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Dr. Peter Jarvis

University of Surrey, School of Arts and Humanities, Guildford, England

Lifelong Learning, Active Citizenship, Social Capital and the Human Condition

ABSTRACT:

This paper distinguishes between human potential and the human condition, and it argues that there is a tension between the human potential and the needs of a social system. The argument is illustrated here with reference to the European Commission policy documents on lifelong learning. It is shown that the needs of the system reduce work to employability, public service to a perfunctory role as a citizen and removes the contemplative from learning – and in so doing the human condition is one within which the achievement of human potential is not possible even though it is regarded as one of the aims of lifelong learning, but then will it ever be achievable?