

INFORMAL LEARNING ON THE INTERNET AND ITS IMPORTANCE TO CURRICULUM

Deirdre Wilmott
University of Ballarat
Deakin University

Lecturer
E-learning Developer
Librarian
Doctoral student

ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

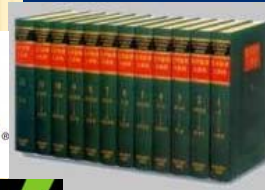
- ✘ We need to recognise that students not only have the technology. They use it effectively, and consider or reconsider what they bring to the classroom.
- ✘ Nearly everybody (over 90% according to Tough(2002) and Livingston(2001)) is involved in some form of informal learning activities.
- ✘ Curriculum is not based around it and often specifically avoids it



SUMMARY

- ✘ We need to seriously consider what learning students bring to the classroom and the view of the world their experience has given them
- ✘ Other wise there may be a price to pay
 - + for not recognising informal learning
 - + For not acknowledging lifetime experience
 - + For not accepting the view of the world as our students see it
- ✘ The price may be relevance

- ✘ Travel books
- ✘ Shopping
- ✘ Newspapers
- ✘ Video store
- ✘ The telephone book
- ✘ Reference Books
- ✘ Travel agents



THINGS THE INTERNET IS KILLING

1895 SCHOOL EXAM.

- × **Grammar (Time, 1 hour)**
- × **1.** Give nine rules for the use of capital letters.
- × **2.** Name the parts of speech and define those that have no modifications.
- × **3.** Define verse, stanza and paragraph.
- × **4.** What are the principal parts of a verb? Give principal parts of "lie," "play," and "run."
- × **5.** Define case; illustrate each case.
- × **6.** What is punctuation? Give rules for principal marks of punctuation.
- × **7-10.** Write a composition of about 150 words and show therein that you understand the practical use of the rules of grammar.

× Smoky Valley Genealogical Society & Library in Salina, Kan., and reprinted by the [Salina Journal](#)

1895 SCHOOL EXAM

Arithmetic (Time, 1 hour 15 minutes)

1. Name and define the Fundamental Rules of Arithmetic.
2. A wagon box is 2 feet deep, 10 feet long, and 3 feet wide. How many bushels of wheat will it hold?
3. If a load of wheat weighs 3,942 lbs., what is it worth at 50 cents/bushel, deducting 1,050 lbs. for tare?
4. District No. 33 has a valuation of \$35,000. What is the necessary levy to carry on a school seven months at \$50 per month, and have \$104 for incidentals?
5. Find the cost of 6,720 lbs. coal at \$6 per ton.
6. Find the interest of \$512.60 for 8 months and 18 days at 7 percent.
7. What is the cost of 40 boards 12 inches wide and 16 feet long at \$20 per meter?
8. Find bank discount on \$300 for 90 days (no grace) at 10 percent.
9. What is the cost of a square farm at \$15 per acre, the distance of which is 640 rods?
10. Write a Bank Check, a Promissory Note, and a Receipt.

1895 SCHOOL EXAM

U.S. History (Time, 45 minutes)

1. Give the epochs into which U.S. History is divided.
2. Give an account of the discovery of America by Columbus.
3. Relate the causes and results of the Revolutionary War.
4. Show the territorial growth of the U.S.
5. Tell what you can of the history of Kansas.
6. Describe three of the most prominent battles of the Rebellion.
7. Who were the following: Morse, Whitney, Fulton, Bell, Lincoln, Penn and Howe?
8. Name events connected with the following dates: 1607, 1620, 1800, 1849, 1865.

1895 SCHOOL EXAM

Orthography (Time, 1 hour)

1. What is meant by the following: alphabet, phonetic, orthography, etymology, syllabication.
2. What are elementary sounds? How classified?
3. What are the following, and give examples of each: trigraph, subvocals, diphthong, cognate letters, linguals.
4. Give four substitutes for caret "u."
5. Give two rules for spelling words with final "e." Name two exceptions under each rule.
6. Give two uses of silent letters in spelling. Illustrate each.
7. Define the following prefixes and use in connection with a word: bi, dis, mis, pre, semi, post, non, inter, mono, sup.
8. Mark diacritically and divide into syllables the following, and name the sign that indicates the sound: card, ball, mercy, sir, odd, cell, rise, blood, fare, last.
9. Use the following correctly in sentences: cite, site, sight, fane, fain, feign, vane, vain, vein, raze, raise, rays.
10. Write 10 words frequently mispronounced and indicate pronunciation by use of diacritical marks and by syllabication.

1895 SCHOOL EXAM

- × Physiology (Time, 45 minutes)
- × 1. Where are the saliva, gastric juice and bile secreted? What is the use of each in digestion?
- × 2. How does the nutrition reach the circulation?
- × 3. What is the function of the liver? Of the kidneys?
- × 4. How would you stop the flow of blood from an artery in case of laceration?
- × 5. Give some general directions that you think would be beneficial to preserve the human body in a state of health.

× <http://www.farmcollector.com/talkin-dirty/1895-school-exam.aspx>

1895 SCHOOL EXAM

Geography (Time, 1 hour)

1. What is climate? Upon what does climate depend?
2. How do you account for the extremes of climate in Kansas?
3. Of what use are rivers? Of what use is the ocean?
4. Describe the mountains of North America.
5. Name and describe the following: Monrovia, Odessa, Denver, Manitoba, Hecla, Yukon, St. Helena, Juan Fernandez, Aspinwall and Orinoco.
6. Name and locate the principal trade centers of the U.S.
7. Name all the republics of Europe and give the capital of each.
8. Why is the Atlantic Coast colder than the Pacific in the same latitude?
9. Describe the process by which the water of the ocean returns to the sources of rivers.
10. Describe the movements of the earth. Give the inclination of the earth.

New generation infected by narcissism, says psychologist

Kate Hagan
March 3, 2011

In a keynote address to the International Society for the Study of Personality Disorders Congress, Professor Twenge will say that permissive parenting, celebrity culture and the internet are among the causes of the emerging narcissism epidemic.

She said telling children they were special to build self-esteem could foster narcissism.

Narcissists had an inflated sense of self, lacked empathy, were vain and materialistic and had an overblown sense of entitlement. Some resulting social trends were a greater interest in fame and wealth, more plastic surgery, and an increase in attention-seeking crimes - for example, "beating someone up and putting it on YouTube".


✘ She said narcissistic students tended to have poorer results and were more likely to drop out, probably because they thought they didn't have to study because they were already smart. "It's delusional thinking."

✘ <http://www.theage.com.au/lifestyle/lifematters/new-generation-infected-by-narcissism-says-psychologist-20110302-1bewf.html>

HISTORUM - GENERAL HISTORY SELECTIVE HISTORY PROFESSORS

02-12-2011, 06:45 PM #1 (permalink)

Selective history professors




Americanfighter
Archivist
Join Date: Sep 2008
Posts: 109

I have run into some selective historians along the way and my professor is one of them. I was talking to him the other day and have mentioned things in classes that reviled some rather disturbing evidence that he is a selective historian. He specializes in American history. He is well known to be very left leaning democrat and has anti American views. In his Vietnam war class is especially where this shows up. He was quick to bring up every bad thing that the US did and had happen to him. However I remember bringing up Robin Olds and Operation Bolo which was responsible for destroying a majority of NVA MiGs. He had absolutely no clue what Bolo was or who Robin Olds was. Also he had never heard about the SOG before. These were two positive successful things in the war and he knew nothing of them. Also he completely bashed Nixon (which I understand) but avoided anything negative about JFK. When asking him about JFK sending in troops he claimed at first that JFK didn't send much at all and when I pressed him further he basically dared me to try and prove him wrong and gave a few smartass remarks. I sighted Project Beef up from a textbook and he finally admitted I was right and claimed he forgot about it but judging by his mannerisms at the time it was clear he had no idea and I was the one that taught him something.

Now my question to you is it too much to expect him to know about Olds, Operation Bolo, the SOG, and Project Beef up? Are they events that are not well known. I consider these to be big important things that he missed especially for one that teaches a class on it. It seems to me that he studied select things.

Funny thing is since then he hasn't taught that class again in two years.

HISTORUM - GENERAL HISTORY SELECTIVE HISTORY PROFESSORS



Americanfighter
Archivist

Join Date: Sep 2008
Posts: 109

Country: United States

Quote:

Where's your ph.d?

this is the point i am a couple months from getting a BA he has a PHd and on multiple occasions i have tripped him up. It be the Civil war, early american history, military history, WW2, or the **Vietnam** war i always got him some how.

He is a selective historian when he is teaching. Anything that goes off the beaten path throws him for a loop. He knows allot on the subject but its like tunnel vision. He can give you all the general history but knows nothing more.


As I said I can understand him not mentioning bolo olds and project beef up, but him being an expert on american history and wars i expected him something about it. But to not have a clue is ridicules.

a student shouldn't be able to come with so many questions to the teacher about his area of expertise that he doesn't have the slightest clue about.

It makes me think that when he studies he only learns the stuff he wants to and skips over things he doesn't like. Hell I found the info on project beef up in the book he gave me to use.

HISTORUM - GENERAL HISTORY SELECTIVE HISTORY PROFESSORS

02-18-2011, 02:43 PM #92 (permalink)



Pancho35
Lecturer

Join Date: Dec 2010
Posts: 396

Country: Canada

As far as facts go, I certainly think it is still important to learn.

My British history class from 1714 this semester is really bad. The professor, all the classes are thematically based, instead of chronologically. Instead of starting at 1714, what happened then and working her way up, she just goes straight to themes.

One class is dedicated solely to commercialism, another to woman's rights etc. Not only is this a bad approach because it can be boring (I mean who would want to go to a class about if they knew before hand it was only going to about women's rights? I skipped it) but it is also confusing because she doesn't address specific historical events at all. We are more than halfway through the semester and if you had to take history only from her than you would never know about the Seven Years' War, or Empire, all you would know is inventory lists.

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."
- Winston Churchill

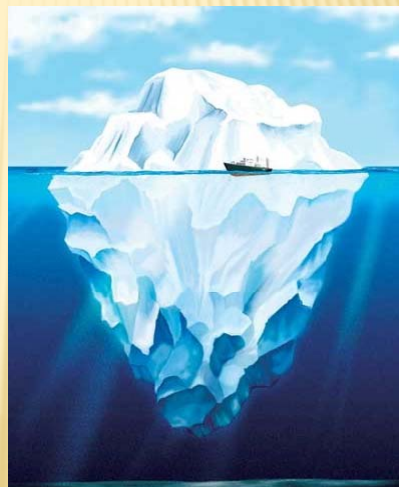
VIEW OF INFORMAL LEARNING

- ✘ The notion of informal learning and the application to the Internet is not new.
- ✘ The idea of informal learning through community, outside the college is not new.
- ✘ Nothing new in some ways except the technology has exposed people to uncontrolled learning and role models like never before

ICEBERG OF INFORMAL LEARNING

- ✘ Tough and Livingstone were talking about the iceberg of informal learning ten years ago
- ✘ In light of this finding, if the crews of our big education and training ships do not increasingly look out for the massive, detectable icebergs of informal learning, many of their programs may sink into Titanic irrelevancy. (Livingston 1999)
- ✘ So – and this is part of the iceberg phenomenon – not only are we as a society (or as educators) *oblivious* to informal learning, we don't even notice our own. That's right, people don't even notice *their own informal learning*. (Tough 2002)

✘ <http://express.howstuffworks.com/wq-iceberg.htm>



TOUGH ON INFORMAL LEARNING

- ✘ According to Tough(2002) informal learning is a very normal, very natural human activity.
- ✘ People are spending 15 hours a week at it on average, and yet it's not talked about, it's not recognized, it's sort of ignored or invisible.
- ✘ So invisible, people just don't seem to be aware of their own learning.
- ✘ Therefore they are not aware of other people's learning, educators don't take it into account

TOUGH ON INFORMAL LEARNING

- ✘ You often hear adult educators wringing their hands and saying, "oh, how can we motivate people to learn, I can't get people to learn."
- ✘ people are already learning. Maybe you can't motivate them to learn what you want them to learn, but they're motivated to learn.
- ✘ A lot of adult educators perceive adults as not normally learning. You have to somehow motivate them or force them or persuade them to do this thing.
- ✘ they're already doing it, they just may not be doing it the way the educator wants them to do it.

FORMAL LEARNING

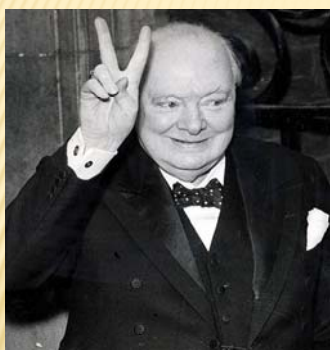
- ✘ Coombs & AHMED, (1974) describe formal education as “the highly institutionalised, chronologically graded and hierarchically structured ‘education system” (p.8).
- ✘ Livingstone, (2001) defines formal education as “when a teacher has the authority to determine that people designated as requiring knowledge effectively learn a curriculum taken from a pre-established body of knowledge” (p.2).
- ✘ Eraut (2000) whose work was based in workplace learning sees formal learning as having a prescribed learning framework, an organised learning event or package, the presence of a designated teacher or trainer and an the award of a qualification or credit.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INFORMAL LEARNING :

- ✘ It is deliberate and purposeful in that the adults concerned are seeking to acquire knowledge and skills. Such purpose and intention may not, however, always be marked by closely specified goals.
- ✘ Learning may be apparently haphazard and therefore unsuccessful at times.
- ✘ It occurs outside of classrooms and designated educational institutions and does not follow the strict timetable of the academic year.
- ✘ It receives no institutional accreditation or validation.
- ✘ It is voluntary, self-motivated, and self-generating. Adults choose to engage in this learning, although the circumstances occasioning that choice may be external to the person. Brookfield (1983)

WHAT IS INFORMAL LEARNING

- ✘ Rogers, (2004) defines informal learning as being “all that incidental learning, unstructured, unpurposeful but the most extensive and most important part of all the learning that all of us do everyday of our lives.”
- ✘ Livingstone (2001) says “informal learning is activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs without the presence of externally imposed curricular criteria.”
- ✘ “the life-long process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experience and exposure to the environment. They say informal education is unorganised, unsystematic and even unintentional at times” (p. 8). (Coombs & Ahmed, 1974)



- ✘ **Michael Dell**, founder of Dell Computers, billionaire, among top ten wealthiest Americans. Founded his company out of his college dorm room. Dropped out of the University of Texas to run the company.

Henry Ford: The pioneer of the assembly line car manufacturing, Henry Ford never completed his high school education. Instead, he started Ford Motor Company, one of the largest automobile companies in the world.

- ✘ **Andrew Jackson:** Andrew Jackson was the 6th president of the United States. In addition to that, he was a Congressman, a military governor, Army Commander and finally an attorney
- ✘ **Winston Churchill**, British prime minister, historian, artist. Flunked sixth grade. After he left Harrow, he applied to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, but it took him three times before he passed the entrance exam. He graduated 8th out of a class of 150 a year and a half later

PEOPLE WHO SUCCEEDED WITHOUT EDUCATION

Florence Nightingale, nurse. No formal education. Home schooled.

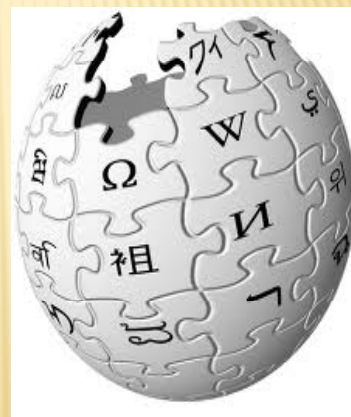


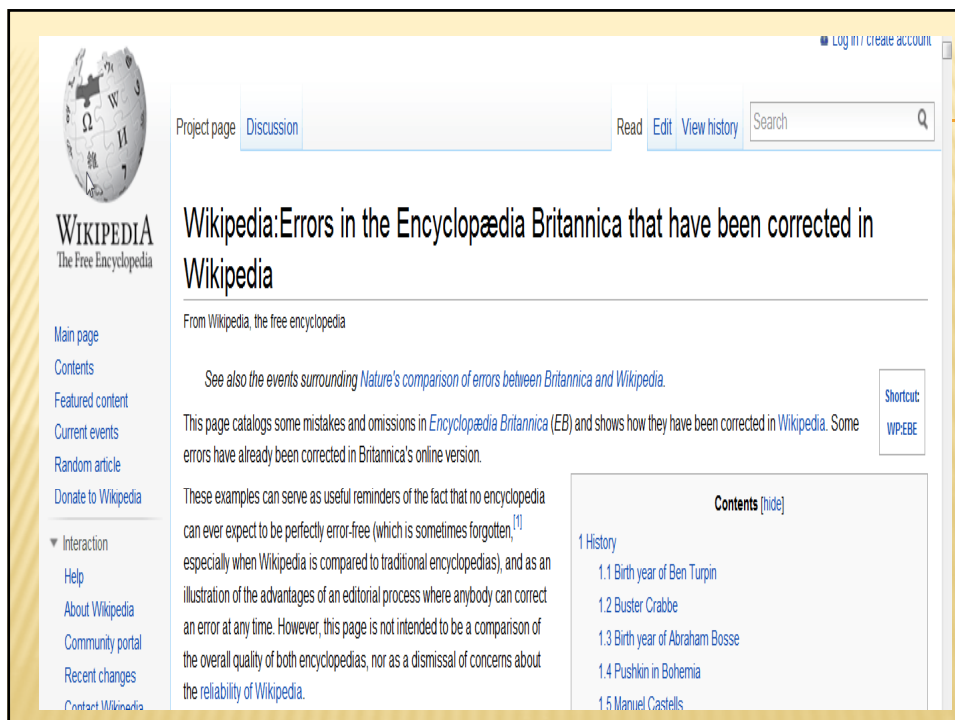
PI... WITHOUT EDUCATION

- ✘ **Mark Zuckerberg**, billionaire founder of Facebook. Dropped out of Harvard to continue working on the social networking website he founded in his dorm room in 2004. Facebook has more than 300 million users.
- ✘ **Anna Wintour**, editor-in-chief, *Vogue* magazine. Did not attend college.
- ✘ **Anton van Leeuwenhoek**, microbiologist, microscope maker, discoverer of bacteria, blood cells, and sperm cells. Dropped out of high school
- ✘ **Sidney Poitier**, Oscar-winning actor. Only finished a few grades. Could only read at the fourth-grade level until a friend taught him how to read better when he was a struggling actor in New York City.

WIKIPEDIA

- ✘ We talk about it deny it
- ✘ Tell students not to use it not to trust it
- ✘ Denying a whole experience
- ✘ Truth is everyone uses it
- ✘ Difference is that here we have learnt to use it discriminately





The screenshot shows a Wikipedia article page. At the top left is the Wikipedia logo and the text 'WIKIPEDIA The Free Encyclopedia'. Below it is a navigation menu with links like 'Main page', 'Contents', 'Featured content', etc. The article title is 'Wikipedia:Errors in the Encyclopædia Britannica that have been corrected in Wikipedia'. The main text discusses errors in the Encyclopædia Britannica and how they have been corrected in Wikipedia. A 'Contents' table of contents is visible on the right side of the article.

Project page [Discussion](#) [Read](#) [Edit](#) [View history](#)

Wikipedia:Errors in the Encyclopædia Britannica that have been corrected in Wikipedia

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

See also the events surrounding *Nature's comparison of errors between Britannica and Wikipedia*.

This page catalogs some mistakes and omissions in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (EB) and shows how they have been corrected in Wikipedia. Some errors have already been corrected in Britannica's online version.


These examples can serve as useful reminders of the fact that no encyclopedia can ever expect to be perfectly error-free (which is sometimes forgotten,^[1] especially when Wikipedia is compared to traditional encyclopedias), and as an illustration of the advantages of an editorial process where anybody can correct an error at any time. However, this page is not intended to be a comparison of the overall quality of both encyclopedias, nor as a dismissal of concerns about the reliability of Wikipedia.

Contents [hide]

- 1 History
 - 1.1 Birth year of Ben Turpin
 - 1.2 Buster Crabbe
 - 1.3 Birth year of Abraham Bosse
 - 1.4 Pushkin in Bohemia
 - 1.5 Manuel Castells

Reference Services Review (2008) [edit]

[Discussion page](#)

- **Source:** *Reference Services Review*
- **Date:** 2008
- **Issue:** vol. 26, no. 1
- **Title:** Comparison of Wikipedia and other encyclopedias for accuracy, breadth, and depth in historical articles
- **URL:** <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/Insight/viewContentItem.do?jsessionid=6D46A9381C4560FE3E2565C7FD8A83?contentType=Article&contentId=1674221> 

A comparison of Wikipedia, Encyclopædia Britannica, The Dictionary of American History and American National Biography Online

Findings [edit]

Summary: "The study did reveal inaccuracies in eight of the nine entries and exposed major flaws in at least two of the nine Wikipedia articles. Overall, Wikipedia's accuracy rate was 80 percent compared with 95-96 percent accuracy within the other sources. This study does support the claim that Wikipedia is less reliable than other reference resources. Furthermore, the research found at least five unattributed direct quotations and verbatim text from other sources with no citations."



PEOPLE WHO WENT BACK TO UNIVERSITY

- ✘ **Mortimer Adler**, author, educator, editor. Left high school at the age of 15 to work. Later received his high school equivalency degree and attended Columbia University.
- ✘ **John Bartlett**, author and publisher, *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*. Did not attend college, but ended up owning the University Bookstore at Harvard University.
- ✘ **Herbert Brown**, Nobel Prize-winning chemist. Dropped out of high school to support his family. Later return to school and graduated from high school and college
- ✘ **Warren Buffett**, billionaire chairman of Berkshire Hathaway. Dropped out of the University of Pennsylvania after two years. But later he did get his bachelor's degree



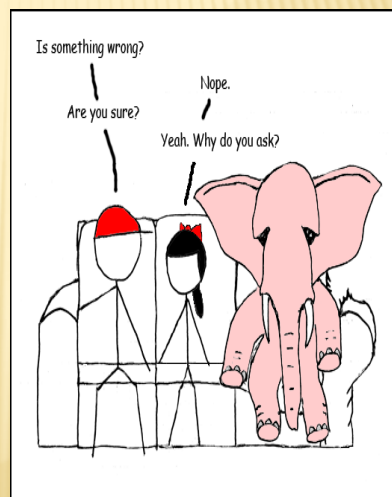
PEOPLE WHO WENT BACK TO UNIVERSITY

- ✘ **Carl Sandburg**, poet, historian, Pulitzer Prize winner. Had little formal education but later attended Lombard College and graduated
- ✘ **H.G. Wells**, science fiction author. Dropped out of high school to help support his family. Eventually completed high school and went on to college
- ✘ **Woodrow Wilson**, U.S. president, college president. Dropped out of Davidson College, but eventually graduated from Princeton University

✘ <http://www.collegedropoutshalloffame.com/b.htm>

SUMMARY

- ✘ There may be a price to pay for not recognising informal learning
 - + For not acknowledging lifetime experience
 - + For not accepting the view of the world as our students see it
- ✘ The price may be relevance



REFERENCES

- ✘ Brookfield, S. (1983). *Adult Learners, Adult Education and the Community*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- ✘ Coombs, P., & AHMED, M. (1974). *Attacking Rural Poverty*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- ✘ Eraut, M. (2000). Non-formal learning, implicit learning and tacit knowledge in professional work. In F. Coffield (Ed.), *The Necessity of Informal Learning*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- ✘ Livingstone, D. (1999). *Exploring the icebergs of adult learning: findings of the first canadian survey of informal learning practices* (No. 10). NALL Working Paper. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto.
- ✘ Livingstone, D. (2001). *Adults' informal learning: Definitions, findings, gaps and future research* (No. 21). NALL Working Paper. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. Retrieved from <https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/2735/2/21adultsinformallearning.pdf>
- ✘ Tough, A. (2002). *The Iceberg of Informal Adult Learning* (No. 49). NALL Working Paper. Retrieved from <https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/2735/2/21adultsinformallearning.pdf>
- ✘