REFLECTING CRITICALLY ON LIFELONG LEARNING IN AN ERA OF NEOLIBERAL PRAGMATISM: INSTRUMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

In the wake of World War I, lifelong learning emerged internationally as a chameleonic concept and complex culture that has had diverse iterations over time and tides. The historical conspectus of this emergence provides a contextual backdrop for a critical analysis of keynote addresses given at the three previous biannual International Lifelong Learning Conferences (2000-04) hosted by Central Queensland University. Keeping this analysis in mind, a critical social pedagogy of learning and work is envisioned that provides a holistic approach to engaging in lifelong learning in today's neoliberal, pragmatic milieu.

INTRODUCTION

There have been many iterations of lifelong learning, certainly since the Adult Education Committee of the British Ministry of Reconstruction issued the 1919 Report in which it stated that learning ought to be universal and lifelong. I begin this presentation with a historical conspectus of the international emergence of lifelong learning as a chameleonic concept and complex culture since 1919. With this backdrop as context, I provide a critical analysis of keynote addresses given at the three previous biannual International Lifelong Learning Conferences (2000-04) hosted by Central Queensland University. Keeping this analysis in mind, I offer a synopsis of my vision of a critical social pedagogy of learning and work that provides a holistic approach to engaging in lifelong learning in today's neoliberal pragmatic milieu. I use a critical lens to engage the historical, the contemporary, and the visionary. This lens focuses on ethical lifelong-learning practices, highlighting historical awareness, hope, possibility, justice, democratic vision, learner freedom, critique, and intervention.

THE EBB AND FLOW OF LIFELONG LEARNING AS A CHAMELEONIC CONCEPT SINCE 1919

For at least a decade, Australia, Canada, and other late capitalist economies have experienced a pervasive neoliberal policy consensus that stresses the value of a knowledge-based economy, technology and skill development, and a learning society in which cyclical lifelong learning is not only a norm, but also a culture and an attitude (Courchene, 2005; Grace, 2004a,

2004b). This iteration of lifelong learning is a new version of an idea in developed nations that learning ought to be a lifelong venture. This idea can be traced back at least to the release of the 1919 Report, which the Adult Education Committee of the British Ministry of Reconstruction developed as a post-World War I response to outline the kinds of lifelong and universal learning needed to rejuvenate and strengthen democracies and their economies through a broad understanding of education for citizenship (Field, 2000; Grace, 2000). Despite the Report's strong, even commonsensical rhetoric that emphasised the instrumental, economic, social, and cultural advantages of engaging in lifelong learning, the chameleonic notion of lifelong learning that emerged was inconsistently valued in Western education and culture (Grace, 2004b). Indeed, the 1919 Report was neglected in the midst of post-World War I economic and labor crises (Field, 2000).

In a déjà vu of sorts in the aftermath of World War II, lifelong learning found new emphasis, at least in Canada and the USA. The notion was revitalised within a focus on education for war veterans and other adult learners in which strengthening individualism, coping with the forces of technological and cultural change, and fortifying democracy were emphasised (Grace, 2000). However, this emphasis on lifelong learning was also underplayed, especially after the Soviet Union successfully launched Sputnik I in the fall of 1957 and won the first round in its space race with the USA (Riesman, 1981). In the aftermath of the Soviet success, learning for productive citizenship strongly centered on youth as the hope for a prosperous tomorrow. In Canadian and US education, thoughts turned to emphasising process over content, and shoring

up the scientific in schooling for children and youth (Gayfer, 1969; Kidd, 1966a, 1966b).

In the 1960s, another more critical and sociopolitical notion, namely lifelong education, had its genesis. It emerged in discussions within UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) (Grace, 2005). In historical terms, lifelong education is tied to the social chaos and activism of the 1960s; critical emphases on democracy, freedom, and social justice in the period; the strengthening of civil society; and inclusive and participatory forms of learning for adults (Boshier, 2000). In his influential 1972 report *Learning to Be,* Edgar Fauré linked lifelong education to building a learning society (Boshier, 2000; Field, 2000). The Fauré Report attempted to engage an individual-social dialectic and address instrumental, social, and cultural concerns as it proposed human resource-and-skill development, support for situation-specific or contextualised learning, a valuing of self-directed learning, "the involvement of the community in the learning process, and the wider social role of education in understanding conflict, violence, peace, the environment and how to reconcile differences" (Longworth, 2002, p. 11). Like the 1919 Report, strong, even commonsensical rhetoric marked the Fauré Report. And, like the 1919 Report, the Fauré Report was sidelined. During the 1970s, vocationalism eclipsed lifelong education as the notion with currency in international policy circles (Field, 2000). By the end of that decade in Canada and the USA, mandatory continuing education (MCE) was in vogue. MCE primarily focused on individual performance and economic productivity. Another (albeit reductionistic) expression of lifelong learning, MCE was considered to be instrumental and arguably coercive in nature (Lisman and Ohliger, 1978).

During the 1980s, the process of globalization and the emergence of the knowledge economy influenced learning in adulthood (Jarvis, 2000). These forces of change stimulated a melding of the social and the economic that cast the crisis in Western education as a crisis of the economic and the instrumental (Corrigan, 1990; Grace, 2005). To resolve this crisis, education was expected to prioritise human resources and skills development in order to produce learner-workers who were techno-scientifically literate and real contributors to national and global economies. This emphasis culminated in revitalised international interest in lifelong learning in educational policy and practice during the 1990s. A subtext focusing on social cohesion was evident, even though economistic concerns appeared to rule the day. Both UNESCO and the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) promoted the notion of lifelong learning for all. In 1996 the UNESCO-sponsored Delors Report, which is entitled *The Treasure Within,* identified four pillars enabling individual development: "Learning to do, Learning to be, Learning to understand and Learning to live together" (Longworth, 2002, p. 12). As Longworth related, the Delors Report, like the Fauré Report published more than thirty years before it, was a response "to the complexities of change, culture, and civilization in the modern world" (p. 14). As the 1990s unfolded in countries like Canada, cyclical lifelong learning rose to the fore as a solution to meeting the demands of globalization, the information society, and the knowledge economy (Forrester, 2005; Grace, 2004b).

In its cyclical iteration framed within neoliberal pragmatism, lifelong learning repeats this mantra: bolstering the social is the upshot of bolstering the economic. This de-centering of the social is problematic for such reasons as it confuses the notion of the competent worker with simply being a skilled worker, and it isolates training and development for learner-workers from broader societal and other contextual considerations (Forrester, 2005; Grace, 2004a). Freire asserted, "It is in this sense [of de-centering the social], among others, that radical pedagogy must never make any concessions to the trickeries of neoliberal 'pragmatism,' which reduces the educational practice to the technical-scientific training of learners, *training* rather than *educating*" (p. 19). If, for example, a contingent of young adults are dislocated in life, learning, and work as an effect of the crisis of the economic and the instrumental, then neoliberal pragmatists tend to downplay the social and react in a "fatalistic manner, always in favor of the powerful—[They say,] 'It is sad, but what can be done? That is what reality is'" (Freire, 2004, p. 58). Even worse, is their frequent follow-up – "They brought it upon themselves". Such responses indicate inattention to matters of context and relationship. However, in the *Pedagogy of Indignation,* the book that he was writing when he passed away, Freire (2004) reminded us that reality can be something more: a place "of options, of decision, of freedom, of ethics" (p. 58). He asked educators to frame their political, pedagogical, and cultural work within this

critical perspective so they might be proactive and intervene – in the face of the power of the economy – to condition individual and social behavior. This requires that we, as educators and cultural workers intervening in the pedagogical and the political, to hone our abilities "to think, to conjecture, to compare, to choose, to decide, to envision, to dream" (p. 33). In other words, we need to become critically intelligent, which Freire described as having the "wakeful capacity for comprehending the new" (p. 4). Freire (2004) holds that critical intelligence enables us to be fully, respectfully, and politically active in the world.

> To the extent that we become capable of transforming the world, of naming our own surroundings, of apprehending [or critically questioning], of making sense of things, of deciding, of choosing, of valuing, and finally of ethicizing the world, our mobility within it and through history necessarily comes to involve dreams toward whose realization we struggle. Thus, it follows that our presence in the world, which implies choice and decision, is not a neutral presence. The ability to observe, to compare, and to evaluate, in order to choose, through deciding, how one is to intervene in the life of … [communities] and thus exercise one's citizenship, arises then as a fundamental competency. (p. 7)

Freire maintained, "This critical intelligence results in a knowledge as fundamental as it is obvious: There is no culture or history that is immobile. Change is a natural occurrence of culture and history" (p. 4). It is critical intelligence in the face of change that can energise a new emphasis on the social, accentuating ethical practices in learning and work.

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES AT THE 1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD INTERNATIONAL LIFELONG LEARNING CONFERENCES, CENTRAL QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY: GAUGING WAKEFUL CAPACITIES FOR COMPREHENDING THE NEW

As the new millennium began, the interest in lifelong learning that had been generated during the 1990s continued to be pervasive internationally in educational policy-and-practice circles. In 2000, Central Queensland University hosted its inaugural international Lifelong Learning Conference. 2006 marks the fourth such conference, which has become a biannual event.

Collectively, the first three conferences created timely spaces for critical reflection and deliberation. They provided participating educators and practitioners with opportunities to discuss possibilities for engaging in lifelong learning in a world impacted by globalization, civil insecurity and unrest, the knowledge economy, and the demands for information literacy. At each conference, keynote speakers spoke about these forces of change as they considered various iterations of lifelong learning. They grappled with issues of responsibility and responsiveness in the face of the power of the global economy to condition what is perceived as worthwhile learning and work. These keynote speakers constituted an eclectic group in terms of their political, pedagogical, and cultural perspectives. In this section of the paper I provide critical reflective analysis of their keynote papers, which I frame using two central questions:

1. How did each keynote speaker frame his or her engagement in lifelong learning in terms of matters of context and relationship?

2. To what extent did each keynote speaker's engagement in lifelong learning demonstrate critical intelligence, with foci on options, evaluation, decisions, freedom, and ethics?

The 1st International Lifelong Learning Conference, Central Queensland University

Patricia Senn Breivik – Information literacy and lifelong learning: the magical partnership

In her keynote address at the inaugural lifelong learning conference, Breivik (2000) asserted that information literacy is the crucial element in enabling individuals to become independent lifelong learners. She equated learner independence with prowess in information literacy, which she defined as the ability to access, evaluate, and use information effectively to address needs in personal, work, and civic contexts. Her definition implies a need to attend to the multiple contexts and relationships that shape learner-workers' lives. It also implies that one can expect significant learning to take place outside a formal framework. Of course, there is an assumption underlying Breivik's engagement with information literacy: If learner-workers are to use information literacy to good effect, then they will already have basic numeracy and literacy as springboards to enable them to build computer, library, media, network, and visual literacies. Had Breivik's address been more

deeply framed using a critically intelligent design, then she might have focused more on this issue and how a new classism can emerge when the limits of an individual's prior learning context are not considered.

Breivik was clear that information literacy is an essential part of the rubric for success in which economic productivity abetted by worker performance enables social improvements. This belief undergirds a neoliberal pragmatic perspective. As government, employers, and even many learner-workers see it from this perspective, desired worker performance involves thinking critically, functioning flexibly, communicating clearly, and working collaboratively. Such performance locates learner-workers as contributors to economic growth, making them a valuable commodity. Institutions of higher education in late capitalist economies in countries like Australia, Canada, and the USA see their growth and even their very survival linked to producing this commodity. As Breivik viewed it, the current aim of higher education is to turn out learner-workers who see formal education as a component of lifelong learning, which is framed as an ongoing endeavor required for adjusting to a flexible work world.

Breivik's approach to information literacy is more instrumental and pragmatic than critical as she links prowess in the literacies to the effectiveness and productivity of lifelong learners in changing workplaces. However, at times she did take a critically intelligent approach in her analysis. For example, Breivik acknowledged that linking information literacy to performativity and flexibility in work is insufficient to meet learner-workers' other needs in personal and civic domains. In a discussion about the "digital divide" in the USA, she noted that technology is creating new "haves" and "have-nots" or a new class system: "The amount of investment that has been made in technology compared to any documentable improvement in education, economic development, or quality of life for the at-risk is almost non-existent" (p. 3). Breivik suggested that learner-workers could use information literacy to overcome being left out by technology and to become empowered. Of course, this means that we need to focus on options, evaluation, decisions, freedom, and ethics in the Freirean sense. It also means that we need to recognise the forces that work against empowerment. When neoliberal pragmatic forces are at work, economistic considerations come first. Producing an

information literate citizenry, generating quality information, and providing universal access are viewed foremost as requirements to advance economic agendas. While this same intricate production could be used directly for social and cultural advancement, direct action in social and cultural contexts is not a primary concern of neoliberal pragmatists. They prefer to believe that if the economy advances, then a domino effect will lead to social advances.

Breivik appeared to have answers for the "haves," for graduates in higher education who will fit into a culture of cyclical lifelong learning abetted by the prowess that comes from being information literate. What her keynote address lacked was answers for the "have-nots;" that is, answers for those disadvantaged by cultural status, class, and lack of formal education. For the have-nots, it is more than getting them to the information they need. It is bringing them up to an educational level where they can use the information, and it is making certain that accommodation is assured after the issue of access is addressed.

Philip C. Candy – Learning and earning: graduate skills for an uncertain future

In his keynote address, Candy (2000) held up universities as adaptable and enduring institutions. He related that contemporary Western universities have been undergoing a process of "massification" in response to current economic needs and the incursion of a larger public into academe. As a result, universities have become more focused on developing employable graduates who possess technical knowledge and skills, communication competence, time-management and organizational skills, computer skills, and the capacity to work collaboratively. In other words, today's universities are responding to the imperatives of neoliberal pragmatism, focusing on learner-worker performativity "more directly and unambiguously as training grounds for people to join the economy" (p. 7). With governments, employers, professionals, and many university students themselves pressuring universities to assist in advancing the economy, Candy related that "the historic role of higher education as a social critic and conscience" has declined in value (pp. 7-8). Increasing value is now given to producing graduates who can make a smooth transition to today's work world where they become expert practitioners in their

professional fields. However, as Candy noted, even specialist expertise is not enough.

> …employers have increasingly emphasised that graduates also need to be adaptable and flexible; and that they need to be able to: manage themselves and others, communicate well orally and in writing, keep up to date in their chosen field, be technologically literate, and generally to manifest a range of more generic or transferable attributes in addition to their subject-matter skills and knowledge. (p. 8)

Here, Candy's attention to matters of context and relationship is instrumentally connected to the contemporary vocational emphasis that is impacting the design and delivery of university programs and courses. Accreditation becomes more techno-rational in this mix, driven as it is by economic rather than social and cultural imperatives. The need to be adaptable and flexible suggests that learning, especially in instrumental formats, cannot end with formal higher education; it must become a lifelong endeavor in which learners willingly and ably engage. This provides contemporary universities with two complementary roles: *"the development of lifelong learners,* and the broader *provision of lifelong learning opportunities"* (p.14). As Candy remarked, both roles are considered important for today's universities because their graduates will variously find themselves engaged in workplace-based learning, continuing professional education, self-directed learning, and further formal study in a vocational college or graduate education. He, like Breivik, emphasised the importance of information literacy as a key enabler of this ongoing learning. He also listed other enablers: an inquiring mind, a sense of personal agency, a repertoire of learning skills, interpersonal skills and group membership, and the ability to see the big picture or "helicopter vision" (p. 9).

As Candy viewed it, the roles of the university are changing for both practical and ideological reasons. While much of his address reflected changes in higher education resulting from the impact of neoliberal pragmatism, he, like Breivik, occasionally engaged in critically intelligent reflection. For example, Candy did discuss social challenges to universities in an era of neoliberal pragmatism. With value placed on economistic forms of lifelong learning in today's learning society, Candy recounted how universities are asked to fit into new patterns of learning. He noted that this has deep implications for issues of access and accommodation as a more diverse student population engages in formal learning as a stepping stone to a broader and enduring involvement in lifelong learning. As learners and workers have been expected to adapt, so, too, have universities. Candy concludes:

> …by focusing on developing lifelong learners in undergraduate programs, by broadening the scope of community outreach, and by forming strategic partnerships, universities are simultaneously reaffirming their historic commitment to providing support for learning in its many forms, contexts, and manifestations throughout life, as well as recognising the imperative to produce employable and vocationally prepared graduates. (p. 17)

However, Candy provided no critically intelligent analysis of his conclusion. There was no problematization of ways the imperative to produce graduates for the knowledge economy erodes the historical role of universities in relation to students' social and cultural learning. There was no consideration or evaluation of learning options beyond the instrumental and vocational. The ethics of contemporary learning practices in universities remained unquestioned when the address was over.

Peter Jarvis – 'Imprisoned in the Global Classroom' – revisited: towards an ethical analysis of lifelong learning

Grounding his keynote address in critically intelligent analysis, Jarvis (2000) spoke about the uncritical way in which lifelong learning is praised as a contemporary panacea that can improve the lot of individuals, communities, societies, and nations. Much of this praise focuses on the benefits of continuous training and development, which Jarvis maintained actually reduces the idea of education. In taking this position, Jarvis did not mean to undermine or dismiss instrumental education; he simply wanted to challenge us to see learning in a more holistic context. He also wanted us to contest lifelong learning that merely focuses on instrumental instruction. Of course, when lifelong learning is framed in neoliberal pragmatic terms, instrumental instruction can be an exclusive focus. For governments, business, industry, and many learner-workers, it is given prime value because it is inextricably linked to gaining employment that sustains learner-workers and economies. However, such learning is often void of any concern with the social and the cultural aspects of quality life, learning, and work for individuals. In this regard from critically intelligent perspectives, Jarvis reminded us to think about what constitutes

ethical and valuable lifelong-learning practices. He challenged us to problematize the development and delivery of forms of lifelong learning in relation to options and freedoms that learners have in choosing and deciding. From this critically intelligent perspective, Jarvis asked us to examine the circumstances under which learning occurs, and to consider who controls the learning in which we engage.

Jarvis's keynote address demonstrated his real concern with who controls lifelong learning. He asserted, "One of the ways in which learning has been controlled has been through the process of institutionalization. Education systems are institutionalized and, therefore, controlled systems of learning" (p. 20). Jarvis related that controlling learning has become even more important in neoliberal pragmatic times due to demands for specific kinds of learner-workers and for economic efficiency. In this milieu, educational institutions serve the ends of late capitalism, and learner-workers have to keep up with knowledge and technology or be blamed personally for failing to do so. With learner-workers subjected to never-ending training and the pressures of knowledge-based performativity, Jarvis declared that it is time to return to a more critically intelligent analysis of what passes as education these days. As he maintained, this analysis has to interrogate corporatised learning models in which learner-workers are valued only to the degree to which they contribute to output in terms of new innovations, new knowledge, and new applications of knowledge. Jarvis summarised the state of affairs in this milieu.

> The work force is having to keep on researching and keep on learning to keep abreast with all of these developments. … Higher education … has had to change at a phenomenal rate, providing continuing professional education … for the knowledge workers. Indeed, universities are being forced into becoming institutions of lifelong learning, and developing all their delivery systems and procedures accordingly – which might be no bad thing in itself! However, the program of courses offered, and much of the research undertaken by the universities, shows that they have been subordinated to the demands of the market, and especially to those of the large corporations. (p. 23)

Rather than positioning universities as adapting and enduring as Candy did in his keynote address, Jarvis positioned today's universities as vulnerable institutions that appear to have little choice as they fulfill roles as servants to corporations. As an indication of the little

choice that universities have, he noted a contemporary phenomenon: When traditional universities have failed to keep up in neoliberal times, corporations have responded by setting up corporate universities that develop their own systems of instrumental education and training. In the face of such corporate dominance, Jarvis concluded that universities have been reduced to conduits for conveying what the knowledge society values. In this milieu, learner-workers are reduced to "human resources to be developed through lifelong learning," which is expressed as credentialism (p. 23). As they increase their instrumental value, these learner-workers are to perform outside any critically intelligent design. They are not to question corporations and governments or the quest for economic returns by these entities. They are not to question whether there is more to life than work. In a neoliberal milieu, work is life, or at least that is what ideal learner-workers should think as notions like learner freedom are shunted aside in the quest to deliver what has value in the marketplace. In this milieu, "all the education and learning that relates to our humanity – but not to the economy – is relegated to the margins of corporate and sociopolitical society" (p. 25).

Taking a critical stance that challenges us to engage in anti-oppressive, oppositional learning, Jarvis concluded with a call to engage learner-workers in an ethical practice of lifelong learning that, in its concern for other people, is

- "really about lifelong learning and not work-life learning (however important that might be),
- about people and not profits,
- about enriching people rather than utilizing human resources,
- about responding to needs and not meeting targets." (p. 26)

The 2nd International Lifelong Learning Conference, Central Queensland University

Hunter Boylan – Graduate attributes, why and how

In his primary focus on relationships of power in his keynote address at the 2nd International Lifelong Learning Conference, Boylan (2002) engaged in critically intelligent analysis to the degree that he enabled us to think about the freedom of learner-workers and their abilities to make choices and decisions. Still, Boylan linked

higher education to the maintenance of a stable and traditional social status quo; he noted that education should prepare students for adult roles as parents, citizens, and workers. However, he stayed in the critical realm by suggesting that postsecondary education should help students develop both cognitive *and* affective attributes. While the cognitive domain focuses on knowledge-and-information building and the development of information processing skills, the affective domain focuses on students' attitudes, motivations, values, and beliefs. Boylan placed "a proclivity for lifelong learning" (p. 5) in the affective-attribute domain. The focus on the affective can be juxtaposed with critical concerns with matters of relationship and disposition.

Boylan related that, in the USA, the development of cognitive and affective attributes has become caught up in an educational accountability movement. Since the 1980s, state governments and higher-education coordinating boards have required colleges and universities to assess student-learning outcomes. Boylan noted that such assessment has focused on cognitive rather than affective outcomes. In focusing on cognitive assessment, the message is clear: Assess what is valued, which is knowledge building and the attainment of such academic skills as verbal and communication skills. In his analysis, Boylan declared that assessment should not be limited to the cognitive domain. For example, he pointed to research indicating that postsecondary education is gender-based – gender-biased might be a better term – in the US experience, as indicated by the predominance of masculine learning styles and intellectual orientations. In another example, Boylan pointed to research that indicates that student exposure to ethno-cultural diversity in a changing college population "has a statistically significant positive impact on critical thinking scores among college students" (p. 6). This research counters a pervasive conservative viewpoint in the USA that suggests that affirmative action designed to increase minority populations in colleges and universities would deleteriously impact academic outcomes. Such research on gender and race indicates that traditional attitudes, values, beliefs, and practices in relation to culture and power still need to be challenged.

While the US trend in assessment is to focus on the cognitive, Boylan related that there is significant research noting the importance of affective attributes in relation to learning outcomes. For example, he drew on research that clearly demonstrated that "participating in and graduating from college has a positive influence on students' affective development" (p. 4). From a critically intelligent perspective, this suggests that colleges are good spaces to have students grapple with the power dynamics and effects of cultural location, language, and relationships of difference, including race and gender. Boylan also pointed to related research focused on the affective that has importance for critically intelligent analysis. For example, he described research indicating that college participation and graduation influenced students' orientation toward self (including building self-esteem) and others (including recognition of the importance and impact of peer-group affiliation). This research also highlighted student recognition and acceptance of the interdependence of people. In critically intelligent terms, such research valuing social dynamics has ramifications for helping students to think about social-support mechanisms and the collective responsibility of educators and learner-workers. It can also help everyone to focus on community building in times when individualism and competition continue to prevail. It also has value to help students critique a myopic neoliberal focus on performativity and the neoliberal pragmatic tendency to blame persons instead of systems when things go wrong. These very notions challenge a purely economistic design for learning and work.

Norman Longworth – Learning cities for a learning century

From a critically intelligent perspective in his keynote address, Longworth (2002) highlighted the value of holistic lifelong learning in relation to citizenship; community building; and learning cities, towns, and regions. He focused not only on learning for work, but also on learning for life. He suggested this response to learning in a world where diverse change-force factors and new knowledge and technology imperatives are at play.

> Any response to this [complex set of] challenge[s] entails a significant movement from the paradigm of "education and training," into which many systems were locked, to one of "lifelong learning" – from the concept of education for those who need it provided by those who deliver it, to the principle of continuous education for everyone controlled by individuals themselves, and mediated within the group of learners. (p. 10)

Longworth noted this transition, with its focus on learner control and matters of interrelationship, is not smooth sailing. Learner-workers are forced to navigate a knowledge and information explosion that makes the quest for expertise all the more challenging. Efforts to become information literate are caught up in the very real challenge of sifting through a sea of knowledge and trying to ascertain what information is valuable to update. Moreover, learner-workers are expected to be innovative and flexible in knowledge societies in which work has migrated "towards high-skill, high-technology, high-added value service industries" (p. 11). In this milieu in which matters of contexts and relationships of power have taken on new intricacies, there is a need to be critically intelligent. Learner-workers have to develop prowess at evaluating and deciding as they choose among increasing numbers of knowledge-and-information sources and options. Still, it may not simply be an individual problem. Surveying contemporary developments in lifelong learning, Longworth concluded:

> The emphasis is undoubtedly on the rights of the individual as a learner and the development of individual human potential. But there is an increasing movement to pose the question whether individuals can, by themselves, solve all the problems of learning. National plans are beginning to put an emphasis on the support structures which need to be put in place from the community in order to allow individual learning to flourish. (pp. 13-14)

There is much to flesh out in this individual-community dialectic. Within a neoliberal pragmatic framework for lifelong learning, the focus on individual learner-workers and the development of their potentials has had a key negative consequence: The individual is blamed when learner-worker potential is not reached. Systemic problems tend not to come to the fore in this framework; after all, governments and corporations are unlikely to blame themselves. Moreover, emphases on community and collective supports tend to be relegated to the sidelines.

As he envisioned learning as a holistic engagement that is not only lifelong (learning throughout life) but lifewide (learning across the full range of life's activities), Longworth provided critical links between lifelong learning and active citizenship in communities. He maintained, "Strategies to mobilize citizens to participate in the life of the city, contribute to its development and give of their talents, experiences and expertise will certainly figure highly in any learning city's plans for the future" (p.16). In critically intelligent fashion, Longworth noted that such strategising involves exploring options and making informed decisions as learner-workers conduct personal learning audits and engage in holistic action planning.

> …participants [are encouraged] to enter into considerable personal analysis of their learning history, needs, opinions, desires, and intentions, culminating in the construction of a plan to identify mentors, styles, priorities, and topics. The focus was on the development of rounded individuals and therefore covered personal development, leisure-time, family, the community, as well as work and career. (p. 17)

This positioning of lifelong learning in the broader contexts of a citizen learner-worker's involvement in life, learning, work, and community has value in a contemporary world where diverse social, cultural, and economic forces of change impact individuals and communities. Erratic behavior in economies contributes to social fragmentation in families and communities, and it contributes to the cultural instability that is associated with rapid technological change, the information explosion, and factious debates about inclusive education in relation to access and accommodation across race, ethnicity, class, gender, and other relationships of power. In discussing key characteristics of a desired learning society, Longworth maintained that this society provides men and women in minority groups with equal access to lifelong-learning opportunities. However, this is still the ideal. Making a desired characteristic a reality remains quite a challenge in a world where bias, prejudice, and hate remain inimical forces that work against the very notion of community. To advance the social and the cultural in the context of lifelong learning, we need to make certain that responsibility for lifelong learning lies not only with individuals and the private sector, but also, and indeed in large part, with government and the public sector. Laws, legislation, and educational policy have to assist inclusive lifelong learning that guarantees access and accommodation if lifelong learning for all is to be a reality. To uphold the principle of democratic citizenship, government must never forget its primary mandate that requires it to be *for the people,* for contributing *and* disenfranchised citizen learner-workers. Longworth, recognising government's importance, summarised the power that it can exercise in the promotion and delivery of lifelong learning.

Through its economic and political power, government is the enabler of lifelong learning programs, values, and attitudes. It has the ability to define targets, to support worthwhile initiatives, to change systems, to influence development, [and] to turn ideas into action. (p. 28)

Of course, this must be done by putting the interests of people before corporate interests. Attention must be paid to the social and cultural needs of people, and not just to people as human resources to be developed to meet economic needs.

Ian Napier – The lifelong learning exchange in Singapore and its parallels in large public companies

Taking a rather instrumental approach to lifelong learning in his keynote paper, Napier (2002) demonstrated how those who subscribe to neoliberal pragmatism seek to integrate learning into workplaces in a way "that leverages on existing systems and institutions" (p. 36). Supporting the privatisation of lifelong learning that is a goal of neoliberalism, he made this assertion: The private sector is capable of managing and delivering lifelong learning to meet public-sector learning needs.

Governments, institutions and organizations today need to reconsider the access and management challenges faced in delivering lifelong learning to their employees, students, or citizens, as well as the opportunity to better motivate and connect their constituencies to an exchange of learning materials, courses, and content. (p. 36)

As Napier related, private management of lifelong learning is focused on producing proficient corporate citizens by creating a training administration, access, and delivery capability to support workplace learning. Napier discussed the Singapore "Learning Exchange" as an example of this support system in action. He described the Learning Exchange as a public-private venture between the Government of Singapore and his company, Accenture. He noted that it contains two major components: "[an] 'Enterprise Learning Management System' – which provides learner administration and training administration, [and a] Learning Marketplace – which provides a training brokerage and alliances with eLearning and traditional training providers" (p. 36). Napier promoted the Learning Exchange as "an exemplar of how lateral thinking around agency or organizational learning-management and delivery opportunities can be extended to an

entire country" (p. 42). Ultimately though, this setup typifies a neoliberal pragmatic model of government-corporate control of lifelong learning in which learner-workers engage in systematic training and development for economistic ends. The Learning Exchange emphasises marketplace capability as the means to structure lifelong learning so learner-workers reach the desired workplace potential: "The Marketplace is a transaction-rich electronic environment that links training providers, buyers, and users through a web-based architecture that allows for publication and registration of training courses" (p. 40). In this learning model, government-corporate needs are emphasised over learner-worker needs in the administration of learning and training.

The learner administration component … offers comprehensive end-to-end training services that focus on lifelong learning, and skills development and improvement for its users. The system enables an organization to track and manage the continuous learning process of its personnel. … [The system] works to benefit the organization or employer by automating the time-consuming processes in corporate training. These features promote reduction in time to on-the-job proficiency and effectiveness of administration, which in turn translates to cost savings. … [The system] has been designed with flexibility for the learner to take ownership of their personal development. The system provides a one-stop shop for the learner. (pp. 38-39)

While neoliberal pragmatists have deemed learning that benefits contemporary state, national, and global economies to be a vital component of lifelong learning, it is insufficient learning for today's time and tides. When an iteration of lifelong learning leaves the personal, the social, and the cultural out, it is diminished because it forgets to integrate a holistic focus on lifewide learning. Napier was not concerned with such diminishment, as he demonstrated in the above description of the narrow focus of the Learning Exchange. Benefiting the system by helping the learner-worker to become more efficient was his modus operandi. However, the one-stop shopping that he suggested for learner-workers proved to be limited. Learning for social purposes and learning with personal intrinsic value could not be found on the shelf.

The 3rd International Lifelong Learning Conference, Central Queensland University

Ralph Catts – Lifelong learning and higher education: reflections and prospects

In providing informed reflection in his keynote paper, Catts (2004) chose a major theme to guide his analysis: "the role of higher education in fostering lifelong learning" (p. 1). While focusing on the notion of adaptability – as Candy (2000) had in his keynote address at the inaugural conference – Catts spoke more about required adaptability in contemporary higher education. He noted that this focus had become pervasive in the face of corporate and political forces of change that had diminished the traditional, more liberal educational purposes of higher education in the rush to address work culture's concerns with employability and economistic ends. As Catts saw it, the role of universities in contemporary times is twofold: More broadly, it is to help students develop skills to sustain prowess in the practice of lifelong learning and, more specifically, it is to help students attain disciplinary or professional knowledge. This dual role is tension-ridden, if not dichotomous in nature, since it often pits a more historical concern with liberal education and molding well-rounded graduates against a more neoliberal pragmatic concern with vocational education and producing specifically employable graduates. In a critically intelligent manner, Catts argued in favor of a more encompassing form of lifelong learning that would provide students with skills to participate in instrumental, social, and cultural learning to meet life, learning, and work needs. He saw this as a matter of "enabling liberal education outcomes to be maintained within the context of a vocationalised curriculum" (p. 2). Catts believed that this multi-contextual kind of education, coupled with a focus on effective and efficient learning, provided prospects for fortifying higher education as a valuable socioeconomic institution.

Throughout his analysis, Catts emphasised the social, specifically social capital and social learning. Although not as critical in his orientation as Jarvis (2000) had been in his keynote address, Catts did call attention to collectivity and interactions among students and other interest groups as he argued for lifelong learning that intersected academic knowledge with workplace learning and experiences.

However, from a critical perspective, there are issues of control in this intersection that tend to reduce options for higher education and choices for students when learning for today's national and global economies is emphasised. Catts did not provide sufficient critical analysis to make sense of how power and politics play out in this scenario spotlighting more economistic roles for higher education and its students. Apprehending this neoliberal pragmatic turn in the Freirean sense of working to ethicise higher education is warranted here. After all, with this turn, institutional autonomy in decision-making and learner freedom to choose have been sacrificed on the politico-corporate altar. Moreover, higher education and its students have become more preoccupied with economistic assimilation and survival. In this regard, Catts did acknowledge higher education's dilemma: The creation of new exploitable knowledge has become the domain of corporations, weakening the ability of higher education to influence what knowledge has most worth. As Catts noted, the production of this new knowledge has, primarily, economistic purposes. Furthermore, the production process can be exclusionary in terms of who has access, and any focus on the public good may, at best, be an afterthought.

Catts's keynote address raised important questions about the role of higher education today. Catts certainly argued in favor of a more encompassing form of higher education that integrates liberal and vocational education. Nevertheless, many of his suggestions for improvement focused more on the applied disciplines and the professions, and less on traditional disciplines in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. This was demonstrated as he challenged us to link the university curriculum to workplace practices in order to enable informed critique of higher educational practices. Catts emphasized, "The role of Higher Education in lifelong learning includes the development and maintenance of professional content, plus the development of capacities for professional practice" (p. 5). He postulated seven dimensions for the lifelong-learning outcomes of higher education: "professional communication, information literacy, critical thinking, application of technologies, global perspectives, informed reflection, and cooperative networking" (p. 6). This critically intelligent focus on building capacities included instrumental, social, and cultural dimensions. For example, in apprehending workplace cultures in the Freirean sense, Catts's understanding of critical thinking

can spur exploration of ethical elements present or absent in workplace cultures. It can also help us to explore the degree to which workers and would-be learners have options and the freedom to make decisions. Focusing on Catts's reflection on global perspectives provides informed insights for addressing multiculturalism and developing a political vision that is more encompassing of the diverse perspectives found in today's workplaces. Catts's notion of informed reflection, which aligns neatly with Freire's notion of critical reflection, provides a structured basis to guide critique of the status quo and to consider prospects for change that take power and interests into account. Catts's accentuating of cooperative networking further enhances a critical approach to learning that highlights collectivity and trust and rapport in teamwork. In stressing the sum of these dimensions in his typology for developing lifelong-learning skills in higher education, Catts provided us with critically intelligent analysis that emphasised social capital as well as economic output.

Francesca Beddie – Learning communities: a catalyst for collective responsibility

In her keynote address at the 3rd International Lifelong Learning Conference, Beddie (2004) attended to matters of context, relationship, and ethical practice as she affirmed the need and responsibility for educators and administrators to engage in holistic lifelong learning. As she saw it from critically intelligent perspectives, such learning had to work against mediocrity and help learner-workers love learning and deepen their values as they engaged in critical reflection on life, learning, and work. She reflected:

> This idea of learning is the one I embraced when I entered the labyrinth of the Australian education sector in 2002, the year I was appointed executive director of Adult Learning Australia. I saw my mission as, to foster a culture of learning in Australia which would be the mainstay for a vibrant democracy, an innovative economy, and a tolerant society. (p. 1)

In a retrospective of her work with Adult Learning Australia, Beddie related that she found her mission to engage learner-workers in critical forms of lifelong learning to be quite a challenge. Even though a large majority of working-age Australians participate in lifelong learning, she determined that their participation was, for the most part, extrinsically motivated;

they engaged in vocational training and workplace learning for economistic purposes. As Beddie saw it, the culture of learning to which working-age Australians were subjected did not promote the intrinsic value of learning, learning to address civic concerns, or learning for democratic citizenship. Instead, the culture of learning catered to the already educated, helping them to become more information literate and savvy about technology. As she spoke, Beddie noted that such an instrumental learning culture marginalised many Australians. She referenced 2002 statistics indicating that 45% of Australian adults lacked sufficient levels of numeracy and literacy to cope with the everyday demands of life and work, and that one in five Australians is not functionally literate. Of course, this sorry state of affairs is not unique to Australia. Many healthy late capitalist economies experience the paradox of unhealthy social divisions and classism because the uneducated and undereducated tend to be left out in the knowledge economy and the kind of learning society that it begets.

Beddie went further in her critical social analysis, referencing OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) research equating a lack of education with a lack of social and cultural capital. When they are thus deprived, she related, certain citizens are left behind economically. Furthermore, social problems multiply as the uneducated and undereducated are more likely to experience poor health, make bad consumer choices, engage in crime, and have a negative attitude toward participation in lifelong learning. Still, Beddie contended that lifelong learning is "the key to maintaining a civilized world" (p. 3). However, to be the key, she insisted that lifelong learning had to prioritise meeting local needs as part of a civic responsibility to help individuals and communities build social and cultural capital. She concluded, "The most successful learning communities are organic – they arise out of local energy and in response to local concerns" (p. 4). Yet governments and universities tend to forget or ignore this when they operate from a neoliberal pragmatic perspective. Moreover, as Beddie claimed, they also forget that the trend to vocationalise university education as a form of mass education favors multinational corporations, not local communities. When the private and the global are valued more than the public and the local, many citizen learner-workers are devalued. Beddie provided this conspectus of the Australian situation.

The current system in Australia, driven by industry demand and individual choice, does little to entice … [uneducated, undereducated, older, and poor adults] back to learning. They are often in situations either where training is not on offer or is inappropriate (e.g., the training does not take account of learning barriers or is intimidating or expensive). This must be rectified because not to have the capacity to learn throughout life is a recipe for individual disadvantage and societal dysfunction. (pp. 5-6)

Beddie concluded that creating an enabling environment for lifelong learning is a core government responsibility. She added that lifelong learning had to be holistic to be most effective. In this regard, she called on government to focus on individual, community, civic, and vocational learning outcomes. In keeping with a critically intelligent perspective, she felt such an approach would help create a dynamic environment for instrumental, social, and cultural forms of lifelong learning.

Christine Susan Bruce – Information literacy as a catalyst for educational change: a background paper

In her keynote address linking critical thinking to building critical intelligence, Bruce (2004) presented contemporary information literacy (IL) as an encompassing term that is "inextricably associated with information practices and critical thinking in the information and communication technology (ICT) environment" (p. 8). Taking IL beyond a techno-transactional function, she linked IL functions to lifelong and lifewide learning that encompass formal education about the information environment, personal development and empowerment, social responsibility, and economic development and advancement. For Bruce, building critical intelligence has meant focusing on the development of "the intellectual capabilities involved in using information" and the creation of "learning opportunities that enhance information literacy not only [to] make use of information and communication infrastructures, but [also] … to bring the information practices that are effective in professional, civic, and personal life into curriculum" (p. 8). Bruce felt this intellectual work is crucial if an information society is to evolve into a learning society.

In her relational model of information literacy, Bruce has described seven different ways to experience information use: "information technology for retrieval and communication,

information sources, information process, information control, knowledge construction, knowledge extension, and wisdom" (p. 9). Her model frames the IL experience as a reflexive engagement with relevant information practices in which students learn how to critique these practices. It also recognises that learning can be a social process that highlights the interdependence of learner-workers and groups operating in local contexts. Bruce concluded:

Information literacy [constructed as a rich and textured experience] … is clearly part of the fabric of learning; and, if students are to learn from the resources available in information-rich environments, must be woven into the learning experience. In recognition of this imperative, localized models of information literacy are created to meet the needs of specific educational contexts around the world. (p. 10)

Broadly used in this experiential context, Bruce's model of information literacy can provide opportunities to explore the impact of history and address the diverse needs that are pervasive in localised contexts. Here IL can be employed to infuse lifelong learning with multiple techno-scientific, social, cultural, and economic purposes. In this process, information-literacy education can take students into the realm of deep learning where perception and pedagogy meet. Students can engage in critique, building awareness in this realm. As students become more critically intelligent, they are able to transfer their experiential learning by applying it in new contexts where they can choose, evaluate, and decide. This "involves bringing real-life experiences of information use into the classroom, and creating opportunities for critical reflection on the learning process, to foster an awareness in learners of what they have learned" (p. 15).

Máirín Kenny – Lifelong learning: sailing to atlantis?

In providing insightful critical social analysis in her keynote paper, Kenny (2004) emphasised the centrality of access and equity in her policy work and practice of lifelong learning in the Republic of Ireland. Two multi-focused questions guided her analysis: "Who says what lifelong learning is, what it is for, and for whom? And what are the key ideas and how do they interact – with each other, and with provision?" (p. 20)

Early in her address, Kenny noted that social cohesion is one key idea with currency in the rhetoric used in lifelong-learning policy circles. She stated that if we take this notion seriously,

then it brings participants in lifelong learning – educators and learner-workers alike – face to face with the history of marginalisation and exclusion in their countries and local communities. While a turn to history is important, Kenny related that other change-force factors like immigration tend to intensify concerns with access, accommodation, and equity in learning and work. Immigration brings new racial, ethno-cultural, linguistic, and other relational differences into the cultural mosaic of nations and local communities. In gauging reaction to immigration in the Republic of Ireland, Kenny discussed how both individuals and churches hanging on to tradition and historical notions of dominance have contributed to the exclusion experienced by marginalised groups. She provided this synopsis of the complexities of Irish sociocultural and economic experiences.

> The economic boom [in the Republic of Ireland] is accompanied by growing socio-economic disparities. The growing "socio-informational" (to coin a term) divide is evident in 2002 census data on access to information and communications technology. Economic disadvantage and geographic remoteness correlate with relatively low levels of computer ownership and access to the Internet. … In the Irish Republic, a distinctive factor is the remarkable marginalisation of older women, 80 percent of whom are not in the labour force, and the majority of whom have lower-secondary educational attainment at best. The unemployment rate among early school leavers (15-29 years) is about fifteen percent, … [nearly four times] the national average of 4.5%. Young women are more likely than young men to have employment – many probably in the growing service sector where employment is insecure and low paid. (p. 21)

This stark picture is not so different from other late capitalist countries like Canada where youth unemployment and underemployment and the lack of quality work are problems (Grace, 2005). What is stunning, though, is the big picture of socioeconomic and techno-cultural exclusion that arises when the facts are presented together. When lifelong learning is a middle-class venture, or learning for the already educated, or learning for those learner-workers who are already part of the fabric of new economies, it is an exclusive endeavor. Kenny's description providing examples of Irish inequities and exclusion is testament to this assertion.

Taking into account the kind of social non-cohesion that exists in countries like the Republic of Ireland, what is needed is critical social lifelong and lifewide learning that can cut across barriers such as those associated with class, illiteracy, age, gender, the lack of education, the lack of quality work, and geographic isolation. In providing a starting point for such encompassing social learning, Kenny maintained that educators should begin with those affected by exclusion. She declared, "The perspectives of members of marginal groups offer useful vantage points for critiquing current understandings of lifelong learning policy and provision" (p. 24). Of course, this would require a culture of learning that explores the social and the cultural in order to provide texture to the instrumental and the economic in ways that might abet social cohesion. As Kenny related, starting with the instrumental and the economic leaves many Irish citizens out since there is a dire basic literacy problem. Moreover, there is a poor adult attitude toward participation in lifelong learning: Only 20 percent of the population takes courses of any kind, and most of them are already educationally advantaged. Kenny pointed to another problem: the Irish tendency to see cultural difference as a deficit. As she saw it, "The conflation of difference with difficulty shows a slippage toward the old deficit concepts, and it does nothing to challenge such a mindset among educators, students and their families, and the general public" (pp. 22-23).

Speaking further to her concern with access and equity, Kenny set this bottom line for lifelong learning as a critically social venture: "Starting from the concept of a diverse normal population, human rights are non-negotiable, and respect for them requires a system's commitment to seeing diversity as being normal" (p. 23). Indeed, if the system is not committed to the social, then the social malfunctions and declines. The sum of the problems that Kenny described pointed to such malfunction and systemic issues. Thus, as Kenny suggested, what is needed is a national commitment to address systemic issues that impact illiteracy, the erection of cultural barriers, and the devaluing of participation in lifelong learning.

In her remarks Kenny noted two key forces of change that are driving educational change in the Republic of Ireland: pronounced demographic and social changes and an economic domain in transition. Such forces of changes cannot be segregated; they must be considered together. This calls for an engagement in holistic lifelong learning that focuses on life, learning, and work from

instrumental, social, and cultural perspectives. In this textured iteration of lifelong learning, an emphasis on economic development would sit alongside emphases on citizenship, social responsibility, and inclusion. This holistic learning constitutes an engagement in critically intelligent lifelong learning.

ENVISIONING A CRITICAL SOCIAL PEDAGOGY OF LEARNING AND WORK: A SYNOPSIS

Countries like Australia and Canada have highly educated workforces, and still learner-workers are continuously told that they need more learning in order to have quality work in the knowledge economy (Beddie, 2004; Cruikshank, 2001, 2002). With a focus on more education for the already educated, being an engaged citizen is equated with participation in cyclical lifelong learning and information empowerment (Courchene, 2005). However, while often feigning a concern with social cohesion, contemporary forms of lifelong learning are often inattentive to the social and cultural needs of learner-workers (Field, 2000). This tendency leads Thomas (1998) to conclude, "Neglect may be the major contribution of the new lifelong learning movement" (p. 356).

If this assertion is true, then how do we deal with this neglect? Perhaps we might begin with a turn to the critical social context and its concerns with historical awareness, hope, possibility, ethics, justice, democratic vision, learner freedom, critique, and intervention (Freire, 2004). These focal points provide a basis to generate a critical social pedagogy of learning and work. Utilising this pedagogy, we can take up Freire's challenge to announce a different reality: one that empowers learner-workers as critical questioning subjects who focus on their locatedness in life, learning, and work. Within this reality, critical educators and learner-workers engage in a teaching-learning interaction focused on apprehending and working to understand the pragmatic-technicist nature of instruction and the objectification of learner-workers within it. This involves critical questioning of what we are to learn before we learn it. Indeed, the aim of a critical social pedagogy of learning and work is to teach both educators and learner-workers how to insert themselves into the world as historical and ethical subjects who resist, critique, decide, and transgress in order to create possibilities for changing objectifying conditions associated with a knowledge-based economy.

Freire (2004) engaged in radical, critical pedagogy as a cultural and political project aimed at preventing education from being reduced to solely instrumental, economistic training that failed to attend to other matters of context, disposition, and relationship. Many of the keynote speakers who presented at the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd International Lifelong Learning Conferences hosted by Central Queensland University demonstrated that they were similarly engaged. Like Freire, they were *"open to the new, to the different, to innovation, to doubt"* (p. 12). When their intellectual analysis hit a critically intelligent stride, they provided important ideas to inform a critical social pedagogy of learning and work. For example, Breivik (2000) reminded us to remember the importance of information literacy in personal, civic, communal, and economistic domains. Candy (2000) remembered the traditional institutional role of the university as an arbiter of the social. Jarvis (2000) asked us to question who controls lifelong learning as we think about the ethics of lifelong-learning practices. Boylan (2002) invited us to consider the dialectic between the cognitive and the affective in student learning. Longworth (2002) challenged us to think about the local context as he discussed holistic lifelong learning in learning cities. Napier (2002), speaking in favor of the privatisation of lifelong learning, tested our critical metal and spurred those critically inclined to reflect further on public responsibility in meeting the needs of learner-workers. Catts (2004) called on us to think about the practice of lifelong learning in instrumental, social, and cultural terms that require intersecting liberal and vocational forms of education. Beddie (2004) dared us to remember those disenfranchised when lifelong learning is cast as more education for the already educated. Bruce (2004) raised the issue of bringing aspects of professional, civic, and personal life into the curriculum as part of a holistic engagement with information literacy and lifelong learning. Kenny (2004) demanded that we grapple with issues of access, accommodation, and equity as we engage questions of purpose, content, process, and audience in our interactions with learner-workers. As part of the sum of the keynote speakers' analyses of lifelong learning, these critical highlights make this point clear: A critical social pedagogy of learning and work has to attend to many matters of context, disposition, and relationship.

CONCLUDING PERSPECTIVE: WORKING WITHIN A CRITICAL FRAMEWORK IS A GOOD THING

Freire (2004) believed that the human inclination toward change and intervening in the world drives vision. In envisioning a critical social pedagogy of learning and work that makes life, learning, and work better, we think about our roles as critical educators as we interact in dynamic ways with learner-workers who have diverse learning needs. This means that we, as critical educators, cannot succumb to the institutional control of learning that has marked much formal education (Jarvis, 2000).

In his keynote address, Jarvis (2000) recounted, "The learning society has become part of the current economic and political discourse of global capitalism in which people are human resources to be developed through lifelong learning, or discarded and retrained if their job is redundant" (Jarvis, 2000, p. 23). Since today's learning society no longer appears able to fulfill the social and cultural intentions that Fauré and others in history associated with lifelong learning, we cannot give into this current dominance of the economistic. Indeed using a critical social pedagogy of learning and work to frame contemporary lifelong learning and the meaning of the learning society would seem to be a good thing right now. Perhaps people would be treated like people; that is, like historical subjects with instrumental, social, and cultural needs.

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