



## Editorial 5(2): Avoiding Faustian pacts: beyond despair, impostorship, and conceit

Jürgen Rudolph<sup>A</sup>

A

Head of Research, Kaplan Singapore; Coeditor in Chief, Journal of Applied Learning & Teaching

Shannon Tan<sup>B</sup>

B

Research Assistant, Kaplan Higher Education Singapore; Journal Manager, Journal of Applied Learning & Teaching

Tania Aspland<sup>C</sup>

C

Professor and Vice President, Academic, Kaplan Business School Australia, Coeditor in Chief, Journal of Applied Learning & Teaching

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Our editorial discusses the relevance of Goethe's *Faust* for the 21st-century higher education teacher and researcher before providing an overview of the issue at hand. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's marathon drama *Faust* is one of the most famous German plays of all time and also one of the most eminent and frequently-cited pieces of German literature. It consists of 12,110 verses, and Goethe (after whom the German cultural centres around the world, the Goethe Institutes, are named) worked on and off on the play throughout his long adult life – for close to 60 years between 1773 till his death in 1832. In 2000, an unabridged performance of both parts of *Faust* took a whopping 22 hours (Jenny, 2000)!

In the play's first part, Faust is introduced as a disenchanted academic. At night, whilst in his high-vaulted Gothic chamber, he restlessly complains:

"Ah! Now I've *done* Philosophy,  
I've finished Law and Medicine,  
And sadly even Theology:  
Taken fierce pains, from end to end.  
Now here I am, a fool for sure!  
No wiser than I was before:  
Master, Doctor's what they call me,  
And I've been ten years, already,  
Crosswise, arcing, to and fro,  
Leading my students by the nose,  
And see that we can know - nothing!  
It almost sets my heart burning."  
(v. 354-365)

Faust experiences an existential epistemic crisis ("we can know – nothing!") that also shows characteristics of impostor syndrome ("now here I am a fool for sure! / No wiser than I was before"). Faust shows himself as dissatisfied and even disgusted by the philosophical and theological answers to the big questions that he has been seeking to answer in vain. However, the following part also contains conceit and self-aggrandisement:

"I'm cleverer than all these teachers,  
Doctors, Masters, scribes, preachers:  
I'm not plagued by doubt or scruple,  
Scared by neither Hell nor Devil –"  
(v. 366-369)

Thereafter, his crisis of knowledge and impostor syndrome takes over again:

"Instead all Joy is snatched away,  
What's worth knowing, I can't say,  
I can't say what I should teach  
To make men better or convert each."  
(v. 370-373)

Parts of the above are reminiscent of Socrates's oft-quoted 'I know that I know nothing'. Although Socrates may have never quite uttered the afore-mentioned statement, known as Socrates's paradox, Plato quotes him as:

"I am wiser than this man, for neither of us appears to know anything great and good; but he fancies he knows something, although he knows nothing; whereas I, as I do not know anything, do not fancy I do. In this trifling particular, then, I appear to be wiser than he, because I do not fancy I know what I do not know" (Plato, 2005: *Apology*, 21d).

Faust doubts the epistemological value of science, which is far from explaining what holds the world together at its core (v. 383). To escape the scientific impasse, he resorts to magic and conjures up the earth spirit, the active force of nature. He hopes through him to participate in the life of the divine universe: "You who wander the world, on every hand / Active Spirit, how close to you I feel! (v. 510-511). However, he is only mocked by that spirit as "a fearful, writhing worm" (v. 498). In addition to Faust's crisis of knowledge and science, we can also sense a teaching and moral crisis. In despair, Faust contemplates suicide till he hears the ringing of the

church bells on Easter Sunday (which reminds him less of the Christian message than of happy childhood days).

Goethe's play is gargantuan in scope and should not be reduced to a single theme or simplistic takeaways. Amusingly, but overly succinctly, another great German playwright, Berthold Brecht, summarised the plot: "Basically, it's the love story of an intellectual and a petty-bourgeois woman. The devil must have been involved" (Brecht et al., 2016; Jürgen Rudolph's translation). Lange (1992) probably exaggerated when he claimed that no work in world literature has eluded interpretation like Goethe's *Faust*. Nonetheless, the second part, in particular, demands an unusual degree of knowledge and careful reading because of the text's labyrinthine topography.

In Goethe's *Faust I*, Dr Heinrich Faust, like his historical role model Johann Georg Faust (approximately 1480–1538), is a middle-aged, respected academic. In his striving to "understand whatever binds the world's innermost core together" (v. 382–383), Faust – unsatisfied with rational knowledge – turns to magic, but the sight of the 'sign of the macrocosm' is not enough for him, since he demands participation in the 'acting Nature' (v. 441). Faust takes stock of his life: as a scientist, he lacks deep insight, and as a person, he cannot enjoy life to the fullest. Faust is torn between his physical and mental needs and his worldly and otherworldly ambitions:

"Two souls, alas, exist in my breast,  
One separated from another:  
One, with its crude love of life, just  
Clings to the world, tenaciously, grips tight  
The other soars powerfully above the dust,  
Into the far ancestral height"  
(v. 1112–1117).

It can be argued that although Faust and Mephisto appear as independent characters, they ultimately form a precarious unit of one person together, just as Goethe said of himself that he was a 'collective singular' and consisted of several people with the same name (Safrański, 2020).

Deeply depressed and tired of life, Faust makes a pact with Mephisto in the form of a bet. In the so-called pact with the devil, Mephisto undertakes to serve Faust in this world and to fulfil all his wishes here. In return, Faust is willing to hand over his soul to the devil if he succeeds in freeing him from his dissatisfaction and providing constant change. Mephisto builds on Faust's disappointment with his scholarly life to make the banal enjoyment of life palatable to him: "We must re-order everything / Before the joys of life slip by" (v. 1818–1819). Behind Faust's back, Mephisto is amused that the scholar has given up on "Man's highest powers": "Reason and Science you despise" (v. 1851).

Parenthetically, there is a comical yet poignant passage when Mephisto, dressed in Faust's professorial robes, fools a newly arrived student with cynical advice, launching a satirical, sweeping attack on university scholarship in general and the narrow-mindedness of individual faculties in particular. Mephisto writes in the student's family book in Latin: "Eritis sicut Deus, scientes bonum et malum" (You'll

be like God, acquainted with good and evil – v. 2048). This line is from *Genesis* (3:5) in the bible and quotes the serpent addressing Adam and Eve to tempt them to sin. Mephisto ends the scene with the words "And then your likeness to God will surely frighten you!" (v. 2049), indirectly evaluating Faust's striving to be made in the image of God (v. 614) as a repetition of the fall.

*Faust I* sees Mephisto striving to lead Faust astray, transforming him into a young man and helping him to initiate a love affair with Gretchen, a young woman with whom Faust immediately falls in love. Faust ruins Gretchen's life by making her pregnant and causing the deaths of her mother and brother. Gretchen gives birth to an illegitimate child, kills her baby out of desperation and is subsequently arrested and imprisoned. Faust wants to save her from execution with the help of Mephisto, but his persuading her to flee is in vain. He must finally leave her to her fate and the mercy of God.

*Faust II* consists of five acts. In the first act, Faust has gone into a long healing sleep of forgetting to free himself from his guilty conscience. He awakens full of desire for action. Faust is brought to the imperial court by Mephisto, and the latter supports him in getting hired as an adviser to the Emperor. Disguised as Plutus (the Greek God of Wealth), Faust introduces paper money to the Emperor to restructure the empire's state finances. The second act is full of Greek mythological figures and an artificial human, Homunculus, created by Faust's former assistant, Wagner. In the third act, Faust finally succeeds in bringing Helen of Troy from the world of the dead into his world. Helen is the initial cause of the Trojan War in Homer's *Iliad* (Paris, through seduction or by force, stole Helen away from Menelaus's home in Sparta) and the classic Greek archetype of beauty. Faust impresses Helen with his poetry. A few years later, Faust and Helen live with their son Euphorion in an idyllic landscape. Euphorion, a passionate young man developing at lightning speed and representing the spirit of poetry, thinks he can fly but tragically falls into an abyss. Helen returns to the world of the dead, and only her veil remains for Faust.

In the fourth act of *Faust II*, Faust and Mephisto travel to a fortress in the mountains that belongs to the Emperor. Mephisto advises Faust to go to war for the Emperor. With Mephisto's magic help, the opposing emperor is defeated. The grateful Emperor presents Faust with a coastal strip of land, and now Faust can embark on his land reclamation project. A few years later – in the final act – Faust is well advanced in this project. But two elderly local residents, Philemon and Baucis, refuse to give up their land. Mephistopheles sets their chapel and hut on fire and causes their death. Faust, who is now a hundred years old, finally renounces Mephisto. Having gone blind from worry, he collapses dead. Mephisto thinks himself the winner of the bet and wants to seize Faust's soul. However, heavenly angels interfere, and Faust is redeemed in heaven and led to the kingdom of the blessed by Gretchen, the penitent.

In contrast to *Faust I*, the focus of the second part is no longer on the soul and emotional life of the individual. Faust continues to develop, becoming a socially and historically acting entrepreneur. In *Faust II*, the homonymous

protagonist actively devotes himself to a wide variety of activities and thus corresponds to the ideal of the classic period to develop all his abilities. Faust is no longer the old-German stuffy scholar or ardent lover of part I. He now appears as a worldly-wise, sophisticated gentleman who is courted by an emperor. He wins over Helen of Troy, the world's most beautiful woman, as a knight of noble stature, then becomes a military strategist who defeats the army of the opposing emperor before finally becoming a big-time businessman in dyke construction. Similarly, Mephisto is transformed from an old-German devil to an elegant cynic, a man of the world who gets things done and does not care how. He then becomes a management consultant of the cunning kind, and at the very end, he shows himself to be a gay lecher (Safranski, 2020).

When reading or watching a performance of *Faust*, we cannot help but be intrigued by the poetic power of Goethe's tour de force. Reading *Faust* in 2022 is an uncanny modern experience. It conveys the timelessness of the drama and reminds us of our own pacts with metaphorical devils as humans and, more specifically, as teachers and academics. It may be worth noting that Goethe himself neither believed in an otherworldly God nor in the devil and thought of the bible as a book of delightful stories, akin to the *Tales from 1001 nights* (Safranski, 2020).

On a general level, Goethe's *Faust* reminds us of our own Faustian pacts in the form of our blind belief in an endless progress that, amongst other things, leads to the destruction of our environment. Since the 1950s, we live in the Anthropocene, a period characterised by the dominant influence on climate and the environment of human activity. Graphs for the rise of carbon dioxide, methane levels in the atmosphere, surface temperatures, factory farming, plastic pollution, ocean acidification, loss of fish populations and tropical forests all show a hockey stick shape from the mid-century onwards (Attenborough, 2020; Ripple et al., 2017; Wagler, 2011). The Anthropocene as 'the epoch of humans' could end in the ultimate disappearance of our civilisation. Living unsustainably damages our whole ecological system to a point where it is bound to ultimately collapse (Tan & Rudolph, 2022). Our Faustian bet that endless growth is possible on a finite planet makes us sleepwalk into catastrophe. Goethe agreed with Spinoza's pantheism and the latter's dictum "Deus sive natura", which views God as interchangeable and synonymous with Nature in all its richness and creative power (Safranski, 2020). In addition, the ancient Greeks experienced the world as a spiritual-sensual totality, where humans and nature are one. If we followed Goethe and saw nature as indeed divine and an inextricable part of the human experience, our technocratic, dominating relationship with it would have to change fundamentally.

Regarding our work as teachers and researchers, many of the themes in *Faust* are highly relevant. Faust despairs because of the limits of his knowledge and its self-perceived shallowness and, as a result, questions the meaningfulness of his own teaching. During the recent pandemic, whose tail end we are hopefully currently witnessing, there was much despair and suicidal thoughts both among students and teachers. Mental health issues abounded, and well-being became a key issue (Wilson et al., 2020; Rudolph

et al., 2021). While these issues were less the result of an epistemic crisis, they certainly relate to a crisis of teaching and learning. As a result of the emergency remote teaching – or for many students in poor countries around the world: no teaching at all – teachers felt stressed and alienated, and students isolated and deprived (Abou Youssef & Richter, 2022; Rudolph et al., 2022; Schotgues, 2022; Tan et al., 2022). On a more epistemological level, many higher-education teachers were, pre-pandemic, unfamiliar with online teaching and then needed to question cherished truths that were no longer applicable to the online environment – for instance, how to encourage online class participation and how to modify virtual discussion protocols.

Faust has feelings of impostorship and delusions of grandeur. In Faust's case, these are twin sentiments or extremes on a spectrum between which he appears to vacillate. We believe this to be not an uncommon experience. For instance, we may feel very familiar with some of our teaching content and feel that 'we know more than anybody else' and that 'we are the smartest', whereas when things go wrong in the classroom (at least in our own perception), we have a sense of impostorship. Stephen Brookfield (2015, 2017) has written about impostorship at length. It is a self-sabotaging behavior, which consists of negative self-talk about our supposed inadequacies or unworthiness to be successful teachers. Impostorship is widespread and can be countered via team teaching (which, unfortunately, is not as widespread as it should be) and continuous classroom research (for instance, using anonymous back channels in which students can comment throughout the class or Critical Incident Questionnaires: Brookfield, 2015, 2017). Interestingly, mild forms of impostorship may be useful as they signify a sense of humility, which facilitates building an authentic relationship with students.

On the other end of the spectrum of a sense of impostorship are self-aggrandisement and conceit. We cited earlier Faust's "I'm cleverer than all these teachers, / Doctors, Masters, scribes, preachers: / I'm not plagued by doubt or scruple, / Scared by neither Hell nor Devil". In a competitive world, 'bigging up' is often considered a necessity amongst academics. Already Aristotle made some critical observations about what he called alazonia in his *Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristotle, 1955). The pretentious person (*alazôn*) claims things that bring renown when he does not have them or claims more of them than he has. Boasters are wearisome and fail to recognise irony. They tend to be arrogant and thus exhibit misplaced self-confidence and a lack of critical reflection. In Aristotle's terminology, the opposite of the *alazôn* is the ironic person that misses the truth by excessive understatement, which is also problematic as it may mislead the literally-minded (Aristotle, 1955; Conroy & Smith, 2017). Whilst ironic mock modesty may be a more attractive personal characteristic than self-important self-aggrandisement, we also need to be careful with too much self-deprecation in the classroom (Brookfield, 2017).

Faust is a deeply flawed character. Interestingly, during the Enlightenment and perhaps up to the end of the Third Reich in 1945, the view prevailed that Faust should not be punished in hell for using the gift of reason given to man by God in all its possibilities. After all, the urge to know is part

of human nature, and Faust's voracious appetite for action was glorified as faultless (Demmer, 1997). Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729 - 1781) was the first to argue that Faust should be pardoned because of his commitment to acquiring knowledge (Schramm, 2019). Accordingly, Goethe, who was not fond of tragedies (Safranski, 2020), at the end of *Faust II*, made three angels pronounce the verdict on Faust: "Whoever strives, on his endeavour, / We can rescue from the devil" (v. 11936-11937). The justification for Faust's salvation is that he has striven. This judgement was anticipated in *Faust I*, where Faust was described as "still aware of virtue's ways" (v. 329). In other words, he was well aware of the right path and ultimately did not leave it.

It is of course questionable whether Faust is a "good man, in his dark yearning", who is "still aware of virtue's ways" (v. 328f.), and whether his deeds can be accepted as mere errors. Faust accepts Mephisto's destructive help all too unhesitatingly. Consequently, Faust's divine 'pardon' at the end of *Faust II* surprised many 19th-century readers, as Faust's sins (especially from a Christian perspective) were numerous. Amongst other things, Faust almost commits suicide; he plunges Gretchen into misfortune by getting her pregnant and then abandoning her; he is involved in the killing of Gretchen's mother, is responsible for the death of her brother, and shares responsibility for Gretchen's desperate act of killing her child; he is at least partially to blame for the deaths of Philemon and Baucis; his dealings are dubious, and he does not contradict Mephisto's assertion that it is generally difficult to distinguish war, trade and piracy – "War, trade, and piracy, allow, / As three in one, no separation" (v. 11187-11188) – and perhaps most damningly, he is involved with Mephisto – the devil. Indeed, many of the literary, artistic, cinematic, and musical works that are associated with the Faust legend have ended with the protagonist's descent into hell.

*Faust* gives us hope when even flawed characters like Faust and Gretchen can be redeemed. But is hope, as Peter Fleming so remarkably put it, "permissible" (Fleming et al., 2021, p. 111)? Rather than a naive hope, we would prefer a critically-tempered hope that can sometimes be angry and defiant (Newman, 2006). As Preskill and Brookfield (2009, p. 171) wrote, naive hope "is inattentive to how disorienting despair can be and unappreciative of how much must be done to overcome injustice". In the context of teaching and learning, Kohl (1998, p. 9) defined hope as "the refusal to accept limits on what your students can learn or on what you, as a teacher, can do to facilitate learning". Our reading of *Faust* in the post-pandemic context reminds us to try to avoid impostorship, self-aggrandisement and despair by not engaging with any bets with the devil, that in the 21st century come in many shapes and forms.

## Overview of the issue

We start the issue with a Commentary by Tom O'Donoghue, titled "Is conducting interpretive studies within mixed methods research projects justified? Methinks not". O'Donoghue investigates interpretive studies that are described as mixed-methods research studies. His main concerns are: how is one's chosen area of research connected

to an underlying research paradigm? How is it connected to a specific theoretical position within the paradigm? How is it connected to a specific methodology consistent with the paradigm and the theoretical position? Finally, how is it connected to a set of methods for data gathering and analysis consistent with the aspects raised in the previous questions? Rather than mounting a major critique of all aspects of works deemed to be mixed methods studies, O'Donoghue shows persuasively that many studies fail to answer these important questions convincingly. We highly recommend O'Donoghue's thoughtful commentary to everybody engaged in mixed-methods research.

Our issue contains 15 research and review articles. After three pandemic-related pieces, four miscellaneous contributions follow that bring us to Canada (on asynchronous learning), Singapore (on the flipped classroom), Australia (on psychological safety) and Vietnam (on knowledge management systems in higher education institutions). The section is concluded with four articles on the teaching and learning of younger students, and there are more research and review articles in the special section.

In Asma Yousef and Carola Richter's well-researched and important article, "Distance teaching in media departments in times of the COVID-19 pandemic. Experiences from six Arab countries", different distance learning experiences in media and communication departments in six Arab countries (Egypt, Tunisia, Iraq, Yemen, Oman, and Qatar) are described, assessed and compared. They answer three research questions through a cross-country comparison: 1) Which organisational steps and arrangements had to be taken by the administration and teaching staff to transition to distance teaching? 2) How was distance teaching perceived by students in the six countries? 3) How was the transition evaluated by the teaching staff, and which suggestions can be made for the future? Yousef and Richter's findings show, amongst other things, that a lack of infrastructure and financial means adversely affected the digitalisation of teaching and learning in the majority of the researched countries.

Ishaq Al-Naabi discusses "Lessons learned from implementing a virtual flipped classroom during COVID-19: An autoethnography". He uses autoethnographic research to explore his teaching strategies and challenges when implementing a virtual flipped classroom in Oman. He identifies the benefits, challenges and strategies for implementing virtual flipped classrooms and proposes a framework to guide higher education instructors when using virtual flipped classrooms.

Kate Collins, Gerard Dooley and Orna O'Brien reflect on the impacts of Covid-19 on the educational experience of mature part-time students in the UCD College of Business in Ireland and the college's evolving post-pandemic support for students. The authors explore the research question as to how has the model of part-time student support provision evolved since the COVID-19 pandemic. The four identified central tenets of student support are (1) day-to-day support and the use of technology; (2) feedback and learner progress; (3) skills development, and (4) orientation and learner integration. It is hoped that the research findings will



influence and shape policy-making in higher education and determine how practitioners support part-time students.

In their article "What's better than the asynchronous discussion post?" Pauline Sameshima and Tashya Orasi discuss the use of asynchronous learning in higher education. They contextualise reflections from five asynchronous online courses taught by different instructors and provide evidence from instructor and student perspectives in assessing the effectiveness of The Slides Strategy. As educational institutions continue to struggle with an increasing need for innovative, dynamic, and supportive online learning environments in a post-pandemic landscape, Sameshima and Orasi's Slides Strategy moves the online discussion post to a more authentic and critically reflexive academic conversation.

Caleb Or, Helene Leong and Xin Hui Ng's article is entitled "Lecturers' perceptions of flipped learning in higher education: A case study on flipped classroom implementation in Singapore Polytechnic". Their findings show that student behaviour as perceived by lecturers and instructional considerations had a significant and positive effect on student learning. In addition, their study examines whether lecturers' experience in flipped learning would moderate instructional consideration and student learning. Or et al.'s results show that lecturers' experience in flipped learning does not influence instructional consideration and student learning.

Kijung Choi and Marcela Fang's article "The role of psychological safety in online tourism and hospitality learning" explores a conceptual framework to examine how tourism and hospitality students' psychological safety and personal resourcefulness in online learning are related to their tourism and hospitality threshold learning outcomes. Their research develops a conceptual framework integrating the conservation of resources and social information processing theories and the findings of a qualitative study through a sequential mixed-methods approach. Choi and Fang test their model with online survey data using a structural equation modelling technique. The results suggest that, for psychological safety, students' computer self-efficacy and peer collaboration significantly affect overall students' perceived graduate outcomes, whereas lecturer support has no significant impact.

Pham Ngoc Duong, Dang Trung Kien and Bui Thanh Khoa's contribution is titled "Do knowledge management systems motivate and satisfy the academic staff in higher education institutions?" The authors explore the relationship between knowledge management and teaching motivation, and academic staff satisfaction in Vietnamese universities. The researchers surveyed 381 professors. Duong et al. highlight some managerial implications for knowledge management systems that may increase academic staff satisfaction and teaching motivation.

Merete Schmidt, Can-Seng Ooi and Becky Shelley's article has the title "School is not for me": Young people's perceptions of being a self-directed learner in a small rural Tasmanian town" and is another contribution on Australia. In this paper, the authors argue that a deeper understanding

of the underlying drivers of retention and engagement in diverse social and cultural contexts is vital in supporting Tasmania's Education Act of 2016. Drawing on qualitative data, this paper provides insights into how a group of Grade 10 students in a small rural town in Tasmania chose to leave school early or continue to some form of post-compulsory education. Schmidt et al.'s paper highlights how perceptions of being a self-directed learner and feelings about the future shape young people's educational decisions.

Naima Al-husban's "Investigating Syrian refugees' education in Jordan: From policies to pedagogy," examines the gap between policies and practices in the context of refugee education in Jordan. Al-husban's contribution appears to be amongst the first journal articles on this important and under-researched topic. She analyses official guidelines that outline the priorities of refugee education and compares them with the perceptions of teachers of refugees with a focus on the types of curricula refugees study and the professional development programs these teachers receive. Al-husban's study reveals the gap between what policymakers think and what teachers perceive in terms of education. It highlights the importance of advancing education when strategising future refugee education policies.

The next article by Valentine Joseph Owan, Mercy Valentine Owan and Neha Lata explores a large body of literature focusing on teachers' service delivery and other related concepts. In "Discharge of pedagogic duties: A bootstrapped structural equation modelling of teachers' use of research materials in school libraries", Owan et al. study how teachers use library research materials and its impacts on teachers' discharge of pedagogic duties across seven areas. Impressively, a structured questionnaire collected primary data from 2,406 teachers and 7,218 students. The authors' study shows that teachers' use of library research materials is crucial for the instructional process. It serves as the information bank in schools and as a source of instructional materials to enabling educational practitioners to plan and deliver practical lessons.

The final research article in the main section is by Jerome Oko and entitled "Teaching methods that influence Grade 12 students' mathematics results in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea" Oko's contribution focuses on the teaching methods teachers employ in the classroom that affect Grade 12 students' mathematics results. A mixed-method research approach is applied in this study. Three different teaching methods (teacher-centred, student-centred, and a mix of the two aforementioned approaches) are identified. The student-centred method had a significant and positive influence on Grade 12 students' mathematics results. Oko concludes that more attention should be given to student-centred and mixed approaches to improve Grade 12 students' mathematics results.

Our issue also contains a special section that is guest-edited by Tania Aspland and Vanessa Stafford. It was first mooted at a 2021 Symposium of Learning and Teaching (SoLT) organised by the guest-editors and colleagues from Kaplan in Australia. The special section contains a preface, four research articles, and a brief paper. In their preface, Aspland and Stafford give a brief introduction to the purpose of

Kaplan Australia's ongoing learning and teaching symposia. The theme for the 2021 symposium was "Empathy, kindness, and presence: Uncovering the human(e) element of teaching and learning". This topic was chosen during a tumultuous time of worldwide educational, professional, and personal upheaval due to the global pandemic.

The first article of the special section is by Tania Aspland and Jillian Fox. It is titled "Teacher presence through the lens of kindness". In March 2020, one Australian higher education provider, like many others, found itself pivoting into fully online teaching as the nation managed the Covid-19 pandemic and campuses closed. The journey to adapt and change one's practices to offer students the highest quality learning experience was a big challenge. Aspland and Fox discuss the challenges faced, and the concepts of presence and kindness are the focus of this paper. The positioning of kindness within Garrison's framework of inquiry is proposed as a proposition worthy of further research, particularly if higher education in Australia continues to be uncertain and fraught with change.

The special section's second article is by Eunice Tan. In "'Heartware' for the compassionate teacher: Humanizing the academy through mindsight, attentive love, and storytelling", she discusses human(e) elements of learning and teaching such as empathy, kindness, and compassion. The paper is conceptual and proposes an approach to humanise the academy through the coaction of mindsight, attentive love, and the teacher storyteller. A conceptual framework illustrating the human(e) dimensions of 'heartware' for the compassionate teacher is also proposed.

The third article by Vanessa Stafford is on "Successful collaboration in online learning through skills and community building: a women in leadership MBA subject case study". Stafford uses an illustrative case study to demonstrate the applications of several theories and aligned models to achieve online social constructivism. The educational philosophy used in its syllabus design and facilitation was to put community-building activities before content teaching so that technology and collaboration skills were developed in a supportive, scaffolded manner, better equipping students to engage in effective, collaborative content learning. This case study provides presumptive evidence that placing community-building activities before content teaching within weekly lesson plans results in strong student collaboration skills development that may contribute to higher student satisfaction levels with collaborative learning.

The final research article of the special section is by Rita Day and Susan Robinson, entitled "Kindness as ethics-in-practice in the business curriculum". They explored the pedagogic potential of kindness as a taught construct within a business ethics programme. Kindness in the curriculum is a topic often taught in early years' education but seldom at the tertiary level. Day and Robinson's research investigate the reasons for this difference. They argue that for a business ethics course, business viewed through the lens of kindness should not be seen as an extracurricular activity but rather be deconstructed as ethics-in-practice. They showcase a practice-based research intervention via a one-day student enrichment activity, which looks at kindness through the

lens of philanthropy.

The special section's final piece is a brief article by Indika Karunanayake, titled "Making assessment feedback effective in higher education: A review of literature". Assessments and feedback are interrelated and play a vital role for students, educators, and institutions. However, giving feedback can be daunting for educators and receiving feedback can be unsatisfactory for students, diminishing the effectiveness of further improvement of students' learning. Karunanayake reviews recent literature and proposes five key areas – (i) content; (ii) tone and language; (iii) feedback literacy, (iv) educator training; and (v) assessment design and marking guidelines – for educators and their institutions to improve the feedback process, thereby improving the learning experiences of students.

The remainder of the current issue consists of an educational technology article, two brief articles and four book reviews. Vanessa Stafford's EdTech article is entitled "Using Google Jamboard in teacher training and student learning contexts". It examines Jamboard as a tool for learning. Stafford's review focuses on how this easy-to-use platform can be used in two contexts: teacher-training sessions within a Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL) program and by educators in the classroom for student learning activities.

The first brief article is by Justin O'Brien and co-authors. In "Experiential learning exercise: Designing a pirate community using the cultural web", they explore experiential-oriented pedagogy. The authors use such designs to provide an opportunity for icebreaking or community building using a team-based activity, apply the cultural web framework in a performative, open-space learning context of the historic pirate culture, and connect the learning experience to job hunting, specifically helping students assess their fit with potential employers. Such pedagogy is helpful for professional development, management, leadership, and organisational modules where a lean-in, experiential-oriented pedagogy is deployed.

The second brief article by William Siew et al. is titled "Designing for inclusive and engaged communities". The authors discuss a pilot health district design innovation programme aimed to empower budding designers with skills to reimagine through ideation and prototyping and to articulate their value-driven solutions for an inclusive and engaged Queenstown community in Singapore. Laudably, student teams co-created ideas around functional living, disease prevention and healthcare delivery with residents and stakeholders. Siew and co-authors' research observed increased student understanding (in their self-perceptions) of inclusive design. Students also felt more confident in critically analysing problems related to persons with reduced cognitive ability and their carers, and this resulted in impactful solution ideas enabled by empathetic technology.

The final section encompasses four book reviews. Arthur Shelley reviews *Unleashing the human mind. A consilience approach to managing self* by Bennet, Bennet and Turner. The book discusses the relationship between life and identity, what it means to be human, and our learning. It takes readers on a deep and wide exploration of how learning is essential

to who we are and how we engage with the world. Shelley enthusiastically recommends “Unleashing the human mind” as the most comprehensive and enlightening book he has read on learning for the future.

Mohamed Fadhil reviewed *Uncommon sense teaching: Practical insights in brain science to help students learn* by Oakley, Rogowsky and Sejnowski. The book discusses and applies concepts in neuroscience research to the modern-day classroom. Drawing on research findings and the authors’ combined decades of experience in the classroom, Oakley et al. provide education practitioners with the essential knowledge and tools to improve their teaching practice, whether they are experienced professionals or simply parents hoping to offer extra support for their children’s education.

A third book review is written by Vanessa Stafford. She reviews *Transformative autoethnography for practitioners – change processes and practices for individuals and groups* by Hernandez, Chang and Bilgen. The book aims to convince the reader that the transformation of the researcher (and those affected by their research) can be the intentional goal of autoethnographic research. Transformation can be more than a positive by-product of the methodology. When transformation is the goal, it can be applied to make tangible changes to practice. The latter is demonstrated to the reader through the Transformative Autoethnography Model (TAM). Stafford praises the authors’ call for qualitative researchers to apply their research to practice for the common good.

Finally, Begüm Burak reviewed Louis Yako’s *Bullets in envelopes: Iraqi academics in exile*. After the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, many Iraqi academics were assassinated or received bullets in envelopes (hence the book’s title) as a sinister warning to leave the country. Many fled into exile. Yako’s book offers a genealogy of loss and a ground-breaking assessment of the dismantling and restructuring of Iraqi academic institutions. Burak highly recommends Yako’s book which is based on extensive fieldwork in several countries.

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