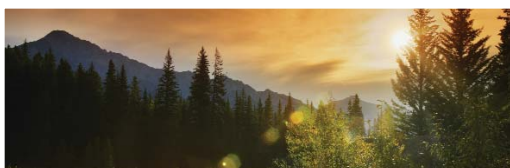


Changing Landscapes

for Learning Our Way
to the Next Alberta



Shaping a Preferred Future
2010-2030



The Alberta
Teachers' Association

Cambridge Strategies Inc.

Join the public dialogue at Learningourway.ca

Creating new narratives for Alberta

As we move further into the province's second century, Albertans find themselves blazing a trail into the unknown – with unprecedented opportunities and challenges. The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) and Cambridge Strategies invites you to be part of the exploration that awaits Alberta's next generation as our province defines its place in the world.

Changing Landscapes for Learning Our Way to the Next Alberta is part of a long-term commitment to engage Albertans in a thought-provoking conversation about our shared future. This publication identifies seven trends impacting four domains of our lives here in Alberta: individuals, relationships and community; work and the economy; governance and politics; and emerging technologies.

How did this publication come about? Beginning in 2004, the Alberta Teachers' Association hosted a series of public lectures and invitational symposia focused on the role that public education will play in co-creating the future of Alberta. At different times, these public dialogues have been co-sponsored by various community partners: the Creating Tomorrow Foundation, the Faculty of Education of the University of Calgary, Cambridge Strategies, Literacy Alberta and the Calgary and Edmonton Public and Catholic Locals of the ATA. With many of the same issues and concerns connected to the Association's *Real Learning First* initiative, these conversations were infused in public meetings held in a number of communities including Red Deer, Peace River, and Okotoks. (For more information see reallearningfirst.ca).

The Alberta and Albertans we want to become – through public leadership in learning

A cornerstone of the Alberta we want to create is a strong public education system that develops the full potential of all children to learn, to care about one another and to contribute to the collective prosperity of Albertans in an inclusive and democratic society.

– Preamble to the ATA's Preferred Futures

The objective of the ATA is to see public education play a significant role in contributing to our shared future. In coming to know the perspectives of some of the leading experts who have been part of exploring Alberta's next twenty years, you are also encouraged to participate in this ongoing conversation.

A shared hope for Alberta

It is not about Alberta being the best place in the world; it is about being the best place for the world.

– Ken Low, Action Studies.com



For more background information about this publication and the work of the partnership with Cambridge Strategies visit learningourway.ca or contact J-C Couture (jc.couture@ata.ab.ca) or telephone 1-800-232-7208.

Learning Our Way to the Next Alberta

Since 2004 when these public dialogues began, over 2,500 forward-thinking Albertans have contributed their ideas and passion to this ongoing public dialogue. The most recent event, the *Learning Our Way to the Next Alberta* public lectures and symposium held in Calgary (May 31) and Edmonton (June 1-2) revealed some issues, or perhaps more positively, creative tensions to be engaged with. One tension was the question of where to begin, with education and building social capital or with the economy with skills upgrading, training and improving productivity. Resilience was the word some used; perhaps contrasting with brittleness in the way we design our economies and our social systems. Keynote speakers observed, there is little doubt that with the growth of economies such as China and India, “unless Albertans get their act together, these emerging economies will eat your lunch.”

Words like productivity, innovation, competitiveness, efficiency, wealth and well-being were used and woven into the discussions. What do and could these words mean in the ordinary lived lives of Albertans? Finally, what are the ideals that nestle close to the hearts of Albertans and how would we like to see these expressed in our shared future?

Albertans need to look at the current and adaptive essential skills needed for a flourishing 21st century society and economy. Albertans need to explore the broad requirements for us all to be successful in a vibrant civil society in the midst of an emerging world order of a highly competitive and interdependent globalized economy.



Co-creating the Next Alberta

Over the past years, three questions have come to dominate the conversations about the co-creation of the Next Alberta:

- **What is the Alberta that the world needs to see?**
- **What kind of Albertans do we need to become to get us there?**
- **How will leadership in learning help us become our best selves?**

As you review this document, including the seven trends outlined on the reverse side, it is important to consider these three questions neither as problems to be solved nor challenges to be feared. Rather, they are the points of departure for an engaging dialogue we need to share in as Albertans poised on the cusp of becoming leaders in learning and innovation in the world.

The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destinations.

– John Scharr

Individuals, relationships and community

Who might Albertans become?

In the midst of Alberta's tremendous growth and resource bubble economy, what will the next twenty years hold for human relationships, identity and community? By 2050, our planet's population will increase by three billion, with three-quarters living in industrialized societies like our own. If the entire world lived as Albertans do today, we would need three planets – by 2050 we will need six. While one in five Canadians will have a psychological disorder in their lifetime, according to Mental Health Canada, Alberta has one of Canada's highest rates of adult depression at 5% of the population. In 2007, approximately 44,400 school-aged children in the province received doctor's care for mental health issues, with half the cases of depression beginning by 14 years of age.



Mark Anielski invites Albertans to consider their current pre-occupation with material growth. Moving away from economies of production and exploitation toward building an economy of well-being and community is an option through new metrics of sustainable development such as the *General Well-Being Impact Assessment*. Reinforcing Mark's study of Alberta's

economy, is the fact that the income gap between the top 20% and bottom 20% of Albertans is the fastest growing in the country. One symptom is the ironic distinction that can be made between GDP heroes (drivers and big spenders) and GDP villains (walkers, recyclers and reusers).

Gwynne Dyer invites Albertans to "decide what you want to be when you grow up" – a challenge all western countries face. Climate change is the "elephant in the room," and Alberta will suffer a net loss of arable land. The energy and agriculture games will be very different. There will be a global exit from carbon; this means getting out of fossil fuels. On the global economic scene, he warns "the West will not dictate the terms anymore." The good news? "Alberta, unlike many other jurisdictions, because of its resources and world-class public institutions like your public education system, has choices. Now is the time to make them."



Don't regard spending on culture as an indulgence – it is a critical investment in the future of Alberta and will produce profound and poignant social and economic returns.

– Gwynne Dyer, commentator and author of *Climate Wars*

Knowing and being ourselves – in an Alberta that is the best for the world

This recent *Learning our Way to the Next Alberta* public dialogues placed a great deal of faith in and emphasis on learning together as we co-create our future. Scholar and writer Iain McGilchrist distinguishes between knowing as the assembly of facts, and knowing as an encounter with something "other" where "knowledge derives from a coming together of one being or thing as a whole with another." In the spirit of the second kind of knowing, participants pondered the importance of relationship and the possibilities of "gentle action", as described by David Peat, where we look for possibility together and move forward in small steps, creating new understandings and learning about the whole and our context as we go.

An education, too, is where we decide whether we love our children enough not to expel them from our world and leave them to their own devices, nor to strike from their hands their choice of undertaking something new, something unforeseen by us, but to prepare them in advance for the task of renewing a common world.

– Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future*, (1961).



Work and the economy

The promises of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity

The nature of work and the nature of our economies are changing as is the ideal that an individual's identity is wrapped around a life-long career. It is already the case that the top ten jobs in 2010 did not exist in 2004 and it is more than likely that the top ten jobs in 2025 do not exist now. The idea that we are preparing young people for a stable career is a thing of the past. Most young people will hold between 25 and 35 positions in their working life.

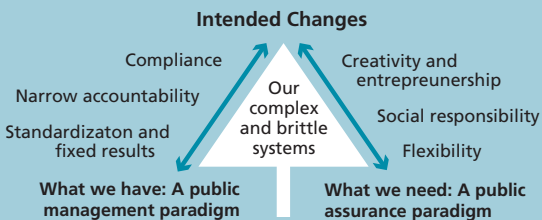
Some key indicators of key shifts are:

- As baby boomers retire, more work falls on fewer shoulders – new ways of working will need to be found to maintain economic productivity and wellbeing
- An increasing reliance on immigration to fill the gaps left by the retiring boomers
- New demands for work-life integration and how we might practically manage conflicting expectations - rather than talk about balance, what is needed is action
- A slow down in growth and expectations of growth following the global recession
- A preoccupation with debt reduction both by governments, firms and individuals
- Globalization means that all economies are inter-related – what happens elsewhere vitally affects Canada and Alberta



Pasi Sahlberg, formerly with the World Bank and the European Training Foundation and now Director General of CIMO in Finland, points out the implications of these shifts in the nature of work for our thinking about learning, whether at school, college, university or life-long learning. To cope with the new economic order and the changing nature of work, individuals need to be

flexible, creative, entrepreneurial and risk taking yet many of educational institutions are locked into a teaching-learning model that encourages standardization, high outcome accountability and a search for fixed results. To build resilience, we need to transition from one model (the traditional learning model) to a new model (one that fosters individualized learning and flexibility) while keeping the best of the old.



Sustaining a culture of ingenuity and innovation in the next Alberta

What Albertans need to decide is what kind of province we wish to build for 2040 and work back from there to ask "what should we do now to make our preferred future possible?"



What's clear is that it can't be business as usual. **Stephen Murgatroyd**, PhD, who has worked extensively on futurist studies for Alberta, suggests that "we need to double the number of people holding degrees in firms, rethink how we deliver and support learning for all our citizens and create incentives for life-long learning, challenge our firms to work together to create more

innovation opportunities, build a strong Heritage Trust Fund to support the new institutions we need and the new innovations we need to see and enable our institutions to become next generation institutions which we can showcase to the world"

The future isn't what it used to be.

– Yogi Berra

Governance, governments and politics

Responsibility precedes and supersedes accountability. Accountability is the remainder that is left when this responsibility has been subtracted.

– Andy Hargreaves, co-author with Dennis Shirley, *The Fourth Way*

Increasingly authoritative does not flow from authority

The Alberta landscape of governance, politics and citizenship is changing in many ways that are integrating and fragmenting our society at the same time.

All political institutions involved in designing and delivering public policy are having trouble adapting to the horizontal and networked reality of internet communications and community engagement. Albertans are feeling frustrated with the old hierarchical top-down command and control models and are moving towards a new type of activist and engaged 'Netizen' using the social media model of information sharing.

Beyond a politics of division

People are coming to the realization that the old adversarial democracy model is broken. There is a growing expectation to see a return to a values based civil society. Recent research by Cambridge Strategies Inc. shows what values Albertans want to see used to guide and drive politicians and policy makers. The top drivers were accountability, integrity, fiscal responsibility, honesty, and transparency.

Leadership for the next Alberta is going to need different and more skills than those of the past as Alberta becomes the largest energy superpower on the planet in the face of climate change and continuing global conflicts.

Citizens, community and democracy – creating and sustaining what matters

With only 41% of eligible voters in Alberta turning out in the 2008 provincial election and after almost four decades of the same party in power, a number of Albertans are imagining ways to renew political engagement in the province. **David King**, former education minister in the Lougheed government, is one of these progressive voices that sees the importance of moving beyond traditional partisan politics.

My idea of success is that the next election will not be characterized as a competition among parties that want the "fruits of victory": it will be characterized as a collaboration among Albertans who are clear about what they want and are determined to choose the servants most likely to achieve success.

– David King

Leadership is perhaps our scarcest technology

In Alberta, we need leaders who are centrifugal not centripetal thinkers. Centrifugal thinkers can be recognized by their rejection of boosterism, comparisons, ranking and ordering. They are leaders who display a deep kindness. They are the sorts of leaders we need for a province like ours: three million people on the edge of the world. Without leaders who find creative ways to link public policy needs with private business, the arts and education, community will not be possible. At the end of the day, Albertans must recognize that learning and innovation are the most important qualities for building the kind of Alberta we want.

– Colin Jackson, former President, EPCOR Centre for the Performing Arts, Calgary



The democratic paradox created by emerging technologies

The public is constituted by the technologies that bind it together but in turn it transforms the technologies that constitute it. Neither society nor technology can be understood in isolation from each other.

Andrew Feenberg, "The Ten Paradoxes of Technology" Techné 14:1 Winter 2010

Emerging technologies

Connecting with anyone anywhere anytime with smart devices

The speed at which technology emerges excites some and alarms others. Every eighteen months, the memory capacity of our digital devices doubles and new products and services emerge as the speed with which we can transmit data increases. The future has technology everywhere. Are we going to be early adopters or resisters?

Six developments that will change our world over the next fifteen years:

- **The intelligent world wide web** – a smart internet that can anticipate your needs based on past patterns of interaction with others and your search for content. Imagine smart social networking where people that matter have an intelligent conversation with like-minded people with all the “clutter” of Twitter and Facebook sidelined while this occurs.
- **The ‘Prosthetic Impulse’** – the artificial eye, heart, pancreas are all in development or in the prototype stage and will shape our sense of human identity and collective psyche. It will soon be possible, using stem cells, to grow body parts. Oscar Pistorius, a double-amputee sprinter, who uses prosthetic carbon fiber legs and feet, plans to compete in 2012 Olympics although some say he should be disqualified... for having an unfair advantage.
- **Robotics everywhere** – robots already play a significant role in manufacturing, health care and retail – you will start to see them in schools and learning organizations providing support to teachers, coaching students or undertaking science experiments.
- **Environmental technologies** – as the world warms, we are becoming more determined to combat environmental degradation and climate change. There are new technologies being tested that will affect daily life (i.e., roof shingles that form solar panels, new methods to control water use, new transportation fuels, and solar powered aircraft).
- **New learning technologies** – as hand-held devices become more ubiquitous and faster there will be new learning applications and the rapid development of mobile learning. Some 10% of “apps” developed for Smartphones and hand-held devices are learning related. As we get better at 3D and animation, simulations will play a bigger role in learning and learners will be networked to others world-wide to support their learning.
- **New health innovations that extend life.** We already live longer than our great grandparents and scientists are confident that we will continue to extend our lifespan, especially if we can combat diabetes and obesity.

The inevitable brittleness of our complicated systems

For **Thomas Homer-Dixon**, the challenges we face as humanity call for the timely and successful applications of technology through ingenuity – a race that we may not win. He documents examples such as climate change and terrorism and suggests that, first and foremost, we should stop habitual behaviours including our oil dependency and centralized decision making in our institutions. The after-shocks of the 2008 melt-down of world financial systems point to the continuing challenges ahead for Albertans. The BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill, in the Gulf of Mexico is a disaster that underscores the brittleness of complex technologies and the vulnerability of eco-systems.

The challenge for Alberta is: are we ready to lead and invent and capitalize on the next technology? The over-riding ethical challenge for us all is: do we know how to manage the implications (social, ethical and moral implications) of some of these technologies?

We have been doing something right, and it would be good to know what it is.

– Steven Pinker, Professor of Psychology Harvard University



TREND

1

Primary resource dependence

Alberta's wealth continues to depend on primary resources and commodities in spite of the growth in many new enterprises and the decades-old emphasis placed on economic diversification.

What are the implications of this dependence for the future of Alberta?

Individuals, relationships and community

Ready to learn?

- Alberta, along with the rest of Canada, is at the bottom of the 25 economically advanced countries with respect to children's readiness to learn by age 6.

– UNICEF 2009

**Treat the earth well:
it was not given to you by
your parents, it was loaned to
you by your children.**

Native American proverb

- A paradox of plenty: Albertans are the oil-richest people on the planet with 51,900 barrels per person in proven reserves; yet currently one out of 12 Alberta children live in poverty.



Work and the economy

Energy superpower or marginal player?

Western Canada is the largest independent energy area in the free world.

Wal van Lierop, President and CEO of Vancouver-based Chrysalix Energy Venture Capital

Investing in future technologies – Are we putting our money where our mouth is?

Canada ranks at the bottom of global rankings on economic stimulus spending on clean energy technologies.

Steven Guilbeault, Co-founder of Equiterre

Governance, governments and politics

Rollercoaster economics

The price of oil falls from \$147 per barrel on July 11, 2008 to \$35 five months later.

Projected government surpluses melt away as natural gas falls below \$4 per gigajoule (from projected \$5.50). Every 10 cent drop in natural gas leads to a loss of \$126 million in tax revenue.

Don Baird, Calgary Herald, p. 14, July 1, 2009

Growing, growing ... gone

- The fates of our cities are in our hands. By 2035, Alberta's population will grow to 4.6 million and booming cities will struggle to avoid social fragmentation.

Green Oil



We are the stewards of a \$15 trillion resource (at today's reservoir size), one that benefits us all. Do we have the courage and the vision to use it for the benefit of the planet?

*Satya Das, author, Green Oil
www.greenoilbook.com*

Emerging technologies

Geo-engineering

- Large scale environmental engineering projects that attempt to mitigate the effects of global warming.

Oil Sands: Fact versus Fiction

Although media reports on oil sands are wide ranging, the size of mineable land in the oil sands is 4,800 square kilometres, of that 1,352 square kilometres has been approved for surface mining as of January 2009. The land size is comparable to Florida and any disturbed land must be reclaimed under Alberta law.

*Alberta Government, Alberta's oil sands:
http://oilsands.alberta.ca/documents/The_resource.pdf*

TREND

Environmental crises

2

Public awareness and concern are growing as governments struggle to effectively respond to current environmental crises. Aside from the obvious implications of these critical environmental issues, in the context of our wealth and obvious advantages, we are faced with the question, *what should Albertans expect of themselves and what should the world expect from Alberta?*

Who gets a voice in our communities?

An inconvenient truth – Alberta grizzlies extinct by 2050?

The Alberta government reports there are only 744 Alberta grizzly bears remaining, with 300 to 400 capable of breeding, and states the population would have to increase by about 300 to 400 to be “sustainable”. Although Alberta’s grizzly bears have now been labeled as “threatened” the government will not establish any new conservation funding.

Globe and Mail, June 3, 2010

Canadian governments at all levels disregard Aboriginal treaty rights, contaminate and deplete water, expropriate resources.

*Schindler et al
www.scienceforpeace.ca/
the-alberta-tar-sands*



Smart movers?

- The typical Alberta high school student spends 3.5 hours per week on the bus.
- Edmonton has the highest number of bike paths per capita but the smallest fraction of commuters walking, biking or taking transit of six major Canadian cities.
- In Calgary, most commuters travel by personal vehicles with the majority of vehicles having only a single occupant.



We can decide what world we will live in

- The Edmonton Composting Facility, the largest of its type in the world, is also the largest stainless steel building in North America. By 2013, the city anticipates that it will divert more than 90% of the city’s household waste from the landfills.

Constitutional rights for nature?

- Ecuador – the first country to recognize natural communities and ecosystems as possessing an inalienable and fundamental right to exist and flourish.

Imagine Calgary was one of the largest communities visioning and consultation processes of its kind in the world. The project brought together citizens, corporations, community agencies and the local government - an ecosystem that engendered an atmosphere of innovation and collaboration.

Huffington Post May 28, 2010

Is there peak oil, and so what?

- World Energy Council predicts: “a possible ‘peaking’ of conventional oil in the coming 10–20 years and of conventional natural gas before 2050.”



Greenwashing vs the politics of hope

- Short-term tweaking such as biofuels and the Alberta government’s \$2 billion carbon capture and sequestration program remain marginal in reducing ecological footprint.

TREND

3

The impact of globalization

Whether it is Brazil for lumber, Texas for oil or the University of Phoenix for students, the world increasingly operates as a deeply interconnected, economic, cultural and political entity. There is only one planet. *How are we being impacted by our growing global interdependence?*

The Janus face of globalization

- **Vulnerability** – Predators can quickly steal our identity and use it world-wide. As we saw with SARS and H1N1, disease can move from country to country quickly. So, too, can computer viruses.
- **Opportunity** – being connected to hundreds of people around the world in peer networks for support, ideas, guidance and mentoring – what an opportunity for individuals, organizations and community?



The simplest definition of globalization is that we are “competing with everyone from everywhere for everything”

Sirkin, Hemerling and Bhattacharya (2008) Globality. New York: Business Plus

Growing disparity of income and opportunity

The income of the top 20% of wealthiest Albertans is 5600 times that of a minimum-wage income.

Economic disparities in Alberta and Canada are growing, 10% of Canadian households hold 58% of the wealth.

57% of the 2005 graduating class has student loans, up from 49% in 1995. Average student debt on graduation rose from \$15,200 to \$18,800.

Statistics Canada

The corporatization and marketization of research

- Educators, along with universities, are caught up in the drive to “academic capitalism” that limits research in priority areas such as mental health, community development and the environment.



Our future – the ultimate stimulus package

Every dollar invested in health care generates seven times or more jobs as a dollar invested in oil and gas extraction. Education creates 5.5 times or more jobs per dollar, mass transit 49.4 times or more jobs.

David Eggen and Diana Gibson, Edmonton Journal, April 19, 2009

We must ensure that the global market is embedded in broadly shared values and practices that reflect global social needs, and that all the world's people share the benefits of globalization.

Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations 1997 - 2006

The next disruption

- Work is in progress to find new ways of powering vehicles and ending our reliance on oil. Just as downloading has disrupted the music industry, so too will the hydrogen economy disrupt the oil-gas economy.



Key drivers of work intensification are technologies like BlackBerries, which create the expectation that employees will be available 24/7. That probably explains

why 43% of women say their partners work too much. More than a third of men say the same.

– Linda Duxbury, Carleton University

China to spend \$123 billion by 2011 to create access to universal health care for its 1.3 billion citizens.

People's Daily Online April 7, 2009

TREND

4

Broadening learning opportunities

Expanded and instant access to “point and touch” digital technologies and the need to be connected to others in both the virtual and the physical worlds, are expanding the interest and capacity to offer broadened learning opportunities.

How will Albertans address issues such as core learnings, commodification of content and student assessment as these opportunities unfold?

Business, cities, learning partnerships

- The City of Calgary currently has the highest post-secondary education rates per capita among the general adult population (73%); yet, only 63.5% of high school graduates go on to post-secondary education.



When we all embrace learning in our daily lives, it will enhance our role in the community, our performance in the workplace, as well as our personal development and physical well-being.

Don Iveson, Edmonton City Councilor and Chair of Edmonton Learning City Initiative

15% of adult Albertans have difficulty reading even simple materials and another 25% cannot read well enough to reach their potential in today's knowledge-economy.

Literacy Alberta

The intensification of childhood

- One third of Alberta parents have hired a tutor for their child. Typically, the child is already an honours student.
- 88% of parents expect their children to attend post-secondary – 57% expect university attendance.

What counts as learning? Who decides?

- The only index of its kind in the world, the Canadian Learning Index (CLI), developed by the Canadian Council on Learning is an unprecedented measurement tool that expresses how learning in all aspects of life is critical to the success of individuals, communities and the country as a whole. Canada's score on the CLI stalled this past year. Funding for the CCL was cut this past year by the federal government.



Cyber Charter Schools

- What are the implications for public education and society if learning is to be enacted any time, any place and at any pace in boundless environments?

Facing the music

Researchers are embracing the overwhelming evidence that demonstrates the positive influence of music and the arts on learning.

James Caterall, Chair of the Faculty at the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies

Growing number of Albertans rallying to have the fine arts a priority in education reforms resulting from Inspiring Education policy review.

<http://saveourfinearts.ca>

- Conventional command and control institutions are less trusted and lack the ability to respond to a more flexible networked world.

The intelligent swarm

Collective intelligence in a wiki world?

National Geographic, July 2007

TREND**5****Rethinking citizenship and civil society**

Governmental efforts to assess public mood using current public consultation models are being met with scepticism and mistrust. Opinion polls and focus groups are becoming less effective as measures of public opinion on complex issues in a democratic society. *How will the rise of social media and ubiquitous connectivity among opinion-leaders and 'influentials' shift policy deliberation and public accountability?*

Climate change – leaders or followers?

- 77% of Canadian thought leaders rate Canada's efforts at addressing climate change as poor or very poor, while 75% say the same about Canada's performance at developing a greener economy. 68% rate Canada's efforts to expand renewable energy as poor or very poor.
- Thinking globally and acting locally to make sure that Alberta becomes the place the world needs to see – environmental stewardship, a strong democracy, vibrant industry, excellent education, resilient health and a strong innovation culture.

– Participant, Learning Our Way to the Next Alberta

**Shifting political (dis)engagements?**

- First Nations seek nation-to-nation political relationships with governments.
- The proportion of the public with a “great deal of confidence” in public schools remains high, just below that of the Supreme Court and churches.

- *Franken City?* Alberta government's plan to privatize a Fort McMurray subdivision through a public private “partnership.”

Privateering: privatization and profiteering meet

– George Lakoff

- The rise of P-3s: The Alberta government implements privatization through public/private partnerships for public infrastructure including school construction.

I've always said the most important weapon in the arsenal of the police force is public support.

*Mr. Braidwood,
Chair of Inquiry
and retired B.C.
appeal-court judge,
Globe and Mail,
June 18, 2010*

Shifting power relations

- Social media and peer-to-peer communications such as *YouTube* becomes a platform for online engagement and political action.
- The tasing of Robert Dziekanski by RCMP on October 17, 2007 is recorded on a cell phone camera that triggers the public inquiry into the abuse of police authority.

– Statismwatch.ca

**A revolution about a revolution**

- The blocking of MSN and Internet sites in China and Iran unsuccessful – Twitter and other applications for connectivity triumph.
- Social media is personalizing engagement like television did in the days of the Vietnam War.

– Ken Chapman, Cambridge Strategies

The new agora – the media is a public space

- 29 million votes for *Canadian Idol* contestants before the final in 2008 while 13.9 million of 23.6 eligible Canadians voted in 2008 federal election.

TREND

6

Fluid personal identity

Personal identity, once “set for a lifetime”, is now more fluid and increasingly a matter for personal exploration, conviction and commitment. *How will the expectation we each have to find our own identity and meaning impact relationships, organizations, learning and institutions? How will we know that meaning has been found in our lives?*

Rekindled narratives for Albertans and Alberta

- **Finding** – One in six marriages are based in internet matching. Those seeking partners are increasingly having difficulty



finding partners that match their expectations.

- **Separating** – Some 8,000 couples divorce in Alberta each year. Their marriage failed to meet the needs of one or both partners.
- **Re-locating** – Alberta is a “go to” destination for new workers (Calgary will produce 220,000 jobs in the next ten years).

Shifting identities in the workplace

- The average worker entering the work force in 2010 will have up to 35 job changes in their working life.
- The average woman in the workforce is delaying having children until age 31.

- 17% of teachers leave teaching within three years and take up different professional work; one out of two will not be teaching in the same school in five years.
- 40% of Canadian women say they have put their careers on hold to raise their children, compared with 13% of men.

Alberta's democratic paradox?

Only 44.5% of Alberta's 2,252,104 eligible voters cast ballots in the 2008 provincial election down from 60% in 1993. Only 52% of Albertans voted in the last federal election, yet:

- 79% of Albertans wanted the right to be able to petition for and receive a referendum on an issue important to them, and
- 77% of Albertans wanted the right to recall their politicians. Alberta once had a citizens' initiative law.

Are Parents Playing a Role in Education?

49% of students say their parents discuss their future career plans with them, and 78% think of themselves as intelligent.

*Ipsos-Reid Canadian Youth Science Monitor Final Report
May 2010*

Blurring the line between connection and connectivity

- There are currently over 500 million registered Facebook users. 75% of all social media traffic is driven by this one site.
- There are 50 million Tweets sent each day.



Technology's child: 40 is the new 30?

- Geena Davis gave birth for the first time at 46, Emma Thompson at 40 and Madonna at 41.
- In March 2010, the Quebec government makes medical history when it becomes the first North American jurisdiction to fund fertility treatments for women. Research shows that at the age of 42, there is only an 8% chance of having a baby without using donor eggs.

Forty is 40, especially for ovaries. When our bodies were designed, we were all supposed to be dead at 40.

Dr. Susan Abbey, Director of the Medical Psychiatry Program, Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto, Globe and Mail, January 23, 2005

TREND

7

Blurring boundaries and emerging technologies

Albertans of all ages are tangling with the promises of technology that expand into new creative, social and work relationships while dissolving the boundaries between person and machine, inner and public lives, information and entertainment, and domains of knowledge. Increasingly, technologies once adapted by a society become seen as much *social as natural*. *What challenges and opportunities do emerging technologies and hyper-reality offer in our efforts to sustain vibrant democratic communities in Alberta?*

Growing screen time

- American 8 to 18 year olds spend 10 hours and 45 minutes per day exposed to some form of media.

– Kaiser Foundation 2010

- Among Canadian youth in Grades 6-10, screen time on weekends was 7 hours and 25 minutes per day, while weekdays amounted to 5 hours and 56 minutes per day.

– Active Healthy Kids Canada

Recommendation

No screen time for children under two years of age and a maximum of 2 hours for children older than two years of age.

The Canadian Paediatric Society

While the Internet promises more connectivity, the number of meaningful personal connections an individual can have remains fixed at 125.

–

95% of blogs are abandoned after 120 days.

technocrats.com



Remote access is all WET

A recent study of 33,000 workers illustrates work extension technologies (WET) have removed communication etiquette and increased work and stress levels.

- Smartphones add 10 days every year to workloads in the UK.

– Nectar Business Study

- 70% report workloads increased.
- 76% experienced increased stress levels.
- More than 90% of managers indicated workload and stress had increased.

– Linda Duxbury, Carleton University

Are we walking the talk?

Ipsos-Reid poll in March 2010 showed that adults spend more time than their offspring surfing the Internet each night.

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42% of children say they spend 2 hours or more a night on the Internet, compared with 48% of their parents.

Globe and Mail, Apr. 26, 2007

The digital divide persists

- The vast majority (94%) of people from households with incomes of \$85,000 or more used the Internet, compared with 56% among households with incomes of \$30,000 or less. The respective proportions in 2007 were 90% and 48%.

– Statistics Canada

Letting students stay “plugged in”

Richard S. Fowler Catholic Junior High School will allow students to use their iPhone or iPod Touch in the classroom.

St. Albert Gazette, May 29, 2010

On the horizon

- The growth of social media platforms and cloud computing is supporting the impulse for more online networking (i.e., Facebook).
- The ‘Internet of things’ (i.e., live connection to the Web creates ‘smart objects’ such as vehicles with GPS locators).

- The Semantic Web: a world where online/offline boundaries are increasingly blurred (i.e., customized consumer product recommendations such as amazon.ca).