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As 2018 draws to a close, it is appropriate that the final edition of Professional Educator for the year is themed Lifelong Learning. As College members we are aware of the need, and benefits, that derive from Lifelong Learning whether it is formal, informal or non-formal. You are probably reading this now because you have a desire to continuously build skills and knowledge throughout your life.

As educators, whether we are just starting our careers, mid-way through or ‘tapering off’ to retirement (and we all know educators never retire!) we, more than any other profession, work in a world where lifelong learning is the cornerstone of what we do. To this end, the contributors to this edition of Prof Ed come from a diverse and eclectic mix of backgrounds, specialisations and perspectives. That said, they all have one thing in common—the acknowledgement and acceptance that lifelong learning is not just a necessity it is essential!

Dr Norman McCulla, FACE, opens the conversation with an insightful challenge to readers to re-think lifelong learning. The article questions the aspiration of lifelong learning and puts forward a range of ideas regarding what it really should mean in a truly practical sense. Dr McCulla considers the economic, social and personal implications of lifelong learning across formal, informal and non-formal learning and the implications our ‘new world order’ has, or should have, on professional learning and career development for teachers.

In ‘Lifelong Learning: is there a choice?’ by long serving ACE South Australia member Dr Lynda MacLeod seeks to shift discussion from the ‘why’ to the ‘what’ and ‘how’ that she believes should drive learning throughout life. Taking into account the projecting nature of education in our modern society, that is anticipating what skills are going to be needed for the jobs of tomorrow, the article investigates the opportunities and challenges that digital technology will have within the education space not only within our formal learning structures but more broadly throughout life.

Associate Professor Justin Reich in his article ‘Lifelong learning in the Digital Age’ further explores the inter-connectedness of teaching, learning and knowledge exchange in a digital age. Drawing on the work from the philosopher and social critic, Ivan Illich, Associate Professor Reich provides a perceptive critique of Learning Webss and the incorporation of lifelong learner networks into education systems that have been ‘honed and cemented in an analog age’.

Lifelong learning has broader applications and implications than those we might traditionally think of when discussing education in formal, informal and non-formal ways. Lifelong learning also has significant implications for people who have different abilities to those we traditionally see in more formal education settings. The articles by Professor Robyn Wallace and Professor James Vickers explore the practical, positive impacts lifelong learning can have on people living with intellectual disability and dementia. Professor James Vickers article on recent findings of educational interventions for dementia and brain protection explores the possible health benefits of lifelong learning on an aging population. More specifically, Professor Vickers highlights the positive work being carried out by the Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre in relation to people living with dementia, their families, carers and the aged care workforce. The Tasmanian Healthy Brain Project, the flagship research project of the Wicking Institute, focusses on the benefits of later-life learning and the article provides some interesting reading into the ways this project is having a positive impact on the participants as well as the broader societal implications.

Professor Robyn Wallace highlights the many challenges faced by people living with an intellectual disability, in her article ‘Lifelong learning for people with intellectual disability.’ As a specialist physician in Internal Medicine, Professor Wallace explores the notion and pragmatics of lifelong learning for adults with intellectual disability and raises a number of key questions relating to the provision of learning opportunities to this unique and special group within our communities. We also have a number of opinion pieces in this edition ranging from Sophie Fenton’s take on teaching humans in a world of smart phones and talking homes, to Vicki Grie’s article exploring the need for students to be well versed in the skills necessary for a post truth future. Daryl McCann and Stephen Powell, have contributed interesting pieces relating to the teaching of history and controversary specifically related to World War II and the Holocaust. Publications Working Group member, Dr Bruce Addison rounds out our opinion pieces with some musing entitled, A nonagenarian, slow cooking and more than a hint of disruption: Lifelong learning in uncertain times.”

Finally, there is a three-part discussion addressing the seminal question: ‘What does lifelong learning mean to me?’ Patrick Hii provides his perspective as a pre-service teacher, Dr Matthew Norris puts forward his thoughts as an early career educator and Kim Cohen gives an insight into the way of a career educator and school principal.

This is a big edition which explores the concept and practicalities of lifelong learning from diverse perspectives. I hope you enjoy this edition and it goes some way to continuing to encourage you to forge on in your endeavours as lifelong learners!
We are just about at the end of another year and I cannot think of a better final edition of Professional Educator for 2018 than one focussed on lifelong learning.

As educators, we are in the business of learning. Our diverse, multi-faceted profession is testament to the fact that learning, which starts pretty much from day one, follows many and varied paths for everyone but there is one common thread, learning must be lifelong.

It follows that, throughout our professional learning journeys, we all require support and connectivity if we are to truly embrace the mantra of lifelong learning. As educators, I would argue that we, more than any other profession, must be champions as well as students in our quests to be lifelong learners and encourage and develop this culture in our classrooms, our schools and the organisations we work for and with.

What is clear from the feature articles and opinion pieces contained in this edition is that learning, now and in to the future, will continue to evolve, develop and adapt to the changing dynamics of the world in which we live (and teach). As educators, we know there is no longer a one size fits all approach to learning (if there ever was) and that how, as professionals working within the education arena, must take ownership of and lead the way in which education (and learning) evolves in Australia.

Reflecting on each edition of Professional Educator always brings me back to the importance of the Australian College of Educators and the role that ACE, through and with our members, must play in ensuring the recognition and advancement of the teaching profession across all systems, sectors, subjects and levels.

As we close on yet another busy year and we work towards a truly significant milestone for the College in 2019 – our 60th Anniversary of serving, supporting and representing the teaching profession in Australia, it is important that we, as a professional association, reflect on what we have learnt over the course of our ‘lifetime’. Organisations, like individuals, must continue to 'learn' throughout the course of their lives to remain relevant and vibrant and deliver the services and support required by their members and their profession. The College is no different in our collective lifelong learning journey. We continue to work to ensure educators from early childhood through to tertiary institutions working in all systems (government and non-government) and across all subjects and career levels (from pre-service to principals and deans of faculties of education) have a central, collective and collegial professional association that is focussed on elevating the standing of the teaching profession, recognises the incredible achievements of educators and actively facilitates avenues through which all educators can influence their profession. The College's learning journey continues alongside that of our members and our profession.

I wish you all the best for a happy festive season and look forward to an exciting 2019.

Warm regards

Dr Phil Lambert FACE, PSM
National President and Chair Australian College of Educators

ACE Membership Referral Campaign

Calling on ALL ACE Members to help build a bigger, stronger, more diverse ACE community. The ACE Membership Referral campaign is underway and we are asking ALL ACE members to refer two (2) colleagues to join the College before the end of 2018. In return for helping us build the ACE Community both you and your colleagues will receive the following:

- As a referral CHAMPION you will receive 25% off your 2019/2020 ACE membership subscription when you successfully refer two new financial members to the College
- Your colleagues who join the College will receive 25% off the pro-rata membership fee for the remainder of 2018/2019
- The more members you refer the bigger your discount for next year's membership subscription - refer five (5) new financial members and your 2019/2020 membership subscription will be free!

To participate in the ACE Membership Referral Campaign please forward your colleagues these simple instructions:

1. Sign up as member of the Australian College of Educators here
2. Please select yearly to receive the biggest discount
3. Enter the following coupon code before proceeding to checkout: REF25

Make sure you provide the name of the member that referred you in the Referred by ACE Member section so that you both receive the discount.

ACE Membership Referral Campaign Terms & Conditions:

1. Membership referrals must be for ACE paid membership and does not include referrals for Associate or free membership
2. ACE members will have the 25% discount for their 2019/20 membership subscription applied once the referred members have joined and paid their subscription fee
3. If referrals do not include the name of the ACE member who has referred them, the application of the 25% discount for the ACE member cannot be applied
4. The Australian College of Educators reserves the right to make amendments to or cease the Membership referral campaign at any time without notice
Michelangelo died a year later at age eighty-eight, which was quite a feat considering it was 1564 and most people were very fortunate if they made it anywhere near that age.

Fast-forward to the first decades of the 21st Century and to young people graduating as teachers from their teacher education programs. Indicate to them that they are joining what is unquestionably “the learning profession”, where lifelong learning is the norm, and you will often get a range of reactions from interest and polite smiles of bemusement to reactions of sheer concern. “Learning” it seems to many has come to be synonymous with testing and assessment, and with the pressure of deadlines and all the stress associated with demonstrating outcomes. Poised on the brink of there being some “open air” from all that hard slog through secondary school and university, the thought of it continuing into their chosen profession is considered by some as anathema.

To the contrary, those of us who have been in teaching for some time celebrate being part of a profession that is dynamic; that is forever learning and forever changing in response to societal changes as well as knowledge and insights that are accumulating in the profession itself. To teach is indeed to learn, both with colleagues and alone. To learn in the profession is indeed a lifelong pursuit, but one subject to some contemporary pressures. Put simply, there have been times when it has been easier to learn than others.

Promoting lifelong learning is an aspiration that slips easily into vision and mission statements, and into strategic plans, as “a nice idea” without necessarily pausing to consider what it actually means. Lifelong learning encompasses our formal education and our working lives. It extends beyond these where research confirms its continued value to economic and personal welfare in the so-called “retirement years”. It increases our self-sufficiency, self-reliance and ability to cope with physical, health and social relationships (Thang, Lim & Tan 2018).

Much of the more-recent discourse on lifelong learning as it applies specifically to education has centred on the need for Australia to remain economically competitive on the global stage. In a globalised world characterised by inter-linked economies, it is understandable that “maintaining economic competitiveness” has become such an imperative. As a consequence, the “learning” required to maintain competitiveness has become more centralised nationally in its definition, targeted to defined standards and desired outcomes, and controlled through regulation.

A glance at the websites of UNESCO and the OECD identifies three broad areas encompassed by the term “lifelong learning”:

- formal learning, centred on credentialised programs and courses

“Ancora imparo” … (“I’m still learning”). At age eighty-seven these were the legendary words attributed to Michelangelo, the famous Italian Renaissance artist (Sistine Chapel…), sculptor (Pieta, David…), engineer, architect and poet.

Dr Norman McCulla FACE

LIFELONG LEARNING

LIFELONG LEARNING

LIFELONG LEARNING
Learning, unleashing and relearning are constant cycles with which most in the teaching profession would be familiar. It is not only through a wide array of professional development (PD) strategies in teams or alone, or conferences, or by reading, or working together online or face-to-face... all of which we accept as ‘non-formal learning’. Some take the further step into postgraduate study and Higher degree research that constitute formal learning.

Work lives however are being defined more by what we work to do rather than by status or title. In this inter-connected, globalised world the ‘shelf life’ of staff in many organisations is being diminished. Stress levels rise. One argument goes, why teaching should be held exempt.

In considering lifelong learning, there is a balance to be struck between what learning is, ephemeral, what is immediate, and what is enduring.

LIFELONG LEARNING AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION

The knowledge base of the teaching profession, as with all modern professions, is growing exponentially. Much of it can now be accessed through a mobile telephone. Such access is giving a new meaning to ‘informal learning’. Where is there a place for in-depth and reporting, or regulatory requirements that force additional ‘points’ to meet certification and re-certification requirements related to state and national professional standards, or are aspiring to address higher order standards for career advancement. In an effort to bridge short-term learning, we are also seeing parts of postgraduate courses being broken down to stand-alone professional development which are sought through participation in short courses or with so many PD offerings in the market place, the question arises as to what incentives exist for teachers to take the step into formal postgraduate learning and research beyond a personal sense of lifelong learning, exploration and achievement that step brings.

Study at the postgraduate level is general is still not a highly valued part of Australian education, remaining more a personal choice and aspiration in many sectors than being recognised as a key part of professional development. Advances have been made. Those studying at the postgraduate level can do so online thus helping to improve and create a better balance work, family and study commitments. The inclusion of online learning has been an extension on the normal learning that has been and is being sought through participation in short courses offered by universities as non-formal learning. This is especially so where teachers are seeking the necessary ‘points’ to meet certification and re-certification requirements related to state and national professional standards, or are aspiring to address higher order standards for career advancement. In an effort to bridge short-term learning, we are also seeing parts of postgraduate courses being broken down to stand-alone professional development which are sought through participation in short courses or with so many PD offerings in the market place, the question arises as to what incentives exist for teachers to take the step into formal postgraduate learning and research beyond a personal sense of lifelong learning, exploration and achievement that step brings.

We know too that the ‘focus and nature of the learning’ that teachers changes substantially throughout their career trajectory. The learning needs of beginning teachers vary, for instance, from those of more experienced teachers. Effective whole-school PD programs therefore incorporate two dimensions: a vertical dimension related to strategic goals and priorities; and a horizontal dimension related to the developmental interests and needs of specific career stages.

The argument put for the dominance of non-formal lifelong learning in the workplace is relatively straightforward: all staff have a responsibility to continually learn; employers have a responsibility to support that learning, especially as it relates to organisational and rational goals and targets. One outcome has been the increasing number of all persuasions to apply for accreditation as providers by demonstrating the national and state-based professional standards that are being addressed, and a substantial growth in PD courses targeting these standards. Regulation and compliance have become key words used with the amount of ‘busy work’ required administratively by both providers and participants in demonstrating how they address and report on accountability requirements sufficient to express concerns as being a detractor from the real work of teaching and learning. It could be argued therefore that the notion of ‘lifelong learning’ is being reframed in subtle ways in the Australian education and training sector where practitioners have come to dominate non-formal learning, colouring

To be continued...

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FEATURE

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• non-formal learning, consisting of professional development, training courses and the like, and
• informal learning centred on personal interests.

A strength in the area of formal learning is the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). It provides an integrated pathway of formal learning to doctorate, studying integrating learning from one stage to the next and ensuring that doors remain open for capable students to progress to the next level. It links conventional tertiary education, vocational education and continuing education, thus providing scope to recognise prior learning.

There are two subtle lines however, both worthy of exploration, that cut across formal, non-formal and informal learning. The first is the association of lifelong learning with economically productive work and, more specifically, with learning secured as necessary for the upgrading of skills to first gain employment and stay qualified and relevant within it. The second centres on the differences between learning that is ‘required’ by someone else and learning that is intrinsic and self- motivated. A question arises as to whether much of the learning that is ‘required’, particularly that which is classified as non-formal learning, has come to dictate the teaching profession, assemblage for a good cause but questionable long-term outcomes. Non-formal learning, along the lines of: because the average worker changes jobs between seven and ten times, workplace relevance and career success depend on lifelong learning and professional development, to be fleeing.

Another argument suggests that those whose work can be replaced by a computer have now been replaced, or will soon be replaced. There is no reason, the argument goes, why teaching should be held exempt.

THE TENIOUS NATURE OF FORMAL LEARNING

Teaching is recognised as one of the world’s oldest professions. Some would say even the oldest. There are eternal truths in the profession centred on the values and moral purposes by which teachers go about their work. Teaching is about helping students learn. There is a body of extensive knowledge (through educational psychology) about how children and young people grow and develop; about how education has evolved over millennia (through education history), especially since the era of mass education; of how we have debated the nature of knowledge and the purposes of schooling (through education philosophy); of how societies shape the educative process to advantage some but not others (through education sociology). There is a discipline in itself, education has gained its strengths by drawing on a range of disciplines.

Insofar as formal education is concerned, pre-service or postgraduate programs that dilute or ignore this scholarly base in favour of addressing only the edicts of current policy, in curriculum, or assessment and reporting, or regulatory requirements that force workers in helping students learn. There is a body of extensive knowledge (through educational psychology) about how children and young people grow and develop; about how education has evolved over millennia (through education history), especially since the era of mass education; of how we have debated the nature of knowledge and the purposes of schooling (through education philosophy); of how societies shape the educative process to advantage some but not others (through education sociology). There is a discipline in itself, education has gained its strengths by drawing on a range of disciplines.

In the broader literature on lifelong learning one thing is clear: better educated people are more likely to be employed in the knowledge economies of the world, including schools and other education institutions.

Observations such as this raise the interesting question of whether we will see a range of ‘super teachers’ emerge as knowledge leaders supported by a broader range of semi-professional and para-professional roles.

Our societies are also dividing along wealth lines, as one nation after another acknowledges the widening gap between rich and poor are widening. Living in a neo-liberal, market-oriented, choice-driven, performance-oriented, individualistic and distributive forms of leadership, power and predictably, administration and management positions. These short courses offered by universities as non-formal learning. This is especially so where teachers are seeking the necessary ‘points’ to meet certification and re-certification requirements related to state and national professional standards, or are aspiring to address higher order standards for career advancement. In an effort to bridge short-term learning, we are also seeing parts of postgraduate courses being broken down to stand-alone professional development which are sought through participation in short courses or with so many PD offerings in the market place, the question arises as to what incentives exist for teachers to take the step into formal postgraduate learning and research beyond a personal sense of lifelong learning, exploration and achievement that step brings.

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THE COLONISATION OF NON-FORMAL LEARNING

If indeed professional learning is centring more on what we can do and need to do in an immediate context, it brings into question the relationship between the gains that are sought through participation in short courses for professional development and the more in-depth, reflective and longer-term learning that comes through formal study such as in a Masters degree.

In the Australian context, it could be argued that the focus has shifted more to emphasising non-formal over formal learning. This is especially so where teachers are seeking the necessary ‘points’ to meet certification and re-certification requirements related to state and national professional standards, or are aspiring to address higher order standards for career advancement. In an effort to bridge short-term learning, we are also seeing parts of postgraduate courses being broken down to stand-alone professional development which are sought through participation in short courses or with so many PD offerings in the market place, the question arises as to what incentives exist for teachers to take the step into formal postgraduate learning and research beyond a personal sense of lifelong learning, exploration and achievement that step brings.

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There is a missing part in general discussion on lifelong learning and that it the pure, unadulterated pleasures associated with learning itself. In a world where technology has made it possible for people to learn new skills and knowledge from the comfort of their homes, we cannot overlook the importance of lifelong learning. However, the idea of lifelong learning has been under threat in recent years due to the rise of formal education and the pursuit of qualifications. There is a need to re-examine the concept of lifelong learning and to recognize its value in fostering personal and professional growth. The challenge is to make lifelong learning more accessible and appealing to individuals who may not have had the opportunity to pursue formal education in the past. In conclusion, we must recognize the importance of lifelong learning and work towards creating an environment that supports and promotes it for all individuals.
Lifelong learning: is there a choice?

Lynda MacLeod, EdD, MEd Studies, BEd, BA, Grad Dip Education (Secondary), Grad Dip Social Science (Child Development), Grad Cert Education (Studies of Asia), FACEL, MACE, JP.

Writing this from the state of South Australia, a state in the throes of transitioning from a reliance on the manufacturing industry, in particular the vehicle industry, to a state optimistically eying off a prime role in the newly recreated space industry, lifelong learning is no longer aspirational; it is imperative. There appears to be no choice.

If we accept this premise, our focus shifts from the ‘why’ of lifelong learning to the what and the how.

Lifelong learning is not a 21st century phenomenon. On a personal level, after completing my initial Bachelor of Arts degree many decades ago, I chose to gain a teaching qualification as I knew that it could be by teaching that I could continue my love of learning, particularly my learning history and politics. As educators we are also learners. Now our learning must be usable and shared with our students if we are to validate the concept that in all professions and occupations lifelong learning is implicit. Lifelong learning is not something new, it is not the exclusive product of the 21st century. Jobs evolve and have done so since the Industrial Revolution; so too must our learning continue to evolve over the course of our life. Although schooling is often labelled antiquated and archaic, teaching and learning now is considerably different to the practices of the late 70s when I first began my teaching career.

Prevision for workplace training, development and the associated funding for many decades was seen as the responsibility of the employing organisation. In 2018 the emphasis has shifted. From the outset we acknowledge that much of the responsibility for ongoing training and development now seems to lie with the worker. However, our focus on lifelong learning should not just be in response to planning for workforce needs, rather lifelong learning should be encouraged for all aspects of life.

LEARNING BEYOND SCHOOLING.

While Laal (2013, p.937) “Lifelong learning should be a process of continuous learning that goes throughout life and is directed towards providing both the individual needs and that of the relevant community.” Lifelong learning is interpreted as engaging people with learning throughout all stages of their lives (Byrne & Wilkins 2003). More generally, “Lifelong learning” can be seen to encompass the strategies required to create and exploit opportunities for learning throughout the lifespan.

If we were to play a word association game with the term ‘lifelong learning’, many would associate it with some aspect of technology, mechanisation, mass production, automation, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, all-time connectivity, the cloud, biometrics, driverless cars, the Internet of things, mobile supercomputing, technological brain enhancements, genetic editing, digital fusion, data-driven, robotics or the need to change jobs as previous occupations are changed. If we keep playing the word association game, lifelong learning will inevitably throw up words like entrepreneurship and innovation.

If we take the space industry, for example there are already more than fifty space start-up companies in existence in Australia in 2018 (https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-14/australian-space-industry-nasa-space-ssf-satellite/9860004). This number is likely to keep growing and concepts such as 3-D printing in space are moving towards reality. There can be no doubt that digital transformation is placing demands on learners and workers to make decisions through a digital lens. Yet despite the seemingly exponential acceleration of change, thanks to great strides in technology and globalisation, we are still looking for ways to ensure that the concept of ‘lifelong learning is embedded, not only in our schools and learning institutions, but within society itself. Digital transformation cannot just be about technology; it has to be about making things better. Though the whole workforce needs to be digitally conversant, the workforce also has to be critically aware and ethically responsible. These are also taught skills.

It is non- contentious that we, as educators, must assist our students to best prepare for the future. The world of work, educational leaders are being urged to prepare their students for a future that is far from predictable. While there has been much emphasis on the so-called 21st century skills, sometimes also referred to as soft skills, curriculum around the world is still dominated by traditional subject content. As with all assisted learning, the starting point is to consider the needs of learners. The question is how to we know what learners will need over the course of a lifespan? What we do know is that school leavers, indeed a reasonable proportion of the current workforce, are mobile, casualised and freelance. It is likely that Emotional Intelligence Quotient will be more important than Intelligence Quotient. If young people today are, as some predict, likely to have 17 jobs over five to six different careers after they leave school, educational institutions cannot possibly cater for every individual’s job and career prospects (FYA 2017, p.6). Therefore, an employee will be needing to continuously learn in order to adapt to the differing demands of up to 17 different employers over the course of their working life.

Yet predicting exactly what skills will be needed for the jobs of tomorrow can be difficult. Whatever the future is, we are reasonably certain that it will be a digital future. Environmentally, socially and economically the world is facing mammoth challenges and solutions to these challenges need to be found now. Learning for life means that individuals must adapt to constant change and find relevance in a digital world. We must be prepared to harness digital reality by accessing digital tools and platforms that facilitate further knowledge acquisition. We need to learn how to exploit the potential of digital technology and to mitigate the risks. We need to learn in order to understand the new relationship between humanity and machine. While this presents huge opportunities, it also presents huge challenges. We need to teach our learners how to learn and how to critique. Through being better equipped to harness the possibilities of what Professor Klaus Schwab (2017), Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, has called the 4th Industrial Revolution, we also need to
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start preparing our students to create the 5th Industrial Revolution. While educators consider the formal notion of education, we now know the need for our students to access the increasing opportunities presented through informal education.

Following its 1996 report Lifelong Learning for All, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) noted in 2000 that there were grounds for both optimism and caution in assessing the importance and impact of lifelong learning strategies in OECD countries and in implementing strategies of lifelong learning within the community. Lifelong learning the OECD provided the following advice:

- All learning, formal and informal, should be recognised and seen as good systems for informing and guiding learners, especially adults, need to be developed.
- Lifelong learning requires good foundation skills among both the young and adults; with maturation the centre. Fundamental changes in curriculum and pedagogy, emphasizing learning to learn, not just content mastery, are needed.
- Enabling access to learning over the course of the life-cycle and response to diverse and multiple learning needs.
- Countries must evaluate resources according to lifecycle needs and deploy them effectively.

In 2018, the fact that we are still exploring the concept of lifelong learning as a separate dimension in education shows that we are far from acting on the advice from 2000. So how do we embed lifelong learning as a key component of education in the same way that we have done with literacy and numeracy?

CREATING LIFELONG LEARNERS

In her 2015 article, Creating Lifelong Learners: Fostering Facilitation, Motivation, and Autonomy in the Classroom, Angela Faller Thomas found that respondents in her research study “believed that to create lifelong learners, teachers must shift away from directing learning to facilitating—providing guidance and scaffolding student learning” (p19).

According to Thomas, the teachers most likely to foster lifelong learning convey the importance of creating a quality learning environment that supports research and allows students more autonomy, thus providing incentive for students to conduct their own learning. These teachers show, explain and provide appropriate tools for students to explore and find their own answers to problems, which they themselves have most often identified. Through providing students with proper research engines and credible websites, students are taught how to conduct precise, credible and most importantly, safe searches. Thus, students need to be taught how to decide if information they find is “credible, reliable, relevant, and important” (p20).

Furthermore, the teachers in Thomas’s study provide students with inquiry activities that allow for groups to “coordinate, collaborate and problem solve”. The approach demonstrated was “as a great way to facilitate and engage students in interesting learning materials, which broaden their minds and makes them want to question more”. This creates motivation while adding variety and interest. Students’ preferences are catered for and learning is shared within the classroom and beyond. “Through facilitation, modeling, and opportunities for choice, teachers can ultimately empower students to become lifelong learners” (p20). We need parents and value and need creative time to allow students to be fully equipped learners for their lifelong journey.

However, the 2001 OECD report acknowledged that motivating adult learners could be problematic (p.16). According to analyses in this report, adults (like children) are most motivated when they can link current learning to past experiences and when learning is placed in the context of their own lives, apply their learning to real problems and when adults have choice and control over what it is that they are learning. To encourage learning in adults, their specific learning requirements must be considered and catered for through specific teaching practices. Adults need options and flexibility in scheduling, possibly needing access to day-care facilities. Many adult learners, if they are going to pursue longer-term education, need to find the learning process engaging, enjoyable and respectable. The rapid advancement in information and communication technologies, especially fast broadband Internet and the ever-growing suite of Massive Online Open Courses, offer huge potential in catering for learning across the lifespan. Yet, commenting to completing the plethora of courses available (for future learning requires resilience and determination given the competing demands on an individual’s time. As adult educators, adult learning will occur when the foundation fosters a culture of learning. Fostering this culture is the responsibility of every aspect of a lifelong learning school where the attitudes of some parents and teachers who expect schools to have “impoverished discipline, mainly competitive, summative assessment and teachers who are dispensers of knowledge” (p16). The other obstacle is the major influence on the curriculum of end of school examinations, which often encourage a short-term approach to learning with a focus on knowering rather than learning.

Byrge and Withers (2000) study identified that the luxury obstacles to becoming a lifelong learning school are the attitudes of some parents and teachers who expect schools to have “impoverished discipline, mainly competitive, summative assessment and teachers who are dispensers of knowledge” (p16). The other obstacle is the major influence on the curriculum of end of school examinations, which often encourage a short-term approach to learning with a focus on knowering rather than learning.

Byrge et al (2000) in their paper for the Australian Council for Educational Research recommends that schools implement a number of actions in order to ensure that a focus on lifelong learning is a priority. Schools should have:

1. A mission statement celebrating commitment towards lifelong learning
2. Course documentation explicitly stating the commitment and strategies for developing lifelong learning characteristics in all students
3. A curriculum that identifies core/essential knowledge and the rapidly changing nature of this core/essential knowledge structure
4. A commitment to working in partnership with community groups to support and broaden student learning.

We know that learners and learning are at the heart of education. Students not only need to learn, they need to know how to learn and how to keep learning across their lifespan. Yet the question remains: how do we assist the learners, indeed create learners, and what lifelong learning should be the focus of our attention in all schools and societies worldwide? As we move towards the third decade of this century why are we still asking questions such as: what is it to be educated in the 21st century? What learning experiences are valuable to our students? What information is most relevant to students in a world of constant technological change? How do we assist our students to be actively engaged in the knowledge economies?

References

- Bryce, J, and Withers. 2003, ACER, Lifelong Learning: Achievement for Educational Research recommends that schools implement a number of actions in order to ensure that a focus on lifelong learning is a priority. Schools should have:

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Biographies

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Educational interventions for dementia and brain protection

Professor James Vickers, BSc(Hons), PhD, DSc

Dementia is a major health and social issue of the 21st Century

The world’s population is getting older. Better public health and improved management and prevention of a range of human health conditions have been the good news stories of our times. This increased longevity adds to a dramatic shift in our demographic future where a much greater proportion of our population will live into their eighties, nineties and beyond.

On the down-side, this increase in lifespan exposes more of our community, to ageing-related conditions such as dementia, for which we currently lack effective therapeutic options. It is estimated that there are over 430,000 Australians with dementia in 2018, which, in the absence of a cure, will rise to around one million by 2050. Already, dementia is the second leading cause of death of Australians, and the leading cause of death of females, accounting for eleven per cent (11%) of all deaths in the latter.

Across the globe, it has been estimated that there are currently around 47 million people with dementia, and this figure will rise to over 130 million by the middle of the century. Alzheimer’s Disease International has identified that the fastest rise in numbers of people with dementia will be in low to middle worth countries where populations are rapidly ageing, against a background of undeveloped health and social systems for the aged, particularly those with dementia.

Dementia is a syndrome rather than an individual disease, a way of describing a range of degenerative diseases that lead to impairment in how the brain operates, resulting in progressive changes in cognitive function as well as in behaviour and personality. While there are dozens of diseases that cause dementia, the best known, accounting for approximately sixty to seventy per cent (60-70%) of cases of dementia, is Alzheimer’s disease. Other common diseases involving significant degenerative changes are Lewy body dementia, frontotemporal dementia and vascular dementia. These diseases can also overlap in ageing individuals. Dementia often comes on insidiously, making it difficult to tell when the condition begins for a person in the early stages.

The middle stages are characterised by gradual loss of a range of functions, which can involve alterations in personality, and, in the last stages, the person affected by dementia can have significant deficits in mobility, problems in eating and swallowing, and difficulty in communicating. The trajectory and expression of these degenerative changes can vary substantially between individuals, and while dementia can result in many significant disabilities, there are also many areas of ability that can persist for a long period of time.

Risk factors for dementia

The most significant potentially modifiable factor related to later life risk of dementia is the number of years of education earlier in life. In this regard, the greater educational attainment early in life, the lower risk of dementia in later years. If this factor alone could be addressed globally, there would be around eight per cent (8%) fewer cases of dementia into the future. There have been a number of ideas about how more education may be neuroprotective in our advancing years. An important insight into this link comes from studies led by Professor Carol Brayne of the University of Cambridge on the interaction between education levels (up to Year 12) and brain pathology in three large cohort studies in Europe (Brayne et al. 2020). The research team measured the density of pathological changes related to dementia in the brain and found that education had no effect on these pathological measures, but that the more years of education a person had, the less chance of that individual has of demonstrating dementia at the end of their life. It is as if increasing education was related to greater resistance to the effects of this pathology, increasing the threshold at which clinical symptoms appear as the disease develops. Education doesn’t stop you getting the disease, but it delays its clinical manifestation.
Across the globe, more years of education is related to general intelligence as well as social-economic circumstances. These factors affect access to education. The broad interpretation of studies that have consistently demonstrated the link between education and dementia risk is that education may reduce risk due to a combination of brain and cognitive reserve. Neuroscientists are not able to tell you what changes the neuroanatomical substrate (or brain) like learning, but that learning is reflected in the richness and complexity of synaptic connections, and so a more intelligent brain can possibly afford to lose more of these connections. The second reason is dementia-related illness before clinical symptoms emerge. Another view is that education may help build cognitive reserve – that more years of education-cumulation leads to greater efficiency and functional plasticity of neural networks and systems, so that the brain can adapt to an accumulating burden of pathology more effectively, and for longer. While brain reserve is linked to genetics and initial neural development, the theoretical basis of cognitive reserve relates to the concept of ‘malleable and plastic’ neural pathways that can benefit from stimulation, and that this capacity is lifelong.

It is important to note that many of the risk factors above are clearly inter-related, and so discriminating the impact of individual factors can be tricky. For example, greater educational attainment is often linked to higher standards of living, including higher access of health literacy and better access to health and social services. This may have a demotivating influence on the suite of vascular factors that have been linked to dementia risk.

Given the lack of progress on effective drug interventions for dementia, there has been an increasing interest in reducing risk of dementia by addressing potential dementia risk factors. A large number of research centres across the world focus on undertaking intervention studies based on these risk factors to boost resilience and healthy aging. Intervention studies have developed around ‘brain-training games’ which are mostly delivered online. While some brain training companies are testing different programs, the lack of evidence on efficacy of their products, others are not. The jury is out on whether such brain training games do reduce risk of age-related cognitive decline and dementia. Longer-term studies by independent researchers are required to generate such evidence.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION FOR OLDER LEARNERS

The Wicking Centre has an undergraduate degree program specifically focused on dementia care, and also runs free online courses (eMDGs or Massive Open Online Courses) on ‘Understanding Dementia’ and ‘Preventing Dementia’ which include contributions from people with dementia, their carers, health and social professionals and leading international experts. To date, over 220,000 people from 185 countries have enrolled in these MDGs. We consider the MDGs as interventions. The Understanding Dementia MDG presents current evidence on dementia risk factors (such as vascular risk factors) and dementia stigma around dementia, whereas the Preventing Dementia MDG presents current evidence on dementia lifestyle factors (such as diet and exercise). The latter is more focused on dementia care, and also runs free online courses on the latest research on approaches to reduce risk. When the courses are run, they typically attract between 15,000 - 25,000 students, and there is a substantial enrolment of social learning component where participants share their views and experiences across a range of topics.

Interestingly, the broad demographic profile of students in our undergraduate degree and in the MDGs are females in their forties and fifties.

The Tasmanian Healthy Brain Project is a flagship research project of the Wicking Centre that focuses on the benefits of later-life learning. While the influence of early-life educational attainment for reducing risk of dementia later in life is strongly supported by observational epidemiological research, it is not known whether engagement in education later in life may supplement resistance to this condition. The Tasmanian Healthy Brain Project commenced in 2010 with over five hundred Tasmanians between fifty and seventy-nine years of age, and has involved participants engaging in a variety of activities that may provide benefits to cognitive function.

In terms of the main goals of the study, we are still many years away from determining if engagement in education later in life is protective for dementia and also looking at the stability of cognitive function into older ages. However, we have determined already that further research increases indices of cognitive reserve capacity (Lenehan et al. 2016), in particular, language processing capacity (such as vocabulary and comprehension) (Thow et al. 2018). Language processing function is an example of crystallised intelligence, functional brain improvement through experience, and has been linked to lower risk of dementia in epidemiological studies. It was certainly pleasing to see that university provided a material benefit to cognitive function!

The Tasmanian Healthy Brain Project also provides an opportunity to understand what the experience of university study is like for a group of older adults. There is a general assumption in the community, and often within our tertiary organisations (if you look at marketing campaigns), that university is mainly for young adults. However, in Australia and many other countries across the world, a growing proportion of university students are adults over sixty years of age, particularly people in retirement or those reskilling for second careers later in life. While there is substantial literature on the factors that relate to educational attainment and achievement for younger learners, there is scarce research into the older adult experience. In our cohort of older adult learners, we investigated a range of factors that might influence academic success, the latter measured by grade point average (Imlach et al. 2017). Interestingly, we determined that age itself (up to eighty years of age) and gender had no influence on academic achievement. This is a very interesting result as it demonstrates that older adults are fully capable of doing university study.

In addition, genetic variations linked to age-related cognitive decline and decline also had no effect on performance.

Furthermore, while factors such as intelligence (IQ), mental well-being and social connectivity appear to have a role in predicting academic outcomes in younger learners, these factors were not linked to academic performance in this group of older learners. Language processing function and working memory, both categories of executive function and language processing ability did correlate with GPA outcomes in the Tasmanian study, as did measures related to lifetime engagement in ‘non-formal’ cognitively stimulating activities. This shows that specific cognitive functions, as well as maintaining an active cognitive lifestyle, would support success at tertiary study in older adults.

An important finding for this was that the participants for the Tasmanian Healthy Brain Project were ‘self-selective’ and so could represent a more motivated group than the general population. This however, driven by an expectation of a lengthy ‘post-work’ period of life. The major health and social challenges that arise through these age-related conditions is that they can have a devastating effect not only on the person with this condition, but also on their close family and friends. Education strategies such as MOOCs provide a great opportunity for society to understand what these conditions are and their various impacts, but engagement in higher education and learning may also be a vital part of our armamentarium to boost resistance to cognitive decline.

Collectively, we are at a very exciting stage of human history, with increasing longevity providing many decades of opportunity for lifelong learning as well as an expectation of a lengthy “post-work” period of life. The major health and social challenges that arise through these age-related conditions is that they can have a devastating effect not only on the person with this condition, but also on their close family and friends. Education strategies such as MOOCs provide a great opportunity for society to understand what these conditions are and their various impacts, but engagement in higher education and learning may also be a vital part of our armamentarium to boost resistance to cognitive decline.

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Lifelong learning in the Digital Age

Assistant Professor Justin Reich

The must-have toy of the 2013 Christmas season was Rainbow Loom. Rainbow Loom is a simple plastic board with vertical pegs that comes with hundreds of small, colorful rubber bands. Children weave rubber bands across the pegs to make bracelets and other charms. Rainbow Loom got thousands of young boys to play with pink rubber bands, and for that alone it deserves hearty commendation.

The media narrative surrounding Rainbow Loom was that it was a back-to-basics craft toy. The Toronto Sun reported (Lu & Rushowy 2013): “‘Parents love the toy because it’s simple. It doesn’t require a battery. It doesn’t mean more screen time and it isn’t an app. It’s an activity. You can sit down and create,’” [Rainbow Loom creator Chon Ng] said. “‘Parents also love when they show creativity. And you’re not done playing with it because you can wear it.’”

In an era where iPads and Android phones were ascendant, Santa brought millions of children a toy that usually finally get them to put down their darn mobile phones.

Except, it didn’t. Rainbow Loom wasn’t an anathema to screens, but rather screens were integral to how children played with the loom. The bracelets that students could make with Rainbow Loom were incredibly intricate. One model was called the Starburst Brooch, a daggling, three-dimensions display of color and technique. Two girls from America’s heartland, Ashley and Steph, published a 16-minute video about how to make a Starburst Brooch on YouTube in 2013.

In the video, the camera has a stationary position above a beige shag carpet, and the Rainbow Loom rests on the carpet. Ashley carefully demonstrates to viewers the process of weaving each band, moving slowly for new movers of technique, and speeding up the video through repetitive motions. The video has been viewed nearly 33 million times.

Brooch making is an activity centered in the physical world, but digital media and networks of learning were essential to children’s interactions with Rainbow Loom. I won’t argue that 30 million people watched Ashley and Steph’s Starburst Brooch video; it’s more likely that 300,000 people watched it about a hundred times each; that bracelet is really hard. But children’s play with Rainbow Loom was profoundly shaped by a global network of other children playing with Rainbow Loom.

Students shared videos on YouTube, asked questions and offered hints in the comments, started discussion forums, posted pictures on Facebook, and sold bracelets through online stores and Web sites. No local community had enough expertise to have fun for very long with Rainbow Loom—once you get past the first few designs suggested in the kit, you need to engage with a wider community to get inspired and learn new patterns and techniques.

Rainbow Loom was developed by an American father in New Jersey who was too fat-fingered to make bracelets alongside his kids, so he designed a kit that leveraged a pick. He sent CAD drawings across the Pacific to China, where factories injection molded millions of kits, packed them on pallets and stacked them in shipping containers that were sent by freighters to local distributors all around the world. This modern marvel of supply chain logistics and innovation happened alongside a second wunder of human ingenuity. Contemporaneously with the shipment of pegboards and rubber bands around the world, a completely decentralized, pan-ethnic network of teaching, learning, and knowledge exchange grew up online. Some of these networks offered more traditional and hierarchal structure — the Rainbow Loom company has a YouTube channel of official instructional videos — and some offered more informal and distributed structures. But opportunities to learn about Rainbow Loom blossomed with extraordinary speed and scale during the short duration of the fad. The nearly-instantaneous development of this global network of teachers and learners is as extraordinary a feat of collective human engineering as the supply chain network that allows a dad in New Jersey to have an idea that becomes a global consumer product.

For those with access to these global online networks, it is the greatest time in world history to be a learner.

Never before have learners had such incredible access to resources and communities of tutors and apprentices. Whether you want to learn to play guitar, brew beer, identify birds, translate Cieno, throw a javelin, intubate a trauma victim, farm gold in World of Warcraft, integrate a function, detonate a bomb, program in Javascript, or become a better teacher, there are classes, tutorials, forums, and networks full of people who are excited to teach and excited to learn. If you’ve ever signed up for an online class, read a recipe online, or watched a video about how to unsnake your tooth, you are part of that network.

Predicting Learning Webs

One person who might not be surprised to read the story of Ashley, Steph and the Starburst Brooch is Ivan Illich. Illich (1973) was a philosopher and social critic, and in 1971 he published a small tract called Deschooling Society. Illich argued that schools were oppressive institutions, imposing onto the young an obedience to the state, while crushing creatively and smothering independence. Now I happen to like schools — I’ve spent my life in and around these magical and tragic institutions — so I don’t truck with all of Illich’s critiques. But the fourth chapter of Deschooling Society, “Learning Webs”, is truly prophetic.

In “Learning Webs”, Illich addresses the question of how learning should proceed after we have deschooled society. How could we learn all the complexities of industrial society without schools? Illich envisions a bag of learning mediated by networked computers. He imagines people who want to learn something would encode their desires on punch cards, and people who had something to teach would send him back the punch cards. This operation of a peer-matching network would be simple. The user would identify himself by name and address and describe the activity for which he sought a peer. A computer would send him back the names and addresses of all those who had inserted the same description. It is amazing that such a simple utility has never been used on a broad scale for publicly valued activity.

Illich envisions that this service would be distributed through terminals into mainframe computers that will match learners and teachers together to have new experiences. Illich wrote:

“Parents love the toy because it’s simple. It doesn’t require a battery. It doesn’t mean more screen time and it isn’t an app. It’s an activity. You can sit down and create,” [Rainbow Loom creator Chon Ng] said. “Parents also love when they show creativity. And you’re not done playing with it because you can wear it.”
peer was sought. People using the system would become known only to their potential peers.

Though the technologies of today are not quite what Illich imagined, Learning Webs offers an uncounted description of the essential features of networked learning in the Internet era. Search engines and keywords provide the connections between Rainbow Loom video-makers and video-watchers, rather than punch cards and mainframes. In the fundamentals however, Illich predicted that people like Ashley and Steph would be able to connect with people like the 30 million Starburst watchers in a networked world.

Illich’s predictions about learning webs were wrong in two important ways. First, Illich failed to predict the mediating role that institutions would play in learning networks. As tutors, Ashley and Steph, for the most part, do not directly encounter their learners. Ashley and Steph’s instructions are mediated through an institution, Google, which owns YouTube. In this particular case, the institutional role is minimal, but other forms of networked learning, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), are crucial nodes in learning networks — providing platforms, instruction, assessment, and credentialing. We haven’t deschooled society. Rather, the role of traditional educational institutions is shifting and expanding, and many more institutions in society are becoming involved in education.

Illich’s second mistake was that he did not account for scale. Illich’s fundamental metaphor, the baggar, constrained his imagination to an expanding series of small, ideally dyadic — tutorial interactions. Ashley and Steph don’t tutor other individual children alone; their learning experiences are accessible to millions. The communities that form in the discussion comments below each video allow all kinds of complicated interactions between individual learners, their peer learners, other tutors, and Ashley and Steph. To be sure, there are blossoming networks of individual tutorials available online for practicing new languages with native speakers, preparing for college entrance exams, playing an instrument, and maybe even for making Rainbow Loom bracelets. But these networks of individual tutorial sit alongside many other learning environments that operate at greater scales.

I suspect that history will prove that in the main, Illich asked the wrong question. The challenge is not to figure out how to leverage networked learning environments offer systems of schooling collapse, but for schools to figure out how to incorporate these lifelong learner networks into routines honed and cemented in an analog age. In some professions, navigating these online learning networks is a basic pre-requisite for functional competence — it is nearly impossible to be a computer programmer without being able to navigate help networks like StackOverflow. In many others, online learning networks offer powerful opportunities for lifelong learning, as the many teachers who have connected on Twitter, Pinterest, Facebook and other social networks can attest. And as the story of Ashley and Steph illustrates, our lives as creators, citizens, and neighbors are enriched by learning with others about arts, crafts, hobbies, and public issues.

Schools will come up with a variety of responses to this new question: how best to prepare students for a life of networked learning? I predict a very small number of schools will find a niche in declaring that the best preparation for any future is the classics, and learning networks can wait until students have mastered the time-worn fundamentals. Another small number of schools will choose another extreme, to re-center the school experience around networked learning, and to align as closely as possibly the networked learning practices that kids use outside of school with those provided inside of school. The bulk of schools will choose some kind of middle. Learning networks will be most easily embraced in the periphery of the curriculum, as students brush up on programming new sensors in robotics club, research substance and strategy on debate teams, and watch exemplar school productions on YouTube in preparation for the spring musical. In the places furthest from testing and standards, networked learning will thrive.

Networked learning practices, will be embraced more tepidly in the core of the curriculum, but some enterprising teachers will make connections between networked learning and the disciplines. To be a physicist now is not just to run experiments in the lab, but to publish new results on ArXiv and discuss interpretations on Twitter. To be a poet is to record performances for YouTube, and trade screenshots of verses on Instagram. Knowledge and expertise, increasingly, resides within networks.

I predict that there will be great and lousy schools at both ends of the spectrum as well as in the middle: the right response to new forms of technology-mediated learning is reflection. The schools that best prepare students for a future of lifelong networked learning will be those who have thought carefully about people’s learning practices outside of school, and what we can do as educators within schools to prepare students for these challenges.

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Biographies
Justin Reich is an educational researcher interested in the future of learning in a networked world. He is an Assistant Professor in the Comparative Media Studies/Writing department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, an instructor in the Scheller Teacher Education Program, a Faculty Associate of the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society, and the director of the MIT Teaching Systems Lab. The Teaching Systems Lab investigates the complex, technology-rich classrooms of the future and the systems that we need to help educators thrive in those settings. He is the co-founder of EdTechResearcher, a professional learning consultancy devoted to helping teachers leverage technology to create student-centered, inquiry-based learning environments. He was previously the Richard L. Minnich HarvardX Research Fellow, where he led the initiative to study large-scale open online learning through the HarvardX Initiative and a lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He earned his doctorate from Harvard University, where he created the Distributed Collaborative Learning Communities project, an Hewlett Foundation funded initiative to examine how social media are used in K-12 classrooms. He writes the EdTechResearcher blog for Education Week, and his writings have appeared in Science, The New Yorker, The Atlantic, Educational Researcher, the Washington Post, Inside Higher Ed, the Christian Science Monitor, and other publications.

Justin started his career teaching wilderness medicine, and later taught high school world history and history electives, and coached wrestling and outdoor activities at the Denuenos Australia Research Foundation and Glenview Community Services.
Lifelong Learning for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities

The pace and volume of change in just about every major discipline means that lifelong learning is no longer an option, but absolutely essential.

Andrew Bollington, Global Head of Research and Learning

LEGO Foundation 2015.

I wish for a world that views disability, mental or physical, not as a hindrance but as unique attributes that can be seen as powerful assets if given the right opportunities.

Oliver Sacks, neurologist, naturalist, and author.

In this context it is easy to see that lifelong learning is part of the fabric of valued everyday life in Australia. There is an acknowledged value of lifelong learning where it is seen as creating a more personally rewarding life self-fulfilment; more opportunities for relationships; an ability to adapt to change; potential for increased employment options and income; and opportunities to develop natural abilities (B-HERT 2001). Continued access to education and training of a country’s citizens is seen as an investment in the future, a pre-condition for economic advancement, democracy, social cohesion, and autonomy. Optimising such potentially immense values of lifelong learning in a society requires a dedicated process of high-level government policy development involving properly identified stakeholders such as federal and state governments, businesses, universities, and other providers of education to set up the scenes and programs for lifelong learners (B-HERT 2001).

ABOUT INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY - DEFINITIONS

A most commonly accepted definition of intellectual disability as a condition implying less efficient cognitive functions or structures compared to the norm is too simplistic to serve our purposes. The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD, formerly the American Association on Mental Retardation) developed a definition and classification of intellectual disability which provides a practical framework for addressing a wide range of problems facing people with intellectual disability rather than simply highlighting a cognitive deficit.

“Intellectual disability refers to substantial limitations in present functioning. It is characterized by significantly sub average intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with related limitations in two or more of the following applicable adaptive skills: communication, self-care, home-living, social skills, community use, self-direction, health and safety, functional academics, leisure work. (Intellectual disability) manifests before the age of 18 years” (Luckasson et al 1992).

Importantly this definition distinguishes two aspects of intellectual disability: a cognitive component which is relatively stable over the lifetime and is measurable by an intelligence quotient (IQ) test, and an adaptive functioning component which is modifiable through experience and interventions and is measurable by appropriate rating scales. The breakdown of functional limitations into categories allows a more focused approach to support, especially in the ways of lifelong learning.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is considered a most significant step in the right direction. It is a program set up to support the rights, capabilities, and potential of all Australians. The importance of the scheme is to ensure that people with disabilities have the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge so they can participate in leading a life that is as normal as possible, contributing to the wellbeing of society as a whole.

Professionals have a challenge to ensure we can extract all potential from our learners with intellectual disabilities. This starts by understanding the definition and the framework provided by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

DEFINITION

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) provides the following definition of intellectual disability:

“Intellectual disability refers to substantial limitations in present functioning. It is characterized by significantly sub average intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with related limitations in two or more of the following applicable adaptive skills: communication, self-care, home-living, social skills, community use, self-direction, health and safety, functional academics, leisure work. (Intellectual disability) manifests before the age of 18 years” (Luckasson, et al 1992).

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As the OECD report describes, a lifelong learning model of conscious learning throughout the lifespan as opposed to the idea that education stops at 16, 18 or 21'.

ABOUT LIFELONG LEARNING - WHAT IT IS?

For the purposes of this paper lifelong learning will be limited to adult learning and that learning which continues beyond the ‘front end’ model of compulsory schooling and is developed in a variety of settings and following a multiplicity of pathways. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2004) says simply that lifelong learning is ‘...continuation of conscious learning throughout the lifespan as opposed to the idea that education stops at 16, 18 or 21’.

As the OECD report describes, a lifelong learning model has four distinguishing and arguably enhancing features from the traditional model of schooling.

Firstly, is a systemic view of education and training, that views the demand for and supply of, learning opportunities as part of a connected system covering the whole lifecycle.

Secondly, there is an emphasis of the centrality of the learner, which requires a shift of attention from the supply side focus to the demand side of the learning arrangement meeting learner needs.

Thirdly, is the recognition that motivation to learn is an essential foundation to the achievement of lifelong learning, so developing capacity to learn is a goal.

Fourthly, lifelong learning recognises there are multiple objectives of educational policy such as personal development, knowledge development, economic, social and cultural objectives; and that the priorities among those objectives may change over the course of an individual’s lifetime (OECD 2004).

As Dr. Ken Robinson says, “the purpose of education is to evoke curiosity, to energize the learner, to enable them to ask questions and to engage others in that questioning process” (Robinson, 2012).

The purpose of lifelong learning is to equip individuals with the critical thinking and problem-solving skills they need to participate in society as active citizens.

The key components of lifelong learning are:

- Continuity: lifelong learning continues beyond the ‘front end’ model of compulsory schooling.
- Flexibility: lifelong learning is available in a variety of settings and following a multiplicity of pathways.
- Access: lifelong learning is available to all, regardless of age, background or current circumstances.
- Learning outcomes: lifelong learning is designed to achieve specific learning outcomes.
- Learning styles: lifelong learning is designed to accommodate different learning styles.
- Learning pace: lifelong learning is designed to accommodate different learning paces.
- Learning environment: lifelong learning is designed to accommodate different learning environments.

Lifelong learning can be seen as powerful assets if given the right opportunities.
LIFELONG LEARNING

FEATURE

The AAIDD’s approach to the broader concept of intellectual disability embodies this helpful definition and takes into account the cause or cause of the intellectual disability by identifying strengths and weaknesses and the need for supports via consideration of the individual’s functioning, behaviour, health, environmental and social networks. Based on this assessment, the approach categorises the kinds and intensities of supports for activities required in the context of home and work, supportive and adaptive skills, psychological, health and environmental considerations. This is most useful in the design of lifelong learning opportunities and the crucial acknowledgement that one-size does not fit all.

These features emphasise that although a core cognitive disability is present, the person with intellectual disability is able to develop and acquire skills if effective supports and services are in place. In turn, provision of these services involves an assessment and modification of that person’s health, environmental, social and cognitive state. Observation that individuals are not improving significantly should raise concerns as to the need to review current supports and whether changes are necessary.

In order for providers of service, including lifelong educators, to provide optimal quality of service to adults with intellectual disability they must understand the ways that the intellectual disability impacts on that individual in how they learn and communicate expressively and receptively, their skills, abilities and disabilities. They must also seek to comprehend what it is like living with intellectual disability in terms of living circumstances and the nature of the supports and services, health and wellbeing status, and associated sensory and motor disabilities. Application of this understanding is useful in understanding this assessment. Importantly, providers of service must come to understand if the individual with intellectual disability requires help to make certain choices in lifelong learning options, if they require help to be motivated, and what disability supports are required to facilitate the learning.

NEUROSCIENCE AND THE BRAIN

In the bigger picture of adult learning, it is useful for educators to understand the neurocognitive neuroscience of the ageing brain and intellectual disability. It is important to understand that particular cognitive acts and thought processes are integrated with particular processes in particular brain locations.

Aging and the underlying etiology of the intellectual disability do not impact on all aspects of cognition. People with intellectual disability have a greater difficulty than average in learning, though they are not a homogeneous group but rather, individuals with diverse strengths, interests and needs.

Types of organic brain processes which contribute to intellectual disability may be broadly classified as anatomical, developmental or neurohormonal. The isomorphism or perceived relationship between organic brain abnormality and cognitive disability may not be evident in all cognitive areas. This could be because of lack of scientific knowledge, reduced opportunities for the development of adaptive skills or because other epigenetic factors mask or minimise the expected cognitive skills. In the area of intellectual disability, the importance of specific neuropsychological processes has been well identified. The role of neuroanatomical, developmental and neurohormonal processes may lead to specific cognitive deficits associated with the roles of that anatomy or those neurohormones (Murman 2015). Populations of adults with intellectual disability are relatively new in society and not all great deal of study has been done in much older adults with intellectual disability.

NOTING THE PROFILES OF ADULTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Importantly people with intellectual disability have identified the central importance of lifelong learning in their lives themselves. In their report Live Out (2009) and the subsequent National Disability Strategy (2009) that ultimately led to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the adults with intellectual disability, who were identified in learning and skills and further, that:

- People with disability achieve their full potential through their participation in an inclusive high quality education system that is responsive to their needs. People with disability have opportunities to continue learning throughout their lives.
- Lifelong learning services for people with intellectual disability must be in line with ethical principles, respect disability values, and meet legislative requirements; recognize the right of person with disability to education, without discrimination, on the basis of equal opportunity; recognize the right for an inclusive education system at all levels and the need for lifelong learning, and recognize the necessity for accommodation to the needs of the individual (United Nations 2006 article 24).

The further complementary disability principles relevant for lifelong learning planning include the principle of least restrictive alternative (Davies et al., 2004). Inclusion can be facilitated by being able to stay connected with work and university, and an ability to contribute more to society. With adequate availability to lifelong learning opportunities, there may well be less intervention and reliance on government services and resources, increased opportunities for more income; future open or supported employment, and a decrease in physical and mental health concerns. Families and carers are able to celebrate their adult children’s successes and enjoy more of a grown-up relationship. The NDIS has much to gain from lifelong learning. These benefits include greater independence and self-sufficiency; improved self-esteem and personal fulfilment; improved ability to problem solve; ability to make own decisions; opportunity to advocate for oneself and understand laws, rights and responsibilities; improved personal health and wellbeing; reduction of exploitation and abuse; increased understanding of the world in which they live and work, and an ability to contribute more to society. With adequate availability to lifelong learning opportunities, there may well be less intervention and reliance on government services and resources, increased opportunities for more income; future open or supported employment, and a decrease in physical and mental health concerns. Families and carers are able to celebrate their adult children’s successes and enjoy more of a grown-Up relationship with their adult child that supports the parent/carer role.

These standards set out a process to be followed to ensure that students with disability are provided with the same opportunities as other students to realise their potential through participating in education and training. The Standards apply to government and non-government providers in all education sectors (pre-school, school, vocational education and training, higher education and adult and community education) as well as to organisations whose purpose it is to develop and accredit curricula and courses. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) manages individual learning service plans for individuals with intellectual disability who have identified learning needs that are expected to continue into adulthood.

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others will be general community services, which still must be accessible for people with disabilities. Educational bodies are required to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that students with disabilities are able to participate in courses or programs on the same basis as adult students without disability. Importantly, in considering such adjustments as being reasonable involves consideration of the nature of the disability, the view of the student, and the effect of the adjustment on the student. These include the effect on the student’s ability to achieve the learning outcome, to participate in courses or programs; and independence. They also include the effect of the proposed adjustment on anyone else affected including the effect on the health of staff and other students, and the costs and benefits of making the adjustments. In making any adjustments the provider is entitled to maintain the academic requirements of the course or program, and other requirements or conditions that are inherent in or essential to its nature.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Those who educate teachers to deliver lifelong learning for adults with and without intellectual disability aim to enable both teachers and learners to feel comfortable with diversity as part of the everyday. Moreover, with increasing inclusion, it may become common for mainstream teachers, ‘untrained in disability’, to have adult students with intellectual disability on a regular basis. Learning about teaching adults with intellectual disability must be in general teacher training, and not confined to specialised education teachers. This does not preclude more specialised training for teachers of students with intellectual disability as practitioners, researchers, innovators and leaders. In the learning environment, all teachers must be asset-rich teachers prepared adequate resources and disability supports so that their adult student with intellectual disability can learn.

IN SUMMARY

Lifelong learning opportunities take many forms all of which are relevant for people with intellectual disability. Mainstream services which provide such learning opportunities to adults must and can be structured around key settings for the particular learning goal, have the reasonable adjustments integrated to eliminate access barriers for those adult students with intellectual disability, be based on sound disability principles, and satisfy legislated education standards. The desirability of making mainstream lifelong learning opportunities available for adults with intellectual disability will be placed in a specialised supported setting, if more specific to their needs. Although promising, more work needs to be done in the refinement of the NDIS-education-disability interface to optimise the opportunities for adults with intellectual disability to engage in lifelong learning.

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It has been another incredibly busy and exciting year for the Australian College of Educators. As the only professional association that works for the entire education profession, our dedicated staff and volunteers have ensured the development and delivery of the highest quality professional support, services and events to our members.

Throughout 2018, the College had held over 100 events at regional, state and national levels presenting the latest research and knowledge and providing professional learning opportunities for all educators.

Our increased public presence saw the College representing and promoting our profession on a broad range of topics in the media including celebrating the incredible work of ACE Awards recipients around the country.

We have also been working hard behind the scenes on issues of significant importance to educators. As a member of a group of education organisations, the College has recognised the urgent need to re-visit the goals that were established 10 years ago under The Melbourne Declaration and work with all levels of Government to reinvigorate and re-focus our efforts in light of the significant changes in social, economic, cultural and environmental factors over the ensuing 10 years.

As has been noted in collective correspondence delivered to all key State and National Education Ministers and Senior Bureaucrats, “It is clear that the ‘why’, the ‘what’, the ‘how’ and the ‘where’ of learning are the central challenges for our communities, our economy, our environment and our society – local, national and global. In the Australian context, equally applicable across the globe, the challenges faced by young Australians associated with ingenuity, inclusivity, and diversity are brought into sharp relief as we experience disruptive technology in the fourth industrial age, the rise of artificial intelligence, robotics and a new world of work. In this environment it is clear that a focus on equity and support for those young people at most risk is crucial.”

The Teaching Profession, first, and foremost, is acutely aware of the special responsibilities we have for creating learning environments that are fit for purpose, supported by enabling conditions provided by government. We need the strong voice of strong teachers, public awareness and political commitment - learning is everybody’s business.

The challenge is to put this national endeavour front and centre. To collaborate on shared national educational goals, is both compelling and urgent.”

This work, along with a range of other services and support we have been developing for our ACE members will form the basis of yet another year of increased activity and action in 2019.

WHAT’S IN STORE FOR 2019

2019 will see the College reach a monumental milestone – 60 years of serving and representing the Australian Education Community – the longest serving professional association for educators in this country!

There is much celebration planned to mark our 60th Anniversary including events and publications.

We will also be enhancing our contributions and activities in the areas of advocacy and representation. Working with the other members of the education collective on progressing a formal review and refresh of our national education goals. The College will also be focusing on critical issues such as standardised testing, curriculum development and teacher agency, to name a few.

The College, like education, continues to evolve. And like education, the College needs teachers to help drive that evolution. Providing avenues and opportunities through which educators, ALL educators from all sectors, systems, and subjects and levels can actively contribute to, take ownership of and champion OUR profession is central to the activities, services and support delivered by the Australian College of Educators.

On behalf of the College, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the incredible dedication and commitment of our members. We look forward to celebrating our 60th Anniversary with you next year and to another 60 years of celebrating, representing and progressing the education profession throughout Australia.

With warmest regards

The Board and Staff of the Australian College of Educators
Teaching humans in this world of smartphones and talking homes

We live in interesting times, it has been said before, and remains ever true today...

discovery that we have recently been played by the system, an incredible opportunity is presented, for we can use this realisation to take back control of ethics to build better systems - for starters, we can strive to build social platforms that are inclusive, ethical, transparent, and equitable...

Who are the builders of these tools? For tomorrow? The students of today!

And this is where we, as teachers, have a pivotal role to play in the shaping of society.

It is through an awareness of the reality that we live in an environment designed and built by us, that we are best positioned to not only meet the challenges posed by the world of drones and talking homes, but to create them for our benefit. If we understand that we live in this construct, then we can become the masters of it, rather than its slaves. There is no debating the fact that our students need skills, they need to know how to think, they need to know how to innovate and to deliver on their ideas.

But as our world is redefined by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Schubert 2018), students also need to know what it is to be human. For it is through a cogiscence of our humanity that we can best live in and design for the world ofvirtual reality (VR) and robots.

And this brings me back to the question that needs to be asked in education today. What is it to be human in this world of smartphones and talking homes? There is something inherently precious in our humanity. When you feel down, a friend might give you a hug full of care and compassion - a hug surrounds and holds you up, with such effect that you physically feel the sadness melt away and comfort take hold. Alexia or a taxi recently and shared a story with the driver that it is an internship for entrepreneurial thinkers and social impact changemakers in the here and now.

With digital twins on the other side of tomorrow, a consciousness of being human will be essential if we are to avoid the fate of those languishing obliviously on the motherboards, the statistic Avon in WALL-E (Stanton et al. 2008).

This is a most immediate time to be an educator - for we are at the precipice of a genuine epoch transition - the tipping point for how society goes forward... and as educators you can be instrumental in shaping the very nature of our society by equipping our kids to be cognisant, ethical creators of their world, our world, the world that we all live in.

one of them looks over at the other and says "What is water?"

Foster-Wallace goes on to argue that the real benefit of education lies in the development of cognisance - an understanding of what it is, so fundamental, so ubiquitous that it typically goes unnoticed unless we draw attention to it. The message here? As educators, we should remind our students always, the urge they perceive and react to the world matters, so ‘choose to see’.

Or as Foster-Wallace (2005) would say... "This is water. This is water.

A fundamental value of education is to equip people with the skills and knowledge to build a better society. Education is an human endeavour. Education, all its best, is communal.

For education to penetrate and have lasting impact, it must be authentic. Schooling is not a practical for the real thing... it is an internship for entrepreneurial thinkers and social impact changemakers in the here and now.

They lie in us... the teachers of tomorrow's systems builders today.

During my years in education, I have developed a view that the fundamental aim of schooling is to educate young people to become au-some and then responsible members of the community, in which we all become contemporary. It needs to focus on positive citizenship and cultivating an ethical entrepreneurial mindset.

But the school is only one element in the education system - each teacher is a microcosm of change agency, a resource for educators and the learners to be the designers of tomorrow's world, today...

Teachers are uniquely positioned to address today's challenges...

When designing your next unit of work, reflect on your practice...

How are you shaping society through your teaching?

How are you equipping your students with an awareness of what it is to be human and how to make a positive contribution to the world they live in?

Is it building student capacity to be learners, thinkers, innovators, doers?

Is it creating lessons characterised by creativity, flexibility and collaboration?

Is it enabling your students to develop empathy and social connectedness?

Where students are equipped with these capabilities, they will be a generation of innovators who are not only surviving in the realm of robots but are actually contributing to improving the state of the world.

This is a watershed moment, and we are at the cusp of it!

Teach your students what it is to be human. Equip them with the awareness, the self-belief, the value of what it is to be human in this world of AI and VR.

These technologies have the potential to enhance our lives or to diminish them... and it’s a choice - be clear about this, it is a choice - educate the next generation of designers and creators to develop tools to enhance, not to diminish.

In his renowned 2005 Commencement Speech, Foster-Wallace tells a story:

There are these two fish swimming along and they happen to meet an older fish swimming the other way, who asks at them and says “Morning, boys. How’s the water?” And the two fish reply “Great! And the water is clear.”

Foster-Wallace goes on to argue that the real benefit of education lies in the development of cognisance - an understanding of what it is, so fundamental, so ubiquitous that it typically goes unnoticed unless we draw attention to it. The message here? As educators, we should remind our students always, the urge they perceive and react to the world matters, so ‘choose to see’.

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Biographies

Sophie Fenlon After graduating with a BA (International Politics) from Monash in 1998, Sophie lectured at the Humanities at ACU and then transitioned into the tertiary sector teaching VCE, serving as Chair of Faculty of Arts, Honorary Head of Teaching and Learning. In 2014, she completed the MED School Leadership at Monash, and then went onto co-found Sandridge School in in Williamstown in 2016. A multi-award winner, Sophie has recently taken up a Doctoral position in the Faculty of Education at Monash. 

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A nonagenarian, slow cooking and more than a hint of disruption

Some musings about lifelong learning in uncertain times

Dr Bruce Addison, Deputy Principal (Academic), Brisbane Girls Grammar School

Recently I lost my 94 year-old father. It was a sad time, but it was also a celebration of a life well lived. When sitting down to write his eulogy, many themes swirled around in my mind—how he had earned an academic qualification, the need to explain his life to his children and the need to record the intrinsic drivers that underscored his approach to lifelong learning – a drive that was evident well into his old age. Dad possessed a prodigious intellect and an incredibly inquiring mind, reading widely and always maintaining an active interest in politics and current affairs. He was also a gifted proof reader and an intellectual, and the Taylorist principles underscoring his approach to lifelong learning left an indelible imprint on me. I was the first person in my family to attend university.

I note all of this not out of any sense of self-indulgence but to record the intrinsic drivers that underscored his approach to lifelong learning—a drive that was independent of formal education. My father could have left school at 15, forge a career and commit to the bygone era. Dad possessed a prodigious intellect and an incredibly inquiring mind, reading widely and always maintaining an active interest in politics and current affairs. He was also a gifted proof reader and an intellectual, and the Taylorist principles underscoring his approach to lifelong learning left an indelible imprint on me. I was the first person in my family to attend university.

The Great Depression meant that Dad had no option other than to leave School. The economic collapse had hit Western Queensland townships particularly hard. Eventually he made his way to Brisbane, finding a job as a junior office boy at a large Trustee company. He stayed with that firm for over forty years eventually retiring as State Manager. This trajectory was the trajectory of many young people during this era. Dad possessed a prodigious intellect and an incredibly inquiring mind, reading widely and always maintaining an active interest in politics and current affairs. He was also a gifted proof reader and an intellectual, and the Taylorist principles underscoring his approach to lifelong learning left an indelible imprint on me. I was the first person in my family to attend university.

The idea that a university degree will prepare graduates for life also needs challenging. Secondary education should be seen as much more than a preparing ground for tertiary education.

In such an environment, the concepts of deep and slow learning have an important role to play. Digital connectivity and its associated instantaneity has led to contextualisation and challenged in order to ensure that learning is deep, reflective and thorough. The speedy access to information is not enough. Just as in slow cooking, slow learning allows time for the flours to meld and for the dish to develop. This requires counter-cultural thought: Laptops and digitalisation provide speed and degrees of connectedness but they don't teach wisdom, thoughtfulness or allow time for musing. There is no doubt that digitalisation can and should be used to augment learning, but we need to guard against it becoming an end in itself. Learning things for retention is so very important for brain function and cognitive growth. Teachers as the role models and facilitators of this are so very important. We must model our thirst for learning—demonstrating to our students that we are indeed lifelong learners, irrespective of our age or credentials. Teacher and learners have to be our constant companions if we are to gift hope, discernment and optimism to our young people—qualities that are so very important in the development of lifelong learning, inquisitiveness and a sense of wonder as life companions. The world has changed and will continue to change. It is very difficult for us, who forged our careers at the intersection of both the old and the new model, to fathom or to appreciate this fully. This disequilibrium is surely extremely challenging for those who will have to fathom or to appreciate this fully. This disequilibrium is surely extremely challenging for those who will have to...

Biographies

Dr Bruce Addison is Deputy Principal (Academic) at Brisbane Girls Grammar School, where he teaches Economics and Philosophy of Learning. For many years, he co-ordinated and taught post-graduate subjects in the areas of both curriculum and leadership as the University of Queensland. Bruce's current areas of interest lie in the areas of student agency and the development of professional practice.
The learning opportunities that we engage with throughout our lives, shape our life chances, experiences and understanding. How, what and when we learn has an impact on the nature and ways in which we teach. We would like to share with you experiences and other partnerships that have helped us and may help other education professionals to fulfill this responsibility.

**Educator and commitment to self**

Your first qualification is only the start of your professional journey. A commitment to lifelong learning in the form of continuing professional development (CPD) is essential for a sustainable professional journey. A commitment to lifelong learning, whether we identify as educators or not, we will need to learn to teach ourselves or our clients in formal and informal ways. Since 2000, the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) PD Scheme has been providing a supporting framework for our Members by having our ongoing commitment to CPD formally recognised with Certified Professional membership. Now voluntarily undertaken by over 40% of eligible ALIA members. From 2020 all new ALIA professional members will be automatically added to the ALIA PD Scheme in recognition that the hallmark of a professional in our sector is someone who commits to lifelong learning. This framework shares characteristics with the various professional standards (frameworks for education and training) and is similar to the requirements for a certified practising accountant (CPA) in Australia. The growth mindset of investing in yourself through life-long learning is one of the most important responsibilities of all educators.

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Skills for a Post Truth Future

Critical Digital Literacy is the most important lifelong learning skill that we must teach our children.

Vicki Greer, BA, MA, Grad Dip Ed, MACE Learning, and Support Coordinator, Cairns Harbour Senior College.

We live and teach in exciting times. Technology is a fact of our lives. Thanks to the internet, our access to knowledge seems limitless. We call our students Digital Natives, but tell ourselves that they are not only better off, but also better at it all, than those of us old enough to remember flipping through index cards to find books in the library. The kids have more than we could ever hope to access in their pockets and their backpacks. The information revolution has become the label, if not the cliché of our time.

But what does this really mean? If we accept the dictionary’s definition of information as ‘knowledge communicated or received’, our students, communities and the wider world should now be so much better informed than any previous generation. Surely, our access to so much information should mean that holocaust denial, climate change denial, anti-vaccination misinformation, and every conspiracy theory would have been put to rest, and truly debunked by now. Fake news would not be a ‘thing’. Neither would ‘post-truth’. Yet, of course, that’s not the case. As teachers, we despair over yet another ‘cut and paste’ job in an assignment. We roll our eyes at the ‘knowledge communicated or received’, our students, from their ability to understand and use what they are accessing. Only 17% of high school students were able to evaluate how accurate news stories were (Nottley and Dezanni 2017). The evidence that too many young people do not have these skills is piling up. In 2016 the Stanford History Education Group assessed civic online reasoning – what they described as ‘the ability to judge the credibility of information that funds young people’s smartphones, tablets and computers’ (SH@E 2016). Their study covered school and college students and summed up its findings as ‘bleak’ (p.1). They found that 80% of middle school students could not tell the difference between a news story and a paid advertisement on a website. High School students were shown a striking image of distorted flowers and a caption claiming that these are ‘nuclear birth defects’ caused by the 2011 Fukushima nuclear plant disaster from a photo sharing site. Only 20% of students questioned the source of the photo or the post and almost 40% argued that the post was correct because it included a photo. Less than a third of college students were able to evaluate how political agendas could affect the content of tweets about gun control. Closer to home, Tanya Nattley from Western Sydney University and Michael Degueurmi from Queensland University of Technology (found that more than half the young people they surveyed reported ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never’ trying to check the accuracy of online news stories. (Nattley and Degueurmi 2017)

The Evidence

The evidence that too many young people do not have these skills is piling up. In 2016 the Stanford History Education Group assessed civic online reasoning – what they described as ‘the ability to judge the credibility of information that funds young people’s smartphones, tablets and computers’ (SH@E 2016). Their study covered school and college students and summed up its findings as ‘bleak’ (p.1). They found that 80% of middle school students could not tell the difference between a news story and a paid advertisement on a website. High School students were shown a striking image of distorted flowers and a caption claiming that these are ‘nuclear birth defects’ caused by the 2011 Fukushima nuclear plant disaster from a photo sharing site. Only 20% of students questioned the source of the photo or the post and almost 40% argued that the post was correct because it included a photo. Less than a third of college students were able to evaluate how political agendas could affect the content of tweets about gun control. Closer to home, Tanya Nattley from Western Sydney University and Michael Degueurmi from Queensland University of Technology (found that more than half the young people they surveyed reported ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never’ trying to check the accuracy of online news stories. (Nattley and Degueurmi 2017)

Solutions

The concept of the digital native seems dangerous when we do not embrace our responsibility to guide students through the online jungle. As teachers, we must separate the ability of our students to access technology from their ability to understand and use what they are accessing.

As educators, it may be far more useful to see ourselves and our students in the midst of a content, not an information, revolution. Our task then becomes clearer – to help our students to develop the critical skills that will allow them to gather information from the vast amount of content that they face online, now and in the future.

Is the solution bigger and better blocking programs? Filtering is an appropriate material is necessary, particularly in schools and it certainly has its place, but it is not the whole solution. We can’t control online activity outside our classrooms. We aren’t teaching any skills that our students clearly need now and throughout their lives by relying on controls alone. Furthermore, we are facing far more subtle and insidious ways through which misinformation and inappropriate content can reach us.

What Should Students Be Learning?

A clearer understanding of the nature of online content and how it is presented is a first step. Solutions need to focus on critical skills and informed engagement. The 2016 Presidential Election, emphasising the concept of ‘fake news’ and ‘post-truth’ has been something of a wake-up call, particularly in the USA. (As a result, most of the resources recommended in this article are from US based institutions and organisations.) The American University’s Game Lab has developed Factitious, a free online game that tests your ability to spot ‘fake news’ by using left or right. National Public Radio’s All Things Considered is a trove of practical advice and engaging articles for both teachers and students. Students need to learn to become their own ‘fact checkers’. ABC News Fact Check provides us with an immediate, Australian resource on the information

References


Biographies

Vicki Greer is the author / co-author of 15 commercially published textbooks (History 7-12); over 40 Newspapers in Education Biographies

Critical Digital Literacy is the most important lifelong learning skill that we must teach our children. Students need to learn to become their own ‘fact checkers’. ABC News Fact Check provides us with an immediate, Australian resource on the information behind news content. For older students (and perhaps yourself)! The Conversation (fact checks the claims made by Q&A panelists. For US based stories, Pulitzer Prize winning politifact.com fact checks a vast array of news stories and political material and links to other sites that focus on critical, for example: factcheck.org. It uses a ‘Truth-o-meter’ icon that could be easily adapted for a classroom activity. Sites such as snopes.com are great for testing unit content. Washington’s News Museum website contains lesson plans and activities focusing on critical media literacy...
The mass murder of six million Jews by Nazi Germany during World War II is harrowing to comprehend, demanding to study, and difficult to teach well. The prospect of planning a Holocaust-related learning sequence for our history, social science, religion or literature class can be daunting. Professional learning helps. The Gandel Holocaust Studies Program for Australian Educators is an extraordinary professional learning opportunity, which attracts teachers with a lifelong learner mindset. Such teachers seek the knowledge and tools to help their students understand a confronting period in history and reflect on tolerance and freedoms in their own society.

Lifelong learning is recognised as a force for good. In the wake of the unprecedented genocide of World War II, leaders established the United Nations, and with it the United Nations Organisation for Education, Science and Culture. UNESCO promotes international peace by supporting efforts to combat what its charter describes as ‘ignorance of each other’s ways and lives’ (UNESCO 1947). Teachers are seen to be at the forefront of lifelong learning for personal and communal development (UNESCO 2018). The UNESCO Commission on Education in the 21st century described the ideal teacher in the new millennium as ‘an agent of change, promoting understanding and tolerance’, by continually developing their own knowledge and teaching skills (Delors et al 1996 p.141).

Professor John Cookahan (2002 p.12) put this well:

If society’s concern is to improve quality in education and to foster creative, enterprising, innovative, self-reliant young people, with the capacity and motivation to go on as lifelong learners, then this will not happen unless the corps of teachers are themselves challenging, innovative and lifelong learners.

UNESCO elaborated on this in a framework for lifelong learning, which includes the pillars of learning to know (formal education), learning to do (vocational learning), learning to live together (for social cohesion) and learning to be (personal growth). All of these forms of learning were on my mind when I joined 35 other Australian teachers in Jerusalem last year to learn about the Holocaust.

The lifelong learner mindset

Thirty years after I first read Thomas Keneally’s gripping historical novel Schindler’s Ark, I found myself standing beside Oskar Schindler’s grave. I was at high school when I encountered the story behind the legend in 1980s Melbourne, consciously and formally a ‘student’. A student – from the Latin studere, meaning I was expected to apply myself to the task of learning. I applied myself to Schindler’s story and was moved. By the time I stood beside the grave in Jerusalem in 2017, I was middle-aged, and had recently changed career to become a ‘teacher’. A teacher – from the Latin instruere, meaning to build something upon others – building them up with curiosity? Skills? Wisdom? What had really driven me out of a higher-paid and more secure public service career towards teaching was not a desire to instruct, but a sense that I wanted to be a learner again, and to be around learners. This was precisely what I was doing in Jerusalem, and I was very moved. I was at Schindler’s final resting place because I had travelled to Israel to spend my vacation doing the Gandel-sponsored intensive professional learning course for Australian teachers. We were from all over the country, having won scholarships to Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust memorial, archive and international school for Holocaust studies. The Gandel program stands on the lifelong learning pillars: learning to know – nearly 100 hours of formal lectures and workshops;

The Teacher of the Holocaust needs to be a Lifelong Learner

Every teacher who seeks to engage, challenge and support students to be lifelong learners needs to be a lifelong learner too. This is especially so for educators who teach about the Holocaust.

Stephen Powell PhD; History and English teacher, Merici College, Braddon, ACT
Learning to do — introductions to high-quality resources and teaching tools; learning to live together — undoing cultural, social, and religious divides; and learning to be — no participant could complete the immersive course without a genuine sense of personal growth.

Learning to be
It was nearing dusk in the Catholic Cemetery just outside the 16th-century walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. Behind us lay the Temple Mount / Dome of the Rock, a place consecrated accessable to Muslims at times but not to Jews, and all the centuries of destruction, exile, rebirth and disputes that explain that situation. Before us lay Oskar Schindler’s grave, strewn with pebbles that had been left as a memorial tribute by visitors to commemorate the enigmatic industrialist’s heroic efforts to save 1,200 Jews from certain death in 1944. Beyond, on the horizon past the Mount of Olives, stood the 21st-century ‘security barrier’ that isolates Palestinian communities in the West Bank and whose towering walls show how cemented-in the Arab-Israeli division has become.

Schindler, as told by Keneally and later Steven Spielberg, was no angel. He had built a fortune through a ruthless competitive spirit, he had joined the Nazi Party to capitalise on business opportunities, and there was nothing admirable about his private life. But there was nothing admirable about his private life. Dr. Effraim Zuroff’s business card reads Chief Nazi Hunter. Michael Sroka wrote: ‘...sick of the thousands of people who know nothing of the Holocaust and have never visited a concentration camp. He is the best-known of the ‘Righteous Among the Nations’ who intervened to save a million Jews, and he is the history of his family to the Holocaust and never returned to his Czech hometown: instead he moved to Israel, became a soldier, and in his 90s still lives in a collective home. The program of expert lectures and survivor testimonies is curated by Ephraim Hayat, a master educator in his own right.

Learning to do
Professional learning for teachers is not only about the ‘what’ but also the ‘why’. We discussed the best ways to guide students learning. These can be summarized in some key dos and donts.

Do
Don’t
Control students’ access to disturbing information
Encourage students to do disturbing research
Focus on the effects of propaganda
Focus solely on Nazis / perpetrators
Excit critical thinking with primary sources
Role play or traumatise students
Reminiscence rare heroes who saved Jews
Foster misplaced empathy
Link students to survivors
Relay unanswerable questions
Visit, or use materials from, the Holocaust museum
Relig on feature films

Students must come ‘safely in’ to the subject and then go ‘safely out’

Students must come ‘safely in’ to the subject and then go ‘safely out’

• Students must come ‘safely in’ to the subject and then go ‘safely out’
• Students must come ‘safely in’ to the subject and then go ‘safely out’

Learning to live together
‘How was it humanly possible?’ (Stenfeldt 2002) is the eternal question for anyone who learns about the Holocaust, and there are few free answers. The questions we asked were: Why were committed by educated human beings, and their victims were their neighbours. Teachers of the Holocaust are reminded that we have a ‘sacred responsibility to make students aware not only of the evil that humankind is capable of but also the processes that allow such depredation to take root and flourish’ (Gelski 2003 p.8) Some organisations tailor their Holocaust learning materials specifically to this instrumentalist view of history, to focus on learning to live together in a time when intolerance is rising. ‘The Facing History and Ourselves’ non-profit, for instance, frames its Holocaust resources in terms of 21st century big, binary, anti-semitic and racism in the United States. In October 2018, within a dog of a gunman opening fire at a Pittsburgh synagogue while shouting ‘Death to all Jews,’ Facing History circulated a teaching idea about contextualising the horrific event (CHO 2018). Yad Vashem sits on the Mount of Remembrance, a quiet forested hill in Jerusalem. At its heart is a breathtaking, 4,200 m museum that is visited by nearly a million people each year. The memorials and sculptures around its beautiful grounds are efforts to remember and make sense of the loss. Inevitably, visitors ask each other how human beings can do such things to each other. This is a powerful question for a learning idea, and one which needs to make sure that our students keep asking.

Biographies
Dr Stephen Powell PhD teaches high school History and English classes at Merici College, Canberra. Teaching is his second career, since graduating from Monash University in 2000 with a PhD in 20th century history. Before entering the teaching profession he worked in environmental and heritage policy, and represented Australia at international conferences, including UNESCO and various NGOs. Stephen was awarded a scholarship to participate in the 2017 Baccalaureate Theory of Knowledge course. He has presented research findings and teaching ideas to state and national conferences of the History Teachers Association of Australia, and is currently designing his school’s introduction of the International Baccalaureate Theory of Knowledge course.
Teaching Controversy

The 1970s classroom, if I am not misremembering my teenage years, was a theatre for dangerous ideas. Everyone was entitled to an opinion, but with the proviso that it might be accepted or rejected, or more frequently, accepted only in part.

Daryl McCann, Learning and Support Coordinator, Coffs Harbour Senior College.

Nobody could hide behind the protection of a ‘safe space’, but then truth never seemed to be absolute or incontrovertible. It was, instead, provisional. None of us, as far as I recall, were ‘triggered’ by our classroom free-for-alls. Maybe we just didn’t know the post-modernist terminology to describe the feeling of being offended by another point of view. That said, the teacher, appreciating there had to be some rules for harnessing adolescent precociousness, invariably ceded the role of the round-mindedness. This type of education set me on a path of lifelong learning.

Jerusalem, January 2012, was the site of my most recent encounter with triggering. Ephraim Kaye, head of the International Seminar at Yad Vashem, had just presented a lecture to 23 Australian educators, titled ‘Arendt, in her seminal Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil’.

I taught Year 11s and 12s the International Baccalaureate unit titled Holocaust Denial and Holocaust Inversion. The Diary of Anne Frank, which I taught in 1979, is a classic of its genre. It is a key reference text for those studying the Holocaust and reminds us that there is no such thing as a closed book, that even the 1947 bowdlerised incarnation, was no hoax. The Diary of Anne Frank, as most of us conceived it, occurred between 1942 and 1944. The commonly accepted truth, for a fan of History of History, might be provisional and open to continual re-examination, but that is not to say it is really utopian. Truth, however conditional, is more powerful than mere opinion.

My time in Israel inspired me to create an educational unit titled Holocaust Denial and Holocaust Inversion. The instructions include:

- Students must find a contested issue in the subject of Holocaust Denial and Inversion. They must research the topic and devise their response into three parts: an averseus argument; and counter-argument. You will be making a six-minute presentation to the class. Visuals are encouraged but are in addition to the speech.

I taught Year 11s and 12s the International Baccalaureate History for some sixteen years, but my Holocaust Denial and Holocaust Inversion unit, which I devised in the second year of teaching the course, is a clinic in the construction of a parsimonious, engaging, and thought-provoking unit. There is a multitude of Holocaust Denial topics from which to choose, including the David Irving versus Penguin and Debra Lissad. Kaye’s responsibility for the Holocaust, Daniel Goldenberg’s ‘Willing Executioners’

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- McCann, D., 2014, ‘Ordinary Men’, the meaning of the Wannsee Conference, in the hands of the leaders.” (Kershner 2018). The meaning of the Wannsee Conference, in the hands of the leaders. It is not enough to dismiss allegations that categorically demonstrates some six million Jewish individuals persecuted at the hands of the Nazis. The other hand, source after source points in the same direction. There is, then, a convergence of evidence that corroborates the view that the Holocaust, as most of us conceive it, occurred between 1942 and 1944. The commonly accepted truth, for a fan of History of History, might be provisional and open to continual re-examination, but that is not to say it is really utopian. Truth, however conditional, is more powerful than mere opinion.

Holocaust Denial also exists on a personal level, as in the case of the trial of Adolfo Eichmann in 1961. Eichmann, who played the key role in co-ordinating the transportation logistics of the extermination camps, claimed that the beginning of proceedings that he ought not to be held responsible for the Holocaust. “There is no need to draw a line between the leaders responsible and the people like me who served as mere instruments in the hands of the leaders.” (Kershner 2018). Eichmann, in her seminal Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil, concluded that Eichmann deserved his fate at the end of a rope, and yet she nevertheless asserted the Nuremberg Trials, the culpability of Albert Speer, disputation about Holocaust statistics, Eichmann in Jerusalem, the Adelaide Institute’s ‘revisionism’, and even the authenticity of Anne Frank’s Diary.

There are, for instance, 287,000 Google results alone for Anne Frank Diary hoax. It is not enough to dismiss attacks on the provenance of Anne Frank’s famous diary as so much nonsense. The faithfulness of the 1947 book to the actual, word-by-word statements of Anne is genuinely problematic. After all, Hans Frank, Anne’s father, is credited as co-author of that original publication. How much did he contribute to the book? Did he, perhaps, fabricate the whole thing? The answer is complicated, but we can be assured – despite the best efforts of the ‘Diary Deniers’ – that the voice of Anne Frank is speaking to us when we read her book. To start with, Hans Frank is credited as ‘co-author’ only in the sense that he collected and edited Anne’s writings to create the artefact we now know as the 1947 version of ‘The Diary of Anne Frank’.

Hans Frank was, admittedly, a heavy-handed editor. For instance, he expurgated all his daughter’s references to her being offended by another point of view. That said, the teacher, appreciating there had to be some rules for harnessing adolescent precociousness, invariably ceded the role of the round-mindedness. This type of education set me on a path of lifelong learning.

If there is any downside to my involvement with the Gandel Programme, which sponsored me to study in Jerusalem, is that I know I will never get to the bottom of everything. And yet that does not stop me to stop from trying. I have no idea how much longer I will live, so I try to make the most of my time, to always be learning. But with as much fair-mindedness as my teachers did, I hope, with as much fair-mindedness as my teachers did, I hope.

Details about the Gandel Programme can be found at this link: https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/education/international_projects/australian_educators/index.asp

Biographies

Daryl McCann has taught History for 38 years, including 16 years teaching the International Baccalaureate. Daryl McCann was a participant in the 2012 Gandel Programme in Jerusalem. He has written for The Australian newspaper, Spectator Australia, Quadrant magazine and the Salisbury Review. He has a blog at http://darylmccann.blogspot.com.au
A preservice teacher perspective

Patrick Hill @HiTeach

My initial career path as a chef meant that I had to endure many hours of work often in hostile kitchen environments. The hours were long, often sixty to seventy hours a week, involving enduring verbal obscenities and many demoralising remarks. I would often arrive home dejected. My sleep was restless as I knew what was going to face me on return to the kitchen the next day. It was a terrible environment but it taught me much about resilience, determination and growth. It gave me a hunger for lifelong learning as a means by which to be released from this cycle and also a means by which to improve. Failure was not going to be an option because grit, learning and determination was to be a passport to better things.

The picture I paint of the kitchen environment is perhaps a little misleading. Swirls rebeke often taught me much. Failure would have had terrible consequences. Senior chefs had much to teach me even though I didn’t like their methodology. All of this made me realise that it is possible to learn and grow through difficulty.

I discovered that an essential co-partner of adversity is support. Support and love from a warm community is a precondition for learning and growth. I credit my fruitful journey of lifelong learning to the encouraging Christian community around me. I recognise that effective learning is not a lonely journey, but is enriched by a supportive, loving network that spurs one another onto greater heights.

My learning journey has been a strange mix of repeated failures, reflection and action enveloped by loving support. I believe this to be the essential alchemy necessary for establishing a habit of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning is not limited to one’s specialisation, career or interests but rather is an overarching attitude and principle of one’s perspective. It is not limited to one’s specialisation, career or interests but rather is an overarching attitude and principle of one’s perspective. It is not limited to one’s specialisation, career or interests but rather is an overarching attitude and principle of one’s perspective.

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I hope in some small way I will be capable of imparting at least some of this to my students so that they will be lifelong learners in our world of challenge and change.

Biographies

Patrick Hill is a Pre-Service Teacher studying at the Australian Catholic University.

What does lifelong learning mean to me? The perspective of an early career educator

Matthew D. Norris, PhD, AACE

It is perhaps only a mere handful of times that I remember the importance of ‘lifelong learning’ being emphasised to me throughout my education. And yet, when I speak to my students, it is always at the center of my thinking. Rather than immediately confronting learners with facts, figures and content specific advice on any subject matter, I always endeavour to take a step back and emphasise, while seeking to inspire, the importance and centrality of lifelong learning.

Last summer I attended a special international meeting focusing on scientific research and international relations in the south of Germany. There were many impressive intellects assembled many of which represented the world’s most gifted scientific talents. One statement that moved me profoundly was a relatively simple one by Professor Dan Shechtman of Israel, winner of the 2015 Nobel Prize in Chemistry. His advice to his younger colleagues about lifelong learning rested on his belief that “learning is wonderful”.

This statement is such a simple statement yet it reaches to the very core of our humanness. Wonder is such a magical word as it encapsulates the inquisitiveness that sets us apart from other animals. Professor Shechtman reminds us that at the core of learning, no matter how simple, rests the intellectual prowess resulting from the joy of wonder and the endless possibilities founded on inquisitiveness.

I will never forget Professor Shechtman’s words. They have prompted me to realise that the reason I enjoyment the education I received in high school; the reason I excelled in my studies at university; the reason that I could contribute to new cutting-edge scientific research during my doctoral years and as a postdoctoral scientific researcher, and the reason I feel that my students derive at least some inspiration and enthusiasm from my course, is because I do understand the significance of learning as a way of life. Learning is a way of thinking and being that is indeed lifelong. In fact it could be argued that lifelong learning is an essential precondition and responsibility of what it means to be truly human.

Shechtman also insists that learning is not exclusive to institutional education. It is not reserved for the university and it is not an art that can only be practiced by scholars and skilled researchers. While there is understandably an emphasis on learning, independent thinking and creative thought within these more specialized pursuits, learning and more specifically lifelong learning is so essential for the continued development of any concept of civility.

Let’s forget the narrow constraints of disciplinarity. Statements such as: “I’m not a maths person,” “all politicians speak non-sense,” and “I don’t use these new technologies” are most unhelpful. No one person can be an expert in everything. In fact, the best one person can expect to do, is to barely scratch the surface of understanding the infinitely complex and fascinating world we live in. We must always enjoy and embrace learning something new, no matter how seemingly difficult or awesome. This is what lifelong learning means to me.

Professor Shechtman’s valuable words have taught me so much about lifelong learning, and I can only hope that his wisdom spreads further than that very special meeting in Germany.

Biographies

Matthew D. Norris was born and raised in the southern suburbs of Adelaide, where he studied chemistry at Flinders University, earning his bachelor degree and doctorate. In 2014, he worked at Princeton University in the United States as a Fulbright Postgraduate Scholar; and currently, he is a recipient of the Humboldt Boyer Postdoctoral Fellowship in Germany. Throughout his study and research, Matthew has taught many students in the tertiary sector and frequentlyRemarks that “it is truly fulfilling day is a teaching day”. 
LIFELONG LEARNING • THREE PART DISCUSSION

A Father’s Day breakfast: Some musings about lifelong learning

Mrs Kim Cohen

On Fathers’ Day my husband and I went to a local coffee shop for breakfast. As we chatted, Jim pointed out a family sitting at a neighbouring table. Mom, dad and son (aged about ten) were also celebrating this special day. It appeared to us that they weren’t engaging or being particularly present with each other. Disengagement and a lack of presence seemed to be the norm to them and they were just living through their ritual. As we looked around it seemed to have been copied by many of the families who were also out ‘celebrating’ this particular day. Dad studiously read the paper while shovelling food into his mouth, mum was scrolling through her phone, as their son quietly ate his food staring into the distance. What a lost opportunity on so many levels. Family meals were once, and still could be, the perfect times for parents to lay the foundations for inquisitiveness and lifelong learning. Discussion, debate, laughter and the occasional tear are such great teachers – perhaps the best!

According to Hudson (2017), lifelong learning ‘is the ongoing, voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons’. Many researchers in this field tend to focus on the learning that occurs once a person has completed their schooling or initial tertiary studies. They focus on the academic learning that a young adult may complete to launch them into their future career.

Lifelong learning is a much bigger concept.

It is the learning in which we engage from the minute we are born to the minute we die – it is indeed lifelong. When we stop learning we stop functioning as a fully alive human being. Lifelong learning is a much bigger concept. It is the learning in which we engage from the minute we are born to the minute we die – it is indeed lifelong.

Back to the coffee shop family. A young boy who is still learning through mimicking adults is discovering that it is the norm to be self-engraved when in a social environment, that it is acceptable to withdraw from your current company and be ambivalent of those around you. This is the age when parents can pique the curiosity of their children, teach them the grit required to immerse themselves in learning and encourage humility to accept that there is so much they do not know, so much to question and so much to listen to. Leo F. Buscaglia (1982, p.188) puts it succinctly in his book, Living, Learning and Loving. ‘I live by the modelling. We don’t learn from being told. We learn from watching, observing, picking it up and trying it out. That’s the way we learn. It’s a voluntary discovery process.’

The home is where children can learn the fundamentals of dialogue, the process in which people engage in free and creative exploration of complex and subtle issues, a deep ‘listening’ to ‘one another and suspending of one’s own views’ (Senge 2004, p.223). If parents and teachers can develop in children the ability to be open to influence; to formulate ideas based on robust observation; to listen in order to learn and not just to focus on their responses, then we will be creating a society in which lifelong learning can thrive. We live in an environment where politicians will engage in debate, but not in dialogue. As the influential adults in these young lives we must role model listening and observation as well as taking. We must hear with our ears and not just speak with our thumbs.

When children, adolescents and adults alike take part in real dialogue, deeper learning occurs. So many avenues for development emerge. Neuroplasticity and a growth mindset are terms that have become fashionable in educational institutions worldwide; and so they should. Whilst some of the growth mindset rhetoric is currently being questioned, even by Carol Dweck (2015), it is very important to keep it in mind. As it stands it remains true. One’s abilities and talents are not fixed and learning from one’s mistakes and perceived failures are indeed learning opportunities and avenues for growth. Unfortunately, in many contexts, the growth mindset concept has been inappropriately linked to effort only. Carol Dweck (2015) states, ‘effort is not the only thing. Students need to seek new strategies and seek input from others’. In so doing they will develop their brains. How much easier will this be for them if they have learnt how to listen and, how to engage in meaningful dialogue? This must be role modelled actively. We cannot just expect our young people to do it. Active family lives is so important.

As adults we need to ensure that the children in our lives can look to us as role models in this business of learning. They need to be able to recognize in us the curiosity; grit and humility required to be immersed in learning, if it is an intellectual, emotional, spiritual or humanitarian. They should understand the importance of, and be able to actively contribute to, robust dialogue, whilst seeking challenges and strategies to develop and grow their brains in order to become role models themselves for the next generation of lifelong learners. I learned much from my Father’s Day breakfast. What a wonderful thing it is to pause, reflect and to wonder!

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Biographies

Mrs Kim Cohen is the Principal at The Glennie School in Toowoomba, Queensland. Kim holds a Bachelor of Science and a Higher Diploma in Education and recently completed her Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership from the Australian Catholic University. Kim’s professional background includes executive roles in well-regarded girls’ schools in Australia, including St Margaret’s ADS, Lourdes Hill College and Brisbane Girls Grammar. Kim is a Mathematics teacher and has held positions including, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal, Head of House and Head of Year.
NEW SOUTH WALES

Lila Mulareczyk
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There has been a lot of ACE and education activity in New South Wales over the last quarter.

September delivered our Annual State Awards Dinner with 200 registrations joining the College to celebrate excellence in education throughout the State. October saw a flurry of activity with many of our ACE regional groups delivering incredible and creative celebrations of the education profession and World Teachers’ Day.

The New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) has commenced a review into the NSW school curriculum to ensure that our education system is preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

The review, the first in almost 10 years, is being led by former ACE National President and Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Catholic University, Professor Geoff Masters.

Public consultation has commenced and it is absolutely critical that teachers actively engage with this and it is absolutely critical that we, the educators of today, act as a ‘roadmap’ for action over the next ten years. The four principals have been articulated as:

1. Place students at the centre of their learning.
2. Empower teacher, school leaders and other professional to meet the learning needs of all students
3. Build strong communities for learning
4. Strengthen systems to focus on equity with quality.

What is of greatest interest to ACE ACT members is recognition and inclusion of empowering the educator as being a central tenant of the ten-year plan. This was something that was raised during our last discussion at the Breakfast and Briefing event.

As educators, we all recognise the fact that we, now more than at any other point in history, work in incredibly complex, multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and challenging times. As professionals, we need to work hard to ensure we have the resources to support our profession and drive it in the ways that help us to deliver the best possible education for our students, no matter what sector, system, subject or level we operate within.

Further to this, we recognize (as has been articulated in the Strategic Plan) that we are part of a diverse community through which positive educational outcomes must be delivered. Although the Strategy’s main focus is on formal education it is timely to consider how the actions that will be implemented over the course of the next ten years with further entrench the philosophy and culture of lifelong learning through our community.

Of significant importance will be how we, the educators of today, ensure the educators of the future have an excellent foundation in ensuring not only their students but themselves are champions for lifelong learning. The Future of Education Strategy is the next step in our post-COVID-19 recovery and it is the en-going efforts of the Australian College of Educators nationally and at a State and Territory level that we, Australian Educators, can ensure that we actively contribute and direct the future of our profession to have the most positive possible outcomes for student education.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Associate Professor David Patterson, President, ACE ACT
act@austcolled.com.au

ACE ACT with the generous support of the Faculty of Education at the University of Canberra recently held a Breakfast and Briefing with the aptly titled “The Future of Education and Skills” presented by ACE National President, Dr Phil Lambert. This was incredibly timely given the release of the ACT Government’s, The Future of Education: An ACT education strategy for the next ten years, which was released in October. The release of the Strategy is the culmination work carried out since February 2017 and consultation and input from over 5,000 people.

According to the Strategy its foundations are built on four principals for implementation and

- A minimum Credit grade point average
- Proven sound practical knowledge and ability
- Superior cognitive and emotional intelligence (measured via a psychometric assessment)
- Demonstrated commitment to the values of public education

Recognition that teaching is relational.

Following the announcement of the TSP, the government is consulting with Principals and teachers on the policy’s application which is scheduled to commence in 2019.

TASMANIA

Dr Jill Abell MACE, President – ACE Tasmania
tas@austcolled.com.au

Tasmania is celebrating 150 years of public education this year. In the last week of October, the Hon Jeremy Rockefeller MP, Minister for Education and Training in Tasmania announced that $179 million was being spent on education infrastructure across the State, with new schools, including two brand new schools, four major school redevelopments and six new early learning hubs.

The Department of Education’s Get Involved campaign will allow consultations with Tasmanians to shape their schools and communities.

Initially, this campaign will support a six week community consultation in projects such as the $30 million redevelopment of the Penguin District School, the $30 million next generation of School and the $4.3 million upgrade of the Jordan River Learning Federation School. Further consultations are scheduled for 2019 for a $25 million redevelopment of Sorell School, a $30 million revitalisation of Cosgrove High School and a new $20 million primary school at Legana.

The Tasmanian government press release dated 3 October 2018 identifies that 38 Tasmanian schools have extended their final year to Year 12 and 75 students in six extended school years. If the new strategy is implemented in 2019 and a current request for further applications. The Apparent Retention Rate of students to Year 12 stands at 96.1 per cent while the direct retention rate tracking individual students from Year10 to Year 12 is now at a record high of 78.6 per cent. This is pleasing news for Tasmanian tertiary education and training, the peak professional educational associations as well as business and industry as the attainment rate of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education is 58 per cent and highest on record. The actual target is the national average of 75 per cent by 2022.

The Grattan Institute’s report Measuring Student Progress, which makes comparisons on student progress using NAPLAN data was also welcomed last month. Tasmania broadly matches the national average for student progress in reading, writing and numeracy when taking the State’s socio-economic status and disadvantages into account.

The government has made a commitment of $6.75 billion across the forward estimates to include the employment of an additional 250 teachers over the next six years as well as extending more secondary schools to Years 11 and 12 to keep students engaged in education.

The recently released TAFE Annual Report shows a significant increase in apprentice numbers over the last three years. The additional apprenticeships are helping to meet new demands for skilled workforces, such as assisting the strong growth in the State’s building and construction industry.

We have taken a digital-first approach to ACE communications in Tasmania. Members will be aware of the ACE strategy of increasing digital content and engagement strategy and with our diverse Tasmanian membership across the Early Childhood, schooling, TAFE and University sectors we believe we can no longer rely on Hobart-based meetings alone to engage statewide membership or reach new audiences. The most important advance building a new web service, information through Professional Educator, the monthly Elets via email, and social media channels, including Facebook and the ACE Podcasts.

The Tasmanian Branch Management Committee continues to work on an annual events program and, already, has confirmed the date for the 13th Annual Richard Selby Smith Oration as Tuesday 30 March 2018 with Professor Toby Walsh, Scientia Professor of Artificial Intelligence, University of New South Wales as the speaker. Her Excellency the Governor of Tasmania, the Honourable Kate Warner AC, Governor of Tasmania will chair the lecture. The Sir Stanley Burbury Theatre lecture will be followed by a dinner at the University’s Club, Sandy Bay Campus.

Please note a ‘secure the date’ opportunity for the 31 May, 2019.

The Management Committee is also supporting national preparations for the celebration next year of the Australian College of Educators (ACE) 60th Anniversary for the College’s National Conference, which will be followed by a dinner at the University’s Club, Sandy Bay Campus.

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The Tasmanian Management Team included members in Tasmania to consider joining this dedicated group of volunteers above to help deliver ACE events and services at our local level. Such services and roles could include:

- contributing articles for Professional Educator;
- working with the National Office to develop online content including webinars and ACE podcasts on vital areas of concern to our profession;
- working within the College and with the UTAS Faculty of Education to continue the mentoring programs for pre-service and early career educators; and
- join the Working Groups on Early Career Educators and Training, School Leadership, Early Career Educators and Academic or Tertiary Educators. We would welcome your contact please contact Jill Abel or Helen Jenj.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Associate Professor Anne Coffey, Acting Associate Dean Teaching and Learning, School of Education, The University of Notre Dame Australia (Perthman Campus) uo@auscolled.com.au

Colin Pettit, Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP), recently delivered a thought-provoking address entitled “What is in the best interests of children?” at the 2018 ACE WA Walter Neal Oration. All first steps of answering this question might appear quite clear. However deeper reflection quickly reveals that there is really no simple answer and that if we were to truly consider what is in the best interest of children a much more complex mix of variables and factors would be considered. Earlier this year the CCYP released a report entitled “Speaking Out about School and Learning” which outlined the findings of research that comprised evidence collected from focus groups and questionnaires conducted with 1,812 WA school students. Whilst the evidence clearly indicated that schools do meet the needs of the majority of students more often than not, optimal environments in which children and young people thrive depend on a variety of factors. Student agency, underpinned the research开展 and feedback from young people where there were four factors identified that impact student engagement. These factors include attendance, academic achievement, liking school and having a sense of belonging at school. Hence in responding to Colin’s question, an answer would need to consider each of these four factors as, without question, access to quality educational experiences are clearly in the best interest of students. For anyone with an interest in education, the report from CCYP is recommended reading.

ENGAGING WITH EARLY CAREER TEACHERS

It is fantastic to be able to engage with you via Professional Educator. As ACE is a member driven organisation (as has been the case since its inception), communication across the membership is key to enabling the input of many volunteers. As you may know, there are currently eight volunteer members of the ACE Victoria Committee. Working with me are Paul Ruting as President-Elect (Dapto High Principal at Caulfield Grammar School), Helen Schieke as Secretary (Director at Advanced Learning Pathways), Rita Binns (Principal at McKinnon Secondary College), Ross Phillips (Senior Dean of Learning Research and Innovation at Strathcona Baptist Girls Grammar School), Dr Ian Silane (recently retired Principal at Kanahooka Primary School), Carl Stevens (consultant at Educational Excellence) and Margaret Vingers Advocacy (Project Lead, Learning and Teaching at Catholic Education Melbourne). You can see our friendly faces at: https://auscolled.com.au/ace-branches/ace-victoria/ Together we make a great team, greatly supported by the ACE CEO, Helen Jenj and the National Office staff. Yet we are always looking for others interested in being involved, please do make yourself known if that is the case.

The main business of the ACE Victoria Committee is to plan and conduct initiatives which support members of the educational profession in Victoria. In this way we are a conduit that can be approached with ideas for events. Our main focus, however, is on the ongoing and annual events we plan and conduct each year. These include:

- The Len Folk Lecture (the main Ipswich lecture)
- and this year we have been privileged to be associated with the Unicorn Series of events run through St Margaret’s and Berwick Grammar School.

As you can see by these events, we aim to support people in all school sectors, working across the profession, at all stages of their careers. If you have suggestions for other events which can support career progression, please let us know. And again, if you might be interested in getting involved, please come along to the next committee meeting mentioned above, or email me on uic@auscolled.com.au.

Warm regards

John Spag, ACE Victoria President uic@auscolled.com.au

Baptist Girls Grammar School), Dr Ian Silane (recently retired Principal at Kanahooka Primary School), Carl Stevens (consultant at Educational Excellence) and Margaret Vingers Advocacy (Project Lead, Learning and Teaching at Catholic Education Melbourne). You can see our friendly faces at: https://auscolled.com.au/ace-branches/ace-victoria/ Together we make a great team, greatly supported by the ACE CEO, Helen Jenj and the National Office staff. Yet we are always looking for others interested in being involved, please do make yourself known if that is the case.

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develop students with what matters at it, South Australia is poised to for either personal or professional tertiary sector that empowers flexible, dynamic and responsive knowledge, understanding and dispositions required to pursue values the skills, capabilities and students. A strong foundation that of lifelong learning for our for the effective building blocks range of possible outcomes. empowering students with a broad preferred pathways. All whilst increases the flexibility of students' University of South Australia) that Adelaide University and the (ongoing talks of mergers between Queensland: Perspectives of Educators Board Member: ACE Brisbane Central Region qld@australiancurriculum.edu.au/10-curriculum-work-studies/ Glossary/?term=lifelong+learning) a negotiable non-negotiable, presentation slides available from http://bit.ly/ wendu4200718

Queensland

Luke Ralph, Australian College of Educators Board Member, ACE Brisbane Central Region qld@australiancurriculum.com.au The ACE Queensland Regions have delivered a number of successful events over the course of the last quarter including a Meet and Greet Networking Event in Townsville. Building school cultures of parent engagement: Perspectives of principals and parents in conjunction with Fairholme College, the Darling Downs Annual, Bank Night Out and the Sam Power Oration and Award in conjunction with Australian Literacy Educators Association and the English Teachers Association of Queensland.

The dedicated regional and state ACE volunteers continue to develop a range of avenues through which all educators in Queensland can engage and actively participate, not only with the College but with the broader education network. The College network is not confined to education systems, sectors, subjects or levels but works to ensure a more connected education ecosystem operates in every state and territory.

Over the course of the past four years, following the State Government’s release of The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders’ 30-year vision, there has been an on-going focus on education and achieving the stated objectives of access to quality education, respect for teachers, high achievement in science, engineering, technology and the arts and practical education that ensure skills for the jobs of the future. Under The Plan, the Queensland Government committed to achieving a number of goals: a flexible and future-focused curriculum, practical-based learning, the most highly valued teachers in Australia, education to be valued as a lifelong experience.

A recent report by the Gratton Institute highlighted that Queensland appears to be making significant inroads in achieving these goals. The report notes that Queensland primary schools are now ‘star performers’ across Australia in terms of literacy and numeracy. There have been a number of ideas put forward to explain these significant improvements in Queensland from more focus and attention being given to literacy and numeracy at the primary level, by building teacher capabilities in grading student work and increases in school autonomy.

Ensuring teachers are valued forms one of the foundation stones upon which the Australian College of Educators has been built. Elevating the education profession, setting the highest possible standards to ensure educators across all systems, sectors, subjects and levels are afforded the respect, autonomy and given the avenues through which to influence their profession continues to central to the College’s vision and mission.

Throughout 2018, ACE Queensland, thanks to our committed volunteer members, have continued to develop and deliver a range of locally based activities targeted at continuing to build the broader education ecosystem that is needed for our profession to continue to advance. ACE Queensland is dedicated to bringing together educators from all areas to foster collegiality and professional learning communities to assist our members throughout their careers.

View from the States

and an approach to collaboration (ongoing talks of mergers between Adelaide University and the University of South Australia) that increases the flexibility of students’ preferred pathways. All whilst empowering students with a broad range of skills that creates a broader range of possible outcomes.

The stage is gradually being set for the effective building blocks of lifelong learning for our students. A strong foundation that values the skills, capabilities and dispositions required to pursue knowledge, understanding and skill development. Merging into a flexible, dynamic and responsive tertiary sector that empowers learners at all stages of their lives for either personal or professional reasons. Whichever way you look at it, South Australia is poised to develop students with what matters most for their uncertain futures.

BOOK REVIEW

Mapping Van Diemen’s Land and the Great Beyond - Rare and Beautiful Maps from The Royal Society of Tasmania

Editors: Lynn Dawies, Margaret Davies, Warren Rogers Published by The Royal Society of Tasmania, 2018, 138pp

Julie Himes

In the world of maps, these days there is a movement away from paper versions to various digital formats, but a constant is that users can be assured of their accuracy. Very few parts of the world remain ‘undiscovered’, and cartologists base their maps on a detailed knowledge of the various features: coastlines, rivers, roads and so on.

But it was not always thus. As the world was being ‘discovered’ by European explorers, the map-makers of the day produced often beautifully illustrated images of the coastlines and mountain ranges of faraway lands but, in hindsight, their accuracy was often limited, having been based on crude observations by earlier explorers.

The Royal Society of Tasmania is celebrating its 175th anniversary, and has published a wonderful collection of old maps and charts from its extensive collection of rare books and maps. They range from the 16th century to the early 20th century in origin.

There are chapters on southern Van Diemen’s Land, the east, north and northwest parts of what is now Tasmania, and on the more remote western part of the island; then some chapters on Van Diemen’s Land as a whole, and the continent of Australia; then chapters with many wonderful maps which set the land mass of Australia into global geography; each of these illustrates the gradual improvement in accuracy of the maps, as explorers and settlers’ knowledge of their surroundings grew.

Each chapter is greatly enhanced by commentary by experts, thirteen of them in all, with backgrounds in various branches of science, geography, museum curation and history. Their insights into the contexts of the various maps provide excellent historical overviews; one cannot study the maps and read the commentaries without clearly imagining the dangerous voyages and overland expeditions on which the data for the maps’ production were gathered. So the reader is presented not only with developing geographical information but with a good dose of social, history as well, concerning the explorers’ and settlers’ lives, as the Dutch, French and British sought to expand their empires.

Two chapters particularly intrigued this reviewer. The maps and charts of western Tasmania show the development of knowledge of a region which is still relatively unexplored and undeveloped – certainly sparsely populated. From the first European sighting of the island by Abel Tasman in 1642, to the remarkable overland expedition of Governor John and Jane Franklin in 1842, to the road through to Queenstown built as late as the 1930s, the ‘wild and unforgiving coast’ comes to life.

Also fascinating are the three maps of the polar region of Canada, with its connection to Van Diemen’s Land as Governor.

To quote from the book’s preface: The Royal Society has proven as relevant today as it was in the 1840s. For 275 years it has worked to develop and disseminate knowledge about Tasmania. The Society holds a large collection of old maps and has indeed done a great service to lovers of beautiful books, and to lovers of history and geography, by publishing an attractive sample of them in a skilfully designed book.

Both books are available for purchase online at https://rst.org.au/
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