Technology Implications for Quality Education, Sustainable Cities and Communities

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EDSU 915: Creative and Innovative Technology Thinking in Educational Sustainability

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July 4, 2021

 As a high school science teacher and lifelong learner, I am passionate about education. The classes I have been teaching the last several years are Environmental Science and Zoology. I also have taught our night school program which is through a program called Odyssey for about ten years and online courses through Illinois Virtual School and Edgenuity. The online courses through Odyssey span the subject areas and through IVS and Edgenuity I teach Earth and Space, Oceanography, middle school science, and Spanish classes. These technologies are helpful to students needing to make up work or student athletes that travel. I have had students in my classes training for the Olympics. They are also being used by districts to push students through to graduate. It is very easy to plagiarize or copy other’s assignments. There is a website called Brainly that is frequently used.

 For our society to move forward education should be lifelong and not be modeled on the factory style where students are shuffled throughout their days and not taught at all how to manage their own time. Over the past 5 years and most evident after this last year the schooling that has been delivered to students is ill equipping them for the world. Students read less and are not adept at technology. Using Tik Tok and playing video games are technologies built to drag them in and keep them using them.

 My interest and research are in Indigenous Science and Pedagogy. I was inspired to find these topics as I have grown up in the United States and know very little about those that truly “founded” this land. People that were here for centuries through thousands of generations. I heard talks by Winona La Duke, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and Wilma Mankiller that said to find your own indigenous, so I began to research Druidry as my family is part Irish. There are many historical and philosophical similarities between Druids and Indigenous peoples including a cogent social structure that is inclusive and has many rituals.

 Two books that are important to building sustainable communities are Donut Economics by Kate Raworth and Local is our Future by Helena Norbert Hodge. In these books it is emphasized that through localism all sustainable issues can be improved upon and solved. Education and sustainable communities should be hand in hand to solve issues of Climate disruption, water issues, agriculture. In a donut inspired local town resources and learning would be as big as the town itself. Schools could have various satellite locations throughout a city to educate students and its citizens on how to be a part of society. My work through Friends of the Fox River and The McNamee Foundation is working on creating that opportunity. It is imperative that students are given more lifelike educational opportunities as found in maker spaces and open labs.

 The city of East Dundee, IL (where I live) has an amazing start to being sustainable. In Dundee township there is an organic farm where students can have internships and we can buy farm raised meat and local produce. There are also several CSAs in the area including [Angelic Organics](https://www.learngrowconnect.org/)\*. [Friends of the Fox River](https://friendsofthefoxriver.org/) is working on having a forest teaching area that includes a prairie, fen, and pollinator garden. During the lockdown it was prevalent that people in the community supported local businesses so they could reopen, and many did. These businesses are all locally owned, and none are chain restaurants.

 In Donut Economics it is discussed how keeping money and resources within a community are what keeps them stable. Educating people on how to use technology

to help their towns and keep resources within in are things that create workable solutions rather than ones that keep pushing onto others. And in my experience discussing localism and strengthening community is something all people agree on regardless of their political views.

# References

[[1]](#endnote-1)Norberg-Hodge, H. (2019). *Local Is Our Future: Steps to an Economics of Happiness*. Local Futures.

Raworth, K. (2017). **Doughnut economics** : seven ways to think like a 21st-century **economist**.

\*Angelic Organics is one of the first CSAs in the United states and there is a great documentary called The Real Dirt on Farmer John that tells the amazing story of the man that began it.

1. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)