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Editorial

Jo Clyne COMMISSIONING EDITOR

Welcome to the first edition of *Agora* for 2018.

I'd like to officially welcome Dr Katrina Burge who has taken over the reins as the new editor of *Agora* and has already demonstrated an impressive energy and attention to detail through her work on this issue.

In this 'Digital Learning' issue, we address how the integration of digital tools into schools has and will continue to shape History pedagogy. Technology should not be perceived by educators as an add-on, but rather a tool to enrich historical inquiry and provide wider opportunities for students to demonstrate learning.

The 'Thema' section opens with Simon Baker reminding us that, if our pedagogical practice is to be shaped by technology, schools must be properly equipped to meet the challenge.

Vanessa Pratt shares her model of integrating documentary filmmaking into her History classes, transforming students from consumers of film into makers.

Margaret Simkin continues the conversation by teasing out the concept of a fully integrated digital classroom by embedding it during the curriculum planning stage.

Nick Frigo continues his advocacy for technology in the History classroom and reflects on how important these skills will be for future-proofing students growing up in this digital revolution.

Sara Amos, Michael Trumble and Josh Judson team up to consider how History Clubs can be used across the middle school curriculum to help students use technology to develop creative approaches to collaborative learning and sharing historical knowledge.

In 'Praktikos,' Emily Fintleman discusses guiding her students in selecting the most effective technology for them to share their learning about Australia's Federation. Contributions from the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and the Australian Children's Television Foundation describe free resources their organisations offer to help your students explore and reflect on the wider world – the National Trust's virtual excursions and ACTF's MY:24 app. Ben Lawless reveals that even digital natives have trouble using search engines when looking for reliable historical information and offers some advice. Jem Duducu and Greg Chapman from the UK podcast 'Condensed History Gems' present some fun facts to help teachers link curriculum content with their students' favourite films and video games.

We are particularly delighted in this issue to include student voices from two students who have used their proficiency in History to access wonderful opportunities. Emily Shallcross from Presbyterian Ladies College (Melbourne) reflects on her experience studying History subjects at the University of Melbourne as part of her VCE studies while Patrick Ryan from Mercy Regional College (Camperdown) shares digital techniques that saw him awarded a free overseas trip on the Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize tour.

In 'Kritikos,' you'll find useful reviews of books and resources that will help support your teaching.

We hope that in this issue you will find many new ideas to try out with your students, challenge your perceptions of digital learning and help you to shape the history classrooms of tomorrow.

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Katrina Burge and Alan Tiller

Agora is the journal of the History Teachers' Association of Victoria Limited. It promotes ideas, information and good classroom practice. It exists to help foster and improve the effective learning and teaching of History.

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President's Introduction

Rosalie Triolo PRESIDENT

Agora is comprised of several sections:

Sungraphô: Original pieces of research.
Note there is no Sungraphô article in this issue.

Thema: Perspectives on the theme.

Praktikos: Teaching ideas.

Kritikos: Reviews.

Submission guidelines for Sungraphô

'Sungraphô' means 'I report' in Ancient Greek. Thucydides uses this verb to describe the product of his historical research. It reflects the aim of the refereed section of *Agora*.

This section of the journal is not necessarily based on the issue's theme.

Submissions are accepted from interstate and overseas. All manuscripts submitted to Sungraphô will be reviewed by two independent experts. Manuscripts must be accompanied by a covering letter. The name of the author must not appear on the manuscript. Articles must not have been published elsewhere. Items appearing in Sungraphô are refereed articles that satisfy the C1 classification of the Department of Education and Training.

Sungraphô articles have endnotes rather than footnotes and do not contain bibliographies.

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Some years ago, the Australian War Memorial produced an educational brochure that pictured, against a white background, a muddied, sturdy leather boot from World War I. Beneath the image was a provocative single-word question in digital characters: 'Technology?'

The Memorial was reminding the viewer that technology is anything that a human (or animal) uses in some way to achieve an outcome. Technology may be a boot specially crafted to protect an infantryman from the rigours of a European winter one hundred years ago or a piece of flint knapped to create a cutting tool one million years ago. The Memorial was simultaneously demonstrating its extraordinary program of digitising its collection and, like so many GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives and museums) institutions, making its resources available to the world.

Yet, as several of the authors in this issue bring to our attention, diverse information and communication technologies are not just a means of harvesting the world of primary sources and synthesised information. They provide engaging ways for teachers of History to enhance the breadth and depth of students' understandings, and enable both students and teachers to demonstrate and communicate those understandings in diverse forms.

In using new technologies, the role of teachers of History in helping develop students' critical literacies is as important as it was last century, when the activity applied for the greater part to analysing words and images on paper. Indeed, critical literacies are arguably more important now, given the speed and reach of modern information and communication technologies. A whole new language underpins such technologies, and the 'Technologies Glossary' at the Australian Curriculum website is an excellent ready-reference for decoding it.¹

An original muddied World War I leather boot may be impossible to take into the classroom, yet I still prefer wherever possible to use authentic and completely non-digitised objects. World War I postcards, for example, can be collected easily and inexpensively as part of a teacher's professional resource collection. Even though I deliberately inform History pre-service teachers about the treasury of digitised postcards at the Australian War Memorial website² and the Mary Evans Picture Library,³ there is decidedly more awe when I produce my collected postcards (in their protective mylar sleeves) so the pre-service teachers can handle authentic hundred-year-old documents.

I share these powerful primary sources with the pre-service teachers to help them devise activities that will develop their students' historical understandings and skills through rich visuals and words. Of course, many pre-service teachers create postcard activities and projects that involve their students in social media and other modern technologies – responses which seem nicely incongruous with the indelible purple pencil copperplate handwriting on the back of the cards. Some suggest that their Year 9s could create their own postcards as hand-crafted art, and a year never passes without the suggestion that Year 9s would enjoy the homework of staining their card with tea or coffee. Another technology.

Part of the pleasure and fascination of an engaging History education is that there are more options than ever for locating sources, undertaking activities and demonstrating understandings in a most holistic definition of technology forms. Old and new approaches can sit comfortably and creatively together.

Welcome to 2018. May it be a successful and happy year for you and your students.

- 1 Australian Curriculum 'Technologies Glossary,' <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/technologies/glossary>.
- 2 Australian War Memorial, <https://www.awm.gov.au>.
- 3 Mary Evans Picture Library, <http://www.maryevans.com>.