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Dr. Michael Eamon

Chair, Collegiate Way International

Dr. Eamon is Principal of Catharine Parr Traill College and historian of print culture at Trent University in Peterborough, Canada. His work also addresses the fields of public history, museums, archives, heritage preservation and the digital humanities. His recent book, *Imprinting Britain*, looks at the development of the press in eighteenth-century Canada. In the past, he has also worked for federal organizations such as Parks Canada, Library and Archives Canada, National Archives and Records Administration (Washington, D.C.) as well as the Ontario Heritage Trust. An ardent supporter of collegiate universities across the world, he has been involved in the Collegiate Way International movement since the inaugural conference at Durham University in 2014.

A Word from the Chair

Welcome to the first edition of Collegiate Way International's newsletter. This overdue publication comes as a direct result of the recent Covid-19 pandemic that has affected us all in higher education. Being a part of a university college has always been both a physical and virtual experience. It is in our physical buildings that our residences, classrooms, common rooms, libraries, dining halls and the like can be found. A university college is truly the place where a community of scholars can be found. However, a college is also a state of mind, a virtual space that its members, fellows, and affiliates can take with them wherever they go. In particular, it is our shared hope as collegians that the erudition, skills, understanding and humility that our students have gained will continue to follow them throughout their lives, regardless of where they may be. There has been much talk about the importance of reflection at this time of social separation. For those who work at collegiate institutions, I believe it has reaffirmed this an important duality of college life and the importance to reach out beyond our physical boundaries.

In a modest way, it is my hope that this newsletter will be a useful tool to connect, to converse, and to help build the global collegiate community. Each issue will have news from around the world and will provide updates about upcoming Collegiate Way International events and conferences. It will also feature short essays, notes on best practices and correspondence. In this spirit, in the inaugural edition you will find two important essays from Kit Thompson (MCM College, Macau) and Ian Walker (Toad Hall, ANU) that offer further reflections on collegiality in the time of Covid.

It has always been a matter of pride for university colleges to have rich traditions, to boast engaged students, and to offer creative and hands-on forms of higher education. However, in spite of our diversity and differences we all share common philosophies and pedagogies that underscore the value of education for both self-improvement and the greater good. In my six years as Chair of Collegiate Way International, I have been truly humbled by the people that I have met. By their erudition, their passion, and their engagement. CWI is truly a dynamic community and we will all get through the vicissitudes of the current situation together.

Please share this newsletter widely. Although CWI extends across the globe, we are always looking for new members who share our outlook and aspirations. Likewise, please share with me any news, anecdotes, or essays that you might want published in the future.

Collegially yours,
Michael



“The World as our Encyclopedia”: the Importance of International Students

In large measure, the national collaboration of medical experts and political leaders has contained the impact of COVID-19 in Australia to low levels, especially compared with many countries overseas. Of course, whatever the statistics, no COVID death, no consequent business closure, no unemployment queue, no loss of hope, no poverty and no violence or abuse can be dismissed or ignored. While there have been extraordinary fiscal measures to deal with the crisis, and while there is an increasing commitment of support from State and Territory governments as well as from our universities, at the Federal level it seems that our international students have been too readily dismissed and largely ignored.

The message that it was time for international students to leave and return home was insensitive and inhospitable to say the least. Many students who had made personal and not just financial sacrifices to be here at our invitation could not return home as a result of travel restrictions and had also lost part-time and casual employment. Many continue to be anxious about family and friends in their home countries; many are struggling with the uncertainties of their on-line courses, assessments and examinations; and, even if living in compliant community accommodation, there can be a sense of loneliness and isolation, and of being unwelcome.

Some 70% of international students who were able to commence this academic year in our country have remained, including a large proportion staying in university residences with all the appropriate restrictions and protocols applied. I have the enormous privilege of heading Toad Hall at the Australian National University, an on-campus residence for mainly postgraduate and international students. About 80% of our nearly 230 residents remain in the Hall at this time. It is my eleventh year working with this community and I continue to be enriched by the range of background, creativity, experience, knowledge and culture of students who have come from some 50 countries across the world, many who are already leaders and others future leaders in their own lands and in global organisations. The residents continue to demonstrate the Hall motto ‘Unity in Diversity’, though currently with apt reference to unity in adversity!

There are myriads of examples of the part overseas born and international students have played since World War II in Australian universities, with, for example, the first two women engineering graduates of the University of Tasmania, Koesmarihati Koesnowars and Trismiati Harsono, being from Indonesia; the first two PhD graduates of the ANU, Antoni Przybylski and Ken Burridge, coming from Poland and Canada; boat refugee from China, John Yu, graduating in medicine from Sydney University, becoming CEO of the Children’s Hospital in Camperdown and Westmead (Sydney), 1996 Australian of the Year, and Chancellor of UNSW 2000-2005; and Hong Kong born John So, Lord Mayor



Dr. Ian Walker

Dr. Ian Walker is a graduate of the University of Sydney, Macquarie University (Sydney), and the University of New South Wales (UNSW) where he completed a PhD on the history of the establishment of denominational residential colleges in Australian universities. Since 2010, he has been Head of Toad Hall at the Australian National University in Canberra, an on-campus residence for mainly postgraduate and international students. He has also been Head of Ursula Hall at ANU, and was previously the Principal of The Kensington Colleges and Dean at New College at UNSW. Ian was President of University Colleges Australia (UCA) from 2014 to 2016, and convened the second Collegiate Way International Conference in Canberra in 2016.



of Melbourne 2001–2008, having lived at Australia’s first International House, opened at the University of Melbourne in 1957.

Before coming to the ANU I was at the University of New South Wales, and for four years I was a Governor and President of the then UNSW Alumni Association. I attended a number of graduations and alumni functions in places such as Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, and hosted young alumni functions in New York and London. It was clear and heart-warming to see the impact of international graduates’ experiences of their Australian education, some, for example, from their time as early Colombo Plan students and later as national leaders in areas such as politics, teaching and research, business, development and diplomacy.

In his ANU E Press publication, *Facing Asia: A History of the Colombo Plan*,¹ Daniel Oakman notes a report in 1953 from the then Australian High Commissioner to India, Walter Crocker, who commented that “the best publicity we have received so far has been from students who have been studying in Australia. In fact I am inclined to feel that the only political value which Australia has got out of its Colombo Plan efforts has been from the students.” International students who continue to be among this country’s most influential advocates and ‘ambassadors’!

I lived on campus at UNSW for 15 years as Dean at New College and then as Principal of The Kensington Colleges, where my residence was in Basser College. Basser opened during the height of the Colombo Plan and, in a recent history of The Kensington Colleges, the author Claire Scobie notes the Basser College motto ‘*Humani nil alienum*’ – no human is alien. She comments “In broad terms, this encouraged students to see their world as their encyclopedia, where no field of endeavour, no branch of learning, no aspect of human nature is foreign.”² This applied and continues to apply to both Australian and international students alike in the special value of their interaction with each other and continues, for example, as part of the New Colombo Plan established by the Chancellor of the Australian National University, Julie Bishop, when she was Australia’s Minister for Foreign Affairs. Far beyond any economic value, it is an engagement of minds and knowledge, of friendships and connections, of skills, service and stories in the shared exploration of the world as our encyclopedia.

We are now, of course, a much more digitally connected world and even more on-line engagement will be part of whatever will frame the ‘new normal’. Nevertheless, our domestic students, our universities and our nation will be the poorer without such on-campus and especially in-residence shared ‘exploration’. It is not just the inevitable loss of revenue, but, without much needed Federal support, the likely loss of real and lasting relationships, of research activity and output, of far-reaching respect and reputation and, indeed, of philanthropic return.

Toad Hall was named by its students in 1974 – a somewhat radical and quirky reaction to their concern, in a time of change, that the University might name it after a Prime Minister or Vice-Chancellor! There is a creek with willows at the back and so, from Kenneth Grahame’s children’s novel ‘*The Wind in the Willows*’, with its main character Mr Toad who lived in the finest house on the river”, they posted the name on the construction site sign ‘Toad Hall’! It was sanctioned by the University Council! It remains, with its ‘river’ a symbolic reminder of international connection, discovery and worth. Our Toad Hall ‘river’, Sullivan’s Creek, flows into Lake Burley Griffin and to the Molonglo River, on into the Murrumbidgee and to the great Murray, and out into Lake Alexandrina to the Southern Ocean, and into the seas beyond! In Grahame’s novel, the character ‘Mole’ sits on the bank “while the river still chattered on to him, a babbling procession of the best stories in the world, sent from the heart of the earth to be told at last to the insatiable sea.” ■

1 Daniel Oakman. *Facing Asia: A History of the Colombo Plan*. (Canberra: ANU Press, 2010).

2 Claire Scobie. *Basser, Philip Baxter and Goldstein: The Kensington Colleges*. (Randwick: UNSW Press, 2015) p. 17.



Titiro Whakamua: Thriving in a Changing World

Collegiate Way International Conference 2022 Update

The conference is postponed until 2022.

The fourth Collegiate Way International conference was set to be held in Dunedin, New Zealand in January 2021. The conference organisers were fast approaching the next phase of finalising venues and catering, speakers and conference timetable including social activities, calling for abstracts and attendance. This would have meant that we would have been confirming content between now and the end of the year ready to go early 2021. Unfortunately COVID-19 hit and the team recommended the conference be postponed by 12 months. This timescale was to address the global pandemic and to give time for countries to recover to an extent where people would be allowed to travel again. We await further information and will be in touch with potential delegates once we have more local information to start with.



Jamie Gilbertson

Jamie Gilbertson BA (Otago), Diploma for Graduates (Otago), Certificate in Theory and Practice of Social Work (Otago). Ninth Warden of Arana. Jamie is the overall manager of Arana College and leader of the community. Jamie has served at Otago for nearly twenty years and currently holds the portfolio as Senior Warden, The Otago Colleges. Over the years, Jamie has served on the Vice Chancellors Code of Conduct Committee, Limitation of Enrolment Committee, has Chaired the Board of Studies for Science Communication, been a contact person for the Ethical Behaviour Group and an executive member of that group. Jamie was one of the team involved in writing the sexual misconduct policy for Otago University. Jamie is also a Justice of the Peace.



Collegiate Way International Blog

For me, Collegiate Way International goes hand in hand with community building. At a time that so many of our communities are being seriously challenged, and especially as entire institutions have effectively been moved online, I hope that our blog might serve not only to strengthen our own community – that is, those colleagues who work in residential education – but also inform faculty, campus leaders, and students of the values and benefits of residential life. Submissions to the [Collegiate Way International Blog](#) can be directed to Joel Silverman at j.silverman@yale.edu.



Joel Silverman, the Director of Academic & Educational Affairs for Yale College, was the residential college dean of Morse College at Yale for 10 years. He earned his Ph.D. in American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. As a lecturer in the English and American Studies, Silverman taught seminars on censorship and U.S. culture, biography, and early Cold War culture. His research and teaching has focused on the intersection of power and persuasion in American law and literature. He is particularly interested in the way in which lawyers, doctors, and other specialists translate technical language for a general audience. He has written for *Judaism*, *Masculinities: A Journal of Identity and Culture*, and *American Sexuality*, and is working on a biography of ACLU attorney Morris Ernst, who defended Ulysses in 1933.



Dr. Kit Thompson

Dr. Thompson is the founding master of Moon Chun Memorial College at University of Macau. He is a Freeman of the City of London and Churchill Fellow (Juilliard, 1992), an experience that has continued to inspire and inform profoundly an approach to a career spent East and West. He has served on numerous advisory committees and received multiple awards and honours for cultural leadership. These include receiving an OBE for services to the Arts and to UK-Hong Kong cultural exchanges in 2011 and being named to the highest of French Knighthoods, Légion d'honneur and Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2017. Dr. Thompson has served as director, chairman, and president of numerous arts academies, theatres, and boards including serving as the founding Principal Birmingham Conservatoire, now the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. He holds honorary doctoral degrees from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and the University of Plymouth. Dr. Thompson was elected to the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, Salzburg in 2019 and the Royal Institute of Philosophy in 2020. He was made a Fellow and Associate of Clare Hall, University of Cambridge in 2019.



Checking Out of Hotel California: Blinking in Post-Pandemic First Light

As weary months wear on, many countries still in lockdown, this period may be recollected, not as guests residing in the Hotel California, nor the confinement of Covid prisoners, but rather as a seminal moment of reflection flanked by fore and aft periods.

Threatened by a veiled enemy, fought by masked global armies of front-line combatants, we have arrived at a moment when exceptional actions, a veritable call to arms, is needed. Whilst fighting a health crisis, we are required to consider – and consider at high-speed – what next befalls a world of transitional periods of torpidity, renewal and resurgence, for in all likelihood, research scientists hypothesise, there'll be another pathogen along soon. One can envision transmuting pathogen pantechnicons waiting in line along the M20/A20 in Kent. South East Englanders have had more than a foretaste of the scenario following Brexit negotiations.

Seizing the chance to rethink the role of a collegiate university, given its exposure, and duty of care responsibilities in a topsy-turvy world changed forever, requires a review of the system of education at all levels – kindergarten to tertiary – conventional time-honoured collegiate teaching to de-schooling. But in today's world, Ivan Ilych, Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal, seem like prophets without honour in their own time.

Given the urgency Covidity brings, there is neither the time, nor appropriate platform at present, to challenge the collegiate model in detail, nor economic wherewithal and fallout. Suffice to say, 19th February 2020, saw the S&P 500 index (flagship US stock market) close at a record high. Just two weeks later it had entered into a bear market on its way to an intra-quarter loss of 34%. Unsurprisingly, given an empty chair economy, government expenditure on education throughout most of the developed world remained low. At least the forthcoming Collegiate Way International symposium offers a rare moment to take a more in-depth look at the parameters of the collegiate model in a time of living with a Trojan horse, indiscriminate, pathogenic: Afro-Americans, the poor and ethnic minorities being disproportionately affected.

For governments throughout the world the imperative to appropriate a principled and ethical stance has rarely been greater; and for CWI colleagues, the particularity of steering collegiate education along a pathway which reasserts a vocation extended, coexisting with global pathogens. Collegiate education has a respected marque. Our aspirations, cautiously positioned perhaps, may at least be seen as creating resilience in our students, in our colleagues, and in our colleges. Yet in light of the boundless nature of a global pathogen, there are further directorial strategies, teaching modes and pastoral provisions to be trialled. Adequate resources will need to be fought for: highly qualified, adept and determined faculty, colleagues who evolve the model further and devise ways forward through the twists and turns, fortunes and forfeits.



It is perhaps noteworthy how we have embraced a lexicon of conflict. One could be forgiven for believing we were at war with Covid-19. The pandemic seems to suggest this as ‘research laboratories, scientists endeavour to find a vaccine to repel the invading pathogen’.¹ We talk of front-line staff. Governments speak of war chests and war cabinets, of ‘home front volunteers’ ‘doing their bit’. This time around one has yet to hear a Brit assert the hoary chestnut to keep calm and carry on. Few remain either calm or feel able to carry on, nevertheless they do; and yet this period of Covidity has witnessed an outpouring of educational and artistic creativity, of prodigious innovation online, on demand, on message. In Britain, inescapable parallels are drawn with the spirit of the 1940s “stand alone” moments, alluded to by HM The Queen in her TV announcement on 5 April, evoking her inaugural broadcast when the adolescent princess addressed the world. We talk of self-sacrifice, resistance, communal endeavour, field hospitals: of NHS Nightingale, and Louisa Jordan, the latter named after a Scottish nurse who died in service during the First World War. Each temporary, emergency, critical-care hospitals with similar medical units created in Wales and Northern Ireland. We speak of a pernicious enemy which has to be vanquished, defeated in an all-consuming battle of wits.

A leitmotif of conflict is hardly conducive with collegiate education as we know it, nor exclusive to a disunited United Kingdom. Whilst Angela Merkel, German Chancellor, sees the punishing confrontation of Covid-19 as the foremost trial her country has faced since 1945, Donald Trump decrees himself a “war-time president”. His seemingly policy on-the-hoof is costing lives at time when narrative needs to convey the urgency of what is happening around him. Mr Trump, unlike Napoleon, has yet to proclaim himself Emperor. Given a toxic period, disingenuous actors, and strength of public feeling, his administration appears not to be listening, nor to be following a script. In lieu, he has become obsessed with re-election. In the throes of a virulent pathogen, Mr Trump’s administration has chosen disassociation and sublimation to rebut and invalidate hard science with spur-of-the-moment malevolent, unkindpropaganda, to undermine international organisations, multilateral decision-making through self-interest.



Freshman leaders in our colleges know that Joe Biden is not Mr Trump’s adversary; it is a world-wide bacterium. That it is leadership ability, measured existential judgement, and how the pathogen and fall-out of a global economy are handled, which will determine the leadership election, and hustings throughout the world, countrywide to collegiate. The President is unlikely to seize the moral high ground any time soon. He may, at least, be spared the ignominy: a contemporary Beethoven – John Adams, Alice Goodman, or Peter Sellars – Nixon in China was at best valorous in nature – vehemently expunging the President’s name from the composer’s manuscript. Eroica (heroic) the Republican President is not. Inglorious, ignoble feelings of intense jealousy, or simply unaware, he has yet to demonstrate lion-hearted entitlement.

In a time of global heightened insecurity, collegiate education provides an analytic framework to weigh contradiction, ambiguity and paradoxical views. It has seldom been more pertinent when superpowers are positing axiomatically and diametrically opposing policy. In Britain, the response from government has been in stark contrast to South Korea, China, and to Germany – plain-talking leadership by Angela Merkel led by scientific evidence – has devoted huge academic resources for epidemiological research. Whilst evolved administrations in Scotland and Wales, were engaged in “adult” conversations as to how restrictions might be alleviated; the overriding narrative in England was characterised by leadership being ‘too little and too slow’.

Justly identified British heroes are our NHS colleagues, Windrush generation, Portuguese, immigrant doctors and nurses, some but one year out of graduation, who have died; fragile people, some of whom were unjustly detained, shorn of legal rights, and civil liberties, warned of expatriation; some erroneously exiled from Britain by the Government. Richard Horton, editor of the Lancet, was quoted as lives could have been saved. Even in March, with the Prime Minister in hospital, when people were seeing their livelihoods

1 New statesman 11 April 2020-04-2020

destroyed, it described the risk as moderate. Other parts of the world were emphasising self-sacrifice and public responsibility. Assuming the lexicon of George Clemenceau, First World War French premier, Emmanuel Macron has placed the Republic on a “war footing”. And, Xi Jinping beckoned the spirit of Mao Zedong as he proclaimed a “people’s battle”.

Now, quiet streets are indeed ‘Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine, With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine’; music from open windows, impromptu recitals from roof tops, an aubade, evoking day-break in Tuscany; then a serenade, from a Florida lanai garlanded with Spring flowers, at nightfall’; plaudits from communities positioned two metres apart in praise of medical front-line personnel, supermarket cashiers and ambulance employees. As ethnographer and music anthropologist, Kristina Jacobsen, writes, “Into [the] void of daily scents and sounds, a multitude of melodies and activities has been born”, veranda solos, impromptu dance, daily rituals of kitchen worktop barre exercises for articulate bodies, kitchen-sink drama, “recordings and in-home videos;”² These: “wail about corona, express defiance towards the disease and communicate the sense of hostility that some locals feel towards the influx of wealthy northern Italians who have been rushing to their summer houses.”



There is clearly a solid case for increasing on-line programmes not simply through periods of storm and stress but for building them in to the very fabric of collegiate education and across a comprehensive range of science and arts disciplines. It is to music, nature and the mind, that one goes in moments of sorrow and quiet desperation, and for solace. Need has inspired artistic creation and ritual, galvanised social spirit, online interactivity, forged connections across neighbourhoods. In some cases, cyber space has brought neighbours together for the first time. More remarkable still is that this has happened across the planet as it braves itself for still more months of Novo Coronavirus isolation and quarantine.

Pathogens could spread at a rate formerly experienced in care homes through collegiate universities, where conserving of young peoples’ health and welfare has to be foremost. Vivaldi’s *Ospedali* conserved welfare of a different nature and ritual: feminine virtue to a marriageable age. Anthropologist, Victor Turner, perceived, ritual as fundamentally, “a stereotyped sequence of activities involving gestures, words and objects, performed in a sequestered place.”³ Ritual is found in the time markers of medieval City Waits musicians, in societal and neighbourhood demarcation, has brought an awareness of individuality. In a time of pandemic, it has created a virtual reminiscence theatre, expressed a transformed ecosystem. The influence of ritual lies in its formulaic nature appearing everywhere and inviolability. All in a singular stroke.

Improbability has become the backdrop of a théâtre de l’absurde, a théâtre de complicité with an extraordinary dramatis personae: Schrödinger’s cat entering from the wings; concurrently, conceivably asymptomatic, silently spreading the virus whilst shaking it off. A reset to familiarity looks as unlikely as *Waiting for Godot*;⁴ we’re already *A Minute too Late*;⁵ restarting, like science fiction. Imposed or self-quarantined, our lives are discretely bonded by a virtual, interactive real-time world, of interlocutors – and bookshelves – spatially disconnected. One garrulous, another silent and secluded provides but a glimpse into a correspondent’s leather-bound scholarly credential or paperback popular fiction interests. People declare themselves by the books they profess to read.

Ritual, practice and praxis form the sentient world in which we live; they inhabit our day-to-day existence, shape finite days, avocation, vocation and vacation points, moments of leisure, sculpt the collegiate almanac, determine lifecycles, quality of natural environment, wildlife, air quality, way of living and manner of dying. Over time, rituals and practices embed themselves, provide communicative and a semantic means by which to traverse uncharted cultural cyberspace.

2 Jacobsen, 2019, looked in to what ways Sardinian households were using online and from-home music practices to manage anxiety triggered by coronavirus. Pub. Sapiens. Cf., #flashmobsonoro, #iorestoaocasa (“I’m staying home”), #lamusicanonsiferma (“the music doesn’t stop”) and #tuttoandràbene (everything will be OK”).

3 Victor Turner, Anthropologist, 1984.

4 *Waiting for Godot*, première, 1953 ; Theatre critic Martin Esslin coined the term in a 1960 essay. He grouped plays around absurd an all-encompassing premise of the absurd. Albert Camus used the term in a 1942 essay “The Myth of Sisyphus”.

5 1984 production by Complicité founded 1983 by Simon McBurney, Annabel Arden and Marcello Magni, originally as Théâtre de Complicité

Today's governments are required to govern in terrain unmapped by the social cartographers of our time: unknown to a generations of baby-boomers, save experienced, if at all, by early post-war children in the 50s when a culture of rationing, if not the practice itself, was entrenched in a milieu of thrift and frugality. Early adapters to this, new to some, Animal Farm, dystopian world, sense never-ending cycles of transmuting pathogens. In this, college campuses can be bellwethers, indicating the advent of a new age. An age of austerity and simplicity, yet one which could see crime rates decrease dramatically, an ascent to a kinder more considerate world; not as a time of furlough viewed as a wilderness, but one which may stand as proof positive for a veritable renaissance of social change, education, culture and quality of life itself. ■



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