



The Briggs Lecture 2016

Asa Briggs
Lord Briggs of Lewes
1921 -2016

1960s: Open University Planning Committee

1978-1994: Chancellor, The Open University

1980s: Towards a Commonwealth of Learning

1989-1993: Chair, COL Board of Governors



‘The BBC Church’

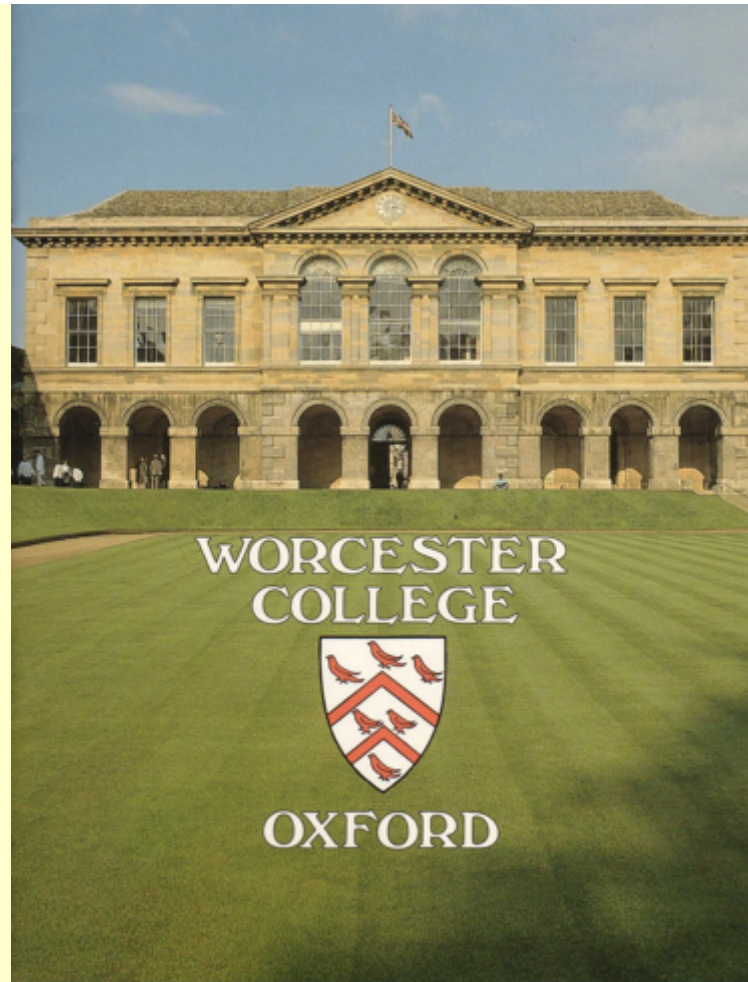
All Souls Langham Place

4 October, 2016





Keighley, Yorkshire 1900



'One always sensed that there were never less than three balls in the air though usually only one of them was visible'.

College Record

"both in quantity and in quality – the two do not always go together – his output in the written word, and in broadcasts and lectures, was awesome.

It is doubtful whether Briggs ever spent a truly idle moment in his life".

The Independent

Re-drawing the map of learning



The Briggs Lecture 2016



Open as to:

- People
- Places
- Methods
- Ideas

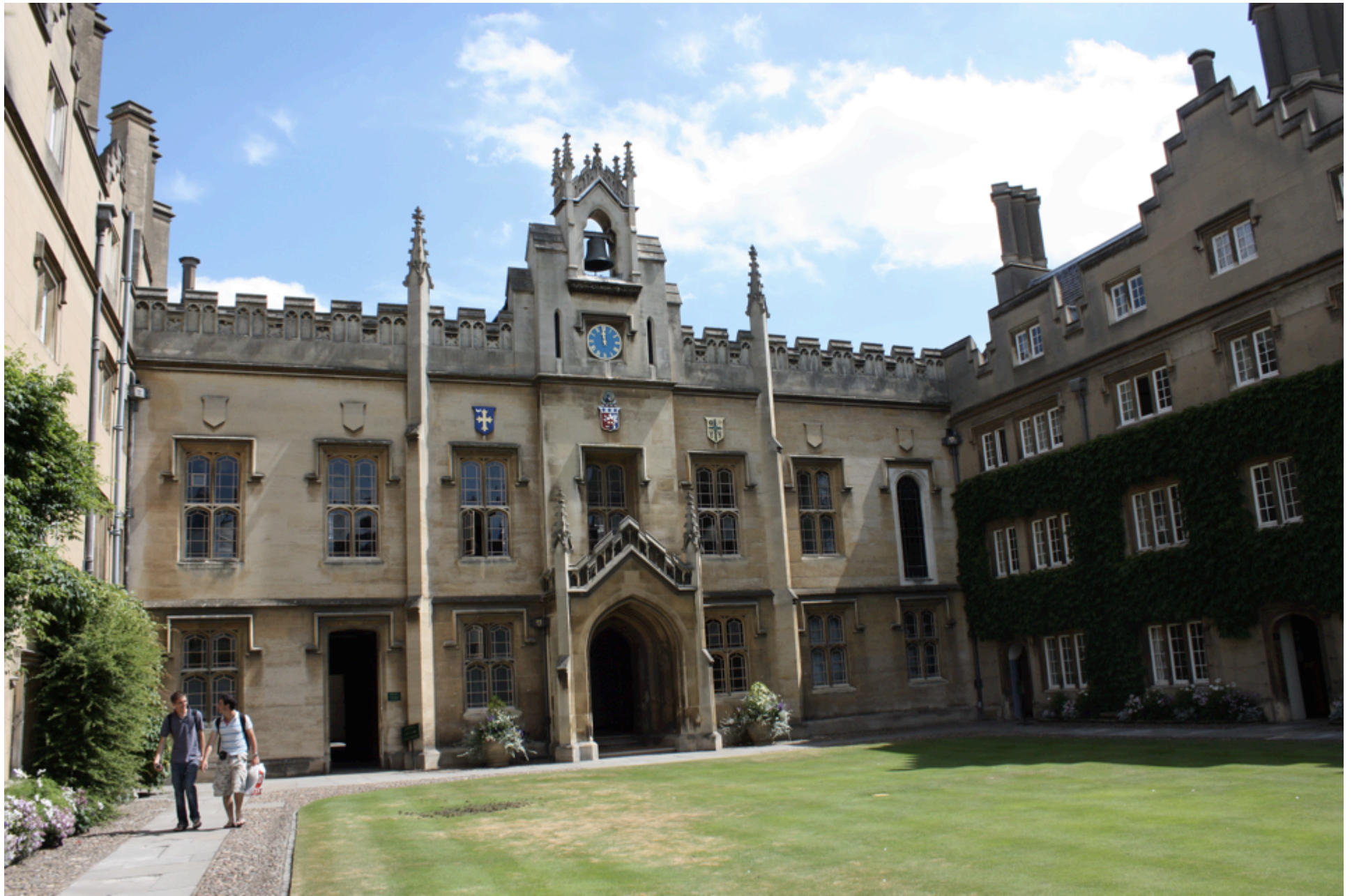


Asa Briggs

Born 1921 to William and Jane Briggs

"We were not straight working class, but
very near to it"

STUDENT



Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge University



The youngest undergraduate since Oliver Cromwell



The youngest undergraduate since Oliver Cromwell

"You're only a baby Briggs - but since we are sure there is going to be a war, we would like you to complete your degree before you are called up for military service".

Asa Briggs

Cambridge:

Firsts in both parts of
the History Tripos



London School of Economics:

First in Economics



Open to Methods

“I actually did some marking of scripts for the University Correspondence College when I was a very young new Cambridge graduate in 1941”

Open to Methods

“I actually did some marking of scripts for the University Correspondence College when I was a very young new Cambridge graduate in 1941”

“I took the two degrees in parallel, the London one called ‘external’. I did not dare tell my Cambridge supervisor in Sidney Sussex College what I was doing or I would have been forbidden to do it”

Open to Methods

“He turned to the UCC for courses and in talking to him about his studies I had the benefit of sharing them without paying for them”

Open to Methods

“He turned to the UCC for courses and in talking to him about his studies I had the benefit of sharing them without paying for them”

“When I told this three years later to an able and enterprising man working for the UCC, who asked me to mark scripts and pass on guidance to the UCC students, he considered sensibly that this was a great advantage.”

SOLDIER

Open to Methods & Ideas



Bletchley Park, 1943



Code-breaking at Bletchley Park

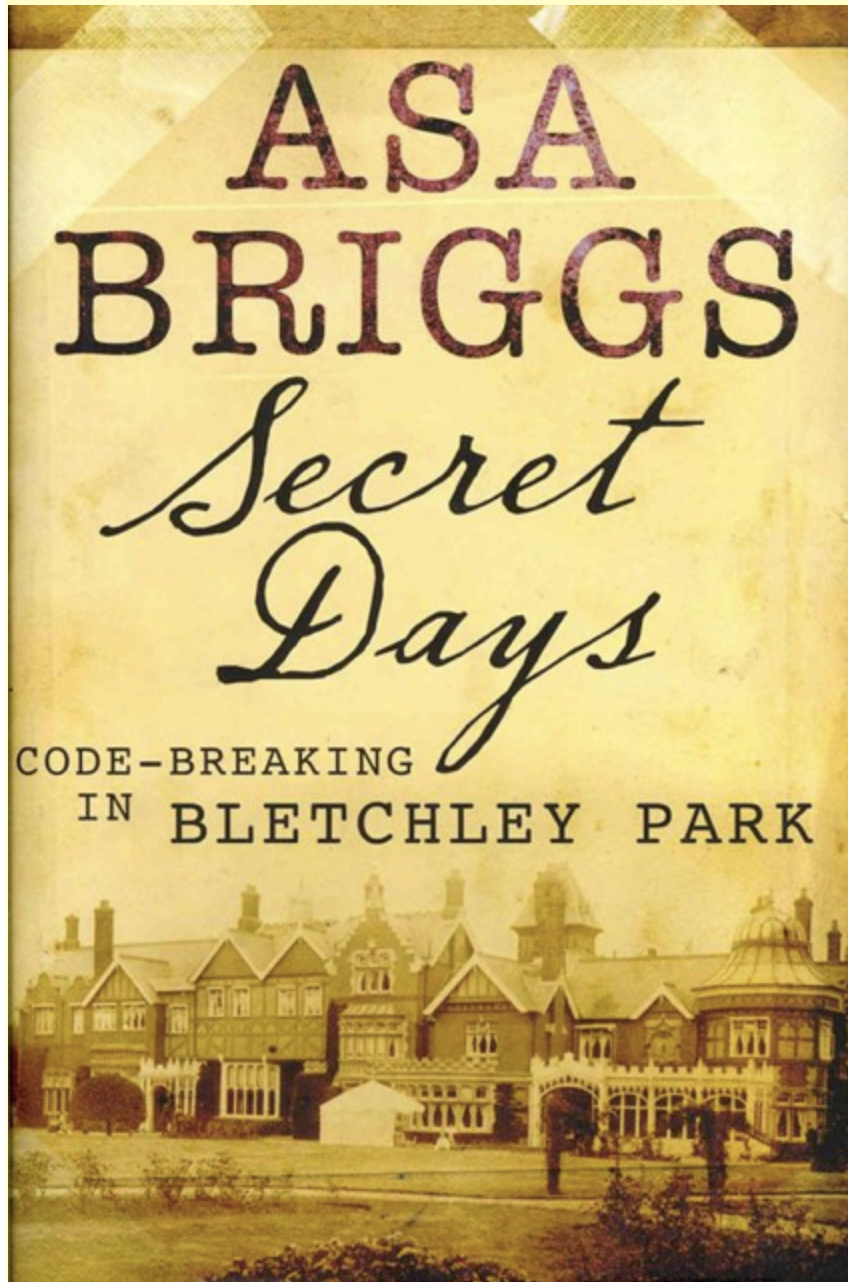


Lord Asa Briggs on his book 'Secret Days - Code-Breaking at Bletchley Park'



CODE-BREAKING IN BLETCHLEY





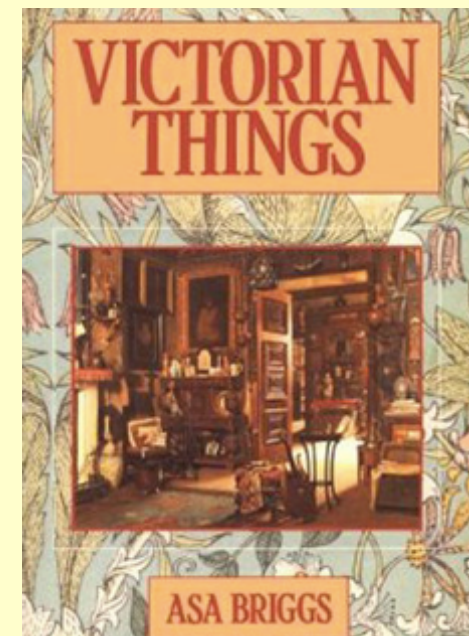
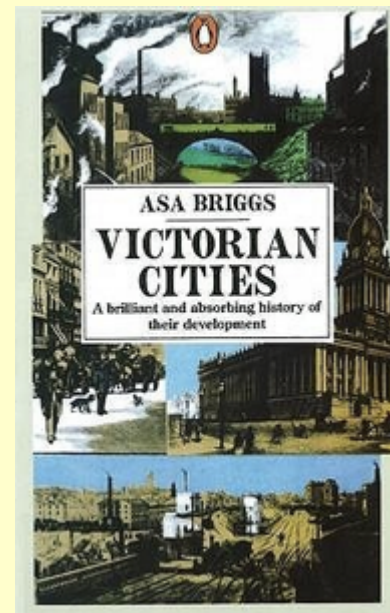
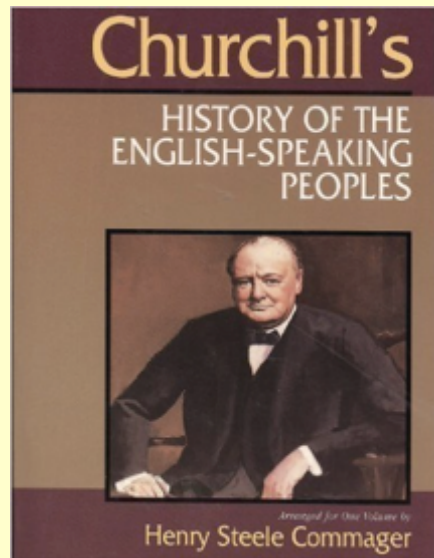
Alan Turing

“whom we all deferred to because he was clearly a genius”

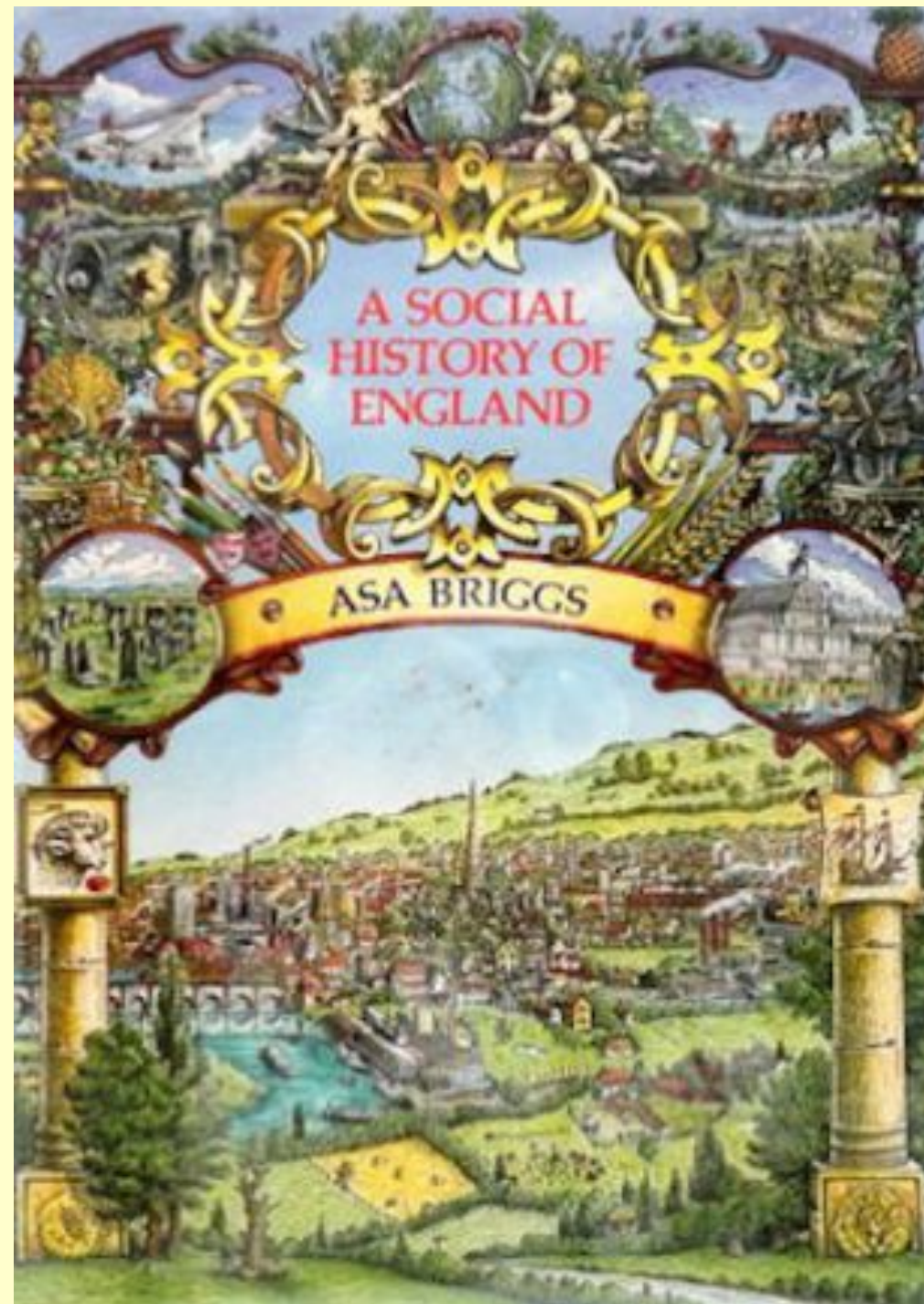
TEACHER
&
SCHOLAR



Fellow of Worcester College, initially teaching philosophy, politics and economics rather than modern history.







Open to People



“Asa had a deep understanding of those denied the experience of education generally and higher education particularly”

Raj Dhanarajan

THE
HISTORY OF
BROADCASTING
IN THE
UNITED KINGDOM

THE BIRTH
OF
BROAD-
CASTING
1896-1927



ASA BRIGGS

THE
HISTORY OF
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OF
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1896-1927



ASA BRIGGS

“Broadcasting is in the forefront of social and cultural changes which it both registers and influences...

To write the history of broadcasting is, in a sense, to write the history of everything else”



University of Sussex 1960

**VICE-CHANCELLOR
&
CHANCELLOR**



Daniel Cohn-Bendit (1968)



Daniel Cohn-Bendit in March 2010

Dany le Rouge



Paris, May 1968



A lecture on the Franco-Prussian War

"If you continue to interrupt me, I will stop lecturing forthwith. If you desist, I shall take questions at the end of the lecture on France and Prussia, and any other matter, particularly including the running and governance of the University of Sussex".

Open to an Open University

1967: Member: OU Planning Committee

- Multi-disciplinary foundation courses
- Liberal modular system
- 'the University as whole should be responsible for the nature, content and teaching of each Course offered by the University – not individual academics or departments

Open to an Open University

1967: Member: OU Planning Committee

- Multi-disciplinary foundation courses
- Liberal modular system
- 'the University as whole should be responsible for the nature, content and teaching of each Course offered by the University – not individual academics or departments
- Partnership with the BBC



Chancellor of the Open University
1978-1994



“I am unhappy if I ever write less than 1,000 words a day”



"Briggs reminds one of one of those tramps who can often be seen rummaging in municipal dustbins, carefully smoothing, folding and packing away things that they find. His books are always overweight, stuffed with minutiae, which any self-respecting graduate student would throw away. And that is their glory!"

Open to COL

1980s – Decline in student mobility

- So why not move the courses to the students instead of the other way around?
- The Briggs Group:
'to report on the potential for Commonwealth co-operation in distance education.'



”Asa demonstrated his well-honed skills in drawing out ideas from a diverse international group, his mastery as a writer, and his willingness to take on too much”

Hilary Perraton

TOWARDS A COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING

A proposal to create the
University of the Commonwealth
for Co-operation in
Distance Education



Commonwealth Secretariat

TOWARDS A COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING

A proposal to create the
University of the Commonwealth
for Co-operation in
Distance Education



Commonwealth Secretariat

'any learner anywhere in the Commonwealth shall be able to study any distance teaching programme available from any *bona fide* college or university in the Commonwealth'

CHOGM Vancouver



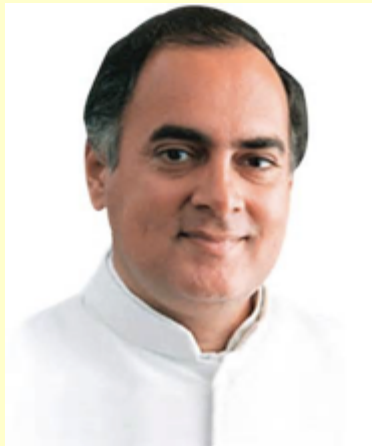
Francophonie
Québec

1987

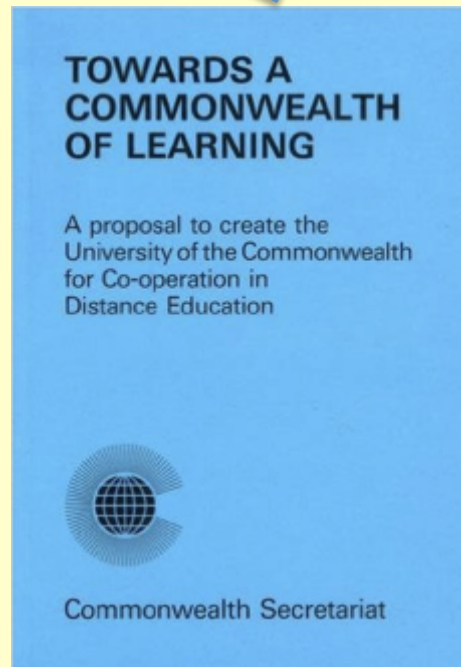


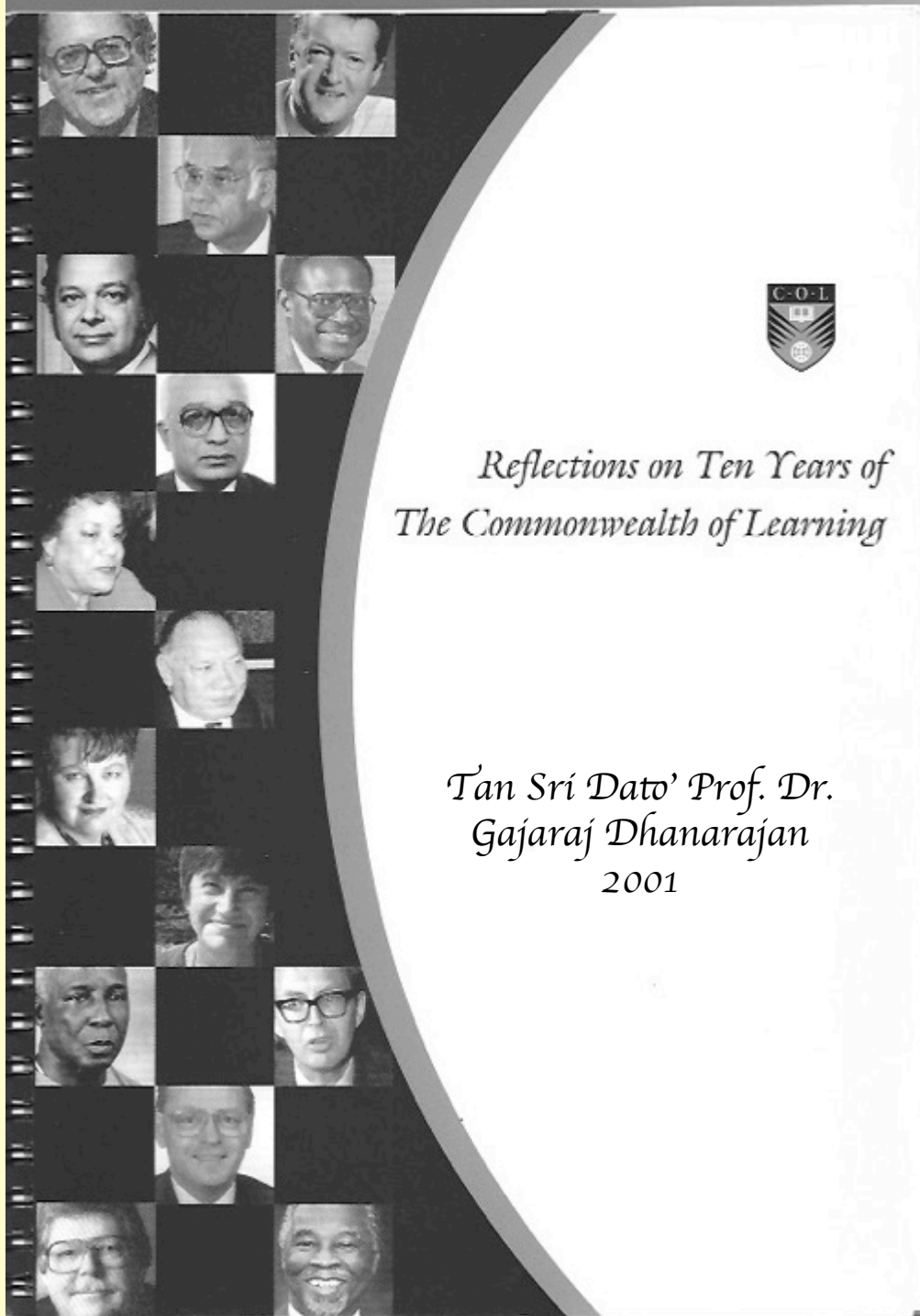
Putting proposals for
using
communications
technology for ODL
to both the CHOGM
and Francophonie
summit meetings

Brian Mulroney



Rajiv Gandhi



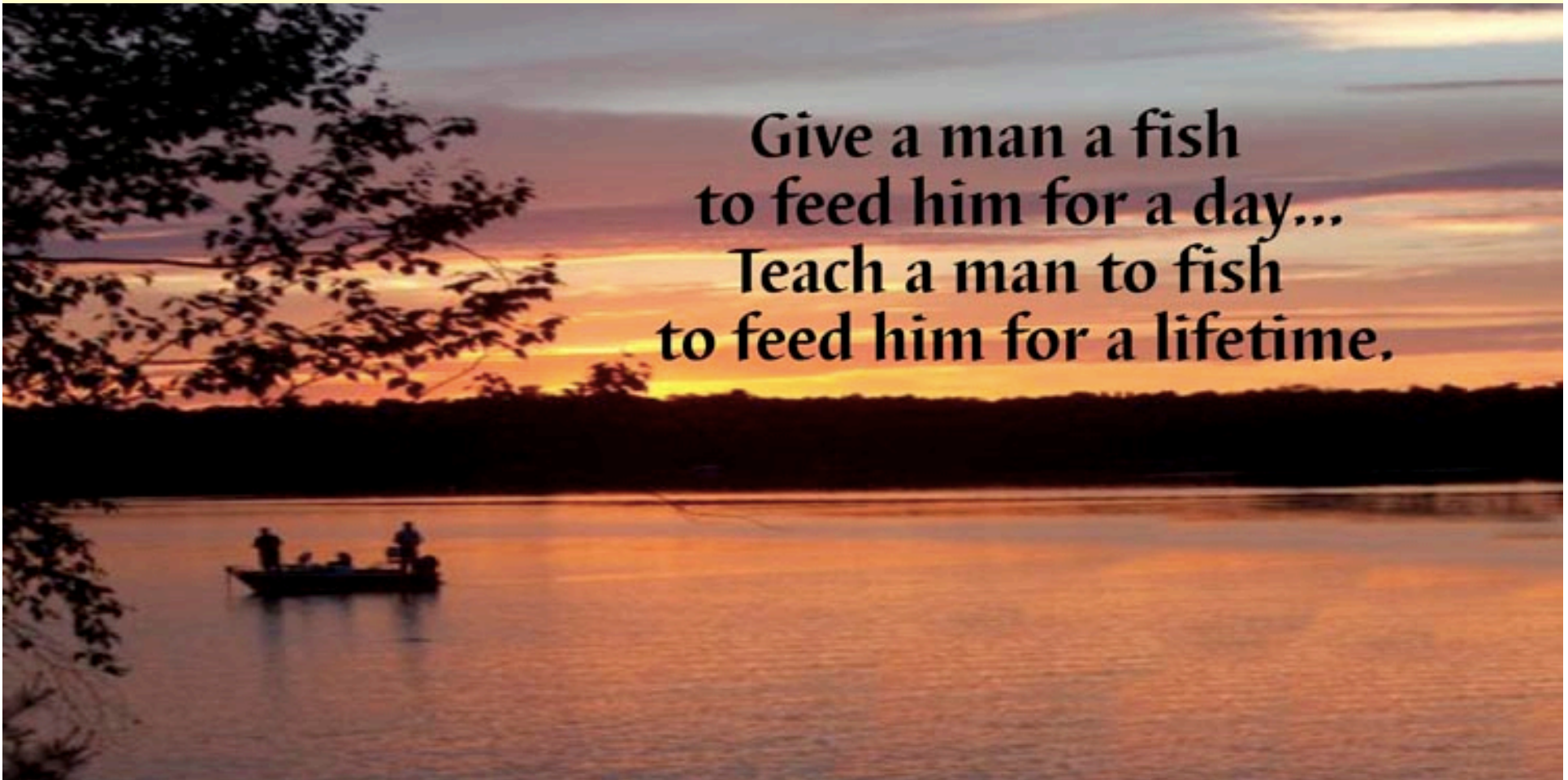




COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

From Approval to Memorandum of Understanding

**Give a man a fish
to feed him for a day...
Teach a man to fish
to feed him for a lifetime.**





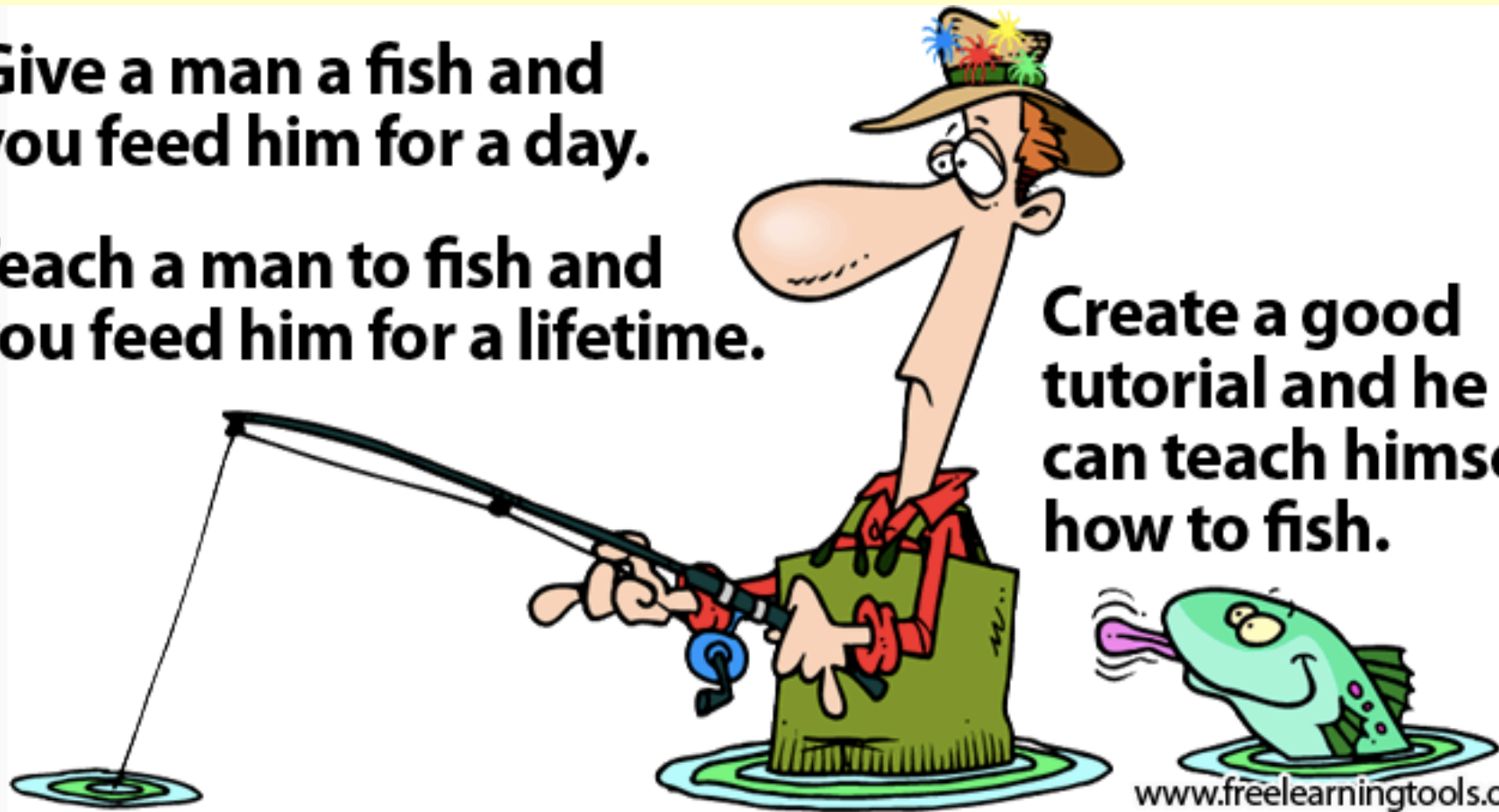
COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

From Approval to Memorandum of Understanding

**Give a man a fish and
you feed him for a day.**

**Teach a man to fish and
you feed him for a lifetime.**

**Create a good
tutorial and he
can teach himself
how to fish.**



www.freelearningtools.org



Chair, Board of Governors, 1989-1993



After his 90th birthday he completed three books and ... two weeks before his death his greatest regret was that he would not be able to finish the book that he was then writing!



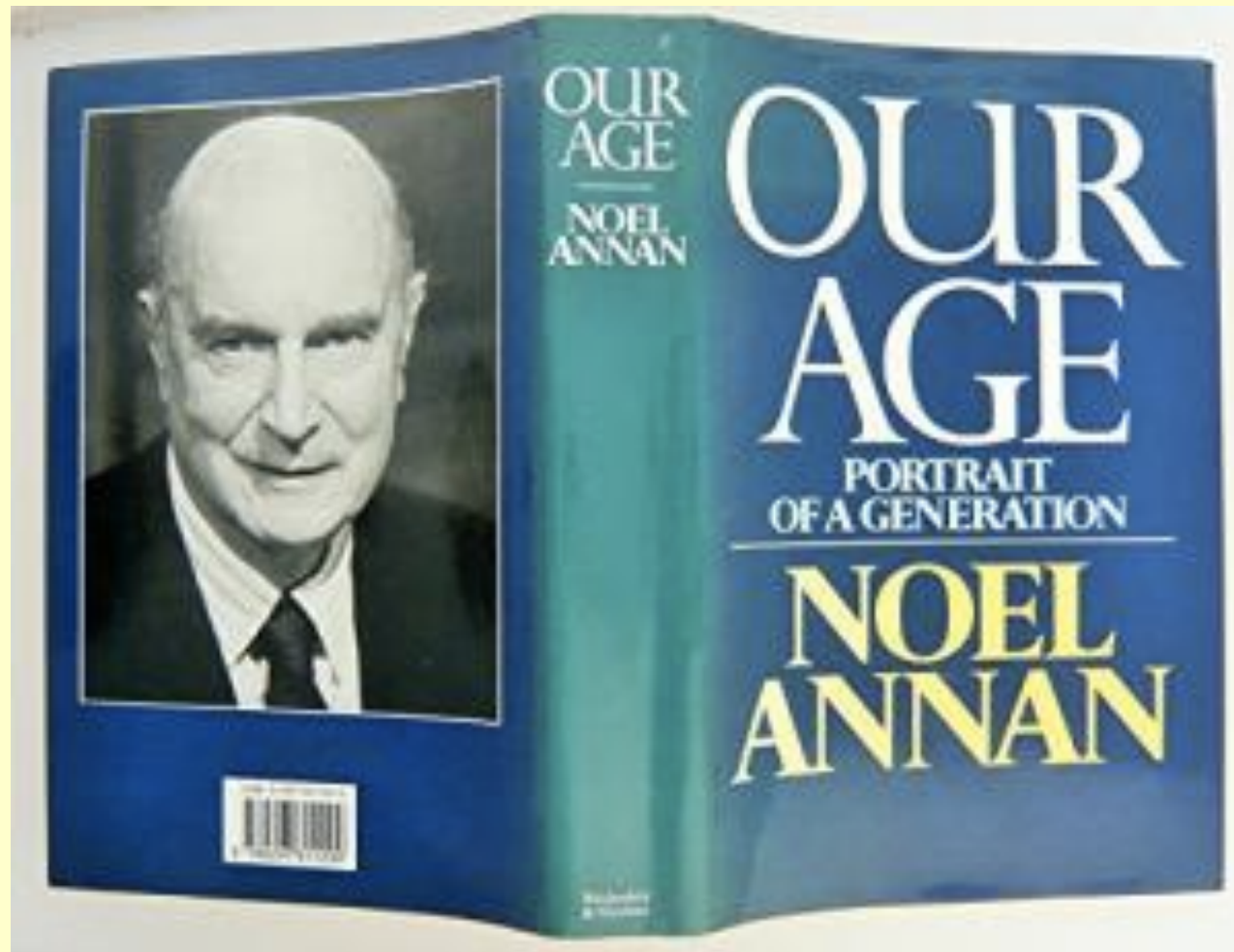
“Being part of the creation of
The Open University was the most
interesting thing I ever did”

Asa's legacy



Open as to:

- People
- Places
- Methods
- Ideas



The 1960s
'The golden age of the don'

Open to People



“Asa had a deep understanding of those denied the experience of education generally and higher education particularly”

Raj Dhanarajan

Open to Places



Open to Places



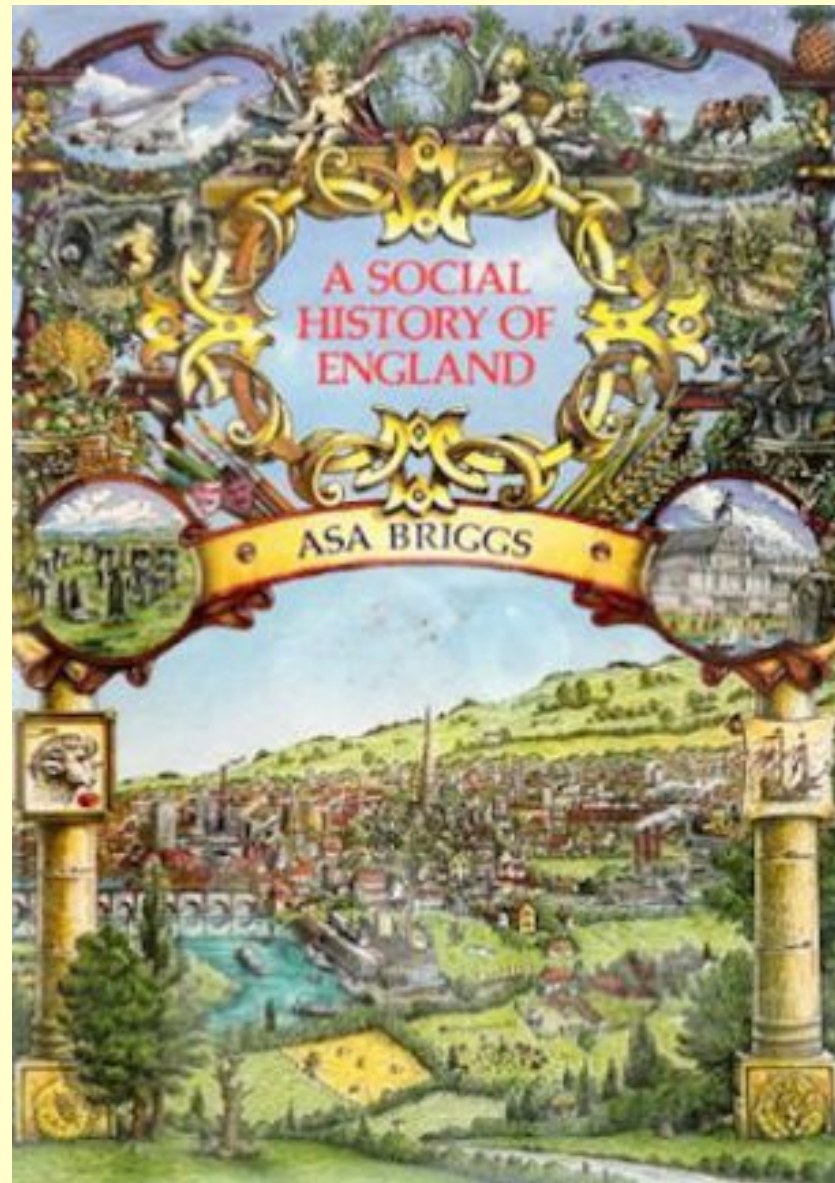


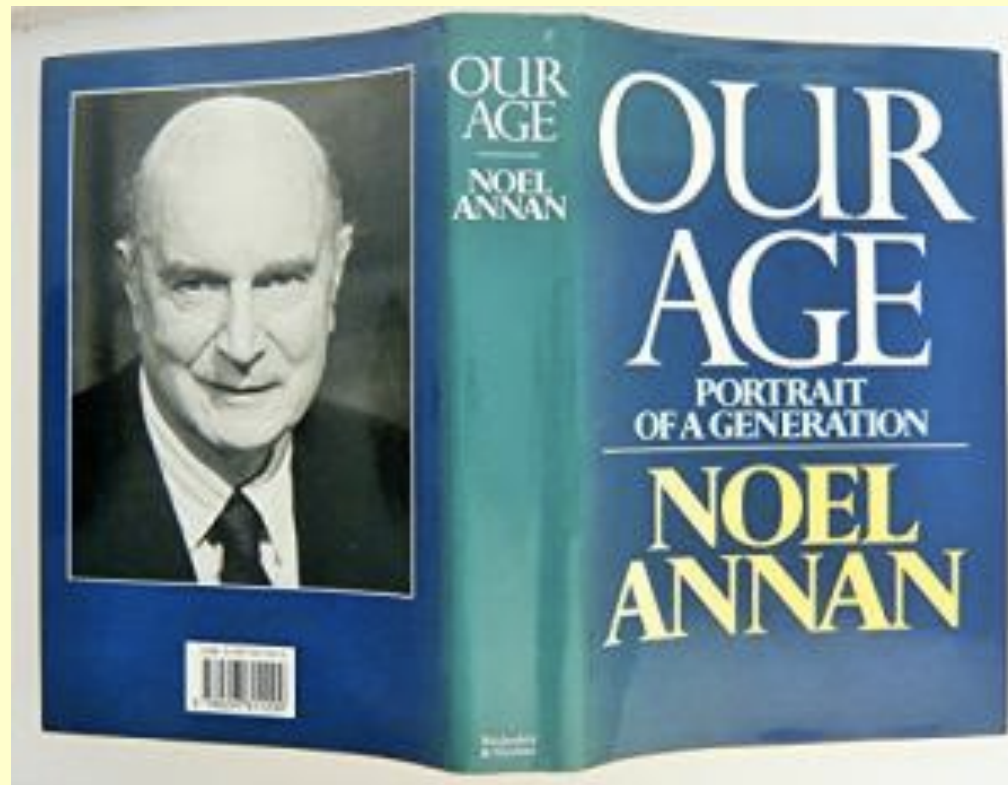
The Virtual University of Small
States of the Commonwealth

Open to Methods

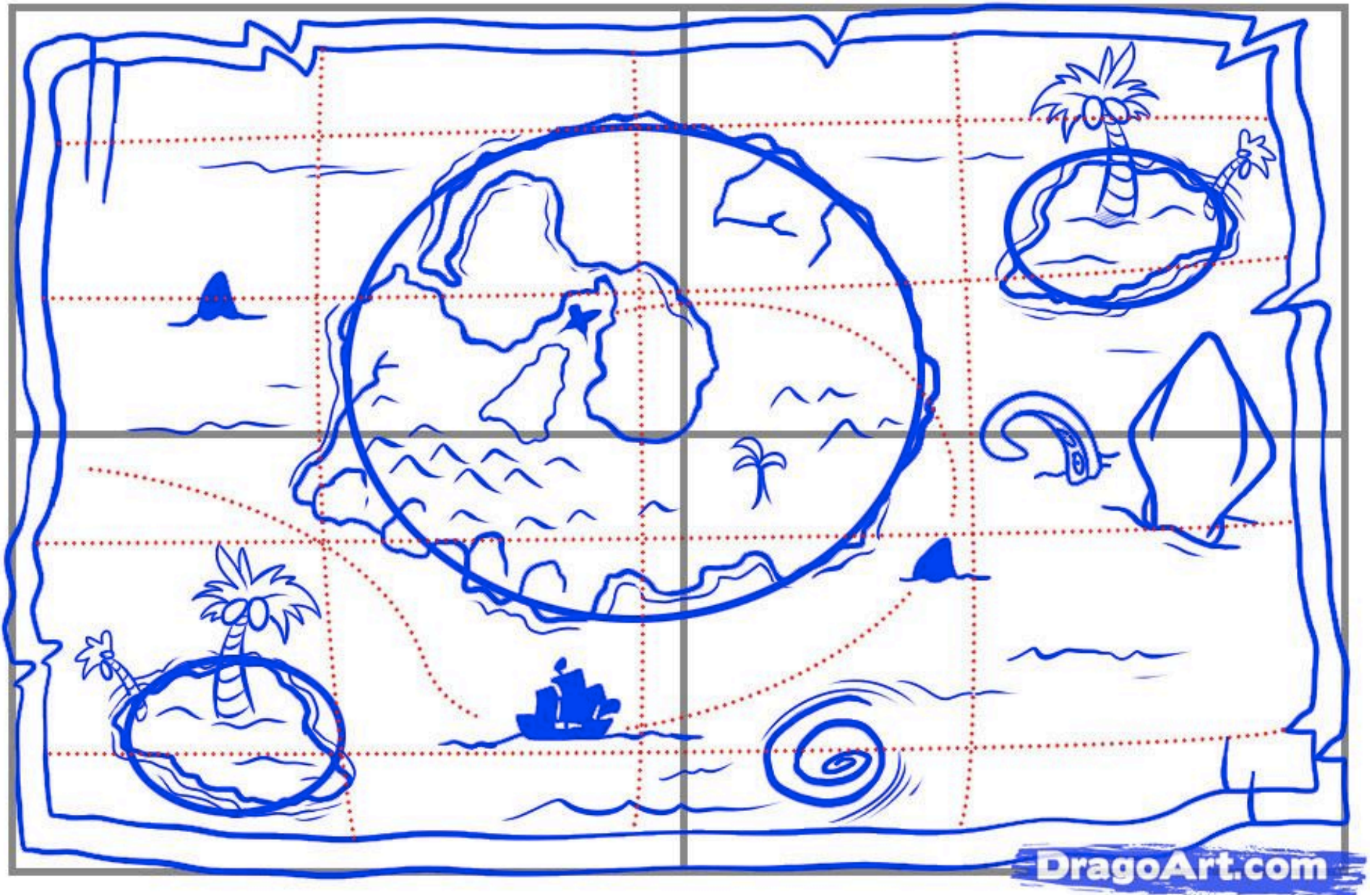


Open to Ideas





"In retrospect how timid the innovations of the new universities look, how traditional the spread of subjects and how marginal the institutional change that substituted schools of study for departments".



Re-drawing the map of learning



- Multi-disciplinary foundation courses
- Course teams

Re-drawing the map of learning



The Briggs Lecture 2016

Text & slides at: www.sirjohn.ca