**Philosophy of Educational Technology [DRAFT]**

*They know enough who know how to learn*

–Henry Adams

It is often thought that what makes humans unique is our intelligent use of tools or our sophisticated linguistic abilities. While true, other animals also use tools (chimpanzees) and have impressive ways of communicating (dolphins). What sets humans apart from other animals is *collective learning*; the ability to accumulate knowledge through the generations. The medium for this ability is education, and it has changed from simply watching and mimicking behaviors to complex graduate courses online.

An educated person is not one who always knows, an educated person is one who always learns. In this way, the only requisite for an education is to know the value of knowledge, and to pursue that knowledge continually. This pursuit has three facets: Experience, Exploration, and Example. The clockwork of all learning is experience. It’s possible to know how something works without possessing the ability to make it work. Where experience connects knowledge to the physical world, exploration connects knowledge within. When students explore, they make their own discoveries. They uncover what a piece of information means to them; that is, how it relates to their own lives and past experiences. What may be more difficult or dangerous to learn by exploration or experience can be learned by example. For most of human history this has been a parent teaching their child, but as the accumulation of human knowledge grows, people have come to rely on professional educators.

To effectively teach modern concepts requires modern technology, and that technology is everywhere. In the context of this statement, it would be helpful to confine “technology” to that which has been created in the teacher’s lifetime. Like any tool, new technology can be used or misused. The most obvious reason to use new technology in the classroom is so that students gain maximal experience with that technology without realizing it. They don’t need to learn biology *and* computers if they learn biology *with* computers. Using the right technology correctly can make the learning process more efficient as well, providing affordances that might not otherwise be available. However, using technology incorrectly can make learning inefficient and distracting. It is up to the teacher to use technology wisely when teaching the next generation.