AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT LEARNING

Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

Australian Journal of Adult Learning
Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

EDITOR'S DESK

The lead articles in this issue focus on values and quality of life, significant aspects in the work of adult and community educators. Such dimensions are all too often neglected in the press for economic rationalism, 'doing more with less' and single bottom lines.

Helen Cameron speaks of the importance of helping human service professionals to unpack their own social and cultural heritage. She explains how she assists her social welfare university students in particular to understand their values about people and relationships. She argues that the adequacy of their preparedness for professional practice is firmly related to their development as effective lifelong learners, and that it is a required quality of modern university education in preparing students for work in a global society. Continuing on this theme, **Richard Eckersley** contends that all learning is ultimately about worldviews – how we see the world and our place in it, and thus how and for what we should live. He raises the issue as to whether life is getting better or worse. He demonstrates how linear optimism – the belief that pumping more wealth in will

automatically generate more welfare out – has three main flaws. It is inequitable, unsustainable and is not meeting its core objective of increasing well-being or quality of life. The issues he raises inform the underlying reasons for what adult educators do.

The following three papers concentrate specifically on ACE – its role and contribution, its construction in national policy and its promotion through State Boards. **Kaye Bowman** highlights three research projects on the scope, role and contribution of ACE, all funded by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA), which were to develop a richer understanding of the sector, greater recognition of its contribution and further its promotion. She states that 'ACE is a key player for ANTA both in the delivery of vocational education and training and in the broader lifelong learning agenda'. The first project focused on scope, the second on role and nature, and the third on outcomes and contribution to the economy.

John McIntyre examines how the ACE sector has been discursively constructed in national policy during the time of training reform. He argues that ACE national policy includes a range of provision extending well beyond *bona fide* community-based organisations, highlighting that the 'ACE sector', as an idea, has an extraordinary policy reach and 'policy symbolism' in the story of Australian training reform. The politics of ACE policy is therefore an important area of analysis of Australian adult education and its transformation in recent years. Also talking about policy is the article by **Shirley Martin** and **Peter Jones**. In analysing the activities of the Victorian Adult Community and Further Education Board, they highlight the importance of having adult education enshrined within structures of Government. In Victoria, legislation recognises that ACE is an education sector in its own right by virtue of its community ownership and management. Such legislation (from 1991) heralded a 'dramatic change in the status and recognition of the ACE sector in Victoria'.

Continuing about adult education in Victoria, **Peter Rushbrook** provides an analysis of the contribution of Colin Badger to adult education in that State and the founding of the Council of Adult Education. In doing so, he raises theoretical issues about individual agency and historical change, and the place of narrative history in adult education research. He concludes that Badger's example is an inspiring lesson on the capacity of an individual to author historical change, and that his life is a reminder of the role of the historian in rescuing historical authorship from obscurity. **Kelvin Thompson** reviews the literature on constructivism, adult learning, professional development and curriculum design in analysing the implications that constructivist theory has for the design of professional development curricula. While he sees intersections between constructivism and adult learning characteristics, he considers that adult learners tend to want to learn skills quickly without entering into the kinds of reflection and elaboration evident in a constructivist learning environment.

In the research report, **Stella Odebode** and **J O Oladeji** employ a case study of Osun State in Nigeria to investigate factors that constrain Nigerian rural women from participating in and helping to develop their local communities. Such factors include lack of funds, male domination, inadequate access to resources, lack of cooperation between women themselves, occupational demands, poor coordination of projects, land acquisition, politics, lack of cooperation from government departments and leadership tussles.

The issue concludes with the usual array of reviews of books and articles. There are four Book Reviews, coordinated by **Peter Willis**, on expressive approaches to qualitative research in adult education, learning communities around Australia, values, means and directions in universities, and mentoring effective learning relationships, and a Journal Scan by **Michele Simons** through a number of interesting articles published in other journals.

Adult Learners Week (ALW) is a national celebration of lifelong learning in Australia. ALW is being held this year on 2–8 September. The week will be focusing on connections: getting connected to learning and using learning as a way of connecting to the world, the nation, your community and your family. A highlight of the week will be the presentation of a range of awards, both state and national. The purpose of these awards is to recognise and celebrate the full variety of contributors to adult learning – including tutors, programs, providers and learners themselves. ALW is coordinated nationally by Adult Learning Australia Inc. (ALA) and supported by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA).

For more information, call 1300 303 212, email *info@adultlearnersweek.org,* or visit the website at *www.adultlearnersweek.org*. National Coordinator is John Cross, telephone (02) 6251 9887.

Roger Harris
Editor

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Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

Facilitating values awareness for professional practice

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The education of university students is primarily about preparing them to manage the demands and challenges of current work in Australia's pluralist society. The adequacy of students' preparedness for professional practice is strongly connected to their development as effective lifelong learners (Candy, Crebert & O'Leary 1994) and to their future competence in the world of work. Although at times this paper focuses on my experiences in educating students for social welfare practice, the central issues apply equally to many professional groups, particularly those whose work entails close communication with clients. Through my experience of teaching in higher education, I have come to see that a central aspect of the educational enterprise is one of assisting students to understand their values about people and relationships, and that this is

essentially about helping them to move beyond their own cultural and social heritage. Gudykunst & Kim (1997:254) refer to values awareness as a hallmark of effective interaction with others, and describe those with intercultural competence as communicating from a 'third culture' space. Through the course of this paper, I demonstrate that helping students to be more skilled in discussing own and others' values is a required quality of modern university education in preparing students for work in a global society.

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I explore some of the pressures that impinge on the processes of educating people for professional practice in current Australian society, particularly in reference to the area of values awareness. Although this paper focuses at times on my experiences in educating social welfare practitioners, many of the issues apply equally to other professional human service groups, such as nurses, doctors and other health workers, teachers and lawyers, and any others whose work involves relating closely and positively with their clients. Educating students for professional practice is inevitably imbued with responsibility, but even more so when the task is one of preparing people for high contact work, where the day-to-day procedures entail expressions of personal and institutional values. There is a central need for students to learn to accept others' values, to be aware of their own frames of reference, and to develop further as effective lifelong learners (Candy, Crebert & O'Leary 1994). If our students are to survive in the current world of work following graduation, they need to be supported in moving towards greater acceptance of responsibility for communicating effectively, operating from a position of ethical self-agency in their relationship with others, and developing 'emotional intelligence' as described by Golman (1995). Additionally, those with a vocation to work with human service clients need to be especially aware of their own

and others' values and attitudes. I have come to see that educating students to understand their values about people and relationships, and establishing responsible and ethical frames for professional practice, is really about helping them to become more aware of the influence of their own cultural and social heritage and to rise above these influences. Gudykunst & Kim (1997:254) refer to this as 'establishing a psychological link' between their own cultural values and beliefs and those of the other person – a hallmark of effective interaction with others. They describe this as an advanced level of intercultural competence, operating from a 'third culture' space characterised especially by 'nonjudgmentalness, openness, tolerance for ambiguity, and interaction management'. Through the course of this paper, I hope to demonstrate that helping students to be more skilled in discussing their own and others' values is an essential feature of all education programs in the modern university.

Generic and transferable communication skills?

Universities have been criticised roundly for emphasising erudite areas of pure knowledge at the expense of more applied practical knowledge, with additional emphasis on flexible skills, as in the 1999 Report from the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, and the earlier Finn (1991), Mayer (1992) and Candy *et al.* (1994) reports. According to these views, students need to emerge from university work-ready, with a strong profile of skill in the areas of interpersonal communication, team-work and self-supporting, lifelong learning practices.

Invocations persist to prepare the nation's workers by developing good communication skills in students (Hobart 1999:42), though there is little consensus about how to make this happen, and McKenzie (1998:1, 2) adds that the concept of lifelong learning is an imprecise one, making it difficult to discern progress in this area. Bauman (1992:106) suggests that universities still neglect to

provide their graduates with a passport for safe passage into the world of work, which he describes as 'irreducibly pluralist', and where 'rendering messages mutually communicable is its major problem'. The charge is one of graduating students with heads buzzing with information and theory, but with poorly developed frames of ethical reference, and with few skills to cope with the interpersonal demands of professional practice. This limits workers' chances of maintaining a healthy spirit of inquiry, of squarely facing personal and professional dilemmas, of becoming ethical and competent practitioners, or of taking their place in what Candy *et al*. (1994:186) refer to as 'the life-wide and lifelong context of each person's learning experiences'.

Writers in this field, for instance Candy *et al*. (1994), Marginson (1994) and others mentioned in this paper, refer to this lifelong learning stance as possessing high transferability to the world of work, particularly in reference to self-motivation, independence and autonomy of the worker. But, preparing people for professional work has been made more challenging by the rapid pace and rate of change in most human service departments, in which many of the students referred to in this paper find work, as described by Donovan & Jackson (1991:339) and Reich (1989:103). As well, pressures to conform to managerialist frameworks increase the stress experienced by new human service graduates according to Ife (1997:12). These writers also point to the rapid turnover of relevant professional or industrial knowledge, suggesting that much information-based knowledge may go out of date very quickly. Added to this list of new demands is the growing requirement to have intercultural competence in relating to clients from many different ethnic and racial backgrounds. Students emerging from universities therefore need an adaptable, intercultural and appropriate interpersonal skill base. This level of expertise, in relating effectively to others within the work setting, is viewed as applicable to a wide range of situations, with continuing currency especially in the rapidly changing fields of work in Australian society.

Marginson (1994:8) suggests that 'knowledge is context bound but generic skills are not' and 'that the bearer of transferable skills holds a timeless and universal asset that is superior to episodic, fleeting knowledge and thus superior to the assets held by the bearer of knowledge'. But the suggestion that such skills are universally transferable needs to be met with caution. I disagree that such skills are not 'context bound', as many are quite culturally specific and may have limited application outside of a society or even across subgroups within a society. Gudykunst & Kim (1997), Lewis & Slade (2000) and Pearson, West & Turner (1995) all describe the extent to which many aspects of communication, including eye contact, use of personal space, and other nonverbal and verbal behaviours, are socialised, habitual reactions, and have quite different meanings in particular cultural contexts. This diversity is present in all processes of human engagement in broader society, as well as in the tutorial room. However, it is the contention of this paper that communication skill and values clarification cannot be developed through a simple didactic process. They require a more complicated set of processes, involving the nurturing of internal ethical stances. This requires the exploration and unpacking of values that may reside in protected no-go zones of the individual. Preparing students for intercultural competence requires a focus on values and attitudes, and the gradual growth of awareness and interpersonal expertise. Such processes take time and require the intensive investment of skilled and motivated staff.

Students, especially those from the culturally dominant, white, anglo-celtic groups in Australian society, may need extra encouragement to explore the impact of their own socialisation, and to move towards appreciating the validity of other ways of being. Gudykunst & Kim (1997:254) discuss the importance of helping counsellors and others to stand on a non-judgemental spot in working with people from other cultures, as do Corey & Corey (1998:183) who see the need for social work and psychology students to overcome cultural 'tunnel vision'. Gudykunst & Kim (1997:254) emphasise the development of

tolerant appreciation of own and others' cultures, in their reference to a 'third culture' perspective, where high levels of interpersonal expertise characterise the person's style. Universities need to help students to develop this 'third culture' aspect of interpersonal competence, and to express it in difficult areas of work, where discomfort or even conflict about values occurs with work colleagues, and with clients. Students will then be equipped with a precious resource that will support them in many areas of their lives, but it cannot be presumed that these skills are simple to teach in professional education programs, and in educating people in the social welfare areas the terrain is even more complex.

Unpacking professional values in human service work

The human service professions are essentially modernist according to Rose (1998) and Hunt (1999). Social work and psychology as fields of practice grew out of modernist projections about the perfect society, solidifying during the early 20th century in what Hunt refers to as 'moral regulation movements' (Hunt 1999:216). This period in history saw a shift from an internalised concern for moral good character, as in the previous centuries, to a fascination with ideas of perfection, or at least with means by which to correct, or self-correct, the human personality (Hunt 1999:217). Rose (1998:25) refers to the 'regimes of the person' which were implanted in Western societies' institutions and which worked their ways into definitions of the modern self and other features of 20th century living. Psychologists, counsellors and social workers thus became secular priests, dispensing prescriptions for living and the new religions of individualism. Coale describes part of this work as involving the 'power to define good and bad, sane and mad' (Coale 1998:51). She refers to the 'Eskimo hunter who asked the local missionary priest, "*If I did not know about god and sin, would I go to hell?*". "*No*", said the priest, "*not if you did not know*". "*Then why*", asked the Eskimo earnestly, "*did you tell me*?"' (Dillard 1974, quoted in Coale 1999:51).

It is of concern to some that there is no great tradition, in psychology, counselling and social work in particular, of accepting clients' *ways of being* despite the rhetoric about this, and this provides a troubling challenge in teaching in this area. For example social work holds up self-determination and autonomy of clients as a rubric (Australian Association of Social Workers 1999:11), but as a profession it is not always characterised by others as tolerant and accepting of diversity. Hunt (1999:193) says '[w]elfare has become a profoundly paternalistic set of disciplinary practices', and this view was reflected over a decade ago by Day (1981) and Kennedy (1982). As a professional group, it is not alone in this respect, with psychology receiving similar criticism as suggested by Coale (1998) and Bankart (1997). Rose (1998:59) describes the 'psychologization' of society, and suggests that unpacking the 'genealogy of contemporary psychology' would trace its path during the twentieth century as an influence over persons and professions, and in promoting flawed perceptions of mental health, dispensed as prescriptions.

Counsellors from all fields can easily encumber clients with Western expectations and injunctions about the socially responsible ways to view self and to manage life. This can produce existential anxiety within those clients from the dominant Australian culture, or, when clients are from a different culture, they may be puzzled and confused about implicit behavioural and cognitive ideals. As well, the negative problem-focused approaches often used in the helping professions have the potential to squash self-esteem (De Jong & Berg 1998:10.11). Many people in society have been socialised to expect a kind of 'medical model' or 'problem-solving paradigm' to operate in their dealings with counsellors or social workers, and also expect to be told what is wrong with them (De Jong & Berg 1998:9). Rose (1998:98) takes it deeper and describes the processes whereby individuals become complicit in shaping and regulating their own person. De Jong & Berg (1998:13) suggest the effective counsellor needs to 'set aside any preexisting ideas about the nature and origin of

client problems' and to encourage clients to do the same. Exploring values and ethical professional practice with students then inevitably involves deconstructing some of these idealised views – about self as professional, about professional practice skills and theory, and about clients and the nature of their problems.

Values in a pluralist but 'PC' society

However, even if such cultural deconstruction can be achieved with students, the territory of values is in itself a troubled one. For instance, it is accepted by many in society that social values are subjective in nature, whereas others believe there are objective principles to guide them in their decisions and actions. This tension is fundamental to the analysis of the nature of ethics and values according to Singer (1994:7). He locates two primary positions on the origin of ethics. One of these is that ethics are absolute standards or moral imperatives (such as according to Kant (1788), in Singer, 1994:39–41). The other is that ethical standards derive from social settings and vary accordingly (as in Hume's (1751) thesis, in Singer 1994:37–38). Singer (1994:7) suggests this tension exists today. Larmore (1996:32) also points to the gulf between knowing what is right, or believing at some level in 'valid rules of morality', and the motivation, opportunity and ability of the individual to act in accordance with these 'rules'. This gap between espoused standards and day-to-day action seems to be the fatal flaw in any Kantian belief in the power of moral or ethical conscience over pragmatic pressures towards self-interest.

Australia's increasingly pluralist culture provides a challenging context for values exploration. Lewis & Slade (2000:154–159) refer to the 'multiculturalism debate' and describe a range of issues now rendered thoroughly contentious, so that discussing some values in certain quarters is to invite trouble. They refer to 'anti-immigrant and anti-Aboriginal' opinions finding an audience through radio

programs, and reinforcing stereotypes and prejudiced thinking (Lewis & Slade 2000:135). Others express concern about the rise of a moral majority, and protest that 'those possessed of this truth all too often seek to abolish difference through force in the name of collectivism and historical inevitability' (Howe 1994:521). Taylor-Gooby (1993:8) reminds us that 'universalist discourses are now obsolete', but he also suggests that the relativism implicit in many of the interpretations of this postmodern condition should not mean that we all abandon competing claims! Then again, Bauman (1992:106) describes current society as 'irreducibly pluralist' and suggests that 'rendering messages mutually communicable is its major problem'. All this suggests that although some may claim that social values are freely chosen (perhaps), there are many social constraints that shape the values and beliefs of individuals, and even more that contain their free expression.

The recent shift in political thinking, referred to by some as the 'New Right' (Sawer 1981:viii; Jary & Jary 1991:427), encompasses a range of concepts including free-market practices and conservatism (as discussed by Gamble 1988, in Pierson 1991:41), religious fundamentalism and biological determinism (Sawer 1981:viii). Defining certain values positions as 'Politically Correct' (PC) is seen by Williams (1995:5) to constitute part of a devious 'culture war' where ideologies about, for example, civil rights, women's rights and welfare, are undermined to justify 'the current redistribution of wealth and organization of life'. The press of the New Right has propagandised conservative moral positions to the extent that many humanitarian and tolerant value positions have become defined as PC. This then acts to infer that the individual is just *mouthing* the value, that no one could possibly really think that way any more. As Williams (1995:5) says, 'talk of egalitarian principles is scorned or spurned as hopelessly PC' and is thus dismissed. As well, the PC debate has trivialised the importance of tolerance about different ways of being human.

The banning of the singing of Baa Baa Black Sheep in schools (Hall 1994:73), or similar trivialisations of social issues, thus becomes the accepted token of racial awareness, replacing *real* civil justice as demonstrated in social attitudes and behaviour. This debate adds even further complexity to the social milieu within which individuals live, and form their opinions.

Larmore's point about the gulf between knowing and doing (1996:32) is at the very heart of the complex nature of teaching around values and attitudes. When I work with students in exploring values, I know I am venturing into well-defended, personal and often poorly declared territory. According to Potter (1996:120), research in the late 1960s began the demonstration of the large gulf between espoused attitudes, as measured on tests, other instruments and in personal declarations in public forums (like the tutorial room), and how people act in real life personal and professional situations. Potter thinks there are problems if we do not recognise that values operate in the everyday world from *undeclared* evaluations and judgements about other people, their behaviours and practices (1996:121), and that much of importance remains unsaid. So simplistically deciding that a good dose of tolerance is all that is needed to bridge personal or cultural differences is to miss the complexity of the issues involved here, and the processes people use to deal with them, especially in difficult interpersonal situations involving disagreement about values and interests. The PC discourse restrains us, as does a natural hesitancy to declare one's position, and Griffin (1994:422–425) and Cupach & Canary (1997:121–147) describe how an individual's cultural heritage operates as a consistent influence on strategies for managing all aspects of interpersonal communication, but especially ones where personal values, and conflict about these, are foremost. A person's gender, ethnic background, family structure and history, age, class and complexity of life experiences means that everyone approaches a situation, and interprets it as it unfolds, from within this personal and cultural bubble. Yet invariably this bubble, acting as a screen to

perception, operates at an unconscious, unexamined or undeclared level.

Values in the tutorial room

All this presents a challenge to the teacher of interpersonal skills and values, and to the student, and it is not surprising that students at times appear reluctant to engage in open communication about ethical standards. The range of views on values-based issues within a tutorial group can be very wide, and this lack of social and cultural consensus presents a challenge, to those of us concerned with educating people for ethical practice in our pluralistic society, and to the student worried about passing and keeping ahead of the game. The *user pays* principle in higher education has also activated a pragmatically economic harmonic in the student voice, especially as their experience at university has become characterised by 'less intimate and more instrumental pedagogical relationships' (Barnett 1997:35, 26). Yet despite this uneasy embrace of pragmatism among students, or perhaps because of it and other pressures in the system, some find it difficult to be open about their own values. For a variety of reasons then, the trust levels within some groups of students may be very low.

The results from a recent focus group with my students revealed that they feel discomfort in declaring values in the classroom because they fear rejection from both students and staff, and dislike the emergence of conflict between tutorial group members. Students become tense and upset when they witness others' distress and may become disturbed if they are personally involved in the situation. Values conflict in particular involves the exchange of high-energy feelings such as frustration and anger, and this can be perceived as risky for many people. This riskiness is described clearly in the literature. For instance, Wilmot & Hocker (1998), Cupach & Canary (1997) and Johnson (1997) all discuss the risk involved with genuine

engagement with others, and especially when disagreement emerges in exchanging opinions and values. Corey & Corey (1998:176) stress the importance of recognising one's own 'cultural encapsulation', and of uncovering values, biases, stereotypes, prejudices and racism. Understanding others' values and locating ways to transcend cultural barriers is encompassed in Gudykunst & Kim's (1997:254) ambit third culture analysis of communication effectiveness. These are high-level skills however, are not part of students' everyday competence, and remain a challenge to many.

Managing situations where disagreement and conflict about values occur, whether as an involved participant or as a more neutral facilitator, throws into sharp relief one's skills, attitudes and deeper values surrounding issues of relationship and personal power. Conflict strips individuals down to psychological bedrock and leaves many people interpersonally de-powered. Ironically then, when individuals most need a range of good communication skills to negotiate a tense or conflicted situation, they may find themselves bereft of skill, operating out of raw emotional energy and social conditioning, or even tapping into old brain *flight or fight* reactions. Avoidance or aggression may be the only choices remaining for some. Discussing values needs to sit within a curriculum that also focuses on establishing a repertoire of skills that provides competent options in situations of stress.

In teaching students about values in relationships, I am under no illusions that any of this is simple. There is risk in unpacking values and attitudes, and the possibility of conflict in sharing these with others is ever present. I need to negotiate a set of circumstances where the student is safe whilst involved in an impactful process, one that may move them beyond the circle of personal comfort. I know too that human beings resist change, and no more so than in the domain of personal attitudes and values, and I appreciate the deeply socialised level at which a person's values are established.

I often present values issues for discussion without asking individuals to declare their own beliefs, in other words to debate positions without owning them personally. I supply fact sheets in advance of discussions, so everyone starts from a common platform of understanding. I sometimes ask students to take on opposing positions, not always ones that fit their own values on the issue. This can provide good practice at being 'argumentative' (Cupach & Canary 1997:58), seeing things from another's perspective and in not taking things personally. Interestingly, Cupach & Canary (1997:58) encourage a more positive press for 'argumentativeness'. They suggest that learning to exchange conflicting points of view without taking personal affront is an important part of effective communication for today's society, and suggest this can assist in avoiding aggressive outcomes when a clash of values occurs. However, I believe it is essential at some point for students to examine their 'bedrock' of culturally based values and attitudes, because when the chips are down in a conflicted situation, it is these values that will show themselves. But they may also need practice as speaking up on issues, even ones they do not agree with, and a chance to practise a range of competent communication skills as rehearsal for the challenge of a more genuine sharing of opinion.

Social comparison can operate strongly and coupled with fear of disharmony or conflict, the urge to conform to the majority view, or to remain silent (and complicit), is a real pressure for many. Clearly important in dealing with conflict about values is the ability (and the will) to be open and inclusive towards others. But how real is this in the tutorial room, which represents in microcosm the pluralistic society in which we live? Students in human service courses are also remarkably homogenous. Kadushin & Kadushin (1997:32) state that the statistically typical social worker in the United States, for instance, is 'middle income, college trained, white, young and female' and in terms of age, race and gender distribution this is also the case for Australian students in the human service areas in my experience. So this homogeneity places pressures on some students in the tutorial

group when they wish to challenge dominant views, especially where the official discourse is in accordance with the social work rhetoric. Censure may derive from dominant views among students or staff on a range of issues. Focus group work with my students revealed for instance that some are fearful about expressing religious conviction in case others in the group disapprove, reject or ridicule them or strongly disagree. Some students with minority views about particular issues thus learn to read the situation carefully and to keep quiet about what they think and believe. This leads back to Larmore's (1996) and Potter's (1996) gulf between espoused attitudes and personal declarations. My concern is not only about how this operates in the tutorial room, but also in professional practice. Students' values may remain private or hidden, buried under a veneer of social conformity during the educational process, but the stress of a work situation, such as one concerning anger and conflict over value-based issues, may uncover these values in a largely unprocessed state, perhaps to the detriment of their relationships with co-workers and clients.

Cupach & Canary (1997:127) suggest it is possible to 'examine individual differences within and across cultures'. They appreciate that values frameworks within the individual are complex, involving ethnicity, gender and socialisation through each person's individually unique path of life. However, like Gudykunst & Kim (1997), Cupach & Canary (1997:27–30), see competence in managing interpersonal conflict as capable of over-riding broader cultural or social factors in situations. Similarly, Corey & Corey (1998:176) focus on recognising 'cultural encapsulation', uncovering and challenging underlying values, and identifying ways to transcend cultural barriers. Gudykunst & Kim (1997) echo this idea with their notion of a 'third-culture perspective' and suggest that good communicators work in a frame that is wider than their own personal and cultural values, one that accepts the values and ideas of others. These perspectives offer a path toward tolerance, and are more than being merely PC!

Summary

What stands out from all of this for me is the need to help students to unpack their social and cultural heritage, and the expression of this at a daily, personal level through their relationships. Students are engaged in a struggle to gain personal dominance over their social and genetic heritage, and this needs to be the primary focus in teaching about values. As a university teacher, I accept my obligation to adequately prepare graduates for managing the interpersonal trials of relating to work colleagues, clients and in their personal lives. I believe that my work with students in values and communication management needs to focus unapologetically on the transcendence of cultural and social selves as the centre of the educational enterprise.

This is not a value free position I know, and my own beliefs are clearly visible in this. Sadly, facilitating values awareness is also not a resource-free activity. Communication skills, and consciousness about values and ethics, are difficult to develop in students even when resources are adequate, and current pressures bearing down upon the university place their nurture in increased jeopardy. Recently the size of tutorial groups in my area has increased, whereas the time available in class has been reduced. This places under threat the adequate preparation of students in the areas of skills, values and ethics. My own idea of ethical practice in university teaching continues to reinforce my efforts in values clarification work with students.

Graduate Qualities, as espoused by my own university, include a clear focus on the interpersonal skills of problem-solving, collaborative work with others, ethical perspectives on practice, and the pursuit of personal development and excellence in professional practice. Giroux (1995:305) sees the need for university teachers to commit to making a difference to students' views about cultural democracy, and to support the issue of university education as 'part of a broader ethical and political discourse, one that challenges and transforms' the curriculum. Yet unless teaching resources are adequate, these aims

remain merely rhetorical. Resources must be directed to support a positive and thorough experience for students in all these areas. To do less is to abandon students to their social and cultural heritage in managing the demands of the complex world of work in current Australian society.

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Australian Journal of Adult Learning
Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

What makes a better life? The role of learning in redefining progress

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Learning is ultimately about worldviews: how we see the world and our place in it, and so how and for what we should live. Australians' worldview, like that of other Western societies, is framed around notions of progress, of making life better. Progress, in turn, is closely linked to economic growth – especially its rate rather than its content. This view of progress is inequitable, unsustainable and, contrary to its core objective, is not increasing well-being or quality of life. Thus the central task of the future, for the future, is to create a new view of the world.

Introduction

My current work addresses the question, 'Is life getting better, or worse?' (and for whom, in what ways, and for what reasons?). For me, this is the most crucial question of our times. Sociologist John Carroll made a similar point in a recent article in *The Australian Financial Review*: 'All opinion worth its salt is addressed to a question that goes something like this: "What's wrong with our times, or with this or that behaviour, and what can be done to improve, if not correct things?"'

These questions are also fundamental to education, including adult education. Let me address them by discussing: firstly, the future as reflected in two historical spikes and our possible responses to them; secondly, the way we currently define and measure progress and what's wrong with these definitions and measures; and finally, what we can do about this situation and the role of education in what we do.

At a futures conference in Perth earlier this year, I heard Damien Broderick, the science fiction and science writer, talking about his book, *The spike*, and discussed it with him. Broderick says developments in computer, gene and nano technologies will produce, some time over the next 10 to 30 years, or by 2050 at the latest, a 'spike' or technological singularity, a period of change of such speed and scale it will render the future opaque, unseeable, where things become unknowable.

It could end in human obsolescence or human transformation. It could mean, as computing power continues to obey Moore's Law and double every year, the rapid emergence of not only intelligent machines but superintelligent, conscious, machines, which leave humanity in their evolutionary wake. Or it could result in bionically and genetically enhanced super-beings who are effectively immortal. (I'm quite attracted to this eventuality. The more I try, the more

I realise that I am just not intelligent enough to understand what's going on and what we should do!)

Providing a counterpoint to Damien's spike is another 'spike': this time the population spike of a plague species – us – as it grows exponentially then collapses as it overshoots the capacity of its habitat to support it. And this within about the same timeframe as the technological spike!

I recently met another Australian writer, Reg Morrison, who argues in a new book, *The spirit in the gene*, that this is the certain fate of humanity. Morrison says evolution ensures this outcome for any species that threatens to become too dominant and reduce the earth's biological diversity. His intriguing spin on us is that our genes have bequeathed us a self-destruct mechanism – or time bomb. This is a sense of spirituality – our tendency to spiritualise or mysticise our existence – with the result that we will never – cannot – behave rationally enough to achieve sustainable planetary dominance, and are predestined to suffer the fate of all plagues.

There is a fascinating symmetry to these 'spikes', both the result of exponential growth – one in technological power, the other in human population – and both occurring at about the same time in history. Maybe we'll see the evolution of a new level or form of intelligence and consciousness just as its progenitor – *Homo sapiens* – reaches its zenith, and burns out: a metaphorical spaceship jettisoning its booster rockets, which fall back towards earth and burn up, as it soars into the wide open horizons of outer space.

Responses

There are several scenarios in the human response to either or both of these imminent 'spikes', each of which has profound implications for human civilisation:

- **surrender and abdication**: the scale and speed of change is so big people will give up any hope of trying to manage or direct it. The sheer impotence of government or any other human institution in the face of such change will totally undermine our faith in already weakened institutions leading to further political disengagement and an even greater focus on individual goals, especially hedonistic ones – precipitating a period of chaotic change.
- **a fundamentalist backlash**: the technological 'fundamentalism' that the spike represents will trigger a desperate response by religious or nationalist fundamentalists, to whom what the spike represents is deeply offensive, and who will use every means at hand to oppose it – including potent technologies such as biological or nuclear terrorism. A population spike could also see a fundamentalist revival, but for a different reason – this is the action of a vengeful God.
- **a new universalism**: a more benign outcome is that the spikes – one or other or both, because of the global threat or challenge they pose – help to drive the emergence of a new universal culture and sense of human solidarity and destiny. Set against the momentousness of these events, all differences between us become petty. But that's maybe a long shot!

Linear optimists

Both spikes are highly deterministic – one technologically, the other biologically. There is a strong element of inevitability about them, which I'd challenge. I also feel that spirituality – a deeply intuitive sense of relatedness or connectedness to the world and the universe in which we live – is crucial to meeting the challenge of the future, not the source of the problem, as Morrison asserts.

But the stories and our responses contain several important lessons for us: the 'spikes' are very real possibilities; they are not events in the far distant future, but within our lifetime or that of our children; there is already evidence of all three responses in the way humanity is dealing with contemporary global social changes.

And yet – most importantly – there is no recognition of these issues and possibilities in current political debate. Government and business are dominated by linear optimists – those who believe that by continuing on our current path life will just keep getting better. Their opposite might be called linear pessimists – those who believe that life will inevitably get worse. What we need are systemic optimists – those who believe life can get better, but only if we change systemically the way we think and do things.

Is linear optimism a valid, tenable belief? This is a more manageable subject, so let's focus on that. Linear optimism is framed by the conviction that economic growth equals progress, that more means better. So, John Howard, declared in a speech to a World Economic Forum Dinner in Melbourne in March 1998 that: 'The overriding aim of our agenda is to deliver Australia an annual (economic) growth rate of over 4% on average during the decade to 2010'. The Government's strategic economic objectives were pursued not as ends in themselves, he said, but as the means for achieving more jobs, higher living standards and an effective social safety net. Nevertheless, the Prime Minister clearly set the rate of economic growth as the prime benchmark by which to judge his Government's performance.

At a Liberal Party conference in April this year, Howard said of the Government's 'great record of (economic) reform':

> That reform program has not been pursued because we want to get an A+ in the exam for economic rationalists. Economic reform is about satisfying human needs. Economic reform is about making people feel more secure, happier, more able to care for their families.

This is progress as a pipeline: pump more wealth in one end and more welfare flows out the other. By this standard, Australia is doing

very well. Australians are, on average and in real terms, about five times richer now than at the turn of the last century. If we maintain economic growth at over 4% a year, we will be twice as rich as we are now in about 20 years' time, and so ten times richer than we were 100 years ago – and about 40 times richer than 200 years ago.

Flaws in the model

I want to consider now three problems with this linear optimism: it is inequitable; it is unsustainable; and it is not meeting its core objective of making life better or people happier.

Equity: About 200 years ago, the average income in the richest country of the world was about three times that in the poorest; today it is more than 70 times greater. There is currently, in the literature, a lot of debate about trends in global inequality. It depends, for example, on how national currencies are adjusted in making comparisons. Thus, the UN Statistical Commission has just released a paper which says that, using purchasing power parity rather than exchange rates,

> the fifth of the world's people living in the highest income countries have 60% to 65%, not 86%, of the world's income, and that the gap in per capita income between the countries with the richest fifth of the world's population and those with the poorest fifth is not 74 to 1, but 16 to 1, and that the gap is not unequivocally widening but moderately fluctuating.

Sustainability: World Wide Fund for Nature recently released the second of its *Living Planet Reports*. It notes that its Living Planet Index, based on an assessment of the health of forest, freshwater, marine and coastal ecosystems, has declined by a third since 1970. Humanity's Ecological Footprint, a measure of the ecological pressure of people on the Earth, has increased by half over this period. Sometime in the 1970s, WWF says, we passed the point of living within the regenerative capacity of Earth.

Quality of life: International comparisons show a close correlation between per capita income and many indicators of quality of life, but the relationship is often non-linear: increasing income confers large benefits at low income levels, but little if any benefit at high income levels. Furthermore, the causal relationship between wealth and quality of life is often surprisingly unclear.

Some of the strongest evidence for material progress is that the vast majority of people today say they are happy and satisfied with their lives, and people in rich countries tend to be happier than people in poor countries. However, one of the most surprising findings of research into what psychologists call subjective well-being (which includes life satisfaction and happiness) is the often small correlation with objective resources and conditions. One recent estimate is that external circumstances account for only about 15% of the differences in well-being between people.

Only in the poorest countries is income a good indicator of well-being. In most nations the correlation is small, with even the very rich being only slightly happier than the average person. That people in rich countries are happier than those in poor nations may be due, at least in part, to factors other than wealth, such as literacy, democracy and equality.

Another striking finding is that the proportion of people in developed nations, including Australia, who are happy or satisfied with their lives has remained stable over the past several decades that these things have been measured (about 50 years in the US), even though we have become, on average, much richer.

It appears that increased income matters to subjective well-being when it helps people meet basic needs, but beyond that the relationship becomes more complicated. There is no simple answer to what causes happiness. Instead, there is a complex interplay between genes and environment, between life events and

circumstances, culture, personality, goals and various adaptation and coping strategies.

The evidence suggests that people adjust goals and expectations and use illusions and rationalisations to maintain over time a relatively stable, and positive, rating of life satisfaction. In other words, life satisfaction is held under homeostatic control, rather like blood pressure or body temperature. This does not mean that social, economic and political developments do not affect well-being, but that the relationship between the objective and subjective realms is not clear-cut and linear.

There is another way to measure people's perceptions of quality of life that maybe gets us around this homeostasis: ask them, not about their own lives, but about how they think people in general are faring. These questions yield much more negative findings. In a May 1999 poll I organised for the Australia Institute, despite the long economic boom, only 24% of Australians said 'the overall quality of life of people in Australia, taking into account social, economic and environmental conditions and trends' was getting better; 36% said it was getting worse and 38% that it was staying about the same.

The same question was asked again in January 2000, this time by *The Australian* newspaper. The percentage saying life was getting better had risen, to 31%. The percentage choosing worse was almost unchanged at 34%, while that saying life was about the same fell to 34%; 1% were uncommitted. The same market research company, Newspoll, conducted the quality of life polls, using a random telephone survey of 1200 Australians aged 18 and over in all Australian States and in both city and country areas. The results were weighted to reflect the population distribution.

In our 1999 poll, people were also asked 'in about what decade do you think overall quality of life in Australia has been at its highest'. Only 24% said the 1990s; a similar proportion chose the 1980s and 1970s,

with the 'vote' then declining through the 1960s, 1950s, and before the 1950s. There was a good fit between how people answered the two questions: most of those who chose the 1990s as the best decade thought life was getting better; those who picked the 1980s were most likely to say it was staying the same; and most of those who chose the 1970s or earlier believed life was getting worse.

While personal quality of life measures are positively biased, those of social quality of life may be biased towards the negative – by, for example, the media's focus on bad news. Still, there is evidence the social perceptions are grounded in real changes in modern life. They appear to be fundamentally about values, priorities and goals – both personal and national – and the degree of congruence or conflict between them.

Surveys show many of us are concerned about the greed, excess and materialism that we believe drive society today, underlie many social ills, and threaten our children's future. We are yearning for a better balance in our lives, believing that when it comes to things like individual freedom and material abundance, we don't seem to 'know where to stop' or now have 'too much of a good thing'.

Beyond the abstract moral issues, surveys also reveal more tangible dimensions to our concerns about 'progress' and its impact on quality of life. We feel that: we are under more stress, with less time for families and friends; families are more isolated and under more pressure; a sense of community is being lost; work has become more demanding and insecure; and the gap between rich and poor is growing. All these concerns are linked, directly or indirectly, to the 'growth priority'.

The 1999 survey of quality of life in Australia asked people to rate the importance of several factors in improving their own personal quality of life. It found that 75% rated as very important 'being able to spend more time with your family and friends' and 66% 'having less stress

and pressure in your life'. Only 38% rated as very important 'having more money to buy things' and 36% feeling they were 'doing more for the community'. The 2000 survey by *The Australian* newspaper framed this question in a different way, asking people if there was more or less of these factors in people's lives now compared with ten years ago. Despite the festive season, 91% said there was more stress and pressure; 68% said people had less time to spend with family and friends; 51% said there was less caring for the needs of the community; but 49% said people had more money to buy things.

In response to other questions in *The Australian* poll, 55% said the distribution of wealth in Australia was less fair now than 10 years ago; 83% agreed the rich were getting richer and the poor poorer; 57% said there was a greater proportion of rich people in Australia now compared with ten years ago and 70% a greater proportion of poor people; 70% said they would prefer 'the gap between the rich and the poor to get smaller' over 'the overall wealth of Australia to grow as fast as possible'; and 79% said Australians workers were less secure in keeping their jobs compared with ten years ago.

It seems, then, that measures of social quality of life reflect social conditions and trends that measures of personal well-being tend to mask. Our social perceptions may be distorted by media and other influences, and vary over the short term as personal circumstances change and the national mood shifts. Subjective measures are just that – subjective. However, the evidence suggests the perceptions are not distant and detached, but reflect deeply felt concerns about modern life.

Myths about growth as progress

Let me turn now to some myths or misperceptions about growth in the contemporary political and public debate over its relationship to well-being. I'll list these briefly, and focus on the last one.

1) If you are *against* current patterns of growth, including economic globalisation, you are *for* failed socialist, centralised, command economies. This confuses means and ends, function and meaning, systems and worldviews – how we do something rather than why we do it. This confusion leads to the claim that whatever its faults, capitalism or neo-liberalism is the best system we have and we should stick to it until someone invents a better one.

2) Growth allows us to spend more on meeting social and environmental objectives. This is understandable: high growth, more revenue, bigger budget surpluses, more to spend on new or bigger programs. But this myth ignores the evidence that growth processes are not socially and environmentally neutral. It assumes that, at worst, we can always repair with more wealth the damage that wealth creation causes.

3) Increased income (for example, as measured by increased output per hour of work) is better, 'all other things being equal', because it increases our choices, our 'command over goods and services'. Again, this view seems straightforward and compelling. But I don't believe all other things can ever be equal; that, to the contrary, the processes of growth inevitably and inherently tend to affect 'all other things'.

Here are some examples. Growth, as we know it, is closely linked to cultural trends like increasing consumerism and individualism, which place the individual at the centre of a framework of values and encourage us to live for the gratification of material wants. Yet:

- US researchers have shown that people for whom 'extrinsic goals' such as fame, fortune and glamour are a priority in life tend to experience more anxiety, depression and lower overall well-being than people oriented towards 'intrinsic goals' of close relationships, self-acceptance and contributing to the community. Referring to 'a dark side of the American dream', the researchers

say that the culture in some ways seems to be built on precisely what turns out to be detrimental to mental health. Similarly, Australian psychologists have found consumerist and materialist values are positively correlated with depression, anxiety and anger; materialism is also negatively correlated with life satisfaction.

- A British researcher found in a recent cross-national study of values and crime that tolerance for a set of 'materially self-interested' attitudes – like keeping something you've found, or lying in your own interest – was higher in men, younger people, larger cities, and had increased over time. This mirrors patterns of criminal offending. These self-interested values were also found to be statistically associated with crime victimisation rates.
- In my own research looking at the socio-economic and cultural correlates of youth suicide in OECD nations – male rates have tripled or more in several countries including Australia over the past 50 years – I found no significant correlation with a range of plausible socio-economic causes including youth unemployment, child poverty and divorce. But suicide rates were positively correlated with several measures of individualism, including personal freedom and control. Both youth suicide and individualism were also negatively correlated with older people's sense of parental duty. While the interpretation of these findings is by no means clear-cut, they may reflect a failure of Western societies – and some more than others – to provide appropriate sites or sources of social identity and attachment, and, conversely, a tendency to promote false expectations of individual freedom and autonomy.

Back in 1970, the Swedish economist Stephen Linder pointed out that as income and therefore the value of one's time increases, it becomes less and less 'rational' to spend it on anything besides making money or on spending it conspicuously. Citing Spender, the American psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi states:

> As is true of addiction in general, material rewards at first enrich the quality of life. Because of this we tend to conclude that more must be better. But life is rarely linear; in most cases, what is good in small quantities becomes commonplace and then harmful in larger doses.

The survey results discussed above support this point of view.

Beyond growth – an emerging consensus?

A new report by the World Bank, *Quality of growth*, released very recently, stresses the importance of 'the sources and patterns of growth to development outcomes'. The report questions why policy-makers continue 'to rely so heavily, and often solely, on the pace of GDP growth as the measure of progress'. The report emphasises four crucial areas that complement and shape growth: improving access to education, protecting the environment, managing global risks and improving the quality of governance. The last includes making institutions less corrupt, more transparent, and accountable to ordinary people – all aspects of a civil society.

At the news conference to launch the report, a journalist from *The Economist* noted that if the report was saying that GDP did not cover all aspects of human welfare, this was obvious and nothing new; if it was saying that there were circumstances where growth in GDP should be sacrificed for other things, then this was radical. Both the World Bank's chief economist, Nick Stern, and vice president and lead author of the report, Vinod Thomas, said that, in short, yes, this (the latter) was what the report was arguing. Thomas says that:

> Just as the quality of people's diet, and not just the quantity of food they eat, influences their health and life expectancy, the way in which growth is generated and distributed has profound implications for people and their quality of life.

In essence, then, a fundamental problem with growth, as it is currently measured and derived, is that it is failing in its core objective of making life better and people happier, at least in nations that are already wealthy. This should not be interpreted as an attack on

economic and technological development as such, but as a critique of the ends towards which it is being directed, and the manner in which it is being pursued.

A key issue here is the narrow focus on the rate of growth, rather than its content. At present, government policies give priority to the rate, but leave the content largely to the market and consumer choice. Most economic growth is derived from increased personal consumption, despite the evidence of its personal, social and environmental costs. We need, individually and collectively, to be more discerning about what economic activities we encourage and discourage. While such suggestions are often dismissed as 'social engineering', this criticism ignores the extent to which our lifestyle is already being 'engineered', through marketing, advertising and the mass media, to meet the requirements of the economy.

These issues need to be incorporated into a new *weltanschauung*, a new view of the world and our place in it, a new framework of ideas within which to make choices and decisions, personally and politically, as citizens and consumers, parents and professionals. My sense is that if we removed growth – becoming ever richer, regardless of where and how – as the centrepiece of our worldview, things would fall into place, the tensions would be resolved, a sense of coherence and balance would be restored.

This sounds much simpler than it is. There is a huge social inertia that resists this change. As I said, worldviews tend to be 'transparent' or 'invisible' to those who hold them because of the deeply internalised assumptions on which they are based. And if individuals find change difficult, institutions find it even harder, running along grooves cut deep by past ways of doing things.

Both the necessity and ability to change become clearer if we look at other times of social upheaval. The great social and political movements of the nineteenth century shattered many assumptions

of what was 'normal' at that time: recurrent epidemics of typhus and cholera, child labour, the buying and selling of human life, the appalling working conditions in 'dark, Satanic mills'. For much of the twentieth century some GDP growth was traded off for a shorter working week and a shorter working life; higher quality of life meant lower growth.

Conclusion

In creating scenarios of the future, we are taught to express key variables as dichotomies or polarities, and to construct scenarios around these. I'd like to mention two such contrasting scenarios based on inner- and outer-oriented values, meanings and satisfactions: 'cheap thrills' and 'inner harmony'. They occurred to me when, on a recent family holiday to Queensland, we spent a day at Dreamworld and, about a week later, walked along a bush road one day to visit Chenrezig, a Buddhist retreat in the hills inland from the Sunshine Coast. (They also reflect, incidentally, two of the three responses – 'a' and 'c' – to the historical spikes I described at the beginning of the paper.)

Bear in mind that scenarios are extremes, or 'pure' expressions of plausible realities – I'm not suggesting we will all live our lives in theme parks, or become Buddhist monks. Dreamworld – like all theme and amusement parks, casinos etc. – is a good metaphor for the current pre-occupations of modern Western societies: the quest for more and new experiences that offer pleasure, fun, excitement. Chenrezig, with its signs requesting no drugs and sex, is about something entirely different: developing a whole new (from a modern Western perspective) awareness of ourselves and our relationship with nature.

'Cheap thrills' and 'inner harmony' reflect growing and conflicting trends, an increasing tension between our professed values – a desire for simpler, less materialistic, less fraught lives – and our lived

lifestyle – one encouraged, even imposed, by our consumer economy and culture. 'Cheap thrills' does nothing to address the issues I've discussed. In fact, its appeal lies in turning away from these issues, in celebrating the power of technology to distract and amuse. As Woody Allen once said, 'don't under-estimate the power of distraction to keep our minds off the truth of our situation'. 'Inner harmony', on the other hand, reflects an emerging global consciousness, environmental sensitivity and spiritual awareness – a transformation of the dominant ethos of industrialised nations in recent centuries.

This might all seem a very long way from the issues most of you grapple with: budgets, course structures, technological innovations, etc. But all education – from primary to adult – is ultimately about worldviews: how we see the world and our place in it, and so how and for what we should live. The issues I have raised, while perhaps not directly applicable to what you do, should inform the underlying reasons for what you do – subtly but deeply.

Australians' worldview, like that of other Western societies, is framed around notions of progress, of making life better. Progress, in turn, is closely linked to economic growth – especially its rate rather than its content. This view of progress is, I've argued, inequitable, unsustainable and, contrary to its core objective, is not increasing well-being or quality of life. Thus the central task of the future, for the future, is to create a new view of the world.

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Australian Journal of Adult Learning
Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

Recent research on the role and contribution of ACE

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This paper brings together some of the findings of recent and current studies concerning the role and contribution of adult and community education. The three studies were proposed by ANTA at the MCEETYA ACE Taskforce conference in August 1999 and had their origins in the Key Performance Indicators for Adult Community Education Report. The overall aim of the three projects was to be a springboard to take ACE forward. Firstly, there was a need for ACE to be able to better measure inputs and outcomes against a set of coherent objectives. Providers need to be questioning the purpose of ACE and why people do and should participate and a central part of this is having the information to measure activity. Secondly, there was also a need to capture the true nature and extent of the sector, its contribution and quality and for a qualitative consolidation study on everything currently known about the ACE sector. Lastly, a focus was needed on the economic benefits of the ACE sector and the contribution it makes to the economy. This paper aims to promote interest in the three studies to readers and is not a stand-alone account of these studies.

Introduction

The adult and community education (ACE) sector is of keen interest to the Australian national Training Authority (ANTA). ACE is a key player for ANTA both in the delivery of vocational education and training and in the broader lifelong learning agenda. Over the past year, ANTA has sponsored several research projects (currently underway or just completed) into the ACE sector through the MCEETYA ACE Taskforce.

ACE has an important role in contributing to overall vocational education and training delivery. In 1998, there were 129,600 people enrolled in formal (that is, accredited) vocational education and training courses being delivered by ACE providers. This activity accounted for 10.2% of all students in formal vocational education and training in 1998 and 3.3% of all formal vocational education and training hours. (For 1999, the corresponding figures were: 89,000 ACE students in formal vocational education and training, accounting for 7.2% of students in formal vocational education and training and 2.8% of formal vocational education and training hours) (Bender 2000).

ACE also plays an important role in educating and training people to become lifelong learners.

Lifelong learning is an important cross-cutting policy issue in education, given recognition by the Organisation for Economic and Cultural Development (OECD) and highlighted at the recent International Indicators of Educational Systems (INES) conference in Tokyo. While the concept of lifelong learning has been used for some time, the meaning attached to it has changed significantly. In the 1970s, lifelong learning referred to 'second chance' or 'recurrent education' for adults, but in contrast, the distinguishing features of the current concept of lifelong learning include:

- recognition that learning occurs during the whole course of a person's life;
- recognition of the importance of diverse forms of learning experiences and the settings in which they occur;
- centrality of the learner and learner's needs, which signals a shift from focusing on the supply of learning provision to the demand side; and
- "emphasis on self-paced and self-directed learning and the associated emphasis on motivation to learn and 'learning to learn'".
  (Organisation for Economic and Cultural Development, 2000:1)

ANTA sponsored ACE research projects

In 2000, ANTA funded three research projects through the MCEETYA ACE Taskforce to look at the scope, nature and contribution of ACE. The purpose of the studies was to develop a better understanding of the sector and greater recognition of its contribution, particularly in relation to lifelong learning. It was anticipated that the information provided would also be used to promote the ACE sector. The projects comprised the following.

1. The scope of adult and community education in Australia and implications for improved data collection and reporting (Data Project)

The Data Project was undertaken by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER). It was finalised in time to inform the *Review of National Policy for Adult Community Education*.

The aims of the Data Project were to:

- "scope the provision of ACE in Australia;
- scope the current collection of data at the national and State level;
- review the scope and purpose of the data to assist in developing a statistics collection for ACE that measures achievement against objectives;
- identify gaps in data elements collected nationally;
- assess the feasibility of expanding the current collection arrangements; and
- estimate the costs of any possible expansion to current collection arrangements".

(Borthwick, Knight, Bender and Loveder 2000:1)

The NCVER reported that neither a national data standard for ACE currently existed nor obligation for providers to pass on data on ACE activity to a national data collection except for publicly funded vocational education and training. However, many providers report personal enrichment activity also. This environment has created a diversity in reporting which has contributed to both the difficulty in defining the ACE sector and in estimating the scope of its activity.

As such, while there were 582,000 ACE students and more than 21.2 million training hours formally reported in 1998, taking into account students who undertook ACE programs which were not reported, the NCVER estimated that a total of 1.2 million to 1.4 million people were enrolled in some form of ACE in 1998. This represented 8.0% to 9.5% of Australia's adult population, resulting in an estimated 25 million to 30 million hours of activity (Borthwick *et al.* 2000:6). (It should be noted that total ACE activity reported nationally to NCVER of 21.2 million hours total to 100% but the 582,000 students total to more than 100% because students can be enrolled in more than one course.)

Bearing in mind that the available data to the NCVER is not comprehensive, the following are the key findings based on the NCVER ACE national data collection figures for 1998.

In 1998, the 582,000 nationally reported ACE students aged 15 years or more represented 3.9% of the Australian population (aged 15 years

or more). The total 21 million ACE activity training hours that they undertook can be examined from both a program and a provider perspective.

On a program basis, activity reported nationally to the NCVER comprised:

- 9.9 million hours (129,600 students) in formal vocational ACE,
- 3.1 million hours (120,800 students) in informal vocational ACE, and
- 8.2 million hours (358,200 students) in non-vocational ACE. (Borthwick *et al.* 2000:10–12)

The NCVER classified ACE programs as formal vocational education and training where a student was enrolled in a program that could result in a qualification classified under the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) or the old Register of Awards in Tertiary Education (RATE), or in other certificates (including statements of attainment and endorsements to certificates).

Of the 129,600 ACE students participating in these vocational programs in 1998, 66% were female and half were older than 37.1 years. They averaged 76 hours of training each, which was significantly less than the average of 204 hours undertaken by students studying at TAFE or private providers (Borthwick *et al.* 2000:10).

The NCVER classified informal vocational education and training as comprising all non-award vocational programs as well as module only enrolment activity.

Of the 120,000 nationally reported ACE students enrolled in informal vocational education and training activity in 1998, 68% were female and half were older than 38.4 years. The total students averaged 26 hours of training per person which was approximately one-third of the

average number of hours undertaken by students undertaking formal vocational education and training (Borthwick *et al.* 2000:11).

Personal enrichment programs are generally characterised by short courses consisting of only one or two modules. In 1998, more than 358,000 students (representing 8.2 million hours) were participating in nationally reported personal enrichment programs. More than 620 providers delivered 501,200 module enrolments and 470,200 course enrolments.

From a provider perspective, activity reported nationally to NCVER (Borthwick *et al.* 2000:12) comprised 19.1 million hours of activity at community-based providers; and 2.1 million hours at other providers (mostly TAFE colleges).

The ACE sector shows great diversity and versatility with a range of training organisations and providers delivering both vocational as well as non-vocational programs.

Of the 582,000 ACE students reported nationally in 1998:

- 71% were female, 29% male;
- 50% were older than 38.5 years indicating that ACE students, on average, are significantly older than students participating in other post-compulsory education;
- 22% undertook formal vocational education and training and 21% informal vocational education and training;
- *62% were enrolled in personal enrichment programs (note: as students can be enrolled in both vocational education and training and personal enrichment programs, these percentages add to more than 100%);*
- *82% were enrolled with community providers and 18% with other providers (TAFE institutes, universities etc.); and*
- close to half (47%) of all annual hours of reported ACE were undertaken in formal vocational education and training programs. (Borthwick *et al.* 2000:*v*, *viii*, 10)

It is important to remember that the NCVER work delivered a view of the ACE sector from the most up-to-date data available at a point in time and, due to the uneven history of data collection in the States and Territories, did not have full coverage in some jurisdictions (particularly in Western Australia). As such, circumstances such as these can tend to contribute to presenting a skewed view of the ACE sector. However, as the Data Project was being undertaken, other parallel studies were also being carried out, such as the State and Territory mapping projects, which will add to the store of data on the ACE sector and contribute to a better understanding of the ACE sector.

The consultations undertaken by the NCVER as part of the project also showed that market research was seen by all ACE providers as more valuable to them than enrolment, provider organisational data. The majority of providers undertook customer satisfaction/ course evaluation surveys. This kind of information was regarded as critical to the viability of the organisation. Providers were also interested in assessing and evaluating the learner's experience of the course. The collection methodology for this varied but primarily was largely self-administered in class or face-to-face (Borthwick *et al.* 2000:15).

A concern was expressed that data collection should capture the outcomes of ACE in terms of the social and personal impact as well as the vocational and employment-related outcomes. While this type of information was already collected by some providers, it was mostly in the form of qualitative data (Borthwick *et al.* 2000:16).

2. Consolidation of ACE research and promotional brochure preparation (Consolidation Project)

The objectives of the Consolidation Project were to provide a clearer understanding of the role and nature of the ACE sector and to develop a brochure explaining its strength and diversity in order to promote the sector.

Major topics covered in the review of research which is nearing completion, include:

- scope and nature of the ACE sector;
- characteristics of participation in ACE and the nature of ACE clientele;
- factors affecting the ACE sector; and
- the role of ACE in lifelong learning.
  (Golding, Davies & Volkoff 2000:11)

The Consolidation Project had some overlap with the data project. It looked at the research available on the nature and extent of the sector in addition to the contribution and quality. The report focuses primarily on research generated during the 1990s and currently in progress in Australia.

In 1991, *Come in Cinderella* highlighted the relative paucity of ACE research. Since then, there has been strong growth in research especially in New South Wales and Victoria (Golding *et al.* 2000:5).

For the purposes of the study, a broad view of ACE was taken and provider-based and descriptive research as well as conceptual and empirical research were included in the scope and analysis. Following are highlighted only very selective findings of the Consolidation Project, and it is recommended that the full study be considered for a more complete picture of research into the ACE sector.

The project highlighted that there are different ways of looking at ACE and these are valid in their own right and one of the reasons which makes the ACE sector interesting.

The Consolidation Project referred to some alternative, competing discourses for thinking about what ACE is, and for categorising

types of research consistent with those discourses. Golding *et al.* (2000:18) point out that while Figure 1 below, which they adapted from Ife (1997) and Watson (1999), tends artificially to provide four mutually exclusive categories of ACE and ACE research perspectives, these divisions are over-simplified. They are, however, useful in understanding and analysing discourses on ACE.

Figure 1: Some competing ACE discourses
(after Ife 1997 and Watson 1999)

HIERARCHICAL

MANAGERIAL ACE	PROFESSIONAL ACE
• ACE as a **program**	• ACE as a **service provider**
• For the pursuit of **social and economic objectives**	• For **personal fulfillment**
• ACE provider as a **program manager**	• ACE provider as **facilitator of learning**
• Accountable to **management**	• Accountable to **client and profession**
• **Program-based** research	• **Provider and client-based** research
POSITIVIST	**HUMANIST**
MARKET ACE	COMMUNITY ACE
• ACE as a **commodity**	• ACE as **participation**
• For the **customer's consumption**	• For the **citizen's empowerment**
• ACE provider as **broker or entrepreneur**	• ACE provider as **community enabler**
• Accountable through **customer choice**	• Accountable through **democratic decision-making**
• **Market-based** research	• **Context-specific, action-based** research

ANARCHIST

Source: Golding *et al.* 2000:18

As Golding *et al.* point out, the figure is useful in explaining why there are different, and often competing, research and stakeholder perspectives on ACE depending on issues such as values, assumptions and presuppositions about ACE, its purpose and accountability. It explains, for example, "why top-down, sector-oriented ACE research differs from humanist research that focuses on ACE service and participation". From the diagram, commonalities in discourses are also identifiable as well as the differences. The study also explains that what is valued, and therefore highlighted, forms the basis of differences between research discourses.

Golding *et al.* also refer to the ACE-VET interfaces and the two basic orientations towards education and training identified in *Beyond Cinderella* (Senate 1997) which can be used in analysing discourses as well. While the VET orientation is based on developing and maintaining technical and professional skills to ensure an internationally competitive workforce, the ACE orientation is based on "the broader social, cultural and personal values concerned with the enrichment of communities and the fulfillment of human lives".

The study also focuses on the three discourses dominating ACE towards the end of the decade which were identified by McIntyre (1998:170) and comprised lifelong learning; the economic necessity of education and training markets associated with economic rationalism; and equity as a second chance for disadvantaged groups. Analysis of other discourses by Hobson and Welbourne (1998) were also highlighted and their conclusion that adult learning is "fundamentally about empowering and transforming learners". In addition, the Consolidation Project also suggested that because discourses also drive ACE taxonomies, any classification system will be normative (Golding *et al.* 2000:19).

The study found that research highlighted the demonstrated commitment of ACE to community learning and its major role in

lifelong learning. The following are some of the key research findings in the report (Golding *et al.* 2000).

ACE can lead to significant involvement of adults in learning, many enrolling on an ongoing basis. However, while the largest "transition" is circulation within the sector, some learners go on to enrol in TAFE and small numbers enter university. Accredited vocational education and training within ACE also allows ACE to play a strong role in upgrading the workplace knowledge and skills of many people.

In terms of benefits, the research showed few significant differences between males and females in terms of the benefits *gained* from completing ACE courses. However, while males reported more improvement in their key competencies, females reported gaining more personal, family and community benefits (Golding *et al.* 2000:44).

The research also indicates that policy makers, researchers and ACE practitioners have sought ways to broaden the definition of ACE outcomes to more appropriately reflect the nature and extent of its contribution to individuals, the community, the economy and the nation. For example, the accumulation of social capital through broad participation in ACE is seen as a source of regional regeneration or community development (Golding *et al.* 2000:61).

The research also highlighted the benefits of ACE for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly as a key starting point or second-chance for those who are educationally disadvantaged. These include early school leavers, indigenous people, adult migrants, ex-prisoners and sole parents seeking re-entry to the workforce (Golding *et al.* 2000:75). For many, ACE can be a turnaround foundation experience leading towards a passion for lifelong learning.

Some groups shown by the study as being well-represented in ACE (Golding *et al.* 2000:6) are also under-represented in other areas of education. These groups included:

- women;
- people from some ethnic groups;
- rural populations;
- small business proprietors and employees; and
- people with disabilities.

Other groups who were shown by the study to be under-represented in ACE (Golding *et al.* 2000:6) are also under-represented in other areas of education include:

- early school leavers;
- people from some ethnic groups;
- older learners;
- unemployed people;
- indigenous groups and communities;
- sole parents;
- ex-offenders;
- people in isolated areas; and
- the poor.

Other ACE-associated outcomes recorded in the research include "contribution to a learning culture within a community, improvements in learning skills, transformation of dispositions towards learning and community involvement, connectedness to community and improvements to social and economic well-being of families, communities and regions" (Golding *et al.* 2000:7).

Opportunities and challenges for ACE highlighted in the research include lifelong learning; the increase of accredited vocational education and training in ACE; ACE as a transition platform to other forms of education and training; and technological change (Golding *et al.* 2000:8).

3. The ACE sector's outcomes and its contribution to the economy (Economy Project)

The Economy Project is currently underway and an interim report only has been produced at this stage.

Through its contribution to lifelong learning and the potential for students to move on to vocational education and training, the ACE sector is a significant national economic player (Doss, Kenyon and Dockery 2000:4). The project team aim to quantify the economic impact of this sector on the Australian economy. More specifically, the main aims as outlined in Interim Report No. 1 are to:

- "measure the direct economic impact of the ACE sector on the Australian economy;
- determine the extent to which ACE provides a bridge to vocational education and training or university study;
- determine the net human capital investment benefits contributed by completion of ACE courses; and
- estimate the consumption benefit as a result of ACE delivering education for enjoyment as a recreational or leisure activity and for personal enrichment."

(Doss *et al.* 2000:5)

Pilot tests are being conducted in early 2001 and will contribute to finalising the sample frame. It is currently proposed to include in the sample frame, those providers nationally reported in the NCVER collection supplemented by others who are considered by the State and Territory authorities as also being ACE providers (Kenyon 2001).

The emphasis of this study is to be on the ACE sector outcomes and data are to be collected retrospectively for 1999 from providers and their clients. The main components of the Economy Project's methodology are:

- "literature review/desktop analysis of factors which affect the economic impact of educational institutions and of existing secondary data sources pertaining to the size and scope of the ACE sector;
- primary data collection – surveys of ACE providers and clients of the ACE sector which is representative of the population of the ACE sector as a whole;
- consultations with the ACE sector for fine-tuning and validation of the survey instruments and to obtain the client sample."

(Doss *et al.* 2000:5)

The specific aims of the project are to be achieved by examining:

- Direct impacts (Doss *et al.* 2000:6) – an estimate of the value to the Australian economy of the resources devoted to the ACE sector. This is to be estimated through provider information, student information and community effects (Doss *et al.* 2000:8). If individual provider data are not available, it is proposed to conduct case studies of regional ACE providers to demonstrate the indicative community effects of ACE provision in regional areas.
- Bridge to vocational education and training or university (Doss *et al.* 2000:9). The study will draw heavily on work by Volkoff, Golding and Jenkin (1999) for three Australian States which assessed the aims of the providers in programming decisions and the motivations and outcomes of students taking ACE courses. Provider and student surveys will be used to collect this information.
- Net human capital investment benefits (Doss *et al.* 2000:9) – occurring where the knowledge and skills gained increase the participant's productive capacity and future earnings.
- Consumption benefit (Doss *et al.* 2000:14). The client survey will collect information regarding the costs associated with an ACE course and the number of paid hours of work foregone to attend a course. Motivation factors and satisfaction will also be addressed.

As the economic value of the ACE sector is the sum of the investment benefit and the consumption benefit, and existing data are insufficient in relation to the costs of provision of ACE and fees and other

expenditure by clients, the project team will be conducting two sample surveys – ACE providers and clients (Doss *et al*. 2000:15). To obtain the proposed 400 usable responses from providers, it is proposed to survey the total population of providers (Doss *et al*. 2000:18).

The survey is scheduled for the February/March period 2001. The outcome of this study will be a report which provides information on ACE sector outcomes and the sector's contribution to the Australian economy.

Conclusion

ACE is a key player for Australia both in the delivery of vocational education and training and in the broader lifelong learning agenda. This paper has brought together some of the findings of the recent and current studies which have shed more light on the ACE sector in terms of its scope, nature and contribution to the economy. The Data Project provided an estimate of the full extent of ACE activity beyond the national reporting system. The Consolidation Project synthesised the ACE research generated since the start of the 1990s and the Economy Project will provide a quantification of the economic impact of the ACE sector. Particularly, these studies have all highlighted the important role of ACE in skills formation and in lifelong learning and human capital (Doss *et al*. 2000:8).

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Australian Journal of Adult Learning
Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

The discursive construction of ACE in national policy*

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This paper explores how the 'adult community education (ACE) sector' was discursively constructed in national policy during the period of Australian training reform. The concept of an 'ACE sector' is taken to refer to a policy construction as well as the complexities of provision. The argument is advanced that the 'ACE sector' has developed a life of its own with high policy values that work in tension with the actual community-based educational practices of neighbourhood houses, community colleges and adult education centres. It is noted that ACE national policy comprehends a range of provision extending well beyond bona fide community-based organisations, highlighting that the 'ACE sector', as an idea, has an extraordinary policy reach and 'policy symbolism' in the story of Australian training reform and policy intervention in education and training. The term 'ACE' has been skilfully used to name, mobilise, organise, defend, legitimate and control a range of activity in the different states and territories. In short, the politics of ACE policy is an important area of analysis of Australian adult education and its transformation in recent years.

* Paper originally prepared for a forum on "Languages and Literacy Policy: Australian Perspectives", 25–26 February 1999, at UTS, Sydney.

In this paper I want to explore how the 'adult community education (ACE) sector' has been discursively constructed in national policy during the period of Australian training reform. I will be talking about the 'ACE sector' not so much as a reference to complex institutional realities but more as a highly problematic policy construction.

My thesis is that the 'ACE sector' has developed a life of its own with high policy values that work in tension with the actual community-based educational practices of neighbourhood houses, community colleges and adult education centres. Though the term is strictly only applicable to such community organisations, in national policy (MCEETYA 1997) it comprehends such a wide a range of provision that 'the ACE sector' becomes the vaguest of ideas. But this policy symbolism and policy reach is exactly what is interesting in terms of theorising policy and training reform – the term 'ACE' has been skilfully used to name, mobilise, organise, defend, legitimate and control a range of activity in the different states (McIntyre 1998).

Why is the 'emergence' of ACE relevant to a forum on national language and literacy policy? It is appropriate because ACE (and here I mean *bona fide* community providers) participated in language and literacy policy developments from an early stage, so that Whyte and Crombie can say, "this area of practice more than any other, drew the attention of modern governments to adult education" (Whyte & Crombie 1995:93). Neighbourhood houses made adult literacy a basis for their work, and adult literacy and TESOL were a major factor bringing adult education in the form of ACE within the scope of training reform and some key debates about access and equity in the 'reformed' VET system.

The discursive construction of ACE

I am interested in the way that the construction of ACE in national policy has called on a variety of powerful discourses to legitimate and promote 'the sector' (I will continue to parenthesise in this way

to signify the construct). By discursive construction in policy I mean the ways in which policy understandings of 'the ACE sector' have been shaped and reshaped during the period of Australian training reform, by processes that were part of the institutional work of policy intervention or working in tandem with it.

I will refer to an array of discourses that have been adapted and deployed in this way – communitarianism, liberalism and vocationalism, access and equity, lifelong education, managerialism and marketisation. I don't claim that my descriptions of these shaping ideologies can adequately convey the policy languages that in succession (and in interaction) helped to shape and reshape adult education activities. However, I think it is worth trying to subject the policy givens to some analysis, since one remarkable feature of 'the sector' is the finesse of the policy management of ACE bureaucrats (and that is a compliment).

There needs to be more debate about ACE's 'recognition' as part of education and training and its 'inclusion' in VET and more theorisation of the nature of this development as a discursive construction of policy. In my view, there has been too little attention paid to the 'politics of community' and its discourse of communitarianism, especially as espoused in the feminist practices of neighbourhood houses, but also in the remaking of older institutions as community agencies through their 'communalisation' by the state. Both trends have transformed the relationships of adult education and 'modern government'. Policy intervention has effectively discarded the values of liberalism for community-based forms of provision that speak a great deal about the working of the contemporary state. In my analysis, communitarian politics have been crucial to this transformation of adult education agency, but this key aspect has been neglected since training reform has concentrated attention on the threats and opportunities presented by the impact of the 'vocationalism' of training reform (see Whyte & Crombie 1995).

The discursive construction of ACE in national policy is rich in contradictions and tensions, however finessed and homogenised the statements of national ACE policy (see MCEETYA 1997). I want to try and account for the evolving 'policy symbolism' of the ACE sector, as well as understand its institutional structuring and restructuring. Naturally, I share a view of training reform as 'policy intervention' and accept that our task is to theorise this, recognising that there is a 'discourse of policy' not just policy discourses in play (Ball 1994). However, I also hope to explore policy processes and give some place to the role of 'actor networks' in playing out policy. Above all, I look for some account of shifts in the state and the bureaucratic culture of its 'policy systems' and actor understandings of policy processes (Considine 1992).

I acknowledge that this paper is an account of the discursive construction of ACE, and that there are different narratives or sets of narratives (and that from my position I understand ACE not as a practitioner but as a policy researcher working within a policy system (Considine 1992).

Inevitably, I am going to give my version(s) of various narratives of the discursive construction of ACE. One such narrative is the recognition story, where it is possible to trace the genesis of the 'ACE sector' construct from its adoption in the national professional body that fused different adult and community education interests, the creation of the Board of ACE and the ACFE Board in Victoria (both of which drew official boundaries of provision amidst the first-wave restructuring of TAFE systems) to its use by the landmark inquiry of a Senate Committee which referred to the 'emergence' of ACE in its report *Come In Cinderella* (Aulich 1991). This was truly an emergence into national policy discourse under training reform.

This is a success story, of sector lobbyists getting parliamentarians to recognise the 'claims' and 'achievements' of adult education in the broad including workplace training and adult basic education, yet the

report *Come In Cinderella* cited the work of community agencies in many of its references. The 'claims' of the sector, it might be said, highlighted those made by the community sector about their role in personal and social well-being as well as economic activity at the local level. The slippage from broad 'adult learning' to 'community agency' is typical.

The success of the Senate Inquiry was followed by the creation of a national ACE policy (MCEETYA 1997) made possible by a national reform agenda and its politics of 'corporate federalism' (Lingard, Knight & Porter, 1993). As training reform reaches its apogée in the formation of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA), the story of ACE can be told in terms of the skilful management of the reform environment by bureaucrats who position 'the sector' advantageously, even as their own policy parameters are being changed by a corporatising of government. This is the 'inclusion story' which leads to the creation of ANTA-funded vocational programs by ACE organisations (see Schofield 1995).

However, there is another tale of the restructuring of institutionalised adult and vocational education by state governments which overlaps in time with the interventions of national policy. This story has as many versions as there are states, and it is one of state administrations abandoning older bureaucratic cultures for a new managerialism, its economic rationalism and neo-conservative politics. There is a complex reworking of the institutional forms of adult and vocational education where new boundaries are drawn between publicly funded institutions and community agencies in terms of a vocational and non-vocational binary that equates ACE to leisure and enrichment and remits its costs to the community (McIntyre 1995, 1997). This is partly the state deciding to limit claims on the public purse at a time where post-compulsory participation was expanding these claims dramatically through TAFE expenditures. The bigger picture is the rejection of welfarism and the promotion of the community services sector (Yeatman 1990). In NSW, before

the heat of training reform, as government restructured TAFE, it rationalised evening colleges and 'communalised' their agency (McIntyre 1997) while promoting a self-help, community-based adult education centre movement in rural areas. In Victoria, the well-established community agencies reached a different accommodation with government and TAFE institutions. In other states, older forms of adult education are simply absorbed in TAFE. When the 'ACE sector' emerges, it does so embracing a variety of organisations, histories, interests and agendas.

The restructuring story (and I am conscious mine is told by a witness to NSW events) helps to understand how it is that language and literacy policy comes to be so important for the 'emergence' of community-based adult education. It is at this point that I assert the importance of the political economy and policy systems (see Considine 1994). The effects of 'communalising' older institutions through user-pays general adult education is their impoverishment, since liberal adult education does not pay for itself except in the most affluent urban areas (McIntyre, Brown & Ferrier 1996). This limitation stimulates the new organisations to diversify into other and better-resourced areas of provision, particularly labour market programs and language and literacy. (The story of Central West Community College is well-known, and was part of the case for ACE's vocational standing mounted by research for the NSW Board, see McIntyre *et al.* 1995). Both national and state funds flowed into community agencies as a direct result of training reform and its promotion of national language and literacy policy. Thus, we need to explore how 'communalisation' of adult education is symptomatic of new policy and funding regimes emerging in the political economy of the contemporary state.

In the story of ACE's inclusion in ANTA, the policy discourse shifts from one of terms of sectoral recognition, a language of 'claims' and 'achievements', to a language of worth and validity, as the state

debates on what terms if at all community adult education should count as part of the greater vocational education and training system. Whereas the 'recognition discourse' in the Senate Report is about claims on government, the dialectics of 'inclusion' are about the extent to which ACE meets the terms of the vocationalist agenda. Whereas the access and equity discourses were dominant in the discussions of the Senate report around the claims of the sector, in the debates about the inclusion of ACE, equity is subsumed into arguments about the vocational worth of ACE.

My point here is that the 'communalising' of agency paves the way for restructured agencies to become vocational providers by virtue of their need to diversify provision, meet a wide range of community needs and gain resources through business and computing training and their expansion into labour market and literacy programs. Training reform has the effect of catalysing this transformation, resourcing it and finally legitimating it through ANTA.

Discourses

Among the discourses which compete in shaping policy understandings of ACE, I argue that it is the tensions around *communitarianism* that are interesting yet little analysed. This is because the claims of community agency have been all but buried by the dominance of other discursive conflicts, by a politics of recognition that demanded ACE be understood as a broad church with the most general of manifestos – lifelong learning (see again, MCEEYTA 1997). ACE policy has adopted and made its own the discourse of *lifelong learning* and adult participation, positioning and legitimating its activity in relation to powerful global policy understandings that are to be located, as Yeatman says, within a meta-discourse of economic rationalism and the work of international policy organisations such as the OECD.

Communitarian discourses, in contrast, have been a basis for feminist practice in the neighbourhood houses and rural adult education centres, as well as an impetus to the community college model for TAFE that was silenced by corporatisation in 1990. The key point, however, is how this discourse stands in relation to old (liberal, unreformed and male managed) adult education.

Frazer and Lacey (1993) identify a 'liberal-communitarian debate' and critique it from a feminist position that rejects this binary. 'Communitarianism' they characterise as 'the thesis that the community, rather than the individual, the state, the nation or any other entity is and should be at the centre of our analysis and our value system.

> Communitarians emphasise the embedded and embodied status of the individual person by contrast with the central themes emphasised in particular in contemporary liberal thought which can construct an abstract and disembodied individual. They tend to emphasise the value of specifically communal and public goods, and conceive of values rooted in communal practices, again by contrast with liberalism which emphasises individual rights and conceives of the individual subject as the ultimate originator and bearer of value … (Frazer & Lacey 1993:2).

I argue that this opposition of communitarianism and liberalism has in fact been constitutive of the policy construction of ACE, though this is *denied in and by policy discourse*. The newer community agencies like neighbourhood houses arose and contended with the older liberal agencies such as the WEA and the Victorian CAE, and this conflict is to be understood in gendered terms as I have already suggested. Yet the policy discourse of 'recognition' and 'inclusion' under training reform defined the competing rationales for adult education as the liberal and the vocational. The 'attack' of training reform upon adult education was the subversion by a vocational agenda of the ineffable breadth and depth of individual learning (see for example,

Bagnall 1994, Whyte & Crombie 1995, and the discussion of the state and adult education in Britain in Jarvis 1992).

This line of argument cannot be confined to ACE organisations, but must also take in the fate of TAFE under training reform. The rise of community agencies coincides with the late blaze of liberalism that we now recognise in the 'Kangan philosophy' of TAFE, an attempt to reshape narrow technical institutions in the image of liberal vocational education. The 'educational opportunity' of old liberalism was rephrased in terms of new discourses of access and equity for disadvantaged groups within social-democratic politics. Kangan sought to claim the liberal ground of 'adult education' for a broader vocational institution. Later, in almost every state, TAFE institutions moved significantly towards a communitarian discourse in the form of the community college model (for example, Beswick *et al.* 1983). It is (to me) highly significant that the first act of training reform was the utter obliteration of this kind of comprehensive community-based model for vocational education. The communitarian direction of TAFE was purged for good perhaps.

Both 'adult' and vocational' institutions were being challenged by the new and self-consciously alternative community agencies in the Kangan years and, in some ways, old adult education soon had no territory to claim as its own. Indeed, in the smaller states, adult education in time disappeared as a formal institution altogether. Yet Kangan liberalism had to contend with the new discursive oppositions of the formal versus the communal, and the state-controlled versus community governed (see, for example, numerous TAFE reports of the time assuming discourses of 'participation' and 'consultation').

I refer to these earlier moments before training reform because they did not disappear in training reform even if they were displaced by the dominance of the vocational-liberal opposition. In ACE, the politics of inclusion in national VET policy demanded that ACE demonstrate its vocational worth, and it is at this point that my own experience as a

researcher intersects with the development of ACE policy. My work for the Board of ACE was especially concerned with documenting the dimensions of the vocational activity of the ACE organisations in NSW (McIntyre, Morris & Tennant 1993, McIntyre, Foley, Morris & Tennant 1995). Though it is not my interest here, this experience has led me to look at the way research and policy relationships are mutually constitutive under corporate managerialist regimes (see McIntyre 1998). I am interested in understanding how the new corporatist policy-making deploys and is shaped by research expertise.

The point, however, is how this research assumed and worked with those discourses constituting the 'ACE sector' in national policy. Briefly, the research can be said to have deconstructed the absurdity of the vocational/non-vocational divide that the state had employed to define the boundaries of TAFE and adult education in the 'earlier moments' referred to above. The discourse of course classification, the 'streams of study' and their supposed types of courses and learning purposes had been a means by which the state limited the expansion of its responsibilities to resource the explosion of participation in organised adult learning. In this classification, adult education was defined as the negative other of vocational worth – as non-award, non-vocational, non-accredited learning for 'leisure and personal enrichment'. In effect, the research on participation and outcomes in ACE showed the extent to which ACE was in practice a vocational provider, paving the way for its inclusion in broad VET.

In a later version of this paper, I intend to explore how the discourses of access and equity, its language of disadvantage, second-chance education, barriers and pathways, were reframed by the demands of strategic policy-making as ACE 'rode the tiger' of vocationalism as it now rides the tiger of marketisation and de-regulation. Here, I want to look briefly at the pathway metaphor as a way into examining in more detail the transformations of equity discourse in ACE policy.

Equity discourse: the pathways metaphor

Equity discourses were adopted and adapted to the work of the policy construction of ACE, particularly the idea of 'pathways' to formal education for disadvantaged people. In fact, the early official position on ACE in the Senate Report can be summed in the view that ACE provides a valuable means of 'second-chance' education so it ought to be better recognised, and training reform bought this proposition (notably the Employment and Skills Formation Council in 1992) as one basis for including ACE in the VET system. I say 'adopted' because it is striking how the Kangan discourses of access and equity, disadvantage, lifelong learning and vocational need were taken up and worked to ACE's policy advantage. A textual analysis of key parts of the Kangan report and *Come in Cinderella* would be revealing in this respect.

Pathways is a key locus of analysis of ACE policy, because the research evidence has shown unequivocally that pathways for disadvantaged people mainly exist where community agencies have pathway planning practices which are based on adult literacy in combination with counselling, training, work placement and other support options. Our work for the National Women's VET Strategy on pathways from ACE to VET (McIntyre & Kimberley 1997) found there was a rich variety of community-based models, but these were concentrated in Victoria, with few pathways models to speak of anywhere else, which is consistent with the weight of the participation evidence. Most of the participants in general adult education (the advertised, fee-paying short course) are not taking a pathway from informal learning to formal learning in TAFE or higher education, but are much more likely to be topping up their store of educational experiences. So long as ACE providers are governed by user-pays and marketisation, so long as TAFE institutes scorn partnerships with community agencies (and are not discouraged by funding penalties for doing so), there will be little *bona fide* pathway construction in ACE (see McIntyre & Kimberley 1997).

The point is exactly that the pathways metaphor is a more powerful policy idea than an accurate description of the practice of many ACE organisations. It has been worked as a key metaphor for legitimating ACE within training reform, where the semiotics of pathways were as important as the 'research evidence'. In our pathways research, Kimberley and I drew attention to the power of the pathways metaphor as a policy construct before we looked for evidence for pathways 'on the ground' as it were.

Beginning from the Shorter Oxford's amazing definition of 'path' as 'a way trodden by the feet of men and beasts not expressly made or constructed', we suggested that that there are several key meanings applied to understanding access by women in adult and vocational education. A pathway could signify the making of connections or linkages by learners between one institutional location or one kind of learning experience and another; it entailed the overcoming of obstacles or barriers along the way, and a choice of direction about life experience, implying an orientation to learning, as well as qualities of venturing. It was a metaphor of learning as personal journey and search for meaning. 'Path' is a key religious metaphor, signifying a way to enlightenment or salvation or at least a progression to higher knowledge or learning by following a way. Pathways also imply a mapping and marking and guiding learners along a learning route. Obviously, there are many possibilities of conflict and tension among these meanings, and it is certainly the case that 'getting disadvantaged people into accredited courses' has been in tension with people finding their way into learning.

This kind of analysis of key policy understandings needs, of course, to be related to key policy discourses that are relevant to practitioners, and to the 'politics of community' with which the concept of ACE is invested by those who have a well-developed community practice (see Bradshaw 1996). These rationales of practitioners do not necessarily find expression in the policy rationales which governments advance

for 'community' adult education. It is important, therefore, in understanding the discursive construction of ACE in policy, to draw attention to the social theories of 'community' and to the 'communitarian' ideas that are assumed in the field.

Conclusion

As a final comment, this analysis of ACE is very much an open-ended and exploratory one that reflects the shifts in my own understanding not only of ACE but of my own participation in community organisations.

My work on adult community education has gradually arrived at a position that questions the location of adult education in liberal individualism and looks for new meanings of 'agency' within communitarian politics and the (re)location of adult education within a community services 'sector' of the contemporary state. This new location is defined by a highly problematic relationship with the state in which issues of autonomy and control are continually revisited. It is in this context that the 'policy symbolism' of national policy needs to be explored further.

As a final comment on the development of my thinking on the state and community, I refer again to my article on policy symbolism (McIntyre 1998), where, in addition to arguing a view of research and policy relationships, I take a position of advocacy for ACE organisations and their claims for a role within the 'new' diversified and competitive vocational education and training (VET) environment. In summary, I argue that the terms of 'inclusion' in national training arrangements have failed to recognise the potential contribution of community agencies to achieving equity of access to VET. I argue that if equity is to be achieved, government must intervene to fund programs, particularly community-based programs, adequately.

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Australian Journal of Adult Learning
Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

Promoting adult learning through State Boards

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This paper addresses the way in which the establishment of a Board of Adult Education enshrined in legislation can create a presence for adult learning in the minds of policy-makers in government. The paper outlines promotional activities of the Victorian Adult Community and Further Education Board and underlines the importance of having adult education embedded in the structures of government in order to maintain such activities. The paper demonstrates the practical achievements for Victorian adults of the ACFE Board's championing of adult learning since 1992.

> We are living in the first period of human history in which the time-span of major changes in knowledge and culture occur in less than the lifespan of individuals. Therefore adults must have access to the resources needed to continue their education as society, the nature of work and personal circumstances change (Senate Report 1990:90).

The creation of an ACFE Board in Victoria

In Victoria, approximately 550 registered providers of adult, community and further education (ACFE), together with the long established and large Council of Adult Education, is known as the ACE sector. Legislation in Victoria recognises that ACE is an education sector in its own right by virtue of its community ownership and management.

The same legislation – The *Adult Community and Further Education Act 1991* – established the ACFE Board and Regional Councils of ACFE to promote, plan for and allocate funds to ACE. The promulgation of this legislation marked a dramatic change in the status and recognition of the ACE sector in Victoria.

Adult and community education organisations such as neighbourhood houses and community learning centres are autonomous and accountable to their local communities. They are vigorous, energetic and enterprising, and tap into the skills of people in their community. They provide opportunities for adults who have never before identified as learners to embark on their own learning journeys.

Apart from these providers, the legislation also recognises that many other agencies, particularly TAFE and Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES), share a common education program with the ACE sector. This education program is further education. Further education as it is defined in Victoria comprises English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Literacy and Basic Education, foundation education and the Victorian Certificate of Education.

The ACE sector is an educational sector which subscribes to Yeats' view that "students are fires to be lighted, not pails to be filled". It is also a sector which, in Victoria, has withstood the sometimes utilitarian and rationalist educational fashions of the 1990s through being clear about the strength and legitimacy of its own educational philosophy and by having those strengths and values formally recognised through legislation.

The adult community education (ACE) sector in Victoria makes a very significant contribution to Victorian communities. This contribution was beginning to be recognised in the late '80s and early '90s. For ACE to thrive as an educational sector, it was important to provide it with a structure which recognised its significance and raised its status while simultaneously preserving its autonomy and independence. The ACFE Board has attempted to achieve this objective.

Creating a Board to represent the interests of adult education has allowed the formation of an embedded adult education infrastructure in Victoria. This has provided a platform for the promotion of adult learning.

Adult learning promotion: What the Board does

The current ACFE Board mission is: "To lead the vigorous development of lifelong learning in the community so that more people can realise their potential as individuals, citizens and workers" (ACFE Board 1998).

In translating its mission, promotion has become one of the key strategic directions of the Board. This has led to a host of promotional initiatives. The Board has:

- coordinated statewide activities associated with Adult Learners Weeks
- created free merchandise, display banners, general fact sheets about the sector, published articles in magazines, funded peak organisations and major research projects

- created its own website with connections to its regions and to other lead adult education organisations
- funded its own library and clearinghouse to make curriculum and resources available to the sector and adult learners online, in hardcopy, via a library and for sale
- conducted competitions celebrating adult learners and volunteers and their achievements and had articles about their successes published in major daily newspapers
- funded a research network and commissioned research on many areas, including:
- the social capital generated by the ACE sector
- the role of the sector in supporting the aspirations of women wishing to pursue a career in small business
- the advantages and disadvantages for adults of accredited and non-accredited learning, and
- the aspiration of adult students in vocational versus generalist streams.

All of these vehicles for promotion of adult education have been milked for the advantages they confer on adult learners and for the opportunities they present for the creation of a learning culture. A culmination of this effort has been the creation of nine learning towns in Victoria during 2000. Each town, charged with responsibility for promotion of adult learning, is led by an adult community education provider.

Probably more important than all of this, though, have been the structural forces which have released these initiatives. More important has been the authority which comes with having a recognised voice in government to chime into the debates which determine the access and opportunities of adult learners and to undertake key planning and policy development for adult learning; a voice at the table of the State Training Board of Victoria to inform larger adult education policy debates; a voice at the table of

the executive of the Office of Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment; and a one-to-one voice at regular meetings with the responsible Minister advocating the rights and needs of adult learners.

Where did this voice come from? It came from the creation of an Adult Community and Further Education Board which derives its authority from a legislative base. The creation of an ACFE Board and a support division within the Department of Education, enshrined in legislation, has enabled us to:

- highlight the sector's economic benefits and cost effectiveness and successfully advocate for an equitable share of resources within government
- demonstrate the sector's contribution to the wider social and educational goals of government
- create a research culture to record the achievements of the sector and of adult learners and continuously improve on practice
- continue to fund peak organisations to magnify the profile of the sector
- strengthen links between vocational and further education whilst preserving the distinct character of further education
- underline the *diversity* of the outcomes and achievements of the sector
- preserve, through explicit recognition in the legislation, the sector's independence and community ownership and management, and
- preserve an identity for a sector which is so diverse that it is difficult to identify.

As a result, we would argue, adult learning has travelled well through a period in Victorian history in which other social policy priorities have foundered. ACE in Victoria continues to be the most robust, vigorous and well resourced ACE sector in Australia. The legislation and the Board have provided certainty, stability and validity.

The benefits for adult learners have been enormous. This is what we claim. The test of these claims is whether or not:

- the resources of the sector have grown
- the independence and community ownership and management of the sector has been preserved
- ACE has matured to the point at which its place as an educational sector is assured
- further education as a program has developed and prospered, and ultimately,
- adults have achieved access to a wider range of educational opportunities.

What have been the outcomes? We'll address each of these points individually.

Financial resourcing

Funds flowing to the ACE sector through the ACFE Board almost doubled over the decade, from $16M (approx.) in 1992 to over $30M (approx.) in 1998–99. (ACFE Board, 1991–92 to 1998–99). These are funds quarantined for this sector.

In addition, since 1996, a portion of Victorian Government funds for training and further education was allocated through a competitive tender open to ACE providers. This has resulted in a further injection of approximately $6M into the sector for each of the last three years.

The Bracks State Labour Government has invested a further $3.6M recurrent from 2000 to fund infrastructure support (ACE Clusters) and Learning Towns initiatives and a further $3M per annum for each of the next three years from 2001 for capital facilities development.

The Victorian sector has access to more financial resources for delivery than the combined financial resources of the remainder of Australian ACE providers.

Independence and autonomy

The Victorian legislation recognises ACE as a distinct educational sector by virtue of its community ownership and management. ACE providers continue to be independently managed by community-based committees of management.

Maturity, robustness and infrastructure of the sector

The sector has remained relatively stable in terms of the number of providers. There were approximately 550 in 2000. In virtually any small town in Victoria where the post office has closed down and the banks have long since left, there is an ACE provider delivering education to adults and keeping the community connected, technologically and socially.

Virtually all Victorian ACE providers are linked to the internet.

The number of ACE providers that have become registered training providers has significantly expanded over the past decade – many are now providing vocational education as well as further education.

The sector has consistently outperformed public and private providers in competing for public funds in Government tenders.

ACE providers are having a significant impact on the shaping of major new learning technologies for adults, including in the wider Victorian training system, making them more accessible and more responsive to adult learning needs.

Development of further education as a program

The Adult, Community and Further Education Act (1991) provided the basis for planning and accreditation of further education curriculum to occur under the auspices of the ACFE Board. The Board has developed a curriculum framework for further education, the first of its kind in Australia, *Transforming lives, transforming communities*. Its development is significant because further education has an intrinsic character and identity which distinguishes it from vocational education.

Adult access to further education

Around 100,000 Victorian adults participate each year in a further education course funded by the government in Victoria. Charting the territory of further education is allowing the quality of teaching and learning occurring within the sector its full expression.

Conclusion

Many techniques exist for promotion of adult learning and equally many talented people to apply them. But if they are not underpinned by a strong educational foundation, all of our efforts to advocate for and promote adult learning can be easily swept away.

Once in place, a Board of Adult Education can give adult learning aspirations visibility, audibility and lasting presence in the minds of government policy makers and ministers. Ultimately, the role of an adult education Board is to engrain adult learning as an integral dimension of learning in the mind and consciousness of every educational policy-maker within its jurisdiction.[1]

If this can be achieved, the launches, the publications, the media and, ultimately, the educational programs and opportunities – all of indisputable importance for adult learners – will flow as naturally as if they were inevitable.

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[1] In a public statement on the directions of education in Victoria made in October, Victorian Premier, Hon Steve Bracks MP, stated "Our fifth goal is to make near-universal participation in post-school education and training the norm in our society. Not just for the young, but for us all." Something seems to be working.

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Australian Journal of Adult Learning
Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

"My business was not with lost souls and the underprivileged": The contribution of Colin Badger (1906–93) to adult education in Victoria, Australia

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The paper is a narrative of the contribution of Colin Badger to Victorian adult education and the founding of the Council of Adult Education. Theoretical issues are raised about individual agency and historical change, and the place of narrative history in adult education research.

Introduction

In 1991, Colin Badger wrote that it "is too early to attempt a critical assessment of my work for and influence on Australian adult education…That must wait until a detached and scholarly historian of adult education in Australia emerges" (Badger 1991:17). Whether or not this writer and historian is "detached" or "scholarly", or even emergent, is contestable, given a general theoretical and methodological abandonment of certitude in relation to research objectivity and acknowledgment that historical narratives are inevitably shaped by the writer's contemporaneity and biography (Berkhofer Jr. 1995, Dean 1994, Rushbrook 1995). This paper, nevertheless, eight years after Badger's death, is a first attempt at such an assessment.

A curious feature of late twentieth century and third millennium educational research is the absence of human agency in constructing contemporary events. This is often the result of studies that anonymously and statistically batch human endeavour or ascribe action to the influence of abstract and collective social and cultural discourses. Such an approach is at odds with the methodology of the narrative historian who seeks to place a central focus on "man [*sic*] not circumstances" (Stone 1979:3). This paper permits and seeks to recognise an ontological individualism that assumes "that what happens in the world is the result of action, that the agency of action is the individual, and that while action may be constrained and influenced in various ways individuals are free to choose" (Roberts 1996:223).

A danger in focusing on the capacity of a named individual to author history is to reinvent "The great man" approach to historical authorship, one Nietzschian disciples would no doubt applaud. Agency, however, takes many forms (Giddens 1991, Waters 1994:15–55). At one extreme, and echoing Nietzsche's 'Superman', Weber wrote of the charismatic leader who "seizes the task that is

adequate for him [sic] and demands obedience and a following by virtue of his [*sic*] mission" (Gerth & Mills 1970:246). At the other are E. P. Thompson's working class heroes whom he rescued "from the enormous condescension of posterity", a theoretical turn from his contemporaries who tended to "obscure the agency of working people, the degree to which they contributed by conscious efforts, to the making of history" (Thompson 1984:12).

Colin Badger falls between these extremes. Without doubt charismatic and certainly a populist, but lacking any romantic notions of working class nobility, he was, as Koestler wrote of epochal change agents, a "sleepwalker" or "crystallizer of thought" (Koestler 1968:213). Like a crystal forming on string in a solution of saturated salts, so did Badger distil and transform the ideas of his age – not a "superman", but nevertheless extraordinary. And, like a sleepwalker, he could not predict where his journey would lead.

Early life

If the philosophy of adult education is underpinned by a commitment to lifelong learning, then Badger's early biography provided fertile ground for later introspection. He was born Robert Colin, the eighth of eleven children, on 4 December 1906 in Peterborough, South Australia. Of humble Scottish background, his father was a haberdasher, the son of a pioneer Baptist missionary. His mother was of Irish descent and a "marvellous woman of great strength and character" (Johnson 1988). The children grew on a diet of thrift, the work ethic, the poetry of Robert Burns and lessons from a "tattered Bible" (Badger 1984:10).

In 1916 the Badgers moved to Adelaide, the capital of South Australia, after drought and declining farm incomes forced the closure of the haberdashery. The city's library and second-hand bookshops fed young Colin's growing interest in literature. Living in a large family of modest circumstances, the children "were all expected to pull [their]

own weight" (Johnson 1988). Colin worked in a bookshop, then as a laboratory assistant and librarian at the University of Adelaide. His family's involvement with the Baptist Church led him to a "call" to minister and in 1926 he enrolled as a student in the state's Baptist College. Through the college, and between pastoral obligations, he was permitted to study for a degree in history and philosophy (Johnson 1988). He completed the course in 1931, though through an administrative quirk of the University of Adelaide he was not permitted to graduate until he matriculated from high school, achieved in 1936. While studying he was taught and influenced by eminent historian Keith Hancock. Hancock's honours program introduced the precocious student to the canonical European philosophers and gave him a sense of historical place (Badger 1984:28–31, Hancock 1954:108–113). In 1929 he married Stella Slade, a nurse and his lifelong friend and mentor (Badger 1989:80–84).

Realising clerical life was not for him, Badger found his way into adult education "through one of the many seemingly accidental chains of circumstances which have made up the pattern of my life". His desire to learn and love of books led him to the South Australian Workers' Education Association (WEA) bookshop. Conceived in nineteenth century England as a site for worker enlightenment, the WEA movement in the early 1930s was regarded by organised labour "with bland indifference" and had become, in Badger's view, "predominantly a middle class organisation" (Badger 1984:34). He saw in the organisation, however, great potential. In a transfer of his missionary calling, he reflected that his serendipidous education encouraged in him the pursuit of a "fuller life". His journey of self-enlightenment led to an emerging obligation to foster a love of learning in others, particularly those "who had missed the chance to learn in their early years". In language that pervades his writing, he commented: "I never lost this sense of obligation: I was not engaged in a mere job; it was a crusade…[a] sense of mission, the fervent desire to save souls, so to speak…" (Badger 1984:36). Work in Adelaide as

a WEA tutor confirmed both the limitations of the WEA and the possibilities of adult education (Johnson 1988, Badger 1991:1–2).

But Adelaide and the WEA failed to sustain his career restlessness. Following Hancock's advice, he enrolled and was accepted into the London School of Economics where he commenced a postgraduate thesis on nineteenth century Italian politics. He travelled several times through Italy and experienced the unease of Mussolini's government. In England he observed closely the WEA and met some of its leading protagonists, including R.H. Tawney. Lack of income and difficulty in securing research materials led him to conclude that he was not destined for a life in academia either. At thirty he realised that if he was to have any career at all "it must be in adult education" (Badger 1984:41).

He returned to Adelaide where he tutored at the university until offered a job in Perth, Western Australia, as a Reader's Counsellor, part of a University of Western Australia scheme to encourage adult reading and funded by the Carnegie Corporation. The scheme sent books in boxes to reading groups scattered across the vast state. Badger's success in promoting the scheme led to his appointment as the university's Director of Adult Education. He extended the reading program to include summer schools and a travelling series of discussion groups and evening classes. A plan to form an association of present and past students failed. In 1939, after three years in his position, he concluded that Perth offered limited prospects and applied successfully for the job of Director of Extension at the University of Melbourne in Victoria (Johnson 1988, Badger 1984:42–46). The appointment was a watershed. His lifework and true calling had begun.

Creating the Council of Adult Education

The WEA that greeted Badger in Melbourne was in a sorry state. There existed an acrimonious relationship between the previous

Director of Extension and the current WEA secretary and classes were poorly patronised. Given that the university was responsible for providing tutors and classes, and the WEA a student body and overall management, the situation was both tense and unproductive (Badger 1991). Combined with a hostile Victorian Trades Hall Council that "wanted nothing to do with the WEA", believing it to be an "anti-working class institution out to subvert the workers" (Johnson 1988), the future for the WEA appeared bleak. That Trades Hall had its own workers' college (established during the First World War) further confirmed Badger's view that the WEA required both radical reform and a new constituency (Stephan 1992:1–27). In later life, he concluded that "my business was not with lost souls and the underprivileged: in so far as my efforts succeeded, it was because they satisfied the needs of a quite different stratum of society from that to which they [the WEA] were ostensibly directed" (Badger 1984:44).

Over the Second World War (1939–1945) Badger quietly but firmly transformed the WEA curriculum fare. In addition to an intense but modified traditional diet of academic politics, economics and philosophy, he introduced folk dancing, practical music, handicrafts, foreign languages and a range of artistic pursuits. He also introduced Western Australian styled discussion groups. The WEA, he claimed, became "a much more cultural outfit" (Johnson 1988). His changes, though, met with resistance from long-participating WEA members (Stephan 1992). Badger's wartime activity at the University was broken by a secondment to the Australian Army Education Service (AAES), led by Colonel (later Professor) R.B. Madgwick, and other related service work (Badger 1984:69–72). Madgwick regarded the AAES as an Australian experiment to combat illiteracy and a search for alternative pathways to formal education (Spaull 1982:249–255). His work made an indelible impression on Badger.

At the end of 1945, Badger's pragmatic individualism and educational vision were given, in his words, a "lucky break" (Johnson 1988)

following the election of a sympathetic Labor government, led by Premier John Cain (White 1982). Labor's two-year reign and its Fabian inspired reform program provided a confluence of circumstances that permitted Badger to inform the 1946 legislation that created the Council of Adult Education (CAE). The Act established the CAE as a statutory authority responsible for coordinating and delivering Victorian adult education. Its innovatory structure was claimed as a world first (Badger 1984:199–215, Rushbrook 1995:171–172). From October 1948 the now defunct WEA was renamed the Adult Education Association, a student body affiliated with the CAE (Stephan 1992:28–40). While Badger provided and sustained the vision, he was shrewd enough to surround himself with highly capable disciples who possessed the required political massaging, organisation building and creative skills. Two examples illustrate Badger's acumen. Frank Crean, member of the Cain government and founding president of the Victorian Fabian Society, became the CAE's first chairperson, holding the position until 1973 when demands as Treasurer in the federal Whitlam Labor government forced his resignation (Badger 1974, Browne 1985:42, Mathews 1993). Crean adeptly handled the politics of sustaining the small organisation in the face of competing funding demands from the larger schools sector, long after the Cain government lost office (Rushbrook 1993). The task of creating a sound administrative structure was allocated to former Treasury officer John Cope, the CAE's first employee. Cope accomplished the task brilliantly, given Badger's observation that there "was no precedent for a body like the CAE to follow. It was a wholly new creature" (Badger 1984a:3, CAE). Other strategic appointments followed.

Building the Council of Adult Education

Presented with a blank slate, Badger began a quarter century of sustained adult education innovation. He regarded his mission as "quite revolutionary…I was trying to correct what I thought had been

a devastation of Victorian cultural and intellectual life as a result of the two great depressions – 1893 and then the 1930s depression – and of the First World War" (Rushbrook 1993:5). Ever the charismatic presence and imbued with a self-confessed "missionary zeal", his infectiousness drew in luminaries from across the university and arts sectors. Making the most of Crean's skills, Badger cleverly located CAE activities in the country as well as the city, assuaging possible criticism from the sceptical and conservative Country Party, a minor party with major influence in post-WWII government (Rushbrook 1993:7).

Badger's initiatives always included one or more of three themes: extension and recreational education, the visual and performing arts, and national adult education coordination. From the esoteria of early WEA classes, the CAE offerings were nothing if not eclectic. Sculpture, weaving, travel, Australian history, philosophy and theatre appreciation, and more, appearedæopen to all, fee-paying and non-award. The revered Ola Cohn may have taken sculpture classes. Artist Mirka Mora may have offered expert design and colour ideas for budding painters. Future governor-general and legal doyen (Sir) Zelman Cowan may have run a session on politics. Manning Clark or Ian Turner, two of Australia's great historians, may have presented a local history workshop. Jim Cairnsæacademic, peace activist and an Australian Treasurer and Deputy Prime Ministeræmay have offered a commentary on international relations (CAE *Annual Reports* 1947–1971). The Box Scheme grew from strength to strength and remains strong today (Badger 1991:20–22). From the early 1960s, Badger spread his CAE philosophy to rural areas through auspicing many independent community education centres, the first opening at Wangaratta in 1962 (Badger 1984:128–133). A series of mobile 'Brains Trusts' and summer schools only added to the rich brew. People from all walks of life, particularly women denied access to further education by the patriarchal conventions of post-WWII

society, benefited immeasurably and were encouraged to pursue more formal studies (Rushbrook 1993b, Rushbrook 1995:172–73).

Badger's encouragement of the arts was equally extraordinary. Apart from being active in the creation of the literary journal *Meanjin* and the Melbourne Theatre Company, he sought through the CAE to popularise the performing and visual arts. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, until killed by television, a bus called the 'Monster' roamed the Victorian countryside. It carried actors, sets and crew to deliver a wide range of plays through the Travelling Theatre scheme. Equally innovative was a collaborative venture with the National Gallery that created the Arts Train. European and Australian collections regularly visited all corners of the state (Rushbrook 1993a).

Though Badger was active in the later 1950s in creating the highly successful Australian Association of Adult Education (AAAE), he did not regard it as a personal triumph. He thought its final shape did not reflect the needs of adult learners and educators, and on many occasions he challenged the WEA model that guided adult education in other states. He was regarded by some, ironically it seemsægiven his admiration of things Italianæas Machiavellian, and by himself as needing more patience, less assurance about his own good intentions and more willingness to listen to others (Badger 1991:vi, Badger 1984:145). He left the AAAE not long after its formation. It was an issue that concerned him many years after his retirement in 1971 (Johnson 1988).

Conclusion

What, then, can be concluded about Colin Badger's steerage of Victorian adult education? At least three salient points, among many others, should be made. First, his example is an inspiring lesson on the capacity of an individual to author historical change. Until he took last breath on 8 August 1993, he retained and further developed his life-forged adult learning philosophy. Perhaps his actions may be seen

as a form of soft-liberalism that 'lucked-out' in the mid-1940s through a happy confluence with Labor's Fabianism. Or, more realistically, as the shrewd machinations of a pragmatist who played a political system to his advantage. Whatever the circumstances, the CAE 'worked'. Second, Badger's life is a reminder of the role of the historian in rescuing historical authorship from obscurity. In a world of anonymous policy-making, it is useful to know that organisations sometimes began with souls. Third, the CAE's early days are a reminder to the CAE itself of what has been lost. Economic rationalism, and perhaps Weber's observation that once charismatic leaders move on, rigidity and bureaucracy move in, has significantly curtailed the CAE's innovative capacities. Badger's spirit, however, still enervates those who remember.

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Australian Journal of Adult Learning
Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

Constructivist curriculum design for professional development: A review of the literature

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In the United States, both government and corporate sectors are increasingly concerned with the effects technological change is having on the requirements for adult learning. Despite the fact that constructivist learning theory was originally developed with children in mind, there are some interesting points of intersection between constructivism and adult learning characteristics. The focus of this article is on what implications constructivist theory has for the design of technology-related professional development curricula. Literature related to constructivism, adult learning, professional development, and curriculum design is reviewed.

The leading professional association for corporate trainers (American Society for Training & Development) in conjunction with the National Governors' Association has recently commissioned a task force to examine and respond to the effects technological change is having on the requirements for adult learning (Hodgins 2000). As Hodgins states: "The relentless demand for new skills created by the use of information technology in work has reinforced the demand for effective and measurable – in terms of performance improvement and return-on-investment – education and training".

Kaufman, Thiagarajan & MacGillis (1997:1–2) made similar comments about the need for employees to perform "Faster! Better! Cheaper!" due to the "world…constantly changing" a few short years before. A need for personal and organisational performance improvement has been recognised. Going back to 1970, Malcolm Knowles (quoted in Carlson, n.d.) commented on the need for better learning strategies for adult learners due to the rapidity of change. In fact, the United States Department of Labor (n.d.) has observed a 50-year trend in increased demand for higher skilled employees. Along with new types of jobs, the Department of Labor recognises that historically non-technological jobs will increasingly require technology skills as new ways of performing old tasks better and faster.

Retention, understanding and active use of knowledge and skills continue to be difficult goals to reach as Perkins (1991) records. However, Brooks and Brooks (1999) report an ongoing interest in constructivism, which among other things promises to help learners become thinkers who grasp and apply concepts.

The focus of this article is on what implications constructivist theory has for the design of technology-related professional development curricula. Literature related to constructivism, adult learning, professional development and curriculum design is reviewed.

Constructivism

Constructivism is regarded by some (Bruner 1996) as a philosophy which cuts across multiple disciplines (for example, arts, sciences and cognition), while others view it as a learning theory (Brooks 1984) or a model for learning (Howard *et al.* 2000). It is also considered a branch of cognitive psychology (Ornstein & Hunkins 1998). Regardless of its classification, constructivism is concerned with how personal understanding or knowledge is formed.

Because of constructivism's focus on knowledge construction, this theory is of interest to anyone concerned with learning and teaching. Wilson (1996) draws parallels from one's view of knowledge with one's view of instruction. He suggests, for instance, that if knowledge is viewed as content to be transmitted, then instruction is probably seen as a product to be delivered. Similarly, if knowledge is conceptualised as a cognitive state, then instruction is thought of as instructional strategies designed to affect one's schemas. And if knowledge is perceived as personally constructed meanings, then instruction can be recognised as a rich environment on which one might draw. Finally, if knowledge is embraced as adoption of a culture (the way a group acts), then instruction will be celebrated as participation in a group's activities.

Constructivism is typically contrasted with a transmissionist (or objectivist) model of learning. That is, instead of focusing on learning objects which are transmitted from one person to another, students and teachers are engaged in a community in which learning is the result of interactions, reflections and experiences (Howard et al. 2000).

Brooks and Brooks (1999) suggest that perhaps constructivism's roots can be traced all the way back through history to Socrates. However, content to look back only as far as the Enlightenment, they trace the foundations of what would become constructivism from Emmanuel Kant who concerned himself with objective and subjective ways of knowing. In the twentieth century, Jean Piaget is noted as the individual who first picked up the baton and ran forward.

According to London (1988), Piaget viewed knowledge as something which an individual constructs and re-constructs for oneself. Piaget contrasted this constructivist perspective of knowledge formation with annatist and empiricist viewpoints which see knowledge as a factor of heredity or of one's experiences respectively. Perkins (1991) notes that from Piaget's development psychology, the constructivist baton was passed in two directions simultaneously, in the direction of cognitive psychologists Jerome Bruner and Ulrick Neisser and in the direction of philosopher Nelson Goodman. (In speaking of Goodman, Bruner (1986) comments that Goodman has been involved with formulating a philosophy of understanding as his contribution to constructivism.)

While constructivism addresses the meanings that individuals construct for themselves, Seymour Papert is associated with a similar sounding term with a related focus. Papert's constructionism moves beyond constructing meanings to see learners create some type of physical artifact that can be shared and discussed. Constructionism can be viewed as a specialised form of constructivism (Jonassen 1996).

Another contributor to the collective conceptualisation of constructivism is the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky's work (usually known as social learning theory or social constructivism) took place mainly in the 1930s but was not widely known in the West until the 1960s, many years after his death. Most recognised for the Zone of Proximal Development concept, Vygotsky laid the groundwork for learners to utilise a social support system as a kind of tutoring process whereby one can bridge the gulf (or zone) that exists between what one knows and what one needs to know (Bruner 1986, Social constructivist theory, n.d.)

Against this historical backdrop, as constructivism has grown in popularity to become one of the most significant trends in education (Lunenberg 1998), the literature referencing constructivist ideas has greatly increased. Along with the philosophical and psychological discussions, there is now also an emphasis on implementation of constructivist ideas in classrooms and other learning environments.

Jonassen *et al.* (1999) note the implications that implementing constructivism has on the role of teacher and student. Specifically, students must wrestle with the responsibility that comes from being truly in charge of one's own learning. While some students are somewhat reticent to assume this responsibility, when given the opportunity most enthusiastically share their constructs with those of other students, often engaging in lively discussions (and further developed conceptualisations). Teachers, meanwhile, shift to a more facilitative role rather than serving as information dispensers as they help students compare the students' personally constructed meanings with those of a larger community of experts.

In the revised edition of their earlier work, Brooks and Brooks (1999) synthesise five principles to guide teachers in implementing constructivist ideas in classroom settings. First, teachers should pose problems of emerging relevance to students. (The phrase emerging relevance is used because the teacher may need to facilitate the students' perception of relevance.) Second, learning should be structured around primary concepts (what Brooks and Brooks call "the quest for essence") rather than disparate facts. Third, teachers should seek and value students' points of view. Fourth, curriculum should be adapted to address students' suppositions. Fifth, student learning should be assessed in the context of teaching, meaning that assessment should be 'authentic'. As Wiggins & McTighe (1999) point out, if a concept is to be understood deeply by students, then the assessment should be as contextualised and project-oriented as the learning activities are.

Honebein (1996) suggests seven goals for teachers to use in implementing constructivist ideas. Although worded rather more broadly, all but one of these seven goals parallel the five principles summarised above. Honebein additionally encourages the use of "multiple modes of representation" (that is, video, audio, photographs, etc.) instead of relying on oral and written communication.

As all of these principles are pursued, the classroom learning environment takes on a decidedly constructivist orientation. In fact, Wilson (1996:5) proposes a definition for such a constructivist learning environment: "a place where learners may work together and support each other as they use a variety of tools and information resources in their guided pursuit of learning goals and problem-solving activities". More detailed descriptions of these tools and information resources can be found in Perkins (1991) who proposes five facets of a learning environment: sources of information (information banks), means of expression through writing or other symbols (symbol pads), means of expression through manipulation of pre-existing objects (construction kits), authentic as possible areas for trying out concepts (phenomenaria), and means for undertaking and receiving feedback on specific learning tasks (task managers). Perkins suggests that these five facets can be found in any learning environment, but that construction kits and phenomenaria are de-emphasised in environments which are not centred on learners.

Black and McClintock (1996) and Strommen (1992) also provide frameworks for constructivist learning environments, but their focus is on processes to be followed rather than resources to be used. (It should be noted, however, that Black and McClintock take exception to the phrase 'learning environment', preferring instead 'study support environment'.) There are seven phases for students to follow in Black and McClintock's Interpretation Construction (ICON) Design Model and four phases in Strommen's Child-Driven Learning

Environment (CDLE). In both cases, these phases are not inconsistent with the resources suggested by Perkins previously. Also, the process involved in following the ICON phases is reminiscent of traversing Vygotsky's zone of proximal development.

Because of similarities between the two models, only the ICON model will be discussed here. The first five ICON phases are: observation (observe authentic artifacts in authentic situations), interpretation construction (construct interpretations of their observations and justify), contextualisation (get background information to aid interpretation or argumentation), cognitive apprenticeship (apprentice under teacher in refining the first three phases), collaboration (collaborate with teacher in the first three phases as an extension of apprenticeship). The last two elements of the ICON model are less phases than they are descriptions of the types of outcomes one might expect from the above phases. They are: multiple interpretations (cognitive flexibility through exposure to other interpretations) and multiple manifestations (transferability through exposure to multiple manifestations of the same interpretations).

It could be argued that not all groups of students would use the five types of resources in the same way and that not all constructivist teachers would utilise all the phases of the ICON model. Perhaps it would be helpful to differentiate between two orientations of constructivism as Perkins (1991) does. There is a difference between those environments in which teachers first present concepts followed by students working through their understandings and those environments where there is no presentation (or a delayed presentation) of concepts. Perkins calls the former BIG (beyond the information given) constructivism and the latter WIG (without the information given) constructivism.

Finally, apart from processes, resources and orientations, Lin *et al.* (1996) introduce the dynamics that constitute a learning community.

Although learning communities are certainly utilised and advocated by people other than constructivists, constructivist environments should certainly be learning communities. Learning communities are typically informal and learner directed. Use is made of 'distributed expertise', drawing on specialisations of other learners in a social context. The authors provide a summary of what they consider to be efficient learning communities. Students should have the opportunity to plan, organise, monitor and revise their own research and problem-solving. Students should also work collaboratively and take advantage of distributed expertise from the community to allow diversity, creativity and flexibility in learning. Students in learning communities should learn self-selected topics and identify their own issues that are related to the problem-based anchors and then identify relevant resources. Students should use various technologies to build their own knowledge rather than using the technologies as 'knowledge tellers'. Students' thinking should be made visible so that they can revise their own thoughts, assumptions and arguments.

Along these same lines, Jonassen *et al.* (1999) present the idea of "scaffolding conversations in structured computer conferences". The teacher or any student can pose a question or a conjecture which can be addressed by anyone from the larger community. Conversations may be public or private.

Lunenberg (1998) and Brooks (1984) propose that children think and learn differently from adults and that this is why constructivism (at least in its Piagetian strain) was developed. Interestingly, there seem to be a number of parallels between constructivism and the needs of adult learners that can be drawn from the literature.

Adult learners

Hodgins (2000:12) defines adults as "people who are in or about to enter the workforce" as contrasted with people who are of traditional school-going age (and, therefore, not in the workforce). In the

twentieth century, first Eduard Lindeman and later Malcolm Knowles concerned themselves with studying how adults learn. Lindeman emphasised the importance of experience to adult learners, going so far as to put experience on the same level as textbooks used by traditional school-aged students (Conner 2000a).

Carlson (n.d.) relates Knowles' seven step process for working with adult learners: cooperative learning climate, mechanisms for mutual planning, diagnosis of learner needs and interests, formulation of learning objectives based on the diagnosed needs and interests, sequential activities for achieving the objectives, selection of methods, materials and resources, and evaluation of learning. Although there is more than a little behaviourist influence in these steps, the process is remarkably progressive for its time.

Knowles adapted the word 'andragogy' to refer to the art and science of helping adults learn in contrast to 'pedagogy' which, strictly defined, denotes the art and science of teaching children. In practice, pedagogy has become synonymous with teaching or with teacher-centered models, while andragogy has been broadened by some people to include any learner-focused models.

Conner (2000a) summarises the following principles to use with an andragogical model. First, learners should be informed why something is important to learn. Second, learners should be shown how to direct themselves through information. Third, the topic being presented should be related to the learners' experiences. Fourth, people will not learn until they are ready and motivated. Fifth, learners may need help overcoming inhibitions, behaviours and beliefs about learning.

Conner (2000b) suggests that children and adult learners do have some fundamental neurological differences related to learning. While children have few experiences, their brains are able to create new neurological structures when learning occurs. In contrast, adults

tend to have existing neurological structures already due to their vast experiences. New learning for adults, then, tends to require new connections between existing neurological structures. For this to occur, higher-order brain functions must take place.

Personal relevance of the content, involvement of the learner in the process and deeper understanding of underlying concepts are some of the favourable intersections between emphases in constructivism and adult learning principles. In contrast, Hodgins (2000) and Kaufman *et al.* (1997) both emphasise the importance of fast learning in the workplace while Howard *et al.* (2000) draw parallels between constructivism and the 'gradual' acquisition of knowledge (consistent with a naïve epistemology).

With this in mind, it is prudent to consider that Harapnuik (1998) proposes a hybrid learning approach, which he labels 'Inquisitivism', as an alternative for adult learners. Inquisitivism is presented as a synthesis of constructivism, discovery learning, active learning, functional context and minimalism. The ten key concepts of this approach reflect this synthesis. They are: fear removal, stimulation of inquisitiveness, using the system to learn the system, getting started fast, discovery learning, modules can be completed in any order, supporting error recognition and recovery, forum for discussions and exploiting prior knowledge, real world assignments and developing optimal training designs.

At this time, Inquisitivism appears to be little more than the result of cutting and pasting attributes of several learning strategies and theories. However, it is included here to underscore the fact that there may be emphases within the K-16 constructivist literature that do not meet the needs of adult learners. Hopefully, options can be found for adult learners which are based in sound theory.

Professional development

Brooks (1984) describes the Cognitive Levels Matching (CLM) project in which staff development for professional teachers focuses on the integration of constructivist practices into their classrooms. Ironically, although the content of this staff development is constructivism, the context appears to be a traditional, instructor-centred format.

In contrast to the CLM project, Howard *et al*. (2000) detail a study in which professional teachers experienced a constructivist learning environment while learning about constructivist theory. As a result of these constructivist experiences, changes in the participants' personal epistemologies were documented. Some of the characteristics of this study are worth highlighting as they provide examples of some of the constructivist principles discussed earlier.

The facilitators introduced the participants to the possibilities of how certain software tools could be utilised in constructivist environments. The teachers in the project were then engaged in creating artifacts using technology tools. The participants were provided with all the resources necessary to adapt the technologies for their own use (such as time, software and hardware, and access to experts in technology and the various subject areas). The technology was 'learned' as it was incorporated into the teacher's projects. The project explicitly set out to foster a community of learners among the participants and their facilitators. Each participant took a turn being a 'lab manager', responsible for tutoring the other participants from their own unique perspectives. High levels of discussion and peer-to-peer tutoring were reported, and 'teacher-to-teacher encounters' were cited as a powerful factor in the outcome of the study.

Kerka (1997) draws a distinction between the emphases of vocational and academic education. While the former focuses on procedural knowledge (or know-how) to the exclusion of propositional knowledge

(know-what), the latter has the exact opposite bias. Kerka advocates instead what she refers to as "key aspects of communities of practice" such as authentic activities, knowledge application, access to experts, and a "social context in which learners collaborate on knowledge construction."

Bruner (1996) makes the point that what he calls 'distribution' or a kind of communal sharing of intelligence is a skill (in a cultural sense). He cautions against denigrating skills or know-how as being somehow hierarchically lower than other types of knowledge. Hodgins (2000) argues that what he calls 'know-why' is more important than know-how or know-what since know-why is a deeper knowledge that underlies a discipline or practice. However, Hodgins also makes a case that all three types of knowledge, (know-why, know-how and know-what) are important and will be even more robust in the future.

Curriculum development

When working with children, it has been suggested that competency-based models of curriculum development often produce written guidelines that may not line up with where students actually 'are' developmentally. Teacher reflection and mediation are considered to be important factors in bringing about this matching. The teacher functions as a developer and deliverer of curriculum (Brooks 1987).

Jadallah (1996) facilitated a constructivist process of preparation with several of his pre-service teachers. Reflective thinking strategies were encouraged as these pre-service teachers made curriculum and instructional decisions in actual school settings. Jadallah found that the pre-service teachers engaged in reflection were more mindful of their teacher mediation in their school settings and more insightful about their decisions than the pre-service teachers who were not engaged in the reflective process.

With competing forces such as a push for basics in the curriculum, higher standards for achievement and the value placed on the more robust understanding facilitated by constructivism, deciding who should select instructional objectives becomes difficult. Ediger (1999) suggests that, from a constructivist perspective, learners should be heavily involved (with teacher assistance) in determining objectives, learning opportunities and evaluation procedures.

None of the literature reviewed truly addressed an explicit set of principles for developing technology-related curricula for adults. However, from some of the previously discussed articles (Howard *et al.* 2000, Ediger 1999, and Perkins 1991), some guidelines can be inferred.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that constructivist theory was originally developed with children in mind, there are some points of intersection between constructivism and adult learning characteristics. However, adult learners tend to want to learn skills quickly without entering into the kinds of reflection and elaboration brought about in a constructivist learning environment. Perhaps Perkins' (1991) idea of BIG constructivism (in which content is still presented to learners prior to learner manipulation and knowledge construction) provides a constructivist approach for adults. Regardless of what type of hybridisation occurs, learners (or a representative sampling of potential learners) should be involved in establishing learning objectives. It also seems likely (from Howard *et al.* 2000) that the epistemology of the professional development curriculum designers and instructors may be important.

No literature was found that focused on constructivist approaches to professional development outside of the context of formal education settings. Perhaps this is because corporate training primarily utilises an objectivist model for learning (or a naïve epistemology) (Howard *et al.* 2000). Or perhaps trainers and educators are using different terminology for similar concepts. It is suggested that these issues be addressed in new contributions to the literature.

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Australian Journal of Adult Learning
Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

RESEARCH REPORT

Constraints to women's involvement in community development in Nigeria: Case study of Osun State, Nigeria

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Efforts at the development of the local communities in Nigeria, especially in the southwestern and southeastern parts of the country, have enjoyed a considerably large dose of considerations of active involvement of women. However, this consideration has not always been total as a result of some cultural or religious constraints that have hitherto inhibited the active participation of women in the development of their local communities. There is, therefore, the compelling need to identify and characterise the factors that constrain Nigerian women from giving their best to their communities.

The searchlight of this study was on factors militating against the active participation of women and the ensuing constraints to development of their local communities in Irewole local government area of Osun State, Nigeria.

The initiators of the self-help projects include women leaders (67%) and extension agents (29%). The constraints identified by the women include lack of funds, male domination, inadequate access to resources, lack of cooperation among women, occupational demands, poor coordination of projects, land acquisition, extensive politics, lack of cooperation from other government field departments and leadership tussles.

Analysis showed a significant relationship between participation of rural women in community development (self-help) projects and particular socio-cultural beliefs such as domestic duties for women alone ($X^2 = 5.43$, $P = 0.05$), male domination of women ($X^2 = 6.49$, $P = 0.05$), poverty ($X^2 = 4.21$, $P = 0.05$) and lack of female access to resources ($X^2 = 3.98$, $P = 0.05$), while poor attitude to female education was not significant ($X^2 = 0.03$, $P = 0.05$).

A major conclusion of this paper is that reducing constraints facing rural women in community development is a panacea for moving forward in the much elucidated integrated approach to community development. This is largely because full participation of all will be guaranteed.

Introduction

Community development through self-help efforts is a development strategy that has been widely accepted throughout Nigeria. Over the years, there has been an increasing awareness of the need for the involvement of people and government in community development (Ogbuozobe 1997).

One of the factors that has seriously reduced the tempo of development in the country's rural areas is the lack of participation of women in the development process.

The United Nations Decade for Women (1976–1985), which legitimised women's status, has contributed immensely to the awareness of women's major contributions. However, studies by women researchers which revealed the true circumstances of rural women's lives have made some impact on development policies of governments and donor agencies and a major impact on women's programs in most Third World countries. Similarly, Olayiwola (1983) observed that rural women's work and economic contributions as agricultural producers, distributors, marketers, mothers and/or homemakers, are indispensable to effective rural development. It is therefore important to highlight the contributions and constraints of women in rural development, if self-sustained rural development is to be achieved. Until their needs and interests are recognised and problems addressed through adequate policies and programs, rural women of Nigeria will slow down the pace of development.

The concept of community development

Over the years, community development has been largely a rural bound movement. In parts of the world – Asia, the Middle East and Africa – national community development programs were undertaken as part of the strategy for rural development (UN 1955). The emphasis of community development is on change, popular participation and leadership training (Ogbuozobe 1997).

This involves interaction between governments and the local communities. In line with the above, community development connotes the processes by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate

these communities into the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress (UN 1971).

Some authors and authorities have variously defined community development. Some view it as an educational process in its entirety. Perhaps, it was for this reason that Biddle *et al.* (1966) noted that the community development process is educational and emphasises the outcomes of learning in terms of people's lives, value systems and competence (Adekoya 1984).

Burke (1966) noted that the function of community development is an education for action process: "it can equip the community with the ability to admit and identify common problems, accumulate the knowledge essential to their solution, and plan and follow a course of action leading to achievement". Burke (1966) further identified the three principles on which community development is based as:

- self help,
- attention to the felt needs of the community, and
- attention to the development of the community as an integrated whole.

Successful community development programs stress the following basic elements:

- increased and better participation of the people in community affairs,
- identification, encouragement and training of local leadership,
- activities undertaken must correspond to the basic needs of the community – the first project should be initiated in response to the expressed needs of the people, and
- the resources of voluntary, non-governmental organisations should be fully utilised in community development programs.

From the totality of community development, process and movement are embedded in the principle of citizen participation, which enjoys

whatever is done to improve the welfare of the people. The local people (especially women) should take part in the planning, execution, utilisation and assessment of the social amenities or facilities designed to improve their welfare. This type of participation gives the people the pride of ownership of the facilities completed in the process of community development.

Women cannot therefore be developed, but can develop themselves by participating in the decision and cooperative activities which affect their well being. Hence, for development to occur, there is need for a greater participation of the rural people in development processes. This will enhance women's recognition and support, and change the nature and direction of development intervention.

Women and community development

Development is an objective that everyone agrees should be attained in recent decades. Different outside agencies, successive governments and local communities themselves have pursued different strategies with varying degrees of success, but often with only short-term benefits. Studies by women researchers which revealed the true circumstances of rural women's lives have made some impact on development policies of governments and donor agencies and a major impact on women's programs in most Third World countries. As a result, how to integrate women into the development process has been consistently and systematically questioned by researchers. In Nigerian communities, economic roles of rural women continue to be viewed as an extension of their domestic roles. No definite efforts have been made to evolve policies that will increase rural women's access to education and training, credits, land reserves etc. necessary for incorporating them into the main stream of rural development. Female members of rural households belong to different socio-economic strata and perform different roles. Their roles are vital to the sustenance of their families, communities and society at large.

Their roles include working in the fields and farms to produce food, tend animals and market farm produce in addition to bearing and rearing children and managing large households with minimal resources (very scanty or no amenities including basic necessities) and inadequate potable water and fuel.

In Nigeria, community development programs are geared towards helping to improve agriculture and raising the standard of living of rural communities (Anyanwu 1992). The FAO (1975) outlined basic requirements of raising levels of rural life. These included provision and utilisation of adequate roads, management of personal family farms and community resources, improvement and modernisation of home and community life, and participation of the family (men, women and youths) in rural development. Women provide community childcare facilities where agricultural labour demands are high to avoid adverse nutritional impacts on children.

Finally, the development of a nation should be carried out in partnership with the women, and no one gender should be seen as either a junior or a senior partner in the relationship. This is because no national development will be meaningful and thorough if women are not fully involved.

Constraints to rural women's participation in community development projects

Community development programs, like any other programs, are plagued with numerous problems and weaknesses during implementation. Effective management of such problems by implementers will contribute to the success of the programs. However, ineffective management of the problems will result in partial success or complete failure (Marilyn 1997). Therefore, the importance of involving local communities in development programs and the need for gender sensitivity in project design and implementation are now accepted by everyone involved in

developmental activities. While change must take place in policies in educational systems and in development institutions, it must first begin with rethinking our own perception of women (Adeyeye 1988). An important problem confronting rural women's participation in community development projects is funding of community development programs. Good programs have experienced low, irregular and unpredictable flow of funds. This has adversely affected programs resulting in limited successes in the execution of various developmental activities. For example, in the Oyo State Agricultural Development Project, the problem of funding hindered the take-off of some community development services and programs and set back projects such as housing and other building programs (Odebode 1997). This is in line with APMEPU (1983b) which states that "low funds can be managed with careful planning; unknown, uncertain and inconsistent finance is a nightmare". Irregular supply of funds affects the timely and adequate supply of inputs which consequently delays many programs.

Another problem confronting rural women is that of men's domination over women. In support of this view, Stiireen (1993) posits that man is the head of the family. This imposes informal powerful sanctions against women. Women are confronted with a lot of cultural problems. Male dominated society emphasises women subordination in its laws and notions of tradition. Adriana (1995), in his view, stated that the capacity or incapacity of women to free themselves from the constraints of traditional culture and the trappings of modernity which view women as consumers depends fundamentally on women's knowledge of the origins of their current situation and the mechanisms which hold them.

In rural areas, women live under multiple layers of repression. These can be political, cultural, social and economic in nature. For example, in the Sudan, the government issued a decree that stated women were not to appear in public unless they complied with Islamic dress code (Marilyn 1997). Rural women are confronted with domestic problems.

These involve the care of their husbands and children. In developing countries, over 550 million rural women live in abject poverty (Idriss 1992, IFAD 1992). These women are caught in downward spiral poverty due to forces such as inadequate access to land, family tradition, prejudices and priorities of men and limitations of the social economy.

FAO (1993) sees women as a symbol of fecundity but also a weakness in playing only a secondary role in decision-making. Women are seen as advisers in the management of family affairs, though this must be done discretely and must remain in the background in public.

Ogunozobe (1997) identified the problems of women's community (self-help) development projects as outlined below:

- missing link between the government and the various communities in initiating and executing self-help projects. There is no established criterion for the funding of such projects, even the disbursement of funds. The result is that funds from the government for self-help projects are not economically equitable and justly utilised;
- lateness of government assistance reaching the community; and
- loss of contributions by communities.

Other constraints include post-project maintenance of the infrastructures provided by the government.

The plight of women is finally receiving attention from researchers as well as development agencies. Women now participate in development in the realisation of their full potential to contribute to development and the improvement of their double oppression by poverty and discrimination.

Methodology

Data were collected through interviews with 120 randomly selected women from ten communities in Irewole local government area of

Osun State. Twelve randomly selected women were interviewed per community. Data were analysed using frequency counts, percentages and chi-square tests. An inventory of various self-help projects and problems encountered during the project implementation period in the study area was taken.

Most (68.3%) of the women in the study were engaged in farming, 18.2% were traders, 6.7% were engaged in craft making and 2% were civil servants. This shows that 98.3% of the respondents worked in the private sector, while only 1.7% worked in the public sector. The majority of the women engaged in farming and related vocations agrees with the findings of Anyanwu (1992) and Ekong (1988) that variation in occupation in the rural areas in Nigeria is not very wide as the majority are farmers.

Most (96%) of the respondents participated in self-help community development projects while few (4%) were non-participants. The percentage of non-participants can be reduced through effective motivation and mobilisation.

Sixty seven percent of the women indicated the initiators of self-help projects in their community were their local women leaders, 20% indicated extension agents and women leaders were their program initiators, while 13% indicated their project initiators were extension agents. This is in line with the assertion of Anyanwu (1992) that extension agents should work with local leaders to achieve a high level of success in their work. Moreover, community leaders are agents through which the process of community development can be initiated.

Table 1 reveals domestic duties as the most pressing problem facing the rural women in self-help projects (50%). This finding supports that of Anyanwu (1992) and Stireen (1993), that rural women are constrained by domestic duties such as the fetching of water and firewood, and caring for children and husbands. Other constraints

included lack of money (19.2%), inadequate access to resources (8.3%), domination by men (6.6%), lack of cooperation among women (5%), occupational demands (2.5%), excessive politics (2.5%), poor coordination of projects (2.5%), land acquisition problems (1.7%), lack of cooperation from other government field departments (1.7%) and leadership tussles (0.8%).

Table 1: Distribution of sampled women according to major constraints affecting their participation (n=120)

Major constraints	Frequency	Percentage
Poverty	23	19.2
Male domination of women	8	6.6
Inadequate access to resources	10	8.3
Occupational demands	3	2.5
Land acquisition problems	2	1.7
Domestic duties	60	50.0
Lack of cooperation among the women themselves	6	1.7
Excessive politics	2	2.5
Poor coordination of projects	3	2.5
Lack of cooperation from other government field departments	2	1.7
Leadership tussles	1	0.8
Total	120	100

Table 2 reveals that the socio-cultural beliefs of the people have significant relationships on rural women participation in self-help projects. There were significant relationships between rural women participation in community self-help projects and domestic duties for women alone, male domination of women, lack of access to resources and female poverty. Poor attitude to female education has

no significant relationship with participation of rural women in self-help community development projects.

Table 2: Chi square tests of relationships between the socio-cultural beliefs of rural women and their participation in self-help community development projects (n=120)

Socio-cultural beliefs	X^2 tab value	X^2cal value	Probability level	Degree of Freedom	Decision
Domestic duties for women alone	3.84	5.43	0.05	1	S
Male domination of women	3.84	6.49	0.05	1	S
Poverty of female	3.84	4.21	0.05	1	S
Lack of female access to resources (e.g. land)	3.84	3.98	0.05	1	S
Poor attitude to female education	3.84	0.37	0.05	1	NS

Source: Field Survey, 2000

Conclusion and recommendations

This study has briefly highlighted the nature of the constraints encountered by rural women in the implementation of community development projects. These problems include lack of funds, male domination, inadequate access to resources, lack of cooperation among women themselves, occupational demands, poor coordination of projects, land acquisition, excessive politics, lack of cooperation from other government field departments, leadership tussles and other socio-cultural beliefs. A significance relationship exists between the participation of rural women in community development and some of the socio-cultural beliefs of the rural women.

Effective and meaningful development of the local communities through self-help efforts requires both intensive and extensive assistance from the government of the federation. The government therefore should:

- provide community education and 'conscientization' to rural women. This will enable the people (especially women) to appreciate and tackle their problems with vigour and commitment in a democratic setting of equality
- mobilise and encourage rural women to participate in community development through self-help so as to enhance the physical development of their communities and the standard of living of the rural populace
- create a conducive condition for the mobilisation and organisation of rural women's groups
- establish widespread awareness of the role of rural women and provide relevant training for the rural women for effective functioning at all levels
- develop an effective means and structure for consultation with the rural women organisations on the forces and policies which affect their lives directly.

Finally, women in Nigeria must be effectively integrated into rural and community development physically and structurally so as not to slow down the pace of development. They must be allowed to participate actively in decision-making at all levels (whether household, community, local, state or national).

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BOOK REVIEW

Being, seeking and telling: Expressive approaches to qualitative adult education research

Peter Willis, Robert Smith and Emily Collins (eds.)
Flaxton, Queensland, Post Pressed
ISBN 1 876682 07 8
Retail price: $55

This book is the third in a series of texts edited by Peter Willis that explore the use of qualitative research in adult education. The book expands on some of the ideas and concepts presented in the previous books and yet, at the same time, leads to new ways of thinking about qualitative research. Not surprisingly, the book is dedicated to the memory of Michael Crotty, a scholar who worked closely with Peter Willis and whose interpretation of and musing about phenomenology inspired many of the contributors to the series. Produced by academics from the University of South Australia, with support from the University's Centre for Research in Education, Equity and Work, the book was generated out of a need to explore more comprehensive and vivid accounts of ways to represent human learning and education. Both Peter Willis and Robert Smith are senior lecturers in education while Emily Collins is a research assistant/ editor whose background is in medical science and communication but who has an interest in education.

In the words of Willis and Smith, the book 'aims to explore ways to generate research texts that represent as vividly as possible the world of learning and education practice, so that its life and texture can be revealed and its experiences and meanings brought to life'. It is the view of the editors that past approaches to qualitative work have tended to categorise, conceptualise and theorise experience rather than portray it so that its lived character is preserved. Hence, the book explores research approaches that Willis and Smith call expressive or 'works of art'. Expressive research aims to *portray* what a social phenomenon is like for those experiencing it rather than those who analyse or categorise it.

Originally, the idea of the book was to look at different ways to portray or present lived experience and, according to the editors, this led to two readings of the project. Some papers explore different ways to present research findings while others explore what the nature of lived experience might be. Some contributors refer to their work directly as arts-based expressive research, also called arts-based educational research (ABER), while others might call it heuristic, autobiographical, experiential, reflexive, storytelling and so on, but all explore different ways to express human social phenomena.

Described by Willis as a complementary alternative to the more common explanatory forms of research, arts-based expressive research is heralded as a new mode of communicating (self)-understanding. Essentially this research genre is about representation of professional practice through artistic rather than scientific approaches and seeks to generate emotions, feelings and conceptions

in a similar way to that experienced by many people when engaging with a work of art. The researcher is referred to as an artist who creates a virtual reality, sketches imagery, produces poetry and presents an aesthetic form that has a mark of individuality. The chapters do indeed represent work with these characteristics. The book comprises a rich array of texts reflecting artful imagery and creativity that push the boundaries of qualitative work and inspire one to consider new ways of being, seeking and telling in interpretation. And yet, while the reader could easily be seduced by the aesthetic power of the work, s/he is constantly reminded that expressive work needs ways to create, critique and validate it so that it makes a worthy and useful contribution to human knowledge. There are therefore some substantive chapters devoted to this issue.

More specifically, the book is divided into three sections. The first explores the interpretation and construction of knowledge or the *seeking* element in expressive or arts-based research. ABER is explained and the reader is provided with exemplars drawn from expressive work by a number of educationalists, most of whom are completing or have just completed PhDs. The second section examines the being in imagistic, subjectivised inquiry and raises issues about the stance or position taken by the researcher. The third section deals with the *telling* or illustrative component of expressive or arts-based work; how to report the findings of research and give accounts that include heart and imagination. Elements of all three however are common across chapters.

Contributions to this book represent a lively mixture of approaches and styles to writing. Much of what the contributors write about are their own experiences which are understandably deeply meaningful and this is manifest in their work. Chapters make rich and compelling reading and, while some are more substantive than others, each contributes in some way to the reader's understanding of the ideas underpinning the collection as a whole. Expressive research

offers ways to rethink the nature of the research product. It is an emergent paradigm that takes lived experience into the post-modern. Intended readers for the book include undergraduate and postgraduate students and researchers working in education and adult education. In my view, the work will be useful to a range of academics and students looking for new ways to think about and express qualitative data. The approach is applicable to research into a wide range of human social phenomena and may hold particular appeal for researchers in the health sciences. A follow-up text with contributions from national and international researchers across a range of disciplines would be useful.

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BOOK REVIEW

Learning around town: Learning communities in Australia

Rachel Castles, Majella McGrath,
Liz Henderson & Tony Brown

A.C.T.
ISBN: 094945327

This booklet is intended as a guide to and a discussion document around the growing concept of 'learning community', which the authors have defined very broadly as "a learning city, town or community regardless of its size and location". I tend to favour the use of the term 'learning city' or 'town' because I think the term 'learning community' generally has a much broader meaning.

According to the authors, the booklet is aimed at interested educators, local councillors, community organisations and policy-makers. It has been written and compiled by Majella McGrath and Rachel Castles (both of whom are now responsible for learning towns in South Gippsland and Ballarat respectively) with the assistance of Tony Brown and Liz Henderson of Adult Learning Australia (ALA). The release of the booklet was timed to coincide with the inaugural Australian national conference, *The learning city: From concept to reality*, held 27–29 October 2000 in Albury-Wodonga.

The publication of the booklet is timely. The learning city movement is gaining momentum. The movement originated as a response to current political, economic, social, technological and organisational changes in Western countries, and the gathering pace of such changes. Learning is seen as central to the future of economic prosperity and social cohesion. The area over which there can be some policy control and implementation will usually be, in the Australian context, a town or a city. Hence the idea of the learning community. Since regional organisations are quite weak in the Australian context, policy determinations across larger regions are difficult unless some regional framework, say, in the form of a network, is developed and then the future of the policy will depend on the strength of the framework. The 'learning city' or 'town' is a more manageable, more coherent notion. This may explain the reason that about 50 learning cities have emerged recently within the United Kingdom and are now spreading to Europe.

To me, the learning city represents, at the moment, the best approach to tackling momentous changes. To underline this, I quote from an article which recently appeared in the Melbourne press:

> As change continues to accelerate, groups in the community have been left behind – not only in rural areas. They are concentrated around primary and manufacturing industries, where employment has fallen in relative terms. There is a community of interests between smaller farmers and those displaced in the restructure of manufacturing industries – between, if you like, elements of the bush and the outer suburbs of the capital cities. Both have been hurt by the pace of change.

> Both have been unable to find a place in the new international world. (Age, 7 March 2001)
>
> The rich are getting richer, the poor are being helped up and the group in the middle can see the rich getting further away and the poor coming closer. That is a recipe for frustration, bitterness and anger. Rick Farley (*Age*, 14 June, 2001 – edited extract of ABC Federation Lecture)

The City of Wodonga was the first in Australia to declare itself a Learning City, in 1998. Since that time, Ballarat has also declared itself a Learning City, South Gippsland a Learning Shire and Mt. Evelyn a Learning Township. In New South Wales, Lithgow has launched itself as a Learning City, while Newcastle and Bathurst are preparing to do the same. In Tasmania, Launceston regards itself as a Learning City, while South Australia considers itself as the Learning State. In New Zealand, the launch of Papakura – the Learning City has been set for 2 May 2001. By the time this article is published, there could well be more.

Five main sections provide the framework for the booklet:

- a background to the emergence and understanding of the term 'learning community'
- an outline of the main features underlying a learning city
- a look at five different case studies of emerging learning communities, including a quick look at some international experience
- consideration of some steps, in particular of building effective community partnerships and
- a short listing of possible resources.

The authors faced a daunting task. Learning cities have a very short history in Australia so there is little practical experience on which to draw. For more extensive experience, we have to go overseas, mainly to the United Kingdom. The booklet would have been strengthened

by some studies of the origins, early tentative steps, difficulties and challenges faced by some of the learning cities, but at the time of their research the authors had a limited choice. The authors are hamstrung by this lack of practical experience and it tends to make the document much more theoretical than would have been the case if it had been written in five years' time.

The booklet is forced to be derivative, relying heavily on the writings of others, on material drawn from submissions and on international literature. The movement is fortunate to have the writings and documentation of researcher Peter Kearns who, over a period of time, has used his research to promote in his reports the broader concepts of lifelong learning and, within that notion, the idea of the learning community. Many of the emerging learning towns have drawn on his knowledge. Quite distinctly, one can sense Peter's influence in the framing of some of the topics used in the booklet. This is not a bad thing. Peter, and Professor Phil Candy of the University of Ballarat, are the major contributors to the knowledge base about the learning city within Australia.

However, despite these limitations, the booklet is a welcome document. It sums up, in a concise and succinct way, the rationale and the main features of a learning city, gives some pointers to other approaches and offers some clues to the next steps. It is a useful introductory compilation and a good starting point for anyone who wants to quickly comprehend this emerging development.

What is now required, in three to five years' time, is a survey to reflect the experience of some or all of the longer-standing learning communities.

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Australian Journal of Adult Learning
Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

BOOK REVIEW

Why universities matter: A conversation about values, means and directions

Tony Coady (ed.)
St Leonards, NSW, Allen and Unwin
ISBN: 1 86508 038 1
254 pages

This volume is a collection of essays in response to the far-reaching changes Australian universities have faced with increasing Commonwealth intervention and control since the mid-eighties. The context of the publication is the controversy over Melbourne University Press reneging on an earlier decision to publish it in the 'Ethics and Public Life' Series and the volume contains editorial comment and an afterword on this. The contributions are based on a series of papers presented at workshops conducted by the Centre for Philosophy and Public Issues at the University of Melbourne.

The publication consists of twelve essays organised in three parts; "Value perspectives", concerned with philosophical issues; "Specific concerns", focusing on such issues as autonomy, inquiry and the crisis in the humanities; and "Looking ahead", with reflections on funding and the 'contestable future' of universities in Australia.

In most respects, this is a publication for insiders and for jaded academics needing to brush up on defensive argument in this federal election year. There are chapters with direct implication for public policy. With perseverance, culturally illiterate politicians and bureaucrats could profit from a reading, for the volume gives insights into the many facets and complexity of the university culture as it strives to accommodate the rather unsympathetic world that has emerged in the last three decades or so.

The volume, in some respects, is prejudiced by the special pleading of those so incensed by the failure of Melbourne University Press to go ahead with publication. However, by default, this gives an insight into the endemic culture wars in a system torn by change incommensurate with what is involved in the preservation and promotion of high culture.

As with most essay volumes, the quality of writing is variable and some themes repetitive. The editing has not entirely eliminated the rhetorical flourish so often associated with the presentation of papers in an audience of peers. John Malony's "Australian universities today", though, with its references to betrayal and personal responsibility, is a spirited inclusion and perhaps closer to a truth we would like to believe but for our pragmatic proclivities.

The historical aspects of the volume are noteworthy with the contributions by Macintyre and Marginson and McCalman useful in establishing a perspective so easily forgotten in the immediate world of best practice and managerial rhetoric. The philosophical contributions (Gaita on truth and the university, Miller on academic

autonomy and Klein on physics and fundamental inquiry) are rather didactic and precious, and suggest yet again why professional philosophy has such difficulty in speaking to a wide audience, even within academe.

One despairs with the messages of this volume. There is a questionable future for the many universities this volume portrays, as the logic of Commonwealth manipulation sits uncomfortably with such an inherent pluralism. Karmel's contribution on funding universities may well be the way forward and provide relief from the heavy hand of Canberra and the major political parties.

The reviewer is a retired academic of little standing who took voluntary redundancy over six years ago. Several years away from the rarefied and politically charged culture of the university, and before that the CAE, and before that the teachers college (lower case intentional) have assuaged the feelings of inferiority, the guilt of no research standing and the unforgivable lack of a PhD. He still reads books and still is enthused by ideas, and occasionally reminisces about the classroom and the many 'private rewards' that came his way over a quarter century of teaching.

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Australian Journal of Adult Learning
Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

BOOK REVIEW

The mentor's guide: Facilitating effective learning relationships

Lois J. Zachary
San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 2000
ISBN: 0-7879-4742-3
US$25.95 p/b
224 pages

Zachary's book contains a useful collection of practical materials that can help with the development of a mentoring process. Her ideas about mentorship are informed by the work of mentor authority Laurent Daloz's notion of mentoring as a learning process. From my perspective as an adult educator, the emphasis on mentoring as more than psycho-social support for the mentee, is heartening. Given the links and connections between their perspectives on mentoring, it is not surprising that Zachary asked Daloz to write the foreword to the book. Consistent with Daloz, Zachary sees mentorship as

relational and important for both adult learning and development. She foregrounds the importance of the learning perspective when she calls for the fostering of a learning context in which to enact mentoring. Her stress on the larger context in which mentoring is situated is helpful, because it draws attention to the need for organisational supports for mentoring.

Not only does Zachary build on Daloz' learning focus, but she is successful in translating his work into a practical format and explaining how mentorship might become a reality in contexts as diverse as business organisations, schools and higher education. She uses the garden metaphor as a unifier for the eight chapters in her book. The chapters have creative titles such as 'grounding the work', 'working the ground', 'tilling the soil' and 'planting seeds' – all well used metaphors, but ones that correspond well with her main point that mentors are there to help mentees grow and develop. As well, the 'working in the garden' metaphor suits the practical nature of this book, which is really a step-by-step guide to assessing one's readiness to mentor, as well as to help in the mentoring process. Zachary provides a large number of worksheets and inventories that can help potential mentors evaluate their readiness for mentoring, examine their previous experiences of mentoring and identify potential challenges to mentoring. I was thankful to see that the inventories or think-sheets were not quantitative – they invited the mentor to reflect, provide comments and make personal assessments. In no case did the sheets ask the mentors to tabulate scores or to locate themselves on a scale. The sheets serve the purpose of stretching and encouraging the mentor in the tasks of mentoring.

As with any book that relies heavily on practice, there is a missing piece which is the theoretical framework for mentoring. The author misses dealing adequately with the complex power dynamics that attend mentorship, especially within hierarchical settings such as business and educational institutions. Although Zachary does

include an extensive discussion on boundaries, in which she makes suggestions for negotiating differences, she does not deal further with the complexity of the mentoring process in terms of power and its distribution and negotiation. The discussion of boundaries needs to be extended considerably to address issues of conflict and power.

To her credit, Zachary never assumes that mentoring serendipitously occurs for us or that everyone can be a mentor or mentee. Nor does she envisage that mentoring needs to be structured and formalised; the focus of the book is to facilitate serious intentional relationships whatever the context or situation. One question I did have is why the entire book is dedicated almost exclusively to mentors and does not leave adequate room for the mentee. In fact, in one place, Zachary provides a sheet for the mentor to think about the experiences the mentee has had (p. 13)! The emphasis on the mentor seems to be overdone and might have been tempered by preparation exercises for the mentee as well as the mentor. This is especially important in such an interpersonal relationship in which the growth and development of both persons is a goal.

Yet, the ample stories, examples and vignettes that Zachary provides, makes this an accessible and delightful book. I recommend *The mentor's guide* to anyone interested in being a mentor in any community of practice. If you are beginning a mentoring process or even thinking about working toward a more serious mentoring relationship, this is a handy compendium that can help get a mentoring relationship off the ground.

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Australian Journal of Adult Learning
Volume 41, Number 1, April 2001

JOURNAL SCAN

Clarke, N. 2001, 'Training as a vehicle to empower carers in the community: more than a question of information sharing', ***Health and Social Care in the Community***, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 79–88.

The concept of 'empowerment' is one that is perhaps overused in a range of adult and community education settings. In this article, Clarke rightly points to the confusion that surrounds this term and critiques the notion that certain types of 'training' promote empowerment.

Clarke points to the increased centrality of empowerment in policy-makers thinking, particularly in relation to increased promotion of informal care giving in the community. He notes that much of the literature does not contain consensus on what the term empowerment means or how it might be developed. Empowerment can be viewed as a process, an outcome or a process *and* an outcome. That is, 'empowering processes are seen as the means by which users and carers can become more empowered'. The problem lies, however, in the lack of any empirical evidence demonstrating a relationship between activities designed to promote empowerment and the achievement of this goal. This issue is further complicated by competing views of empowerment as the ability to participate in decision-making and empowerment as internal trait of an individual. It is this latter view that is pursued in this article.

The author describes the outcomes of an empirical study designed to explore if a one-day training program provided to carers and care professionals in the north of England resulted in improvements in carers' perceived levels of psychological empowerment as measured by increases in carers' levels of control, self-efficacy and self-esteem. The outcomes reported show that, whilst participants from the program reported increased knowledge of services and participation, it did not produce any changes to measures of carer empowerment. Reasons for these findings and suggestions for changes to training programs for carers are examined.

Foley, G. 2001, 'Radical adult education and learning', ***International Journal of Lifelong Education***, vol. 20, no. 1/2, pp. 71–88.

The concept of radical adult education almost seems to be 'an endangered species' within the context of current rationalist economic agendas for education and training. In this article, the well-known and respected Australian educator Griff Foley argues for the continued importance of radical education.

He starts by providing an overview of some of the formative influences of radical education. Carl Rogers and his 'radically democratic' approach to teacher/learner relationships and Myles Horton and his work with the Highlander Folk Schools are described as key elements in the emergence of an understanding of learners as being oppressed and the importance of emancipatory learning as it emerges out of

struggle. A description of Paolo Freire's problem-posing pedagogy, as interpreted and used by the North American educator Nina Wallerstein, is provided to illustrate how this might be achieved.

Foley then turns his attention to ways in which adult education has been restructured and the problems it poses for the maintenance of radical education. He argues, however, that 'the terrain [has] shift[ed], the spaces for radical education and learning [have] chang[ed]' and that these new situations require radical education to adopt critical, emancipatory and more strategic approaches.

Foley examines the current context in Australia and points to the importance of 'finding the radical in the ordinary'. That is, radical educators work and learn in ordinary circumstances (for example, in the workplace) but

> ... in the context of the contemporary workplace, where suppressing awareness of what is actually going on and what people are actually learning is the norm, to name the negative learning and change it to more productive learning is radical.

Gerber, R. 2001, 'The concept of common sense in workplace learning and experience', ***Education and Training***, vol. 43, no. 2, pp. 72–81.

The notion of 'common sense' is one that many people know of but often find very difficult to explain exactly what it is and what it means for people in their everyday living. This article takes up this issue by reporting on the outcomes of a study examining the place of common sense in workplace learning.

The paper commences with a brief examination of the literature, particularly relating to the concept of insight and its links to ways of understanding. The author posits that common sense is a specialisation of intelligence and generates a particular form

of knowledge 'for the sake of doing'. The author provides a brief overview of the methodology of the study that employed a phenomenographic approach to examine the place of common sense on workplace learning. Analysis of data collected from 56 respondents employed in regional areas of Australia revealed seven different conceptions of the workers' experience of common sense. These were common sense as

- a gut feeling
- innate ability
- knowing how
- learning
- using others
- demonstrable cognitive abilities, and
- personal attributes

Drawing on excerpts from the interviews, each conception is described. The author concludes with views on the importance of common sense in the understanding of workplace learning and some suggestions for further research.

Guile, D. & Griffiths, T. 2001, 'Learning through work experience', ***Journal of Education and Work***, vol. 25, no.1, pp. 113–131.

Work placements have assumed a significant place in efforts to develop meaningful and effective learning pathways across a range of programs. It has become apparent, however, that not all workplaces or work placements are equal in terms of their ability to foster students' development. This paper takes up this issue, arguing for greater sophistication in understanding how context influences learning and the relationship 'between learning that occurs within and between education and work'.

The authors commence with a brief analysis of the concept of 'context', highlighting the importance of analysing work experience to take into account the different types of contexts in which learning and work can occur and how learning is shaped by contexts. They argue that understandings of work placements have not taken into account the ways in which students need to learn how to negotiate their learning whilst at work, nor have they addressed ways of assisting students in 'relating' (integrating) their formal and informal learning. They draw on socio-cultural learning theory, developments in adult education and curriculum development to support these assertions.

The article presents a critique of five different approaches to work placements, suggesting that each represents an unfolding understanding of how learning through experience might be understood. Each model is described in terms of its purpose, assumptions about learning and development, underpinning models of management and supervision that guide the 'shape' of the work placement, outcomes and the role of the education and training provider.

Harrison, R., Edwards, R. & Brown, J. 2001, 'Crash test dummies or knowledgeable practitioners? Evaluating the impact of professional development', ***British Journal of Guidance and Counselling***, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 199–211.

This article draws on the authors' experiences and learning from a process of designing a professional development program at Masters level as part of the offerings of the Open University. The first part of the paper examines a range of issues that impacted on the development of the program and included:

- who are the 'professionals'?
- what is 'development'?; and

- how to bridge the theory-practice divide.

They argue that in order to provide meaningful experiences of professional development, attention needs to be paid to the diverse nature of professionals, particularly when they are working in a range of occupations that engage in similar practices but in very diverse settings (the example provided in the article is that of guidance counsellors). Subsequent sections describe how these issues were resolved through the program design process and a small-scale study that was designed to measure the impact of the program. The outcomes of the evaluation study raise issues for how educators might approach understanding the impact of professional development.

Parnham, J. 2001, 'Lifelong learning: a model for increasing the participation of non-traditional adult learners', ***Journal of Further and Higher Education***, vol. 25, no.1, pp. 57–65.

The issue of participation of non-traditional adult learners is taken up in this article, which presents a case study of one college in England and its attempts to put into practice the goals of British government policies relating to the development of a learning society.

The author provides a brief overview of much of the well-known research relating to factors that motivate those persons not usually attracted to adult and community education and the factors that are known to impact on participation. Rather than starting from the position that an adult education provider needs to 'market' what it offers more effectively, the author promotes the value of a community-based approach as a means of increasing participation. This approach incorporates the development of establishing links and networking within the community. How this was achieved is illustrated by the case study of efforts to attract non-traditional

participants to community-based education and training in a specific area within the London borough of Bromley.

Stroobants, V., Jans, M. & Wildemeersch, D. 2001, 'Making sense of learning for work. Towards a framework for transitional learning', ***International Journal of Lifelong Education***, vol. 20, no. 1/2, pp. 114–126.

Professionals engaged in the task of assisting people to make the transition into work are operating in a complex and dilemma ridden environment. The authors of this article argue that there has been a shift from a 'vacancy orientated' approach to an 'employment orientated' approach in guiding, counselling and training individuals for this transition. In the former approach, the employer is the main focus where the unemployed are viewed as potential human resources to fill identified vacancies. In the latter view, unemployed people are viewed as 'clients of employment policy' and there is an emphasis on meeting the individual needs of each person. In this scenario, professionals are required to try and strike a balance between encouraging people to adapt to the demands of the labour market whilst also striving to preserve the autonomy of individuals. They label this shift in practice to one that emphasises the professionals' work as one of 'interpretive practice' whereby professionals, together with their clients, work together as co-learners to 'interpret and negotiate the possibilities and limitations for each client in the context of their own life-worlds'.

In order to facilitate this practice, the paper puts forward transitional learning as one means of theorising how people can make sense of transitions and make 'meaningful connection' between their 'own competencies as situated in their biographies to external opportunity structures (as shaped by labour markets, social policies etc.)'. The theory, which is still being developed, is described in detail. The

authors also examine the implications of transitional learning for the work of adult and continuing educators.

Tennant, M. & Morris, R. 2001, 'Adult education in Australia: shifting identities 1980 – 2000', ***International Journal of Lifelong Education***, vol. 20, no. 1/2, pp. 44–54.

The article, written as part of the twentieth anniversary edition of the *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, provides a descriptive overview of the changes that have shaped the provision of adult education in Australia in the period 1980 – 2000.

The authors commence their overview with the observation that, while there have been significant changes during this period, there has also been some continuity with the past. Many of the same types of providers continuing to be involved in ACE and debates relating to issues such as lack of government funding and 'identity of the sector, to name but two, continue to be held. But within this stream of continuity there has also been considerable change that has had a significant impact on the role and place of adult education in Australian society.

The authors trace the impact of a number of trends (including demographic changes, workplace changes, the nature of knowledge and the role of the state) on adult education. They point to these trends resulting in changes to scope and definition of adult education and the replacement of the 'grand tradition' view of adult education with the more inclusive concept of adult learning. They argue that many of the distinctions between adult education and other forms of post-compulsory education have largely dissolved as the Adult and Community Education sector has received increased recognition and resources and seeks to reposition itself into new relationships with higher education. However, despite this re-positioning within

the vocational education agenda, the sector still seeks to preserve its identity by promoting a broad understanding of the notion of 'vocational' and its continued concern with enabling participation which needs to be addressed through continued efforts to develop a distinctive pedagogy that 'celebrates and utilizes difference which builds on its tradition of starting with the experience of learners'.

Wright, P. & Geroy, G. 2001, 'Changing the mindset: the training myth and the need for world-class performance', ***International Journal of Human Resource Management***, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 586–600.

The authors of this article argue that the 'myth' of training as a 'good' that will result in increased productivity needs to be reconsidered. They commence their argument by examining the literature and noting that training does not bring about increased employee effectiveness and productivity for a number of reasons, including:

- training takes place in controlled environments which often decreases the likelihood of real change in the workplace;
- training often addresses the symptom of a workplace problem rather than the cause;
- management styles (rather than the skills, knowledge and attributes of employees) are often significant factors in determining productivity and changing this factor is not often achieved through training alone; and
- training needs to 'fit' with the organisational culture.

The authors suggest that world-class performance is the result of a complex interplay of variables, one of which is training. These variables can be loosely categorised into two groups – social science variables (management style analysis, feedback/ participation systems, training and development methods, etc.) and physical science variables (job design, ergonomics, physical plan maintenance and engineering, etc.). Determining the requirements of world-class performance is a simple [sic] task of identifying the gap between how a job is being performed now (reactive job analysis) and how it should be performed (proactive job analysis) and then determining what physical and social variables need to be changed in order to achieve the desired goal.

The authors report on a study undertaken in enterprises in Canada, Hong Kong, the Czech Republic and Indonesia to identify the factors that needed to be changed in order for employees to become more productive. Within these enterprises proactive and reactive job analyses were conducted using interviews. The findings showed that training was listed as an activity needed to improve performance by 57 of the 79 respondents. The authors argue that this study illustrates the point that, whilst training is an important factor, it is *not the only* factor that may contribute to improved performance. They conclude by offering a series of questions that might assist enterprises to determine their 'true' needs in relation to working to enhance their productivity.