

## Foreword

For most of history, humans have made tools to extend the human body.

Since the development of writing, humanity has increasingly shifted to designing tools to extend the human mind. This shift has accelerated in the last century as the industrial age has waned and the so-called information age has grown in prominence. During this time, tools and methods have been developed to improve the capacity for people to *think together*.

In 1916, public relations pioneer Ivy Lee made the bold proclamation: “The people now rule. We have substituted for the divine right of kings, the divine right of the multitude”. Nowhere is the participatory power of the people more evident than online in sites such as YouTube, Wikipedia, blogs, podcasting, and social networking services. When seen from the perspective of higher education, open educational resources and open access journals promise a new information cycle, where the creation, dissemination, validation, sharing, and re-creation of information are available to all.

Yet, as is often the case, times of change also offer new beginnings. Uncertainty exists about how existing education systems will absorb and utilize new technologies and respond to the development of participative information creation evident in mainstream society. Power shifts are not readily absorbed by established segments of a society. As power flows from one system to another, the world appears to be unchanged: control, access, and information interaction are still supported the facade of previous systems. Newspapers and academic journals continue to publish in the same environment that produces blogs and open educational resources. The transition from individual genius to collaborative and collective genius is at a similar point – indications exist of a foundational change in social and information interactions, yet the curricular models of universities remains largely unchanged. Classroom teaching coexists with online learning. Traditional pedagogy reigns even as emerging social and networked pedagogies grow in prominence.

Imagine a future where learners have greater personal control in accessing experts, in joining groups of interest. A future where learner’s education is not confined to one institution and where subject matter exploration is achieved through networks of experts and novices, rather than the one-educator model evident in classrooms today. Image a future where classrooms are not confined to physical space, but permit learners from around the world to share and create resources. A future where educational resources – text, videos, podcasts, simulations - are readily accessible by all learners. Imagine a future where technology plays a greater role in performing grunt cognition tasks of presenting patterns, relations, and connections between people and data, thereby permitting learners and academics to more readily consider implications of those patterns and connections. Imagine a future where the collective expertise of learners and educators is harnessed through social technologies.

The seed of this future has already been planted in many schools, universities and colleges, and the task now remains for administrators and educators to explore how our current education system can be transformed to embrace the potential of participatory pedagogy.

Many questions remain about collective intelligence and about how emerging technologies will impact traditional institutions. While Wikipedia demonstrates the ability for collectives to create content, questions of quality remain. What is the value of individual expertise? How are individuals to be related to the larger group. And, while many technologies for collective action already exist, what do we still need? Nascent tools for information and relationship visualizes offer a glimpse.

*Collective Intelligence and E-Learning 2.0: Implications of Web-Based Communities and Networking* tackles important outstanding questions about the foundation and extent of change impacting education. Learning networks, new literacies, emerging pedagogies, new institutional models, and more are considered. The methods and tools of collaborative information creation are prominent in our daily lives. It is important for educators to explore how to best implement these approaches in the service of teaching and learning.

*Collective Intelligence and E-learning 2.0* addresses what will surely become one of the most important educational discussions of our generation: how does collective intelligence impact the current individualistic structure of education?

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