



## Eidos + Congress 2005

### Tent Transcripts

Tent 1: Panel A

10am May 18, 2005

GPO Box 3277  
Brisbane QLD 4001

P: +61 (7) 3875 5774  
F: +61 (7) 3875 5777  
E: [info@eidos.org.au](mailto:info@eidos.org.au)  
W: [www.eidos.org.au](http://www.eidos.org.au)

### Panelists

Mr Bill Brown, Executive Director, Training, Global Institute of Learning Development

Mr Garry Everett, Assistant Director, Queensland Catholic Education Commission

Dr Aniko Hatoss, Lecturer, Centre for Learning & Teaching University of Southern Queensland

Ms Angela Mulgrew, Social Planner & Imagineer

Dr Rob Simons, National Manager Strategic Research & Social Policy, The Smith Family

Facilitator: Professor Erica McWilliam, Assistant Dean, Research, Queensland University of Technology

### Transcript

PROFESSOR ERICA. McWILLIAM: Folks, welcome to all on day two of the EIDOS Launch. Just introducing myself, I'm Erica McWilliam, I'm from QUT's Faculty of Education and I have the good fortune of facilitating this early first event, in fact, the first of several of these groups that we have pulled together. I always used to say, "A facilitator was a teacher who doesn't have registration", because a lot of people call themselves "facilitators" but it is actually an exciting thing because I think what we have here in the last day and today is a genuine attempt to facilitate, in the very best sense, to do something we've not been able to do before. With all the best intentions this actually starts to look like a plan.

Could I just say to people, it is great to have you and what we have here is an assembly of people who've never come together before. Again, I made the point yesterday that you know things are cooking when people who've never been together before are sharing exciting ideas. That's a terrific thing for Queensland, it's a great thing for us here, and we look forward to your joining us again at the launch at 5 o'clock. That's really important for us to show all our stakeholders and to show government here that we're serious and that we have a fantastic group of researchers and a number of people who are very interested in the future of research, what it can do for community capacity building, what it can do for young people, what it can do for those of us who are ageing, and some of us in universities feel we're ageing more quickly than others, how we might be able to go forward and come to new futures and to take on new challenges.

So it's terrific right now to have people here on the panel who I think, again, have come together for the first time, I don't know how many of us know each other, but probably not too many. I've met a couple of people here but a very exciting and fizzy group and they've got a challenge to tell us about meeting the Premier or, indeed, John Howard, or anybody in the lift, if we have a temporary malfunction you've got a couple of minutes. I've heard that politicians say that, "You need to think about the space for giving a message, about the space between when people pick up the butter in a supermarket and when they pick up the bacon. That's about the space that you've got to get your message across".

Now, we know research takes longer than that, but we also understand that we have an attentional economy that we have to work in and that attentional economy is limited and we know that our job is to understand better, each other, and what our own attentional economies are so that we can map on to big pictures and do big and important things. All of these people here are going to respond to that great challenge, having been stuck in the lift with Peter Beattie or similar and we might just start and I'll just call on people as we go. Bill, you're on the top of the list, even though you're down the other end there.

ERICA MCWILLIAM: We weren't sure whether Bill was a doctor or not, apparently he gets doctored every now and then and then he's not, but Bill is the Executive Director of the Global

Institute for Learning and Development which is a social enterprise focussing on the development of sustainable learning within families, communities and workplaces, key theme for him, key thing for EIDOS. He's currently a member of the National Board of Learning Networks Australia, he's Chairman of the Queensland Consortium for Professional Learning and Education, which is a collaborative initiative of the key stake-holders in education in Queensland, established in 1993 under the auspices of the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration and he's stuck with Beattie and he's going to give us some sense of what that means. Thanks, Bill.

BILL BROWN: I'm not sure whether this works or whether I need it but can you hear? Okay, let's play that.

BILL BROWN: That fine? Okay. Well, really, Mr Beattie, we've spent the last 25 years in education being fair to students by treating them all the same. We've got to spend the next 25 years being fair to students by treating them all differently and that's one heck of a challenge. The key part of that, to me, is the teaching force and the use of the tacit knowledge of the teaching force as some of the research and evidence on which we base our way forward. We've got professional associations out there working in - on a voluntary basis with great professionalism and a whole lot of resources and support going to formal structured organisations.

So if we're serious about a networked organisation and making the most of partnering with our people who actually have to do the work, I really think that we ought to find ways of being equal partners with these professional associations and engage them in the learning journey because none of us know where we're going, really.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Okay. So can I just ask you then, what does that mean for national testing? Isn't that where we'd need to go, isn't that where we'd want to go? One test for all?

BILL BROWN: I'm sure that there is a place for national testing but really it has to be operated within a local context.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Okay.

BILL BROWN: So really, what we need to do is to say: Well, how does the context impact on those structures and frameworks? That's where we miss, we constantly put up a framework but don't deliver it down to the local context, so we've got to engage people at that local context and make the adjustments there. Happy with the framework, not happy with all people doing the same all the time.

ERICA McWILLIAM: No. Thanks, Bill, and what we'll do is perhaps come back to some of these. If there's a burning question though from somebody straight away that we think we can quickly deal with, we will, and we're going to open this up later. So if we're happy, we get that idea about difference and sameness and the work that needs to be done. Thanks, Bill. This is all short and sharp and we'll move straight on. Garry's just got a brief brief, which is that Garry is Assistant Director at the Queensland Catholic Education Commission. He assures me that's enough and we want to hear from Garry because he's coming down in the lift after we've heard from Bill. Thanks, Garry.

GARRY EVERETT: Thanks, Erica. Prime Minister and Premier, I've been listening to you talking about your concern about social change in Australia and it reminds me of a story of a minister in a Queensland government a little while ago who decided that he was going to change the whole of Queensland and after 12 months he realised he'd made no progress whatsoever. So he decided that instead he would change his own political party and six months later down the track he hadn't done that either and so he realised that the only thing he could change was himself. And the point of that story, John and Peter, is that we often think of social change as changing things out there, improvements in our social context such as better roads, more electricity networks, more dams, greater access to leisure opportunities, all of those indicators of social progress, as we call it.

But there is a complementary way of understanding social change which is a much more difficult and disturbing thing to confront and that's the question: What kind of people do we want to become? And that's a confronting question because in the end I have to ask it myself: What kind of a person do I want to be and in what kind of a world do I want to live? And if you think this is not relevant then, John, I'd have to ask you: How come you made all those decisions about the detention of refugees and the child overboard situation? What are we going to do about designer babies for therapeutic purposes, which has already been approved by the High Court in the UK? What are we doing about the reduction of debt repayment for third world countries who will never pay their way

and we keep demanding those kinds of debts? What will we think of marriages for gay and lesbian couples? And are super powers really terrorists?

These are the kinds of issues that confront us as individuals and as society and we don't have too many answers for them because they are much more complicated than working out whether we need a new dam or another power station. So my concern is that somewhere in the world we need to have a centre for global ethics because all the major problems now are global, they're not local, and we have, in fact, no framework to allow us to address ethics at a global level. I think if Queensland wanted to change from the "smart state" to the "wise state", this would be the way to go and in fact we would be better off known as the "wise state" rather than the "smart state" because of the connotations of being smart.

Also, John, if you want to put Australia firmly on the map rather than just as an ally to the super powers in war, you might think about creating the global centre here in Australia and particularly, in Queensland. That would give us a reputation that would be enviable throughout the world. So I'm simply advocating, John and Peter, that you start thinking about how we might develop a centre for global ethics here in Queensland.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Garry, you say that ethics is a personal matter and it's about changing yourself, why should governments then be involved at all?

GARRY EVERETT: It's interesting that governments are of the people, for the people, and in fact ethics is not just an individual concern. It is an individual concern but it's a social concern. We live in a society and we have to work together and live together and so we have to work out things together. So ethics ultimately ask that question: What kind of a people do we? Whether it's Queenslanders, Brisbanites, you know, western suburbs people. What kind of people do we want to be and how do we want to treat other people and why? So I think it's individual and collective, Erica.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Thanks, Garry. Let's move through to Dr Aniko Hartos, who's from the University of Central - of Southern Queensland, I keep getting that wrong. She's a lecturer in the Centre for Language Learning and Teaching at the University of Southern Queensland, involved in teacher training in the areas of language teaching, sociolinguistics, bilingual education. Chair of the Multicultural Staff Network at her university, convenor for the first cultural and linguistic diversity symposium in Toowoomba. In recognition of her advocacy to diversity issues she was recently nominated for the Queensland Multicultural Awards. Aniko?

ANIKO HATOSS: Thank you very much, Erica. Welcome all. My message to you this morning is very much related to the second speaker's idea because I'd like to speak up for linguistic and cultural diversity, which is a crucial issue. In a simple way I'd like to quote Feinstein who stated that, "What we should aim at and work for is involving our learners in all kinds of activities in the context of peace education so that they learn what to do in order to build up a peaceful world". I don't think I have to go in to details about the multicultural aspect of our society which is paired with the rapid internationalisation, globalisation. We are looking at bringing up global citizens who are challenged to be able to communicate in different inter-cultural contexts.

The idea is not new and, in fact, the universal declaration of human rights states that, "Education should be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human development" - sorry, "for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace". Now this is an enormous challenge for educators and I would like to propose just a very simple idea which is to address diversity issues through research.

We need to know, we need to demonstrate what are the cross-cultural attitudes at this stage in our multicultural society. Does education in fact promote positive cross-cultural attitudes? We need to see how Australia stands on an international scale. Recently in the European Union in 15 countries of the EU they conducted a large scale study and it showed, in fact, that most Europeans were racist in their attitudes and they were very negative about migration in general and they were negative about immigrants. Now, if you want to build an ideal future, a future where people live in peace, we really need to act now to address these issues. Thank you very much.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Thank you, Aniko. Aniko, what do you - would you say then to the proposition that you can't force feed people on social justice?

ANIKO HATOSS: Well, certainly education has got a major role and there is no guarantee that just through force feeding the positive cross-culturalists develop but that's the challenge for us, to develop pedagogues which will, in fact, lead to more positive cross-cultural attitudes and I'd like to emphasise the role of language education. Australia has not done a great deal in this area and, in fact, in comparison to other countries and continents Australia is lagging behind and our education system is producing or leaning towards mono-linguism and mono-culturalism rather than the well advertised multi-culturalism, as such. We need to work towards deep multi-culturalism not the multi-culturalism that is present in our society in various spheres, where multi-culturalism stops on the level of appreciation of international food. Thank you.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Thanks, Aniko. I think we - ready to hear from Angela. Angela Mulgrew is a community development and planning professional, located in Brisbane. She's an imagineer. What a wonderful idea, what a wonderful name and I'm sure we'll hear - I'd like to hear a little bit more about that. Perhaps it's something we can open up a little bit later on, Angela. Specialise in systematically being able to define, interpret and mobilise the needs and visions of herself and others into workable plans and innovative, sustained activities. It's almost sounding like we did this deliberately, didn't we, in this order? It sounds like we're about ready for you.

ANGELA MULGREW: Maybe.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Along with a range of consultancy work for community organisations, government and business in Manitoba and New South Wales, Angela's had two positions in local government in Queensland, a Social Planner, Caboolture Shire Council, and Manager, Community Planning, Toowoomba City Council. She's a Master of City Planning from Manitoba, a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Winnipeg, complemented with decades of experience as an active community member on issues of family cohesion, youth needs, fitness, ageing and safety. Angela, the Premier's going up again, it's time for you. Thanks.

ANGELA MULGREW: Thank you, and before I start I really feel I must acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land and thank them for this opportunity to meet here today and being a strong feminist, I also have to acknowledge that today is the 100th anniversary of women getting the vote and 40 years for Aboriginal people to get the vote in Queensland and there's celebrations going on in parliament, so that sort of shows you the slant, any way, where I'm coming from. Okay. I'm in the elevator and I'm just going to read a little bit of what I threw off, okay?

Hi, Peter, my name's Angie. Give a thought to our situation in this stuck lift being similar to the worse case scenario that politicians and planners have been worrying about for some decades. That is, communities and people coming to a standstill because of the unsustainability of high population growth and a lack of courageous, integrated, physical and social planning policy and development in south east Queensland. We hope this moment is not the end, a situation we've been dreading. Will we get the system moving in the right direction and get out of this alive?

To do so, I believe we need to make sure that our communicative actions make us talk and work together honestly and as efficiently and effectively as possible. Let us, politicians and community members, get real with each other and the options we have to get this lift moving. I'll press the emergency button, you call for help, and the rest of you folks, position yourselves through your weight or your fairness as spread evenly on the surface of the floor of this elevator, and then let's discuss together our preferred options for getting out of this situation.

I would go on, hopefully at that point, when I got his attention, to be able to talk about some of the things that - about communicative actions and the patterns of ideal speech and the kinds of things that make us credible and legitimate in this kind of work. In terms of trying to do community planning our legitimacy has gone by the wayside because the work of planners, for instance, who, of course, I think are totally brilliant, but by the time their work gets sterilised as it goes through the bureaucracy and by the time it gets politicised, it's nothing at all like it's been suggested. Or even using the research and all the valuable information that we have, with regards to the way that we could do things differently, there just isn't enough courage out there any more.

There's a strong concern from the Planning Institute of Australia with regards to the loss of planners out of the field of planning because of these whole issues over bureaucracy, over the whole fact that our work is not our work any more, our ideas are not ideas, things are not being presented in the right way. So there's a strong push for needing getting fairness and I'll just say to the Premier as well that ideas by themselves cannot produce a change of being, your effort must go in the right

direction and one must correspond with the other. And also, to possess ideas is to gather flowers but to think is to weave them together into a garland. I hope we can work together.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Thanks, Angela. You're asking for courage at a time when - and certainly since September 11, a time where we are being asked to be alert but not alarmed and we're in fact very much focussed on minimising risk. Why should somebody be courageous at a time when there's so much invested in risk minimisation?

ANGELA MULGREW: The concern is that if people are operating out of fear then they've lost their power and unless they can have the courage to do -again, we're talking about the fact of, what is this, learning for social change? Have we learned anything? Have we learned anything? The information that we have about what happened in the Second World War with regards to the Jews, what we know happened to Aboriginal people, we've had that information for decades and decades, nobody did anything with it and look at the situation that we have. We can't operate out of fear, we have to be courageous.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Right, thank you. Now, I think - would you mind just, Aniko, passing that microphone down? Rob, you might have to introduce yourself a little. Rob is actually the National Manager of Strategic Research and Social Policy for the Smith Family and I know that Roly is here with us too, also, as Queensland Manager for the Smith Family. So there is a lot of interest here from that organisation and Rob will join us. I think this is about the last trip that we're taking with Beattie at this point, so you've got the last chance and he's ready to escape, I would think, by now.

ROB SIMONS.: Okay. But I understand that John Howard just stepped into the lift also since

ERICA McWILLIAM: Away you go.

ROB SIMONS: those are the options that we were given when we were invited

MS McWILLIAM: Yes.

ROB SIMONS: and I appreciate that. Basically the big issue, I think from the perspective of the Smith Family as a community organisation that's trying to change the way we operate to achieve better societal outcomes, the big issue is how we bring about an educational systems reform for a 21st century knowledge economy. Because what we're finding out dealing with our demographic of over 22,000 learning for life students and for those of you who are not familiar, that would come - they would come - they and their families would come from the bottom two quintiles of the socioeconomic strata. What we're finding out is that unless the systems are changed for more diversity of access and availability of options, learning options, they're not going to have the learning opportunities they need to be able to participate in a 21st century knowledge economy.

What we're also discovering through our research is that learners of all ages need greater access to and availability of diverse learning pathways, particularly when we talk about school to work transitions, and too many aspects of our present systems are ill-suited, we're not sufficiently responsive to contemporary student and learning needs. For example, we had a major report that came out three years ago that clarified that there is still this residual mind-set in a lot of different sectors of education where the primary focus is on the level of achievement attained and not a comparable amount of emphasis placed upon the interest/motivation of the student to continue to be able to learn. Hopefully changes are occurring in that order but we haven't seen them happen fast enough and we think one of the reason is because the systems don't reinforce that strongly enough.

Hence, we think educational learning systems need to pick up learning needs across the life cycle that are not presently being met either consistently or sufficiently and our systems we think need to incorporate the pre-school years. That home to school transition is absolutely critical for school readiness and where people move once they are within the system. The home to school transition and other transitions from school to work, further education and also from work and unemployment back to education and more skilled work, are all issues that have not been taken seriously by educational systems. There are programs out there to address them but they haven't been brought together with - for systemic impact.

Learners of all areas need greater access to and availability of diverse learning pathways and research in Australia and overseas, as we are learning, strongly confirms the importance of the early years as well as the need for better systems to equip people to meet the complex challenges in the school to work transition, as well as the diverse transitions that continue to confront us, all of us, throughout

our working lives. Unfortunately, too many aspects of our present educational systems are not sufficiently responsive to such an expanded brief. That's the big issue, educational systems change. The big idea, enhanced learning opportunities across the life cycle. Very simple but how do we get there?

There are two associated challenges, we think, to bring about such a reform. On the conceptual level, the challenge is how can we make a motherhood statement like "life long learning" a valued and a workable concept within diverse communities? What we're coming to discover in our work with communities is that we have to ensure that learning is perceived across the board less as a luxury than a tool for survival for everyone. We're also encountering, particularly within our demographic, is people have incredible resistance to present experiences of formal learning, so there are lots of psychological barriers to overcome, and we're also finding out that it's important to engage both adults and children in a whole of community approach.

Indeed, with the Smith Family, it's so obvious to us that if we don't engage parents in our programs as well as the kids and work to ensure that they can participate fully in education, we're throwing our money away. It's just not achieving the outcomes, we need a dual generational approach. On the practical level, the challenges for implementing a good life long agenda or strategy nationally, we think that the challenge is to provide - be able to engage individuals and communities in practical, life long learning initiatives, and this is the key, not only in formal but in informal contexts and to be able to connect, network and link the formal and the informal contexts.

Neither of these challenges, the practical one of moving life long learning from a motherhood concept to a valued and - implement a valued and practical concept, as well as the challenge to connect the formal and informal learning context, will be met without, we think, a long term commitment to reshaping our educational and learning systems which means a lot more collaboration across the board between states and the Commonwealth to meet the diversity and the pace of learning needs for the 21st century.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Thanks, Rob. Could I just ask, in relation to parents and children, I mean we're actually being told that a new systemic move, that is to bring in league tables that show that the performance of our schools, for example, is something that parents want so they can be assured about the extent to which the school is contributing to the learning of their particular child.

ROB SIMONS: Yes.

ERICA McWILLIAM: In terms of systemic reform, how would you understand that? Is that a plus to have public league tables or is that a move in the wrong direction?

ROB SIMONS: Well, I think like most issues that are politically sensitive, you can make a case on either side. I would think any initiative that has the capacity to engage parents, as well as the communities in which the schools are located, more fully on what is going on in the school, should be investigated with that purpose in mind. I think it's also unfortunate if a focus on league tables is dismissed as simply placing certain schools at a disadvantaged position. Of course, it does depend on how you present the results of what you're doing there.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Mm.

ROB SIMONS: But there surely must be ways of engaging other stake-holders who have an interest in the outcomes of the educational system, besides the parents, into what is going on in the schools.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Mm.

ROB SIMONS: And, indeed, another factor that we're picking up from our research is that some schools that are having difficulties are not simply having those because of lack of financial resources, although that is an issue, but we're also - we have placed so many expectations, developmental as well as learning, on teachers and schools that there's no way that that system in its present format could respond to all the needs and unless a broader range of stake-holders are engaged, that's not going to happen.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Mm.

ROB SIMONS: So that's my long way of answering your short questions.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Yes, we got that. What we'll do now is open up it for questions and comments from people. You know, we're just reminding people, Bill, remember, was talking about treat them differently, not all the same. Garry talked a lot about the Centre for Global Ethics and what - and just giving us a snapshot of why that might actually be a necessary impeditive. We've heard from Aniko in relation to diversity and looking again at that matter in relation to learning. We've heard from Angela in relation to unsustainability and the necessity for communicative action and what that might actually need from us. We've also heard then from Rob in relation to educational systems reform and related issues that are to do with both formal and informal learning.

So what we have is, I think, an interesting sort of package and we might just want to come at that, open to people to take that where we want to take it. Yes, just - thanks, and then you, Alan.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Sorry.

PANEL MEMBER: there's a need to treat individuals as individuals, but in a social context. And the second theme which has emerged is the importance of early childhood school to - family to school transition, and so on. Now, Bill, you started off very briefly by saying we needed to treat students differently, effectively as individuals with different situations, different aptitudes, and the lady in the middle, whose name I've forgotten, said

ERICA McWILLIAM: Angela.

PANEL MEMBER: Angela, that we need to look at how we translate engineers through - ideas through effort into practise. So could you expand on how you would go about bringing about a system in which students could be treated as individuals?

PANEL MEMBER: I think I'd pick up the issue of parents and the relationship between parents and the local contextual decisions that have got to be made about: What do we want kids to be able to do when they leave here? How - is that a shared vision or is it somebody in Canberra who's decided that there are five or six things we're going to measure. So that's the first thing. I don't think if you ask parents in a local context, that they always agree with what we're going to measure nationally. Okay? So there's no commitment in that school to whatever we're putting our resources in. So to me, the very beginning is at a school/local context level, to say: What are we trying to do here? Okay. I don't believe a lot of people have that conversation.

I think the next thing is that in actual fact, if you can have more than three in that bucket you can't deliver it. So what I see schools as trying to do is 5000 things, all poorly. It might but they're trying to do three things, ethical students, students who can live, have a social responsibility, and something else. Now, they're far too broad and waffly but you can actually do that at a local context, I believe, and be clear about what you're trying to do. I think that cuts away at a lot of clutter. I'm interested in a system that is to me - a system level change has really got to come to grips with what its role is compared with what I do on the ground, really, with the parents and kids that I have here in a school setting.

So to me it is partnerships at the local level. Okay, it can be scaffolded nationally but really, unless you and I have some meaning about what we want this grade 12 student to be able to do and feel and understand and know and believe by the time they've left, and let's face it, some of our schools have preschool to year 12, so they're there for a long time, okay, so there is a massive impact there. I don't believe the system actually impacts on that too much. I really believe it's the local context and the partnerships between the parents, the teachers and the kids. And I guess what I was saying is, average age of teachers, 40-something, some of them are brilliant and they do know stuff, some of them aren't. Okay. And the way we allocate our engagement processes, it all goes to top end, system bureaucrats.

Let's get back to the real world and if you want to change a student's learning, you change the interaction between the parents, the students and the teacher. It's pretty simple but, first of all, it's got to be simple enough to say what we're trying to do and then get rid of the clutter. And I don't believe that can be done at a system level, I really don't. I really, really believe it's only going to be done at a local contextual level, with change support requirements from a set up system.

PANEL MEMBER: Yes, Bill, could I just - I just want to ask you a question about the systems component in it. I mean, I hear what you're saying but if you don't have a systems change like, for example, the present system assumption which is that students are grouped together on the basis of content/curriculum groupings.

BILL BROWN: Absolutely.

PANEL MEMBER: Unless you change that some way to accommodate the differences and where people enter and the entrance level, how is what you're talking about going to happen?

BILL BROWN: Mm.

PANEL MEMBER: I'm not saying that what you're saying - I'm basically saying you have to have system changes to come about to have what you're suggesting happen, I suspect?

BILL BROWN: I don't think anybody's actually challenged that. I reckon there are some schools around who decided that they don't want to group kids the way somebody's told them.

PANEL MEMBER: Mm.

PANEL MEMBER: Okay. They've actually done that within a system and ignored a system.

PANEL MEMBER: Yes, but that's also ignoring the issue because the issue is ultimately the systems - I'm not saying that

PANEL MEMBER: Yes.

PANEL MEMBER: Yes, people do that because they have no other choice. But in effect then, you have a system that's not exactly supporting them and I mean it's great that they've done it, and I'm not saying that it all has to be - but there's a question here of opening up systems so that it can become more responsive.

PANEL MEMBER: I think - yes, I think we're agreeing, really, the system has to change its role. Instead of telling people and doing for or doing to, we're going to have to do with. I mean, I think that's as simple as that, to me, so it's - we're pretty good at doing to and doing for and both of those are useless, to me. Do with, we might get somewhere.

PANEL MEMBER.: Can I just make a comment on Rob's question? There is a sense in which systems exist for a particular purpose, which some cynics might say is to maintain the system. So to get the system change, Rob, you know, is quite difficult because the system often is not prepared to examine the system. It'll examine everything else but it won't examine the system.

PANEL MEMBER: Mm.

PANEL MEMBER: And at the basis of the system is a set of beliefs or values which probably have never been thoroughly explored and until you really get down to that depth, and that comes in - down to even individual directors or director generals or politicians, ministers, whoever, trying to be honest about what they really believe about the educative process and how to change things. But my experience is that large systems tend to maintain the system and, in a sense, it looks like change but in the end, it's a system maintaining the system and convincing us that this is the only way to do it. And I think in the promotional material for today, Bruce Muirhead commented on a statement by Andy Hargraves, a visiting scholar here, who said, "Education really hasn't changed much in schools in the last 100 years".

Now, some people would jump up and down straight away and say: That's a load of rubbish. But at a very broad level I think Andy Hargraves is probably right

PANEL MEMBER: Yes.

PANEL MEMBER: that we still send kids to school in 9 to 3 kind of blocks, we have a bit of variation at the top end for kids who go out and do TAFE and apprenticeships and that, but the basic model of education has not really changed dramatically in 100 years. And I think what Rob is saying is: It's got to change; Bill is saying: It's got to change; it's how do we change a system that really, in a sense, wants to maintain the system as it is?

ERICA McWILLIAM: It could be said and it has been said that schools are actually still for custody, that's what they're really for and that learning's really quite a bizarre idea, that in fact they've always been for custody.

And so child protection is the major role so that issues about keeping drugs out of school is going to become much more important than the quality of learning and taking responsibility for ethical development and global citizenry and that we really - it's quite odd to confuse schooling with something else. I mean, it's just interesting, I think, for us to consider that possibility rather than presuming that schools are about learning. And maybe, if we can unhook the risk minimisation that schools are on about, as custody - as custodians, as in loco parentis, from the risk and experimentation and excitement that learning is about, as Rob said, in informal settings as well as formal, we have a double vision.

Minimise risk, don't take a chance, protect the child, bubble wrap them, and we also have the other vision, experiment, excitement, fabulous things, and we hand it to teachers and say: Do both. That becomes enormously problematic and I think we're at a - in a real bind in relation to that, if we want to talk about exciting schools and learning. I don't blame teachers, if they feel that they can't take the kids across the road to the art gallery in case something happens. I know it's true, I've seen it, I mean, and this is where we have to start to work out where do we want to go with that.

ANGELA MULGREW: Can I just respond to that because, again from my perspective any way, this whole idea too of obviously where there's a need to meet curriculum, but there has been some excellent programs that have been brought forward like, for instance, Pathways to Peace or Peacebuilders, also the Virtues Project. These are the kinds of things that engage people and, as Dr .....

ERICA McWILLIAM: Garry.

GARRY EVERETT: was saying, you know, it's not just students, parents and teachers, it's the community as well. And in the Pathways to Peace programs and in the Virtues programs and things like this, you're talking about community engagement, you're talking about bringing all the people together and you're talking about those kind of partnerships. So the very kinds of things that you're saying in terms of the fear of taking children and, you know, we know about all these crazy liability issues and all the rest of it, but it's about breaking down those barriers and bringing people together to talk together and to find sort of their modus operandi that will work within their sort of situation. And if you don't know about the Pathways for Peace program, that's about really developing within the school culture a change in the way that the teachers act, in terms of the way they talk and treat the children and the way the teacher - children treat each other within the school and the balance in to the community, as well.

Where we're talking about respectful communication, we're talking about encouraging, preventing bullying, lack of self-esteem, all those kind of things. So there's a lot of things like that that prepare an atmosphere and, again, I'm about community action but I'm also about communicative actions and what we do and what we say. All right? Thank you.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Alan?

PANEL MEMBER: Thanks. I hope I can remember what my question was after all that discussion. I was particularly triggered off, Garry, by your comment about the request for a Centre for Global Ethics, in talking about a wise state. I'm just thinking it probably sounds like an ethical state. On the other hand, Aniko was talking about sort of peace education and linguistic and cultural diversity, so here we've got, it seems to me, attention, and also Angela talking about community planning, and I'm just wondering which community actually does the planning. So I'm going to try and tie some things together which - I've got questions which just - you know, I'm just curious about. And I suppose coming back to Garry, I suppose if we're going to talk about ethics, we're going to talk about community. Whose ethics, whose community and how we might find, through research, what these would look like?

Because I'm caught between the ethics of, say, Robert Mugabe, on one hand, and Nelson Mandela, on the other, and George Bush and Vladimir Putin, on the other, and even some of the tensions which are within our own society because of the budget, which the arguments are over in the last few weeks. Whether we're really interested in a technological society and our hip pocket nerve or whether we're interested in ethics, real community and real peace. Maybe it's a conglomeration which has come out of my head, but I'm just wondering what research and education might look like, which might help us make some sense of those.

GARRY EVERETT: Thanks for the question, I'll make a little response to begin with, I suppose. I'm not sure it's always either/or, technological or ethical in society. I mean, I think it's a both and kind of society that we want. One of the great challenges that we have in the contemporary world, of course, is that Australia is the most successful multi-cultural experiment in history. And we have to acknowledge that not only are we multi-cultural but we're multi-faith. So once upon a time the dominant faith in this country may well have been christianity, it may still be, but there are a lot of other faiths in our multi-cultural society.

And each one of those faiths has an ethical framework and like christianity may never have explored buddhism and buddhism may never have explored something else and so we go on, assuming that somehow we can live in a multi-cultural, multi-faith world, not only in Australia but in the whole world, and yet have a ethical framework that comes out of one tradition only, white western, democratic thinking, you know? It served its purpose for a time but the issues that face us now are far bigger than most of those frameworks are able to accommodate and that's -my feeling is that the time has come for somebody, somewhere in the world, and why not us, to start to think about a centre that would address global ethics because we all face now the same kind of problem. And our own way of dealing with it here in Australia is rather inwardly looking.

So we can come up with an idea about detaining refugees, which other parts of the world judge us and say that was harsh and unreasonable and unfair and unjust and is not even ethical, right, but it sits within our ethic all right, maybe, but it doesn't sit within the global ethic. And I think we've got to acknowledge that there are so many groups, you talked about Mugabe and Nelson Mandela, yes, that's a South African experience. They've got to somehow come to grips with all that and somewhere down the line the things that unite us ought to be more important than the things that divide us, but at present I think it's the other way around. So I will leave my comments there for the moment.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Rob?

ROB SIMONS: Yes, if I could just pick up on that because I think the point that and what I'm taking from Garry's comments is that unless we address the issue that he's talking about, that is going to put brakes on the extent of the research we can do and brakes on the extent to which we will allow the research to suggest new forms of practise. For example, let's just stay with educational research for the moment. If we're going to look at ways of improving educational learning developmental outcomes, we can go on for quite some time and harness enough agreement among a diverse group of people but at some point we're going to come to a values' impasse. I mean, we're already seeing that in different - and that the potential of that values' impasse is to segment an otherwise coherent society.

So I guess what I'm saying is that the research that we do for those educational outcomes, I suspect is qualitatively different in terms of how we respond to the values' research, if I'm hearing what Garry is saying, and how we bring those two into dialogue is an immense challenge. But to pick up on Garry's point, unless that wave of research happens we're going to continually constrict the extent to which we can progress the educational research.

ERICA McWILLIAM: I'm just - we

PANEL MEMBER: ..... one specific example. Ken Willshire was here last year, Ken's currently working for UNESCO, used to be at the University of Queensland, and he was talking about changing the curriculum in schools and he said the biggest the world faces at present, in his mind, is terrorism. So how does a school curriculum address terrorism? And his answer, I'm sure Aniko will be pleased to hear, is to develop a syllabus in peace because what creates terrorism is fear, and fear comes when we don't have peaceful processes and peaceful products. So like, kind of researching backwards from a contemporary social problem, he can come to an educational kind of decision and rationale.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Mm.

PANEL MEMBER: Now, what UNESCO can do about that and how we'll all act in solidarity to bring some of those ideas around, I'm not too sure, but I think the notion that you can take a social problem and address it through an educational change process is quite valid.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Mm.

PANEL MEMBER: But Angie has said to us, "The one thing that we lack is courage".

ERICA McWILLIAM: Mm.

GARRY EVERETT: And often times we find that the great ideas eventually are abandoned because we don't have the courage, we're afraid that we might have to be different and we don't understand the difference, we're unfamiliar with difference, we're uncomfortable with it, so we rather ignore it and just do more of the same.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Thanks, Garry. Quick comment or question from the back?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: ..... alarmed when people make claims that we're the greatest multi-cultural society in history. That simply is not true and, indeed, in our own society there are huge flaws. So that is one point. If you're making claims, please let's substantiate. The second point is about ethics. Why don't we go the whole hog and deal with philosophy, that forgotten discipline that contributes so much to our society that it has become a subset of technology and economics? The third point is, I get very concerned indeed about such cuddly words as "peace and harmony". What if we want to have a risk taking learning process? We can't have peace. We have to have contention and we have to have conflict and it's defining those things, but please don't let us smother with terms such as "peace". Thank you.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Angie and Aniko might want to make a quick response? Angie, have you got a quick response?

ANGELA MULGREW: Well, yes, definitely. This is the whole thing is, that we're not talking about everything being peace and, you know, flowers and wonderful, we're talking about engaging people so that there's discussion so that we can be informed so people can develop the frameworks and develop their arguments and develop their minds, so that they can participate in discussions. Robert Theobald was in this country a number of years, he's since passed away. He was saying, "There's more than enough information in the world, let's connect people, let's get that information happening".

We had the great Australian chinwag back in '97, I think it was, and this is the whole thing, is about connecting people, discussions. I had the great privilege in Ireland one time at the Grand Clee Reconciliation Centre, sitting with Ralph Myers who negotiated the end of apartheid in South Africa and he told us at that event that when he finally realised that his black counterpart wanted exactly what he wanted, which was peace in his community, a future for his children, he was able to walk across the hall into the hotel and sit down and start to negotiate, properly negotiate, the end of apartheid because they had the courage to sit down and say, "This is what we want and that's what we're going to get".

ERICA McWILLIAM: Thanks, Angie. Anything further, Aniko, or

ANIKO HATOSS: Yes, I just want to clarify the point I made about building a peaceful world. I think it would be highly pretentious to think that this can be achieved in a very harmonious and peaceful way if we understand peace in this context, but we all know that the first step in developing positive cross-culture attitude starts from learning about ourselves and positioning ourselves, in contrast with others. And there is a necessity to have this friction and, in educational context, our students are exposed to these challenges but I think it's absolutely essential that pedagogues are developed to look at these frictions and to guide them in the right way in order to develop those positive cross-cultural attitudes.

The second point I like to make is we need to get away from this idea that diversity and unity are two opposites. I think it would be dangerous to think that diversity is something completely against unity. I'd like to point out that I agree with Garry's point that in fact our unity is in our diversity. And the third point I'd like to make is we really have to move away from this rigid framework of looking at the local and the global as two extreme opposites. We need to capture the interaction between two ends, the local and the global. We need to globalise the local and localise the global, so I think this is a great challenge for us. Thank you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can I just say, I'd like to support my colleague from Griffith University in his call for the teaching of philosophy and ultimately, once you get into the ethical area you must get into philosophy, so I don't have any problems with that. And - but I'd like to make one final comment about peace. The philosopher Kierkegaard once said, "It's no good bringing people to the truth if by -

if the way you get them there leaves them outside it". In other words, we could finish up with a sort of a peaceful world where we've bombed most of our enemies out of existence, but there are other ways of getting a peaceful world.

ERICA McWILLIAM: Thank you. I'm just going to wrap up now. What I think a lot of us are looking at is what it means to take responsibility, as distinct from accountability, I'm going to say. It seems to me a lot of the things that I'm hearing at the moment, our social and educational institutions are being asked to be accountability but I think what we have is a misrecognition of accountability as covering all responsibility. Principals, for example, are accountable for the protection of children or accountable for the student performance. They are not accountable for whether or not the issues around a tsunami are discussed and whether kids actually are brought into that. That is a responsibility of a school but it is not an accountability.

I think what we are all talking about here is refusing to accept that responsibilities are covered when accountabilities are covered, like league tables, and so on. It seems to me that the political agenda is to insist that there is more to responsibility than mere accountability and the quantification of responsibility. So, you know, in all that we're doing here, there's a space that I think needs to be reclaimed and I think we need to work to make that distinction rather than having governments understand that if we're accountable we've also been responsible.

Thank you to the panel members, I'm sure you'll agree it's been a very useful forum. Another group will be starting here at 11, so we'll let them come through, thank you.