

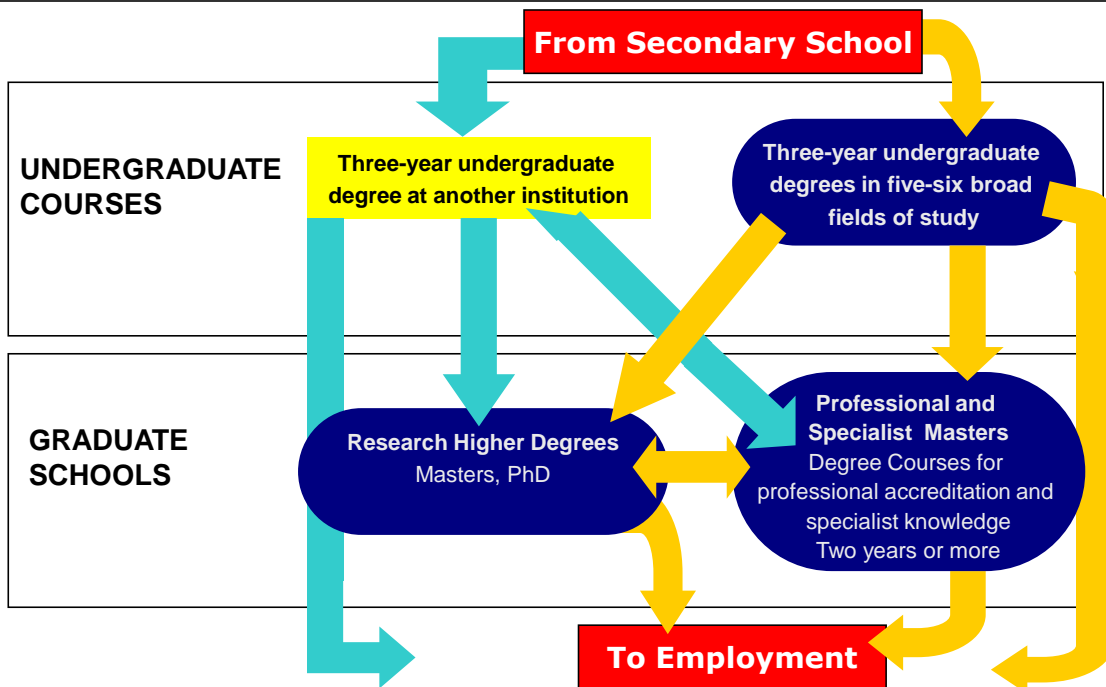
Generational Narratives in Melbourne Lived Higher Education Policy 2005-2015

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Office of Vice-Chancellor
The University of Melbourne
1998-2008

Thank you for the Society to allow me this opportunity.

Some slides like this one, might appear odd. In a few of the slides I have imported the original work done between 2005 and 2008. These slides used the official template in the office at the time.


The Melbourne Model



The Melbourne Model, in slightly more concrete terms, is simply a set of pathways through a university education which emphasizes and interlinks teaching with research and knowledge transfer. That is a very simplified version of work done between 1998 to 2008. What I am doing in fifteen minutes is to truncate everything down to the bare statements from a 20,000 worded manuscript.



It comes as a detailed read of Mary Emison's *Degrees for a New Generation: Making the Melbourne Model*, published in 2013, and a review of my work at the University. I worked with the Vice-Chancellor and Mary during the planning years of what has various names, and I will say something shortly about terminology. I also worked for the previous Vice-Chancellors, and also for the Chancellors and other University executives on occasions. I wrote the Vice-Chancellor's, Professor Glyn Davis, 'new generation' speeches and created Growing Esteem PowerPoints. I still have hundred PowerPoint slides and selected collection of speeches to explain the process. I have contacted Glyn Davis to discuss the development of the manuscript and will follow up further.



Lived Higher Education Policy








- (Left) Professor Peter Phee, Chairman of the Curriculum Commission; inaugural University Provost.
- (centre) Dr Mary Emison (right) with colleagues some years before the Melbourne Model

University of Melbourne Archives

Mary Emison was the Director of the Melbourne Curriculum Project, and the support person for Professor Peter McPhee as Chairman of Curriculum Commission. I was a member of Vice-Chancellor’s communications team which involved the senior policy advisor Andrew Norton, and the university media officer, and I worked also in the University Planning Office with Mary and Michael Beaton-Wells. In August 2005 the Director in the planning office, Michael Beaton-Wells, who had stepped into Mary’s previous role, had produced a confidential document for the university executive called, “Melbourne Agenda Mark II Towards 2025.” It was a term effort across the office.

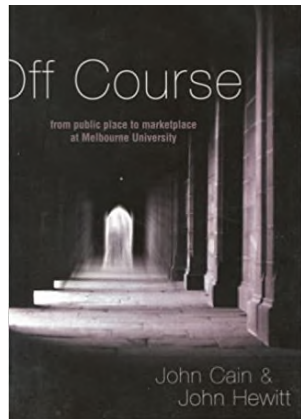


What we have today and in the manuscript are the testimony of historical players. There was a time that academics dismissed personal history as insular and emotionally-bias. Such criticisms were often short-sighted, ignoring the insularity and emotional-directiveness of so-called objectivism.

<p>Thinkers in Personalism</p> <p>Friedrich Schleiermacher 1768-1834</p> <p>George Holmes Howison 1834-1916</p> <p>J. M. E. McTaggart 1866- 1925</p> <p>Edgar S. Brightman 1884- 1953</p> <p>F.C.S. Schiller 1864-1939</p> <p>Max Scheler 1874-1928</p> <p>Nikolay Berdyaev 1874- 1948</p> <p>Dorothy Day 1887-1980</p> <p>Gabriel Marcel 1889- 1973</p> <p>Georgia E. Harkness 1891-1974</p> <p>Emmanuel Mounier 1905-1950</p> <p>Pierre Trudeau 1919- 2000</p> <p>Karol Józef Wojtyła 1920- 2005</p>					
					
				<p>Personalism and Generations</p>	

Today, personal history is a credible field of scholarship. My argument as a philosophic historian is that Personalism is a better approach in analysis and policy formation than the generational analysis used in the design of the Melbourne Curriculum. Personalism is the intellectual stance that emphasizes the importance for the place of human persons. It is a philosophical movement of two hundred years with Russian Orthodox, French Existential, Polish Catholic, American Protestant and British Idealist histories. Institutions have used generational analysis to mask the personifying effects of political decisions in educational reforms

First, a quick lesson in terminology so we are not confused in the semantics.

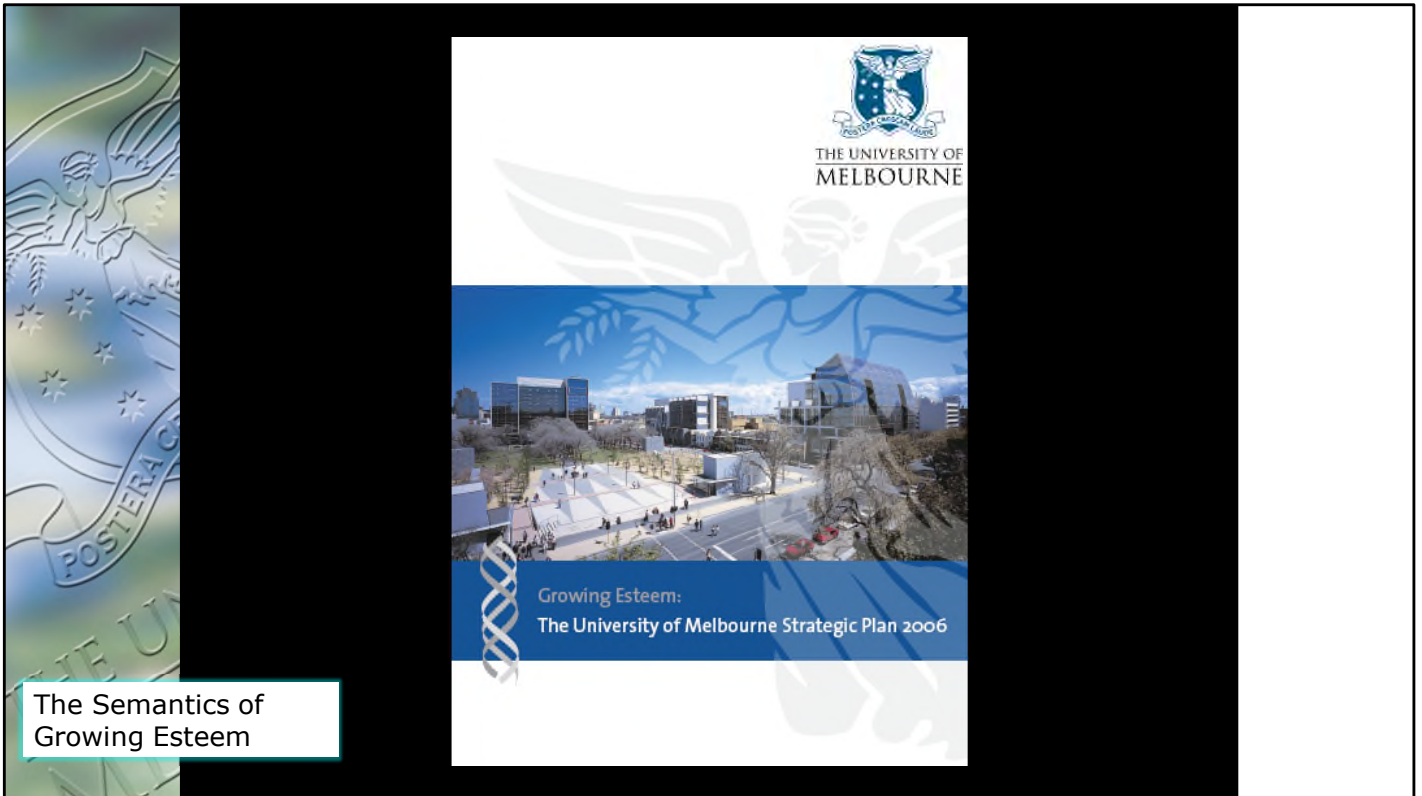


The Semantics of
the
Melbourne Agenda
(Model)



Terminology

The original 'Melbourne Agenda' was the strategy policy, published in 1996 by Vice-Chancellor Alan Gilbert. Its key features were the language of public-private synergy and the creation of the failed Melbourne University Private enterprise.



Growing Esteem was the first stage of the planning, the strategic plan at the end of 2005. It referred to the traditional conception of the University and speaks of the esteem of future generation. It picks up the place of the god Nike which links into the traditional and modern corporate mission of the image. Added is the triple helix of teaching, research, and knowledge transfer.



Melbourne Agenda Mark II Towards 2025

The University of Melbourne



The Semantics of the
2nd Melbourne Model

Prepared by Michael Beaton-Wells

Analysis & research by Neville Buch, Sue Sleep,
Nathalie Bourgois, Sarah Finnin, Cassandra
Devine, Henry Wu, Carol Smith and Guy Isgro,

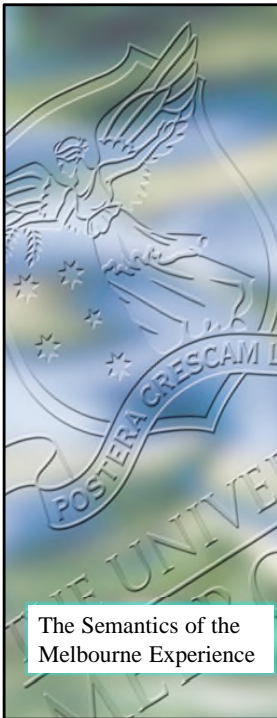
Version 3.1
11 August 2005

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT

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Melbourne Agenda Mark II was the next stage of the original Melbourne Agenda. It was an adaption of the European Union Bologna Process, which spoke to having a common pattern of three years undergraduate education, two years at masters level, and three years professional-doctoral training, across all degrees. The adaption and compromise meant it did not quite fit the pattern.

The term 'Melbourne Model' was to show that the new model would be distinct from the Bologna or from American models, and an attempt to express the specific Australian context.

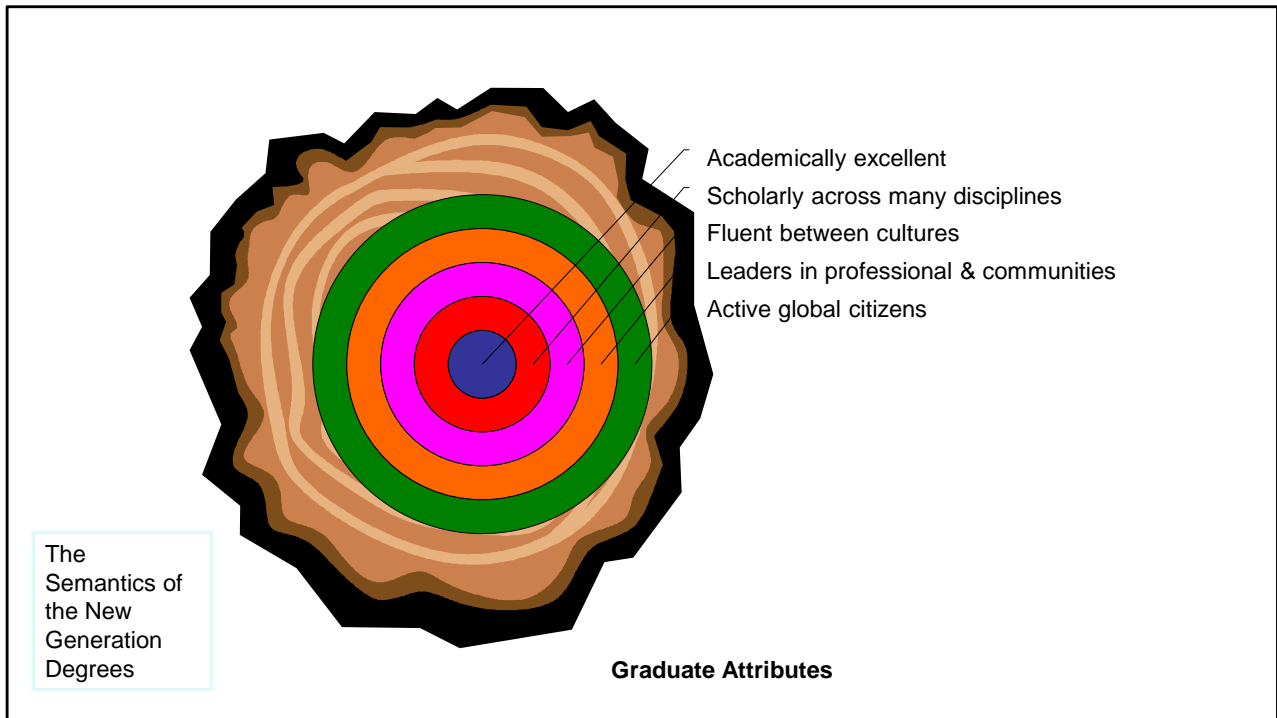


The Semantics of the Melbourne Experience

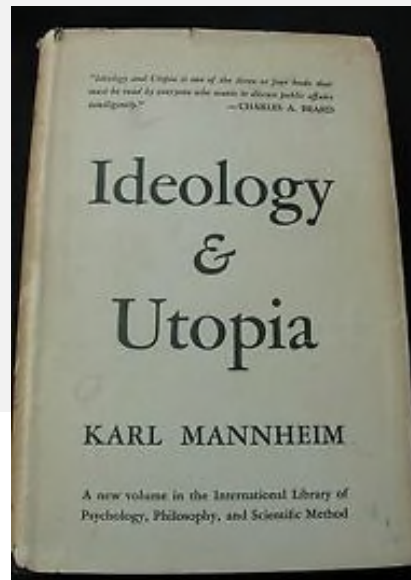
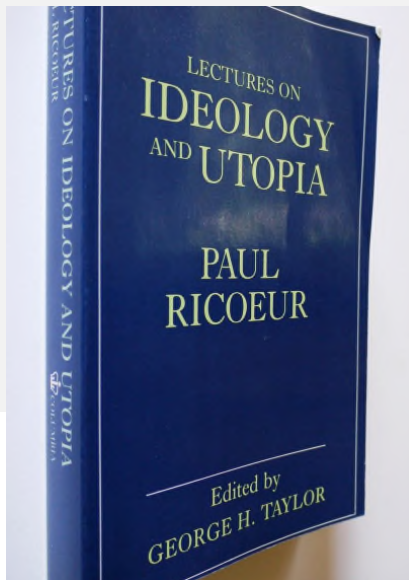


DEALING WITH GULLIVER.

The Melbourne Experience was an early ideal Davis introduced and related the outcomes in the Melbourne Experience surveys. This was particularly problematic. Much of the messaging was Marketing, an attempt to speak to academic ideals without understanding the actual experience of students. As Mary Emison said, “This was far from satisfactory and left the University in a vulnerable position with its mantra of offering students a quality ‘Melbourne Experience.’” Glyn Davis’ experience of the student’s dissatisfaction, from an institutional perspective, was the way Gulliver was tied down in public expectations and government regulation.



The new generation degrees combined the drivers of higher education, the ideals, or virtues of the public university, but ultimately, at the end of the process, the expectations were what the new generation would need as an education to be productive citizens of the future.

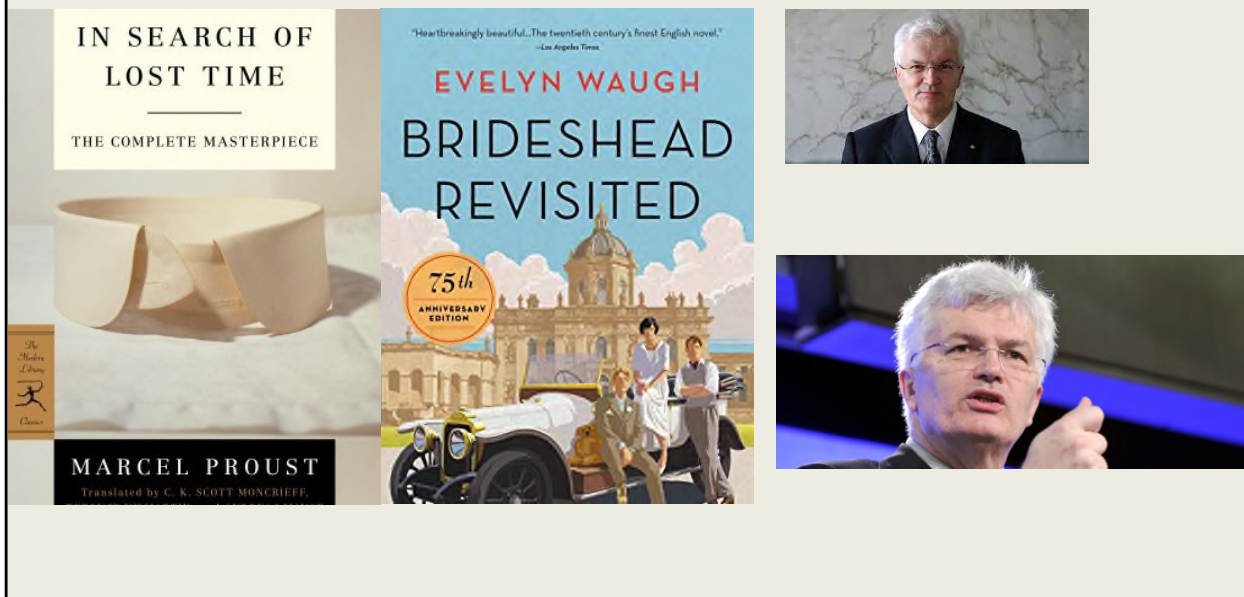


The Foundational Work of Karl Mannheim

The foundational work of Karl Mannheim comes into the creation of the generational framing of educational policy because of what he laid out as the principles of generational analysis. He took a positivist worldview, not a personable one, and argued that generation follows generation at regular intervals and with mechanical features. He clearly stated that when a person reached the age of 60, they were not educationally productive. The generational analysis defies the principles of lifelong learning, but sociologically it misses the continuing historical threads in learning, which is taken up or rejected across each new generation. Transgenerational reevaluation is lost in such policy formation. Mannheim's critics have loomed large, including Paul Ricoeur.

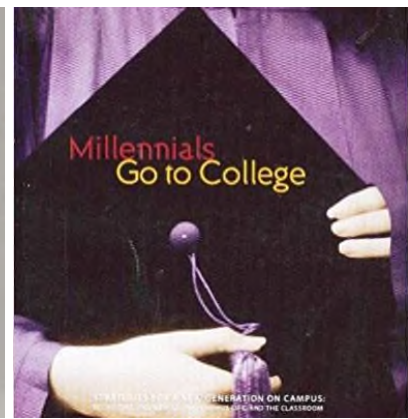
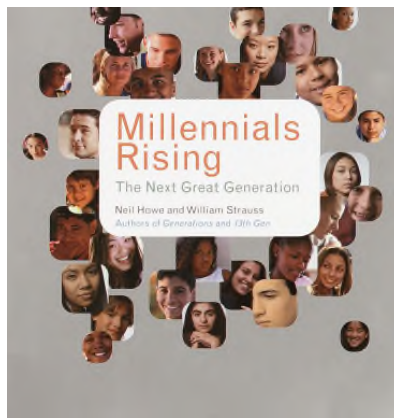
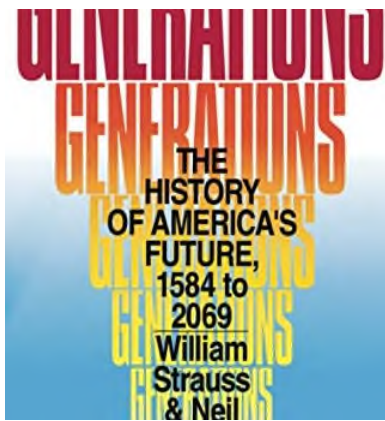
In our own time, the generational work has degenerated in the American pop sociology texts from Neil Howe and William Strauss.

Generational Work from Glyn Davis



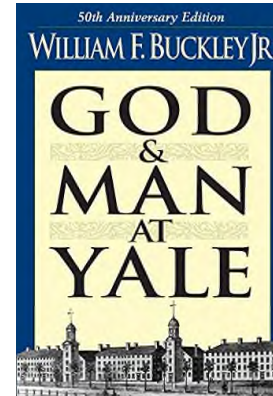
Generational analysis took hold of the Melbourne New Generation vision in subtle and conflicting ways. On one side, the Vice-Chancellor had arguments of alternative generational analysis: Aristotle's ethics and politics, Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*, and Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*. It was a personable argument of memory and generational nostalgia in relation to the virtues of the public university. Davis had compatibilist thinking, philosophically, and there was an attempt to bring an institutional healing from the disruption of privatisation. Davis was not an economic rationalist but a centrist in the public-private synergy debates, for example, the debate between John Cain and Alan Gilbert.

That was one side. The other side were those in Melbourne influenced by the Neil Howe and William Strauss' *Millennials Go to College*, published in 2007.



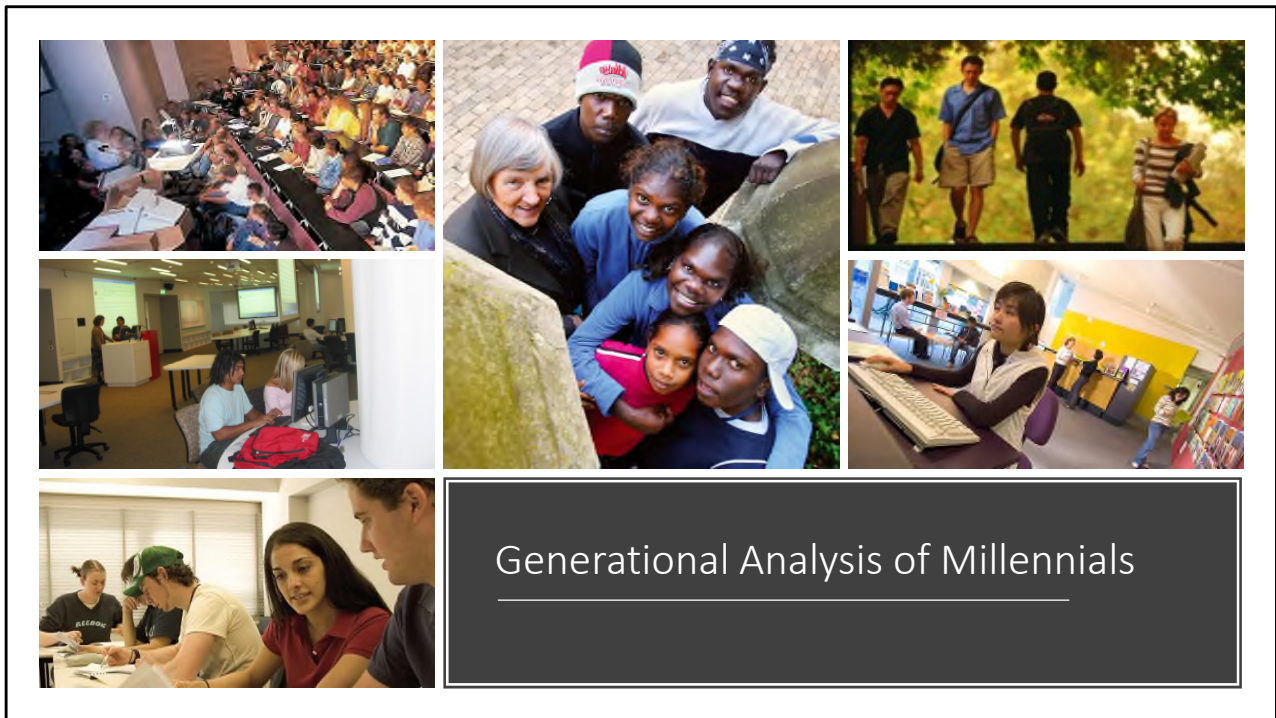
Generational Work from Neil Howe and William Strauss

They already had, over the previous two decades, a corpus of generational analysis, degenerated into corporate speak. In the Howe and Strauss argument, by labelling a generation, you had the persona of the student cohort and, therefore, you had the answer to the type of admission program or loan program or career counselling program to implement.



Generational Work from Neil Howe and William Strauss

Howe and Strauss are not systems sociologists, and their prejudices crossed different frames of understanding. There were two strong threads of old-style progressive conservatism and late 20th century neo-conservatism. You have in their work an American modernist reading of 'Western-European' thought. You can see much influence of William F. Buckley in defending a cultural-centric interpretation while appealing to republican virtues. Howe and Strauss generalise global and historical generations in the American local, moralistic, and Whig historiography, and their caricature generational narratives are presented as the cycles of history.



It should have been seen for its poverty of analysis among the Melbourne academics, but many academics do not have the education in sociology and history. One of the features of the Melbourne Curriculum was to remedy that problem for the new generation of academics.

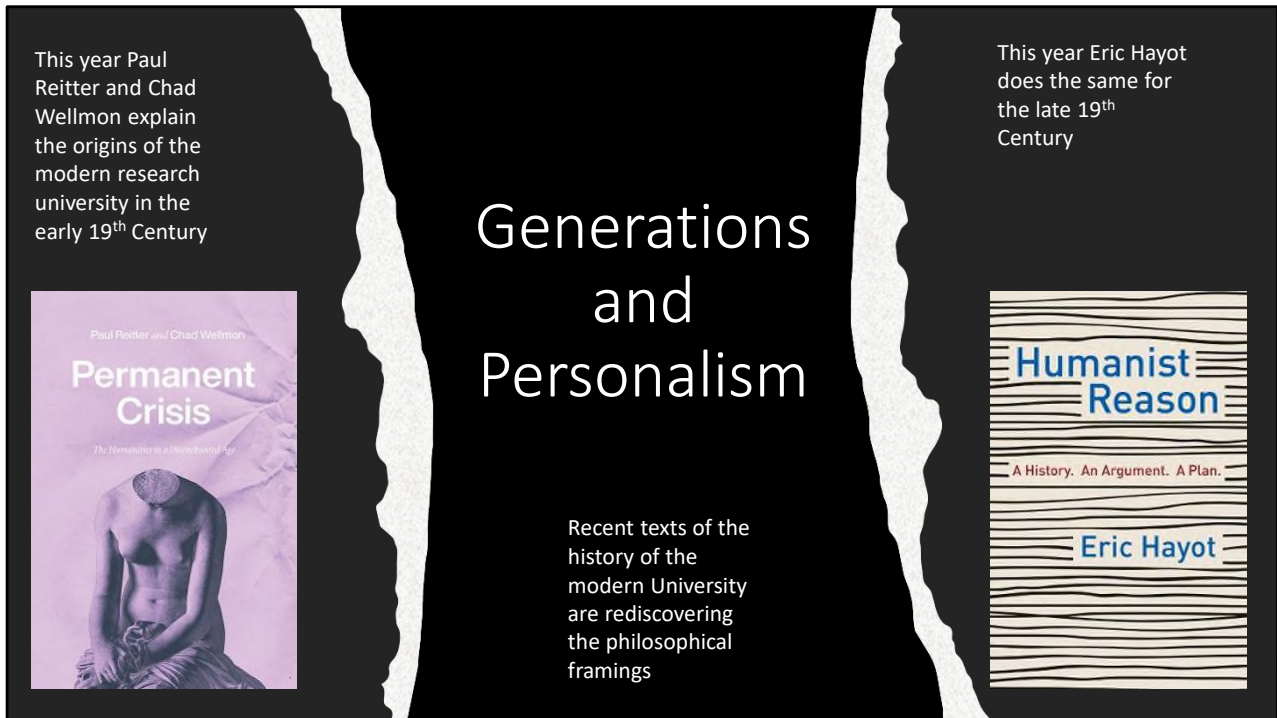


Mind the Gap



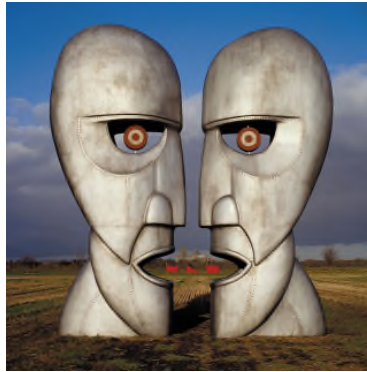
If income does not meet expense, universities must make their own arrangements. The sector has done so with conspicuous success, meeting the gap between domestic income and cost by attracting hundreds of thousands of international and domestic fee-paying students.

Furthermore, the sociological studies of the Millennials made it difficult to challenge the rhetoric. At Melbourne the governments' expectation for a job-ready generation was confused, however, the optimism for young people made it hard to unpack the political rhetoric. The hope of the older generations was that the children would make a better world.



The generation narrative is shaped in one of two transgenerational directions, as utilitarian values, or rational-natural ends in themselves – as in Aristotelian holistic flourishing or the transcendental ends in a Kantian humanism.

Glyn Davis and his partner, Margaret Gardiner, who became the RMIT Vice-Chancellor, were the ‘high hopes’ as in the Pink Floyd song:



Generations and Personalism

Beyond the horizon of the place we lived when we were young

In a world of magnets and miracles

Our thoughts strayed constantly and without boundary

The ringing of the division bell had begun

...

The grass was greener

The light was brighter

The taste was sweeter

The nights of wonder

With friends surrounded

The dawn mist glowing

The water flowing

The endless river

These are personable images which cut apart the generational analysis and reconnect.

Concluding Remarks



- Personable Characteristics
- Drivers of Higher Education
- Generational Analysis Gets it Wrong
- Melbourne Curriculum is about personal beliefs inside the Model

Look to the personable characteristics of all those involved in producing the Melbourne Curriculum. Davis' argument about the drivers of higher education had greater explanation value than descriptions of what the new generation's education requirements are going to be. Davis was the national key figure in the public service reform movement from his time with the Queensland Government, during the post-Joh Bjelke-Petersen era. He was part of the neo-liberal thinking of the 1990s, but he had a unique take, different from the Penington and Gilbert generation.

The generational analysis generally gets it wrong or cannot grasp the eventuality of the future. The Melbourne Curriculum was a product rather of the personal beliefs shared among the University's leadership.