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Place Management, Social Capital and Learning Regions

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Lifelong Learning, Social Capital and Place Management in Learning Communities and Regions: a Rubic's Cube or a Kaleidoscope?

By Dr Ron Faris - Golden Horizon Ventures

The PASCAL Observatory is a consortium of RMIT University and the University of Stirling.

RMIT University
Professor Bruce Wilson
Head, Social Sciences and Planning
RMIT University
Phone: +613 9925 2675
Fax +613 9925 2985
bruce.wilson@rmit.edu.au

University of Stirling
Professor Mike Osborne
University of Stirling
Phone: +44 780 358 9722
m.j.osborne@stir.ac.uk

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1. Introduction

Three inter-related drivers of change are transforming our world. All three are the result of learning - the stem cell of a knowledge-based economy and society. The first driver, globalization, is largely based on a market economy model and ideology that is characterized by short-term economic interest, privatization of many social and economic functions previously carried out by the state, and de-regulation of market rules. The transformation is enhanced by a second driver - the rapidly increasing pace of technological change sparked by research and innovation - especially in the information and communications technologies. The third driver is the explosion of new knowledge and learning - chiefly in the sciences and technologies - which has been harnessed to aid in the promotion of the first two drivers.

Whole nations, industries and communities have been changed by these forces that are rapidly impelling nations like Canada from resource-based to knowledge-based economies and societies. The paper is unabashedly a Canadian adult educator's perspective, and as such attempts to draw upon not only relevant Canadian experience and insights but also leading-edge thought and practice globally.

The term "lifelong learning" has gained currency in many international agency, government, and academic circles over the past generation. The UNESCO concept of lifelong learning as an organizing principle and social goal has informed a number of Canadian initiatives to reform learning systems. In recent years both UNESCO and the OECD have promoted their concept of lifelong learning as a compass in the uncharted territory of the knowledge-based economy and society. One consequence has been an increased interest in learning community and region development by all levels of government in a number of jurisdictions.

This paper will initially sketch some of the key contributions to the development of the lifelong learning concept. It will then focus on several aspects of social and human capital theory and some links with the lifelong learning concept. It will emphasize the synergistic

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relationship between social and human capital, and the formal and non-formal learning dimensions of each - perspectives that have provided insight and impetus to the response of learning communities and regions to the powerful forces of globalization.

The paper will then illustrate how lifelong learning has served as the over-arching notion of an inter-disciplinary conceptual framework in a series of learning community and region projects in rural and urban British Columbia over the past five years. The framework is based on a perceived confluence of leading-edge political economic, natural and social science, and community development theory and analysis that informs, and is informed by, both lifelong learning and social capital concepts. The framework is an attempt to provide an integrated, comprehensive, learning-based community response to the "silos" of government departments and the narrow disciplinary approaches of many academics.

Finally, the paper will briefly discuss the continuum of place management approaches and how lifelong learning and social capital concepts will contribute to place management practice in emerging initiatives in the North Sea area and Victoria, British Columbia. Together, these concepts provide important insights into our complex, diverse, and changing communities and regions - but raise the question of whether the many moving parts of learning communities could best be viewed as a solvable Rubic's Cube or a perpetual kaleidoscope?

2. Lifelong Learning

> *The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried.*
> G. K Chesterton*, What's Wrong With the World* (1910) p. 37

Is Chesterton's wry comment upon Christian ideals applicable to the increasingly popular concept of lifelong learning? Why has the notion of lifelong learning too often been used in a confused and confusing way? Is it chiefly an honorific rather than an operational concept? A brief survey of the history and development of the concept of lifelong learning and its sibling rivalry with its fraternal twins, lifelong education and adult education, may assist in answering these questions.

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2.1 Some Historic Roots

Both at the international and domestic levels earlier thought has influenced the definition, principles and use of the terms "lifelong education" and "lifelong learning". From their genesis to their more recent iterations, the Anglo-Saxon use of these terms is firmly rooted in the adult education movement. As early a 1919 the Report of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction of the UK asserted that:

> *(A)dult education must not be regarded as a luxury for a few exceptional persons here and there, not as a thing which concerns a short span of early manhood, but that adult education is a permanent national necessity, an inseparable aspect of citizenship, and therefore should be both universal and lifelong.*

In 1926 Eduard Lindeman (1961), a brilliant American adult educator associated with John Dewey, argued that "education is life, …not merely preparation for an unknown kind of future living…the whole of life is learning, therefore education can have no endings…" He also asserted that adult education is essentially non-vocational, student-centred, and based on the learners' experience. Basil Yeaxlee (1929), a British adult educator, was author of *Lifelong Education,* the first book explicitly devoted to the concept. Thus in the English-speaking world the notion of lifelong education and adult education became inextricably bound - nowhere more clearly than in Canada where notable adult educators promoted both concepts.

Two Canadian adult educators, Roby Kidd and Alan Thomas, were among those who gradually transformed the notion of "lifelong education" into "lifelong learning". Kidd was President of the Second UNESCO International Conference on Adult Education in Montreal in 1960 that set "lifelong education" as a goal for the future policies of governments (Lowe, 1982; Himmelstrup, 1981). In 1961 the Ottawa conference of the Canadian Association for Adult Education received an address by Alan Thomas (1963b) on the "Learning Society" in which he argued that the capacity for learning should be the foundation of Canadian society. He added that:

> *"We therefore offer as our central concern, not education, in its formal and institutional sense, but learning. Whatever the explicit and various goals of the multitude of agencies which we here are associated with or represent, we have one common*

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concern, the ability of human beings to learn continuously, and the conditions under which learning best takes place. These conditions are the foundations of the learning society."

Kidd (1978;1980), who had edited a dozen booklets in the 1950's with the series title *Lifelong Learning* discussed principles to govern the organization of lifelong learning. In his 1966 Quance lecture, "Organizing for Lifelong Learning", Kidd (1978) noted that "lifelong learning" was not a synonym for adult education. Kidd's distinction was not accepted by all observers. Himmelstrup (1981) frankly pointed out that:

Until the late 1970s many people (including decision makers) thought that Lifelong Education was almost a synonym with "adult education". And as adult education notoriously finds itself in a weak and marginal position in most countries, it has been very difficult to give the necessary force to make a political breakthrough.

2.2 The International Scene – Some Key Episodes

Major philosophical and ideological differences appear to have influenced the use of the terms "lifelong education" and "lifelong learning" in different regions and nations as early as the mid-1960's's. Indeed, two concepts, "education permanente" and "recurrent education", were to provide alternative notions. In the 1960's UNESO'S Paul Lengrand initiated discussion of "education permanente" that influenced thinking in the Council of Europe, especially when its Council for Cultural Cooperation investigated the notion during the 1970's (Hilmmelstrup,1981; Kidd, 1980).

The concept of education permanente emphasized the role of cultural policy and local communities in changing society (Selman, 1983). Northern European political leaders, led by the respected Swedish leader Olaf Palme (then Minister of Education) promoted an alternative concept, "recurrent education", on the world stage, using the platform of the OECD to promote discussion of a concept that focused on alternation between the worlds of education and work throughout an individual's lifetime.

The American attempts in the mid-1970's to build a federal lifelong learning and education initiative, the Mondale *Lifelong Learning Act*, were still-born with the election of the conservative Reagan

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administration. Further, in 1984 the Reagan administration withdrew from UNESCO for alleged financial mis-management and an "anti-American agenda". The next year the UK Thatcher government withdrew their membership from the international organization. Britain was to return in 1997 and the U.S. in 2002 however during the intervening period a generation of American and British educators, unlike Canadians, did not formally participate in UNESCO concept development and application related to lifelong learning and education. The impact of this breakdown in networking, trust and shared values - social capital - among some English-speaking adult educators is problematical but one could speculate that it led to even greater definitional and semantic diversity in a field already characterized by competitive concepts and terminology.

The year 1996, dedicated as the European Year of Lifelong Learning by the European Union, proved a watershed for discussion of the concept. Interest in the notion of lifelong learning increased as it was placed on the international agenda when both OECD and UNESCO reports on lifelong learning were published that year.

UNESCO

At the international level UNESCO's leadership role in the discussion of lifelong education and learning was assured with the publication of Paul Lengrand's *An Introduction to Lifelong Education* (1970) and the report of its International Commission on the Development of Education (Faure report), *Learning to Be* (1972). One of the main themes of the Faure report was the need to develop a wider concept of education which was both lifelong and life-wide, as well as a "learning society" in which both the non-formal sector and the individual self-directed learner would play an increasing role. It also asserted that it would be more productive to view individual and national development from the perspective of learning rather than that of formal education.

R. H. Dave, then Director of the UNESCO Institute for Education in Hamburg, led theoretical development of the concept of lifelong education, particularly related to adult basic education. He defined lifelong education as:

> *… a comprehensive concept which includes formal, non-formal and informal learning extended throughout the lifespan of an individual to attain the fullest possible development in personal, social and professional life. It seeks to view education in its*

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totality and includes learning that occurs in the home, school, community, and workplace, and through the mass media and other situations and structures for acquiring and enhancing enlightenment. (Himmelstrup, 1981)

During 1996, the European Year of Lifelong Learning of the European Union, UNESCO issued the report of a 3-year global consultation process chaired by Jacques Delors. The Delors report, *Learning: the Treasure Within* (1996)*,* claimed that "learning throughout life will be one of the keys to meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century". It urged:

Building on the four pillars that are the foundation of education learning to be, learning to know, learning to do, and learning to live together …

It is of interest that the report places greater emphasis on one pillar - learning to live together - than any of the others arguing that:

… by developing an understanding of others and their history, traditions and spiritual values and, on this basis, creating a new spirit which, guided by our growing interdependence and a common analysis of the risks and challenges of the future, would induce people to implement common projects or to manage the inevitable conflicts in an intelligent and peaceful way.

Such advice appears to have been ignored by those who developed and carried out the American war plans for Iraq! It is especially pertinent for those who work in places where aboriginal people struggle to maintain their profound connection to the land and its historic, ecological and spiritual meaning.

In sum, several key concepts related to the UNESCO notion of lifelong learning are:

- a life-span (birth to death) or vertical dimension

- a life-wide or horizontal dimension manifested in the different settings of learning through a life-time (home, community, school, and work place) and across societal sectors

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(governance, economic, public, education, and community/voluntary or civil society)

- a distinction between the formal learning sector (credentialized education and training) and the equally important non-formal learning sector (purposeful non-credentialized learning in the home, community and workplace), and

- a comprehensive range of social, cultural and economic purposes for individual and organizational learning.

OECD

In 1973 the OECD report on *Recurrent Education: a Strategy for Lifelong Learning* was published. It defined recurrent education as follows:

> *A comprehensive educational strategy for all post-secondary or post-basic education, the essential characteristic of which is the distribution of education over the total life span of the individual in a recurring way, i.e. the alternation with other activities such as work, but also leisure and retirement.*

The report and subsequent related documents promoted mechanisms such as paid educational leave that were implemented in a number of western Europe nations and inspired serious investigation in Canada, but gained little acceptance in the UK and the U.S.A. (Kidd, 1980; UK, 1973).

The European Year of Lifelong Learning provided an opportunity for the Organization to publish its major report, *Lifelong Learning for All* (1996). The report, aimed at the Education Committee at the Ministerial level, concludes that the "Ministers accepted lifelong learning for all as the guiding principle for policy strategies … to improve the capacity of individuals, families, workplaces and communities to adapt and renew." It is based on a view of learning that:

> *…embraces individual and social development of all kinds and in all settings – formally, in schools, at home, at work, and in the community." The approach is system-wide; it focuses on the standards of knowledge and skills needed by all,*

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regardless of age. It emphasizes the need to prepare and motivate all children at an early age for learning over a lifetime, and directs efforts to ensure that all adults, employed and unemployed, who need to retrain or upgrade their skills are provided the opportunity to do so. As such it is geared to serve several objectives:

- *to foster personal development, including the use of time outside of work (including retirement);*
- *to strengthen democratic values*
- *to cultivate community life*
- *to maintain social cohesion, and*
- *to promote innovation, productivity and economic growth.*

Thus the OECD reinforced the multi-dimensional aspects (life-span and life-wide) of the concept as well as the multiple socio-economic purposes and settings of learning.

The OECD's 2001 report on Cities and Regions in the New Learning Economy:

> *… analyzes the role of individual and organizational learning in "learning regions" including five OECD case studies of regions responding to the challenge of the emerging knowledge-based or learning economy. There is a focus on "the relationships between the development of regional systems on innovation and the processes of individual learning. The latter are embodied in learning processes that embrace formal educational organizations and sites of informal learning in families and communities; as well as firms and other workplaces, universities and R & D organizations." The report identified ten policy principles for creating learning cities and regions including six inputs to, and four mechanisms of, the learning process.*

Inputs to the learning process:

- *ensure high quality and well-resourced lifelong educational provision.*

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- *coordinate the supply of skilled and knowledgeable individuals through education and training and the demand for them so that the benefits of individual learning may be gained through its effects on organizational learning.*
- *establish appropriate framework conditions that improve organizational learning within and among firms and other organizations in interactive networks, and demonstrate to firms resultant benefits of such learning.*
- *facilitate effective organizational learning across all regional industries and services that have the potential to develop high levels of innovative capacity.*
- *Identify available regional resources (existing industries, educational provision, research facilities, positive social capital etc.) that either impede or contribute to developing future innovative strategies.*
- *Respond to emergent socio-economic conditions and "unlearn" dysfunctional practices and knowledge of a previous era.*

Mechanisms of the learning process

- *Establish coordinative inter-departmental mechanisms between different levels of governance.*
- *Develop strategies to foster appropriate social capital as a key mechanism for more effective organizational learning and innovation.*
- *Evaluate relationships between participation of individual learning, innovation and wider labour market changes with a focus on social exclusion of groups.*
- *Ensure that the regional learning and innovation strategy is accorded legitimacy by the regional populace.*

This report illustrates a growing interest in weaving lifelong learning and education with strategies to promote a more coordinated response of governance levels and fostering of positive social capital development.

Both the OECD and UNESCO and have played a crucial role in promoting the concept of lifelong learning and its application. Their initiatives during the European Year, and after, have spurred interest and action in lifelong learning in many macro-regional organizations world-wide.

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2.3 Recent Macro-Regional Commitment to Lifelong Learning

OECD AND UNESCO initiatives have informed and animated recent action by several major regional bodies. In 1997 the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC, 1997) commissioned a Canadian-led survey of the lifelong learning concept and its application. The 1999 G8 Cologne Summit developed a charter - *Aims and Ambitions for Lifelong Learning -* which noted that: "Economies and societies are increasingly knowledge-based. Educational skills are indispensable to achieving economic success, civic responsibility and social cohesion." It stressed the need for:

- a renewed commitment to investment in lifelong learning,

- identifying the essential elements of a lifelong learning strategy, and

- using international good practice as the building blocks for educational reform.

The 2000 G8 Education Minister's Meeting in Tokyo stressed the importance of lifelong learning for all in a knowledge-based society. It asserted that:

Education policy cannot be developed nor practice shaped in isolation. There must be consistency and connections between primary, secondary and tertiary education, resulting in true lifelong learning systems. There must also be consistency and connections with other policy domains such as employment, science, technology and information and communication. There must be engagement in implementation with society as a whole and with local communities.

While the G8 focused on education system reform, as had UNESCO and the OECD, the links between social and economic policy, and the increasingly important role of information technologies in the emerging knowledge-based society was also highlighted.

The Commission of European Communities engaged in a year-long consultation process of its members in 2000-2001 regarding *A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (2000) which focused on six key areas including:

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1. *guaranteed universal and continuous access to learning;*

2. *increased levels of investment in human resources;*

3. *development of effective teaching and learning methods and contexts for the continuum of lifelong and life-wide learning*

4. *improved ways that learning participation and outcomes are understood and appreciated, particularly non-formal and informal learning;*

5. *increased access to information and advice about lifelong learning; and*

6. *provision of lifelong learning opportunities as close to learners as possible, in their own communities and supported through information technologies wherever appropriate.*

Thus the Commission, which is subsequently encouraging support for learning communities, cities and regions, has, like the G8, adopted a comprehensive, coherent definition of lifelong learning that, among other matters, recognized the importance of local communities as the settings of learning (Commission, 2001).

2.4 Some Canadian Perspectives

Adult Education in Canada: a Survey (Sandiford, 1935), the initial investigation of the field, made reference to neither "lifelong education" nor "lifelong learning". However it did focus on pioneering "adult learning" research which presaged the work of Canadian adult education researchers, Alan Tough and Alan Thomas, who a generation later contributed to recognition of importance of non- and informal learning to adult life and societal learning (Tough, 1971; Thomas; 1963, 1991). The *Survey* also chronicled the work of a growing number of university extension departments involved in community education and development initiatives of the time - ranging from the Antigonish Movement of St. Francis Xavier University in rural Nova Scotia, the agricultural extension work of prairie universities through to the fishermen's cooperative development of the University of British Columbia - roots that can be discerned in the learning community initiatives that evolved several generations later (Faris;1975, 2000; Faris and Peterson, 2000).

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The 1970s was a period of intense interest in educational reform in Canada. Major reports in two provinces, Ontario and Alberta, raised issues of lifelong learning. In Ontario the Commission on Post-Secondary Education (Ontario, 1972) issued its report, *The Learning Society,* which placed post-secondary reforms within the context of "lifetime learning". The report of Alberta's Commission on Educational Planning, *The Choice of Futures,* argued that lifelong learning should be the basis for future provincial educational developments. A Lifelong Education Task Force was appointed by the Commission and its influence is found when the report (Alberta, 1972) asserted that:

> *Lifelong learning is more crucial than mere additions to existing programs. It involves a totally revised concept of studentship - one which disassociates the term student from any particular age range…. It deliberately blurs dividing lines and provides a merging of early, basic, higher and further education. Thus it contributes to continuity and satisfaction of living and learning.*

Other provinces contributed to the growing interest and application of lifelong learning principles. In Saskatchewan a Saskatchewan Association for Lifelong Learning (SALL) was formed in 1971 and pressed for a unique community college model based on lifelong and community education principles. A Minister's Advisory Committee on Community Colleges, with a majority of SALL members, was charged with developing a community consultation process that would result in a unique "made-in-Saskatchewan" college model. The two "key assumptions" of the report (Saskatchewan, 1972) were:

- *The sense of community in rural Saskatchewan, built on traditions of community participation and co-operation blended with self help, is among the province's most valuable attributes and*

- *Learning continues throughout life and access to learning opportunities should be continuous.*

They [key assumptions] underlie all other assumptions -- that learning is a vital and necessary part of life as both a personal and social experience and that communities as well as individuals require new information and attitudes to meet new and changing conditions.

This mixture of social capital and lifelong learning thought resulted in a novel brokerage model of college that was to engage in community

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development and education as well as deliver a full range of academic and vocational programs. An associated study, *The Saskmedia Report* (Saskatchewan, 1973), recommended the integrated development of a proposed educational communications system with the existing provincial public library and emerging community college systems.

College development and reform in British Columbia was also influenced by lifelong learning concepts. The report of the Task Force on the Community College (British Columbia, 1974), entitled *Towards the Learning Community,* claimed that:

> *Learning is a natural and necessary human activity that should not and cannot be confined to educational institutions. It is a life-long process which occurs in real-life situations of the community as well as in educational facilities. A fundamental purpose of a community college therefore, is to provide learning opportunities and encourage learning throughout the wider community as well as within college walls.*

The Task Force foresaw new community links being forged as the colleges, among other roles:

- *Engage in community educational developmental services actively participating in the communities by assisting individuals and organizations "in promoting a greater sense of community and in developing community resources";*
- *Act as information clearing-houses for adult education programmes conducted by community organizations; and*
- *Provide access to media-communications services for community groups and individuals.*

These proposed community capacity and social capital building roles were largely untested as a provincial election resulted in election of a new conservative government which abandoned plans for implementation of all of the Task Force recommendations related to community development. The new government did, however, establish a Committee on Continuing and Community Education in 1976 which, among other matters, called for a provincial commitment to lifelong learning as the basis for planning the total education system for British Columbia - one among many recommendations that was summarily rejected by the government of the day.

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A generation later, with election of a more progressive provincial government, lifelong learning once again was on the public agenda. A 1992 report, *Lifelong Learning for the 21ˢᵗ Century,* called for development of a lifelong learning policy and administrative framework including:

- *Adopting "the concept of lifelong learning as an organizing principle and social goal for education and training programs of all government ministries and agencies, the total public education system, and the promotion of learning opportunities in the non-formal sector, and that such a view be incorporated in a provincial policy statement."; and*

- *Creation of independent community learning councils composed of formal and non-formal sector stakeholders that would initiate and fund programs such as multi-cultural and citizenship education; local economic development; solutions of social problems; family learning; health and safety education, and volunteer training (British Columbia, 1992).*

The report noted that the two ministries involved in public education and training expended over C\$4 billion annually and that hundreds of millions of dollars were expended by other provincial ministries on their public education initiatives (over a dozen of 19 provincial ministries were identified with public education programs including ministries responsible for significant programs, often of a non-formal nature, such as agricultural extension, public libraries, environmental education, legal education, women's programs, recreation, consumer and labour education).

The report recommended that there be a single locus of responsibility, housed either in a central agency or a major education ministry, for developing a provincial policy framework and implementing a provincial lifelong learning strategy - the condition for a whole-of-government approach. Inter-Ministry rivalries, and serial changes in the incumbent of the Premier's Office were among political and bureaucratic reasons for inaction on the report's major recommendations.

In 1991 Ontario's provincial government created a Task Force on Lifelong Learning that reported in 1994 with recommendations "to strengthen the links between educational and economic strategies in Ontario through a focus on lifelong learning."(Ontario, 1994). Recommendations to measure progress towards transforming the

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education and training sector into a "coherent learning system", to improve education and training career information and counseling services, and to initiate an associated project on social and economic innovation were still-born with the election of an extremist conservative government in 1995. Thus ended the last of the significant provincial initiatives of the 1990's to explore and explicitly use the concept of lifelong learning to reform the formal education system. Moderate conservative, liberal, and social democratic governments across Canada have entertained the notion but extreme conservative governments of different partisan stripes have routinely rejected or ignored it.

2.5 Canadian Federal Government Initiatives

Despite the sporadic attempts of authorities in some provinces to apply the concept of lifelong learning to the reform of their education and training systems in the 1970's onward, no major initiatives of the Canadian federal government commenced until 1991 with a consultation paper, *Learning Well … Living Well*. The paper was part of what proved to be an abortive attempt at joint constitutional and socio-economic reform by the Progressive Conservative government of the day. The paper proposed the building of structures for a system of lifelong learning system that would network the many components of a learning system that it claimed largely already existed, albeit in an incoherent manner (Canada, 1991). Defeat of the constitutional reform package in a national referendum a year later spelled doom for the associated lifelong learning initiative.

Almost a decade later a Liberal federal government commenced initiatives, chiefly through its Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) department, that were informed by aspects of the lifelong learning concept. The 1999 *Speech from the Throne* promised the establishment of "a national action plan on skills and learning for the 21st Century that will focus on lifelong learning, address the challenge of poor literacy among adults, and provide citizens with the information they need to make good decisions about developing their skills." (Canada, 1999). That year the HRDC's Office of Learning Technologies commenced funding of Community Learning Networks initiative that would forward the Office's mandate to "promote a lifelong learning culture in Canada".

In 2001 Teresa MacNeil, a noted adult educator, conducted the most comprehensive analysis of the state of lifelong learning policy every

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undertaken in Canada (MacNeil, 2001). She found a largely uncoordinated and incoherent approach to formal education and training across the nation - the potential lifelong education component. She concluded that the term lifelong learning was not well understood and that it was often equated with formal adult education to the exclusion of non-formal learning. She noted the comprehensive nature of the OECD lifelong learning objectives and that such breadth "is the essence of a learning culture, which has yet to be established or even suggested through public policy in Canada." She concluded that in the absence of coordinating mechanisms in any jurisdiction, "… coordination may only be possible at the community level where all services can be brought together and where the individual learner can be the focus of attention."

A November 2003 national think-tank on learning communities convened by the Learning Policy Directorate of HRDC illustrated a new interest not only in a more comprehensive definition of lifelong learning but also in learning communities and regions. The role of lifelong learning and social capital concepts in development of learning communities and regions were central seminar themes.

2.6 Education Floats Upon a Sea of Learning

The concept of lifelong learning is based upon the recognition that learning - the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values - is a natural everyday process that occurs throughout one's life. It is driven by human curiosity and intelligence that attempts to give meaning to information in all its forms. It is both an individual activity and a social process that occurs in all of life's stages from birth to death. Most of the learning we acquire is from or with others.

There is also a life-wide dimension that recognizes that systematic learning occurs, and is promoted in not only the formal sector of education for credentials but also the non-formal sector or context of the workplace and the voluntary or community setting (Colley et al, 2002). Finally, informal or non-systematic, but often purposeful, learning can occur as one views television, discusses politics around the family table or gardening tips with a neighbour.

Lifelong learning, then, is a seamless process by which we all can learn to better perform our roles as active citizens and community participants, effective parents and family members, productive workers and informed consumers, and creative learners. It is a

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concept that to some is a mixed blessing for while it raises aspirations and invokes novel policy debate it could serve to further exclude and alienate (Field, 2000). Another view is that "there is a rich and strong meaning to the notion of lifelong learning which is worth promoting and expressing in policy and institutional behaviour" (Duke, 2002).

Several experts have identified different stages or "generations" of lifelong learning conceptual development. Rubenson (2001) argues that the first of three generations occurred from the late sixties to early seventies and viewed "lifelong learning as a master concept and guiding principle for restructuring education" and saw a major role for the civil society. Interest reappeared in the late eighties with an emphasis on "economic restructuring and international competitiveness through increased productivity" that focused on the role of the market.

The third and present generation, commenced in the year 2000, sees a balance among the "different roles for and interrelations between the three major institutional arrangements, state, market and civil society" and stresses the aims of active citizenship and employability. Duke (2002) identifies two phases. The first, which commenced in the sixties and lasted for just over a decade, "remained a relatively erudite conversation limited to policy and academic circles." The second began in the early nineties and not only popularized the term but also saw it become "increasingly a tool for the reform and modernization of aspects of national education and training systems." (Field, 2001; Duke, 2002).

Lifelong education is limited to the contribution of the formal sector in providing credit-based education and training opportunities for individuals throughout their life-span. It means that individuals will play student roles - characterized by dependency and competitive individualism - as they enrol in the formal education institutions. In contrast, those who engage in the non-formal learning sector play member roles - characterized by learning-in-community or social learning - that strengthen the organizations, communities, and families in which the learning occurs (Thomas, 1978).

Lifelong and adult education are lifelong learning's fraternal twins - not identical! The twins have to this day been used in some jurisdictions and by some discussants as synonymous with lifelong learning. In reality both lifelong and adult education are encompassed by the concept of lifelong learning. Adult education overlaps the concept of lifelong education. Lifelong education recognizes the formal

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educational opportunities that children, youth and adults engage in, while adult education focuses on the formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities of adults - however adulthood may be culturally defined. Learning is the common denominator of both lifelong and adult education. Indeed, education "floats upon a sea of learning" (Thomas, 1987).

3. Social Capital

Social capital refers to the values and beliefs that citizens share in their everyday dealings and which give meaning and provide design for all sorts of rules. The word 'capital' implies that we are dealing with an asset. The word 'social' tells us that it is an asset attained through membership of a community. Social capital is accumulated within the community through processes of interaction and learning …
Social Capital: Critical Perspectives (2000) **Peter Maskell** p. 111

The creation of human capital is by its nature a social, and not an individual process. Human skills only grow if one generation teaches the next what it has learned so that the second generation can devote itself to expanding existing knowledge and acquiring new skills rather than to rediscovering and relearning what the previous generation has already mastered.
Building Wealth: the New Rules for Individuals, Companies and Nations in a Knowledge-Based Economy (2000) **Lester C. Thurow** p.130

3.1 Introduction

The link between the concept of social capital and education is historic. According to Robert Putnam the term "social capital" was first coined by an American state supervisor of rural schools, L. J. Hanifan, in 1916 as Hanifan emphasized the importance of community involvement for successful schools (Putnam, 2000).

The concept of human capital was a subject of substantial debate in the 1960's when it first entered the global stage yet today it is firmly established and recognized by mainstream economists (Rubenson, 1987). The concept of social capital has been the topic of growing use and debate over the past decade. Robert Putnam's classic, *Bowling Alone: the Collapse and Revival of American Community,* firmly placed the concept at the centre of the policy agenda. It is still a contested concept; however increasing attention is being given to both its definition and measurement (Cavaye, 2004).

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3.2 Link to Human Capital and Lifelong Learning

The OECD has recognized the value of combining human and social capital analysis within the context of lifelong learning. Several OECD reports have investigated aspects of this synergistic relationship: One looked at the effects of these forms of capital in the six learning regions projects they had conducted from 1997-2000 (OECD 2001a). Another report, *The Well-being of Nations: the Role of Human and Social Capital,* "identified the roles of human and social capital in realizing sustainable economic and social development" (OECD, 2001b). The report recognized both the life-span and life-wide dimensions of human capital development:

Learning and acquisition of skills and knowledge takes place from birth to death. The concept of lifelong learning emphasizes not just the importance of adult learning and training, but also learning at all stages of life including "learning to learn" in the context of schools and other institutions of formal education: both the lifelong and "life-wide". Human capital is developed in the contexts of:

- *Learning, within the family and early childcare settings.*

- *Formal education and training including early childhood, school-based compulsory education, post-compulsory vocational or general education, tertiary education, public labour market training, adult education, etc.*

- *Workplace training as well as informed [sic informal] learning at work through specific activities such as research and innovation or participation in various professional networks.*

- *Informal learning "on-the-job" and in daily living and civic participation.*

This seminal report defines human capital as "the knowledge, skills, competencies and attribute embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being". The report defines social capital as "networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups". It distinguishes social from both human and physical capital in that it is relational rather than the exclusive property on an

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individual; is a public good shared by a group; is produced by societal investments of time and effort albeit in a less direct manner than human or physical capital; and is a product of inherited culture and norms of behaviour.

Social capital, like human capital, can be analyzed in terms of the vertical (life-span) and horizontal (life-wide) dimensions of lifelong learning. The three types of social capital -bonding, bridging, and linking - echo the dimensions of lifelong learning in that

- Bonding capital is characterized by narrow life-wide bonds among family, ethnic or community groups

- Bridging capital is characterized by weaker but more expansive horizontal connections across family and community boundaries,

- Linking capital is characterized by vertical ties between those with differing levels of power or social status such as links between the political elite and the general public or between individuals from different social classes.

The OECD report concludes that both human and social capital are mutually reinforcing and that both are "created, formally and informally, in the workplace, in local communities, and within families" which the report rightly notes are important "learning environments".

The contribution of social capital to education is powerful (Putnam, 2000; UK 2002). According to Putnam (2000) social capital has powerful effects upon:

- Child development;
- Student academic performance from school to college levels; and
- Community involvement in schools.

Balatti and Falk (2001) argue that

Social capital building is implicated in effective adult learning in three most important ways:

> *1. Social capital is involved in program design, management and delivery whether it is explicitly*

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> recognized as such or not. Its explicit recognition facilitates superior planning and delivery.
>
> 2. The processes of drawing on and building social capital are part and parcel of the learning process.
>
> 3. Social capital can be a direct or indirect benefit of learning.

A recent UK survey of social capital (2002) concludes that:

> Social capital may prove to be the single most important variable to impact educational attainment, with much greater importance than the resources conventionally focused on, but further work needs to be conducted to establish causal direction at macro-level.

One aspect of synergistic social and human capital development that has resonance in communities, particularly where local and traditional knowledge is valued, is the social-historical dimension of learning. Learning is a cumulative social and cultural process for our species and historical analysis can give insights to both its social and human capital development consequences (Szreter, 2000; Thurow, 2000; UK, 2002). This value is particularly true in aboriginal communities where the aboriginal people hold a significantly different world view than people in the dominant society.

They identify themselves as the first peoples of a region (hence in Canada they are known as the First Nation) with a profound affinity to the land and an accumulation of insights, wisdom and knowledge and skills passed on by successive generations of elders - lifelong learning, and especially informal, experiential learning is central to how they have learned and continue to learn (Michie, 1999; Wotherspoon & Butler, 1999;Burns, 1998; Haig-Brown, 2000). The recognition of this knowledge and value system is especially important in places, the communities, where aboriginal people continue to live and learn.

Schuller acknowledges the contribution of human capital theory to the idea of education as an investment but claims that "it has to be complemented by an approach [social capital] which a underlines the recognition that learning is a social activity and depends for its value on its embeddedness within a social framework." (Schuller, 1998) He also underscores the importance the social capital networking of people learning together in informal associations as well as in formal

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settings (Schuller, 1998). A recent study of the contribution of adult formal and non-formal learning to social capital concludes that "there is strong evidence that adult learning contributes to changes in attitudes and behaviours that promote social capital and, possibly, social cohesion (Feinstein, L. et al, 2003).

Non-formal learning is fostered in the wide array of voluntary associations that exist in our communities. The learning, chiefly of a non-formal nature, that is acquired through volunteer work is a major motivation for many volunteers who wish to gain new skills (Ross, 1990; Canada, 1998). Studies in Canada and Australia also indicate that over 70% of the learning in workplaces is of a non-formal or informal nature (Falk and Kirkpatrick, 1999; Livingston, 2000; Sousa and Quarter, 2003). Thus it is in communities - the families, workplaces, voluntary associations and educational institutions therein - that most of the learning associated with building trust, networks and shared values occurs.

4. Learning Communities and Regions

There has been steady growth of learning community initiatives around the world since the 1992 OECD conference launched the concept in Gothenberg, Sweden. Development of several learning cities in the UK in the mid-1990's and the subsequent creation of a UK *Learning Cities Network* (recently re-named the *Learning Communities Network*) influenced development in a growing number of learning community and region initiatives in the Anglo-Saxon world including Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

Activities ranging from learning regions to learning villages were promoted by a variety of sponsors in Europe. Some of the leading examples include the following:

- In 1997 the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) of OECD launched a learning region initiative in six countries - Spain, France, Denmark-Sweden, Germany and the UK - that added credibility to the concept (OECD, 1998; Larsen, 1999);

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- A European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI) and some European cities and institutions developed an European Union-funded project, the TELS-project (Towards a European Learning Society) that started in 1998; and

- The European Union initiated an international "learning village" project in 1999 by three research bodies in Finland, Portugal and Italy (Urponen, 2001).

OECD and UK experience, however, was particularly influential in the development of a structural/process learning community model that was to evolve in British Columbia.

4.1 Learning Communities in British Columbia

In 1999 the first of a number of learning communities was created in rural British Columbia as the result of federal-provincial collaboration. The federal Office of Learning Technologies of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) cooperated with the then provincial Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers to promote learning community development. Both provided funding for developmental work with potential project communities and both developed an initial working agreement that served as a framework for future initiatives - only to have the collaboration end abruptly with the election of an extreme right wing provincial government in 2001 that abolished the community development ministry and all associated programs and funding.

However, the first years provided the opportunity to apply the concepts of lifelong learning and social capital in a variety of communities and begin work on a conceptual framework for a learning-based approach to community development (Faris and Peterson, 2000; Faris, 2001b). It is a framework in which lifelong learning is explicitly used as the organizing principles and social goal. It draws upon a growing body of inter-disciplinary research and analysis from the natural and social sciences including:

- ecological models from the biological and environmental sciences that provide insights into holistic, sustainable life systems (Capra, 1996, 2002; Natrass and Altomare, 1999);

- human development research especially from the population health and neurosciences that emphasize the importance of

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investing in early learning strategies that have lifelong impacts (Mustard and Keating,1993; Keating and Hertzman, 1999);

- an emerging political economy that recognizes the contribution and synergy of human and social capital in a knowledge-based economy (Szreter, 1999, 2000); and

- associated communitarian values that stress the need for active citizens, communities empowered by education and new technologies, and the use of social capital to foster local economic development and social cohesion (Etzioni, 1994).

Learning communities explicitly use lifelong learning concepts to enable local people from every community sector to act together to enhance the social, economic, cultural and environmental conditions of their community. It is a pragmatic, asset-based approach that mobilizes the learning resources and expertise of all five community sectors:

- Civic or local government;

- Economic (private and social enterprise);

- Public (libraries, recreation commissions, social agencies, arts councils, health bodies, museums etc.);

- Education (kindergarten to university); and

- Voluntary/community.

The total formal (kindergarten, school, college and university) and non-formal (civic, economic, public and voluntary) learning resources of a community are therefore harnessed to provide immediate impacts as well as longer-term consequences according to the needs and priorities set by the community. In every community prior or current local initiatives are recognized and built upon by the nascent learning community.

The success determinants, initially drawn from a UK study (DfEE, 1998) have proven to be borne out in the British Columbia experience. That is, the success of each project depends upon the degree to which each community can learn to:

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- build partnerships and networks within and among all five community sectors;

- foster participation of all citizens, including the most disadvantaged; and

- assess project performance and progress in achieving community-set targets.

The concept of lifelong learning has served a multitude of uses in enabling learning communities to successfully make a difference.

4.2 Seven Uses of the Lifelong Learning Concept in British Columbia's Learning Communities

The lens of lifelong learning has been used in various ways at the developmental and implementation stages of British Columbia's learning communities. It is used to guide creation of community socio-economic profiles which provide a shared, agreed-upon data base for community discussion and a benchmark for project progress. It provides the framework for mapping and assessing the wide range of a community's assets including its social and human capital - the intangible assets of a sustainable learning community in an emerging knowledge-based society.

It enables the life-span needs of individuals and groups as well as the life-wide settings of the family, the workplace and the community to be assessed. It fosters a recognition of the life-wide learning resources of all five community sectors that previously existed in their respective 'silos' rather than be mobilized for the common good. Lifelong learning, then, is not only an organizing principle and analytical tool but also a vision of a possible future to which a community aspires.

a.   A Means of Identifying Needs and Prioritizing Action

The concept of lifelong learning, with its life-span (vertical) dimension and life-wide (horizontal) dimensions, has proven to be a useful new way for community members to think about their communities. They have personally experienced the developmental process of lifelong learning, and the expanding settings of learning from child- to adulthood (first, the family; then the community; then the school; and finally the workplace as the ever-widening locations of learning). Thus

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community members use the concept to reflect upon their own learning as well as the learning within their communities. Participants in discussions in every learning community project have identified a continuum of priority needs often commencing, for example, with family learning at the pre-natal to pre-school stage; challenging programs for at-risk youth; and adult basic education - emphasizing the foundational skill of lifelong learning - learning how to learn.

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b. An Analytical/Planning Tool for Community Asset Mapping

Learning-based community development is essentially an asset-based approach. Hence there has been a growing emphasis upon using a variety of mapping approaches in the learning communities (McKnight and Kretzmann, 1996: OLT, 2003; Lydon, 2003). The use of the vertical and horizontal dimensions as cross hairs in a scope, or policy lens, has served as a means of community analysis such as mapping the learning resources of all five community sectors. All these life-wide sectors have people with knowledge and skills worth sharing - as well as other learning resources, including existing facilities and equipment that can be mobilized for community action.

Citizens who participate in a community analysis process appear to readily understand the asset-based approach central to learning community development. They understand that agency silos and inter-community rivalries are dysfunctional and that mobilizing the full resources of their communities in new partnerships benefits all. For example, in the Learning Canyon of the Fraser River, fruitless inter-community competition and rivalry is being replaced by a canyon-long perspective that results in collaboration in such fields as eco-tourism and cooperative transportation of local agricultural produce.

c. A Comprehensive Approach to Transformative Learning

The 1996 Delors report of UNESCO saw lifelong learning as major force for educational reform by "building on the four pillars that are the foundation of education - *learning to be*, *learning to know*, *learning to do*, *and learning to live together*…." These pillars express the wide range of purposes that many community members value - the lifelong learning concept supports the notion of working with whole people in whole communities - and the associated view that the public interest and the common good are worthy aims. The UNESCO and OECD concept of lifelong learning is not value-free - it is based on democratic values that call for "lifelong learning for all" and challenge existence of a permanent under-class that disadvantages any community or nation

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in the knowledge-based society. Strong community support for both reform of the education system and provision of more equal learning opportunities for all has been expressed in every learning community in British Columbia.

d.   A Means of Promoting Social Inclusion

Recognition of the importance of both the local and traditional aboriginal knowledge and value base in a lifelong learning model has helped bridge between the First Nation and non-First Nation communities. For example, the Upper Skeena Learning Partnership has pioneered novel approaches to this task including imaginative service-learning projects which have built inter-generational bridges between youth and elders, and have provided drug addicted youth the opportunity to serve their community (Faris, 2001a; Donaldson and Docherty, 2004).

Many community members readily understand the importance of experiential learning and local knowledge, and feel included when the informal and non-formal learning they have engaged in is recognized as valuable. They feel at ease with a lifelong learning model that values all forms of learning, including the aboriginal knowledge and value base, rather than an education model that is chiefly focused on the formal learning sector that largely reflects the values of the dominant society. Hence building bridges between aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities has been an important and successful objective in communities where previously there was significant social exclusion.

e.   An Important Link with Social/Human Capital Generation

The findings by OECD and other researchers (OECD, 2001b; Putnam, 2000) that stronger measures of human capital (e.g. educational attainment and health conditions - the consequences chiefly of formal learning) are nurtured by increased social capital (i.e. trust, networking and shared values - the consequences largely of non-formal and informal learning) in the form of stronger families and communities, is intuitively understood by community members. Hence in virtually every learning community there is an emphasis on learning initiatives that build stronger families as well as early learning opportunities (Faris, 2001a; Makoul, 2004 a & b, Donaldson and Docherty, 2004).

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f.   An Incubator for Citizenship and Leadership Development

UNESCO identified citizenship education as a major challenge for lifelong learning in a knowledge-based society (UNESCO, 1996). Communities, and their voluntary associations, are the incubators of democratic citizenship. The power of community service-learning - a method of citizenship/leadership development introduced in several learning communities - is evident as the behaviour and attitudes of the participating learners change. Significant positive change in children and young adults participating in imaginative service-learning projects in both the formal and non-formal learning sectors has been reported in the Upper Skeena Learning Partnership, for example (Faris, 2001a).

g.   A Means of Sustainable Economic, Environmental and Social Change

Paradoxically, in a knowledge-based society the only constant is change. There is growing awareness in learning communities that their sustainability hinges on a triple bottom line approach that is infused by lifelong learning. In other words, the probability of sustainability increases when all sectors:

- recognize environmental limits and the need for all sectors to act as if future generations matter;

- learn how to build and expand partnerships and networks within and among themselves; and

- promote lifelong learning - the continuous acquisition of new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values - to enable the new behaviour and attitudes necessary to meet the constant challenge of change in a knowledge-based economy and society.

Adoption of the Swedish *Natural Step* process by the learning village of Whistler is a clear example of a triple bottom line model based on the concept of lifelong learning (Natrass and Altomare, 1999). Whistler, the site of the 2010 Winter Olympics, is also using its learning community initiative to build increased community capacity in preparation for the winter games (Makoul, 2004b).

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5. Place Management

… place solves a basic puzzle of our economic order. It facilitates the matching of creative people to economic opportunities. The gathering of people, companies and resources into particular places with particular specialties and capabilities generates efficiencies that power economic growth. It is for this reason that I say place is becoming the central organizing unit of our economy and society, taking on a role that used to be played by large corporations.
The Rise of the Creative Class (2004) **Richard Florida** p. 224

5.1 Introduction

The term "place management" is a relatively new concept of community service delivery that has its origins chiefly in the field of urban planning and government practice in the UK and several Australian states, New South Wales and Queensland (Stewart-Weeks, 1998, 2000; Zappala & Green, 2001). While there is agreement that the term "place" denotes a geographically-bounded location whether it be a human settlement such as a neighbourhood, town, city, region or larger political units such as a state or inter-state entities, or a geographically defined landscape such as a river basin or ecological region, the term "management" is a contended concept.

The definition of management as a command and control function is universally rejected in place management thinking. Rather providing "whole-of-government" responses to social, economic and environmental issues in specific localities is generally accepted as the core management objective. Coordinated or integrated delivery of public services to geographic communities or "place" is a major goal. An array of projects across the globe, some which use the place management concept and others that unwittingly contribute to the notion, illuminate some of the contributions of the concept and its links to both lifelong learning and social capital theory.

5.2 Australia

An array of place management projects have occurred with almost a decade of experience in Australia. New South Wales is the leader in the field and a Strengthening Local Communities Unit housed in the Premier's Department has promoted policy and practice of place management throughout the State. The Unit has led in policy and project development, training and consultancy service including

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creation of an electronic Place Management Network. In 2001 the Unit initiated a consultation with stakeholders (New South Wales, 2001) that focused not only on a training strategy but also attempted to develop a consensus around the key features of the 'place' approach by advancing the following definition:

> A place management or community renewal program is one which generally exhibits the following features:

- *it is project based*

- *projects focus on specific communities (neighbourhoods, towns, or remote areas)*

- *projects aim to address key social or economic issues which seriously impact on general community well-being*

- *projects promote a cross Government agency approach to planning and services provision, and, in some cases, an active cross sector approach*

- *project practices, if proven effective, should be informing long term, significant changes to the core planning and service provision activities of agencies, and partnerships with other sectors, within communities.*

Several observers of the place management projects in both New South Wales and Queensland have argued that there is a spectrum or continuum of place management possibilities. Stuart-Weeks (1998) distinguishes between *place coordination* (improved service delivery), *place management* (significant changes about decision-making, projects funding and accountability), and *place leadership* (response to demand for increased community governance).

A Smith Family working paper (Zappala & Green, 2001) sees *place coordination* (minimal change to existing government service delivery) at one end of a spectrum and *place entrepreneurship* (community-based approaches involving government, business and non-profit organizations) at the other end. The paper critiques selected place management projects of the New South Wales government including:

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- the 1996 *Kings Cross* project, a joint initiative with the South Sydney Council, aimed at community regeneration and capacity-building;

- the 1997 *Cabramatta* project, a strategic partnership with the Fairfield City Council, that dealt with drug treatment, vocational training for youth, tourism development, and urban planning; and

- the 1998 *Canterbury Bankstown project* focused on "whole of government" responses to local youth issues.

The paper concludes that *place coordination* best be left to government but that *place entrepreurship* approaches are best led by non-profit and community organizations especially since such groups are immune from short-term political cycles - an ideal but unrealistic notion in Canada where short-term project or "drive-by" funding equally plagues government and non-governmental organizations and the communities they would serve.

5.3 American Place-Based Ecosystem Restoration

A unique contribution to place management theory and practice comes from the interdisciplinary field of ecosystem management. Ecosystem management is defined by the U.S. National Park Service as "a collaborative approach to natural and cultural management that integrates scientific knowledge of ecological relationships with resource stewardship practices for the goal of sustainable ecological, cultural and socioeconomic system" (USGS)

The Place-Based Studies (PBS) Program of the U.S. Geological Survey within the U.S. Department of the Interior emphasizes the need for government wide approaches that draw upon multi- and inter-disciplinary and interdivisional approaches to ecosystem science. One such approach is applied historical ecology that uses historical knowledge in the management of ecosystems - emphasizing that "detection and explanation of historical trends and variability are essential to informed management." (Swetnam, 1999). Lessons learned from this field may provide a more profound "vertical dimension" insight into place management projects focused on ecological issues or using historical community mapping.

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5.4 Two Emerging Place Management Projects - VISP and Victoria, British Columbia

The author recently became involved in two new place management projects that explicitly draw upon lifelong learning and social capital concepts - the first in the North Sea area and the second in the author's home town of Victoria. In February, 2004 the *Vitalizing City Centres through Integrated Spatial Planning* (VISP) project was launched in the lead partner city of Molndal, Sweden. Seven partners and around 50 sub-partners from seven countries (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Holland, Belgium and the UK) will, over a three and a half year period, collaborate within the framework of the INTERREG IIIB North Sea Program of the Commission of the European Communities. The project partners will develop a new transnational strategy and innovative methods to make urban areas in the periphery of large North Sea cities more attractive and more competitive through

- integrated spatial planning,

- lifelong learning,

- trans-national interdependence,

- networking, and

- increased citizen involvement in spatial planning.

Two aims specifically reflect learning community practice, including:

- to prove through trans-national and local best practices in the North Sea area how lifelong learning integrated in spatial planning can contribute to making Europe the most competitive and knowledge-based society, and

- to strengthen citizens participation in spatial planning.

Hence the concepts of lifelong learning, social capital (through civic engagement) and place management will inform the project initiatives. The partners believe that only an integrated physical, economic, social and environmental vitalization complemented by lifelong learning and integrated physical and virtual services can regenerate the economic potential of the area and create attractive places for all citizens (VISP, 2004).

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The City of Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, has a population of about 80,000 people but a dozen surrounding municipalities provide over 200,000 additional persons. A *Vision 2020* initiative, sparked by the Downtown Business Association, commenced in November 2003. The initiative formed a *Place of Learning* sub-committee of which the author is a member. The sub-committee, composed of leaders from the civic, economic, education and public library sectors, is currently developing some tentative objectives around a 2020 Vision of Victoria as a leading learning community.

In April, 2004 the City of Victoria Corporate Strategic Plan incorporated an objective to *Promote Downtown as a Place of Learning.* One *Place of Learning* sub-committee recommendation under active consideration is for the City to adopt a place management i.e. whole of civic government, social entrepreneurship strategy. Unfortunately there is no likelihood that the present provincial government would participate in a "whole-of-government" approach. Thus this project may entail focusing whole-of-civic level- government resources (e.g. education, police, social service, library, community development including social housing) on a collaborative basis involving Downtown stakeholders in order to achieve agreed-upon *Vision 2020* goals.

5.5 Summary

There are social-historical, ecological, cultural and political economic dimensions to the evolving concept of place management worthy of further investigation. The operational definition of management that is politically and culturally acceptable may well vary by jurisdiction. However that definition which is most consistent with learning region values is a management style that facilitates networking and partnership building, increases the stock of human and social capital, and enables the requisite learning that makes for sustainable social, environmental and economic development. Further, those who govern in jurisdictions in which aboriginal people reside have a special challenge to listen and learn from, and work with, a people with a rich sense of place.

While *place entrepreneurship* models will enable cross-sectoral collaboration that increases the probability of long-term sustainability the issue of short-term or "drive-by" funding is central. Is there any reason to believe that issues that have grown over several generations can be addressed in one or even three year funded projects? For example, family break down among aboriginal people who, for several

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generations, were raised in residential schools in Canada or Australia rather than in their own families has had profound inter-generational consequences. It may well take at least a generation to heal the wounds and learn the skills and attitudes necessary to re-build the families and communities of those victimized by an insensitive dominant society.

There are many First Nation and non-first Nation communities in Canada where long-term commitment to learning-based place management is needed. The *place entrepreneurship* model appears to be that which is most likely to foster the community involvement and learning that will build the social and human capital central to community capacity building and sustainable economic, environmental and social change.

6. Rubic's Cube or Kaleidoscope?

As for the future, your task is not to foresee but to enable.
Antoine de Saint-Exupery French author/pilot

It is an axiom that in the emerging knowledge-based economy and society the only constant is change. Those of us who attempt to bridge the theory and practice of learning-based community development in learning communities and regions recognize the complex, diverse, and changing nature of the communities with whom we work and learn.

Assessing the multiple dimensions of human communities, and their connection to other living systems, is an incredibly complex and daunting challenge. As one searches for the stories, parables and metaphors that may help us understand this enigma, the question of whether the many moving parts of learning regions are akin to either a giant Rubic's Cube or a giant kaleidoscope comes to mind.

A Rubic's Cube is a solvable puzzle. By adeptly changing one component after another, what initially appeared to be a nest of confusion culminates in an ordered pattern. Each time a component is moved the total relationship changes. Each move is made with a number of subsequent moves in mind. Yet, with experiential learning and abstract thought the puzzle is solved. Can we transfer the ability to predict the consequences of the changes we make, even in the context of several iterations of compounded change, in a community? Is the need for constant re-evaluation and re-alignment applicable to place management? Can we predict the cascading consequences of

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one's wilful moves after each re-evaluation so that the solution can be approached despite the moves introduced by other uncontrollable forces within a community?

A kaleidoscope is a tubular viewing device containing two plane mirrors and multiple coloured fragments which, when the instrument is rotated, forms ever-changing patterns. The attraction of the device is the colourful diversity and the largely unpredictable nature of the changing patterns that are produced. Development of place management projects - particularly those of a *place entrepreneurship* nature - that use lifelong learning and social capital concepts to foster resilient learning communities may well be akin to using a kaleidoscope rather than a Rubic's Cube in that requisite problem-solving entails no final solution but rather the constant challenge of learning our way out by infusing our policies and practice with learning strategies for all involved - from place managers and bureaucrats to community members. Formulistic responses to dynamic and unique community conditions are no substitute for learning-based capacity building.

All metaphors have their limitations including the analogies of a Rubic's Cube or kaleidoscope. Yet both illuminate some of the challenges we face as key associated elements of the three concepts of lifelong learning, social capital, and place management - the power of non-formal learning and its parity with formal learning, and the importance of joining up the horizontal learning resources of government with those of the life-wide sectors of the community - inform efforts to focus on the "whole-of-government" and "whole-of-community" approaches to tackling economic, social and environmental issues in learning regions.

In the best Canadian tradition of compromise the author should opt for either a "Rubic's Kaleidoscope" or simply foster discussion about the possible contribution of both - or other - metaphors. However in the emerging knowledge-based economy and society, and in the places in which we live and learn, the future seems more like a kaleidoscope of ever-changing challenges than a Rubic's Cube with certainty of solution. Chaos and complexity rather than certitude and constancy may be our lot. In such a human condition our capacity to learn-in-community and to celebrate our differences and our creativity will be crucial to our task of enabling whole people to live in whole communities of the future.

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About the author

Dr Ron Faris has been monitoring global reform of education and training systems (and associated national commitment to lifelong learning policies and strategies) for over a decade, with a special focus on nations with a shared British education and training tradition. He has been researching, teaching and consulting on learning communities (villages, towns, cities and regions) and community service-learning in Canada and abroad. He is President of Golden Horizon Ventures, a consultancy focused on lifelong learning strategies, and education and training reform at governmental levels, and learning-based community development at the local level.

Prior to obtaining his Ph.D. in Educational Theory (adult education and educational administration) from the University of Toronto he taught high school in British Columbia and Australia and in a factory classroom in London. He has taught at a distance at the University of Victoria since 1992 and at the new Royal Roads University in the MA Program in Leadership and Training (service-learning at a distance for mid-career students). In the summer of 2002 he visited Australia as an International Fellow of the RMIT University in Melbourne and keynote speaker at the Monash University conference in Electronic Networking and Community Building. He teaches graduate courses on Learning Communities, and The Social and Political Economic Context of Learning in Democratic Organizations, and non-credit workshops on Lifelong Learning Communities for the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria. In 2004 he taught an undergraduate course on learning communities at the University College of the Fraser Valley, and was a keynote speaker at the Swedish Municipal Adult Education Association Conference and seminar presenter at the Swedish National Agency for Rural Development.

He was charter President of the Saskatchewan Association for Lifelong Learning (SALL) in 1971 and chaired the Task Force which created that province's unique brokerage model community college system. His associated *Saskmedia Report* integrated the developing college and educational communications systems with the existing regional library system. He was Executive Director of Continuing Education in British Columbia from 1973 until 1987, when he became Associate Executive Director of the National Literacy Secretariat in Ottawa.

Dr. Faris places the issue of individual, social and corporate responsibility for lifelong learning in an historic and global context. He also brings the perspective of one committed to voluntary sector service - he served on the executive of the Canadian Association for Adult Education (CAAE) for over a decade and among his awards is the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal for Voluntary Services. His book, *The Passionate Educators* (1975), is a history of Canadian voluntary associations and their roles in adult educational broadcasting from 1919 to 1952. He co-edited, with Dr Frank Cassidy, *Choosing our Future: Adult Education and Public Policy in Canada* (1987).

More information about Dr Faris and his work can be found on his webpage at: members.shaw.ca/rfaris/

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