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## Book Reviews

### **Faith Schools: consensus or conflict?**

ROY GARDNER, JO CAIRNS & DENIS LAWTON (Eds), 2005

London: RoutledgeFalmer

267 pp., ISBN 0-415-33526-4, paperback, £24.99

When New Labour's 2001 White Paper, *Schools Achieving Success*, proposed a huge expansion in the number of faith schools in England, there was widespread concern that there had been little or no consideration of the implications of the proposal. *Faith Schools: consensus or conflict?* attempts to fill that vacuum by presenting 'a balanced debate and evaluation of the issues involved in the continuing and expanded provision of faith-based education in our present society'.

The book is in five parts. Part I, 'Faith Schools: past and present', tackles some of the issues and concerns which have been raised – both in education and in society in general – as a result of the Government's decision to sponsor more faith schools. Roy Gardner presents an overview of the current situation and asks whether the Government has 'paid due attention to the messages and outcomes which the initiative to expand faith based school provision ... will offer to our diverse society and its multi-identity citizens'. Brian Gates outlines the history of the development of education in England in a chapter which provides invaluable long-term perspectives on the overpowering influence of religion. Marie Parker-Jenkins explains the legal framework for faith-based schools. The biggest problem, she says, is reconciling the rights of parents to choose the type of education they want for their children with the rights of the children themselves.

Part II, 'Faith Schools: for and against', notes the lack of agreement about what sort of society Britain is today, and presents arguments for and against the existence and expansion of faith schools in the light of a number of themes: 'inclusiveness', 'social justice' and 'social capital'. Richard Pring asks whether faith schools should be publicly funded. The answer, he says,

hinges ultimately, not upon their academic achievement, the rights of parents, freedom of choice or a distinctive ethos, but upon the aims of education, the rationality of nurturing a particular set of faith based beliefs, the value of individual autonomy and the extent to which indoctrination should at all costs be avoided.

J. Mark Halstead & Terence McLaughlin explore allegations that faith schools are divisive. They note that religions claim that their own values and perspectives are true and that others are false, and point out the difficulty of reconciling such beliefs with the values of a liberal democratic society. In a chapter based on the British Humanist Association's ongoing work on education policy, Marilyn Mason suggests a rights-based approach to diversity in schools. Harry Brighouse presents 'an unenthusiastic defence of a slightly reformed status quo'. His argument seems to be that it's good that faith schools are within the state sector because if they were outside it they would be even more damaging than they already are. He warns that 'Introducing the American model of separationism would jeopardise the level of secularisation British society has achieved. British liberals should proceed cautiously'. Eva Gamarnikow & Anthony Green aim 'to locate and discuss the place of faith schools within overall policies on standards, specialisation, excellence and parental choice'. They conclude that 'The relative positioning of differentially "ethosed" schools is more concerned with product identity in the educational market place than with the redistribution of access to the structure of educational opportunities'.

Part III, 'Faith Schools: in practice', explores some recent initiatives and considers the problems facing faith schools in the area of citizenship education. Roman Catholic Bart McGettrick's chapter looks at the perceptions and practices of Christian schools and argues that 'if they are genuinely inspired by their faith, and by a love of learning, they will undoubtedly be forces for the common good'. Another Catholic writer, Alan J. Murphy, makes the case for 'joint church' schools. He acknowledges that setting up and maintaining such schools is not always easy but argues that 'the potential gains far outweigh the difficulties; it is a journey worth taking.'. Anglicans Rachel Barker & John Anderson seek to play down the damage done by segregated faith schools in Bradford and argue that such schools can play a part in securing social cohesion. Lynndy Levin presents an Orthodox Jewish perspective on religion, identity and citizenship in a plural culture. She argues that religion is necessary for 'personal identity'.

Part IV, 'Faith Schools: the experience elsewhere', offers perspectives from around the world on the critical questions surrounding the place of religion in education. James Arthur acknowledges the difficulties involved in attempting to measure Catholic school performance internationally but dismisses claims that the schools operate covert selection procedures as 'anecdotal and potentially unreliable'. Tony Gallagher presents a useful history of the development of education in Northern Ireland. He appraises the role played by religion and separate schools in 30 years of violence but warns that a common system of mass education is not necessarily the best means of promoting social integration. Michael Totterdell considers the consequences for pluralism of the apparent ambivalence of Americans towards religion in the public realm. Cecile Deer describes how France's secular state sector and religious private sector have developed forms of 'complementarities' which have led to 'an unprecedented

level of mutual tolerance'. But she warns that 'in an atomised school system like the English one, faith schools constitute yet another layer of differentiation and specialisation which reinforces the system's academic and social divisions'.

Part V, 'Faith Schools: the way forward', revisits the policy dilemmas faced by central government and faith groups over the introduction of citizenship education, argues for a strategic approach to research into faith schools, and suggests that self-researching schools should be supported through programmes of continuing personal and professional development. John Annette examines New Labour's love affair with religion and the models of social capital which underpin its faith schools policy. He acknowledges concerns about the divisiveness of faith schools but says the answer is to get them to 'work together for the common good'. Ian Schagen & Sandie Schagen analyse the statistical evidence and conclude that there is very little difference between faith and non-faith schools. Where faith schools do achieve marginally better results, they say, it is usually because of the 'nature and quality of their intake'. Given the findings of the previous chapter, it is odd that John Keast should assert that 'faith schools achieved proportionally higher standards than other schools, in terms of examination results'. However, he goes on to present useful definitions of citizenship education and of faith and values. He argues for a national framework for religious education to prevent it being taught in an exclusive manner in faith schools, and calls for a national debate about how faith schools can teach citizenship, given their different beliefs. Roy Gardner & Jo Cairns argue for school-based continuing personal and professional development to enable 'individual teachers, leaders, faith schools and faith communities ... to contribute to an informed discussion and evaluation of the work of faith schools in their mission, culture and outcomes in our present plural and possibly post-secular society'. In the final chapter, Denis Lawton & Jo Cairns criticise the Blair government for not thinking through the implications of 'opening the gates of grant maintained status ... to any religious group that wanted to establish their own schools' and for a complete lack of consultation, debate or serious consideration of the 'unintended consequences' of the policy. They call for 'a considerable research programme' to 'mitigate possible dangers', pose a series of questions about culture, identity and ethos, and conclude that 'situating faith in an open, postmodern and democratic schooling system is a huge responsibility, challenge and opportunity both for the state and for the faith communities involved'.

I have one major concern about *Faith Schools: consensus or conflict?* and that is that one voice is entirely missing: the voice of the atheist or secularist. Most of the book's contributors seem to start from the premise that religions per se, and, by implication, the schools they sponsor, are a good thing and that they are widely supported by the public. Gardner, for example, appears to take at face value the 2001 census finding that 'just over three quarters of the population identified themselves as religious'. Well, most will have put 'C of E' on the form, despite the fact that few of them will have set foot in a church for years, barring the odd wedding or funeral. It's a pity Gardner didn't mention

that, according to a *Guardian*/ICM poll published in August 2005, two-thirds of the public believe the Government 'should not be funding faith schools of any kind' (Matthew Taylor, *The Guardian*, 23 August 2005).

Throughout the book there are frequent references to the 'values' and 'morality' implicit in religion and promoted by religious schools. Annette, for example, talks of the 'inspirational ideology' of faith schools, and Gardner and Cairns quote former Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey: 'Church schools themselves embody the truth that a context of firm principles suffused by faith and love is the best and right basis for learning and growing'. They also quote Scottish Catholic Education Service director Michael McGrath: 'Catholic schooling involves developing Catholic values, religious education, spiritual and moral formation and a commitment to serve the common good, all within a supportive climate that affirms the life and dignity of every person'. Such quotations beg some questions. What sort of morality is espoused by Carey? As Archbishop he encouraged adulterers Charles and Camilla to marry but rigidly refused to countenance gay partnerships and opposed the repeal of Section 28, declaring, 'I resist placing homosexual relationships on an equal footing with marriage as the proper context for sexual intimacy' (Kirsty Scott, writing in *The Guardian*, 24 January 2000). And what sort of values are promoted by McGrath? 'Serve the common good'? This is the man who wouldn't support interdenominational schools in Scotland unless the Catholics had separate entrances, separate staffrooms, separate gyms, separate nurseries and even separate staff toilets. 'The life and dignity of every person'? McGrath is part of the church whose former Cardinal, Thomas Winning, called homosexuals 'perverted' and whose new pope has declared that gays are 'intrinsically immoral' and 'objectively disordered'.

There is much talk of 'tolerance' and 'understanding' between faiths. Yet on BBC2's *God and the Politicians*, broadcast in September 2005, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor told David Aaronovitch that he wouldn't want to see Catholic children attending Muslim schools because he wouldn't want them 'brought up in that particular atmosphere'. Are these the 'values', 'morality' and 'inspirational ideology' promoted by religions? If so, we'd be better off without them – and so would the nation's children.

There are even suggestions that non-faith schools are lacking when it comes to teaching values. For example, Halstead & McLaughlin argue that 'Common [i.e. non-faith] schools often fail to deal adequately with matters of moral texture and complexity', though they provide no evidence for this sweeping statement.

Now don't get me wrong – many of the contributors do raise and discuss serious concerns about the existence and expansion of faith schools. The book aims to present a 'balanced debate and evaluation of the issues' and to a great extent it achieves that. But I do feel that it would have presented an even more balanced picture if it had included at least one chapter arguing that the state has no business promoting religious education at all.

Having said all that, this is an invaluable book. It contains much important historical information, accurate description and analysis of the current situation and a wide range of interesting views. *Faith Schools: consensus or conflict?* reaches no simplistic answers. Indeed, for the most part it asks difficult questions. In doing so it provides much that should inform the debate about government education policy in relation to religious schools – a debate which the Government seems determined not to hold. As Roy Gardner warns, unless the Government is prepared to demand of faith schools that they acknowledge that they operate in a pluralist society, the current policy poses a ‘real and present danger’.

Derek Gillard, *Oxford*

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**Education plc: understanding private sector participation in public sector education**

STEPHEN J. BALL, 2007

London and New York: Routledge

192 pp., ISBN 0-415-39940-8 hardback, £75.00,

ISBN 0-415-39941-6 paperback, £22.99

About 20 years ago articles began to appear by educationists such as Caroline Benn and Richard Pring predicting future problems which would arise from policies concerning proposals to privatize parts of the education system. As these policies developed, detailed studies of specific areas by academics such as Richard Hatcher and Philip Woods appeared in journals and, now, we have an authoritative study of privatization by Stephen Ball.

Ball’s study commences with a chapter ‘describing and critically analysing changes in policy, policy technologies and policy regime in the UK and some of the ethical and democratic impacts of these changes’ (p. 1). This chapter dealing with theory does not always make for easy reading and at times the reader may find they are pausing to ‘translate’ some of the language used to follow the core of the arguments. However, it is important to follow these complex ideas because they underline the themes pursued throughout the study. For instance he refers to the “re-emergence of the state as a commodifying agent”, that is a re-positioning of the state as a commissioner and monitor of public services, a broker of social and economic innovations, rather than deliverer or even owner and funder’ (p. 5). This explains precisely government policies for the public sector from the 1980s onwards that rationalize privatization and contract out large sectors of the public sector, claiming that ‘delivery’ is all that matters whilst ignoring deteriorations of working conditions or the loss of democratic control of services.

The following chapters consider the scale of privatization within the Education Service Industry (ESI), the scope for private companies to enter the education market, the new managerialism of ‘innovation, creativity and

empowerment', the careers and perspectives of key players inside the ESI, the influence of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit in pressing private partnerships upon numerous aspects of local authority schooling and in doing so changing 'old' liberal approaches to education, the drive to replace these past values with those of the market, competition and profit motive, and finally, an examination of the multinational companies like W.S. Atkins, Balfour Beatty and Jarvis, with no previous experience of education, moving into the ESI to capture lucrative private finance initiative (PFI) contracts, especially for new buildings and refurbishment projects: a controversial area which illustrates the manner in which the private sector recognizes both the reliability and scale of profits to be made from state contracts.

At the beginning of each chapter Ball outlines what he intends to cover, which helps to set the scene. Instead of examples appearing in footnotes, related issues are placed in a box, e.g. six national programmes contracted out to private providers ranging from a scheme for careers and training to the threshold assessment of teachers' pay and performance are grouped together. The easy movement of senior personnel between the public and private sectors is recorded, including Michael Barber, Mike Tomlinson and Chris Woodhead, suggesting they see no conflict between the values in either sector (p. 348). Public Private Partnership (PPP) and PFI schemes are produced in a similar style. There are nearly 40 of these 'boxes' provided at relevant sections, making it possible for related information to be seen at a glance.

Ball has amassed a vast amount of information concerning the political and social aims of those who have been the driving force behind privatization, their deep penetration within the ESI, the vast sums of money diverted from earlier public sector providers to the private sector, often undermining local democratic control. His conclusion is not straightforward. He does not seek to defend all that went on when the ESI was almost completely organized and controlled by the public sector. He points to the 'class ridden divisions of previous education regimes', although there is nothing to suggest that privatized sectors of the ESI have been exercised by this. After all, inequality in earnings, wealth and opportunities have been the very essence of Thatcherism. For many, there seems little difference in the policies of Major and Blair from that of Thatcher in favouring the private over the public sector for the delivery of services. Simon Jenkins is not alone in believing there is no such thing as Blairism; rather, it is largely an extension of Thatcherism even if it is wrapped up in words such as community, renewal or partnership. At the same time Ball recognizes clearly the consequences of privatization; 'education is increasingly, perhaps almost exclusively, spoken of in terms of its economic value and its contribution to international market competitiveness' (p. 185) and he is quite clear that 'the bottom line for business is ultimately profit. Concerns about profit (or business failures) have led some firms to renege on or sell off their public sector contracts' (p. 188). He argues that

privatization is not simply a technical change in the management of the delivery of educational services – it involves changes in the

meaning and experience of education, what it means to be a teacher and a learner, but it is also part of a broader social dislocation. It changes who we are and our relation to what we do, entering into all aspects of our everyday practices and thinking – into the ways we think about ourselves and our relations to others, even our most intimate social relations. It is changing the framework of possibilities within which we act. This is not just a process of reform; it is a process of social transformation. Without some recognition of and attention within public debate to the insidious work that is being done, in these respects, by privatization and commodification, we may find ourselves living and working in a world made up entirely of contingencies, within which the possibilities of authenticity and meaning in teaching, learning and research, as well as other aspects of our social lives, are gradually but inexorably eroded.  
(pp. 186-187)

For those seeking detailed information concerning the range and scope of private sector participation within the public sector, the extent of which will doubtless surprise many, Ball has provided well. This, together with his analysis of these developments, makes his study an important book for all those interested in the education process.

**Clive Griggs**, *University of Brighton*

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**A Comprehensive Future:  
quality and equality for all our children**  
MELISSA BENN & FIONA MILLAR, 2006  
London: Compass ([www.compassonline.org.uk](http://www.compassonline.org.uk))  
33 pp., £5.00

This pamphlet endorses comprehensive schooling and exposes New Labour's treacherous approach to state primary and secondary education. It is wide-ranging, accessibly written, informed by research and not afraid to be heartfelt. To the Blairite agenda ('a false one'; p. 7) of choice and diversity Benn & Millar counterpose the possibilities offered by a fully-funded fully-comprehensive education-system. Their pamphlet intervenes in the debate around the Education and Inspections Bill 2006, and it may be that in order to obtain the widest hearing among Labour MPs the authors felt compelled to cede territory to the Blairites. Far from giving ground, I believe their pamphlet should have pressed further in its analysis of the damage wrought by New Labour's requisitioning of Thatcherite education policies, and in its arguments promoting the comprehensive ideal.

### **Read My Lips: lots more selection**

Time and again Benn & Millar expose the way New Labour has worked against the best interests of all schoolchildren by increasing the fragmentation and selectivity of the state education system. They note that 'Every piece of legislation over the last 20 years has resulted in more rather than less [school] selection, covert and overt' (p. 6). They point out that private schools continue to exist, 'offering highly resourced and privileged learning ... to the wealthy few' (p. 6). Worse, because the Government allows their 'charitable status' to persist, such schools continue to receive some £100m of public subsidy. Grammar schools remain in spite of promises to end them, and there are more selective school places now than existed when New Labour took office in 1997. Benn & Millar spell out how New Labour's rhetoric of social justice cloaks wholesale capitulation to the ideology and workings of the market. They are clear that 'choice' and 'diversity' make in practice for a bewildering variety of types of school, whether Specialist or Trust or Leading Edge or sectarian or Academy. They acknowledge such a system 'risk[s] entrenching existing inequalities ... and storing up trouble for generations to come' (p. 7). They applaud the perceived power of the comprehensive ideal to educate for a more neighbourly society: 'At its best such a school creates powerful social bonds that contribute to community cohesion and well-being' (p. 8). They echo a pioneer of comprehensive education in claiming such schools not only enable greater equality of opportunity for all children but represent a way of building a more generous and robust communal culture. 'There is no more powerful sight', Benn & Millar declare, 'than that of the children of Muslim and Jewish, black and white, the most well-off and the poorest families, all walking through the same school gate in the morning' (p. 8).

To say these things is as commendable as it is necessary. Benn & Millar imply that the struggle for juster schools is also the struggle for a juster society. But as the children walk through the school gates Benn & Millar stop short. In so doing, I believe their perspective falls prey not only to a moment's sentimentality, but to a more enduring political lack of reach. It is not simply that outside the school gates the gap between rich and poor remains egregiously wide, indeed wider still and wider under New Labour. Inside even the comprehensive school, children walk into separate sets which function to distance the middle class from the working class and to prevent all children being educated together. Year by year the school's children are channelled towards separate pathways (the vocational, the academic), and granted unequal educational provision on the basis of an assessment system predicated on notions of fixed innate ability and loaded in favour of existing inequalities. Not to see past the school gates is not to see deeply enough into how school structures help perpetrate and perpetuate social division.



### Fault Lines

In defence of the comprehensive school, Benn & Millar review its origins and history. They remind us of the 'blatant injustice' (p. 9) of the old tripartite system, but appear to understand that injustice as having to do primarily with the degree of opportunity for social mobility within class society, rather than with the existence of class society itself. They rebut reactionary claims that abolition of grammar schools caused social mobility to decline, but this leads them to argue that '[a] decline in manufacturing primary industries ... and the growth of more white collar jobs may have led to social mobility slowing down in the last decade, but it does not suggest that Britain is less egalitarian' (p. 10). They further claim that the struggle for comprehensive education has 'seriously challenged, if not entirely eroded' (p. 11) England's class divisions. Would such claims were true! In another of its publications (*Make UK Poverty History*) Compass has lamented that 11 million people in the UK continue to live in poverty, of whom some 3 million are children. Meantime, the very rich get even richer. The Economic and Social Research Council reports that 23% of this country's wealth is owned by 1% of its people, and that the wealthiest 10% own 50% of the national wealth (2005 figures). *The Guardian*/Reward Technology Forum survey for the 2005 financial year found two hundred company directors each receiving a million pounds in pay, while the average annual pay for chief executive officers was £2.4m. Company directors' pay in 2005 rose 28% across the FTSE 100. In contrast, average earnings rose by 3.7% – just above the inflation rate of 2.5%. Average pay for shopfloor workers in some sectors, notably supermarkets, actually went down. New Labour, whose project so many associated with Compass are complicit in furthering, has not eroded class divisions. It has buttressed them.

Our shared and deeply unequal society needs its children readied for work. Benn & Millar chart the huge success of comprehensive schools in helping more and more students obtain greater numbers of increasingly necessary qualifications at 16 and 18. They applaud New Labour's investment in school buildings, which they contrast with the years of neglect suffered under Thatcher and Major. But they do not mention how such public investment has been achieved by paying over the odds through mechanisms like the private finance initiative (PFI). Nor do they point out how the 'Building Schools for the Future' programme infiltrates private contractors and the privatization drive deeper within the public sector. They speak of reform of the primary school curriculum and the introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours, without mentioning how such measures narrow the curriculum offer made to students and limit the scope for teachers to work in the best interests of their classes. They claim better professional development, without considering that this has become a method for filtering out oppositional voices within the teaching profession and for shaping teachers as unable to take control of their own professionalism. They cite rapidly raised standards in primary schools, as if higher Standard Assessment Task (SAT) scores justified the educational damage done by teaching-to-the-test term after term. (Benn & Millar note this damage

on pages 22-23, but fail to call for the scrapping of such tests.) They believe that 'primary schools are by definition comprehensive' (p. 12), without seeming to realise that so-called 'ability' setting, increasingly prevalent at all levels in primary school, creates selective mini-schools under the one roof. They are shaky about the notion of 'ability' itself, at times steering close to the view that it is innate and fixed: '[t]he comprehensive school was designed to take children of all abilities and backgrounds' (p. 10), while at other times suggesting that comprehensive schools challenge such notions. They say nothing about pre-primary education.

Benn & Millar identify fault lines in the 2006 Bill, which appears to them 'as if it had been written by two different authors' (p. 14) whose views as to what secondary state education should look like diverge. A policy rhetoric of inclusion, parent power and improved local services is interrupted by, and interrupts, another vocabulary of competition, independence and fragmentation of the local school system. In looking more closely at the fault lines, Benn & Millar do reveal the way the Academies programme is used to blackmail local authorities into accepting such institutions in return for accessing school refurbishment or rebuilding monies. They show the severe constraints on 'choice' and 'diversity' at work within a system characterized by 'a highly prescriptive curriculum, driven by tests and exams' (p. 15). They unmask 'diversity' to expose hierarchy, and they reveal ministers as implicitly condoning 'the idea that some schools will be better than others, and encouraging parents to aspire to the better schools, although never explaining which children and parents would deserve to be in the worse ones' (p. 15).

Benn & Millar go as far as to echo the call at the heart of the comprehensive movement. 'It is clear that most parents would prefer a high quality local school and so should any government whose political aim is truly social cohesion, equality and the furthering of genuine democracy. Reforming the secondary school admissions system, while focusing on raising standards in the classroom, is the key to achieving this' (pp. 16-17). They say very little about 'standards', but address the issue of fair admissions at some length. They reveal the range of sharp practice in use by many schools to select intake, and point to the role played by a market-orientated system characterized by high-stakes testing and league tables in generating a structure which fosters such activity and cannot but lead to the establishment of sink schools. They argue for and give examples of locally agreed admissions criteria which can help ensure fair and balanced school intakes.

## **Reforms**

In surveying the direction of the road not taken by New Labour's education policy, Benn & Millar turn to Finland's school system, a system particularly successful according to some international measures of comparison in educating all its children to a high level. Finland's teachers are apparently 'quite independent and have wide powers of decision making, compared with

colleagues in other countries' (p. 22). Additionally, every teacher in Finland must hold a Master's degree. Teacher autonomy within a broad national curriculum, along with a scaling down of national testing, has been the foundation for Finland's success. Benn & Millar suggest Finland has lessons for us.

Towards the end of their pamphlet they return to the question of class, and in particular to the problem of how best to redistribute resources to overcome 'the gap between rich and poor, and the enormous disparity in children's home backgrounds and the social and cultural capital they bring to the educational table' (p. 23). Here at the last fence, they shy again. They note that 'poverty, poor housing and inadequate nutrition ... blight children's chances' (p. 23) but focus attention on Department for Education and Skills (DfES) research which purportedly 'shows that parental involvement in a child's education is a more powerful force for the good of the individual child than any other family background characteristic, including social class' (p. 23). To rally to such a view puts back on the individually impoverished (in particular, mothers) the onus for improving their children's lot, while leaving intact the structural (that is, most significantly, the class) forces acting to keep the poor poor. Better for Benn & Millar to call for shorter working hours, improved levels of benefit, higher taxation of the wealthy and a living level of minimum wage in order to enhance the possibility for parents to be more involved with their children's education.

Benn & Millar do argue for a variety of less thoroughgoing reforms. They support extended community schools, which can provide 'less affluent children with the sort of out-of-school activities ... which many middle-class children take for granted' (p. 24). They urge funding flexibility so that money can be directed at the 'neediest children' (p. 24). They suggest '[a] more effective way of targeting money might be to link funding to prior attainment on entry to secondary school ... In this way schools in highly disadvantaged communities, where admissions alone cannot help to create more balanced intakes, would be progressively funded' (p. 24). This would, they claim, be a far better use of the £5 billion currently subsidising selection and congealing inequality through the Academies programme.

### **In Thrall**

Benn & Millar conclude by considering issues of accountability. At the heart of the Education and Inspections Bill 2006 is the proposal to legislate for so-called Trust schools. Benn & Millar highlight how, like Academies, these institutions appeal to the private sector in part by having no genuine mechanism for ensuring local democratic accountability. The bulk of a Trust school's governing body will be appointed by the sponsor; parents will have token representation. Teachers face union de-recognition and assaults on national pay and conditions agreements. The remit of the local authority will not run. By contrast, Benn & Millar would mandate against schools being free to administer

their own admissions. They would talk the language of school preference as against school choice, since such language is more honest about the limits on the exercise of choosing. They favour the idea of a modernized community school, with funding weighted towards any neighbourhood which 'does not provide a fair spread of ability or mix of social class' (p. 26). They would back this up by the 'relentless focus' from government 'on standards, quality control and the recruitment and professional development of highly-qualified school leaders and teachers (p. 27). But whose 'standards'? Whose 'quality control'? Whose 'professional development'? In other words, whose version of what happens *inside* the (now, one hopes, fully comprehensive) school's gates is to be secured? Are SATs and the Office for Standards in Education and setting and Key Stage frameworks and all such DfES strategies to continue intact because our (non-'faith', non-private) schools will have an academic and socially balanced intake? For these strategies and mechanisms also work to confirm 'the existing privations and privileges of a given social background' (p. 6) which Benn & Millar recognize are maintained by the current education system.

Benn & Millar's sub-title ringingly proclaims 'Quality and equality for all our children'. That happy pole is not to be reached tied to the traces of a political project still in thrall to the market. Any compass may waver, led astray by the lodestone of social democracy. But true North is socialism.

**Patrick Yarker, Dereham**

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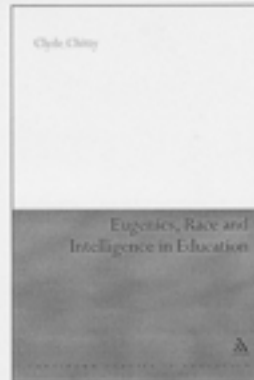
# EUGENICS, RACE AND INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION

PROFESSOR CLYDE CHITTY

For over a hundred years, psychologists and human biologists have been engaged in an often heated debate as to whether 'heredity' or 'environment' should be viewed as the determining factor in the creation of the human personality. For teachers and educationists, the discussion has tended to focus on how the human mind functions and intellectual powers develop.

The controversy is often simply expressed in terms of 'nature' versus 'nurture,' with some scientists declaring that human beings are a product of a transaction between the two. To many, such enquiry and speculation is little more than futile and depressing. Yet it can surely be argued that at least with regard to the development of abilities, the 'nature' versus 'nurture' debate has had dire consequences for the education of millions of young people. Furthermore, we need to question why this debate has been pursued with such vigour in both Britain and America.

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