standalone discussion, in structured exercises, and also by including reflective practice as a core competency in several of the formal assessments.

It was also done through embodied practice. I embrace that the arts are essential to telling law's stories, and integral to the goal of learning to live at ease with multiple truths, irresolvable conflicts, and abundant ambiguities. By incorporating more diverse and thick opportunities for reflection, I could give the students space through which to revisit and reconsider prior commitments, in light of other commitments, changed circumstances, or new information. The capacity to imagine is part of what makes us human and is essential to any effort to conceive of and realise something new. By drawing on pedagogies of embodiment, a course, even one as traditionally doctrinal as LRW, can be a way to activate and enhance the ability of students, publics and clients to experiment or play with existing and new possibilities.

As Michele Leering has argued, legal educators are in a powerful position to prepare students to become more reflective learners, nurturing their capacity to become more self-directed, resilient, effective, efficient, creative, and collaborative. What I add is that, to truly embrace the mantra that the whole body thinks, not just the brain, I had to open up space for different kinds of engagement, including emotional intelligence and curiosity, if I wanted to achieve the course's foundational aims, and inflame students' passion for learning in the process.

And so, I asked them to write a letter to their future selves, go outside and find a plant Indigenous to Victoria, and respond to a series of questions about that experience. I introduced them to the ethics of AI use. We engaged with Indigenous stories and traced the legal principles that inhere in those stories. We talked about trauma. They were asked to engage in a poetry workshop, as a means to understand that words are their creative superpower, and to share one of the layers of scaffolding in their encounter with the difficult legal issues surrounding transgender youth in Canada today. They were given the chance to learn about inequities in Indigenous health care by watching a film as a primary text. And they worked collaboratively to understand the workings of BC's Mental Health Act, so they could offer legal and non-legal advice to a client actor.

And throughout this work, they were given opportunities to build on their learning, offering them a chance to experience the grounding that a reflective practice could offer.

So let me conclude by talking about one of the places where the competency of reflective practice was made visible, and how, through asking students to create art, I was also asking them to confront the almost exclusive emphasis in legal education on textual resources, on languages and their manipulation, and the danger that in that exclusive focus

they might never acquire the skill of coming to see the ethical complexity of any given situation, or to overcome the limitation of the categories with which they are working. So, in order to further understanding of the ways questions of law and identity are shaped in our communities, to enable students to understand their role in self-education, allyship and collaboration, I asked them to venture beyond the classroom and create a visual project which responded to the theme of the assignment, law stories, to demonstrate ways in which stories are told beyond text. These, with permission, are the images that you have been viewing.

The projects could take a range of forms, from visual arts, baked goods, photography, papier mâché, sewing, movement, children's storybooks, and so on. And the students were divided into four groups, asked to create a gallery of their projects, to create them with their classmates, and then to lead me through the gallery. Part of the assignment was the work they did to tell their own story. The rest of the assignment was listening to their classmates, seeing the connections between the works, and understanding the collaborative value of juxtaposition, disruption, and alignment. The students were asked to demonstrate their work by uploading two photographs to our learning platform, one of their project, the other of their project situated within the gallery. And I evaluated that work with attention to the competencies of the assignment.

And while those ranged from enhancing conceptual thinking, to developing personal values and sense of justice, through cultural competence and collaboration, it was the competency of reflective practice that struck me most. That is, by asking these students to explore the role of the visual in telling law's stories, and to do that in collaboration with each other and across difference, they were able to model deep learning and show a bridge of meaning that connected to work they had found throughout the course, signalling direction and impetus to growth non-textually, in a way that had not been otherwise visible. The use of the visual, and the way that they modelled an iterative uptake of their learning, enabled what Caputo and Luz call far transfer, particularly the ability to use new skills in evolving circumstances. To offer, as Julian Webb argues, that the importance of knowledge lies in its power to create within us a capacity for action. And while action provides the stimulus for learning, it is the process of reflection which makes experience a source of knowledge. This was reinforced in the way that they connected with each other, listened to what their classmates had created, and thought about how to tell their collaborative story.

I saw firsthand how they took their experience of working with a client into the work of their visual storytelling, and forward into the creation of a more persuasive, effective factum. So many of the projects brought forward a difficult moment from the course's learning and then offered juxtaposition. It was simple but effective, and it was reflective praxis. It integrated theory and practice, fostered reflection on both the doing and the knowing, and enabled action that improved the ideas going forward. It made it possible to see the work of LRW through different eyes.

So, in conclusion, timing a bit off, the goal of this brief pedagogical snapshot has been to build on the arguments made throughout the symposium, that the freedom and exploration of critical reflection builds a stronger aptitude for creative problem solving. The arts prompt students to reflect on the information they are learning, and how exactly they are using that information. And so, I've offered some thoughts on what that might look like in action, by positing these innovative acts of reflective practice as moments of transformational learning.

We illuminate legal pathways to social justice, integral to the work of training our students to be both humane professionals and good human beings. Thank you so much.

(Sharry Aiken) Thank you, Gillian. Wow, I would love to take that class. That's what I can say, 100%. Far cry from the course I experienced myself. Thank you so much.

So, next up is not Avni Bahri, who unfortunately had some difficulties with respect to a flight being delayed and won't be able to join us, but we will have her presentation up on the website (editor's note - under the Abstracts tab) in due course, and we'll let you know about that.

But we're going to proceed now to Emmanuelle Bernheim, who is Canada Research Chair in Mental Health and Access to Justice with the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Law, French Common Law Program, in Ottawa. And Emmanuelle is going to be speaking to her paper, *"From Reflective Learning to Political Engagement: How Can We Get Students Interested in the Law of Marginalized People?"* And, Emmanuelle, there you are.

43:43 (Emmanuelle Bernheim)

Thank you. And thank you for the really beautiful presentation, Gillian. It was really inspiring. Mine is not at all, you know, with that kind of beautiful colours and pictures. But I will talk about my experience as a teacher, but also as a researcher, as I work with community groups for research, for years, in mental health and child welfare services and so on. And I've been working with legal clinics for a while, before I founded, with colleagues, an interdisciplinary clinic at the University of Ottawa. And I will talk a little bit about that. And I want to also say that I use the term marginalised people to really talk about the fact that people are subjected to real discrimination, structural violence. And this is exactly what I want students to be able to understand, and, in relation with this and with the structural inequalities, consider differently, or maybe have a reflection about what is their role in community. So, their role as legal students, maybe as legal practitioners, but also as community members.

So, I will talk about two experiences I had. One in a Mental Health and the Law course, which is an elective course in the third year of the bachelor degree in civil law. In this course I try really to have different on the ground activities. So, they will go, for example, to the courthouse, they will attend hearings, and we will meet with people with relevant experience talking about different situations, different issues, like seclusion rooms and restraints and so on. And this is what I will talk about. They will enroll in the *Community Service Learning* program, which is a program we have at the university where they will work with a community group. So how it works is that before the semester I will meet different community groups. It can be in mental health and mental health advocacy. We have a legal clinic, but also different groups working, for example, in harm reduction with women. And we then will design a project the student will work on, and it will be a project related to mental health law. But mental health law understood in a really broad way. And then we will design what will be the core of the student work, and the requirements. So, it will be really different from one project to another. They will work on information documents. They will produce research papers. They will participate, for example, in workshops, and things like that. So, it will be really different from one project to another, but they will have to produce a personal reflection for me. So, it's a five page reflection. They are really free to talk about what they want, about their experience with the community groups, about the experience they had with the people with lived experience. But I ask them to have this reflection in relation with the program and what they learned before, and how this experience was important, what it brings, what was different.

And then I will talk about the interdisciplinary social clinic, which I was talking about. In this clinic we have a lot of social work and nursing students working together. And we work really closely with community groups. We have individual consultations in soup kitchens, and we work with different community groups. The users of the clinic are unhoused persons. We work a lot also in the encampments. And with our students, we have conducted some structured interviews talking about their experience. And with students that have been in the clinic one or two years ago, talking about their experience and how they see this experience in relation with the work they do as professionals now.

So, we had interviews with social work, nursing, and law students. But I will talk about law students.

I think what is interesting is to see that in the personal reflections and the interviews, the students were free to talk about what they want, but there are really two topics they talked about. One is the experience they had. And the experience is really like lived experience. So, they talk about their emotions and experience in their body. And so, I think this is really important and I will come back to that. And then about their learning. So, what they learned and how it was different from what they learn usually in the classroom. So, about the experience, I think one of the things that is really important is that the students talk about the experience as transformative. So, they met new people. They were in a new environment. So, they talk about the difference, how it changed their ordinary living, how they discovered a completely new world through this experience. I think this is really the first thing that the people want to share through the interviews and their reflections. And they talk about the challenge it is for them. So, we prepare them in the classroom, like, you will have a solution for all the situations and it will be smooth. And they say it's not true at all, of course. But for them it's really a shock. And they explain that it's a challenge for them to find a new position in all this, and to realise that, well, the reality on the ground is very different from what they were thinking before, even if they had a chance to have other experience.

We do not have a lot of clinical experience in civil law in our law school's program, but even for people that were, for example, going for training in different offices and things like that, they were really talking about the fact that it's a really different experience for them.

One of the really important things I want to emphasise in the next year with the students in my classroom is how experiential knowledge is important first, and you need to recognise its value. But how expert knowledge, so the knowledge they have and they think they can bring to the people, can be interesting in relation with this experiential knowledge. And this is something they really talked about in interviews, saying that, well, they understood that it's really in co-creation with the people they met during their time at the clinic, for example, that they were able to understand how to work with these people and create something new. So, new knowledge for themselves and for the people they were working with. And so, they were talking themselves about the fact that, well, when I came, for example, to the clinic the first time, I was thinking that I will come here with my legal knowledge, helping everybody, and it's easy. And they moved from that kind of thinking about themselves to thinking about solidarity, the fact that, well, I can work with the people and we can share something all together.

And then I think another thing that is really interesting is that they talk themselves about the fact that they changed the way they see justice, they see law, and they see themselves as legal students and as legal professionals. And this different conception of justice is really built with the experience, through the experience, but with the people they met through this experience. It can be people from community groups. So, they understood better why and how engagement can make changes, and what is the place for law in this, and what are the limits.

And I think this is maybe the most important, is that they realised there's a limit, and maybe we need to change our way of seeing justice, and injustice, maybe not the courtroom, for example. It can be something else. And it's something they really realised, I think, through the discussion and the experience they have made on the ground. Again, I think that this is really embodied with the experience they've made in their own body. I think they come back a lot to that, the experience they had, the emotions they had, the way they were feeling bad because they realised they had privileges that others do not have, the fact that, well, for example, homelessness is something really different in theory and in practice.

I will finish with this. So, the learning part of it is really again connected to the experience they had. So, I think you cannot talk about learning without talking about the experience, and the fact that this experience is really personal, but makes differences that are similar for a lot of students. They were talking about interpersonal skills, the fact that they developed the capacity to listen to people, to have a more inclusive approach in the way they will interact with people, the fact that they will be able to collaborate with people with different knowledge. So it's true for people from, for example, community groups, but also with their colleagues in social work and in nursing, for example.

But I think the more important thing, and this is what I was talking about at the beginning of my presentation, is that through the experience they have, they understand really the systemic issues. So, it's not theoretical anymore for them. It's really something they see. They understand the relation between social determinants of health and the capacity to access rights and justice. And then what we see that is really interesting is that they're really engaged with the political dimension of law and legal practice. So, they start really working in community groups themselves. So even if the semester is over, they will continue their engagement, they will continue working with the community, and they will change the way they see themselves as legal practitioners. And I think there really is a shift between imagining themselves as legal practitioners and imagining themselves as community members. So, how can I contribute to this community with my role? It's true, as a legal practitioner, maybe, but it's not only like that that I can contribute, and it's a more holistic way of understanding their own role.

I will stop there. Thank you.

(Sharry Aiken) Thank you, Emmanuelle. Terrific.

Finally, we're going to hear from Sarah-Jane Nussbaum, who is Assistant Professor with the Faculty of Law at the University of New Brunswick. (Editor's note - recording paused during Prof. Nussbaum's presentation at her request, so a transcript is not available. She may post her speaking notes with her abstract – check the Abstracts tab under her name.)

(Sharry Aiken) All right. Well, we have about 20 minutes for some discussion, and I'd actually like to call on Lisa Bliss first, if I may, who may have a few comments and or questions for the panel.

56:36 And I know after that we already have a question from Sarah-Jane that I'm going to ask you to unmute and address. And there may be others as well. The Q&A box is open if anyone wants to put one in there. And apologies for that. That was my timer. So, over to you, Lisa.

56:54 (Lisa Bliss)

Thank you so much, Sharry, and thanks to Sharry and Michele for this incredible symposium. I kind of feel like I've died and gone to heaven. I mean, just everything that everyone is talking about is so exciting and stimulating, and ideas are popping. And so, I just wanted to offer a couple of my own reflections, and thinking about particularly the novelty in everyone's approach to how they're accomplishing helping students engage in reflection, and in which context. And I really liked Angbeen's idea that we're encouraging reflective practice, but we're also trying to help students maintain their individuality, which is so critical in the law school context, where there's this sort of bunching together of personalities, and not always room for individuality. Or students don't always feel safe to be individuals until they kind of figure out what the whole community is about. And, I don't know, law school kind of pushes everyone into this conforming persona. And so, I really like thinking about that, and just the idea that we bring our whole selves into our practice of, or understanding of, law, and helping students understand that it's okay to be you. You're just you, wearing your lawyer shoes. And so that's, I think, a big component of the reflective practice learning in law school.

And I love the use of art and other novel ideas as ways to push students into these other forms of expression. And those are things that I've tried in my own work and find really exciting.

And I guess what I wanted the panelists to maybe address is, to what degree are you being transparent and helping students understand the why? Why are we doing this? Why are we doing these exercises? What is the purpose? And not just by telling them, but helping them really extract meaning from, for example, Gillian, your options for students to use the arts and to use creative expression and helping them make the connection as to how this does relate to their work as a lawyer. Not just in reflecting the competencies, but them really inhabiting and embodying the act of working with clay, or working with a group, or working on a project that seems on its face to be not connected. I see the connection, but our colleagues may not see the connection. And so, I'm just wondering if you all could maybe comment on that. Just to what degree is your facilitation of these experiences transparent?

*** PUBLIC TRANSCRIPT ENDS HERE – Moderator and audience Q & A omitted ***