Legacy from the Portfolio Literature

- Much to learn from the literature on paper-based portfolios
- As adult learners, we have much to learn from how children approach portfolios

“Everything I know about portfolios was confirmed working with a kindergartener”

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The Power of Portfolios

Author: Elizabeth Hebert
Publisher: Jossey-Bass
Picture courtesy of Amazon.com

The Power of Portfolios

Author: Dr. Elizabeth Hebert, Principal Crow Island School, Winnetka, Illinois
Picture taken by Helen Barrett at AERA, Seattle, April, 2001

From the Preface (1)

“Portfolios have been with us for a very long time. Those of us who grew up in the 1950s or earlier recognize portfolios as reincarnations of the large memory boxes or drawers where our parents collected starred spelling tests, lacy valentines, science fair posters, early attempts at poetry, and (of course) the obligatory set of plaster hands. Each item was selected by our parents because it represented our acquisition of a new skill or our feelings of accomplishment. Perhaps an entry was accompanied by a special notation of praise from a teacher or maybe it was placed in the box just because we did it.”

From the Preface (2)

“We formed part of our identity from the contents of these memory boxes. We recognized each piece and its association with a particular time or experience. We shared these collections with grandparents to reinforce feelings of pride and we reexamined them on rainy days when friends were unavailable for play. Reflecting on the collection allowed us to attribute importance to these artifacts, and by extension to ourselves, as they gave witness to the story of our early school experiences.”
From the Preface (3)

"Our parents couldn’t possibly envision that these memory boxes would be the inspiration for an innovative way of thinking about children’s learning. These collections, lovingly stored away on our behalf, are the genuine exemplar for documenting children’s learning over time. But now these memory boxes have a different meaning. It’s not purely private or personal, although the personal is what gives power to what they can mean."


Let’s get personal...
Think for a minute about:

- Something about your COLLECTIONS:
  - Suggested topics:
    - If you are a parent, what you saved for your children
    - What your parents saved for you
    - What you collect...
    - Why you collect...

Some issues to consider
- What do your collections say about what you value?
- Is there a difference between what you purposefully save and what you can’t throw away?
- How can we use our personal collections experiences to help learners as they develop their portfolios?

What is a Portfolio in Education?

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress and achievements in one or more areas over time.

(Northwest Evaluation Association, 1990)

The power of portfolios [to support deep learning] is personal.

What is a Portfolio in Education? (2)

The collection must include:
- student participation in selecting contents
- the criteria for selection
- the criteria for judging merit
- evidence of student self-reflection

(Northwest Evaluation Association, 1990)

Metaphors!
- Mirror, Map, Sonnet
- C.V. or Multimedia Resume
- Test
- Story
- http://electronicportfolios.org/metaphors.html
Purpose & Goals for the portfolio
(Determine Content)

- Multiple purposes:
  - Learning/Process
  - Assessment
  - Marketing/Showcase

Think about the differences between:

- Learning Portfolio and Portfolio Learning
- Assessment Portfolio and Portfolio Assessment
- One is more Product, the other is more Process

Learning Portfolios
- “know thyself = a lifetime of investigation
- self-knowledge as outcome of learning

The Learning Portfolio
(Zubizaretta, 2004, p.20)

Learning Portfolios
- Support reflection which is central to learning
- Reflections
  - The Heart and Soul of the Portfolio
  - An electronic portfolio without reflection is just a
    - Digital scrapbook
    - Fancy electronic resume
    - Multimedia Presentation
    - Personal web site

Showcase Portfolios
- Marketing
- Employment
- Tell your story
- A primary motivator for many portfolio developers

Assessment Portfolios
- A major movement in Teacher Education in U.S.
- A major new commercial market
- A primary motivator for organizations

More later!
A few thoughts about Assessment -- What Type?

- Assessment OF Learning? or
- Assessment FOR Learning?

www.qca.org.uk
ages3-14
Assessment for Learning

Principles of Assessment FOR Learning

Definition: Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.

Overlap of Assessment Types*

Assessment OF Learning
Assessment FOR Learning

*Alberta Assessment Consortium

Portfolios used for Assessment OF Learning

- Purpose of portfolio prescribed by institution
- Artifacts mandated by institution to determine outcomes of instruction
- Portfolio usually developed at the end of a class, term or program - time limited
- Portfolio and/or artifacts usually "scored" based on a rubric and quantitative data is collected for external audiences
- Portfolio is usually structured around a set of outcomes, goals or standards
- Sometimes used to make high stakes decisions
- Summative - what has been learned to date? (Past to present)
- Requires Extrinsic motivation
- Audience: external - little choice

Portfolios that support Assessment FOR Learning

- Purpose of portfolio agreed upon with learner
- Artifacts selected by learner to tell the story of their learning
- Portfolio maintained on an ongoing basis throughout the class, term or program - time flexible
- Portfolio and artifacts reviewed with learner and used to provide feedback to improve learning
- Portfolio organization is determined by learner or negotiated with mentor/advisor/teacher
- Rarely used for high stakes decisions
- Formative - what are the learning needs in the future? (Present to future)
- Fosters Intrinsic motivation - engages the learner
- Audience: learner, family, friends - learner can choose
A Resource on K-12 Portfolios
- By Evangeline Harris Stefanakis
- Published by Heinemann
- Includes a CD-ROM with examples of student portfolios

Assessment for Learning Continuum - Enhanced

Which approach should you take?
- Are you looking for an electronic portfolio...
- Or an assessment management system?
- What's the difference?
Along a Continuum

Electronic Portfolio or Assessment Management System?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Electronic Portfolio</th>
<th>Assessment Management System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple purposes: Learning, Assessment, Employment</td>
<td>Single purpose: Formative and Summative Assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data structure varies with tools used to create the portfolio; common data formats (converted to HTML, PDF)</td>
<td>Data structure most often uses a relational database to record, report data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary type of data: qualitative</td>
<td>Primary type of data: qualitative and quantitative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data storage in multiple options: CD-ROM, videotape, DVD, WWW server, LAN</td>
<td>Data storage primarily on LAN or on secure WWW server</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual design and hyperlinks often under control of portfolio developer</td>
<td>Visual design and hyperlinks most often controlled by database structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner choice of artifacts</td>
<td>Institutional choice of artifacts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner-Centered</td>
<td>Institution-Centered</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Contrasting Paradigms of Portfolios

- Positivism
- Constructivism

"Assessing Portfolios Using the Constructivist Paradigm"
Palatine: IRI Skylight Training & Publishing.
Tension between two approaches

“The two paradigms produce portfolio activities that are entirely different.”

“The positivist approach puts a premium on the selection of items that reflect outside standards and interests.”

“The constructivist approach puts a premium on the selection of items that reflect learning from the student’s perspective.”


How can we address both types of portfolios?

Use three different systems that are digitally linked:

I. A digital archive of a learner’s work
   - Allows for the collection of evidence that is not easily captured by traditional methods.

II. An institution-centered database to collect faculty-generated assessment data based on tasks and rubrics
   - Provides a structured approach to document and track student progress.

III. A student-centered electronic portfolio

Handout

Assessment Systems and Electronic Portfolios: Balancing Accountability with Learning

Interactive Process

Evidence = + Artifacts + Reflection + Validation

I. Digital Archive of Learner Artifacts (Working Portfolio)
Interactive Process

Performance Tasks & Rubrics for evaluation

Reflection on Learning (self-selected artifacts for self-evaluation)

Assessor

Learner

Evidence = +Artifacts +Reflection +Validation

Positivist Paradigm
(Evaluation and Making Inferences)

Portfolio as Test

Assessor EVALUATES required artifacts

Data collected for certification/licensure (high stakes) and for accreditation

Performance Tasks & Rubrics for evaluation
II. Assessment Management System
(institution-centered data management system)

Resulting in...
Institution-centered aggregated data leading to certification/licensure and accreditation

Focus on Limited-Term Evaluation

External Locus of Control
- Includes prescribed artifacts and rubrics
- Requires database to manage information
- Focuses on faculty's formative and summative evaluations

I. Digital Archive of Learner Artifacts
(Working Portfolio)
Constructivist Paradigm (Making Meaning and Assessment as Learning)

Portfolio as Story

Learner COLLECTS artifacts from learning experiences

Reflection on Learning (self-selected artifacts for self-evaluation)

Learner SELECTS artifacts and reflections to meet self-determined purpose(s)

III. Electronic Portfolio(s) (presentation portfolios for multiple purposes)

Resulting in...

Student-centered documentation of deep learning, for developing self-concept and presentation to multiple audiences (peers, employers, etc.)
Focus on Lifelong Self-Directed Learning

Internal Locus of Control
- Includes choice of artifacts
- Results in personalized e-portfolio
- Focuses on learner's celebration of uniqueness

Both approaches result in a:

Balanced Assessment System

Constructed Meaning
"The portfolio is a laboratory where students construct meaning from their accumulated experience."
(Paulson & Paulson, 1991, p.9)

Portfolio tells a Story
"A portfolio tells a story. It is the story of knowing. Knowing about things... Knowing oneself... Knowing an audience... Portfolios are students' own stories of what they know, why they believe they know it, and why others should be of the same opinion."
(Paulson & Paulson, 1991, p.2)

Portfolios tell a Story
“A portfolio is opinion backed by fact... Students prove what they know with samples of their work."
(Paulson & Paulson, 1991, p.2)
Linking Two Dynamic Processes to Promote Deep Learning

Portfolio Development Process
Digital Storytelling

Portfolio Development Process

Traditional + Technology
- Collecting
- Archiving
- Selecting
- Linking/Thinking
- Reflecting
- Storytelling
- Directing
- Collaborating
- Celebrating
- Publishing

Reflective Questions that tie the Past to the Future

Some concerns...
- Assessment for Learning
- Portfolios for Learning
- What about Motivation?
Components of Portfolio Development

■ Content
■ Purpose
■ Process

Components of Portfolio Development

■ Content: evidence = artifacts + reflections + validation

Components of Portfolio Development

■ Purpose: the reason for developing the portfolio – includes audience
  ■ Learning & professional development - Process
  ■ Assessment (of and for learning)
  ■ Showcase (Employment/Marketing)

Components of Portfolio Development

■ Process:
  ■ tools used
  ■ sequence of activities
  ■ rules
  ■ evaluation criteria (rubrics)
  ■ collaboration/conversation

Developmental Levels of Portfolio Implementation

■ Extrinsic Motivation
  – institutional directed content, purpose & process – external locus of control

■ Mixed Motivation
  – learner ownership over one or two of the components

■ Intrinsic Motivation
  – learner ownership of content, purpose and process

Learner Ownership and Control of Electronic Portfolio Development

Learner Control vs. Organizational Control

Assumption:
Greater Learner Control leads to more Intrinsic Motivation
Two anecdotes about high school portfolios

High School graduates - thrown in bonfire or trash can

High school freshman - $50 reward for lost portfolio

What’s the difference between those two stories?

What are the variables that produce these extremes in attitudes toward ownership of portfolios?

Linked to...

Digital Tools to Support Reflection:

- Online Portfolios
- Blogs & Wikis
- Digital Storytelling
- Games

Portfolios provide Encouragement for Reflection

1. ...provides both the discipline and the freedom of structure, allowing one to see one's own work. (Sonnent)
2. ...provides the opportunity to assess one's own strengths and weaknesses through examination of a collection of samples, as well as to get feedback on one's performance from others. (Mirror)
3. ...the process of self assessment leads one to setting goals for future development and professional growth. (Map)

(Mary Diez, 1994)

Helping Students to Reflect

- Provide models and examples
- Begin with forms or prompts
- Move to journals/blogs
- Be careful that reflection in portfolios doesn’t become an exercise in filling in the blanks on a web-based form.

North Carolina Reflection Cycle

1. Select
   - What is my goal?
   - What am I reflecting on?

2. Describe
   - What?
   - Why?
   - Where?

3. Analyze
   - Why?
   - What?

4. Appraise
   - What is the relationship to your values, philosophy?

5. Transform
   - What is the relationship to practice, professional development?
“Blog” #1 word of the year*
- Merriam-Webster Inc announced its top 10 "words of the year" list, with the immensely popular "blog" taking the number one place.
- Compiles list each year by taking the most researched words on its various Web sites

* Internet Scout Report, December 3, 2004

**Digital Storytelling Process**
- Learners create a 2-4 minute digital video clip
- First person narrative
- Told in their own voice
- Illustrated by (mostly) still images
- Music track to add emotional tone

**What is Digital Storytelling?**
- Play Digital Storytelling from DVD

**Center for Digital Storytelling**

**Why include Digital Storytelling in ePortfolios?**

**Learner Motivation and Affect**
**Brain Research on Emotion in Learning**

**Storytelling as a Theory of Learning**
- Two educators from New Zealand - staff developer and health educator
- Relates storytelling to literature on learning and reflection
- Provides stages of storytelling related to reflection

http://www.storycenter.org
**Storytelling = Narrative Inquiry**  
Mattingly in Schön (1991)

- Aristotle: narrative – natural framework for representing world of action
- Everyday sense-making role of storytelling
- Stories reveal the way ideas look in action
- Narrative provides explanation
- Motivation for telling stories: to wrest meaning from experiences

**Storytelling as Reflection**  
(Schön, 1988)

“...for storytelling is the mode of description best suited to transformation in new situations of action.”

**Storytelling as Reflection**  
(Schön, 1988)

“Stories are products of reflection, but we do not usually hold onto them long enough to make them objects of reflection in their own right.”

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**Links between Learning and Storytelling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Noticing</td>
<td>• Story finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Making sense</td>
<td>• Story telling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Making meaning</td>
<td>• Story expanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Working with meaning</td>
<td>• Story processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transformative learning</td>
<td>• Story reconstructing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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**Storytelling as Reflection**  
(Schön, 1988)

“When we get into the habit of recording our stories, we can look at them again, attending to the meanings we build into them and attending, as well, to our strategies of narrative description.”
**Constructivist Approach to Project-Based "Assessment-as-Learning"**

- **Digital Storytelling as Reflective Portfolio**
- **Learner Ownership and Engagement with Portfolio**
  - The tools should allow the learner to feel in control of the process, including the "look and feel" of the portfolio.

---

**Deep Learning**

- involves reflection,
- is developmental,
- is integrative,
- is self-directive, and
- is lifelong


**Voice = Authenticity**

- multimedia expands the "voice" in an electronic portfolio (both literally and rhetorically)
- personality of the author is evident
- gives the reflections a uniqueness
- gives the feeling that the writer is talking directly to the reader/viewer

---

**Digital Paper or Digital Story?**

- If your e-portfolios are just digital paper (text and images on the screen), you are losing a wonderful opportunity to really tell your story in your own voice.
- With the capability to add multimedia, audio and video, we can truly create an engaging environment to document the milestones of our lives.

---

**A Graduate Student’s Letter to a former teacher**

- ...or you are a graduate student reflecting on what is drawing you into teaching (while showing your photo portfolio)
- Play "coming full circle"
My own story
- ...or you are reaching another transition and decision point in a long career, reflecting on the milestones in your life.
- Play "choices"

What’s Your Story?
- We all have a story to add to our portfolios. These digital stories provide opportunities for a richness not possible in print.
- Some stories will represent the fresh innocence of youth, some will reflect the experiences of a rich life.
- The audiences might be worldwide, like the BBC Wales, but most likely the audiences will be small and intimate.

Digital Story as Legacy
- These digital stories aren't just for professional development.
- They aren't just for skills-based portfolios.
- They are our legacy for those who come after us...the stories of our lives we give to our children's grandchildren.

Presentation online and stories are on my CD
- http://electronicportfolios.org and click Recent Conference Presentations
- My CD has examples of digital stories as well as hands-on activities to learn the process on Mac and Windows XP

My Final Wish...
- May all your electronic portfolios become dynamic celebrations and stories of deep learning across the lifespan.

Dr. Helen Barrett
- Co-Director ISTE’s Community & Assessment in PT3 Catalyst Grant
- Research Director, The REFLECT Initiative
- hbarrett@mac.com
- http://electronicportfolios.org/