

Melbourne CSHE/CGHE Book launch: Changing Higher Education for a Changing World
Wednesday 14 October 2020

1. Thank you for your contributions both today in your comments and past contributions in written form. With the significant growth in online learning opportunities offered by providers other than universities and a growing interest in micro-credentialing as an alternative to a ‘basic’ undergraduate degree, are we, as university educators becoming less relevant to the labour market needs of the world we now live in? Are we on the precipice of no longer being relevant since we continue to enmesh ourselves in a model of learning that is transmissive, rather than experiential, and in an industrial-age organisational form?
2. Will the current disruption due to COVID likely to reduce or eliminate the monopoly public Universities have on awarding degrees?
3. Unis have been equating graduate outcomes as evidence that going to uni produces good outcomes, i.e. equating correlation with causation. Such practice would have been revealed as unethical anywhere else. How is it that Unis have been able to get away with it for so long?
4. 2 questions for Bruce and Lorraine: (1) To what extent is the design of an income-contingent loan dependent on integration with the taxation system in order to function effectively? (2) Are you seeing any opportunities/gaps/examples whereby ICLs could play a role in funding global student mobility?
5. Will the stocks of universities rise (positive public sentiment) as a result of COVID as the epidemiologists, immunologists, economists, learning designers and technologists based with universities take on new levels of veneration and overtaking the ‘fake news’ era. Will this see a plausible up-tick in public willingness to fund universities adequately?
6. Many thanks to all the presenters, and congratulations to you all for this fantastic and very timing book. I would like to have a few questions on the nature of academic labour in the years to come. Given the casualisation of faculties that has happened for quite a long time, what is your take on this situation? Also, in the past we had schools of thought that were attached to institutions, for example the Frankfurt School and their critical theory, but nowadays institutions are globalised and getting similar to each other, academics are mobilising, will we still have schools of thought that are affiliated to institutions? Thank you all very much, I really appreciate the presentations and discussion.
7. As you suggest William, there are multiple factors driving the change agenda. Whilst issues and challenges have arisen in the past, they are nothing on a global scale such as COVID-19. Many thanks to Simon and William for your comments. I wanted to reinforce the need for universities to differentiate themselves from others by providing curated bodies of knowledge. Do you think that this is a skill which we had in the past, but risk losing unless we address the media and political comment on the value of a university education?

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8. For Simon and William: Given the Australian govt's lack of financial support for universities through the funding schemes such as JobKeeper, partly potentially due to the perception that universities are 'independently wealthy' despite the severe reduction in international student enrolments and hence essential revenue leading to a likely loss of about 20,000 jobs across the sector, would it be fair to say that universities are seen as elitist and out of touch with the public? Do Australian universities fulfil the same role of public good provision as much as they do in China, as presented today?
9. For Lin Tian: Given the significant role that universities play in providing public good and the significant role the government plays in the university sector in China, how is independence and objectivity ensured in research ensuring that government imperatives don't skew or confound analysis of research outcomes?"
10. You said one of the reasons students come to unis is social aspects. But that can be gained at work as well while working and studying online.
11. To all. What do you think the short and long-term impacts of the proposed Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Bill 2020 on Australian university international research and learning engagement?