

Our Welcome to the Sustainable Development Goals



Gearing into the Goals: Reflections on Australian SDG Prospects

Lindsay Mell



United Nations
Association
of Australia
NSW Division







SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



“We scientists don’t know how to do that”

“I used to think the top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change.

I thought that with 30 years of good science we could address those problems.

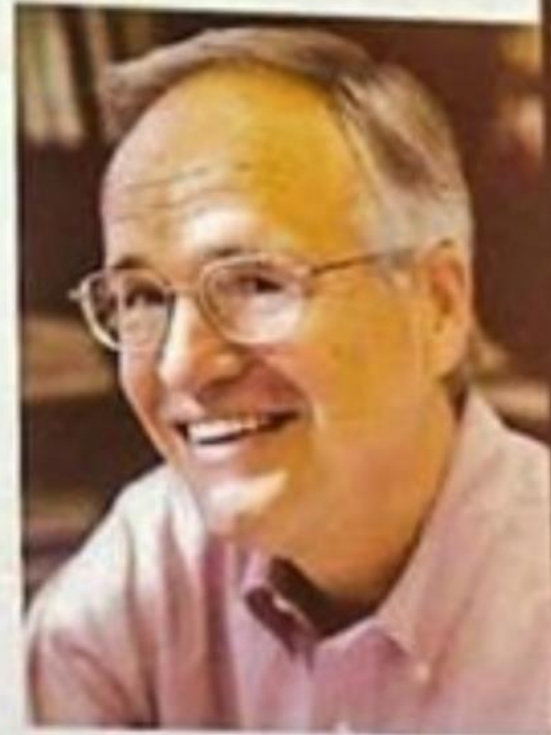
But I was wrong.

The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy...

...and to deal with those we need a spiritual and cultural transformation

- and we scientists don't know how to do that.”

Gus Speth



Sydney Peace Foundation
A Foundation of the University of Sydney

CITY OF SYDNEY

20

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Invite you to the
CITY OF SYDNEY PEACE PRIZE LECTURE
and **GALA DINNER** celebrating

NAOMI KLEIN

*Courageous author, journalist and activist,
world-leading voice on climate justice*

Friday 11 November

Science, Reason, Modernity

Readings for an Anthropology of the Contemporary

Edited by Anthony Stavrianakis, Gaymon Bennett, and Lyle Fearnley



Earth, Climate, Dreams

Dialogues with Depth Psychologists
in the Age of the Anthropocene

Edited by
Bonnie Bright
and
Jonathan Paul Marshall

FEATURED DIALOGUES

Stephen Aizenstat
Susannah Benson
Jerome Bernstein
Michael Conforti
Nancy Swift Furlotti
Sally Gillespie

Veronica Goodchild
Jeffrey Kiehl
Jonathan Marshall
Robert Romanyshyn
Susan Rowland
Erel Shalit

Bonnie Bright

Cover Art by Peter Cameron





UNAA



UNAA



'LIVING TOGETHER'

Stream One:

Development Process Vision → Strategy → Performance → Evaluation

MEANING

SIGNIFICANCE

GLOBAL ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY



Stream Two:

Policy Process Framing Proposal → Advocacy → Further Enquiry/ Research [Source: Torbert 2000]

‘By the word ‘to think’ I mean everything that happens in us in such a way that we perceive it immediately in ourselves; that is why not only to hear, to wish, and to imagine, but also to feel, are the same thing as to think’

– **Rene Descartes.**

Quoted from *Problems of the Development of the Mind*, by A N Leontyev, pages 269-270.

‘We must envision our work as a creative act, more akin to the artistic endeavour than the technical process. This never negates skill and technique. But it does suggest that the wellspring ... lies in our moral imagination, which I will define as the capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world yet capable of giving birth to that which does not yet exist’ ‘ – **John Paul Lederach**.

Quoted from *The Moral Imagination* by John Paul Lederach, as it appears in *The Power of Collective Wisdom and the Trap of Collective Folly*, by Alan Briskin, *et al*, 2009, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, page 147.



‘Jung observed that the individual must recognise his or her own involvement in the process [of life], or the potential for change remains in the imagination ... the individual [through such recognition] can then make choices which have meaning for that person’s life.

‘Jung called this integration ... or insight.

‘He believed that insight was the beginning of individuation.’

Lydia Lennihan [in Kittelson, et al: 1998, p.164]

**‘While we think we can change the drama
of history, and of our own lives,
we are not awed by our destiny.’**

**‘The dependence of the degrees of beauty
upon our nature is perceived,
while the dependence of its essence upon
our nature is still ignored.’**

– George Santayana: from *The Sense of Beauty*
– pages 145 and 81 respectively.

‘When there is real profundity – when the living core of things is most firmly grasped – there will accordingly be a felt inadequacy of expression.’

George Santayana

Quote from ***The Sense of Beauty***, page 82

Carl Jung advocated a technique he called 'active imagination' as a way of releasing psychic energy:

'... when you concentrate on a mental picture, it begins to stir, the image becomes enriched by details, it moves and develops. Each time naturally you mistrust it and have the idea that you just made it up ... But you have to overcome that doubt because it is not true.'

MACKAY RESEARCH

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'INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT' PROPOSAL

I am pleased to endorse the proposal from the Motives Foundation for an 'International Year of Community Development' to be established by the United Nations General Assembly.

It would be hard to think of a subject of more enduring concern to contemporary Australians than the subject of 'the community'. Throughout my career as a social researcher (and most particularly through the last ten years of my social research program, The Mackay Report) concern about the community has been a recurring theme.

In my recent book, Reinventing Australia, I identified the urge to re-establish effective communities as one of the most significant factors in Australians' dreams of a better future.

It is a widespread view that our sense of being a community is in decline and that, as a result, the moral health of our society is being adversely affected. Such a view, of course, taps into ancient wisdom: the moral sense is a social sense, after all. The essence of morality lies in our sense of mutual obligation and that, in turn, grows out of our experience of forging personal relationships with other people in the context of a functioning community.

To address the issue of 'community', therefore, is also to address such crucial issues as personal identity (as well as national and regional identity), social responsibility and ethical sensitivity.

The technological revolution is also relevant to this theme: as we become more used to dealing with machines instead of people, new and more sophisticated technology will pose a threat to our sense of belonging to local, human communities. The illusion of 'the global village' and of mega-communities linked via computer technology may seduce us into thinking that human contact is alive and well but, of course, this is a hoax. The life of a village demands personal interaction (and the skills to manage such interaction): shared data on electronic screens is no substitute for the shared life of a true community.

An 'International Year of Community Development' would serve the important purpose of providing a context for the discussion of these and other community-based issues which will have such a profound effect on the development of human societies around the world.

I think the proposal to designate an 'International Year of Community Development', therefore, is imaginative, appropriate and timely.


Hugh Mackay

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The Centre for Volunteering – NSW
and the United Nations Association of Australia – NSW
will present a Panel Session Forum Dialogue on

The Volunteer Journey

Thursday, 26 June, from 2 pm to 5 pm

at the Volunteer Centre NSW

Level 3, 40 Gloucester Street, The Rocks, Sydney City NSW –
near corner of Cumberland Street;
or, enter from Cambridge Street at rear of building

Panel Presenters:

**Lynne Dalton – Former Chief Executive Officer of The Centre for
Volunteering NSW**

**Glenn Martin – Author and Executive Committee Member of the
Spirituality Leadership and Management Group**

**Convenor and Discussant will be Lindsay Mell
– Coordinator of the UNAA – NSW Community Project**

Our contemporary universal Life Journey requires ever considerable demands on
our volunteers to ensure proceedings keep rolling, and to keep the faith
in shared solidarity and respect, as well as a true spirit of
compassion, affinity, affection and appreciation.

What is the effect of this often difficult process on the lives of our volunteers ?

How are we able to truly appreciate each of our distinctive vital contributions
in the context of our collective diversity and destiny
in our ever changing world ?

There will be ample opportunities for dialogue on these themes.



INTERREGNUM

The old order crumbles, the new struggles to be born

INTERREGNUM – THE IN-BETWEEN TIMES

A series of five workshops exploring the Anthropocene Transition through movement, creative expression, warm data labs, dialogue circles and reflective practices.

Every four weeks from May 10 to August 30

As the current period of widespread, erratic and often catastrophic disruption of the Earth System unfolds, driven by human impacts and thus called the Anthropocene, we face existential crises for many of Earth's complex life forms - including us.

In the domain of human affairs we call these times of environmental and social turmoil the "Anthropocene Transition".

Many of our legacy institutions and cultural norms, rooted in the past, will fail or prove inadequate to the challenges we face.

Yet the Anthropocene Transition can also be a time of cultural,

intellectual, and spiritual breakthroughs and renewal.

This workshop series takes a deep dive into the Anthropocene Transition to explore what it means in our own lives and in the cultures which shape our ways of seeing, knowing and being.

PLEASE NOTE -- Numbers will be limited and priority given to those enrolling for all 5 workshops.



WORKSHOP 1 - Sun 17 May

hope
(less)

Fire sweeps the land, relentless, dispassionate. We cringe, we fight, we flee, we perish – animal, humanimal alike.

Leaders reveal incapacity. Others step up resolutely to duty. Communities care...

Life's familiarities go up with the smoke. Possibilities disappear in the flames. Denial and avoidance fall before red hot reality.

Where is hope?



Kenneth McLeod
Animateur, change-maker, facilitator, process innovator, and ATN program curator

WORKSHOP 2 - Sun 14 June

turmoil
(breakdown)

The Great Conceit: humans stand outside, above. Nature bending to our will, our ambition, our cravings.

The Great Rupture: relationships unravel. Creatures suffer. Species lost for eternity. Our power dissolving in less than mighty hands.

Rapacity reaches tipping points. The Earth shifts towards a new equipoise.

Outer-inner, macro-micro turmoil.



Andrew Batt-Rawden
Composer, performance artist, creativity teacher, arts business consultant, creative technologist.

truth
(falsity)

WORKSHOP 3 - Sat/Sun 11-12 July

We see. We know. We believe.

Then perception shifts. Figure/ground reverses.

See what? Know what? Believe what?

Obfuscation, mystery, camouflage, sham, truthiness...

We seek the truth. But can we know it?

The universe unfolds beyond us, the octopus hides in plain sight, media lies, politicians dissemble.

Can we know truth?



Dean Walsh *
Award-winning dancer, choreographer, scuba diver, educator, sense-maker and disability arts access advocate

turmoil
(breakthrough)

WORKSHOP 4 - Sat 9 August

Metamorphosis – butterfly, cicada, frog, dragonfly...

Panarchy – adaptation, growth, over-reach, collapse, cyclical renewal...

Catagenesis – creative destruction, innovation, co-creation...

Nature rules OK!

Does the phoenix learn to rise?

Does life love life?



Julie Regalado *
Movement practitioner and researcher, social ecology lecturer, educator, non-formal learning facilitator

hope
(full)

WORKSHOP 5 - Sat 6 September

Within the ashes of the forest new life springs forth.

Robust. Resilient. Enduring.

Growth within limits. Dependent co-aring.

Can we choose emergence?

Can we choose eco-mutuality?

Can we dream a new dream of Earth?



Lindsay Mell *
Community development facilitator, journalist, educator, voluntary sector organiser and peace activist

This series of workshops will build on and extend the work we began at our experimental **Turmoil-Truth-Hope** workshop in November last year. We learnt a lot on that day, which is of course the purpose of experimentation. And we received much encouraging and some challenging feedback – all of which has gone forward into our planning of this series. We are grateful to those participants who

generously shared their experience with us.

Because these workshops are conceived as a wholistic collaborative inquiry, preference will be given to people who choose to register for all five workshops. If there are spaces available we will accept registrations for single workshops two weeks prior to each event.

* Dean, Julie and Lindsay are International Bateson Institute accredited Warm Data Lab hosts

Register now at: www.xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx







Growing Community 'Living Together'

Journal of the Year of Community Engagement Project
United Nations Association of Australia – NSW



The Community Project

Winter 2013 Edition



Our July 2012 'Values and Attitudes in Regional Vietnam HIV AIDS Education' comprehensive presentation from World Health Organisation Research Officer, **Pamela Kechter** (right), for our 'Cultural Social and Personal Diversity' Forum Dialogues, is announced by Lindsay (center). Participants Franklin Scarf, Geoffrey Usher are seated in the foreground.

Professor Russell Shuttleworth, of the Deakin University Social Sciences Faculty, is introduced by Lindsay (left) before presenting his September 2012 wide-ranging overview of 'Disability and Relationships' for our 'Cultural Social and Personal Diversity' Forum Dialogues while Lindsay announces the advent of the Spring 2012 Edition of the *Growing Community – 'Living Together'* UNAA – NSW Community Engagement Project Journal.



Family Constellation Facilitator, **Mary Brownlee** (centre), shares her vibrant presentation on the theme 'Our Life Journey' for our December 2012 'Cultural Social and Personal Diversity' Forum Dialogue.



Scenes from our June 2013 UNAA – NSW Annual General Meeting (AGM): **Below Right**: our UNAA Federal President, **Russell Trood** (left), vacating NSW President, **Valerie Weekes**, and Guest Speaker, **John Merrill** (right), Assistant Secretary of the UN Security Council Task Force, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, received by a most attentive AGM audience (**Below Left**)



Growing Community—'Living Together'
United Nations Association of Australia – NSW
Humanist House, 10 Shepherd Street
Chippendale NSW 2008

Journal Editor: Lindsay Mell
Graphics: Sandy Yang



NSW DIVISION



Growing Community 'Living Together'

Journal of the Year of Community Engagement Project
United Nations Association of Australia – NSW



The Community Project

Spring 2012 Edition



Above Left: The Community Project (CP) team and friends celebrate the vacation return of CP legend, **Martyn King** (third from right), from Thailand, during April 2012. Always such a pleasure to enjoy Martyn's tranquil presence.



Left: Social Ecologist, **Dr Lloyd Fell**, formerly of the University of Western Sydney, advances the perspective of Love as a biological phenomenon from his key work entitled *Mind and Love – The Human Experience* (2010) for our March 2012 'Cultural Social and Personal Diversity' Forum Dialogue.

Below Right: South Australian Education Advisor, **Dr Noel Wilson**, reviews some key concerns around values, structure and control from his classic work *With The Best of Intentions* (1991) for our May 2012 'Cultural Social and Personal'

Forum Dialogue.

Below: UNAA–NSW President, **Valerie Weekes** (left), commends **Ambassador Colin Keating** for his fervent advocacy in July 2012 for Australia's UN Security Council seat bid ...

And our Association members and friends gather in solidarity for our universal cause at our July 2012 NSW Annual General Meeting.



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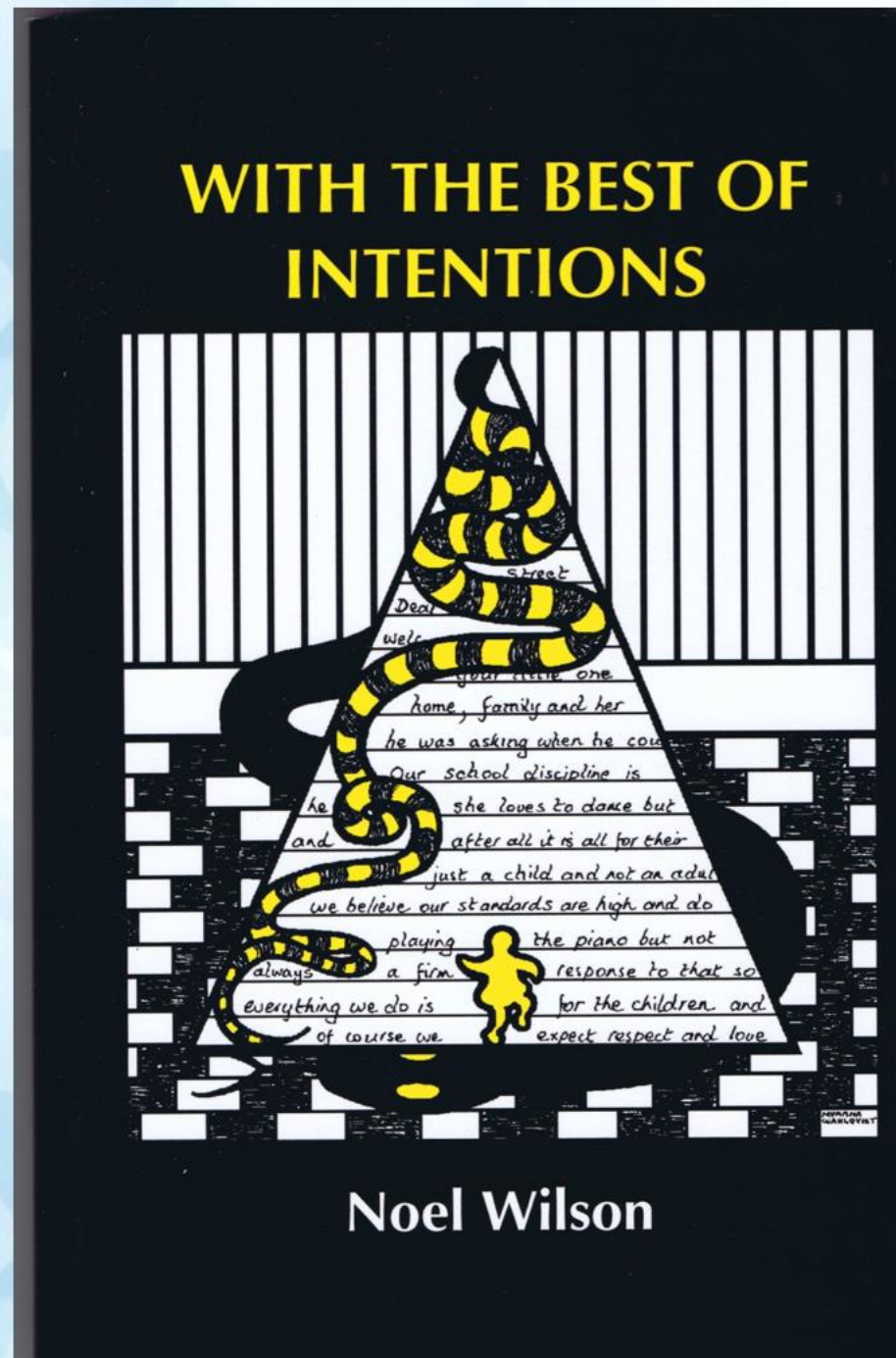
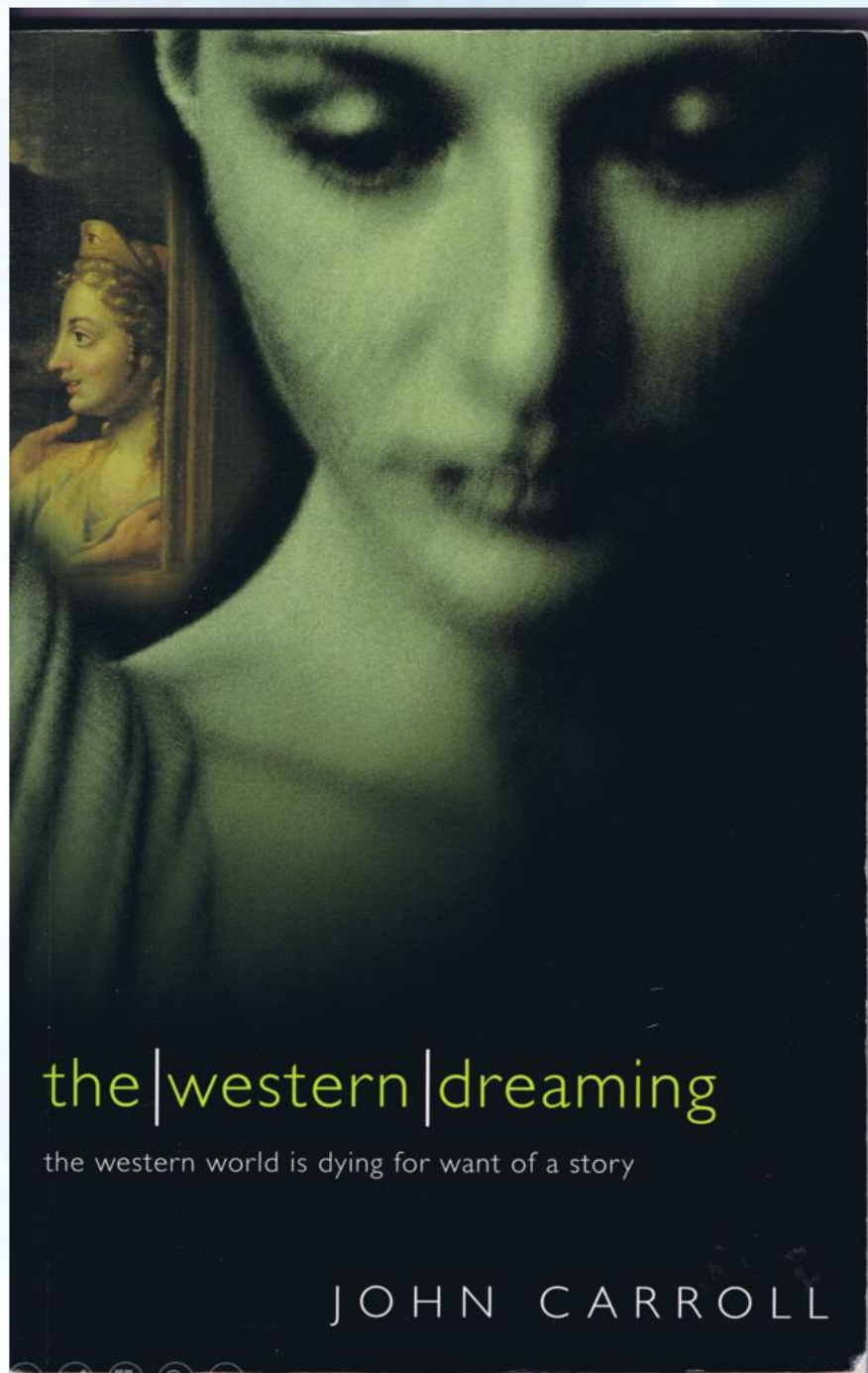
Maria Maguire, Margaret Bell, Winsome Matthews and Professor Stephen Hill (left to right) in intensive dialogue at our UNAA – NSW Community Project 'Community Engagement and Social Inclusion – Bringing the Threads Together' Panel Session, convened in July 2010 at the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts Theatre.

'Tsunami ! A Case Study' – Emeritus Professor Stephen Hill AM, presents his heart-rending overview perspective of the recent tsunami in Indonesia, which so epitomised the reality of 'Community Engagement and Social Inclusion' at work as a most poignant Panel Session contribution (right).



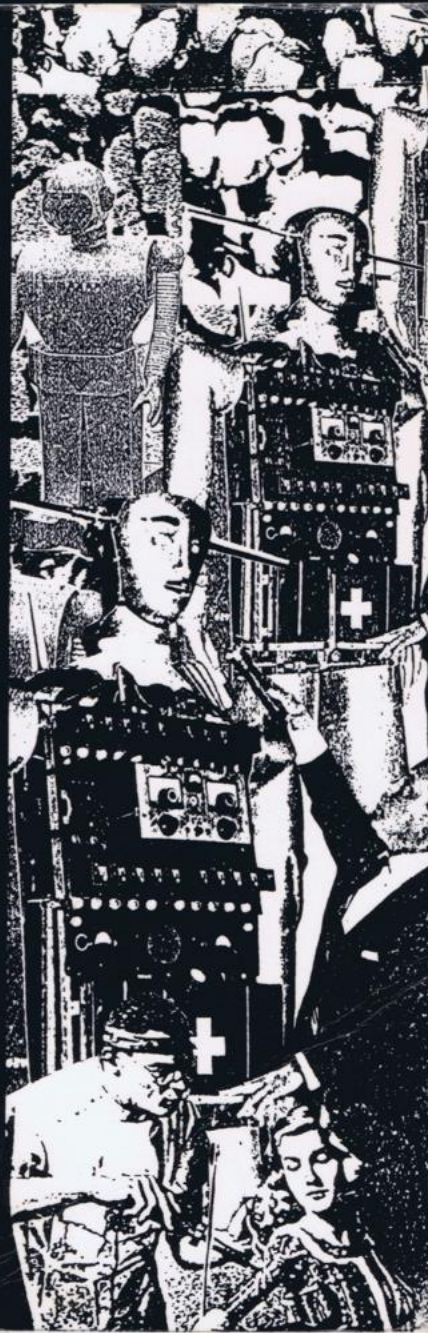
Vivid testimonies to the vital aspect of 'Community Engagement and Social Inclusion' were shared by Chain Reaction President, Margaret Bell AM (below left), and then NSW Aboriginal Justice Advisory Council Chair, Winsome Matthews (below right).





**THE TRAGEDY OF
TECHNOLOGY**

Stephen Hill



MIND and LOVE

The Human Experience

Lloyd Fell



'EQUANIMITY MATE!'

TEN YEARS ON



THE COMMUNITY PROJECT / CULTURE LAB



LINDSAY MELL

24 JANUARY 2008



REFLECTIONS ON



THE COMMUNITY PROJECT / CULTURE LAB INTERACTION



COMPILED BY

LINDSAY MELL



'Wants' and 'Needs'

"Wants flow into needs, and needs into wants", so it is difficult to distinguish between them, according to Dr Stella Cornelius, who is Co-Director of the Conflict Resolution Network.

Stella was speaking during an exclusive video interview presented at DVA Sydney on 21 October.

However, both 'wants' and 'needs' are important, and the conflict resolver would do well to address basic needs first, and then wants, according to Stella.

"Meeting basic needs helps to provide a way that works, and conflict resolution enlivens the quest for basic needs ... Einstein said 'We live in divine question' ... Accordingly, the quest in this instance is how to satisfy the basic needs of everyone concerned, not just the key protagonists," Stella said.

Yet, the challenge then put to Stella was that contradiction and/or contrast (or polarisation) are states in which people often seem comfortable. So they may remain in contention simply because they feel more comfortable in this than in feeling they have to 'give up' something, such as what they may want.

Thus, 'Is there a state of ambiguity or paradox inherent in the dilemmas people face?'

"My own inclination is to paradox - and ultimately all paradoxes are resolved, particularly if we reject either paradigm and develop a new one ... So, again, it's like a kind of flow - this is what I don't want, and this is what I do want, we say. I believe you can move beyond paradox and contrast to an integration of extremes.

"Polarisation needs to be recognised, but as something from which people can move forward.

The skill, art and morality of conflict resolution is to create a movement towards satisfying basic needs," Stella responded.

If you have confidence in yourself, you will have confidence in others.

Could this be an appropriate principle for cultural and/or global contexts?

"Yes, there's a lot of good thinking there," Stella agreed. "Participating with others will teach you a great deal about yourself ... and the better you know yourself the better you can participate. I always say: 'think globally, act locally, and respond personally'. What's going on within yourself is important."

The 'intersection of society and politics' [Robert Lane] might be an instance of how this occurs - people being affected individually and in groups through political developments, it was proposed.

"That's right. We live in context ... Just as we live in relationships, we also live in the context through which these are created. Also, the group doesn't necessarily act from the same psychological perspective as the individual," Stella said.

The search for meaning seems to be becoming a more pressing preoccupation now, as people are prevailed on by social influences to take on greater social responsibilities, it was observed.

Was this a challenge people needed to take on collectively, in groups and individually?

Stella believed so, "because we are moving to the point where we can take on greater responsibilities". "Conflict can be a safe arena in which people can develop opportunities for growth and development in loving and nurturing relationships. For me, this gives life meaning," she said.

Could it be the process of values clarification relates closely to the quest for meaning, particularly now, as we seem to be more into the meaning mode of exploring the aspect of values for our lives?

Again, Stella agreed. "I see this happening too. There are close links between meaning and values ... Because, if I'm asking what has meaning, then I need to work out what has value for me - my country, my group, or the human race, and so on. For me, values are almost synonymous with spirituality."

The video interview was carried out late in 1995.

Lindsay Mell



Photograph: Warren Mell

Above: Dr Stella Cornelius

Next Month ...

An interview with
Dr Anne Noonan,
psychologist and
former President
of the *Womens'
International
League for Peace
and Freedom
(NSW)*, on the
quality of
collective maturity.

Venue: Level 2
Lady Davidson
Room

Thursday, 18
November,
12.30 p.m.,
BYO Lunch.



George Johnston

Work and Volunteers

Desire to be of service and 'make a difference' are increasingly the reasons why people become volunteers, according to former Benevolent Society Executive Officer, George Johnston, speaking during a video interview presented at DVA Sydney on 16 September.

'The reasons why people volunteer today are complex. Volunteering was much more simple 20 to 30 years ago, because life was more simple then.'

'Now the emphasis is on looking after people, not just raising money. More volunteers are wanting to assist professionals through their activities. This is quite a different aspect of volunteering, for they require considerable training to do this.'

Asked if the motives people have for volunteering formed an important emphasis, George agreed.

'Most definitely, this is important. I would hope that most people who volunteer to assist causes are motivated by wanting to work for the benefit of the community. But obviously there are other motives.'

'For instance, people now often volunteer because they seek work in a particular area, and therefore regard voluntary work as a form of training experience. I haven't personally come across any situations where people have had a deeper, more sinister, motive for volunteering.'

Could it be said this greater emphasis on the service aspect of volunteering 'made for a more personalised world', in this sense?

George thought that this was so, but that it also complicated the volunteering process. It was now much more labor intensive. 'The philosophy has changed from giving handouts to trying to make a difference in the lives of people,' he responded.

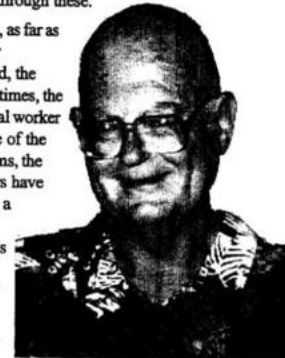
Conflict between volunteers and paid workers was a further outcome. 'There is a distinct fear among paid workers that volunteers might tend to usurp more of their roles. Personally, I can't see this happening, but the paid workers can.' So, if this fear really existed, was there a need for those involved to work through the situation? 'Yes. There is a need for clear lines of accountability as to where the paid worker takes over from the volunteer.'

This also meant the various parties involved in the various projects and programs concerned needed to have a clear sense of purpose through their respective contributions. Particularly corporate entities needed to be clear on this. 'Corporations today want to be viewed as good citizens, and get involved in causes on this basis ... And a lot of them want to be involved in other ways than just giving donations. For instance, they may want to allocate staff to train people in a certain program.'

Would this mean there was a need for those concerned to put their values and attitudes out in the open, and then perhaps seek some form of consensus, or compromise? In this way, a lot of different perspectives and complexities could be considered, but there would be opportunities for those concerned to work through these.

George agreed. However, as far as the professional/volunteer relationship was concerned, the position was clear. 'At all times, the priorities of the professional worker are over and beyond those of the volunteer. For our programs, the ground rules for volunteers have been established early - to a certain point, and not beyond this ... Because it's too complicated to go beyond that certain point.'

This video interview was carried out late in 1994.



Above: George Johnston

Lindsay Mell

NEXT MONTH...

An interview with Stella Cornelius, Director of the Conflict Resolution Network, who will consider 'people perspectives' in the broader social context.

The venue: 11th Floor Annex Room,
Thursday 21 October, at 12.30 pm.
Bring your lunch.

Hugh Mackay

On Australian Society



Above:
Dr Hugh Mackay,
researcher and
social critic.

The case for a greater level of personal responsibility and discretion in social concerns was put strongly by social researcher, Dr Hugh Mackay in a video interview presented at DVA Sydney, on Thursday 19 August.

Hugh Mackay responded to questions on a comprehensive range of social and community concerns.

He believes one of the greatest worries facing Australians is the recourse to a reliance on legislation in dealing with difficult social issues. This tendency has emerged as the prevailing attitude to social development. What is required is an acceptance by Australians, individually and collectively, of the need to clearly work out their personal views and approaches to these issues. They will then be better placed to form distinctive ways of dealing with these issues in a social and/or communal context.

Australians are facing many challenges in accepting personal responsibility for their behaviour, probably because of greatly increased insecurity in a period of phenomenal change and complexity, Hugh said.

Other outcomes of this situation are increased perceptions of being overwhelmed by social progress, a loss of the ethical fabric in society, and the loss of community – or the sense of a loss of communal belonging and cohesion.

The need to define and establish core values is a priority in this respect, with *mutuality* being a crucial value now and the future. Asked if it might help for people to seek out a sense of 'mutual maturity' as a context for working out values, Hugh agreed.

Further, Hugh agreed with my observation that 'perhaps people had become a little too structurally orientated in their lives', meaning they were tending to adopt standard lifestyle approaches which were devoid of innovation.

Hugh pointed out that such a challenge often confronts organisations and groups. So that, for instance, when those who comprise the organisation are asked to develop a 'code of ethics', 'what they often come up with is a 'code of practice'', which is *not* a code of

ethics. The project becomes an exercise in 'getting the rules straight – we *must* do what we *should* do' ... Thus, ultimately, there is meagre personal involvement, responsibility, or sense of ownership of the process ... It's all a matter of 'playing it by the book', which Hugh regards as potentially 'extremely dangerous' to cohesive social development.

Hugh was asked if this situation presupposed the need for people to 'work proactively at their personal purposes and motives' in their lives. It was implied the 'conditioned syndrome' tends to apply, with reliance on convention and standard approaches to life.

Hugh agreed, noting life was not 'a desert island experience', and we needed to remain aware that we can contribute greatly to our life circumstances and social progress, rather than merely accept these as given factors.

'We need to realise we are as much shapers of our destiny, as we are shaped by it,' he said.

Hugh added that when, towards the end of their lives, people were asked what they made of it all, they commonly said they wished they'd spent more time attending to their personal relationships than remaining preoccupied with work activity.

The video interview addressed concerns which remain clearly relevant as the context for social and communal development. It took place late in 1994, yet its content remains clearly pertinent to Australians today.

Additional perspectives on these crucial concerns will emerge in the weeks ahead, as we reflect on further contributions in this video interview series.

Lindsay Mell

Next month, an interview with George Johnston, former Executive Officer of the Benevolent Society of NSW, who will discuss relevant perspectives on personal interaction in organisations.

The venue is the 11th Floor Annex Room, Thursday 16 September, at 12.30 pm. Bring your lunch, and enjoy the experience!

Living with the paradox of conflict

- a challenge for Australians



Above:
Dr Anne Noonan

The prospect of people living and interacting as communities is a key challenge for Australians, Dr Anne Noonan said, during an exclusive DVA Sydney video interview on 18 November.

"I think there is more trustworthiness among Australians now, but people may be becoming inclined to keep to themselves and less inclined to be involved in communal activity."

So how do we approach this challenge? Would it help for us to progressively acquire a sort of **collective maturity**?

"This would mean a maturity which would be right, whatever the age of the person. And I think that's a difficulty just now. It would mean people would need to be right, where they are - whatever their situation in life," Anne responded.

Yet, if maturity as a **value** could be worked at collectively, might this assist us socially in some sense? Anne agreed. "... But this would mean people individually accepting a lot of aspects of themselves which they project on to others, at times."

In view of Anne's background as a Jungian therapist, a quote from Carl Jung seemed appropriate:

"Conflict creates the fire of emotions, and like every fire has aspects of burning and giving light."

Consequently, conflict could be considered in a polarised way - or else as a blending of opposites, or even diverse elements... It could be like a kind of **paradox**, it was suggested. So what might be the implications of such a paradoxical view of conflict for the current tensions and anxiety in the lives of people?

"The earlier part of a paradox is a **contradiction** - when things don't go together. If you take the path of contradiction, the challenge is to make a metaphor through which you can understand the contradiction. This is the path to new ideas and value systems."

Another option proposed to Anne was that of accepting the extremes by understanding this tension as a paradox - like the tide, which seems to come in and go out at the same time. So, to just

accept the tide moves as it does is to come to terms with the paradox in some sense. Whereas this acceptance can be lost by trying to understand too deeply what's actually happening.

The experience of conflict may be similar. One way of dealing with the conflict is to accept the **perspectives** inherent in it... Tension may be experienced in doing this, but accepting the consequences of the conflict can enable people to move on from it, and learn from it.

Anne agreed. "This is an aspect of the relationship of the personal to the public that everyone is dealing with at the moment. What's happening now is that we are very much seeing the tension of people living in the community individually, with some people feeling it's all too much and wanting to opt out of community life... People are often forced into a splitting of choices between personal and public (or social) life."

Could the 1990s be characterised as the age of the 'search for meaning', whereas in the 1970s and 1980s people were more preoccupied with their **individuality**? This seems to be a strongly held view among some people just now.

"Yes, but meaning can only come from being pretty grounded in oneself. I believe we need a greater sense of belonging and interconnectedness. I mean, we are in the world, we're not cut off from it."

Anne was asked if psychotherapy is "... an art, and a sensitivity towards individuals; not a technique, or a science." (Marvin Spiegelman)

"I think this is true. There have always been forms, such as art, theatre and religion, which enable people to see themselves in the larger picture. And often these are very therapeutic... I don't think psychotherapy has the edge in helping people to find meaning for their lives. I think it becomes a danger when psychotherapy is regarded as just a technique."

This video interview was carried out early in 1995.

LINDSAY MELL

NEXT MONTH ...

In response to popular request, some ideas and thoughts from prominent social commentator, John Ralston Saul, author of *The Unconscious Civilisation*

VENUE: LEVEL 2, CONCORD ROOM
THURSDAY, 9 DECEMBER,
12.30 P.M., BYO LUNCH.



**To work is to live;
‘But when work becomes soulless,
life stifles and dies.’**

– Albert Camus

**‘Nothing is inherently
and invincibly young
– except spirit.’**

– George Santayana



Deep Friendship

Shoshana

Lindsay Mell



Sydney, Australia, November 2008

Deep Friendship

Martyn

Lindsay Mell



Sydney, Australia, July 2005

Deep Friendship

Allecia

Lindsay Mell



Sydney, Australia, July 2005

**‘To be serene and successful
you must be one with the Universe.’**

– Henry David Thoreau

**‘Peace is not something you wish for ...
‘It’s something you make,
something you do,
something you are;
‘And something you give away !’**

– Mother Teresa



Desiderata

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant, they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit.



If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.



Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let not this blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is as perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.



Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.



Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labors and aspirations in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams; it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful.



Strive to be happy.
1927

— Max Ehrmann,







Scenes from recent 'Cultural Diversity' Forums, as featured in the *Growing Community* journal, Winter 2007 edition: Ben Weiss (above) and Bridget Tam (centre) with Lindsay Mell, and Richard Hu (below).





'Language and Culture' comprised the broad theme for a vibrant August 2007 'Cultural Diversity' Forum on the intricacy of emotion and sentiment in expression through language. Presenters Mishka Jambor (right) and Sandy Yang (left) provided an impressive concise context for the lively dialogue which proceeded.

Hoda Shafizadeh, of the Holroyd Baha'i Community, provided a finely considered perspective on the topic 'The Arts, Culture and Community' for the September 2007 'Cultural Diversity' Forum.



UNAA Community Project and Culture Lab International collaborative endeavours culminated in a ten-year trajectory with the advent of 2007. At the September Forum, Lindsay Mell presented an overview of the achievements advanced through this intensive collaboration. Later in 2008, Willem Brugman, Culture Lab Director, will convey his perspective on this progress thus far.

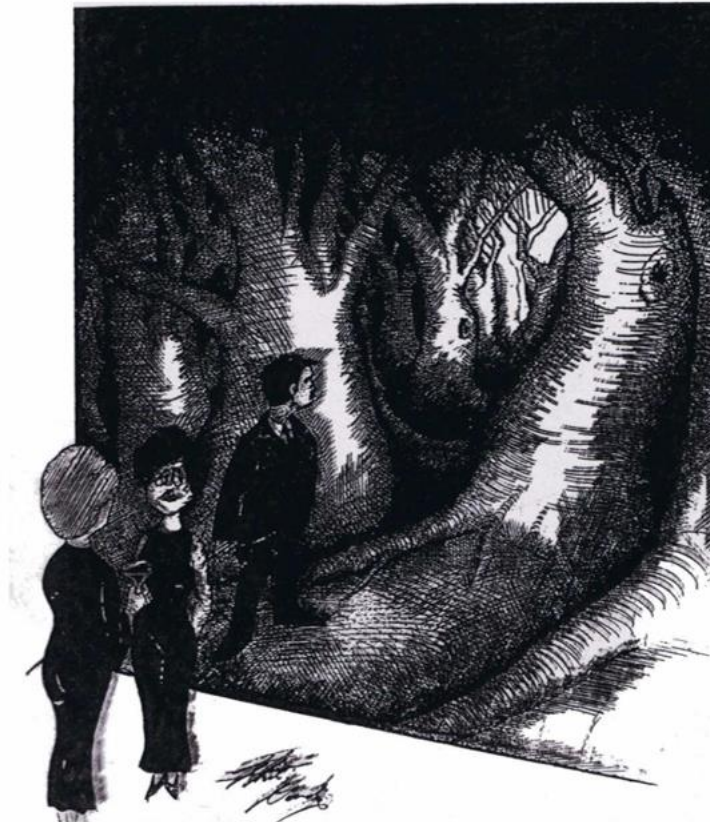
Willem Brugman (centre), Founder and Director of Culture Lab International, discusses with Lindsay preliminary arrangements for the planned early July 2008 launch of The Community Project/ Culture Lab ten-year anniversary heritage project. Culture Lab Secretary, Catherine Hassall, and daughter Maia Thiango (left), each provided pertinent contributions to the session.



MOTIVES

- the source of fulfilment

by LINDSAY MELL





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