

Prof. Rex Li's Writings

Category: Psychology

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Title: Summary and Review of Howard Gardner (2008) *Five Minds for the Future*

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Summary/ Abstract: Gardner outlined 5 minds:

- Disciplined
- Synthesizing
- Creating
- Respectful
- Ethical

This is the research program of Gardner after his MI plateau.

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Summary and Review of Howard Gardner (2008)

5 Minds for the Future

Chapter 1: (p.1 - 21) A Personal Introduction

1 - 5 (A) From Description to Prescription

Gardner said he was moving from description of mind (81) to prescription (51), "I concern myself have with the kinds of minds that people will need if they – if we – are to thrive in the world during the eras to come." (p.1)

With the 5 minds = 5 "dramatis personae" – "person will be well be well equipped to deal with what is expected, as well as what cannot be anticipated" (p.2)

They are "broad uses of the mind that we can cultivate at school, in professions or at the workplace". (p.4)

6 - 9 (B) Gardner's experience in different minds

Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Psychology ● Management of research team
Synthesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writing textbooks ● Writing articles, he "enjoyed reading disparate texts." (p.6)
Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Frames of Mind</i> – a new theory ● Creativity, leadership, ethics "attempts to break new ground – efforts at forging knowledge." P.7)
Respectful and ethical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relations to others ● Understand other persons on their own terms" (p.8), avoid stereotyping <p style="margin-left: 40px;">I must try to understand other persons on their own terms, make an imaginative leap when necessary, seek to convey my trust in them, and try so far as possible to make common cause with them find to be worthy of their trust.</p> ● "good work – work that is excellent, ethical and engaging." (p.9)

10 **(C) Gardner’s concern of education – nurturing young minds and workers**

We should be concerned with how to nurture these minds in the younger generation, those who are being educated currently to become the leaders of tomorrow. But we should be equally concerned with those in today’s workplace: how best can we mobilize our skills – and those of our coworkers – so that all of us will remain current tomorrow and the day after tomorrow? (p.10)

10 - 11 **(D) Gardner’s Criticism of Old Education**

- (1) It is not working. We need new thinking. “evidence accrues that we are not successful in these purists (scientific theorizing, tolerant of immigrants, skilled in conflict resolution, p.10)
- (2) Change changes goals and capacities. For example, no premium to good memory and recitation. (p.11)
- (3) “New educational aspirations” To respect others cultures
- (4) Summary of his new education. (.11)

We can speak about these changes as entailing the power of science and technology and the inexorability of globalization (the second meaning of global in the subtitle of this chapter). These changes call for new educational forms and processes. The minds of learners must be fashioned and stretched in five ways that have not been crucial – or not as crucial – until now.

Prof. Li: Read it 15 years after its publication, I really can’t pick much.

13 - 15 **(E) Gardner on Goals of Education**

- (1) “Education is inherently and inevitably an issue of human goals and human values” (p.13)

(2) He criticized cliché goals of

“using the mind “

“closing the achieved gap”

“helping individuals realize their potential”

“appreciating our cultural heritage”

“having the skills to compete”

“leading the world in international comparisons of scores.”

(3) He thought our current education is too geared on science and technology. Humanities is important too. “A full life, like a full organization, harbors multiple disciplines. Excessive focus on science and technology reminds me of the myopia associated with ostriches or luddites.” (p.15)

16 - 19 (F) The unprecedented trends of globalization (p.16)

episode of globalization. The current incarnation features four unprecedented trends: (1) the movement of capital and other market instruments around the globe, with huge amounts circulating virtually instantaneously each day; (2) the movement of human beings across borders, with well more than 100 million immigrants scattered around the world at any time; (3) the movement of all matter of information through cyberspace, with megabytes of information of various degrees of reliability available to anyone with access to a computer; (4) the movement of popular culture—such as stylish clothing, foods, and melodies—readily, even seamlessly, across borders so that teenagers the world over look increasingly similar, even as the tastes, beliefs, and values of their elders may also converge.⁵

(G) Gardner criticises science without scientific thinking

dent. We acknowledge the importance of science and technology but do not teach scientific ways of thinking, let alone how to develop individuals with the synthesizing and creative capacities essential for continual scientific and technological progress. And too often, we think of science as the prototype of all knowledge, rather than one powerful way of knowing that needs to be complemented by artistic and humanistic and perhaps also spiritual stances. We ac-

(H) The importance of 5 minds (p.18-19)

- Individuals without one or more disciplines will not be able to succeed at any demanding workplace and will be restricted to menial tasks.
- Individuals without synthesizing capabilities will be overwhelmed by information and unable to make judicious decisions about personal or professional matters.
- Individuals without creating capacities will be replaced by computers and will drive away those who do have the creative spark.
- Individuals without respect will not be worthy of respect by others and will poison the workplace and the commons.
- Individuals without ethics will yield a world devoid of decent workers and responsible citizens: none of us will want to live on that desolate planet.

Examples: (p.19)

John Keats Marie Curie	Discipline
Aristotle Goethe	Synthesis
Martha Graham Bill Gates	Creativity
Rachel Carson Jean Monnet	ethical