

Association Report

to the

**Australian Federation of Societies for Studies of Society and
Environment**

**Values education, civics and
citizenship**

**By the
Victorian Commercial Teachers Association
On the Annual Conference, Comview**

- Association: Victorian Commercial Teachers Association
PO Box 361, Abbotsford, Vic. 3067
Ph 03 94199 622
Fax 03 9419 1205
Email: vcta@vcta.asn.au
Web: www.vcta.asn.au
- Date of Forum: Monday 24 November, 2003 (a component of the VCTA annual three-day VCTA Comview Conference)
- Time of Forum: 9.15am to 3.30pm
- Venue: La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria
- Invitees: The Civic Values and Citizenship program was promoted via the Comview program to
- Business Studies coordinators (Vic. secondary schools)
 - all VCTA members
 - Principals (Vic. Secondary schools).
- Program: A summary is overleaf. The full Comview program is available on the VCTA website: www.vcta.asn.au

Forum Program Summary

9.15 – 10.15 am

Sustaining Civic and Cit Education – Connecting with Other Issues on the Education Agenda

Libby Tuddball, Lecturer in Education
Monash University

OR

Exploring Civics and Citizenship – Useful Websites

Dr. Rick Williams, Parliamentary Education Office, ACT

10.45 – 11.45 am

Teaching Economy and Society Through Discovery Democracy

Pat Hincks, Project Manager, Discovering Democracy
Curriculum Corporation

OR

Developing Informed Consumers

Dr David Cousins, Director
Consumer Affairs Victoria

12 noon – 1.00pm

Having Opinions on Issues – Is This Good Citizenship?

David Arnold, Manager, School Programs, National Museum of Australia
Stephen Cutting, Educational Radio Productions, National Museum of Australia

OR

The Practicalities – A School Approach to Civics and Citizenship

Caroline Terode, Brimbank College

OR

Values Education

David Brown, Snr. Project Manager,
Curriculum Corporation

2.00 – 3.30pm

Essential Core Skills for Active Citizenship – A Curriculum Approach

Anne Dwyer and Lisa Sheldon-Collins, Toorak College

OR

Global Citizenship

Lisa Hayman, Bendigo Snr. Secondary College
Jill Wilson, Asia Education Foundation

Program Details

9.15am

Participants select to attend one of the following:

Sustaining Civics and Citizenship Education – Connecting with Other Issues on the Education Agenda

Civics and citizenship education should be core work for schools. In the past few years, there has been renewed interest in exploring the scope of CCE, and how it can be developed in school classrooms, through student participation programs, in whole school programs, and through school/community links. In this session, participants will explore a range of strategies schools are involved in to develop CCE, and also to make links to other issues including middle schooling, literacy, and student engagement in authentic learning. Reference will be made to the *Discovering Democracy* program and other resources for CCE. The session is presented by Libby Tudball, Lecturer in Education, Monash University.

OR

Exploring Active Citizenship

Students are encouraged to be *active citizens*, but are they clear in their own minds what defines an active citizen? Indeed, do we as educators have a reasonable working definition of active citizenship? To many, being an active citizen implies some form of political activism. For students, however, being an active citizen in the context of the school usually means something different. This presentation by Dr Rick Williams, Assistant Director, Parliamentary Education Office, ACT, explores definitions of active citizenship as gleaned from various organisations' presence on the WWW. It also attempts to reach a useful and relevant definition for students so that they might see some attractive purpose for becoming active citizens. Thirdly, it attempts to identify some of the ways in which students can become active citizens in Australia.

OR

Curriculum That Works - A Resource in Civics and Citizenship

This hands-on session focuses on how civics and citizenship has been integrated within programs offered in *Curriculum That Works for Economy & Society*, a VCTA curriculum resource. Tony Ward, a teacher at Debney Park Secondary College, will explore how civics and citizenship has been woven into programs designed to meet outcomes of the SOSE Economy and Society strand, Levels 4 - 6.

10.15am Morning Tea

10.45am

Participants select to attend one of the following:

Developing Informed Consumers

Dr David Cousins, Director, Department of Consumer Affairs Victoria, will explain CAV's vision of "a confident and informed Victorian marketplace distinguished by ethical

trading and consumer protection". The various ways in which CAV can assist consumers and traders will be discussed, and recent department changes and new responsibilities outlined. Dr Cousins will also discuss a major new initiative, the *Consumer Education in Schools Project*, designed to empower young consumers and improve their financial literacy. A range of CAV resources will be provided for participants.

OR

Teaching Economy and Society through Discovering Democracy

Discovering Democracy provides a rich range of resources for Economy and Society, Levels 5 and 6. Materials about key values of a representative democracy, key political structures, the roles of political and legal institutions and opportunities for citizens to participate in the political process can all be explored through a variety of resources available in print and online. Presented by Pat Hincks, Curriculum Corporation, this workshop will look specifically at those resources for Levels 5 and 6 and how they can be adapted for student needs.

11.45 am

Participants select to attend one of the following:

Having Opinions on Issues – Is This Good Citizenship?

Many students are not interested in politics - but they are interested in issues. Presented by David Arnold and Stephen Cutting, National Museum of Australia, this workshop will provide participants with a way of helping their students explore issues that involve active and informed citizenship processes. It will also introduce them to the highly successful *Talkback Classroom Project*.

OR

The Practicalities – A School Approach to Civics and Citizenship

Take away a basket full of ideas for civics and citizenship! Presented by Caroline Torode, Brimbank College, this session will provide a range of approaches to the teaching of civics and citizenship in Years 7 to 10. Reference will be made to active citizenship, the Australian political and legal systems and useful resources. An outline of a whole-school approach will be presented.

OR

Values Education – Whose Values and How?

How are values taught in Australian schools? Whose values are they? Can there be consensus about the core values that Australian schools ought to foster? Can values education provide another means of encouraging student engagement and student connectedness? What evidence is there that school communities are making a difference through whole-school approaches to values education? Presented by David Brown, Curriculum Corporation, this workshop will explore these issues and report on the findings of the national *Values Education Study* and its 70 schools-based projects across all States and Territories. The workshop will conclude with a review of likely futures and approaches for values education in Australia.

1.00 pm Lunch

2.00pm

Participants select to attend one of the following:

Essential Core Skills for Active Citizenship – A Curriculum Approach

What is meant by 'core skills for active citizenship'? And how can we 'teach' core skills? This presentation by Anne Dwyer and Lisa Sheldon-Collins, Toorak College, provides a valuable overview of how to tackle the teaching of civics and citizenship with the focus on a skills-based approach, as distinct from a content-based emphasis. The session will include an outline of topics and units taught.

OR

Global Citizenship

Looking for ways of challenging students' knowledge and understandings of Australia's nearest neighbours? Lisa Hayman, Bendigo Senior Secondary College and Jill Wilson, The Asia Education Foundation, will introduce participants to the award winning *Voices and Visions from Indonesia*, and *Voices and Visions from China*. These CD-ROMs provide teachers with a rich range of resources including TV commercials, film extracts and contemporary music videos. The focus of the workshop will be on opportunities to develop higher order thinking skills of students and provide enrichment of existing curriculum. It will demonstrate how issues such as globalisation and civics can be addressed in an engaging manner. Participants will receive a copy of the CD-ROMs.

Key Issues

Key issues explored by presenters and participants were:

- that civics and citizenship education (CCE) should be core work for schools
- the connection is being made in schools between CCE and other education issues such as values education, the middle years of schooling, authentic learning and the like, but the degree to which this occurs varies significantly between schools
- that values education is still a relatively 'new concept' for many schools, including an awareness of (or, in some cases, lack of) its links to CCE
- an exploration of how to gain space in the 'crowded curriculum' ie by linking to civic participation, state and national curriculum standards and education agendas (eg national goals of schooling), values education etc
- an acknowledgement that the many reasons for gaining 'space' in the curriculum are many of the actual strengths of CCE
- a strong link can exist between student wellbeing and CCE and values education, dependent upon the extent of the 'active', participatory and student decision making nature of the CCE program(s) offered
- an exploration of the degree to which schools are including global citizenship/issues in CCE ie the extent to which issues are explored beyond the immediate local level
- that CCE programs have the potential for wide spread benefit to the whole school and wider community, and nation
- effective professional development is required for teachers
- some uncertainty exists as to what the 'agenda' might be for values education and what is the definition of values education
- that values education is fundamental to a basic understanding of what it is to be an Australian citizen.

Strategies/Implications for Classroom Teaching

- participants were keen to explore the approaches and programs of colleagues, often considered the most valuable aspect of forums and professional development opportunities
- a range of approaches/categories exist for the 'teaching' of values education
- CCE is not confined to the SOSE KLA but is a cross curricula initiative eg also in English and H&PE KLAs. And with a whole school approach CCE can be extended into other KLAs such as Technology, The Arts
- a range of resources exist to support the teaching of CCE and values education, particularly via Curriculum Corporation
- an assessment rubric can be utilized for CCE and a sample was offered
- a whole school approach can produce the best outcomes, but that this must be adopted in the real sense of the word 'whole' ie with active support from school senior management, staff and across KLAs.
- parental and community support were considered very valuable assets in formulating CCE programs
- a strength of values education is in the very notion itself ie in developing consensus within schools as to the meaning of, and implementation of programs, for values education and that many valid approaches are possible
- an examination of varying school programs were offered ie varying in content
- active participation/decision making is an approach that is especially engaging for students