Episode 6: Creativity Everything

Starting in the very first weeks of the global pandemic, a steady stream of news stories have revealed a fascinating increase in crafting art work and various other forms of hands-on creative practice. From building covid-gardens to singing Sea Shanties on TikTok, many of us have turned to creative activities to pass the time and stay connected. In this episode, Sara chats with Dr. Gauntlett about his upcoming book, Creativity: Seven Keys to Unlock Your Creative Self, and about his ground-breaking, deeply inclusive approach to studying and doing creativity.

Did you spend more time than usual making or crafting this past year? Did you take up knitting or finally finished that cool crochet project that you’d somehow abandoned years ago? Were you frustrated by the long wait for oil paints and brushes, as art supplies stores struggle to keep up with the sudden massive demand? If so, you’re not alone. Media coverage from the past several months suggests that participation in crafting, making, art and various other forms of hands-on doing exploded during the pandemic, from building COVID-gardens to starting DIY home improvement projects, from refocusing time and energy on our existing talents and hobbies to taking online courses and learning new skills. For some, this was driven by the sudden need to keep ourselves and our little loved ones occupied during the shutdowns. For others. The abnormal and devastating circumstances had the unexpected side effect of opening up or freeing big chunks of time and attention, giving us the breathing room, as well as the impetus to tinker, get our hands dirty, and create.

Of course, not everyone had the luxury of doing arts and crafts during this period. And many of us were instead preoccupied with surviving, grieving, or combating the virus itself. The barrage of Instagram posts featuring recently completed sewing projects and tweets about sourdough starters were also evidence of the stark divides and profound inequalities found in our pandemic experiences, both here in the West and globally. But creating and making are more than just leisurely past times. Scientists, philosophers
and other scholars from a range of disciplines have shown that engaging in hands-on creative activities has a myriad of benefits for our sense of self, our sense of community, our mental and emotional health, and our overall well-being. Creating can provide stress relief, a way to connect with others; it can support learning new materials, and help us to process our feelings and memories to name just a few. The research in this area reveals that the importance and value of engaging in creative activities should not be underestimated, even in times of crisis, perhaps especially in times of crisis.

Professor David Gauntlett is the Canada Research Chair in Creativity in the School of Creative Industries at Ryerson University in Toronto, where he leads the creativity everything lab, Dr. Gauntlett is an internationally renowned scholar, author and educator. His research explores creative processes, and the cultures that emerge around making and exchanging creative content, both online and off, professional and just for fun. His groundbreaking transdisciplinary work links social analysis of the value of creative engagement with work relating to the media and creative industries.

Dr. Gauntlett is the author or editor of 13 books, including *Creative Explorations: New Approaches to Identities and Audiences*, published by Routledge in 2007, and *Making is Connecting: The Social Power of Creativity, from Craft and Knitting to Digital Everything*, published by Polity Press in 2011, with a second edition published in 2018. He has also created a number of highly popular digital resources, videos and play things, and has worked with a number of the world’s leading creative organizations, including a 12-year plus partnership with Lego. That’s right, the building toy company. He’s currently working on a new book entitled *Creativity: Seven Keys to Unlock Your Creative Self*, which, when complete, will lay out his main ideas about creativity and creative activities, their roles, their meanings and their mechanisms.

I’m Sarah Grimes, Director of the Knowledge Media Design Institute at the University of Toronto, and host of the Critical Technology Podcast. Today I’ll be talking to Dr. David Gauntlett about his ongoing work on creativity, his methods for researching and practicing creativity, and his theory that creativity is a thing that you do.

Your lab at Ryerson is called the Creativity Everything lab. When you say creativity everything, what do you mean by that?
Dr. David Gauntlett  4:34

Well, we established the Lab to be about all kinds of creativity for all kinds of people. And so Creativity Everything seemed to be a name which suggested that broad encompassing kind of approach. So we’re concerned about developing opportunities for people to be creative and thinking about ways in which we can create platforms for creativity, which is any kind of environment, event, toy, tool, technology, thing that enables people to step into a world of creativity they wouldn’t otherwise have stepped into. And Creativity Everything seemed to encompass that, and encompass the idea that it’s not for a particular bunch of people, that it’s quite broad and expansive. And we want to be very inclusive in our approach.

Dr. Sara Grimes  5:21

So just to follow up on that, in this context, does creativity mean making things? Or is it focused on artistic creativity? What types of activities are you talking about?

Dr. David Gauntlett  5:34

Yeah, so it’s making things, but it’s not just artistic kind of creativity. It’s, as you know, creativity means people doing and making new things in science, or technology, or coding, or anything. And so we don’t want to develop insights that are being used to ceramicists only, or some, though I don’t even know what those would be. I think the lessons that we learn about creativity tend to be quite broadly applicable, but we’re certainly interested in all forms of creativity, which sometimes people do think you mean, artistic things, when you talk about creativity, but we’re not meaning it in that way. Although we’re just as happy with people doing artistic things as everything else.

Dr. Sara Grimes  6:16

You’re currently writing a book called Creativity. Can you tell us a little bit more about what the book is about?
Dr. David Gauntlett  6:23

First of all, the book was going to be called *Seven Keys to Creativity*. And I had seven different themes for chapters basically. And, and then I thought, why not just call it *Creativity*. So it’s *Creativity*. That, and it’s all the things I think I’ve learned about creativity in a book. And, of course, it has some order to it. And it’s not just my thoughts. It’s, but it’s drawing together lots of different things from lots of different places. It’s partly philosophical about the nature of creativity, but it’s also practical about how people can enhance, boost, keep going with their creativity. And so it’s sort of both a handbook and discussion, which I think, you know, people are interested in creativity and their own creativity, are interested in these discussions about creativity and other creators. So it all mixes together, hopefully quite well.

Dr. Sara Grimes  7:18

That seems like an incredibly vast topic.

Dr. David Gauntlett  7:23

Yea, it does take in lots of things, but I like taking in, I like things being quite broad, rather than too narrow. It takes a different approach to some other writing about creativity in the academic world, when the study of creativity tends to be dominated by people in the field of psychology, who take a particular, quite often quantitative kind of approach, writing quite technical things about creativity in journals. And I take a more practice-based approach, and approach which is interested in talking to creative people about their experiences, or people who don’t necessarily identify as creative, but all kinds of people about creative experiences. And so trying to do it in a way, which is more broad and open and sociological kind of approach, rather than the approach of the psychologists. It does include a lot of what I would call psychology. It’s about people and how they go about things, and how they use their brain to manipulate material to generate new things and insights. So that is psychological stuff. But the approach that I take is not the approach that’s taken by academic psychologists. And part of that is the emphasis on practice, and not on doing weird experiments, but on just taking people in their lives who may or may not have creative experiences. And talking with them about that, or leading them through creative experiences, and seeing how that goes and talking with them through the experience of doing.
Dr. Sara Grimes  9:02

So you mentioned that a lot of the academic literature on creativity seems to be coming out of psychology. And I’ve certainly encountered that in my own research on kids and creativity, particularly frameworks like the creativity quotient, and other approaches that try to measure and classify forms of creativity. I found that there are similar traditions coming out of education studies, actually, some of which approach creativity in similarly, propulsive or instrumental terms. But from your description just now, it sounds like you’re more focused on the experiential and cultural dimensions of creativity. Can you say a little bit more about that?

Dr. David Gauntlett  9:43

Yeah. You’re right about that kind of experiential approach. And it’s not so much just to kind of, it’s not just academic observation of that we’re like looking at a thing because it’s the thing we can study. It’s more engaged than that and thinking about how can we help and support people to unlock the creativity that they may wish to have in their lives. How can we create sort of structures and environments that would support that? Yeah, it’s good to you mentioned about measurement. I don’t believe in that at all, like the idea of measuring creativity. That’s one of the things that the psychologists I refer to spend a lot of time working out different kinds of measures.

But in the book, I was writing a thing about how I just don’t think creativity is a thing that people have different levels of, and it’s quite common that people think that, and people say, you know, I’m not creative; this other person is really creative; I’m not creative. You know, I wish I have a level of creativity. And often people have experiences, often, it seems to me around the age of 12, 13, 14, where some authority figure, often a teacher, without necessarily meaning to be harmful, presumably, but they say some comment, which leads that person to believe that, oh, I’m not creative, let’s give up on that. And then there might be 20 or 30 years pass until they then think, hmm, well, maybe I, maybe that person was wrong, because they’ve remembered it all those years. And and maybe I’ll give it a go. Or maybe they never give it a go. But I think often it may be a teacher who’s just like, oh, well, you know, that that’s nice, but don’t do it like that, do it like this. Some little comment where they’re not trying to be nasty, necessarily; they might think they’re being helpful by suggesting you do it in a different way. But it just knocks people that people’s sense
of creativity is quite fragile, I guess. And it, it gets knocked, and people think, oh, I haven’t got that.

But in terms of that thing about whether you do have an amount that you can measure, and I think it’s not an amount of juice that people have. The metaphor about creativity muscles is much better. That’s not my metaphor, but is a metaphor about the idea of muscles. So it’s like, we’ve all got muscles. But if you never go to a gym, then if you, if you’ve never been to a gym, and then you go along to a gym, when you’re gonna find that it’s quite difficult to do all of the gym stuff, because you’re just not exercise those muscles. And similarly, with creativity, if you haven’t exercise your creativity muscles, then if you’re suddenly faced with some creative challenge, you’re going to find it a struggle. But we’ve all got these muscles and can use them. And so when you look at somebody and say, oh, they’re really creative, I’m not so creative. What it really means is, they they have been creative, they’ve done creative things, they’ve exercised those muscles, they’ve got the experience of trying, and maybe failing to do creative things. But you could also do that; you may not have the experience of trying to do that, but you could have the experience of trying do that. It’s just a thing that you do. So creativity is the thing that you do, not I think that we can measure.

Dr. Sara Grimes 12:38

So a lot of what you’ve said so far kind of refers to, you know, this general audience of everybody can be creative. I know from your previous work that you also bring this same argument to academic research and academic contexts. And thinking specifically, of your book *Creative Explorations*, which I use a lot with my students in, in my own work. Would you mind talking a little bit about how we can bring some of these lessons into research contexts?

Dr. David Gauntlett 13:10

Yeah, it’s nice to hear that you still use that. It seemed around that time that came out in 2007. And there seems to be a rise in using creative and visual methods, then which I was part of trying to generate conversation around that. The idea that instead of just getting people to verbalize answers to sociological questions, then you could get people
doing things and engage their brains in a kind of creative stimulating activity, which, which had a number of features or advantages. One is just that, in a sense, you give people more time to process and generate responses to the thing that you’re interested in. Based on the observation that sociologists or humanities researchers often turn up with some questions that they have in their mind, because there’ll be searches on that topic, and so they’re going to ask me more questions about those things. And you’ve got this expectation that people are going to have instant answers to those things. Because in an interview situation, the person needs to start talking almost immediately. Otherwise, it’s weird. So they do and they say things. And those are things which their brain can generate around that topic, and which are probably, you know, things that they believe more or less. But we certainly found out from, from research on this that the kind of first pass of what a person thinks about I think they say, if you just take that as being their response, then fine. That’s what researchers normally do. But if you actually then go through a process over a number of weeks where they’re making something and talking about it, well, then you get much deeper, nuanced kind of responses, which kind of suggests that some of the things they said in week one, were, you know, they weren’t false, or they weren’t lying, but they weren’t, they weren’t closest to what that person really thinks about a thing.

And by taking people through a creative process, that and the process of being able to reflect and make something which represents their thoughts, and then you can kind of look at it and change it and edit it and realize, oh, you know, I’ve put this, but I’m going to put that, I should also put this, and I need to include this thing, I’m going to include that thing. And that process of being able to creatively generate a response to a research question seem fruitful. And that hasn’t taken over the world of research in the past decade has it, but there’s people experimenting more.

I suppose it did contribute to a slight growing sense of freedom about methods, and maybe a renewed interest in methods, because this kind of thing isn’t aware, everybody in universities thinks that methods is a boring topic. And nobody wants to teach the methods course, because it seems methods is just kind of procedure. It’s like having to teach people a bunch of procedures, which doesn’t sound interesting. And I don’t think that sounds interesting, either. But if you think about methods as like, methods are the only way that we know anything in social science or humanities, like how do we know
stuff, we know it, and are able to write about it, because we’ve got some methods that we deploy that generate knowledge. So the methods are the absolute crucial thing at the heart of it all. And without some good methods, you haven’t got anything. So that makes it exciting to talk about. And, and it means that we should question the methods we got and try to generate new ones in it, which is an interesting conversation to have. And it kind of goes to the nub of everything. How do we know anything in sociology? How do we know anything in politics or social science or whatever topic, it’s, it’s the result of the methods that we use. So the methods of interesting and important.

Dr. Sara Grimes 16:43

I want to ask you about creative practice, and the role of practice, in your work, in your writing, in how you engage with the theories you explore in your research, but also, as this larger practice in your life and kind of like way of being, what role does doing creative things have in your approach?

Dr. David Gauntlett  17:05

Hmm. Well, I do think that I need to be engaged in creative practice to be somebody who can think about the processes of creativity, and you know, how it works and all of that. It, it certainly helps if you’ve got your own creative practices. And, and, obviously, that’s things that I like to do anyway. But like, for example, I started making music about five years ago, as in a sense, a deliberate thing, because I didn’t think I’d be very good at it. Like I didn’t have the skills. I’ve like musical in my life, like many people in the normal kind of way, but I didn’t know that I would necessarily be that good at making it. And I certainly knew that I would have to be starting out in a way where it would not be good, you know, it’d be kind of embarrassing and humiliating. And being a sort of middle-aged, white man who’s like I’m gonna make electronic music notes potentially seems naff and embarrassing. And I deliberately throw myself into that space to face the humiliation of failure as it were, and and to try to get better, and to be doing something that I’m not necessarily good at. And now knowingly, I’ve got better at it. So it’s not as embarrassing as it theoretically ought to be in this approach. And that engagement with greater versus, as you say, is, is central to it.

And I don’t want to be entirely autoethnographic about what I say about creativity. So
obviously retaining an engagement with other makers and creators. And we create workshops and things where people who maybe don’t identify at all is greater people who are doing things, I also do things with people who do very much identify as creators, or artists, making different kinds of things. And also, as well as those things, myself, and my own experience of that certainly helps and feeds into it. And thankfully, the idea of practice-based research where you as a researcher are doing and making things as a way of understanding a topic means that I can sort of approach it in that way. And it’s not purely autobiographical or anecdotal, which doesn’t seem quite right to me. But it’s, it is part of a more rigorous structure of engaging in creative practice as a way of understanding creative practice, which does make sense.

Dr. Sara Grimes 19:25

I also want to ask you about material and digital and the relationship between the two, both in terms of their roles in creative practice and creativity, and in terms of some of the emphasis that’s found in the literature on making and maker culture, on the importance of hands-on tactile material engagement. What do you think about the relationship between digital and material, and the traditional divisions between these two modes of engagement?

Dr. David Gauntlett 19:53

Well, I think of them as a continuum for one thing, and it always works well. If you’ve got the, the physical or the material and the digital working in some kind of tandem. Of course, we do some things that are purely digital We do some things that are just in the physical world, and we don’t do anything digital with them. And that’s fine. Thinking about ways to bridge those, and to create kind of hybrids is interesting. Like in my past role, and one of the things I did was working with Lego, Lego Serious Play, which was a very physical hands-on way of getting people to externalize their thoughts. It’s a process where adults build metaphors of their experiences in Lego, which sounds ridiculous when you say it like that. But you lead people through a workshop process where they get used to using Lego, and then thinking about metaphors and representing things in metaphors, and then getting to the point where they can basically build models of their internal worlds or their relationships within an organization, or within the experience
of education, or healthcare, or something else and, and make it very physical. And then it's that thing where you've got a physical object in front of you can you look at it, you can talk about it to other people, because you've got this thing that gives you kind of prompts for talking in different dimensions to talk about. And you can edit it, and change it, and realize that if you're including this, this and this, then you also need to add on this, this and this. And so it's a very interesting way of externalizing knowledge, a person's knowledge and being able to reflect it, and review it, and then talk about it. And that's very powerful. And that's purely hands-on basically, you can do sort of digital versions, but there's definitely something that comes from the, the physical connection with the materials. People have a nice kind of nostalgic feeling about Lego anyway. Or even people who've not seen Lego before find it quite easy to make something pretty satisfactory.

And the thing about how your hands, have the most nerve endings of any part of your body, which means the most connections to your brain, so there is that sense in which your hands are doing the thinking. It sounds kind of semi-mystical or kind of you think, is that really right? Can that really be science that your hands are doing the thinking, when you're putting stuff together? But because your hands are directly connected into your brain. It is like your brain doing the work of manipulating material and making things. So so there is meaning to that. So, and so for that, in that case, in particular, I have a great attachment to the power of physical manipulation of materials. But also all of my working career, at least, I've been very engaged with the digital, and I was one of the first kind of people to be very active, having my own website with lots of resources on it, and all that kind of thing in sort of mid-90s and, and the idea that it is part of an academics job to be, you know, putting stuff out there and making it available and to be engaged in all of the vibrant digital culture. And, and the link between the two is really interesting. If you're somebody that makes physical stuff, well, then how do you get it out there, and the ways in which you can connect with others and show your process. Even if you can't exchange the sort of main thing that you make online in a very direct way, there's still a lot that you can do about communication, and process and exchange of ideas and inspiration. All of those things, online is obviously very useful for.

Dr. Sara Grimes 23:16

Listening to your answers just now, and thinking about previous conversations that you
and I have had, it sounds like you’re actually still pretty optimistic about the internet and online culture, which I have to say is pretty divergent from in most of the other academics studying digital culture at the moment. Why are you so optimistic about the internet?

Dr. David Gauntlett 23:39

I’m, to be fair, I am both. I think it’s like there’s a pile of good things, there’s a pile of bad things. And it’s worth talking about both of them. And the pile of good things doesn’t really affect the barrel of bad things, and vice versa. So, so obviously, there are many arguments that people can make, which I am, you know, I’m sympathetic to them. And also they just like factually true beyond anything about sympathy. It’s just the facts about the surveillance culture, surveillance capitalism, the potential for people being abusive and bullying online. All of the different dimensions of bad things you can say about the internet are true and worrying. And it’s good that there are people that talk about that, because that’s important.

At the same time, the things that were true about the internet in the 1990s remain true. This certain things that now seem to exist within certain frames that makes life a bit more difficult. But the very obvious basic thing about the internet, which that it enables you to connect with other people who are interested in the kind of stuff that you’re interested in, which previously was often difficult you did, you know, you’re interested in whatever niche of whatever it was, that you were interested in, and you were aware that there might be other people in the world interested in that thing. And maybe you could sign up for a newsletter about it or something or, you know, read a magazine. But being able to have proper exchanges with people interested in your kind of thing was difficult. It’s very basic obvious thing about the internet that the internet enabled you to find those people all around the world. And that’s very powerful and is still true.

And, and the opportunities just to connect with a creative community to show your work, to exchange ideas, to be inspired by what other people are doing, to problem solve together, to find new techniques and ways of doing things. And all of that is still great, you know, that it’s, those things are still great, and are still just as possible as they ever were. And they exist at the same time, as you know, all of the bad stuff. And the two things often come from the same source like you can enthuse a great length about the value of
people forming communities on particular platforms, which actually offer a platform, or can be used for other purposes, and are doing awful things in the background. I mean, Facebook's the obvious one there. And we can enthuse about the value of being able to look up a YouTube video about absolutely anything that's absolutely fantastic. And all different people sharing ideas and how to do things on YouTube, that is great. And is part of the mega-monolith, Google doing all of the things that Google does.

And I think it's interestingly difficult to, to talk about these things. And for one thing, there's a strong culture in academia that you, it's good to be critical, right, which means you talk about the negative things, and you get kudos and respect for talking about those things and bringing them to light, which is true, good and fine. And I'm glad that people do bring the negative things to light that's valuable. But it's hard for people to hold both things in the air at once, and be able to talk about the good things and the bad things at the same time. And you just think that the academic world should be quite sophisticated and nuanced. But I think it finds it very hard to not just have an argument, which is like, well, these people are right, these people are wrong. This is the good stuff, and this is the bad stuff. So it's interesting trying to have a more nuanced conversation about it.

Dr. Sara Grimes  27:23

Yeah, in a sense, if there were no positives, then what would be the point of even fighting for it, right? That's why it's worth creating the critique and introducing regulation and trying to make things better, because otherwise, the solution would just be to turn it off and do something else. And very few academics are actually making that argument. But maybe not enough emphasis is placed on the things that we need to reclaim and protect when it comes to digital culture or life online.

Dr. David Gauntlett  27:52

Yeah, I think it is worth talking about the things that make digital culture valuable for people, because obviously, that is why, that's why we use it and engage in it, as you say, it wouldn't be a problem if it wasn't a value, because then people just wouldn't want to be using anyway. You've got good and bad things very much intertwined.
Dr. Sara Grimes  28:12

I’m going to shift gears a bit, and ask you a question I’ve asked all of my guests on the podcast this season. How has COVID-19 affected the people and processes at the heart of your research? So for starters, how is the pandemic affected creative practitioners?

Dr. David Gauntlett  28:29

Well, it's interesting, isn’t it? Because the COVID situation just really turns up your attention to lots of things, it turns up the question of like, how can we really use the internet, which is one of the things we can still use to its best advantage? I think it also raises questions about like, why are we even doing this thing, like when universities have to switch online, and do all their stuff online? It also raises this whole question about what, what is it that we're doing? What are the things that you want to somehow turn into an online experience? Or what is it University for? These fundamental things, and in terms of creative people, and I think COVID hasn’t been all bad. It's shocking to say, obviously, COVID is terrible thing. And, and, you know, the illness and death and loss and grief. And all of that is terrible.

I'm just going back how people have managed to pivot within this time. And I think people have been prompted to do all kinds of interesting new things that they otherwise wouldn’t have had to do. And it's been very interesting to see the pivoting that some people have done. And obviously, it would probably be nice to if we'd never had to do this. But for some people like those people who rely on, especially obviously having people in rooms, like performers, some people have just had to basically stop doing what they were doing. But I've been very interested to see, for example, stand-up comedians who were used to turning up in rooms doing their thing. And it was very much a live experience, and they got a lot of the positive feelings about just doing it, from the fact that they will physically standing in front of people in rooms who would laugh at the things that they did. That's the whole definition of the job. And then they are having to switch to doing different kinds of things. Some of which is still physical like doing it, doing it in car parks, and odd-seeming ways of having like people in different kinds of pods, in physical environments, and even a forest, or those kind of things. But, but also, of course, the the pivot to doing things digitally, and, and different ways of creating some kind of communal experience where people can be sort of enjoying themselves together, not just making
YouTube videos, I mean, making YouTube videos is an interesting challenge for those people too. But, but ways are having more engagement than that, and using stuff like Twitch or combining Twitch with other technologies and trying to make it some kind of living experience for people. That's been interesting to see.

Dr. Sara Grimes 30:58

And now can you tell us about the impact on everyday creativity, because it seems to have had a really positive impact, at least for some, on people's interests, and engagement and creative practices, crafting and making and so on?

Dr. David Gauntlett 31:13

Yeah, of course, there was that huge explosion of I mean, it was a proper news story that everybody was aware of the wave of people doing stuff on their balconies, you know, in Italy, people seeing from their balconies, or doing DJ sets, or displaying art in their windows, and is talking about this phenomenon. And you look at the dates. And the date of that story is I think, like March the 14th. And the lockdown in Italy only started on March 7th. So within a very short amount of time, people have started to engage in creative practices, because it helps them to survive, and to feel engaged, and to feel part of things.

And so the thing I love about that is that you might think that people would start to do some creative, creative activity. But you might imagine that would be like after three months of being really bored. And you know, sort of, we'd have to adjust to lock down, work out what we're going to do with our families, and what kind of new routines we're going to get into, and then some more time would pass, and then people would get more bored. And you know, three or four months in, then people might start to get out their paints, and their DJ, and all that. But the fact that they were doing it within the very first days of lockdown just shows to me how much people really want to be able to engage in those kinds of practices.

I also had a great conversation with, there's a woman called Dr. Margaret Harris, who's the Head of Critical Care at Women's College Hospital in Toronto. So she's the head of a team who are dealing every day with, you know, the absolute frontline workers in the battle
against COVID. And these people who were obviously exhausted and facing all of this, you know, the huge cognitive load of dealing with all of that. And at the same time, those people were still finding it really nice to find moments of creativity in their lives. And the reason she was talking to me is because she wanted me to go to speak in there. So they have an annual get-together, which was in December. And she wanted me to talk about the power of creativity. And we had this conversation where she wanted me to do that.

And, and I started thinking, you know, I, what, what could I possibly say to all the people that are really dealing with this terrible thing. And you can't just have me talking about the pleasure of, you know, painting some unicorns and making a bit of music as, by cheerful approach to the value of creativity, doesn't seem like the way I can just start talking about to people who are at the absolute epicenter of the COVID crisis. But, but she was really insistent. I was trying to get out of it, basically. But she was very insistent said no, no, no, no, people really want to talk about this aspect of creativity in their lives, which they found really, really vital, even though they are spending, you know, 98% of their time dealing with this horrible thing. They also want to have a creative outlet, because it helps them to feel grounded, it gives them a thing they’ve got control over. That's what was one of my explanations validate that opportunity to see a process from start to end. And know that it's the thing that you’ve thought of doing and you’ve done it, you’ve arrived at a thing and you can share it with others. That’s all nice. I guess when you’re at the epicenter of an uncontrollable COVID crisis, well, then that's the opposite. Although, of course, they're being extremely inventive every day, and finding new ways of dealing with things, and just new ways to smash processes together to make them work a bit more effectively and all of that. So creativity is obviously involved in that but my kind of nurturing self-care creativity also has a place for them, which was heartening to hear, even though I felt like I shouldn’t even be talking about.

Dr. Sara Grimes 34:48

A big thanks to Professor Gauntlett for joining us today. Please follow the links in the podcast description to find out more about Dr. Gauntlett’s work, his upcoming book, “Creativity”, and the other publications mentioned in today’s episode, as well as information on where to send your questions or comments. This was the final episode of season one, but we’ll be back in the late fall of 2021 for Season Two, which will feature
episodes focused on research relating to the timely and often controversial topic of children, youth and digital technologies. The Critical Technology Podcast is produced by me, Sara Grimes, with support from the KMDI. Audio mix, music and sound design by Turner Wigginton. Theme song by Taekun Park. Original artwork by JP King. Please subscribe to stay up-to-date on new episodes and posts as they become available. And thank you for listening.