The Manchester Lit and Phil

Discussion for lively minds since 1781

e-programme edition 3

22nd April 2020

Welcome to the third edition of the Manchester Lit & Phil e-programme!

We hope you enjoyed the last edition of our e-programme on 'Plants that changed the world'. For this third edition we will look at a rather topical subject, 'Education: Past and Future'.

The current coronavirus outbreak is pushing schools to use new tools to continue providing lectures and courses to their students. It isn't the first time that the way education is provided has changed. Over time, education has adapted not only to changes in technologies and the environment, but also to changes in mentalities. We can see an evolution of what and who is taught and the places where education is provided too. In this edition we will also have a look at how our brains learn and take a peek into the future to see how robots can be taught.

As with previous editions, the material listed in this e-programme is free and we do not own it.

For anyone who wants to be part of a free-flowing discussion on this topic, we will meet again on the Forum to discuss this week's theme on Friday 24th April from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 a.m. But do remember that the forum is accessible outside of these hours too!
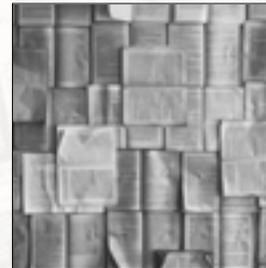
Front cover image: credit Pexels / Pixabay

Read

Derek Gillard
EDUCATION IN ENGLAND: A HISTORY
Chapter 1: Up to 1500

http://www.educationengland.org.uk/history/chapter01.html

In Chapter 1 of his book 'Education in England: a history', Derek Gillard tells the story of education in England from the Romans to the Renaissance. In this period of time, England saw the creation of the first schools, usually in cities which had cathedrals. This link between religion and education is one that remains to this day.

Learn

open.edu
HISTORY OF READING: AN INTRODUCTION TO READING THE PAST

https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/culture/literature-and-creative-writing/history-reading-introduction-reading-the-past/content-section-0

As per the open.edu website: *'The 11 essays comprising this course cover a wide range of topics in the history of reading, each designed to whet your appetite to explore the subject further, by searching the UK Reading Experience Database RED yourself'*. Each essay is presented independently from the others so you don't have to read the essays in the order they are listed.
This course is open now and requires 1 hour study for each essay.

Watch

Richard Brinsley Sheridan
THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeuN1DM5t7s

This 1777 comedy of manners was one called by critic and essayist William Hazlitt "if not the most original, perhaps the most finished and faultless comedy which we have."

This play of five acts is about a tangle of love in a part of English high society where gossip runs rampant and is used as a weapon against someone. As per the Encyclopædia Britannica *'Charles Surface is an extravagant but good-hearted young man. His brother Joseph, supposedly more respectable and worthy, is shown to be a conniving schemer who courts Lady Teazle, the young wife of a wealthy old nobleman. Sir Oliver Surface, their uncle, disguises himself to discover which of his nephews shall be his heir.'*

Read

Elain Hardwood
ENGLAND'S SCHOOLS: History, architecture and adaptation
https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/englands-schools/englands-schools/

This book by Elaine Hardwood *'aims to broaden our understanding of the historical and architectural development behind the buildings in which we spent so many of our formative years.'*
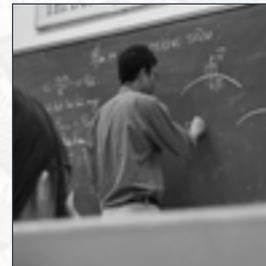
Learn

open.edu
CHILDHOOD IN THE DIGITAL AGE
https://www.open.edu/openlearn/education-development/childhood-the-digital-age/content-section-overview?active-tab=description-tab

Children nowadays have a large amount of technologies available to them and there is a continuing debate on the impact that this will have on their development. In this free course, you will explore the potential benefits and limitations of technology in children's lives.

The course is open now and requires around 12 hours of study.

Listen

BBC Podcast - Sarah Montague
THE EDUCATORS
https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04dwbkt/episodes/downloads

In this podcast series, Sarah Montague interviews people on the future of education. The episodes cover a wide range of topics from who the first teachers are, to what really makes a difference to a child's ability.

The episodes can either be streamed online or downloaded.

Watch

Sir Ken Robinson
DO SCHOOLS KILL CREATIVITY?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG9CE55wbtY

In this popular 2007 TED talk, Sir Ken Robinson explains why we need to rethink the school system in order to foster the creativity of students rather than 'educate them out of it'. He also argues that schools should cater to different types of intelligence.

Read

Nathan Martin
WHAT WE'LL TEACH AT THE FIRST SCHOOL ON MARS
https://www.gettingsmart.com/2016/09/how-we-get-to-next/

In this article published in 2016, Nathan Martin explains how when we look at the future of education we may be putting too much emphasis on technology rather than 'pedagogy or the needs of civilization'.

For him, future education will have to do three things 1) Rapidly equip humans to survive and thrive, 2) Prepare humanity to live, work and learn with (not on) machines and finally 3) Preserve humanity for humans.

Listen

Alex Beard
HOW BABIES LEARN, AND WHY ROBOTS CAN'T COMPETE
https://www.theguardian.com/news/audio/2018/may/07/how-babies-learn-and-why-robots-cant-compete-podcast
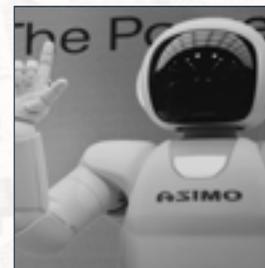
In this article Alex Beard looks at the fundamental differences between 'human learning' and 'machine learning'.
It includes the experiment conducted by Deb Roy and Rupal Patel where they recorded 90,000 hours of video and 140,000 hours of audio from their son's three first years of life.
This article also looks at how crucial the first years of our lives are in term of eduaction and innovative solutions developed by pioneering schools to support those early years.
This discussion is available either as a podcast or an article.

Watch

Alan Winfield and Raja Chatila
ROBOT ETHICS IN THE 21st CENTURY
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3VHbLeq0BU

Pretty much everyone knows about Asimov's 'Three Laws of Robotics'. But how do you actually teach robots these laws?

How can we teach them to make moral judgements, and do they have to be sentient to behave ethically? These are the questions that Alan Winfield and Raja Chatila discuss in this 2007 talk to the Royal Institution.

Take a walk

What could be more enchanting than getting lost in a magnificent library?

Click on the following links to take a look at some amazing libraries from around the world, and maybe get some ideas for some post-lock-down trips!

National Georgraphic - See 23 of the world's most enchanting libraries
https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/travel/see-23-worlds-most-en-chanting-libraries

The Telegraph - Take a 360° tour of the Bodleian, Hogwarts' library in the Harry Potter films
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M70H4M_pL4o

University of Oxford - Inside the Bodleian: Building a 21st Century Library
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8r96cZC2lY

FORUM

If you would like to share your thoughts, interrogations or other activities on this week's theme in a live discussion with other members, we will meet online on **Friday 24th April from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m**.
Please note: the forum is open and accessible outside of these hours too, and we really do encourage as many of you as possible to contribute!

To join the forum click on the link below. You will be asked to register for the forum (this doesn't duplicate your membership):
https://the-manchester-lit-phil.mn.co/

If you are not able to attend on Friday but would like to put forward a question for discussion, please email your question to admin@manlitphil.ac.uk

www.manlitphil.ac.uk I @manlitphil I admin@manlitphil.ac.uk