

PROFESSIONAL Educator

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Australian College of Educators



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EDITORIAL

Where HASS Thou Gone?

Dr Julie Rimes FACE, FACEL, FAICD Editor



Where would we be without the arts? More specifically, where would we be as educators without the humanities, arts and social sciences? As educators, we are all too aware of the pressures of what we define as an 'over crowded' curriculum. The rise of a national (and one could argue global) focus on the sciences, technology, engineering and maths creates an interesting and perhaps somewhat controversial debate regarding the place and role of HASS in a future focussed, highly competitive, fast paced, individualised and student centric education system.

**“The object of Art is to give life a shape”
William Shakespeare.**

In this edition of Professional Educator, we explore the purpose and role of HASS in a future focussed society. Instinctively we, as educators, know that the humanities help us to understand others through their languages, histories and culture. HASS encourages creative thinking and teaches us to reason, question and make inquiries about what it means to be human and seek answers from the world in which we live/have lived. But is this actually the case?

Does or should HASS hold the same status as 'higher profile' subjects such as maths, science and technology? With a future that includes the everyday use of artificial intelligence, greater space exploration even the possibility of the establishment of space communities/colonies, advances in medical and health care treatments that at present can't even be fathomed, what role will HASS play not only in education but more broadly in society?

Dr Loretta Dolan commences this edition by providing readers with an excellent overview of the current Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) Learning Area of the Australian Curriculum. Her article clearly defines the various subjects and learning areas contained within HASS, and established a clear platform from which this edition will discuss the issues and complexities related to seeking answers to the questions: Where HASS Thou Gone?

Does terminology actually matter when addressing the need for the Australian Curriculum to prepare the learners of today to be not only successful in school and further education, but for the ever-changing world of work? Leonie McLuenny and Rachel Sheffield's article, *Are Transversal Competencies the 'New Black'?* argues that competencies, whether termed 21st skills, soft skills or as the authors prefer, transversal competencies (tVCs) are already present in the Australian curriculum but, the authors argue, there is a growing need for these tVCs to be given the necessary

attention at a school and systemic level that ensures we are able to appropriately assess and capture rich evidence of students' acquisition of these competencies.

“The first consideration that strikes one in reviewing the work of a school is whether the work performed in that school is mere instruction or real education, because between the two there is all the difference in the world,” opined Edmund Barton. Brett Henebery's article, *Why quality education can mean a healthy democracy*, opens this edition with a fascinating exploration of the decline in Australians satisfaction with our country's democracy. Brett investigates a similar decline in the United States and explores what options are being pursued to attempt to refocus curriculum on civics education. How does this translate to the Australian experience and how can general capabilities, particularly those taught through subjects outside of the STEM area have an impact on ensuring students become the engaged, informed, active and discerning citizens our country needs.

Professor Murray Print in his article, *STEM, HASS and the Australian Curriculum: The case for active, informed and critical citizens*, argues that rather than a debate, there is currently an ongoing conversation between STEM and HASS which is yet to be concluded. The attention and resources currently being channelled into elevating students' engagement in STEM has yet, he argues, to result in either a significant increase in the percentage of students taking STEM subjects at an advanced level and/or a consequent decline in the percentage of students taking HASS subjects. However, he goes on to offer that it will actually be HASS learning opportunities, beyond simply History and Geography, that will ultimately offer learners the best avenues for well-rounded learning experiences that go towards achieving the goals that Australia has identified, in the Melbourne Declaration, as being of greatest significance.

Georgia Lawrence-Doyle's focus is on the complexities of teaching history in her article *Teaching History – HOW?* She investigates various schools of thought that have gained prominence and how these have increasingly influenced the evolution of teaching history to contemporary learners. She goes further to discuss how the use of various pedagogies, that may be viewed as non-traditional within the subject of history, are challenging educators in seeking to broaden the impact, role, relevance and value of history and how it influenced the socio-political environments of the 21st century.

What is at the 'soul' of HASS? Bryan Smith, Lecturer at James Cook University in Townsville argues that HASS's 'soul lies in its ability to critically investigate difficult ideas in the pursuit of ethical futures'. Drawing from his work in geography and place-naming, Smith argues that it is the role of 'HASS' to provide students with the opportunity to question the seemingly inconsequential and often time 'normalised and narrow' visions of what history ought to be.

Samantha Owen's highlights the historical (pun intended) path that has been taken in Australia and in other parts of the Western world that has led us to the current challenges facing the teaching of history. Her article addresses the confronting issue of genocide/massacres and the complex interplay of the disciplinary and post-modern approaches to history. Samantha also offers a thought provoking discussion on the collaborative roles that disciplinary and post-modern approaches have when combined using inquiry pedagogy to ensure students become 'active and informed citizens' who seek to achieve 'equity and excellence' for all.

Should Geography be taught as a key learning area within the Humanities and Social Sciences, or should it be placed within the subject grouping of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)? How can the Theory of Reflexivity be used to consider whether the teaching of Geography is enabled or constrained by placing it in either of these contexts? Susan Caldis, a highly experienced Geography educator, puts forth an interesting argument, based on her own personal experience, that Geography is both enabled and constrained within both HASS and STEM. Susan suggests that the extent to which Geography is enabled or constrained is influenced by Reflexivity and its emergent properties.

Where HASS Thou Gone? is an extremely topical and at times, polarising discussion. Many of our contributors in this edition put forward interesting and challenging ideas in their opinion pieces. A taste of some of this edition's opinion pieces include:

Taking a 'selfie' has become synonymous with generations from Gen Y onwards. In his article, *Our future citizen 'selfie' is found in humanities*, Richard Leo explores the importance of HASS in the 'creation' of not only 'good' citizens based on the service models of volunteerism and community service but of 'empowered, active and engaged' citizens. Richard draws on the current wave of student 'activism' and puts forward ideas and concepts around the ways in which the humanities when utilising an enriched pedagogy focussed on transformative learning will determine how well the 'selfie' of our future selves is developed.

The Content vs Engagement dilemma is one most teachers within humanities have experienced. The importance of engendering 'empathy as an essential route to understanding history' is an ongoing challenge experienced by many History teachers. In her article, Jenny Jones, Head of the Humanities Department at St Michael's Collegiate, Hobart, highlights the benefits of heuristic learning and the importance of 'depth rather than breadth' as the 'gold standard in pedagogical terms' particularly in relation to a complex and crowded curriculum.

It's always interesting, and I believe valuable, to include a student perspective in *Professional Educator*, and the contribution from Lucy Vogel at Melbourne Girls' College is just that, interesting and valuable! Lucy is a young adult who has carefully thought about and weighed up, in an informed way, the intrinsic benefits of not an either/or approach to her subject choices but an integrated and complimentary one. Touching on her knowledge of the benefits to her, as a current student, of the cross application of skills and experience acquired through humanities subjects to those in the STEM arena, Lucy's opinion piece highlights the benefits of not viewing curriculum 'space' as a competition but rather as a platform through which subjects from both the humanities and STEM areas compliment, support and enhance student learning.

Many educators will have considered Alaric Maude's proposition that decline in the number of secondary students studying Geography will result in Australian students 'missing out' on something of educational value. In his article, Assoc. Professor Alaric Maude argues for the importance of Geography within the Australian Curriculum and suggests a number of reasons why students and parents understanding of the 'value' of studying geography needs to be challenged from a holistic learning and more broadly, employability perspective.

Adding salt to a dish, as all chefs will tell you, enhances its flavour. Salt is an essential ingredient in all kitchens. Nathan Bessant, in his article *Historical thinking as the salt of education* argues that historical thinking and understanding are the 'salt of education' and the critical skills of evidential thinking, empathy and complexity are enhanced through the teaching of history, and it is these that skills which will ultimately ensure students flourish.

There is much to enjoy in this edition of ACE's *Professional Educator*. It brings together the experience, knowledge and wisdom of educators from around Australia as it seeks to provoke and stimulate your intellectual curiosity and enhance your knowledge. As always, I thank the contributors for their work and the editorial panel for this contribution to this edition.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

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



Over the course of the past few years I have been fortunate enough to work with various education systems around the world. Much of the work I have done (and continue to do) for agencies such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) relates to the *Future of Education and Skills*. Projects such as the OECD's Education 2030 initiative are specifically aimed at supporting education systems to determine the competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) students need to thrive and shape their future. I specifically mention this work because I believe it directly relates to the theme of this edition of *Professional Educator*, *Where HASS Thou Gone?*

Many of the articles contained in this edition have a similar underlying theme, that being the subject matter taught through the humanities, the arts and social sciences play a significant role in the development of many of the competencies that have been identified as essential in the 21st century. These competencies include, for example, creative thinking, critical thinking, co-operation, empathy, and global competency.

It is clear that the authors and contributors to this edition of *Professional Educator* are passionate advocates for the inclusion (and in some cases increased focus) on HASS as an essential component of the learning journey each student should take throughout their school years.

What also comes through in many of the articles are the challenges being faced by educators as they work through critical issues associated with the Australian education landscape.

The importance of a robust, diverse, flexible and future focussed education system and more specifically curriculum cannot, I believe, be overstated. In conjunction with this, it is essential that educators from across the education profession are directly involved in the discussions, debate and development of the system (at local and national levels) to ensure Australian learners have the best opportunity to develop the competencies they will need to not simply survive but live and thrive in the complex and constantly changing World we have created for them.

Warm regards

The Humanities and Social Sciences in Australian Schooling: An Overview

Dr Loretta Dolan, University of Western Australia

The Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) Learning Area of the Australian Curriculum in years F-10 - and the State and Territory versions of the Australian Curriculum¹ - is made up of four, discrete academic subjects: Civics and Citizenship, Economics and Business, Geography and History.

The HASS curriculum adopts a two-strand approach emphasising both knowledge and understanding as well as subject-specific skills and in all states and territories it is taught as a single-disciplinary approach in years F-6/7. In years 7-10, a multi-disciplinary approach is taken and HASS subjects are taught as discrete subjects. Western Australia however, retains this single-disciplinary approach until Year 10, with all four subjects given an equal allocation of teaching time (one term) throughout the school year, although subjects can be taught through programs that link to more than one subject (School Curriculum and Standards Authority [SCSA] 2014).

The Learning Area of HASS has had a number of iterations throughout the years before the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. The influence of the American term 'Social Studies' on this curriculum area suggests shifting definitions and boundaries on what should be taught within the subject, influenced by dominant political ideology and economic rationale (Marsh 2010). This could be clearly seen in the adoption of the term Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE), an integrated Social Studies approach, which was adopted by the Australian Education Council in 1991 as one of eight learning areas (Marsh 2010). The SOSE curriculum was underpinned by six generic concepts and many wide-ranging subjects including both discrete disciplines such as History and Geography, in addition to multidisciplinary and integrated studies pertaining to topics such as religion, the environment and citizenship. This generic approach led to the criticism that 'anyone can teach SOSE' (Hart 2014). However, the demise of this approach is not welcomed by all who feel the Australian Curriculum limits the opportunities of educators to capitalise on the multi- and inter- disciplinary approach and thus make relevant to students. (Hart 2014)

HASS as a learning area and the subjects within it, however, are often disadvantaged by the emphasis placed on the Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects by governments, industry and educational researchers. This results in students eschewing HASS subjects for those that can be directly linked to a career. Despite this challenge, research by

the British Council in 2015 found that 44% of industry leaders – defined as someone in a position of influence - worldwide hold Social Science degrees. The same research noted that 33% of leaders in government positions have Social Science degrees, whereas the same percentage of leaders in not-for-profit organisations holds a Humanities degree. 51% of young leaders are more likely to have a Master's qualification in a Social Science or Humanities subject (British Council 2015). Participants emphasised the broader skills these degrees provide, equipping them to handle complex situations and embrace the human dimensions of the work they do. So how does each discrete HASS subject prepare Australian students for life beyond the classroom?

CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP

Civic knowledge, as taught in any national curriculum, should typically cover a country's political system including its institutions, the rights and responsibilities of its citizens, and the ways in which those citizens can engage with society. Concepts of national identity, tolerance and values should also be included (Schulz, Fraillon & Ainley 2013). These aspects are reflected in the Australian Curriculum, where knowledge and understanding in Civics and Citizenship is divided into three distinct sub-strands: Government and democracy; laws and citizens, and, citizenship, diversity and identity. Students' understanding of these sub-strands has been shown to be an indicator of future participation in elections as well as engagement with equality and issues affecting minority groups (Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Kerr & Losito 2010; Lauglo, 2012 cited in Schulz et al. 2013). Unsurprisingly then, the Australian Curriculum rationale for Civics and Citizenship seeks to develop a deep understanding of Australia's federal system of government based on democratic values in order for students to become active and informed citizens able to engage in Australia's democracy (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA] 2016).

Civics and Citizenship in the Australian Curriculum is taught in years 3-10 and is underpinned by seven concepts: democracy; democratic values; the Westminster System; justice; participation and rights and responsibilities. Although these concepts are specific to Civics and Citizenship, there is considerable overlap with the other HASS subjects, particularly Geography and sustainability. Brett (2017, p. 4) argues that we need to give students a 'sustainable citizenship education' so that they can actively engage in geopolitical problems.

¹ Hereafter only the Australian Curriculum will be referred to.

The extent to which students understand their roles as emerging citizens in Australian Society is monitored through the triennial Australian National Assessment Programme on Civics and Citizenship, which is administered to selected Year 6 and Year 10 students in both public and independent schools across Australia. Findings from the last assessment in 2016 demonstrate that a large percentage of students in both year groups have significant gaps in their civic knowledge (ACARA 2017). It should be noted however, that young people engage in civic knowledge outside of formal instruction in HASS lessons by the groups they belong to and communities they interact with (Schulz et al. 2008 cited in Schulz et al. 2013).

ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

Economics as a subject, considers production, allocation and consumption of wealth (Seth & Saxena 2016). The focus is the working of economies and how individuals, businesses and governments interact within those economies (ACARA 2012). Underpinning the study of Economics are markets, notably how individuals and groups make decisions in regards to limited resources when they have unlimited needs. Business is part of Economics as it addresses production and supply of goods and services, as well as the social enterprises that aim to satisfy the needs and wants of society. Business therefore, is part of the daily lives of all Australians (ACARA 2012).

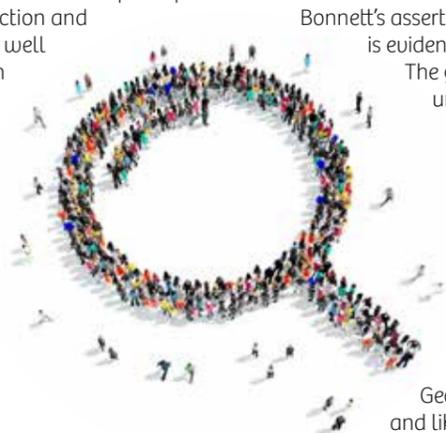
The Economics and Business syllabus in the Australian Curriculum aims to educate students in Years 5-10 about the impact economic systems will have at a personal, local, national, regional and global level and how these systems affect students' daily lives including economic growth and standard of living. To do this, students are introduced to the economic concepts of scarcity; making choices; specialisation and trade; interdependence; allocation and markets; economic performance, and living standards. Students begin their Economics and Business education in Year 5 with the study of wants, resources and choices. By Year 10, they are examining Australia's economic performance and the standard of living around the world having considered aspects of markets, consumerism and interactions in a global economy in the years in-between.

Educators have long advocated for Economics and Business education for all compulsory years of schooling in the national curriculum (Business Educators Australasia Inc. 2009). The Global Financial Crisis of 2008 highlighted the global connectedness of the world economies and the need for school students to be economically and financially aware. This recognition of the need for students to be well versed in economic systems is underlined by supra-national organisations like the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and

Development (OECD). Their publication, *Trends Shaping Education 2019*, notes that education is key to students understanding how shifting economic power towards Asian countries, particularly China and India, affects jobs and wages in their own countries. Similarly, education has a significant role in helping students understand interdependence in global marketplaces and global consumption patterns including their own (OECD 2019).

GEOGRAPHY

Geography has been described as a 'fundamental human project' and 'one of humanity's big ideas' (Bonnert 2012, p. 39). In past years, it has been through many different interpretations about what knowledge and skills Geography provides for students. Bonnett (2012) argues that Geography has three fundamental aspects: an existential function (how Geography is used to understand the world), Geography's relationship to human survival, and, useful knowledge for a globalising planet. These three functions demonstrate that Geography is a very diverse subject studied by experts in a large number of fields.



Bonnert's assertion about the function of Geography is evident in the 7-10 Australian Curriculum.

The geographical knowledge and understanding part of the curriculum comprises two units for each year group; one 'physical geography' and the other 'human geography'. Despite this, there is a considerable amount of overlap between the two units as you cannot study physical location without human interaction (Cranby & Matthews 2017).

Geography is taught in years F-10 and like all HASS subjects is underpinned by concepts: space, scale, space, change, environment, interconnection and sustainability. These high-level ideas are applied to Geography to guide an inquiry of work and its requirements (ACARA 2016). Concepts help with students' 'geographical imaginations' or the way that they think and feel about the world around them (Caitling 2011). Whilst all concepts are important, place tends to be at the heart of a Geography curriculum (Scoffham 2013). This connects the physical landscape to the human dimensions, as noted above, whilst technology with its ability to allow residency of multiple spaces simultaneously serves to make the concept of place effectively broader (Scoffham 2013).

HISTORY

As E. H. Carr (1964) stated in his seminal work, *What is History?* History is all about interpretation of the past but it is also about the ongoing conversation with the present and how that might influence the future. History is also about heritage - giving society roots as well as providing examples so as not to repeat past mistakes (Black & MacRaild 2000). It is though, always open to new interpretations. It is uncertain and as such does not provide definite answers.

History then, is a subject that encourages students to question what is presented to them as knowledge. The 7-10 History rationale of the Australian Curriculum states that 'History is a disciplined process of inquiry into the past that develops students' curiosity and imagination' (ACARA 2016). Implicit in this statement is that there are distinctive ways in which History should be taught so as to produce an understanding of society (Hoepper 2017).

History is taught in years F-10 in the Australian Curriculum. It draws on the concepts of sources; evidence; continuity and change; cause and effect; significance; perspectives; empathy and contestability. Like Geography, the content to be taught has been hotly debated by politicians and commentators including the 'History Wars', an ongoing debate about the colonisation of Australia. History was also the subject that received the most attention in the 2014 review of the Labor-introduced Australian Curriculum by the new Liberal government. Additionally, criticism has been levelled at the textbooks produced for the new curriculum. Errors and distortion of facts found in these books are argued to underline basic ideological biases of the curriculum itself (Forrest 2014). Regardless of the content studied by students, it is important that History can be interpreted rationally and provide findings that can help them always to look to the future (Carr 1961).

HASS subjects are, as discussed above, influenced by ideological concerns. This affects the knowledge and skills that are taught in Australian schools. However, it can be argued that we do need diversity in what is taught, particularly if we want to attract students to subjects other than STEM in upper-school and university (Forbes 2018). Fundamentally though, HASS is about essential personal and professional skills that everyone requires to function in society.

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Biographies

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How a quality education can deliver a healthy democracy

Mr Brett Henebery, Editor, The Educator Magazine and The Educator Asia

While a good education is often spoken about as a path towards employment, higher living standards and a more fulfilled life, there are other critical, long-lasting benefits that can be realised at a national level.

On an individual level, a good education can be a path towards employment, higher living standards and a more fulfilled life. However, there are other critical, long-lasting benefits that can be realised at a national level.

After all, some of the most highly-performing education systems in the world are also the healthiest democracies.

Finland, Sweden and Norway are just some of the high-

performing school systems that also enjoy a ranking at the top of the Global Freedom Index (Freedom House 2019). And for those wondering whether this is just a 'European thing', Japan and South Korea are other thriving democracies that boast enviable PISA scores.

One particular skill that these education systems hold in high regard is critical thinking, which enables young people to gather information, identify credible sources and take alternative views into consideration before making informed decisions.

When it comes to large portions of a nation's population engaging with media, political discourse and the voting process, critical thinking – or the absence of it – can make a profound difference to the direction that their country takes (we've all heard that sayings: "A nation of sheep soon begets a government of wolves" and "you get what you vote for").

ROOM FOR GROWTH

So where does Australia sit in this regard? Are our schools adequately informing young people about democracy and their human rights?

In the context of this article's opening paragraph, let's look at where our education system sits in global rankings.

The latest Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (OECD 2018) rankings put Australia in 21st place among 48 other countries when it comes to the educational skills and knowledge of its 15-year-old students. Last year, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) report card ranked Australia 39 out of 41 high and middle-income countries in achieving quality education.

Running almost parallel to these educational trends is a growing belief that the health of Australia's democracy is in decline.

A 2018 report from the Australian National University – titled: 'Trends in Australian Political Opinion: Results from the Australian Election Study 1987– 2016' (Cameron & McAllister 2018) – found that a large majority agreed with the premise that Australia's democracy was broken.

A year earlier, in the 2017 Global Democracy Index (EIU 2017), Australia ranked eighth in the world – not a bad score by any means – but another report, released in December, found that fewer Australians have trust in their democracy.

According to the report by the Museum of Australian Democracy and the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis at the University of Canberra, satisfaction with the way democracy works in Australia has fallen significantly over the last decade.

In 2007, 86% of voters were satisfied with Australia's democracy, but that figure dropped to 72% by 2010 and then went into freefall from 2013, plummeting from 72% to 41% between 2013 and 2018 (Stoker, Evans & Halupka 2018).

The most recent National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship (NAP-CC) report, which is used to measure students' knowledge of government, judiciary and democratic processes – found that just 55% of Year 6 students achieved at or above the standard. Worse still, the rate of Year 10 students attaining this standard was just 38% -- the lowest result on record.

Recognising the seriousness of these trends, a push is

underway to educate children about democracy, as well as their human rights.

Last year, a free resource was announced for high school teachers to help children explore and understand Australia's democratic freedoms.

The Story of Our Rights and Freedoms curriculum unit was created through a unique partnership between education not-for-profit Cool Australia and the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC).

The 18-lesson unit for Year 7-10 broadens students' understanding of democracy and its function throughout history with captivating curriculum for history and civics and citizenship classes.

In an article published in The Educator back in January, Chris Vella, head of education at Cool Australia, said students can never know too much about democracy if they are to become active and informed citizens.

"Through the success of a previous unit of work that we partnered with the Australian Human Rights Commission to create, Magna Carta, we have seen that students and teachers are seeking out engaging content in this area," Vella said.

"This is why we have continued this partnership to create 18 free lessons that explore key features of the Australian government, and how those systems act to protect the rights and freedoms of all Australians."

The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) has created an interactive website which introduces Year 5 and Year 6 students to the concept of human rights.

In the same aforementioned article, National Children's Commissioner, Megan Mitchell, said providing education about the importance of human rights is "one of the central functions" of the AHRC.

"Through our free school resources, we aim to support teachers and students to apply human rights in their day-to-day lives and bring about positive change within their communities," Mitchell said.

"In the past, the Commission has mainly focused on developing resources for high school students. However, there is no age-limit for learning about human rights and it is important that human rights education is embedded in primary schools and early childhood education as well."

SIMILAR TRENDS IN THE US

Earlier in this article, we looked at the parallel decline in the educational outcomes of Australian school students and the perceived decline in the health of our country's democracy. When looking at how the United States has been faring in these two critical areas, we begin to see something similar.

A growing body of research, in tandem with impassioned appeals from prominent US politicians

and community leaders suggests that the country's education system and the health of its democracy have experienced a simultaneous decline over the last several decades.

Introduced in 2006, the Democracy Index is compiled by The Economist Intelligence Unit and measures the state of democracy in 167 countries. In the 2018 list, the United States – widely touted as "the land of the free" – didn't even make the top 20. In fact, the report classed the United States a "flawed democracy", pointing to a "sharp fall in popular confidence in the functioning of public institutions", including government-run schools which have been seeing a worrying decline in student outcomes.

Most recently, the latest Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) — a reading comprehension test given to fourth graders in 58 countries and regions around the world — found that US performance is sliding in both absolute and relative terms.

Other studies have found that just three out ten American children born to low income families in the United States will make it into the middle quintile or higher, and only four out of 100 will make it to the

"Our generation is at risk of being the first American generation to leave less opportunity to our children than we inherited – and if we do that, we will have broken a fundamental American promise to our children,"

top 20%. Another worrying factor is the decline of the country's social mobility, which now lags behind 12 other developed countries. In Fourth Grade, only one-in-four children are proficient in math and less than that can read at grade level; and as few as nine will receive a Bachelor's degree by age 25. The trend is equally grim for America's teens, with the country's 15-year-olds scoring lower than their peers in 14 countries in reading, 36 countries in math, and 18 in science.

To be fair, these are issues that many within the US education system are well-aware of and have been responding to through various initiatives in recent years. One model, the Pathways to Technology (P-TECH) program allows students to complete high school requirements, an associate in applied science in the computer sciences field and earn industry experience. The ground-breaking education model is a partnership between education, industry and community that guarantees students a diploma and IBM-facilitated job interview at the conclusion of a six-year course. Through

its education arm, global tech giant Microsoft has also been stepping in to provide far-reaching programs aimed at improving teaching and learning across the United States, and the world.

No doubt, the American education system will improve as researchers hone in on the sources of the systemic issues and widespread collaborations lift teaching and learning opportunities and outcomes. However, there is a growing sense that the nation's policymakers could be doing a lot more to address the educational decline highlighted in the PISA and PIRLS tables.

On February 6, 2017, US Senator Michael Bennett delivered a speech on the Senate floor during the Senate's consideration of President Trump's nominee for Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos (whose nomination he opposed on the basis that her ideas on schooling were insufficient to overcome the significant challenges that the nation's education system was facing).

"Our generation is at risk of being the first American generation to leave less opportunity to our children than we inherited – and if we do that, we will have broken a fundamental American promise to our children," Bennett warned.

It would be unwise to assume that certain failings within the school system of the United States over the centuries is solely to blame for this decline in educational outcomes, and the public's attitudes towards government, but as Bennett pointed out, the quality of education that children are given certainly plays a significant part.

"Schools that once were engines of opportunity and democracy" are now too often "traps for inter-generational poverty," the Senator warned. "A commitment to choice without a commitment to quality serves ideology

rather than improvement, and a commitment to competition without a commitment to equity would forsake our democratic ideal that a free, high quality public education must open the doors of opportunity to all."

America's Forefathers held the provision of quality education in such high regards that they considered it as a crucial pillar of the nation's freedom. In the words of Thomas Jefferson, the principal author of the Declaration of Independence, educating the whole mass of the people is the greatest means of ensuring the preservation of liberty. Likewise, Benjamin Franklin, another Founding Father, regarded education as a means of strengthening the nation's economic independence and broader freedoms, saying: "the good education of youth has been esteemed by wise men in all ages, as the surest foundation of the happiness both of private families and of Common-wealths."

To put the quality of American education, and

democracy, back on track, schools need to put a stronger focus on civics education, says Brendan Bernicker from the McCourtney Institute for Democracy at Penn State College of the Liberal Arts.

In an article published in *Everyday Democracy*, Bernicker said that for the last several decades, the focus of the US education system has shifted from civics to job training – and that all Americans have paid a steep cost for this.

“Special interest and lobbying groups have unprecedented power over our political system. A lack of knowledge about public affairs has made citizens more susceptible to political advertising, which has given the wealthy tremendous power to shape politics through campaign contributions and ad spending,” Bernicker said. He went on to say that so few Americans trust the political system that nearly half of 2016 primary votes went to candidates promising anti-establishment revolutions.

“As we know, the thing that makes a democracy work is not simply a set of checks and balances backed by a strong legal system, but a citizenry that is aware of its history, aware of its rights, and aware of its own role in defending democratic values.”

“If we really care about preserving our democracy for future generations, we will stop treating civics education as secondary to math and science instruction and put it back at the core of our school curricula,” Bernicker said.

HOW WE CAN TURN THE TABLES

Earlier, we saw a glimpse of the unfailing vision that America’s Forefathers had for their nation’s education system and democracy. It’s only appropriate that we consider the vision of a prominent Australian statesman of historical significance.

On December 9, 1911, Edmund Barton – who was the acting Chief Justice at the time – addressed a group of schoolgirls in Wahroonga, NSW, after distributing prizes to them. To this group of schoolgirls, this speech was made more important by the fact that it was coming from the man who had, just eight years earlier, concluded his tenure as Australia’s first Prime Minister.

“The first consideration that strikes one in reviewing the work of a school is whether the work performed in that school is mere instruction or real education,

because between the two there is all the difference in the world,” Barton said. Barton went on to say that the “collection of a conglomeration of isolated facts”, which he considered to be the sole aim of many schools in the past, “does not equip any one at all for the battle of life”.

“Thought will, and the distinction to my mind between instruction and education is the application of thought to fact so that the mind may be trained to make of facts lessons for the work of life,” he said.

“This is not done by mere memory, it can only be done by careful training of the perceptive and the reflective faculties which are so often neglected in schools.” In 2018, *The Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools*, commonly dubbed the ‘Gonski 2.0 review’, addressed this all-important point, among others. The report laid out 23 recommendations to lift the quality of Australia’s schools, arguing more attention to general capabilities such as critical thinking, social skills and problem-solving is essential in preparing students for an uncertain future.

Indeed, the ‘Gonski 2.0’ review wasn’t the first time that a call for greater attention to the general capabilities has been made. The importance of the general capabilities was highlighted in the 1992 Mayer Report, the 1999 Adelaide Declaration of National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century, the 2008 Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, the 2010 Australian Curriculum and The Review of the Australian Curriculum in 2014.

The kind of sweeping change to our education system that is being recommended will of course take time to

implement. There are many nuances and complexities to tease out and further discussions to be had. State and federal governments are well aware of public attitudes towards the health of our democracy and the need to instil critical thinking in young people; so we can be sure that as long as damning reports about these issues continue to be released into the public domain, there will be progress, albeit gradual, towards addressing the issues they highlight.

However, some academics warn that unless a serious effort to equip the next generation with the tools they need to effect political and social change is made, Australia risks heading down a dangerous path.

I spoke to Jack Tsonis, who holds a Master of Research at the Western Sydney University’s Graduate Research School. Tsonis says that while it seems cliched to say that a high-quality education system is important for democratic culture at large, it is a message that “needs constant repeating in the mighty storm of noise and change that is contemporary high-speed capitalism”. “As we know, the thing that makes a democracy work is not simply a set of checks and balances backed by a strong legal system, but a citizenry that is aware of its

history, aware of its rights, and aware of its own role in defending democratic values,” Tsonis says.

“In other words, the only way a democracy works is if you have highly educated citizens – people who not only understand the nature and history of democracy, but people who also have skills in reading, writing, thinking, and critical analysis, all of which are necessary to ensure that political systems do not become corrupt and economic systems do not unfairly benefit wealthy interests.”

As one might expect, the role of schools in bringing about the highly educated and informed citizenry that Tsonis refers to is crucial to say the least.

Chris Presland is the president of NSW Secondary Principals’ Council and principal at St Clair High School. He says that teachers have a responsibility to inform their students about democracy and political engagement without impacting their opinions.

“It’s certainly not the place of public schools in particular to be advocating political views or political involvement in any way but it is certainly the role of teachers in public schools to help students to be well informed without prejudicing their views or interpretations,” he wrote in *The Educator*.

“Surely, we want our schools to educate our students to be able to take part in the society in which we live but we certainly don’t want to see public schools promoting particular political views.”

Instead, Presland says schools should be providing an understanding of the role of politics as well as covering general political issues.

“I think it’s important that schools help students to understand the issue without directing them in any way or encouraging them in any way to form a view that is not their own,” he stresses.

And therein lies the challenge moving forward: balance. As with education in general, parents are a major influence in how their children engage with politics and might not necessarily respond well to a sweeping initiative aimed at potentially influencing how their child might cast their ballot when they reach voting age (especially if the whole family votes the same way). In this sense, such an initiative could create tension between schools and parents. But while it would be a precarious one no doubt, achieving such a balance is possible so long as there is broad and thorough consultation between governments, schools, parents and students.

Looking ahead, it is incumbent not just upon Australia’s leaders but communities everywhere to ensure that young people are not only “STEM ready” and “future-proof” once they leave school, but also sharp, discerning citizens who are fully aware about democracy and their rights.

The House of Representatives are elected to present petitions from citizens and raise citizens’ concerns and grievances in debate, but the reports mentioned earlier about public attitudes to our democracy clearly show that something is terribly amiss with the way the system is working. In the words of our nation’s first Prime Minister, “the organ by which the will of the people is expressed is not necessarily the House of Representatives alone”.

And today, the message is clearer than ever before: for democracy to flourish, so too must a well-informed citizenry who can think critically – from the classroom to the ballot box.

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Biographies

Brett Henebery is the editor of *The Educator Magazine* and *The Educator Online*. Brett’s primary interests are in education, politics and human rights.

STEM, HASS and the Australian Curriculum: The case for active, informed and critical citizens

Professor Murray Print, University of Sydney

Every successful, sustained democracy requires active, informed citizens. All the better if these citizens are critical and engaged participants in their democracy. We tend to think of Australia in this category but there is plenty of evidence to indicate this is not the case. Studying young people's civic and political engagement over many decades, primarily in the context of school experience, has led to many concerns (Print, 2007, 2015, 2016). In recent times these concerns have been exacerbated by the emphasis on STEM and the apparent demise of HASS in schools.

Educators have long known that students in schools benefit from a balanced curriculum. When the school curriculum becomes unbalanced, problems emerge. We are currently witnessing an attempt to emphasise STEM in the school curriculum and to stimulate student numbers in STEM subjects in schools. This approach is observable through extensive political, policy and funding stimulus of STEM learning experiences, particularly in school contexts.

Yet all is not what it seems. This article contends that the STEM conversation [not yet a debate] with HASS is

evident at two levels –

- a) A general ideological, persuasive level directed to policy and student decision-making.
- b) A targeted approach at subject level in high schools, designed to influence student subject choices

STEM- GENERAL

At the general level there has been rigorous attempts in recent years to persuade the public of the value of studying STEM subjects. Ultimately this intends persuading students / parents to decide on STEM



subjects in their high school curriculum where they have choice. This has been based on the rationale that a) STEM subjects are essential for the future and will ultimately save the world and b) student numbers generally have been falling in the hard sciences and tough maths and we need to solve this problem, especially for university entrance and future careers.

This argument has been forceful, sustained and possibly successful, at least at a policy level so that a STEM approach is conscientiously advocated for students. Politicians, leading community members and scientists have pushed this strategy. Study STEM, the argument goes, and you'll have better job prospects, better than average salary, a wide variety of careers with new technology and you can impact the world. You may even find a way of saving the planet.

These are essentially the arguments employed in Texas, USA. So they went ahead with an aggressive STEM program for schools. Texas has a population of some 29 million – more than Australia's. Recently Texas spent USD120million (>AUD 170million) on a major initiative to stimulate STEM in that state. Why? Endorsing a small, educated elite with strong academic STEM training, while essentially neglecting a large proportion of the

student population, was considered untenable. Through some 51 academies and seven T-STEM technical assistance centres, the project sought to stimulate STEM in Texan schools. The results showed a few positive student outcomes, specifically for higher 10th-grade mathematics scores, higher likelihood of passing Algebra I by ninth grade, and higher attendance rates than students in matched comparison schools (Young, et al. 2016). Nonetheless, overall student outcomes were mixed. In all, quite disappointing considering the expectations and level of funding support.

STEM - SPECIFIC

At the more specific level, we can see the degree of success of this strategy reflected in the subjects students select when they have a choice. This mainly means subjects in upper secondary school as the degree of choice offered by schools in lower secondary is limited and negligible in primary schools (as it should be). The STEM approach is designed to turn the tide of students currently 'avoiding' STEM subjects, especially the more difficult ones.

Taking NSW as an example, over the past decade the decline in STEM subjects, especially the most difficult ones, is apparent. Similarly a decline in the 'difficult' social

Teaching students STEM subjects will not save the world. Nor will science and technology. They will assist, but the decision making processes that support, or not, science / technology 'solutions' to world problems will be made by humans.

sciences (Economics, Geography) is apparent. By contrast, growth in student numbers has occurred in subjects such as Business Studies, Legal Studies and PDHPE.

Reporting on student HSC subject choices on 24 March, 2018 the Sydney Morning Herald identified,

The proportion of students doing high-level maths and science subjects in the HSC has steadily declined over the past 10 years along with Australia's performance in international tests, which experts say is linked to the country's attitudes towards STEM. For example, only 11.54 per cent of year 12 students did Maths Extension 1 in 2017, down from 13.18 per cent in 2007, and 22.36 per cent studied Mathematics, down from 26.99 per cent. The proportion of students studying physics, chemistry, engineering and technology subjects has also seen a similar decline. By contrast the percentage of students taking the popular PDHPE course has increased from 18.64 per cent of the HSC cohort in 2007 to 20.43 per cent in 2017. (Singhal 2018)

For the moment at least, general STEM arguments apparently are not having much impact at the level of student subject choices in upper secondary schools. This will probably change over time with a modest increase in STEM student numbers as governments fund more projects and key scientists promote STEM learning. Meanwhile the rhetoric about STEM subjects will continue.

Teaching students STEM subjects will not save the world. Nor will science and technology. They will assist, but the decision making processes that support, or not, science / technology 'solutions' to world problems will be made by humans.

And humans are far from perfect, even when it comes to the survival of their species.

HASS

The theme of this issue is 'Where HASS Thou Gone'. This appears to be an appropriate title for school education in Australia today. While there are many statistics available to reveal the demise, or transformation, of HASS subjects in schools, and the consequential effects this has had on subjects taken for the final years of

secondary schooling, that is not the focus of this article. Rather my focus is the case for educating Australian students to become active, informed and critical citizens.

I want to briefly examine student opportunity to learn HASS subjects in schools and the link with the Australian Curriculum. Research over the years has told us that students must have the opportunity to learn through the school curriculum if we want them to learn. That is what the Australian Curriculum is intended to provide.

The value of HASS appears self-evident.

Through HASS subjects students can learn to deal critically and logically with subjective, complex and imperfect information (such as fake news), build skills in inquiry, writing and critical reading (essential for critical literacy), and become informed, active and critical citizens. To achieve this learning students need to experience more than History and Geography in the school curriculum.

Arguably the most influential policy document in Australian school education in recent years, The Melbourne Declaration (2008), built on previous Adelaide (1999) and Hobart (1889) Declarations, set this direction clearly. It states: "As a nation Australia values the central role of education in building a democratic, equitable and just society. (MCEETYA 2008, p.4). This would be achieved through Goal 2 – "All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens" (MCEETYA 2008, p.8). Do schools provide these learning opportunities through HASS?

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

If you're teaching in an Australian school you should be teaching the Australian Curriculum. Why? Because all state and territory governments have agreed to and endorsed the Australian Curriculum. Do teachers teach the Australian Curriculum? The evidence here is very mixed.

Initially there were two versions of the Australian Curriculum as developed by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). The original was completed in late 2013 and parts of that were adopted by some jurisdictions in early 2014. Some were already using the Phase I subjects as evidenced by ACARA's Monitoring Report of 2015.

Before the Australian Curriculum could be fully developed, endorsed and implemented in the states and territories, a politically inspired curriculum review was instigated early in 2014. This led to changes that ACARA was required to complete which it did mostly in 2015 so that Version 8.3 was initially available for schools and jurisdictions for 2016.

However, some jurisdictions, such as NSW under the direction of the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA), have conscientiously endeavoured to

remake the Australian Curriculum in its own image. On its website NESA states:

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) has legislative responsibility under the NSW Education Act 1990 for setting and monitoring Kindergarten to Year 12 curriculum for NSW schools. Implementation of the Australian Curriculum is the responsibility of states and territories. In consultation with key stakeholders, NESA determines the timeline for syllabus development for each key learning area and the subsequent implementation of syllabuses in schools. In NSW, Australian Curriculum is incorporated into K-10 syllabuses and is represented through codes and icons within syllabus documents.

What does this mean? In NSW it means that syllabuses will be developed as NESA wants, with the Australian Curriculum included in syllabuses 'as appropriate' and represented through connecting links to the NESA syllabuses. Take the Australian Curriculum Civics and Citizenship (ACCC) as an example. In the Australian Curriculum the ACCC was deliberately developed to meet Goal 2 of the Melbourne Declaration. Originally the ACCC was identified as a separate, compulsory subject with a specific time allocation in the Australian Curriculum.

Implementing its HASS syllabuses NESA has interpreted the ACCC to mean including some content in obscure locations within the History and Geography Syllabuses in primary schools. In secondary schools NESA is locating the ACCC within Commerce, an elective subject mostly available in Year 9 or 10. In the Geography K-10 Syllabus, for example, Civics and Citizenship is relegated to a single mention (NESA, p33) along with the general capabilities as part of learning across the curriculum. So much for a separate, compulsory subject with a specific time allocation.

This is but one example of how HASS learning opportunities can, or have, been reduced for school students. While History and Geography are now mandatory syllabuses across K-10 this curriculum approach has diminished the value of learning a broader range of HASS subjects. Perhaps part of the perceived diminution of HASS learning is due to the application by jurisdictions of reduced opportunities to learn HASS rather than the expansion of STEM.

Biographies

Professor Murray Print is a recognised leader in civics and political education and curriculum development within Australia and internationally. He has been appointed to the College of Experts for the European Science Foundation. Over the past two decades he has directed many major research projects such as an ARC-funded project on youth participation in democracy, as well as being chief investigator in many other projects in civics and citizenship education. In 2003 Professor Print was awarded the Centenary Medal for his contributions to civics education and the community. He was a Mercator Visiting Professor (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) in Germany in 2012 and a Distinguished Fellow Award in 2016 from the School of Critical Studies in Education, University of Auckland for his contribution to Civics and Citizenship Education. In 2011 Professor Print was appointed to lead the development of the Civics and Citizenship Curriculum for all Australian schools within the Australian Curriculum. The Australian Curriculum Civics and Citizenship was completed in late 2013. He participated in the response to the review of the Australian Curriculum Civics and Citizenship and the final version that was published in 2015.

CONCLUSIONS

At policy, project and system levels STEM has been encouraged and funded, especially by government, but there is little major impact on HASS in schools in terms of student numbers or school subjects –yet. Meanwhile, educators should spruik the value of HASS learning in schools.

Jurisdictions should encourage more HASS learning opportunities in schools and meet the Melbourne Declaration goals. This would mean that schools should identify what HASS learning experiences are offered to their students. Possibly within HASS this could mean providing greater emphasis to be given to learning HASS subjects other than History and Geography.

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Embracing “The Wrong Path”: Place-Naming and the Work Yet To Do

Dr Bryan Smith, James Cook University

Last September, nine year old Harper Neilsen made national news for their refusal to stand for the national anthem.

A powerful symbolic act, Neilsen argued that they were protesting against the celebration of violence that often goes unnoticed in the almost habitual recitation of the lyrics. Choosing to protest the celebration of nationalism, veiled as it is by its lyrical and political banality, represents a bold assertion of conviction; the nationalist historical narrative memorialized in the anthem commands a significant amount of sway over the public’s imagination and commitment of, and to, the past. Case in point, the response of critics, notably Senator Pauline Hanson, who made the argument that Neilsen, “is headed down the wrong path” and should be removed from the school (Munro 2018) by asserting their civic and ethical refusal. This tension reminds us of a much broader tension, that is, the continued “history war” wherein two competing visions of the past vie for command of the public’s imagination (Macintyre & Clark 2004). Neilsen and Hanson serve as symbolic stand-ins for what has commonly been seen as the chasm between historical interpretation that catalyses this “war.” On the one side, Neilsen and others sought and seek to illuminate how even the most seemingly banal moments (while anthems are powerful expressions of nationalist sentiment, all too often people passively engage with them) are a reminder of how history has long served to mythologise and confuse exclusions and violence as “progress.” On the other hand, Hanson and others sought and seek to assert a vision of the past that demands complacency and acquiescence; an interpretation of the past that prides itself on its aversiveness to critique.

I begin here as I want to suggest that the pressing issue facing HASS is less its disappearance from classrooms and more the need to preserve the field in spite of efforts to have it become little more than a space of acritical indoctrination (this is not a particularly new issue for the field but nonetheless still pressing). The soul of HASS ought to be its critical investigation of difficult ideas in the pursuit of ethical futures, something wonderfully reflected in Neilsen’s convictions and denied in Hanson’s refusal to engage. And while Hanson’s view itself warrants extended critique for its myopic and misinformed reading of the past, Hanson’s statements are symptomatic of a much broader effort to normalise overly narrow visions of what history is (and HASS ought to be). Said differently, the ways in which history is often imagined to be for many is commonly and rather compellingly univocal and hyper focused on a select set of ideas, actors and events that come to be so taken for granted that they appear to reflect the past “just as it happened.” Or, that is, to borrow Hanson’s language, “on the right path.” To illustrate this, I turn to geography and place-naming as a demonstration of how “the right path” of historical interpretation is written into the symbolic and material spaces of every street corner, making it seem so normal as to elude critical awareness. In so doing, I suggest that HASS must

turn its attention to giving students the opportunities to question the seemingly inconsequential not to save the field from irrelevance or subordination to HASS but to save its critical soul in spite of efforts to deny it.

PLACE-NAMING AND THE CREATION OF “OUR” HISTORY

I begin here by making a rather simple claim: the story of “us” – the right path as it were – informs the vocabularies and character of everyday spaces. I’m not concerned here with the more obvious examples – monuments or statues – as these are rather clearly the consequence of efforts at remembrance and most often the geographic features of historical remembrance that are contested. Rather, the “right path” of concern here is written into the language of

of a collective subjectivity”. Said differently, the complex web of place-names does ultimately help to represent and cement a particular social identity reflected through the kinds of events and people remembered through how we identify and name places. Who “we” are, then, is embodied in the everyday commemorative commitments of place-naming practices.

Perhaps an example of place-naming at work will help. I live and work in Townsville, situated in tropical North Queensland, and on the Country of the Bindal and Wulgurukaba peoples. Named for the merchant who Frank Anstey and John Curtin (1927, p.11) noted more than 90 years ago was “the originator of the Australian slave trade”, the city’s street naming tells a story of settler historical privilege and serves to commemorate settler ascendancy in the area. To illustrate this, I turn to John Mathew’s (2008) wonderful text – *Highways and Byways: The Origin of Townsville Street Names* – that carefully documents the namesakes for the city’s streets as the primary source for what follows. In the central business district, the proverbial core of any community, the main thoroughfare is Flinders Street, named for famed explorer Matthew Flinders. Parallel to Flinders to the north is Sturt Street, named for Charles Sturt, famed British explorer. Intersecting each of these is, from north to south, Denham, Stokes, Stanley and Blackwood Streets, named for Captains Henry Denham, Owen Stanley, John Lort Stokes and Francis Price Blackwood, surveyors who helped map the Australian coast for the British. The two blocks north of Sturt Street – Walker and Wills Street – both commemorate a surveyor (William John Wills) and someone who sought out the lost Burke and Wills expedition (Frederick Walker). When you extend outside of the CBD, you begin to see the introduction of local business people and politicians along with Queensland politicians. North of the CBD you begin to see the British monarch appear as a common street name, with Queen Victoria enjoying two streets (Queen and Victoria Street) and Alexandra of Denmark, Queen Victoria’s daughter in law, enjoying another (Alexandra Street).

place, that is, the place-naming practices that come to give shape to the community spaces that we call home. The names given to our streets, our parks, and our schools (to name a few named locations) reflect particular commitments to historical remembrance. Controlled by the state (city, state or federal government where appropriate), place-names serve as what critical geographer Maoz Agaryahu (2009, p.66) calls “an authorized index of a putative narrative”. In our community spaces, place names are conferred an authority to speak to and represent an officially sanctioned interpretation of the past by virtue of their protected status. While the arrangement of these place-names do not allow for a conventional narrative structure (and thus don’t lend themselves well to easily observable patterns), we are left with a “spatially configured register of historical figures and events” (Agaryahu 2009, p.64) that do cohere together by virtue of their thematic and historical connectedness. Taken together, their remembrance of certain people and events and their loose but nevertheless present connections across space, connect the local with broader (ie. state or national) mythologies. The consequence of this, Emilia Palonen (2008, p.220) suggests, is the “creation or representation of public values and thereby the construction

Reading this text and the conception of historical significance that it writes into the community’s geography, one would be hard pressed to conclude that the Bindal and Wulgurukaba peoples history is significant to this area, let alone that there is a history of each peoples. Indeed, the selection of commemorative namesakes in Townsville’s central core (and in most communities across Australia) accomplishes three things. First, it identifies the city’s geography with a history of British colonisation and mapping that works, simultaneously, via exclusion of non-colonial figures (while not exclusively, the consistency is difficult to deny). Second, it commits the city to a particular identification with that narrative of colonisation and surveying, suggesting that what matters to “us” is a particular historical settler narrative and identification. Third, this thematically coherent collection of street

**WHERE HASS THOU GONE?
FEATURE**

names also serves to symbolically lay a claim to space – “this is settler space and will serve as a medium for celebrating colonisation.” It is, as Timothy Stanley (1998) suggests, the creation of a national community through racist denial.

CONCLUSION: LET’S HEAD DOWN THE WRONG (SKEWED) PATH

Reading everyday spaces as media for the memorialization of white, settler heroes is an intrinsically difficult task. By virtue of their “semantic displacement” – that their commemorative value cedes ground to their functional and “locational” meaning (Azaryahu 2009) – place names often elude criticism because they, ostensibly, don’t mean anything. Yet, they’re powerful symbols of who and what is thought to be important. In effect, they present themselves in such a way that is both unquestioned and supportive of “the right path.”

As suggested in the introduction, I don’t think that HASS has gone anywhere but it continues to be subject to efforts on the part of those such as Hanson who would have it become little more than a mechanism for securing “the right path.” To overcome this – to save the field’s critical soul – we have to support student investigation

into not only what “the right path” is but how it becomes normalised. For myself, place-naming becomes the entry point for disrupting “the right path” because of its existence as a language that writes history, exclusion and settler claims over how the past is imagined into every aspect of our spatial lives. Engaging this process is rather difficult but when done well, HASS can continue to be the critical space that it needs to be, that is, “skewed, biased, and purposeful” (Lintner 2010, p.19). This challenge – the development of openness and willingness to see “the wrong path” – is what HASS needs to do. And while this makes it subject to more and sometimes trenchant critique as an improperly biased space, drawing student attention to how certain history becomes the language of everyday life is worth doing. The “wrong path” needs to be made right, to save the soul of HASS from those who might see it do little more than the same old.

Biographies

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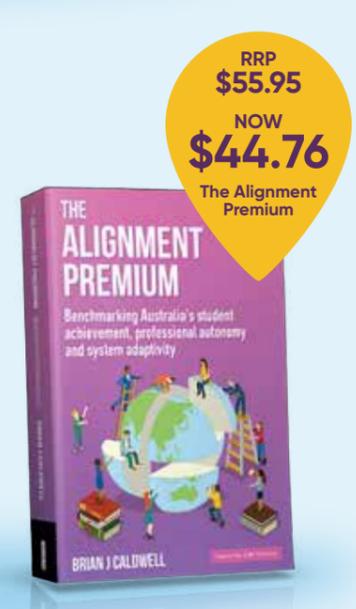
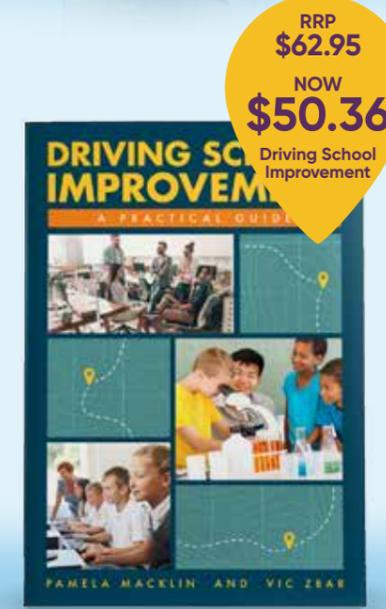
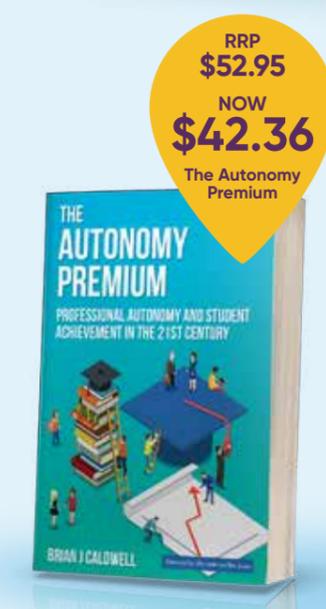
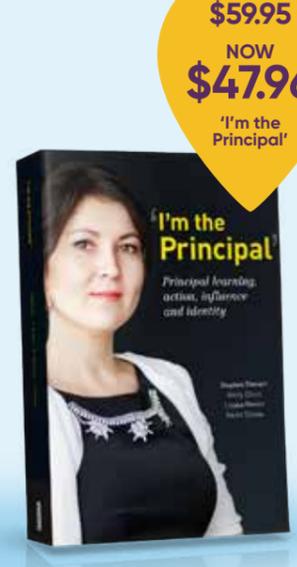
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Teaching History - How?

Ms Georgia Lawrence-Doyle, University of Sydney

“[The study of] history enriches the present and illuminates the future”

(Shape Paper, Australian Curriculum: History, March 2012).

History education has long been a point of contention in the Western world (Peterson 2016). This is most likely due to the fact shared history is such a fundamental—yet divisive—part of the national and cultural consciousness. Therefore, the nature and content of history teaching has been debated within schools, and also wider society. It also has often been utilised (even exploited) by governments to reiterate national sentiment and identity in schools (Peterson 2016; Martin 2016; Clark 2009; Dinc 2011). Despite the central part that history pedagogy and discourse has played in our society, it has also proved to be a difficult subject in which to engage students. As Nair and Narayanasamy (2017, p.109) point out, teaching history is a “tough and challenging task for teachers” as many studies indicate that “students are not interested in learning history” due to it being “irrelevant” to their current lives. So how can history gain relevance? Can it become a subject that students find interesting, informative and one they are keen to enjoy whilst studying in the compulsory years of schooling and beyond?

NATIONAL HISTORIES AND NARRATIVES IN THE CLASSROOM

Historically, the teaching of history has revolved around content—namely, students memorising facts that are perceived to be important, and stories which align with a nation’s past (Van Drie & Van Boxtel 2008). As Seixas (2017, p. 593) notes, for over a century democratic nation states have experienced a “tug-of-war” between “political demands to promote national solidarity” and a “liberal educational vision of history” in order to foster an “engaged, literate, critical citizenry”. He explains that this conflict was heightened during the 1970s, when academic history experienced its own crisis of disciplinary identity, which in turn trickled down to history education through national narratives (Seixas 1993).

This focus on history curricula and pedagogy in educational research has been more pronounced since the 1990s (Van Drie & Van Boxtel 2008). In Australia secondary history education has been much disputed on a national level since the mid-1990s. According to

Clark (2006), Australian students have been framed as significant but “vulnerable receptors” of the national narrative. Clark noted that it was not until the 1960s and 1970s that Australia experienced its first challenge to history education with the “critical interrogation” of the ‘digger’ mythology. The figure who had previously been upheld as the quintessential Australian hero was becoming increasingly problematic, and historians, teachers and national commentators alike were exposing the dark, almost forgotten, aspects of the nation’s past.

Clark (2006) stated that, with the advent of the bicentennial in the late 1980s, Australia also became divided over the inclusion of “multiculturalism in its national narrative”. During the 1990s, this was followed by the “history wars” under the Howard government, whereby representations of Australia’s colonial past were divided between the more forgiving ‘white armband’ view of Australian history, or the more condemning ‘black armband’ perspective (Peterson 2016; Clark 2009).

In recent years, these debates have once more featured in public discourse when the Australian Curriculum was reviewed in 2014 (Martin 2016, p.4). Christopher Pyne, then Commonwealth Minister for Education, justified the review of various subject-areas by stating that “concerns have been raised about the history curriculum not recognising the legacy of Western civilisation and not giving Australia’s history and culture the prominence they deserve, such as Anzac Day”. Consequently, the history curriculum once more became a point of political and public contention. Martin (2016, p.7) argues that these debates are defined by the clash of two approaches to teaching history: the ‘heritage’ paradigm, and the ‘disciplinary’ paradigm. Martin explains that the former seeks to educate and reaffirm certain narratives about the nation’s past in order to cultivate a “shared identity and sense of civic duty”. The latter, however, aims to expose and examine myriad perspectives of the past. Martin (2016, p.5) states that, although the narrative approach is still important in relaying the past to history students, the disciplinary paradigm rather “encourages critical examination of various narratives in the pursuit of such explanations”. If, as a nation, we are not effectively educating students in these issues, the kind of society we want our students to live in, and the kind of people we want them to be is directly impacted.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES TO TEACHING HISTORY

There is an increasing trend in the scholarship of history education that calls for the shift from “traditional”

approaches of “lecture, recall, and over-emphasis on the textbook”, to more constructivist methods of student-centred learning, and developing skills-based approaches to sources (Roberts 2011, p.122). Over the past thirty years or so, there has been a tension in the field between the more narrative “chalk and talk” approaches to teaching history, versus the more source-focused methods of critical analysis. Many scholars argue that history pedagogy remains trapped in the exam and rote-learning centred mode of education.

The focus in Western history education in the latter third of the Twentieth Century aimed for students to develop the higher-order thinking skills of evaluation and analysis. Many scholars argue that students should be more “active participants” in their study of history (i.e. “doing” history) through more “hands-on” approaches (Roberts 2011; Warren 2007). According to Warren (2007, p.249) this can be achieved through a “more ambitious agenda of critical pedagogy”, which gives teachers the tools and support to move away from the “kill and drill” strategies that are still commonly used in history education, and instead to teach students to undertake actual historical inquiry themselves (Roberts 2011, p.122). Triolo (2008, p.50) posits that this can be achieved through a return to the core, primary sources of historical research as well as the use of inquiry methodology. Allowing students to “experience the real work of historians and detectives”.

There has been a shift to more constructivist approaches in history teaching. That is, the idea that teachers and students have more freedom in the classroom, with a focus on student-directed learning and construction of their own knowledge (Dinc 2011). Many constructivist methods have been proffered in social studies discourses, such as the role of the concept map, which allows students to engage “actively in the learning process” through organising broader historical concepts (Nair & Narayanasamy 2017, p. 120). The idea of the socio-political relevance of history has also arisen as a pedagogical emphasis in the

classroom. This method addresses three perceived key objectives of history education: “building a personal identity, becoming a citizen, and understanding the human condition” (Van Straaten, Wilschut & Ootsdam 2016, p. 484). The work of Van Houver, Hick & Dack (2016) also highlighted the importance of critically studying history as a means to being an “active, informed, deliberate participat[ant] in a democratic society” (Barton & Leustik, cited in Van Houver, Hick & Dack, 2016). They argue that the most effective way to achieve this is through “actively engaging students in historical inquiry”, through the use of primary sources. They claim that these develop in students the “essential knowledge, skills and habits of mind” that are an essential part of the “education of a future citizenry”.

ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING

Engagement is a critical part of student learning and development: both in the short and long term. Put simply: the more that students are interested in and apply themselves to a subject, the more they will absorb and learn about it. Further, by students honing their skills through editing and drafts, and receiving constructive feedback through this process, it is more likely that they will become proficient in their work (Kuh 2003). Therefore, although much of the scholarship on student engagement tends to be more general in its subject areas, this seems especially pertinent to the engagement of students in history. By focusing on strategies that foster student engagement in history, there will be a greater chance of them applying themselves to classroom interaction, assessments, and developing a keener interest in the issues that continue to affect contemporary society today.

One of these engagement strategies is to encourage historical empathy in students. **Historical empathy** has been extremely under-researched, but is now emerging in the field of learning relevancy and engagement. According to Ashby and Lee (cited in Donnelly 2004, p.18), empathy is an effective tool for informing and developing historical understanding in high school students, and they outline five different stages of “sophistication in empathetic thinking”. Their study traced the students’ trajectory from total detachment and apathy regarding the past, to a “restructured and contextualised empathy” whereby the student grasps the varying narratives used to understand a certain historical experience, which in turn, allows them to discern the difference between the “historical agent” and “the historian” According to Donnelly (2014, p.6) historical empathy is thus an “epistemological matter”. She explains that this is because it requires “recovering the thoughts and values of past generations” and that “without this aid to interpretation, historical sources could be misconstrued”.

Nevertheless, Cunningham (2009, p.680) points out that scholarship on the role of empathy in historical education is vastly neglected. She argues that the current literature tends to explore the philosophical aspects of empathy, but does not so much cover how to actually elicit this in the classroom as a pedagogical strategy. Furthermore, Cunningham adds that the scholarship takes “little account of differing contexts”

or the “competing goals that teachers seek to achieve”. Indeed, because empathy is such a subjective, abstract concept, it is difficult to actually form universal strategies on how to cultivate it, which traverse all cultural, ethnic, religious boundaries, whilst remaining within ethical borders. This is partially why—despite the early attempts in the 1910s and 1920s—it was not until the 1960s and 1970s that empathy began to receive serious attention as “one of the constructs central to the discipline of history” (Cunningham 2009, p.680). Cunningham (2009, p.681) states that scholars then attempted to define the concept of empathy, despite the fact that it “did not possess the conceptual sharpness of other historical ideas such as ‘evidence’” and was rather a “fuzzy” concept. As a consequence, there has since emerged a wide range of student-centred activities which cultivate a deeper, and more personal historical understanding of the past (Cunningham 2009). For example, some teachers are promoting empathy in a direct way through organising various activities which “remove” students from the classroom, either “literally through field trips or figuratively through simulations or videos” (Cunningham 2009, p. 696). Donnelly’s study (2014, p.12) examining how historical feature films aided the teaching of history, also reinforced this idea of taking students ‘out of the classroom’, even if not in a physical sense. She argued that the “engagement with visual and multi-modal constructs” not only adds depth to the teaching experience, but also “enhance[s] the significance and relevance” of the classroom to “students’ world life, outside and beyond school”.

Many scholars, however, including Lang (2003) and Hawkey (2007) maintain that the narrative, direct teaching method remains the most effective way of teaching history to secondary students. Hawkey and Lang’s concerns were mirrored by the Historical Association’s (2005, pp.28-29) curriculum development project in the U.K., where the Secretary of State for Education stated that “the construction of historical narrative from historical source material... is a high-order skill which lies at the heart of the historian’s craft”. Moreover, they added that it is the “end to which historical research and source analysis leads”.

USE OF SOURCES AND CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE IN STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Most prevalent in the shift from the more narrative, text-book centred approaches, is the embracing of non-traditional sources as a way of engaging students in the subject of history. This does not necessarily mean ‘non-written’ texts just that these sources are not from the textbook, or traditional historical scholarship. For example, these might include **film and television, music, biographies of historical figures, historical fiction, and oral histories** (Roberts 2011; Marcus and Stoddard 2009; Rosenstone 1994; Michalczyk 1982; Boulware, Monroe and Wilcox 2012; McTigue, Thornon and Wiese 2012; Dutt-Doner, Allen and Campanaro 2016). These sources are critical in keeping students engaged and stimulated by history in the twenty-first century, as it involves them in their own learning process, as well as highlights the value and relevance of studying history—not only in their education, but in the context of contemporary society.

As well as the viewing of films, television and documentaries, Pratt (2018) encouraged their own students to produce, direct and star in their own historical documentary film. Pratt recounts that, as part of the ‘Towards Transformation’ project held by Apple at their school, they asked their students to make a documentary film (using both primary and secondary sources) in order to demonstrate the experiences of World War One on a “specific individual” (2018, p.13). Pratt’s students were then required to write a scholarly essay on various aspects of the war, such as: “technological advances, conscription and gender roles”. According to Pratt (2018, p.16), this assessment allowed their students to not only merge “source analysis, evaluation, and engagement with history” it also provided a “bigger picture” to students of the realities of World War One on a micro-personal level. Essentially, this means that the students are able to draw connections between the individual historical perspectives, and how these fit within broader historical phenomena.

Teachers are being encouraged to use **biographies and oral histories** in their classrooms. In their study of the use of biographies in the history classroom, Boulware, Monroe and Wilcox (2012, p.487) argue that biographies of significant (and not-so-significant) historical figures allows students to examine how these individuals “responded to, shaped, and created opportunities during the historical periods and contexts in which they lived”. In this manner, students can identify and connect with stories of individual experiences in a way that textbooks simply cannot do. Oral histories remain an incredibly undervalued source in history education.

Crutchley, Parker and Roberts (2018) advocate the role of sound/historical voices further in their work on the role of ‘sonic sources’ in gaining an insight into the past. They argue that there is a growing body of work on “sound and the acoustic” in history, which they perceive as being neglected in scholarship and “everyday life” (2018, p.13). Documentaries, interviews, and oral histories, for example, often detail how the sonic was “enacted and experienced”, thus offering a more “fully embodied educational experience of the past”.

The role of **technology and digital histories** is also becoming increasingly important in the teaching of history in the twenty-first century. Scholars such as Simkin (2018); Frigo (2018); Baker (2018) are making strides in their research to form new strategies of teaching history in a ‘digital classroom’... Digital modes of teaching have begun to (positively) “disrupt” the ways in which we teach, especially the ways we teach history.

It is essential, as Frigo (2018) argues, that teaching move beyond the “industrial model” (i.e. teacher facing the class, students putting their hands up to answer questions etc.). Instead, the current generation of students are the “products of a new revolution—the fourth industrial revolution, the digital revolution” (Frigo 2018, p.23). Consequently, the classroom must adapt in order to “prepare [students] for the world they are entering” (Ibid.). Therefore, a range of new strategies based around **digital modes of teaching** and learning have emerged.

Margaret Simkin (2018, p.19) outlined her use of inter-school Skype conversations, where students debate various stances, or conduct Q&As on the French and Russian Revolutions. She states that this is the “power of the types of tools that most us now use to teach and learn history” (Ibid.). Greg Chapman, Jem Duducu (2018) and Simon Baker (2018) also embrace various digital sources, such as podcasts, Youtube videos, video games and Virtual Reality for engaging students in the past. Chapman and Duducu even host two podcasts on how to achieve these very strategies. Baker (2018) pushes this further to include social media outlets such as Twitter and Facebook. He praises Simon McKenzie’s “Tweeting Pompei” method, where students “re-enacted the event via a Tweet”. Baker (2018, p.10) states that along with social media, video games (such as Minecraft and Assassin’s Creed) and Virtual Reality can also be incredibly useful in getting students to engage with the lived experiences of the past. He argues that this is because they are, in their essence, created as a “form of entertainment”, but also because they promote “good learning habits” by attempting to “master a situation, usually via multiple failures” (Ibid.).

Essentially, Frigo (2018) and Baker (2018) concur on the importance of these “twenty-first century skills”, often referred to as the “4Cs: communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity”, which allow us to build networks with other history teachers and students, “collaborate on projects, share resources” as well as create a “professional presence online” (Baker 2018, p.8). It is thus increasingly the view of many scholars now that history teachers need to embrace technology, as we are now living in a time where “the entire knowledge of humanity” is “sitting in our pockets” (Ibid.).

Whilst this is true, and it is essential that we move forward—and not against—the tide of this “digital revolution” in history education, we should also remain critically aware and careful as to how we treat and transmit these new sources of learning. Simply possessing infinite knowledge in one’s pocket does not make one more knowledgeable, nor does having more “tools” to engage students mean that you are automatically engaging them. Rather, we need to learn, as teachers, to embrace and adapt these digital sources in a way that is still teaching students to analyse and apply this knowledge in a critical fashion. Moreover, we should also be aware that the **‘Digital Classroom’** is also, for the most part, a western construct. Further research is needed on the ways in which we can utilise the “digital classroom” without compromising on essential historical skills.

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Biographies

Georgia Lawrence-Doyle completed her Bachelor of Arts degree with First Class Honours in History from the University of Adelaide in 2012, receiving the University Medal for Outstanding Academic Achievement (2012), and both the Lynda Tapp prize and Tinline scholarship for History. Georgia has since completed her PhD in History at the University of Sydney, her thesis examining the intersections between modern Italian history, politics, and the Italian film comedies of the 1950s-1970s. Due to her passion for teaching history to young people, she is currently studying for her Masters in Teaching at the University of Adelaide. This is reflected in Georgia's dissertation on the HASS curriculum, and especially strategies to make the subject of history more engaging and relevant to Australian secondary school students.

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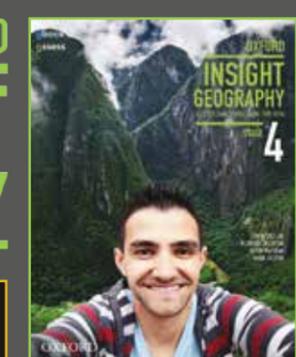
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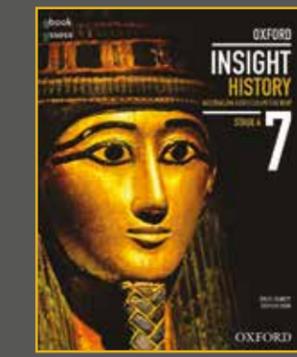
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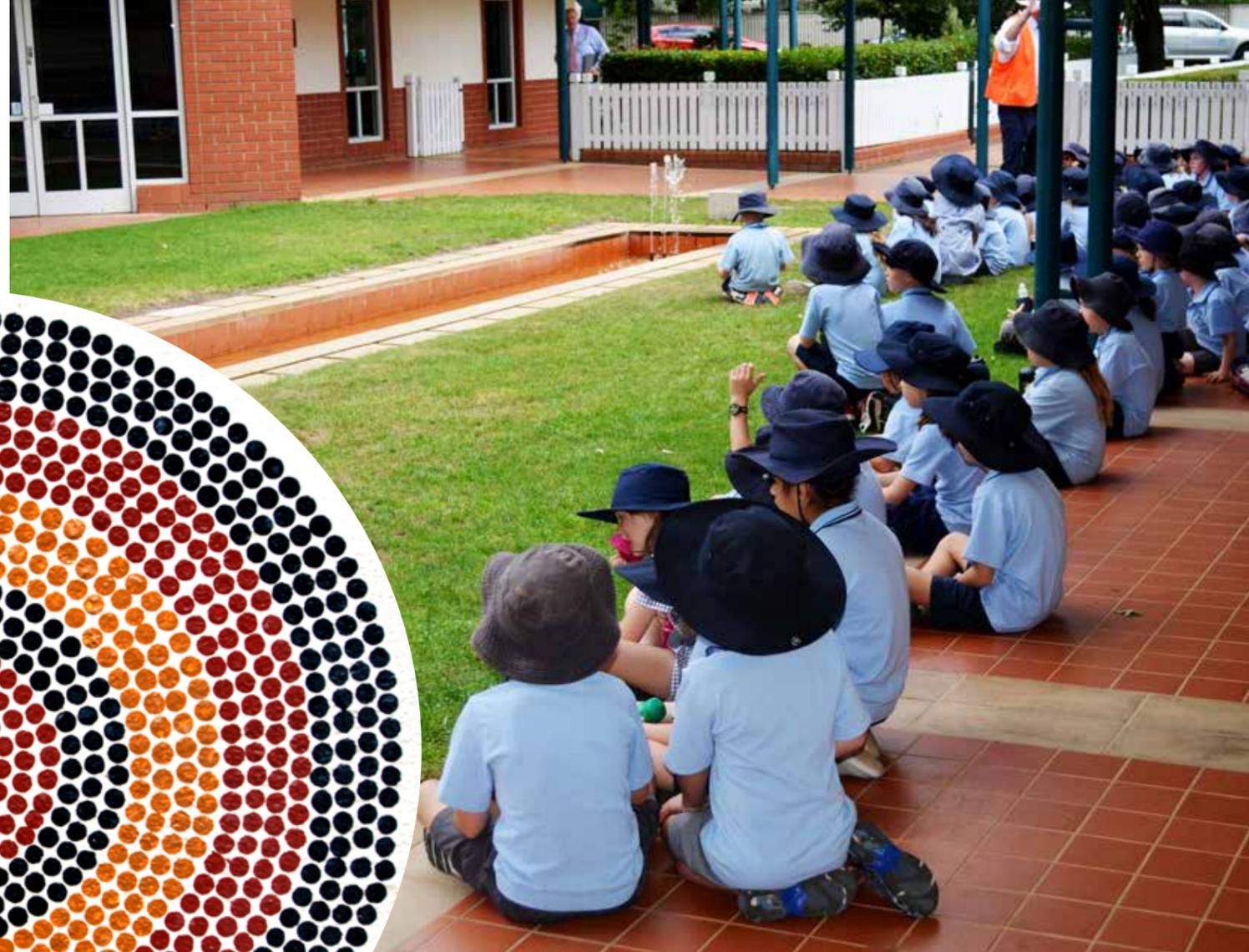
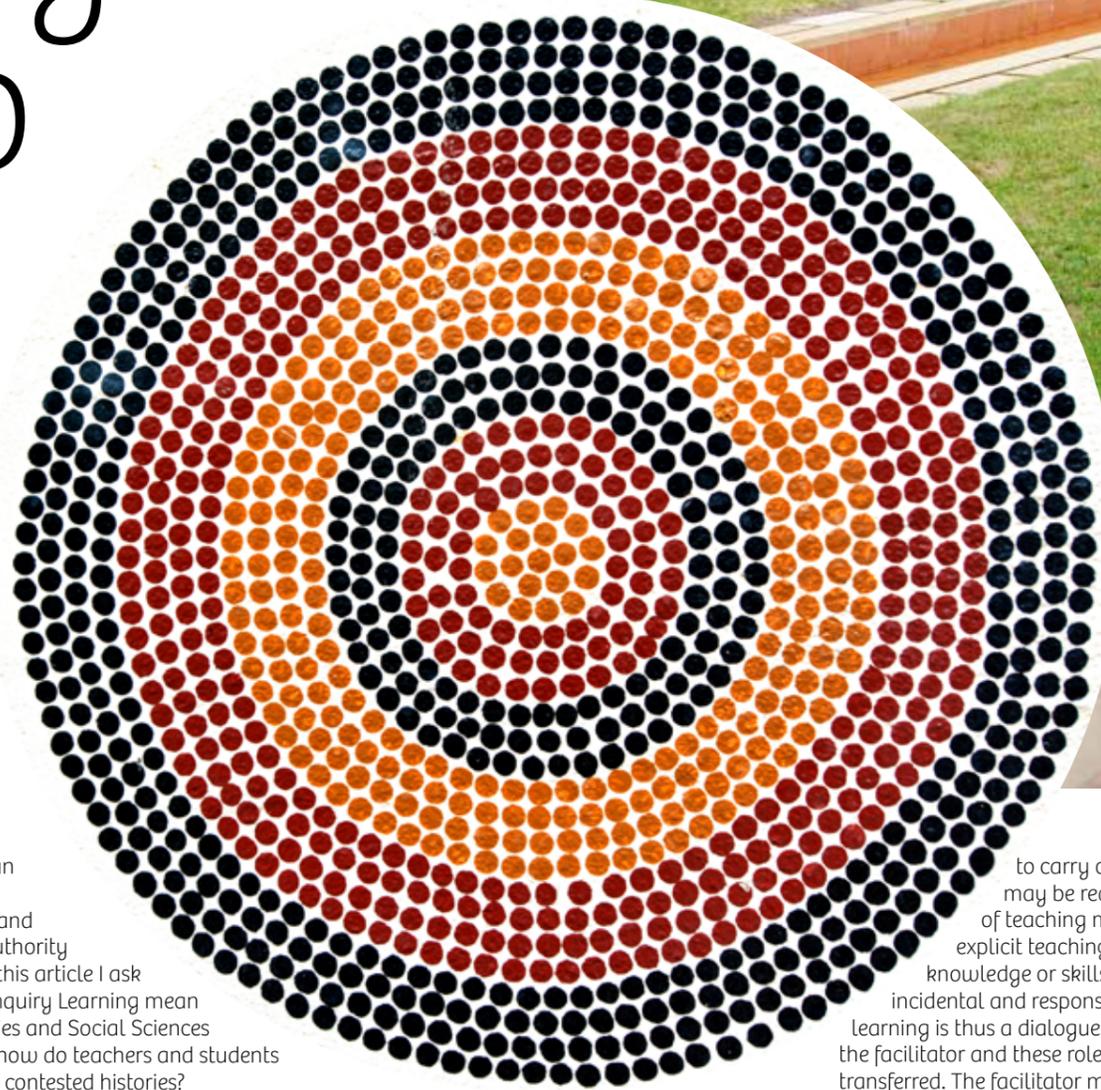


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Contesting Inquiry to Preserve History

Dr Samantha Owen, Curtin University



HOW DO WE READ AND TEACH THE STORIES THAT WON'T GO AWAY?

In the week beginning 4 March 2019 Guardian Australia hosted *The Killing Times*, a special report on genocide in Australia which aimed to tell “the stories that [do not] appear in our history books yet they refuse to go away” and “to assemble the information necessary to begin truth telling” (Allam & Evershed 2019). The first instalment was an interactive “massacre map of Australia’s frontier wars” which virtually took readers to the massacre site closest to their homes (Evershed & Ball 2019). The Report also asked how genocide in Australia is taught. History Teachers Association of Victoria executive officer, Deb Hull, suggested that the method was “in passing” as to deal with an overcrowded curriculum “History is being squeezed out [...] A lot of schools will say, ‘We’re all about Stem [sic]’” (Martin 2019). The *First Dog* on the Moon comic “When we were in school, we didn’t learn about the massacres. Do they teach it now? I don’t know” asked all readers to respond by taking action: to find out about local massacres, access and tell the stories, to do something (First Dog 2019). The questions of how to teach genocide in Australia, and if it should be taught, have stemmed from the History Wars and surfaced in arguments over teaching pedagogies and approaches following the implementation of the National Curriculum by

the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). In this article I ask what does Inquiry Learning mean for Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) and how do teachers and students engage with contested histories?

INQUIRY LEARNING

Inquiry Learning is a learner-centred pedagogical approach which privileges active learning through a question asking process and which seeks to trigger the curiosity of the learner/s. Inquiry learning is authentic and constructivist and a core principle of inquiry is that the learning comes through doing. Inquiry is conducted in stages – Immersion; Question Design; Finding Out; Drawing Conclusions; Taking Action; Reflection – and the understanding gained from the inquiry process takes precedence over the final product or knowledge learned by rote (Murdoch, 2015; Wilson & Wing Jan, 2009; McKenzie, 2000). Inquiry is an integrated and holistic approach to learning as the process of questioning may lead the inquirers to draw on other subject areas or to learn new skills. The teacher operates in an inquiry learning space as an inquirer but also a facilitator and

to carry out the inquiry process they may be required to use a number of teaching methodologies, including explicit teaching methods for specific knowledge or skills, as well as planned, incidental and responsive teaching. Inquiry learning is thus a dialogue between the inquirer and the facilitator and these roles may be exchanged and transferred. The facilitator may introduce the inquiry to: confirm an understanding of a concept; carry out a structured inquiry on an assigned topic; guide an inquiry with an assigned research question; or conduct an open inquiry where learners formulate their own questions and research cycle (Banchi and Bell, 2008; Schwartz, 2017). The inquiry process draws on the skills and knowledges of all participating – and seeks to develop new ones – and so is necessarily collaborative, creating an inquiry community, even though the individual learners may have their own journey. To bring the inquiry to an end the learners and facilitators should critically reflect on the process, the actions taken, the skills and knowledges developed and possibilities for improvement.

HAS HASS A PLACE IN THE NEW AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM?

On 5 December 2008 the Australian Ministerial Council

on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs approved *The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*. The document was presented by Julia Gillard, then Federal Minister for Education and Training, and articulated two main goals. First, linking education and nationbuilding, “Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence” to create a “society that is prosperous, cohesive and culturally diverse and that values Australia’s indigenous cultures.” Second, “All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens”, thus connecting schooling to job readiness. The Melbourne Declaration outlined a purpose for schools as harvesters of citizens and future thinkers and contributors and was a blueprint for the national curriculum. The curriculum designers created the category “General capabilities”, which identified twenty-first century skills, introduced three cross-curriculum priorities, which encourages integration, and named pedagogical approaches for discipline areas (ACARA, 2011a). In the HASS learning area they endorsed and recommended an inquiry-based and student-centred approach to be adopted alongside disciplinary thinking (ACARA, 2011b).

From the HASS area the new History curriculum was included in Phase One of the National Curriculum

rollout. Addressing the National Press Club in the 2013 election campaign, the then Opposition Leader, Tony Abbott, reviewed it and lamented that Australian history, as he understood it, was left out. In his view the only area covered properly was “indigenous heritage” and there was “too great a focus on issues which are the predominant concern of one side of politics” (Lane & Maher 2013). Abbott’s sentiments were supported by the future Federal Minister for Education and Training, Christopher Pyne, who asserted an “education priority” of the Coalition would be restore ANZAC Day to a sainted position. He also announced that the Coalition would review the national curriculum for coverage and bias as they had been asking the authors “to give appropriate weight to our Western and Judeo-Christian heritage as a nation” (Pyne 2013). Once elected, the Liberal-National Party Coalition ordered their review under Dr Kevin Donnelly and Professor Kenneth Wiltshire. The need was rejected by the chair of the ACARA board, Professor Barry McGaw (2014), and called out for being politically motivated.

We read the histories written without the massacres. We read the narratives which contest the accepted or known. We teach studeaboriginants how to listen to the silences, to search for unheard voices.

Wiltshire and Donnelly (2014) reported that “in relation to the history and the civics and citizenship curriculums” they received a “significant number of submissions arguing that “the Australian Curriculum did not pay enough attention to the impact of Western civilisation and Judeo-Christianity on Australia.” These submissions informed their recommendations for what should be taught:

- i. “History should be revised in order to properly recognise the impact and significance of Western civilisation and Australia’s Judeo-Christian heritage, values and beliefs”;
- ii. “an overall conceptual narrative” covering all periods of Australian history should be developed and taught; and
- iii. “the curriculum needs to better acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses and the positives and negatives of both Western and Indigenous cultures and histories” (p.181).

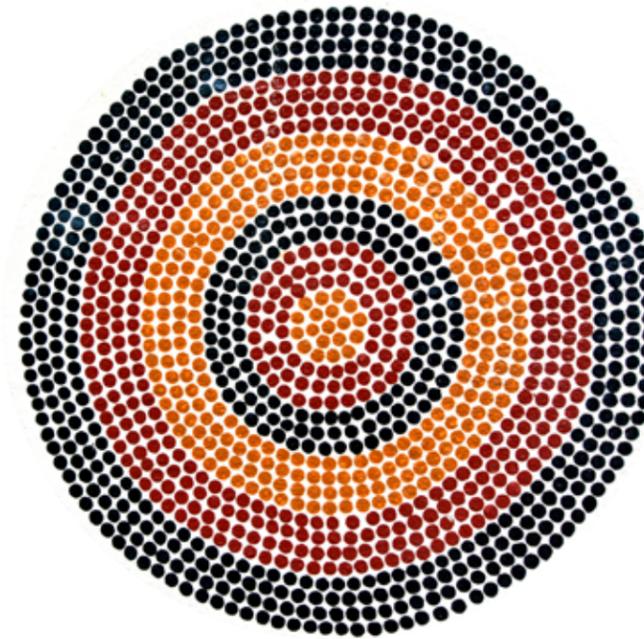
They also raised concerns about the “focus on skills and capabilities at the expense of explicit knowledge and the need for explicit teaching” and suggested general capabilities and the cross-curriculum priorities should be slimmed-down and only embedded “where relevant or educationally sound” (p.145). Finally, Pyne’s reviewers advised inquiry learning should not become “the prevailing orthodoxy in comparison to other

evidence-based approaches” (pp.124-126) because “the emphasis should be on imparting historical knowledge and understanding central to the discipline instead of expecting children to be historiographers” (p.181).

CONTESTED HISTORIES AND THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Pyne and his reviewers advised a return to the “best story” approach: teaching children a controlled and selected narrative which is presented as objective and unmediated in an attempt to create a collective memory for the society it serves (Seixas 2000). These narratives broker no contestation. To Wiltshire and Donnelly, History taught through an inquiry approach was potentially dangerous because the National Curriculum brings together the “disciplinary approach” with the “postmodern approach” (Seixas 2000). The “disciplinary approach” relies on taught skills as disciplinary methodologies and used to assess multiple perspectives and narratives on a historical event. These may challenge what was once the “best story” and students must select one, thus making them an active co-creator. The “postmodern approach” is when multiple narratives are analysed and the student is pushed to question the roles each plays in contemporary society. Unlike the second approach, the aim of the disciplinary approach is not to choose a narrative – objectivity and truth are taken as relative – but to understand how the story is constructed. When using the postmodern approach students are drawn into social and political debates, they must question the silences and the forgotten, why some stories can only be told now, so that the relevance of history and historical constructions to their present becomes clear.

In conclusion, this – to answer First Dog on the Moon – is how we teach about the massacres. We read the histories written without the massacres. We read the narratives which contest the accepted or known. We teach studeaboriginants how to listen to the silences, to search for unheard voices. We use historical and historiographical methodologies to do so. We use the skills of critical literacy to understand how and why different stories emerge in different historical moments and why historical truths are eclipsed at certain points in time. Such a practice does not place blame for historical wrongs and omissions but seeks to understand the context that created them. The HASS Curriculum directs students to do so through co-application of the disciplinary and postmodern approaches when using inquiry pedagogy as it promotes integration of skills and knowledges through the general capabilities and the cross-curriculum priorities. In doing so we deconstruct grand narratives and those which contest them and decouple signifiers, leaving them free-floating and with the potential to be re-ordered. It is an approach that – to echo the language of the Melbourne Declaration (2008) – allows learners and facilitators to become “active and informed citizens” who seek to achieve “equity and excellence” for all.



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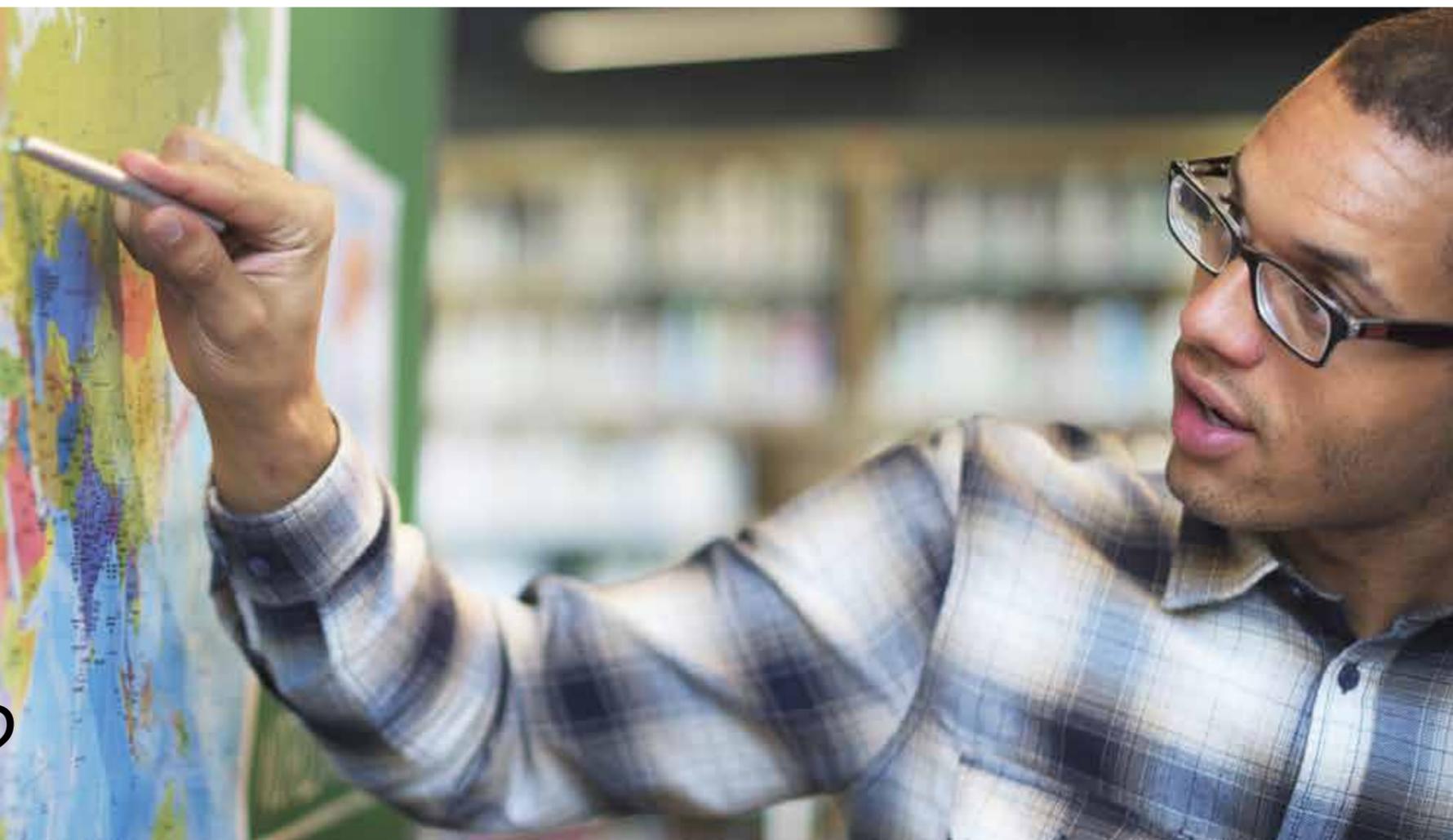
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Dr Samantha Owen is a lecturer and early career researcher in the School of Education at Curtin University. She works in Humanities and Social Sciences Education and is the HASS unit steward and the Staff Representative to the School of Education Student Council. She currently holds a grant from the Princeton University’s University Centre for Human Values with Anna Arabindan Kesson for research on representation and Contested Histories; is involved in a cross-institutional project “Signature Assessment Tasks in History Education”, which is funded by the University of Newcastle, NSW; and is working with colleagues on a HASS/STEM community education project funded by the City of Canning. Samantha’s wider research considers the relationship between nation, nationbuilding and education. She is currently a national convener of the Australian Women’s History Network, an elected representative on the History Council of Western Australia and she sits on one board.

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STEM or HASS: Where is Geography - enabled or constrained?



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ABSTRACT

The Theory of Reflexivity (Archer 2010a, 2010b, 2012) is used to consider whether Geography is understood to be enabled or constrained within the key learning area (KLA) of the Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) or within the subject grouping of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). A positioning of key terms including Geography, HASS and STEM opens the discussion, and an overview of the theoretical framework that underpins the Theory of Reflexivity follows. Properties that emerge from this theoretical framework provide a structure for exploring the enabling and/or constraining influences of policy and praxis in response to understanding where Geography is situated amongst other subjects. Ultimately, there are many points to consider and this article touches on only a few. The article also provides a personal account and opinion drawn from my lived experience as a Geography educator and curriculum developer. Evidence suggests

there is no definitive 'one-size fits all' answer, although drawing from personal experience it can be concluded that Geography is both enabled and constrained within HASS and STEM. It is also reasonable to suggest that Geography provides a bridge between HASS and STEM. Whether Geography is enabled or constrained more within HASS or STEM is related to the influence of Reflexivity and its emergent properties upon each practitioner and educational context, as well as ones' willingness to act upon such influences.

POSITIONING THE KEY TERMS

Definitions for Geography, Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS), Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM), and integrated-curriculum are evident across policy statements including curriculum documents and strategic plans, empirical research, and also in the way each becomes represented or enacted in schools and universities. Such definitions vary. Therefore, the following

definitions of the aforementioned terms, drawing heavily on policy, are provided for the purpose of clarity and consistency throughout this article:

Geography is defined as a wide-ranging and dynamic discipline where phenomena from the natural world, social world, and the humanities are integrated and studied through the perspectives of place, space, and environment. Geography provides an understanding about the world around us, for example through exploring the diversity of environments, places, peoples and cultures; the inequalities existing within and between these places; dependence on the environment for survival; attachment to place; and connections between places and people throughout the world (National Committee for Geographical Sciences 2018). At a national scale, in a school-based education and curriculum context, Geography is typically identified as a subject within the Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) learning area with a focus on inspiring curiosity and wonder about the diversity of the world's places, peoples, cultures and environments, and encouraging active citizenship towards creating a socially just and sustainable future (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority 2013a; Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs 2008;

National Committee for Geographical Sciences, 2018).

Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) is defined in the Australian Curriculum structure as a learning area comprised of several subjects including Geography, History, Civics and Citizenship, and Economics-Business. Learning focuses on future challenges through the study of human behaviour and interaction in social, cultural, environmental, economic, historical and political contexts, from the personal to global scale (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority 2013b; Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs 2008). It should be noted that across states and territories the name and inclusion of HASS identified subjects varies slightly.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education refers to the collective teaching of the disciplines of Science, Technology, Education and Mathematics; and it is a national school education strategy which advocates a multi and cross-disciplinary approach to teaching (Education Council 2015). The aim of such an education strategy is to enhance Australia's future competitiveness in a rapidly changing global economy through using the lenses of Science, Mathematics, Engineering and Technology to develop

individual and national capacity to respond to challenges around productivity and economic wellbeing. There is an emphasis on using a multi-disciplinary, integrated approach to learning (via STEM) to develop critical analysis, problem solving and creative thinking skills to solve real-world challenges (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority 2016; Education Council 2015; Office of the Chief Scientist 2013, 2014; Seikmann & Korbelt 2016).

An integrated-curriculum refers to the purposeful connection or conceptual links made between different subjects; that is, meaningful teaching, learning and assessment activities that are designed across several subjects or disciplines (Dowden 2014; Smith & Lovat 2006). An integrated-curriculum allows complex real-world problems to be solved through critical and creative thinking using a cross-disciplinary or multi-subject lens (Acedo & Hughes 2014).

In summary, for a national school-based education setting and for the purpose of this article, the following definitions apply: Geography is a subject; HASS is a formalised key learning area comprised of several subjects including Geography and identified in national curriculum policy including the Melbourne Declaration; STEM is a national education strategy emphasising a multi-disciplinary and cross disciplinary approach to teaching rather than being siloed, and an integrated curriculum is an outcome from teaching, learning and assessment strategies that deliberately connect learning from more than one subject.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Archer's Theory of Reflexivity is defined as the 'bending-back' of thought to stimulate inner conversation that creates distance between self, circumstance, and the item. For this response, the item requiring discernment and deliberation refers to whether Geography is evidenced as being enabled or constrained by its connection to HASS or STEM.

Reflexivity is an iteratively progressive cycle of reflection (thinking) and reflective practice (action) where three emergent properties – personal, structural and cultural – guide an internal conversation that encourages a decision-making process (Archer 2010a). An internal conversation is the thought process of comparing at least two emergent properties relating to a decision, by which a reasonable conclusion is finally arrived at. The decision-making process occurring in response to these emergent properties is known as the 3Ds:

1. Discernment, identification of emergent properties affecting the phenomenon;
2. Deliberation, the process of thinking and reasoning about the phenomenon and prioritising choices and decisions arising from that thought-process; and
3. Dedication, the implementation of appropriate actions in response to Deliberation (Archer 2010a; Ryan & Carmichael 2016; Willis, Crosswell, Morrison, Gibson, & Ryan 2017).

It is the internal conversations of the 3D process that

shape thought and action to develop a reflexive practitioner (Archer 2010a). The emergent properties, either separately or in combination, have distinctive characteristics which can either drive and enable, or inhibit and constrain, the process of action and dedication (Archer 2017).

Personal emergent properties (PEPs) refer to personal beliefs, values and attitudes; they are identified as strong shapers of concern and areas a person will feel most strongly about and therefore react towards (Archer 2010b, 2017; Caetano 2015). Structural emergent properties (SEPs) include empirical evidence, documents, or laws to abide by; they are identified as centralised and conditional guides of operation to provide structure and uniformity to various activities or processes (Archer 2010b, 2017; Caetano 2015). Cultural emergent properties (CEPs) refer to values connected to a specific place and/or period of time (Archer 2010b, 2017; Caetano 2015).

From here-on, the structural and personal emergent properties provide a structure for discernment and deliberation, and to propose possible dedications related to whether Geography is enabled or constrained by a STEM education approach or by the key learning area of HASS. It is acknowledged there are many points worthy of consideration, however, within the brief of this article, only a small number are selected for coverage. The personal emergent properties are reflective of personal insights and experience, as required by the Theory of Reflexivity

STRUCTURAL EMERGENT PROPERTIES

Empirical evidence and national policies, such as curriculum documents and strategic plans, can assist in determining whether Geography is structurally enabled or constrained by its connection with STEM education or the key learning area of HASS.

The *Melbourne Declaration* and structure of the Australian Curriculum identifies Geography within the HASS learning area. This is supported by the literature compiled at the time suggesting that Geography provides a bridge between the social sciences and biophysical sciences but is characterised by the analytical, critical and speculative methodologies of the Humanities through determining the impact of place, space and environment on the human condition (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2013b; Sorensen 2008). However, as the curriculum development process continued, and further research emerged, the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum: Geography was written to have specific points of connection and complementarity to the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum: Science and the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum: Mathematics.

The prevalence of international research around the effective use of geospatial technologies in a geographical education context to provide tools of data interpretation and to develop skills of spatial reasoning supports the specific inclusion of spatial technologies and Geographical Information Systems into the Inquiry and Skills strand of the Australian Curriculum for Geography

(Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2013a; Kerski 2015; Milson, DeMirci, Kerski 2012). To further emphasise the connection between Geography and STEM education, National Geographic has produced a series of multi-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary resources, focused on the skillsets of critical thinking, teamwork, problem-solving, and the use of geographical information systems, to show how Geography can be integrated as part of and beyond the named subjects of STEM because the best STEM resources and programs go beyond Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (National Geographic, date unknown).

Nevertheless, the importance of understanding Geography through the HASS lens remains. Within the humanities there are pathways in to new cultures and worldviews; within social sciences, one can learn about how resources are used by people and companies, which can lead to an understanding of how the economy might develop. Understanding Geography as a subject of the HASS learning area allows one to learn about individuals and communities in terms of their relationships, interconnections and interdependencies with each other and with their surrounds which is important when needing to solve difficult situations and address contemporary issues from the personal to global scale. Seeing Geography within STEM education and as part of the key learning area of HASS provides a myriad of ways to interpret and analyse issues to make a holistic, informed decision (Greenberg 2017).

Drawing from policy and praxis identified within *Geography: Shaping Australia's Future and the GTANSW&ACT* submission to the NSW Curriculum Review, it is obvious that the study of Geography in schools and at university levels requires students to increasingly develop their capacity to access, use and interpret, and communicate through a range of constantly emerging technologies related to data-sets and the tools of Geographical Information Systems (GIS). Augmented reality sandboxes provide an example of how a technology-enabled teaching tool can be used to connect learning about terrain and topography (Geography) with atmospheric processes and climate (Science, Geography), soil attributes and crop yields (Science, Agriculture, Mathematics), and infrastructure considerations for a community (Engineering, Geography, Mathematics). Geospatial technologies allow students to show connections between subjects, demonstrate their holistic interpretations about place and spatial patterns, and make predictions about future environmental events. The Federally established Science and Research Priorities encourage users of GIS-related technologies and data to make connections between food, soil and water, transport, energy and resources, health, and population to develop innovative solutions to the so-called 'wicked-problems' of a connected world. Such technologies are currently being introduced for use in schools, within Geography classrooms and across STEM education projects. Therefore, a formalised statement where Geography also becomes recognised as a STEM education subject will promote the development of the so-called 21st Century skills or general capabilities. Understanding Geography to be within the key learning area of HASS and as part

of the STEM education repertoire will allow educators and students to grasp what is both new and important for effective participation in and contribution to a rapidly changing and globally connected world. (GTANSW&ACT 2018; Kerski 2015; National Committee for Geographical Sciences 2018)

In a school education context, Geography is traditionally housed and enabled in the learning area of HASS through structures such as curriculum design, curriculum documents, and organisation of school faculties. Conversely, the understanding of Geography spanning the natural sciences and social sciences means the empirical and policy related call for Geography to be formally recognised as a necessary subject within STEM education is becoming more prominent. Australian education scholars speaking at a symposium focused on STEM STEAM or HASS suggest an integrated-curriculum approach is supported and enabled within HASS, particularly between Geography, History and Civics and Citizenship due to connected conceptual understandings (such as time, change, people, perspective and place), and an emphasis on inquiry-based learning pedagogies. However, the general capabilities, for example collaboration, critical and creative thinking, information and communication technology capability were also suggested as being an enabler for the enactment of an integrated-curriculum because they are a skill-set applicable to all subjects and allow for knowledge to be applied to a range of contexts. Furthermore, it is the siloed approach of curriculum design and school organisational structures that constrain the implementation of an integrated-curriculum approach within HASS and between HASS and other learning areas (Caldis 2017). STEM education and research is intended to relate to and build on the work of HASS not replace it because a deep understanding of societal context is vital to the effectiveness of STEM education and is a major contribution to teaching and learning. Such societal contexts include how to effectively live in a changing environment and secure Australia's place in a changing world by managing food and water assets, lifting productivity and economic growth, and promoting health and wellbeing (Education Council 2015; National Committee of Geographical Science 2018; Office of the Chief Scientist 2013, 2014).

In the Australian Curriculum structure, STEM education is addressed and enabled through the general capabilities such as numeracy, critical and creative thinking, and information and communication technologies. Therefore, room is available for Geography to be included in such a structure. However, whilst STEM in an Australian Curriculum structure is enabled through the general capabilities, it is simultaneously constrained by identification of cross-disciplinary coverage through the key learning areas of Science, Technologies and Mathematics (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2016). Strategic plans such as *Geography: Shaping Australia's Future* recommend the peak body for geography education, the Australian Geography Teachers' Association collaborate with the National Committee for Geographical Sciences to develop a case for submission to the Ministers of Education

seeking recognition of Geography as a partial STEM education subject (National Committee for Geographical Science 2018). A response to the NSW Curriculum Review focused on the subject of Geography illuminates both the HASS nature of geographical content and its increasing relevance to the repertoire of STEM through the use of geospatial tools and emerging technologies such as augmented and virtual reality to develop skills of reasoning, problem-solving, and critical and creative thinking. The response concludes with a specific request to the Curriculum Review team for Geography to become formally acknowledged as a subject of STEM education (Geography Teachers' Association of New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory 2018).

Enablement or constraint of Geography being more deeply and formally understood as a subject of the key learning area of HASS or as a STEM education subject, or being a bridge between both will depend on the strength of policy and praxis combined with stakeholder ability to effectively champion the desired cause.

PERSONAL EMERGENT PROPERTIES

Reflecting on my career as a Geography teacher and Head Teacher HSIE – most of which occurred prior to the 'STEM education era' – it would seem my personal beliefs, values and attitudes about geography as a subject are simultaneously enabled and constrained by connecting Geography to the key learning area of Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS).

In the 1990's, Bachelor of Education programs required completion of a Humanities pathway to become a specialist Geography teacher. A Geography major in such a pathway emphasised coverage of units from Cultural, Development, and Economic Geography because in this era, a second teaching subject in the Humanities would typically be Society and Culture, or Economics, or History, or English. As a Geography teacher mandated to complete a Humanities pathway, my understanding about and capacity for creating meaning and value from the relationship between people and place, and landscape and livelihood was well developed (Hulme 2013). To then be employed in a variety of Social Sciences or Human Society and Its Environment faculties for over a decade meant that HASS truly enabled my understanding about and love for Geography. I saw connections with other subjects in HASS, enacted through inquiry-based project-based learning initiatives. In particular there were clear connections in content and pedagogical approaches with the learning areas of Science (for example Biology and Earth and Environmental Science) and Technology and Applied Sciences (for example Food Technology). Although I was able to bring such connections to life for students through purposeful collaboration on integrated-curriculum with interested like-minded teachers, at the time I was definitely an advocate for Geography as belonging to HASS; and such cross-faculty teaching, learning and assessment activities were perceived by most colleagues as innovative as well as risky.

Times and new experiences bring change.

From a school-based leadership position I transitioned

into national curriculum development for Geography. Currently, I hold leadership roles within the state and national professional association for Geography and am in the middle of PhD Candidature researching pedagogical practice in Geography. The career change within geographical education is challenging and extending my previous views and practice about Geography being predominantly understood through the lens of HASS. Perhaps I realised it to be so during my early-career years but had nothing to confirm it against because there was no readily available nomenclature or research from which to identify and attach. Dialogue with Geography academics and educators, an increasing exposure to an array of geospatial technologies for use in everyday life as well as in the classroom, and access to an abundance of empirical research about the nature of Geography and its pedagogies assisted me in making sense of the call for the future relevance of Geography to be enabled through its recognition as a component of the STEM subjects. Yet an acknowledgement of Geography as part of STEM education is not to remove it from the traditional school-based home in HASS, it is to reinforce the dynamic and multi-faceted nature of the subject.

Over time, my values and beliefs about whether Geography is enabled or constrained by its connection to the key learning area of HASS or as a subject of STEM education develops, extends and changes. As a leader in geographical education I have a responsibility to respond to policy and praxis.

CONCLUSION

Now it is time to decide which emergent property becomes most powerful – the structural or the personal. A combination of properties would be ideal. In reading through the closing paragraphs of Chapter 13, Geography in Australian Schools in Geography: Shaping Australia's Future, I am struck by a sentence: "An awareness that school geography extends beyond humanities perspectives and also has significant science content, would be greatly helped if it was nationally recognised as partially a STEM subject." (National Committee of Geographical Sciences, 2018 p.87). This policy, discussed in the structural emergent properties section, connects with my personal emergent properties. The words 'beyond', 'also', 'partially' signify Geography can belong to both HASS and STEM. For Geography to be enabled and not constrained as a subject in terms of its visibility, integrity and profile, its knowledge and understanding within the Australian population, and ability to provide important university pathways and career trajectories to support the productivity and relevance of Australia in a changing world, it is time for the lens about Geography to expand. Formally.

Therefore, the strength of policy and praxis combined with stakeholder ability to effectively champion the desired cause is likely to be observed by the action of key leaders in the Geography and geography education community moving forward with the recommendation for "The National Committee for Geographical Sciences and AGTA to develop a case for submission to Ministers of Education for Geography to be recognised as partially a STEM subject." (National Committee for Geographical Sciences, 2018 p.87).

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Biographies

Susan Caldis is a highly regarded Geography educator in school and university contexts. Currently, she is the Vice President of Geography Teachers' Association of NSW & ACT (GTANSW & ACT) and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) candidate at Macquarie University. Her research focuses on the development of pedagogical practice in the teaching of Geography amongst pre-service teachers. Prior to PhD candidature, Susan was a Head Teacher Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) in NSW government schools and also led the development of the Australian Curriculum: Geography at Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). In 2019, Susan gained international recognition for her work and was invited to Singapore by the Academy of Singapore Teachers as the Outstanding Educator in Residence for geographical education.

Please note this article is the authors' interpretation of policy and literature and includes a personal account and opinion drawn from key moments in the authors' career as a Geography educator. The article does not represent the views of the Department of Educational Studies, Macquarie University or GTANSW&ACT

Are Transversal Competencies the 'New Black'?

Ms Leonie McLuenny,
Associate Professor Rachel Sheffield, Curtin University

ABSTRACT

"The debate surrounding what constitutes quality education and learning in the 21st century is ongoing" UNESCO (2015 p.1). While traditional disciplines such as English, mathematics and science continue to have a strong hold, there is a concern that the current educational focus is not addressing the 'new generation' of skills, often referred to as '21st century' or 'soft skills'. The questions Australian educators must ask include: What are these competencies, what is their significance and where, if at all, are they addressed within the Australian Curriculum? This article examines the acting forces and key organisations involved in developing international skills frameworks. It discusses where and how these competencies are addressed in the Australian Curriculum and how they could be embedded and consequently assessed more thoughtfully and strategically in the classroom. We suggest that these "transversal competencies" are already present in our curriculum as the General Capabilities, therefore, there is no new framework to consider - they are not the 'new black'. The challenge for educators, however, is to recognise these competencies, provide strategic learning opportunities, and collect evidence to ensure their students attain the necessary skills to be ready for the future.

INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of reports are espousing the importance of the so-called '21st century' or 'soft' skills. For example, the OECD (2012a) states that "Skills have become the global currency of 21st century economies" and McKinsey (2017) suggests that as machines are becoming more capable of (AI) artificial intelligence, workers of the future will need to focus more on activities that require skills rather than content knowledge. Gonski (2018, p.36) stated, "every student needs to be equipped with the skills and knowledge to navigate a rapidly changing world", indicating both



skills and knowledge are equally important. In Australia this trend will impact 4.3 million young people who will be required to make this shift towards balancing skills and knowledge and consequently the Australian education system will need to equip young people with the necessary skills and capabilities required in the era of the 'new work smart' (FYA 2017, p.8). It is imperative then, that we identify shortcomings in our current curriculum and develop bold strategies to create a progressive education system that develops a 'new work smart' workforce of the future (OECD, 2012 p.124).

A QUESTION OF TERMINOLOGY

Various terminologies are currently used in an attempt to capture, compartmentalise and name this shifting

cluster of skills and competencies. Within research communities, educational institutions and international organisations, however, there is no definitive list or title to describe them collectively (Gonski 2018 p.39). Terms in use include '21st century skills' or '21st century learning' (e.g. the Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills [ATC21S] Partnership for 21st century skills [P21], 'key competencies' (OECD 2005), 'soft skills', 'new collar skills' (McKinsey 2017) and 'entrepreneurial skills' (New Work Smarts). '21st century skills' is widely used, but many argue that the skills and capabilities referred to were important before the 21st century, while also noting that with rapid change, century-long milestones are inappropriate (Voogt 2015, p. 301). Another term, "transversal competencies", is re-emerging as a way of describing these broad-based skills, knowledge and understandings. For the purpose of this article, the authors will be referring to this cluster of skills as "transversal competencies" (tVCs).

In April 2018, the European Parliament and Council (EU) 2018/646, articulated a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass), acknowledging that "transversal or soft skills, such as critical thinking, team work, problem solving and creativity, digital or language skills, are increasingly important and are essential prerequisites for personal and professional fulfilment and can be applied in different fields". (European Commission 2018). The European Commission also suggests that transversal knowledge, skills and competences are the building blocks for the development of the 'hard' skills and competencies required to succeed in the labour market (European Commission 2018). ATS2020 (2018) describe tVCs as a broad set of key skills that are known to be critically important to success in school, further education, and the world of work.

TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCIES IN THE CURRICULUM

There is evidence that education systems from a number of countries around the world have taken steps to redesign their curriculum and explicitly embed 21st century competencies such as problem-solving, collaboration, global awareness, and communication skills in the curriculum (New Basics 2017, p 8).

UNESCO (2015) suggests that there are two main approaches to this process:

- an **analytic** approach where learning of tVCs is

facilitated through a cluster of learning areas or learning experiences, each intended to provide the learner with a particular competency (e.g. the Australian Curriculum's General Capabilities); and

- an **holistic** approach in which tVCs are introduced as a scheme or programme that conveys an overall message. All participating countries use the analytical approach, except for Japan, which sought to engage in an holistic approach called 'Zest for Living', (UNESCO 2018).

The UNESCO Report also identified a number of challenges facing educational institutions in their efforts to address tVCs in the countries they canvassed and identified them as Definitional, Operational, and Systemic (Table 1).

THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

There is significant evidence that within the Australian Curriculum the General Capabilities provide the main mechanisms and structure for developing tVCs. This was recognised by UNESCO (2015, p.1), which stated

the Australian Curriculum implicitly and explicitly includes transversal competencies in every educational activity. To this end, the Australian curriculum provides detailed information on each capability and how it can be adopted across each subject.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA 2017) reiterated this:

The Australian Curriculum identifies seven capabilities that play a significant role in equipping young Australians to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century.

The recent Gonski Report (2018, p.74) also stated that the General Capabilities provide a "clear list that has been nationally agreed and established as part of the Australian Curriculum" and that they "need to be at the core of our curriculum and teaching practice" (p. 36). It is important that Australian teachers understand that these skills are already deeply embedded in the Australian curriculum, though not explicitly identified as "transversal competencies". Table 2 illustrates how frequently these "transversal competencies" are presented within the Australian Curriculum.

Table 1. Challenges to the Implementation of Transversal Competencies in the Curriculum

| Definitional | Operational | Systemic |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of, or a vague definition of transversal competencies in policy documents, such as education plans and curricula. • Lack of clarity in scope of transversal competencies • Lack of clarity in the desired outcomes of the teaching of transversal competencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of assessment mechanisms • Insufficient teaching/ learning materials and teaching guides • Lack of incentives • Insufficient capacity of teachers • Lack of budget (policy-budget inconsistency) • Additional burden on teachers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large class size • Overloaded curricula • Pressure to achieve academic success • Inconsistency with high-stake exams • Lack of understanding among parents and other stakeholders • Overall school/ community culture |

MAJOR OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES FOR EDUCATORS

ASSESSMENT

A major challenge associated with the implementation of '21st century' competencies or tVCs concerns their assessment. Gonski (2018) suggests there is a lack of support surrounding the General Capabilities as there is no consistent method of assessment. Many scholars agree that there are few research-based tools or assessment models for use in education settings that facilitate the assessment of "transversal competencies".

Despite the attention and importance given to the general capabilities, teachers and schools are insufficiently supported to teach and assess them. (Gonski 2018, p. 39).

The focus of assessment has traditionally been the measurement of factual knowledge and not the more complex competencies of problem solving, critical thinking, and communication, which require students to complete complex tasks applied to real world situations across multiple settings and diverse situations (Hipkins Boyd, & Joyce 2005). In most educational settings this is difficult to achieve given the current timetable structure, time constraints and subject-siloed learning that occurs in schools. Therefore, the challenge involves the development of new assessment procedures and instruments that create opportunities to apply these competencies in authentic contexts, and facilitate the collection of evidence across multiples contexts (Pepper 2011). It is important to note that the achievement of these skills are lifelong achievements and therefore the role of assessment is formative and developmental.

PEDAGOGY, PRACTICE AND PROFICIENCY

Another challenge related to the teaching of tVCs is teacher expertise and proficiency. The acquisition of 21st century competencies requires specific pedagogic techniques such as problem-based learning, co-operative learning, experiential learning, and formative assessment (cf. Dede 2000). Gonski (2018, p.40) supports this by suggesting that teaching and assessing the General Capabilities, particularly in an embedded form, is a highly complex task requiring teachers to have a sound understanding of how to teach these capabilities and to interweave their teaching into different learning areas. Some solutions include the introduction of inquiry, problem-based, or project-based learning in authentic real-world contexts. To develop in-service and pre-service teachers' pedagogy in this area, the requisite skills need to be embedded in initial teacher education and ongoing professional development. As with most professional learning, it is recognised that the designed activities need to be sustained, involve the development of teaching materials, and be integrated into teachers' daily teaching work (Rand 2012).

INTERNATIONAL APPROACHES

A number of education systems around the world are offering project and problem-based learning experiences that go beyond the classroom environment. These include working with local businesses or facilitating arts and film projects in local communities. These learning experiences are designed to develop transferable career management and enterprise skills that will be critical for future success (OECD 2014). These support the development of the tVCs in real life contexts.

The European Union's *Assessment of Transversal Skills 2020 (ATS2020)* Project was designed to provide a

comprehensive learning model for the enhancement of transversal student skills within their curriculum. It introduced new approaches and innovative tools for the development and assessment of these skills. The project's consortium consisted of 17 partners from 11 EU countries, and involved over 1,000 teachers. There are extensive materials available for review on their website for those interested in the ATS2020 approach. (www.ats2020.eu)

CONCLUSION

The term "transversal competencies" (tVCs) is becoming increasingly popular to describe the essential skills and competencies needed to operate effectively in today's world - some might call it the 'new black'. Freeman (2014, p.86) suggests "while it will be important to keep up to date with the contemporary thinking surrounding these skills..., the title we give them is less important than the focus we need to place on their teaching and development".

The General Capabilities exist at the core of the Australian Curriculum and reflect what are widely recognised internationally as "transversal competencies". These will become increasingly important as more pressure continues to be placed on educational systems through political and economic agendas to prepare a transversally-competent workforce. The next stage must focus on mechanisms for capturing rich evidence of a student's acquisition of these competencies.

Some future questions include:

- How well do our teachers understand the concept of tVCs?
- How is our school currently addressing the General Capabilities?
- Are we capturing evidence of the General Capabilities? If so how?
- Are there some competencies (such as affective ones like empathy and resilience) that we need to focus on?
- What non-formal opportunities do we provide that might allow us to capture evidence of tVCs (e.g. extra-curricular activities, clubs, etc.)?
- How might this evidence be collected (e.g. through the LMS, digital portfolios, digital badges)?
- What pedagogical approaches could we implement that support the development of these competencies?
- What programs are already in place (e.g. ATS2020) that we could emulate or modify?
- What pedagogical practices would help us ensure these skills are developed within our curriculum (e.g. inquiry learning, problem-based learning, integrated units of work)?

The worldwide trend of recognising the importance of "transversal competencies" as essential for the future world of work has elevated the importance of the General Capabilities in the curriculum. The challenge for Australian schools, therefore, is to ensure they are given the necessary attention at both a school and systemic level.

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| UNESCO tVCs | Key Skills and Competencies (* indicates frequency presented in AC) | Australian Curriculum General Capability |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Critical Innovative Thinking | creativity (*53), entrepreneurship (55), resourcefulness (3), application skills (1104), reflective thinking (449), decision-making (1282) | Critical and Creative Thinking |
| Interpersonal Skills | presentation skills (1312), communication skills (1777), leadership (64), organisational skills (1138), teamwork (37), collaboration (155), initiative (90), sociability (1046), collegiality (86), empathy (83), compassion (7) | Personal and Social Capability |
| Intrapersonal Skills | self-discipline (637), independent learning (1651), flexibility (860), adaptability (19), self-awareness (880), perseverance (3), self-motivation (606), compassion (7), integrity (14), risk-taking (527), self-respect (900) | Personal and Social Capability |
| Global Citizenship | awareness (2163), tolerance (9), openness (20), respect for diversity (634), intercultural understanding (2611), conflict resolution (99), civic / political participation (190), respect for the environment (950), national identity (1080) | Intercultural Understanding |
| Media and Information Literacy | accessing information (2667), locating information (2704), communicating ideas (2177), participating in democratic processes (1039), analysing information and media (3468), evaluating information and media content (3011) | ICT Capability Critical and Creative Thinking |

Biographies

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Lived experience: increasing student engagement with the humanities

Teachers of history have long understood the need to move beyond the text book to tell the stories of the past in order to generate empathy through lived experience.

Ms Jenny Jones, St Michael's Collegiate, Hobart

LOCHNAGAR CRATER, THE SOMME, APRIL 2014

I am aware that this moment in time is profound. We are standing in a field surrounded by impenetrable mist with nothing but the starkness of a cross and silhouettes dominating my vision. The sensory response to a situation like this is often to focus on the minutiae: the smells of mud and wet grass and the sounds of distant vehicles on a busy highway. Yet here there is more than just the immediate, much more. There is a sense of what and who has been before in this place; that now, no-matter how disorienting it might be, it is peaceful and calm compared to what has happened here a century before. I can sense fear and despair, pain and suffering but also strength and friendship. History is alive in this place. I feel it and, most importantly, the students feel it. This is evident in the cessation of chatter, the awe in their faces and the enquiry in their eyes. Emotion is often considered to be a hindrance to understanding. "Don't let emotions get in the way," we often say. On this occasion, however, the experience of emotion is a critical step towards understanding the terrible reality of war.

The legitimacy of lived experience as profound evidence in research has gained prominence in recent years through the works of Dutch-Canadian academic Max van Manen. Van Manen's works have foregrounded the strength of the connection between the phenomenological experience and pedagogical practice in the classroom. Van Manen (1997, p.54) argues that writing about lived experiences should be described, "as possible in experiential terms, focusing on a particular situation or event. I try ... to give a direct description of my experience as it is, without offering causal explanations or interpretive generalizations of my experience.". This is of course, an incredibly difficult exercise for human beings to do well, programmed as we are to make judgments as we experience a moment

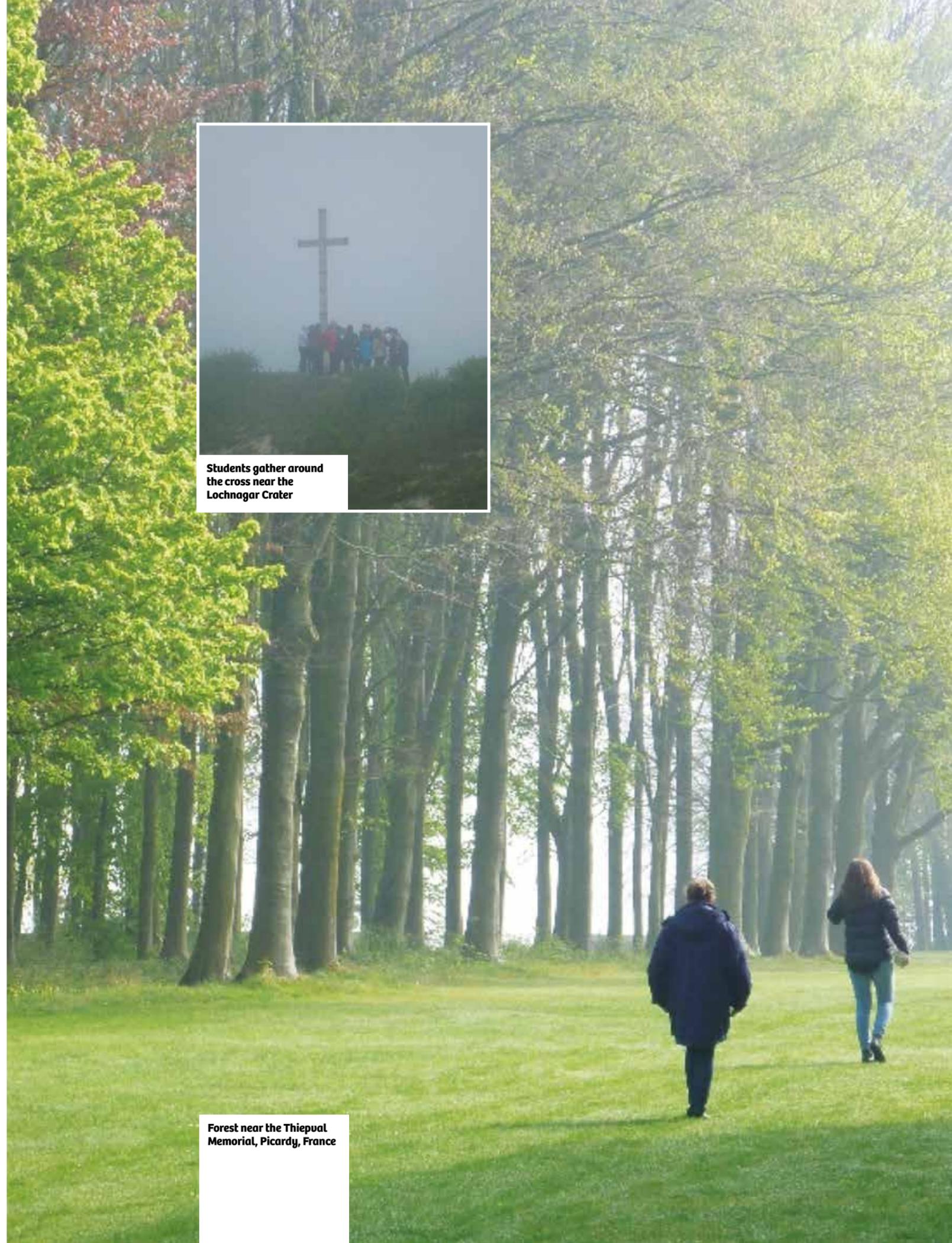
in time. Yet our understanding of history often depends on the myriad of personal stories available to us both in the classroom and beyond, and our ability to be 'in the moment' in a contextual sense can greatly add to our contextual empathy.

The ongoing tension for teachers of all disciplines often centres around the content versus engagement dilemma. This is especially relevant in the humanities, with the range and depth of curriculum now expanding from the central canons of history and geography to economics and citizenship content. The undoubted benefits of heuristic learning are often subsumed by time constraints and curriculum limitations. This often runs counter to the development of empathy, which can take time to allow for students to come to their own realization of context. Teachers of the Humanities, more than in any other discipline, have learned that depth rather than breadth is the gold standard in pedagogical terms. We have learned to address the central learning intentions without trying to incorporate everything suggested in the Australian Curriculum. To do otherwise would be to skim across history like a stone across a pool with no real engagement, empathy or understanding of anything but facts and dates.

An excellent example of this is demonstrated in the teaching of the Holocaust, a cataclysm of such magnitude that the telling of personal stories is vital to understanding its impact. Compounding time limitations, there is also the problem of achieving a semblance of balance between the tragedy and survival narrative, as well as the 21st Century's enduring dilemma, the ease of accessibility to confronting, unfiltered information. The World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem, is a trove of information both in terms of resources and advice, for teaching this most challenging of topics.



Students gather around the cross near the Lochnagar Crater



Forest near the Thiepval Memorial, Picardy, France

The Centre has undertaken a mammoth task to record the stories of as many survivors as they can in the form of filmed testimonials, easily accessible through their web site. The personal testimonials exemplify their philosophical approach, which is to focus on the lives of survivors both before and after the Holocaust, so that the evils they experienced do not define them. It is self-evident that the bald recitation of data and statistics is far less effective than the story of one person's lived experience. To learn that 6 million died is nothing compared to the searing testimonials collated by Yad Vashem. The understanding of such an incomprehensible event is given more meaning in examining the lived experience of just one person.

The enduring challenge for educators is to provide opportunities for students to understand the motivations and emotional context for people who lived in profoundly different times. Historical empathy can be defined as "a process of understanding people in the past by contextualizing their actions" (De Leur, Van Boxtel & Wilschut 2017). Van Sledright (in De Leur, Van Boxtel & Wilschut 2017) argues that "it may be impossible to achieve because human thinking is always inextricably linked to its own time and circumstances". Nevertheless, it is the goal of all history educators to provide as many opportunities as possible to achieve some kind of understanding of the lives of others. It is incredibly challenging for inhabitants of the 21st century to understand the reality of, for example, a medieval peasant, whose entire life was lived within walking distance of their village. Or the concept that, to the First Fleeters, travelling to Sydney Cove may as well have been a flight to Mars. This is the ongoing challenge to history educators who well understand the need to engender empathy as an essential route to understanding history. The benefit of hindsight can also be a hindrance to contextual understanding, with some students rolling their eyes with incredulity at the naivety of the Munich Agreement without living in a world still traumatised by the Great War and understanding the desperate hope that peace would prevail.

This is the ongoing dilemma of the historian as educator. The benefits of heuristic learning, of which empathy and the consideration of multiple perspectives can be a central tenet, are undoubted. But so are time constraints. Over the last few years, research into this area has tended to affirm what teachers already know, "the need for teachers to understanding the concept of historical empathy in order to creatively teach the "why" and "how" of history, as opposed to the "what" and "when," which tends to be predominant among teachers overwhelmed with [curriculum] requirements" (Harris 2016).

In addition, the historical content of the Australian Curriculum from Years 7-10 includes significant stories from places from which we are geographically isolated. This, of course, makes it very difficult for students to visit evocative places to understand the perspectives of others. We are fortunate to live in the rich historical environment of Tasmania which provides incredible opportunities for students to engage with indigenous, colonial and convict heritage. From the brilliant



Names on the Australian memorial at Passchendaele

Cascades Female Factory to the terrifying grandeur of Port Arthur, students are able to stand in the same places as those whose experiences they study. This experience has in recent years been improved with the addition of fabulous personal narratives such as the museum at the Port Arthur Historic Site where students are allocated the name of a convict and follow their story, to the dramatic tours of the Female Factory, where actors provide context to the brutal history of the place. The excellent use of pre-curated artefacts in themes is a recent and excellent source of empathy for students. They provide context, perspective and, more importantly, personal stories with which students can connect more profoundly. In the study of more modern history, providing opportunities to interview those who have lived through key events can also provide a rich trove of experiences for students. The experience of asking questions of veterans can enable students to understand the personal impact and reality of war on those who served.

The benefits of site visits and museum excursions are undoubted. These days, of course, local community historic sites are much more accessible to school groups and, as mentioned, many have educational material in support of student learning.

The profound sensory impact of visiting places resonant with history is uncontested. In a different more accessible world, the possibility for young Australians to travel has increased. The benefits of this were clearly demonstrated to me on a school trip to the battlefields of World War 1 in 2014. Our School was fortunate enough to be selected to provide the choir for the Dawn Service at Villers Bretonneux. This provided an unrivalled opportunity for students to stand on the very ground where Australians not much older than them had fought and died. The trip afforded students the chance to hear the personal stories of horror and survival that (fortunately) are anathema to today's generation. Standing in the mist at the Lochnagar Crater or in the pre-dawn silence of thousands at Villers Bretonneux, students were transported to a world of a different generation, questioning again why this war had even started. The museums at Peronne and Ypres were an essential experience in providing an understanding of the personal and the scale of the horror, once again reinforcing the engendering of empathy and personal narrative. Providing the opportunity to travel does, of course, have its economic limitations. The profundity of the impact on the students who toured the battlefields of the Somme was, however, significant. My description of the lived experience at the beginning was repeated over and over again, as these young Australians began to have a sense of the reality of war as opposed to its glorification.

The cost of providing such opportunities should not, however, mean that all students cannot experience the benefits of educational 'travel'. The chance to immerse ourselves in other times and places continues to grow exponentially through the virtual world, with impressive and highly accessible technologies supporting pedagogical practice. Some of these sites require subscriptions, but many others provide access to schools at very little or no cost at all. The advent of some excellent virtual field trips has been of great benefit for educators seeking to generate deeper understanding of what it was like to live in different times. A good example is the virtual tour of the Edinburgh of Mary Queen of Scots (see link below) which has enabled students to experience the sights and sounds of 16th Century Scotland.

Biographiess

Jenny Jones BA, DipEd, Head of the Humanities Department and teacher of the Humanities and English, currently at St Michael's Collegiate School, Hobart, Tasmania.

Some of the more useful links are listed below:

- <http://www.discoveryeducation.com/Events/virtual-field-trips/explore/by-theme/history.cfm>
- https://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/virtual-field-trips-history.shtml
- <https://www.educatorstechnology.com/2014/01/20-wonderful-online-museums-and-sites.html>
- <https://www.smarthistory.co.uk/Edinburgh1544/about.html>

In addition to the opportunities of virtual travel, museums have really improved student access to artefacts through pre-curated resource boxes that can be hired by schools. The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery offers a loan service of boxes brimming with artefacts about such topics as the indigenous people of Tasmania and Antarctic exploration (Loan Service 2019). The Australian War Memorial also loans Australian War Memorial Boxes, which can be borrowed through local museums. All of these opportunities add to student engagement and wonder about the past.

In the final analysis, what matters to all of us who are passionate about the teaching of history is that students are given an opportunity to empathise with the people who came before us. In the world in which we currently live, it seems to me that the very best education we can give our students is to understand the lessons of history in order to understand the circular narrative of the future.

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The importance of Humanities in an era of STEM

As I am confident that I intend to work in the field of Engineering, I have frequently been asked why I would not only 'cross the divide' between humanities and STEM subjects, but enrol in a 50/50 split (Global Politics, 20th Century History and English Literature, along with Specialist Mathematics, Mathematics Methods and Physics).

Lucy Vogel, Melbourne Girls' College, Victoria

The equal split was actually unintentional, but my choices were strategic and very carefully chosen. Having a limit of six subjects in Year 11 was difficult. I have a passion for learning, so spreading myself amongst the two fields, as some people see it, was easy. The unintended benefit for me is immeasurable. I have chosen an array of subjects that will afford me a 'full education'. As a student, flexibility in learning style will be and is already a strength. There is a clear link between the humanities and scientific innovation and as a global citizen, there is no clear divide between these disciplines, like many tend to believe.

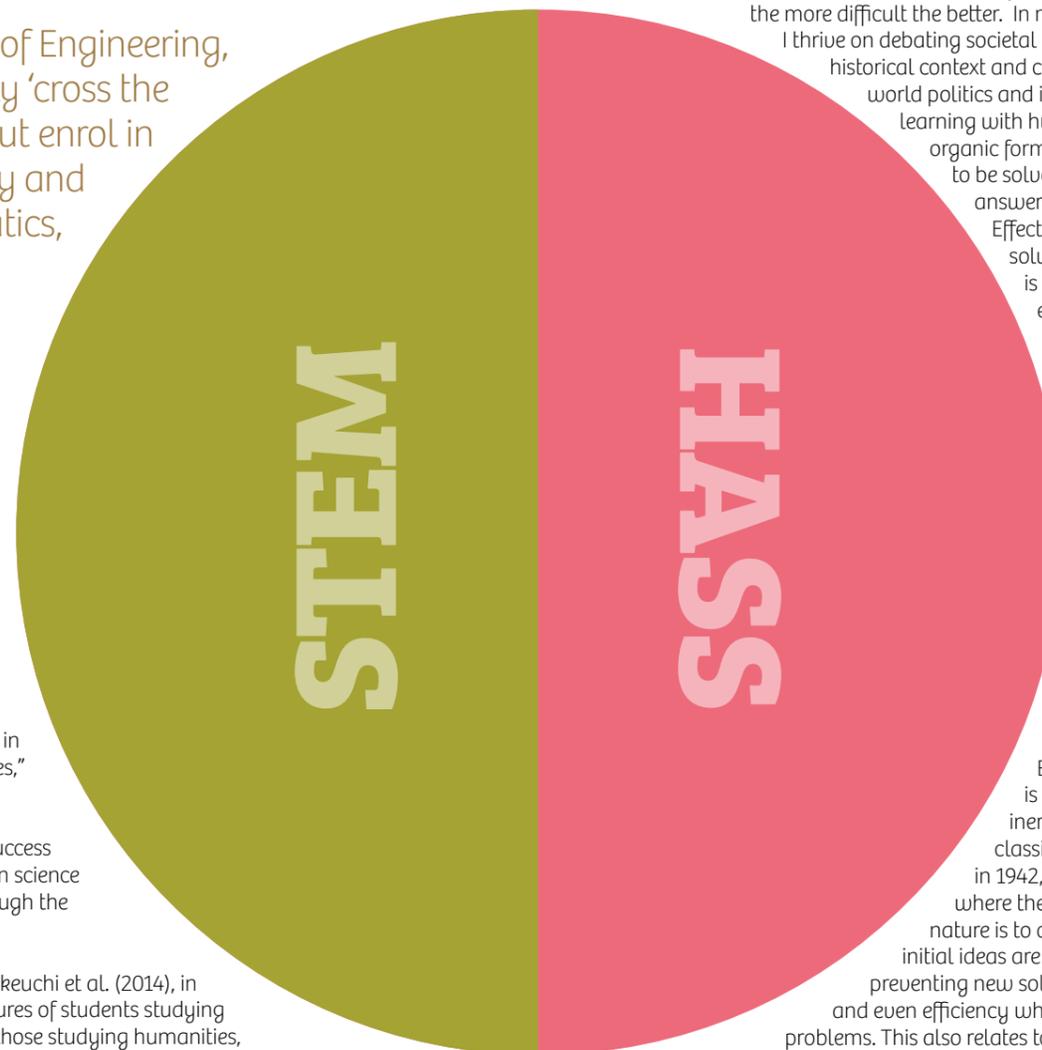
It may be a surprise to many that MIT, the number one university in the world (QS Top Universities 2018), is also the ultimate world leader in STEM education, and is ranked number two world-wide, in facilitating a well-rounded humanities education. Every undergraduate student at MIT, must enrol in eight humanities subjects, in order to graduate. This accumulates to one quarter of a student's classes. There is an integration of both disciplines in all subjects, for example designing and engineering a printing press as part of a history module about the Renaissance.

MIT's School of Humanities was born out of crisis, at the end of World War II, when it was acknowledged that the world's complexities of the time required integrated knowledge. Seventy years ago, in March of 1949, Winston Churchill addressed the MIT Mid-Century Convocation and stated, "no technical knowledge can outweigh knowledge of the humanities...technology, philosophy and history walk hand in hand." Professor Deborah Fitzgerald, Dean of MIT's School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, states that "MIT's mission is to prepare students to solve the world's most challenging problems, while this does require scientific knowledge and technical

skills, 'the world's problems are never tidily confined to the laboratory or spread sheet.'" (2014). Furthermore, she states that, "urgent challenges like poverty, climate change and diseases are always embedded in broader human realities," (2014).

The 'why' to the MIT success formula is embedded in science and disseminated through the humanities.

According to Hikaru Takeuchi et al. (2014), in a study of brain structures of students studying sciences compared to those studying humanities, the science students had significantly larger regional grey matter volume around the medial prefrontal cortex, whereas the humanities students had significantly larger regional white matter volume, concentrated around the right hippocampus. This can be explained by the phenomenon where overlearning in a particular area or discipline, can create what is known by neurobiologists as the Einstellung Effect. 'Einstellung' comes from the German language and translates to fixed mindset, due to embedded and seemingly 'overused' neural connections. This phenomenon dictates the way one approaches and perceives a problem and the manner in which the solution is derived. Familiar neural pathways are revisited to the detriment of being able to explore or recognise new and innovative options. Entrenched neural pathways are



ignited, solutions are quick, however, the Einstellung Effect creates a 'road block' to evolution of novel and creative ideas.

In my STEM classes, I focus on calculating answers to posed questions. There may be more than one method, and there is collaboration and an emphasis on the process of problem solving, however the answer is generally right or wrong. I love the challenge of solving the equation and calculating the answer to the problem, the more difficult the better. In my humanities classes, I thrive on debating societal problems, discussing historical context and content, along with world politics and its implications. The real learning with humanities subjects, is the organic formulation of the questions to be solved, not necessarily the answers. With the Einstellung Effect, problems may be solved however, innovation is absent. This effect is enhanced when one 'overlearns' in one particular subject or where one is entrenched in one type of discipline, at the expense of another; humanities VS. STEM, as opposed to humanities and STEM. This is not a new phenomenon but one that is not commonly acknowledged in traditional education. The validity of the Einstellung Effect is what is considered 'psychological inertia' and came from the classic Water Jar Experiment in 1942, by Abraham Luchins, where the effect showed that our nature is to default to autopilot once initial ideas are formed and repeated, preventing new solutions, innovations and even efficiency when approaching problems. This also relates to 'solution blindness' and 'confirmation bias', where one subconsciously ignores or rejects results that do not uphold an initial hypothesis.

How can we prevent or negate our human inclination to default to the mechanized Einstellung Effect? Students require, a broad education, with a balance of humanities and STEM learning opportunities, encouraged and valued equally and most importantly NOT separately. The arts in a design need to be considered as an integral component to technological development, not after, not before and not in isolation.

Biographies

Lucy Vogel is a Year 12 Student and Humanities Vice-Captain 2019 Melbourne Girls' College

As mentioned, I benefit now and will continue to benefit in the future from moving from STEM subjects to humanities subjects across the day, complimented by extra-curricular activities, in these areas as well as sport. Although I intend to work in the field of Engineering, I plan to enrol in a double major, Engineering and Arts. This will allow me to experience focused and diffused learning each day, creating learning experiences that are interleaving (multi focused) in nature as opposed to chunking (single focused). This arrangement not only allows me to approach ideas and problems from diverse angles, it supports me to foster ideas from unique perspectives. According to Neuro science, interleaving has the additional benefit of promoting the acquisition of stored knowledge gained, in long term memory as opposed to short term memory. This is a great advantage towards fluency in the engineering of solutions to world issues.

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The status of Geography in Australian Schools

The present status of geography in schools is mixed.

Associate Professor Alaric Maude AM, South Australia

In some ways the subject has been strengthened by the introduction of the Australian curriculum. It is now a mandatory subject from Foundation (Kindergarten, Prep, Reception) to Year 8, 9 or 10, depending on the state or territory. In primary schools it may be taught as a component of a combined HASS subject, but has a separate Knowledge and Understanding sub-strand in the curriculum. This means that whereas geography was previously taught within an integrated social studies in most states and territories, a practice that was widely criticised as lacking in rigour and depth, it now has a separate disciplinary identity. Whether it is taught this way in primary schools, however, has not been studied. In secondary schools, geography is a separate subject from Years 7 to 12, which it wasn't previously in some states and territories. The introduction of the Australian curriculum has consequently strengthened geography's identity, and it was the fifth subject to have a curriculum developed by ACARA.

On the other hand, when judged by Year 12 enrolments, geography has experienced a significant loss of students in the upper secondary years. The graph shows that since the mid-2000s the number of students taking the subject has remained relatively stable in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, but declined in Western Australia and South Australia. However, these numbers represent a major decline since the 1970s, when measured by the percentage of all students who took geography as an examination subject in their final year of schooling. In 1973 this ranged from 22.0 per cent of all students in Victoria to 50.3 per cent in New South Wales, while the most recent figures range from 2.1 per cent of all students in South Australia to 8.1 per cent in Queensland.

The relatively weak position of geography in the upper secondary years, as measured by Year 12 enrolments, can be contrasted with its stronger position in New Zealand and England, countries which have the



same disciplinary heritage as Australia. In both, the percentage of final year students taking geography is at least double that in Australia, and in England student enrolments in geography for both the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE, Year 11) and the A levels (Year 13) have been growing rapidly since 2011. The UK Royal Geographical Society attributes this growth to government funding for the development of the subject, the inclusion of geography or history in the English Baccalaureate, the recognition of geography as a preferred facilitating subject (a subject which give students the most options for entry to degree courses) by a group of leading universities, the employability of geography graduates, and the combined efforts of the geographical community. There are lessons to be

learned from the New Zealand and UK experience, one of which is that the position of geography in Australian schools is not inevitable.

Does the decline of geography in Years 9-12 mean that Australian students are missing something of educational value? The rest of this article outlines some of the contributions of the discipline to the education and personal development of young people.

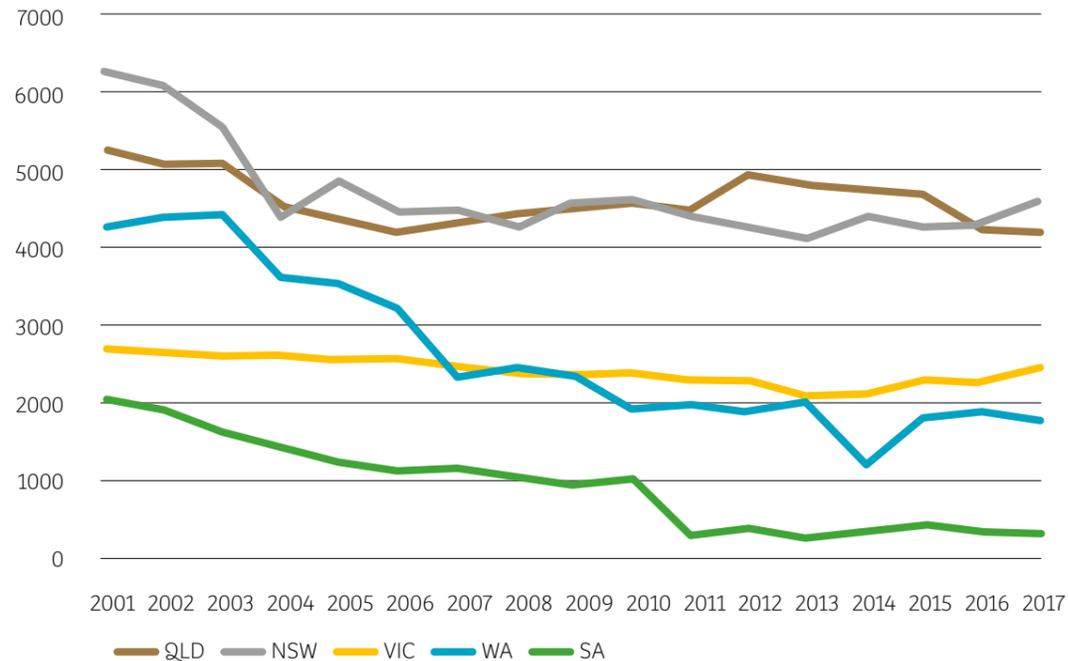
Geography Develops Literacy and Numeracy

Schools are under enormous pressure to improve the literacy and numeracy of their students. This appears to have led to a reduction in the time allocated to teaching other subjects, especially the humanities and

social sciences. However, this ignores that literacy and numeracy are capabilities, and are not learned only in English and mathematics. They can be developed by applying them to a range of contexts, and geography provides many opportunities for this.

For example, geography develops literacy because it is language-rich. Students use technical geographical language to describe and explain, as well as descriptive, aesthetic and emotive language to express what they feel about places and landscapes. In their search for information and ideas, geography students will need to comprehend and interpret text from novels, poetry, magazines, reports, newspapers, reference books and the Internet. Novels and poetry can be especially useful

Enrolments in Year 12 geography for selected states



in getting students to imagine places they have never seen, and in encouraging them to think about places and landscapes emotionally as well as intellectually. To communicate what they have learned, students will use language in a variety of spoken and written contexts, further developing their oral and writing skills.

Geography also develops numeracy. In primary school geography, students count, measure and construct graphs and tables, and the subject can provide many practical applications of mathematical skills. In secondary school geography a wide range of statistics and graphs are used to portray and analyse information and relationships. Students learn these methods best when there is a purpose for using them, and geography can provide this purpose.

Geography Develops Personal Capabilities

The geography curriculum develops the ability of students to think logically, critically and creatively in a variety of ways. They learn the importance of creative questions and how to develop them, and the value of speculation, and are encouraged to be creative and imaginative in investigations and field work. They learn how to think logically in evaluating and using evidence, testing explanations and analysing arguments, and to think deeply to answer questions that do not have straightforward answers.

Geography teaching emphasises learning through student inquiry, often involving field work. This gives students a role in directing their own learning, and in planning and carrying out investigations, and this develops self-management. When they work cooperatively with others in the classroom and in the

field, students develop their teamwork skills, and learn to appreciate the different insights and perspectives of other group members. They may, of course, also develop a strong dislike of ‘free riders’.

Geography Teaches About the World

Geography teaching responds to students’ curiosity about places. It nurtures their wonder about the world and its diversity of peoples, environments, societies and cultures. It develops a geographical imagination that enables them to relate to other places and to the lives of people in those places, and helps to foster a sense of global citizenship.

Geography gives students a knowledge of the world. It helps them to understand its environments, and its changing demographic and economic patterns, and to comprehend the processes producing greater global integration and their varying outcomes in different places. It can help students to understand a range of global issues, such as international migration and its consequences, pressures on global water supplies, climate change, differences in human wellbeing, food production and consumption, ways of managing environmental problems, and international geopolitical conflicts over resources, ethnicity, ideologies and borders.

Geography also teaches students about their own place, how it is connected with other places throughout the world, and how and why it is changing. This provides them with an understanding of some of the influences on their locality and their lives, and in turn helps them to make informed decisions on a range of community issues.

One of the negative consequences of the Australian curriculum is that history is the only HASS subject made mandatory in Years 9 and 10. This means that in some states and territories, but not all, students in Years 9 and/or 10 will learn nothing of the contemporary world, and they will not have the opportunity to study some of the topics mentioned in the previous two paragraphs.

Geography Develops an Understanding of the Significance of the Environment

Geography teaches students about the resources and services that the environment provides to support their life. They learn how these are produced and maintained by environmental processes. They explore the opportunities and constraints that these resources provide for human life and economic activity and evaluate scenarios of future resource issues. They explore the different ways people have perceived, managed and used these resources and services, and how they have changed them through this use. Where these resources are being degraded, students investigate the causes and consequences of degradation, and integrate environmental explanations with demographic, economic, social and political ones. In all this geography has a vital role in explaining the significance of the environment for people and societies, and in developing a sense of environmental responsibility. And because part of geography is natural science, the subject also has vital role in linking the humanities and social sciences with the sciences.

Geography Has Distinctive Ways of Thinking

A recent Academy of Science report on geography described geographical thinking this way:

Geography is distinctive in its emphasis on spatial thinking, its interest in knowledge generated from the study of specific places, and its recognition of the fundamental importance of the environment to human welfare. Its vision is both local and global. It is also marked by an awareness of the interconnections between phenomena and processes both within places and across space, and its fields of study span the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities. (National Committee for Geographical Sciences 2018, p. 4)

Because of this awareness of interconnections, geographers try to think holistically, and to be open to a wide range of ways of understanding and explaining the phenomenon or problem being studied. This helps to prepare students for the interdisciplinary understanding that is increasingly needed to comprehend complex issues.

Geographers are Employable

One of the reasons for the decline in geography in schools is that the subject, like other HASS disciplines, is

perceived by many parents and students as not leading to future employment. This perception needs to be challenged, because a university major in geography can lead to two types of careers. One uses specifically geographical knowledge and skills in careers in environmental management, environmental policy, natural hazard management, urban planning, regional development, geographical information systems, applied economic and social research, market research, teaching, tourism and travel, and other fields. Some of these careers require further study for a professional qualification, as in the case of urban planning or teaching.

The other type of career is based on the broad knowledge and general capabilities gained through studying geography. The broad knowledge includes the ability to comprehend information and ideas from the natural and human sciences, an understanding of the world and its diversity of places, environments and peoples, and an awareness that the distinctiveness of places means that what works in one place may not work in another. The capabilities are variously described as soft, enterprise or transferable skills, and are increasingly sought by employers. Those gained from the study of geography include breadth of thinking, teamwork skills, problem identification, problem solving, analytical skills, digital literacy and critical thinking. These are the capabilities needed by young people to successfully navigate their way through varying career paths in different occupations and industries during their working life, which is rapidly becoming the employment norm. In fact, one advantage of a geography degree is that it does not have a set career path but can lead in many directions. In the UK, data suggest that many geography graduates get jobs in banking, finance, marketing and other types of business, and are less likely to be unemployed after their degree course than those studying almost any other subject.

Geography has much to offer!

References and further reading

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Biographies

Alaric Maude BA, PhD, AM. Associate Professor of Geography, Flinders University (retired since 2004); Lead Writer and Writing Coach for the Australian geography curriculum 2009-13; Chair, National Committee for Geographical Sciences, Australian Academy of Science, 2013-2017.

A World History Curriculum for twenty-first century Australia

The Australian Curriculum has been in operation for five years and we are now in a better position to reflect on its strengths and weaknesses. A full revision may be several years away, but we can start imagining what a possible history curriculum for the middle of the twenty-first century might look like.

Mr Ian Keese FACE, Victoria

I wrote a critique of the Year 7 to 10 History course in the Australian Curriculum in an issue of Professional Educator in 2012. While I acknowledged that it was a great achievement to have History as a stand-alone subject rather than being merged in a social science framework, I also felt that, in terms of content and organisation, there were some significant failings.

One criticism was that, despite the occasional optional and isolated topic on pre-modern Asia and/or the Middle East, it essentially presented a Eurocentric history and effectively ignored Asian and Middle East history over the last 400 or so years. My other main criticism was that in thousands of years covered by human history, a disproportionate period equivalent to two thirds of a year or 17% of the total curriculum was spent on the ten years covered by the two World Wars.

There were good reasons for these failings. Because of the relatively short time available for formulating the curriculum there was a heavy reliance on what was already being taught in schools. Contrary to the “left-wing radical” stereotypes, history teachers are very conservative when it comes to topics, and only a few are ready to step outside familiar territory. In the NSW Senior History Syllabus, for over 40 years, an in-depth study of World War I has remained the core study that every student had to do. It is only in the last two years that this syllabus has been replaced by a study that goes from the end of World War I to the formation of the United Nations, which provides far more appropriate background knowledge for a student today.

We need to move from the current Australian Curriculum, which still resembles the curriculum I was teaching when I began 40 years ago, to a curriculum with topics that are more relevant to students who will be adults in the mid-twenty-first century. To do this will be like turning a massive ship around, and is something that will take time and effort.

The process of updating the curriculum

I see the process of updating the history as having two components. The first will involve teachers and academics working closely together to draw up a twenty-first century curriculum that caters to the interests and abilities of students in philosophically and pedagogically sound ways.

The second, more difficult but vital, component will be the provision of training and resources to support both new and current teachers to teach such a curriculum. Achieving this would involve universities, educational administrations and subject associations. Having an Australia-wide curriculum can create efficiencies through sharing the load and avoiding duplication of efforts.

An overview of a twenty-first century curriculum

A meaningful twenty-first century curriculum would respond to developments in the last fifty years or so that offer new perspectives on human history.

In terms of human origins, the advances in genetic mapping mean we now know far more about amazing movement of women and men out of Africa to eventually colonise all parts of the globe. In Australia the dating of this occupation is being continually pushed back in time, to over 50,000 years ago. In the South Pacific islands we are still only beginning to uncover the massive feats of navigation involved during the last thousand years.

Looking at more recent times, over the last five hundred years there have been four significant, and inter-related movements that have resulted in bringing these disparate populations together again. The first was European exploration colonisation and then, some centuries later, the de-colonisation process of gaining independence. Colonisation began in the sixteenth century with European exploration and occupation but eventually there were the independence movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in which countries

such as India, while winning political independence, still adopted many of their occupiers’ institutions. Other countries, such as Japan and China were not colonised in this sense but have still undergone massive transformations in response to western pressures.

The second significant movement bringing societies together can be traced back to the Industrial Revolution, first in transportation and even more dramatically, in means of communication – from newspapers to telephone to the Internet and smartphone.

The third movement accompanying these two has been the spread of a capitalist economy so that all countries are dependant on each other in both obtaining and exporting goods.

Finally there are the series of mass migrations of western Europeans moving in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to the new colonies, and from the mid-twentieth century, by migrations from all parts of the world, mainly resulting from warfare or civil disturbance in the home country. These migrations were to countries which were more peaceful, more westernised, and with developed economies; and felt that they could cope with, and gain from, such migration. Australia is a leading example of such a country.

The World History Movement

Over the last fifty or so years a historical approach to this large-scale perspective on human history has developed under the umbrella of World History. One of the leading proponents of World History is David Christian. He would be known to Australian Senior History students for his works on the Russian Revolution. He taught at Macquarie University from 1972 to 2000 but was born in Brooklyn and is now based in the United States. His book, *This fleeting world* (2008), provides an overview of world history in just over 100 pages. A more detailed account by Yuval Noah Harari (2015) is the very popular *Sapiens: A brief history of humankind*. There is also, *A short history of the world* (2003), by the Australian historian, Geoffrey Blainey, as well his other book, *A very short history of the world* (2nd ed.), (2013) – although this latter book still goes to 500 pages.

Guidelines for a World History Curriculum for Australia

The above-mentioned books (and many others) will help provide a suitable overview for a course of World History for Years 7 to 10, but the biggest challenges will come in the next two stages.

The first of these stages will be converting this overview into a curriculum that students will find interesting and exciting, relevant to their current needs, and contributing to their development as informed citizens. While much of the present curriculum is still relevant, there are at least three special considerations:

1. If we are to begin with the earliest human migrations and Indigenous Australians as an example, it is crucial that we do not see pre-conquest Indigenous societies as examples of “Stone Age” cultures. A culture that by 1770 had been developing over fifty thousand years was as rich as any other civilisation. The complex history of land-use is only now being written in books such as *The biggest estate on earth: How Aborigines made Australia* (2011) by Bill Gammage, and at a more popular level, Bruce Pascoe’s *Dark emu: Black seed: agriculture or accident?* There is still so much in accounts of early explorers that is not common knowledge, such as the days spent by Indigenous peoples preparing for elaborate ceremonies like initiations or corroborees. (The process was taken just as seriously as setting up a set for a modern stage play.);

2. At all stages of development, the primary focus should be on how the topics help us understand contemporary Australia. For example, early Greek democracy, the Roman Senate and Renaissance city-republics and nineteenth century political reform in England are all relevant to understanding our form of government. But just as important is a knowledge of our South Eastern neighbours;

3. A series of ‘snapshots’ in the form of world maps at different times could provide an overview. Aspects of British history will remain important but just as important will be other topics such religious movements from around 600 BCE to 700 CE when almost all the major world religions developed, and an overview of South Asian history that leads to a better understanding of our current position in the world and possible future developments.

Once a curriculum has been formulated the next stage is to ensure that the training and resources for teaching any new areas that have been included is carried out.

Where to from here?

I would be interested in working with a small group of those with curriculum and teaching experience, both inside and outside the subjects covered by the current History Curriculum, to produce an outline of what a true World History for Australian students in Years 7 to 10 might look like. If what I propose strikes a chord with your own thinking, I would be happy to co-ordinate a discussion group on what a new curriculum might look like and welcome any feedback.

Endnotes

¹ Professional Educator Vol 11 Issue 4 (June 2012) pp22-24

² My website, www.iankeese.com.au has further background and a contact page or email to keeseian@gmail.com

Biographies

Ian Keese FACE, Retired History Teacher

Our future citizen 'selfie' is found in the humanities

We can practice future social imaginaries through empowered and engaged citizenship practices in our humanities classrooms today.

Mr Richard Leo, Millis Institute, Brisbane

Within a decade of its first usage online in 2002 as a slang word by young Australians, the cultural practice of taking a 'selfie' had become a global phenomenon. So much so that the Oxford English Dictionary was compelled to declare 'selfie' as its word of the year in 2013. Since then, all manner of Kardashian-style Twitter or Insta feeds have been spawned, the most (in?) famous being the moment that Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt, grabbed a selfie with then global leaders British Prime Minister David Cameron and US President Barack Obama at the funeral of former South African President, Nelson Mandela – apparently, much to Michelle Obama's chagrin.

According to the philosopher Charles Taylor (2004), cultural habits, like taking a selfie, act out a 'social imaginary' that brings society together in ways that define social expectations. Individuals, says Taylor (2004), 'imagine' their social surroundings and express it not as theory but in images, stories and songs that are shared by large groups of people. These practices help us to feel, instead of think, our way around our world and our relationships with each other (Taylor 2004).

Taking a selfie, therefore, becomes a snapshot that help us to make sense of where we came from and to where we may be going. The early years of debates around the Australian Curriculum were described by Kerry Kennedy (2009) as a conversation that tried to 'capture a nation's soul' by clarifying what future Australians will know, value and do. Seeing the Australian Curriculum as a selfie of our national soul that captures our present and future Australian social imaginary often helps pre-service education students in my HASS or history curriculum classes to make sense of the purposes of the various humanities curriculum they need to teach. Exploring how the relationship between school knowledge and everyday life (our old and new communal 'images, stories and songs') can be organised afresh through HASS or humanities curriculum, encourages the next generations of both students and educators to explore what the selfie for a future Australia could represent.

Despite the recent, and at times somewhat partisan, discussions around what should or should not be included, at its core, HASS and the other humanities

learning areas are more than just content knowledge. The three-dimensional structure of the broader curriculum, with its opportunities to investigate 21st century skills, attributes and cross-curricular priorities as part of the content matter allow educators to practise a more enriched pedagogy that focusses on transformative learning through inquiry in the HASS or humanities classroom.

Lilley, Barker and Harris (2015) identify four complementary lenses of transformative learning theory that have potential for any humanities inquiry classroom:

- personal transformative approaches of meaning making through interpersonal relationships and related encounters
- emancipatory approaches that promote critical reflection within social contexts as students learn to examine positions, values or power relationships that exist in groups and societies of which they are members
- philosophical approaches that challenge the comfort zones of students and build on their capacities to become consciously aware and make sense of the world around them and
- disciplinary perspectives that encourage 'high risk learning' that leads students to new capabilities and cognitive awareness.

The varieties of these transformative learning models begs the question as to the type of selfie the next generations could take. Finlay et al (2014) conducted a longitudinal study in Britain of the future values of adolescents to determine if future adult behaviours could be predicted. Building on classic conceptualizations of values theory, they defined future values as those abstract beliefs that are organised into a system of overarching principles guiding the perceived importance of future attitudes (and behaviours). Basing their work on the assumption of classic value theory that an individual's values are relatively stable, they argued that the future values of adolescents will be likely to offer insights into adult behaviours. After concluding a longitudinal study of nearly twenty years, they found that the future values formulated during adolescence plays a 'theoretically meaningful' role in adult life. In terms of civic behaviours, they found that adolescent future values in the areas of autonomy, civic



responsibility and hedonistic privilege could confidently predict the levels of healthy and active, or otherwise, adult civic behaviours. These studies reflect how over time, the aims of the Melbourne Declaration, especially the second goal that aims for all young Australians to become 'active and informed citizens', could be met through focussing on the values constructed by young people in their formative years.

Alexander Wahnig (2016), however, has raised an interesting question about what active and informed citizens look like within the practices of the German 'Pedagogy of Democracy'. In an era where there is recorded decreasing involvement in traditional participatory forms of engaged citizenship such as party membership or voting, he analyses how citizenship education should be looking to transfer from social to political learning approaches. He says that social democratic education is commonly achieved through academic civic education and service learning. These approaches to civic learning have developed 'good citizens' who show characteristics such as 'listen[ing] to authority figures, dressing neatly, being nice to neighbors [sic], and helping out at a soup kitchen' as the key markers of civic action. Wahnig says that these types of democratic pedagogies emphasise the 'volunteerism' of community service rather than deeply engaging with social policy issues. Instead, he describes a model that involves the political sensibilities of students so that they become 'empowered' citizens rather than just 'good' citizens. This is a subtle difference and provides a more nuanced understanding of what an 'active and engaged citizen' could resemble in the Australian context.

Transforming students to engage their political as well as their service sensibilities does not mean that all students will become placard waving demonstrators. One of the leading lights in social movement theory was the social change activist Bill Moyer who was introduced to the philosophy and practice of nonviolent activism by some Quaker friends. He is most well-known for developing the eight-stage model of social movements, known as the 'Movement Action Plan'. He later also developed a theory of the four roles of social engagement which are a useful reference when discussing the difference between service and political models of civic education. The British Quaker organisation Turning the Tide provides a useful summary of these roles in their online training material (Turning the Tide 2019). These roles (Moyer's terms in parentheses) are the advocate (reformer), helper (citizen), organiser (change agent), or rebel role. These roles can be enacted in either a positive or negative way, but Moyer was adamant that any ongoing change must contain these four roles. Finding ways that students can connect with one of these roles is a way that can assist them to find a place to becoming an empowered active and informed citizen.

These roles also will help students to find a variety of ways to engage with value-laden issues that help them to consider visions of the future to build a better world for the common good. The recent student climate strikes

in Australia and around the world are an interesting case study in how students can be empowered as more than just 'good citizens'. Inspired by their Swedish peer, the teenager Greta Thunberg, Australian students have organised, according to their website, to 'tell our politicians to take our futures seriously' in an era of climate change (School Strike 4 Climate Australia 2019). They continue by stating that 'climate change is one of the biggest problems facing the world and it isn't being addressed quickly enough' and link to their demands for climate action including the eventual cessation of coal and gas mining and developing a 100% renewable energy base by 2030.

Without explicitly saying so, these students have identified what Dipesh Chakrabarty (2016) describes as the two dominant approaches in the debates around climate change. The first approach is a simple 'one-dimensional challenge' of achieving a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in the coming decades. The second sees climate change as 'part of a family of interlocking problems' that have combined to create the 'phenomenon of ecological overshoot' by humanity and that the challenge now is to intelligently manage our resources (food, water, land, population) to solve the problems that will emerge as we move forward as a species into the Anthropocene. Whilst there is discussion in academic circles about when, or even if, we can talk about an 'Anthropocene', using this future framework has value in providing us with a perspective against which the human enterprise can be assessed as it intertwines with the larger processes of the Earth system (Chakrabarty 2016). As Tom Griffiths says, it allows us to revisit the story of the 'exceptionality of humans' and reassess how we continue to live into the future (Griffiths 2017). The Australian Curriculum's description of sustainability includes the desire to build capacities in students to think and act in ways that will empower them to design actions to see a future that is more equitable and sustainable and revisit our 'exceptionality'. The student climate strikes is a situation where young people have engaged in 'dialogue and discussion in and outside school contexts' to determine the most effective strategies to help them feel cherished as community members (Hoskins, Janmaat and Villalba 2012).

We must, though, naturally ask if this type of active and informed citizenry would contribute to creating healthy democracies of any future Australia. According to Aidan Ricketts (2012), activist and academic, advocating for social change, engaging in democratic practices and activism are all interlinked in healthy democratic practices. The students involved in the climate strikes are too young to vote, in many cases, too young to have any form of formal political membership and yet are able to practice being active and informed 'good citizens' in ways that are more than a service model. They are engaging in ongoing democratic practices outside of any election cycle, partly because their age prohibits them from full participation in that cycle.

Admittedly, there are natural concerns that are raised when we see school students engage as active and informed 'political' citizens as opposed to 'service'

citizens. The student climate strikes were not immune to such criticisms with several politicians saying that students should be in school undertaking more formal learning. A more nuanced criticism could be found in the growing discussion around the idea of 'slacktivism', a term coined in 1995 by Fred Clarke and Swight Ozard in Illinois. 'Slacktivism' describes the 'feel good' factor that people experience when engaged in social causes. It has also come to mean political or social actions that use the internet and requires little time or involvement. Examples of slacktivist behaviour might include signing an online petition, 'liking' a campaign group's social media website or on-sharing a social media meme such as Isaac Cordal's famous artwork 'Follow the Leaders' which went viral on the internet with an alternative title 'Politicians debate Global Warming'. Criticism from within is also worth hearing. Micah White, who founded the Occupy Wall Street movement of the early 2010s says that there seems to be a changing view of protest marches. He says that attending a protest march these days has become a bit like going to a concert; just another way to connect with friends to have worthwhile experience.

What is not under debate is that many thousands of young Australians joined with many other young people around the world to make a statement and raise awareness about their combined future. They have directly questioned and enacted a social imaginary by asking what type of society they want in the future. They have begun to assess whether our current practices are worthwhile or whether they have been found wanting. They have identified actions that they see need to occur for their future and invited others, both their peers and other adults join with them to imagine a new set of images and social surroundings. They have recognised that in a democratic society it is possible to advocate for alternatives by promoting and sharing a new set of stories, songs and images to reimagine how we can feel our way into a future. By seeing the opportunities that are afforded teachers of the humanities in the Australian Curriculum to promote a selfie of our future selves, our visions of the future, in the words of the Irish poet Seamus Heaney, may see hope and history begin to rhyme.

Biographies

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Historical Thinking as the Salt of a Good Education

Salt is arguably the most important ingredient in many dishes, vital to any cuisine. Whether it is soy sauce from Japan, anchovies on a pizza or the piles found on the best hot chips, salt makes the meal. Why? Because salt enhances flavour, deepening the dish and drawing out more complexity in the things we eat. There is a reason why we cannot find any caramel slice that is not salted anymore.

Mr Nathan Bessant, Northern Beaches Christian School, Terrey Hills, New South Wales

I've often thought about cooking as an excellent metaphor for teaching and learning. No two dishes are ever the same, in the same way, that no two lessons are ever the same. Creating an amazing dish requires a complex set of interactions and ingredients, in the same way, that an amazing lesson requires the interactions of students, teachers, prompts and activities. Dishes go wrong in the turn of a moment, and most need constant attention and adjustment. Every lesson, every student, requires the same thought and attention.

Unfortunately, though, education has undergone a process of losing its flavour. Where formal education could be about the privilege of deepening knowledge, it is now become 'a requirement for getting a job with decent wages.' (Engle 2015). Parents and students are increasingly interested in preparing for the next step in career development, rather than the development of a holistic understanding of the world that they are a part of. The most obvious consequence of this increasing focus on certification has been the drive towards increasing STEM enrolment. Significant individuals from across Australia are calling for radical changes in what students learn; Alan Finkel, Australia's Chief Scientist, argued for mandatory mathematics K-12, the Australian government is providing over \$50 million to boost STEM offerings and glittering entrepreneurs, such as Atlassian head Mike Cannon-Brooks, demanding that coding should be a natural part of an already crowded curriculum, (Bolton 2018).

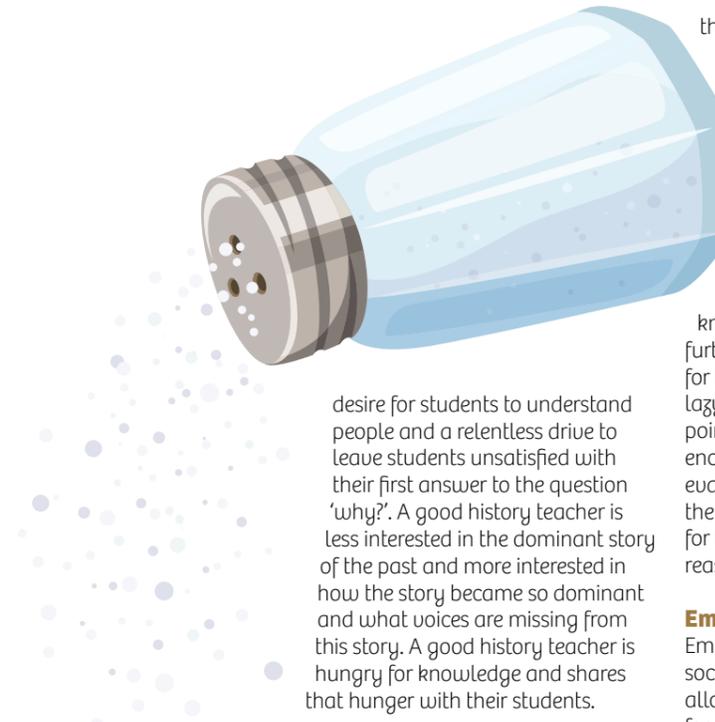
While the benefits of such a widespread engagement in education are encouraging to all teachers, it is worth considering the cost of narrowing the focus of society's gaze on just a fraction of what a holistic education looks like. As with narrowing the ingredients that go into a dish, narrowing our student's education to STEM leads to a loss of flavour and complexity in their learning, leaving them apathetic to the entire learning experience. While this is an argument for a significantly broader education, I want to

focus in on one area of education that, above all, should not be undervalued - History.

Historical thinking and understanding are the salts of an education. As Louis P. Masur (2019) argues, it makes every other aspect of learning richer, more meaningful and more satisfying. By understanding more about the past and the ways that we should think about the past, we gain a greater appreciation for everything else we might learn. The importance of studying mathematics is so much easier to grasp when students understand that mathematics has been the foundation of empires. Believing in the evidence for climate change is significantly easier when you have spent time reasoning as you interpret sources in the history classroom. Conversations about the role of technology in society are less meaningful without the ethical models that have developed over time with every great leap forward in science. It is the teaching of history that makes these experiences and this learning worthwhile. But beyond this, it is history that ties an education together into something more than simply a certification process. Understanding history allows students to leverage their understanding into being better citizens, engaging in debate and conversation, at a level beyond the screaming and shouting that so often defines our current discourse.

Why aren't prominent Australians calling for a focus on the study of history? Firstly, and most obviously, because the nature of the links between history and future success are second order. The job at the end of a history education is not as clear as that of an engineering student or a scientist. But, less obviously, many in our society don't see current models of history teaching as an issue. Why? Because teaching history is easy. Everyone knows history, everyone has read a book - therefore, anyone could teach history!

The issue is that teaching history well is incredibly difficult. It requires more than a passion for the past. Teaching history requires a hunger for debate, a deep



desire for students to understand people and a relentless drive to leave students unsatisfied with their first answer to the question 'why?'. A good history teacher is less interested in the dominant story of the past and more interested in how the story became so dominant and what voices are missing from this story. A good history teacher is hungry for knowledge and shares that hunger with their students.

Without this form of history teaching, history in schools will wither and students will lose the opportunity to experience a richer and more satisfying history experience. The question then becomes what does good history teaching focus on and how can teachers from across the school encourage historical thinking within their classroom? My argument is that history education requires three important ingredients if it is to be successful; evidential thinking, the development of empathy and an appreciation of complexity. While each of these aspects of an education will assist students in their interactions with the past, they are skills that are transferable across a student's journey, to enrich their learning and assist them to provide a more meaningful contribution to society.

Evidential thinking

I see the first job of any history teacher is to help their students understand that history is not the past retold. That history is not about studying what DID happen but instead, consider what MIGHT have happened and the reasons for it. For all of the confidence, so many historical documentaries demonstrate about the Pyramids, the Roman Emperors or the bombing of Hiroshima, there are far more questions we don't have answers to than that we do. History is more of a mystery than a story and the only way we know anything about the past is thanks to the clues that have been left behind.

Therefore, effective history teaching focuses on helping students develop their ability to use sources as evidence for an interpretation. History teachers should constantly be coming back to the sources of knowledge, encouraging students to make links between the source and the conclusion that has been made. For some areas of the past, this is easy. Connecting the rampant anti-Semitism found in Nazi Germany to the propaganda released by

the regime is an easy link for students to make. But for other areas of the past, the link is not as clear, leaving room for interpretation. The role of the palace at Persepolis and what it says about ancient Persian administration has a range of interpretations for a student to consider.

Teachers developing evidential thinking are constantly asking why and challenging student responses. In this way, a good history teacher makes students feel uncomfortable in their knowledge, encouraging them to take academic risks by furthering their logic and finding a more solid foundation for their thoughts. A good history teacher will rebuff lazy answers such as 'It just was.....' and constantly point students back to their evidence. Students can be encouraged to think about alternative interpretations, evaluating their validity and providing judgements on their own position. Thus, students are held to account for their thinking and encouraged when they express a reasoned, thoughtful conclusion.

Empathy

Empathy is an important skill to develop for a functioning society. Being able to understand the experience of others allows us to better appreciate their ideas, is the foundation for a more useful form of conversation and creates greater opportunities for solutions to problems. However, as J.D. Trout (2009) argues, there is an empathy gap in a society which few know how to bridge. Yet the result of a good history education is a greater development of empathy and the capacity and skills for a student to further their own levels of empathy.

Why is this the case? Because history is filled with people, and often the history that is taught is filled with stories of people who are different to the reader. Whether separated by time, gender or any of a number of dividers, the people of the past and their experiences significantly diverge from our students' lives. Yet to understand and grasp the movements of history and the directions our world has taken, it requires us to understand the thoughts, feelings and beliefs that define people and the structures and norms that shape their actions.

Therefore, good history teaching requires a careful, thoughtful ability to guide students thinking and the development of their ideas about the people that they are studying. It requires the appropriate insertion of a new source that opens up a new way of thinking from an individual at the time. It requires questioning that is sensitive to a student's lack of knowledge, with the teacher often having to find a way to rebuke an inappropriate thought or idea in a way that encourages, not shames, a student. Good history teaching often requires a teacher to share their own viewpoint and their own discoveries as a way of modelling thinking to their students.

It should be obvious, but this is not easy for any teacher to do. With less and fewer examples in public life of what an empathetic outlook in action looks like, there is a fear that students are coming to classrooms across our country with a less developed understanding of what empathy is or how to utilize it. Online communication, especially

the creation of personalised content which is essentially creating echo chambers, as well as the increasingly partisan nature of much of Western society, leaves an impression (Quattrociochi et al 2016). Addressing and challenging norms that students have developed outside of the classroom is one of the most important and challenging aspects of a quality history classroom.

Complexity

Finally, and maybe most importantly, a quality history education introduces students to complexity and ambiguity. While students often come into the history classroom believing that they will be studying one narrative of the past, teachers must convince their students that the narrative that they are looking for is unfinished, unclear and often unsatisfying. For every story of a hero in history, there is an alternative perspective that sees a villain, for every explanation, there is an equal and valid alternative explanation. For every dominant voice in history, there is a whisper of a voice that has been ignored or skipped over. Each of these alternatives makes learning history more difficult, but also more rewarding. It is this complexity that adds flavour to leaning history.

How does a history teacher introduce this complexity? With careful planning, attention and thought. The history teacher has to provide a core arc or story that a student can grasp then add layers to this story that questions the core narrative and complicates a student's understanding. The teacher needs to question the dominant narrative, provoking student's understanding and instilling in them an uncertainty around what the past actually looked like. A history teacher needs to consider the voices that have a place within the history being taught, and the most effective moment to introduce voices that challenge and broaden the history. Importantly, the history teacher must be careful to avoid using definitive language but instead must speak conditionally, leaving space that encourages alternative interpretations. A history teacher has to consider how they can allow students to grapple with this complexity, constructing tasks that are open enough to allow them to voice their theories and opinions while giving feedback that guides students to new depths of their work.

This complexity is vital to a student's education in preparation for a world that is more complex and more ambiguous than ever before. Complexity in the history classroom is not tied to imagination or creativity but is instead based on the experiences of people throughout generations. It teaches a student how knowledge is built over time and how over time this knowledge is transformed anew. It also teaches students that definitive ideas and answers are both rare and often unhelpful and that there needs to be a certain level of comfort with the unknown and the uncertain.

Bringing flavour back

Every dish will benefit from salt. Without it, food is one dimensional, plain and unfinished. Too many of our students are at risk of receiving this kind of education if

those of us who give education the most thought don't fight for balance. Central to this balance is the need for a strong, well thought through history program for every student. Without historical thinking Science, Mathematics, Literature and Art risk being less satisfying and lose some of their wonders. Historical thinking is the salt that brings out the best in every other subject.

Two issues hinder quality history teaching, focused on evidence, empathy and complexity, from happening in every class. The first is a lack of support for quality history teaching in schools. Too often school leaders undervalue the role of the trained and thoughtful history teacher. Instead, there is a belief that anyone with knowledge of the past can teach history. This is untrue. Teaching history requires a specific approach that is not easy in its application. Valuing history teachers and ensuring that history teachers have training and time to devote to their approach and to the discipline should be vital for every school. The second challenge is the apathy of the community. Schools that value history needs to explain its value to its students and parents, helping them to see the ways in which studying history will be of benefit across the wider spectrum of their learning. Without a clear occupation (beyond that of the historian – a not particularly lucrative field) to point to, history is suffering in a world of certification. Support from school leaders is vital here, particularly in key stages where students are selecting a course load to take into the senior years. Convincing students to study history shouldn't rely on the latest historical movie but should focus on the ways in which the student can grow and flourish in their studies.

Ferran Adria, one of the world's best chefs and founder of the paradigm-shifting restaurant elBulli, once declared salt "the only product that changes cuisine". When applied correctly and intentionally, historical thinking and understanding can entirely change a student's education, helping them to see broader and deeper and to think with more clarity. Like salt is to a dish, history is fundamental to every student's flourishing.

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Unleash the HAMSTER!

Putting humanities first in a fancy new acronym

Mr Steve Hawkins President Geography and History Teachers Association of the Northern Territory (GHTANT)

As a teacher I've come to develop a loathing for acronyms, which can be an issue because education is full of them. I'm quite convinced that entire divisions exist in departments of education to create them. Whether it's forcing my goals to the SMART or my coaching to be GROWTH I find myself rolling my eyes at pretty much every abbreviated buzzword except TGIF (which is technically an initialism, so doesn't count).

The prevalence of acronyms lies in their ability to simply market a complex idea. For this reason, acronyms are powerful, and in education none is more so than STEM. A focus on STEM would concern me less if jurisdictions spent more time considering how scientific, mathematical, engineering and technical ways of thinking were embedded across all equally-valued learning areas in mutually beneficial ways. But this is not what is happening. Systems focussed on the acronym are trying to out-STEM each other. We have STEM officers, STEM programs, STEM teachers, STEM buildings, STEM, STEM, STEMrolling across the curriculum and sucking up resources that have the potential to threaten other learning areas, including my own.

As a humanities teacher and the president of a humanities teaching association, I look with some trepidation at the pace of technological change and the subsequent risks of humanity's inability to adapt. I wonder if an emphasis on STEM is allowing us to fully consider the implications of contemporary and future technical innovations – such as artificial intelligence or the human genome project – on our society. Is the acronym still working for us? Does it need a reboot?

STEM Education 5.5 million Google hits ¹

STEM hit the big time with a reference in President Obama's 2011 State of the Union address, but has been in common parlance since the mid-2000s when the US National Science Federation opted for STEM over the far less poetic SMET (Mohr-Schroeder et al, 2015). While STEM as an acronym was relatively uncommon in the late 20th century, its unacronymised impact on the humanities was certainly felt. I learned this on the very first night at residential college during O Week of

1993 when I was handed a tissue to cries of "Here's your degree!" and hoots of laughter. It was one of many light-hearted but influential jokes at the expense of the Bachelor of Arts students, whose career prospects were seen as only requiring command of the phrase, "Would you like fries with that?" There were maybe a dozen Arts students at that time, and the low proportion of liberal arts students and liberal arts graduates has been declining in many educational jurisdictions around the world (Strauss, 2017) although the trend is not uniformly negative (Singhal, 2018).

I was fortunate that I had a strong interest in studying the humanities and no clear idea of a future career path (thankfully teaching was a good fit because working the fryer held little appeal). To engage in lectures and tutorial discussions on Australia's colonial history, the economic development in Indonesia and to learn a smattering of French has left me with some of the brightest memories of my life and a strong sense of social justice that carries me to this day. Other students, however, are clearly being put off, lured instead by promises of bright careers in industries not yet invented (Strauss, 2017). It is this concern for future proofing the



¹ To obtain this figure I conducted an exact-match Google search on "Acronym Education". Not the most scientific tool, but I'm a history teacher.

workforce that drives much of STEM educational policy, even though a strong case can be made that these concerns are unfounded (Charette, 2013).

Whether the humanities are in crisis in the face of STEM is debated. Much commentary of the decline of the liberal arts is American (Strauss, 2017), but Tully Barnett (2015) from Flinders University argued in *The Conversation* that although some concerns exist, in Australia 'the humanities are not in crisis' at a tertiary level. I certainly hope this is the case, and I am in no strong position to comment on the status of the humanities in universities. But my experience as a high school humanities teacher does raise concerns regarding declining enrolment and a clear re-orientation in resourcing towards the STEM.

My first teaching gig in 1997 was Year 12 Australian History, a subject that no longer exists as a standalone subject in South Australian or Northern Territory schools (we share a curriculum). At that time students could study European, World, Asian, American and Medieval History – all now reduced to a single Modern History course. My current school – a senior secondary public school with an enrolment of around 900 – only has nine humanities classes running (that's classes, not subjects), with the strongest demand in Legal Studies. Geography has not run in many years. There is presently much greater demand for science and technology subjects, even though advanced maths and science enrolments are also in decline (Singhal, 2018).

Just as I am sure no decent science or technology teacher would question the value of the humanities, I feel the same about STEM. But differences in resourcing and the attention placed on STEM in comparison to the humanities is a real issue. The Northern Territory has a 'STEM in the Territory Strategy' in place and is building a \$16 million STEAM building at a local school. My current school has an (excellent) speciality STEM program and extensive industry ties with technical and mining companies. Certainly industry partnerships play a key role, with resources companies actively supporting STEM programs, but the government and departmental focus on STEM is very apparent and an equivalent focus on the humanities simply does not exist. It is impossible for me to see how this imbalance won't have an impact on the humanities now and into the future.

STEAM Education
787,000 Google hits

All good educators will see value in considering the human implications of scientific endeavour, and attempts have been made to refocus this in STEM with

the addition of an A to the acronym. STEM becomes STEAM with the inclusion of the arts. But what arts in particular? Writing in *The Conversation*, Wade-Leeuwen et al (2018) explains that the arts includes "humanities, language arts, dance, drama, music, visual arts, design and new media." Georgette Yakman (2010), founder of STEAM.edu also includes the manual and physical arts. With these definitions it may be reasonable to ask if the A stands for "All that's left over" and to wonder what hope the liberal arts can have in such a crowded space. Certainly both STEM and arts educators have questioned whether their place in STEAM is mutually advantageous (Beattie, 2016).

Perhaps we humanities teachers, fighting for the odd kid who isn't doing double maths, physics and chemistry, should be grateful for the recognition of the liberal arts in the STEM space. But I question whether STEAM truly values the role of humanities can play in the STEM space, as the arts are often not included to critique the influence of technological advancement on society, but rather to maintain the pace of technological development using creative ways of thinking. Warren (2018) tells us that the arts are "key to igniting creative and imaginative thinking which is an essential driver behind innovation". Wade-Leeuwen et al (2018) explains that STEAM still investigates science, technology, engineering and maths but does it using "the creative process", going on to give examples of mathematics being used to create art or the arts used to advance technology. This is a perfectly appropriate and engaging approach to teaching both the arts and sciences, and is nothing new to humanities teachers. After all, it is impossible to teach geography without using elements of STEM and history teachers frequently use technology to engage and enhance student learning. But the humanities can do far more than this, teaching us how scientific and technological advancements have challenged – and continue to challenge – the communities in which we live.

STREAM Education
44,000 Google hits

Brisk developments in artificial intelligence and robotics – now occasionally added to the acronym with an R – demonstrates the very real urgency in why a humanities education is essential for considering the risks of technological development on societies and cultures. None of us can read the future, but history allows us to learn from the past to prepare for the future. Exploring the impact of earlier revolutionary technology provides many essential lessons for how we must carefully manage dramatic advances in robotics and artificial intelligence, and other controversial areas such as genetic engineering. As a Darwinite



sweltering through one of the driest wet seasons on record, I can afford to be grateful to Eli Whitney. His invention of the cotton gin contributed to the development of an industry that gives me breathable fabric for this humid weather. But even non-history teachers will know that an innovative tool designed to improve the sustainability of the cotton industry had shocking short and long term impacts on slavery, segregation and racial discrimination that continue to impact on our world today. The gin itself is not the issue – just as advances in robotics are not the issue – it was the desire to exploit technology for profit at the expense of human rights that provides an essential lesson for today.

History is rife with examples of technological advances dramatically influencing the human world. Some, such as the Gutenberg press, we could consider as revolutionary in a generally positive way, while others – like the development of nuclear weapons – are decidedly not. More common, however, are innovations that cut both ways. Steam engines revolutionised travel and opened the eyes of the world, yet sent children into coalmines. The Internet shares the best of human knowledge with the worst of human experience. Mapping the human genome may cure our worst diseases but raises significant ethical concerns regarding designer babies or genetic discrimination. To me, the liberal arts are essential for managing these changes and the humanities must be a strong focus in a STEM-driven education.

HAMSTER Education
5,800 Google hits (but a couple of the videos are quiet cute!)

The case has been made to add an H for humanities to the acronym, conveniently spelling a word we can all remember. But let's be honest, HAMSTER is not an acronym that is going to take off. No education minister is going to stand on stage spruiking the values of their latest HAMSTER program. But that's not what I'm advocating. The ridiculous idea of HAMSTER education should – I hope – allow us all to reflect on how an infatuation with STEM is of concern, and that we should very quickly reframe our thinking. The issues facing our world today and into the future – including those directly linked to scientific and technological advancement – cannot be neatly boiled down to a buzzword. The opportunities for humanity from artificial intelligence, genetic manipulation and bioengineering require scientific, technological, engineering and mathematical skills to be sure, but the students of today and the workers of tomorrow must have the good sense to reflect on potential risks to our society. We can prepare for the future by looking at the past, and can

Biographies

Steve Hawkins is the current president of the Geography and History Teachers Association of the Northern Territory (GHTANT) which represents the interests of humanities and social science teachers across the Northern Territory. Steve has been teaching the humanities, primarily history, for 22 years in South Australia and the Northern Territory in urban, regional and remote schools. Steve is passionate about the humanities and is actively supporting teachers of the humanities across the NT – Australia's most diverse and challenging educational jurisdiction, and in building productive partnerships with teachers across Australia for the advancement of the humanities in Australian schools.

learn to manage threats by exploring the historical and contemporary impacts of scientific and technical innovation on societies and cultures around the world. The humanities are essential. So bring forth the HAMSTER, if only to hasten then end of the obsession with the acronym that is STEM.

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To Progress or Pioneer? Psychology as a Senior Course in the NSW Science Curriculum

Currently the NSW Curriculum to be the only Australian education system that does not provide a psychological science course for its students.

Mr Scott Waring MACE, Great Lakes College Senior Campus

NSW enjoys a broad, flexible and multicultural curriculum in its primary and secondary education systems and 2008 saw the momentum of an Australian Curriculum (AC) gain traction in both the public's and governments' best interests. Near a decade has now passed since ACARA was commissioned and as of 2019 all states and territories have begun to implement, or have implemented, the AC with NSW leading the charge in 2013 with English, mathematics and science & technology. In a similar trend, psychology as a senior secondary course, which is not included in the AC, has been recognised and delivered across the nation with an enrolment of over 20,000 students each year, with the notable exception of Australia's largest and most influential educational system.

Why psychology?

In a nutshell, we know that most problems in the world today (e.g. conflicts based on in-group/out-group thinking; mental-health disorders such as depression, life-style diseases such as obesity etc) are psychologically based. Unfortunately, despite the impressiveness of the human brain, it is difficult for us to: (a) realise the sociocultural and political factors that lead to these problems and (b) subsequently work together to create solutions². However, through studying psychological science as part of the NSW curriculum, there is the opportunity to understand how we can change behaviour both in ourselves and in others.

Linking to major reports and policy

The aims of the 2018–19 NSW Curriculum Review are to:

- provide an engaging and challenging education that promotes high standards and rewards effort for all students, and
- prepare students with knowledge, capabilities and values to be lifelong learners, and to be flourishing and contributing citizens in an unpredictable, technological world.

With these in mind, the implementation of psychology will need to include an adaptive and reflective syllabus. In 2007, as a key voice of the AC Final Report, the Curriculum Standing Committee of National Education Professional Associations (CSCNEPA) stated that all students should have a solid understanding of scientific content, including psychology, as well as an appreciation of how personal and interpersonal skills can be applied within human society³. The addition of psychology will ensure that an emerging and relevant course, with cognitive science, neuroscience and neurophysiology at its core, has a key place in a future focused curriculum⁴. Increasing evidence illustrates the clear links between improved academic, social and behavioural outcomes of students, and their learning experiences with interpersonal skill, supported by psychology-driven research⁵. Figure 1 illustrates the national educational timeline and the NSW review outline which suggests, coincidence or otherwise, the next 2 years will shape the next decade within NSW education, and possibly Australia.

Figure 1: Timeline of AC review and NSW Curriculum Review

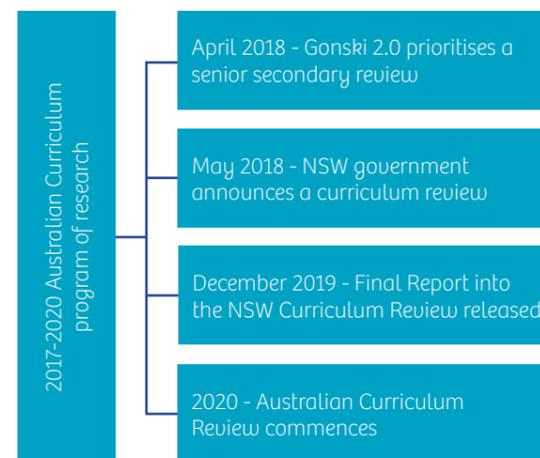


Table 1: Most common pathways for psychology students and the demand/reward in Australia

| Position | Future Growth | Skill Level | Weekly Pay |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|------------|
| Psychiatrist | Very Strong | Very High | \$2,500 |
| Psychologist | Very Strong | Very High | \$1,934 |
| Social Worker | Very Strong | Very High | \$1,364 |
| Teachers | Very strong | Very High | \$1,350 |
| Counsellor | Very Strong | Very High | \$1,330 |
| Advertising/Marketing | Strong | Very High | \$1,346 |
| Research – Life Scientist | Moderate | Very High | \$1,645 |
| Accountant | Moderate | Very High | \$1,400 |
| Human Resource | Moderate | Very High | \$1,339 |

The highly regarded publication Through Growth to Achievement: Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools, a.k.a. Gonski 2.0, has suggested that the education of our students must prepare them for a 'complex and rapidly changing world'⁶. Research around the implications of continued technological advancements and society are showing that as routine manual and administrative activities are becoming increasingly automated. More jobs will require a higher level of skill, and school leavers will need skills that are not easily replicated by machines, such as creative thinking, problem-solving, interactive and social skills, and critical thinking.⁷ Supporting such a statement is the job outlook platform provided by the Australian Government, highlighting the increasing need for developing psychologically literate citizens, as summarised in table 1.

Progressing towards other educational systems

The HSC has a strong international reputation, however with the increasing presence of systems such as the VCE, QCAA, IB Curriculum, UK's O and A levels, and the AP Curriculum, and their rigorous psychology courses, the

HSC, and by extension, the Australian education system is at risk of being left behind. For now, let's just look at the sciences within Australia. Data obtained from each of the states curriculum authorities quickly shows a similar pattern of distribution with student course completions as shown in table 2.

Excluding psychology, the typical hierarchy of the sciences goes from biology to chemistry to physics to EES. However, once psychology is brought into the mix, there is an enormous change in this pattern and an increase in students completing sciences (table 3). An interesting finding is the consistent position of the earth & environmental sciences, even though it is one of the four senior science courses implemented as part of the AC. Findings also showed the amount of growth each course has experienced over the past decade. Biology enrolments continue to increase across all states, whereas chemistry and physics are in decline. EES is growing in both NSW and Victoria but is shrinking elsewhere. Psychology has been offered from the beginning of the VCE in 1991 and has shown that it consistently enrolls between 15,000 to 18,000 students each year. As part of the WACE,

Table 2: Average number of students by course and by state from 2008-2017

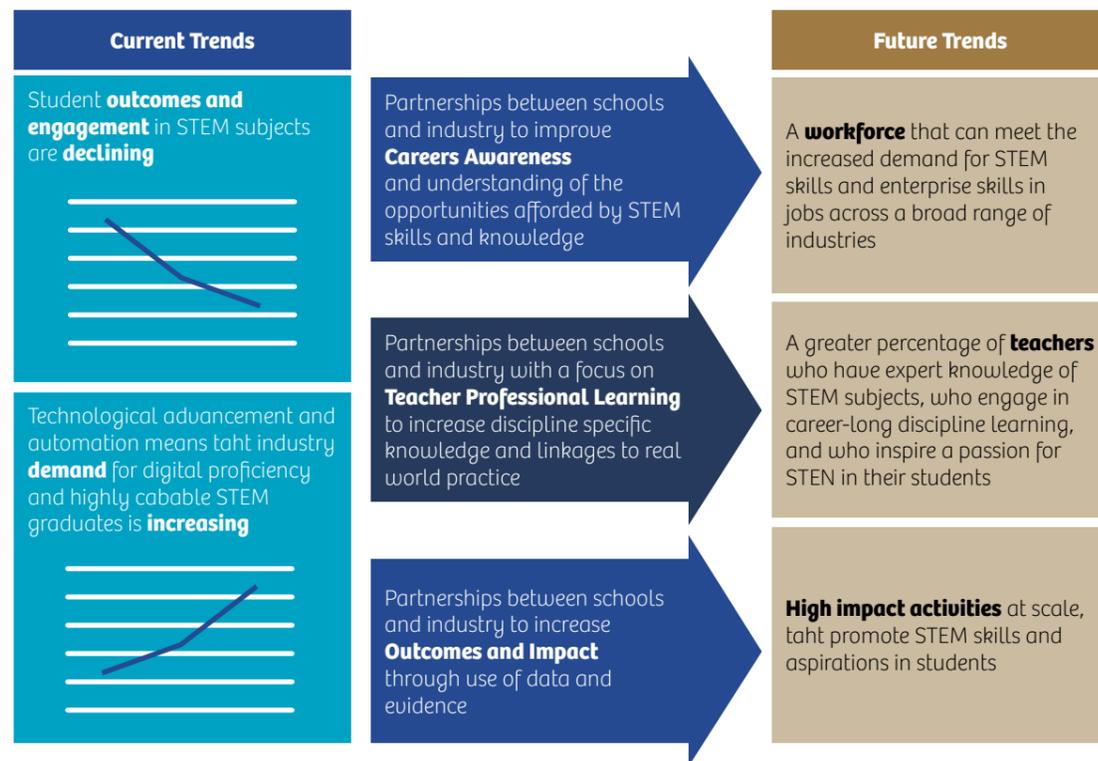
| Science Courses | NSW | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | WA |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| Biology | 16,683 | 11,908 | 11,281 | 3,286 | 1,622 | 1,622 |
| Chemistry | 10,697 | 9,389 | 7,690 | 2,219 | 4,614 | 4,614 |
| EES | 1,475 | 599 | 237 | 37 | 202 | 202 |
| Human Biology | N.O.* | N.O.* | N.O.* | N.O.* | 4,255 | 4,255 |
| Physics | 9,366 | 7,055 | 5,976 | 1,969 | 3,473 | 3,473 |
| Psychology | N.O.* | 15,552 | N.O.* | 2,070 | 1,006 | 1,006 |

*not offered (currently)

Table 3: Student subject enrolment as a percentage of total number of students in 2017

| NSW | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | WA |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Biology (26%) | Psychology (30%) | Biology (28%) | Biology (23%) | Human Biology (19%) | Biology (20%) |
| Chemistry (16%) | Biology (26%) | Chemistry (18%) | Psychology (16%) | Chemistry (19%) | Psychology (16%) |
| Physics (14%) | Chemistry (20%) | Physics (13%) | Chemistry (15%) | Physics (13%) | Chemistry (12%) |
| EES (3%) | Physics (14%) | EES (1%) | Physics (12%) | Psychology (8%) | Physics (7%) |
| | EES (1%) | | EES (<1%) | Biology (7%) | EES (4%) |
| | | | | EES (<1%) | |

Figure 2: Addressing student outcomes and future-needed skills¹².



psychology was only introduced in 2009 and had shown rapid growth (increasing at 33 per cent each year), whilst not reducing enrolments from the other sciences but adding to the total number of students engaged in a science at a senior secondary.

NSW would likely follow a similar trend as the other states. Psychology would start small but would see a rapid rise in popularity. It would likely see enrolments overtake biology (currently approaching 20,000 in 2018) and plateau for an extended time period, as has occurred in Victoria. The successful implementation will no doubt be of great benefit to our students and curriculum, and progress us to a similar state as other educational systems; but could we do more? Perhaps we should also be looking at a combination of human biology and psychology as one course, and EES/ecology in another?

Pioneering

Part of the OECD's Future of Education and Skills 2030 policy highlights the necessity for tomorrow's schools to help our students to think for themselves and join others, with empathy, in work and citizenship. The policy goes on to suggest the role curriculum will play in assisting students to develop a strong sense of right and wrong, and sensitivity to the claims that others make. That is to say the curriculum has a responsibility to immerse their students in the world beyond the school fence and develop their personal skills particularly in boosting self-esteem and personal confidence.

There is a near-overwhelming amount of evidence that outlines the need for high quality psychological

information to be taught amongst adolescents^{8 9}. Awareness of the biological and chemical processes that influence psychology has been shown to produce incredible effects between students and their teachers, resulting in increased education and personal outcomes for students. A recent cross-sectional study that involved over 4 000 participants was able to show that students that have better states of wellbeing are associated with their teachers reducing their own depressive symptoms. It went on to show that better teacher wellbeing can lower psychological difficulties of their students, and that this association is statistically significant¹⁰. This evidence is also linked to a student's path towards lifelong learning, and their perceptions towards education¹¹. These studies are highlighting the real-world effects psychology, and its study, have on personal and interpersonal relationships.

The Gonski 2.0 paper has laid down the priorities for the future of Australian education and states that every student should emerge from schooling as a creative, connected, and engaged learner with a growth mindset that can help to improve their educational achievement over time. When combined with the goals of the National STEM School Education Strategy 2016-2026, to increase the number of STEM literate students and to engage in meaningful partnerships to build the essential skills required after schooling (figure 2), psychology seems to fit in like a missing jigsaw piece.

Most schools already have these partnerships in place, they are just not used for educational outcomes but student support services. Counsellors and psychologists are part of education systems and should take a greater

role in classrooms reflecting a real-world and authentic learning experience that provides students with the right mix of knowledge, skills, and understanding for a world experiencing significant economic, social and technological change.

In the USA, the APA provides leadership, resources and professional development to teachers, schools and students. Psychology is recognised as an advanced scientific course that employers and tertiary education systems recognise and reward. The APS in Australia has already begun supporting psychology in schools, however to increase the partnerships and maximise the outcomes of students, other organisations (Psychology Council, Psychology Board of Australia etc) will need to take up the challenge.

To paraphrase the Science Extension syllabus, science is not conducted in isolation. Psychology will extend and provide authentic, wholistic and relevant learning experience for NSW students, and ensure they are prepared for a future in STEM learning and enterprises.

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Biographies

Scott Waring has been teaching for 6 years in the fields of science and mathematics, currently at Great Lakes College Senior Campus in NSW. He is undergoing Highly Accomplished accreditation and is a Member of ACE. Scott completed his post-graduate degree in 2017, majoring in physics (USQ).

TWO PART
DISCUSSIONPersonal
Perspectives
on HASS
Teaching
and
LearningA little birdy
told me:
teachers
using social
media

Mr Matthew Esterman, Our Lady of Mercy College
Parramatta

As Simon Sinek says, we need to “start with why” when it comes to using social media. Before jumping into handles, hashtags and the haphazard world of memes, likes and creating personal, professional or social connections across the globe, we need to establish a clear purpose for our social media presence and use thereof (even if our purpose changes over time). Knowing why we are there helps to anchor our thoughts, focus our attention and manage the truly endless world of content that exists in the digital space. .

Personally, I use social media for three reasons: to connect with people who prompt me to think differently and more deeply; gain exposure to interesting ideas regarding educational research, policy and practice that I may not encounter in other reading; and to share my own thoughts and practice so that I can also contribute to the global conversation on education.

With purpose, we can begin to explore people we wish to ‘follow’ or connect with, especially in a professional sense. It may be that you find it most useful to connect with likeminded teachers of a particular subject area or domain, such as the humanities, which is often expressed differently across the world. For example, in Australia it’s highly likely that most teachers (primary or secondary) can connect fairly easily because of a similar curriculum base. But looking at the UK or the USA - and especially beyond the anglophone world - there may be different language or assumptions that shift the focus of what ‘humanities’ might mean.

There are literally billions of people and communities with which you can connect through social media. It’s a special kind of madness to try and connect with them all. You will also notice that celebrities often don’t ‘follow back’ and sometimes delegate the operation of their own social media accounts to others, as it would otherwise be impossible for them to keep up. Facebook is still one of the most popular platforms, though it

is much less popular with people between the ages of 13 and 30, who prefer to use the more instantaneous platforms Instagram and Snapchat. People gravitate towards those similar to themselves; so if you are an experienced teacher, Twitter is probably your best bet at finding the people and content you want.

Staying professional in the digital space is a concept that is potentially fraught with challenges and complications but generally managed by simply saying, doing and sharing things online that you know aligns with the expectations of your system, your peers and your school community. Within your school or institution, social media policies may exist but that doesn’t alleviate the responsibility to act as if you were speaking with a parent, a student or a colleague; because you are. Simply accept that anything you say and do online in public circles (and even in less public circles) can and might be seen by those to whom you have a professional responsibility, and think before you post.

As a teacher in the humanities, specifically History, there are hundreds of potential conversations in which I could engage on a daily basis through Twitter and other platforms. These conversations are usually grouped by a hashtag or ‘#’ symbol, to identify that a particular topic, region, group or event is - as much as one can - claiming a wall-less room on Twitter to itself. You will have seen or heard ‘hashtags’ promoted on television shows or similar. This is so that when searching through a platform, you can use the hashtag to view all posts relating to that topic. It’s a useful way of collating and tracking a topic in a very, very busy world.

For example, one of the most useful hashtags to me is #histedchat. Run by teachers for teachers, it collects and collates links and posts that may be of use to history teachers. It also has regular ‘live chats’ where, at a particular time in a given week, dozens of people will come together digitally to share ideas, usually by answering a series of pre-determined questions. It’s a collegial activity that encourages people to think critically, communicate effectively and manage their time well.

Twitter and similar platforms are like a global staffroom. Big ones. Open plan. Where anyone can potentially hear a conversation and join in, for better or worse. It is usually astonishingly positive and constructive in my experience, but that’s because I choose to focus on following and connecting with people who share my philosophy of using Twitter for good and not trolling (abusing) or undermining others. Refuting false claims or challenging others to think more deeply is one thing, but intentionally attacking or undermining the person themselves is as inappropriate online as it is in person.

Biographies

Matthew Esterman is Director of Learning Technologies and Innovation at Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta. He is highly active in the TeachMeet community, an author of several published articles and chapters, and has been a speaker and facilitator at workshops and conferences in Australia and overseas. Matt holds Masters degrees in Learning Science & Technology and also Modern History from the University of Sydney and Macquarie University, respectively. He is @mesterman on Twitter.

One of the great ironies of technologically driven change is that when the newest audience of users arrives on the scene, they often reject the technology currently being used by previous generations. This is true of Twitter at the time of writing, which was not long ago seen as a tool only for the young or for the very geeky. It is now seen as commonplace for communication between individuals, groups, institutions and social movements. Every politician now “must” have a personal Twitter handle, to broadcast their ideas and engage their audiences without the need for traditional media. Furthermore, Twitter is only really seen this way by adults who have come aboard the social media train in recent years. New users, such as those students in our schools right now, have basically rejected Twitter as a usual form of communication in favour of other platforms such as Snapchat and Instagram. No doubt in a few more years, with a few more iterations, such platforms will be replaced by whatever comes next.



For now, we have access to expert knowledge and advice from those who are most qualified to help: from historians to archaeologists, museum educators, television presenters and authors of historical fiction. Many of these people will happily jump into your classroom via Skype or be a guest in a Twitter chat in order to provide an interesting perspective on a given issue. There’s no harm in asking, the worst they can say is no! I’ve had several extremely positive and fulfilling conversations with experts from around the world, most powerfully when I’m in the classroom with my students asking the questions and leading the conversation.

Whatever platform we’re using, we need to remain human whilst adopting new technologies. Underneath all the layers of photos, filters, symbols and algorithms is a very human urge to communicate, to learn, to belong, or at least to feel connected to others. We need to remain aware of how we are using social media; the effects it can have; the responsibility we have to both promote our own ideas and listen to those of others; and to be the responsible digital citizens we expect our students to become.

We can reimagine learning and teaching with technology. But to do this well requires mindful innovation, curious exploration and adaptation to our own contexts.

The Role of Podcasts in HASS Teaching and Learning

Mr Marco Cimino, Magdalene Catholic College, Smeaton Grange, New South Wales

Introduction

What role, if any, do podcasts play in the teaching and learning of HASS? Can they help bridge that divide which is the false dichotomy of HASS vs STEM? This article draws on personal experience through the work of the recently developed 'Oh, the Humanities! (and Social Sciences)' podcast in order to answer these questions.

The Pod Has Been Cast

Back in 2016, I began a monthly Twitter chat using the hashtag #HASSchat. It took place on the last Thursday of every month at 7:30pm and had a different focus every month. Some topics included technology in HASS, literacy in HASS, and innovation in HASS. It enjoyed moderate success, with educators from around Australia taking part. In 2017, I made the decision to convert the Twitter chat into a podcast with the intention of reaching a wider audience, and allowing educators to access professional learning whenever, and wherever they want, and it launched in January of 2018.

Through my teaching experience and conversations with other HASS educators, the question about the relevance of HASS always comes up. My response to this question is always the same: HASS always has, and always will be, relevant to the world. Regardless of which agenda is being pushed by governments, industries, or the media, HASS will always play a part in ensuring that people are informed and active citizens. Yes, the study of HASS subjects seems to be declining, but that does not mean that people are not utilising the skills that HASS offers. The work being done by HASS teachers is immense, and they are striving to ensure that their student's develop the critical capacities (critical thinking, collaboration, and empathy for example) required to engage in the world in an active manner. Because of the tireless work being done by HASS educators, HASS will never fall to the wayside, and nor should it. This is where I believe podcasts play a critical role: as they increase in popularity, they provide teachers access to quality teaching and learning strategies whenever and wherever they want in order to better serve their students.

Why Can't We All Just Get Along?

I once saw an image that someone had shared via social media that read something along the lines of: "STEM tells you how to build nuclear weapons, but the Humanities tell you why you shouldn't." This is a false dichotomy. HASS and STEM could, and should, work together to further develop student's skills. Again, this is where podcasts play a vital role in bridging the gap in the HASS vs STEM debate. There seems to be a silo mentality within education that say that HASS and STEM are not to be mixed, or even, at war with each other. Many of the guests I have had on my podcast spoke about ways in which HASS and STEM can work together to achieve the same ends: quality learning for students. There are many examples as to how HASS and STEM can work together: for example, coding can be utilised in Geography to create weather stations that collect data which can then be interpreted and analysed, AI can be analysed regarding its ethics in Philosophy, and History classes can be enriched by the use of a Makerspace. This again shows how podcasts can help quash the false dichotomy of HASS vs STEM: it breaks down the silos of 'us' vs 'them' through a more accessible professional learning library.



Biographies

Marco Cimino is a 7-12 HSIE, VET, and Religious Education teacher from South-West Sydney. He is the creator and host of a podcast titled 'Oh, the Humanities! (and Social Sciences)'. The podcast can be located by visiting <marcociminoedu.wordpress.com/> and Marco can be found on Twitter via @MrMCimino.



Australian Government
Australian Taxation Office

COMPETITION
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You don't have to be a tax expert to take part, and thinking outside the box is strongly encouraged.

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You will not only get an insight into the value of tax and super, but you could also have the chance to win a share of **over \$6,000 in prizes.**

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- Write It** – short stories, a script or a marketing proposal
- Make It** – artworks, comic strips, songs or a prototype of an app or game
- Film It** – videos, skits or music clips.

Stage 2: The shortlisted entrants will be invited to submit a video pitch to the judging panel on why their entry should win. The winners will be announced in September.

Stage 3: There will also be a People's Choice Award in each category with great prizes on offer. It's voted for by the public so you'll have a chance to have your say on your favourite entry.



To enter

Go to taxsuperandyou.gov.au/competition and submit your entry online or print an entry form to submit your entry via mail.

Competition closes 23 August 2019.
Terms and conditions apply.

**VIEW
FROM
THE
STATES**

VIEW FROM THE STATES

NEW SOUTH WALES



Lila Mularczyk OAM, FACE
nsw@austcolled.com.au

In March, New South Wales went to the polls which saw the Gladys Berejiklian led Liberal/National government returned to power. In the lead up to the election there had been much discussion and debate around education. The coalition campaigned on a platform to:

- Recruit 4600 extra teachers
- Clear the school maintenance backlog down to zero
- Expand before and after school care to give access to every child
- A commitment of \$500 million in funding for new buildings for non-government schools.

Post the election, that the Honourable Sarah Mitchell MLC would be appointed as the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning. As the new Minister for Education, Ms Mitchell will face several major challenges early on in her role. One of the most significant being the delivery of a major review of the NSW curriculum. In addition to this, she will be responsible for managing the school building program that was begun by her predecessor, Rob Stokes as well as addressing the on-going debate regarding NAPLAN.

In one of her first interviews following her appointment with the Sydney Morning Herald (April 3, 2019), Ms Mitchell indicated that her personal view would be that there is a place for standardised testing and that with NAPLAN going online, and the technology evolving, there might be opportunities for it to evolve into something that better suits families and teachers as well.

As all members in NSW (and probably more broadly) are aware,

in September 2018 the then Minister for Education, Rob Stokes released the terms of reference for the NSW Curriculum Review. Many members have been actively involved with the review which is being led by Professor Geoff Masters, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). To date, there have been over 2,100 submissions, 14 public consultations and over 50 stakeholder meetings conducted. It is anticipated that NESA will provide the interim NSW Curriculum Review Report to the Minister in the second quarter of this year.

From a State perspective ACE NSW has delivered a number of very high profile and successful activities and events throughout the first part of this year. The ACE NSW Professional Learning, networking and social media platforms continue to provide enriched communication and learning for our members, while we as ACE Members and educators have also contributed and been involved with the NAPLAN and curriculum reviews.

The 2019 ACE NSW Fellows Dinner was held on March 8 (International Womens' Day) at Sydney University. Professor Debra Hayes was guest speaker. Debra is Head of School, Sydney School of Education and Social Work and President of the Australian Association for Research in Education 2019-2020. Debra's address People, policies and positions was an informed and often provocative address. Debra provided us with some insight into contemporary policy making in Australia and the media's influence on that discourse.

ACE NSW has also introduced on our State Facebook Page a new series of Facebook Live events that connect educators to online discussions. Discussions have been held with Professor John Hattie, the current ACE (NSW) Wyndham medallist, Dr. John Collier and the Dr. Paul Brock award recipient 2018, Mr. Matt Esterman.

The ACE Hills/Parramatta regional

group recently hosted a major event exploring the theme of innovative education with the award winning, energetic teacher and Australia's 2018 local hero, Eddie Woo. The keynote was followed by a reflection on curriculum reform by the NESA Executive Director of Curriculum Standards, Lyndall Foster. This gathering of engaged teachers from 4 universities and 30 schools, both government and non-government, exemplified the role of ACE in providing cross-sectoral, face-to-face professional learning and networking. Registered teachers were also eligible to gain 1.5 hours of NESA accredited Proficient Teacher professional development.

TASMANIA



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The Tasmanian Education Department is providing a range of new initiatives to support school leaders. The Department's Secretary announced the newly formed Early Learning Initiatives Steering Committee made up of nine voluntary members with diverse skills and expertise across the relevant early childhood education and care communities. Chaired by the Secretary, the first meeting was held in late March.

The Principal Wellbeing Action Plan 2019 – 2021 has been launched this month to address some of the key issues at system and individual levels that principals identify as impacting upon their ability to 'feel good and function well' at work. Areas of concern include the strengthening of supports available, Principal Wellbeing Leader positions will be established to ensure that there is a coordinated and sustained approach. A forthcoming

development will be a staff wellbeing framework. Increasing opportunities for principals to build mentoring connections and to clarify the school leadership team role functions.

A new anti-bullying website was launched this month for system leaders, principals and teachers. The site features quality educational content that is research-driven, evidence and experience-based, including informative articles, videos, webinars, summary infographics, and tools for teachers and student leaders. The Tasmanian Government funded this work through its Combatting Bullying Initiative.

The ACE Tasmania committee led by Convenor Dr Duncan Bradley is currently preparing for the annual Richard Selby Smith Oration on Tuesday 14 May. The Guest Speaker will be Professor Toby Walsh, University of New South Wales. This year's oration concerns "AI and Education" with a goal of looking both at how AI can help education and how education needs to change to deal with an AI enabled world. The lecture will be followed by an informal dinner at the University Club. Pre-dinner drink, canapés and three course dinner and beverages are included in the ticket cost. This live-streamed event is sponsored by both the University of Tasmania and the Selby Smith family.

Toby Walsh is Scientia Professor of Artificial Intelligence at the University of New South Wales and at Data61. Professor Walsh is a strong advocate for limits to ensure AI is used to improve our lives. He has been working with the NSW Department of Education on a project exploring "education for a Changing World". He has been a leading voice in the discussion about lethal autonomous weapons (aka killer robots) speaking at the UN in New York and Geneva on the topic. He is a Fellow of the Australia Academy of Science, and has won the NSW Premier's Prize for Excellence in ICT and Engineering. He was named by the Australian

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newspaper as a "rock star" of Australia's digital revolution. He has authored two books on AI for a general audience, the most recent entitled "2062: The World that AI Made".

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



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Casting a shadow on the brightness of current educational practice have been recent media reports of increasing violence in ACT schools. These include reports of violence, verbal and physical, directed by students towards other students but also towards staff. In response to this the ACT Government has recently announced the establishment of an advisory group to review management of violence in schools.

Education authorities face a dilemma in these circumstances. On the one hand they have a responsibility to maintain safe learning environments for students; teachers are at the forefront of these endeavours. On the other hand, education authorities are also responsible for the maintenance of safe working environments for their employees. It seems clear that a focus on 1) the promotion of equity and excellence in Australian schools and 2) ensuring that all young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens (MCEETYA 2008) should achieve safe and productive environments for both students and teachers.

But so much of the good work that is being done every day in schools to achieve these goals

can go unnoticed when reports of critical incidents surface in the media. Should these media reports be understood as cries for help from parents who are not satisfied with school responses or from teachers who are not satisfied with responses from their employers? It will be very interesting to hear the outcomes of the ACT review, particularly since the focus will be on system-level approaches.

On a happier note, the University of Canberra has launched an innovative program in conjunction with the ACT Educational Directorate. The Affiliated Schools program builds on strong relationships between the University and the school sector. For some time, an element of the programs for UC preservice teachers has been the development of teaching skills in authentic classroom settings. The Affiliated Schools program, with an aim of building teacher capability and a skilled future teacher workforce, now includes a collaborative research element where school and University staff will work together on professional learning activities that have specific relevance to their school contexts.

MCEETYA (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs) 2008. Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians. Melbourne, Australia: MCEETYA.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



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The *Valuing Children Initiative* (VCI) commenced in Western Australia in January 2016 with the aim of inspiring Australians to not only value children but to reinforce the

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notion that the health and wellbeing of children is a community responsibility. It is worth noting that when the VCI use the term 'children' they are referring to children and young people aged 0 – 17 years. When taking into consideration the findings from various reports such as the latest from the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) 2018 and Australian Child Wellbeing Project (2016) it is clear that Australian children could be doing better. For example, The ARACY report card noted that Australia is "still on average only middle of the pack by international comparisons" (p. 4) and that some outcomes had deteriorated since the previous Report Card was released. For too many children poverty, mental illness, sexual abuse obesity, poor school readiness and chronic disease impact their lives.

The results from such comprehensive research projects are sobering indeed. Teachers are often at the front line and continue to attest to the requirement to take on many more roles in the lives of the children they teach. Ensuring that each and every child has the best start in life as well as a happy and fulfilling school experience is the responsibility of the community as a whole. It is this notion that underpins a one-day conference with the theme "Do I belong? What matters in education" being planned for Tuesday 16 July and to be held at the Catholic Education WA office in Leederville. The conference promises to bring together some of the leading educators and researchers and will provide an opportunity for educators to consider some of the really compelling imperatives confronting children and schools today. The conference will also be an opportunity for the WA Chapter of ACE to formally celebrate ACE's 60th birthday. The conference will conclude with the Walter Neal Oration.

J.B. Priestly eloquently wrote that "Like its politicians and its wars, society has the teenagers it deserves." In research conducted by VCI the five most commonly

chosen words to describe children were spoilt, lazy, fortunate, selfish and vulnerable. The same survey also revealed that almost one third of adults do not believe that the opinions of children are as important as the opinions of adults. If these are the assumptions that underpin interactions with, and opinions about, children then it would seem appropriate to question the degree to which children are valued. Advocating for the rights of children, particularly with respect to education, is a key focus for the Australian College of Educators. In its 60th year the need for such organisations such as ACE has never been greater.

A Synopsis of The Valuing Children Benchmark Survey – Part B: March 2017

Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (2018). *Report card: the wellbeing of young Australians*. Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth: Woden, ACT

VICTORIA



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It has been a busy start to the year for all in education in Victoria. That is not an evidence-based comment, of course, but one based on enough anecdotes that there may be some truth behind it!

Members of the ACE Victoria Committee have been diligently working in their day (often stretching into the night) jobs in education, to get the year off and running positively in their schools, their universities, and at the other institutions we connect with. Our focus for ACE is organising the events that allow us to come

together to learn, to network, and thus to advance our careers.

The first event on the ACE Victoria calendar for 2019 was the Len Falk Lecture. Held on Thursday 2 May in the Len Falk building of the Department of Education in Moe. Supported by Department of Education Victoria, Peter Greenwell, a Gippsland stalwart in education, delivered the lecture. His focus was on sharing his understanding of the development of schooling in Gippsland as influenced by Len Falk BA BEd TPTC MBE, Regional Director of Education in Gippsland from 1972 to 1982.

The Len Falk lecture was instituted in 1978. Amongst the many who have delivered the Len Falk lecture are Sir Zelman Cowan (Governor General of Australia), Margaret Whitlam and Barry Jones. To see the full list of past Len Falk lecturers, and for further information on this year's Len Falk lecture, please see: <https://www.austcolled.com.au/product/len-falk-lecture/>

We are also putting together our other events for the year. ACE Victoria supports the Unicorn series of events conducted by St Margaret's and Berwick Grammar School and their Principal, previous ACE Victoria President, Annette Rome. To see the inaugural event from 2018, "What makes a good teacher," please visit this youtube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgYxDOTAQko> Further Unicorn events will occur over the course of the year. The most recent, held in early April 2019, was titled "Flourishing and Floundering: the challenges and opportunities for young people in the online world."

Not far off is our event designed for pre-service teachers – "Getting your first job" – which will be held on an evening in June as a Q&A with a panel of school principals and early childhood centre directors. Please keep a lookout for ACE advertising of this event and share the word with others, especially if you are a pre-service teacher or know one! As usual, this event will be free; an

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enticement to encourage pre-service teachers to join ACE as Associate Members, a free membership category for the newest members of our profession.

It is fantastic to be a member of our professional association, the Australian College of Educators, as it enables us to speak across boundaries: sectors, subjects, schools.

Warm regards

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



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"The SACE is not a competition. It's a standard." Professor Martin Westwell, Chief Executive SACE Board of South Australia, signed off with this statement in a recent article in The Advertiser (April 1, 2019). "What the world cares about is what that student knows and, more importantly, what they can do with what they know." Skills, capabilities and dispositions rather than memory of content and process. A simple yet profound statement that has been echoing around the world for many years now. Almost two decades into the '21st Century Skills' revolution and we still don't seem to have settled into a new paradigm for learning. This year will see the eighth generation of school students finishing their school-based 21st century education, yet there are still concerns about how effectively our systems are preparing students for future study or the workplace.

Andreas Schleicher, Director for the Directorate of Education and Skills, OECD, recently shared a provocative and insightful presentation at the Institute of Educational Assessors

annual conference in South Australia. One of his concerns, framing part of his presentation, was put as "When fast gets really fast, being slow to adapt makes education really slow". We are almost twenty percent of our way through the current century and it appears that we are stuck, not on whether we think we should, but on whether we think we could. Does this sticking point change the narrative that we are following? Does this influence the way in which our support for teachers, leaders, academics and the wider educational community perceives the challenge of immersing ourselves into the new learning and assessment paradigm?

Let us take a leaf from our own books. Where are the exemplars? Tried, tested and moderated to give validity to a new way of learning. What does the new 'A' standard look like for educational assessment? What does the standard look like to teach it? It is no exaggeration to say that the decisions that we make, as educators, have students' lives at stake. We are suitably reluctant to take a plunge into the abyss unless someone lights the way into the murky depths and we know what is at the bottom.

A pervasive trend in education is that we value what we assess and we teach what we value. If we are evaluating complex competencies, skills and the dispositions of learners, then how do we support all educators to develop their own set of values within this construct? To reshape their own professional identity within the new learning and assessment paradigm? Perhaps this would be the most compelling narrative of all.

Membership Milestones

It was an incredible privilege to lead recent proceedings at our 'In Conversation with SA Minister for Education - John Gardner'. The evening was graciously hosted in Adelaide University's Nexus 10 Hub. Helping to celebrate the Australian College of Educators 60th year, Minister Gardner reflected on

the educational landscape both past, present and future, in South Australia. Highlighting the incredible depth of wisdom, knowledge and influence of our local educators in shaping educational policy and practice over the last 60 years. Minister Gardner was also asked to present the Mary MacKillop Medal to this year's worthy recipient – Dr Paul Rijken, Principal at Cardijn College and Marcellin Technical Campus. It was against this backdrop that I had the honour of acknowledging the ongoing commitment to the college of our local members, and to celebrate significant milestones in their membership.

Life Membership, recognising 30 years of commitment to ACE:

- Mr Alan Buckland MACE
- Mr Bradley Fenner MACE
- Mr Ian McKay FACE
- Dr Di Russell FACE
- Mr Peter Russell FACE
- Dr Julia Sguster MACE
- Dr Marisa Young MACE

Recognising 25 years of commitment to ACE:

- Dr Gregory Carey FACE
- Ms Lia Tedesco MACE

Recognising 20 years of commitment to ACE:

- Professor Lester Rigney MACE
- Mr Nigel Croser MACE
- Mr Christopher Prance MACE
- Mrs Deborah Russell MACE
- Mrs Constance Price MACE
- Mr Garry Le Duff FACE

QUEENSLAND



Luke Ralph, Australian College of Educators Board Member
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It is interesting that this edition of Professional Educator explores the role that HASS (or could we

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say non-STEM) subjects play in an increasingly complex school curriculum as changes to the Queensland Senior Schooling Curriculum and Assessment have come into effect this year.

According to the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) "For success in work and life, young Queenslanders in the 21st century need to be innovators, entrepreneurs, lifelong learners, valued employees and responsible global citizens". 2019 has seen the introduction of the first 'wave' of changes to the curriculum and assessment system for all Queensland schools, commencing with Year 11 students. Students commencing Year 11 this year and graduating Year 12 in 2020

will receive an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) which replaces the current OP ranking used in Queensland. The way students are assessed is also changing. The majority of subjects will see students assessed using three school-based assessments and one external assessment set and marked by QCAA. The changes to the senior schooling curriculum are aimed at ensuring Queensland's education system is keeping pace with a 'transforming society and economy' and to ensure Queensland school leavers have the 21st century skills they will need for the future.

Earlier this year, the federal government inquiry into the status of teaching held its Brisbane hearings. According to reports, one

in three Australian teachers leave the profession within their first five years. According to the Queensland Minister for Education, Grace Grace, "Analysis by the Queensland College of Teachers indicates that around 14 per cent of new teachers leave the profession within four years'. Further to this, the Queensland College of Teachers have cited several articles reporting that "between 30 per cent and 50 per cent of Australian teachers leave the profession within the first five year". The inquiry has officially been closed due to the recently held Federal Election. The College will continue to monitor and report on the outcomes from the inquiry and ensure that members are afforded every opportunity to actively contribute to this important and ongoing discussion.



BOOK REVIEW

Committed to Learning A History of Education at The University of Melbourne

Juliet Flesch

Reviewed by Anthony Mackay AM

Author Juliet Flesch notes that accounts of administrative changes do not make for racy reading! However, in her History of Education at The University of Melbourne, administrative changes coupled with personalities, politics and institutional changes do make for compelling reading.

This is a remarkable story of the transformation of Education at the University from "Cinderella to Star" - on the local, national and International stage.

It is a play of four acts spread over 110 years - taking us on a journey encompassing the amalgamation of the University and College, the inauguration of the Melbourne Model, and the transition from Faculty of Education to the Melbourne Graduate School of Education.

It is a journey that reveals the reasons why MGSE is consistently rated amongst the world's five best faculties of Education.

For those of us who have a strong affinity with and deep affection for "Education @ Melbourne" the leading actors come to life in a way that strengthens our admiration for outstanding scholarship & thought leadership, ground breaking research and development, quality teaching & learning, world leading professional & clinical practice, highly influential policy formulation & advocacy, administrative acumen, disciplined innovation & experimentation - and above all superb leadership.

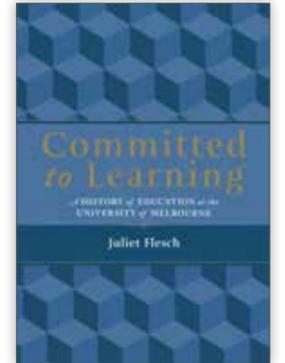
Many who will read this wonderful account have been participants & contributors - fellow travellers - happy to be implicated in the past, present and immediate future of what is a highly respected institution.

Other readers, once removed - educators, historians, and those drawn to the drama of a "compelling story" with a cast list of Australia's outstanding educational leaders - will find from the pen of this professional historian a narrative of drama, twists and turns, volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity and success - a work worthy of a VUCA world.

Reputation of the order that MGSE now enjoys is hard won - and retaining & further enhancing that standing is even tougher in today's global environment where sustainability is the ultimate prize.

The Foreword to *Committed to Learning* reminds us that public discourse on education in Australia is poor at best. At a time when learning has never been more important to our individual and collective well-being the role of Faculties of Education is crucial.

Judith Flesch's History of Education at the University of Melbourne is a celebration of the extensive influence of one institution's contribution to an educated society. It is good to have this story now to inspire all of us to lift our game to ensure we have the service of the next generation of equally outstanding educational leaders.



Anthony Mackay AM is President | CEO, National Center on Education & the Economy, Washington DC Senior Fellow, Melbourne Graduate School of Education

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