



# **A New Culture of Learning: Cultivating the Imagination for a World of Constant Change**

*Douglas Thomas, John Seely Brown*

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The twenty-first century is a world in constant change. In *A New Culture of Learning*, Doug Thomas and John Seely Brown pursue an understanding of how the forces of change, and emerging waves of interest associated with these forces, inspire and invite us to imagine a future of learning that is as powerful as it is optimistic.

Typically, when we think of culture, we think of an existing, stable entity that changes and evolves over long periods of time. In *A New Culture*, Thomas and Brown explore a second sense of culture, one that responds to its surroundings organically. It not only adapts, it integrates change into its process as one of its environmental variables. By exploring play, innovation, and the cultivation of the imagination as cornerstones of learning, the authors create a vision of learning for the future that is achievable, scalable and one that grows along with the technology that fosters it and the people who engage with it. The result is a new form of culture in which knowledge is seen as fluid and evolving, the personal is both enhanced and refined in relation to the collective, and the ability to manage, negotiate and participate in the world is governed by the play of the imagination.

Replete with stories, this is a book that looks at the challenges that our education and learning environments face in a fresh way.

## **PRAISE FOR A NEW CULTURE OF LEARNING**

“A provocative and extremely important new paradigm of a ‘culture of learning’, appropriate for a world characterized by continual change. This is a must read for anyone interested in the future of education.”

**James J. Duderstadt, President Emeritus, University of Michigan**

“Thomas and Brown are the John Dewey of the digital age.”

**Cathy Davidson, Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Duke University**

“*A New Culture of Learning* may provide for the digital media and learning movement what Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* did for the colonists during the American Revolution— a straightforward, direct explanation of what we are fighting for and what we are fighting against.”

**Henry Jenkins, Provost’s Professor, USC**

“*A New Culture of Learning* is at once persuasive and optimistic — a combination that is all too rare, but that flows directly from its authors’ insights about learning in the digital age. Pearls of wisdom leap from almost every page.”

**Paul Courant, Dean of Libraries, University of Michigan**

“Brilliant. Insightful. Revolutionary.”

**Marcia Conner, author of *The New Social Learning***

“Douglas Thomas and John Seely Brown portray the new world of learning gracefully, vividly, and convincingly.”

**Howard Gardner, Professor, Harvard Graduate School of Education**

“Thomas and Brown make it clear that education is too often a mechanistic, solo activity delivered to the young. It doesn’t have to be that way—learning can be a messy, social, playful, embedded, constant activity. We would do well to listen to their message.”

**Clay Shirky, author of *Cognitive Surplus***

“Anyone who fears, as I do, that today’s public schools are dangerously close to being irrelevant must read this book. The authors provide a road map—and a lifeline—showing how schools can prosper under the most difficult conditions. It is a welcome departure from all the school bashing.”

**John Merrow, Education Correspondent, PBS NewsHour**

“American education is at a crossroads. By illuminating how play helps to transform both information networks and experimentation, and how collective inquiry unleashes the power of imagination, *A New Culture of Learning* provides an irresistible path to the future.”

**Joel Myerson, Director, Forum for the Future of Higher Education**

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