Virtual Ability, Inc.® presents the 6th Annual
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http://maps.secondlife.com/secondlife/Virtual%20Ability/54/170/23

Title:	"Advocate or Mechanic? The Role of the Citizen Practitioner in Social Change"
Speaker:	Dr. Christopher McMaster, New Zealand high school educator

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[2017/12/02 07:58] Carolyn Carillon: Hello everyone.
Today's presentation is being transcribed so those without audio or who require text only can participate in real time.

A little explanation about this service.

Voice-to-text transcriptionists provide a translation of the key ideas discussed, NOT a word for word transcription.

Voice-to-text services provide an in-the-moment snapshot of ideas and concepts, so that those who are unable to hear or to understand the audio program are able to participate in real-time.

You will see the transcription in local chat.

[2017/12/02 08:00] Carolyn Carillon: <>

[2017/12/02 08:00] Beth Ghostraven: Good morning! or Afternoon! or Evening!
I'm Beth Ghostraven, also known as the Spam Queen. I'm a middle school librarian in physical life, and I love being in Second Life to network with other educators.
I also love how virtual worlds make it much easier to overcome my hearing impairment when interacting with others.
Gentle Heron and Virtual Ability have been amazingly helpful in this journey. Thank you!

I'd like to introduce a fellow educator who is on the other side of the physical world from me, but here in the same room virtually.
Christopher McMaster is a writer and educator living in New Zealand. He completed a PhD in education from the University of Canterbury based on a critical ethnography of developing inclusive culture in an Aotearoa New Zealand high school.
He designed a thesis topic that incorporated two of his passions—community activism and inclusion—and builds on the experience of 15 years as a teacher and 25 years as a parent.
This study was recently adapted and published as Educating All: Developing Inclusive School Cultures from Within (published by Peter Lang,
available through Amazon here: https://www.amazon.com/Educating-All-Developing-Inclusive-Inclusion-ebook/dp/B076611YQ1).
This presentation draws upon that research, as well as subsequent work.
I think we can probably all agree that our schools, and our world need more inclusiveness of others.

Christopher received a Master of Arts from the University of London, before becoming a primary teacher in the UK.
Returning to his native US he specialized in special education, earning a postgraduate diploma from the University of Alaska Southeast.
Christopher was recently an Assistant Professor of Education, Special Education at Augsburg University, in Minneapolis, USA.
He has since returned to his adopted home of New Zealand where he teaches in the local community, developing a model of alternative education within a mainstream high school. Christopher can be contacted at drchrismcmaster@gmail.com.

Christopher, I'm eager to hear what you have to share about the role of the citizen practitioner in social change!

[2017/12/02 08:06] Gentle Heron: Oxford = Augsburg (MN)

[2017/12/02 08:03] Elektra Panthar: <>
[2017/12/02 08:04] Elektra Panthar: CM: Thank you for coming! It's morning here
My talk is a about a theme I focused on in Oxford, I hope to end it in a conversation
A little outline first
About me - scene setting about education in New Zealand
I'm talking to you from the northern island you can see
(CM reading his Maori introduction from the slide)
I'm acknowledging where I grew up, introducing myself and thanking you for having me here today

There were 2 interpretations about the treaty signed between NZ native people and the English speaking people
There have been protests about the land, which sparked a host of changes in laws
My background is as an educator. There are similarities with the other English speaking countries
They have privatised a lot of schools
There have been disputes about teachers salaries, with only two unions, one for public and one for private teachers
It's an amazing achievement, that Maori communities were able to govern their own schools
A difference is the curriculum - there is potential for change
The curriculum subjects kind of override the 'classic' subjects
How they break down service provision is also similar, with some differences

I'll talk now a little about my research
I thought school culture was toxic where I used to work, studied a way to include various values and practices
NZ: How can we try to improve the system ?
NZ: We used the Index for inclusion in the local school I taught next, which I came to know about in UK
The students adapted the questions for themselves
They took the framework and adapted it to their own culture
We worked in a small group, about 10-12 people, at first
My research methodology is about critical ethnography - I could not observe without 'sticking my nose in'
I'm a visual thinker, as you can see from the slide
I was part of the process of change as well as researcher
Taylor observed a high level of abuse in hospitals and centers for people with disabilities, and then someone blew the whistle about the abuse

How can researchers know when to step in and speak out about what they have observed?

[2017/12/02 08:30] Beth Ghostraven: Like with bullying, teaching kids not to be bystanders

[2017/12/02 08:31] Elektra Panthar: CM: Considering our role in our culture, bureaucracies and institutions also are heavily influenced by it
The words themselves and how we interpret what is around us, what our values are based on depend on it
This model is by a researcher who went to Japan in the 60s - it's filled with cultural artefact, and also the architecture
I was driving by and sometimes I couldn't distinguish schools from prisons
They were only lacking guard towers
I was at the stadium in NZ some time ago and English spectators started cheering loudly, but we don't do that in NZ: That is to say sometimes we take things for granted, think things are done this way everywhere, but it's not so
I tried to find something to illustrate my position in culture
We can go on like this for a long time: immersed in the culture and unaware of it unless presented with other examples
Then I came across this painting in the slide
This represents culture better
There are so many differences between the individuals, but everybody is expressing their agency
Humans don't have a nature, they have a history
Things change when people are aware of their agency and work to keep expressing themselves
Also accepting their responsibility and role in society, how we teach the new generations about their own role in society
Our media is pedagogical as well
 That is what Dewey theorised
Gramsci instead talked about there being no neutrality in your position - once one knows about the status quo one can decide whether to uphold it or change it
This vignette in the slide shows about the culture I grew up in and my role in it (Tea time)

[2017/12/02 08:44] Gentle Heron: (he is reading aloud the slide)

[2017/12/02 08:47] Elektra Panthar: CM: I found myself in several positions while observing and I couldn't stand back and just observe, I had to try and change what wasn't working
If I didn't try to change things I wouldn't have walked away thinking I didn't do anything ethically and culturally of consequence
The SABO center does important work with students
They help them getting the tools to affect change in the community

[2017/12/02 08:51] Beth Ghostraven: http://www.augsburg.edu/sabo/what-we-do/publicachievement/

[2017/12/02 08:51] Elektra Panthar: CM: We had a course in special ed called public achievement, about working with a group of students; the candidate teacher would act as coach - students chose that word
It teaches special needs students how to cooperate and find the confidence to address the community, and how to influence people in power to change things positively
In NZ the students walked away with mostly the key competencies illustrated earlier, more than traditional subjects
Within the school system we sometimes have to be mechanic, as in keeping the machine/system running
As citizen teacher you can also be an advocate for change, helping students find their place in the community, interact with them on a meaningful way, support them taking into account their environment and current situation
What are the implications for us? What price are we willing to pay as teacher and researcher?

[2017/12/02 09:00] Gentle Heron: Christopher in your methodology picture of the flour mill about critical ethnography, I think it's important to think about this a lot more, because we are all observers of our culture. Our Virtual Ability community is involved heavily with Tom Boellstorff, an ethnographer who has been embedded in the virtual world for many years. It truly is important to understand that although the researcher is in one sense intrusive, can't be otherwise, the researcher has an ethical responsibility about interfering with what is going on, not just observing.
Don't all members of a culture have that same ethical responsibility? I think that is the message that John, the previous presenter, left us with. Does that fit with your research, Christopher?
[2017/12/02 09:01] Elektra Panthar: CM: Totally, yes
There's a fine balance in research
Being able to research without being kicked out but also doing something, otherwise it'd have been just an intellectual exercise
A researcher I knew remained objective, didn't see the need to intervene
I don't know if it's ethical to not be both
The whole perception of neutrality comes in play about bias , yes
[2017/12/02 09:03] Gentle Heron: Wasting your time as researcher but also ours as a community being observed, if you don't become an advocate
[2017/12/02 09:04] ShylatheSuperGecko: It opens the research, however, if not carefully done, to criticism of bias.

[2017/12/02 09:04] Gentle Heron: I'm thinking of Ethnographia, folks
[2017/12/02 09:04] ShylatheSuperGecko: Yes, I am part of that.
[2017/12/02 09:06] Carolyn Carillon: Shyla: I'm not sure what you want us to say about the project, Gentle
The goal of that project is to demonstrate the embodiment of place
In virtual worlds, we construct places just like the real world

Those places have meaning and are extensions of our lives
Inherently, there's support for the concept of virtual worlds
My comment about bias comes from our discussions of healthcare
The research may be valid
The calculations may be right
Affiliation of the researchers is important to me
But how do you appease people like me?
If I see research performed by a conservative institution
As a disabled person
I'm likely to give it less weight
I suspect people on the far right do the same
I'm doing research on medical marijuana
I assume they'll think I'm pro
And disregard some of my results
[2017/12/02 09:11] Elektra Panthar: CM: If you look at research of pharmaceutical companies you might be wondering about their bias, about able bodied academics researching about disabilities, people might question the motives and the bias of the researcher if they're not part of the 'world' they're observing

[2017/12/02 09:10] Zombie doggie (tarquin.evermore): I am neutral on it, it may have some benefits, but the risks might outweigh them. But at the same time we need to do something about our opioid epidemic
Replacing one addiction with another also compounds things. It once was done with meth to 'treat' alcoholism back in the Victorian days, since a meth addict behaved differently than an alcoholic, basically they weren't in public so out of sight out of mind.

[2017/12/02 09:11] YasminEliora: some people do not know how to make a difference other than being a voice
And raising awareness

[2017/12/02 09:12] Pecos Kidd: The Scientific Method *should* provide a defense against researcher bias: results should be repeatable.
[2017/12/02 09:13] Carolyn Carillon: Shyla: Sorry for bringing up bias
but sometimes I find
that I need to go back & reconsider bias
[2017/12/02 09:13] ShylatheSuperGecko agrees with Pecos
[2017/12/02 09:13] Elektra Panthar: CM: It takes a lot of openness to do that
You have to able to see everything out there

[2017/12/02 09:15] Gentle Heron: Thank you Christopher for your patience with voice issues. It seems to be a bad day for that. I'm hoping you will come back and talk to us again at a later date. Audience, let's thank Christopher for challenging us to think about advocacy and research and ethics and how that all relates.
[2017/12/02 09:16] Suellen Heartsong (suln.mahogany) claps
[2017/12/02 09:16] Jade (myst.serenity): claps
[2017/12/02 09:16] Slatan Dryke: great talk Christopher !!

[2017/12/02 09:16] ShylatheSuperGecko: Very nice presentation - yes!
[2017/12/02 09:16] Suellen Heartsong (suln.mahogany): thanks Christopher
[2017/12/02 09:16] Gloriejoy (joycie.string): thank you
[2017/12/02 09:16] Sonitus Randt applauds
[2017/12/02 09:16] ShylatheSuperGecko: and interesting to see values around education where you are....
[2017/12/02 09:16] Mook Wheeler: thank you Christopher, that was wonderful
[2017/12/02 09:17] Cricketsea: Thanks all
[2017/12/02 09:17] Carolyn Carillon: <>