

## Building Learning Communities 2014

Alan November's conference has become an institution. I believe I have attended all on the East Coast but one. I have been his guest for several years now (which I appreciate a great deal) and enjoy the current setting: the historic Park Plaza Hotel in Boston.

I have presented on several topics over the years, most recently including this year, on Global STEM education, specifically.

I found that attendees interpret Global connections as having students in the US 'speak and share ideas and experiences' with their counterparts in all parts of the world. Approximately 30 countries were represented at BLC 2014 and Alan organized a "meetup" for those interested in connecting.

Global STEM Education, as we interpret it is more focused and encourages skills and knowledge building.

One exciting outcome of a conversation Alan and I have had is that next year there will be a STEM strand...then we can actually explore several aspects...global STEM education and global connections. I hope and expect that I will be able to help to organize it.

I am happy to finally have heard Michael Fullan.

What I have learned over five days:

Significant shifts (from Alec Couros):

Atoms to bits  
Scarcity to abundance  
Consuming to creating  
Individuals to networks  
Standardization to personalization

I also heard Private to public lives, compliance to care, consumer to producer (similar to the item above but from Michael Fullan)

One of the challenges I am dealing with now is the last one...I know there is power in multiple voices but, in my opinion, only if they are informed and well intentioned. I have seen, as I suspect has everyone else, the destructive power of unfounded claims and accusations which spread on social media and once in the ether acquire a life of their own and the damage cannot be undone. As a result I don't use social media except to respond to people I have met. If someone invites me to connect through Linked In I do so only if I know the person and/or the organization.

Other sound bites that invite reflection:

- The critical consumer needs to create
- Making learning visible
- Contributing to the education of others
- Digital residents vs visitors (no longer immigrants and natives)
- The implementation plan is not for the planners
- Leadership from the middle ( including the district and the schools)  
( *I believe I always practiced this principle ...an average of from the top with advice from the 'bottom'*)
- Deep learning is the goal...shared depth of learning

• The unplanned Digital Revolution:

Push...school is boring, alienating

Pull...the digital world and its new pedagogies

exciting/ engaging for teachers & students

elegantly easy to use

Technology is ubiquitous

real life problem solving

The synergy is pedagogy, change knowledge and technology to raise the bar for outcomes.

Alan's parting observations to the attendees

Consider concentrating one of these

1. Teach students to assess their own work. The technology can help..Kaizena

2. The most important teacher behavior is the quality of the feedback to student work...voice is better than writing
3. Make thinking visible (blogging is an example) Langwitches, Mindcraft are available tools)
4. Critical thinking on the internet. Give students a search challenge on the first day of school
5. Globalize the curriculum.Connect kids to others around the world

Below are the apps, programs and practices which were recommended by various presenters. I have not yet had a chance to explore all of them myself (the conference ended yesterday) but as with all resources I cite, the educator needs to determine whether they are useful for those the teach.

Quadlogging

Deviant Art

Scratch

[fanfiction.net](http://fanfiction.net)

EOLorg

YouTUBE education

Project Mash

Play with info

MYOB learning

Twitteracy...tweeting as a new literacy

Answer Garden

Back channel

Near Pod

Knowma

Educreations

Adobe Voice

Tech smith

Jung

EduCanon

Blendspace

Mathtrain TV  
Google Custom Search  
NewK 12  
LearnZillion  
OER Commons  
Wikipedia book creator  
Active textbooks  
Alex  
Canon sense media  
Graphite App flows  
Read write Think  
NBC Learn  
Watch Know Learn  
YouTube education site  
TED talks  
Symbaloo [edu.com](http://edu.com)  
Diigo  
Live Binders  
Scoop it  
Pinterest  
EduClipper  
Printfriendly  
Curriki  
SAS curriculum pathways  
NROC...hippocampus  
Wikis  
Connections  
Google ebooks  
Wikibooks  
International Child Digital Library  
Google Science Fair  
Kids Science Challenge  
3M Young Scientist Challenge  
Discovery Ed and Siemens  
EGFI  
Teach Engineering

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