

Editorial

The Inaugural Issue of the CEF

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At last. We have the first edition of the scholarly journal, *Culture, Education, and Future*, is ready for release. I and the editors, Akif Erdener, Sümer Aktan and Ünal Deniz, are genuinely excited about this journal. But even more important, at last there is a journal that looks at emergent educational issues that impact us today and which promise to impact our futures.

So, what does this mean? There are several elements to consider. The first is culture. What is culture and what causes it to change (other than normal drift)? According to dictionary.com, culture is “the behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic or age group.” The important thing to not here is that culture is not monolithic at any level, rather it is characterized my multiple sub-cultures.

Second, what influences cultural change? Here the question becomes quite involved for change is often related to multiple events, but we can identify some of the major causes. The first dynamic that influences cultural change is its epistemologies, or ways of perceiv-ing reality. There are four primary epistemologies operating on culture:

- Positivism, or a belief that reality is fixed and waiting for humans to discover it. A tree falling in a forest makes a noise whether humans are present to interpret it or not (see philosophers George Berkeley and John Locke).
- Constructivism, the perspective that reality is created. This explains, for example, why there are multiple cultures in any given society.
- Post-structuralism argues that reality is constantly changing, and that the only way to understand it is to analyze the shifting dynamics that comprise culture.
- Critical theory perceives reality as conflict among sub-cultures over scarce resources. Minority ethnic groups that feel they don't share equitably in the monetary resources of a society conflict with dominant groups for better shares.

The epistemologies of societies change over time—at one time, the dominant perspective in the US was clearly positivist but now it can best be described as an amalgam of all four. The dominant perspective of decision makers will affect education and future events.

Epistemologies are not the only influence on the future. Technological or scientific advances can affect it as well. Note, for example, the tremendous effect that relativity or desktop computers had in our culture and future. Politics influence cultures, education, and futures; the recent shift in Turkey to more centralized decision making illustrates, as does the Brexit movement in Great Britain. Religion influences culture. There are often spontaneous emergences of major ideas that influences culture, such as the “Me Too” movement in the West (this is also an example of post-structuralism). This, and similar movements (LGBT rights, abortion, transgender, Black Lives Matter, Critical Race Theory, etc.) have caused acrimonious debates and even violence in some countries. Schools are often flash points in these debates, with demands that certain books be censored in libraries, that textbooks be chosen which do not include “offensive” materials, that CRT be banned from school discussions, and so on. How are these events changing culture and education? Triggers can spark major culture realignments; there are numerous examples, but one of the more famous is the assignation of Archduke Ferdinand, which sparked WWI. This is hardly an exhaustive list, and we expect future authors to help us expand the events that change cultures and, consequently, the future.

Now, what sort of questions might appear in CEF. What specific events emerge from the above cultural change agents that could be explored. Currently, a big one is a technological change: the influence of artificial intelligence on culture and education. AI is affecting education already. The most immediate current concern is TextGPT and other text generators. Students can now use a generator to write term papers; unscrupulous scholars can similarly write manuscripts for publication. Will we be able to tell the difference between a paper written by a human and one by a computer? Is this plagiarism? Is this the same as buying a paper from an online manuscript seller or paying the smart kid in the class to write one’s paper? Will programs that check for plagiarism be able to successfully detect AI written papers (Turnitin currently has an AI checker, but it is not 100% successful). But this may only be the tip of the AI iceberg. We don’t know, for example, what will happen when different computers running AI programs communicate with and learn from one another. Imagine a world-wide web of AI learning computers. The resemblance to a brain is not accidental. What will this mean for education if intelligent computers begin to dominate the education of children. Unfortunately, this is no longer science fiction.

There are positive possibilities to AI in education. Would it be desirable and acceptable to use controlled AI to do the grunt work in creating a literature review that could then be modified to meet the structure and needs of one’s paper. How do educators feel about using machine learning statistics, which are important to building AI programs, to create highly dependable checklists for identifying effective teachers? Can AI evaluate an individual student weakness, learning style, and motivation to better help the student learn?

There is so much to debate involving AI, but there are many other cultural changes that our journal needs to discuss. Are there political movements in given countries or globally that enhance or threaten education’s future? What will the mass movements of populations due to war, economic difficulties, or global warming mean for education? Is higher education shifting because of political or epistemological shifts? The *Chronicles of Higher Education* recently reported that college students are less engaged in their courses than before the Covid pandemic (June 6, 2022) How is this related to Covid and did Covid change our culture in ways that affect students? How is the policy shift in the US that permits athletes to sell their image (e.g., be paid for being in advertisement) affecting college sports?



How can we evaluate such trends and futures empirically? Perhaps we can try to predict current behaviors using historical databases (being careful of tautology)? We could use qualitative research strategies to analyze opinions about possible futures or culture shifts. Can agent-based modeling (a science for modeling the effects of controlled change on outcomes in a network) reveal possible outcomes (futures) of cultural events?

I am not implying that these topics are certain to be published if you write about them; but they are interesting subjects, and we would be interested in hearing from someone with expertise on these subjects. But they only represent types of topics appropriate for this journal; there are many other subjects that might be addressed. The articles we have published in this first edition exemplify other topics of interest for this journal. We present a paper by **William F. Pinar** on noted Italian educational philosopher, Pier Paolo Pasolini. Pinar discusses how culture in Italy may be drifting away from Pasolini's perspectives—perhaps to society's detriment. **Marcea Ingersoll's** manuscript examines the “intersections between culture, education, and future through the lens of curriculum studies,” and proposes a set of viewpoints to guide the future of curriculum. **Joseph Jordania** argues that culture has moved away from the child-centered educational strategies in which students asks questions and seeks answers, to a more teacher-centered strategy in which teachers ask questions and gives answers. Jordania then proposes that both approaches could be effective in a curriculum of the future. **Hüseyin Can Coşkun** shows how culture in one region of Pakistan is negatively affecting its educational policies. And **Thade Buchborn** and **Johannes Treß** discuss the digitation of music and its impact on music education.

This journal, then, asks how cultural trends are influencing education and the future of education, for the good or the bad. We seek substantive, well-conceived and researched discussions of the nexuses between culture, education, and the future.

Can we predict likely outcomes. We can predict some of what we will deal with in the near future due to AI. But long term or currently unanticipated futures are merely speculative; one cannot predict without some evidence. We are not, like politicians who promise doom and gloom if policies they don't like are adopted; rather we do want to explore culture, education, and the future thoughtfully and intelligently. Our vision is to formulate credible information for school personnel that will allow them to act changes early in the emergence dynamic.