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Editorial

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Caption: Sam Davidson (operating the drop saw) a Design and Technology teacher, demonstrates the finer points of use to Max Allan, Year 11 student at Hills Adventist College (Kellyville Campus). Photography: Michelle Gibbons

EDITORIAL

Graeme Perry

Thirty years ago Kieren Egan published *Teaching as Story Telling: An alternative approach to teaching and curriculum in the elementary school* (1986), as an early part of his search for a new educational theory, now established on a foundation of imaginative engagement. Howard Gardner, the Harvard University proponent of multiple intelligences, has asserted "Kieran Egan is one of the most original 'big picture' thinkers in education. I always read what he writes … " (Egan, n.d.)

Recently Deitcher (2013) affirmed a theoretical base for the use of stories in children's moral education claiming:

> *'Storying' appears to be a fundamental and uniquely human activity, and involves creating (as teller or author) and recreating (as listener, viewer or reader). This interactive process invites young readers to launch a search that challenges them to come to grips with their ideas about themselves and how they will lead their lives.*
>
> (p. 237)

This year extends the centennial retelling of Gallipoli's impact on the formation of an Australian identity to commemoration of the battles of the Western front. ANZAC day 'story' recollection, ensures "we shall remember them. Lest we forget." Reynaud, Rickett and Bogacs assert in this issue that William McKenzie's use of journaling and letter writing provided a personal strategy for coping as a Christian chaplain with the 'realities' of WWI. Yet in the retelling, his use of factual material was 'shaped' to his 'audience' for pastoral purposes but also revealed his own hurt and damage.

Remember how Sarah Haynes honestly delivered her intentional school captain speech, after dishonestly clearing an alternative script, unintended for delivery, with her school administration (Browne, 2015). By sharing an authentic view of her school life she established personal credibility, but also confirmed the validity of a hidden curriculum that taught a valuing of 'the greater good'. It is with similar indignation that Christian exposes, through case study narrative, the 'marijuana subterfuge' potentially perpetrated in some 'establishment' intentions. This broader perspective of health benefit founded on deeper education and informed, subsequently appropriate, policy, may also be personally researched in considering linkages between health and climate change based on perceived cobenefits from dietary change (Springmann, Godfray, Rayner & Scarborough, 2016). This approach might be compared to awareness of a moral Irlens syndrome that prompts 'life coaches' to see the real needs of all in the 'classroom', inviting a suitably 'coloured' vision to ensure understanding and clarity for broad learning and action.

Delvin and England with Dobson and Geelan invite readers' review of the application of suitable learning processes. While Devlin focuses on administrative initiatives, the others advocate creating a personal 'palette' of learning strategies. A phenomenon of imbuing spirituality *in* principalship, is related by Gibson as an example of action research affirming an administrator's journey. These contributions to wholistic school improvement can be affirmed, Murdoch claims, through collegial internal school processes that are the objective of the Quality Adventist School Framework (QASF), the development of which is explained in this organisational story.

Predictably, crisis is a school invader. Matthias' reflective propositions are commended by Rieger as catharsis for *The Cry of a Teacher's Soul*.

'Storying' appears to be a fundamental and uniquely human activity, and involves creating (as teller) and recreating (as listener)

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[Photography: Nikolai Agafonov]

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Let Me Do it and I will Learn: Investigating Three Models of Student-Centred Learning

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TEACH[R]

Let me do it and I will learn: Investigating three models of student-centred learning

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Key words: pirozzo matrix, socratic seminar, graffiti model, student–centred learning

Abstract

Three techniques that foster student-centred learning were trialed in Year 10 English and History classes at a small Queensland school. These included the Socratic Seminar, the Graffiti Model and the Pirozzo Matrix. It was found that each of these methods created discussion, involvement, cooperation and learning at many levels. Ideas were shared by students, all students became involved and differentiation of learning was made possible. Overall there was a greater level of cooperation within the class.

> *be cognisant of the values instilled through the teaching strategies [you] choose*

Introduction

An effective teacher, as defined by the education ministers responsible for the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*, is one who has "the capacity to transform the lives of students and to inspire and nurture their development as learners, individuals and citizens" (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 2008, p. 11). In order to achieve this aspirational ideal, a teacher must also take on the role of learner. They need to continually reflect on the principles of learning and the unique needs of their students, and to adjust their teaching strategies accordingly.

Background

Teaching practice must embrace differentiation, an intentional matching of the learner's style to strategies that help the learner to achieve their learning goals (Butler, 1993, p. 149). According to education researcher John Hattie (2012), differentiation occurs when the teacher knows "where students are in their learning so they can move them '+1' beyond this point" (p. 97). Although learning is paramount, the Melbourne Declaration proposes that effective teachers will also inspire students to develop something broader than learning goals; they should also instil "national values of democracy, equity and justice, and personal values and attributes such as honesty, resilience and respect for others" (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 2008, p. 5). While striving to innovate their teaching strategies in order to differentiate the curriculum, a teacher should be cognisant of the values that are being instilled through the teaching strategies they choose. A study was conducted by a secondary teacher in a small Queensland school to intentionally apply these principles by trialing and reflecting on three innovative teaching strategies in a Year 10 class. The teacher reflected on the effectiveness of these strategies in meeting the individual needs of the students and the values that were imparted through them.

The first strategy trialled was the Socratic Seminar, a pedagogy developed by Mortimer Adler and Dennis Gray (Metzger, 1998, p. 240) but based on the ancient philosopher Socrates' position that "no idea can be taught directly... All that we know must be extracted from us through a series of questions" (Estes, Mintz, & Gunter, 2010, p. 190). In a modern Socratic seminar the teacher prepares a series of open-ended questions surrounding a 'big question' which students will be able to answer after considering the smaller questions. The teacher takes a background role and "uses questioning as necessary to help redirect or focus the discussion" (Coke, 2008, p. 29). To participate in the seminar

students are asked to complete a 'ticket assignment' which is typically to read and take notes on a passage that will be the focus of the discussion. The students are then arranged into an inner circle of students who participate in the discussion; and an outer circle of students who observe, take notes and give feedback to the inner circle. Students then swap places and roles. An important goal is for "non-competitive discussion" to take place "in order to gain deeper understanding of the text" (Metzger, 1998, p. 242).

The Graffiti Model was trialled next. It is a type of cooperative learning activity. Typically students will be assigned to groups where they will 'graffiti' the paper that has been allocated to them with drawings or words—questions, statements as issues or comment. This becomes the property of that group. An option sometimes used is for each piece of paper to be passed on to the next group where they tick the concept or idea the previous group had written and that they agree with, and then add their own ideas to the paper (Western Australian Department of Education and Training, 2008). Sometimes students at the final table are asked to synthesise all of the graffiti into a considered response to the question at hand. This means most levels of Blooms Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill & Krathwohl, 1956) have been utilised.

The third strategy chosen for trial was the Pirozzo Matrix. Devised by Ralph Pirozzo in 1997, it blends the rigour of Bloom's taxonomy with the capacity of Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (MI) to engage students (Coote, 2008, p. 14). Bloom's taxonomy identifies six levels of thinking, ranging from knowledge to comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Butler, 1993, p. 171). Since its inception, Bloom's taxonomy has been widely used by teachers to create a hierarchy within learning activities; however, this approach alone does not account for the developmental states of students and therefore "often becomes the source of much frustration for students" (Butler, 1993, p. 172). Pirozzo proposed that Bloom's taxonomy would be more effective if the various learning styles of students were taken into account, and he created a grid that contrasts Bloom's taxonomy with Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. Gardner described eight 'intelligences' or capabilities as a "means of mapping the broad range of abilities that humans possess" (Armstrong, 2000, p. 1) - visual, kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, mathematical and naturalistic. In practical terms, Gardner's Multiple Intelligences are valuable because "if we can engage all intelligences through the instructional strategies we use on a regular basis in our classrooms, we reach each student regardless of his or her particular pattern of intelligence" (Kagan & Kagan, 1998, p. xx). By combining Multiple Intelligences with Bloom's taxonomy, the Pirozzo matrix is a model that "nurtures students' thinking skills and engages them through their preferred learning styles" (Coote, 2008, p. 15) for differentiation.

Method

A case study approach was used to determine the effectiveness of three different learning strategies in one Year 10 class. This methodology was adopted because the objective of the study was to answer questions of "how" and "why" (Yin, 2003). For example, the teacher was trying to establish how different pedagogies may impact the learning, understanding, adoption of values and socialisation of students and why student-centred learning enhances educational outcomes.

A classroom scenario is a microcosm of society that has complex organisational systems in place and intricate teenage relationships at play. According to Easton (2008), this type of combination is difficult to work with and "a case study of a single, or a small number of such entities can provide a great deal of largely qualitative data which can be written up as a case study, offering insights into the nature of the phenomena" (p. 118).

The Socratic Seminar was chosen for a Year 10 English unit on the Shakespearean text *Romeo and Juliet*. Since Shakespearean language typically creates a barrier to understanding, students often reach fairly superficial levels of cognition when encountering Shakespearean texts. It was hoped that a Socratic Seminar would deepen their understanding of the ideas that work beneath the surface of the story of forbidden teenage love. The teacher composed a big question: "Who was to blame for the deaths of Romeo and Juliet?", and prepared a series of open-ended questions relating to character roles and the concept of fate versus fortune in the play. Due to the complexity of the language, the play had been read in class, then as a ticket assignment students were asked to re-read Act III Scene ii, where a distressed Romeo blames 'fortune' for his predicament. The following day the classroom was arranged in the required concentric circles and the process was explained to the students. The teacher posed the big question and prompted discussion with the open-ended questions.

The Graffiti Model was chosen to check for understanding early in the Year 10 History unit on World War II. As several lessons were spent at the start of the unit teaching background information with teacher focused methods, it was felt that a cooperative activity would help the teacher check

"The teacher composed a big question: "Who was to blame for the deaths of Romeo and Juliet?"

for understanding and identify areas of need. It was also hoped that the cooperative activity would help to move students beyond knowledge to deeper critical understandings of the topic; the teacher therefore prepared question sheets that required some interpretation and critical analysis such as the reasons for the rise and success of Nazism. Two short interactive online quizzes were prepared on 'Kahoot' (Kahoot!AS, 2015) with comparable knowledge questions in order to evaluate knowledge building. One quiz was taken online as a pre-test for comparison.

Campbell and Campbell (1999, p. 63) observed that while Multiple Intelligence theory has for some time been embraced by elementary schools, it is rarely utilised in secondary schools. It was decided to trial the Pirozzo Matrix with the Year 10 History class, and since after some initial teacher focused lessons and the Graffiti activity, the teacher observed some interest in the experiences of Australian prisoners of war, a Pirozzo Matrix based on this topic was created. The tasks varied according to the Multiple Intelligence learning styles, while each column progressed through Bloom's taxonomy with similar content, starting with facts and figures about POW camps and progressing through to specific POW experiences and finally an evaluation of a camp according to the Geneva Convention. The students were prepared by completing a Multiple Intelligence quiz online, and then given the Pirozzo Matrix to choose the learning style they preferred.

> *It was interesting to see how some people thought about the question and gave their opinions but other[s] … fought over it.*

Findings and discussion

1. The Socratic Seminar

As Metzger (1998) admits "Socratic Seminars don't work perfectly at first" (n.p.) and can even be a disaster until the process becomes more familiar to the students. This Socratic Seminar was no exception with students in the inner circle unsure of how to sustain a discussion without being led by the teacher, and the outer circle unsure of what they should be observing. There was, however, some promising discussion and the teacher was pleased with the student focused nature of the pedagogy. Coke (2008) notes that the Socratic Seminar "presents multiple opportunity for differentiated instruction" (p. 29) since it encourages students to participate at varying levels in non-competitive discussion and develop their own ideas and opinions. It is an ideal strategy to encourage students to think deeply about values, in this particular case personal social responsibility. The strategy itself also "foster[s] social cohesion and social inclusion" (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2011, p. 2).

From the teacher's point of view, she was prepared from her reading of the literature for the process to be quite anarchic and that is what she found. It was necessary for the students to become more familiar with the process and develop more confidence in verbalising their thoughts in a structured discussion. The main issue she had with the seminar was the students resorting to heated argument in a superficial way, rather than proper debate/discussion. Again, this is not surprising as this is a learned skill. From observation however, despite the bickering they were actually being forced to express their opinions and appeared to quite enjoy the challenge. There was 100% participation and engagement, which was a good outcome with this particular class.

Formal evaluation of the impact of the Socratic Seminar was not feasible, however, students were asked to self-evaluate their participation, and demonstrated deeper understandings of the text. It was felt that future use of the Socratic Seminar may be a valuable way of encouraging students to develop and express their understanding of literary texts as they become more familiar and comfortable with the process. Students did comment however, about how heated the process became. When asked whether they saw any potential in the strategy as an ongoing tactic, their answers included:

> *It could work with the right people.*
> *I think the group was a bit too big and it might work better with a smaller group. [R5]*

> *It was interesting to see how some people thought about the question and gave their opinions but other people just fought over it.*
> *It was fun and it made us think about the reasons for our opinions. [R10]*

2. The Graffiti Model

The students responded enthusiastically to the cooperative nature of the activity, engaging positively with the questions, while the teacher circulated to help direct the discussion where students were struggling. It was observed that the activity encouraged students to share information and develop understandings. At the end of the activity students were able to share responses, although some groups needed assistance with consolidating all of the responses into a summary. The teacher then administered the second knowledge quiz with all students achieving a higher score. While a quiz only assesses knowledge questions, deeper levels of understanding were observed during the final discussion. Additionally, as a cooperative activity, there were positive observable effects such as increased collaborative behaviour. Studies

show cooperative activities such as this not only encourage learning but also affect "acceptance of and tolerance for diversity" (Arends & Kilcher, 2010, p. 310), which are important values for students to cultivate.

3. The Pirozzo Matrix

An immediate rise in enthusiasm was noted as the students were presented with a wide choice of options, but it was also noted that some students, unaccustomed to such autonomy, had difficulty narrowing down their choices and required assistance with this. It was noted that seven of the 21 students selected the 'intrapersonal' column as they were reluctant to move beyond the normal boundaries of a research task; however, it is possible that with future similar opportunities they may have greater confidence to choose less traditional options. The unit culminated in an afternoon where students presented their research, including some speeches, role-plays and an interpretive dance. Students completed a feedback survey that indicated most students had greater engagement with the material and embraced the level of autonomy they had in their research. Assessments were graded and found to be of a high standard. The teacher also observed throughout the learning process a greater level of cooperation between students, discussing and assisting each other with research, and deeper class discussion due to the way the tasks led to analysis, synthesis and evaluation. It was observed that the learning process fostered values of cooperation and knowledge sharing, in addition to the national values of justice that are inherent in the research topic.

Future research directions or recommendations

The study and reporting of different student-centred learning techniques is a rich area for further research. This paper reports on just three techniques. More work needs to be done on other methods such as card clusters, one minute challenge, KWL (know, want to know, learnt), brainstorms, circle talk, jigsaw method, head talk, placemat, mindmaps, 90 degree thinking, Venn Diagrams—and even more. By trialing these methods and reporting the results, other teachers will benefit and be inspired to use student-centred learning in a broader smorgasbord of learning activities.

Conclusion

At the end of the trial period it was noted that the Year 10 class was working more cooperatively and responsibly together. The teacher was confident that involving the students in differentiated, cooperative strategies was a factor in this positive growth, since "Celebrating the diversity of others gives students an appreciation of the wonderful qualities other individuals possess" (Kagan & Kagan, 1998, p. 12.1). The Pirozzo Matrix revived enthusiasm for research and motivated students to work together; the Socratic Seminar deepened textual understandings, encouraged value-based judgments of the text, and fostered cooperative discussion; the Graffiti Model activity encouraged sharing of ideas and collaboration as well as contributing to the students' personal values. These student-focused strategies provided observable opportunities for students to participate in learning activities in non-threatening ways, thereby encouraging them to move ahead with learning at their own pace. As a result of the trial, the teacher concurred that "By honouring the uniqueness of every student, we establish a nurturing classroom atmosphere in which our students are free to blossom" (Kagan & Kagan, 1998, p. 12.1). TEACH

> *"Celebrating the diversity of others gives students an appreciation of the wonderful qualities other individuals possess"*

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Irlen Syndrome: Why the Cool Coloured Shades?

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Irlen Syndrome: Why the cool coloured shades?

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Key words: Irlen, Meares, scotopic sensitivity, MISViS, visual stress

Abstract

In a world of inclusive education and assistive technologies, it is more important than ever to ensure every member of the class is given the opportunity of a sound education. This may present a challenge when almost every classroom includes students with additional and specific needs. MISViS (Meares-Irlen Syndrome Visual Stress) is one example of a learning disability that will require additional accommodations, but can be readily managed once a teacher is familiar with the individual's needs.

> *It is important to recognise that MISViS is not an optical condition; it is a neural disorder that affects perceptual processing*

Introduction

MISViS is a relatively common neurological dysfunction that causes visual perceptual distortions for some individuals. These distortions cause the text to appear to move, distort and/or change colour or shape (Millodot, 2009). It is important to recognise that MISViS is not an optical condition; it is a neural disorder that affects perceptual processing (Chouinard, Zhou, Hrybouski, Kim & Cummine, 2012). This condition was independently discovered by New Zealand teacher Olive Meares in 1980 and American psychologist Helen Irlen in 1983. Both identified individuals with perceptual dysfunction in the way the brain attempts to decode visual information, and both sought to treat the disorder through a method known as colour therapy (Crabtree, 2011). MISViS is also known as Irlen syndrome, Meares-Irlen syndrome, Scotopic Sensitivity and/or Visual Stress.

Irlen Syndrome symptoms

Studies have indicated that MISViS affects between 5-20% of the general population (Kriss & Evans, 2005) and occurs in 30-45% of individuals with other conditions that also affect learning such as ADHD, dyslexia, ASD, photosensitive epilepsy, binocular instability and chronic fatigue syndrome (Chouinard, Zhou, Hrybouski, Kim & Cummine, 2012). Common external symptoms of MISViS include light sensitivity resulting in headaches, dizziness, anxiety and fatigue (Randall, 2013); reading problems including poor comprehension, skipping words or lines, reading in dim light, constantly losing place; writing problems such as unequal letter size or spacing, writing up/downhill; poor depth perception including difficulty judging distances or catching objects and general clumsiness (Crabtree, 2011).

MISViS is commonly confused with dyslexia and is often misdiagnosed as dyslexia. Statistics suggest that 46% of people with dyslexia also have MISViS, however, there are distinct differences (Chang, Kim, Kim & Cho, 2014). Dyslexia is a miscomprehension of reading associated with difficulties in sequencing letters and phonics, and to an extent a child can be trained in phonics and adjust to their disability. MISViS cannot be addressed through training as the difficulty is in perceiving the words. Tinted glasses/ coloured filters will need to be a lifelong intervention (Chang et al., 2014).

Many individuals with MISViS do not know that they have a learning disability. It is hard to know that words are supposed to stay still on a page when that has never been their experience of 'normal' print (AAIC, 2014).

Causes and Treatment

In some cases MISViS is a genetic condition that can be inherited from a parent (Taub, Shallo-Hoffmann, Steinman & Steinman, 2009) or even from significant head trauma (Australasian Association of Irlen Consultants Incorporated, 2013).

Two interdependent dysfunctions within the brain define this condition.

Deficiencies in the magnocellular pathways

The magnocellular pathways originate at the retina of the eye and transmit visual information directly to the primary visual cortex of the brain. These pathways convey information about motion and depth, meaning that a dysfunction could destabilise visual fixation (focus) and cause the visual perceptual distortions commonly experienced by individuals with MISViS (Stein, 2003).

Hyper-excitability of the visual cortex:

There are certain groups of cells within the visual cortex (the area of the brain that processes visual information) referred to as orientation columns. These cell groups react simultaneously to stimuli with particular orientations (or in the case of MISViS, hues and frequencies of light), causing over-excitation throughout the visual cortex (Wilkins, Huang & Cao, 2007).

In combination these two dysfunctions result in disrupted synchronisation of visual signals and messages to the cerebral cortex, resulting in the visual distortions symptomatic of MISViS. The visual representation of MISViS in the form of neural imaging confirmed the existence of MISViS and extended its neurological understanding.

Diagnosis

Before MISViS is specifically diagnosed, individuals should be tested by an optician for optical vision impairments. First, to ensure that the symptoms are not being caused by an optical visual impairment (in which the individual may now have MISViS), and secondly to ensure that if an individual does require coloured eyeglasses that these glasses are created with a proper prescription to also correct any optical impairments that may limit the effectiveness of colour therapy (Crabtree, 2011).

If problems persist following an optical test, individuals should undergo a screening process using colour overlays to determine if MISViS is present, and if so, identify the particular colour that mitigates their specific colour sensitivity. There are no especially common colours that benefit individuals with MISViS: colour preferences tend to be idiosyncratic and consistent (Wilkins, Sihara, & Myers, 2005). Generally tinted lenses are more effective than colour overlays or paper, given their broader applications including the use of technology and reading from a whiteboard. Tinted lenses may also be a specific hue rather than a generic colour as with overlays (Chouinard et al., 2012).

Despite scepticism from some professionals (Melbourne Psychology Services, 2016), increasing numbers of studies are validating the benefits of specifically designed coloured lenses in reducing visual distortions and improving various aspects of reading for those with MISViS (Hall, Ray, Harries & Stein, 2013). It has been noted that some previously critical studies of MISViS did not use the personally prescribed tinted lenses for the child being tested (Harries et al., 2014). The British Institute of Optometry also advocates the use of coloured lenses to ameliorate the symptoms of visual stress (Allen, Evans & Wilkins, 2012).

Classroom Strategies

Creating an *individualised education program* (IEP) is important when dealing with any special education needs. Creating an IEP for a child with MISViS is important to ascertain the specific needs of the individual as each child is unique and has his or her own requirements. Include relevant medical professionals either through a phone call, face to face contact or a letter outlining recommendations and the extent of the child's condition. Ensure that the parents are also involved; this may be difficult for them to grasp or it may be a relief to have the school support; in either situation, show compassion and listen with interest.

> *"some previously critical studies of MISViS did not use the personally prescribed tinted lenses for the child being tested"*

In class, assistive measures should include printing all *class materials on coloured paper or having coloured overlays* (Uccula, Enna & Mulatti, 2014) as this has been shown to reduce the wavelengths of light that may cause irritation. When writing on the board, use different coloured pens to find a contrast that suits the student. Trial different colours each day until a colour of best fit is found.

Seat students in a position that reduces glare from windows or overhead fluorescent lighting or allow them to wear a cap or visor in class (Loew, Jones & Watson, 2014).

Depth perception is also an issue for students with MISViS of which teachers, especially Physical Education teachers, need to be aware. Activities involving judging heights, distances, speeds, movement, catching and throwing balls, stepping on and off escalators, needing *additional care and management* (Kruk, Sumbler & Willows, 2008).

Social/emotional implications are some of the most serious issues for children with MISViS. Not only do they frequently feel stupid because of their reading difficulties, this is further compounded when

other children appear to have no problems. They do not realise that for other children the words do not move. Teachers need to be aware of this by *not having the child read aloud in class* (Irlen, Alberta, 2013); by *task analysing, structuring and reducing the work to increase the potential for success*, and affirming the child for this (Harries et al., 2014); by carefully choosing *supportive group members, closely supervising and having a zero tolerance policy to prevent bullying*, the child's anxiety and stress will reduce. Following testing, *encourage the child to wear his/her glasses*. All of the students in class can try out different coloured worksheets and/or overlays as part of developing their understanding of MISViS. Harries et al. (2014) also described the emotional strain on the parents in their study who reported trying to have their child's condition diagnosed and being passed from teachers to doctors to opticians without success.

Many assistive technologies exist that can be used for students with MISViS. For direct computer/device work *adjust screen brightness, contrast and all application background colour settings*. Applications such as *display tuner* and *ER-browser* can assist with creating coloured backgrounds in various computer applications e.g. internet browsers and word documents (Harpold, 2013). Also *adjust fonts*; fonts with serifs are difficult to read as the letters tend to merge together and can become indistinguishable from one another. Choose sans-serif fonts such as Tahoma, Calibri and Arial that are well-spaced, with clear and distinct letters.

> *"Social/emotional implications are some of the most serious issues for children with MISViS."*

> Recently a pre-service teacher shared information in the special education class about her own child. Her child's teacher had phoned her with the following story: We were reading together and I was listening to your little girl. Suddenly she said to me: "Oh Mrs X, the words are all running off the page! But don't worry, they'll be back again in a minute or two….here they come now!" Subsequently the little girl was assessed for MISViS, and once fitted with her personalised, tinted spectacles, her reading improved greatly.

For senior students sitting exams, in NSW the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards has permitted certain assistive measures. These include the use of coloured overlays, visual aids and special lighting. To be granted these measures requires written evidence from the teacher and a medical diagnosis of MISViS (BOSTES, 2013).

Conclusion

Despite its high prevalence within the general population and relatively simple mitigation of symptoms, MISViS is not a commonly known or understood condition. The earlier MISViS is detected and treated the greater the potential for increased efficiency and quality of life for the individual. TEACH

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Australia's medical marijuana subterfuge

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It is a little known fact that medical cannabis has been legally available on prescription from General Practitioners for more than 18 years in Australia. The curious media calls to 'legalise' an already legal medication has generated the illusion that medical cannabis has always been as illegal as its recreational use, and that State and Federal Governments really do need to make the legality of medical cannabis a reality. So why has the Australian media almost uniformly been keeping the Australian public in the dark about the already legal status of medical cannabis, and why has it campaigned so strongly and deceptively about something we have long had, albeit rarely used? This discussion informs educators and potentially their students, particularly in areas within current personal development and health curricula.

Some background

Back in 1999, a NSW parliamentary briefing paper (Griffith & Swain) noted that in 1997 general practitioners were prescribing the pill Marinol for 100 patients in NSW under the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) Special Access Scheme. Marinol, otherwise called Dronabinol, is a synthetic form of the psychoactive constituent in cannabis, tetrahydrocannabinol, the chemical properties of which were isolated and then reproduced when Marinol first entered the market in 1985. The therapeutic effect of Marinol lasts twice as long as smoked cannabis with the same 'high' but also exhibits the same negative side-effects such as dizziness, anxiety and confusion (Cooper, Comer, & Haney, 2013).

In 2012, a cannabis whole-plant extract, Sativex, was registered with the TGA for use by Multiple Sclerosis patients in the form of an oral spray. Sativex was stocked by Australian pharmacies for a short time before being withdrawn due to lack of interest by patients. Nevertheless the TGA has confirmed in writing (Drug Free Australia, 2015) that GPs are able, under their Special Access Scheme, to prescribe Sativex, as with Marinol, for patients with a variety of other conditions that might be alleviated by cannabis. Internet-purchased Sativex can be imported legally into Australia with a permit so long as it has been prescribed. These confirmations from the TGA have been described and sent in multiple letters and opinion pieces by Drug Free Australia, the country's peak prevention body, to each of the major press, radio and television outlets throughout Australia to correct their false understanding. None have ever responded or changed their rhetoric.

> *"the calls for medical cannabis have not been coming from doctors but rather from people with an entirely different agenda"*

Medical indications for cannabis

Many claims have been made by cannabis users about the benefits of cannabis medicinally, but the majority of these claims have evaporated under the scrutiny of clinical trials. Because cannabis has a well-documented withdrawal syndrome, many of these claims only address the effectiveness of cannabis in alleviating its own withdrawal symptoms – pain, muscle spasm, agitation, fits, convulsions and rheumatics are the most common (Reece, 2014). This is important because many of the patients who present public testimony before Parliamentary inquiries are speaking from a background of prior cannabis dependency and addiction.

Rigorous clinical trials have isolated a number of conditions where actual benefit has been demonstrated. In terms of chronic pain, where cannabis has a mild analgesic effect comparable in strength to codeine, it can become a useful adjunct for those who don't tolerate opiates well. Cannabis can alleviate some symptoms of MS, reduce nausea and vomiting, and reduce AIDS wasting by increasing appetite in patients (Institute of Medicine, 1999). For each of these conditions there are more effective medications available to doctors, and so medical cannabinoids do not in any of these conditions represent a first-line treatment, or second or third for that matter, available to doctors (Reece, 2014). Consequently, it is revealing that the calls for medical cannabis have not been coming from doctors or their medical associations, but rather from people with an entirely different agenda.

In 2014, significant publicity was given to the

effect of cannabis on Dravet's and Lennox-Gastaut's syndromes, which both cause severe epilepsy-like seizures particularly in young children. Some children have been helped by the use of cannabis strains high in Cannabidiol (CBD), a constituent of cannabis which is not psychoactive as is THC. The manufacturer of Sativex, GW Pharmaceuticals, has completed third stage clinical trials of Epidiolex, which like Marinol and Sativex is a pharmaceutical-quality medication with standardised dosage, strength and purity, but with high levels of CBD. Epidiolex is available in the USA for trials, (Epilepsy, Australia, 2014) and the Federal Government announced in February 2016 that it will commence trials of Epidiolex in Australia shortly (Beech, 2016). This scraps the NSW Government's plans to produce their own similar preparation in NSW.

Media agenda? Most likely recreational use

So why was the media, along with the ACT and Victorian Governments, continuing to call for medical cannabis to be legalised when it was already legal? The answer is very simple. In the USA, where States hold referenda on various legislative issues at the time of each federal election, the cannabis legalisation lobby has had a fighting-fund spend that is 25 times greater than the anti-cannabis lobby, as disclosed in a November 2012 meeting I had with Gil Kerlikowske, the US drug Czar at NSW's Parliament House. Some of the world's richest men such as George Soros, who spends up to half a billion dollars yearly on his social liberalism agendas, heavily fund these referenda on legalising cannabis, first for medical purposes and then for outright recreational use as has now happened in a number of US States. The massive spend on repeated TV advertising shows sick people claiming in-camera their dire need to access medical marijuana. Despite many of these televised conditions not being supported by any objective evidence, more than 20 States have voted to legalise medical marijuana, many with home-grown cannabis legally available to patients.

> *a quasi-legalisation strategy for recreational use of cannabis via subterfuge and ruse*

Ruse of recreational use

What the US public is not told, nor has the prevention lobby the money to tell them with any penetration, is that 95% of medical marijuana 'patients' are previous recreational users. Surveys by the US Institute of Medicine in the late 1990s had found as much (Institute of Medicine, 1999). Nor are they told that cannabis has only a handful of conditions it alleviates, and almost all of these have far more effective medications available. The public is not told that cannabis actually causes the chronic back pain which many claim cannabis alleviates, quite clearly as part of its own withdrawal syndrome, along with other conditions arising from its use which cannabis will always appear to alleviate.

Effectively, US States have allowed popular vote to determine what is a medicine based on emotive advertising, rather than the normal scientific regulatory processes applied to every other available medicine. Predictably, there are tens of thousands in each corresponding US State citing conditions they claim cannabis alleviates, however, in the early years of Nevada's legislation, 93% of the maladies claimed were severe pain (53%), muscle spasm (29%) and severe nausea (11%) (Gogek, 2015) which cannot be objectively verified by a doctor and must be accepted on faith. The Australian Disability Support Pension constantly faces many similar health claims which are just as unverifiable, many of which are exposed in the media as false.

Medical cannabis has, in many of those US States which have poorly framed medical cannabis laws, become the route to 'legalised' recreational use (Gogek, 2015). Colorado introduced medical cannabis laws in 2001, and by 2004 had just 512 patients accessing raw cannabis leaf, which is available in that state for smoking or ingestion. By 2010 the number had exponentially grown to more than 100,000 according to data from Colorado's Department of Public Health and environment, with 94% registered for the unverifiable condition, pain. Oregon has 94% claiming pain while Arizona has 90%.

Pain profiles and pain management

There are well established profiles for patients of chronic pain across all Western countries, where patients are more predominantly women and those aged 60 and above. For instance, a 2001 study by Sydney University's Pain Management Research Centre (Blythe et al., cited in Access Economics, 2002) found 54% of patients were women (p. 15), with men suffering in their sixties and women in their eighties (p. 12). Yet the profile for pain patients using medical cannabis in the USA is very different. A 2007 study of 4,000 medical cannabis patients in California (Gogek, 2015), found that their average age was 32, 75% were male and 90% had started using cannabis while teenagers, an identical age and gender profile to that of recreational users across the US. This discordant profile means that medical cannabis in the various states of the US has mainly amounted to a quasi-legalisation strategy for recreational use of cannabis via subterfuge and ruse.

Approving recreational use of a drug?

It is no surprise then that the full legalisation of cannabis for recreational use has followed in six

US States or jurisdictions since the introduction of medical cannabis laws. Pot activists are now agitating for legalisation of recreational use in every State. Such legalisation is in open breach of the United Nations' Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs which applies to every country world-wide, but President Obama and Presidential hopeful, Hillary Clinton, are too compromised to intervene federally – the aforementioned George Soros is the largest financial backer of the Democrats.

A contemporary Australian issue

In Australia, where no similar referendums are held, the pathway to legalisation is not so easily bought.

Shaping opinion

In 2012, the Australia21 forum, (Douglas & McDonald, 2012) with influential Australians such as former NSW Premier Bob Carr and former NSW Director of Public Prosecutions Nicholas Cowdery, began agitating in the media for the legalisation of all drugs – heroin, cocaine, speed, ice, ecstasy and cannabis – with the televised media giving them plenty of airplay, albeit fairly with Drug Free Australia brought in to debate the issue on air. By contrast the *Sydney Morning Herald* held a public debate at Sydney University where five drug legalisation advocates were pitted against a single prevention advocate. Not one contrary opinion was reproduced in any print media Australia-wide, including in Murdoch papers such as *The Australian* or the *Daily Telegraph*, which usually represent the conservative voice within Australia.

By 2013, with that push gaining no traction with the public, Australia21 operatives looked for a new pathway to legalising drugs, and found it in a young NSW cancer patient from Tamworth, Dan Haslam (Knott, 2014), who publicised his need to smoke cannabis to alleviate chemotherapy-induced nausea. And it is precisely this that the media is fighting for—not for medical cannabis per se, which is clearly already legal, but for crude non-pharmaceutical cannabis products which they hope will not be regulated by the TGA, all for the end-game, it would seem, of getting home-grown cannabis made available to all as it is in many US States.

Government initiatives - legislative action

In the ACT in late 2014, the Greens Bill (ACT Government, 2014) to legalise medical cannabis specifically stated that Sativex was not part of their plan, despite Sativex delivering all the same cannabinoids via a safer and faster-acting delivery system than hash cookies, bongs or crude cannabis oils. Their Bill sought to legalise home-grown cannabis, with up to nine cannabis plants being considered a non-trafficable quantity. What they failed to tell the public was that a single cannabis plant can produce 5 crops a year with a total 2,500 grams, enough to make 8,600 joints (Drug Free Australia, 2015). With the average medical cannabis patient in the US requiring 1.5 grams per day or 550 grams per year, a single plant provides five times the needed quantity, which in the US has provided too much temptation for patients who could use extra cash. Nine cannabis plants, as proposed by the Greens Bill, could have produced a street value of $270,000 worth of cannabis per year per individual – a nice little earner. The Bill was defeated (McElroy, 2015), a victory for common sense.

The current position

In February 2016 Federal Health Minister Sussan Ley announced legislation (Beech, 2016) allowing cannabis to be grown in Australia for medical use under strict cultivation conditions similar to the opium poppy crop in Tasmania (Yaxley, 2015). A centralised regulator controlled by the strictures of the Australian TGA would oversee the entire production of medical cannabis products which would be only pharmaceutical products. No raw cannabis products would be available for smoking or ingestion. This undermines the pathway to legalising recreational use. As it is, the legislation is a concession to pot activists in that it is only pegged to TGA strictures, not directly under the control of the TGA, which will more easily allow political tampering in the future.

> *"cannabis to be grown … under strict cultivation conditions similar to the opium poppy crop in Tasmania"*

Costings and consequences

In late 2015 Ley had suggested much lower costs of producing cannabis oils under this regulator, claiming that Australia might produce medical cannabis pharmaceuticals cheaper than those already available from overseas. She particularly mentioned that they could be made available in the form of tinctures or oils. What Ley may not have realised is that home-made cannabis oils can attain THC concentrations of 80% (High Times, 2014) as compared to 3% in bush-grown smoked cannabis. This could promote extreme cannabis intoxication. It was surmised that Australian pot activists may be seeing oils as their product of choice for use in e-cigarettes (Greig, 2013) where tobacco or cannabis oil is vaporised and publicly 'smoked' with no odour to allow detection by police. Drug Free Australia called for legislative measures to close down this pathway to recreational use via the medical cannabis ticket and pain alibi.

It is doubtful that Australia can reduce the cost of pharmaceutical cannabis medications substantially. As it is, the cost to medical cannabis users of illegal cannabis purchased on a street corner, at an average $12.00 a gram or $500 per month, is exactly the same

cost as cannabis bought from commercial growers by patients in the USA, as verified in a submission by cannabis legalisation organisation NORML (2009) to an Obama Inquiry. The UK-produced Sativex also costs patients $500 per month (NSW Legislative Council, 2013). Oddly enough, NSW Premier Baird's plan to produce cheaper pharmaceutical cannabinoids led to advertising for local expertise to develop a CBD-rich medication for children with epilepsy-like seizures, as disclosed in a January 2015 Drug Free Australia meeting with NSW Health Minister. It resulted in the Government announcing trials with Epidiolex purchased from the UK (News Limited, 2015).

"Australians do not want drug use entrenched in this country … 90% did not approve the regular use of cannabis"

Visioning our future

Present indications are that the Federal legislation will avoid many of the problems besetting the US legislations. There is a high price to be paid for having lax medical marijuana laws – the deleterious effect it has particularly on the young people for whom cannabis, as with alcohol, could never be legalised. In Colorado, which has allowed six plants per patient since 2009, 74% of teenagers surveyed entering rehabilitation for cannabis addiction reported that they sourced cannabis from medical marijuana patients (Salomonsen-Sautel, Sakai, Thurstone, Corley, & Hopfer, 2012). This issue of diversion of cannabis to minors for recreational use has been the most dangerous aspect of the push for crude cannabis, considering the damage done to any teenager's developing brain. A recent Lancet study (Di Forti et al., 2015) found that daily users of strong forms of cannabis have a five times greater risk of developing psychoses, many of which will debilitate them for life.

Public opinion on drug use

Australians do not want drug use entrenched in this country for 98% of the 24,000 people surveyed in the 2013 National Drug Strategy Household Survey did not approve the use of heroin, ecstasy, speed, ice and cocaine, 90% did not approve the regular use of cannabis, and 74% of Australians did not want to legalise cannabis. Further, 93% or more, depending on which drug is considered, did not want to legalise the other illicits. But persistently, a group working since 1992 has sought to change Australia's drug laws, seeing the choice to use any drug as a human right. It is a 'right' that doesn't exist because there is worldwide agreement that the harms presented by illegal drugs are unacceptable. That hasn't stopped the drug law reformers.

Challenging legalisation advocacy

The chosen pathway to a final goal of drug legalisation has been via harm reduction interventions, which presuppose an acceptance of illicit drug use with free needle programs, methadone maintenance and injecting rooms. The President of the Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation—Australia's drug legalisation movement—is also lauded as the father of harm reduction in Australia (Wodak, 2012), having formally set up the first needle exchange as an act of civil disobedience in the mid 1980s. In a speech reproduced in the Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation newsletter he (Wodak, 2005, para. 1.) stated that, "it is time to move from the first phase of harm reduction – focusing on removing adverse consequences – to a second phase which concentrates on reforming an ineffective and harm generating system of global drug prohibition." As a leading member of the Australia21 group, and the most vocal advocate for Dan Haslam's right to smoke cannabis as a cancer sufferer, his stated aims give a clear picture of what was behind the push for non-pharmaceutical forms of medical cannabis. For them, the acceptance of medical cannabis will ultimately lead to an acceptance of recreational use.

In 2012 almost all Australian media outlets gave Australia21 a platform to declare that the 'war on drugs' had failed and it was time to scrap prohibition. At that time, prevention organisations responded by asking, "What war on drugs?" (Channel 7 Sunday Sunrise, 2012). When Australia has done everything to pander to drug users by handing them free needles, maintaining drug users on methadone for up to 40 years, and giving them injecting rooms, this cannot be construed as a war on drugs. For 28 years now we have been facilitating drug use, anything but a war. And if we want to call the regular policing of drug use a 'war on drugs' why think it has failed? We don't abandon our 'war' on stealing, speeding or rape because we know we can never eradicate them, but we always seek to control them because if we don't the societal harms are catastrophic.

Maintain the 'war'

In 1998 the Howard government implemented the Tough on Drugs strategy, which maintained the harm reduction strategies that continue to facilitate drug use, but introduced a new and stronger prevention emphasis. Between 1998 and 2007 heroin use reduced by 75%, speed and ice use by 40% and cannabis use by 50%. While cocaine use rose by 15% and ecstasy use by a worrying 46%, assessment suggests successes outweighed failures (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2011).

A comparison of the legal drugs, alcohol and tobacco, with the illegal drugs shows the success of prohibition. Alcohol is used by 81% of Australians,

while tobacco in its heyday was used by 65% of Australians. It has taken many years and millions of dollars to reduce tobacco use in Australia. By comparison the illicits are a fraction of those percentages - opiates are used by 0.5%, cocaine by 2%, amphetamines by 2%, ecstasy by 2.5% and cannabis by 10%.

It is clear that Australians want less drug use, not more. Legalisation of drugs will only add significant use. Medical cannabis as the media was promoting it, would definitely have added more. Australia is taking a path which has learned from the mistakes of the USA, a path which is compassionate but sensible.

Educators are encouraged to lead their students in discussions considering the social influences affecting wellbeing, as required by the PDHPE curriculum of NSW or its equivalent in other states, but in particular to address the impact of pressure groups influencing legislative processes providing for, and protecting health. The current promotion of a medical use of marijuana provides a useful case study within which the complexity of community interaction becomes apparent. It highlights both the importance and difficulty of maintaining an open, clearly informed, research based decision-making political process. TEACH

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> *Australia is taking a path which has learned from the mistakes of the USA, a path … compassionate but sensible*

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7-25-2016

Transforming Classroom Practice

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Out and About Adventures

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TRANSFORMING CLASSROOM PRACTICE

Peter Vaughan
Out and About Adventures, Wangi Wangi, NSW
shared with
Graeme Perry
TEACH Editor, Cooranbong, NSW

Increasingly society is looking to educators to assist in responding to issues affecting a growing proportion of the population. Social issues—bullying, youth suicide and domestic violence, as well as medical issues—safe sex, obesity, and other lifestyle health problems, seek space in the crowded curriculum. In 2007-08 the ABS National Health Survey found one-quarter of Australian children aged five to 17 years were either overweight or obese (up 4% from 1995); however, this proportion has remained relatively stable (ABS Australian Health Survey, 2014-15). Australians (who live in the world's most urbanised nation), like Americans, are experiencing what Ricard Louv (2014) has called 'nature-deficit disorder'. While this is not a recognised medical diagnosis, he believes that the physical activity of young people is decreasing and their screen-based activity is increasing. He suggests that "research around the world identifies a correlation between time spent in nature with reduced symptoms of ADHD and depression, and improved mental cognition and creativity" (para. 10).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that some of the most prominent memories of school for many students occur outside the classroom, in the outdoors—whether it be on a class camp, an adventurous journey as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, or on subject specific field trips. While the focus of these events organised by teachers may be largely in response to the syllabus, they can also encourage students to increase their engagement with the outdoors and can contribute to the development of positive personal and group attributes.

Both State and Federal governments are increasingly aware of the need for 'active recreation', as opposed to passive viewing and minimal engagement, and are consequently realising the need for strategies that cross the traditional health and education sector boundaries. While it is both unfair and unrealistic to expect schools to be the panacea for some of these problems, they can be part of the solution by encouraging student engagement in outdoor activities.

Choose to evaluate your classroom program and consider some strategies that may assist in developing more powerful outdoor education. Strategies for consideration could include:

- Integrating healthy food selection and preparation into student activities and programs
- Providing regular extended exposure to nature—including free/unstructured time
- Using outdoor professionals to deliver or assist in outdoor education programs that focus specifically on desired behaviours and outcomes

Why not initiate the development of a full institutional scope and sequence charting, plotting the delivery of outdoor education that also considers the integration of multiple subject areas? This would include and extend the desired lifetime wellbeing outcomes and values adoption that education must encourage.



Avondale Schools Year 7 Outdoor Education: Kayak management—collaborative skills for problem solving. Photography: Peter Vaughan

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Holistic School Improvement: The Journey in Australian Adventist Schools

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TEACH[R]

Holistic school improvement: The journey in Australian Adventist schools

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Key words: collaborative, data driven, holistic, internal, school improvement

Abstract

This organisational journey traces transition from an initial recognition of an archaic 'inspectorial model' of school evaluation to an encompassing holistic school improvement process. A description of how the world's best practice informed this challenge for schools to engage in further strengthening of their professional learning cultures includes the development of consultation, structures, procedures, policy and process. Key changes emerged that have resulted in a self evaluation process that is internally driven, focused on a culture of improvement and excellence (*The Community of Faith and Learning*), but supported by the whole system. This support is represented within *A Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools*. Three supporting development pillars—the *Quality Adventist Schools Framework (QASF), Data Driven Decision-making and Quality Adventist Schools Cyclic Reviews (QASCRs)*—build upon the foundational elements of purpose and resources, to support the ultimate goal of Christ-focused, service-orientated, excellent student outcomes. In the rapidly changing educational context within Australia and internationally, Christian schools need to ensure they are delivering the very best educational program possible. System implementation by Adventist Schools Australia (ASA) predicts *schools* can successfully evaluate the extent to which they are meeting stakeholder expectations, delivering on system priorities and implementing strategic initiatives to optimise their success.

> *school improvement, became seen as something done to schools … recommend-ations generated by accreditation teams lacked school ownership*

A journey of holistic school improvement

The concept of school improvement is not new. Committed school leaders and teachers have always wanted the best for their students and school communities. Hence the journey towards improving outcomes for students is an ongoing pursuit. The journey of Adventist education is no exception.

Thirty nine years ago I commenced my career as a sole charge principal in an Adventist school. The measure of my school improvement efforts, were the reports received from the school inspector, who would visit once a year. He spoke earnestly into his dictaphone regarding what he observed in the classroom and school environment and sometime later a report would appear in the mail outlining my strengths and failings. As archaic as this may sound, as I reflect, I note that his efforts were motivated by a genuine desire to see my school improve.

In the early 1980s the South Pacific Division system office introduced a new approach to school review and improvement. This approach revolved around a school completing a copious self-study instrument once every five years and then going through an external accreditation program where a group of evaluators would come to the school for a period of two to three days to consider the school's self-study report and various areas of school operation. They would then write a raft of recommendations for the school to implement during the ensuing five years of accreditation.

With some minor tweaking here and there the self-study and accreditation program served Adventist education in Australia for over thirty years. In essence the desire was to assist schools improve. However, over time the completion of the instrument became an administrative function that did not engage teachers in reflecting on their practice. The process, which was designed to enhance school improvement, became seen as something done to schools and as a consequence recommendations generated by accreditation teams lacked school ownership and resulted in patchy implementation practices. It was commonly agreed that a new approach to school improvement was needed to support Adventist schools.

Seeds of change

In 2011, ASA hosted its biennial Educational Leaders Conference in Adelaide. Key speakers were selected to support key system initiatives with one of the foremost being school improvement. Ian Gamble, a noted international expert in the field of school improvement, was invited to present a keynote address. His understanding of the key elements of effective school improvement initiatives across the world provided an invaluable roadmap for Adventist education in Australia. Ian likened externally orchestrated accreditation programs to a farmer banging on the chook shed every now and then. When the banging started there was a loud commotion and feathers flew; however, once the banging stopped everything returned to 'normal', business as usual. It became clear that the key to school improvement was a culture of local engagement and ownership.

Following the conference, ASA hosted a full day think tank with school company directors of education to craft a new school improvement journey for Adventist schools that was cognisant of current research and informed by the directions that other schools' systems were pursuing.

Prior to committing to a particular model or framework to facilitate reflective practices school company education directors felt that it would be valuable to gain a first-hand understanding of the mechanisms utilised by high performing school systems across the world. Hence, in 2012 a group of ASA and school company education directors embarked on a study tour to Singapore, Finland, Scotland, and England.

The insights gained from the study tour were invaluable on many levels. While Finland and Singapore were at the top of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) rankings, it was Scotland that provided the greatest insights into effective school improvement practices. There is no doubt that Singapore and Finland are running excellent school systems; however, much of their success relates to the value placed on education by these small, homogenous cultures (Sahlberg, 2012).

Scotland had over a decade of experience associated with progressing its school improvement agenda and Ian Gamble's fingerprints were evident. The cornerstone of their initiative is a school self review tool—*How Good is Our School?* (Education Scotland, n.d.), now in its fourth edition. Inherent in the tool are a range of components covering a broad range of school operations but primarily focusing on the improvement of learning and teaching. In practice, each school undertakes its own school improvement journey by engaging school leadership and staff in measuring the school's current level of performance against rating scales provided for each component. Improvement goals arising from component reviews are the outcome of evidence driven professional conversations. It was apparent that such outcomes were 'owned' by school leadership and staff and provided a clear improvement roadmap for each school. Strong cultures of reflection and improvement were apparent.

The context

Adventist education in Australia is comprised of 42 inter-connected schools supervised by regional school companies acting as system authorities. These schools provide holistic Christian education for over 13,000 students. The peak body of Adventist education in Australia is Adventist Schools Australia (ASA). The core functions of ASA are to provide advice and resources to support schools in the development of authentic communities of faith and learning.

Utilising world's best practice to craft a new school improvement journey

In early 2012 ASA appointed a school improvement officer and formed a working group to guide the development of a school review and reflection tool similar to the model developed in Scotland and those developed in several Catholic Education Offices across Australia. Our 'learnings' from these school systems has been significant and ongoing.

The working group designed a framework consisting of twenty components in four domains (see Figure 1). The goal was to maintain a central focus on student learning outcomes while recognising the range of additional facets required to 'build' an effective school. Interestingly, the Australian Government was also working on an improvement tool under the leadership of Masters (2012) concurrently with ASA.

Master's National School Improvement Tool was released in 2012 with nine components which brought "together findings from international research into the practices of highly effective schools and school leaders" (p. 5). The ASA working group was encouraged that it was heading in the right direction. The resolve of the working group was further strengthened by the Australian Government enshrining the need for schools to develop robust school improvement plans within the Education Act (2013), making compliance a requirement to ensure ongoing receipt of Commonwealth funding.

During 2012 over one hundred Adventist educators were involved in the development of rating criteria to populate the twenty components of the school improvement framework. The professional

> *"Improvement goals arising from component reviews are the outcome of evidence driven professional conversations."*

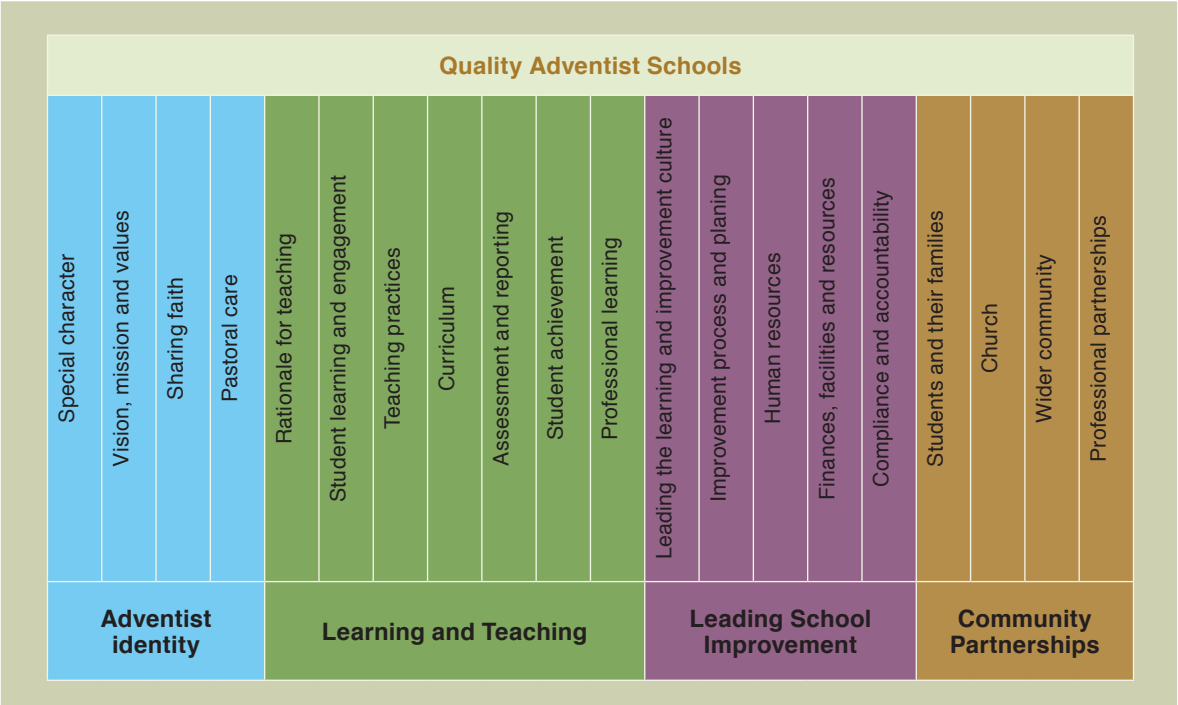


Figure 1: Quality Adventist Schools Framework domains and components

> *a new systemic requirement … without … a clear aligned vision, training and support would result in low levels of fidelity*

conversations generated within the component writing groups were energising and exciting. They provided a small window into the conversations that we hoped would subsequently be occurring in our staffrooms and amongst our school communities across the country.

In May, 2013 the new school improvement tool for Adventist schools was officially launched as the Quality Adventist Schools Framework (QASF) at the Educational Leaders' Conference at Wyong, NSW. Much had been achieved in the two years since the Adelaide conference and the new tool and its inherent processes provided an exciting opportunity for Adventist schools to move beyond the long established accreditation program and cultural attitudes that had arisen for this approach. It became clear that producing the QASF was only the first part of a process of aligned cultural change in Adventist schools.

The Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools

The philosophical underpinning of Adventist education calls for a balance between the development of the spiritual, mental, physical and social outcomes for students. The twenty components of the QASF reflect this holistic approach and are inherent in the four domains of the framework – Adventist Identity; Learning and Teaching; Leading School Improvement; and Community Partnerships. However, transforming a tool into an aligned school improvement strategy for a diverse range of schools is complex.

ASA recognised that school leaders and staff work in highly accountable and challenging school environments and face a plethora of daily demands on their time and energy. Adding a new systemic requirement to their lives without providing a clear aligned vision, training and support would result in low levels of fidelity to the QASF. As a consequence ASA retained the services of their school improvement officer and created an aligned system school improvement strategy.

The components of an aligned school improvement framework are outlined in Figure 2, A Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools. Each component of the model plays a critical role in improving outcomes for students in Adventist schools.

The foundations

The bedrock of Adventist education is its mission, vision and values (see Figure 2). Maintaining a strong understanding and articulation of the mission, vision and values is essential for a faith-based school system to flourish. In 2012 an ASA Adventist Identity Working Party created *The Adventist School: A Community of Faith and Learning Model*.

The working group recognised that the creation of school communities where young people are

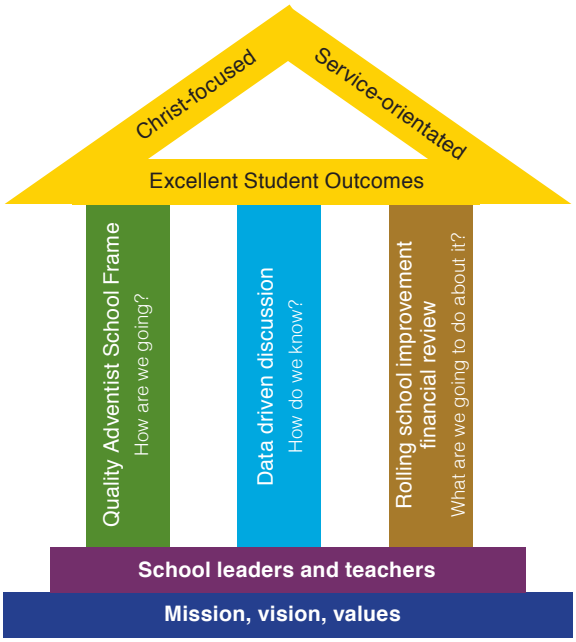


Figure 2: A Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools

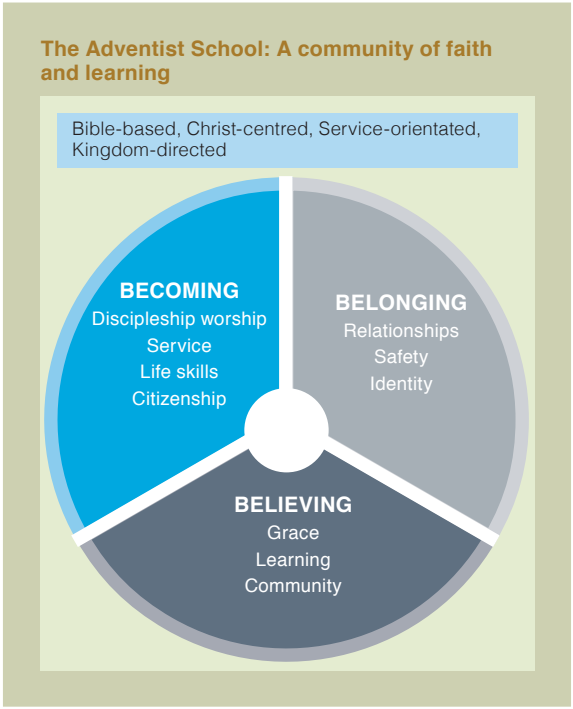


Figure 3: The Community of Faith and Learning

provided with opportunities to develop their faith and a 'love of learning' is at the heart of the mission of Adventist education. Figure 3 provides an overview of the Community of Faith and Learning. At its core are the beliefs and values of Adventist education that school leaders and staff uphold. The flow between the key elements of *Belonging, Believing and Becoming* illustrate the complex and dynamic relationships between supporting students on a personal journey of holistic improvement while at all times maintaining relationships and programs that are Christ-centred, Bible-based, Service-orientated, and Kingdom-directed.

The second essential foundational element to progressing a model of sustained school improvement is the commitment and support of school leadership and staff (see Figure 2). At the heart of a successful school system is its leaders and staff. In a far-reaching research study conducted during 2006 and 2007 McKinsey and Company analysed the performance of more than two dozen of the world's best performing education systems. The reports *How the World's Best-Performing School Systems Come Out on Top* (September, 2007) *and How the World's Most Improved Systems Keep Getting Better* (November 2010) detailed findings identifying why these top-performing school systems perform so much better than most others. In essence their findings highlighted teacher and leader quality as the highest determinant of system improvement. The training and support they receive create the school cultures in which they operate, and in turn, student outcomes are either improved or diminished.

> *findings highlighted teacher and leader quality as the highest determinant of system improvement*

Adventist education is blessed by both its committed and talented, leaders and teachers. They share a common vision of the core goals of Adventist education. Such alignment is essential yet often taken for granted in faith-based school communities. The development of the Adventist Encounter Curriculum as a religious education curriculum framework and teaching guide/source, has also served to undergird schools with the beliefs and values that inform genuine communities of faith and learning.

While missional alignment is essential, it is also critical to provide school cultural environments conducive to school improvement. Paterson and Deal (2002) highlight the fact that every school has its own distinct and unique culture comprised of a complex set of rituals, folkways, and values that shape behaviour and relationships. Swygert (2004) maintains that true school improvement depends on changes in school culture. When leaders are attentive to building a culture of reflection, where daily interactions and deliberations focus on teaching and learning, then meaningful improvement will occur (Barnett & O'Mahony, 2006).

In 2012, ASA commissioned research through Insight SRC into principal well-being and school culture. All Adventist schools in Australia participated

and received a comprehensive report and opportunities to reflect on the findings. While reports varied from school to school there were two overall messages for Adventist education as it sought to provide appropriate foundations for aligned cultural change.

The first message was that principals are highly engaged and passionate about their schools, and in serving as Christian educators. They demonstrated a high degree of 'openness' and 'agreeableness', indicating receptiveness to teamwork and new approaches to building a better future for their schools and their staff. However, the second key message highlighted a need for school and systemic cultural change. On average, staff wellbeing was lower than in other school systems. A focus on teamwork, empowerment and learning were seen as key opportunities, at the system, company and school levels, for bringing about an improvement in wellbeing and school effectiveness. In addition, the findings noted that a stronger focus on facilitative leadership styles that empower staff to work through challenges and issues, in a way that enhances shared learning, was required (Hart, 2012).

ASA believes that an aligned approach to school improvement will facilitate the needed cultural changes. The three pillars of the model of aligned cultural change in Adventist schools are at the heart of such cultural change.

The first pillar – The Quality Adventist Schools Framework (QASF)

The first pillar of aligned cultural change in Adventist education is the collaborative development and embedding of the QASF. Unfortunately, as the demand for accountability has risen, school leaders and teachers have been forced to become more reactive to external demands, rather than

> *staff wellbeing was lower than in other school systems. A focus on teamwork, empowerment and learning were seen as key opportunities*

Domain	**2**	**Learning and Teaching**
Component	**2.5**	**Assessment and Reporting**
Element	**2.5.1**	Assessment for learning

Quality Adventist Schools

1	Rating 2	3	Rating 4	5	Rating 6	7
	The school has an assessment policy that is not widely known and needs to give higher priority to developing shared understanding amongst all teachers. The school needs to develop assessment processes that encourage a safe and engaging learning environment. The school needs to implement assessment processes that provide greater scope and opportunities for independent learning amongst all students. Assessment processes need to be implemented that challenge and support all students in their learning. Teachers need to be encouraged to provide helpful and constructive assessment feedback that identifies strengths and relevant areas for students' improvement. The school needs to increase the consistency and regularity of feedback in order to encourage self-assessment.		The school's assessment policy outlines some of the key principles of assessment for learning and is mostly implemented by the teachers. The school seeks to develop assessment processes that to some degree encourage a safe and engaging learning environment. The school's assessment processes broadly seeks to foster independent learning for students. Assessment processes are somewhat effective in challenging and supporting the students. Many teachers provide feedback, which identifies some strengths and relevant areas for student improvement. Many teachers provide assessment feedback that is consistent, continuous and to some degree encourages self-assessment.		Whole school assessment policy comprehensively outlines the key principles of assessment for learning and is consistently implemented by almost all teachers. Whole school assessment processes promote a safe, engaging, innovative and creative learning environment. Whole school assessment processes facilitates student self-regulation and independence, and encourages lifelong learning. Assessment processes are highly effective to comprehensively challenge and support individual students. Almost all teachers regularly provide meaningful feedback, which comprehensively identifies strengths and relevant areas for student improvement. Almost all teachers provide assessment feedback that is consistent, continuous, immediate, challenges students, and encourages ongoing student self-assessment.	

Possible Evidence		
	• Mark Books and reports to demonstrate student improvement • Peer feedback and self-assessment • Differentiation evident in programs • Marking Criteria • Comments and annotations on student assessment tasks	• Whole School Assessment and Reporting Policy • Documentation of assessment in teaching program • Professional appraisals and observations to see assessment embedded in the learning environment

Figure 4: A sample component for: Learning and Teaching Assessment and Reporting - Assessment for Learning

taking a thoughtful, proactive approach to school improvement. However, the QASF is a framework designed to enhance opportunities for leaders and teachers to reflect on their practice rather than relying on intuition and hunches.

Figures 4-6 provide a sample component of the benchmark criteria (within The Learning and Teaching – Assessment and Reporting component) available to school leaders and teachers to initiate and guide professional conversations.

The heartbeat of the QASF is a collaborative approach to component reviews. Professional conversations in safe and supportive learning communities are essential to the success of a new approach to school improvement (Wills, 2014). Naming a component rating, on a seven point scale, is far less important than the conversation and collaboration around reviewing components that provide members of the school community with opportunities to create grassroots driven goals that

Domain	**2**	**Learning and Teaching**
Component	**2.5**	**Assessment and Reporting**
Element	**2.5.2**	Assessment Practices and Processes

Quality Adventist Schools

1	Rating 2	3	Rating 4	5	Rating 6	7
	Students and parents as yet have limited understanding of the importance of assessment processes and procedures and need to be more fully engaged. Teachers need to consistently document assessment practices and processes. The school needs to ensure that assessment practices and processes are implemented across the whole school. Assessment practices and processes of the Australian Curriculum, state curriculum and National Standard for Teachers are partially reflected in school documentation. There is considerable scope for the school to analyse and use data from external assessment more consistently and effectively to improve student achievement. The school needs to find more opportunities to differentiate assessment to support and meet individual student needs more effectively. Across the school teachers need to be more self-reflective and work more collaboratively to develop more effective assessment practice which improves student learning. Assessment feedback is generally limited and ineffective in improving teaching and learning. The school needs to encourage teachers and students to engage in better feedback of their assessments to assist improvement.		Students and parents are aware of the importance of assessment procedures and are generally cooperative with its processes. Many teachers document assessment practices and processes, and to some degree implement them. Assessment practices and processes are generally sound across the whole school, but there is scope for greater consistency and impact. Assessment practices and processes of the Australian Curriculum and state curriculum and National Standard for Teachers are adhered to in school documentation. Data from external assessment is often used for improving student achievement. Assessment is sometimes differentiated to support individual student needs. Many teachers are self-reflective and work collaboratively to review assessment practice to improve student learning. The school provides some opportunities for students to engage in feedback of their assessment to assist ongoing improvements to learning.		Students and parents are highly aware of the significance and relevance of assessment procedures and are cooperative with its processes. Almost all teachers consistently and comprehensively document assessment practices and processes. Assessment practices and processes are consistent and well integrated in their implementation across the whole school. Assessment practices and processes comprehensively embed the Australian Curriculum and state curriculum documentation, and the National Standard for Teachers. Data from external assessment is analysed and effectively used for improving the quality of student achievement. Assessment is rigorously differentiated to support individual student needs. Almost all teachers are self-reflective and work collaboratively to evaluate and review assessment practices and processes to improve student learning. The school provides regular opportunities for students to engage in evaluative feedback of their assessments in order to improve.	

Possible Evidence	
• Staff and Department Meeting Minutes • Unit evaluations and program registers • Peer feedback, self-assessment, surveys, student focus groups • Marking Criteria • Comments and annotations on student assessment tasks	• Whole School Assessment and Reporting Policy • Whole School Assessment Policy Student Handbook • Teaching programs • Australian Curriculum documentation, relevant state curriculum documentation, NAPLAN results and NST documentation

Figure 5: A sample component for: Learning and Teaching Assessment and Reporting - Assessment Practices and Processes

> *Naming a component rating, … is far less important than the conversation and collaboration around reviewing components*

assist the school to reach its desired future. Rather than an outside team of experts coming in and telling leaders and teachers where they must improve, they are reaching their own conclusions and taking ownership of key improvement strategies. The basic message is that educators have a collective sense of direction for and commitment to student learning, aided by constant reflection on their practice within safe and supportive school cultures.

The QASF assists school leaders reinvent themselves as educational leaders. Their enthusiasm and engagement in seeking to answer the key question—*How are we going?*—is central to creating and sustaining successful school improvement journeys. It is difficult to know how to improve if there is no clear understanding of current strengths and weaknesses and a plan to move forward.

Further opportunities for professional conversations and reflection are afforded when component review groups share and refine their findings with whole staff groups. Subsequent component review validation with school company education directors provide further opportunities to have focused professional conversations regarding the findings of a component review and establishing improvement goals for the school's rolling school improvement plan.

> *"Rather than an outside team … telling leaders and teachers where they must improve, they are reaching their own conclusions and taking ownership"*

An additional welcome benefit of QASF component reviews has been the identification and nurturing of leadership talent in schools. Wise principals are selecting potential leaders to coordinate component reviews and they are not being disappointed.

Currently Adventist schools are at varying waypoints on the implementation of the QASF and the creation of highly effective cultures of reflection and collaboration. We rejoice at the many 'bright spots' appearing across the system.

The second pillar – Data Driven Discussions

The central pillar of the *Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools* is on the cutting edge of current school improvement initiatives. The telling question is—*How do we know?*—whether each child at school is on a suitable learning journey as school improvement can only be achieved as the outcomes of individual students are addressed.

QASF component reviews require the triangulation of data to inform professional conversations, arriving at a 'component rating', and formulating specific, agreed goals for improvement. Inherent in each component is an 'evidence box', provided to guide personnel involved in component reviews in relation to the types of evidence they may seek (see Figures 4-6). While some schools are

Domain	**2**	**Learning and Teaching**
Component	**2.5**	**Assessment and Reporting**
Element	**2.5.3**	Reporting Principles

Quality Adventist Schools

1	Rating 2	3	Rating 4	5	Rating 6	7
	Reporting procedures provide limited scope in tracking student achievement. Communication between parents and teachers is under-utilised in reporting student achievement. Feedback in academic reports needs to be more positive and focused on fostering student improvement. Reporting provides a record of student achievement but is not consistently linked to the whole school assessment policy.		Reporting procedures are generally helpful in tracking student achievement throughout their schooling career, although some inconsistencies are evident. Most teachers satisfactorily communicate reporting of student achievement to parents and students. Many teachers provide positive feedback in academic reports with the intention of fostering student improvement. Reporting generally reflects the whole school assessment policy, providing a satisfactory record of student achievement.		Reporting procedures are highly effective in comprehensively tracking student development and achievement throughout their schooling career. Almost all teachers consistently and comprehensively communicate reporting of student achievement to parents and students. Almost all teachers provide positive and constructive feedback in academic reports to foster student improvement. Reporting is fully in line with the whole school assessment policy, providing a comprehensive and accurate record of student achievement.	

Possible Evidence		
	• Teaching Diaries • Marks Books • Parent feedback on parent/teacher interviews • Whole School policy to ascertain the protocols for communication with parents e.g letter, telephone, email	• Whole School Assessment and Reporting Policy • Database and central record of past academic reports • Report comments • Schedule of parent/teacher interviews and protocols

Figure 6: A sample component for: Learning and Teaching Assessment and Reporting - Reporting Principles

collecting quality data others need assistance on this journey at this time and providing assistance in this area is a priority for ASA as it endeavours to maintain strong system alignment and support.

Masters (2012) identified that data needs to be collected and not created. There is certainly plenty of meaningful data available to Adventist schools through NAPLAN, standardised testing and perception surveys; however, there is scope for ASA to assist in both planning the collection processes and accessing training needed for associated data analysis. This is a work in progress, with all schools to be provided with a data dashboard in 2015.

Jensen (2010) argues that school performance measures published on the *MySchool* website are prone to mismeasurement and may be biased against schools serving lower socio-economic communities. He argues that:

> *School principals need to be able to identify for which students, in which subject areas and in which grade levels their school is effectively contributing to student progress. Effective programs and instruction can be expanded and less effective areas developed.*
>
> (p. 4)

School improvement in Adventist schools will benefit greatly by the creation of strong 'data driven' conversations and a focus on school value-added scores calculated by comparing the progress made by each student between assessments and measured by the contribution the school makes to that progress, controlling for students' background.

The third pillar – Rolling School Improvement Plans/ Quality Adventist Schools Cyclic Reviews (QASCR's)

While QASF component reviews informed by triangulated data are essential, there comes a time when the key question comes—*What are we going to do about it?* The key word in the question is *'we'*. The fundamental cultural change sought through the Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools was that schools would feel empowered to embark on their own journey of improvement with appropriate system support and their goals for improvement would be those that they have generated and taken ownership of at a grassroots level (Barnett & O'Mahony, 2006; Jensen, 2010; Masters, 2012).

Adventist schools are now in the third year of the first five year cycle of the Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools. However, there are strong signs of cultural change as schools embrace the pillars of the ASA school improvement initiative. In time, like all cultural change, the hope is that principals and teachers will say, *'This is just the way we do things here'*. Such cultures will support the provision of contextually appropriate holistic Adventist education.

In answering the question—*What are we going to do about it?*—The Australian Education Act (2013) requires schools to have annual school improvement plans in place as one of the accountability criteria for the receipt of Commonwealth Funding. While the current Government has postponed the implementation of this requirement, it highlights the need for schools to have clear, agreed improvement plans. ASA and system school company directors of education expect that schools will develop a functional rolling school improvement plan.

Our system learning to date in relation to school improvement plans, is that schools are often developing overly comprehensive school improvement plans under the four domains inherent in the QASF. Schools are being encouraged to step back and embed fewer, more substantial and aligned strategies, and further that such strategies be sustained until their completion. Principals and school company directors of education have a part to play in ensuring that professional conversations, at the time of QASF component reviews and validation visits, focus on reaching agreement in relation to more overarching improvement strategies rather than focusing on minutia.

"Schools are being encouraged to step back and embed fewer, more substantial and aligned strategies, and further that such strategies be sustained until their completion."

The final aspect of the Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools is the institution of the QASCR. Similar to the Scottish and Catholic Education Office processes of monitoring school improvement journeys, ASA has created an opportunity for schools to share their school improvement journey. A review occurs every five years and is confined to a one day program involving key ASA, school company education directors and school personnel.

The dynamics of QASCR visits are radically different to former accreditation visits. Rather than external 'experts' determining the direction of a school, the school shares its journey of improvement through a series of professional conversations. These conversations take the form of three, one hour dialogues, directed by school leadership. The first conversation provides a snapshot of the schools improvement journey – components reviewed and goals set. The second conversation revolves around a discussion of the schools analysis of key data and its implications for school improvement, while the final conversation is a joint reflection on the school's improvement and future areas of focus to enhance a robust improvement journey. Feedback from schools indicates that QASCR visits are providing valuable opportunities for reflection and future goal setting.

Excellent holistic student outcomes

The Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools (see Figure 2), establishes the mission, vision and values of Adventist education together with the passion, commitment and skills of its school leaders and staff, as foundational and essential to informing and progressing the three pillars associated with cultural change in Adventist schools. However, it is important to always keep in mind the purpose of a school improvement initiative.

As Figure 2 illustrates, Adventist education in Australia is driven by particular achieved outcomes for the students who attend our schools. Ellen White (1903), a founder of Adventist education stated:

> *True education means more than the perusal of a certain course of study… It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.*
>
> (p. 13)

In essence Adventist education is committed to the provision of an education program designed to provide excellent holistic outcomes for its students. Further, the primary goals of Adventist education are to provide opportunities for young people to commit their lives to Christ and to live lives of service to Him now and in the world to come.

Conclusion

School improvement is an ongoing journey as exemplified by the journey of Adventist education over the past forty or more years. ASA as a resourcing agency of Adventist education in Australia has collaborated with school company education directors to develop a *Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools* after extensive research and consultation in relation to world's best practice in school improvement strategies.

The foundations of the model are the mission, vision and values of Adventist education operationalised by the school leaders and staff. They have the responsibility of progressing Adventist identity through the implementation of new approaches to creating aligned cultural change in Adventist schools. The challenge for school companies will be the provision of appropriate support to ensure that aligned school improvement strategies are sustained. This support will need to be in the form of both personnel and financial resourcing.

The key questions that school leaders, staff and community members will consider are:

- How are we going?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do about it?

Providing deep and well considered answers to these questions will inform the development and implementation of meaningful rolling school improvement plans at each school. These plans will need to focus on aligned and sustained improvement initiatives rather than on a plethora of small, well-intentioned, modifications to aspects of the schools' programs.

Desired outcomes of pursuing the Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools are based on a holistic approach to the purpose of education. A balanced development of the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions of young people attending Adventist schools remains as the central focus of school improvement initiatives, as does knowing and serving Christ in their communities.

The outcomes of Model of Aligned Cultural Change in Adventist Schools will be reviewed regularly, potentially after each 5-year cycle, to ensure that all Adventist schools are maintaining a strong and effective journey of school improvement. TEACH

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Developing a Culture of Learning by Making Thinking Visible

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Developing a culture of learning by making thinking visible

TEACH[R]

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Key words: visible thinking, learning cultures, professional learning, school change

"For classrooms to be cultures of thinking for students, schools have to be cultures of thinking for teachers."
(Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011)

Introduction

Many organisations would say they are a learning organisation due to their focus on professional learning, collaboration and sharing of knowledge. However, many make the mistake of considering professional learning (PL) to be an innovation, a fad and possibly a 'one off'.

Reeves (2009) suggests, that professional development should focus "on a few things: what to teach, how to teach it, how to meet the needs of individual students, and how to build internal capacity" (p. 63), rather than 'mind-numbing' vendor packaged workshops. A true learning organisation is more a state of being than a list of features based on how it operates. Fullan (2006) supports these ideas suggesting that the development of a learning organisation requires the ability to build capacity among its participants: leaders, teachers and community.

Our schools' journey to becoming a learning organisation has assisted staff in dealing with the rapid changes in education through focusing on the practices of individuals in the organisation as well as on policies (Levin & Fullan, 2008). This has required a careful balancing act between accountability, education reform, government and system expectations and the realities of College daily life. Early on we came to understand this truth: that "no corporation or school can thrive in the absence of creativity, innovation and learning", (Brown 2012, p. 187), and that in order for real growth to occur, we as leaders needed to facilitate a culture of learning that promoted these ideas. It is also important to note at this point that the college leadership team had decided that whole-school professional learning, sustained over longer periods of time, would have the best chance of being implemented and embedded in teacher practice, and therefore would be effective for increasing student achievement.

Fullan (2006) and Fullan and Quinn (2015) also suggest that a learning organisation has to get beyond surface ideas and superficial learning to deeper authentic learning. In their most recent book Fullan and Quinn (2016, p. 79) state: "we must shift from a focus on teaching or inputs to a deeper understanding of the *process* of learning and how we can influence it." As a learning organisation participants, leaders wanted to ensure that as they were not undermining the learning of individuals, so practices were developed that ensured thinking resulted in articulation of ideas, and ideas were followed by action. Initially, in early experience as Head of Primary learning, meetings were somewhat silent, and only a few teachers would share their thinking or ideas. An emerging purpose was to encourage all teachers to have a voice.

"the development of a learning organisation requires the ability to build capacity among its participants: leaders, teachers and community."

The Primary Leadership Team Initiative

The Primary Leadership Team (PLT) structure was a significant support in helping us find our way through this period of our learning cycle and the development of our culture of learning. It was necessary for us to answer the question: What do our students need? However, this was not a question asked initially. It became an emerging focal question as our culture of learning developed.

Some of the key ideas learnt about developing a culture came from Jovanova-Mitkovska (2010) who suggests that it is the responsibility of all schools, educators, systems, communities and society to promote and encourage a professional learning culture, one that encourages teachers to value the

worth of life long learning. He avoids the question, "Can we have effective schools without effective teachers?" Professional learning communities that ensure follow up and reflection are results orientated. They reinforce a focus on essential common goals or standards, and are social, which encourages the best kind of accountability—internal accountability—because such relies on a commitment from others, as well as "taking responsibility for one's actions" (Fullan & Quinn, 2016, p. 110). But significantly it "honours and empowers teachers and their intelligence, capturing the vast reserves of expertise in any team and school" (Schmoker, 2006, p. 114). This suggests that a new professional 'trajectory' starts with the recognition that we must identify and cultivate the talent that already resides within our schools.

"surprising was a comment, … "I try everything you model to us". This was a stunning outcome because the protocols were not mandated."

Programs accessed and developing the culture

Early in our school journey leaders applied to participate through Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) in the Australian Government Quality Teacher Program (AGQTP), and continued to do so, until this program was discontinued by the Federal government. The first program undertaken was the 'Developing a Culture of Learning' project. As part of the project Ron Richhart from The Harvard Graduate School of Education's Project Zero, along with Anna Bennett and Aine Maher from ISV, outlined to leaders the necessity of addressing 8 Cultural Forces (Richhart, 2002) when developing a professional learning culture. They also led learning about and understanding of both the use and value of Project Zero thinking protocols to develop students' thinking and enhance their learning.

Consequently, as part of the sustained professional learning strategies, leaders discussed how these 8 Cultural factors and Project Zero protocols could be utilised with teachers, not only to develop collaboration and professional conversation around teaching and learning, but also as a modelling of some effective practices teachers could use in their classrooms. As Helen Timperley (2015, p. 6) describes "One way to think about this idea is for leaders to consider teachers as their 'class' of professionals, in the same way that teachers have classes of student learners."

The use of protocols such as Microlab, See, Think Wonder, and Connect, Extend, Challenge were therefore used to engage leaders and teachers in conversations around professional readings, videos and other stimuli. Initially it was difficult and the conversations didn't flow as smoothly as expected. Reeves (2009, p. 48) states that if "you are committed to effective change, then persistence through the initial challenges to achieve the essential short-term wins will be necessary, even when that persistence is unpopular." This was found to be true and over time (years to be honest), through selecting engaging stimuli that would encourage teachers' thinking and conversations, these protocols started to emerge, becoming observed in teachers' classroom practice and soon useful as part of developing students as thinkers.

The culture of learning was growing and developing. Teachers' talk about their practice and students' learning became more natural and extended beyond formal settings. Leaders increasingly observed professional conversations occurring in informal settings such as around the staffroom table at lunchtime. What was also surprising was a comment made in conversation a few years into our journey where a teacher said, "*I try everything you model to us*". This was a stunning outcome because the protocols were not mandated. Leadership simply wished to model some effective ways to support students to learn and think, by using them as part of teacher professional learning.

Through the use of thinking protocols during professional learning sessions the teacher group started to establish a common language and consistent professional dialogue around such key ideas as, "What makes the most improvement in teaching and learning?", or unpacking the Australian Professional Standards. The group found, like Opfer and Pedder (2011), that teachers saw 'whole school commitment' and 'social capital' were very significant in professional learning. They began to understand that leaders saw it was important to provide time and opportunities for them to collaborate and talk about teaching and learning, and to share ideas and expertise. Teachers saw that their individual identity was being acknowledged. As stated earlier, Richhart's (2002) 8 Cultural Forces (Time, Opportunities, Routines and Structures, Common Language, Modeling, Interactions and Relationships, Physical Environment and Expectations) that define professional learning communities and classroom environments, were central in establishing the environment and culture for teacher learning.

Example 1
Mrs Holland's reflections
"The first Compass Point lesson concluded our Year 2 Unit on the Past and the Present. We thought we would finish off with one lesson on thinking about the Future. This was the first time that they had used this thinking routine, so while the lesson was an introduction to Compass Points it revealed their thinking about the Future (Figure 1). Again, I used Think Pair Share to help those kids who were reticent to use the new protocol… it empowered them to share in our discussions."

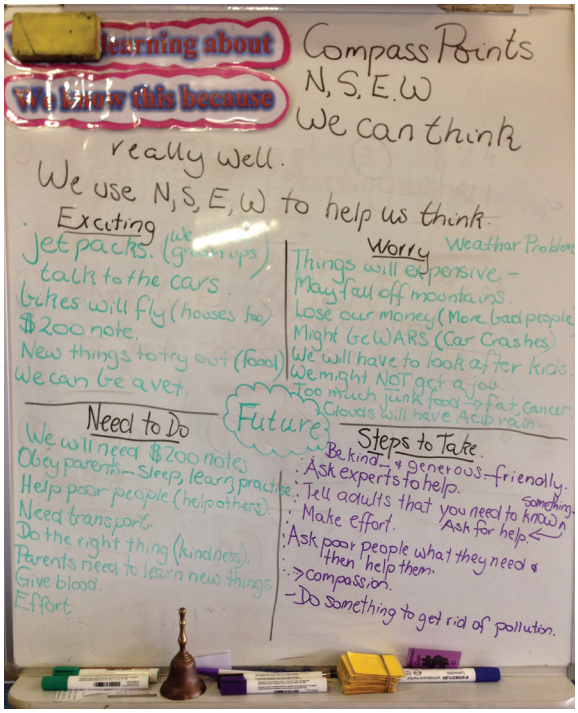


Figure 1. Using the Compass Points thinking protocol with Year 2 students

Developing the leaders

A significant focus in developing our culture was the development of our own capacity as leaders. Hargreaves (2009, p. 180) suggests that the best leaders develop leadership capacity in themselves as well as others. Leaders have a central role in creating this culture. It is about what they do daily to encourage these behaviours and habits. Fullan (2015, p. 35) states that it is "well documented as successful in practice that principals should act as 'lead learners', participating with teachers in 'using the group to change the group'." Boud and Middleton (2003) identified this concept as leaders encouraging learning from each other at work by pursuing the rich sources of information from each other in a 'community of practice'. Simply put, leaders have to be learning alongside their teachers modelling the importance of learning whilst building the capacity of each member of their team. Through our Primary Leadership Team learning, our teachers were engaged in rich teacher learning, which has transformed the way our students are taught and learn too.

Key Points Learned

Key points learnt along the way about learning cultures and teachers are:

- Learning cultures take time to establish
- The 8 Cultural Forces that surround learning cultures must be addressed
- Protocols are important for engaging in effective conversations
- It is important that leaders are lead learners alongside their teachers
- It is important that teachers are given voice
- Teachers should be part of setting the pace for learning
- Teachers are the designers of their learning
- It is the role of leaders, as lead learners, to develop teachers' capacity in how to identify effective ways to learn professionally

Example 2

Teachers are brainstorming differentiation. Each has a book to guide their thinking. The protocol Connect Extend Challenge is being used to respond to their shared personal reading. A shared understanding of what differentiation 'looks like' and 'sounds like' is being formed. The PLT then used teacher learning as a type of 'formative assessment' practice for 'leaders' and to plan future differentiation PL. This strategy was learned from a recent short course on *Making Learning Visible*.



Figure 2. Teachers are brainstorming differentiation

Recent developments

As a result of taking the time over many years to build our professional learning culture, and with the assistance of the learning received as leaders from ISV, an invitation was received in 2015 to take part in Project Zero (PZ) Connect, a pilot PL collaboration between Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) and the Harvard University Graduate School of Education. This project involved teachers and leaders having the opportunity to learn through a series of short online courses delivered by Harvard facilitators. Twenty eight of our teachers and leaders were engaged in Action Research through two of the offered courses: 'Making Learning Visible' and 'Making Thinking Visible'.

> *"leaders have to be learning alongside their teachers modelling the importance of learning whilst building the capacity of each member of their team"*

As a result of this partnership, while once a few teachers had used visible thinking protocols effectively in their classrooms, but in an adhoc manner (as a result of the PLT modelling their use, as described above), now many teachers engaged in using visible thinking protocols in their classrooms to develop deeper thinking in their students. It is exciting to note that thirty six teachers have submitted expressions of interest to participate in four 2016 ISV/Harvard short courses as part of the professional learning component of their Action Research.

Example 3

The Leaders as part of their learning were documenting the learning of teachers. This graphic (Figure 3) documents some reflections from literacy support aides taken from their professional learning (PL). It was important for us to document the reflections in this way to affirm for our aides the value leaders place on them and their professionalism. It was also important to the leaders for our adult learners to see their learning displayed in a public space—where they could be proud of it, where it could act as a reminder to them of the strategies they could use with the students in their care, and where passersby could view it and perhaps discuss it. The documentation was also completed as a model to our classroom teachers of what is possible for them, demonstrating the value and use of documentation in planning learning.

> *important to the leaders for our adult learners to see their learning displayed in a public space—where they could be proud of it …*

Summary of changes observed

As a result of developing our professional learning community we have seen the following changes in teacher practice:

- Increase in complex questioning by teachers
- Increase in use of visible thinking protocols across the whole primary school and in a number of areas of the secondary school
- Consistent use of learning intentions and success criteria to guide and assess learning
- Collaborative team planning, with more teachers asking more inquiry questions
- Student-led learning becoming a key feature of teacher planning and practice
- Increase in formative feedback and feed forward to students
- Willingness of teachers to accept and act on PL feedback and feed forward—very open to learning

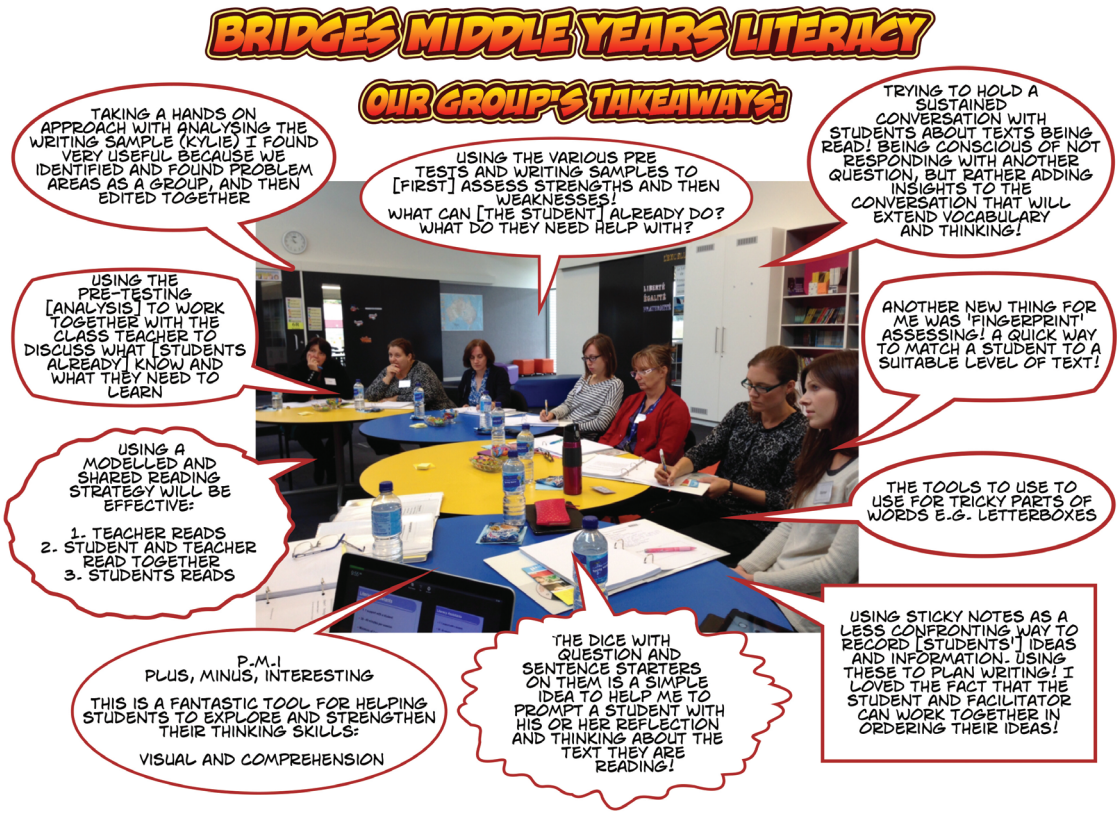


Figure 3. Reflections of some of our literacy support aides during their professional learning (PL)



Figure 4. Stimulus images for See Think Wonder in action – Year 2

- Increased passion about teaching—teachers are more aware of their own impact on learning and feel empowered
- Teachers also now seek each other's advice and expertise
- Teachers willingly opening their classrooms to leader and peer observations

The following figures and text are some examples of the evidence of change recently shared from the Year 2 and Year 5 classes within the school. They are shared in the spirit of collaborative, reflective practice, an outcome of the PL cycles in our school.

Example 4
See Think Wonder protocols
Use of the See Think Wonder protocols in the Year 2 classroom incorporates the images in Figure 4 and the following question prompts:

Think:

- What do these pictures make you *think* about?
- What do you *think* these pictures are saying?
- What do you *think* is similar about these pictures?
- What do you *think* these pictures have in common?

See: This *thinking* is evidence based….

- What do you see that makes you *think* that?

Example 5
Students bring their own assumptions to critique work. Students' background is often overlooked when teachers plan for discussions. If teachers can bring different perspectives to what they see in a situation, students can too. Ms Angie Sharma – Year 5 Teacher.

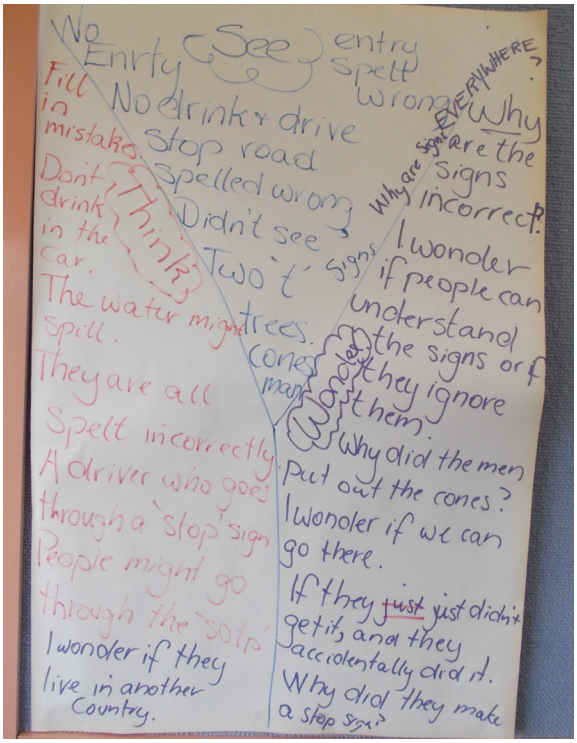


Figure 5. The students thinking made visible in Year 2

Year 5 students using protocols as part of Literature Circles and to share their thinking on a school task a new product 'Apple Watch'.

Conclusion

A professional learning culture allows for all people in the organisation to be afforded the opportunity to build capacity. Such a culture relies upon balancing both a collective and an individual approach to work. Our College aims to become the training ground for all of its teachers and acknowledges that learning is ongoing, ambiguous and largely determined by the culture in which it is planted; a culture that is determined by its leaders. While accountability is important, a collective aim is to avoid the distractions of governance and compliance. While these are necessary they should not dim the light on the real stars of an organisation—the student and the learning. Through the use of simple protocols that ask teachers to consider "What do you see? What does it make you think? And, What does it make you wonder?", schools are creating a culture of leaders, teachers and students who are learning alongside each other as deep and reflective thinkers. This linked learning community is highly committed to ensuring that all students entrusted to a Christian school have the opportunity to develop and achieve to their fullest potential. TEACH

> *If teachers can bring different perspectives to what they see in a situation, students can too*

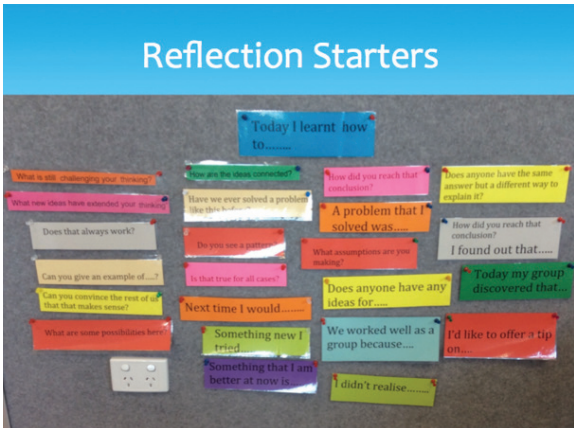


Figure 6. Reflections on Making Thinking Visible

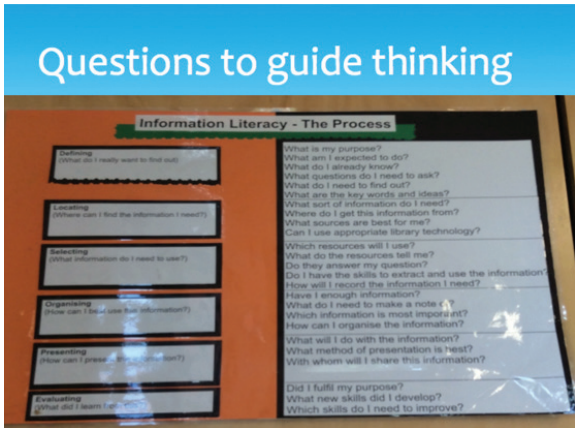


Figure 8. Literature circles and thinking protocols

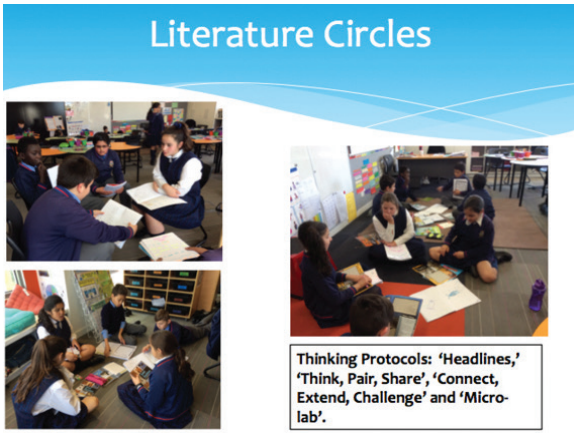


Figure 7. Literature circles and thinking protocols



Figure 9. Reflections on a Apple Watch

"a collective aim is to avoid the distractions of governance and compliance. …they should not dim the light on … the student and the learning."

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Exploring Spirituality in the Teacher-Leadership Role of Mentoring Through Collaborative Action Research

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Exploring spirituality in the teacher-leadership role of mentoring through collaborative action research

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Key words: spirituality, teacher-leadership, mentoring, action research

Abstract

This paper reports on a collaborative action research project exploring spirituality in teacher-leadership through the life-world of a New Zealand Christian school principal. The participant focused on the teacher-leadership role of mentoring colleagues towards more effective teaching practices and improvement in the Christian culture of the school community. The findings show that mentoring is a long term relational commitment that remains faithful to the Christian vision and values of the school. By modelling humility, compassion and a godly resolve to encourage quality Christian education, the principal witnessed transformation in teachers' practice and the culture of the learning community.

Introduction

Spirituality in educational leadership has received renewed interest in New Zealand and internationally in the past decade (Wellman, Perkins & Wellman, 2009; Gibson, 2014b; Ramirez, 2009). Tisdell (2001), an American professor of education and an educational researcher says,

> *Spirituality is one of the ways people construct knowledge and meaning. It works in consort with the affective, the rational or cognitive, and the unconscious and symbolic domains. To ignore it, particularly in how it relates to teaching for personal and social transformation, is to ignore an important aspect of human experience and avenue of learning and meaning-making.*
>
> (p. 2)

The current New Zealand Curriculum document (Ministry of Education, 2007), continues this tradition by acknowledging the importance of spiritual well-being within the Health and Physical Education learning area. Specifically, it refers to a Maori term, 'taha wairua', literally meaning '*the spirit*', within the concept of 'hauora' or holistic well-being, which is said to lie "at the heart of this learning area" (p. 22). This curriculum document also emphasises values that are to be "encouraged, modelled and explored" (MOE, 2007, p. 10). The document states, "students will learn about different kinds of values, such as moral, social, cultural, aesthetic and economic values" (MOE, 2007, p. 10). Values are also widely acknowledged in literature as an integral aspect of people's meaning making of spirituality (Conrad & Brown, 2006; Gibson, 2011a).

It is also noteworthy that the Education Council New Zealand, Code of Ethics for Certificated Teachers (2015, p. 1), states that teachers will among other things, "promote the physical, emotional, social, intellectual and *spiritual* well-being of learners." These examples of state education literature take an inclusive view of what spirituality means, reflecting the pluralistic, religious and secular nature of New Zealand society. These background considerations support the pre-supposition that spirituality in teacher-leadership remains a meaningful and relevant topic for today's schools.

Spirituality is one of the ways people construct knowledge and meaning. It works in consort with the affective, the rational or cognitive, and the unconscious and symbolic domains.

Spirituality in teacher leadership

Following research into spirituality in principal leadership (Gibson, 2011c), spirituality in *teacher-leadership* within *Christian schools* has emerged as an under-researched topic within our national education system. Spirituality is a complex and controversial human phenomenon with widely differing philosophical, sacred and secular arguments being presented in the literature (Waaijman, 2002). From a theoretical perspective the author does not conflate religion with spirituality. However, for many people spirituality is juxtaposed with religious, ontological and epistemological meanings and in part, defined by their socialisation within religious organisations (Gibson, 2011c). This article takes an inclusive stance that spirituality can include theistic, supernatural and transcendent

understandings linked to religious beliefs and sacred text. This pre-supposition is in contrast to a humanistic world-view, which excludes the existence of theistic and supernatural reality (American Humanist Association, 2003).

There is a growing body of literature which explores theoretical and experiential dimensions to spiritual leadership (Flintham, 2003; Fry, 2005; Woods, 2007; Walker & McPhail, 2009). This paper asserts an important distinction between spirituality *in* leadership, and spiritual leadership. As such, spirituality in leadership invites teacher-leaders to "integrate personal meanings of spirituality into their preferred leadership practice in appropriate ways for their own well-being and the well-being of everyone in their school community" (Gibson, 2011c, p. 39). This does not imply perfection and acknowledges that mistakes can be valuable contexts for spirituality in leadership to be developed and expressed (Gibson, 2014a).

*"This paper asserts an important distinction between spirituality **in** leadership and spiritual leadership."*

In terms of leadership, there are numerous types and styles that might characterise a teacher-leader and these have been well documented in the literature for several decades. For example: servant-leadership, moral and authentic leadership, relational and transformational leadership (Beattie, 2002; Branson, 2007; Burch, Swails & Mills, 2015; Dyer, 2001; Quin, Deris, Bischoff & Johnson, 2015). It is important to note that such leadership styles are not completely distinct, for they share common characteristics. They also inter-connect with discourse on spirituality in leadership in their beliefs, values and intentions. Dent, Higgins and Wharff, (2005, p. 628) claim there are "many similarities between workplace spirituality theory and leadership theory" based on the fact that there are many "dynamic dimensions or contexts for describing and measuring the phenomenon that closely resemble one another."

Furthermore, teacher-leadership may be engaged through a number of strands. For example, through modelling the way in a curriculum area, managing student behaviour and restorative justice processes, mapping out the curriculum for a team, moulding the climate and culture of the school community, mediating between disaffected people, mentoring colleagues and students, building a sense of membership among teams and syndicates, and ministering to pastoral needs of people within the organisation (Gibson, 2011a). Through such strands teacher-leadership contributes towards shaping and influencing teaching colleagues, school policies and programmes, student participation and performance, and the organisational culture and climate of the school community.

Principals also engage in teacher-leadership roles directly through mentoring and indirectly by providing effective leadership in administrative and management practices, provision of timely and appropriate professional development for teachers, and in building a cohesive successful school learning community (Gibson, 2011a). Spirituality in teacher-leadership therefore, can have multiple, situated meanings interwoven through the personal and professional beliefs, values, attitudes and actions of participants as they enact and embody their praxis in the life of the school (Ramirez, 2009).

Within Christian school contexts, spirituality in teacher-leadership implies living the virtues and dispositions of a disciple of the Lord Jesus (Matthew 16:24; Acts 11:26). It also implies that Christian teacher-leaders will authentically integrate into their practice biblical Christian teachings (Van Brummelen, 2009). These assumptions are supported within the biblical story. For example, Galatians 5:22-25 refers to walking in and bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and 2 Peter 1:5-8 emphasises seven characteristics followers of Christ are enjoined to diligently add to their faith. Furthermore, the desire to integrate Christian spirituality into teacher-leadership would ideally be motivated by love and service to God (Matthew 22:37), to walk worthy of the Lord Jesus (Colossians 1:10), and to encourage others to be Christ-minded (Philippians 2:1-16).

Mentoring teachers

Mentoring of teachers is understood in the research literature as a reciprocal, relational and reflective process which may be formal or informal, one-on-one, collaborative and even a community endeavour (Bynum, 2015; Newby & Heide, 2013). Shillingstad, McGlamery, Davis and Gilles (2015, p. 2) write, "Teacher leaders who step into the role of mentor face significant responsibilities. Within these multifaceted roles, mentors encounter triumphs and challenges." Mentoring teachers is complex, as each teacher is unique with unique contextual variables in terms of their professional experiences, current teaching responsibilities, knowledge, skills and dispositions. The levels of support, guidance, and direction, as well as the ways in which mentoring might occur, will therefore need to be differentiated. Yet there will be times when mentors can model pedagogy or inquiry processes within a group setting.

Mentoring teachers is different to teaching children and requires an awareness of the adult learning approaches. The value of mentoring of teachers on student learning outcomes is supported in the literature (e.g. Newby & Heide, 2013). Power

relationships, motivational factors, and the mentor approach (whether authoritarian or democratic), will also impact on the engagement of the mentee (Wolfensperger, 2010).

Research methodology and design

Methodologically, this research project is understood within an interpretive, constructivist paradigm of how knowledge is derived. It includes aspects of phenomenology, in which Laverty (2003, p. 8) observes, "the biases and assumptions of the researcher are *not* bracketed or set aside, but rather are embedded as essential in the interpretive process." Interpretivism links well with the systematic, cyclical, dialogical and reflective process embedded within action research. It recognises the subjective, co-constructed meanings developed between the researcher and practitioner. This research is also a qualitative inquiry. Denzin and Lincoln (2006, p. 3) say, "qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them."

As a method of inquiry, the development of action research (AR) as a theory is attributed to Kurt Lewin in the 1940s (Coghlan & Brannick, 2010). Action research is best understood as a flexible, recursive, iterative and spiralling inquiry process (Bognar, 2009; Pine, 2009). It is designed to engage participants with their own needs, leading to valued insights and improved professional practice. It asks participants to be intentional, systematic, ethical, vulnerable, and have a psychological and spiritual readiness for transformation (Stringer, 2007). According to Kinsler (2010, p. 173), *educational* action research, "has multiple forms and levels that permit a range of possible design capabilities."

The particular collaborative action research (CAR) model presented to the principal participant was informed by a range of literature (Shula & Wilson, 2003), and is best described as flexible, first-person, technical and practical action research. Kinsler (2010) says,

> *Technical AR is orientated toward functional improvement measured in terms of success in changing particular outcomes of practice... Practical AR seeks to improve practice through the development of personal wisdom derived from true and reasoned deliberation.*
>
> (p. 174)

The researcher also added the concept of the participant engaging in discussion with a trusted critical friend or colleague to assist in interpreting and evaluating ideas and issues. Referring to critical collegiality Pine (2009) asserts:

> *It is important to engage colleagues in a process of collaborative inquiry to advance the developing research effort. Particular colleagues may be enlisted at the beginning of the research for a variety of reasons—because they are especially sensitive to emerging problems, or are creative and have ideas about how educational issues might be addressed, or are skilled in problem definition, or are greatly interested in a particular issue.*
>
> (p. 235)

The author's role was to facilitate participant engagement in the action research process, inviting the principal to choose an area of teacher-leadership too that was relevant and appropriate. The collaborative role extended into explaining the action research intentions, conducting semi-structured interviews, assisting in the refinement of the action plan, providing feedback on the participant's reflective journaling, collating and co-constructing the meaning of the data, and reporting on the outcomes. In these ways CAR is characterised as dialogical and reflexive, focused on understanding and reframing praxis—the intersection of beliefs and professional practice (Pellerin & Nogués, 2015). This approach links with Whitehead's (2008) living theory methodology which emphasises the importance of each individual's experience in improving practice and generating knowledge.

"*asks participants to be intentional, systematic, ethical, vulnerable, and have a psychological and spiritual readiness for transformation*"

Data was gathered from the participant in two 60 minute semi-structured interviews. One interview took place at the beginning of the project to understand the participant's personal and contextual meanings of spirituality in their diverse teacher-leadership roles. A second interview was undertaken at the end of the project to understand the participant's experiences and to obtain critical incidents that illustrated engagement with spirituality in teacher-leadership. Reflective e-journaling was encouraged throughout the research period. Emailed communication kept the relationship connected, enabling updates on the participant's progress and thinking. The researcher also provided feedback on ideas and where appropriate, forwarded articles on the topics the participant was interested in.

The field-work took place over three school terms. The credibility of this qualitative inquiry is supported through the triangulation of the research design and the participant selection process. Visiting the participant twice for interviews enriched my appreciation of the school community context. The online reflective journaling and email communication enlarged and enriched the data set available for interpretation. The participant was able to check the interview transcripts and the veracity of the

research report. Furthermore, the participant followed the action research process in a thorough and systematic way, involving critical reflective thinking, data gathering and analysis, consultation with a critical friend, action planning and evaluation. Cognisance of clarified theoretical perspectives about spirituality in teacher leadership situated within Christian school contexts, shaped the participant's responses.

Due to the busyness of teachers' and principals' work-lives, the time committed to the project was strategically positioned as professional development in the participant's work plan for the year. In support of this approach Pine (2009) considers,

> *Enacting change is not easy. It requires time, patience, sound planning, communication, and implementation skills. So, in establishing a foundation for action research, I believe that modest beginnings are no disgrace and in most respects, preferable to ambitious ones. The visibility and impact of early efforts may be small, but it is advisable to consider carefully the relative merits of simple versus more intricate research plans and data analysis procedures.*
>
> (p. 235)

... to enquire about my effectiveness in developing and embedding these values [referring to the school's values] in myself, in our teachers and in our students

Participant recruitment and demographics

The researcher received ethical approval from Bethlehem Tertiary Institute to conduct the research in 2012. Recruitment letters of invitation were sent to a sample of 17 Christian schools in New Zealand, chosen for their size and practical accessibility to the researcher. Four people within three non-denominational Christian school contexts in New Zealand accepted and were recruited to participate. Due to the unique personal and in situ variables, this report focuses on one of the participants, an experienced principal (referred to as Participant 1) serving in an established Christian school community.

Findings and discussion

Participant 1 is an experienced school principal and a mature Christian, who described spirituality in teacher-leadership as:

> *Jesus' command to love God and to love your neighbour as you love yourself... In teacher leadership our goal is to be able to support each other in community to be doing that more effectively and to be modelling... being an example of us seeking to do that well and building that in our student body and in the wider community... you can't measure what's happening in the heart and soul, you can just observe the fruit of it.*
>
> (P1, interview 1)

The principal chose to explore spirituality in teacher-leadership through the complex and challenging process of *mentoring* teachers, a role that relates to the Christian concept of discipleship (Matthew 28:19). Believing mentoring was a priority, this principal positioned the role and process as a relational and reciprocal form of professional development within the school. The over-arching focus of the action research according to the principal was

> *… to enquire about my effectiveness in developing and embedding these values [referring to the school's values] in myself, in our teachers and in our students, as I feel this is something I want to improve on in my own practice.*
>
> (P1, personal communication)

This over-arching focus was integrated into the action research process by gathering data from the staff including through a questionnaire. Staff responded to several questions, the first being, "How can I [as principal] best support you as a teacher to live and teach in a way that inspires our students to personally own our school values?" The remaining questions invited the teachers to give feedback on the things they would like to see the principal continue doing, start doing, or stop doing, in terms of supporting them to embody the school's values.

The principal demonstrated to staff through the use of the questionnaire, a willingness to be vulnerable and open to learning. Modelling life-long learning was an intentional authentic strategy to build credibility and a trusted learning-focused relationship with teachers. The principal explained,

> *I have asked them to do a reflection on my leadership and sent it to them...*
> *and I have been deliberately open and vulnerable because I want to model that*
>
> (P1, personal communication)

The principal's spirituality was again highlighted at the end of this questionnaire by linking the purpose of the inquiry to Jesus' teaching in Matthew 7:3-14 about self-evaluation preceding the fixing of problems in other people's lives—an important attribute of a mentor. The principal wrote, "*am committed to growing, and can't do that without understanding the logs in my own eye, and I appreciate your honesty about both the good and the bad*" (P1, personal communication). This approach models humility, communicating to colleagues that Christian teaching is not about perfection but more about a growth mind-set, and a desire to improve through collegial fellowship.

The questionnaire was a helpful data gathering instrument at the commencement of the action research process. However, there are ethical

issues about teacher-leaders conducting their *own* evaluative questionnaires due to the power relationships between the mentor and those being mentored. Notwithstanding, in this case the principal believed that by modelling openness and vulnerability, it helped to nurture collegial trust in the process ahead. Paul wrote to the Ephesians linking this virtue with corporate growth: "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Ephesians 4:15).

The principal's action plan following on from this questionnaire was complex as the mentoring role involved working relationally and responsively one-on-one, with each of the teacher's diverse needs. One of the important ingredients for successful mentoring is confidentiality. For that reason many personal and professional details of the mentoring experience are not available for inclusion in this publication. Notwithstanding, the principal in the role of mentoring needed to work through quite diverse scenarios in a professional manner. The principal described how these scenarios afforded opportunities to critically reflect, to walk carefully through each problem, to seek counsel from others, to pray, to process a range of personal feelings and to be resilient.

The findings showed that the principal's spirituality in teacher leadership was woven through a range of mentoring strategies. These included clarifying expectations with teachers, providing teachers with the tools to support their management responsibilities, and encouraging open and honest professional reflective writing. The idea behind reflective journaling was to encourage teachers to self-critique their praxis—the intersection between beliefs and professional practice.

The principal's spirituality in mentoring was further illustrated through modelling restorative justice processes to the teachers as a way of compassionately and holistically working with student behaviour issues. The focus being not on revenge and punishment, but, "how we can bring change in the offender and some of that is loving themselves and some of that is loving others in terms of our school values" (P1, interview 2). Compassion is a characteristic of God (Psalm 145:8), being exemplified through the life of the Son of God (Matthew 9:36; 14:14). Christians are enjoined to be compassionate towards one another (1 Peter 3:8) and compassion can be instrumental in "making a difference" in people's lives (Jude 1:22).

The principal described a critical incident in which compassionate mentoring was shown towards a staff member who was suffering deterioration in health. The principal helped the teacher understand and process the situation by being caring, patient and consulting with others. The principal described the need to respect the person's 'dignity' and explained how the mentoring process was undertaken with integrity.

> *I have sought quite a lot of advice from different people about how to process things with ____and I have really tried to be gentle with ____ , to be honest.*
>
> (P1, interview 2)

Another practical example of spirituality in the teacher-leadership was the principal encouraging teachers to explore using a more student-led approach to devotion times. The principal said the aim was, "*not to be talking at kids all the time about God but to try to engage the kids and get the kids asking questions ...a more inquiry approach*" (P1, interview 2). The principal believed these mentoring strategies and practical examples contributed towards improving the teaching and learning across the school. This was supported in the data by several incidents in which the principal's mentoring was affirmed by staff members.

Undertaking action research on the topic of mentoring teachers, even in a Christian school context, was not easy for the principal. Pine (2009, p. 236) maintains, "It is good to remember that action research can be messy." Significant professional issues arose during the journey that needed to be carefully considered. Reflecting on these issues the principal demonstrated the integral nature of spirituality in teacher-leadership.

> *We live in a fallen world... it's not about what's happened, it's about how we respond to it and stuff happens unfortunately. That's why we need God and why we need forgiveness and why we need grace... and why we need help.*
>
> (P1, interview 2)

"We live in a fallen world... it's not about what's happened, it's about how we respond to it and stuff happens unfortunately."

The findings showed that mentoring teachers was a holistic and transcendent endeavour requiring a sense of drawing on God's help, drawing on personal resilience and crafted wisdom from previous experience. At the end of the year, the journey was described with mixed emotions. On the one hand, it was an "*extremely difficult year*" and on the other, "*Term 4 has been the best—and there has been an absence of stress within the staff*" (P1, personal communication). Reflecting on the experiences, the principal expressed a sense of optimism and peace in being called to the role, and a confidence in God's sovereign work in the bigger picture—the life of the school community.

> *I do enjoy it... I actually hate broken relationships. That's what it's all about at the moment, trying to bring the community back. I believe I'm called here and I think God knows what he's doing... .*
>
> (P1, interview 2)

This case study of a principal exploring spirituality in the role of mentoring teachers is a 'work in progress'. The complexities of the individual circumstances and needs of the teachers meant the principal didn't feel a sense of closure or fulfillment of the goals that were hoped for at the beginning. At the conclusion of the action research process the principal said,

> *I feel as though I'm not the best case-study for the action research because you've got what my hope is and you've got what happened, but there's not necessarily been that clear link between them in some scenarios.*
>
> (P1, interview 2)

This evaluative feedback affirms that the outcomes of action research can be incomplete when the end of the collaborative research period arrives. It certainly supports the idea that action-research includes successive on-going cycles.

"Exercising spirituality in professional practice doesn't guarantee fair weather and plain sailing."

Synthesis of the findings

Spirituality **in** leadership, invites leaders to integrate personal meanings of spirituality into their preferred leadership practice in appropriate ways for their own well-being and the well-being of everyone in their school community. This does not imply perfection and acknowledges that challenging and difficult circumstances can be valuable contexts for spirituality to be developed and expressed. Mentoring implies a relational, reciprocal and reflective process; one that is respectful and responsive to the individual needs of the mentee. The findings of this qualitative research provide descriptive insight into a principal's spirituality in mentoring teachers towards more effective pedagogy and a stronger Christian culture in the life of the school. In Figure 1 the textural data is synthesised into five key areas. They affirm the literature discussed pertaining to relational, authentic and transformational leadership (Beattie, 2002; Burch, Swails, & Mills, 2015; Quin, Deris, Bischoff & Johnson, 2015) and relational, responsive and reflective, differentiated mentoring (Bynum, 2015; Newby & Heide, 2013; Wolfensperger, 2010).

Firstly, spirituality in teacher-leadership for this participant did not emerge from a vacuum. Rather it was believed to derive from considerable personal and professional experience or crafted wisdom, and in response to significant needs within the school community. Jesus as a teacher was responsive to the needs of people within the contexts in which he lived. He taught people to be responsive to their neighbours through the story of the Samaritan who, as he journeyed came across the man half dead beside the road and "when he saw him, he had compassion on him" (Luke 10:33).

Secondly, the participant's spirituality was described as interwoven within a revised strategic vision for the school, which included strengthening pedagogical effectiveness and fostering a greater consistency in living out Christian values within the life of the school. Christian schools are vulnerable to losing their special character over time. Christian spirituality is vulnerable, something that needs to be protected and encouraged (Ephesians 6: 10-18).

Thirdly, the participant described the mentoring process as modelling and guiding the way for colleagues. This concept links with the spirituality of Jesus of whom Acts 1:1 says, of all that he began to "both do and teach." Paul the apostle of the Lord Jesus expressed it this way, "Those things which you have both learned and received, heard and seen in me, do..." (Philippians 4:9). Of particular note was the participant's spirituality expressed through a growth mind-set. Various writers of the epistles in the New Testament exhort readers to grow. For example, 1 Thessalonians 4:1, "Furthermore then we beseech you, brothers, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as you have received of us how you ought to walk and to please God, so you would *abound more and more*."

Fourthly, the participant's spirituality in mentoring was characterised by relational, supportive and ethical practices. These practices included clarification on expectations, provision of tools to help teachers engage with change, discreet consultation, care towards staff who might find the process challenging or be facing personal difficulties, and self-control in the face of criticism or resistance. These characteristics of the participant's mentoring echo expectations of spiritual life recorded in the scriptures. For example, Galatians 5:22-23 says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance... ." Jesus also promised relational support for the disciples via the Holy Spirit to enable them to be equipped to be agents of transformation (John 14:26).

Fifthly, the participant's self-evaluation of the outcomes of the teaching mentoring process was mixed; some success and cause for joy, some on-going areas for growth, with the entire process being messy and challenging. Exercising spirituality in professional practice doesn't guarantee fair weather and plain sailing. Jesus experienced

difficulties teaching people in the early part of his public ministry where it is recorded in John 6:66, “From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.” The ability to remain resilient is an important feature of Christian spirituality. In 1 Corinthians 15:58 Paul concludes his extensive mentoring of the believers at Corinth with the admonition to be “steadfast unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.”

Nuanced insights

There were unique critical incidences that arose in the mentoring process during the year. Due to ethical considerations around the sensitivity of these specific mentor/mentee stories, details cannot be described. Suffice to say that they were believed to have been worked through with professional wisdom, care and patience. The concept of having a ‘critical friend’ to support the principal through the action research process was also believed to be helpful in critically reflecting on decisions. To assist with specific needs, the principal did draw upon professional resources.

1. Spirituality in teacher-leadership *informed by*	personal spiritual life in Christ, crafted wisdom derived from leadership experience within Christian schools, teacher and student needs within the current school community.
2. Spirituality in teacher-leadership *interwoven through*	strategic vision to build a more cohesive learning community around core Christian values and effective pedagogical practices.
3. Spirituality in teacher-leadership *modelled through*	personal integrity, a growth mind-set, vulnerability to critical feedback, and encouraging colleagues to undergo a similar process.
4. Spirituality in teacher-leadership *characterised by*	relationality, provision of supportive tools, clarification of goals, ethical practice, care, compassion, humility, consultation, godly resolve, and self-control.
5. Spirituality in teacher-leadership *experienced as*	complex, individualised, messy at times, incomplete, on- going challenge, including prayer and faith, resilience, and perseverance.

Figure 1. Key themes identified from the action research inquiring into spirituality in teacher leadership

Prayer and faith were also described as important throughout the mentoring process. A further nuanced insight from the data was that the mentoring relationships drew upon the participant’s emotional management skills and social-emotional intelligence in working collaboratively with others.

Limitations, implications and recommendations

Spirituality is a complex and contested phenomenon in the literature, with many diverse secular and sacred views reflecting our pluralistic societies. Spirituality in teacher-leadership can also have many situated meanings as teachers enact and embody their praxis in the life of a particular school (Ramirez, 2009). The qualitative findings described in this article, acknowledge the subjective and interpretive reality of the participant’s experiences, and of the researcher’s own knowledge and dispositions towards Christian biblical perspectives. These findings are tentative, not being generalisable to statistical populations (Check & Schutt, 2011). However, they are presented as credible and trustworthy, having been triangulated from interviews, reflective journaling and personal communications across a three term period. Together the findings show a range of practical ways that spirituality was believed by the participant to be an integral part of mentoring teachers. Further cycles of action research would be ideal to enrich the findings and to better understand the long term commitment and dynamics required to effectively mentor teachers within the life-world of a Christian school community.

> *“the findings show a range of practical ways that spirituality was believed … to be an integral part of mentoring teachers.”*

Conclusion

The findings of this collaborative action research project have described how personal spirituality was intentionally integrated into the principal’s teacher-leadership role of mentoring teachers. Through modelling humility and compassion combined with a godly resolve to encourage quality Christian education, the principal participant was able to see progress towards transformation in pedagogical practices and the culture of the school community. Readers will take into account that the findings are tentative and limited to a particular context. Notwithstanding, it is hoped that this study of spirituality integrated into an action research process will be useful to readers encouraging self-reflection on the degree to which their own spirituality is authentically and relationally modelled in professional practice. Overall, the findings of this project showed that mentoring is a long-term collegial commitment that remains faithful to the vision and values of the school community.

The final word from the principal, received at the commencement of the following year, affirms the fruitfulness of this commitment.

> *This year the school is a completely different place... I can now feel creative.* (P1, personal communication). TEACH

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Teaching with Interactive Simulations: One Small Contribution Toward Science Education for all

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Teaching with interactive simulations: One small contribution toward science education for all

TEACH[R]

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Key words: science education, interactive simulations, classroom research, physics

Abstract

Many of the greatest challenges facing humanity in coming decades have a scientific component: energy needs, disease pandemics, water and food security, climate change, machine intelligence and many not yet imagined. The tendency has been to assume that the solutions to these challenges will be developed by scientists, engineers and technologists, but it is increasingly important that all citizens have sufficient understanding of science to participate in the democratic processes that are necessary to address major issues. Enhancing the science education of all citizens is a huge challenge in itself, and will require a very wide range of strategies and approaches. One small contribution can come from teaching approaches using new technologies, including interactive simulations. This paper briefly describes interactive simulations and an approach to teaching using them, and addresses evidence of the effectiveness of this approach. Outcomes showed significant learning gains, relative to a control group, that were not differentiated by gender, or for students at different levels of academic achievement, suggesting that this approach may be effective as one contribution toward science education for all.

Introduction: Science education for all

All Australian students participate in science education until Year 10. Patterns of participation are similar in most developed countries in the region, and most countries aspire to this level of science education. Yet, in many ways the system from Year 10 on, and even before, is about 'filtering out'; the selecting and educating of the 10-15% of people who will take on careers related to science or engineering (Osborne, Simon & Collins, 2003). (A higher proportion of students than this study science to Year 12 – perhaps 25-30% of students in most Australian states – but not all of these end up having careers in the sciences or engineering.) It's an unintended consequence, but a very real one, that this tends to leave the other 85-90% of citizens with the message that 'science is not for you'. Or, perhaps in some ways even more insidiously, 'you are not for science'.

At the same time, it is increasingly clear that a scientifically literate and educated populace is essential to facing the challenges posed by life in the 21st century. As just one example, most centuries have a major disease pandemic. We often think of the Black Plague in Europe in the 1300s, but, for example, the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic killed between 50 and 100 million people, 3-5% of the world's population at that time. More recently we have seen outbreaks of SARS, swine flu, bird flu and Ebola that have been controlled before becoming very large, but it is very likely that we still face significant challenges in addressing disease pandemics. Many other issues also have a social and scientific component – food and water security for a growing world population, climate change and energy policy, the increasing rate of automation and the threat/promise of machine intelligence, among a plethora of other issues. Beyond this, a high quality science education develops students' abilities to consider evidence and make decisions based upon that evidence, rather than on propaganda, misinformation or prejudice. It can protect them from charlatans selling useless or dangerous medical treatments or energy solutions. Scientific work is also inherently collaborative, and studying science helps students to develop skills in teamwork and collaboration that are important at work and home.

"a high quality science education develops students' abilities to consider evidence and make decisions based upon that evidence, rather than on propaganda, misinformation or prejudice."

It is dangerous, in this context, where citizens need to both be able to vote in an informed manner, and also to take measures in their own lives such as making choices about vaccination, diet and lifestyle, to continue with a science education approach that tells 90% of citizens that science is not for them.

It's important to note that I am *not* advocating for specific positions or policies on the various controversial issues previously raised. The goal of 'science education for all' is to allow all citizens to have *informed* views on the issues. There will naturally be a range of positions on social issues, but discussions and debates are more effective when informed by a good understanding of both the science and the values underlying particular positions.

Science education has always had the twin goals of 'science education for scientists' and 'science education for all'. This work is certainly not arguing that science education for all is a new notion. However, it would suggest that the balance has been shifted too far in the direction of science education for future scientists. It is possible to do both. Indeed, the authors would argue that ensuring that all members of society are well educated in science would do a better, not a worse, job of preparing those who do take up careers in science. Specialisation occurring in Years 11 and 12 and at university is still appropriate to the preparation of scientists but, the American 'liberal arts' tradition of college education in which Arts majors study at least one or two science courses, and vice versa, to ensure that citizens are broadly educated is asserted here as a model with advantages.

Solving the challenges of extending science education to all students—particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, those with special needs and those who are struggling with the concepts—will clearly require a very broad blend of approaches. It will need changes to policy and resourcing, to approaches to teaching and learning and science, and a variety of additional tools. This paper outlines one such tool: teaching an inquiry approach to science using interactive simulations.

"One dimension of the research around computer-based tools has been largely neglected: the pedagogical (teaching) approaches used."

Interactive simulations

The almost ubiquitous availability of computers (it's important to remember, though, that they may be less available in some schools and some homes) has offered a range of new 'affordances'—capabilities and possibilities—for learning. Some of these have been more effective than others. Our earlier study showed that teaching chemistry and physics using 'visualisations'—computer-based animations and simulations—was no more effective than teaching these subjects in more traditional ways (Fogarty, Geelan & Mukherjee, 2012; Geelan, Mahaffy & Mukherjee, 2014).

More recently this research attention has turned to a specific class of computer-based visualisations described as 'interactive simulations'. These are typically 'virtual laboratories' in which students can manipulate variables and observe the results, either qualitatively through colour changes or animations or quantitatively through generating result data in the form of numbers. An interactive simulation offers the capability for students to conduct a larger number of experiments more quickly than a 'real' laboratory experiment, which in turn allows students to test their developing concepts against these simulations of the world. Of course, there is an important step that needs to occur, where students develop confidence that the simulation does model the real world. One way of developing this confidence is to compare the results of the real laboratory experiment with the results obtained from the computer-based simulation, but there are also other approaches that can be used.

An interactive simulation also offers the ability to compare, for example, the 'physics world' in which we can assume that friction doesn't exist, some objects are mass-less and have no inertia and so on. Some of the best simulations allow these features like friction to be turned off and on, to compare the predictions of the simplified physics formulae students learn in high school with the complexities of the real world.

Many scientists and educators around the world, as well as some commercial companies, have developed interactive simulations for use in teaching, but the PhET project at the University of Colorado is perhaps the best-known source, and produces a very wide range of well-developed and supported simulations in a variety of scientific disciplines (https://phet.colorado.edu/). The central characteristic of PhET simulations is to support the implementation of inquiry learning. The design principles are based on research on how students learn (Bransford, 2000). PhET simulations have been used in a series of studies (Adams, Paulson & Wieman, 2009). Chinese translated versions of the physics simulations were used in the study described below.

One dimension of the research around computer-based tools has been largely neglected: the pedagogical (teaching) approaches used. Most often studies either have no comparative dimension—many studies in the field are of the form "I built this and used it in my class, it was great, students loved it and learned!" but without comparison or measurement—or else simply compare the results of students taught with the tool with those of students taught without it, with little attention to *how* the students were taught. As a consequence, Xinxin Fan and I (Geelan & Fan, 2014) developed a new teaching sequence for using interactive simulations in an inquiry approach to science teaching.

ISIS: An Instructional Sequence with Interactive Simulations for inquiry learning

The focus within 'Instructional Sequence with Interactive Simulations' (ISIS) is on an inquiry

approach to learning (Bell, Smetana & Binns, 2005; Chiu, 2010) that focuses on students' construction of new scientific concepts and on challenging 'misconceptions' that no longer successfully explain their experiences. The teaching sequence is outlined in a 2014 book chapter (Geelan & Fan, 2014). It draws on Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and on Posner, Strike, Hewson and Gertzog's (1982) 'conceptual change' teaching model. The work of Quintana et al. (2004) on scaffolding inquiry instruction using software was also influential. It has some similarities and differences with the 5Es model developed by the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study (BSCS) (Bybee et al., 2006).

Briefly, the steps are as follows.

Zeroth Step – Deciding whether an interactive simulation is the appropriate tool and ISIS is the appropriate sequence to support learning of this concept

This is, to us, a key step: is an interactive simulation even the best tool for the job? Given that science is about explaining our experience of the world, shouldn't we do 'real' experiments that have students test their ideas against the real world, rather than abstract simulations? Of course we should: but it needn't be either-or, it can be both-and. This is about enhancing the repertoire (to use a musical/theatrical metaphor) or toolbox (to use a more mechanical one) or toybox (our personal favourite) available to teachers. Making informed, thoughtful professional judgements about which is the best and most appropriate tool, the most suitable teaching approach for a particular concept, class and context, is a key part of being a professional teacher.

Assuming that the decision is made that interactive simulations are the appropriate tool and ISIS is the appropriate pedagogical model, teachers and their students can proceed through the remaining steps.

Step 1 – Eliciting and clarifying existing conceptions and the 'target' scientific conception

This approach is not a 'mystery novel' approach in which the scientific concept is held as a surprise twist at the end that students do not encounter until later. Rather, it is a very explicit approach, in which the teacher elicits from the class the concepts they are using to explain particular everyday phenomena. Some of these concepts will be amorphous and not fully formed, and the discussion may help to clarify them. Others will be fully formed but erroneous: these are often referred to in the science education literature as 'misconceptions'. Students may believe, for example, that the force acting on something is the only relevant thing influencing its acceleration. This is a misconception: the mass of the accelerating object is also relevant.

During this step, it will become apparent whether or not there are clusters of student concepts: typically there will be more than one perspective on the part of students, but fewer than the number of students in the class. There may be two or three common misconceptions, and some students may also already hold the scientific conception.

(A note on the nature of science: I am being careful to use the language 'scientific conception' or 'canonical conception', not 'accurate' or 'correct' conception. Scientific knowledge is contingent and subject to challenge and change. The current best concept may in time be replaced by a more powerful and effective one. Science does not claim to have infallible knowledge of the real world—just concepts that have withstood the test of experiments without being falsified by the evidence.)

If the scientific concept is *not* elicited from the students, the teacher should outline it briefly and clearly. The ISIS approach differs from the Bybee et al. (2006) 5Es model and a number of other teaching models in this early explicitness.

> *"[ISIS] focuses on students' construction of new scientific concepts and on challenging 'miscon-ceptions'"*

Step 2 – Outlining the predictions and implications of students' existing conceptions and the scientific conception

Once the few 'candidate concepts' have been introduced, the teacher can introduce the context of the experiment to be simulated in the interactive simulation, and ask students to predict what will happen. This is linked with White and Gunstone's (1992) 'predict, observe, explain' sequence. It is also linked to an extended 'predict, explain, observe, explain' sequence: having students make their prediction, then explain why they have made it, is a further means of eliciting and clarifying the concepts they are using to make sense of their experiences.

In both these learning experiences using interactive simulations and in 'real' laboratory experiments, it is crucial that students understand what their observations mean in conceptual terms. Which concept is supported by the evidence, and which is falsified or challenged by it? If students simply complete Step Seven of the experiment 'recipe' and write down in their notebooks that the clear solution turned red, but without understanding what that observation means, it could be argued that they are not really learning science at all.

For this reason, it is important that the specific implications of each of the 'candidate concepts' are worked through and made explicit—ideally written down so that students must commit. If students hold the concept that the mass of the accelerating

object is irrelevant, for example, they will predict that the same force will cause the same acceleration, irrespective of the mass being accelerated. If they hold the conception that more mass will lead to greater acceleration when the same force is applied, they will predict that to be observed. The scientific concept is that the greater the mass being accelerated, with the same force, the less acceleration will be observed. Again, if students do not make this prediction, the teacher should, and should make it explicit that this is what the scientific conception predicts.

Step 3 – Testing predictions of competing conceptions using interactive simulations

Now the interactive simulation can be used to test the different predictions made. Since students understand that particular results support or challenge particular concepts, the results will be immediately meaningful to students. It will be obvious to many students immediately which concept has been successful in predicting the actual results and which concepts have been unsuccessful.

> *"that they internalise the scientific concept and continue to use it as a 'tool to think with', rather than just memorising it undigested"*

Step 4 – Clarifying findings and linking results to the scientific conception

Other students may require more discussion with peers and the teacher to make this connection, and Step 4 involves making the findings correct. If the experiments have been designed and conducted well, all 'candidate concepts', except the scientific concept, should be falsified by the evidence. What *constitutes* a scientific theory is successfully predicting and explaining our experience and not being falsified by the evidence. Making it clear to the students that the scientific concept is uniquely capable of passing this test is the key to ensuring that students learn it. Further, that they learn it in ways that mean that they internalise the scientific concept and continue to use it as a 'tool to think with', rather than just memorising it undigested for regurgitation in assessment tasks, to be forgotten soon after they leave the class.

Step 5 – Further testing to develop and deepen understanding of the scientific conception

Additional experiences in which the newly developed (for these students) scientific concept is applied in new and different contexts, and continues to successfully predict results and avoid falsification, lead to enhanced student confidence in the concept, deeper understanding and engagement with it, consequently ensuring that learning is rich, powerful and transferable. This step and its effectiveness was relevant to the finding reported below that students' confidence in the correctness of their own answers was enhanced by participating in this learning sequence.

The step sequence is an organising device: there is a logic to it in terms of developing students' concepts, but there is nothing sacred about the order of the steps, and it may be appropriate to, for example, skip the first step if prior discussion shows that students' concepts are already well defined, or the final step if the concepts are already strong and well-elaborated. It may be appropriate to cycle through steps 2 and 3 multiple times within a particular sequence. Like the initial selection of this approach, this is a professional decision that teachers make by drawing on all their experience, preparation and professional learning.

The sequence sounds plausible, but does it work? Is it actually effective for enhancing students' learning?

Evidence of effectiveness

Research methods

A preliminary research study was conducted in Beijing, China, by Xinxin Fan with two physics teachers. Each teacher taught Newton's Second Law to one 'experimental' class using ISIS and one 'control' class using his/her usual physics teaching approach. Over all, there were 62 students in the two classes that made up the control condition and 55 students in the two classes included in the experimental group. Students' conceptual understanding was tested before and after the teaching sequences using the relevant questions in the Force Concept Inventory (Hestenes, Wells & Swackhamer, 1992), which uses multiple choice questions in which the 'distracters' are common misconceptions about the key concept. This was complemented by asking students to explain their answers, and to indicate how confident they were about their answers.

Here is an example of an item from the questionnaire:

> Two metal balls are the same size but one weighs twice as much as the other. The balls are dropped from the roof of a single story building at the same instant. The time it takes the balls to reach the ground below will be:
>
> A. About half as long for the heavier ball as for the lighter one.
> B. About half as long for the lighter ball as for the heavier one.
> C. About the same for both balls.
> D. Considerably less for the heavier ball, but not necessarily half as long.
> E. Considerably less for the lighter ball, but not necessarily half as long.

Could you please explain why you choose this answer? You can use your physics knowledge or your own words to write down your understanding.

_____

_____

How sure are you of your answer to the question?
A. Very sure; B. Sure; C. Neutral; D. Unsure; E. Very unsure.

Students' inquiry skills were tested before and after the teaching sequences using a 13 question survey based on work by White and Frederiksen (1998). Students rated their inquiry skills on a 5 point Likert scale.

Results

The statistics for the analysis of the student responses on items related to conceptual understanding, inquiry skills and confidence follow.

Conceptual understanding

Comparing the gains in conceptual understanding, measured using the Force Concept Inventory, between the experimental and control classes, the effect size, η^2, was .18 ($p = .000$). This effect size is considered large (Cohen, 1988, suggests that η^2 of .01 represents a small effect, .06 a medium effect and .14 and above is a large effect). That is, students who learned the concepts about the ways in which forces work that are summarised in Newton's Second Law of Motion using the ISIS teaching approach understood the concepts significantly better than those who learned it using the more 'traditional' approaches used by these teachers. It is worth noting that both the participating teachers were effective and successful teachers. Their 'usual' teaching was not of poor quality, but this approach to inquiry learning through interactive simulations—the combination of the computer-based tool and the pedagogical approach—was significantly better for students' learning.

Inquiry skills

Students' perception of their own skills in inquiry learning, measured using the 13 item test, differed even more markedly between the experimental and control groups, with $\eta^2 = .38$ ($p = .000$). Students perceived themselves as being more capable of learning science through inquiry—using their own minds and their skills in thinking, communicating and experimenting to develop concepts. This occurred within the context of a Chinese physics education system, which is typically much more teacher-centred and transmissive in approach.

Confidence

Students' confidence in their own answers to the Force Concept Inventory Items, when the experimental group was compared to the control group, showed a high medium effect size, $\eta^2 = .12$ ($p = .000$). That is, students who had learned using the ISIS approach were more confident that their answers were correct. They had developed the new concepts through intensive thinking and scaffolded discussion, and felt more secure in their understanding.

On each of the three sets of findings, analyses were also conducted to determine whether boys or girls received more benefit, and whether the lowest, middle or highest group of students ranked by academic achievement received more benefit, but in no case were there statistically significant differences. This means that the educational benefits from ISIS seem to support the learning of all students similarly.

This is perhaps the most significant finding of the study for the purposes of this paper, which is focused on 'science for all'. Some of our earlier studies (Fogarty, Geelan & Mukherjee, 2012; Geelan, Mahaffy & Mukherjee, 2014) seemed to suggest (not always at statistically significant levels, so not always reported in the papers coming out of the studies) that scientific visualisations may be more effective for the learning of boys and of the most academically capable students. That would be a case, in physics education, of giving more to those already doing best, increasing the gaps between the highest and lowest achieving students. These effects were not observed in this study—overall students of both sexes and at all academic levels received a significant increase in knowledge, skill and confidence.

> *"[All] students … using the ISIS teaching approach understood the concepts significantly better than those … using the more 'traditional' approaches"*

Conclusion

Clearly it is important to replicate the Beijing study in Australian schools, in other schools around the region and internationally to ensure that the results are generalisable, and in addition to repeat the study with much larger groups of students and teachers to enhance our confidence in the statistical power of the results seen, but the preliminary results reported above are very encouraging. These effect sizes are seldom seen for educational innovations, particularly those involving relatively brief interventions, so there seems to be considerable potential. Expanding the context to the teaching of chemistry concepts seems likely to be appropriate, however, there are interesting theoretical questions about whether there are concepts in biology that would be susceptible to this approach. Similarly, it is possible that some mathematical or economic concepts could be interactively simulated and that students could learn them using the ISIS approach, or an adapted sequence.

While this evidence of learning effectiveness is gratifying for science education researchers, as noted above, one important facet of interest is in 'science education for all' and ensuring that, as far as possible, all members of society develop an understanding of science sufficient to allow them to participate in finding solutions to the significant challenges facing humanity. There are many facets to an approach to broadening the appeal and effectiveness of science education, and it is hoped that this research program is making some small contribution. TEACH

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Beyond Telling: Narrating Trauma in the Wartime Writings of Great War Chaplain William McKenzie

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TEACH[R]

Beyond telling: Narrating trauma in the wartime writings of Great War AIF Chaplain William McKenzie

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Key words: war trauma, narrative therapy, chaplaincy, Anzacs

Abstract

In a centenary period of Anzac celebration that is often given to the valorising of soldiers' heroic experiences of the First World War, this article introduces teachers to a case study of William McKenzie. Once a house-hold name, the legendary Salvation Army Chaplain of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) McKenzie documented his responses to the trauma of war in his prolific letters and diaries. Drawing heavily on primary sources, this article suggests that McKenzie's story recaptures the essence of what it means to be Christian educators: being engaged in the midst of suffering, disarray and confusion. In the variety of human experiences encountered in the classroom and the playground, the presence of Christian educators must leave a legacy and provide a model for being salt and light.

> *How does one make sense of that which is unimaginable or put words upon that which is unspeakable? How does a soldier, who is stripped of so many things that we cherish as human when he enters battle, begin to construct his humanity?*
> (Saks, 2007, p. 591)

Introduction

Legendary Salvation Army Chaplain William McKenzie of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) of 1914-1918 was of robust constitution and resilient character, with enormous vitality and earnest conviction, and a strong sense of purpose and connection to family, church, nation, Empire and God. Despite these apparent advantages for emotional wellbeing, he was invalided home in early 1918 suffering from war trauma (Reynaud 2015, pp. 166-167, 177-178). As writing is considered to be a key therapeutic way of dealing with trauma, this article explores what McKenzie's writings reveal about how he processed the traumas that he experienced in the Great War between 1915 and 1917. His literary output varied from letters to family members of soldiers, to Salvation Army Commissioner for Australia James Hay, to his wife Annie and to his children, and his Gallipoli diary. Despite the fact that he labelled his experiences as "beyond telling," (McKenzie, Diary, August 6, 1915, Australian War Memorial (AWM) PR 84/150) McKenzie consistently, even compulsively, reverted to words to convey them. Both implicitly and overtly, he demonstrated that the act of recording was somehow vital in making sense of these experiences.

> *Despite the fact that he labelled his experiences as "beyond telling" … McKenzie consistently, even compulsively, reverted to words to convey them.*

As a Chaplain, McKenzie confronted the traumas of war in a way that was perhaps more concentrated than that of the regular combat soldier, having to deal far more frequently and consistently with the mutilation and death of thousands of men. He had to identify dismembered corpses, and bury them, often under shell fire. He also had a voluminous

correspondence with the distressed relatives. But as chaplains of the time were ill trained and prepared for the traumas that they experienced (Wilkinson, 1978, p. 244), it is hardly surprising that the accumulation of such experiences eventually undermined his health and degraded his capacity to serve. However, while his faith could not shield him from the effects of trauma, it offered help in recovery and remained a powerful witness to Christ in the memories of the men, many of whom were irreligious, who witnessed him in action. His story is a model of how Christian leaders can engage with communities of mixed beliefs and influence them positively even through traumatic circumstances.

"this article takes a historian's approach rather than a clinical one, … seeks to understand how McKenzie's writing both reflected his trauma and helped him cope."

Trauma: studies and definitions

While trauma has been associated with war since ancient times (Davoine & Gaudillière, 2004, p. 105) the study of how to treat war trauma had its origins in the Great War, as the stress of war caused an epidemic of emotional injuries which incapacitated vast numbers of soldiers who bore no physical injuries (Herman, 1992, p. 20; Davoine & Gaudillière, 2004, pp. 106-108). Old categories of cowardice or 'lack of moral fibre' had to be abandoned in the face of the present reality, and a new field of psychological research opened up. There is now a large body of scholarly writing to underpin and inform a study of the war writings of McKenzie in relationship to the very evident trauma that he suffered. War is now well recognised as emotionally distressing through exposure to shocking injuries, disfigurements and deaths, as well as the stresses of sustained combat (Briere & Scott, 2006, p. 9). Literature on the topic of trauma and the Great War includes creative writing (notably the war poets Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, and Wilfred Owen, and novelist Erich Maria Remarque), as well as the work of historians and psychologists.

Trauma is defined as a reaction to a life-threatening event; this reaction is mediated by interpersonal and intrapsychic coping mechanisms, and the duration and intensity of the trauma. What distinguishes trauma from other life experiences is the tendency for somatic and psychological systems to intrude in various ways and thus becomes part of the present experience, though not all who suffer trauma will develop the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5), 2013, pp. 271-272). McKenzie, through his prolific writings, gives witness to symptoms of PTSD, including depression and a degrading of coherent meaning; 'nerves' (a catch-all term of the era for manifestations of as-yet clinically undefined psychophysiological injuries); uncontrollable trembling; persistent nightmares; and chronic memory loss. In addition he also suffered neuritis, which left him in physical agony and barely able to crawl on all fours, recurring fevers, vomiting, and 'di-o-rea' (as he loved to write it).

War trauma can be studied from various perspectives; this article takes a historian's approach rather than a clinical one, and so seeks to understand how McKenzie's writing both reflected his trauma and helped him cope. Historians have noted the complex relationships that processing war trauma takes through interactions of writing and audience (including the self, the military censors, and various family members and friends at home) (Damousi, 1999; Fussel, 1977; Larrson, 2006; Roper, 2010; Shepherd, 2000).

Voicing the wound

The wartime writing of McKenzie may serve as literary exemplars of the concept of voicing the wound, where trauma "is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available" (Caruth 1996, p. 4). Scholars identify the central part played by writing in allowing soldiers to come "to terms with their harrowing loss," noting that "they fumbled to find a voice to convey the meaning of such extraordinary experiences," using writing as "they attempted to order, contain and control the chaos which surrounded them" (Damousi, 1999, pp. 9-11), despite the universal sentiment that language could not convey the experience of the war (Fussell, 1977, p. 170).

McKenzie's compulsion to write, wrestling with the complexity of attempting both to reveal and conceal experiences shaped by trauma, represents the contention of trauma specialists that there remained an intrinsic need to record linguistically the disaster of war and disclose its traces rather than try to erase its impact through complete silence (Wilson & Lindy, 2013, p. 35). This need to assert language in order to speak of (and protest) traumatic effect/affect is powerfully referenced in McKenzie's first-hand accounts of the impact of the war. "War is indeed 'Hell,'" he wrote of his first traumatic experiences at Gallipoli, "and no adequate description can picture it" (Diary, May 24, 1915, AWM PR 84/150).

The use of therapy through verbalisation goes back to physician Josef Breuer and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, then developed by French psychologist Pierre Janet, Ira Progoff and James Pennebaker, to become a leading therapy in the present era. Researchers now easily point to the growing consensus from clinicians and theorists that expressive writing can be a tactical response to traumatic situations.

Despite McKenzie's suggestion of language's flawed capacity to retrieve accurately and adequately describe traumatic knowledge, there is persistent evidence of his recourse to language to represent traumatic experience, which in turn could still perform aspects of therapeutic exercise. McKenzie's writings embody one scholar's observation that victims of trauma simultaneously felt that "I must write. I must tell about this" and "there is no way to tell. It is beyond description—unspeakable" (Chandler, 1989, p. 4).

For McKenzie, bearing witness to his war trauma through his writing helped retain his perception of coherence, cohesiveness and connection in relation to traumatic experiences. In the process of 'voicing' his experiences of the war, McKenzie used written activities involving self-disclosure as an opportunity to counter a sense of fragmentation through authoring patterned, coherent and manageable texts. So instead of the trauma and chaos of war being completely exiled from broader social consciousness, McKenzie reclaimed, re-visited, re-visioned and re-versioned events, especially in the light of his faith and mission. The production of diaries and letters for intended audiences functioned as an important means of re-orientation and re-anchoring McKenzie in the social order, and thus his storying, can be viewed as an essential component in compassing the radical dislocation caused by the nihilistic context of the front line.

McKenzie's narratives as 'Writing Performance'

Two key types of McKenzie's writings can be classified as 'writing performance' for their tendency to come from his formal roles as Chaplain in the AIF and Officer of The Salvation Army: his letters to individuals about the fate of their loved ones, and his letters to his civilian employer James Hay. These roles required him to write about his war experiences, but the governing frame of reference was always his official positions rather than his personal reactions.

While almost nothing remains of his thousands of letters to families of soldiers in Australia, each communication channel acted as a means of describing and codifying the "fragmentations or dissociations, defilements and humiliations, helplessness, and other overwhelming grief anxieties…. [which] destabilize or disintegrate basic beliefs" (Kauffman, 2010, p. 8). His intended audience also helped shape the way in which he constructed his war narrative; there was an interplay between writer, genre and audience in the process of sharing his experiences, for the nature of a soldier's audience was a powerful factor in shaping what he wrote about and how he expressed it (Roper, 2010, p. 25). By McKenzie's judicious selection of narrative incident and voice, he attempted to address the question: "Can language be found for this experience that will not be obscured or deformed? Will a listener emerge to hear it?" (Gilmore, 2001, p. 132). He was a privileged communicator, in that his own letters were not censored, allowing him to speak with a frankness that many other soldiers did not enjoy.

McKenzie's letters to individual members of the public stemmed from several motivations. Many were written on his initiative to the families of soldiers who were wounded or killed. Others were responses to enquiries from members of the public, often prompted by excerpts from his letters published in The Salvation Army press and reprinted in country newspapers. His correspondence in this field was enormous, numbering tens of thousands of letters during the war. The few that survive show that the construction of war experiences in these letters was very careful, designed in a pastoral manner, rather than dealing with his own trauma. This did not prevent them from containing frank descriptions at times, but they were always framed in a way that constructed a positive contribution from the subject soldier.

"the nature of a soldier's audience was a powerful factor in shaping what he wrote about and how he expressed it"

His letters to James Hay (Australian War Memorial, n.d.a), his Salvation Army superior, also indicated wider audience awareness. More frank than the letters to families, McKenzie was fully aware that their contents would be published in the Salvation Army newspaper *The War Cry*, and consequently he tailored his writing to that readership of his broader church constituency, and the members of the public who would buy it. Occasionally, he wrote details which he instructed Hay not to publish. In other letters, a pencil has been drawn through particular incidents, probably by Hay or an editor at *The War Cry*, ensuring that only acceptable details were printed. For his Salvation Army audience, McKenzie emphasised the evangelistic successes of his work, and diminished the traumatic war experiences.

In letters to individuals of the general public and to Hay/The Salvation Army/*The War Cry* readership, McKenzie's writing elided over some of the realities of war in favour of an upbeat context of spiritual salvation, national pride or personal honour. A rare surviving letter (Snelling, 1995) to the family of a Victoria Cross-winning soldier after the Battle of Lone Pine in August 1915 demonstrates this capacity. He wrote of the terrible suffering and casualties that Willie Dustan's unit experienced, and noted that Willie was severely wounded, hastily adding:

> *but not at all dangerously. He will suffer considerable pain for a couple of weeks, or even four, but will probably be as right as possible again in six or seven weeks' time. He proved himself a capable, intelligent, intrepid young warrior in his first fight. It was one of the most desperate and stubborn nature. There is no need whatsoever to worry about him. He is doing all right. There is every reason to feel proud of such a son.*
>
> (p. 186)

To Hay he gave an extended account of a young Scotsman who found assurance in Christ the night before Lone Pine, being killed the next day. McKenzie's narrative allowed the tragedy to have the promise of eternal salvation as its defining frame. *The War Cry* published his account of the Battle of Lone Pine, which was a rather sanitised heroic narrative compared to his diary and letters to his wife, though he permitted himself some strong language regarding war itself. He concluded that, "War may be magnificent, but I think it the most damnable insensate folly of which mankind could be guilty" (*War Cry*, October 23, 1915, p. 10).

"Ironically, as conditions grew worse in France and McKenzie's own state deteriorated, his public letters assumed a more flamboyant and humorous style"

Ironically, as conditions grew worse in France and McKenzie's own state deteriorated, his public letters assumed a more flamboyant and humorous style when describing his situation. In one letter to *The War Cry* (January 13, 1917), he made light of the conditions at the front.

> *At present we are waging a woeful war in waders with slobbery, watering whirls wearily whisking round one's waist in some of the trenches, and withering wintry winds whistling round your withers. Ugh! It is calculated to cool the combustible characteristics of the fiercest fire-eater, and make him sigh for a little bit o' 'eaven 'ere, and 'ome, sweet 'ome, be it ever so 'umble.*
>
> (p. 4)

In another whitewash statement, when he was in fact suffering quite intensely, he described himself as having "a brave heart, a chastened spirit, a cool head, a firm step, a strong fist, a dauntless soul, a gripping faith, a clear vision, a fighting fervour, a love of good things, a hatred of the devil, a hope of heaven, a vision of the glory. So I guess I ought to be happy" (*War Cry*, January 13, 1919, p. 3: March 3, 1917, pp. 1, 3). The rhetoric was quite misleading, and perhaps its intended audience was as much himself as others.

Characteristically, these kinds of writings lacked the close detail and harrowing personal consequences of his other accounts of the same events. While they allowed McKenzie to recompose the war traumas as a patterned, coherent narrative with clear spiritual and national closure which reflected his own personal convictions, the absence of naming the trauma and the lack of immediacy marked them out as textual performance rather than therapy. The narratives stemmed from functionality and role; they were disassociated and abstracted, and their report-like nature placed them in the realm of concealing rather than revealing trauma. They were good propaganda for domestic consumption, placing the Australian soldiers, and McKenzie's role as an ambassador of The Salvation Army, in the best possible light. In effect, these writings were simultaneously an act of revealing and an act of concealing. The language he found for these experiences was in fact obscuring and deforming, but he found many willing listeners to hear it.

McKenzie's narratives as 'Writing Therapeusis'

But another category of McKenzie's writing demonstrated a much greater engagement with the capacity for telling the untellable, as it was personally rather than professionally motivated. Firstly, McKenzie's Gallipoli diary, written in his bold, impatient hand, recorded his war experiences. But while it is frank, there is an abstraction in its tone, as if writing to an ideal self or future audience. The entries still demonstrated a number of therapeutic qualities. As is characteristic of Great War trench writing (Shephard, 2000, pp. 260-261), they were often distorted, raw and unprocessed, capturing the fragmentation characteristic of traumatic experiences, but they named the trauma graphically, ensuring that the memory did not become repressed. The compelling need to record is evident in the recording of very specific details, such as numbers of men killed and wounded, or of conversions at his religious meetings, and his writing displayed an evident sense of both empathy and community, and often constructed his experiences into a larger, spiritual world-view.

For example, his entry concerning the massive Turkish counterattack at Gallipoli juxtaposed both glee (*"our men and machine guns did great execution…. Many reckoning it the best sport they ever had. It put them in great heart, and they long for such another go"*) and mourning (*"I had a very trying duty the next day, burying our own dead. I thought so much of the many sad hearts in Australia, when they know of our losses"*) (Diary, May 18, 1915, AWM PR 84/150). His sense of community was expressed in speaking of 'our boys' and his empathetic connection to their grieving families is transparent. On the other hand, it is evident that at times of greatest trauma, writing up diary entries took place some days or even weeks after the event, when he had the time to

catch up the entries. At these points, it can lose its immediacy and become like a report.

Letters to his children, addressed to them individually, were notable for their almost complete absence of war information, save for the occasional promise of battle souvenirs for the boys. Otherwise, they adopted a tone suited to the age and interests of each child and, while not directly concerned with the war, offered McKenzie a haven of imaginative engagement in his children's lives, a kind of positive disassociation, that he later claimed helped keep him sane (Reynaud, 2015, p. 146). The refuge of confining himself solely to their world both acted as a temporary escape from the stress of war, and reinforced his sense of belonging to community that helped sustain him. Indeed at one stage he revealed to his wife that the thought of "your welfare with that of the children" was all that prevented him from a desperate, suicidal charge at the enemy, so low had his spirits become (Letter to Annie McKenzie, October 28, 1916, AWM PR 84/150).

The most effective therapeutic writing that McKenzie undertook was in letters to his wife Annie. It was evidently a very close relationship, but not without its complicating factors. Annie was distressed over his extended absence, was struggling as the sole parent of her troublesome teenage boys, feared internment because of her German background and worried over her impulsive, action-oriented husband's safety on the battlefields. McKenzie was sufficiently aware of her pain to restrict the frankness of his early letters, but as the war progressed, the writing became more and more confessional, naming his trauma, and giving voice to the unspeakable that he experienced. The compulsion to write is evident again, especially when he began letters by describing his own pleasure in writing to her. As with the children, it offered him an oasis, a refuge, in the war. His insistence that she carefully keep all his letters shows that his writing was important, not just for the present but also as a legacy allowing him in the future to construct his current traumatic work as meaningful (Letters to Annie, January 21, 1916; circa August 1916, AWM PR 84/150). Her role as a confidante and guardian of information not to be disclosed to others suggests that these letters played an active role in how he processed his trauma. Unlike his war diary, the audience is concrete and real, the relationship is connected, and she bears witness to his trauma.

These letters reveal most clearly McKenzie's own journey into fragmentation brought on by trauma, but also illustrate the healthy ways in which he processed his experiences. They have the greatest sense of immediacy of all his war writings, locating the narrative on the page both in the immediate time and space. He described writing "by candlelight in my dugout or cave, the bullets are whizzing over my head through the air by the thousands" (Letter to Annie, May 20, 1915, AWM PR 84/150). Writing in such circumstances confirms the compelling need to record, despite the circumstances. Occasionally, he was more positive in his letters than in his diary (for example the account of the May 24, 1915 armistice burials in his diary and his letter to Annie on May 30, AWM PR 84/150), but the letters still demonstrate an honesty, reality and personal quality that could be absent from his diary. In one, he admitted that he had little news, but countered this self-censoring with the fact that "you get this [news] in the [news] papers with many lies added." He described his energy levels as so low that he had "to apply 'the whip' occasionally." He went on to comment about his heavy workload, but quietly bragged about the honour that this brought him from the men (Letter to Annie, September 5, 1915, AWM PR 84/150).

McKenzie was quite consistent in reconnecting to community through the letters to his wife. He emphasised the importance of Annie to his own emotional wellbeing. "I get very heart hungry at times and homesick too" he wrote. "I long to see you all and clasp you to my breast. You are a great joy and comfort to me and I'm so glad you are mine. I lay for three hours last night having such kind thoughts of you and it did me good." The letters bear witness to his service to those he felt called to serve, by God, church and country. He repeatedly spoke of fulfilling his divine mission of bringing soldiers to Christ, and bringing honour to The Salvation Army. At times he used humour to lighten descriptions of the arduous conditions under which he lived, once suggesting that post-war accommodation could be much cheaper by renting a well-appointed dugout (Letter to Annie, May 4, 1916, AWM PR 84/150).

The letters also demonstrate the safety he had in simply pouring out his unprocessed feelings onto a page, without the need to clean them up for consumption. One epistle juxtaposed dreadful details of horrendous casualties with upbeat predictions of a quick end to the war, followed by descriptions of the terrible effect of new weapons, blended with assurances of victory by God's grace (Letter to Annie McKenzie, August 6, 1916, AWM PR 84/150). This letter illustrates perfectly the fragmentary nature of war trauma sensations, but also the safety that he had in voicing these to Annie.

Most dramatically, McKenzie recorded in letters to Hay and to Annie many occasions when he responded to direct instructions via a 'Voice' which repeatedly saved his life. "I have learned to promptly obey and so come off all right," he wrote to Annie. "Sometimes it is 'go' others 'do not go' and again 'get

"The most effective therapeutic writing that McKenzie undertook was in letters to his wife Annie."

away quickly,' 'lie down,' 'be careful,' 'go in there'. It is very striking and has deeply impressed me." He interpreted this as the voice of his guardian angel, giving him divine protection for as long as his work remained unfinished, imbuing him with fearless assurance on the battlefield (Letter to Annie, August 20, 1916, AWM PR 84/150; War Cry, October 14, 1916, p. 3).

But the letters of 1916-1917 reveal a gradual whittling away of his confidence, morale and capacity to retain an integrated world view under the strain of the trauma. Several times he lashed out in anger at the Germans, wishing for blood-curdling retribution on them even at the cost of a million German civilian casualties (Letter to Annie, October 10, 1916, AWM PR 84/150). In other letters, he expressed weariness at bearing witness to death, and had "got almost to feel as if nothing now mattered, life is so cheap here." Yet even at this low point, he managed to construct meaning, saying that a last "desperate and furious charge" would offer him the chance of an honourable death for his country and "in the vindication of righteousness and the liberty of the subject [which] is supremely grand" (Letter to Annie, October 28, 1916, AWM PR 84/150). He gradually admitted that he was war weary and would "have hard work to avoid a collapse later on," and was perplexed at his puzzling loss of memory (Letter to Annie, June 17, 1917, AWM PR 84/150). Despite having 'real good' services, sports and concerts for the men, he said that he could no longer cope with writing sympathetic letters to the families of the dead (Letter to Annie, August 22, 1917, AWM PR 84/150). Within a couple of weeks he composed a fatalistic letter admitting in language strikingly uncharacteristic of his normal God-given certitude that the once-clear outcome of the war "is a mystery in the lap of the gods," leaving him "to wonder if there is really a God after all who loves justice." However, he immediately turned to talk of the children, delighting in reports of his young daughter's performances at concerts (Letter to Annie, September 2, 1917, AWM PR 84/150). Even at his worst, McKenzie reintegrated himself into community. Within weeks, his repatriation to Australia was formalised, though the process dragged out until January 1918.

> *"we are "wounded healers", fellow pilgrims, a tiny piece of God in a world deeply scarred by trauma. It is in our woundedness that we form empathic connection"*

Conclusion

McKenzie's war writings demonstrate a remarkably healthy engagement with the paradox of "put[ting] words upon that which is unspeakable." While much of his war writing was performance required by the nature of his role, his letters to family acted as a safety valve through which he could name the trauma, giving voice to the wound which cried out. The letters helped him retain a sense of location in his own past and future, constructing meaning and purpose into his present wartime role. Out of the shame of dealing with horrific death and injury, he could reconstruct honour; out of the fragmentary experiences of trauma, he reconnected to his family, the 'boys' of his brigade, his church, nation and God. Through his war writing, McKenzie was able to recreate pattern, structure, closure, coherence and balance from his fragmentary, traumatic experiences. While engaging in rather effective practices, the trauma which McKenzie experienced proved too great and too sustained even for so resilient a personality as himself, and he was invalided home.

The pattern of his post-war career followed this disjunction, for on his return, he reintegrated with his wife and family, resumed his high-profile evangelistic career in The Salvation Army, and became a magnetic Anzac celebrity in Australia for the next twenty years. Yet the trauma of the war never left him; he suffered from appalling nightmares for some time, and never fully recovered his memory. Twenty years later, the recurrence of the telling memory lapses that had been a catalyst for his repatriation from war triggered his retirement from The Salvation Army. As therapists and researchers recognise (Caruth, 1996, p. 4; Scaer, 2005, p. 253), even a healthy engagement with traumatic experiences does not 'unmake' the wound, which still cries out. Yet it was precisely these experiences which made his engagement with soldiers so powerful: their shared nature gave his Christian witness authenticity.

The lessons for Christian educators are profound; we are "wounded healers" (Nouwen, 1979), fellow pilgrims, a tiny piece of God in a world deeply scarred by trauma. It is in our woundedness that we form empathic connection, thus giving powerful witness to the message of Christ.

McKenzie's story is a compelling narrative that contains tragedy and heroism, faith and doubt, set in the historical context of a war central to Australian memory. It is, however, more than a story of hope and despair arising out of a man's struggle to integrate the worst and best of human nature. It is also a profoundly Christian story in which the metaphors of salt and light (Matt 5:13-16) so familiar to us from the Gospels are poignant indicators of the story's timeless relevance. McKenzie brought many soldiers to a knowledge of salvation; however, the reason he was revered was for his ability, in the most trying of circumstances, to make a difference in the lives of those whose journey he shared (Reynaud, 2015, pp. 233-243). He connected with and immersed himself in the lives of the soldiers. For Christian educators, this is not just an acknowledgement of history, but an example of the power of genuine engagement in the midst of suffering and brokenness. The incarnational model of ministry focuses not just

on eternal destiny but on the present lived experience. The fact that, in Christian schools, many students will not become committed followers of Christ should not deter us from being the presence of God in the lives of those whose journey we share. The example and legacy of McKenzie becomes a model for how to make a difference, a model well worth sharing with our students. TEACH

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Understanding History: Seventh-day Adventists and their Perspectives

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Understanding history: Seventh-day Adventists and their perspectives

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Key words: history, historiography, Seventh-day Adventist, religious history

Introduction

History is never abstract. It is always the story of how we came to believe and act the way we do today. Understanding the history of a particular denomination can transform discussions of contemporary issues from divisive stone-throwing to a more sensitive awareness of how and why certain beliefs and practices are current, or are currently under threat of change. And a knowledge of a Seventh-day Adventist understanding of history explains a great deal about the church and touches on many of the key conflicts and controversies that have affected, and currently affect, the church. Hence, it is topical for the teacher in Adventist schools, and by parallel, to teachers in all Christian schools.

> *Understanding the history … can transform discussions of contemporary issues from divisive stone-throwing to a more sensitive awareness*

The importance of history to the Seventh-day Adventist (hereafter Adventist) church is evident in the place that history holds in the curriculum of all Adventist tertiary institutions, as well as in the creation of institutional archives and of research centres around the world tasked with exploring the legacy of pioneer Adventists. This article explores the ways in which Adventist writers and scholars have approached history, the ways in which they themselves have written works of a historical nature, and to what ends history has been put in the church. Seventh-day Adventism emerged from the Millerite groups that survived The Great Disappointment of 1844, establishing its core doctrines, denominational name and structure by 1863 (Schwarz & Greenleaf, 2000). Core to Adventist theology has been a concern with history, which it owes to its Millerite roots. William Miller (1781-1849) swapped sceptical rationalism after his conversion to an Evangelical Baptist faith in 1816 for a 'common sense' hermeneutic that shaped his interpretation of the Bible. With a kind of mathematical precision (Arasola, 1990), Miller interpreted scripture in the light of history—his principal work in its many editions was entitled *Evidences from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ about the Year A.D. 1843, and of His Personal Reign for 1,000 Years* (1833, 1st ed.). Miller always demanded evidence; Scripture was, for him, authority; *history* merely spotlighted his era as the time when remarkable fulfilments of Bible prophecy were anticipated (Crocombe, 2011, p. 53; Knight, 1993, p. 56).

Early Sabbatarian Adventism cherished all three of Miller's components: evidence, Scripture *and* history. Two of its three co-cofounders were formerly ardent Restorationists: Joseph Bates (1792-1872) and James White (1821-1881) had been members of the Christian Connection as well as Millerite preachers (Reid, 1990). The third co-founder of Sabbatarian Adventism, Ellen Gould Harmon White (1827-1915), was a Methodist drilled in John Wesley's notion of 'Primitive Godliness.' During a thirty-year period, 1858-1888, with the concepts of Restorationism and Millerism in the backs of their minds, Adventists idealised biblical/prophetic, Protestant Reformation and Evangelical Revival history, envisioning themselves as completing the processes initiated by Christian reformers of earlier times. History was a means of demonstrating the engagement of God in human affairs, with the Adventists as the heirs of God's promises and particular agents of his current activity in the world. The pursuit of history was in the hands of lay people or minimally-trained clergy and teachers; professional historical endeavour was little considered because it was seen as lacking necessary spiritual insight. Thus, for early Adventists, history was always subordinate to theology. They were not interested in history as a discipline, but only as a product.

Nineteenth-century idealists

Four important Adventist writers who made influential use of history in their religious writings were Uriah Smith (1832-1903), the prominent editor of Adventist publications; Ellen White (1827-1915), whose work gained major leverage through her

prophetic status; John Nevin Andrews (1829-1883), who wrote an influential study on the history of the Sabbath, and Alonzo Trevier Jones (1803-1923), a prolific writer on historical and theological issues.

Of the self-educated Uriah Smith's three chief works dealing with history, the most influential were his apocalyptic commentaries, combined as *The Prophecies of Daniel and Revelation* (1897), and is still in print. Smith used history to validate his interpretation of biblical apocalyptic, listing his sources to indicate his reliance upon classic works of Protestant history. His second major historical work was *The United States in Prophecy*, later rewritten as *The Marvel of Nations*, which traced American history from the perspective that divine providence was guiding its development. He did not discount conventional history, but he argued that "[i]f we believe that there is a God who rules in the kingdoms of men (Dan 5: 21), we must look for his providential hand in human history, in the rise, career, and fall of the nations and peoples of the world" (Smith, 1887, preface). A third work was *Our Country's Future*, which interpreted Bible prophecies deemed to apply to the future of the USA, with the expectation that history would bear out his version. Smith based much of his historical writing on existing histories, as he felt that these works had already established the facts; his aim was to provide what they had missed – God's point of view. Smith saw prophecy and history on a continuum: one was history anticipated, the other was prophecy fulfilled.

Ellen White, the most influential writer during Adventism's first seventy years, received formal education only until the third-grade. From that point on, she was self-educated through a lifetime of reading, though her historical reading was limited to the Protestant historians whose world-views were similar to her own. White outlined in five major volumes – *Patriarchs and Prophets* (1890), *Prophets and Kings* (1917), *The Desire of Ages* (1898), *The Acts of the Apostles* (1911), and *The Great Controversy* (in various editions between 1858-1911)—the activity of God in biblical and religious history from creation to the Second Coming. Like Smith, White took an exclusively providential point of view, explaining each event in terms of God's interaction with the affairs of men.

White's use of history had a special import that the writings of other Adventist authors of her era did not possess. While others could be quite dogmatic, none claimed direct revelation through supernatural visions as White did. The authority of her historically-related writings was questioned, to which White and her son Willie made revealing comments on her use of history. Ellen White specifically claimed direct revelation of some historical events, which she characteristically described as "scenes" or "views," and which Willie depicted as "flashlight pictures." Willie emphatically declared that she was not dependent on historians as other writers were, noting that on one occasion she was able to tell him accurately about events described in a book he had not yet read aloud to her, having seen the events in vision. At the same time, Ellen White openly disavowed her writings as a standard of historical accuracy, routinely quoting from established Protestant historians, and revising historical details in later editions of her books, a process described by her grandson Arthur L. White as "the subordination of historical detail to the purpose of the book." (Ellen G. White, Letter 14, 1889; Letter 86, 1906; Letter 56, 1911; Arthur L. White, "Toward a factual concept of inspiration, II," Ellen G. White Research Centre, Avondale College, DF65-a, 20, 22, 24-25; White, 1950, p. x). Despite impressing Willie with her ability to recite history she had not yet heard, Ellen in fact was well read in Protestant history over many years, and it is an exaggeration to claim that her visions were the principal source of her historical writings (McAdams, 1980, pp. 28-31). Indeed, as A. G. Daniells observed after her death, "we were warned against using Sister White as a historian. She never claimed to be that" (Numbers, 2008, p. 360). Her frequent unacknowledged borrowing from historians caused some distress to her followers from the 1880s onward; turmoil erupted when later generations of Adventists discovered that her writings were not all directly from God, even though she had not made such a claim for herself in the first place.

"as he felt that these works had already established the facts; his aim was to provide what they had missed – God's point of view."

However, Ellen White was unapologetic about her unacknowledged quotes, saying she gave no specific credit where she borrowed, "since the quotations are not given for the purpose of citing that writer as authority, but because his statement affords a ready and forcible presentation of the subject" (White, 1950, p. xii). More recent researchers have debated the extent to which White copied, paraphrased, or even carelessly distorted the historians she quoted. It is evident that she borrowed significant segments of her history from Uriah Smith, whose words were often a light paraphrase of other writers. Therefore, some of White's historical errors are not original to her, having been copied from Smith (Land, 1980, p. 93; McAdams, 1980, pp. 29, 34, 35). She did not follow Smith slavishly, however, at one point she censured him for using Gibbon as a source (White, 1885, p. 520). In fact, Ellen White did not see herself as an historian and she condemned much of the historical profession for being preoccupied with the pursuit of worldly goals. It was sacred history that White considered as being

of supreme value, for it revealed the fulfilment of prophecy, the workings of Providence in the great reform movements, and the events associated with the end of time (White, 1942, pp. 441-442). Even her own autobiographical writings were apologetic rather than strictly historical, and relied heavily on accounts of her visions to authenticate her message (Land, 2014, pp. 322-324).

John Nevin Andrews was an influential theologian, helping to establish key historical and contemporary connections in Adventist apocalyptic interpretation. But perhaps his most important work was *The History of the Sabbath and the First Day of the Week* (1859), which grounded Adventist seventh-day Sabbatarianism in a historical context, and thus through its ancient origins and practice giving it a sounder apologetic foundation. This work was crucial in establishing the Sabbath in both Adventist theology and practice.

> *"while not acting as historians, they were not afraid to disagree … and conduct a robust discussion … applying history to biblical interpretation."*

Ex-army non-commissioned officer and leading Adventist theologian and editor Alonzo Jones (1898) was another passionate amateur historian. He wrote a number of historical works, some of them voluminous, on a diverse array of topics. Jones' histories were like those of Smith and White – always taking a divine perspective on human affairs. "History, properly studied," he wrote, "is but the study of the grand purposes of God with men and nations. It is evident, therefore, that the proper study of history can be made only upon the basis of the word of God – the Bible. Upon that basis this history is composed" (Jones, 1898, preface, p. v). Yet Jones differed particularly from Ellen White by claiming no originality and by quoting all his sources as the authority for his historical statements (Jones, 1887, preface). In that sense he was the more careful of the early Adventists in his use of history.

Other contributors to Adventist-authored history included Joseph Bates, whose autobiography was the first Adventist historical work which was not apologetic (Land, 1994, xvi). Ellen's husband James White and John Norton Loughborough also wrote historical works. The latter wrote the first account of the Adventist church, *The Rise and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* (1892), later expanded as *The Great Advent Movement, Its Rise and Progress* (1905). It was more of a chronicle than a history, as it lacked an evaluative dimension. His biography of Ellen White, along with her own writings, "established the foundation for an Adventist historical understanding of Ellen White" in a strictly apologetic genre (Land, 2014, p. 325). But none of the early Adventist historical writers considered themselves as rewriting the basic historical data: essentially, all saw history as apologetic, not critical. To them, history traced the establishment of the pure apostolic church after the resurrection of Jesus, followed by its gradual decline and apostasy, and then long restoration from the Reformation through to the Advent Movement. However, while not acting as historians, they were not afraid to disagree with each other and conduct a robust discussion on issues of applying history to biblical interpretation. They operated in a context of (mostly) respectful but lively debate.

Early-mid twentieth-century efforts

The capacity to respectfully disagree did not last long. In the years following the death of Ellen White in 1915, polarisation occurred in the church between progressives and conservatives, who lurched towards a more militant, even Fundamentalist position, sharing the latter's fear of an emerging Modernism (Campbell, 2008, pp. 40-51, 190-191) and squashing the earliest signs of a more rigorous historiographical approach to history. Clement L. Benson and Edwin Franklin Alberstworth, the first professionally-trained historians with higher degrees from secular universities, began to push for a more professional approach to church history, supported by appropriate training and resourcing. They argued that shoddy history undermined the sound biblical arguments of the church (Campbell, 2008, pp. 184-190). Unfortunately, despite the largely favourable reception of their presentations at the Bible Conference of 1919, specially convened to deal with issues of biblical and spiritual authority after the loss of the governing voice of Ellen White, these two men fell victim to the conservative backlash of the 1920s and both eventually left the organisation under suspicion of holding liberal Modernist views (Campbell, 2008, p. 192). Historiographically-informed discussion, particularly on the nature of White's inspired role in the church, was stymied for another fifty years.

The 1919 Bible Conference, held in camera, represented a missed opportunity for the church, especially in developing a sound understanding of the relationship between White's writings and history. One of the issues addressed was the teaching of history and historical method. W.W. Prescott opened the discussion by asserting that a providential history was the only true history, showing the "unity of history under the control of one Will" (Campbell, 2008, pp. 183-184). General Conference president A. G. Daniells, a former confidant of Ellen White, responded to questions by teachers over issues of factual disagreements between history texts and Ellen White books. He clearly stated several times Ellen White's warning not to use her as a historical authority (Numbers, 2008, p. 360). But Daniells found such talk left some employees shaken,

and the conference transcripts were locked away until accidentally discovered by an archivist in the 1970s. Daniells himself had a manuscript published posthumously in 1936, *The Abiding Gift of Prophecy*, which traced in the traditional Adventist manner God's use of prophets. It updated Adventist history into the 20th century.

Another aspiring Adventist historian was Everett Dick, who pursued doctoral studies in the Millerite movement, as being less threatening than ones about the denomination itself. His hopes that the church would publish his insightful work were dashed. Initially denied access to the archives of the Review and Herald, the church's chief publishing house, his manuscript was rejected by various Adventist publishers, especially after influential church editor LeRoy Froom labelled it "too defeatist." Asked to write a denominational history book for the church's young people, he disowned it as a scholarly work because he was forced to sanitise it. Discouraged, he turned from Adventist history, and from the 1930s forged a distinguished career in American mid-West history. His Millerite book was finally published in 1994, with an excellent foreword by Gary Land (Land, 1994, pp. vii-viii).

Several other Adventist historians of the early and middle decades of the Twentieth Century worked along lines less disturbing to church administrators. Following Loughborough, Mahlon E. Olsen, Arthur W. Spalding, LeRoy Froom, and Francis D. Nichol were among those who adopted more historical methods of writing (Knight, 2007, p. 45). Olsen studied the reform movement from Martin Luther onwards, placing Adventism firmly as its true heir in *A History and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* (1926, Land, 1994, pp. xvi-xvii). Despite wide-ranging primary research about pioneer Adventists, he had difficulty accessing some sources due to the non-cooperation of Ellen White's son Edson (Taylor, 2014). His work was sound but unadventurous, avoiding apologetics, but it also "largely eschewed interpretation in favour of description" (Land, 2014, p. 326). Spalding wrote two key historical works: *Captains of the Host* (1949, Vol. 1) and *Origins and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (1961). As probably the most widely-read histories of Adventism, he was consequently influential. He wrote openly for Adventist believers, not attempting to be objective, but consciously using a tone that was warm, and at times fervent (Spalding, 1949, pp. 7-8). He was aware of the limitations of his work, although his research drew on useful secondary and primary sources including Olsen, Matilda Erickson Andross and Emma E. Howell, the latter two being the first Adventist women historians, and authors of Adventist histories for young people.

Two key Adventist editors also contributed works of history, predictably adopting a line that supported the dominant denominational narrative. Nichol, associate editor of the flagship Adventist publishing house the Review and Herald, published *The Midnight Cry in 1944*. A somewhat apologetic and consciously subjective work based on extensive primary research, it was influential in rescuing the Millerites from their popular reputation of fanaticism, winning very positive reviews upon its release, though recently it has been critiqued for its misuse of evidence (Mitchell, 1946; Land, 1994, pp. xvii-xviii). He also authored a systematic apologist rebuttal of disillusioned former Adventist minister Dudley M. Canright's 1919 posthumous polemic against White.

Froom, an editor of *Ministry*, the journal for Adventist clergy, published a massive four-part series *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* between 1948 and 1953, in which he exhaustively traced the use of the Historicist approach to biblical prophecy, defending it as the oldest and soundest method. Praised by non-Adventist scholars for its impressive scope and meticulous documentation, its scholarly judgments were cramped by its narrow parochial focus and its apologetic tone. In the end, its chief value was primarily bibliographic. Froom claimed to have given "a fair and faithful to fact, comprehensive and impartial treatment," (Froom, 1971, p. 18) but his work fell short of this high standard. Other important works by Froom included the two-volume *Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers* (1965-1966), a history of the doctrine of the conditional mortality of the soul, and *Movement of Destiny* (1971), tracing the history of Adventism and controversially including valuable discussions of various theological debates. Significantly, the work of Dick was intentionally overlooked in the otherwise comprehensive bibliographies of both Froom and Nichol. Other apologetic writers of the era included Jerome Clark, Robert Gale and Mervyn C. Maxwell, all of whom adopted a simple theological narrative framework weak on analysis (Land, 1994, pp. xix-xx). The guardian of the legacy of Ellen White during this era was her grandson, Arthur L. White, who broadened the spread and accessibility of his grandmother's papers through new E. G. White research centres and the creation of a General Conference Archive open to outside researchers, while simultaneously zealously protecting that material from being accessed by the 'wrong' hands, thus preventing much investigative historical research.

> *"Asked to write a denominational history book … he [Dick] disowned it as a scholarly work because he was forced to sanitise it"*

One historian managed to act as a bridge between the apologists of the mid-century and the new wave historians who would follow. Richard Schwarz's 1964 doctorate on the controversial sometime Adventist leader John Harvey Kellogg was

published in several editions. He specialised in the history of the Adventist church, writing the standard denominational history textbook for Adventist colleges, *Light Bearers to the Remnant* (1980). A revised edition with updates by Floyd Greenleaf, *Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (2000), remains the best work of its kind. Schwarz mentored the newer generation emerging in the 1970s, helping to moderate some of the conflicts generated by their research, for example negotiating to make a new study of Ellen White less emotive. While retaining the support of church administrators, he nevertheless helped the younger historians who were changing the shape of Adventist historiography (Butler, 2008, pp. 24-25, 27-28).

Later twentieth-century professional dialogues

A professional historical approach to issues began tentatively in the 1950s as university-educated historians took up positions in Adventist institutions. From 1969, scholarly debate within the church found a platform through the journal *Spectrum*, and to a lesser extent *Adventist Heritage* and *Adventist Today*, which offered forums that more official church papers, having a (de facto) imprimatur, were reluctant to host. Recent Adventist approaches demonstrate more awareness of the complexities of history, are less likely to assume the perspective of God, and are more open to alternative and non-linear explanations of events. However, the work of these historians is contested by some lay people, church administrators and even some historians, out of fear that new interpretations will threaten established beliefs. The conflicts generated have led to casualties among Adventist historians.

> *The first serious critical scholarly analysis of Adventist history took place over the role of Ellen White, beginning in 1970*

The first serious critical scholarly analysis of Adventist history took place over the role of Ellen White, beginning in 1970, with a cluster of articles in the Autumn 1970 issue of *Spectrum*. Donald McAdams characterised Adventist historiography as having been through three typical generations: the energetic and committed founders; the second generation which idealised the first generation and interpreted them conservatively; and finally the third generation, which feeling safe in a heritage that stretched back beyond living memory, could question the givens more easily (McAdams, 1980, pp. 27-28). Early critics of Ellen White were polemic rather than scholarly, while her defenders from the 1920-1960s were generally well-researched apologists rather than analysts. From 1970, a different origin and purpose was distinguishable. Frederick E. Harder wrote of Ellen White, "She was not writing history, she was interpreting it," adding that, "the history was learned by ordinary means, but the activity of God in the historical situation was seen by revelation" (McAdams, 1980, pp. 28-29). The research of the next ten years—though not always the debate surrounding it—fitted that basic model.

McAdams considered that what distinguished the modern debates from those of Ellen White's time was a desire "not to tear down, but to understand." Unlike her contemporary critics, writers like Roy Branson and Harold Weiss wanted to make White more influential, "but they insisted upon objective scholarship and a critical examination of sources" (McAdams, 1980, p. 29). Debate between William S. Peterson, W. Paul Bradley, John W. Wood and Ronald Graybill in the early 1970s, centred on her use of history, but occasionally became personal (McAdams, 1980, pp. 29-31).

However, this was merely the prelude to more significant Adventist historiographical research. Ron Numbers, already influential in church historical research, initiated a major shift with his seminal study of the health writings of Ellen White. Numbers refused to begin with presuppositions about divine inspiration, restricting himself to what he called more objective, historical criteria (Numbers, 2008, xxxvii). He concluded that some of White's inspired ideas were in fact borrowed from popular contemporary proponents of health reform, and that she changed her ideas over time (Land, 1994, p. 94). His major book, *Prophetess of Health* (1st edition 1976), sent shock waves through academic and administrative church circles. *Time* magazine commented on the stir it created, while the church's official paper, *Review and Herald*, editorialised that it did not challenge mature faith. Numbers' work was endorsed by respected Adventist scholars as a "thoroughly researched and clearly written … first-class piece of historical scholarship" (McAdams, 1980, p. 35). Several Adventist historians and church administrators attempted to tone down its conclusions, while at the same time tacitly accepting that Numbers was essentially correct, though a detailed rebuttal of many of its points was published by the Ellen G. White Estate, with historian Richard Schwarz noting Numbers' lack of critical scrutiny of sources hostile to White (Schwarz, 1976). Graybill, who had actually helped Numbers with his research, was co-opted as the defender of the church's traditional representation of White (Butler, 2008, pp. 14-17). The ensuing debate opened up the tensions that arise when the historian-believer writes on issues involving divine interaction with humanity (McAdams, 1980, pp. 31-34). Since the activity of God is not a matter subject to the usual rules of historical evidence, faith and historical methodology clash. However, the political fallout helped move Numbers from a professing Adventist

to agnosticism. The debate he began has rumbled on for decades, with another historian, Gary Land, courageously labelling the church's official response as "inadequate," and calling on the church to review its tacit support of the inerrancy of White's inspiration (Land, 1994, p. 95; Land, 1978, pp. 51-55). Many who challenged the status quo were forced out of church employ or left before they were pushed, including Petersen, Weiss and Branson from Andrews, and Jonathan Butler, Vern Carner and Numbers from Loma Linda University. Graybill himself, attempting to walk the fine line between faithful history and administrative favour, eventually fell foul of the latter and was transferred out of the sensitive position in the White Estate to other church employment. McAdams survived for a while, but later also left denominational work (Numbers, 2008, pp. xvii-xviii). As in the time of Daniells, some leaders feared that the revelations would cause undue consternation among the church constituency, and Arthur White led the defence with a six-volume biography of his grandmother that drowned most of the major issues in a treacle of minutia. But it was not all bad news from the organised church: beginning in the 1980s the new Director of the Ellen G. White Estate, Robert Olson, promoted a more open approach to accessing sensitive archival documents. Meanwhile, Numbers' work was decisive in motivating Adventist historians to examine aspects of Adventist history with a new scholarly candour, which gained momentum with a series of *Spectrum* articles in 1979-1980.

Benjamin McArthur made an important contribution to the debate with his article, "Where are Historians Taking the Church?" published in *Spectrum*, November 1979. He observed that the professional historians were no longer the guardians of tradition, but rather had evolved into social critics (McArthur, 1979, pp. 9-10). The historical methodologies they used were different from the historical approaches of earlier Adventist writers, leading to conflict over vastly different conclusions. He made overt the problem for historians of faith, stating that "The discipline's insistence on finding causal explanation within the temporal realm heightens the problem, for it seemingly counters the assumption that God acts directly in the affairs of humanity," noting that God's leading was not susceptible to historical methodology (McArthur, 1979, p. 11).

McArthur considered that the impact of this new wave of historical research on Ellen White could adversely affect her standing as an inspired writer. He feared the process underway in Adventism might follow that of the Jewish community, where thinking shifted from blind belief to one of secularisation. Historical scrutiny could lead to a more tentative attitude to White's writings as inspired and prophetic, losing their normative authority. On the other hand, it would move Adventism closer to its tradition of rationalism, claiming that truth could bear the closest scrutiny (McArthur, 1979, pp. 12-13). The paradox was that many Adventists would struggle with the tension between traditional views of White's inspiration and the findings of research that showed sources other than visions for many of her cherished advocacies. But while these tensions were real, there was no going back to the former, simple ways. However, McArthur considered that relatively little of the revisionist work had filtered down to the grassroots, and he speculated that conservative attitudes could prove too resilient to change (McArthur, 1979, p. 14). Time has shown that this forecast was not too wide of the mark: a Fundamentalist attitude to White's inspiration waxes and wanes, but still remains prevalent in many church circles, while the debate has created a church with a much greater diversity of views on White's role than ever before (McArthur, 2008, pp. 45-56).

The late Gary Land was a pioneer among professionally-trained historians in the church, seeing himself as a researcher rather than just a teacher, and also acting as mentor to many, including McArthur (McArthur, 2015, p. 7). He saw history as being at the heart of Adventist identity. Land wrote a major article exploring the development of historiographical consciousness in Adventism, drawing similar conclusions to McArthur. Land considered that the debate in studies about Ellen White, though uneven in quality, was healthy, prompting further scholarship which eventually asked whether a distinctive Adventist approach to history could exist. This philosophical debate essentially turned on whether "the rationale of all history should be illuminated by ecclesiastical history and not vice versa," as proposed by one conservative historian (Schwantes, 1970, p. 139). Numbers stated his preference for "honest agnosticism" as preferable to "pious fraud," while others like Land refused to accept unhistorical subordination (Land, 1980, p. 97). Land, in comment:

> *pointed out that the traditional way of describing God's hand in history implied an almost deistic separation of God and the world, whereas the Bible presented God as both immanent and transcendent. This meant, then, that God is always active in history. But because, in the light of revelation, some events are more meaningful than others, the Christian historian, rather than emphasizing God's intervention, will seek to understand the meaning of events within a Christian framework*
>
> (Land, 1980, pp. 96-97).

"*Numbers' work was decisive in motivating Adventist historians to examine aspects of Adventist history with a new scholarly candour*"

> *demonstrated that a nuanced understanding is compatible with strengthening trust in the church, especially for the growing numbers of highly educated Adventists*

Land identified further study that needed doing, including work on institutional history, twentieth century history, and intellectual history. He argued that Adventist history also needed to be done by non-Adventist historians, editing the volume *Adventism in America: A History* by a non-Adventist publisher. There was also a need to take seriously the connection between history and philosophy, and the need to write sound history for popular audiences. Land wrote, "if we are to survive and make our research understood, we must be able to articulate the relationship between critical history and religious belief." He also called on historians "to engage theologians and denominational administrators in dialogue about the meaning of our history and its implications for our beliefs and practice" (Land, 1980, pp. 98-99). His book *Teaching History: A Seventh-day Adventist Approach* (2001) is a fascinating study of the philosophical issues arising out of the engagement of Adventism and history, in which he argued that the nature and shape of a specifically Adventist philosophy of history was not the methodology as much as the philosophical emphasis and focus. He is credited with having helped "nudge our denomination toward intellectual self-scrutiny." Despite a wavering commitment from church leadership "to this uncomfortable endeavour," Land was "to the end persuaded that only the examined religious tradition was worth embracing." (McArthur, 2015. p. 9)

Another historian reaching a broader audience has been George R. Knight, whose studies into Ellen White's educational philosophy led to research into her sources, methodology and authority. As a historian, he has written extensively on White, as well as on broader Adventist history, theology and education, showing a continuing intimate connection between Adventist belief and history, and its role in the classroom. A prolific writer, many of his books have targeted a more general Adventist readership while still being grounded in sound scholarly principles, achieving a higher popular profile than probably any other Adventist historian. He has demonstrated that a nuanced understanding is compatible with strengthening trust in the church, especially for the growing numbers of highly educated Adventists, and hopes that a better historical understanding can help heal some of the divisions within the church (Knight, 2007a). One historian described him as having, "the gift for synthesizing the devout tradition with the critical one" (McArthur, email to author, March 28, 2014).

The late Arthur N. Patrick had a significant influence on the shaping of Adventist historical thought. Like others, he found a deeper respect for White through a more academically rigorous investigation of her work. He was particularly noted for the moderation with which he propounded his ideas, thus becoming the embodiment of the phrase, 'a gentleman and a scholar.' What Patrick brought to the debate was the capacity to lovingly and respectfully work alongside those who at times violently disagreed with him – a capacity that was evident in the founders of Adventism but that seems too often to have been lost along the way. He wrote of a need:

> *to hear actively the voices that derive from differing convictions, including the enthusiastic participants and affirmative supporters in Fundamentalist/ Evangelical and (in particular) Adventist circles. Others' voices are also crucial, especially those of the ardent cautioners within each of these communions who express concerns, formulate critiques, and lay charges. However, the quest to understand will be helped most of all by the analysts who offer historical, biblical, theological, sociological, and other interpretations that point beyond the partisanship of apologetics and the rhetoric of controversy toward comprehensive understanding and constructive action*
>
> (Patrick, 2007, p. 2)

Through the Ellen G. White Research Centre at Avondale College, Patrick fostered others in genuine scholarly research into Adventist history. His activities also caused ripples, and he was eased out of the Directorship of the centre into other fields of ministry that offered less scope for troublesome historiography. Patrick graciously took this in his stride and, especially with the freedom of retirement, continued his incisive yet inclusive scholarship.

It is impossible to do justice in a relatively short article to the wide range of contributions being made by current Adventist historians in Adventist studies, but a few may represent the rest. Three European scholars, Ingemar Lindén (1978, 1982), P. Gerard Damsteegt (1989) and Kai Arasola (1990), have made excellent contributions on Millerism in its social context, while Englishman Bryan W. Ball has contributed a number of well-reviewed works tracing the origins of the distinctives of Adventist faith, particularly eschatology, sabbatarianism and conditional mortality, among Puritan thinkers of the late Tudor and Stuart periods, two centuries and more before Adventism adopted them. New Zealander Gilbert Valentine's work, particularly *The Prophet and the Presidents* (2011), has demonstrated a candid evaluation of thorny issues in Adventist history, while Douglas Morgan's (2001) work includes significant analysis of Adventism's changing approach to the church's relationship with the state, especially on participation in war. Institutional maturation is evident in the Review and Herald's Pioneers series, which "marks an

important commitment of a church publishing house to careful historical scholarship. It represents the clearest example of academic scholarly values informing works of history as anything the church has produced" (McArthur, email to author, March 28, 2014). The relationship between historians and organisation is not all smooth sailing, for tensions surface from time to time, but it is evident that rigorous, honest scholarship can flourish within the organised church.

Two examples of the growing confidence and sophistication of Adventist historiography are the *Ellen G. White Encyclopaedia*, and *Ellen Harmon White: American Prophet*, both published in 2014. The first began as an initiative of Knight in 2000, and includes a comprehensive suite of contributions from about 180 scholars, with much impressive new research, and was published by Review and Herald. The second, from Oxford University Press, commenced as 'The Ellen White Project' in 2009. Bringing together sixty-six world-class specialists from the Adventist world and the wider academic community in Adventist and American religious history, it has drawn more deeply on primary sources than ever before, developing a richer dialogue between a genuine diversity of scholarship. The conference, and the resulting book, revealed a wide consensus that has developed regarding the historical Ellen White. The volume has given Adventists and the scholarly world a fresh opportunity to foster a mature, sustainable understanding of White among believers and the general community, especially that of North America, and sets a precedent for sound scholarly engagement across religious and ideological lines on broader issues of Adventist history.

The contemporary Adventist church has a new opportunity to transcend the unnecessary conflicts and the false assumptions about its 'mother' that have been both pervasive and destructive in the past (Patrick, 2010; Reynaud & Patrick, 2011, pp. 5-18). Naturally, this has come with challenges. Adventism's origins have fostered two conflicting cultural characteristics: a huge respect for learning and a deep suspicion of higher education. There are those who push for a return to more simplistic interpretations of Ellen White as the only safe way of ensuring true spiritual integrity. Nevertheless, recent scholarship has demonstrated that sound historical methodology and a firm commitment to Adventism's historical aims and beliefs are highly compatible.

Conclusion

It is apparent that Adventism has had changing views on history. Its founders considered history to be relatively simple and definitive, an apologetic tool for proving their interpretation of biblical prophecy. Early Adventist writers did not see themselves as writing history; instead they subordinated history to religion. They considered this to be the appropriate relationship between the two. Over one hundred and fifty years later, Adventist historians have adopted a more diverse range of views. While some saw themselves as maintaining the traditions of apologetics, others tackled the difficult issues that arose when modern historical methodology was applied to sensitive areas of Adventist faith and tradition. The result is a growing body of history that identifies and recognises the complexities of the issues. The newer history is open to alternate explanations and different perspectives, and is more aware of the problem of trying to link human events to the actions of God.

An awareness of how the Adventist church has understood history helps inform current teaching about the origins and development of the organisation. This in turn promotes a better awareness of contemporary debates and suggests strategies to engage in meaningful discussion without resorting to divisive judgments. TEACH

"The newer history is open to alternate explanations and different perspectives, and is more aware of the problem of trying to link human events to the actions of God."

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Summer Fades but Hope does not: Author's Authentic Take on the Life Experience of Young Adults

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Summer fades but hope does not: Author's authentic take on the life experience of young adults

Nathan Brown
Book editor, Signs Publishing Company, Warburton, VIC

Avondale College of Higher Education alumna Amanda Bews has a passion for the issues that affect young adults and the choices they make. A teacher and the mother of three boys, Bews has written a new novel called *Summer Fades* as a follow-up to her first, *Heaven Sent*. She responds to questions from Nathan Brown about her stories and why they are important.

Why stories?

For thousands of years, we've used stories to pass wisdom from generation to generation. Jesus knew the value of stories. Stories are memorable and can lead us to knowledge that mere delivery of information cannot do. With *Summer Fades* and *Heaven Sent*, the stories generate discussion and allow exploration of serious and often uncomfortable issues in non-threatening ways.

How does your research of the issues about which you write grow into a character and a story?

The issues grow out of my interaction with contemporary culture. After I've identified which issues to address, the characters and their stories develop. Then I study the issues by reading biographies, newspaper articles and academic journals and use the research to inform the story. After completing the third draft, I ask experts to read the manuscript. In *Summer Fades*, for example, an ambulance arrives to take Summer to hospital. So, I asked some paramedics to read the scene so it would reflect how they would manage the situation. I also had a doctor, a psychologist, a counsellor and a sexual abuse survivor read the manuscript before I completed the final draft. Authenticity is important. Faith is also a significant part of the stories. Why? My faith is intricately linked to all the decisions I make in life. When I've tried to "go it alone," things haven't worked out. I hope the young adults who read the stories are encouraged to explore how God wants to be a part of their lives and how biblical principles apply to contemporary issues.

What's surprised you about the responses you've received to Heaven Sent?

Just how many people have found themselves in similar situations to Heaven. Date rape is so much more common than I imagined. Concern about the spiking of women's drinks is understandable, but the most used date rape drug is alcohol.

Apart from understanding more about anorexia and abuse, what do you hope readers will learn from Summer Fades?

I hope they might be more willing to think about why people act the way they do. We all experience life differently and many people have lived through extenuating circumstances, so we should always be kind and considerate. I also hope they'll understand more about God's renewing, healing power and about how He works in and through genuine community. A healthy church family is a wonderful place in which to experience life change. (see the Book Review p. 63)



Amanda Bews introducing Summer Fades
Photography: Nathan Chee

> *"think about why people act the way they do. … many people have lived through extenuating circum-stances, so we should always be kind and considerate."*

DISCUSSION GUIDES

Summer Fades and *Heaven Sent* are available from Adventist Book Centres and from hopeshop.com. Download discussion guides for *Heaven Sent* at www.amandabewsbooks.com.

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The Cry of the Teacher's Soul

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BOOK REVIEWS



Summer Fades

Amanda Bews (2015). Warburton, Vic: Signs.
196pp.
ISBN: 978-1-925044-18-8

Adele Nash

Communication Coordinator for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Northern New South Wales

***Summer Fades* seems an apt name for a book review in March, the first month of autumn. It is also the second novel by Amanda Bews, a follow-up to Heaven Sent. As with Heaven Sent, Amanda is clearly not afraid to tackle some big issues—this time covering eating disorders.**

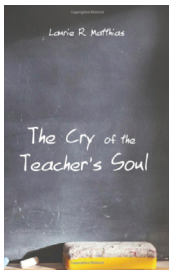
These are becoming more prevalent. Estimates are that one in 20 Australians suffer from some kind of eating disorder, with rates increasing in the past decade even as obesity is reported as reaching epidemic levels in most Western countries. So, if we think it's too confronting reading a story about eating disorders and other complex matters, we're kidding ourselves. Life is confronting and complex.

But Summer Fades doesn't smack the reader over the head. It doesn't make you feel guilty, it doesn't preach. Rather, it invites you to empathise with Summer, the main character, a perfectionist who tries to find control through food (well, specifically, not eating food).

The other characters—Summer's best friend Cameron, brother Bobby, love interest Ben and childhood friend Julie, whose return is the catalyst for chaos—are well developed and thoroughly thought out. And the novel's portrayal of the role faith can play is not that of a quick fix but of a real hope and gradual healing.

The story moves along quickly. There's enough emotional engagement to keep you interested but not so much that it seems affected. And while written for young adults, Summer Fades is also a good read for parents.

Having friends who've suffered from eating disorders, I know how complex an issue this is. But I also know there's hope, that change and healing can and does occur. TEACH



The Cry of the Teacher's Soul

Laurie R Matthias (2015). Eugene, OR:
Wipf & Stock. 115pp.
ISBN: 13:878-1-4982-0804-8

Janet Rieger

Children's Ministries and Education Director (Retired), Bonnells Bay, NSW

There are many books for Christians about theology and many books for teachers about educational theory and practice, but this book is like neither of those. This is one for teachers that is not about teaching, one for Christians that is not about biblical exegesis. This is a perceptive and sympathetic 'letter' from a Christian teacher, to Christian teachers about their own spiritual and professional health and how these are intrinsically connected.

Each chapter starts with a true story: a case study of an authentic Christian teacher struggling with their chosen vocation, and seriously considering a change of direction. Why has it happened? What external and internal stresses have caused it? In what ways has their belief system and their Christian experience contributed to the situation?

The reader is then presented with an honest appraisal of some of the paradoxes of the Christian life as they apply to teachers: like the clash between idealism and reality, the tension between giving everything to our students and taking care of ourselves, and the contrasts of what we know in our head and what we feel in our heart.

This is not a self-help book. It doesn't prescribe quick solutions but it explores the close relationship between teachers' daily classroom experiences and their own spiritual development.

There are questions at the end of each chapter—a pause to consider not if, but how the discussion relates to individual teachers and their situations, as it surely will.

Because the book addresses experiences that are topical, and relevant to Christian teachers, it is easy to read. With only 115 pages, it is designed for busy teachers, student teachers and their mentors. I wish it had been available when I was a student teacher, a classroom teacher, a lecturer and student mentor. TEACH