

# TEACH JOURNAL

OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## THE TOUGH GIG

being salt and light

## MUSEUMS OF THE MIND

knowing Gwen Harwood

## SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY

it could be better

## A MOTIVATION SCAFFOLD

improving engagement

## VALUES INTERNALISATION

entering high school

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MinistryOfTeaching



# EDITORIAL

Graeme Perry

**Death has recently dominated our daily commentary. Our community, from before Christmas, and then into 2015, has been consumed by one constant preoccupying theme, “death”.**

Predictably, this year, the centenary of the Gallipoli invasion, would honour the sacrifices on the peninsula - 26,111 casualties including 8,141 deaths. Further, ANZAC day reminded us, that now, all the participants have died. The print, film and electronic media, including TV specials, have extended war journalism into potentially sobering entertainment such as *The Water Diviner* (2015). A few bent, sallow faced ninety year old veterans of more recent wars, now authenticate the battles and victories, registering their ‘lest we forget’ memories, accentuating their fortune in escaping death, even as ‘returned men.’

Yet before this focus on developing the ANZAC legend and WWI heroism, it had begun. Death was highlighted within an already conflicted community discussion of ISIS, beheadings and other atrocities, that included ‘new’ labels - ‘death cult’ and ‘radicalisation’. The tragedy of the Lindt Café was displayed in every home. In the background, the media amplified the stuttering legal process of the Bali Nine ringleaders, pressuring a communal ache, progressing to the ultimate inevitability of execution. Drought dehydrated animals to their deaths. Rosie Batty, Australian of the Year, voiced reform to combat violence against women, particularly domestic violence that kills about two women every week in Australia (Osborne-Crowley, 2015).

Emerging from this discourse of death were contrary stories of life. Benaud’s “Voice of Summer” assuring wellbeing, who according to his friend Bill Laurie “never put a foot wrong ... on or off the field” (McGarry, 2015, paras. 35, 48). Noel Pearson (2015) honoured Whitlam, far beyond ‘the dismissal’. Malcolm Fraser, renowned for asserting his personal values, spontaneously eulogised by Vietnamese refugees. Evangelists Robert Schuller and Gordon Moyes, bringing hope and redemption through large ministries, as Chan and Sukumaran did in prison.

These lives suggest there is a ‘radicalisation’ that is positive, transforming for good, enhancing for life.

It was Easter, in the middle of all this depressing outcome of evil, that invited renewed perception of ‘the victory’ over death. Worship of a resurrected Christ transcends the disappointing wages of life to reignite hope and awareness of eternity.

So, within this TEACH issue authors engage in promoting a ‘right radicalisation’, a process which will

“transform you into a new person by changing the way you think” (Romans 12:2. NLT). Michael Spence, Vice Chancellor of Sydney University introduces fundamental career choices in “The tough gig: Being salt”. Given values internalisation will support making wise choices, Watts, Christian and Greive share an exploratory study of Year 7 students, assessing these attributes at entry to high school. Parker, Gane and Parker claim a significant role for the school chaplain in ‘journeying’ through school, supporting students in an understanding of life and spirituality. Trim recounts Gwen Harwood’s personal succinct poetic perceptions, including a confession she “see[s] the God who goes with me,” and suggests her work will engage youth in considering these abstractions. To address a secular mindset, Miller and Krause show how a breakfast club subtly initiates “complementary learning” across a low SES community through a partnership of enterprises, including church volunteers.

For all teachers, Emma King’s shared “excursion through heart space”, the “Ah Ha!” moment during professional experience placement when “children spoke about deaths” and “I discover the real purpose of teaching”, will prompt your reflection. As will the life of William ‘Fighting Mac’ McKenzie.

Can you be radicalised too? **TEACH**

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“These lives suggest there is a ‘radicalisation’ that is positive, transforming for good, enhancing for life”



[Photography: Nikolai Agafonov]

[Photo credit: Phoebe Entermann interacting with her teacher Adrian Goldstone, Year 6, Ipswich, Adventist School, Queensland. Photo credit: VIVIDUS]

# The tough gig: Being salt and light<sup>1</sup>

**Michael Spence**

Vice Chancellor and Principal of Sydney University, Sydney, NSW

**Almost exactly two years ago, I was invited to speak at the Avondale Graduation for that year and had accepted. But unexpectedly, my wife was taken ill in late November and was dead by the 22nd of December. It was a very difficult time, but it was also a time in which life had a certain clarity. All sorts of things that had seemed important – the state of the house, the state of my finances, the state of my work – seemed suddenly far less significant. But relationships (with Beth, with my children, with our friends, with God), in those days and in the months that followed, became more and more clear. How important these were. It wasn't that I gave up on the house, or my finances or my work, but it was clear that they were secondary priorities. I was to invest in things that would last, in things that, when the going was tough, had really been revealed to matter. In short, I was to invest in love.**

*“But the real question is the one of priorities; of how you are going to use those skills; of where your effort is going primarily to be expended. The real question is not which of the many possible career paths you will take, but why and how.”*

Now a graduation is a marker of change in your life, and it is not bad at that point to ask precisely the question of priorities. What is your task and what is it that you are being called to do? In one sense that is easy. You have had an education that has prepared you for a specific career. At its best, that education has equipped you, not just with professional skills and with knowledge; the former you will constantly have to update, and the latter will very soon be out of date. At its best, that education has equipped you with an intellectual tool kit; with skills in critical thinking and in communication. You will have practised asking the hard questions; weighing evidence; and looking for answers in even counter-intuitive places. You will have learned how to defend your views, and to listen better to those of others. Those skills need practice, but they don't need updating, and they never go out of date, they are always in demand. I have no doubt that, with an Avondale education, you have those skills aplenty.

But the real question is the one of priorities; of how you are going to use those skills; of where your effort is going primarily to be expended. The real question is not which of the many possible career paths you will take, but *why* and *how*. Those are much more challenging questions, and ones

to which Jesus gives an answer in Matthew 5, the passage that you have chosen as a class. That passage asks whether your primary vocation is not to be a nurse, or a teacher, or a businessperson, or graphic designer, but whether it is to be salt and light to the world. You can't necessarily write that on your CV but the effort you put into being salt and light will be your greatest contribution.

Salt: it was a preservative in the ancient world. It made a difference by stopping things from going bad. Light: it reveals the truth and shows people the way to go. In the workplace, in the home, and in the community more generally, things should be better, relationships stronger, the truth more clearly seen, because you are living out your vocation to be salt and light to the world.

It's a tough gig the 'salt' and 'light' vocation. It requires a great deal to accept. In particular, it will require two things. First, it will require all those intellectual skills that you have been working on in your time at Avondale. I wonder if you remember the beginning of Romans 12. Paul writes "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." There is an old adage: "You are not what you think you are, but what you think, you are." What goes on in your mind really matters; it shapes how you behave and who you are. The implication of Paul's exhortation is that if you don't do anything, if you simply absorb the ideas and assumptions of the culture around you, then your mind will be conformed to this world. That is the default setting.

And we know how that happens. Most people accept ideas as true, or reject them as false, not because they have considered them in any depth, but because they are the product of what sociologists call 'plausibility structures': fundamental, untested beliefs that determine the plausibility of other beliefs without examination. These plausibility structures are constantly reinforced by, and help create the values present in, the television shows that we watch, the songs that we listen to, the things that we read, the common practices of our professions. Sometimes those beliefs have at one

<sup>1</sup>Avondale College of Higher Education Graduation Address 2014

point been the product of academic argument; sometimes they have not. They almost always survive in the popular culture long after academic argument has rejected them.

But those who are called to be salt and light are called to use their minds differently. They are to 'be transformed'. Note the verb structure. It is a passive imperative. In other words, while transformation is principally the work of the Holy Spirit, we also have our role to play. We are to commit ourselves to 'being' transformed. We are to test the ideas around us, the assumptions of our profession, the norms that dominate the environments of our work and our communities, against our fundamental commitments to the truths of God. This is an active process. You have been given the tools for it at Avondale and you are not to waste them. As clinical decisions are made, as curricula are formed, as businesses are shaped, as designs are formulated, as government policy is made, we are constantly to be taking the values and priorities of the world around us and asking how these decisions might best be made in light of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And we are to use the skills of communication that you have honed here at Avondale to explain to the world, to demonstrate to the world, that there is a different way of thinking and living, a way that gives priority to relationship and ultimately to love, a way that reflects the character of our gracious Lord. That is indeed a 'tough gig', and it will require all your minds and the intellectual skills that you have learned.

But second, to be salt and light in the workplace and more generally, requires not only a tough and fine-tuned mind, it also requires soft and open hearts. I said at the outset that the thing, which became most important as Beth lay dying, and the thing that I valued most in many of the professionals with whom we dealt, was love. We valued the professional skill of the doctors and nurses, but the ones who really made an impact were the ones who also cared, for whom we were not just one more family with a dying relative, but were people of infinite importance. The hospital in which Beth died had a religious foundation and my most secular friends who live in its catchment area all really do believe that that makes an important difference. That which will bring salt to a situation at your work, that which will preserve it for good, that which will bring light, that which will reveal the character of God, is not only your ability to speak the truth into the situation into which you have been called, but your ability to treat your coworkers, your clients, your patients, your students, your bosses, your direct reports, as people of infinite value, people whom God has made and for whom Jesus died. One of the most ugly linguistic developments

in the contemporary workplace is that managers have come to speak of people as 'resources'. In planning sessions, people often say 'we will need a new resource to do this or that'. When they do, I sometimes quip, "You mean a person made in the image of God." It is a joke and people laugh. But it reminds me, who usually needs it most of all, that people are not functionaries serving a particular need, they are, as the Psalmist and the writer to the Hebrews both remind us, "creatures little lower than the angels" whom God loves with a love that took him to the cross. If that is right, then I too, who claim to serve him, am to treat them as walking miracles, and to seek their highest good. That was what we knew when Beth died. People matter. Love matters. Relationship matters. It is ontologically central: God has from all eternity been Father in self-giving love with Son in self-giving love with Spirit in self-giving love with Father. Our daily prayer should be that the Holy Spirit will give us the fragrance of that love as we hope to serve the people whom we meet and with whom we are in relationship.

So it is a matter of priorities. You today are being called upon to choose your vocation. You can choose to be just another nurse, teacher, public official or businessperson. You can choose a career for the financial rewards, or for the reputation it will bring. You can merely enjoy your work, or you can find it a slog. But there is another choice to be made. And that is the choice as to whether, whatever else you may be, and wherever you may serve, you are salt and light. That will require all the skills that you have. It will require tough minds and soft hearts. It will require the work of the Holy Spirit in your life as he empowers you to understand the world differently and to love with just a whiff of the love that binds the Trinity. It will require a constant recommitment to God and to the people whom he has called you to serve. It will be costly. But if you do that, you will really be salt to preserve the good, and a lighted city set on a hill. You will make a difference that people will remember.

My late wife had made that choice and it impacted not only the way that she lived, but also on the way that she died. The staff of the hospital were quite overwhelmed by her peace and kindness to them in facing death. Salt and light: it makes a difference. What is your choice today? Will you accept the graduation challenge that in choosing Matthew 5 you have set for yourself? Will you be salt that preserves the God, and light through which people come to see the Father heart of God? It is my prayer as your graduate today that you will accept that vocation and that it will shape the rest of your careers, that it will shape the rest of your lives. **TEACH**

“*I too, who claim to serve him, am to treat them as walking miracles, and to seek their highest good. That was what we knew when Beth died. People matter. Love matters. Relationship matters.*”

## Museums of the mind: My friendship with Australian poet, Gwen Harwood

**Mary Trim**

Retired university Lecturer, Australian Catholic University, Australia, Newbold College and Loughborough University, England

**Key words:** Australian poet, biographical criticism, friendship

**In late winter, 1986, I wrote a letter of appreciation to Australian poet, Gwen Harwood, for her *Selected Poems* (1975). I mentioned that I was planning to visit Hobart in 1987 and cautiously wondered if we might meet. I enclosed a stamped addressed envelope, hoping, perhaps presumptuously, to receive a reply. After all, it was rumoured she did not like academia and was arguably the finest poet then writing in Australia. She had already won seven prestigious awards and would go on to receive seven more, including three honorary doctorates.**

To my delight, the envelope returned with a letter dated the eighth of September, 1986. Harwood wrote:

*Thank you for enclosing the SAE – so many people don't. I hasten to use the last of my Christmas-gift butterfly paper to say I'd be happy to meet you . . . and answer in person any questions I know the answer to. In the meantime, please feel assured I'll reply if you write.*

*In Southerly of this year there will be a prose article written by me about my work and background as a librettist. Also you might be interested in *Overland*, No. 10, December 1985, in which I write about my present house, and *Island Magazine*, No 225/26, Summer/Autumn 1986: 'An Interview with G.H'. I mention these only to save your time (you might find something you were going to ask).*

*You can ring me . . . when you're in Hobart next year.*

*All good wishes,  
Gwen Harwood*

It was the start of an acquaintance that brought me further letters and cards, of which I still possess twelve items. I had no idea that I was corresponding with a renowned communicator, and only of recent years have I discovered that Gregory Kratzman edited *A Steady Stream of Correspondence: Selected Letters of Gwen*

*Harwood 1943-1995*, published 2003.

In 2015, twenty years after her death, I feel a strong sense of obligation to the memory of Gwen Harwood, to share what I learned from both her correspondence and poetry. Not forgotten today in Australian university English departments, in New South Wales secondary school studies her name is now listed under texts – not prescribed but exemplary – for poetry across the curriculum. Her name stands with exemplary greats; Donne, Keats, T.S Eliot and others.

Her work is also used as a text for the Victorian Certificate of Education and in the West Australian Certificate of Education Literature Courses, in the poetry section for its literary value and complex themes. So Harwood speaks to a wide audience that also includes the teenage reader. Therefore, like Abel, she 'still speaks even although she is now dead' (Hebrews 11:4).

Before we met, in her second letter she wrote to arrange details of the full day we would spend together, starting off at her home in 18 Pine Street, Hobart. She suggested that I send my questions



Photography: John Trim

“After all, it was rumoured she did not like academia and was arguably the finest poet then writing in Australia.”



ahead, should I wish to tape the interview. She also indicated further helpful reading, such as *Essays and Monographs Series, No. 3*, from the Centre for Research in New Literature.

In May 1987, Gwen Harwood greeted me at her front door. My initial awareness was of her slender build and height, several inches shorter than my own. I especially noticed her welcoming smile and twinkling eyes. She was not what I had expected and I found myself thinking,

*Either I mistake your shape and making quite.  
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
Call'd Robin Goodfellow.*

Shakespeare's Puck had flashed unbidden into my mind, linking with the pleasant lady who stood before me. I knew the range of her published work: scholarly and insightful, some of which, under her own name, was ironically playful, and fifteen others that she had written under the pseudonym of Walter Lehmann, published in 1960-61, to whom were attributed the two acrostic sonnets whereby she completely hoaxed *The Sydney Bulletin*. Other pseudonyms were Francis Geyer in 1960-64, (twenty-nine poems); Miriam Stone, 1962-63 (nine poems) and the eighteen poems by Timothy Kline, 1968-1975. Some scholars suggested that, in the early years, she wrote under several pseudonyms to avoid prejudice against women poets. She explained, later, it was a way to get as many of her poems published as possible.

Welcomed inside the Harwood home, I met her husband, retired professor of linguistics at the University of Tasmania. After introduction he quickly returned to his computer. Gwen commented that he was not keen on her bringing strangers to their house; that my visit was a special favour. "There was something about your letter that made me want to meet you," I remember her saying. I felt highly favoured.

She invited me to see through their small retirement home to which she refers in her article, 'The Seventh House' (*Overland*, No. 101, 1985), in which she reminisces the influence of her homes on her life and work. She remarked, as we went, that any ornaments on display had been gifts from family, friends or admirers. Pausing before a wall hanging, she asked if I recognised it. As I looked at the picture and its amber background, she began to quote lines from her poem, 'Flying Goddess' (*Collected Poems*, 153):

*A batik picture on the wall  
springs suddenly to life: a Flying  
Goddess made luminous by dying*

*sunlight. In a last western glow  
her gold-edged feet and fingers shine.  
In labyrinthine fantasies  
her scarf weaves rapid arc of line  
blue round her skin of ebony. . .*



As I listened and looked, the picture came to life through Harwood's vision and talent.

The morning passed as our conversation moved to and fro concerning trends and development in Australian literature. Harwood also mentioned the oeuvre of her poet friends: Vincent Buckley, A. D. Hope and Vivian Smith and spoke highly of Veronica Brady. For a time we shared appreciation of the work of another friend and hoaxter, the renowned poet James McAuley. I mentioned that, in my opinion, their work might be compared and contrasted, for they shared the voice of the God-fearing, lyrical poet, especially in McAuley's final work: *Time Given* (1976).

Harwood then quoted lines from her poem 'Momento' (*Collected Poems*, 318) which remember James McAuley, and also from 'A Memory of James McAuley' (*Collected Poems*, 344). Her brown eyes, twinkling earlier, had now changed to depths of sadness which I felt and shared: a moment of bonding.

We ate lunch in the café of the Hobart Botanic Gardens, still talking together. Gwen coaxed me to confess my own interests - amateur music-maker in piano, organ, choirs and musical theatre, and she drew out of me the confession that 'Yes, I have had a few poems published.' Then I discovered that we were both mothers of five children and, with some delight, confirmed that we each had experienced and understood the friendship of cats! I had already enjoyed her tribute to the feline 'Tiglath-Pileser, named for the grand Assyrian kings ...' (*Collected Poems*, 391), also 'Schrodinger's Cat Preaches to the Mice' (*Collected Poems*, 392-93) and 'The Secret Life of Frogs' which introduced her Siamese cat, Mr Gabriel Fur (*Collected Poems*, 331). Mr Gabriel Fur is also recalled with the poignant

“she wrote under several pseudonyms to avoid prejudice against women poets [and] as a way to get as many of her poems published as possible”

memories of a cat lover in 'Twilight' (*Collected Poems*, 320), a loving lament from the museum of the mind.

During the afternoon, Gwen Harwood drove me to some locations in Hobart and beyond, places that were meaningful to her, which held echoes in her poetry, such as in the Oyster Cove Pastorals (*Collected Poems*, 307-307). Finally we went back to her home, to take photographs and to part with promises to keep in touch.

In retrospect, I felt she accepted me because she was an encourager and because we felt comfortable together. I was a late starter in academia, already aged in my fifties and, I suspect, she may have viewed me as being 'unstuffy'; that I was not there in order to write academic criticism but that, as a sort of disciple, I understood her perceptions and would give her poetry life.

I honoured that trust, especially when, by invitation in 1987, I visited Strathfield Adventist High School to speak to the HSC students who were studying Harwood's poetry. I told them of my memorable meeting with the poet, answered their questions and read and discussed some of her poems.

After my visit, one of the girls wrote on behalf of her class to tell Gwen Harwood how much they responded to her poetry, naming those poems and lines to which they particularly related. All the students signed the letter, adding their own brief, positive comments.

In Gwen Harwood's fifth letter (13/7/87), she wrote:

*I was charmed to get the card from the HSC girl; such things mean more than a hundred critical articles!*

*I've just been up to Launceston for a week to take part in the Australian Studies in Literature conference, gave a reading and a launching and sat on a panel. Some of the papers were appalling; it alarmed me to think that the paper-givers might teach as they wrote and read. I'm glad there are people like you to keep the word alive.*

Gwen Harwood's poetry that depicts experiences of childhood and youth, about decision making and confronting death, resonates with the sensitive, teenage mind: See the following from *Collected Poems* - 'At Mornington' (p.258-259); 'Class of 1927' (p. 365); 'Father and Child'; 'I, Barn Owl', 'II, Nightfall' (p. 375-377); 'The Twins' (p. 372); 'Mother who gave me life' (p. 381-382). For a taste of ironic wit, try 'Songs of Eve II' (p. 489-490, or for multiculturalism, 'Refugee' (p. 151). Harwood's poem, 'A Valediction' (p. 335), addressed to John Donne, includes the challenging lines that are as relevant in 2015 as when they were written:

*Who needs drugs if she has enough  
uppers and downers in her head?*

In Letter Number Nine, 18/7/88, she wrote about her moving poem 'Ebb-Tide' (*Collected Poems*,141) noting a change in her point of view since the year of the poem's first publication, in *Australian Poetry 1962*, edited by Geoffrey Dutton. The poem begins, 'Now that you have no word for me/ I bring your bitter silence here ... .' To me she commented:

*I gave a lecture on that poem once and said it was about death - 'the one picture is all that remains'; the emphasis would be, 'you smile **there** forever?' (i.e. nowhere else in the world). Does that seem ok?*

*'Bitter' is often used in the O.T. In Job 3:20-21 for instance, Jeremiah 31:15, and Proverbs 5:4-5, in connection with death - I would read this poem as being about death. I'm glad I don't feel like that (Ebb Tide) now.*



Photography: John Trim

What did I learn from Gwen Harwood's correspondence? I encountered the lively intelligence of an insightful, well-rounded intellectual who had a great capacity for friendship, as is shown in her several poems about Vera Cottew and those about other friends she mentioned to me. It was also evident from her topics that she was well-versed in religion and proficient in classical music; that she wrote texts for vocal compositions, particularly for the composer, Larry Sitsky. She was also a participant with nature and events:

*We've had some hard frosts but the spring bulbs will soon be open. We've had flocks of Eastern Rosellas in the bare trees ... . Love from Gwen  
(Letter Number Five, 13/7/87)*

*I had a marvellous week at ASAL conference and saw some of the stars of Aust. Lit. I had breakfast with them, even!*

Gwen Harwood's poetry that depicts experiences of childhood and youth, about decision making and confronting death, resonates with the sensitive, teenage mind

*We're looking forward to spring in the garden which is still bare but promises to be beautiful and fruitful.*  
Love, Gwen.  
(Letter Number Six, 18/8/87)

*I went to see the children and grandchildren. One day, Mary (my daughter) and I caught the early bus from Canberra to Sydney and stood in the queue to see Gold of the Pharaohs. It was worth it!* Love, Gwen.  
(Letter Number Eleven, 9/2/89)

The cards that Gwen Harwood sent me were ones she had carefully chosen. Some examples were: from the National Trust, one depicting hydrangeas and leghorn chickens by Hardy Wilson; from the Australian National Gallery, *Water-Lilies* by Monet. Another was a 'Convict Transport Brig', painted by Tony Crago; also one showing women in eighteenth century costume.

Sometimes Gwen commented in detail about particular poems, for example:

*I've been thinking about the sonnet (The Lion's Bride). A Polish friend said it was 'a bitter commentary on Anglo-Saxon marriage.' Mark Strand said it was 'mysterious.' Perhaps the lion is an image of the poet resenting the conventional finery covering the naked, sensual poetic self. Perhaps not. I'll write more about it soon.*  
(Letter Number Three, 15/5/87)

In Letter Number Four, (28/5/87), she added:

*The lion in The Lion's Bride probably owes something to Psalm 22 which fascinated me as a child. Verse 2: 'Save me from the Lion's mouth'.  
I used to look up all the references to animals in my grandmother's Concordance to the Scriptures; the lion gets a good go in the O.T.*

What I learned most from the letters of Gwen Harwood emphasises her interest in, and knowledge of, the work of the Austrian-British philosopher, Wittgenstein who worked primarily in logic and especially concerning the philosophy of mind and language. She was fascinated by his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, with its use of aphorisms and philosophical conundrums. She said, "When I read in Wittgenstein, 'Not how the world is, is the mystical, but that it is' I took my first step towards being a poet." It is therefore not surprising that his quotations precede or are alluded to in some of her poetry, as in 'Evening, Oyster Cove' (*Collected Poems*, 302):

*What is history to me? Mine is the first and only world.*  
– Wittgenstein.

In Letter Number Five she told me that one of her favourite books was *Zettel* by Wittgenstein, and

she proceeded to fill almost a page of its quotations which she found memorable. Examples I especially noticed and could relate to in Harwood's poetry were:

- *Like everything metaphysical, the harmony between thought and reality is to be found in the grammar of the language.* (Entry 55)
- *How words are understood is not told by words alone.* (Entry 144)
- *The way music speaks. Do not forget that a poem, even though it is composed in the language of information, is not used in the language-game of giving information.* (Entry 160)

In Letter Number Ten, 12/12/88, she wrote:

*The academic scene fills me with neurotic angst. I think of Wittgenstein with the Tractatus written but not published. He said that if it was first-class work it didn't matter when it was published; if it wasn't, better it never should be published.*

She added, "Vin said the last time I saw him that fulltime academic work was incompatible with writing at full stretch (he was speaking of poetry)." That remark, made by Vincent Buckley, reminded me of one made to myself at the University of Sydney when another eminent poet warned me that if I wanted to write, I would find academia soul-destroying.

Harwood's poetry challenged me by its range of topics and points of view and the way she moved perceptively beyond description and memory to explore the very crux of an issue. Many of her poems sing on in text and imagery, especially as she wrote:

*If by some chance I wrote  
a fine immortal poem  
it would have a mortal theme.  
All that excess of life  
in museums of the mind  
still there to contemplate.*

Harwood's 386 published poems flow from many memories of childhood, relationships, people, places and experiences, stored in her own 'museum of the mind.' Her poem, 'The Violets' (*Collected Poems*, 247) is such a one where the final verse wraps up unforgettably:

*Years cannot move  
nor death's disorienting scale  
distort those lamplit presences:  
a child with milk and story-book;  
my father, bending to inhale  
the gathered flowers, with tenderness  
stroking my mother's goldbrown hair.  
Stone curlews call from Kedron Brook.  
Faint scent of violets drifts in air.*

“  
Still in my  
flesh I see  
the God who  
goes with me  
glowing with  
radioactive  
isotopes.  
This is what  
he at last  
allows a  
mortal eye to  
behold  
”

I would not categorise Harwood as a writer of Christian verse, as is James McAuley who is recognised as such by the English poet, literary critic and scholar Donald Davie in his *New Oxford Book of Christian Verse*, 1988. However, biblical knowledge and Christian thought underpin her work as in ‘Religious Instruction’ (*Collected Poems*, 370). She mentions Sunday School attendance in ‘Mother’s Day’ (*CP*, 530), later she was an organist at the All Saints Church of England in Brisbane before her marriage; in 1941 she entered an Anglican convent for a time. Death and beyond death often absorb her mind.

Someone suggested to me that Gwen Harwood was an agnostic. When I questioned her about it, she denied it strongly in Letter Number Nine, 18/7/88:

*Who said I was an agnostic? How could anyone read that into the poems? – particularly ‘Mid Channel’ (in The Penguin Book of Australian Women Poets) and ‘Seven Philosophical Poems’ (in The Lion’s Bride) (Collected Poems, 286-289).*

Harwood’s poem, *Bone Scan*, is a brilliant testimony of faith in God, written after being treated for breast cancer in 1985 and published in 1988 (*Collected Poems*, 373):

*Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and my uprising. – Psalm 139*

*In the twinkling of an eye, in a moment all is changed: on a small and radiant screen (honeydew melon green) are my scintillating bones. Still in my flesh I see the God who goes with me glowing with radioactive isotopes. This is what he at last allows a mortal eye to behold: the grand supporting frame complete (but for the wisdom teeth), the friend who lives beneath appearances, alive with light. Each glittering bone assures me: you are known.*

An astounding poem, it can be used in a science lesson or in religion as well as within Australian or World literature.

Written in 1994 when her cancer had re-emerged, Harwood’s final, unpublished poem, ‘Late Works’ (*Collected Poems*, 571) is laced with her ironic humour while being both prophetic and a benediction:

*Time to think of your Late Works in the pure daylight atmosphere of mystical acceptance, freedom from old monsters, etcetera . . . All those you wanted to impress are dead or sick or pretty crazy and those you know will understand it are not yet born. Nurse, I need paper, No, not that kind, you idiot girl, The kind you write on. Get me Matron.*

The poem continues:

*Matron I need a fountain pen. If you have any wits about you they’re PhDs requesting access to things you can’t remember writing . . .*

Her final words, speaking to her dying self, are:

*No matter now. You have your life before you, you’re a child enjoying yourself, the unity of contrasts. Whose hand is it that holds your pen?*

Partnered with her poems that declare her faith in God, such as ‘Bone Scan’, I believe this layered ‘late work’ indicates that Gwen Harwood faced her future beyond death with confidence of union between the mortal and immortal: ‘the unity of contrasts’, and in recognition of the source of her gift.

In late 1995 I noticed the Australian flag in the window of a large London bookstore. On investigation, I saw with delight that it was surrounded by photographs of Gwen Harwood, pictures of Tasmanian scenes and a full window display of her many publications, for her readership had extended to Britain. To my dismay, however, it also announced the sad news of her death on December 5th.

*Vale*, Gwen Harwood, my friend. May those who were ‘not yet born’ in 1994 relate to ‘museums of the mind’ and respond to ‘the unity of contrasts’, becoming like a host of others, enriched by poetic vision.

## Notes

1. Quotations of poems are from *Gwen Harwood Collected Poems, 1943 – 1995*, edited by Alison Hoddinott and Gregory Kratzmann, University of Queensland Press, 2003.
2. Quotations from Harwood’s letters are from her personal correspondence with me.

“Gwen Harwood faced her future beyond death with confidence of union between the mortal and immortal: ‘the unity of contrasts’, and in recognition of the source of her gift.”

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# Vision for Learning (Part II)<sup>1</sup> : A tool for educators to assist in the detection and treatment of vision difficulties

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“visual impairment may go far beyond educational implications, impacting on ... social factors including overall health, self-perception and job choices”

The Australasian College of Behavioural Optometrists (ACBO) (2013c, para. 2) recognises that vision is a key sense in the classroom – playing a major role in a vast array of skills, particularly literacy skills such as reading, spelling and writing. The *Children’s Vision Information Network* [CVIN] (2013d, para. 2) reports that around 20% of school-aged children struggle to read. When considering vision as a possible cause of difficulty it is useful to note that the *Australasian College of Behavioural Optometrists* (2013c, para. 3) warns that “many students’ visual skills are not able to meet the demands of typical classroom learning situations. However, it must be recognised that not all children with learning problems will have visual difficulties, and that not all children who are identified as having vision difficulties will experience educational delays” (ACBO, 2013c, para. 3). While “in some instances visual problems may be the primary cause of the reading or learning difficulty, more frequently they are contributory” (ACBO, 2013c, para. 3).

Current research does suggest that individuals with reading difficulties often have co-existing visual and language processing deficits; explaining why vision difficulties often co-exist with dyslexia (ACBO, 2013c, para. 18; Peachy, 2013, para. 2). With regard to dyslexia, it is also important to note that at times the signs and symptoms of these vision problems mimic those suffered by individuals with dyslexia (ACBO, 2013f, para. 15). Thus, before

a diagnosis of dyslexia is made comprehensive assessments in a variety of areas should be made, including assessments of vision skills.

Regardless of the cause of vision problems, “prompt professional treatment is required, as any delay in vision care will dramatically reduce a child’s achievement levels at school, and may cause them to begin to adapt behaviours to compensate or overcome the difficulty they are experiencing” (ACBO, 2013d, para. 24). Vision difficulties may cause children to adapt their behaviour in ways that result in poor concentration and overall behaviour (ACBO, 2013g, para. 3). As a result the effects of visual impairment may go far beyond educational implications, impacting on a number of other social factors including overall health, self-perception and job choices (Davidson & Quinn, 2011, p. 334).

### Binocularity & Alignment (Eye Teaming Skills)

An important requirement of vision is that both eyes function together as a team – performing as one. However, this teaming is not guaranteed by design. Therefore, difficulties in the teaming skills of binocularity (binocular vision) and alignment may exist (ACBO, 2013d, para. 11). *Binocularity* is the ability to use both eyes at the same time. This process involves simultaneously blending the images from both eyes to create one mental picture (ACBO, 2013b, para. 23). Alignment requires

<sup>1</sup> Vision problems, behavioural optometry, orthoptic treatment, behavioural and perceptual vision therapy and good vision habits were addressed in Part I.

that both eyes work together as a synchronised team to focus on images (Handler & Fierson, 2011, p. 832). It is important to note that true *orthophoria* (perfectly straight eyes) occurs rarely; therefore, most individuals demonstrate a small asymptomatic *phoria* (deviation) that should be considered a normal variant – a latent deviation, usually *esophoria* (inward deviation) or *exophoria* (outward deviation) (Handler & Fierson, 2011, p. 832). While visible signs of eye turn are a clear indicator of vision problems it is important to realise that “Subtle eye alignment problems ... that may not produce a visible eye turn ... still can be the cause of eye strain and eye fatigue when reading” (Heiting, 2013, para. 25).

The *Children’s Vision Information Network* (2013d, para. 8) reports that about 10% of school aged children have eye teaming problems. Eye teaming skills are vital in determining the level of function of the *vengeance system*, which works to maintain fusion – maintaining eye alignment on a visual target (Handler & Fierson, 2011, p. 832). *Convergence* is a skill which involves conducting and maintaining inward turn of the eyes, and is required for conducting close-up visual tasks (Handler & Fierson, 2011, p. 832). *Convergence insufficiency* or *convergence excess* may be characterised by “discomfort, eye strain, blurry vision, diplopia (double vision), and headaches, which can contribute to limited fluency by interfering with the child’s ability to concentrate on print for prolonged periods of time” (Handler & Fierson, 2011, p. 834). It is important to note that while children who have *acquired* convergence insufficiency problems (via injury or illness) tend to have more symptoms, “those who have never refined their ability to maintain eye convergence generally have few visual symptoms” (ACBO, 2013a, para. 4). “These children do tend, however, to have reduced fine *eye-hand* and *visual-motor* skills, and will tend to avoid near centred tasks due to the difficulty they experience in attending to these” (ACBO, 2013a, para. 3).

In addition, “problems in this area of visual performance will manifest in general clumsiness in the classroom and playground” (McKee, 2013, para. 1). One reason for this is that the *disparity* (difference) between the two retinal images of the same object provides important information about its size, distance and movement relative to other visible objects (McKee, 2013, para. 1). Squinting, blinking and poor posture may also be evident (ACBO, 2013d, para. 12). The *Children’s Vision Information Network* (2013d) provides an animation depicting how a page of text might appear to an individual with eye teaming difficulties.

## Strabismus (Crossed or Wandering Eyes)

*Strabismus* is a vision problem that exists in a reciprocal relationship with eye teaming skills, effecting 2-4% of the population (Davidson & Quinn, 2011, p. 337). *Strabismus* occurs when one or both eyes turn in or out due to the brain’s inability to coordinate both eyes simultaneously (CVIN, 2013b, para. 1). The most common type of strabismus involves horizontal misalignment (Davidson & Quinn, 2011, p. 337). “*Strabismus* in which the misaligned eye turns in or out is divided into two categories: *esotropia* (crossed eye), which means one eye turns in towards the nose; and *exotropia* (wandering eye), which means one eye turns out away from the nose” (CVIN, 2013b, para. 2).

As a result of strabismus, an individual is only able to see through one eye at a time. Therefore, they experience loss in *depth perception*, which is the ability to judge distance (CVIN, 2013b, paras. 3, 4). *Strabismus* usually develops before a child is two, but may also occur as late as six, and even later as the result of injury or disease (CVIN, 2013b, paras. 1, 5). Children do not outgrow strabismus, and the condition may worsen over time, even resulting in additional complications with amblyopia, which is explored next. Therefore, it is important that the condition of strabismus receive prompt treatment (CVIN, 2013b, para. 1)

“Subtle eye alignment problems ... that may not produce a visible eye turn ... still can cause of eye strain and eye fatigue when reading”



Figure 1: Esotropia (top) and Exotropia (bottom) of the right eye

Source: Biology Forums - Strabismus, right exotropia <http://biology-forums.com/index.php?action=gallery%3Bsa=viw%3Bid=6118>

## Amblyopia (Lazy Eye)

The *Australasian College of Behavioural Optometrists* (ACBO, 2013e, para. 3) reports that *amblyopia* (lazy eye) is “quite common in young children, with about 5% of children requiring treatment for this problem”. According to the *Children’s Vision Information Network* (2013a, paras. 1, 2, 4), amblyopia is the result of one eye failing to develop normally as the result of the brain suppressing its use in favour of the other eye, and thereby failing to develop *binocularity*. Because the brain suppresses the *lazy eye*, *acuity* (normal sharpness of vision) is unable to develop, resulting in blurred vision even with the best glasses or contacts that an optometrist can prescribe (CVIN, 2013a, paras. 2, 4, 5). “The amblyopic eye/visual system becomes susceptible to the crowding phenomenon – a difficulty with distinguishing letters in close proximity to one another” (Handler & Fierson, 2011, p. 830). *Figure 3* provides an example of how a scene may look to an individual with normal vision, compared to how it may look to an individual with amblyopia – even with corrective lenses.



*Figure 2.* The above pictures depict clear vision out of an eye with normal sight (left picture), and blurry vision out of a lazy eye, even with glasses (right picture) (CVIN, 2013a)

Amblyopia is caused by various conditions, and is usually associated with *strabismus* or other eye teaming problems and/or *anisometropia* (refractive errors between an individual’s eyes); however, there is usually no visible structural abnormality (Davidson & Quinn, 2011, p. 336; Heiting, 2013, p. 23). A common misconception is that the lazy eye is primarily the result of a muscle problem. The problem is in fact usually due to the manner in which the eye muscles are controlled by the brain (ACBO, 2013e, para. 9). Prompt treatment to encourage the lazy eye to again switch on is important (ACBO, 2013e, para. 3).

## Oculomotility (Eye Tracking Skills)

An additional ability that is important for reading is *oculomotility* – the ability of the eyes to control movements (CVIN, 2013d, paras. 15, 18). For example, catching a ball requires the eyes to follow the movement of the ball smoothly and accurately,

while reading requires the eyes to be able to control this fine movement at close range in order to follow a line of print. Children with tracking difficulties will often lose their place, skip or transpose words, have difficulty comprehending, read slowly, and will often be forced to use their fingers to follow the line because their eyes are unable to (Ciuffreda, et al., 2008, p. 18; CVIN, 2013d, para. 15). The *Children’s Vision Information Network* (2013d) website contains an animation that is useful in understanding how a page of text might appear to an individual with eye tracking difficulties (see [www.childrensvision.com/reading](http://www.childrensvision.com/reading)).

What is important to understand is that when we read our eyes don’t move smoothly across the line; instead they make a series of *saccades* (jumps) and *fixations* (pauses to aim) as we read (CVIN, 2013d, para. 16). The length of saccades and duration of fixations is determined by factors such as the difficulty of the text being read, the ability to recognise letters, and the length of words (Handler & Fierson, 2011, p. 831). Research also indicates that *memory* aids in visual movement control, and therefore the more an individual reads the better control they will have over eye movements (Cheng, Grosbois, Smirl, Heath & Binsted, 2011, p. 1).

“The precise coordination of *saccades* and *fixations* is controlled by the *central* and *peripheral visual systems*. The central vision processes what is seen, while the peripheral vision processes where an individual is looking” (CVIN, 2013d, paras. 16, 17). Current research also provides some indication that individuals can shift attention to an object without moving our eyes (McPeck, 2013, para. 4). “In reading, central vision processes the word, while peripheral vision locates the following word and also tells the eyes where to aim next (CVIN, 2013d, para. 17). If there is not continuous, fluid simultaneous integration between these two systems tracking difficulties will result” (CVIN, 2013d, para. 17). Despite difficulties, it is possible for children with tracking disorders to learn to read fluently (Handler & Fierson, 2011, p. 831).

## Accommodation (Focusing)

Accommodation (focusing) is the *optical* part of vision that allows an individual to see clearly by maintaining a clear, sharp image for an extended period of time, and also to quickly shift focus when looking from near to far (Damari, Taub & Duman, 2011, p. 17). Accommodation is an important ability required when reading up close and also when looking from the desk to the board (Damari, Taub & Duman, 2011, p. 17.). The *Children’s Vision Information Network* (2013d) website contains an animation that is useful in understanding how a

“Children with tracking difficulties will often lose their place, skip or transpose words, have difficulty comprehending, read slowly, and ... be forced to use their fingers to follow the line”



page of text might appear to an individual with focusing difficulties (see [www.childrensvision.com/reading](http://www.childrensvision.com/reading)).

Accommodative difficulties may be indicated by the following: decreased visual acuity at near; accommodative lag; either *esophoria* or *exophoria*; and uncomfortable, blurry or moving vision (Handler & Fiererson, 2011, p. 831). Sometimes children with focusing difficulties will hold their books very closely or lay their heads down, and may commonly experience headaches (CVIN, 2013d, para. 19). Accommodation has been shown in several studies to be the major cause of *binocular vision dysfunctions* (Damari, Taub & Duman, 2011, p. 17).

A major reason for accommodative difficulties is that our eyes are actually better suited for “distance vision, so when we look at something up close the natural lens in our eye has to change shape in order to redirect light rays on the retina” (Handler & Fiererson, 2011, p. 834). “Occasionally, a child can fail to establish adequate focussing stamina during the early years of development; however, in the vast majority of cases focussing dysfunction results from fatigue arising during sustained near visual tasks such as reading, writing and computer work. Therefore, in a sense this problem is an acquired one rather than being an innate problem with the visual system” (ACBO, 2013a, para. 2). “Also, accommodative amplitudes are maximal at childhood and decrease naturally with age” (Handler & Fiererson, 2011, p. 831). In addition, accommodative difficulties may be the result of the following: uncorrected high hyperopia (far sightedness); nonspecific viral illness; local ocular trauma; many medications; and various functional problems (Handler & Fiererson, 2011, p. 831).

## Visual Perceptual Processing

Visual perceptual processing is a set of skills used to gather visual information from the environment and integrate them with our other senses, in order to create *schemes* (representations); the ability to interpret, analyse, and give meaning to what is seen (CVIN, 2013d, paras. 21-29). Examining visual perceptual processing is akin to ‘opening a can of worms’. However, it is important for educators to have at least a basic understanding of how visual processing deficits might impact their students. “Processing of visual input is a higher *cortical function*. Decoding and interpretation of retinal images occurs in the brain after visual signals are transmitted from the eyes. Although vision is necessary for reading, it is the brain that must perform the complex function of interpreting the incoming visual images” (Handler & Fiererson, 2011,

p. 832). *Visual perceptual processing* can be broken into three components: *visual spatial skills*; *visual analysis (discrimination) skills*; and *visual integration skills* (McMains, 2008, para. 3).

## Visual Spatial Skills

“Visual spatial skills require observing an object then accurately reporting its relationship in space relative to your own self with regard to *laterality* (left and right) and *directionality*”, and also includes the ability to be able to *bilaterally integrate* by effectively using both sides of the body simultaneously (McMains, 2008, paras. 7, 24). Problems in this area may be indicated by a number of signs including: difficulty in learning left and right; letter reversals; and lack of coordination and balance (McMains, 2008, para. 8). Currently research into visual perception is an important area of neuroscience, with one of the central questions being *how the brain represents an object in space* (Kasamatsu, 2013, para. 1).

## Visual Analysis Skills

Visual analysis skills are those skills that are utilised in order to “identify, sort, organise, store and recall visually presented information; the ability to take in visual information, remember it, and apply it at a later time” (McMains, 2008, para. 29). *Sub-skills of visual analysis include* the following: *figure ground*, which is the ability to distinguish an object from its surroundings; *visual form recognition/discrimination and constancy*, which involves discriminating differences in forms, including differences in size, shape, colour and orientation; *visual closure*, which allows an individual to visually complete a picture or form that is not in full view; *visual spatial memory*, which is the ability to recall the spatial location of an object or stimuli; *visual sequential memory*, which is the ability remember and recall forms in the correct order; *visualisation*, which is the ability to recall a previously viewed image or object and mentally manipulate the image from various aspects; *visual speed and span perception*, which relates to the rate and amount of information being handled in visual processing; and *automaticity*, the ability, once all of these skills have been developed, to be performed automatically so that less brain power is used, and efficient learning may take place (McMains, 2008, paras. 30-49). Signs and symptoms of problems with visual analysis skills may include: difficulty learning the alphabet; difficulty remembering how to read and write letters and numbers; difficulty recognising words; having poor concentration and attention span; having difficulty understanding instructions; and exhibiting hyper- or hypo-activity (McMains, 2008, para. 31).

“Visual perceptual processing is ... to gather visual information from the environment and integrate them with our other senses, in order to create schemes”

## Visual Integration Skills

Visual integration skills allow an individual to integrate visual information with other visual information (*visual-visual integration*), and with other senses such as the auditory system (*visual-auditory integration*) and the motor system (*visual-motor integration*) (McMains, 2006, para. 1).

### Visual-visual Integration (VVI)

Visual-visual integration is the result of several visual skills integrating together (McMains, 2008, para. 3). For example, such as when you look at a word and then match it to an image in your mind; looking at the word ‘Siamese’ and then picturing that type of cat in your mind (McMains, 2008, paras. 4, 5). In this case you would be integrating visual input with visualisation. Children with deficiency in this area will demonstrate poor visualisation skills.

### Visual-auditory Integration (VAI)

“Visual-auditory integration requires linking together visual information with information that is heard, and includes abilities such as seeing a word and saying it aloud, or hearing a word and writing it down” (McMains, 2008, para. 15). Research indicates that organisation of visual-auditory integration is important in processing peripheral space and motion (McMains, 2008, para. 16). Signs and symptoms of visual-auditory integration problems include: “the consistent need to have directions repeated; poor spelling ability; difficulty learning to read phonetically; and difficulty relating symbols to their relevant sounds” (McMains, 2008, para. 20).

### Visual-motor Integration (VMI)

Visual-motor integration, which includes gross motor eye-body and fine motor eye-hand-body coordination, is a critical component of vision (CVIN, 2013d, para. 30). In fact, “20% of raw visual data from the retina does not go back to the visual cortex for imaging, but rather breaks away and travels up to the brain’s motor centres to assist with balance, coordination and movement” (CVIN, 2013d, para. 30). “*Gross motor eye-body coordination* requires efficient visual input regarding the body’s relationship with its surrounding space. Children with poor *eye-body* skills may have difficulty in such areas as sports, leaning to ride a bicycle, or general clumsiness” (CVIN, 2013d, para. 31). “*Fine motor eye-hand coordination* requires efficient visual input into the body’s fine motor systems. Children with poor *hand-eye* coordination may have poor handwriting and take longer to complete written assignments”, and are also likely

to often become frustrated and lose concentration during sustained tasks (CVIN, 2013d, para. 32; ACBO, 2013d, para. 15).

## Related Difficulties: Behavioural Disorders, Stress & Anxiety

More than 100 years ago White (1903, p. 14) clearly articulated the importance of the harmonious development of the whole person. While on the surface, behavioural disorders might seem to have little to do with optometry, “the fact is that vision occurs in the brain and not in the eyes, and co-mingles extensively with social and emotional pathways in the brain” (Hong & Press, 2009, para. 2). Therefore, we are compelled to look more closely at the role of vision in disorders such as attention deficit (A-D/HD), oppositional defiance (ODD), bi-polar disorder, and depression. In the subsequent pages, this document examines the association between vision and the following: *Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) / Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD);* and stress and anxiety, in disorders such as *Streff Syndrome*.

## Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) / Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

A recent research study into “the connection between eye teaming problems and attention deficit disorders found that children diagnosed with ADHD were three times as likely to have a *convergence insufficiency* as children in the general population” (Granet, Gomi, Ventura & Miller-Scholte, 2005, p. 163). Children with vision-based learning problems experience discomfort which causes them to exhibit a number of characteristics in common with those of ADD, including: being highly distractible; having short attention spans; making careless errors; failing to complete assignments; and often being fidgety and off task (CVIN, 2013c, para. 3). Unfortunately, educators and even some professionals are often not aware of this fact, and as a result these children are often misdiagnosed (CVIN, 2013c, para. 3). The *Children’s Vision Information Network* (2013c, para. 6) recommends that prior to a diagnosis of ADD being made, vision tests should first be undertaken; objective clinical measures and tests for vision should be place before subjective checklists used to diagnose ADD.

## Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

Another example of the interplay between vision and behaviour is the relationship between vision and *autism spectrum disorders* (ASD). Recent studies comparing saccadic eye movements in autistic and non-autistic individuals suggests that some of the

“we are compelled to look more closely at the role of vision in disorders such as attention deficit (A-D/HD), oppositional defiance (ODD), bi-polar disorder, and depression”

social impairments associated with autism may be attributed to abnormal attentional processing (Mazer, 2011, p. 1150). For example, Klin, Jones, Schultz, Volkmar and Cohen (2002, p. 809) found that autistic individuals viewing a movie tended to focus on the mouth, body and other objects, whereas non-autistic individuals tended to focus on the eyelids of subjects, and were therefore better able to read related social cues. Thus, while “*attentional biases* often result in positive outcomes, such as enhanced perceptual representations of visual stimuli containing an attended feature”, they may also be *maladaptive* and thereby facilitate certain human *psychopathologies* (Bridwell & Srinivasan, 2012, p. 1151).

### Stress & Anxiety: Streff Syndrome

Streff Syndrome is a condition of visual stress, which although it is associated with physical, psychological and/or emotional stress, can only be diagnosed by optometric testing (Godtland & Scott, n.d., para. 1). Due to the role that patient anxiety is now recognised as playing, anxiety rating scales are now being developed for clinical and research purposes (Hong & Press, 2009, para. 2). Optometrists can treat the visual stress – usually with low plus lenses – and if no improvement is seen, psychotherapy can be recommended (Godtland & Scott, n.d., para. 2). While *Streff Syndrome* is caused by stress and anxiety, it is important to note that mild head trauma or concussion may be a trigger for stress that leads patients down the path to *Streff Syndrome* (Godtland & Scott, n.d., para. 2).

Streff Syndrome It is most often seen in patients between the ages of 6-12, with a slight female predilection (Godtland & Scott, n.d., para. 1). In addition, this condition is frequently seen in children with above average intelligence who are having reading, writing, learning and/or behavioural problems (*Vision Link Behavioural Optometrists [VLBO]*, 2013, para. 4). *Streff Syndrome* is classically characterised by a loss of *depth perception* and a decrease in *visual acuity* that is worse at near than it is at distance (Godtland & Scott, n.d., para. 1). There may also be *colour vision* abnormalities that do not follow the colour confusion lines, as well as reduced *visual fields* (Godtland & Scott, n.d., para. 9). If sufferers are observed carefully, it becomes clear that it is not for lack of trying that they struggle (*VLBO*, 2013, para. 3). In fact, the harder they try to be obedient to the requirements to do their near work, the worse vision becomes (*VLBO*, 2013, para. 3). Also, it is common for children suffering from this problem to be accused of *malinger*ing (not telling the truth),

because the optometrist does not understand the problem (*VLBO*, 2013, para. 6).

### Vision Resource & Checklist

The new visual demands placed on children as they enter school are likely to highlight existing problems in the visual system. However, children rarely report vision problems because their vision is normal to them, and therefore they think that everyone sees the way that they do (CVIN, 2013b, para. 8). For this reason it is essential for educators to be aware of the signs and possible causes of visual difficulties. In fact, the *Australasian College of Behavioural Optometrists* (2013d, para. 5) **considers teachers to be the best screeners for vision problems, through simply observing children functioning in the classroom.**

To resource teachers, three appendices follow. Appendix A is a list of web based resources; Appendix B addresses colour vision deficit assessment. Finally Appendix C contains a checklist designed to assist educators to identify students who may be experiencing vision problems which is an adaptation of the *Checklist for Common Symptoms* provided by the *Children’s Vision Information Network* (2013d). Please note that proper diagnosis and treatment can only be performed by a qualified behavioural optometrist; however, this checklist provides a useful starting point.

### Appendix A: Web Sourced Vision Resources

Brain Gym International  
<http://www.braingym.org/>

Children’s Vision Resources for Teachers  
<http://www.optometrists.asn.au/EyesVision/ChildrensVision/ForTeachers/ChildrensVisionresourcesforteachers/tabid/861/language/en-AU/Default.aspx>

Clues to Good Vision: Teachers Resource Kit (Primary)  
<http://www.optometrists.asn.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=ra9vomlW%2bok%3d&tabi=861&language=en-AU>

Good Vision Guide – Multilingual  
<http://www.optometrists.asn.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=GGHCSKIONKo%3d&tabid=861&language=en-AU>

Good Vision Teacher Information Card  
<http://www.optometrists.asn.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=sCT5VdUdn9k%3d&tabid=861&language=en-AU>

“  
The  
Australasian  
College of  
Behavioural  
Optometrists  
considers  
teachers  
to be the best  
screeners  
for vision  
problems,  
through  
simply  
observing  
children  
functioning  
in the  
classroom  
”

National Eye Institute: Eye Health Information  
<https://www.nei.nih.gov/health/>

Parent's Guide to Vision  
<http://www.optometrists.asn.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2fmqj0K%2fc04k%3d&tabid=845&language=en-AU>

## Appendix B: Colour Vision Deficiency (CVD)

*Colour Vision Deficiency (CVD)*, commonly referred to as *colour blindness*, is a disorder in which sufferers are unable to see all colours, but are still able to see things as clearly (Better Health Channel, 2013, paras. 2, 8). "Colour blindness is most commonly a genetic condition; some colour blindness is genetically inherited while other colour blindness arises as a result of a genetic change (mutation during development) or trauma to the brain or retina" (Better Health Channel, 2013, para. 2). "Very few people who are colour blind are blind to all colours" (Better Health Channel, 2013, para. 7). The usual colours that individuals have difficulties with are greens, yellows, oranges and reds, and less commonly, blues (Better Health Channel, 2013, paras. 3, 8). There are varying degrees of colour vision deficiency, with the degree and intensity of the light and nearness of the object also playing a role in colour vision ability (Better Health Channel, 2013, para. 13). Many tasks at school require children to be able to accurately see in colours. Signs that a child may have colour blindness include: difficulty recognising and identifying different colours beyond the age of around four years; and the inability to categorise things according to colour" (Better Health Channel, 2013, para. 5). "There is generally no treatment to cure colour blindness. However, certain types of tinted filters and contact lenses may help a person to distinguish different colours better" (Better Health Channel, 2013, para. 22).

“There is generally no treatment to cure colour blindness. However, certain types of tinted filters and contact lenses may help a person to distinguish different colours better”

It may be useful for educators to complete diagnostic tests to ascertain if any of their students might have *Colour Vision Deficiency*. These can be completed on an individual or whole class basis. Please note that the validity and reliability of these tests is impacted by the colours that are displayed on the screen being used to display them; different screens will produce variations in colour.

## Colour Vision Deficiency Assessment Links

1. This on-line colour vision test consists of 8 plates taken from the PseudoIschromatic Plate Ishihara Compatible (PIPIC) Colour Vision Test 24 Plate Edition, and is suitable for children who are able to identify numbers. (<http://colorvisiontesting.com/ishihara.htm#first%20test%20plate%20answer>)
2. This online-colour vision test is a simple non-medical test for red-green colour blindness. The animal shapes make this a suitable test for young children who may not yet be able to identify numbers. (<http://freepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~hellmers/test/>)
3. This online colour vision test is available in video format on YouTube. The first section consists of paediatric test plates which cater for younger children, while the latter section caters for older children and adults who are capable of reading numbers. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEIM4jmK1F0>). **TEACH**

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## Peanuts by Charles M. Schulz



Source: Schultz (1968, p. 13)

## Appendix C: Checklist of common symptoms\*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Place a tick (✓) in the column that best describes how often your student/child experiences the following symptoms:

	How frequently does this happen?	Never	A Little	Sometimes	A Lot	Always
1.	Headaches with reading or writing					
2.	Words slide together or get blurry when reading					
3.	Reads below grade level					
4.	Loses place while reading					
5.	Head tilt or closes an eye when reading					
6.	Hard to copy from the board					
7.	Doesn't like reading or writing					
8.	Leaves out small words when reading					
9.	Hard to write in a straight line					
10.	Burning, itching or watery eyes					
11.	Hard to understand what he/she has read					
12.	Holds book very close					
13.	Hard to pay attention when reading					
14.	Hard to finish assignments on time					
15.	Gives up easily (says "I can't" before trying)					
16.	Bumps into things, knocks things over					
17.	Homework takes too long					
18.	Daydreams					
19.	In trouble for being off task at school					
<b>Total score in each column:</b>						
<b>Multiply column totals by:</b>		x0	x1	x2	x3	x4
<b>Score for each column:</b>						
<b>Total score for all columns:</b>						

If your student/child's total score is more than 20, they have a greater than 80% chance of having a vision problem that is interfering with their learning.

\* Adapted from the Children's Vision Information Network (Children's Vision Information Network, 2013), this checklist has reportedly been found to be an excellent tool in identifying at-risk children.

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The editor is happy to receive queries or submissions at: [TEACH.editor@avondale.edu.au](mailto:TEACH.editor@avondale.edu.au)

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# AVONDALE SHORT COURSES OUTDOOR RECREATION

Outdoor education involves contact with nature, small groups, and adventure, to provide a unique approach in the development of health and wellbeing for school students.

Effective outdoor education programs are best run by teachers who are trained to guide and facilitate outdoor education activities. Avondale is proud to announce the commencement of Outdoor Education short courses for teachers.

These courses will train teachers to be guides in the three activity areas of Bushwalking, Abseiling, and Canoeing/kayaking. The competencies are from the Sport, Fitness and Recreation Training Package (SIS10) and the qualification is a Statement of Attainment from the Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation, which is the recommended qualification for teachers, and others, who wish to guide outdoor education activities. Short courses are available on-line with a practical assessment in your local area.



## BUSHWALKING

**Bushwalking Guide Controlled Environments** — Controlled bushwalking involves walking in the natural environment for a day or overnight bushwalk. This a skill set of units for those wishing to guide bushwalks in locations such as tracked and easily untracked areas that are reliably marked on maps, and are obvious on the ground.



## ABSEILING

**Abseiling Guiding Single Pitch (Natural Surfaces)** — Abseiling single pitch involves descending vertical or near vertical surfaces using ropes and descending friction devices where there is access to the top and bottom of the cliff. This is a skill set of units for those wishing to guide abseiling activities on natural surfaces which are single pitch.



## PADDLING

**Canoeing/kayaking Guide Flat Water** — Canoeing and kayaking has a broad scope. It involves paddling activities done in a variety of different locations from rivers and lakes to estuaries and protected waters. This is a skill set of units for those wishing to guide canoeing/kayaking trips on flat and undemanding water.

## TRANSFORMING

## CLASSROOM PRACTICE

### **Nigel Lynn**

Head of Department - Technologies KLA,  
Avondale School, Cooranbong, NSW  
shared with

### **Bev Christian**

Senior Lecturer, School of Education, Avondale  
College

### **Is it possible to foster excellence, engagement and intergenerational understanding through a Year Eight Technology project?**

**Nigel Lynn wanted to engage his design students at Avondale School in meaningful learning experiences in the Technologies Key Learning Area (KLA). He designed a complete unit to open an authentic way of fostering intergenerational understanding and promoting excellence in his students by partnering with Avondale Lifestyle Community (ALC), a facility catering for the elderly. The vehicle for fostering excellence, respect and intergenerational understanding was a pilot unit titled Design Challenge.**

Design Challenge was conceived through questioning assumptions upon which industrial models of teaching and learning are based. The underlying motivation for this questioning stemmed from a shared passion to trial teaching strategies that would improve student learning outcomes. With this in mind, the two main aims were to (i) encourage student self-directed learning, and (ii) offer an environment where needs-based design was realised by establishing clients from society. Avondale Lifestyle Community (ALC) was approached and kindly offered to sponsor the unit as well as facilitate the process of identifying residents who were willing to be design clients. Thus, the Avondale School-ALC learning partnership was formed.

The unit involved dividing the year group into autonomous, mixed-gender 'design companies', each with 5 students. Design companies were introduced to their clients through a series of introductory sessions, including afternoon tea at the school and short visits to ALC. Positive student-client relations were engendered during

these informal meetings. Individual 'needs' of clients were identified during these times and each company designed and constructed a project to satisfy agreed needs. There were no set classes in the Design Challenge. Design companies had the chance to utilise skills from 4 specialist Technology teachers, mentors from the Year 12 Community and Family Studies class, and mentors from the Year 10 Business Studies class to solve their problem. Further to this, the design companies were permitted to work with any technology (such as textiles, wood, food, ICT, plastics, metals) to realise a solution to their clients' needs.

At the end of the unit the entire Year 8 cohort visited the ALC and formally presented their design solutions to respective clients. Projects such as a wooden knitting caddy box, a patchwork quilt with client family photos printed on it, a cushioned stable table with inbuilt iPad stand, a chess table with inlaid playing surface and chess-piece drawers, were just a few of the excellent works created for clients. The atmosphere at the formal presentations was humbling as teenagers and elderly clients openly expressed high regard for one another. Intergenerational friendships were established, with evidence of ongoing contact subsequent to the unit.

Data gathered over the course of the unit revealed that the initial aims of the activity were realised. Quantitative analyses of the Design Challenge and student results have informed subsequent styles of pedagogy and assessment in Year 8 Technology. The pronounced qualitative data associated with student behaviour and performance during the unit were:

1. Striving for excellence: authentic use of design process by students was higher during the challenge than with regular, school determined projects;
2. Intergenerational understanding: student perception of elderly citizens changed as their language evolved into one of inclusion and respect toward their client;
3. Heightened engagement: students with low records of engagement improved in this unit; and
4. Students with a poor behaviour record



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showed heightened sensitivity to their clients and improved work ethic.

In acknowledgement of the benefits of this innovative unit, ALC received the national award for Diversional Therapy with the Design Challenge, and furthermore, the University of NSW is running an intergenerational research project on the 2015 Design Challenge.

In this collaborative task, everyone emerged a winner. The outcomes for designing and constructing a technology project were met, but more than this, attitudes changed, intergenerational understanding was enhanced, and engagement levels rose as students met the needs of real people in a real life situation. **TEACH**



Above: Participants (L to R): Lara Maybury, Sage Chapman, Mrs. Margaret Peck, Lexy Stansfield, Zane Hick. Project: Timber Memories Chest (A place to store historic/sentimental memorabilia). Photography: Kerrie Howells.

“Everyone emerged a winner. The outcomes for ... a technology project were met, but more ... attitudes changed, intergenerational understanding was enhanced, and engagement levels rose”



Participants (L to R): Mackenzie Eunson, Annalea Bishop, Fay Waldrip, Mrs. Kath Heise, Samuel Siv, Broden Sherrat. Project: Aluminium Walking Stick Clamp (A clamp that can be attached to various sized structures to hold a walking stick while the client is seated). Photography: Kerrie Howells.

## School chaplaincy is effective but could it be better?

### Michael Parker

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**Key words:** chaplaincy, faith development, reflective practice

#### Abstract

**Analysis of the data collected in the Valuegenesis II study of 3263 students in Seventh-day Adventist schools, indicates that 63% consider the school chaplain has influenced their development of faith. Further, school chaplaincy is associated with statistically significant positive differences in the levels of Faith Maturity, Christian Commitment, Intrinsic Orientation to Religion, Positive Views of God, Denominational Loyalty and Social Responsibility, being a medium to large effect impacting students lives. The potential of reflective practice to improve the outcomes of chaplaincy in the current context of low levels of job satisfaction and chaplaincy retention is considered.**

#### Context and purpose

Chaplaincy in Australian schools can be traced to the time of The First Fleet, with Reverend Richard Johnson, the first chaplain, establishing the first schools in Sydney and Parramatta in 1792 (Anglican Church League, n.d.). It was not until much later that Australian governments introduced chaplaincy into state schools (Victoria – 1955, Western Australia – 1982, South Australia – 1986, Queensland – 1970, New South Wales - unknown ) (Pohlmann, 2013, p. 58). The real momentum for school chaplaincy came with the introduction of the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) in 2007, where the Howard government provided funding for two thousand seven hundred schools to establish a

chaplaincy program (Department of Education, Science and Training, 2007). This was further extended to another thousand schools by the Gillard government in the lead-up to the federal election in 2010 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011, p. 5). The funding allowed the introduction of chaplaincy programs and created new, unique and untried roles in the government school sector. It allowed faith-based schools to expand their existing programs and to employ chaplains in areas where lack of finance had previously made it difficult to have full time chaplains.

The NSCP has come under considerable criticism, not only from the non-religious sector, but from society in general. At a time when governments needed to slash funding, the value of the chaplaincy program has been questioned, leading to assertions that it was a waste of money. Initially, many schools hired people who had no training in chaplaincy, which also caused people to ask questions about the validity of the program. Later, when guidelines were clarified, some schools opted to hire counsellors rather than chaplains, and the question “What is the role of the chaplain?” was often posed.

#### Recent research

Judith Salecich, in 2001, and David Pohlmann, in 2010, both made significant contributions into the research of school chaplaincy by looking at case studies and models of chaplaincy in Queensland state schools. Their research encompassed a detailed investigation of a range of models that were currently operating in a sample of Queensland state schools. However their goals were not to identify best practice models.

“  
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Paget and McCormack (2006) consider chaplaincy in a wide range of contexts. Later David O'Malley (2008) looked at chaplaincy in a school context and the different aspects of the work, but the point of commonality reported is the lack of clear job descriptions and definitions of the role of the chaplain, which leads to a lot of frustration, lack of job satisfaction and stress-related burnout. Clare McBeath (cited in Threthfall-Holmes & Newitt, 2011) observes "many chaplains leave to take up other forms of ministry as a result" (p. 23).

With the government investing so much money in the school chaplaincy program, and with many questioning its relevance and validity, a study was completed by Hughes and Sims (2009) looking at *The Effectiveness of Chaplaincy*.

### The Adventist schools system

Before 2007 the Seventh-day Adventist school system had several full-time chaplains in its biggest schools and many church pastors who fulfilled the role of part-time chaplain in addition to their roles in the local parish. With the introduction of the NSCP the available funding enabled the majority of schools within the system to have a full or part time chaplain. However, in this school system, the role of the chaplain was often defined by the school principal, and varied from school to school. There was often no clear line of accountability, and there was confusion over job descriptions and no clear model for chaplaincy.

In this context of a comparatively recently introduced national school program and limited current research, this article will look at some of the evidence that supports the validity of the chaplaincy program within the Seventh-day Adventist school system in Australia; the role the chaplains perform; and how this can be enhanced by "reflective practice".

### The research approach or method

In an attempt to ascertain the relationship between homes, churches and schools, the Seventh-day Adventist church in the South Pacific conducted a major Valuegenesis I study in 1992 (Hughes, 1993), prior to the introduction of school chaplains in all schools. A further study (Valuegenesis II, Gane, 2012) was commissioned in 2011 (twenty years later) to revisit this area of research in order to evaluate past programs and to assist in goal setting for the future. This latest study added a question (see Figure 1.) on the role of chaplaincy in the development of faith in the lives of the students.

As there are now a number of schools that have full time chaplains it was a goal of the study to discover answers to the following queries: Does having a chaplain on the campus make any difference

in the lives of the students? Does the chaplain become one of those important and significant adults who at least shows an interest in the lives of the students or at best becomes a mentor with ongoing real impact? Does spiritual activity on the campus increase in both frequency and quality through the addition of a chaplain? The following analysis of the student responses informs answers to these questions.

### The survey instrument and the respondents

The data for this study was collected through the Valuegenesis II instrument being administered to most students in the Adventist School system in Australia and New Zealand. A final response rate of 3263 (80% of the total available) was achieved after the data cleaning process. One thousand, three hundred and fifty nine (1359) students came from homes with at least one Adventist parent while 1904 came from homes with no religion stated or another religion or Christian denomination listed.

### The results

#### Spiritual influence

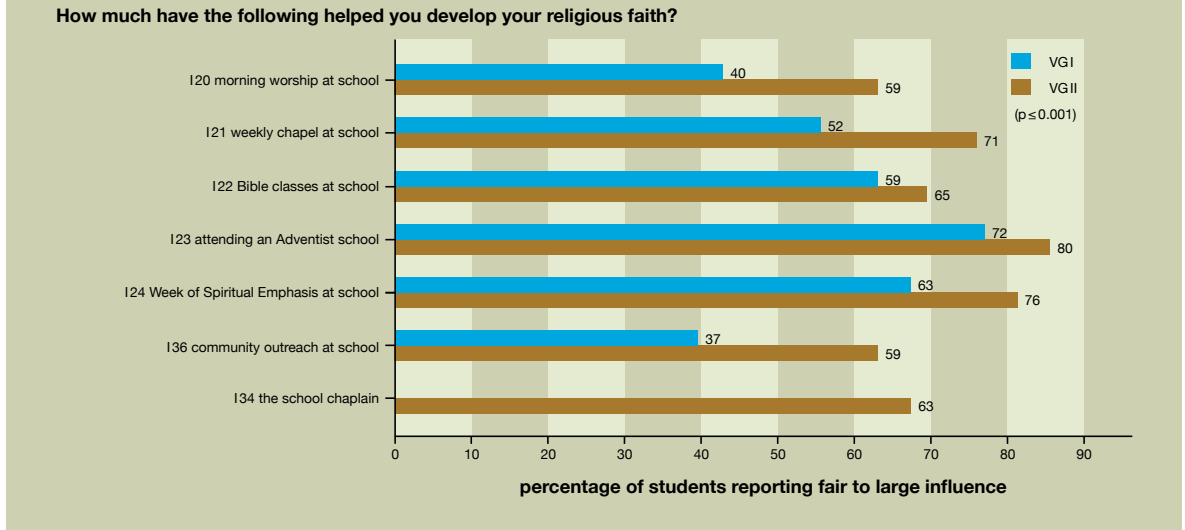
As the impact of the chaplain was not included in the original 1992 study this paper reflects only the results from the Valuegenesis II study. The personal influence of the chaplain is reflected in item I 34 where 63% of students say the chaplain has a fair amount or a very large influence on their development of faith (see Figure 1.). One cannot state that the major changes in the overall results for the school can be directly attributed to the chaplain as the cause, but the data suggests that there is a relationship.

A series of independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to examine the difference between having or not having a chaplain for the following scales: Faith Maturity, Christian Commitment, Intrinsic Orientation to Religion, Positive Views of God, Denominational Loyalty and Social Responsibility. Accepting the criteria that the probability of rejecting the statistical hypothesis when in fact it is true (Type I error) be 5% or less ( $\alpha = .05$ ), there are significant differences between students who had a school chaplain and those who did not. The presence of the chaplain is associated with significant differences and higher scores ( $p \leq .05$  to  $p \leq .001$ ). Further, the magnitude of the effect size for the difference is medium ( $d = .5$ ) for Faith Maturity and Christian Commitment, approaching large ( $d = .7$ ) for Intrinsic Orientation to Religion, while the effect size for Denominational

“63% of students say the chaplain has a fair amount or a very large influence on their development of faith”

<sup>1</sup>Because the study was designed to compare results for schools between the original Valuegenesis study of 1992 and the second study of 2012 the results presented below are generally only for those students from homes where the was at least one SDA parent.

**Figure 1: Influence of the school chaplain on faith development (Gane, 2012, p. 113)**



Loyalty is only a little less ( $d = .6$ ). However, for increasing Positive Views of God the impact of a chaplain approaches a medium effect ( $d = .4$ ) (Gane, 2012, p. 110). The effect sizes noted suggest that the addition of a chaplain does affect the lives of students, in particular increasing the quality of spirituality on the campus.

Additional analysis considered the effect of chaplaincy on two sub-samples – SDA and non-SDA students. The scale scores for SDA students who had a school chaplain and those who did not were significantly different (Faith Maturity,  $p \leq .05$ ; Christian Commitment,  $p \leq .005$ ; Intrinsic Orientation to Religion,  $p \leq .05$ ; Positive Views of God,  $p \leq .005$ ; and Denominational Loyalty,  $p \leq .05$ ). The only scale where there was no confirmed difference was Social Responsibility (Gane 2012, p. 109). The differences for the non-SDA students were of higher probability for all scales (Faith Maturity,  $p \leq .001$ ; Christian Commitment,  $p \leq .001$ ; Intrinsic Orientation to Religion,  $p \leq .001$ ; and Positive Views of God,  $p \leq .001$ ) except Denominational Loyalty; further, there was a difference for Social Responsibility ( $p \leq .05$ ). It appears that the presence in the school of a chaplain has a major positive influence on students of all faiths, but the effect is even more predictable for non-SDA students and enhances their service within society.

Figure 2. shows a difference between having a chaplain and higher levels of faith maturity. When students did not have a chaplain only 21% expressed high faith maturity, while 34% of students who had a chaplain indicated high faith maturity.

**Figure 2: Presence of a school chaplain and faith maturity (Gane, 2012, p. 113)**

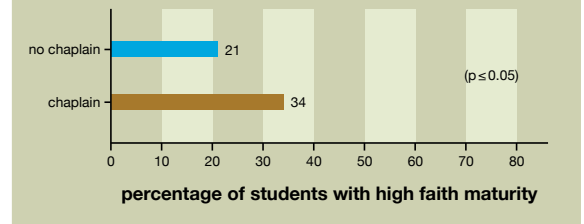


Figure 3. shows the positive difference having a school chaplain has on Christian commitment. Among the students who do not have a chaplain, 35% have high Christian commitment while of their counterparts with a chaplain, 51% have high Christian commitment.

Figure 4. shows 55% percent of those with a chaplain have higher intrinsic orientation to religion while 32% of those without a chaplain have a high intrinsic orientation.

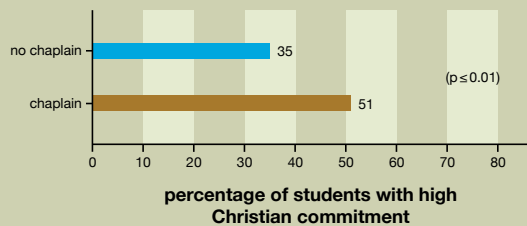
Figure 5. shows that 80% percent of students in those schools that have chaplains have a very positive view of God, while only 60% those without chaplains have positive views of God.

### Mentoring

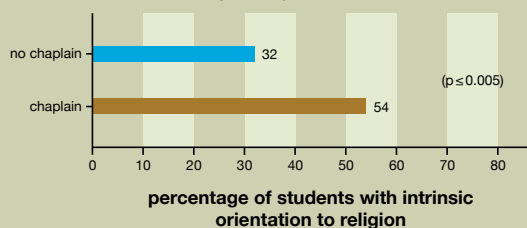
About 40% of students recognise 5 or more adults have shown a significant interest in them at school, yet 15% do not identify even one adult mentor. About 65% of students recognise a significant

“the addition of a chaplain does affect the lives of students, in particular increasing the quality of spirituality on the campus”

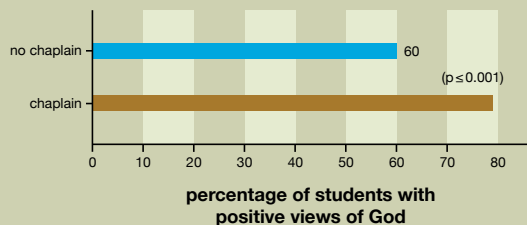
**Figure 3: Presence of a school chaplain and high Christian commitment (Gane, 2012, p. 114)**



**Figure 4: Presence of a school chaplain and orientation to religion (Gane, 2012, p. 114)**



**Figure 5: Presence of a school chaplain and views of God (Gane, 2012, p. 115)**



relationship with a mature Christian adult at school (Gane, 2012, p. 102). Mentoring in the church has a weak correlation with reduced 'at risk behaviours', moderate correlations with aspects of spirituality, but these are lower in schools (Gane, 2012, p. 102-106).

### School climate

Comparison of school climate measures between the 1992 and 2011 surveys show a negative trend with the increasing presence of chaplains in schools (Gane, 2012, p. 67). Possible reasons for this observation are offered in the following discussion but should be part of future research.

### Discussion

#### Considering the research questions

Anecdotally, it has long been thought that chaplaincy

has made a significant difference in schools. Valuegenesis II is the first research in Seventh-day Adventist schools that has definitively shown the significant impact that chaplains have in the spiritual lives of students, affecting their view of God, their spiritual growth and their faith. Introducing school chaplains has increased the intentionality of Christian mentoring (numerically) and consequently the potential for an increasing influence on students' lives. An increase in the number of chaplains does not seem however, to have had a trending impact on school climate. The overall negative change in school climate may however link to societal influences or any of the changes introduced over the period, including the effect of growth introducing a more varied student intake.

A known weakness of this broad survey is that it does not measure the quality of chaplaincy practice. Considering that very few, if any, chaplains in Adventist schools have specific chaplaincy training, training should make a demonstrable improvement in the quality of the chaplain's work and consequently in desirable outcomes.

#### Improving chaplaincy by reflective practice

Reflective practice is used in many professions as a means to improve performance, in areas such as healthcare, education and business. Little investigation has been done into the effectiveness of the elements of the chaplain's role, or the critical evaluation of their daily activities. So it is appropriate to investigate the various roles of the chaplain and how reflective practice contributes, or could contribute further, to these roles. Such reflection has the possibility of further enhancing the impact of school chaplaincy on students. The tasks that the chaplains perform are many and varied, but largely fall into the following categories – shepherding, counselling, crisis managing, celebrating important milestones/occasions, dealing with the big issues of human suffering such as death and dying, divorce and issues such as bullying (Petersen, 2007). All of these pastoral responsibilities provide opportunity for the practitioner to enhance their services through reflection.

One of the major roles of the school chaplain is to journey with the students (King's Baptist Grammar School, 2010). This "journeying" involves getting alongside them, listening to them, being available to assist them through the various elements of life that they are experiencing. Often the chaplain is so busy "doing" that he/she fails to take the time to reflect on why they do what they

*“Valuegenesis II is the first research in Seventh-day Adventist schools that has ... shown the significant impact ... chaplains have in the spiritual lives of students”*

do, or evaluate the effectiveness of what they are doing. The chaplain often feels pulled in many directions, is busy running events, and needs to set aside the time to take stock, to determine the effectiveness of all these activities in order to ensure he/she is being effective, and in order to avoid the burnout to which chaplains are particularly prone.

In order to address these issues, “theological reflective practice” is very important.

Reflection is an active process of witnessing one’s own experience in order to take a closer look at it, sometimes to direct attention to it briefly, but often to explore it in greater depth. This can be done in the midst of an activity or as an activity in itself. The key to reflection is learning how to take perspective on one’s own and experience—in other words, to examine that experience rather than just living it. (Amulya, n.d., para. 1)

Reflective practice is a process which can be used to enhance our working with individual students, and it is also a practice which should be applied to evaluating and modifying/improving the overall chaplaincy program within the school. “Being reflective is one of the ways we learn to be ministers” (Nash & Nash, 2009, p. 19). When we reflect, we do things better. The chaplain who, as a result of reflecting on his/her practice is better able to evaluate their pastoral practice, and is able to articulate this to their line manager and others, frequently receives greater support. This can often result in a team ethos being developed as the chaplain involves others in his/her work, rather than bearing the pressure of isolation in their role.

Often the school chaplain is busy “doing”, rushing from one place to another, from one appointment to another, their lives dominated by the school bell, often failing to stop and “take stock”, “to be” rather than “to do”. When the chaplain takes the time to stop, and evaluates all the busyness in his/her life, he/she will often come to the realisation that “being” is far more important and effective. Jesus asked “Who do people say I am?” (Mark 8:27) and this search for identity is also the central question in the life of every teenager. When the chaplain takes time to “journey” with people, to “be” with them, through whatever issues concern them at the time, this allows the chaplain to play a significant role in individual lives, and helps teenagers make sense of the confusion felt in the search for identity, and lessens the anger that teens feel as they try to make sense of themselves (Threlfall-Holmes & Newitt, 2011, p. 19).

“There is another aspect of the chaplain’s

relationship to the whole school that is seldom mentioned. Listening is at the heart of the chaplain’s role and every chaplain will need to develop the skill of being still and letting people talk honestly and safely” (O’Malley, 2008, p. 19). Frequently, chaplains (especially males) listen to solve the problems that they think people are sharing with them. This limits their impact. As they learn to “listen” they will “hear” people’s “hopes, fears, disappointment, anger, frustration, joys and sadness” (O’Malley, 2008, p. 88). As the chaplain reflects on what he/she hears, he/she will be able to minister far more effectively, and as students, staff and the community recognise and gain confidence in the chaplain’s listening ability, the scope of his/her effectiveness will be significantly extended.

As the chaplain incorporates reflective practice into his/her mode of operation there will be many benefits for their pastoral practice. These benefits are seen in their ministry and in their personal experience. In terms of ministry, reflective practice enables the school chaplain to:

- analyse why he/she is doing the activities that he/she is doing and to determine how they can be done better
- concentrate on the things that are most important without becoming bogged down by minutiae
- evaluate the theological rationale underpinning his/her ministry and ensure that tasks fit within this
- achieve greater spirituality in their role, as everything has a theological rationale
- include others in his/her ministry, and so widen their effectiveness
- have a greater impact on individuals as he/she listens and reflects on the deeper issues of individuals
- develop a better pastoral care model that will enable them to minister more effectively to their school community

On a personal level, adopting a habit of critical evaluation and reflection enables the school chaplain to:

- be a better time manager, through identifying and addressing the things that are most important
- realise that he/she is not, and does not have to be, “superhuman”, to accept that they did the best that they could at the time
- do a better job of self-care, leading to less likelihood of burnout, because they are evaluating what works and what does not work
- achieve a higher degree of job satisfaction, due to more targeted and effective ministry.

“*One of the major roles of the school chaplain is to journey with the students*”

## Future research

Research consequently should further evaluate the impact of chaplaincy and specific relationships including the effects of levels of formal training, clarity of job specification, accountability measures, the mentoring of chaplains, retention rates and other variables related to chaplaincy practice, particularly reflective practice.

## Conclusion

The evidence indicates that school chaplains are having a very positive effect in the Adventist schools and communities in which they work, but chaplains still suffer a high degree of dissatisfaction and burnout. Some reflection on why they appear to help develop social responsibility in the non-SDA students but not those from SDA homes could profit from the process of reflection we are advocating. When the chaplain takes time to reflect on their pastoral practice and critically evaluate, it is asserted that the school chaplain will be far more effective. In response to those who have

a negative mindset towards chaplains, reflective practice offers a way for the school chaplain to identify and demonstrate: to themselves, to their colleagues, to employers and to the wider community; that in their role, they are being increasingly effective.

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“reflective practice offers a way for the school chaplain to ... demonstrate ... they are being increasingly effective”



Chaplain Mel Lemke, sharing ideas (with a student) at Avondale School, Cooranbong, NSW.  
Photography: Avondale School PR

# A motivation scaffold to improve the learning engagement of students

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**Keywords:** engagement, motivation, scaffold

## Introduction

“Learning for life, not for grades”, is the eye-catching heading, of a recent report on the upgrading of an online education resource (Evans, 2014). The article went on to describe what many teachers know, but are seemingly powerless to change.

Schools are limited by a seemingly endless desire to subject children to frequent stressful tests, eliminating a sense of curiosity and engagement in exchange for instilling fear of failure. This means kids don't get the education they need to apply in their life, they just learn to get good at tests. No wonder they aren't interested. (Evans, 2014, para. 9).

Teachers who work with young adolescents know that motivating and maintaining their interest in classroom-based learning is a major challenge. Research such as that completed by the Centre for Mental Health in Schools (2008); Cole (2006), Cole, Mahar & Vindurampulle (2006), support this notion. The desire to tune into pre-prepared and packaged doses of information, however important, is not particularly high on the agenda of a 14-year-old young person whose body is pumping full of hormones and whose brain is so rattled by the latest round of synapses' pruning that they have little clue as to why they are here and what that person at the front of classroom is prattling on about. In fact one author was moved to write:

Many teachers believe they should receive hazardous duty pay for teaching adolescents. Adolescence is for many – adolescents, parents and teachers alike – a time of turmoil, rapid growth and learning, as well as shifting emotions and searching for personal and social identities. (Reilly, in Crawford, 2008, p. vi)

This study seeks to address this issue and is an examination of the use of a motivational scaffold to assist a cohort of Year Nine students to take greater responsibility for their learning through direct and authentic learning experiences outside the classroom.

## Literature review

Many theorists have proposed ideas relating to motivation and learning. Although the literature covers a wide variety of these theories, this review focuses on recent engagement in learning literature, particularly as it relates to adolescents. The need for research in this area is detailed with reference to recent publications; and the ways in which students are likely to become engaged in, and take ownership of their learning, are explored. In this review specific attention is focused on engagement of adolescent learning, self-determination theory (SDT) and outdoor education (OE).

The relationship between learning and engagement may not be immediately evident in outdoor education literature, but a case is made in this paper for such a link existing and that outdoor education experiences provide a valuable context for students' learning. Outdoor education can be defined as direct and authentic experiences in outdoor environments. While it might be assumed that there will be learning engagement benefits from the personal development undergone through outdoor education programs (Hattie, Marsh, Hewison & Martin, 2010; McLeod & Allen-Craig, 2007; Martin & Fleming, 2010; Neill, 2008; Neill, & Richards, 1997), there is also a large amount of literature relating to the value of authentic and meaningful experiences leading to improved interest and engagement in learning (Blum, 2005; Cavanagh & Kennish, 2009; Gibbs & Poskitt, 2010; Murray, Mitchell, Gale, Edwards & Zyngier, 2004 ).

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engagement”



With this in mind we are of the view, like Hewison and Martin (2010), that Outdoor Education (OE) theory has much to offer traditional schooling. Notions such as direct and authentic experiences, challenge by choice and facilitation combine to make a compelling case for the use of outdoor education methods in the classroom, particularly when dealing with young adolescents. Added to this, the Experience Fluctuation Model developed by Massimini and Carli (1988) and Lambert, Chapman, and Lurie (2013), and the Flow Theory from which it emerges (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988), both being important contributors to outdoor education theory, have received acknowledgement and usage in the wider educational research community (Cavanagh & Kennish, 2009; Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004; Gibbs & Poskitt, 2010). In learning engagement literature (e. g. Fredricks, et al, 2004), flow is described as another name for engagement within the affective dimension of learning engagement (Robinson, 2013). While this representation of flow is questioned within outdoor education literature (Pfab Houge, Hodge & Boyes, 2010; Priest & Gass, 2005; Stremba & Bisson, 2009) there is little doubt as to its significance in the learning, engagement and motivation debate.

Emerging from Flow Theory and The Experience Fluctuation Model is The Expectations Capabilities Model developed by Cavanagh and Kennish (2009). This model replaces the familiar outdoor education terms of skill and challenge with capabilities and expectations to allow for a more comfortable fit with learning engagement literature. Research based on this concept has found a positive correlation between the challenge and skill continuums in secondary school learning engagement (Harbaugh & Cavanagh, 2012).

In a recently completed doctoral thesis involving a study into the efficacy of an experiential education program in respect of learning engagement for Year Nine students, attention was drawn to the need to be mindful of motivation (Robinson, 2013) when considering learning. This is based on the premise that, without a desire to learn, the likelihood of students wanting to learn is quite remote. In the conclusion of this thesis Robinson (2013, p. 162) suggested a “trinary” (p. 161) that, as well as including the capacity to learn, and the conditions for learning, when considering learning engagement, the need or desire to learn was a third major component.

A review of some literature relating to the Self-determination Theory (SDT) of motivation (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991) suggests that it is when there is congruence between competence, relationships and autonomy that there is likely to

be intrinsic engagement in given learning tasks. Competence, in this context, relates to having the ‘know how’ to complete a given task, while relationships refers to satisfying connections with “peers, teachers and parents” (Borich and Tombari, 1996, pp. 33 & 34). Feelings of autonomy emerge when students are able “to initiate and regulate” (p. 34) their learning.

From this contextual background a recent article by Belland, Kim and Hannafin (2013) suggested the use of a six-fold scaffold for motivation and cognition. A scaffold, as used in this context, is a mechanism that supports growth and development and can be represented in different ways such as a coach, mentor, facilitator, teacher, or software; and guideline documents such as a rubric, worked example or worksheet (Hmelo-Silver, Duncan & Chinn, 2007). Belland et al. (2013) reviewed research on scaffolding and motivation to develop a framework to support the design of scaffolds that are likely to encourage motivation. The framework they posited included the following strategies: establish task value, promote mastery goals, promote belonging, promote emotional regulation, promote expectancy for success, and promote autonomy. Three of these strategies (Table 1.), link directly to the three components mooted in SDT, while the others are at least implied as well.

A number of theories on motivation and engagement were summarised by Martin (2012) and he claimed that motivation appeared to be linked to and precede engagement. Engagement was also found to increase using the instructional approach of Problem Based Learning (PBL) (Rotgams & Schmidt, 2011). This supported the notion that PBL can be a helpful medium to enhance the motivation for student engagement. Belland et al. (2013) proposed PBL to be a key instructional method for increasing motivation as it involved the use of authentic problems, group collaboration and self-directed learning. Added to this, when authentic tasks were used in the learning process, research demonstrated that task value and student motivation increased (Parsons & Ward, 2011). Motivation also increased when students were encouraged to solve real-life problems with the use of their own resourcefulness (Williams & Gonzalez-Hass, 2012). This supported the notion of self-directed learning giving the students greater motivation to continue.

However, there are practitioners and authors that express some concerns with the validity of PBL. It is often assumed that the authenticity associated with PBL automatically gives value to the learning process (Belland et al., 2013) when in fact, PBL requires greater planning and effort on

“*establish task value, promote mastery goals, .. belonging, ... emotional regulation, ... expectancy for success, and ... autonomy*”

the part of the teacher and assumes that students already have the level of organisation and reflection skills to cope with self-directed learning (Williams & Gonzalez-Hass, 2012). Furthermore, the PBL environment is not minimally guided, and requires scaffolding to support self-directed learning. Scaffolding allows learners to be involved in complex problem solving which can be beyond the student's capacity and experience base (Hmelo-Silver, et al., 2007).

“  
A mastery goal orientation will encourage students to collaborate ... and push each other ... [and] promote a deeper level of ... engagement ... than performance goals”

**Table 1: SDT and Motivation Scaffold comparison**

Self-determination Theory (Deci, et al., 1991)	Motivation Scaffold (Belland, et al., 2013)
	establish task value
competence	promote mastery goals
relationships	promote belonging
	promote emotion regulation
	promote expectancy of success
autonomy	promote autonomy

### Scaffold design suggestions

The following are scaffold design suggestions from the six-fold motivation scaffold proposed by Belland et al. (2013).

#### 1. Establish task value

Promoting task value is an important element for scaffold design as the perceived value of the task can be linked to intrinsic motivation (Belland et al., 2013). Two instructional strategies that establish task value are fostering interest and attainment value. Firstly, interest that is initiated by environmental features is known as situational interest (Hidi, 2006). A knowledge and understanding of what would attract students to an activity can generate situational interest (Ainley, 2012). Such interest can be triggered by driving questions that establish curiosity or cognitive conflict (Belland et al., 2013). For situational interest to be maintained, knowledge needs to be stored and understood, increasing the value of the task (Renninger & Hidi, 2011). The features of the activity are no longer essential, but opportunities for reengagement are critical (Ainley, 2012). Starting with situational interest there is

transition from emotional to cognitive components as situational interest develops into individual interest. Individual interest involves an increase in positive feelings, knowledge and value in the task, and can include a predisposition to the interest domain (Hidi, 2006). When individual interest is well developed, reengagement in the activity occurs which characterises the notion of engagement (Ainley, 2012). Therefore situational interest is an important component of any scaffold design.

The second strategy for achieving task value is attainment value. This is best achieved by outlining the significance of the task, providing reasons for doing the task and why it is relevant to the current situation, particularly when the task is uninteresting (Reeve & Halusic, 2009). Engagement in the task is more likely, when the task is perceived to have value, as opposed to the student's belief in his/her ability to achieve the task (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000).

In order to promote task value some suggestions for scaffold design would be:

- a. To expose the students to expert modelling where professional practise is demonstrated (Hmelo-Silver et al., 2007).
- b. To ask the student to reflect on performance and to record personal insights which would help him/her better comprehend the realities of the task (Belland et al., 2013).

#### 2. Promoting mastery goals

Belland et al. (2013) promotes four strategies to enhance mastery:- Short-term goals, informational feedback, co-operation and rational goals. Miller and Brickman (2004) found engagement to be enhanced when a student regulated self and divided future goals into proximal tasks, which could be achieved in the short term. A scaffold could be developed in the form of a worksheet with prompts, rather than the student being asked to develop a full scale report about a problem.

Promoting informational feedback is helpful and can be scaffolded in various ways. Demonstrating and describing capabilities, which match various levels of achievement, will promote progress toward competence rather than benchmarking performance against other students. Feedback can be used to encourage a student to higher levels of competence by assessing his/her work in a substantive way, recognising various levels of progress. However, continual focus on the overall problem is still important as performance goals can be a distraction and lead to disengagement (Belland et al., 2013).

A mastery goal orientation will encourage students to collaborate on learning tasks and push each other for explanations and understanding

to achieve rational goals, which will promote a deeper level of processing and engagement than performance goals could engender (Pugh, Linnenbrink-Garcia, Kosskey, Stewart, & Manzey, 2009).

### 3. Promote belonging

A scaffold can promote belonging with the use of strategies such as shared goals, accommodating social goals, and the co-construction of standards with participants. This is best facilitated with group work and encouraging the development of a social contract (Martin, Cashel, Wagstaff, & Breunig, 2006). Although students work in groups, it is recognized that individuals still have different interests and personal goals; therefore it is important to use a scaffold which outlines different aspects of the problem, allowing for group members to choose common objectives (Belland et al., 2013). However, student expectations should be established first to have any chance of forming a consensus on what to solve (Belland et al., 2013). When group members are aware of the expectations of others, they are more likely to share goals, invoking social responsibility. Strategies that accommodate social responsibility are those which remind group members of the greater capacity to be found in group achievement and importance of task attainment value, even if it is just for some members of the group (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Sharing the construction of standards and benchmarks for assessment with students increases incentive and motivation for students to participate in the activity. It encourages students to take ownership of the assessment process, but not without expert support and guidance (Reeve & Halusic, 2009).

### 4. Promote emotion regulation

An emotion can be described as a sequence of events beginning with a relevant situation, which is evaluated by an individual and then gives rise to a response. Emotions can have helpful or inhibiting effects, thus it is important for scaffold design to offer opportunity to regulate negative emotions (Belland et al., 2013; Gross & Thompson, 2006). Suggested strategies for emotion regulation start with selecting a situation, which is likely to give the expected response, and then if needed, modifying the situation to reduce intensity. Changing an emotion with a distraction or perhaps modulating a response with exercise, deep breathing or medication can also redirect attention. However, this is more temporary in nature and experimental studies have identified this approach as suppressive, showing that negative emotions are likely to increase (Gross, 2014). In controllable

situations, Belland et al. (2013) suggest a scaffold can be designed to direct a student to constructive responses where negative emotions are viewed as formative feedback to causal structure. On the other hand reappraisal of the situation can be useful to bring about a cognitive change where the situation is viewed differently and the emotional response is changed. Gross (2014) has reviewed a number of studies which have shown that reappraisal does not impact the nervous system, memory or relationships with others and thus would be an important emotion-regulation strategy for a scaffold. Reappraisal can be external (e. g. the outcome can be viewed as good although it was very different to what was expected) or internal (e. g. feelings of apprehension can be viewed as a way to maintain a cautious approach).

### 5. Promote expectancy for success

Belland et al. (2013) point out that motivation will not be optimised by simply, promoting expectancy. It is more likely expectancy for success will be greater if a scaffold offers some strategies for making the achievement of the task believable.

One suggested strategy is to use behavioural modelling (Moos & Azevedo, 2009). Some programs have demonstrated the effective use of students who have just completed the task to be used as peer models to those beginning the task (Wigfield, Eccles, & Rodriguez, 1998). Another strategy is to encourage students to regularly reflect about progressive outcomes and make the necessary adjustments to subsequent attempts based on what did or did not work (Belland et al., 2013).

### 6. Promote autonomy

The role of the scaffold is to support success; however it can be constrictive to the point where there is a significant reduction in choice. This could impact the aspect of autonomy to the extent that motivation would decrease too much for students to engage (Rotgams & Schmidt, 2011). Therefore, it is important to incorporate into the design of a scaffold, options that provide opportunity for students to have ownership over the learning task. Scaffolds can be very useful for outlining and detailing different aspects of an overall problem, which could provide a choice for students to select a learning task in which they are interested (Belland et al., 2013). Students could choose from a list of processes that are personally relevant and reliable (Katz & Assor, 2006). For example, time management could be supported by short term time-lines while self-evaluation could be scaffolded by a rubric which would allow for self-assessment (Loyens, Magda, & Rikers, 2008).

“Strategies that accommodate social responsibility ... remind group members of the greater capacity to be found in group achievement and importance of task attainment value, even if it is just for some members of the group”

Figure 1: Motivation Scaffold visual planning tool

Theme	Day: _____
<b>Year 9 L4L Urban Learning Challenge</b>	<b>Fill in the boxes below with comments about your upcoming trip to the city</b>
What is the purpose of this trip? (big picture)	
What do I/we want to achieve today? (learning intentions)	
How will I/we ensure that everyone feels part of the group today? (belonging)	
What will I/we do to ensure that everyone in the group feels positive about the outcomes achieved for the day? (emotions)	
How can we ensure we will succeed? (success criteria)	
What am I/we able to contribute to the trip/group/learning today? (autonomy)	Member 1:
	Member 2:
	Member 3:
	Member 4:
	Member 5:

“  
a  
motivational  
scaffold in  
the form  
of a visual  
planning  
tool ... was  
developed to  
help students  
plan for and  
evaluate their  
learning”

### Methodology

Out of the review of literature relating to motivation and learning engagement a motivational scaffold in the form of a visual planning tool (see Figure 1) was developed to help students plan for and evaluate their learning. In this study 15 groups (four to five students in a group) of Year 9 students, participating in a PBL project over four day visits to the Melbourne CBD, used this tool. Before each visit, the groups were asked to collectively complete the planning tool by thinking about and

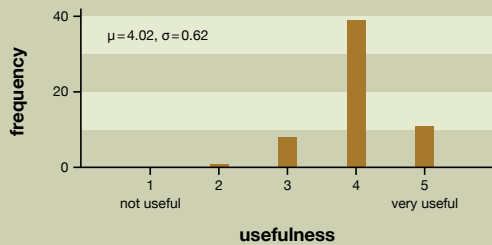
responding to each of the six statements in the tool when planning for the trip to the city. Each of these statements reflected one of the six components of the motivation scaffold.

After each trip to the city each group was given time to evaluate the planning tool using their planning sheet. These data were not recorded, but the activity was intended to be part of the reflection process for each of the trips to the city. The activity also provided the students with an opportunity to consider how they could improve the learning

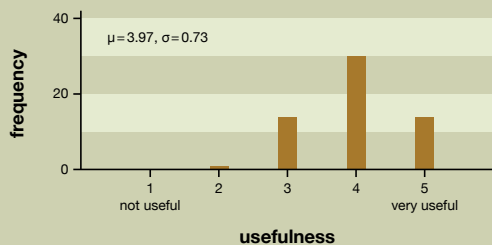
**Table 2: Mean ( $\mu$ ) and standard deviation ( $\sigma$ ) for the six scaffold components (n=60)**

scaffold component	$\mu$	$\sigma$
establish task value	4.02	0.62
promote mastery goals	3.97	0.73
promote belonging	3.80	0.95
promote emotion regulation	3.73	1.09
promote expectancy of success	3.75	0.85
promote autonomy	3.70	1.01

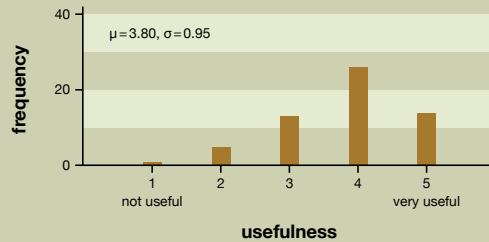
**Figure 2: Establish task value: What is the purpose of this trip? (N=60)**



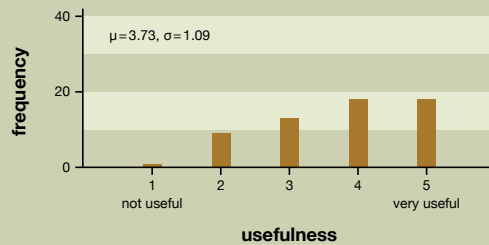
**Figure 3: Promote mastery goals: What do I/we want to achieve today? (N=60)**



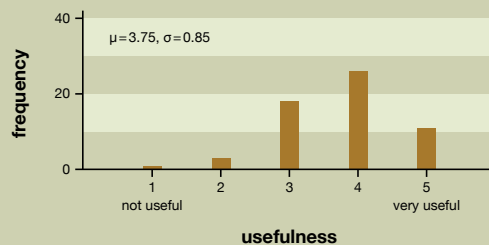
**Figure 4: Promote belonging: How will we ensure our group works well together (N=60)**



**Figure 5: Promote emotion regulation: If I see or feel there are issues within our group how will we settle them? (N=60)**



**Figure 6: Promote expectancy of success: How can we ensure we will succeed? (N=60)**



“Even though ... use of the scaffold was mandatory, do you feel ... it gave you more responsibility for your learning?”

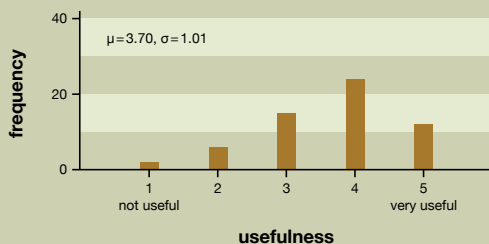
outcomes of their next city visit.

At the conclusion of the fourth visit to the city students were asked to complete an online questionnaire designed to elicit responses relating to the value of the visual planning tool in impacting their engagement levels with the PBL project. Included in this survey were questions relating to the six scaffold components, the results of which

are included in the graphs below. As well, students were asked to comment on the value of the scaffold for ownership of their personal learning, by answering the question: “Even though the use of the scaffold was mandatory, do you feel that it gave you more responsibility for your learning?”.

In total, 60 students completed the online survey, with the quantitative data from their

**Figure 7: Promote autonomy: What was/were I/we able to contribute to the trip/group/learning today? (N=60)**



responses reported in tabular and graphic form below. These data are based on a one to five point Likert Scale, with 1 referring to being *not useful* and 5 *very useful*. Qualitative data are reported in the form of respondent comments that are either supportive or not supportive of the use of the scaffold for their learning engagement.

### Results

The quantitative data, summarised in Table 2 and the subsequent charts below, indicate that students were positive about the value of the scaffold for improved engagement and participation in learning. From this data it would appear that students found the scaffold to be a very useful tool to improve their learning. This was particularly true for the items, 'establish task value' and 'promote mastery goals', with most of the cohort reporting that use of the scaffold was a helpful tool to help with planning and maintaining focus during the trips to the city.

Table 2. Mean ( $\mu$ ) and Standard Deviation ( $\sigma$ ) for the six scaffold components (n=60)

The distribution of the responses is of some interest. While the first two scaffold component responses are more tightly clustered, those for the remaining variables are more spread out indicating a greater variance of student opinion for the latter variables.

This variance of opinion is supported from the qualitative data collected. Student comments on the value of the scaffold to assist them with ownership of their learning varied from a simple 'yes' or 'no', to quite detailed answers.

Some students indicated that they were neutral to the value of the scaffold.

*Only to an extent. This was because it gave a bit of responsibility towards certain circumstances.*

and, *Only a bit to get organised, but that's all.*

Responses such as these seem to suggest that for some students at least, the process of completing the scaffold was simply another thing they had to do before they went on their city trip. About 10% of the 60 responses would fit into this category.

Thirty of the 60 respondents replied that the scaffold was of definite benefit to help them engage in their trips to the city. Sample responses of those who were positive about the use of the scaffold included:

*Yes, because we were the ones in control of our learning in this situation, so it was up to us to take the initiative and responsibility to stay focused on the goal and the scaffolds helped me keep on track with where I was going.*

and,

*Yes, it placed responsibility on us. It allowed us to see our aims and goals for each day.*

Just over a third of the students were of the view that the scaffold did not contribute to their engagement in learning. Some of the responses from this cohort included:

*No, because I think it would have been the same without it.*

and,

*No because something might be a surprise and not planned and it might be good for the assignment.*

While for some students this may be true, the wording of the question does leave room for those who felt they were already responsible for their learning to answer in the negative. Also, for some of the students, various components of the scaffold were of more use than other components. This is shown in the wider distribution of responses in latter sections of the tool. This suggests that teachers may have to provide more focused facilitation of the groups while they complete the scaffold and before they make the trips to the city in the 'promote emotion regulation' and 'promote autonomy' components.

While it is obvious from the data represented in the above charts that the majority of students found the instrument to be useful as a planning tool for trips outside of the classroom. This conclusion does need to be treated with some caution.

Acknowledgement is made here that the students who completed the survey were in one of the author's classes, which can impact the reliability of the data (Briggs, 1986; Zink, 2005). Obviously, further research is required to tease out more

“it would appear that students found the scaffold to be a very useful tool to improve their learning”

information about the usefulness of the scaffold and the factors that impact its implementation.

The teachers involved in the project were positive about the use of the scaffold. When asked at the conclusion of the project about the impact of the scaffold teachers were generally positive and commented:

*Personally, I think the scaffold did enable the students to focus more closely on their area of study (PBL). While this was not obvious in all the presentations, the overall presentations were of a higher standard than in previous years and I am of the view that the scaffold was one of, if not the main, contributing factors, for this.*

Also, some teachers thought the scaffold was of use to them as well as the students:

*Though there are still definitely some areas for improvement, I believe that students who used the scaffold performed significantly better than previous years and there were a number of reasons for that improvement. Firstly, I think that we have had a significantly better idea of what we were doing and why we were doing it. In other words the scaffolding was both necessary for teachers and students. Secondly, I think the engagement scaffold provided students with a discussion point and enabled them to focus on the general idea better.*

## Conclusion

It is evident from the literature reviewed in this study that for many adolescents, the arousal and maintenance of interest and motivation in school-based learning is necessary. This study supports the idea that, for a significant number of students, the use of a visual planning tool is effective in increasing levels of student engagement and student ownership of learning in a PBL context.

While this study uses a small sample from one school, and is based on trips outside of the classroom, we believe the results of this initial study have provided enough evidence to suggest that this method of improving motivation and engagement is worthy of consideration by teachers who are seeking ways to more effectively engage their students in learning. Further research needs to be carried out to determine the value of such an instrument for improving motivation and engagement in more traditional classroom settings.

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“*Firstly, I think that we have had a significantly better idea of what we were doing and why we were doing it ... the scaffolding was both necessary for teachers and students*”

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# An analysis of values literacy and internalisation in students commencing high school: A pilot study

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**Keywords:** values, literacy, internalisation and gender

### Abstract

**This mixed methods pilot study investigated the impact of values education on Year Seven students in three Christian K-12 schools in Australia. Participants were surveyed to determine their knowledge, understanding, and internalisation of the *Nine Core Values for Australian Schooling*. Further, random selections of students from two schools participated in three focus groups that discussed scenarios describing value-laden interactions. The study found that Year Seven students had a varied knowledge and understanding of the *Nine Core Values for Australian Schooling* that appeared independent of background variables. The study also found that the participants generally had sound levels of internalisation of values, but that the levels of internalisation among girls exceeded that among boys. Further, the study found no relationship between the knowledge of values and the internalisation of values.**

### Introduction

Values may be viewed as a body of internalised beliefs, expectations and empathies to which individuals have emotional attachments and that can potentially guide their behaviours and judgements (Carr, 2011; Halstead & Taylor, 2000). Values

education is one increasingly recognised component of education worldwide. All cultures subscribe to the importance of values, although core values of any given culture or society may vary somewhat from other cultures and be played out in ways that are unique to that culture (Rowan, 2007). Although the various approaches to values education generate vigorous discussion with some educators taking an explicit teaching approach (Lickona, 1996) and others opting for a more 'from the ground up strategy' (Fox, 2012), there is general agreement that schools are one place where values are transmitted and, far from being neutral, teachers facilitate this process (Passe, 1999). Therefore teachers are increasingly perceived to be moral guides (Bullnough, 2011; Carr, 2011; Claxton, 2008; Forster, 2012; Totterdell, 2010). In addition to this evidence that teachers play a role in the moral development of their students, there are external influences including family and other significant adults that impact this important area of a child's development (Arthur, 2011).

It is also widely recognised that there is a difference between knowledge and understanding of values (values literacy), and the internalisation of values (Hill, 2004; Lovat, Toomey, Clement & Crotty, 2009). This study aimed to gain an insight into the perceptions of children entering high school regarding their knowledge and understanding of values, and to ascertain the extent to which they had internalised those values in their own lives.

“schools are one place where values are transmitted and, far from being neutral, teachers facilitate this process”

## Contextual understanding

The Australian government has affirmed the importance of values by officially stating that effective values education “is an explicit goal of schooling” that should enable students to understand and apply values (Australian Government, 2005, p. 5). Even more recently, the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Review Authority (ACARA) reaffirmed the importance of values in the Australian curriculum by listing ‘Ethical Behaviour’, inclusive of values, as one of their seven general capabilities (ACARA, 2010).

The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools defines values education as “any explicit and/or implicit school-based activity which promotes student understanding and knowledge of values, and which develops the skills and dispositions of students so they can enact particular values as individuals and as members of the wider community” (Australian Government, 2005, p. 8).

Within this framework, the *Nine Values for Australian Schooling* is a list of significant values that the Australian government has mandated for all Australian schools. These values are: “Care and compassion; Doing your best; Fair go; Freedom; Honesty and trustworthiness; Integrity; Respect; Responsibility; Understanding, tolerance and inclusion” (Australian Government, 2005, p. 4). This set of values was chosen as the basis for this investigation solely due to its commonality of use in Australian schools. Christian schools within Australia generally adhere to these values and while there is some evidence to support a link between biblical literacy and behavioural outcomes (Jeynes, 2009), the purpose of this research was not to prove or disprove links, or establish a comparison with government schools, but to determine the state of play in three schools with a similar ethos.

## Current perspectives in values education

Values are the basis of a harmonious society. They determine how people relate to one another and how people behave in given situations. As such, they are more than idealistic beliefs; they are moral codes that inform and regulate collective and individual practice (Halstead & Taylor, 2000). Values may be defined as “the principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour, the standards by which particular actions are judged as good or desirable” (Halstead, & Taylor, 2000, p. 169). Values may also be described as “the priorities individuals and societies attach to certain beliefs, experiences, and objects, in deciding how they shall live and what they shall treasure” (Hill, 2004, p. 4). All these

definitions imply knowledge, understanding and internalisation.

The importance of transmitting values to the next generation has been recognised throughout history in many world cultures. For example, Huang (2001) posits that Confucius, an ancient Chinese philosopher, ethicist and teacher, saw his role to teach his students “how to be virtuous and authentic human beings” (p. 149). In western culture, classical education has included discourse on values, so although values education has historically been the responsibility of the family, the adage ‘It takes a village to raise a child’ recognises the wider responsibility that society, including schools, carries in values education (Clinton, 1996).

Schools have long participated in values transmission with Kohlberg and Hersh (1977) stating, “Whether we like it or not, school is a moral enterprise. Values issues abound in the context and process of teaching” (p.53). Narvaez and Lapsley (2008) agree, stating that values are imparted implicitly in everyday teaching and classroom interaction. It is widely recognised that values literacy without internalisation is of little benefit to individuals or society (Gleeson, 1991; Paul, 1988; Ryan, 2002). As Paul points out, “Moral principles mean something only when manifested in behaviour” (1998, p. 11).

The dilemma, then, for educators is that values education must take students on a journey beyond knowledge and understanding to internalisation of values. It is this difference between values literacy and internalisation that is the subject of conjecture and research in the area of values education. While there is agreement on the importance of internalising values, how this process occurs is still under discussion. Models for this process range from implicitly enculturating students through the school ethos, to explicitly including values education in the curriculum (Narvaez & Lapsley, 2008). A set of fifteen varied strategies for values education that have a strong research base have been identified by Berkowitz (2011). This list includes explicit strategies such as directly teaching values and peer interactive strategies, to more implicit ones including service to others, mentoring and modelling, high expectations and trust and trustworthiness. Lovat, Toomey, Clement, Crotty and Nielsen (2009) have identified three important components in their model of values education. The first is becoming ‘values literate’, or educating the ‘head’. This involves the development of a common metalanguage as a central point from which students can discuss values and build ‘values-related knowledge’ (p. 111). The second component involves educating the heart. This involves becoming socially aware and the

“values literacy without internalisation is of little benefit to individuals or society ... “Moral principles mean something only when manifested in behaviour”

development of affective or empathetic responses to life situations of self and others. Students may learn specific social skills, and the importance of body language and tone of voice that enable them to build more positive relationships with others (Lovat et al., 2009). It also involves 'prizing' those values that motivate changing personal behaviour (Paul, 1998). The final component relates to the concept that 'giving is receiving', or educating the 'hands'. Educating the 'hands' involves engaging students in "action based activities where students can apply their curriculum learning in direct service to others" (Lovat et al., 2009, p. 119). This process, also known as experiential learning essentially provides opportunities for students to enact their knowledge and understanding. Althorf and Berkowitz (2006) concur, highlighting the importance of facilitating opportunities for students "to take part in activities that can help put a 'real life' perspective on what is learned in class" (p. 505). In effect, the development of an emotional response to a set of values to the extent that behaviour alters to become consistent with those values, can be described as the internalisation of values. It amounts to a process of characterisation where the observed character of an individual is consistent with the values. Lovat et al. (2009) are not the only educators to posit a three pronged approach to teaching values. The notion of educating the 'head, heart and hands' is a recurring theme in values education literature (Gleeson, 1991; Paul, 1988; Ryan, 2002).

Not all the literature links these three components so strongly. Kang and Glassman (2010) posit that moral thought ('head') and moral actions ('hands'), although related, and sometimes even dependent on one another, are quite distinct and may at times function independently. They propose with others that additional factors may impact on the link between knowledge about values and personal behaviour. These factors may include: gender; temperament; personality; emotional state; family background; and social environment (Bronstein, Fox, Kamon & Knolls, 2007; Cohen & Cohen, 1996; Sokol, Hammond & Berkowitz, 2010).

Kohlberg's initial work involved developing stages of moral reasoning and behaviour, and was conducted with males only (Kohlberg, 1958). This work attracted criticism on both counts (Gilligan, 1982; Krebs & Denton, 2005); yet to date, the evidence for gender differences in values acquisition remains scant.

On the matter of how values are transmitted, the 'caught' or 'taught' debate continues with Arthur (2011), Carr (2011), French (2005), and Lovat (2010) all highlighting the importance of modelling values, both individually and in a whole school context.

Bargh, Chen and Burrows (1996) and Dijksterhuis, Chartrand and Aarts (2007) add to the discussion with their finding that individuals may be primed to act in a particular way without them being aware "of the influence or potential influence of the priming effect on their behaviour" (p. 239), lending credence to the idea that values are 'caught', while not discounting the importance of explicit teaching of values literacy.

The literature is clear on the importance of raising the values literacy of students. It offers suggestions of factors that may lead to internalisation of values and acknowledges the role of teachers in facilitating this process, pointing to their responsibility as moral guides. It is less clear about how long this process takes and what factors may impact on students' knowledge, understanding and internalisation of values at their point of entry into high school.

### Rationale for the study

Within society are expectations that individuals will adhere to commonly held values in their behaviour towards others and that schooling will play a role in developing those values. The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools states that "Education is as much about building character as it is about equipping students with specific skills" (Australian Government, 2005, p. 5). This study explores the perceptions of children in Australia entering high school in regards to their knowledge and understanding and internalisation of values. As such, it elicits information at the junction between primary (elementary) and secondary education that may inform approaches to values education.

### Research questions

The following questions guided the investigation.

Within a system of Christian schools:

- What relationships exist between measures of students' values literacy and students' values internalisation and measures of gender, school size and years in the school?
- What correlation exists between measures of students' values literacy and students' values internalisation?

In laying the framework for answering these questions, this paper defines values literacy as the ability to: understand the nature of values; identify specific values in scenarios; be able to discuss the nature of values; and to provide examples of specific values. On the other hand the paper uses the term *internalisation of values* to mean a moderation of mind such that the values begin to characterise both the individual's thought processes and behaviours.

*“an emotional response to a set of values to the extent that behaviour alters to become consistent with those values, can be described as the internalisation of values”*

## Method

This study investigated both values literacy and values internalisation in children entering high school in three Australian Christian schools representing one denomination. While the Australian government has conducted extensive research on values education in the government school system, the independent education sector has been less studied. A mixed method was employed that involved the collection of data through a questionnaire given to 104 Year Seven students across three schools sharing a similar ethos and demographic characteristics. This was followed up with three mixed gender focus groups of six to nine students in two schools, based on availability and time constraints. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from relevant authorities and participants and their carers. The use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches provided research perspectives from two different data sets (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The questionnaire was divided into two parts, the first of which employed multiple choice items to test knowledge and understanding of the *Nine Values for Australian Schooling*. The second part used a six point Likert scale to determine measures of the internalisation of values (Fraenkel & Warren, 2006). These items were directed toward the respondents' anticipation of their own behaviours in specific circumstances. Research over time has indicated that stability of beliefs, emotions and attitudes create a covert neural environment (often described as 'intention') that is conducive to consistency in behaviour (Armitage & Conner, 2010; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This paper posits that consistency in the anticipation of future behaviour implies that the structuring of this internal neuronal environment is at least underway. That is, consistency in the degree to which values-dependent behaviours, in prescribed circumstances are anticipated by research participants, becomes a measure of their internalisation of those particular values. This assumption is consistent with the theories of researchers such as Paul (1988) and Lovat, Toomey, Clement, Crotty and Nielsen (2009).

Focus groups were used in this study as a form of triangulation to validate the results of the questionnaire and to provide deeper insight into the participants' 'values literacy' through their interactions with one another. Each focus group discussed three scenarios, each of which linked to three specific values. Sessions were audio-taped and transcribed before coding. Coding for the definition of values was based on whether a definition was attempted by the group, the number of synonyms used for the specific value, and the ability to generate specific examples.

## Results

### Quantitative results

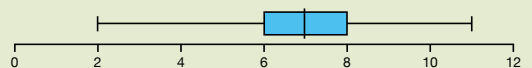
A two part questionnaire was administered to 104 Year Seven students from the three schools belonging to the same Christian school system. Of these, 49 were females, 37 were males and 18 did not specify their gender.

### Knowledge and Understanding

In the Knowledge and Understanding section of the questionnaire (values literacy), participants were given twelve scenarios and required to select the value that was being described in each scenario. Scenarios included statements such as "When the basketball team realise they are not playing as well as they could, they begin practising twice as hard as they had before" (doing your best), and "The Year Eight students pick up all of their rubbish and throw it in the bin after their class picnic at the beach" (responsibility). Identification of the values exhibited in these scenarios gave rise to a Knowledge and Understanding or 'values literacy' score for each participant. The participant 'values literacy' scores ranged from 2 to 11 with a median value of 7 and quartile values of 6 (25th percentile) and 8 (75th percentile) indicating a distribution approaching normality (see Figure 1).

Correlations between the 'values literacy' scores and background factors including 'school size' ( $r = -0.16$ ), 'gender' ( $r = +0.05$ ) and 'years in a Christian school' ( $r = +0.11$ ) suggested that the ability to identify values in the scenarios was unrelated to school size, gender and the length of time the participants had spent in the school.

**Figure 1:** Box plot of knowledge and understanding / 'values literacy' scores



### Values Internalisation

The second section of the questionnaire involved 15 items describing scenarios exemplifying values chosen from the *Nine Values for Australian Schooling*. Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they felt the item described their own response to each scenario. The items included statements such as "If I found a fifty dollar note at school and nobody was looking, I would keep it for myself" (honesty and trustworthiness), and "I try to do the right thing, even if no one is around"

“the ability to identify values ... was unrelated to school size, gender and the length of time ... spent in the school”

(integrity). Each item was set against a six-point Likert scale ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ through ‘mildly disagree’ and ‘agree’ to ‘strongly agree’ (see *Figure 2*).

Participants’ responses to the 15 items were subjected to exploratory factor analysis involving an eigenvalue-factor graph (a scree plot). This graph indicated a single strong factor with item-loadings ranging from 0.77 to 0.19 (see Table 1). Items 3, 10 and 14 produced negative loadings and were reverse-coded to produce positive loading of the same magnitude. The resulting changes to implied meanings of the three statements are shown in brackets within the table. A Cronbach test of reliability was carried out and indicated that if the items with a loading of less than 0.50 (items 15, 6, 3, 10 and 14) were removed from the scale its reliability would rise from 0.78 to 0.82. This procedure is standard practice in the data reduction and scale production processes employed in exploratory factor analysis (Bruce, 2004).

A Values Internalisation Scale was created by averaging the Likert scores across the remaining

ten items for each participant. A box plot (*Figure 2*) indicates that the resulting scores, ranged between 2.1 and 5.9, with a median score of 5.1 and quartile scores of 4.7 (25th percentile) and 5.5 (75th percentile). The distribution of this scale is obviously skewed (*Figure 2*) with more than 75% of the participants in general agreement with the internalisation statements.

A series of correlations were generated in order to determine possible relationships between Values Internalisation and other variables such as school size ( $r = +0.14$ ), years in a Christian school ( $r = +0.06$ ) and Knowledge and Understanding of values ( $r = +0.01$ ). The result suggests that internalisation of values is independent of the size of the school attended, the years spent in Christian education and the participants’ knowledge and understanding of values. However the correlation between the participants’ gender and their internalisation of values ( $r = +0.27$ ) was found to be significant at the 0.05 level.

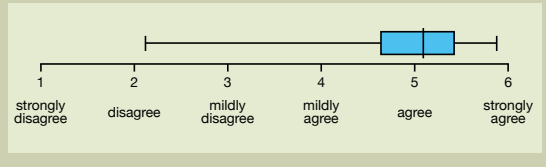
This relationship was further examined. The difference between the male mean score of 4.8 (SD

“A Values Internalisation Scale was created by averaging the Likert scores across ... ten items for each participant”

**Table 1: Single factor indicating internalisation of values**

item	value	Factor Item (coefficient $\alpha = 0.78$ )	loading
7	integrity	I treat my classmates and teachers the way that I would like to be treated	0.77
2	doing your best	I work hard on my school assignments	0.71
13	freedom	I invite people other than my best friends to join in games	0.69
4	integrity	I try to do the right things, even if no one is around	0.64
11	care and compassion	My health is important to me and I do my best to take care of it	0.63
1	understanding, T & I	I make friends with students who are different to me	0.59
12	respect	I am willing to let others share their beliefs and opinions, even if they are different to mine	0.56
9	care and compassion	If a classmate needs help with his schoolwork, I do my best to help	0.56
5	honesty and trust	I mean what I say when I give someone a compliment	0.53
8	fair go	I do not judge people before I get to know them	0.51
15	respect	If someone enters the classroom to speak to my teacher, I continue with my work or sit quietly and wait	0.44
6	freedom	If I see a younger child being bullied, I stand up for the child or notify an adult who will do so	0.37
3	responsibility	I (do not) blame others for my mistakes	0.34
10	honesty and trust	If I found a fifty dollar note at school and nobody was looking, I would (not) keep it for myself	0.29
14	doing your best	I do my best at something only if I (even if I don't) enjoy it	0.19

**Figure 2: Box plot of values internalisation scores set against the Likert scale**



= 0.74) and the female mean score of 5.2 (SD = 0.49) was greater than 50% of the higher standard deviation, suggesting that internalisation of values among girls was greater than that among boys. An analysis of variance between the two distributions of internalisation scores ( $F = 6.5$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) indicated that these were not chance results (see Table 2). Further, Cohen’s  $d$  coefficient (effect size) was found to be 0.63 suggesting that this difference in the internalisation scores between girls and boys was strong and meaningful.

Individual item analysis revealed that the greatest difference between male and female scoring occurred in item 10 (“If I found a fifty dollar note at school and nobody was looking, I would keep it for myself.”) This is one of the items removed from the scale formation process. This fact that the ‘Values Internalisation’ scale returned a difference between male and female scores even though the item creating the strongest difference was absent, strengthens the sense of validity of these results.

### Qualitative results

The qualitative data came from three student focus groups, the purpose of which was to elicit rich data concerning the respondents’ values literacy that would augment the questionnaire results. Age appropriate scenarios were presented and each group asked how they could best demonstrate three specific values for each scenario.

### Scenario One:

*You thought you studied really hard for your maths test, but it seems that you didn’t study hard enough. When you open the test paper, you don’t know how to answer a number of the questions. Eric, the smartest student in the class, is sitting beside you. If you copy a few of his answers, you will be able to pass the test. No one else is looking.*

This scenario tested students’ understanding of ‘integrity’, ‘responsibility’ and ‘doing their best’. The discussion indicated a high level of ‘values literacy’ in relation to all three values. Students articulated definitions, including “even though no-one will know, you’re still not going to do it” for integrity, and “taking ownership of your actions” for responsibility. Several synonyms were provided by the groups for integrity and responsibility. All groups gave a variety of practical examples for each value which were age appropriate to the scenario, and indicated a sound working knowledge of the values.

### Scenario Two:

*Your friend Sally asks you to keep secret that her mother has been diagnosed with cancer. She’s very upset and she doesn’t want other students to know yet. Later that week, your friend Michael tells you that he has heard a rumour about this and asks you directly if you know anything about it.*

This scenario tested understanding of ‘honesty and trustworthiness’, ‘respect’ and ‘compassion’. It produced the most animated discussion in all three focus groups. It was apparent from the discussion that the students understood not only what each value meant, but the complexity of relationships between values. This became evident when trustworthiness was given as a synonym for respect, and respect emerged as a synonym for care and compassion. This scenario caused

“The difference between the male mean score of 4.8 ... and the female mean score of 5.2 ... suggest[ed] that internalisation ... among girls was greater than that among boys”

**Table 2: Results for the calculation of the F ratio and its significance for the difference in mean values on the scores measuring ‘internalisation’ between males and females**

	sum of squares	df	mean square	F	significance
between groups	2.4	1	2.4	6.5	0.01
within groups	30.7	82	0.4		
total	33.1	83			

tension within all three focus groups as the students grappled with how to be honest to Michael while remaining trustworthy to Sally. As a result, Group 3 did not reach a consensus of opinion on how to demonstrate the values of honesty, trustworthiness and respect in this scenario and Group 2 failed to reach a consensus of opinion as to how care and compassion may be demonstrated.

### Scenario Three:

*Dan is a new student in your class. His family has recently migrated to Australia from a non-English speaking country, so he has difficulty speaking English. Dan wants to take part in your class drama, but several of your classmates feel frustrated with his poor English.*

This scenario tested understanding of ‘freedom’; ‘understanding, tolerance and inclusion’; and a ‘fair go’. An evolution of the definition of freedom from “being able to do what you want” to “being able to do certain things up to an extent” was observed in the discussion of one group. This demonstrated both an awareness and understanding of the implications of certain values and recognition of social interdependence. Although no focus groups offered synonyms for the values in this dilemma, ample practical examples were provided and all groups arrived at a consensus of opinion for all three values.

Overall, the data obtained from the focus groups revealed that Year Seven students in this investigation were able to define individual values that, for the most part, coincided with the definitions provided by the Australian Government in The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools. Furthermore, the students were able to apply the values to given scenarios by providing a variety of practical examples. The combination of shared perspectives and verbalisation while grappling with the nuances of difficult dilemmas revealed a sound level of ‘values literacy’. It also confirmed results from the questionnaire items that were designed to test knowledge and understanding. What it did not reveal, was whether the values discussed were internalised by the groups, or if this was merely a theoretical discussion which may play out differently in real life.

## Discussion

### Values literacy

Responses to the questionnaire revealed that 75% of Year Seven students understood the *Nine Values for Australian Schooling* to a degree that enabled them to identify specific values in applied situations

at least 50% of the time. Discussions within the focus groups revealed a sound collective working knowledge of values that permitted participants to propose practical examples of how to enact these values in life-situations, and allowed them to negotiate the dilemmas that arose. The implications are twofold. Firstly, it reinforces the Lovat team’s suggestion that values education should continue into the years of secondary education (Lovat et al., 2009). Secondly, the teaching strategy of group discussions (Berkowitz, 2011) has the potential to enrich the learning environment and reinforce individual perceptions of the importance of values.

It was not possible to determine how or where the students had gained their knowledge and understanding of the *Nine Values for Australian Schooling* from the data gathered. Measures of knowledge and understanding were not significantly linked to any of the background demographics examined on the questionnaire, including gender, school and years at the school. Transcripts from the focus groups indicated that, in general, both boys and girls had developed sufficient knowledge of values to be able to discuss general implications of values-related behaviour and to articulate their own reasons for the importance of values education. This was consistent with the correlation arising from the quantitative results that indicated no gender difference in scores of understanding and knowledge. While these findings do not discount the importance of schools in transmitting values, it does suggest that the development of values literacy is likely to be a complex process that involves other influences including sociocultural factors and personal characteristics. This finding aligns with The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools which states: “parents, caregivers and families are the primary source of values education for their children, although they expect support from their school” (Australian Government, 2005, p. 2).

### Values internalisation

The second research question dealt with the internalisation of values. Data raised by the questionnaires revealed that more than 75% of the participants averaged scores on the ‘values internalisation’ scale that lay on, or stronger than ‘mild agreement’ with the intent of the 10-item scale describing personal behaviours relating to particular values (see Figure 1 b). Correlations demonstrated that student internalisation was not significantly affected by such background factors as school size and the number of years in the school. The exception was gender, where boys were found to have significantly lower internalisation scores

“75% of Year Seven students understood the *Nine Values for Australian Schooling* to a degree that enabled them to identify specific values in applied situations ... 50% of the time”

than girls and further analysis showed that this difference was both statistically significant and meaningful. Whatever the reason for this disparity, these results suggest that it is important to continue values education in the teen years, especially for boys. Although the literature alluded to gender differences in moral behaviour (Cohen & Cohen, 1996; Gilligan, 1982), there is less evidence that supports gender differences in the rate of values internalisation. This is an area that deserves further study.

The finding that measures of ‘knowledge and understanding’ bore no relation to measures obtained by the ‘values internalisation’ scale (there was virtually no common variance) was unexpected. This finding implies that, for the participants of this study, comprehension of values (values literacy) was not a predictor of values internalisation. This result links back to the literature findings where a three-pronged approach is advocated (Gleeson, 1991; Hill, 1991; Lovat et al., 2009; Paul, 1988). While the findings of this pilot study do not negate the importance of classroom lessons focused upon learning about values, they suggest that, alone, these lessons are insufficient to fully promote the internalisation of values.

“the results ... suggest the absence of strong links between values literacy (knowledge and understanding) and the internalisation of values”

### The importance of significant others

The results of this pilot study suggest that factors outside the school environment also impact on both values literacy and internalisation. The findings of the Bargh team and others (Bargh, Chen & Burrows, 1996; Dijksterhuis, Chartrand & Aarts, 2007) that a significant component of human behaviour is non-consciously driven by the social milieu that surrounds the individual, may have a bearing on the process of internalisation of values. In this investigation, where school size and the number of years in school were proven to be non-contributors to values literacy or internalisation, it is likely that significant others in a child’s life such as family members, friends and teachers do play a role. They create the setting in which the child absorbs and responds to an array of implicit influences that could prime both thought and behaviour in relation to values, an idea supported by Narvaez and Lapsley (2008), Arthur (2011), and the Australian Government (2005). As far as the school environment is concerned, it is possible that the classroom ethos, the manner of the teacher and the relationship created between the teacher and the student could have a greater influence on the internalisation of values than explicit teaching of any set of values.

### The importance of varied approaches

The disconnect in this study between values literacy and values internalisation in students at their point of entry into high school supports the notion that values education should be an ongoing process throughout a child’s schooling. In this sense, values education should be an integrated process in which the ‘doing’ enriches the ‘knowing’. Using a range of implicit and explicit strategies emerging from the literature (Berkowitz, 2011), with an emphasis on experiential learning especially for boys, may prove beneficial in assisting the internalisation process. The use of various approaches is supported by the final report of the Values in Action Schools Project (Australian Government, 2010) which states, “Evidence gathered from all clusters indicates that this increased awareness of values and values education was developed through various forms of reflection, dialogue and communication, and personal story” (p. 40). It is through involvement in acting out values in practical ways that students may form the kind of emotional attachment that extends beyond knowledge of values and gives rise to commitment and characterisation.

### Conclusions and recommendations

This paper describes two findings that deserve further consideration. Firstly, the results suggest that there is a gender difference in the internalisation of values at the entry point to high school – girls have higher internalisation scores than boys. Secondly, the results also suggest the absence of strong links between values literacy (knowledge and understanding) and the internalisation of values. On the basis of these findings two recommendations have been drawn. Firstly, that intentional values education should extend into adolescence with enhanced benefit when school, society and home model and espouse positive values. Secondly, that the integration of a wide range of explicit and implicit strategies with an emphasis on experiential learning expressing the values taught in class could positively influence the internalisation of values, especially for boys. Despite the obvious limitations of this pilot study, it raises important questions and provides suggestions that should be subjected to further and more rigorous research.

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# One public school: Building community at breakfast

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**Keywords:** partnership schools, complementary learning, community development

## Abstract

**School-family and school-community partnerships have been shown to underpin school success. These relationships where parents and community organisations share responsibility for helping children succeed in school have been called ‘partnership schools’ and ‘complementary learning’.**

An example of a ‘partnership school’ was reported in a case study by Miller (2005; 2009) where support being provided by church-based community volunteers at Whitewood Public School<sup>1</sup> on the Central Coast of New South Wales was cited. That study investigated the use of empowerment evaluation (Fetterman, 2001) with a national school breakfast program in Australia called the Good Start Breakfast Club.

This paper reports from two perspectives, the contribution to ‘complementary learning’ of those volunteers from the Christ Centered Community Church<sup>2</sup> serving in the school breakfast program at Whitewood: first the reflections by a group of parents, grandparents and carers of children attending the school; and second, the reflections of the church pastor. Relationships significant to students’ lives and learning emerge in these narratives.

## Introduction

In the advertising material for its 2014 National Symposium, The Family, School and Community Partnerships Bureau claimed, “More than 40 years of research shows that when families, schools and the community partner effectively, children and young people’s life and learning outcomes improve.” The Harvard Family Research Project (2005) calls the concept of these deeply interconnected

support system processes ‘complementary learning’ suggesting two essential principles should guide our thinking about developing this support. First, “both school and nonschool contexts are critical to children’s learning and achievement” and second, “learning opportunities and contexts should complement one another” (pp. 2-3).

Jensen and Sonnermann (2014) in the Grattan Institute publication *Turning Around Schools: It Can be Done*, include engagement of parents and community as one of five common steps to school turnaround. Further, and Social Ventures Australia (SVA) (2013) have identified school-community partnerships as one of the organisation’s key evidence-based areas of focus in their publication *Insights and Actions: Great Teaching in Tough Schools*. In the context of a high-performing education system preparing students for the world of work, particularly in areas of disadvantage “We need to empower schools, non-profit organisations, businesses, philanthropists, and the community to develop partnerships which bring new resources and opportunities to students and families” (SVA, 2013, p. 3).

Similarly Weiss and Stephen (2009, p. 4) claim “an array of community learning and support services need to partner with families and schools in order to insure school success, especially for economically and otherwise disadvantaged children.” Furthermore, Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, and Davies (2007) speak of ‘partnership schools’ where parents and community organisations share responsibility for helping children succeed in school.

This paper expands discussion of *complementary learning*, an outcome emerging

“an array of community learning and support services need to partner with families and schools ... to insure school success, especially for economically and otherwise disadvantaged children”

<sup>1</sup> A pseudonym has been used for the school involved in this research

<sup>2</sup> A pseudonym has been used for the church involved in this research

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from a research project that investigated the use of empowerment evaluation (Fetterman, 2001) with a national school breakfast program in Australia, the Good Start Breakfast Club (GSBC). Two key aspects comprised that project. First, the empowerment evaluation approach was used as the framework to develop a 'practical' methodology desired by the program managers (Australian Red Cross) and a major sponsor (Sanitarium Health Food Company at the time of the study) to evaluate their program. Second, the impact that empowerment evaluation had on the delivery of the breakfast club program was reported. Program personnel identified key program activities for investigation; gathered baseline data about the strengths and weaknesses of the activities; suggested goals and strategies to monitor and improve the activities identified; and developed evaluation tools designed to provide evidence of success. Two 'stories', sourced from unique views, allow specific voices to confirm both the individual and shared mutual development that demonstrated the nature and processes of complementary learning within a broad community.

### A partnership story – the researcher

Toward the end of fieldwork an invitation was received to attend a morning tea function at Whitewood Public School, one of the schools involved in the investigation. At the end of the function, which was initiated to recognise the contribution community volunteers had made to the school during the past year, an impromptu conversation was convened. The Community Liaison Officer (CLO) who had been largely responsible for getting the breakfast club program operating, invited anyone willing to talk about the club to be involved in the conversation. Although the status of participants was not verified, the group that assembled appeared to be made up of parents/carers and grandparents of children who attend the breakfast club, and a number of interested others. However, at one point in the conversation someone revealed "... this is sort of the P&C [Parents and Citizens Association]... a subset of the P&C" (Miller, 2009, p. 173). The context and data gathering opportunity provided at this time and place enabled voices significant to the lives of children at Whitewood to be heard.

The conversation (Miller, 2009, pp. 178-185) provided opportunity for this group of parents and extended family members of children who participate in the program to talk about the contribution the breakfast club was making to their school. Eight people were involved in the conversation, a smaller number were significant contributors, with one member being particularly dominant. At no time, however, was there a sense that this order of things

had a negative effect on the comfort of any member of the group or their willingness to participate.

The first comments were general statements about the benefits to children and teachers of breakfast club attendance such as asserting formerly hungry children were now able to concentrate on school work, resulting in a flow-on benefit to teachers and other students.

### Dispelling perceptions of stigma

Stigma associated with the breakfast club occupied the discussion for quite some time. It was revealed that considerable time and effort was required, during the period of two years it took for the P&C to endorse the program, for some members of the wider community to be convinced the service wasn't tainted by stigma.

*If you go back two years ago, with the P&C, with getting it started...there was this thing that there was a stigma attached. That people would think you don't look after your child properly or that they might just sleep in so that by the time they get up there's no time to have breakfast. So it took a while to get that mind-set out of people, yes, and now it doesn't... .*  
(Community member (CM) 2, Lines 28–33)

Events surrounding the launch of the program were attributed with aspects helping to dispel any stigma associated with the service. Reflections on the launch by four members of the group show how the occasion helped to do this. The open invitation for parents and carers to attend the opening with their children, and to do so whenever they liked, was thought to have dispelled the taint of stigma.

*(CM 2) I think the way it was launched too that really... [helped reduce the stigma]*  
*(CM 4) Oh yea*  
*(CM 2) That made a difference as to how people felt. Like there was a big launch and it was...*  
*(CM 4) Oh yes*  
*(CM 3) There was a line up too*  
*(CM 2) And you got parents who probably normally wouldn't get to come and see or get involved in it were here. And they did and it was a big launch and (everyone) had fun...and had breakfast.*  
*CM 3) And we all had breakfast. We all had breakfast together...*  
(Community members 2-4, Lines 156-165)

### A social and socialising impact

The breakfast club as a social and socialising medium received considerable attention during the conversation. For members of the community the social aspect was reported to be a key component.

(CM 2) *It's like, it comes down to social...It's a big social activity basically. Breakfast club is like a social activity, everyone knows everything*  
(Community member 2, Lines 35–36)

(CM 1) *Breakfast was a time when parent would come with their kids...even if they just walk them in and don't have breakfast with them...*

(CM 2) *Same thing when you go to work or you see someone down at the shops, the kids yell out a mile from down the road, 'Hello Mrs...!'*

(CM 4) *And then you get to know their parents...*

(CM 2) *Yes, that's right*

(CM 1) *And then they say, 'Oh you're the (name) in the canteen...' or 'You're the (name) that does reading' or something...or 'You're (name)'s Mum!'*

(Community members 1, 2 & 4, Lines 166–176)

(CM 3) *...people intermingle. More people understand...People are willing to help out. More parents are involved...parents wouldn't necessarily have the chance to meet...*

(CM 1) *And you get the hello in the shopping centre as well...*

(Community members 1 & 3, Lines 405–410)

For the children who participate in the program it was reported as having a strong socialising effect.

*But it brings the shy ones out though. You know that the ones that are shy, and new kids that come, they're totally accepted. It brings them out, they're no longer shy, they're no longer afraid or anything...That's how we want them to be. That's how we're bringing them up to be...It's that social activity. Yes because when you're going out into the world you're going to come across people with intellectual...With physical...And you have to be prepared to accept them for who they are. So I think the breakfast club...giving them energy and making them...is a social thing. So that there isn't a great divide.*

(Community member 1, Lines 42–45; 61–65)

Using a personal example, this member of the group showed how her own daughter had transitioned from needing her mother to accompany her to breakfast club to having the confidence to attend on her own even to the point of asking her mother to stay away.

*...she's an only child in kindy...And when the breakfast club came about it was like, 'Well Mummy, you have to come with me to have breakfast'...and then it's like 'Mum give me a kiss at the gate' because it's time for me to go...'You don't need to come in now Mum. It's OK'*

(Community member 1, Lines 70–76)

Later in the conversation the social skills being demonstrated in the breakfast club, that complemented the socialising aspects of club attendance, were raised as significant benefits.

*...the procedures like of them washing their hands and... Especially the kindy children who are just learning. The other kids are so patient and they'll go like...I can do this. I'm a big person...they're really aware of all that... the manners...and (name) also has rapport with some of the children like she knows them...People like looking at the ends of the boxes you know the names on the edge of the cartons. She keeps them aside for them to come up and get them and sit down and you know she'll have a pen in her pocket and she'll just...So he can finish doing...And for me that little guy must just love coming in. And I know he's there frequently and he just loves to have the communication with that...*

(Community member 1, Lines 202–212)

## Service and community mindedness

Supporting the assertion made elsewhere, that the work done by breakfast club volunteers helps to develop a spirit of service and community mindedness in students, two members of the group commented about this apparent influence of the volunteers.

(CM 2) *They teach our kids a certain sense of community in helping out.*

(CM 3) *They do.*

(Community members 2 & 3, Lines 213, 214)

Justification for providing breakfast at school was touched on a number of times throughout the conversation. While some of the more sensational justifications associated with dysfunctional home situations were mentioned, lesser reasons were also considered ample justification for providing the service. This comment which first refers to the concerns people were expressing about providing breakfast at school, goes on to list other justifications three members of the group put forward such as sleeping in, being out of cereal and in need of payday to restock.

(CM 2) *A lot of people...it was the parents...'Well I don't care if so and so wants to go and spend all their money on like alcohol and they don't have food and things', but it wasn't [it's not] always the case...Sometimes they would just...They could just sleep in...*

(CM 1) *That's it. Or you just don't have time*

(CM 2) *Or you're [not] going to have breakfast cereal... nothing in the cupboard*

(CM 1) *Or payday!*

(CM 3) *They have breakfast...[at school]*

(Community members 1, 2 & 3, Lines 111–120)

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Providing opportunity for children to eat at home and again at the breakfast club, or to 'double up' as one member of the group described it, was mentioned somewhat positively as being associated with the social attractiveness of the site. This three-way interchange mentions the prevalence of the practice.

*(CM 1) My daughter was doubling up. She's having breakfast at home then coming in...*

*(CM 3) Yes. Mine was a bit the same way*

*(CM 2) Yes most kids are...*

*(CM 1) It's a social thing...*

*(Community members 1, 2 & 3, Lines 121–126)*

Community member 1 mentioned that her son, while not being attracted to the feeding potential of the site, attended nevertheless and engaged in what could be described as social eating.

*...even my boy. He doesn't really like going to breakfast club. But I find that when he goes in, a couple of boys go in, and they're all just sitting around...their chairs...stuff like that. He'll usually have like one triangle of toast...ate at home but he doesn't want me to sit with him...*

*(Community member 1, Lines 139–142).*

### Behavioural and academic impacts

A number of typical justifications for the program were made later in the conversation with reference being made to behavioural improvements having been evident in students and that academic improvements had followed.

*(CM 1) ...To have it available...I know that the school always commented...Like they were referring families to have a piece of toast before they went to school. So to me I know that the main [effect]...That the breakfast has...I know that behavioural-wise you can see the children at assembly time. They're all... much more calmer and yea...Because they [Teachers] come back and they tell you. And I know that's when you see... They all do whatever in the classroom. They're all able to concentrate.*

*(CM 2) Exactly.*

*(Community members 1 & 2, Lines 337–349)*

### Comments on volunteer contributions

With the morning tea having been convened to recognise the contribution of volunteers, it was understood that members involved in the conversation were contributing to the school in some way in a volunteer capacity. Having established that no breakfast club volunteers were in the group they were asked to talk about the volunteers who

operated the club on school mornings. The invitation resulted in statements of praise from all four main contributors for the work done by volunteers and particularly for the head volunteer.

*(CM 4) Great*

*(CM 2) Great*

*(CM 3) Fantastic*

*(CM 2) They're headed by a really, a beautiful lady, who like the children just look forward to...*

*(CM 1) Yes, I know my little person just loves...when we go into the chemist we see her again and they have a conversation about school and you can see like the... the adult and the child having a conversation about something...and she says don't forget I'll be in on Tuesday and you'll come in and see me won't you, and it's like 'Yea, I'll be there'.*

*(CM 4) I think it's marvelous. It's as if a parent was there... .*

*(Community members 1, 2, 3 & 4, Lines 183–201)*

Mention was made of the fact that the volunteers did not have children in the school, were not members of the local community, and came from 'outside'.

*(CM 1) Because a lot of those people, they don't have children at this school yet they've come in and they're teaching them a sense of community that anyone can help.*

*(CM 3) They're people that come in from outside. Like they're not people that we know from...They're people from outside.*

*(Community members 1 & 3, Lines 215, 235, 238)*

One volunteer was mentioned for enhancing self-esteem in children.

*(CM 4) Also (name) gives the kids a sense of being important. Everyone is important.*

*(CM 1) Individually.*

*(CM 2) Yes that's it, yes.*

*(Community members 1, 2 & 4, Lines 219–221).*

### Nutritional gains, habits changed by peers

Nutritional benefits derived from breakfast club attendance were also mentioned, some in the context of what the 'cool' kids in attendance might be eating. Mention was also made of breakfast club attendance influencing the eating habits and food choices of participating children.

*(CM 4) ...fruit and I think that is just unbelievable...a taste for fruit...Again you get kids that normally won't eat healthy things like at home and they go 'I'm not touching that bit of fruit'...*

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(CM 1) They do.

(CM 4) ...like the rules, they're teaching kids what you should have for breakfast. This is what you should eat. OK you might have something junky for lunch but at least you've got that...

(CM 2) Bowl of cereal

(CM 1) Bowl of cereal

(CM 2) The little guys are watching the older guys to see what they're eating...whoever could be at that time a cool person and they're just going to copy them...and try that...

(CM 1) And you go down to the shops, 'Oh Mum can we get some of this?' Because her brother had it at breakfast club.

(Community members 1, 2 & 4, Lines 262–276)

## Influence of school personnel

Toward the end of the discussion some time was spent discussing the role of the Community Liason Officer and especially the key role she had played getting the breakfast club program started.

(CM 2) ...no, it's more community oriented now than it was.

(CM 1) And (CLO) has had a big part to play

(CM 2) Big part to play

(CM 1) ...made us more accepting of people with different situations. Spend 5 minutes with (CLO) and she'll have you doing everything!

(CM 2) It goes outside of school though. It doesn't just finish at 3 o'clock when the kids go home. Her commitment and her caring goes outside. If you need her or you want to talk to her, she's available...

(CM 1) Yes, a phone call.

(CM 2) A phone call away. And she knows...

(CM 1) If she hasn't heard from you she's worried and she'll ring you...

(CM 3) She knows all our phone numbers.

(CM 1) If she needs something, she knows we're all there...She got the breakfast club up and running. She saw a need and it affected every single one of us whether it be...socially or whatever, or if she...that child hadn't...and it would benefit others. She thought it was a need that was there and there were parents generally that just needed food...Every P & C meeting. Every couple of P & C meetings there was those brochures. We'd be going over...are we going?

(CM 2) Then here comes (CLO) and she'd have something on the agenda – breakfast club!

(CM 1) OK we get it (CLO)...obviously just to keep her quiet for a little while. I thought it would last longer, but it is now something else!

(CM 2) Even if it was to keep her quiet, it has succeeded. If the P & C just said yes, let's keep (CLO) quiet as one of their reasons...If we just gave in for that, that's great because the benefits the kids have

received...I don't know, there's not much...you could say [against] it because if they need it for nutritional value or if it's the only meal they might have that day... (Community members 1, 2 & 3, Lines 440-477)

## In summary learning was complementary

During the conversation, as a result of having a Good Start Breakfast Club (GSBC) at the school, three areas of focus emerged being: the issue of stigma, benefits to participating children, and benefits to the school and wider community. The *matter of stigma* had been raised elsewhere by a workshop group involved in the research project, which had resulted in a survey being prepared and piloted in a number of schools including Whitewood. This community group's reflections on the matter of stigma added to the responses of teachers at their school to questions about stigma on the survey.

The type of *benefits to participating children* mentioned by the group deriving from breakfast club attendance contributed to the investigation of key program activities identified in the research project by GSBC program managers and regional coordinators. The group said the breakfast club provided opportunity for younger and older children to interact in ways that appear unique to that environment; children interact with members of the community working as volunteers in the club and with parents who attend, which spilled over into wider social connections; behavioural and educational benefits had been witnessed and reported by teachers; and further, students observing the community service ethic in volunteers were in turn becoming more service oriented.

The *benefits to school and community* mentioned by the group contributed to other key activities that had been investigated in the research project. With respect to community effects, members of the group said the breakfast club had united the school's Parents & Citizens Association in a common cause; that it provides a meeting place for parents and provides a point of reference for interaction between members of the community away from the school.

Through engagement in an impromptu conversation this 'subset of the P&C' clearly identified outcomes that are contributing to 'complementary learning' at Whitewood Public School and in its wider community.

The next section gives voice to the pastor of the church that undertook to support the program to provide breakfast for children attending Whitewood Public School.

## A partnership story - the pastor

When Sanitarium initially approached the Christ Centred Community Church (CCCC) with the idea

“the breakfast club ... united the school's P & C Association in a common cause; provide[d] a meeting place for parents and ... a point of reference for interaction ... away from the school”

of partnering with their company and the Australian Red Cross to run a GSBC at Whitewood Public School, the opportunity was met with immediate interest by the church. Whitewood was literally just down the road from the church and was seen by the church as part of its community. However, it was felt that further examination of the situation was needed in order to make sure involvement with the school would really benefit the school and the greater Wyong community.

As a result of consultation with both Sanitarium and the school, it was understood by the church that if the program was a success, it could well result in improved behavioural and learning ability for the students plus improved community awareness and involvement by parents, teachers and the wider community. There was also the possibility of the young people at the school having increased feelings of both individual and community worth along with a desire to be more involved in community activities.

It was realised very early in the initial consultation that any perception of stigma could kill the success of the ministry. Whitewood was a school that had significant social needs amongst its students and parents. However, often a child and parent would prefer to go hungry rather than admit that they were disadvantaged in any way. What child wants fellow students or teachers to know that they might be poor or that the parents didn't have time to make breakfast?

There were two things that CCCC brought with them to the development of the GSBC that we believe led to the success of the club. First, they had been developing a philosophy of ministry to guide how the church would be involved in community activities. This philosophy asserts that as far as possible we would only work *with* the community and not *for* the community. As church members we would partner with the community, parents, teachers and students working alongside them rather than coming in and 'doing good' by ourselves. The church believes it is this philosophy that was the major reason for the overall success of the GSBC and this philosophy of ministry now permeates every ministry the church is involved in.

The launch of the GSBC was, as already pointed out key to its on-going success. Local dignitaries such as the mayor, major sponsor Sanitarium, Red Cross personnel, parents, teachers and students were involved in this party-like event. The ongoing running of the club however, needed to continue in the same way it was launched: with open inclusiveness. Parents and teachers continued to come for breakfast, but it was the fact that parents, teachers, students and

church members were working together in teams to see that all the children, whether hungry or not, wanted to be there, that made the club a success and sustainable. The church came to be seen as an essential part of the school community and not just as a group of intrusive temporary interventionist 'do gooders'. The underlying philosophical assumption was that there is a big difference between doing things *for* the community and doing things *with* the community. Even with the best of intentions, when you just do things for the community you can be seen as aloof, separate and elitist. You can be seen as above, or thinking you are above the person you are helping. At worst, when you just do things for a community, you can contribute to the downward spiral of a community's existence. For example, a person who receives \$200 and spends \$180 on drugs may use the remaining \$20 on food just to exist. Along comes a church or charity and gives the person food. Now the person can spend \$200 on drugs because the food is provided. By trying to do good for a community you can actually be aiding them on their downward spiral.

The second important element that CCCC brought with them to the Whitewood breakfast club that helped in its success, was in its leadership and team of assistants. The lady leading the ministry was a grandmother who had a genuine love for young people and that showed in every part of the breakfast club. She had what we used to call a 'hard soft heart'. By this we mean she loved everybody, regardless of social standing, she had a soft heart. However, she was also street smart. She modeled to the team, those from the church and those from the community who joined the initial team, how to involve the children in all aspects of the breakfast club. Besides being an organised person, she made all those who came to the breakfast club feel that they were part of her family. When she finally, for health reasons stepped down from leadership, the person taking over was a younger mother who had the same characteristics as the first leader.

In the parent interviews, mention was made of the impact individuals from the church had in the lives of the children and parents outside of school hours. One person mentioned actually chose a part-time job in the local pharmacy so she could be part of the community. Children and parents were constantly going to the pharmacy to talk to this person who they saw as part of their family. Team members were invited into the homes of the families from the school. School families were invited into the homes of the people from the church. The leaders and team were very conscious of the fact that it was a privilege to be involved

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as far as possible we would only work **with** the community and not **for** the community”



in the lives of others and it was never a case of us or them, it was always we are together in this community.

In Wyong, there are generations of families that have never seen anyone within their family employed. The grandparents did not work, the parents haven't worked and the children grow up not knowing what employment is and with little incentive to find employment. With government assistance, and charities, they can live their whole lives not feeling the need to find employment and contributing to society.

When CCCC teamed up with the school community and became one united community, changes already noted were observed. The breakfast club was not just something for them, put on by others doing good for them. The club was seen as theirs and students saw it was their responsibility to be part of the team running the club.

It would be interesting to do a long term study to see if the children who learnt to serve with and for others followed through with this in adult life. Would such programs like the GSBC help children who have never seen a relative in employment decide they want to work or serve? What we do know is that at CCCC where the philosophy of serving and working *with* others, not just *for* them has been instilled in children from pre-school age, there is a marked level of involvement in different levels of ministries at the church in their later teen years and adult lives. The children believe that serving is normal. Further, for the last three consecutive years, students from CCCC have been the school captains in their respective high schools. Could it be that the philosophy of serving and working with people, not just for them, has cumulative benefits?

CCCC became the first Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia to have a public school approach them and ask us to provide them with a school chaplain. When Whitewood personnel were discussing whether they wanted a chaplain or not, they decided if the chaplain came from CCCC they wanted one, but not from any other church. Why, because this church did things with them and not just for them.

For the church, working alongside students, parents and teachers with the breakfast club has been an incredible honour and privilege. Life term friendships have been made and enjoyed. Sure there have been people who have come to the church as a result of the breakfast club and the relationships formed there, and we are happy about that, but it is the understanding that when Whitewood decided on a chaplain that their first thought was the church, that is heart-warming.

Why, because we are seen as a part of their lives as they are a part of ours.

## A conclusion

*This statement by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) about narrative inquiry resonates with the authors,*

*As researchers, we come to each new inquiry field living our stories. Our participants also enter the inquiry field in the midst of living their stories. Their lives do not begin the day we arrive nor do they end as we leave. Their lives continue. Furthermore, the places in which ... [participants] live and work, their classrooms, their schools, and their communities are also in the midst when we researchers arrive. Their institutions and their communities, their landscapes in the broadest sense, are also in the midst of stories.*  
(pp. 63-64)

Commenting on the program a teacher at Whitewood said, "The breakfast club has been a bonus to our school. The general overall atmosphere is one of caring and sharing not just of each other but with the wider community" (Miller, 2009, p. 375). The pastor and the researcher count it a blessing and a privilege to have been invited into the midst of the Whitewood Public School story, an encounter of mutual community 'complementary learning'. **TEACH**

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“Would such programs like the GSBC help children who have never seen a relative in employment decide they want to work or serve?”

# Clinical missionaries: Avondale students model the value of nursing

**Bianca Reynaud**

Master of Teaching Student, Faculty of Education, Avondale College of Higher Education, Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia

**A fifth annual visit by Avondale nurses to a hospital on Malaita in the Solomon Islands demonstrates to local nursing students the value of the profession.**

A partnership between Atoifi Adventist Hospital and Avondale College of Higher Education saw nine final-year students from the Faculty of Nursing and Health return with lecturer Kerry Miller to the island, July 12-25, 2014.

The purpose of the trip: to serve as a clinical learning experience in a developing country and as an introduction to medical-focused mission.

The students served on all wards with those from the hospital's School of Nursing. They assisted with the care of a boy with burns to more than 80 per cent of his body, diagnosed and treated outpatients with machete injuries, malaria and ulcerated wounds from insect or snake bites and observed the birth of babies.

"We all have great memories we'll never forget," says Brittany Charters. "And most importantly, great friendships." Several of these formed around classmate Melissa Byrne's guitar. "I asked the children if they'd like to sing and they all screamed, 'Yes,' so I started playing 'Jesus Loves Me.' All the children came over and started singing. They were so beautiful."

Kerry describes the willingness of the students to build relationships with the staff, students and children on the hospital campus as "heartening." It may even be career defining.

"Many students in the Solomons choose nursing as one of the limited post-secondary avenues for education and may not see nursing as their primary occupational goal," she says. "By showing that the Avondale students have chosen nursing despite the plethora of alternatives available to them, the Atoifi students can gain a greater sense of the value of this kind of professional service. **TEACH**

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Avondale students react to Atoifi hospitality on a Vanuatu visit.

# Lifestyle the best medicine: Annual appeal supporting research into health and wellbeing

### Brenton Stacey

Public relations officer, Avondale College of Higher Education, Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia

**One of the world's leading health and exercise scientists describes the power of "low tech" for remedying problems created by "high tech" as one of the most exciting medical discoveries of the past few decades.**

"Scientific evidence is showing that returning to a simple lifestyle is often the best way to manage and treat chronic disease," says Dr Darren Morton, a senior lecturer at Avondale College of Higher Education whose doctorate is in human physiology. "It seems lifestyle is the best medicine."

Avondale is making a contribution through its new Lifestyle Research Centre (LRC) implementing its motto "optimising health outcomes."

The centre brings together academics from Avondale and other entities. Morton, a lead researcher, is described by The Wall Street Journal as the world's "most-published authority" on the stitch. The director Dr Brett Mitchell, an associate professor of nursing states, "Thomas Edison once said the doctor of the future will give no medicine but interest his patients in the cause and prevention of disease. This is exactly what the centre's about and why its work is so important."

Current work includes partnering with Sanitarium Health and Wellbeing to relaunch and study the Complete Health Improvement Programs (CHIP). Dr Paul Rankin researched this lifestyle intervention for his PhD completed through Avondale. He found the delivery of CHIP by volunteer facilitators in their communities significantly improves the health of participants.

The research by Rankin and others in the Lifestyle Research Centre is establishing credibility in the medical community. Published papers have appeared in academic journals such as the British Medical Journal Open, the New Zealand Medical Journal and the Medical Journal of Australia.

Research presented in the latter measured an increase in hospital-identified *Clostridium difficile* infections. The message: we need to standardise

cleaning practices and products.

Mitchell, a co-author of the paper, is a chief investigator on a National Health and Medical Research Council grant implementing and evaluating the effectiveness and cost of targeted environmental cleaning practices in 20 Australian hospitals. "I've gone into research to make a difference," he says. "That's why the work of the Lifestyle Research Centre is important—our projects are sustainable, cost effective and improve lives."

Giving to the Avondale Annual Appeal this year will support two of the centre's projects - Lifestyle Intervention and Infection Prevention.

The centre is contributing by studying the effectiveness of a modified CHIP for illiterate communities in the South Pacific and by offering postgraduate degrees in lifestyle medicine. Other areas of interest include avoidable blindness, education programs about non-communicable diseases, medical humanities, mental health and wellbeing and nutrition.

“*Scientific evidence is showing that returning to a simple lifestyle is often the best way to manage and treat chronic disease*”



If the evidence is showing lifestyle is the best medicine, then the Adventist health message "is arguably more relevant today than when it was conceived," says Morton. "And that's exciting because we have the potential to help others become healthier and happier." **TEACH**

## Trash, treasure and trivia

**Wilf Rieger**

Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Avondale College of Higher Education,  
Cooranbong, NSW

### A question to ponder

Are teachers hoarders? (I must admit to being a culprit for too many years.) Has the study in your home been taken over by subject syllabi, curriculum materials, books, archive boxes filled with activity sheets, science experiments, project materials, videos, and ‘who knows what’, all of which, like some amorphous mass, over time, somehow made its way into the spare room and then out into the garage — competing for space with gym gear, bikes, table-tennis table, canoes, and empty flower boxes, with vehicles needing to be parked outside on the driveway? Worsening the study’s space shortage is your current take-home workload: The pile of essays that have to be marked the unwieldy collection of research tasks that are spread over the study floor and demand assessment.

You have my sympathy. Al-Jahiz, an Arab scholar from Basra is reported to have been killed by his own library when it fell on top of him. Imagine it: One’s own resources becoming an excellent teacher’s undoing!

Perhaps by nature of their pursuit, teachers — like hamsters — tend to acquire and keep all sorts of things, not for a ‘rainy day’, but to enrich the learning of their current and future students.

Virtually none of this applies to 21st Century, digitally empowered teachers. Happily, they are not burdened by three-dimensional archaic educational ‘luggage’; their resources consist merely of the latest lap-top computer and an array of mini-peripherals. It’s literally ‘pie in the sky’ stuff, true! All storage problems are now solved. All resources can be parked in ‘The Cloud’. The sky is no longer the limit, but part of the solution.

But, for ‘seasoned troopers like myself’, there is the question of what to do with the accumulations of the past that have become part of one’s life. Wisdom literature says: “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven” (Eccl. 3:1, KJV). So, recently I decided to make a start on some ‘house cleaning’ by deleting emails, files and folders on my computer, and then progressing to drastically thinning out, or entirely removing rows of Manilla folders in filing cabinet drawers. My efforts ended with removing material from two steel cupboards; the terminus being two

bins — filled — to be collected by the recycling truck.

Initially I dreaded the task, but instead of a chore, it became a serendipitous journey down memory lane, as I sifted trash from treasure. My attention was ‘captured’ by interesting items and material. These brought to mind experiences that had left indelible impressions on me, and caused me to reflect on the ‘richness’ and diversity of teachers’ lives.

Here are several ‘treasures’ that I would like to share with readers. I would encourage readers to construct narratives of notable experiences or events from their own teaching journey. This can bring significance and meaning to our lives and teaching ministry.

### Two different letters

I re-read David’s letter from Bougainville. It conveyed the good news that the boxes of library books and the donation of money had arrived safely. David and his wife Denise, both indigenous to Bougainville, had returned to their home island from Pacific Adventist College (where I had initially worked with them), after the Reconciliation Process had been initiated in 2000 with the PNG Central Government in Port Moresby.

It shared how with local teachers, helped by both villagers and the Home and School Association, they had begun to rebuild the Rumba School near the ruined provincial capital of Arawa.

The rebuilding was tough going, as noted on a visit earlier that year. The results of the civil war were evident everywhere: utter devastation, and almost total destruction of the island’s socio-economic and physical infrastructure. But the local church community did not want another generation of unschooled children. They were people of faith and hope. They trusted in God and did everything possible to make the future brighter.

The second letter had been written from an Australian prison. V.O., the inmate had drawn a crest at the top of the page that boldly announced: “In God We Trust.” He wrote that, after serving more than ten years of a ‘life’ sentence, his application for parole had been refused. His discouragement was understandable. As part of a

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prison ministry team, I came to know V.O. and had taken him fishing; including a meal at our place, as part of 'day leave'. Why had he been turned down? I wondered.

The parole officer later enlightened me regarding the situation. Years earlier, V.O.'s murder victim had been a teenage girl. The discovery of her body (with cigarette burns on the abdomen) in a shallow grave had led to V.O.'s conviction. But there was now more. The prisoner had been on day leave recently with another family. Subsequently, the authorities intercepted correspondence to the family's young daughter. Its content raised 'red flags' for psychologists. It seemed to be a case of *déjà vu*. Was the hand-drawn crest a forlorn pious hope, or a useful symbol for projecting a false persona, evidence of apparent impending recidivism?

The two letters were windows on the human condition: All human beings, without exception, are flawed, broken and daily in need of God's grace. Ours is the choice: To accept grace—changing and growing — or to reject it.

### Mistaking one thing for another

This vignette 'grew' from a bundle of material about a government inquiry. Section 5. (i) sought a response in terms of "the philosophy underpinning the teacher *training* [italics supplied] courses (including the teaching methods used, course structure ...)."

My comments/observations, in retrospect, were somewhat terse. I felt the use of particular language reflected a prevailing mindset that could have far-reaching consequences for the preparation of teachers.

The distinction between education and training has long been recognised by analytical philosophers.<sup>1</sup> For example, we recognise that persons are not educated to operate a machine, throw a discus, or ride a motorcycle. The wider the range of learning activities, the less specialised they are, the more appropriate it becomes to speak of education. On the other hand, the narrower and more circumscribed they become, the more likely that the term training is applicable. Language is significant in shaping teaching practice, how teachers are viewed by other professions and the public. This in turn is instrumental in shaping teacher identity.

There is a danger that teacher preparation is perceived as a training exercise to provide technically skilled human resources; something like army recruits undergo. As in the case of practitioner-based research, where inquiry may be in the technical, interpretive or critical mode, some

teacher preparation may be limited to the technical mode. It should not be confined to that mode alone, as the use of some terminology would have us believe.

### "There is nothing new under the sun."

(Eccl. 1:9, NIV)

Ideas from Laurie Beth Jones' book, *The Path*<sup>2</sup> are central to the vignette that follows.

Long before mission statements became fashionable, Jesus declared His, when entering human history: "the Son of Man came to seek and save what was lost" (Luke 19:10, NIV). It perfectly meets the three criteria of excellence set out by Jones. Her criteria for a good mission statement, paraphrased, are:

Brevity - no longer than a single sentence.

Clarity - easily understood by a twelve year old.

Memorable - it can be recalled instantaneously.<sup>3</sup>

The formula that Jones advocates in creating a mission statement is a gem. I had taken a copy and filed it. There were three simple parts to it: The actions (verbs) that would energise the individual or organisation; their core value/s; and the cause or group that is the focus of the actions.

It's lamentable that some mission statements are uninspiring and forgettable, hybrids of glossy information and a hotchpotch of ethics. Good mission statements of Christian schools clearly and succinctly articulate their true *raison d'être*.

Interestingly, Jones also plainly differentiates a vision statement from a mission statement. Mission is the recorded reason/purpose for an organisation to exist, vision "is ... what you will have done ... It is your ideal."<sup>4</sup> The apostle John shares with us Jesus' truly amazing vision statement: "that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10 ESV).

Thank you Lord for your magnanimous mission and vision, simultaneously accomplished and yet to be fully realised.

### Epilogue

What trash, treasure or trivia might you come across, should you embark on a 'house cleaning' venture of your resources? Can we learn from the past to shape the future? More and more this is likely to require thinking outside the box, and for Christian teachers: To know Jesus better, on a daily basis.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Such as P.H. Hirst and R.S. Peters, among others.

<sup>2</sup> Jones, L.B. *The path* (1996). New York: Hyperion.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p.63

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p.71

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Ours is the  
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reject it.”

# Christian schools and chocolate cakes. An ‘excursion through my heart-space.’<sup>1</sup>

**Emma King**

Education student, Avondale College of Higher Education, Cooranbong, NSW

### Why do we teach?

Why do you teach, Christian teacher? Have you ever stopped to ponder why? Maybe you were inspired by a really good teacher. Maybe you really love kids and enjoy hanging out with them. Maybe you like the pay and all those holidays! (Wait, what holidays?) Maybe you had a terrible teacher in school and want to make it better for the next generation of students.

These are some of the many reasons I’ve heard as to why people get into teaching. Trust me, I’ve thought all of these myself! However, I seem to think we don’t really become teachers for any of these reasons. I believe there is a far greater and grander reason why we teach. I think, however, many of us have missed it or at least misplaced it. We’ve lost the true meaning of why we Christian teachers teach in the first place. We are being seduced by how education is ‘done’ elsewhere.

I didn’t always know that (after the fall of the Roman Empire) the first schools were church run. Christianity and education have been closely associated for a long time. But now, when I peek inside Christian schools I see stressed teachers, piles of paperwork, and a plethora of programming. In this blog I want to rediscover the reasons why we teach. I suspect they are nothing to do with ourselves, but everything to do with our Creator GOD!

### My “Ah Ha” moment

Today I learnt something that no textbook could ever teach me. I’ve been doing a school placement and one of my lecturers was scheduled to visit me. As I prepared for the visit, questions about how it would result filled my head like a swarm of bees buzzing around a beehive. I was so busy planning to impress that I forgot my God-predestined purpose in being there.

That afternoon, the children in my class had

written stories about their families. One student bullied another student about their story and right then the Holy Spirit urged me to bring these precious children back to the everlasting promises of their Heavenly Father. I pointed out the beautiful promise of Jeremiah 29:11 and assured them everyone’s story was God-ordained and wonderful, because God had created it. The child responsible for the bullying then asked, “So my dog dying was part of God’s good plan?” Whoa! My heart was beating and I had a gospel moment lurking right in front of me. I assured the children of God’s sovereignty when we face difficulties.

Then other children spoke about deaths in their families. I struggled with what I was hearing. Like water from a tap, these kids were pouring out their hearts to me. I realised that they were dealing with real heart-wrenching issues and they were only in Year One! I also recognised the remedy. It was for them understanding and accepting God’s love and salvation and being resurrected from spiritual death to life.

### I discover the real purpose of teaching

This is the lesson I learned that day: Teaching, foremost, isn’t about being impressive. It’s not about getting a good grade or being judged a “great teacher” by The National Standards for Teachers. It’s neither about making children “good and competent” citizens for society and the workforce, nor is it about the pay check. It’s not even about fulfilling our passion of working with children. It’s not actually about us. It’s about helping *every child* realise they are created in the image of God and understanding that they have a God-given purpose. It’s about helping them discover their God-given abilities and talents. Most importantly, it’s about helping them to discover God’s eternal and

<sup>1</sup> This is an adaptation of a free choice Blog that was written as part of an English unit in the Bachelor of Education (Primary) program.

“  
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beautiful salvation. It's about helping them come face to face with the Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ, made possible when they can see Him as soon as they look directly at you. It's about serving and honouring God.

We tend to joke as teachers that we are nurses, doctors, counsellors, cooks, mothers, and fathers. Realistically we are servants. God's servants. The children in our classrooms need us to tell them that there is something grander than themselves. I was ever so wrong that day on my school placement when I tried to impress. I lost my focus on Jesus, but God through his mercy helped me refocus, so the twenty something little children in front of me could experience the grace and love of Jesus in the midst of their tragedies.

### Exploring a higher purpose for education

God has placed each of our students in front of us. He wants us to teach them about Him. Do they need to be taught how to count? Absolutely. Do they need to be taught how to read? Absolutely. Do they need to learn about our world and how it functions? Again, absolutely. However, they also need to be taught about the One who ordered the numbers. They need to be taught about the One who created words and about the One that brought everything in our world into existence. Just by speaking, He created!

Our students need to learn because God inspired the writer of Proverbs 1:7 to proclaim, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." These children need to trust us but at the end of the day we are only human, not God. I'm not trying to diminish the importance of what we are doing because we endeavour to do worthwhile and sometimes even accomplish wonderful things that are making a difference. However, we cannot save our students from everything. Only God can save a child from their sin and perform a miracle. God is the one working through us doing all the work. So when our students look at us we must have them thinking that we can't do it all but that's OK, because we, with them, are trusting in the God of the Universe. God is the one who is really behind all the wonder.

### The Christian classroom

What does the Christian classroom look like? I guess most of us think of displayed Christian posters with nice Christian sentiments and truths. While these are helpful and admirable things we should have in our classrooms for our students, the Christian classroom is more than this. Ultimately it is our mission field. Also, we cannot just save

the 'God stuff' for our Bible classes. In Matthew 10:33 Jesus says, "But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven." When we save God for the set 'Bible times' in our classrooms, it is as if we are denying that He exists when we are teaching any of the Key Learning Areas. God should be at the centre of our classrooms and at the centre of each subject. Because He created everything, He deserves first place in our life.

Once when I was on placement at a Christian school, I was teaching my students about the different properties of materials in a science lesson. We discussed why God made different materials with different properties. One student intelligently spoke about how God had made different materials with different properties because He made them for different purposes. He said "It's a good thing God made cornflakes brittle and not stretchy so we can eat them!"

### Worldviews!

Our lecturers consistently challenge us on the topic of worldviews, what they are, and how our worldview impacts everything we do! My worldview is impacting on the words you are reading right now! So, how are you bringing Christ into your classroom? Is all our lesson material supported by a Christian worldview, or does it ignore a Christian worldview or promote another?

One of our lecturers taught us that every storybook has a worldview and how to identify them. Are our storybooks teaching a Christian worldview or neutralising it? Are we giving our students the wrong ideas or the right ones? It actually frightens me how important the Christian teacher's role is. I thought for the first two years of my course that all I had to do was teach students how to write, spell, and count and all that other educational 'stuff'.

Then we discussed how some Christian schools might be like a chocolate cake; immaculately decorated on top but when you cut into the middle, it is bland. These schools have the Christian name attached, but do they integrate the Christian worldview throughout their curriculum? Our schools need to be like a chocolate cake where both the outside and inside are delightful and where a Christian worldview needs to be evident in everything we plan and do. To do all this, however, we need to be equipped with an understanding of God's word, regularly attending Church, praying daily, reading the Bible, reading inspiring Christian literature and speaking with other Christians. These are spiritual disciplines that will enable us to effectively teach God's Word. If we don't

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# Reflections, Impressions & Experiences

understand it, how will our students? Thus a teacher must also be a learner.

## Reward and punishment

One of the ‘fierce’ debates we often have in our teacher education classes is about rewards and punishments. I have formed my own personal opinion about these. I have realised that many of the behaviour management systems used in Christian classrooms are not *biblical* because we are *bribing* instead of *teaching* the children to do the right thing.

Observe any classroom that uses behaviour management systems and what you will identify is children doing the right thing the instant their teacher offers an incentive. I once had a boy cry because he didn’t get a ‘Happy Ticket’ from me. When students do the wrong thing, rebellious and cheeky reactions may occur. Shouldn’t they obey, I ask myself, because they respect us and because God commands it? As Romans 13:1 says, “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.” It then continues, “those who don’t obey will be punished.”

Now here is what I am *not* saying. I’m not saying that we cannot reward children. Rather, I am proposing we should reward them when they don’t know it is coming. Tokens and little merit awards need to be destroyed. I know that sounds tough, but do we want to mould our students into the image of a dog begging for a treat or into the image of God? If you reverse the letters in ‘God’ you get the word ‘dog’. I think some of us may be guilty of this.

## Warfare in the classroom

Let me finish. Every year we are going to have twenty plus children sitting in front of us. It’s up to us to be Jesus to them. You may get tired from the workload. You may get frustrated with that one child who always calls out or with the one who is out of their seat, refusing to work. In those moments you may want to give up and wonder why you began this journey. In those moments remember that Satan is attacking you because you are trying to expand God’s kingdom in your classroom. Jesus won on the cross and so you can win in your classroom for Him because He is the chief cornerstone that holds you up. God uses and sustains you in the process.

Imagine if you gave up just before a child decided to commit their life to God! I know all the stress will be worth it when I see just one child come to Christ. One Christ-like word or action is all it can take.

Teaching is a 24/7 calling. Those twenty plus students, every year, are relying on **you** and **me** —

**us** — to be God’s faithful servants. In the bad times remember, “Why do we teach?” But, but ... “How do we do it to achieve our why?” *Pray* and keep on praying that God will use you mightily and help you do what He wants you to do. Is it impossible? No, it certainly isn’t. Luke 1:37 declares, “NOTHING is impossible with God.”

## Conclusion

I think reflecting on why we teach is a valuable exercise for Christian teachers. Perhaps we do it too infrequently. On such excursions through our personal heart-space we may often come face to face with the One who first inspired us to join Him and who *continues* to accompany us on every step of our journey as His servants.

I still have so much to learn. So much has to take place as I commence my final school placements. Yet, when I am a qualified teacher, learning will still continue. Through reflection comes value for every teacher. Values emerge, confronting our practice. So, every day, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our excursions in personal heart spaces, we will continue to learn and change our thinking, choosing to walk in step with our Lord. Then the One who first inspired us to join him will say,

“Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”<sup>2</sup>

What eternal fulfilment if I could also see Him turning to each student to share the same commending declaration!

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 25:23 NIV



Daniel Reynaud presents a copy of his book, *The Man the Anzacs Revered*, to William McKenzie’s great-grandson Stephen Hansen and partner Josephine Bibby. Photography: Etienne Reynaud.

“do we want to mould our students into the image of a dog begging for a treat or into the image of God?”



# Fighting Mac returns home: Avondale academic presents biography to ANZAC chaplain's church and family

**Brenton Stacey**

Public Relations Officer, Avondale College of Higher Education, Cooranbong, NSW

**The most comprehensive and accurate biography of the Gallipoli chaplain worshipped by the Anzacs despite being a wowsler is now in the keeping of his family and of his church.**

Author Dr Daniel Reynaud presented *The Man the Anzacs Revered: William 'Fighting Mac' McKenzie Anzac Chaplain* to William McKenzie's great-grandson and to The Salvation Army at an Evensong concert presented by the Conservatorium of Music at Avondale College of Higher Education on May 2, 2015. Stephen Hansen accepted the book on behalf of the family. His mother, Olga, was a daughter of McKenzie's son, Donald. Susan Petterson from The Salvation Army's Newcastle & Central New South Wales Divisional Headquarters accepted the book on behalf of commander Major Gavin Watts.

In her speech, Petterson described McKenzie, who received the Military Cross for his actions at the Battle of Lone Pine—McKenzie should have been in the rear trenches but followed the charge carrying just a spade to bury the dead—as “brave and courageous.” “He'd given his life completely over to God, and Jesus was his best friend, so he was able to do the things he did because Christ lived within him.” Referring to the presentation, she added, “If McKenzie were here today, he would say, ‘This is wonderful and thank you very much,’ but he would also say, ‘I give all the glory to God.’”

McKenzie became the most famous Anzac by the end of the war even though he stood for “almost everything the typical digger loved to hate,” says Reynaud, associate professor of history at Avondale. “He railed against booze, brothels, betting and bad language, and he ran frequent evangelistic campaigns for the Anzacs where he forcefully appealed to them to become Christians. But the soldiers just about worshipped him.”

The Scottish-born Salvation Army officer served on Gallipoli and on the Western Front as chaplain of the Australian Imperial Force's 4th Battalion. “His tireless energy on the soldiers' behalf earned

their respect, while his charismatic personality and integrity of character won their love,” says Reynaud.

While stationed in Cairo before the Gallipoli landings, McKenzie not only preached against the brothels but also went to the red-light district and dragged men out, putting them on a tram back to camp. On Gallipoli, McKenzie conducted burial services, often under shell fire. But he went further, finding chocolates for each man, or cutting steps into a steep part of a track at night. By the end of the war, McKenzie had led between 2000 and 3000 men to Christ. He became one of Australia's most popular and enduring celebrities. People mobbed him just to shake his hand, and his visits to cities and towns were characterised as being like a Royal Progress.

*The Man the Anzacs Revered* is, according to Professor Peter Stanley of the Australian Centre for the Study of Armed Conflict and Society at the University of New South Wales, a “full, sympathetic but careful” re-telling of McKenzie's story.

Signs Publishing book editor Nathan Brown also recognised this after reading the manuscript. He represented *The Man the Anzacs Revered's* publisher at Evensong and stated,

What I found was not only a good story and work of serious historical research but a true Australian hero and a story of national significance... [McKenzie's story] belongs to our nation, to the best of our Anzac tradition, to the Australian church and also particularly to The Salvation Army, which has kept the story alive through its history and so provided a platform for Daniel to share in this fuller way and for us to be able to give it back to them.

A book review of *The Man the Anzacs Revered: William 'Fighting Mac' McKenzie Anzac Chaplain* is on the following page.

“This is wonderful and thank you very much,’ but he would also say, ‘I give all the glory to God.’”

## BOOK REVIEWS



### *The Man the Anzacs Revered: William 'Fighting Mac' McKenzie Anzac Chaplain*

Daniel Reynaud (2015). Warburton, VIC: Sign Publishing. 262 pp  
ISBN: 9781925044164

#### Nathan Brown

Book Editor, Signs Publishing, Warburton, Victoria.

**The name William McKenzie might be a familiar one to you. McKenzie was a Salvation Army officer who ministered in some of Australia's toughest mining and industrial towns around the beginning of the 20th century. With the outbreak of World War I, he was quick to volunteer to serve his country.**

Despite McKenzie's evangelistic zeal and preaching against the vices enjoyed by many of the soldiers, he soon became well known and loved by the men of the Australian Imperial Force, during their training camps in Egypt, on Gallipoli and then on the battlefields of France, as well as by many of the soldiers' families back in Australia. On his return to Australia and for years after the war, admirers mobbed McKenzie wherever he went.

This new book by Daniel Reynaud goes much deeper into this remarkable story, the larger-than-life personality and the active faith of the most famous—but now almost forgotten—Anzac chaplain.

*The Man the Anzacs Revered* is a work of careful historical research and a good story, written with respect for McKenzie and an understanding of the faith that drove him. Reynaud is associate professor of history at Avondale College of Higher Education. He has been researching different aspects of the Anzac stories for many years, with a growing interest in the role of faith among those Australian and New Zealand soldiers.

Amid the strong interest in the Gallipoli centenary, *The Man the Anzacs Revered* is an important contribution to the discussions of

what the Anzac mythology means, questioning some of the assumptions and offering another important story to our understanding of what it can mean to serve others and to serve God in even the most difficult of circumstances.

#### Editor's suggestion

In this year of the 100th anniversary of ANZAC, when planning commemorations or curriculum elements, teachers could use as sources across many levels, *The Man the Anzacs Revere*—with its stories of William 'Fighting Mac' McKenzie's experiences—and parts of *The Hero of the Dardanelles* (from the DVD or film clips available from the National Film and Sound Archives site <http://aso.gov.au/titles/features/hero-of-the-dardanelles/clip1/>) to create more realistic awareness of Christian witness in particular within the human story of the ANZAC legend.

Understanding McKenzie's story "adds a new dimension to the Anzac legend, one that has been relentlessly indoctrinated to paint the Anzacs as indifferent to religion," says Reynaud. "Yes, the majority of soldiers were secular, but Christians were strongly represented and many chaplains engaged the Anzacs in spiritual things." About one in four of the diaries Reynaud read makes positive references to religion. "That's startlingly high for a secular legend! If we're to understand and memorialise Anzac fully now, we need to know Christians were active, visible and influential in the Anzac story. McKenzie is the most obvious and most powerful example of this." **TEACH**

*Note: Reynaud is also author of Celluloid Anzacs: The Great War Through Australian Cinema and The Hero of the Dardanelles and Other World War One Silent Dramas (released for the 90th ANZAC commemoration).*

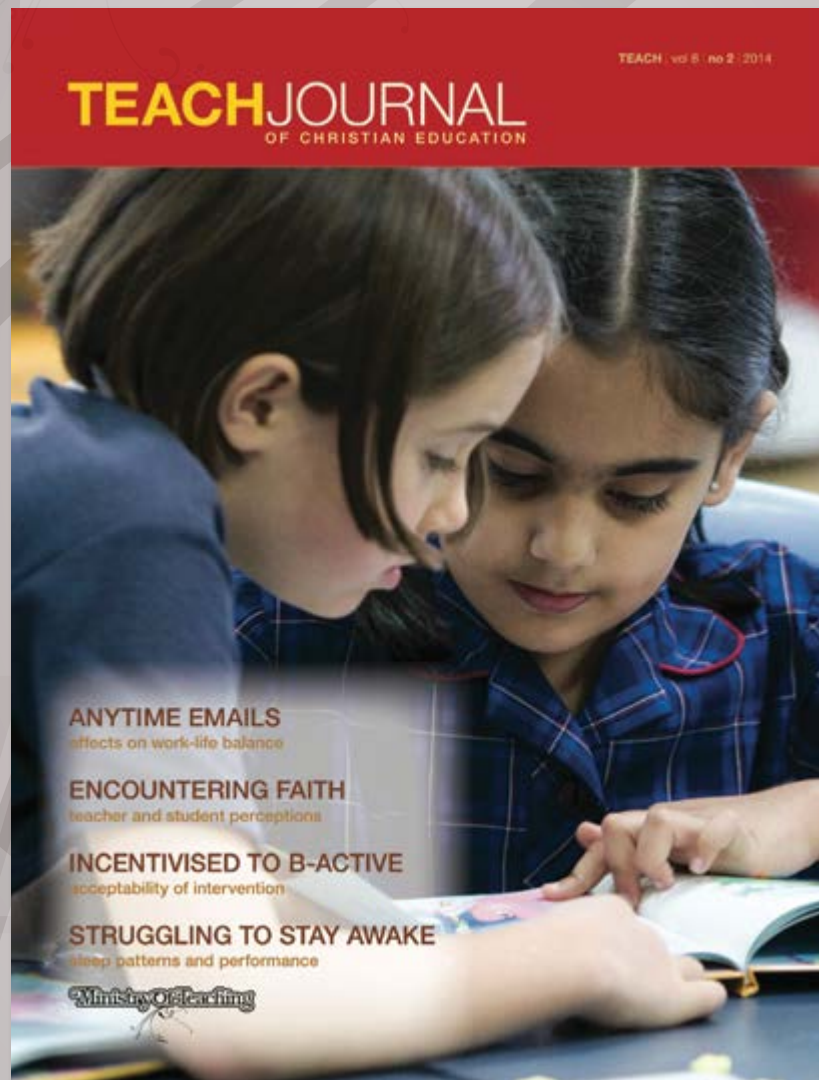
*The Hero of the Dardanelles*, released in 1915, is Australia's first Gallipoli movie—Reynaud recovered and partially reconstructed it. Released on DVD by the National Film and Sound Archive this month (April, 2015), the movie is now publicly available for the first time.

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