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## Book and Film Reviews

### **Developing the Expertise of Primary and Elementary Classroom Teachers: professional learning for a changing world**

TONY EAUDE, 2018

London: Bloomsbury

192 pages, hardback £90.00 ISBN 978-1-350-03189-0

This book provides a refreshing counterpoint to the current emphasis on accountability, alongside media reports of teacher recruitment and retention issues that dog the teaching profession. Instead, this book provides an accessible, well-written and clearly structured discussion of the development of teacher expertise. It completes a series of texts recognising the complexity of teaching and being a teacher and proposes how expertise might be developed and supported (Eaude, 2012, 2014, 2015).

The author, Tony Eaude, was the head teacher of a primary school who, after taking his PhD at Oxford, has worked extensively as an education consultant and until recently as a teacher. He has focused much of his work on developing understanding of expertise for primary and elementary years and what that might mean and look like for teachers. His enthusiasm for the profession and for helping teachers and teacher educators is evident in his style of writing and the accessible content, given that this is not a top-tips approach to teaching or a quick fix to meet the latest policy directive. Instead, he argues for a more reflective and informed approach to challenge assumptions that underplay the complexity, professionalism and active participation and engagement at many levels that characterise the expert teacher.

In dispelling myths, Eaude draws upon an extensive range of literature and research, not necessarily his own, but theoretically underpinned to argue for the importance of the emotional dimension in teaching and for a recognition of the multifaceted nature of teaching in a complex environment.

The book is organised into three parts, each divided into further chapters, prefaced by a full introduction that outlines the structure, assumptions and underlying principles behind the book. Part 1 sets the scene; it provides a background to the current context and a rationale for understanding expertise, in three chapters. Part 2, in four chapters, provides an overview of expertise and its development, and discusses the nature and types of knowledge, from subject and pedagogical through craft and case and into the less commonly

acknowledged personal and interpersonal. Part 3 argues for the importance of professional identity for teachers and for an extended professionalism, with suggestions and implications. The book concludes in chapter 10 with implications for three key areas affecting teaching: initial teacher education, in-service teacher education, and research and policy.

Particularly striking for me is the call for more teacher autonomy and self-belief through the development and understanding of expertise. The book offers an informed alternative to the current discourse of teaching scripts and recognises the importance of informed decision making on an individual basis. The power of relationships and the personal qualities that teachers bring to the workplace are celebrated as contributing to professional identity and the support of expertise.

The book self-identifies as British and specifically English in context and approach. However, it seems that, while I am against cherry-picking from other countries, further examples from international contexts might have helped to illustrate the alternative vision and risk taking within the managed limits being advocated. For example, Scandinavian practice might have provided interesting examples for reflection. However, the principles underpinning the book can be universally applied, so the particular context is of less concern.

At the same time, Eaude makes a clear case for providing ideas and not prescription for practice, so the reader needs to engage with the text rather than scan for quick answers on how to become an expert teacher. The investment in time and reflection required is well worth it, as the book delivers on its aim to extend the discussion initiated in his previous work on how teacher expertise can be, and is, developed. This book offers informed content employing a conversational tone and provides a breath of fresh air in the field of education. This makes it a 'must read' for teachers, those involved in all aspects of teacher education and policy makers. The book is currently only available as a hardback or an e-book and is expensive, so one must hope that it will be produced in paperback to make it accessible to a wider audience.

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**Amanda Ince**

**Factories for Learning:  
producing race and class inequality in the neoliberal academy**

CHRISTY KULZ

Manchester: Manchester University Press.

194 pages, paperback £14.99 ISBN 978-1-5261-1619-2

*FORUM* invited me to review Christy Kulz's book at a notable turning point in my life. The school at which I was head teacher, Stanley Park High, has developed an innovative approach to professional development. All staff can select from a broad range of options in order to be leaders of their own learning. By choosing 'Read, Write, Publish' from the list, I have been able to conduct this, my first book review. Readers of previous editions of *FORUM* (vol. 59, issue 3 and vol. 60, issue 1) will be familiar with the pioneering practices at the school, and it is in this spirit that a slight twist on the traditional book review format is undertaken.

After 13 extremely rewarding years, I recently took the decision to retire as head teacher of Stanley Park High. It would appear that I am not alone in choosing to leave the profession that I have loved for 33 years. Indeed, research by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) [1] concludes that the proportion of working-age teachers leaving the profession each year rose steadily between 2010 and 2015, from 9 to 11 per cent for primary teachers and from 11 to 13 per cent for secondary teachers. At the ripe old age of 54, I also appear to be stereotypical. The same research suggests that the proportion of teachers in the workforce in their 50s has decreased markedly between 2010 and 2015. While acknowledging that this is partly due to the cohort in this age band at the start of the period being larger than the one that followed it, the evidence base clearly demonstrates a higher rate of older teachers leaving the profession before normal retirement. As a result, some believe that the quality of teaching will suffer if we continue to haemorrhage our most experienced educators.[2] Not that I would ever claim in any way to be better than your average 22-year-old teacher. For testimonials on this, just ask any of the students in my current Year 8 mathematics class!

Having made my decision, there has been much reflection. Reflection on what I have done during my time as head: my successes, things I would have done differently and any regrets – just a couple, one of which I will return to later. Such reflections have been sharpened by my reading, and by this review of Christy Kulz's aptly named book. Against a backdrop of academisation – well over half of secondary schools, including my school, are now academies – the book sets out to examine how the 'glossy veneer of success' in one celebrated market-driven academy conceals an underlying broadening of inequalities in relation to race and class, and the narrowing of the democratic participation of students, parents and teachers.

Kulz's book is the result of ethnographic research into the ethos, culture, staff, students and day-to-day life at the rather ironically named Dreamfields

Academy, situated in the borough of Urbanderry, both of which are introduced to us at the start of the book. In her very first sentence, Kulz notes that the school, the borough and all the names of the participants – staff, parents and students – are pseudonyms to protect their anonymity. Despite this, the author makes little attempt at concealment, providing many heavy hints, if not clear signposts with flashing lights, that will direct the majority of educationalists to the actual location and name of the academy. It is an academy in which Kulz had previously been employed. During this experience she states that she was uncomfortable with the securitised, draconian atmosphere, and with the approach of its head teacher, 'Mr Culford', but her appreciation of the pupils' 'excellent grades' – consistently exceeding the national average at GCSE and A level, with numerous students receiving offers from elite universities – meant that she put her reservations to one side. It would appear that Kulz believes that many of her former colleagues were equally accommodating, with many mentioning similar qualms and feelings of surveillance, yet they continued to do the job.

Kulz describes Urbanderry as a borough of marked inequality, with classed and racialised divisions being 'highly visible due to their intense proximity, highlighting how a social mix does not infer mixing or subsequent social parity, as cleavages run across social and material space' (p. 5). Dreamfields nestles in this space between a mixture of social housing estates and increasingly gentrified Victorian properties. Kulz asserts that a key feature of Dreamfields' aspiration is to flatten out these glaring disparities, and it is this narrative that has been referenced as proof of the success of the academy programme. Although the author claims this has been a blueprint for numerous urban schools, there is no attempt to quantify this. Despite this, the author is right to use Dreamfields to challenge the pervading rhetoric by shining a light on less dominant stories, because 'what signifies gritty appeal for some is actual danger for others' (p. 5).

Kulz is right to state that Dreamfields is not an anomaly, but is your typical rags school – it was previously named 'Larchmont Grove' – to riches academy that descends from a long trajectory of reforms that have brought education into the marketplace. Such reforms are described in some detail in the first chapter, starting with Thatcher's 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) and the introduction of parental choice, open enrolment, a national curriculum, testing, league tables and inspections. Kulz is also right to demonstrate that academisation is not solely the preserve of Conservative governments. New Labour's significant programme of academies, a reincarnation of the Conservative's City Technology Colleges (CTCs), established them in deprived urban areas with the financial support of private sponsors like Lord Harris, which secured such sponsors an opportunity to shape a school's ethos. However, it is the more recent coalition and Conservative governments that have overseen a rapid expansion of academies and free schools, driving the final nail into the coffin of local education authorities.

The purpose of Dreamfields is perceptively described as ‘to create docile, pliable bodies open to the inscription of capital’ (p. 44). Kulz is very clear that under the leadership of Culford, a business executive, saviour, military commander and, more revealingly, a self-portrayed cowboy, the ethos of ‘structure liberates’ (p. 19) manifests itself through a range of coercive practices that combine to ensure that the academy operates like a ‘well-oiled machine’ (p. 37). Chapter 3 ‘maps the contours of the physical environment through which students and teachers are funnelled. It describes how place, time and the body are re-ordered through repetitive routines’ (p. 37) to enforce discipline. Notable among these are the regimented manner in which children transfer between lessons – single file and in silence – and the chanting in unison of the school reflection six times a day, an activity often attracting punishment if the reflection is not pronounced with appropriate respect. Similar rigidity is applied to curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. Dreamfields marketed itself on the production of successful examination results, and as a result, its teachers have moved away from acting as ‘critical educators and pedagogues to function as efficient service providers delivering results’ (p. 95). Kulz makes it clear that this assessment conveyor belt – two sub-levels of progress – for each student must be maintained, but quotes ‘Mr Arkanel’, who ‘questions what this pushing accomplishes, and laments that his real job is not to understand how his subject area works but to get students to produce a set product’ (p. 54). Another teacher, ‘Mr Davis’, goes further in maintaining that other forms of knowledge are not valued: ‘What about being able to form human relationships, or draw, or play sports? Every child had at least one talent and not all of them could be academic’ (p. 55).

Running alongside repetitive routines, Kulz’s research highlights the significance of panoptic surveillance, a term she references against Jeremy Bentham’s 1787 approach to prisons, factories and schooling, whereby multiple occupants can be easily observed and controlled. Dreamfields’ architecture ensures that all classrooms and teacher office areas are on display. This transparency could be of immense benefit if it was utilised in the spirit of openness and sharing of pedagogy, but surveillance and constant inspection are evidenced as the primary benefits. As with Bentham’s acknowledgement that no building can enable constant scrutiny, Dreamfields endeavours to close any gaps, with Kulz citing one teacher, ‘Mr Turner’, who states that ‘every moment of every day is taken up with some kind of duty. If you are not in lesson, we are expected on patrol’ (p. 81). This additional surveillance is not only enacted through ‘brawn’, as Kulz also identifies the continual measurement, ranking and quantification of both staff and students through testing, lesson observations and performance management.

A key point of reference throughout the book is Mr Culford, who was specifically selected to be Dreamfields’ head because of his authoritarian management style. He is introduced to us in the architect’s blueprint, Chapter 2, with Kulz later quoting Culford’s belief that a clear philosophy and ‘radical’ leadership make a school successful, and that trial and error and experience

'trump' (no pun intended) reading a book about it (Chapter 4). Kulz misses a trick here, because while trial and error would suggest an innovative or radical approach, Culford has done anything but, choosing instead a highly 'traditional or formal approach' as articulated in Dickens' *Hard Times*. It is also ironic that he denigrates the reading of books.

Culford is portrayed as an extremely confident, if not arrogant, man. Such over-confidence is shown in his very relaxed approach to being interviewed by a researcher given pretty much free rein to publish her findings. She states: 'When I first introduced the research to Culford, he brusquely asserted that I did not need to spend time studying Dreamfields; he could tell me why it worked, and it had nothing to do with being an academy.' Kulz muses over whether Culford's approach may have been due to the fact that she had worked there before. Or a result of his misunderstanding of what sociological research is, or because of his dismissive attitude to research in general. It is likely to have been a combination of them all, because on completion of her research she sent an executive summary to Dreamfields and asked for an opportunity to run a participatory workshop with the student council to debate findings, or at least to meet with Culford and the rest of the Senior Management Team. No response was received.

Would Culford be enraged by this book? I suspect so, but I doubt he would lose any sleep over it, because he and others like him have 'dazzled politicians' [3], and have the unequivocal support of the influential. This brings me neatly to the one of the two regrets of my headship I referred to earlier. Unlike Kulz, I have been complicit in allowing this to happen. Yes, I have written one or two blogs that have challenged this system, but they have been sporadic and superficial. In so doing, I have helped prop up the academy machine.

Although at times lacking flow, Kulz's well-referenced book is a challenging read, but it is well worth persevering because it exposes the deceit of the academies programme. In so doing, it becomes part of an increasing body of evidence, including UCL's recent study [4], that clearly identifies the grim reality of the effect of the academies policy on our young people, our teachers and our schools.

### **Notes**

- [1] <https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/NUFS03/NUFS03.pdf>
- [2] <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2018/may/12/secret-teacher-the-exodus-of-older-teachers-is-draining-schools-of-expertise>
- [3] [https://schoolsweek.co.uk/exposed-the-downing-street-teacher-reception-where-academies-reigned-supreme/amp/?\\_\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://schoolsweek.co.uk/exposed-the-downing-street-teacher-reception-where-academies-reigned-supreme/amp/?__twitter_impression=true)
- [4] [https://amp.theguardian.com/education/2018/jun/30/coalition-education-reform-academies-fuelling-inequality?\\_\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://amp.theguardian.com/education/2018/jun/30/coalition-education-reform-academies-fuelling-inequality?__twitter_impression=true)

**David Taylor**

**Educational Justice:  
teaching and organizing against the corporate juggernaut**

HOWARD RYAN, with DEBRA GOODMAN,  
JOEL JORDAN & JOSPEH ZECCOLA, 2016  
New York: Monthly Review Press, paperback  
287 pages, paperback £17.99p ISBN 978-1-5836761-3-4

**Precious Knowledge**

A film directed by ARI LUIS PALOS & EREN ISABEL MCGINNIS  
2011 Dos Vatos Productions \$20.00 70 minutes, colour DVD  
<http://www.dosvatos.com/films/>  
<http://www.preciousknowledgefilm.com/>

Teachers in the USA have been walking out. West Virginia, a state with a proud history of industrial militancy, saw two weeks of unofficial strike action in the spring. Strikes followed in Oklahoma, Kentucky, North Carolina, Colorado and Arizona, all states which return Republican legislatures and voted for Trump. After years of cutbacks imposed on ideological grounds to state-funded services, teachers built for action, took it, and won increased public-service budgets and higher pay.

Wide-scale walkouts in states and more localised action in cities such as San Diego, Los Angeles and Chicago have, for the most part, been organised outwith the established structures of teacher unions. Too often those unions are unrepresented at school-district level, and can provide only a token lobbying presence at state level. In such circumstances, payment of union dues becomes an unappealing proposition for cash-strapped practitioners. But the main driver of militant rank-and-file action has been the failure of the established union leaderships to fight on behalf of the membership. Leaders of the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association, the two large national bodies, accepted links between teacher evaluation and student test scores, and so cleared the way for payment by results. This decision opened a gulf between members and high officials. Other concessions around issues of job security, the spread of charter schools and school closures widened that gulf. An approach to negotiation built on 'conceding not leading' (as it is termed in Howard Ryan's book) demoralises union members and makes it harder to convince non-members to join.

Where union leadership is weak or compliant in the face of sustained attacks on the funding of public education and on teachers' pay and conditions, activists have looked to forge other networks. Howard Ryan explores the two big questions this raises – namely, what does the union stand for, and how is the union to be led? His book presents detailed narratives of grass-roots victories, along with an explicitly class-based analysis of the broader context in which these have been won. Ryan understands this context as shaped by the

'corporate occupation' (p. 10) of education in schools, which he characterises as an 'assault' (p. 12). Many of these corporate-driven 'reforms' will be familiar to teachers in the UK. They include: an externally imposed 'standards' agenda drawn up without the participation of those most affected; the spread of high-stakes testing along with a drive to raise attainment by data-driven teaching; the restructuring of educational services in ways which facilitate privatisation; and further weakening of education workers' job security and professional voice.

Ryan and his co-contributors explore the way the dynamic interaction of school and community can bolster working-class students against a pervasive deficit model which asserts that they cannot succeed and which helps to reproduce existing inequalities. 'Public education,' Ryan notes, 'is fundamentally about democracy, equipping young people with skills for effective citizenship and participation' (p. 16). One essential aim of the currently dominant policies has been, he claims, 'to squelch democracy by converting schools into centres of obedience training for working-class youth' (p. 18).

In opposing such 'reform', teachers find they must also work to democratise their union, so that it becomes an instrument which serves this necessary opposition. Where members organise and mobilise, they can create new conditions and make gains. Several chapters in the book offer case studies in which such an approach has borne fruit, if only temporarily, for individual schools and their communities. We learn how teachers at the Jacob Beidler Elementary School in Chicago successfully fought off incorporation into a charter school. Incorporation would have handed public assets to the private company running the new school, forced students to travel across gang territory to be educated in an unfamiliar setting, and made teachers reapply for jobs with no guarantee that they would again be hired. Elsewhere in the city, a principal's bullying and budget-cutting was successfully resisted thanks to local union leaders who took a stand, and then organised on the ground, kept members fully informed, held regular accessible meetings, and told the truth about the situation to teachers, governors and parents.

Ryan advocates school-based community organising as a way to amplify the power teachers and parents/carers can wield. Social injustices confronting a local community will arrive, sooner or later, inside the school which serves that community. Teachers' unions can collaborate with community organisations to mobilise against harmful policies. Ryan further argues that it is necessary for teacher unions to involve themselves in a sustained way in debates over curriculum. This must also mean debates about pedagogy and assessment. Two case studies set in Los Angeles show teachers collaborating to make best use of whatever agency they retain within their settings in order to offer 'living alternatives' to what has been termed 'the pedagogy of poverty' (p. 208). This consists of a regimented drill-based approach to teaching, in particular the teaching of reading, which corporate reformers see as being necessary to administer to children from impoverished backgrounds, on whom generosity of provision and creative pedagogical approaches need not be wasted.



Debra Goodman's chapter about the 'whole language' movement is especially pertinent. Goodman's parents helped inaugurate 'whole language' approaches to the teaching and learning of what is now, perhaps all too readily, termed 'literacy'. She values that movement not only for its efficacy in helping children learn to read and write, but also because it empowers practitioners and enables them to support each other beyond their own workplaces – for example, by joining dedicated networks which have a nationwide span.

'Whole language' approaches recognise individual learners as makers of meaning, and encourage them to relate what they already know of text and the world to the new materials encountered in school. As the drive to streamline the teaching of 'literacy' has taken hold, the idea of meaning as complex, contestable and constructed has been supplanted by a view which sees meaning as singular, pre-existent in the text only, and always readily available to be found. This in turn has licensed the use of simplistic right/wrong testing as a way to gauge reading 'competence' and development. Goodman is surely right to conclude that 'discussion of language pedagogy remains extremely critical today, in an era when reading – evaluated through high stakes tests – is a focal point in corporate attacks on teachers and public schools' (p. 185).

A fuller consideration of Ryan's book can be found at [www.jceps.co.uk](http://www.jceps.co.uk).

*Precious Knowledge* is a documentary film, easily ordered as a DVD online. First screened in 2011, it centres on events in Tucson, Arizona during 2009 and 2010, when state officials' political expediency and racism combined to outlaw a highly successful ethnic studies programme from the city's high schools.

The film is set in Tucson Magnet High School, where a large number of students are of Mexican-American heritage. In 1997, responding to community pressure to address the structural inequalities in the school system which ensured that students of minority background were consistently failed, the Tucson School Board established a 'Hispanic Studies Department' in each of its six high schools. Tucson schools cater for some 35,000 students of Latinx heritage. The nationwide drop-out rate for these students is over 50%, the highest for any minority group. The figure for Tucson's schools is 48%. Failure to graduate from high school has grave and lifelong consequences for a person's employment and well-being. Renamed 'Mexican-American Studies/La Raza Studies' in 2002, the programme at Tucson High, whose elective courses were open to all students, had great success in sustaining engagement, particularly among students of Latinx heritage. By 2008, the percentage of Latinx students enrolled on the programme who were graduating stood at 93%. The 'La Raza Studies' programme foregrounds a social justice pedagogy, looking to link school knowledge to community activism. As might be expected, its curriculum includes material about the long history of indigenous peoples in the Americas, draws extensively but not exclusively from Chicano/a and Latinx cultures, and values the political activism which defends the gains won over time.

In designing the programme, its teachers made sure to comply with Arizona's state standards. Four principles of conduct underpin the programme: to reflect; to seek what is called *quetzalcoatl*, or precious knowledge, as a way to

find out who you are as a human being; to act; and to transform the world. Students learn that these principles have their basis in Mayan civilisation. They are encouraged to take the principles into all aspects of their own lives.

Opposition to the programme came from the hard right of the Republican Party in the shape of Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne, and later his colleague, State Senator John Huppenthal, abetted by the incoming governor, Jan Brewer. Horne claimed that the programme generated a 'racial divide' among students, split them along ethnic lines, fostered in participants a sense of resentment, and conflicted with the values of American citizenship. He sponsored a series of bills to ban the programme, and spearheaded an intense media campaign to misrepresent and discredit what teachers were doing. As a result, teachers on the programme received abuse and death threats.

*Precious Knowledge* follows the developing conflict, and charts elements of the defence of the La Raza Studies programme. It does so by focusing on a small number of students and teachers, and by filming inside the classroom and within the wider community. We see how important the programme is to students, and hear how it changes them. It is valued for informing identity, providing a richer knowledge base, developing critical thinking, and offering what the standard curriculum does not: an affirmatory, celebratory and respectful understanding of the history and cultures of people of Latinx heritage, a history which predates the formation of the USA and which can serve to counteract the label of 'immigrant'. Students say that the programme has enabled them to become more vocal and articulate, and above all to remain committed to succeeding in school.

Students enrolled in the programme not only are much more likely to graduate, they also score more highly on state-wide attainment tests than do their un-enrolled peers. But improvements in attainment and stay-on rates are of no consequence to the politicians looking to outlaw the programme, some of whom refuse, even when invited, to visit the school and see the programme in action. Their minds are made up. State Senator Huppenthal does visit. He notes a poster of Che Guevara among the many portraits of political leaders and activists on the classroom's walls. He remarks on the presence of Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* among the many books in the classroom library. Later, addressing the legislation committee in the state senate, he mis-characterises what he has seen and heard.

As the legal assault gathers pace, students and staff undertake various acts of resistance, mobilising the community, demonstrating, and speaking before the legislature. When the bill to outlaw the programme is passed, along with a proviso to ban several books from use in any Tucson school, including Freire's work and Elizabeth Martinez's *500 Years of Chicano History in Pictures*, the state legislature building is subject to a short sit-in, and four students are arrested. The aftermath is affecting, as the students and teachers we have come to know absorb the impact of a defeat. We have witnessed an act of oppression – one made all the more bitter because it has been cloaked in legality.

The La Raza Studies programme was forced to cease in Arizona, but the campaign to defend it generated national attention. As a result, a number of states, including Texas and California, implemented their own ethnic studies programmes along the lines of that pioneered in Tucson. The struggle also continued through the courts. In 2017, the bill sponsored by Horne and others to end the programme was found to have violated the 14th Amendment. In other words, the ban was declared to be motivated by racism, and as such was unconstitutional and unenforceable.

*Precious Knowledge* views events mainly through the lens of 'race', and valorises the collective community spirit of those resisting the suppression – deemed legal at the time – of the Mexican-American Studies/La Raza Studies programme. Such solidarity, above all on the terrain of class, continues to offer hope for a better future. Women of colour who teach in Chicago's schools can make common cause with white men who teach in West Virginia's schools by resisting cuts to school funding or worsened conditions of service. Unity around this kind of issue may herald the return of capitalism's repressed: a working class willing and able to organise in defence of its own interests, and in spite of other existing divisions.

The US teachers' walkouts, appearing to come out of nowhere, surprised the leadership of the unions as much as they surprised the employers. But such action is never conjured out of thin air. It arrives because people prepare it, laying the ground patiently in the seemingly quiescent periods and in the times of defeat.

Even so, preparation and militancy, though essential, don't guarantee success. In Oklahoma and Kentucky, union leaders cut a poor settlement to end the dispute over the heads of those teachers who took action. Gains in one school, or in a city, or even across a state, can only be provisional absent wider changes in the political field. Hence the need for a vision of society which will consolidate and build from such gains, as Howard Ryan articulates.

Still, each success offers a glimpse, as through a glass darkly. Priscila, one of the Tucson High students we have followed, gains a place at Arizona State University. Her father is in jail as an 'undocumented immigrant'. She tells us he will be proud. And in West Virginia, the teachers' strike – which broke the law and closed every school in the state – was settled only when public service budgets were boosted and a pay rise of at least 3% was guaranteed not to teachers solely, but to every public employee.

**Patrick Yarker**







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## CALL FOR PAPERS - special Issue

# For a New Public Education in a New Public School

*FORUM* Volume 61 Number 2 Summer 2019

Issue Editors: **Peter Moss, Melissa Benn & Michael Fielding**

Unlike some other countries, the concept of ‘public’ has had a weak presence in education in England. Education provided for the majority of children is more often described as ‘state education’, while the schools in which such education has been provided are often referred to as ‘state schools’. Both terms carry centralised and authoritarian connotations and are misleading – at least until recently, with the spread of so-called academy and free schools, institutions that are both privatised businesses and, as Tim Brighouse observes, in effect ‘nationalised ‘government schools’’. When the term ‘public school’ is used in common parlance, it is applied to highly selective, elite private schools – ‘comically inappropriate’, in the words of the great socialist thinker R.H. Tawney.

At a time when education in England is increasingly marketized and privatised on the one hand, and increasingly subjected to managerial, statist control on the other, we invite contributors to this special issue of *FORUM* which is about exploring a radical alternative.

The issue will: consider the possible meanings of and rationales for ‘public education’ in ‘public schools’; compare them critically to other concepts and terms (e.g. ‘state education’, the ‘common school’); explore their implications for issues such as values, governance and accountability, and the identity of and relationships between students, teachers, parents and other citizens; and examine how a public education in public schools has been or might be enacted in practice. Discussion of what a new public school might look like in practice (e.g. its role, structure, relationship to its community) would also be welcome; as would the implications of this new public school in a new public education system for private education and private schools – for example, can they or should they co-exist?

The issue welcomes past, present and future perspectives, both from England and other countries. It also welcomes contributions that locate ‘public education’ in debates about a renewal of the wider public domain, and which seek new understandings of how that domain might be reconceptualised and reconstituted.

*Call for Papers – special issue (continued)*

Last but not least, the special issue locates the discussion of public education and the public school at a time when the neoliberal experiment of the last 30 years (including its educational manifestations) is in crisis, making it imperative (in the 1960s' words of Milton Friedman) 'to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes politically inevitable'.

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*FORUM* exists to promote 3-19 comprehensive education, and contributions are encouraged that address some or all sectors of such a comprehensive education (including also the education of children under 3 years and higher and adult education).

A two-stage process is being adopted for this special issue. Potential contributors are invited to submit a title and abstract (up to 250 words) to the editors, who will review all abstracts prior to inviting the submission of full articles. Abstracts should be sent to [peter.moss@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:peter.moss@ucl.ac.uk) by the end of October 2018; full articles will need to be submitted by the end of March 2019.

Many *FORUM* articles weigh in at about 3500 words, but some have been longer, and others much shorter. Please include a short Abstract with your article, distilling its main focus, and a sentence or three of autobiographical information, as well as a contact email address. *FORUM* offers a platform for writing which is heartfelt as well as thought-through. Previous issues of the journal more than three years old are freely downloadable at [www.wwords.co.uk/FORUM](http://www.wwords.co.uk/FORUM).

**Peter Moss, Melissa Benn, Michael Fielding**