Probert, B., & Wilson, B. (Eds.). (1993). *Pink collar blues: Work gender and technology*. Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press.

Reid-Searl, K., & Anastasi, J. (2002). An assessment process with a difference – an avenue for nurses to regain their registration. In K. Appleton, C. Macpherson, & D. Orr (Eds.), *Building learning communities through education: refereed papers from the 2nd International Lifelong Learning Conference* (pp. 288-293), Yeppoon, Queensland, Australia, 16-19 June. Rockhampton: Central Queensland University.

Spivak, G. C. (1990). Explanantion and Culture: marginalia. In C. West (Ed.), *Out there: Marginalisation*

and Contemporary Cultures (Vol. 4). New York: MIT Press.

Thomas, S. (1999, May 14th). Social crisis looms as full-time work dries up. *Courier Mail*, p. 1.

Waite, N. (2002). Fine balance: Family, consultancy, a seat on the board and time to play tennis. By going 'portfolio' perhaps it is possible to have it all. *VIVE*, 92-94.

Wearing, B. (1996). *Gender: the pain and pleasure of difference*. Melbourne: Longman.

Zajdow, G. (1995). *Women and work: Current issues and debates*. Geelong: Deakin University Press.

SOCIAL CAPITAL, LIFELONG LEARNING, AND AUSTRALIAN OCCUPATIONAL TRAVELLERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL, RURAL, AND REMOTE EDUCATION

Beverley Moriarty, Geoff Danaher, and P. A. Danaher
Central Queensland University

ABSTRACT

This paper examines lifelong learning according to alternative understandings of capital. The authors argue that a more nuanced and contingent conception of capital is needed to understand the lifelong learning of Australian occupational Travellers. The paper considers implications of this argument for lifelong learning in regional, rural, and remote locations.

INTRODUCTION

An enduring debate about lifelong learning is its role in replicating existing social structures vis-à-vis its potential for creating new networks and relations. This debate is particularly important in regional, rural, and remote communities, which are often depicted as being under threat of diminution if not extinction.

This paper examines the conceptual links between lifelong learning and alternative understandings of capital. On the one hand, it considers Bourdieu's (1977, 1990, 1993) analysis of different forms of capital and its implications for education as an agent of socio-economic stratification. On the other hand, it presents the position that such an analysis does not provide a complete view of social capital conceived as regional, rural, and remote community development in Australia.

We contend that understanding the role and potential of lifelong learning in contemporary regional, rural, and remote education – particularly in an Australian rather than a European context – requires a more nuanced and contingent conception of capital than that provided by Bourdieu, the significance of his contribution notwithstanding. We illustrate this conceptual argument by reference to the educational aspirations and opportunities of Australian occupational Travellers – specifically mobile circus and show communities. We assert that the forms of educational provision – including lifelong learning – for these communities need to engage with the Travellers' generation and exchange of varied forms of differently valued capital.

More broadly, we argue, the paper has important implications for lifelong learning in regional, rural, and remote locations. In particular, Australian occupational Travellers have three key characteristics in common with residents of such communities that suggest that responsibility for, and contributions to, lifelong learning in regional areas require dynamic and reciprocal social networks and partnerships.

It is important to explicate this paper's articulation with, yet also to differentiate it from, the three preceding papers about Australian occupational Travellers in the lifelong learning

conference series. Coombes, Danaher, Anteliz, and Danaher (2000) used a comparison between "generic skills" and "life skills" to argue against an approach to lifelong learning that homogenises the lived and educational experiences of such marginalised groups as university pre-undergraduate bridging students and occupational Travellers. Danaher, Coombes, Danaher, and Anteliz (2002) drew on these same groups to advocate an ethically informed discourse of lifelong learning. Danaher, Moriarty, and Danaher (2002) conceptualised lifelong learning in terms of its vertical and horizontal dimensions, as cooperative communication and as problem-based learning, and illustrated that conceptualisation by reference to Australian circus people. This paper uses a different conceptual resource – forms of capital – and focuses on a different set of implications – the sustainability of regional, rural, and remote communities – to present the same general point underpinning all four papers: the crucial and urgent responsibility of all of us concerned with lifelong learning to be alert to the potentialities of alternative and multiple knowledges and experiences, and to be attentive to the easily overlooked needs and aspirations of the traditionally silenced, in relation to educational provision.

LIFELONG LEARNING AND ALTERNATIVE UNDERSTANDINGS OF CAPITAL

One of the contributions of more contemporary conceptualisations of "capital" has been to extend the notion beyond the economic realm. This move escapes the limitation of the conventional Marxist position in which an economic base is conceived of as playing a deterministic role in cultural and social life. It also challenges an economic rationalist perspective that configures the practice of a diversity of institutions (media, education, government, and so forth) within models derived from the field of business.

Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1990, 1993) has been an enormously influential theorist in rethinking the value of capital (Webb, Schirato, & Danaher, 2002). He distinguished among economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital. While economic capital refers to financial resources, cultural capital refers to qualifications, attributes, talents, and tastes that represent value within particular fields; social capital refers to connections and networks that are built up

within and across different fields; and symbolic capital refers to attributes of reputation such as honour and prestige. Each of these forms of capital is integral to the practice of learning, including lifelong learning.

Yet Bourdieu's conception of diverse-though-connected forms of capital raises significant questions for our research into the movement of travelling communities within regional areas: What forms of capital are valued within different settings, and by whom? To what extent and on what basis can valorised, authorised, and sanctioned forms of capital be challenged? What are the effects and tensions involved in this challenge?

Within the field of education, Bourdieu's studies have tended to focus on the effect of socially sanctioned forms of schooling and higher education upon a student body divided along social class lines. Within this context, he finds that schools and universities tend to play a role in reproducing social relations of domination and subservience. The lower classes' lack of access to the cultural, social, and symbolic capital of the upper classes – capital that implicitly informs the educational values and practices of schools and universities – means that they face a comparative disadvantage within these institutions that has the effect of confirming their relatively impoverished social position. Far from being agents for creating a more equitable society in which all can enjoy the fruits of knowledge and learning, educational institutions for Bourdieu tend to act as sites in which existing social divisions are confirmed and validated.

While a number of Australian educational theorists have taken up Bourdieu's theories in order to make sense of educational practice in this country (for example, Mills & Gale, 2003), and while we regard his contribution to thinking about these issues as significant and valuable, in this paper we seek to emphasise the limitations of this thesis for making sense of lifelong learning in regional areas. In doing so, we align ourselves with more recent theoretical work that has looked at the prospect of a more finely nuanced conception of the possibilities embedded in the concept of social capital (see for example, Baron, Field, & Schuller, 2000; DeFilippis, 2003; Field, 2003). Firstly, Bourdieu's focus within the French educational system in which forms of social stratification and cultural distinction have evolved over

centuries doesn't translate easily to the Australian context in which a more egalitarian spirit, together with opportunities for educational innovation, create a potentially more propitious set of circumstances. Secondly, his focus on formal educational institutions overlooks the lifelong learning taking place within other institutions: workplaces, friendship groups, families, and entertainment clubs, for example. We regard these sites as playing, at least in many cases, as significant a role (if not more) in shaping the lifelong-learning experiences of the individual as do formal educational institutions. As the next section demonstrates, this is certainly the case with the lifelong-learning experiences of Australian occupational Travellers, a situation with important implications for conceiving of social capital as regional, rural, and remote community development.

LIFELONG LEARNING AND AUSTRALIAN OCCUPATIONAL TRAVELLERS

The authors of this paper are members of the Traveller Education Research Team at Central Queensland University. The team has examined and followed the educational progress of Australian travelling show people and their children since 1992, and of Australian circus people since 1998. One of the most significant outcomes of this research is the mounting evidence against a deficit view of mobile populations that depicts them as marginalised from the mainstream popular conceptions of social capital (Danaher, 1998, 2001).

Typically, deficit views of mobility have emphasised the negative impact of mobility on travelling populations as well as the communities through which mobile people move (see, for instance, Edwards, 2003; see also Danaher, 1998, 2001). For example, many Australians will be familiar with the negative connotations attributed to show people visiting rural towns (Broome with Jackomos, 1998), and yet many people would also willingly acknowledge that the agricultural show is traditionally an important event in any town's annual calendar – particularly any regional or rural town. The fact that rural communities have a public holiday to afford local people the opportunity to attend the show must indicate at least a degree of recognition of the importance placed on that event.

Recently, the document, *Changing schools: Its impact on student learning* (Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training and Commonwealth Department of Defence, 2002), in redefining student mobility and its impact on learning, acknowledged the challenges that mobility can create, but also, in its redefinition of the term, acknowledged that there can be both positive and negative outcomes of mobility for student learning.

> A revised definition [of student mobility and its relationship to learning] centres on the following statement:
> Mobility has the potential to impact either positively or negatively on student learning outcomes where:
>
> - a student has more than two moves in three years; or
> - patterns of family movement involve students in relocating school or periods of time when they do not attend school. (p. 26)

This definition and the ensuing reference to the establishment in 2000 of the Queensland School for Travelling Show Children do not, however, address the potential that the school has realised not only in improving the educational opportunities and outcomes for show children, but also in maintaining the existing social capital within and among the families of show children. Contrary to more popular conceptions, mobile communities such as agricultural shows and circuses possess a tremendous amount of rich social and cultural capital that has accumulated over generations and can be preserved through the provision of innovative educational programs that cater specifically for the needs of Traveller children.

The nature and extent of social and cultural capital connected with show and circus communities cannot be recognised by an annual visit to the show or circus. In-depth and extensive interviews with personnel from these communities over a long period reveal a much richer picture that indicates the importance of innovative programs such as that provided by the Queensland School for Travelling Show Children in preserving social and cultural traditions considered crucial by the travelling communities. Prior to the establishment of the "Show School", when parents' choice of education for their children was restricted to options that either were quite unlikely to lead to

a good basic education or resulted in family disruption (Danaher, 2001, p. 255), it was virtually impossible to combine the higher educational standards demanded in society today with the continuation of a rich, traditional, mobile way of life.

Long before the idea of lifelong learning became so important and prior learning began to be recognised and valued, show and circus personnel provided for one another and the upcoming generations education and training in a range of areas connected to the preservation of their lifestyle. For example, circus families and communities trained their members to take on a variety of roles (Danaher & Danaher, 1999; Danaher & Danaher, 2000; Danaher, Moriarty, & Hallinan, 2000) and, while this training could be considered to be informal and did not attract formal qualifications, it made members employable and dependable and ensured that the show could continue. Our research on the circus grounds conjures images of young children being taught simple acrobatic moves and older people teaching one another more advanced moves and critiquing their performances. Other forms of knowledge and skill related to such areas as making costumes, performing maintenance on heavy duty vehicles, and serving customers with food. Skills in business management and the ability to negotiate dates, terms, and conditions with communities where they wished to perform were also prominent. Without these and many other skills, the unique lifestyle of the show and circus communities could not be maintained.

Show and circus people recognise that their children need a better education than was available to earlier generations, regardless of whether they wish to remain with the show or circus in the future or would like to adopt other career options. The drive for formal qualifications, and even the ability to develop accepted levels of literacy, are both part of the solution to, and part of the problem with, the futures that the current generation of young mobile people face. Improved educational opportunities can widen options for future work and living but can also take these children away from their families in ways and to extents in which many of the rich cultural traditions are less accessible as the children grow further apart from their families.

The establishment of the Queensland School for Travelling Show Children, as its name suggests,

enables show children to access effective and sustained primary school education while being able to travel with their families and so, to have continued contact with a rich lifestyle that has been in their families for generations. The Show School appears to be the ideal solution for show people who have also acknowledged that their children learn an enormous amount about a range of topics as they travel the circuits. It is interesting to note that parents of show children have recognised the effectiveness and importance of authentic experiences for generations, while it appears that educators who work with children of predominantly fixed residence – and the educational authorities in Australia that oversee their work – are only just beginning to be more serious about providing practical, rich, and authentic experiences for children.

After operating for more than four years, the Show School will face challenges that many not have been anticipated previously. For example, the time that children spend in travelling classrooms and not directly on the show circuits could continue to lead to improved educational outcomes as the children focus more on their schooling. When this lifestyle is combined with increased access to modern entertainment and communication technologies in the evenings and less informal time with their parents and grandparents, stories about the traditional way of life may be less likely to filter to and direct the lives of the children. In gaining a "better" education in a formal sense, therefore, these children could become increasingly disconnected from the traditional social and cultural capital of which their parents and grandparents are so proud.

Whether this dilemma emerges as a more significant problem than the restricted access to formal education did in the past will remain to be seen. Considering the enormity of the task that show people faced in convincing authorities that they needed an educational provision that accommodated their lifestyle and that helped to keep families and show traditions and forms of employment intact, they are well qualified to address other situations as they arise. The next few years, as the school and its impact are reviewed, will be important for taking stock of a range of outcomes that include reference to the forms of social and cultural capital that make their lives so rich and meaningful.

Finally, in terms of lifelong learning, while some theorists have configured the occupational Travellers' lack of access to formal educational institutions in terms of a deficit model that regards them as being relatively educationally impoverished in comparison to other groups (see, for example, Edwards, 2003), we suggest that a more nuanced understanding of capital in the context of conceptions of lifelong learning allows a very different picture to emerge. That is to say, if we take lifelong learning to mean both, in a vertical sense, the learning experiences with which an individual or group engages throughout her, his or its life, and, in a horizontal sense, the learning experiences with which an individual or group engages across different sites such as workplaces, sporting fields, and so forth (Danaher, Moriarty, & Danaher, 2002), then, far from being relatively impoverished, the learning experiences of occupational Travellers seem particularly enriched. Many occupational Travellers come from families involved for several generations in the business, and given the sheer wealth and diversity of different tasks and roles that they take on, there is ample evidence that occupational Travellers are able to generate considerable cultural and social capital. There is a consciousness among these communities of their relative lack of socially sanctioned capital in terms of formal educational outcomes. What our research has found is the complex ways in which occupational Travellers are seeking to exchange and translate the capital that they generate in other sites into outcomes that benefit them in formal educational terms, thereby arguably strengthening their social capital. This has meant engaging with diverse social networks and partnerships, and using fluid and flexible negotiation practices.

LIFELONG LEARNING IN REGIONAL, RURAL, AND REMOTE LOCATIONS

The starting point for this account of the broader implications of the preceding discussion of social capital, lifelong learning, and Australian occupational Travellers is Howley and Harmon's (1999) identification of "the mythological principle" whereby "rural people are necessarily lesser, more backward, and decidedly uncultured people", and "rural and urban places make one another" (p. 3). We contend that this "mythological principle" encapsulates three crucial ways in which occupational Travellers and residents of regional, rural, and remote communities parallel one another.

Firstly, just as Travellers' identities are predicated on a "settled-residence/itinerancy" binary, so the residents of such communities are constructed as "other" to their urban counterparts. In both cases, the absence of a "level playing field" means that Travellers/regional residents have less access to resources and services than permanently settled/urban residents.

Secondly, just as Travellers' lives reveal the existence of multiple, even if differentially valued, forms of capital, so too do the members of regional communities rely on – and for their survival, must rely on – networks and communities that are differently constituted from those in metropolitan settings. Social capital in these contexts tends to be tied to longevity of residence, association with local heroes, and localised and specialised knowledge (for example, of particular places and/or of specific cultural practices such as farming). This kind of social capital is typically devalued, or not recognised at all, vis-à-vis the centrally-sanctioned social capital of urban residents, yet it is often considered crucial to the resilience and the sustainability of regional communities.

Thirdly, in combination, the absence of a level playing field, and the presence of locally-valued social capital, create particular pressures for lifelong learning to address the unique needs and aspirations of regional residents as much as those of Travellers. This suggests that responsibility for, and contributions to, effective and meaningful lifelong learning in regional areas must be conceptualised as multifaceted, intersecting, and involving a multiplicity of competing and overlapping interests. Furthermore, these interests must be expressed and addressed through dynamic and reciprocal social networks and partnerships. The significance of social capital in this complex situation cannot be overestimated: without it lifelong learning is likely to conceal the imposition of a homogenising and centrally-controlled agenda; with it lifelong learning is likely to provide an invaluable vehicle for individual and community enrichment and empowerment.

CONCLUSION

As with our previous papers in this conference series, we have used this paper to insist that lifelong learning must engage with and celebrate difference and diversity, rather than be complicit in the imposition of a narrowly instrumentalist socioeconomic and political agenda. The concept that we deployed to underpin this argument on this occasion has been social capital, in relation to which we added a distinctively Australian twist to Bourdieu's (1977, 1990, 1993) valuable account of different, and differently valued, forms of capital. Those differences were illustrated starkly in our account of the lived and educational experiences of Australian circus and show people, who for generations have exchanged and negotiated multiple forms of capital. That account has important implications for mapping and interrogating lifelong learning provision in regional, rural, and remote communities: properly harnessed, social capital and lifelong learning can sustain and potentially transform such communities; kept asunder, they can do nothing for fostering the resilience of such communities. All of us – academics, educators, policy makers, community leaders, citizens, and residents – have a fundamental responsibility to work towards this kind of sustainability and transformation; without our respective and shared contributions, it simply will not occur.

REFERENCES

Baron, S., Field, J., & Schuller, T. (Eds.) (2000). *Social capital: Critical perspectives.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1993). *The field of cultural production.* Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Broome, R., with Jackomos, A. (1998). *Sideshow alley.* St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Technology and Commonwealth Department of Defence (2002). *Changing schools: Its impact on student learning.* Canberra, ACT: Author.

Coombes, P. N., Danaher, G. R., Anteliz, E. A., & Danaher, P. A. (2000). Educating university bridging students and occupational Travellers: Interrogating the generic skills approach to lifelong learning. In K. Appleton, C. Macpherson, & D. Orr (Eds.), *Lifelong learning conference: Selected papers from the inaugural International Lifelong Learning Conference Yeppoon, Queensland, Australia, 17-19 July 2000* (pp. 152-157). Rockhampton, Qld: Lifelong Learning Conference Committee, Central Queensland University.

Danaher, G. R., & Danaher, P. A. (1999). Circuses and the commoditisation of 'childhood' and 'youth'. *Southern Review, 32*(3), 336-346.

Danaher, G. R., Moriarty, B. J., & Danaher, P. A. (2002). Cooperative communities and problem-based lifelong learning: Issues in educational delivery to Australian circus people. In K. Appleton, C. Macpherson, & D. Orr (Eds.), *Building learning communities through education: refereed papers from the 2nd International Lifelong Learning Conference* (pp. 152-158). Yeppoon, Queensland, Australia, 16-19 June. Rockhampton: Lifelong Learning Conference Committee, Central Queensland University.

Danaher, P. A. (Ed.) (1998). *Beyond the ferris wheel: Educating Queensland show children (Studies in open and distance learning number 1).* Rockhampton, Qld: Central Queensland University Press.

Danaher, P. A. (2001). *Learning on the run: Traveller education for Queensland show children.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Faculty of Education and Creative Arts, Central Queensland University, Rockhampton, Qld.

Danaher, P. A., Coombes, P. N., Danaher, G. R., & Anteliz, E. A. (2002). Towards an ethical discourse in using lifelong learning skills for the future: Findings from the education of university bridging students and show people. In K. Appleton, C. Macpherson, & D. Orr (Eds.), *Building learning communities through education: refereed papers from the 2nd International Lifelong Learning Conference* (pp. 159-164). Yeppoon, Queensland, Australia, 16-19 June. Rockhampton: Lifelong Learning Conference Committee, Central Queensland University.

Danaher, P. A., & Danaher, G. R. (2000). From itinerancy as educational deficits to floating signifiers: Flight, enmeshment, circus and Australian youth. *Youth Studies Australia, 19*(1), 26-30.

Danaher, P. A., Moriarty, B. J., & Hallinan, P. M. (2000). Theorising youth and difference: Australian circus people. *Youth Studies Australia, 19*(2), 17-21.

DeFilippis, J. (2003). The myth of social capital in community development. *Housing Policy Debate, 12*(4), 781-806.

Edwards, J. (2003). "Send three- and four-pence; we're going to a dance": Forward generating research. *Australian Educational Researcher. 30*(2), 17-32.

Field, J. (2003). *Social capital.* London: Routledge.

Howley, C. B., & Harmon, H. L. (1999, Spring). Introduction to special issue. *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 15*(1), 3-4.

Mills, C., & Gale, T. C. (2003). *Transient teachers: Mixed messages of schooling in regional Australia*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Webb, J., Schirato, T., & Danaher, G. R. (2002). *Understanding Bourdieu*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

RE-READING BIBLICAL TEXTS: A FEMINIST THEOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION TO LIFELONG LEARNING

Anne Musso
Central Queensland University

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on theological lifelong learning for Christian women; acknowledging the ground-breaking work of feminist biblical scholar Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. Key elements of her theoretical framework and reading strategies are presented, and their application is demonstrated in a lifelong-learning project undertaken by a small group of Australian Catholic women.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, Christian women have been relegated to subservient working roles in the church and been positioned in marginal relationships with lifelong, theological learning: the work of studying and producing theology has largely been the domain of men (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1996). However, since earliest Christian times, some women have rejected the association of masculinity with learning and have actively participated in the production and distribution of theological knowledge. This activity became increasingly prolific during the late twentieth century when significant numbers of women claimed women's authority to engage in lifelong, theological learning by producing and distributing multiple feminist re-readings of androcentric biblical and doctrinal texts.

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (1983, 1984, 1992, 1997) has led the way in this endeavour, with her work making an impact on many people worldwide. Amongst these is a small self-support group of Australian Catholic women, the Sophia group,[1] of which I am a member. In

---

[1] The Greek word *sophia*, meaning wisdom, is used in scriptural texts to represent God as Woman-Wisdom.

the late 1990s we undertook a study of Matthew's gospel. I designed the study using Schüssler Fiorenza's feminist theoretical framework and reading strategies. The study positively contributed to participants' theological lifelong learning and to their personal growth and development.

The term "lifelong learning" is used in this paper to encompass all formal and informal endeavours towards personal development – based on an understanding of learning as a lifetime's "work in progress". I concur with Longworth's (2002) assertion that lifelong learning is about "continuous education for everyone controlled by individuals themselves, and mediated within the group of learners" (p. 10). Hence I do not view it as being synonymous with "worklife learning", the focus of global capitalism's politico-economic discourse on lifelong learning (Jarvis, 2000).

This paper begins with a synopsis of Schüssler Fiorenza's feminist theoretical framework and reading strategies which shaped the construction of the Sophia group's gospel study. Attention is then focused on the Sophia group and their lifelong, theological learning project. Snapshots from the group's responses to Matthew 8:14-15 are presented as a demonstration of women's