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TABLE OF CONTENT

DEMOCRACY AND LIFELONG LEARNING, THE FORGOTTEN SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

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Abstract

The article examines the interaction between lifelong learning and the development of a democratic culture. In order to survive and to further develop a democratic society needs to constantly balance the common good, individual freedom, protection and the powers that regulate these processes. Individual members as well as the institutions share the responsibility to engage in dialogue on these processes, promote participation and responsibility and set fair rules. Lifelong learning is at the basis of this dynamic way of living together. The article investigates how education and lifelong learning in specific are intricate characteristics of a developing democratic culture.

From analyses follow that the interests in three domains of lifelong learning - developing qualifications for economic competitiveness, enabling personal growth and promoting a democratic way of living – change over time. It is argued that a narrowed focus on mainly economic benefits has had a devastating effect on the motivation for learning, leading to an impoverished democratic culture, with the potential risk of societies falling apart.

The article concludes with guidelines for curriculum development that supports the lifelong learning process that is part of a dynamic democratic culture. The main challenge for such a curriculum is not the content nor the required subject matter expertise, but its democratic way of organizing the educational provisions for adult learners: organizing a rich learning landscape that values self-efficacy, participative activities, community work, self-directedness, and learning form others and otherness.

Key words: Democracy, lifelong learning, adult learning, personal development, curriculum, human capital.

Introduction

An intriguing question is whether lifelong learning and democracy are related and if so, what is their interaction. Moreover, this question is not only relevant for lifelong learning and adult education, but for all education and schooling in the public domain of civilized societies.

It is evident that a newborn member of the human species is in need of a long process of care, learning, development and training to fully participate in the social life of a family and the community. As a relative independent adult, it is required to acquire the skills to make a living and becoming a responsible parent for a new generation of newborns. Moreover, the society where we make part of is under constant change, which requires new skills, capabilities and an attitude of continuous adaptation.

Besides the necessary primary and basic needs, adults strive for a meaningful and fulfilling life. Therefore, they explore their talents, ambitions and sense of belonging, for which they are prepared to learn and seek coaching and dedicated training. Personal

fulfilment is not only based on adequate instrumental and social competences, it is also about growing self-respect, self-efficacy, autonomy, feeling responsible, emancipation and altruïsm. This complex set of needs, ambitions and longings leads to supporting goals and objectives that are central in our educational systems. In practice, there is a strong focus on basic academic skills like reading, writing, math and vocational and scientific competences, but also on social skills, dealing with ethical issues and conflict, dialogue and living together with diverse members in a dynamic society. Furthermore, traditional skills will become obsolete, job changes require new competencies, horizontal and vertical mobility is facilitated by new capabilities. The complexity and constant changes in society create a demand for lifelong learning.

These objectives for education and lifelong learning are often seen as individual responsibilities. You only succeed in life when you study hard, work diligently and develop a resume paved with formal degrees and highly esteemed qualifications. Success is a personal achievement; failure is an individual process of losing out.

From a philosophical perspective the relationship between individual and community is quite complex. One of the greatest paradoxes of the human condition has been the place of the individual in the group and the community (Jarvis, 2008). How do groups allow the individual to exist rather than stifle individuality? This constant challenge is at the core of the incomplete project of humanity. In order to survive and to further develop, such a society needs to constantly balance the common good, individual freedom, protection and the powers that regulate these processes. Individual members as well as the institutions share the responsibility to engage in dialogue on these processes, promote participation and responsibility and set fair rules. Such a society is inherently a learning society. Lifelong learning is at the basis of this dynamic way living together. Here emanates the idea of education and lifelong learning as the main characteristics of a developing democratic culture.

This article analyses how the three aforementioned domains of education - developing qualifications for economic independence, enabling personal growth and promoting a democratic way of living (Aspin & Chapman, 2000) - have a long tradition, but change in scope over time. One of the concerns is that over the last three decades a dramatic shift has been made from a democratic focus on lifelong learning to an economic, human capital focus: from the shared responsibility of ‘learning to be’ (Fauré et al., 1979) to the individualistic duty of ‘learning to earn’.

Despite the formal intentions and goals of educational institutions that may show a broad perspective on learning and adult education, the day-to-day practice in schools and institutions is focused on individual academic learning, scores, grades and diploma’s leading to advanced levels of earning power, serving global economic competitiveness and growth. Investment in learning activities foremost needs to be beneficial in economic terms. Government funding tends to favor technical and ICT studies and curtail the liberal arts.

It seems that the shared responsibility for developing a democratic learning culture has moved to an obscure background. This will eventually bring the democratic project of humanity in danger. Democracy is not only about extending voting rights, but also equipping citizens with the ability to take on the responsibility to make informed, intelligent choices and decisions, not only for the individual but also for the common good. As for Stobie (2016) democracy is not just a political system but an ethical ideal with active informed participation by citizens. Therefore, education has inherently a moral purpose.

This text explores the origins of the relationship between lifelong learning and democracy, and observes the current flaw in interest of the value of lifelong learning for a democratic culture in favor of a strong inclination for economic growth. Furthermore, the article argues that lifelong learning provisions, particularly in view of a democratic

perspective, need more than just broad moral intentions. If lifelong learning activities are to serve democratic principles, they need not only provide adequate content, but even more a democratic practice. In such practice learners take actively part in the decision-making process not only when it comes to the objectives and content, but also on the interaction between learners and facilitators, the organization of the learning experiences, the assessment of the outcomes, the evaluation for improvement, staffing and a shared responsibility for quality assurance. This is probably a consistent consequence of striving for a learning culture that supports the democratic project of humanity. Here, important steps still have to be made.

A long tradition of relating lifelong learning to democracy

Dewey was one of the first authors who made a strong link between education and democracy. In his seminal work *Democracy and education: an introduction to the philosophy of education* (1916), he presented learning as a social, communal process requiring students to construct their own understanding based on personal experiences. Furthermore, he stated that although developing an intellectual process is a necessary goal of education, it is not sufficient. Schooling must equip (young) people with the capabilities to live a fulfilling live and become lifelong learners, able to fulfill their potential and contribute to society (Stobie, 2016). Dewey was alarmed that schools failed in this regard and saw how they were promoting passive and compliant pupils rather than reflective, autonomous, informed decision makers (Dewey, 1916). In his view democratic education is concerned with developing informed citizens, capable of making informed choices and decisions. In view of a highly unpredictable world which creates uncertainty when it comes to jobs and roles, education has to help learners to cope with new circumstances. Only informed, independent and autonomous citizens can survive in such a world. Therefore, education is a moral enterprise. As a consequence, Dewey thought that education should be seen as a process of forming fundamental dispositions, overcoming the traditional academic/vocational divide in the curriculum (Doddington, 2018). The main focus should be on developing a common ground and a framework for facilitating 'reflective conversations' as prerequisites for a democratic culture (Dewey, 1916).

In 1972 the idea of the democratic foundation of lifelong learning received a renewed interest by the influential UNESCO report 'Learning to be' (Fauré et al., 1972). The four basic assumptions in their text include: 1) a fundamental solidarity, 2) democracy, implying each man's right to 3) realize his own potential to the full, and direct his own future, and 4) the cornerstone of democracy is an overall culture of lifelong education.

In 'Learning to be' the main focus is on personal and complete fulfilment, that only can be achieved when actively participating in a democratic society. It not only stresses the importance of informal and non-formal learning, but also of health education, cultural education and environmental education. The current emphasis on economic competition and expansion is almost absent in the UNESCO text.

However, this enlightened idea of broad lifelong learning changed dramatically during the years to come. The rise of the so-called knowledge economy made shifts in educational goals. In an economy in which the application of knowledge replaces capital, raw materials, and labour as the main means of production, the essential ingredient of products and services is the inherent knowledge. The ability to gather information, generate new knowledge, disseminate, and apply this knowledge to achieve improvement and innovation is seen as an organisation's knowledge productivity (Kessels, 2001). Knowledge productivity became the dominant economic factor in a knowledge society and stressed the importance of a well-trained, flexible and competent workforce. This notion encouraged innovative companies to consciously design a corporate curriculum that turns the day to day work environment into a powerful learning environment, and thus actively promote adult education

and lifelong learning for economic reasons. A new rise of lifelong long learning emerged, but with a narrow focus. The idea of Human Resources Development for producing human capital gained interest, and even became an academic discipline at many university programmes.

However, the knowledge economy mainly brought prosperity to those who could join the new elite of knowledge workers and widened the gap with the knowledge-poor, those who suffered during their formal, initial learning career and often dropped out. Inherently, lifelong learning in a knowledge economy created new imbalances, challenging democratic values of inclusion and solidarity. Available budgets were mainly spend on training the higher levels and managerial staff. It was Field (2000) who as one of the few authors who addressed the problem of the unskilled, unqualified and uneducated who will definitely have less chances in the knowledge era, despite the efforts for lifelong learning. He stresses a renewed significance of a global strategy for lifelong training and education that not only is economically efficient, but also socially equitable, ecologically sustainable and politically democratic. His plea resonates the four UNESCO assumptions of 'learning to be' (Fauré et al. 1972).

A growing economic dominance of useful learning

Although the formal policy documents on lifelong learning of the OECD and EU state that learning throughout life enriches personal lives, maintaining social cohesion and achievement of genuinely democratic societies with full participation (Biesta, 2006 / OECD 1997), in fact the OECD and the EU favor lifelong learning as the main vehicle for economic development and an investment in human capital, so as to secure competitiveness and economic growth (OECD, 1997). Lifelong learning is needed to overcome the growing skills gap (e.g. ICT) and the skills mismatches (peoples' qualifications and competences and the employers' demands, which do not match) (Van der Pas, 2001).

In the Netherland, many years of discussion on lifelong learning took place and many reports have been published. Attention moved back and forth between the ministries of education, social, labor and economic affairs, but specific actions remained sparse and produced rather little. Finally, the Dutch Social Economic Council (SER) took over. After a long period of debate and broad consultations the recent recommendations of the SER (2017) stress the need for continuous knowledge and skills development. The focus is clearly on continuous learning of the working population. Notions of personal fulfilment, democratic participation and inclusion are absent. The SER offers three sets of recommendations: 1) reinforce the infrastructure (flexible and practice-based options for personalized learning, specific provisions for people with low literacy skills, improving the role of Sector Training & Development Funds, validation of prior learning and experience, and career development via career development centers), 2) support the demand for learning (credit system for a personal learning account and a skills development savings account), and 3) create a learning culture (national learning culture initiatives, providing skills development interviews and career counseling, promoting informal learning) SER (2017).

It seems as if the objectives for lifelong learning in terms of personal development and living a meaningful life, supported by a democratic learning culture has completely vanished from the political agendas and government policies. Subsequently, funding for activities in the so-called non-economically useful learning activities have disappeared during cost cutting in the public budgeting processes. Furthermore, lifelong learning for economic attractiveness and employability has become a sole individual responsibility. The government offers the facilities, while the citizen should take initiative. Success in the new labor force is a personal merit, failure is your own fault.

Over time, education has become a means of social control, according to formal rules and bureaucratic processes, governed by the state, under centralized administration and quality assurance systems. Although education is officially promoted as a social right and instrument for promoting equal opportunities, adult education is mainly a form of second-chance training for dropouts in initial education. The focus has more and more moved towards fostering employability, competitiveness and development of a knowledge economy. There is a strong emphasis on ongoing vocational training, upskilling of economically valuable competences. The educational system provides human capital and is governed by managerial procedures for human resources development. State and non-state organizers of training programs cooperate. Learning, development and employability have become individual responsibilities. It brings back the narrowed focus of education in times of the Cold War, where the dominant concern in education was creating and sustaining a scientific and technological elite for military purposes. Nowadays, the military purposes seem to be replaced by economic drives.

The need for a democratic learning culture

The preoccupation of public policy with the formation of human capital (economic priority) continuous to leave public policy on lifelong learning too narrowly conceived as developing capabilities for the labor market to the exclusion of preparing capabilities that enable citizens to make an active contribution to the wider purposes of a democratic civil society (Ranson, Rikowski & Strain, 2001). This narrowed focus on lifelong learning for economic progress has hampered the ongoing learning process for establishing a democratic culture in a society at risk. Beck (1994) designates a development phase of modern society in which the social, political, economic and individual risks increasingly tend to escape the institutions for monitoring and protection in the old industrial society. It creates a permanent state of uncertainty and generates alienation among its citizens. Meanwhile, such society at risk is a breeding ground for conservatism, terror, ultra-right political movements and populism. The need for 'reflective conversations' as prerequisites for a democratic culture, like Dewey propagated in 1916, is more urgent than ever before.

Brazilian conservative president Bolsonaro considers universities as places of chaos and immorality and in his view studies like sociology and philosophy are mere Marxist brainwash. Textbooks need to be cleaned of references to feminism, homosexuality and equality (Van de Water, 2019). More than twenty years ago, Martha Nussbaum stated in her thought provoking book *Cultivating Humanity* that 'If people view the teaching that is actually going on in the humanities as incompetent and even politically dangerous, it is all too easy to feel justified in cutting off funds and turning increasingly to the safer terrain of accounting, computer science, and business administration' (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 298). In addition, Bolsonaro also denies the dangers of climate change and is prepared to give up the measures to protect the Amazon rainforests.

The chaotic withdrawal of the UK from the EU, once the symbol of democratic ways of living together, is a painful observation. Political repression and change in even democratic states like Russia, Turkey and east European EU member states, is an indicator of a flawing democratic culture (Doddington, 2018). Today, in the USA, the confederation of states with a great variety of settlers that originated from democratic principles, president Trump is openly putting Muslims, Mexicans and other citizens aside.

More than ever before, there is a need for a renewed construction of a democratic and participatory society. Democratic values like solidarity, social justice and common good need to be reexamined and included in the educational system, not only in initial schooling but also in provision for adult and lifelong learning. As a consequence, education and training should

be perceived as a process of empowerment, with room for local self-organization and promoting autonomy of community initiatives.

Biesta (2006) stresses the need for collective learning and learning with others and from otherness and difference. Lifelong learning should act as a lever for empowerment and emancipation, collective action and social change. In his view learning is not an individual duty and responsibility but also an opportunity to translate private troubles into shared and collective concerns. Aspin and Chapman (2000) deliberately include the democratic function of lifelong learning, which emphasizes becoming able to live your life with others in a more just and inclusive way. It contributes not only to the well-being of the individual, but also to the quality of democratic life itself.

As stated before, democracy has a much broader scope than the right to vote for representatives in public institutions, parliaments and councils. Democracy is an ongoing learning process about living together in a complex and risk-full society, respectful taking differences seriously, while balancing individual freedom and the common good. In this view democracy and lifelong learning are two sides of the same coin. In the emerging dominance of the economic dimension of lifelong learning, that coin seems to be forgotten.

However, it looks as if there is an upcoming turning point in policymaking on lifelong learning. The recent terror attacks in France triggered the EU Paris Declaration in 2015 (EU, 2016) that urges for strengthening the role of education in promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination, leading to 'Learning to live together: a shared commitment to democracy'. All EU member states adopted the 'Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education' (Council of Europe, 2017). The leaders of government have expressed their good intentions.

Good intentions in need of consistent practices

One of the main personal barriers for participating in lifelong learning is that initial, formal education failed to enhance essential skills and learners' motivation. For many learning is too often associated with a sense of personal failure (Ranson, Rikowski & Strain, 2001). In their longitudinal studies Gorard and Smith (2007) and later White (2012) found evidence that experiences of failure during initial education, dropout and social background appeared to be constant factors that inhibit adults to participate in lifelong learning activities. Over time, financial and other policy measures, as well as the application of modern technologies and Internet do not have a significant contribution to increased participation. Early feelings of fear and failure, selection and exclusion seem to hamper the good intentions for lifelong learning later.

Other studies (Amrein & Berliner, 2003) that specifically investigate the effects of the pressure of summative testing on motivation and learning, reveal that the stress for examinations lowers the inspiration for lifelong learning later in life. Moreover, testing has a negative effect on the motivation for self-directedness, critical thinking and self-efficacy. And these elements are such important characteristics for personal development and engaging in a democratic learning culture. On top of these findings Amrein and Berliner (2003) found that the constant pressure of testing increases the feelings of fear, anger, pessimism, and enhances the chance of dropout.

Harlen and Deakin Crick (2002) have pointed at other effects of summative testing like a decrease of self-respect in weak students, teachers who tend to focus more on cognitive elements than on other learning outcomes, performance that is becoming more important than the learning process and there is reinforcement of extrinsic motivation at the cost of intrinsic drives. They suggest paying more attention to offering choices of what to learn, promoting self-directedness and collaborative learning.

When the initial experiences of learning have been emotionally and educationally disabling, then it is difficult to engage in lifelong learning at a later stage in life. When the contribution of formal, initial schooling to the formation of a strong, positive, personal identity has been weak or even negative, how can we successfully promote continued lifelong learning?

There are many lessons to learn from these findings. Weak results in initial schooling are strongly related to poor future participation in lifelong learning. It also increases the gap between those who benefit from education - the new knowledge workers' elite - and the knowledge-poor. A strong emphasis on cognitive achievement and testing in initial schooling, not only reinforces the one-sided focus on qualification centeredness of lifelong learning later, it also hampers the need for personal development, fulfilment and learning to lead a meaningful life. As a consequence, the continued training and testing for individual, academic achievement misses out on opportunities to learn with and from others and experience meaningful dialogues on differences and otherness. In the contrary, such systems, despite the best intentions, facilitate failure, damaged self-respect, selection and exclusion. In fact, the basis for developing a democratic learning culture is completely absent. When these are the initial experiences of young citizens with formal learning, development and education, then their enthusiastic participation in continued lifelong learning practices is difficult to expect.

When lifelong learning intends to develop the capability for active membership of society, then learning needs to be connected to the wider experience of people and to the purposes which are to shape their lives. Ranson, Rikowski and Strain (2001) argue that meaningful lifelong learning recognizes the significance of emotional well-being, health and quality of relationships. The main objective is to enhance the learners' self-esteem, motivation and well-being. They promote a pedagogy of active and flexible learning, where investigative learning and reflective problem solving motivates people to become involved in their learning. In their plea for what one may call 'deschooling lifelong learning' they promote forms of multi-agency working, integrating family support, adult as well as young learners, health and social services in a coordinated lifelong learning approach. Meaningful learning should engage the wider community, where learning relates to practice and social purpose (Ranson, Rikowski & Strain, 2001).

Biesta (2006) observes that as long as adults have little to no influence on the agenda-setting, content, purpose and direction of lifelong learning, they have 'de facto' no autonomy. How can one feel responsible for one's continuous learning if it is to serve others' objectives like narrowing the skills gap and making Europe the most competitive knowledge economy in the world? Bransen (2019) comes to a similar conclusion. When the main objective of education is offering guidance and support in finding out who you are and what role you could play in life, then you should also have a say in choosing the content, the type of learning experiences and how you would like to make progress.

Thus, one of the prerequisites for learning in a democratic culture is reinstalling the autonomy of the individual when it comes to setting goals, meaning, format and procedures. This is a major challenge for educational systems. We are so used to the fact that the learner has no say in what to learn, when, where, how, with and from whom, and in what way to prove that the learning has been meaningful. When so, it is an idle aim that education and lifelong learning contribute to personal development, fulfilment, preparing for a meaningful life, let alone practicing democratic values, engaging in reflective dialogues, learning with and from others, and preparing for living in a complex society that presents many risks and little security and protection.

The good intentions for lifelong learning need to be accompanied by practices that are consistent with the educational aims.

Towards a renewed curriculum for lifelong learning in a democratic culture

Maybe it sounds odd to write about a curriculum for lifelong learning in a democratic culture. Despite its original meaning as 'a plan for learning' (Kessels & Plomp, 1999), curriculum is nowadays mostly associated with the fixed and formal, prescribed content that meets the instructional objectives and forms the basis for testing and examinations. However, it also can be viewed as a rich landscape where learners find their way and construct meaningful capabilities, attitudes, competencies and knowledge (Kessels, 2001). When it comes to meaningful capabilities for a democratic culture, many authors offer comprehensive suggestions.

A recent monitor study of the Solidar Foundation (2018), a European network of NGO's working to advance social justice, presents useful guidelines for developing a democratic learning landscape. Their aim is to support a set of attitudes and behaviours that emphasize dialogue and cooperation, solving conflicts by peaceful means, and active participation in the public space. This requires value-based education that puts the learners at the centre and offers an environment that best stimulates critical thinking and understanding of the subject. This competence is crucial to ensuring peaceful and fair societies. An education system which equips people with such competences empowers them and endows them with the capacities they need to become active participants in democratic processes, intercultural dialogue and in society in general.

To make this happen, teaching staff needs to prepare for this specific domain. They shall act as facilitators who help adults move from dependency towards increasing self-directedness; using their personal experience as a rich resource for learning, especially when related to

real-life tasks and problems; enabling the development of competence in a meaningful way; and recognizing the dominant role of intrinsic motivation and self-esteem (Kessels & Poell, 2004).

Furthermore, close cooperation is needed with forms of non-formal and informal learning, to value the learning that takes place outside formal education and training institutions, such as work experience, leisure time and activities at home (Solidar Foundation, 2018).

When developing a curriculum for lifelong learning for a democratic culture, we can draw on the long tradition of andragogy, a specific direction in adult learning, known for its critical and reflective approach. The concept of andragogy refers to a broad field of study, including adult learning, interventions in the domain of social work, welfare, community work, and mental health care, with a strong emphasis on promoting change for increased wellbeing of citizens. The critical roots of andragogy favor the idea of the independent and autonomous learner striving for freedom of choice and emancipation (Kessels, 2015). Pre-described performance improvement in the interest of dominating others does not fit with the origins of andragogy nor with the values of a democratic culture.

Brookfield (1986) analyzed a set of andragogic principles for adult learning that directly could be applied to the democratic domain of lifelong learning: 1) adults work best when they are in collaborative groups; 2) success comes when adults begin to exert control over their personal and social environments and thus begin to see themselves not as being controlled by external and unchallengeable forces, but as initiating, proactive beings capable of creating their personal worlds rather than simply living within them; 3) the focus of activities is determined by adults' perceptions of relevance rather than being externally imposed; 4) and adults learn best when they engage in action, reflection, further action, and further reflection.

It is fascinating to observe that after a period that has been dominated by a strong economical and performance oriented vision on education and lifelong learning, we now adopt value driven principles that originated during the Enlightenment, that were further developed in the early 20th century, almost forgotten in the past decades, and now reexamined as possible stepping stones for a new way of curriculum design (De Jong & Kessels, 2018).

Conclusions: learning as a democratic process

The interest in the connection between learning and democracy has a long tradition. Dewey (1916) was one of the first authors who deliberately explored the relationship. In adult learning similar notions on critical thinking, experiential learning, reflective dialogue and community work have played a role, especially in the discipline of andragogy, where authors like Lindeman in the 1920's, Knowles in the 1970's and Brookfield (1986) (see for an overview Kessels, 2015) initiated lengthy discussions on these aspects. The UNESCO report 'Learning to be' (Fauré et al., 1972) was one of the first very influential policy documents promoting lifelong learning for democratic development.

Lifelong learning provides educational opportunities for three distinct domains: a) the acquisition of qualifications for entering and moving in the labor market – the economic perspective; b) personal growth and talent development for leading a meaningful and fulfilling life as a human being – the personal perspective; and c) developing emancipated citizens, capable of making informed choices and decisions – the democratic perspective.

Over time, especially in since 1980 the emphasis on the economic perspective became dominant. Learning, education and development, especially adult learning had to contribute to economic growth and global competition. The focus narrowed down to the production of useful human capital. As a consequence, public funding for adult education in the other domains vanished. Even initial education and schooling turned into performance driven managerial organisms with quality assurance systems promoting high stake testing and examinations, preparing young entrants for an emerging knowledge economy.

Our analysis shows two distinct effects of a prolonged narrow focus on economic benefits of educational systems, at the cost of investments in personal development and democratic awareness and competences. Despite the best intentions, education systems with one sided cognitive drives hamper motivation for learning, facilitate failure, damaged self-respect, selection and exclusion, and widen the gap between the knowledge elite and the knowledge-poor. The absence of lifelong learning provisions for development of personal growth and a democratic culture will bring a society at risk, creating uncertainty and alienation, giving rise to autocratic leadership, disintegration of communities and terrorism.

Recently, the Council of Europe (2017) seems to recognize the danger of neglecting the need for a democratic learning culture and promotes policies for 'Learning to live together: a shared commitment to democracy'. However, it is far from easy to develop a lifelong learning curriculum for promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance, non-discrimination, empowerment, emancipation, collective action and social change. The main challenge is not finding appropriate content nor the required subject matter expertise, but merely organizing lifelong learning provisions that are inherently democratic in their nature. This means organizing a rich learning landscape that values self-efficacy, participative activities, community work, self-directedness, and learning form others and otherness. A rich landscape of educational provisions that values learning that takes place outside formal education and training institutions, such as work experience, leisure time and activities at home.

The main conclusion may be that lifelong learning is not so much instrumental for democracy, but that a democratic culture can only exist when it is perceived as a lifelong learning process of coming to grips with balancing the common good, individual freedom,

protection and the powers that regulate these processes. That is the reason why democracy and lifelong learning are the painfully forgotten sides of the same coin.

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