

RETHINKING WORK AND LEARNING

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Issues, Concerns and Prospects

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Rethinking Work and Learning

Adult and Vocational Education for Social Sustainability

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Foreword

Rethinking a Sustainable Society

Alan Mayne

The world has already passed the midway point for achieving by 2015 the eight Millennium Development Goals for a “more peaceful, prosperous and just world” that were set by the United Nations in the wake of its inspirational Millennium Declaration in 2000.¹ These goals range from combating poverty, hunger, and disease, to empowering women, and ensuring environmental sustainability. However Ban Ki-Moon, the United Nations Secretary-General, conceded in 2007 that progress to date has been mixed. During 2008 the head of the United Nations World Food Programme cautioned that because of the surge in world commodity prices the program had insufficient money to stave off global malnutrition, and the World Health Organization warned of a global crisis in water and sanitation. Depressing news accounts accumulate about opportunities missed to achieve a fairer world order and ecological sustainability: the manipulation of election results in Africa, human rights abuses in China, 4000 Americans dead and another nation torn apart by a senseless and protracted war in Iraq, and weasel words by the world’s political leadership in the lead-up to negotiations for a climate change deal in 2009 that is supposed to stabilize global carbon dioxide emissions.

It is clear that the parameters of the debates that drive progressive policy change urgently require repositioning and energizing. As is shown by the contributors to *Rethinking work and learning*, experts in the humanities and social sciences (HASS) could have an important role to play in this process. However two things are required in order for their input to have real value. First, HASS researchers must “cut to the chase.” Public debate has already moved beyond establishing that sustainable development requires as strong a social agenda as it does economic functionality. HASS researchers must take the next step and help to delineate and actively assert that social agenda. As Nobel Prize winner and former World Bank chief economist Joseph Stiglitz puts it, “Development is about transforming the lives of people, not just transforming economies. Policies for education or employment need to be looked at through this double lens: how they promote growth and how they affect individuals directly” (2006, p. 50). Stiglitz argues that the processes of globalization since the

¹ *United Nations Millennium Declaration*, United Nations General Assembly, 55th session, Resolution 55/2, 18 September 2000.

late 1970s have resulted in “a democratic deficit” that can be corrected only through “a greater concern both for the poor countries and for the poor in rich countries, and for values that go beyond profits and GDP” (2006, p. 276). Rectifying that deficit provides HASS researchers with their best opportunity to contribute substantially to knowledge building for a just and sustainable world.

The second challenge facing HASS researchers, if they really are to reposition public debate about social sustainability in this way, is to distance themselves clearly from the jibe that “the emperor has no clothes.” Such is the magnitude and the urgency of the sustainability crises that face human society in the twenty-first century that the HASS sector must dispense with the baggage of conventional academic and professional process and focus instead on developing practical protocols for sustainable living. Now is not the time to indulge in obtuse jargon and abstract word play (neither of which should be confused with the need to maintain benchmarks for action that are anchored in core ethical or spiritual values). We need the clear and active engagement of HASS researchers in order to fashion a just and sustainable world. Since it is easy to throw stones at others, I will instead direct this criticism at myself. I have been an academic historian for thirty years, and for all of those years have written and taught about the imbalance between urban wealth and poverty which sustained city growth during the first wave of globalization during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was easy for me to deplore social injustice in the past, because in adopting the perspective of a would-be social reformer of equity imbalances in the past I was really only tilting at shadows in the present. The situations I studied had passed, and the participants in them were long dead and buried. But parallel social imbalances are accumulating around the world today, and as a result of continuing rapid urbanization half of humanity now lives in urban areas. The social inequality that has become entrenched in cities is a major impediment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. I see the “slums” stretching below me whenever I fly into Mumbai, and I see them when I travel to work in Delhi at JNU. How should historians respond to the present-day outcomes of social transformations whose development they have comfortably traced in the past? And how, more generally, should HASS researchers translate their technical expertise into effective social action in support of the Millennium Goals?

“Slum” is an outside construct that misrepresents the complicated social, economic, political, and environmental specifics that perpetuate urban inequality in diverse places. It is a label based on fear, misunderstanding, and indifference. It endures and continues to skew public policy reform because of a mixture of cynicism and ignorance by public regulators and private developers. The sad result is evident in the decision by the Maharashtra state government in 2008 to demolish Dharavi, the heart-shaped mosaic of dirty and smelly neighborhoods—but nonetheless functional and resilient communities—that has long existed in the center of Mumbai. Journalist Dan McDougall argued recently that careful investigation of

Mumbai’s labyrinthine Dharavi slum [reveals] one of the most inspiring economic models in Asia. Dharavi may be one of the world’s largest slums, but it is by far its most prosperous—a thriving business centre propelled by thousands of micro-entrepreneurs who have created an invaluable industry—turning around the discarded waste of Mumbai’s 19 million citizens.

A new estimate by economists of the output of the slum is as impressive as it seems improbable: \$1.4bn a year. (2007, p. 29)

Juxtaposing the competing visions of Dharavi, McDougall noted that “For Dharavi’s detractors, mainly Mumbai’s city fathers and real estate developers, keen to get their hands on the prime land, the shanty is an embarrassing boil to be lanced from the body of an ambitious city hoping to become the next Shanghai. But for a growing number of environmental campaigners Dharavi is becoming the green lung stopping Mumbai choking to death on its own waste” (p. 29).

Kalpna Sharma exposed the sham about Dharavi when in *Rediscovering Dharavi: stories from Asia’s largest slum* she rejected outsiders’ characterizations of the district’s brutality, crime, and dysfunctionality and instead described the reality of day-to-day community life. One of Sharma’s strengths, and it is replicated by the contributors to *Rethinking work and learning*, is her immersion in society’s “grass-roots.” The preface to her book begins: “This book would not have been written if the people of Dharavi had not welcomed me into their homes, extended their hospitality, and shared their stories and their dreams with me” (2000, p. xi). Potentially one of the most important contributions of HASS research to policy debate about social sustainability is its sensitivity to and respect for local knowledge systems that have been disregarded and discountenanced by policy makers. Building knowledge for sustainability should no longer entail (as it has too often in the past) talking down to disempowered constituencies; it must engage with them in order to understand local concerns and where necessary reinforce local action and the informal support networks that already attempt to mediate community health, education, and work issues.

Rethinking sustainability requires real understanding of subaltern knowledge systems and support networks, and enduring partnerships that build upon this knowledge and which harness and develop grassroots energies. Too much public policy has faltered in the past because it ignored or snubbed local experience and the vernacular processes that articulate them. As Sharma said of the inhabitants of Dharavi, they are “people like us who can think out and plan their own future” (2000, pp. xii, xvii). Genuine social justice and social inclusion programs for the new millennium need to tap into this “savviness,” rather than be superimposed upon it. HASS inputs are well suited to help us achieve this goal. As a historical illustration of what I mean, Mumbai’s urban planners may have done better in Dharavi if they had reflected upon Robert Darnton’s historical accounts of eighteenth-century France. Darnton’s interest lies less in the lives of philosophers and the well-to-do than in those of peasants and urban workers, and in *The great cat massacre* he reminds his readers that the historian’s job is to uncover

the way ordinary people made sense of the world. He [sic] attempts to uncover their cosmology, to show how they organized reality in their minds and expressed it in their behavior. He does not try to make a philosopher out of the man in the street but to see how street life called for a strategy. Operating at ground level, ordinary people learn to be “street smart”—and they can be as intelligent in their fashion as philosophers. (1985, pp. 3–4)

Darnton's point of view in studying the past resonates with Sharma's purpose in writing about the inhabitants of Dharavi today. It also overlaps with the wide variety of social science perspectives that are presented here in *Rethinking work and learning*.

These intersections remind me of the British social historian J. F. C. Harrison, whose works encouraged me, when an undergraduate, to think deeply about social justice and social inclusion. Harrison wrote many books, but one is especially relevant to the concerns that are shared by Willis, McKenzie, Harris, and their collaborators. It is called *Learning and living, 1790–1960: a study in the history of the English adult education movement* (1961). Old-style historical narratives such as Harrison's, and the best of present-day social science research, have one key element in common: they value storytelling. Sharing stories expands relationships because it tends to build mutual respect and to foster conciliation. It assists social inclusion and cohesion by providing sounding boards for diverse social relationships and experiences. It accelerates reform programs by pinpointing social justice issues where policy intervention cannot be gainsaid. Stories about conflict and reconciliation in Africa are a good example. Another example is provided by the subaltern voices that have been relayed from shantytowns in places such as Dharavi. Storytelling can nowhere guarantee better social outcomes because progressive policy take-up is invariably contested and often ultimately denied, but at least the rethinking and repositioning has begun.

Storytelling takes many forms. It can be expressed through text, voice and song, play and performance. It is expressed in art. During my research collaboration with Indigenous artists at Borroloola in the Northern Territory of Australia my hosts demonstrated the power of storytelling to remedy enduring wrongs. Remote Aboriginal settlements and outstations are regularly characterized in the mainstream Australian media as brutal and dysfunctional places. Borroloola is ridiculed as being the furthest and most marginal place that an Australian citizen can go to without a passport. But local artists construct storylines in both paint and "whitefella" language about the history of their country, its spiritual pathways, and its ecological rhythms, which are starting to win outside appreciation for their homelands, cross-generational bonding within their community, and a new source of shared learning, work, and income for local people.

Sharing stories, and drawing moral lessons and practical blueprints for action from them, is an essential starting point for rethinking the key planks of sustainable communities in the new millennium. Although there is now little time remaining to meet the Millennium Development Goals for 2015 of a socially just and sustainable world order, rapid and large-scale social progress is nonetheless still feasible and achievable (see United Nations, 2007).

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Introduction by the Series Editor

Rupert Maclean

Promoting skills development for employability, through means such as technical and vocational education and training (TVET), has been an important feature of education in all societies, regardless of their level of economic and social development, since the beginning of time. This is to be expected, since work is fundamental to human survival, and work-related skills need to be passed onto each new generation of learners.

The main difference over history, and between countries, has concerned which modes of delivery have been dominant: that is, whether skills development for employability has been mainly through formal, non-formal or informal means. In practice each of these modes of delivery has to varying degrees had a role to play, although in earliest times the modalities mainly concerned informal and non-formal means of learning.

In modern times TVET has become an increasingly important part of formal education systems. The very first World Bank loan for education, granted in 1963, was for TVET; and TVET accounted for about 40% of all educational loans in sub-Saharan Africa until the early 1960s. In 1991 the Bank reversed gears, partly due to a World Bank policy paper which argued that TVET was not a good investment when compared to general education. This led many experts and policy-makers to conclude that training is best left to the workplace. This view was promoted by a major policy change by the World Bank, which was earlier considered to be one of TVET's staunchest supporters.

Over the past five years or so, TVET has again been attracting increasing attention from governments, and is very much back as a key part of the development agenda.

There are several important reasons for the return of TVET to become one of the priority areas in education. The world of work – those who create employment opportunities, the employees and workers themselves, and the educators and trainers who provide the skills needed for employability – is regarded as being central to achieving sustainable development and so is of great importance with regard to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD),

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2005–2014. At its most basic level, achieving sustainable development means achieving the targets set in the Millennium Development Goals, as agreed by all countries in the world at the special September 2000 session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Skilled workers are central to achieving all eight goals and associated targets in the Millennium Development Goals. In this sense, TVET underpins every single one of the MDGs.

In addition, TVET is regarded as being very important if Education for All (EFA) is going to be achieved, since skills development for employability is a major motivator for people to become literate, and to engage in lifelong learning.

Making gains in poverty reduction, job creation, health or environmental concerns, and achieving EFA and ESD, is not possible without a focused TVET policy, which can lead to huge improvements in education, gender equality and living conditions.

Achieving the MDGs therefore requires the development of strong and effective TVET, in terms of equal access for all, and programmes with high relevance and quality assurance. As a strategic vision, the Millennium Development Goals are steps towards a longer-term vision of building human, social, economic and environmental capital, especially in developing countries. However, maintaining and building social, economic and environmental capital depends upon human capital, and upon the institutions for TVET that develop work-ready human capital that is the engine for sustainable development over the long run.

In this regard there are several main concerns that need to be addressed, such as:

- The acquisition of skills for work, and for citizenship and sustainability, is crucial for economic and social development because 80% of the world's workforce use technical and vocational skills in their work.
- TVET should be relevant to the needs of the labour market, be of high quality, and broadly accessible to all. However, this ideal is often not being met, particularly in developing nations, economies in transition, and those in a post-conflict situation.
- There is a need to assist UNESCO's 193 member states to improve and integrate TVET as part of the global Education for All Campaign, and also to assist the alignment of TVET with the tenets of sustainable development, with particular reference to promoting best and innovative practices.

This timely, cutting edge book explores ways of rethinking work and learning with particular reference to adult and vocational education for social sustainability. The authors argue that Human Resource Development is of key importance if sustainable economies and societies are to be achieved. They also argue that when policy makers examine sustainability their main area of focus or emphasis tends to be the economic dimension of sustainability. However, they believe that there is a need to rethink the concept of sustainability, placing a greater emphasis on social sustainability including notions of peace-building, the central importance of values and ethics, and importance of social justice and social cohesion and the role of religion and spirituality. In all of these areas, TVET is regarded as being important to achieving both economic and social sustainability.

This book makes an important contribution to examining the meaning and significance of sustainability, and encourages the reader to rethink this important concept.

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In Australia, our “AVE for Social Sustainability” project which has come to fruition in this volume was enriched and energized by an early symposium at the University of South Australia that many of our chapter writers, international and national, attended in April 2006. This gathering was sponsored by a seed grant from the Hawke Research Institute for Sustainable Societies (HRISS) and the university’s Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences, for which we express much appreciation. We also want to thank Bernie Lovegrove from the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education in Canberra who connected us to scholars/educators in the Asia–Pacific region.

Our thanks go to supportive colleagues from the University of South Australia at the Hawke Research Institute for Sustainable Societies: Alan Mayne, the then director, who wrote the foreword to this collection; Barbara Comber, the present director, and Gerry Bloustein, who has overview of editing and publishing support at the institute. In addition we, the editors, especially thank colleagues in the Centre for Research in Education, Equity and Work (CREEW), one of the institute’s research concentrations: Tom Stehlik, Alan Reid, Michele Simons, and Miriam McLean.

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Peter Willis, Stephen McKenzie, and Roger Harris

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Challenges in Adult and Vocational Education for Social Sustainability

Peter Willis, Stephen McKenzie and Roger Harris

How can adult and vocational education (AVE) systems help to create social sustainability? The chapters in this volume approach this question from a range of methodological and geographical positions, but all share the concern that current AVE systems are failing to adapt to the changing nature of work and society and are thereby missing a crucial opportunity to enable the growth of more sustainable and equitable communities. In various ways, our contributors call for the reorientation of current AVE systems to include the use of ethical, philosophical, and imaginal teaching styles to complement the technical and professional pedagogical modes that currently predominate in those systems.

We use the word “reorientation” as a deliberate echo of the recent work undertaken by UNESCO-UNEVOC on the current and potential role of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in sustainable development. UNESCO-UNEVOC has generated much discussion internationally around the opportunities and challenges facing TVET providers in reorienting their training systems so as to embed skills for sustainable development in the workforce. The argument is powerful and straightforward: social cohesion and environmental protection will remain distant ideals for many people unless they can be linked with the everyday livelihood activities that people must pursue in order to achieve economic or food security. In order to forge these links, new types of knowledge will be required, including values and attitudes as well as new technical skills. TVET settings are the obvious places for this new type of learning to occur.

We refer to this new kind of knowledge generally as “knowledge for sustainability.” In this book, many of our contributors explore models of education that position this “knowledge for sustainability” alongside the more specific technical skills that are taught in settings that focus on preparation for work. It is through the development of new types of knowledge within the workforce that are both vocationally relevant *and* contribute to sustainability that the distant ideal can become a reality. Although this agenda is widely recognized as important, little cohesive research has been undertaken on *how* TVET providers are beginning to develop these skills within the workforce. We have no clear conceptual models of how the process can

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work, or case studies to inform the design of such models. This picture is true of TVET research worldwide, despite continued calls from UNESCO-UNEVOC to step up activity in this area. The Bonn Declaration on Learning for Work, Citizenship and Sustainability describes TVET as the “master key” for sustainable development.¹ Yet, at present, we do not know how this key can be turned to best effect or in what kinds of locks it can best be used.

In this introduction, we wish to alert the reader to key distinctions in terminology and thereby introduce some important themes of this volume. Such distinctions are important; in a field as large and complex as sustainability (or adult and technical education, for that matter), key terms differ greatly in their meaning according to context, and a lack of clarity results in words becoming buzzwords and concepts becoming catch-all phrases. The three main distinctions we wish to discuss here are the difference between AVE and TVET; the difference between sustainable development and social sustainability; and a final distinction regarding the meaning of “education for social sustainability.”

This book focuses on the pairing of the twin concepts of adult and vocational education (AVE) and social sustainability. AVE differs from TVET partly through its inclusion of adult and community education as an important setting for imparting knowledge and skills for sustainability. We cast this wider net because we do not think that TVET alone—especially as it is currently practised—can be the master key to sustainable development or social sustainability, and we must turn to other education sectors for ideas on how to reorient it.

We see adult and community education as an adaptable vehicle for community development in areas where early schooling and post-compulsory education have been inadequate. Further, unaware of adult education methods, many TVET providers struggle when dealing with retrenched adult workers looking to re-skill or indeed with adult learners in disadvantaged areas who have never received initial formal training. Finally, adult and community education (in Australia, at least) has traditionally concerned itself with precisely the kind of issues we are describing by the term “knowledge for sustainability”—knowledge that is concerned with making a better society as a whole, not simply a better livelihood for the individual.

The second distinction we need to make here is between the general field of sustainable development and our more specific focus on “social sustainability,” because social sustainability is very different in kind from its counterparts in the triple bottom line: environmental and economic sustainability. When we speak of environmental sustainability, we know what it is that we wish to sustain, and our task is simply to manage existing ecosystems as best as we can. To a lesser extent this is true of economic sustainability as well: the task at hand here is to ensure that our economy is sufficient to sustain a decent standard of living. When we come to social sustainability, however, we are playing another game. As many communities

¹ The Bonn Declaration was the product of an International Experts Meeting on Technical and Vocational Education and Training held by UNEVOC in October 2004. A further meeting on TVET for Sustainable Development—Opportunities and Challenges was held in Ho Chi Minh City in June 2006.

can lack elements of viable structure and appropriate social and decision-making processes, social sustainability cannot simply refer to keeping what exists alive and flourishing, but must encourage necessary changes while also ensuring the continuity of communities and their values.

A sustainable society, as put forward in the volume, is one in which the demands of the economic sphere do not predominate over the needs of the social. In a sustainable society, all citizens would be encouraged to imagine and create futures in which their own means of economic and social security contributed to the sustainability of society as a whole. Thus, a “socially sustainable society” is a more useful term for describing the chapters in this volume than “sustainable development,” a term that can be—and often is—used to describe any development that is economically viable and will create employment, even if its implementation causes or perpetuates social and environmental problems.

While there is a wide variety of definitions for sustainability as a whole, and its environmental and economic branches, social sustainability is rarely defined on its own. We offer the following criteria not as “the final word” on social sustainability but simply as an initial point of reference.

Social sustainability refers to a positive and long-term condition within communities and a process within communities that can achieve and maintain that condition. The following features are indicators of the condition, and steps toward their establishment and implementation are aspects of the process:

- equity of access to key services (including health, education, transport, housing, and recreation)
- a system of cultural relations in which the positive aspects of disparate cultures are valued and protected and in which cultural integration is supported and promoted when it is desired by individuals and groups
- widespread political participation of citizens not only in electoral procedures but also in other areas of political activity, particularly at a local level
- mechanisms for a community to fulfill its own needs, where possible, through community action
- mechanisms for political advocacy to meet needs that cannot be met by community action
- mechanisms for a community to identify collectively its strengths and needs
- *equity between generations, meaning that future generations will not be disadvantaged by the activities of the current generation*
- *a system for transmitting awareness of social sustainability from one generation to the next*
- *a sense of community responsibility for maintaining that system of transmission.*

The last three points are in italics to emphasize that this truly is a definition of a sustainable society, as well as simply a “good” one. Sustainable is more than “good.” It is a powerful concept precisely because it focuses attention on the mid-to long-term future, and evokes consideration not only of how people’s ideas and actions in the present are going to contribute to the improvement of society, but also of *how we are going to ensure that these improved conditions are maintained.*

This second point is critical when we are thinking about developing new policies and practices in education. By adding sustainability to the equation, we are forced to consider issues of resources, community acceptance, and the transmission of our ideas to future generations. It is no longer enough to simply say “this action will have a positive result.” We must begin to consider how the result may be sustained.

This brings us to the third and final distinction in terminology: the distinction between “education for social sustainability” and “education for a sustainable workforce.” By “education for social sustainability,” we mean the development of teaching and learning styles that allow students to gain knowledge and skills that will enable them to become more socially and environmentally responsible citizens. By “education for a sustainable workforce,” we mean the positive effect that education (particularly technical and vocational education) has on bolstering employment levels and therefore creating greater financial security in a particular region. The first is about creating a better society; the second is about obtaining and maintaining employment.

Our volume is focused on these different relationships between the terms “education” and “social sustainability”—and particularly on any form of education that specifically seeks to forge links between them. While technical and vocational training is clearly vital the world over, it must be paired with other styles of education that foster social and environmental harmony. It is no longer enough to train people to do today’s jobs tomorrow and argue that this has contributed to sustainable development because the recipients have been given livelihood security. A true reorientation of the TVET system and the workforce will come about only when people are trained for the work of the future—work that not only provides security, but is also socially just and environmentally responsible.

To summarize the previous sections, AVE for social sustainability as a theoretical model refers to teaching and learning within adult and vocational education settings *that contributes to social sustainability*. This means that it

- actively contributes to the economic welfare of individuals by enhancing their career skills
- actively enhances the economic stability of communities by improving the skill pool
- actively enhances the social sustainability of communities by imparting knowledge and values associated with strong and open democratic societies
- is easily embedded into the fabric of communities and therefore is easily perpetuated
- contributes in some way to its own perpetuation into the future.

Much work remains to be done in collecting a body of case studies on AVE for social sustainability—or, to put it another way, examples of “education for social sustainability” within TVET and adult and community education settings. Many of the examples provided in this volume (outlined in the following part of this introduction) do not describe themselves as social sustainability projects. Some do not even refer to social sustainability overtly, but instead talk about creating safe spaces for personal therapy, spirituality development, peace education in post-conflict settings,

or the development of community health centers. This alerts us to the possibility that other suitable case studies might not be conveniently labeled as “education for social sustainability” either. We hope therefore that this volume, as well as providing an initial landmark, will also highlight the wide possibilities for further research. What other areas of activity might provide us with models for reorienting the TVET system? TVET alone cannot be the master key to sustainability; it requires lessons from adult and community education in order to understand how to use it.

The chapters that follow are clustered in four parts. The first, “Social sustainability perspectives in adult and vocational education,” provides an overview from a number of different angles. John Fien and David Wilson in Chapter 2, “Advancing social sustainability through vocational education and training,” apply a systems approach to thinking about the possible functions of technical and vocational education to foster a strong inclusive relationship between sustainable development as a scientific goal and a culturally directed search for ecological balance. Such concern for balance can promote equity between different countries, races, social classes, and genders but it requires appropriate curriculum that invites learners to reflect upon the values and principles that guide human actions. AVE has to focus on its responsibilities in general education, especially in relation to learning for work as part of citizenship and sustainability. Such programs can provide opportunities for learners to develop knowledge, skills, and values appropriate to helping create a fairer and less troubled world for all.

Peter Willis in Chapter 3, “An ecology for the fourth pillar: imaginal learning for social sustainability in AVE,” explores appropriate pedagogic ways to evoke and nourish social sustainability’s “fourth pillar,” namely “cultural life,” or more accurately “cultural vitality and life enthusiasm.” This life enthusiasm can be seen as a key factor in the health of a society and its ecology, which can be called its social ecology. The author focuses specifically on pedagogic ways in which AVE, in addition to logical and rational approaches, can evoke and foster social ecological learning imaginably.

A third perspective is provided by Roger Harris in Chapter 4, “The historical contribution of AVE to social sustainability in Australia.” The chapter examines the dominance of the economic over the social in the historical development of AVE in Australia. The author draws attention to the traditional person–job relationship that has underpinned many approaches to TVET: “the dominant ethos of productivism.” This affords precedence to economic interests, and thus subordinates the needs of individual learners to those of industry, privileging work and employability over noneconomic outcomes. As a consequence, AVE’s contribution to social sustainability, he argues, has been largely submerged and thus neglected, under-resourced, and to a large extent under-valued.

The final perspective in this section is provided in Chapter 5 by Aidan Davison, “The language of longing: rationality, morality, and experience in education for sustainability.” He argues that sustainability is a preoccupation that simultaneously engages powers of reason, belief, and feeling, mixing up any neat separation of descriptive and normative claims. It is also a preoccupation that unsettles a long-standing dualism of theory and practice on which so much in education has

been built. Current initiatives such as the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development promote the embedding of universal ethical principles of sustainability in curricula as the basis for creating more sustainable attitudes, values, and behaviors. The author contends that such approaches are, at best, only partially effective and, at worst, politically dangerous. The chapter concludes that, in its most fundamental and pre-institutional forms, education for sustainability is best understood as a capacity for critical and reflexive encounters with the reciprocity of sustenance that constitutes self and world.

From these broad-ranging overviews in the early chapters, the four chapters in Part Two, “Foundations for social sustainability in adult and vocational education,” focus on some of the educational bases for social sustainability. In Chapter 6, “Educating for a sustainable democracy,” Michael Newman points out that social sustainability cannot exist without justice and that resistant anger against injustice can be one of social sustainability’s more powerful tools. Those of us with the opportunity to help ourselves and others learn can examine the ways to help people express their anger and then respond to that anger. We can teach ourselves to think clearly, that is, to think critically and independently. We can teach ourselves to think imaginatively, that is, we can open ourselves to insight. We can teach ourselves to choose to act. And we can teach ourselves to act well. We can help ourselves and others become thinking, imaginative, active, moral beings in a socially sustainable way.

Patricia Cranton in Chapter 7, “Transformative learning and AVE for social sustainability,” explores approaches to transformative learning and its links to social sustainability. She shows first how the traditional “cognitive” approach enriched by critical reflection can lead to revised habits of mind about the self and the world. She then describes how “relational” theorists who favor “connected knowing” over “autonomous knowing” pay attention to the role of relationships in learning and understanding others’ points of view. She refers to the extra-rational dimensions of transformative learning linked to the power of so-called imaginal and emotional learning. Imaginal and emotional learning relates to a contemplative way of thinking and reflecting using the power of human imagination, which differs markedly from logical rationality. Social sustainability needs its own stories and story-tellers and these need to be discovered and celebrated.

In Chapter 8, “Education, religion, sustainability, and dialogue,” Chris Provis claims that sustainability is looming larger in regard to the social world as well as the natural environment. The author asks what role moral education can have in promoting dialogue among groups. The main point developed here is that dialogue takes different forms depending on what is at issue. Less well developed are processes for dialogue where differences between people tend to be cognitive differences rather than differences of preference or interest, but where issues do not centrally revolve around truth or falsity. This may be the sort of dialogue required where people are separated by religious differences. It may be approached as different “ways of seeing” or “ways of framing.” In education, we need to become clearer about this sort of dialogue.

In Chapter 9, “The role of religion in education for social sustainability,” Heather Foster examines the manner in which religions create symbolism, meaning, and

values through their adult educational and teaching practices. Through an understanding of the connection between religion and the creation of meaning and values within communities, strategies can be developed for workplace education which could incorporate education on religions, religious assumptions, and cultural differences. This could also lead to a more harmonious functioning of multicultural workplaces and global networks.

Part Three, "Creating spaces for social sustainability in adult and vocational education," contains four chapters that illustrate various spaces/domains for social sustainability. In Chapter 10, "Claiming sustainable space: families, communities, and learning, an auto/biographical perspective," Linden West moves the focus to smaller units. He seeks to link notions of learning, families, and intimate aspects of human relationship with issues of sustainability, both personal and social. This includes strengthening the social fabric and invigorating democratic processes with reference to marginalized communities. The chapter draws on studies of groups of parents and the professionals they had to deal with when they were involved in family support and learning programs in several sites in England. The author chronicles and illuminates the meaning and impact of particular interventions through parents' eyes, as well as those of workers on the ground, in what is deeply contested territory.

Kay Price in Chapter 11, "Health literacy and AVE for social sustainability," points out that, in a world characterized by consumerism, any education format focusing directly or indirectly on influencing the health status of a person constitutes a product that is premised on what is "sold." She clarifies a need for health educators to attend to how people think and make decisions about their health and for this to be integrated into their health literacy learning. This chapter addresses how AVE providers could develop appropriate programs in this area.

Rebecca Spence in Chapter 12, "Education in post-conflict environments: pathways to sustainable peace?," queries whether formal and non-formal education processes can act as catalysts for peace. Recognizing that education is one of the main tenets of any peace-building process, she suggests how educational policy and practice could and has been shaped so as to integrate key peace-building and reconciliation principles. Using examples from a variety of conflict-affected countries, the chapter explores the benefits and challenges associated with educating for longer term peace.

Chapter 13, "Social sustainability and activation strategies with unemployed young adults," is by Danny Wildemeersch and Susan Weil, who carried out research on education, training, and guidance of the young unemployed in Europe. It is concerned with revealing, understanding, and resisting hidden inequity that is emerging from government policies of self-help and personal responsibility. The authors are particularly critical of the current policy emphasis on "activation" strategies which emphasize self-responsibility and entrepreneurship. They point out that such policy tends to focus on and even blame the socially excluded rather than social exclusion itself. They then demonstrate how this type of activation discourse operates in a restrictive way. They finally sketch "reflexive activation" as an alternative that does not conceal policy ambivalences and complexities, but rather takes them as a point of departure for practices of AVE for social sustainability.