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ROSLA and De-Schooling

Editorial Board

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ROSLA and De-Schooling

The first effects of the raising of the school leaving age will be felt in a year's time, when those who would previously have left at the end of the Easter term, 1973, will spend an extra year in the schools. The same is true, of course, of the summer leavers that year, so that the full effects will be felt in the autumn term, 1973. It is unfortunate that the old system of two leaving dates is to be retained.

Since the latest figures (for 1970) show that approximately 55 per cent of 15 year olds stay on voluntarily at school, the raising of the leaving age means that the number of 15 year olds in school will be roughly doubled from the autumn of 1973; an addition of about 300,000. While this works out at an *average* of about 60 pupils per school (there are some 5,000 secondary schools in England and Wales), the impact of this measure will, of course, be felt differentially; comprehensive schools in any case have a higher voluntary staying on rate than secondary modern schools, and this is particularly the case with 11 to 18 schools. In many cases the proportion is between 60 and 80 per cent already, so that the raising of the leaving age may more easily be absorbed by schools of this type (and comprehensive upper schools) than where the bipartite system still reigns supreme.

The significance of this reform, particularly for comprehensive schools—whatever the immediate difficulties—is immense. It makes possible a full five-year course for most (but not all) pupils between the ages of 11 and 16. To gain full value from this measure, and to make possible the development of a unified course for all, two further steps may be envisaged. First, the fixing of a single leaving date (the end of the summer term), so allowing a full, five-year course for all; and second, the provision of a single system of examinations—or set of objectives—catering for *all* at the age of 16, in place of the present three level system of GCE, CSE, and non-examination pupils. The Schools Council Working Party has already proposed a single examination at 16 in place of GCE and CSE, but catering only for 60 per cent of the children. But this proposal, while a step forward in one sense, is divisive and impracticable. The movement headed by experienced comprehensive school heads like Pat Daunt, calling for an examination specifically designed for *all* pupils at 16 deserves the strongest support. Such an examination would use the new techniques developed particularly in relation to CSE Mode III.

In this number, Roy Waters analyses the steps being taken in the largest local authority in the country (the ILEA) to prepare the ground for raising the age. Roy Haywood presents one model tending towards a unified curriculum for the common course in the comprehensive school. We plan to publish articles in later numbers giving the experience of schools adopting a unified approach to the middle years of comprehensive schooling, since several schools are now feeling their way through this fundamental problem.

It is ironic that, just at the moment when a reform fought for for many decades by the labour and progressive movement generally is about to be implemented, the de-schooling movement in the United States, arising from the sharp social contradictions there, has been accorded massive publicity in the press and TV. Clearly the schools need changing — **Forum** has stood for positive changes in the schools since its inception—but the alternative presented, that of destroying the publicly provided system of education, is a counsel of despair. Three articles deal with this issue: by Philip Jackson, a distinguished American critic of the de-schooling movement; by Norman Stephenson, who reviews the literature; and by Mary Stapleton, whose article represents the thinking of a group concerned with aspects of change within the English system.

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London Looks to ROSLA

Roy Waters

Large urban authorities face particular problems in preparing for Rosla. Roy Waters here gives a personal view of what the ILEA is doing.

Rosla is what is euphemistically known as a challenge. Like most challenges in education it is one which will probably have to be met by making a number of advances on a variety of fronts. What is certain is that complacency would be foolhardy.

In London just over two-thirds of schoolchildren stay on until they are 16 already, though this still leaves an estimated extra 9,400 in the fifth year in September 1973. Some £4,320,772 will have been spent on providing teaching spaces for them (in a number of cases by building sixth form accommodation so that sixth formers can vacate fifth form areas which they have had to use). The DES ban on major secondary projects and their recent cuts in minor building allocations have prevented the ILEA from doing all it had hoped, but there will certainly be roofs over heads and the necessary furniture and equipment. Of course there won't be as much as many teachers will think necessary, nor will there be as many teachers as some will wish, but at 1 : 15.5 London's overall secondary teacher-pupil ratio is already the highest in the country apart from that in four small areas, and this will be maintained in 1973, with more of these teachers allocated to schools facing special difficulties.

The real question concerns what will happen inside the new (or old) classrooms between the sixteen-year-olds and their teachers. Clearly the problems of the control of the significant minority of disaffected and often violently aggressive adolescents must give rise to deep concern. But equally clearly this problem is inextricably interwoven with the problems of curriculum content and the organisation and methods whereby teaching is carried out and learning encouraged. Furthermore these problems will not be solved by considering the fourth and fifth years alone—the whole of the secondary course must be reviewed.

All this was recognised some years ago when it was first decided to raise the school-leaving age and a number of projects were started in London, often at the initiative of *ad hoc* staff-room committees or groups of local heads. However the Newsom report was still fresh in most people's minds at that time and there was a tendency for planning to centre simply on new courses for the less able fourth and fifth year pupils, these courses consisting largely of interdepartmental projects on topics like The Family or Conflict. Partly out of such discussions there emerged a new subject on the curriculum, Social Education, a name which covered a wide range of very different activities. Team teaching and some degree of unstreaming often went together with these new ideas. In some notable cases the schemes flourished and are thriving still. Often, however, they did not come to much. Perhaps in some cases they were based on wrong ideas, but it can also be argued that all too often the teachers concerned had insufficient time for thought, consultation and research. Furthermore they lacked the necessary support in secretarial help and facilities for the preparation of pupils' resource materials. These difficulties were particularly acute when teachers from different schools tried to work together. All this, and then above all the postponement of Rosla, led in some cases to an unfortunate degree of disillusionment, ranging between two polarities of attitude. On the one hand there were those who remembered that last time the school-leaving age was raised they had simply prolonged existing courses for an extra year and it had all gone off fairly smoothly. On the other hand there were those who grimly foresaw an escalation in the continuing blackboard jungle guerrilla war.

Practical support

Since that time a number of features in the London situation have changed. Many more teachers' centres have been established, including not only divisional multi-purpose centres (with wardens, resources officers, clerical officers and sophisticated reprographic apparatus, video tape recorders, etc.) and specialist subject centres, but also such general supportive centres as that for Media Resources. All these provide not only practical and material help, but also meeting points at which teachers can exchange ideas. The Educational Television Service has been launched and it is hoped that the provision of VTRs in the larger schools will increase the viewing of the ILEA's own in-service training transmissions as well as of those provided by

the ITA and BBC. The latter's new Rosla series has been discussed at a number of local meetings and various schemes for the exchange of ideas, speakers and resource materials have been developed locally.

Teachers have been seconded from their schools to collect and disseminate ideas on such topics as integrated studies, mixed ability teaching and remedial work. The authority's careers guidance adviser has been particularly concerned with work experience and appreciation, and a curriculum development co-ordinating committee is linked to local support groups, while a number of advisory panels of teachers are engaged in projects such as an ETV series in workshop format on discipline.

The ILEA has issued a number of discussion documents to schools. At first headed **ROSLA**, these have recently been called **New Educational Developments and Aids to Learning** in acknowledgement of the fact that Rosla projects cannot profitably be isolated from other curricula and organisational issues. Topics covered have included social education, co-ordinated courses, work and residential experience, integrated studies in art, housecraft and handicraft, unstreaming, the **Humanities Curriculum Project** and so on.

These and other topics have been the subject of a number of in-service training courses over the years on a local and central basis, both on general Rosla topics and on subject specialisms. Relevant specialist courses have ranged from utilisation courses in conjunction with the Schools Council's **Mathematics for the Majority** project to courses for drama teachers with professional actors at the Cockpit and at Oval House, encouraging non-authoritarian, multi-disciplinary approaches to creative drama work with teenagers. Two residential conferences for heads and deputies on preparing for Rosla have been held at the authority's centre at Stoke d'Abernon. A recent development has been the organisation by local teachers' centre wardens of courses arranged at the request of groups of staff within their own schools.

Particular attention has been given to children who present special problems to the teacher. There are bound to be pressures from some teachers for difficult and aggressive children to be removed from the schools altogether. More places for maladjusted and ESN children are planned, though the speed of this provision is governed by DES building policy. But not all difficult children are maladjusted and the means must be found not simply to contain them within the normal school but to provide them with a worthwhile experience and so, one hopes, eventually to win them over. One answer may lie in the establishment within the schools of a 'sanctuary', a base in which a teacher gifted in this direction can exert a calming influence on violent children in moments of crisis. Many schools already have unplanned and unofficial sanctuaries of this kind in an art room, say, or woodwork shop or housecraft centre — or even the schoolkeepers' mess room. Probably most schools would argue that they have no space available to set up an official unit of this kind. One fortunate school makes use of a neighbouring house and this has some advantages. But suitable and willing teachers are also hard to find, as, indeed, are good counsellors, whom heads are now free to appoint if they choose, though it is considered essential that all teachers should continue to be deeply involved in the pastoral care of their pupils. It would certainly be idle to pretend that the ILEA has any new solutions to the problem of recalcitrant pupils. All that can be claimed is that no one is blind to the difficulties and a number of teachers and inspectors are engaged in the search for more effective means of overcoming them.

The range of courses and modes of organisation being developed in different schools is considerable. Many of these have been touched on already — the moves towards unstreaming, for example, and towards interdisciplinary approaches, and the introduction of subjects like Social Education. The ETV service programmes for pupils can also point in new directions, as in the integrated **You in the Seventies** series, or **Press and Placard** which broke new ground nationally in its use of Monty Pythonesque presentation techniques. A few other ventures deserve mention.

Links with FE colleges

Particularly interesting is the development of linked courses with colleges of further education, whereby groups of pupils spend a day or half day at the local college. Subjects studied in this way include leathercraft, office mechanisation, a computer course for the less able, electrical and mechanical engineering, building, etc. An interesting point arises in connection with pupil attendance at colleges. Generally speaking school uniform is not worn unless attendance is for half a session only. If such linked courses are extended, they may well add strength to what one might anticipate to be an increased resistance to uniform by the new Rosla

pupils. Perhaps surprisingly, many heads seem strongly to favour retaining it.

Privilege and participation

This leads one to the general social provision for fourth and fifth year pupils and the grant of special privileges to them. Developmental thinking within the ILEA is tending to move away from the sixth form suite concept towards one of common social provision for all older pupils, probably from the fourth year upwards. It is likely that most heads would argue that it is impossible to make any special provision for the fifth year whatever simply because to do so would require more new building than the DES will allow, though some who have not previously done so hope to be able to give them free access to the premises during breaks and lunch hours. Some heads are considering giving fifth formers more participation in decision making. Examples of first steps here include the freedom to decide whether to take games or not, or what form of assembly (if any) to adopt. There are indications that the system of allowing pupils a wide range of optional subjects is gaining ground over that of providing a basic course in arts/science/engineering/commerce/etc.

One school is considering the possibility of running a number of intensive, self-contained courses, not necessarily a year long, the successful completion of which would lead to the award of a credit, with the pupils choosing their course and assembling a collection of credits throughout the period of their fourth and fifth years. However, most schools see CSE as a main objective for most pupils. On the other hand a few heads are fearful lest compulsory fifth year schooling may lead some parents into unrealistic examination expectations for their children. These heads are particularly concerned when they also believe that CSE, even in some interdisciplinary Mode 3 form, is not suitable for all pupils. Incidentally, a number of Mode 3 syllabuses are already in operation and more are under consideration. One school with its own recording studio is running a successful Mode 3 in sound recording which has captured the imagination of a number of youngsters otherwise resistant to school. Another school already offers Black Studies for GCE and several hope to offer this subject for CSE.

Some form of social service is offered to pupils in most schools, usually on a voluntary basis, sometimes as an option against games, or at any time during the day on the understanding that an equal amount of time is spent in the evening or at weekends. This includes work in hospitals or activities in conjunction with Task Force, often with old people, or work in neighbouring primary schools or schools for the handicapped. Visits are organised in connection with careers, with social education courses and with specialist subjects. As more schools acquire their own country house (the current rate of acquisition seems to be two such houses a year) more and more pupils are profiting from residential experience — at one school every pupil spends three separate weeks at the school's house during his or her school career. The authority runs its own mountaineering centre and several large residential centres which are heavily booked.

Learning for Leisure

Courses designed to foster interest in and skill at leisure activities are increasing. The involvement of the housecraft and handicraft inspectorate is notable here. Workshop activities can be partly directed towards home improvement (integrating with art) or towards the construction of equipment for sport (such as boat building). At its worst this new interest in leisure leads to pupils being left to their own devices during unplanned 'hobbies' sessions, but at its best extremely worthwhile and creative courses have been prepared which one might expect to have a real relevance to the year 2000 when the first Rosla generation will be in the middle of their lives.

All this, well-intentioned as it undoubtedly is, will certainly not satisfy either the de-schoolers or those who believe that the only solution to the problems of our schools lies in a total change in the values of society as a whole. The overall picture is one of an inner urban LEA providing the necessary resources, both human and material, as far as its powers permit; seeking to support its teachers in their individual and collective initiatives; and throwing in a variety of ideas of its own for discussion. It is not surprising that, irrespective of the extent of their present difficulties, morale seems lowest in those schools which are doing least to work out their own solutions and highest in those which are most active. Both groups deserve help and support. Personally, though I have met some teachers who are hopeful, some who are angry and many who are gravely concerned, I have not yet encountered despair.

A Common Core Curriculum

Roy Haywood

Roy Haywood, now on study leave from his post as Head of the Middle School of Exmouth Comprehensive School, explains how a common core curriculum was developed there.

In 1959 the Crowther Report described the education received by the majority of the population as 'inadequate in quality and duration'. Since then innovating comprehensive schools have been making headway in improving quality and this has led in turn to lengthening school life. What the schools have been steadily working towards is an opportunity for every pupil to achieve a satisfactory basic minimum education, with openings to go as far beyond the minimum as they can. In spite of the findings of Julienne Ford (1969), who studied a streamed school, comprehensive schools have raised the educational sights of pupils, up to and including retaining many in the fifth and open sixth forms. While, therefore, successive governments have jibbed at raising the school leaving age, comprehensive schools have increasingly realised this. They have also built up a fund of valuable experience in curriculum design and practice which imparts an air of optimistic confidence.

What I propose to do, in this brief article, is to outline a rationale of curriculum planning, then examine how it has worked out in Exmouth School—an 11-18 school numbering 2,000, and finally make some tentative observations about achievements and trends.

Three approaches

There are three possible alternatives to be considered in organising a curriculum, or planned learning experience. First, there can be a single programme for all the pupils in the school all the time. Second, there can be a multiple programme of exclusive tracks or courses (eg technical, commercial, pre-nursing, academic). Third, there can be a common core of learning for all pupils with a system of options, thus providing for a variety of learning experiences within the main fields of knowledge and human experience.

Exmouth School has used both the first and last alternatives. There is a common curriculum for the Lower School (years 1 to 3) and a common core curriculum plus options for the Middle School (years 4 and 5). There are complex reasons for this policy, and so, before examining the school's curriculum in detail, it is appropriate to look at the background and considerations underlying the decisions taken.

From its beginnings in 1968 the school has been more than a comprehensive school in name only. The pupils, drawn from a wide catchment area which is not creamed by any selective school, are not prematurely labelled on entry. Instead, teaching takes place in non-streamed social, or tutor, groups—altogether so during the first year and with minor modifications during the second and third years. In other words, the curriculum has not rested on the premise that 'academic' work is hard and 'vocational' studies easy. The corollary which requires pupils to be sorted into 'ability' groups so that those of high ability follow a high status academic course, while those of low ability are fobbed off with a low status 'smorgasbord' curriculum (J D Koerner 1968), or an 'indoctrinal' curriculum (John White 1968), or even a 'relevant curriculum' (Kingsley Amis 1970) was excluded from the start. In its place non-streaming implied an intention to initiate all pupils into the basic aspects of human knowledge (P H Hirst 1969).

The Lower School curriculum has been organised to incorporate the best of traditional practice, while avoiding the dangers of both premature specialisation and lack of intellectual content. How far this has resulted in a balanced and systematic curriculum may be seen when the details are given.

There is, however, a modification when pupils reach the Middle School (14-16 years). The reasons for this may be briefly summarised. First, comprehensive schools must take a realistic and responsible attitude and recognise the claims of the outside world. Whether teachers like it or not, the later years of secondary school must provide qualifications for careers, and there is pressure from society, in particular from parents, for systematic teaching leading to qualifications. Second, pupils are developing rapidly and becoming more capable of coping with more abstract knowledge and the complexities of the explosion of knowledge. Third, adolescents are motivated in new ways; wants are no longer the main driving force but purposeful future requirements begin to be perceived.

Fourth, in these circumstances it is the responsibility of the school to guide pupils along appropriate paths.

Consequently, the Middle School curriculum is planned to provide a common core of subjects for all pupils, however wide initial differences in attainment, supplemented by guided choice among a range of alternatives for each individual pupil. Given that a large comprehensive school can offer some 25 subjects to 14-year-olds, many of them new to the pupils, help is needed to avoid over-specialising on the one hand or under-specialising—for instance, by dropping foreign languages or science entirely—on the other. By assisting pupils to achieve balance and coverage at this stage, the school gives them an opportunity to graduate from pupil towards student status.

In order to see how this reasoning works out in practical terms, the school curriculum may be examined in more detail.

Organizational details

The annual intake of 370-400 pupils in the Lower School is divided—primarily for timetabling reasons—into four equal and constant Population Blocks, within each of which there are three or four Tutor Groups. These groups are carefully formed, with reference to sociometric and personal information gathered from the contributory primary schools.

The first year curriculum for all pupils, in unstreamed Tutor Groups, is on the following pattern, with some extraction for remedial teaching as required:

5 periods	**4 periods**	**3 periods**	**2 periods**	**1 period**
English	French	Games/PE	Religious	Drama
Mathematics	Discovery		Education	
Science	(History/		Art	
	Geography)		Music	
			Craft	

The same pattern of subject time distribution prevails during the second year. But opportunity is allowed for setting for English, Mathematics, French.

In the third year both English and Mathematics lose one period and these two periods go to Science when a beginning is made teaching separate disciplines; and to the Language Department in so far as one extra period is used to introduce the 'top' language set to a second foreign language. It must be stressed that this small amount of setting does not imply reversal of the basic non-streamed situation. When a recent analysis of the VRQ scores of a 'top' French set was made, it appeared that of 31 pupils five scored over 115, thirteen 100-114, eleven 85-99, with two unrecorded.

Basically, then, there is a common curriculum for all in the Lower School, with minor variations, eg remedial provision at one extreme and a second foreign language at the other. This last, it should be recorded, is a recent introduction after much thought and protracted discussion.

When pupils move into the Middle School they remain in the same pastoral tutor group, but the four Population Blocks are now regrouped into two for teaching purposes, again on timetabling grounds. One block includes about 60 per cent of the pupils who are following a curriculum designed to lead to GCE or CSE examinations. The second block, including about 40 per cent, follows a curriculum leading to CSE.

Both blocks have a common two periods for Games/Activities. Otherwise 13 common core periods of the GCE/CSE Block are divided as follows: English Language and Literature (6), Mathematics (5), Music (1), Re/Careers/Health Education (1). There remain 20 periods for options. There are five Option Groups. One is science based, one practical/vocational (with escape routes for Latin and Religious Knowledge to 'O' level), and the remaining three comprise a mixture of science, arts and practical subjects to enable pupils to pick up a subject they may have missed in one group in the next.

The curriculum for each pupil is arrived at by guided choice but with emphasis on pupil election. As some American studies have shown (Ginzburg 1951, Super and Overstreet 1960), vocational and consequently subject choice is usually very unreliable, or invalid, before the age of maturity at 16+. Choice is not free if the chooser is unaware of the implications of the decision he makes. Consequently due notice is taken of departmental recommendations, parents' wishes and pupil aspirations in working out a suitable, broad and balanced, curriculum for each pupil. The subjects chosen are continued into the fifth year.

In the second or CSE Block there are 21 common core periods: English (4), Mathematics (5), Geography (4), History (4), Science (2), Religious Education/Careers (1), PE (1).

This leaves 12 periods for Options which range from 6 to 2 periods each, in various subtle combinations of Commerce, Typing, Office Practice, Cookery, Home Making, Home Economics, Needlework, Art, Metalwork, Woodwork, Technical Drawing, Plastics, Animal Behaviour, Agriculture, Auto Maintenance, Humani-

ties Curriculum Project, and extra Science. There is allowance for nine of the subjects studies to be taken to CSE level, and both specialist and academic staff teach in this block (10 heads of departments are timetabled within it).

The same arrangements continue for the fifth year which was completed in 1971-2 by some 70 pupils staying on beyond the statutory leaving age.

This, in brief, is the pre-sixth form curriculum of Exmouth School. It can be seen that in many ways it closely resembles the *Enhetskola* (Unity School) of Sweden.

Finally, I would like to offer some personal comments on the present situation in the school and on possible future developments, from the relatively detached position of one on secondment from the trenches.

In the first place, I feel that the basis of the school's strength as a comprehensive school lies in the common curriculum throughout the first three years of the Lower School. Without this, the subsequent system of a common core with options would not give such good results.

Second, if there must be examinations to mark completion of the first stage of secondary education, then the CSE has helped in developing a balanced and systematic curriculum. The proposals for a Common Examination (Schools Council **Examinations Bulletin No. 23**) could, if implemented, have a more significant effect.

Third, if limitations imposed by deployment of resources have necessitated divisions into Blocks for teaching purposes, I feel that the four Populations in the Lower School and the two in the Middle School serve objectives in tune with the comprehensive school ethos, allowing for talent to develop without too early channelling into educational backwaters.

There is a Curriculum Study Group in the school which keeps the situation constantly under review and looks for ways to combine the best of the old with the best of the new. For instance, it has recently considered the balance between common core areas and options in terms both of content and time allocation. Perhaps the guided choice programme towards a balanced, rather than specialised, curriculum has anticipated Barnard and McCreath who in 1970 reported: 'Little choice in the earlier stages may, in fact, give greater freedom later'.

There has also been review of a proposition to extend some limited interdisciplinary inquiry work to supplement the disciplines, or any integration of them, by selecting problems from areas lying between established disciplines which may be fruitfully studied on educational grounds and by a wider section of the school.

While there is controlled practical work, and critical scrutiny, in comprehensive schools, there seems reason to believe that the Crowther finding about the inadequate quality of education is being outdated.

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A Foundation Year

Some observations by a team of staff from Llanedeyrn High School, Cardiff.

Llanedeyrn High School is Cardiff's first purpose-built comprehensive school. It opened in September, 1970 with three year-groups, of whom 130 children were in the first year.

It was felt desirable that some effort should be made to ease the transition from primary to secondary school, and so it was decided that the first-year pupils should be presented with an integrated course in which English, History and Geography were taught together, the staff working on a team basis: so evolved the Foundation Year.

Not one of the Heads of Department involved had any experience of team-teaching, or indeed of the comprehensive school, but once appointed to the school they met, initially with the Headmaster, to work out a detailed syllabus which would meet the demands of the three specialist disciplines and, it was hoped, hold out an appeal to the children. At the first meeting, the Head of the Art Department was also present; this was a recognition of the fact that the visual and practical approach was to play an important part in the projected course. 'Man in his Environment' was the theme finally decided upon for the year's work, beginning with an outline of the form and structure of the universe and working through to the emergence of civilisation on earth.

Eleven lessons each week were allocated to the Foundation Year, and a team of seven members—two of whom were probationers—chosen. Pupils were divided into six form-groups, with six of the team acting as form-tutors to the group which they were to lead.

Ideally, the implementation of such a course and mode of teaching requires a flexible super-structure: a lecture theatre surrounded by work areas with craft facilities; certainly, moveable walls would enable teaching areas to be altered to suit changing demands. At Llanedeyrn, although without this flexibility, we were fortunate in the provision of space which we could adapt to the needs of our work.

The week's work hinged upon the 'key' lesson; this was given during a double lesson on a Monday morning to the whole of the first-year children assembled in the Lower Hall. The lesson was provided by a team-member, with the other members of the team present for information and observation, particularly of audience-reaction. The lesson generally took the form of an illustrated lecture, in which the generous provision of visual and aural teaching aids were to play a major part in overcoming the difficulty of teaching a comprehensive range of pupils at the same time. Projectors—for slides, film-strips, cine-films and over-head projection—were found to be of prime importance in catching the imagination of children, but the epidiascope and static displays also made their appearance with success. It ought to be superfluous to add that the most meticulous preparation is necessary for the key-lesson, by both the team and the team-member responsible for its delivery.

Follow-up work was then carried out in form-groups for the remaining seven periods in the week. While the key-lesson provided the basis of the material to be developed, each teacher was quite free to work out the week's topic in his own way, and so we found within the course a happy variety, which the children were able to share through the provision of a double-lesson on the Friday afternoon timetabled across the year group. This enabled form-groups to exchange visits to inspect work done, or, as often happened, to re-assemble as an entity for the reading of essays or poetry or the performance of mime or drama—or for any activity which demonstrated both the achievement and the common experience.

Follow-up work generally consisted in treating the topic in greater depth or, as happened often and where relevant, in developing the theme laterally with particular reference to local studies. Projects, model-making, map-work, wall-displays of all kinds—for each form room is liberally provided with pin-board—were used as opportunity suggested. The use of reference books, source books and reading books was encouraged to the limits of the children's ability, and the resulting work either read, or displayed, to others. Where suitable source matter was not readily available—and this was generally the case—it had to be extracted, edited and prepared for duplication by team members themselves; the result is a compilation of material which could readily be transformed into a 'textbook' should the need arise.

A most important feature of the Foundation Year, and certainly one of the major reasons for its success, has been the 'Conference': a weekly meeting of the team. Difficult though it may be to organise a school-timetable to bring seven people together at the same time, we consider the weekly conference essential for a successful programme of integrated studies. At the conference, the topic for the following week can be discussed: methods of presentation, prepared maps and diagrams, notes for other members of the team, particular points of emphasis —all can be thoroughly treated. Points emerging from the current topic can be noted; plans for visits and field trips can be laid and organised; and someone—a co-ordinator—should be responsible for keeping a log of all discussion, decisions and progress.

This brief survey of the Foundation Year indicates

quite clearly that certain problems have to be met and solved. The most important of these, we think, is the question of staff. The success of the course depends upon its flexibility, and in particular the opportunity to divide the year group into smaller units for exploration and development. This makes demands on staffing resources. Obviously, the three disciplines involved must be represented within the team, and one member, we think, should be an art or craft specialist. In this way, the maximum benefit may be obtained from the free exchange of ideas and experience. Ideally, also—and here we have been fortunate at Llanedeyrn—this method requires an additional member of staff to act as a relief. The teacher who gives a key-lesson may then be relieved from teaching duties to give him the time to research and organise the material necessary for his particular section of the Course.

The provision of new and relevant material requires a great deal of time for research, duplication and distribution. Visual Aids have to be selected well in advance, ordered and pre-viewed. The additional member of staff—or even a non-professional auxiliary—can take over these time-consuming tasks, freeing other members of the team for their teaching.

Compatibility within the team is vital. There must be full co-operation; specialists must be prepared to pool information and experience, and be prepared to deal with material and methods new or unfamiliar to them. Such a course requires enthusiasm, self-criticism, and, above all, an open mind. One is constantly re-appraising one's own subject, and its place in the common course. But the benefits, of shared experience and mutual support, have been readily admitted by the senior members of the team, while the course has provided an excellent training for the probationers, who have had the advantage of working on a scheme, shaped by the more experienced but flexible enough to allow for individual interpretation. The key lessons in particular provide opportunities for observation of a variety of teaching-methods.

Demands on resources are considerable. The means and materials for duplication, illustration, model-making and display must be available. The school should possess its own pool of visual aids, which can be supplemented from the LEA's Visual Aids Section on loan. On both counts we have been singularly fortunate. A wide selection of reference books is of course necessary, and they should be readily accessible to pupils. And a judicious fostering of cordial relations with departments not directly concerned in the Foundation Year has been found to be particularly fruitful.

Careful time-tabling is essential for the success of this type of course. Block lessons across the year group are necessary at least twice a week, and time should be made available for the meetings of team-members. The course co-ordinator should also have adequate time, as well as resources, at his disposal if he is satisfactorily to carry out his function.

Possibly the problem of catering for a wide ability range in a common course is not so acute in the first year as it may be at a later stage, but finding the right level of presentation can be difficult. Our solution was to pitch the key-lesson mid-way, and then to adapt the material in follow-up work at appropriate levels. Slow learners presented some problems: often excerpts were frequently too difficult and had to be re-written; but by selective withdrawal for 'remedial' attention and the use of large-type printing and more specialised series we hope to meet fully their particular needs. In more active or practical forms of 'expression' they were able to make a full contribution. Our own situation was further complicated in that the school has a partial-hearing unit. We have the most lavish facilities, and specialist teachers, for the withdrawal of these children during the week for individual attention, but it was found that some of the partially hearing children had difficulty in following the key-lesson. The installation of a loop-system in the Lower Hall has provided the solution. The teacher wears a neck-microphone, and the children simply 'plug-in' their individual hearing units. The successful integration of these children has been a major encouragement. In practice, we have found that these problems have suggested their own solutions. When presented in an exciting way—in this context visual stimuli are all-important—the material is understood, retained and forms the starting-point for a wide range of interpretive, imaginative and creative work.

When the idea of an integrated course was first put forward, some concern was expressed by the respective Heads of Departments about possible losses in terms of their own disciplines. In particular, it was felt that English stood at greatest risk, since the course was basically 'historical' in concept, with obvious and frequent opportunities for Geographical and Geological work of a varied nature. In the result, there is unanimous agreement that the Foundation Year has fully met the requirements of the specialist subjects, and none more so than English; for it has provided 'English' material which has arisen—or appeared to rise 'NATURALLY' from the work in hand, so obviating the chief difficulty of the English

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Fair Opportunity for the Youngest

Eric Linfield

A review article by Eric Linfield based on two recent books, **Starting School** by Richard Palmer, University of London Press, 1971, £1.85; and **A Fair Start** by Tessa Blackstone, Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1971, £5.

Schooling depends on an organised, purposeful, and structured approach to children's learning and this means buildings with personnel trained and equipped for carrying out the co-operative teaching-learning enterprise with children. Homes, like families, vary in their size and in the facilities which they can afford the young learner, so any attempt to reduce initial inequalities in his life chances must begin at the earliest possible stages of the child's life. Hence one supports the extension of nursery schooling; pre-school playgroups and kindergartens are certainly concerned with the health and welfare of the very young child, the care of the child, but schooling goes beyond caring. Nursery schools are essential facilities for the well-being of every local community in our complex modern society.

As I write, I note that the resolution which has been voted the top priority resolution for the 1972 NUT Annual Conference at Blackpool urges the immediate withdrawal by the government of circular 8/60 which put a complete stop to nursery school building. The resolution wants nursery education for all children between three and five by September 1978. Indeed, there is increasing evidence that the years of schooling before adolescence are crucial for the child, and that nursery education and the number of terms spent in the infant school are significant too. National resources should be devoted to increasing the provision of nursery schools so that they can play an important role in the development of community schooling. Various writers have contributed to past issues of **Forum** on this topic, especially Miss Dorothy Gardner and Miss J Helen Wheeler. Although the issue of lengthening the number of years of schooling may be extremely complex, **Forum** readers ought to focus their attention on the practical politics of the situation so that action can soon take place.

Besides the increasing provision of nursery schooling, the admission procedures for infant schools can be altered to allow children to enter schools earlier than present regulations allow. The Plowden Report made

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specialist—the artificial nature of his subject matter. Standards of achievement were met, and the evidence is contained in notebooks, models and the two magazines produced during the year which contained examples of work by children across the ability range. It is also represented in work of a related nature produced by 'extra-mural' departments, who used Foundation Year topics as starting points for their own creative efforts—in ceramics, graphics, metalwork and woodwork.

But the team is conscious that the greatest contribution of Foundation Year has been the creation of 'an attitude to learning'. Throughout the year, every effort was made to make all the children aware that they were sharing a common course and a common experience, to which all could—and did—make a contribution. This we felt to be a major desideratum in a comprehensive school. The common nature of their studies was evident, of course, in the weekly key lesson, but it was emphasised a number of times during the year at strategic intervals. The first was the field expedition to the neighbouring sea-side towns of Penarth and Barry to study the geological formations evident there, and to hunt for fossils; the second was a 'Festival of the spoken (and sung) word' which brought to a close the Winter Term. In the Spring Term, the children were entertained by the staff of the National Museum of Wales, where they were allowed to handle handaxes and other artefacts of the Stone and Bronze Ages. The Summer Term saw the re-enactment of the Battle of Marathon (on the school playing-fields). The children devised their own costumes and armour; the girls took the part of the Persians, and the boys the Greeks, and history was almost re-written. This form of expression through movement was filmed—in colour—by the Head of English, and the result shown to parents at our first Open Day. The response was wholly gratifying. And lastly there was a concerted visit to the legionary fortress of Caerleon and the Roman remains at Bath.

The net result has been the creation of an enthusiasm and excitement which demand to be sustained. We hope to do so by the provision of at least a combined course in English and History in the second and third years. Then, no doubt, other considerations will have to be taken into account.

some specific recommendations on nursery schooling and on the altering of the existing methods of entry to infant schools (Paras. 343 and 407). The situation since the Plowden Report appeared has changed slightly with the designation of Educational Priority Areas and with the deployment of some resources in these places, but on the whole the position throughout the country remains far from satisfactory. These two new books by Tessa Blackstone and by Richard Palmer tackle the problem of extending the years of schooling for all children in their earliest years clearly and forthrightly; their attack is sound and rational and not merely expedient.

Tessa Blackstone's study, **A Fair Start,** based on her doctoral thesis at the London School of Economics, covers the following topics, quoting from Professor C A Moser's introductory paragraph. 'It attempts to identify the political and demographic factors which have affected the supply of nursery education, and to consider some of the wider social changes relating to the structure and functions of the family and the roles of its members which may explain the growing demand for it. This is followed by a cross-sectional analysis of provision which measures the number of places available in 1965 and tries to explain the variation in supply from one area to another. Finally, and an extremely important section this, it describes decision-making on nursery education in four local authorities in an attempt to identify some of the unique historical factors affecting the extent of provision which would not emerge from a statistical study at the national level.' Richard Palmer, formerly Staff Inspector for Primary Education with the ILEA, deals with a detailed account of the 'London Plan', which examines in depth Plowden-type proposals for starting school in the context of the 'birthday handicap' which can lead to inequality of opportunity at the very outset of schooling. He goes on to consider some of the ways in which the transition from home to infant school can be made easier and more gradual even under present arrangements. He, too, looks briefly at the existing provision of nursery education and the case for expansion of this, but by far the most important part of the book is his discussion of the 'London Plan' itself. Plowden type proposals are examined in the light of twelve criteria and cost examined. Finally, he looks beyond matters of policy to the wider perspectives in the early education of early childhood which a fresh pattern for starting school could reveal. He refers at the end of his first chapter to Tessa Blackstone's more detailed historical and sociological approach in her book, and especially to her analysis of the factors, local and national, which have inhibited the expansion of nursery schooling. So let us turn to her study first.

A Fair Start

Dr Blackstone begins with a survey of the origins of pre-school education in England and of the way in which opinion altered about the babies' class in infant schools from 1870 to 1910. She quotes a report by the Women Inspectors at the Board of Education in 1905 where they were very critical: 'it will be seen that there is complete unanimity that the children between the ages of three and five get practically no intellectual advantage from school instruction'. Of course, the teaching in the infants' schools at the time may have been at fault but one notes the differentiation in approach to working class children from middle class children which has persisted to this day. Quoting again from this 1905 report: 'it would seem that a new form of school is necessary for poor children. The better parents should be discouraged from sending children before five, while the poorer who must do so, should send them to nursery schools rather than schools of instruction'. The division of attitude is described in some detail; putting it bluntly, one should care for the very young but they were not ready for intellectual challenge. Dr Blackstone records this ambivalence for its persistence has bedevilled professional attitudes too, and consequently the numbers of children in nursery schools has never been high.

Apart from this, perhaps one of the most important chapters in her book is that on decision-making on pre-school education in four local authorities, Kent and Hertfordshire, two large, affluent and rapidly expanding counties in the South-East, and Smethwick and Burton-on-Trent, two small heavily working class county boroughs with relatively static populations in the Midlands. Never before have I read such an illuminating report on the interaction between policy makers in local government, both the permanent officials of the LEA, and the elected representatives on the education committees. This chapter shows that we need more investigations of this type, for the profession and the public want to know where the power in decision-making rests. She contrasts (on pp. 134 and 135) the way in which Kent and Hertfordshire dealt

with the adaptation of the war-time nurseries, and the powerful figure of John Newsom emerges as the greater champion of nursery provision. She drew on the written papers of the administration of these authorities, including minutes and reports of the education committees or their sub-committees, and files of correspondence between the officials and teachers, Her Majesty's Inspectors, elected members, the Ministry of Education and the general public; but as she often found this documentary evidence deficient, she also sought interviews with some of the people involved. (It would be useful if some similar type of investigation could be conducted on comprehensive school provision instead of the cautious investigations of the NFER.)

Her historical analysis in the early chapters of the book are supplemented with some extremely interesting appendices, including a complete survey of pre-school education in each LEA in 1965 (Appendix 4), and in Appendix 5 we have a regional survey of nursery education provision. To the sociologically inclined, Appendix 7 gives a summary of Smelser's model of structural differentiation. She uses this model as an underlying theme in her book, for she thinks that it is worthwhile to study the growth of pre-school education in terms of structural differentiation in the family. Most of us must agree with her that the family can no longer deal with the socialisation of its youngest members, but the demand for more nursery education has not been as strong and persistent as that for secondary education for all in England and Wales. Maybe, we are on the threshold of a new thrust forward in early education and **Forum** readers might like to look at Dr Blackstone's comparative study. **Pre-school Education in Europe**, published by the Council for Europe, Strasbourg, April 1970, where she described the growing demands in France, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands and England and Wales.

A Fair Start is an important book and one hopes that it will stimulate some action. Educational campaigns are essential for focusing attention on current problems; the continuing liberation of women from perpetual domesticity and their increasing demand for more effective participation in society at large means that society will have to look very carefully at early schooling and one hopes too more intelligently than in Operation Headstart. There remain serious practical difficulties in making educational priority decisions, and this leads on to the consideration of Richard Palmer's solutions to some of the difficulties of early schooling in the 'London Plan'.

Starting School

Richard Palmer summarises the present position on infant schooling in this way, after he has stated the case for more nursery provision in which he is as enthusiastic as Tessa Blackstone.

1. Great variation in length of infant schooling—from two years to three years.
2. Considerable variation in age of entry to full-time infant schooling—from 4.8 to 5.4.

These two anomalies depend quite arbitrarily on when the child's birthday happens to come and its relation to local practice and local pressures.

3. A rigid all-or-nothing age of entry to full-time schooling or as Plowden puts it, 'a sudden transition from whole time home to whole time school, from the day with mother to the day with teacher'.
4. Admissions two or three times a year, leading often to great pressure of numbers in the summer term, a 'shuffle-up' of children from class to class in order to make room at the bottom, and instability of staffing.

He writes that the 'London Plan' for dealing with some of these difficulties began to emerge in the autumn of 1968, when he in consultation with Lady Plowden, a co-opted member of the Authority, and with representatives of teachers, were working on the LCC's evidence to the Plowden Committee. In the final Plowden recommendations referred to earlier, there were long-term and interim proposals for school entry dates. By the combination of compulsory half-time schooling and full-time schooling for children between the ages of 4+ to 7+, the total length of school experience would be increased for all children. Here are the details of the plan:

1. Full-time schooling would be compulsory for all children from the September after they reached the age of five, and, for autumn-born children, also during the summer term preceding that September.
2. Half-time schooling would be compulsory for all children in the term preceding the normal compulsory date of entry to full-time schooling; ie half-time schooling would be compulsory for autumn-born children from the January after they became five, and for spring- and summer-born children after Easter.

These two compulsory requirements would however be applied with flexibility, with exceptional children opting out if a case could be made, and he gives examples.

3. A LEA would be required to make voluntary half-

time schooling available, before the age at which half-time schooling was compulsory, so as many as possible of the 3+ and 4+ year groups, attaining, by a date to be arranged, the Plowden percentages—35 per cent of the 3+ year group and 75 per cent of the 4+ year group.

4. A LEA would also be required to make voluntary full-time schooling available for some children below the age of compulsory full-time attendance, such provision to meet the Plowden percentage of 15 per cent for each of the 3+ and 4+ year groups by a date to be arranged.

7. Classes which only contained children of present infant age (ie rising fives and upwards) would be in classes of normal infant standards of roll and accommodation applying at the time. On the other hand, where a class contained any children below this age it would be organised on nursery standards of roll, accommodation, and nursery assistance.

8. All classes would be under the direct control of a qualified teacher.

The author gives some statistical details of the implications of the plan which will not concern me here, but the broad features of the plan are these.

(a) The amount of deferment of the statutory age for compulsory full-time attendance is quite small—one term in the case of the autumn- and spring-born and not at all in the case of the summer-born.

(b) The ideal pattern of half-time before full-time is achieved for all children—except for a few of those who opt out and for the 15 per cent for whom full-time schooling from 3+ is deemed to be necessary. Apart from these, all children have at least one term half-time schooling before becoming full-time, and it will be shown that on average children attending half-time do so for three and two third terms.

(c) Under the London Plan, leaving aside the 15 per cent who would attend full-time from 3+ and those now attending nursery education, children would have on average some ten terms of school experience before 7+; if half-time attendance is only counted as half, this amounts to about eight terms actually in school. Under present arrangements, the comparable average figure is 7.6 terms.

(d) Summer-born children would enter school, on average, at a slightly earlier age than the others, so gaining some compensation for being young within the year group.

Richard Palmer undertook a feasibility study applying these plans to 20 schools in the Brixton area and 20 schools in the Peckham area; the results of these studies are included in the Appendix. One can see that there may be difficulties in some places in implementing the ideas of the 'London Plan' but it can be done. The problems that are associated with giving children a fair start with their schooling do vary from place to place and from year to year as migrations occur from one area to another as the result of housing and employment policies and as the birth-rate fluctuates. **Starting School** gives a fascinating analysis of educational planning for the benefit of children so that some of the inequalities which exist in the system can be removed.

The prospect before us demands greater understanding of all the relevant factors in the first years of schooling. One needs the background of historical and sociological analysis such as **A Fair Start** introduces, and one also can learn from the efforts of committed administrators to produce practical proposals for action such as those contained in **Starting School.** To make more sense in a national education system locally or regionally administered, the whole schooling process should be re-examined in its totality and linked to higher and further provision. These two books might be usefully involved in seminar discussions on educational improvement, for all processes depend so heavily on their early stages for ultimate fulfilment.

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the teacher and children. Secondly the curriculum must have a logic comprised of three essential elements:

(a) The ultimate objectives and intermediary goals,

(b) Activities and modes of learning which are at the pace and stage of psychological development for each individual child, and

(c) Evaluation and feedback of organisation, teaching method and content so that they may be amended when either teacher or pupil is unable to cope.

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The Structured Day

Ernest Choat

In this article Ernest Choat, a tutor at Rachel McMillan College of Education, follows up his previous discussion of the integrated day in the primary school. (**Forum** vol 13 no 3, 1971)

The structured day in the primary school is not a plea for a return to former traditional organisations and methods, but a means whereby the teacher can obtain a clear-sighted appraisal of what she is attempting in her daily teaching. Several terminologies purport to describe the functions of schools—but does the teacher really know what she is doing when employing them?

The integrated day, for instance, is a well-worn phrase, but one that is often applied incorrectly to the integration of curriculum content and, in extreme, is recognised by some teachers as a situation when the children may do as they wish, ie *laissez faire*. Neither does it imply teaching method—another misapprehension. The integrated day merely describes that the school day will not be stratified into time-tabled sections and so it enables the children themselves to decide when, during the day, they undertake specific assignments, complete areas of work, etc. Within the organisational structure, certain subject material may integrate, whilst for certain disciplines (eg music, physical education, story or literature, French, etc.) the teacher will decide to group the children as a class.

Contrary to some people's belief, the integrated day, and any other form of organisation in a school, does not just happen. Primary school children need familiarity with the structure of the organisation which they are to experience before being able to cope. They must be conversant with the responsibilities entrusted to them, the use to be made of the specified areas of the classroom, how their work should be tackled, the procedure associated to the assignments, and the standards expected by the teacher.

It is the teacher's task to ensure compliance with these prerogatives. Within any class the children will make demands on the teacher, and the demands cannot be met unless the teacher has structured an adequate classroom organisation. Much of the disillusionment of the probationary teacher, and even for some people with teaching experience, emanates from a lack of organisation.

Routines should be established when first taking-over a class. Time devoted to acquainting the children with her classroom system (ie where items of equipment and apparatus are stored, the procedure for getting out and returning this material, how to use reference books, how to use the technological aids, how work is expected to be completed, how to hand work in for marking, how to receive her attention, etc.) will be time well spent. Indeed, such practices are ultimately responsible for the degree of teacher expectation, standards, responses, and conduct levels from the children.

The efficiency of classroom organisation comes with experience. Many probationary teachers fail to associate classroom organisation with the act of teaching. A well-organised classroom establishes order. Discipline can be adjudged from the implemented order, ie the relationships which accrue and the stimulation which arises. Meanwhile, many head teachers fail to appreciate the inexperience which the newly qualified teacher possesses of classroom organisation. Inevitably, the new teacher is shown her classroom, given her register, and left to her own devices. Head teachers are apt to overlook that a student has been prepared for teaching only, and that she becomes a teacher with experience in the classroom. First attempts at organisation may be disastrous and justify that, initially, the newly qualified should not be expected to adopt a complicated form of school day organisation or classroom organisation. The probationer should commence with a simple system until she is proficient to manage a more complex one. This infers organising the children as a class, specifying groups and defining activities in a limited sphere; but it will give the teacher control of what is happening in the classroom instead of a situation which is beyond her and doomed to failure.

When the structure is formulated, both teacher and children are able to work effectively within it. The teacher is unrestricted to pursue the function for which she is in the classroom—to teach. This, too, requires abidance with structure so that she can ascertain each child's progression. The children have security in that they know how to approach their tasks within the structure, and are aware that they have the support of the teacher. Children see themselves in school in the way that the experiences have been interpreted for them. They are assured of recognition, approval and guidance from a teacher who has clearly defined each child's needs.

To attain such a situation, the teacher must have objectives to which to strive. Wiseman and Pidgeon

(1970, pp. 18-45) allege that the selection of objectives demands a judgement as to what the school can hope to achieve. As such, the curriculum as a whole should be an efficient instrument which, in its evaluation, determines the means to the ends. It will provide a programme of activities that are adequate for obtaining the range of activities.

Kerr (1968) succinctly summarises the contention when he says that in curriculum design the objectives should be identified first. The teacher will then know towards what she is aiming, and will be able to decide 'what' or 'how' to employ her organisation and methods. The identification of objectives should be a precise and important consideration in the school, and evaluation of them should produce evidence about the nature, direction and extent of the behavioural changes which have taken place with the children from their educational endeavours. The school should elucidate a philosophy towards which it is aspiring and in this context enumerate certain cognitive skills, attitudes, values and interests that it is encouraging its pupils to acquire, and these will be obtained only by the provision of appropriate learning experiences. Clearly, the curriculum should explain the child's world to him; and to do this realistically we need to forget the orthodox curriculum and start with the child himself.

In effect, the objectives can be successfully evaluated only when the child is being considered as an individual. Wiseman and Pidgeon remark that children have varying capabilities which are related to their age, level of general ability, type of personality and home background. Consequently, educational, and hence curriculum, objectives should appertain to the needs and capabilities of the pupils. Curriculum objectives which cannot be achieved by any pupil are not worth stating, neither can objectives be stipulated which refer to a whole class of children. Realistic objectives are required that take account of the individuality of the children throughout the school.

Thus, the ultimate acquisition of the school's objectives is vested in the teacher, and to secure them the teacher must systematise a series of goals. Owing to her superiority in age, skill and experience, the teacher is the accepted leader of the class, and the manner in which she avails herself determines the attainment of the goals. Her curriculum planning must be such that the activities, subjects or units of work, are indicated clearly to the children with provision made for each child's progression, stage of psychological development and pace of learning. The methods which are employed for goal-attainment will vary from teacher to teacher. In some classes, the children will read individually to the teacher whilst in others the children will be grouped by ability. Similarly with mathematics, children who have reached a commensurate stage of learning may be combined as a unit for the ensuing progression. Within the continuance of a 'centre of interest' or a 'project' the children may work by themselves or join in a co-operative aspect.

Evaluation of the means being used to secure the objectives is a continuous process and necessitates the keeping of records. Records will show the progress, or otherwise, that each child is making. If a child has not progressed, the indication will be that the means are failing in their purpose and need to be changed. The system of recording is basically the head teacher's prerogative to institute, although some teachers will devise schemes of their own that break down the objectives into specified goals.

Therefore, if evaluation is to fulfil its correct function, there is a need for feedback. Nisbet and Entwistle (1970, p. 153) maintain that unless results are fed back into the system rapidly and widely the education offered in a school will not benefit. Unless there is continuous evaluation of what the school is achieving curriculum development will remain a stalemate.

Education is the tool for preparing the individual to make his future contribution to society. What is taught should be of practical application and of definite use. The pupil should understand that what he learns is not taken from an Utopian idea or borrowed from Platonic ideas but is one of the facts which surround him in life, and that an acquaintance with it will be of value to his life. Van Til (1941) drew a metaphorical parallel. In education, as in touring, a trip may be either sight-seeing or social travel. When sight-seeing, the tourist only regards the surface of a culture and sees a medley of unrelated monuments, relics, buildings and views. In social travel, the investigator purposefully explores selected institutions and ways of living in order to understand better the people and their problems. Schools which ignore evaluation are only sight-seeing.

As such, the structured day, and through its implication the primary school curriculum, takes shape. It does not involve the compartmentalising of subjects, children's obedience to learn facts as dictated by the teacher, and the acquisition of skills by endless repetition. There is, first, the need for organisation for both

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Discussion

Non-streaming in Italy

From Dr Mirella Mammano, Milan.

You asked me for information about mixed ability classes in Italy. Up to now there has been so much reorganisation in the secondary school here and so much experimenting with new methods and techniques in my school, I could not give you clear and definite information.

I shall explain how we teach in my school and the sort of organisation we have here. Several other schools follow the same ideas and keep up to date according to the new trends in education, but a good many schools, especially in the main towns, still follow old ways of school organising and teaching with almost complete disregard of the children's needs and feelings: teachers often give academic lessons to the whole class, follow a grading system common to all children according to an hypothetical optimum of attainment, stretching all of them as far as possible for the programme's sake. Our Minister of Education and the progressive officials and experts continually advise and push for a more up-to-date approach to education but having in the last Education Act given complete liberty to teachers in dealing with their pupils, as far as they don't break the law in education, they cannot do much against elderly and experienced teachers and heads with their old-fashioned ideas.

On 1st October, in my village school outside Milan, I am going to have a usual class of 20 to 25 children of both sexes mixed together by the secretary of the school who tries only to keep together children from the same class in the primary school. They were first mixed at random when they were six years old. But not all of them reached together the fifth year of the primary school: as you certainly know, in Italy we still have an old-fashioned and resisting tradition of selection; if the child does not try very hard or is incapable of keeping the pace with the other children they have to stay for another year at the same level with new companions.

During the first month in the secondary school the children will be given IQ and sociometric tests by a group of psychologists; we teachers will enquire about their environment, their difficulties in the family, etc. By the next month we are supposed to know the children's lacunae so to give a detailed report to the headmaster and let him know what sort of class we have, our aims, methods and how extensive our programme will be.

We teach to groups: normally the children group themselves for the discovery work; after the first approach to the subject given by the teacher they work in groups on different themes; later on in turns they pass on their knowledge to their companions. They get as much individual attention as we can give to overcome their individual difficulties; the slow learners are helped by their better companions and twice a week for half-an-hour in groups of two they are given extra teaching by a second or third year pupil.

Last year the children were invited to assess how much they worked, whether they were unsuccessful or not and how successful they were; at the end of the month the child and I discussed together what sort of grading they deserved. This year I am going to get my headmaster to grade only twice a school year according to the law, on the basis of the observations on written papers, homework and the children's assessments.

During the first year we mainly work on the morale of the pupils as individuals, as groups, as a class, to make them feel self-confident, accepted and appreciated. We give them love and normally are loved: then we see our pupils study and work for the teachers' sake and we get a noisy but working classroom and no discipline problems. We work much more on methods of learning and on subjects during the second and third years. We are asked to give a certain amount of learning to these children according to their possibilities but mainly to form their character, to introduce them to contemporary society and to state what sort of school or work we think suitable for them at their age; their parents normally follow our advice because by the end of the third year we are trusted implicitly; I can say we deal famously together with parents.

It is not at all easy to find a team of teachers working so well together as we do, but disobliging colleagues and authoritative heads can make this work difficult. And this is common enough.

Teachers' Centres

With regard to the piece on 'Teachers' Centres' by D N Hubbard and J Salk in **Forum**, Spring 1972, I would like to offer some comments.

The authors indicate two roles for Teachers' Centres:

(a) that regarding the 'need for teachers constantly to review their methods and approaches . . .' and
(b) 'their more obvious role' as agencies for in-service training.

These roles are separable only in an analytic sense. In the actual practice of providing *support and facilities for teachers* (which is what Teachers' Centres are all about), I would suggest that it would be difficult in many cases to distinguish at any one time which role is being performed.

The role of Teachers' Centres as *teaching resource centres*—towards which the authors looked in the future—has been an integral part of Teachers' Centres' activity since their inception.

And *part* it should remain. Resources, in the senses used by the authors might be better 'stored' elsewhere and have other agencies for distribution. The Teachers' Centre's role lies mainly in the detection of needs and the *creation* of the support systems required.

'Provision could be made for the special needs of the probationer teachers . . .' We, at this Centre, have always made such provision, particularly in the last three years. during which a substantial programme of support for the probationer teacher in Southwark has been carried out by teachers and Inspectors of the ILEA, in which the Centre has been heavily committed.

I would question whether the Centre 'could provide a valuable neutral ground on which teachers and parents could come together'. This could be extremely dangerous. Teachers at Centres are encouraged to explore new schemes, new methods, new modes of thought. They are encouraged to try out materials in an endeavour to evaluate their work for a particular school. Parents perceiving such exploration could obtain a very distorted view of teachers and classroom practice—particularly as they will rarely see the teacher in action in his classroom. (It is rather like one's view of a play being formed by viewing the 'warming up' of the actors before a rehearsal). This is not to argue that parents should not be involved—only that Teachers' Centres are not the places to do it. The schools are.

A more useful suggestion was that of opening Centres to other elements in the community, and most Wardens would, I suggest, welcome such elements, *where they contribute to the professional self-renewal of the teacher.* Where they do not do this, my colleague Wardens—wisely, perhaps in a situation of scarcity of time and other resources—might well prefer to devote themselves to the provision of facilities which teachers require and demand.

R G GOUGH
Warden, Rachel McMillan Teachers Centre

School Management

In discussing the work of the head teacher there are many factors to consider: among these are location and size of school, age of pupils, length of schooling and content of work. Apart from these variables there is a basic consideration of great importance: the traditional view that the head is someone who, because of his position, is endowed with the ability invariably to arrive at satisfactory decisions affecting the whole range of school activities.

In recent years, particularly during the past decade, there have been considerable changes on the educational scene. In primary education there has been much innovation, resulting frequently in a movement from traditional ways of teaching and forms of organisation. Changes in secondary education have resulted in a growing movement towards comprehensive education. Additionally the introduction of Middle Schools in some areas has involved changes in both primary and secondary education. These changes are not only organisational in character. To a far greater extent than before the teacher determines the content and direction of his work: more flexible classroom arrangements and a tendency for more pupils to stay longer at school have changed the teacher's function and his relationships with pupils.

While there are exceptions it could, in general, be said that the head is still seen, and sees himself, in the traditional role, a role that is frequently in conflict with the reality of change around him. It is suggested that it is now no longer satisfactory to speak of the 'role of the head', implying a universal and preordained function. Rather we should ask, 'What form of management is appropriate for a particular kind of school or educational establishment?' In contrast to the traditional view of 'one establishment, one manager', there is the alternative of a management team to deal with the main functions of schools.

In the case of large secondary schools there could be a management team of, say, three, each being particularly concerned with a main function. Working as a team, in frequent contact with members of staff, there would be considerable opportunity for informal as well as formal interchange of views and, consequently, a well-informed basis for decision-making based on involvement and consultation. The main functions could be: the curriculum and related forms of organisation; management functions not in the first field to do with staff relationships and the daily running of the school; links with the home, welfare work, counselling. These, or alternative main functions, presupposes that they are frequently interrelated. Rotation of the leadership of the team would ensure that there was always an opportunity for two of the team to be involved to a greater extent than would otherwise be possible in teaching and consultation at the 'workshop' level. Each member of the team should be entitled to the salary payable to the person who would otherwise be appointed as head.

Teachers are managers of their own work to a very considerable extent. To work effectively, psychologically as well as academically, the teacher needs to feel that his contribution is part of the work of the whole school, that it is the concern of others, that his views are valued and that, by right, he can consult others, and be involved in decision-making. Regulations should include provision for representation of assistant teachers on management boards or committees. There should be an agreed minimum number of staff meetings a year and teachers should have the right to propose items for the agendas of these meetings. The active involvement of assistant teachers is practised in many schools. Where little consultation takes place, however, an obligation to provide this opportunity would ensure that this participation, so necessary for satisfactory professional functioning, becomes a reality.

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The James Report

Statement by the Editorial Board

The James Report confirms the fears expressed by many when the main proposals were leaked to the Press last October. Far from improving on the *status quo* the recommendations would largely worsen it. The Editorial Board of **Forum** believes the Report to be unacceptable on the following counts.

The Report confirms and makes more explicit the divisiveness in the routes to the teaching profession, the one through the universities, ending up with two degrees, the other through the colleges, ending up with one, and that a pass degree. The latter route would be that taken by the teacher of young children, whose inferior status would be confirmed and emphasised.

It would also ensure that only those unable to gain a place in a university or polytechnic would choose the college route. Of the 22 universities offering BEd 19 now award honours degrees, and the number of college-educated BEds gaining good honours degrees has increased each year (69 in 1968, 489 in 1969, 849 in 1970, 1,124 in 1971), and in 1971 39% gained good honours degrees. Why should their successors be content with a pass degree—and that of dubious parentage?

The division of their second cycle into two separate years, possibly in different parts of the country, is perhaps the most objectionable of their proposals on educational grounds. The Committee's suggestions for the first year, 'unashamedly specialised and functional', restricting theoretical studies to 'a rudimentary introduction', would be insufficient for the production of a technician, never mind a professional teacher. Their proposal that these deficiencies could be made good some years later in voluntary sabbatical terms is irresponsible, especially when there is no indication of the necessary steps to ensure realisation of this.

Though the **Forum** evidence called for closer partnership between schools and training institutions in the supervision of teaching practice, we certainly could not support the proposal of a school-based year's practice or apprenticeship rolled in with the probationary year, especially with the as yet unqualified student handicapped by the uncertain and unprotected status of a 'licensed teacher'. This is an unworthy, pinch-penny device, purporting to give a professional training while actually ensuring the divorce of theory and practice. Contempt for theory seems as marked a characteristic of the Committee's thinking as their low regard for the teacher of young children.

It is not surprising that this incoherent experience should be adjudged by the James Committee as worthy only of a pass degree, nor that they should invent a new body to validate it. For what university (or CNAA) would care to associate itself with such a flimsy substitute for the professional qualification that is so clearly necessary?

It is clear that the Committee rejected the volume of evidence which conflicted with its apparent brief to provide a form of higher education on the cheap for the estimated increase in school leavers with university entrance qualifications. This can be the only reason for their decision not to publish the evidence. Their decision to make the whole of their recommendations conditional on a massive expansion of in-service education, and yet to make no estimate of the cost, is also highly suspect, especially as they suggest that additional expenditure would not be involved.

While accepting that consecutive courses should be available in the colleges for students who do not wish to commit themselves initially to teaching, and that diversification from monotechnics is desirable, we believe that concurrent courses have a continuing place in teacher education. The perspective of a graduate teaching profession demands a minimum four-year course of higher education and professional training at university, college or polytechnic followed by a supervised probationary or interne year. Criticisms of the ATOs can be met by reforming their structure and rationalising areas as viable regions: there is no need for new administrative devices such as the proposed RCCDEs and NCTET, which would have no credibility as awarding or validating bodies.

The Editorial Board of **Forum** reiterates its main recommendations:

1. The end of the binary system and the merging of Colleges of Education with university Schools of Education, which should act as ATOs.
2. The transition to the concept of a fully comprehensive system of education from nursery school to the seventh year of secondary school necessitates a basic restructuring of educational and professional courses.
3. The minimum professional qualification should be a degree available with honours, comprising four years' study including professional training. Degree and professional qualification should be validated by universities or CNAA.
4. The teaching profession should be made more attractive in terms of salaries and conditions of service.

De-Schooling— an appraisal

Norman Stephenson

A lecturer in Education at Bristol University School of Education, Norman Stephenson is a co-author of **Young Teachers and Reluctant Learners.** This is a review article on some American de-schooling books recently published in this country.

The raising of the school leaving age to sixteen has been long fought for. Despite the increase in numbers of pupils staying on voluntarily into a fifth or sixth year, the opportunity to leave at fifteen has clearly operated against the working class child of average ability. For some years now ROSLA has been prepared for, with new curriculum projects and posts of special responsibility in the schools. Many welcome the challenge it offers—but many too are uneasy. It is perhaps opportune, as well as ironic, that there has recently been published in this country a number of books originating in the United States which challenge the whole concept of compulsory secondary schooling.

Paul Goodman in **Compulsory Miseducation**, first published in 1962, questions the assumption that the automatic expansion of formal schooling at high school and college level has any necessary justification. He writes as a compassionate teacher, one in love with learning and with the relationships which can exist between a teacher and his students when they are united by a common purpose to understand an idea or master a skill. He maintains that this relationship, though crucial to the very notion of education, is rarely to be found in the schools of today, where young people follow compulsory courses, motivated if at all by the need to obtain sufficiently high grades simply to move on to the next course (and hopefully to the high-status job) and he is critical of the army of administrators, curriculum theorists and counsellors necessary to keep the whole machine running smoothly. (Not of course that it does.) He argues that universal higher schooling has over-reached itself, oriented as it is to careers and happening as it does after puberty. As he writes, very characteristically, 'jobs and sex are usually not best learned about in academies'. He castigates schools for emphasising conformity of attitude and behaviour and failing to encourage spontaneity and informal approaches to learning.

The analysis of schools as they are is taken up and developed by Everett Reimer in **School is Dead** and Paul Illich in **Deschooling Society**. They are based on the Center for Intercultural Documentation in Mexico and work in the context of planning for educational development in Latin America. The enormity of the task has led them to reconsider the value and achievements of compulsory schooling as it is practised in the more developed Western countries, particularly the United States. They argue that the 'technological society' is based upon the promise of unlimited progress, in terms of material consumption, to unlimited numbers of people. This, they maintain, is absurd since — quite apart from the profoundly unsatisfactory nature of the view of life it implies — the earth's resources will not allow the total world population to achieve the highest standards of the rich, which in any case are continually rising. They are led therefore to question the provision in emerging countries of universal schooling which is said to be necessary for economic progress. We do not have to go so far from home to see the force of this argument: teachers here know the contradiction of trying to motivate children to 'better themselves' at a time when many go straight from school to the dole queue. Since the essential function of schools is to serve the needs of technology, it follows, say Reimer and Illich, that they put a high premium upon product rather than process, that they abhor disruptive individual differences and that they promote conformity. Reimer distinguishes four distinct social functions carried out by the school: custodial care, social-role selection, indoctrination and education (defined as the development of knowledge and skills).

The James Report *(continued)*

5. The schools should be brought into closer partnership with training institutions, and the probationary year made a reality.
6. Much greater resources should be provided for in-service education, with regular secondment ensured.
7. The staff/student ratio in teacher educational and training institutions should approximate to that of universities generally.
8. A staff college should be established to act as a centre for both theoretical and practical studies in teacher education.

It is the complexity of the task which society has placed on the schools which has contributed to their high cost and perhaps to the intolerable strains which many teachers are beginning to feel.

There is general agreement that younger children are the better for spending time away from families (relief for parents as well as for them) in the company of other children, learning basic social and cognitive skills under the guidance of specially designated caring adults. But it is by no means self-evident that children from the age of puberty are best served in this way. The effective segregation of young and older adolescents from the adult community is a relatively recent phenomenon and would seem paradoxical in view of one of the adolescent's most basic desires—to be adult. However, so long as children are full-time students they remain children—dependent and without the rights that adult status confers. They can contrive to drop out of course, but only at the cost of forfeiting the right to satisfying employment and social status. The social-role selective function of schools is well documented, here as well as in America — job-selection for most children depends on their capacity to survive the school system. Appearance, manners, attitudes quite irrelevant to the school's overt function to educate continue to determine children's chances of success. Every other week there are press reports of boys deprived of education for over-long hair, or girls for wearing the wrong shade of blue. The hope that schooling would enable every child to develop his potential regardless of parental status has proved illusory, though many continue to believe the promise.

Experiencing failure

Selection implies failure and it is undoubtedly true that for very many children the experience of schooling is one of failure—failure to achieve high marks, failure to make the examination sets, failure to match up to the school's expectations of a well-mannered pupil and potentially useful citizen. For the school as an institution operates a 'hidden curriculum—quite apart from the declared intentions of its staff—which comprises a set of unexamined assumptions: that it is good to be a child, that it is good to compete for the prizes offered by the school, that it is good to learn from teachers rather than for yourself, that conformity is the surest way to success. John Holt, in **The Underachieving School**, has documented this at the level of the American classroom and Illich maintains that schools throughout the world, whether the regime be fascist, democratic or socialist, are alike in these respects for all reflect the dominance of the technological society with its belief that increased production will lead to a better life. The overt curriculum, too, carries implicit values related to the organisation of the world as it is rather than as it might be. Modern languages in our schools still means French and perhaps German, but not Chinese, and more money is available for science equipment than for works of poetry and fiction. There is, too, an emphasis on the standardisation of curricula: knowledge is packaged for easy transmission, teachers have merely to read the instructions and pupils to follow them to ensure an easy transition to the next stage. The process may have gone further in the United States than here but we know the effects of University demands on our schools and CSE Regional Boards go to extraordinary lengths in chase of the illusion of 'comparability of standards'.

Given that schools are largely occupied with the functions of custodial care, social selection and the more or less implicit transmission of values, what of the chief business of schools, cognitive learning? This, says Reimer, occurs only in so far as there are resources available after the other functions have been performed. Certainly it often seems the case that the right to learn French or go on a biology field-trip is reserved for those who conform to the general values of the school. It is the learning of specific skills, particularly of reading and mathematics, that is generally considered to be the chief province of the school, but its efficacy here is questionable. Reading is the prime example: after several generations of universal schooling in the United States and in this country, some children still leave unable to read at all and many more, perhaps the majority, quite impervious to the satisfactions of genuine literacy. It may be, indeed, that schools, through their system of extrinsic rewards and punishments, positively discourage a skill which would be better learnt, Goodman asserts, on the streets. Certainly children learn to read in school but it is by no means clear that they learn more effectively than they would elsewhere. Similarly, only a small minority do better than chance in learning formal aspects of grammar or mathematics, or in grasping the theoretical implications of science or the arts. It is the children whose homes are rich in the learning resources of the school who learn most there. Those whose homes lack these resources are relatively unsuccessful in school and

leave not only with a sense of failure but with a dislike for formal learning of any sort. All learn dependence upon teachers rather than self-motivation.

It all adds up to a powerful if sometimes overstated case and rests upon two assumptions, one pessimistic, the other optimistic. The de-schoolers have a pessimistic view of the values and direction of advanced technological societies and of the institutions which service them. They question the notion of unlimited material progress to which Western society is committed, not only because of its impracticability. There is also an implied rejection of material values generally and an emphasis on the virtues of somewhat abrasive individualism. Illich, for example, deplores the fact that while a few years ago a Mexican peasant was born, took ill and died in his own home surrounded by his friends, now he is 'institutionally managed' by doctors and undertakers. The fact that a spell in hospital might help him to live longer does not seem relevant. Pessimistic too is the view that schools serve so inexorably the demands of a technological society for a clearly defined labour force and an amenably docile citizenry. Some teachers might have no objection to these demands but more would regard this as a gross oversimplification of the complex reality of their encounter with pupils. Is it not one of the functions of the school in a free society precisely to question the dominant values of that society? And, in some schools at least, there is sufficient freedom for teachers and pupils for this to happen. And yet—'at the end of the day' and 'when the chips are down'—college and university demands for GCE results, employers' insistence upon CSE grades and respectful manners have to be met and in any case you cannot change society from within the schools . . .

Motivation distorted

The second, an optimistic assumption, is that children and adolescents are capable of self-motivated learning; that the elaborate systems of rewards and punishments set up by schools to 'motivate' learning and the sequential syllabuses devised to direct it appropriately are misconceived—not only unnecessary but distorting and undermining the child's capacity to take responsibility for his own learning. Children, like other people, learn what they need to learn in real life situations. Certainly, children can deliberately be put in the way of situations but theirs must be the initiative to learn from them. The best junior school practice takes cognisance of this, but more commonly in secondary schools the curriculum is known only to the teachers and is revealed to pupils a little at a time with the assurance that in due course its meaning will become clear. Knowledge is power and the hierarchical structure of the school reflects uncomfortably closely society at large.

Schools abolished?

What then is proposed? First, that the idea of education be separated from the institution of the school. In turn this implies that we should no longer assume that learning is dependent upon being taught. Much learning already goes on outside schools, in the family, in jobs or on the streets—people learn what they need to know. What is needed, says Illich, is 'the creation of a new style of educational relationship between man and his environment'. Access to skills and to knowledge should be made easy and not dependent on accepting the package-deal offered by schools. Four 'educational webs', or networks, should be set up to make this possible. These would be based upon things, upon models, upon peers and upon elders. Things are defined as the basic resources for learning: books and computers, but also botanical gardens and TV studios. These would be made available for young people to consult or explore. The second network would consist of 'skill-models', people with specific skills whether in reading or guitar-playing, in languages or keeping accounts. Such people would have no need of pedagogical training in, for example, 'motivating' learners, since students would only come to them already wanting to acquire their skills. Directories of skill-models could be set up, readily available to all who wished to make use of them. The third network envisaged is made up of the students' own peers, voluntarily sought out through what Illich calls 'peer-matching'. A communication network would be set up so that, through the use of computers perhaps and of telephones, any learner could make contact with others of like interests and join with them in pursuing these. The essence of the system would be its voluntary nature; students would not be herded together compulsorily nor required to learn skills in which they had no interest. 'To deschool', writes Illich, 'means to abolish the power of one person to oblige another to attend a meeting.' The fourth network, of elders or

professional educators, would perform three functions. First, there would be people with the administrative skill and the imagination to set up the networks already described. They would have to be non-authoritarian, capable of organizing the means for young people to further their pursuits without falling into the temptation of directing them into 'suitable' activities. Second, there would be 'pedagogues', people skilled in diagnosing the educational difficulties of their clients and in suggesting possible remedies. They would be available to give advice to students about selecting appropriate skill-models or peers but there would be no compulsion on the client to accept the advice. Finally, there would be educational 'initiators' or leaders, people whose experience, whether in intellectual or other spheres, would enable them to give a lead when the going became rough. Such people might very well attract groups of learners to them. What the professional educators would not be required to do would be the very activities which now distract teachers from carrying out their primary tasks—registration, maintaining discipline, public relations, keeping mark-lists.

or schools reformed

What relevance does all this have to our own schools, particularly in the light of the extension of compulsory schooling to the age of sixteen? My own feeling is that the pessimism regarding the school as an institution faithfully serving the needs of a divided and divisive society is largely justified. The fact of compulsory attendance for young adolescents who are no longer disposed to believe that others know what is best for them is placing an ever-increasing strain upon staff whose teaching function is more and more usurped by the need to administer and control. Inevitably this encourages dependence upon well-tried methods of instruction and a reluctance to embark on innovatory curriculum projects which emphasise pupil-initiative and risk-taking—particularly since it is precisely those pupils who are at present reluctant to stay on at school who find these approaches most threatening. It is the relatively able middle class child who thrives on individual projects and competitive group work. And it is likely to be the same child who will most readily adapt to the educational webs set up by the deschoolers. How can the young working class adolescent be persuaded to seek the skills and make the contacts with others beyond the end of his own street which will give him some chance of participating fully in his society? The experience of many early school leavers in dead-end jobs, open to exploitation of all kinds, would suggest that the 'educative community' is a long way off.

There may yet be a place for the secondary school in our society—provided, first, that it is not regarded as having any exclusive rights in education and second, that it extends the principle of choice much more widely than at present. From the age of thirteen, as far as is feasible, pupils should be able to choose what courses they are to follow and to have a substantial say in their content. There is absolutely no reason why all these courses should take place in schools. Some skills —modern languages, mathematics, science—might be better taught in properly equipped regional centres (open to adults as well as to children). Others—motor mechanics, engineering, nursing, journalism—could be taught, in part at least, at the place of work by those professionally engaged in these activities. Intensive academic courses geared to examinations could still be offered within schools to those able and willing to take them. Disinterested advice should be made available to young people and their parents as to which courses might be most suitable, but coercion should be reduced to the minimum. Special efforts would need to be made to inform working class clients of their rights and opportunities. Voluntary groupings of students, in or out of school, with or without 'teachers', working to follow up special interests should be encouraged.

Above all, nothing must be allowed to get in the way of young people learning what they want to know. Any institution, however open, will have some expectations about how its members should behave. But these in the case of the school should themselves be an object of enquiry, open to change according to the wishes of the community of learners, students as well as 'teachers'. Both Illich and Reimer cite the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, who defines the process of education as 'becoming critically aware of one's reality in a manner which leads to effective action upon it'. The raising of the school leaving age will increase the tensions of our secondary schools unless they can begin to 'de-school' themselves. It may not be possible, but there seems no alternative to trying.

Paul Goodman: **Compulsory Miseducation,** Penguin 1971.
Everett Reimer: **School is Dead,** Penguin 1971.
John Holt: **The Underachieving School,** Penguin 1971.
Ivan D Illich: **Deschooling Society,** Calder Boyars 1971.

An American View on De-Schooling

Philip W. Jackson

Philip Jackson, who has been a visiting professor at Manchester University, is Professor of Education at Chicago University and Director of the Laboratory Schools there which were so closely associated with John Dewey. This article was originally Professor Jackson's contribution to a book recently published in the United States entitled **Farewell to Schools?**

How true — when you happen not to be a schoolteacher yourself — how true those oft-quoted lines sound:

Under a cruel eye outworn
The little ones spend the day
In sighing and dismay!

But when you yourself are the cruel eye outworn, you realize that there is another side to the picture.

—George Orwell, *A Clergyman's Daughter*

Many of us who work in schools, save those situated in urban ghettos, are becoming increasingly reluctant these days to wander outside the shelter of our institutions. And small wonder! Within the classrooms over which we preside and along the corridors through which we pass the atmosphere is pleasant, if not exactly peaceful. There is the customary confusion that surrounds the processes of teaching and learning, of course, and more than enough discomfort from time to time. But, by and large, a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment accompanies much that goes on within our not-so-ivyed walls.

From across the street, however, the view is quite different. At that distance the appearance of internal calm and the business-as-usual attitude on the part of the practitioner cannot help but be interpreted as signs of callous indifference. For outside our schools the air is thick with the cries of critics.

This situation is not exactly new, we know. Schools have long been the favourite targets of critics, both from the outside and from within. And, given the importance of education and the variety of interpretations to be put upon it, such a condition would be surprising if it were otherwise. But, though historically commonplace, attacks upon our schools do vary from time to time in both their magnitude and their substance. At present the volume is unusually high and we find ourselves in the midst of a particularly intensive barrage of catcalls, complaints, diagnoses, and freely proffered remedies for our educational ills. Moreover, in recent months the strategy of the critics has taken a new turn.

Until quite recently the desirability of schools and of compulsory attendance by the young was more or less taken for granted by friend and foe alike. The goal of both, even of those who were most unhappy with the *status quo*, was not to do away with our schools as we now know them, but somehow to improve their operation. Some critics contented themselves with the detection of faults in our present system, leaving their correction in the hands of professional educators. Others went on to spell out in considerable detail their own plans for educational reform. But whether or not they offered specific remedies, most critics, until quite recently, operated on the assumption that our schools, as such, would endure the reformer's zeal. There would be changes, to be sure, but schoolhouses and classrooms and teachers and lessons and some form of compulsory attendance would somehow still be there when the dust settled.

Now the critic's voice is becoming harsher and his ideas more radical. His tools seem to be changing from hammers and saws to battering rams and bulldozers—from instruments of construction to ones of destruction. Moreover, as these new land-clearance engineers rumble towards the schools, an increasingly large crowd of onlookers seems to be on hand to cheer them along and to enjoy the sport.

Why such radical action is necessary is, of course, the most important question to be asked. The only acceptable answer to that question (aside from acknowledging that some people derive perverse pleasure from the act of destruction for its own sake) is to claim that our schools today are so hopelessly bad that nothing can be done to salvage them. This being so, it follows that no matter what takes their place, the resultant arrangement is bound to be an improvement over what we now have.

Some form of this contention, with various elaborations and qualifications, is advanced by almost all the radical critics of our schools. As Goodman puts it, 'Only a small fraction, the "academically talented"—about 15 per cent according to James Conant—thrive in schools without being bored or harmed by them'.

Reimer takes Goodman's assertion one step further by claiming that 'The school system also fails in part to educate most of its nominally successful students, stultifying, rather than nurturing, their lifetime capacity and desire for learning'. Illich is quoted in a national magazine as saying, 'Preventive concentration camps for pre-delinquents would be a logical improvement over the school system'. Other critics, though less extreme, echo similar sentiments.

Now such charges are serious indeed. If true, they would certainly justify a battering-ram approach to educational reform. But the seriousness of such a consequence also demands caution. Before taking up the cudgels of attack we need to understand how Goodman, Reimer, Illich, and others arrive at such a devastating verdict. For, if it should turn out that their verdict is unjustified, we must not hesitate to turn our backs on it, no matter how unfashionable it may be to support The Establishment, and no matter how unpopular such a stance may make us at the weekend cocktail party.

If we turn to the search for facts, a disenchantment with the radical critics is quick in coming. For even under the most liberal definition of proof, there is precious little to substantiate the basic premise on which the de-schooling argument rests. That is, there is no solid evidence to support the blanket assertion that schools in our society are failing to educate our children, much less that they are actually doing them harm. This is not to say that there are not students—too many, we know—for whom such a charge is true. We hardly need proof, for example, to convince us that life in many of our inner city high schools is miserable indeed. We are also painfully aware that a sizeable number of our middle-class adolescents are being turned off by their school experience. But to move from such knowledge, lamentable as it is, to a general indictment of our entire school system is to take a giant step indeed, totally unwarranted by the evidence at hand.

Not only is there no basis for concluding that public school pupils across the land are gnashing their teeth in despair and rattling their tin cups against the bars of the classroom in protest against the injustices they are suffering, the few scraps of evidence that do exist point to quite the opposite conclusion. From the middle nineteen thirties to the present day, almost every systematic study of educational attitudes that has been undertaken has revealed the vast majority of students, from the middle grades onward, to be surprisingly content with their school experience. Apparently, almost four out of five students, if asked directly, would confess a liking for school, with all its faults.

Such evidence must of course be taken with a grain of salt, for it can always be argued that the majority of students are content with school simply because they have little else with which to compare it (save summer vacation!). None the less, even if accepted with great reservation, it is difficult to reconcile the few facts that do exist with the iconoclastic condemnations of the de-schoolers.

In addition to basing their arguments on scant evidence concerning the state of our schools today, the proponents of de-schooling seem curiously lacking in historical perspective. Though educational progress, like human progress in general, has clearly had its ups and downs throughout history, leaving no reason to believe that future improvement is inevitable, it does seem true that schools in our country, and probably in the entire Western world, are superior in many respects to those that existed a century or two ago. They serve a larger segment of our citizenry, they follow curricula that are more varied and better suited to the future needs of our students than was true in the past, and they are staffed by teachers who, on the whole, are better educated and more humane in their dealings with children than were their predecessors a few generations back. Gone are the hickory stick, the rapped knuckles, and the dunce's cap, together with the heavy reliance on rote memory, the rigidity of the recitation method, and the bolted-down desk. Some of the educational practices that have taken their place leave much to be desired, it is true, but with all of our present educational shortcomings it is difficult to avoid the terribly smug conclusion that our schools are better today than they have ever been before.

Such smugness should not be accompanied by complacency, however, for whatever progress has been made has required hard work, and there is much yet to be done. Moreover, we have no guarantee that things will not get worse rather than better. None the less, the overall impression of progress, unstable though it may be, does not sit well with the assertion that our present system is one great failure. Faced with such a charge, one is tempted to say to the critic, 'If you think our schools are bad now, you should have seen them in your grandfather's day!'

Much as it might dampen the critic's flame, a calm look at what goes on in our classrooms reveals them to be neither Dickensian nor Orwellian horrors. They

are neither prisons, presided over by modern-day Fagins who take delight in twisting ears and otherwise torturing children, nor are they gigantic Skinner boxes, designed to produce well-conditioned automatons who will uncritically serve The State. Anyone who believes in the truth of such fictions should take a few days off to visit his local schools. Should he find the fiction to be matched by reality, he would indeed have reason to seek change by whatever means are available. But anyone who, with or without such personal experience, proceeds to argue that such is the state of all or even most of our schools, can only be accused of being both misinformed and irresponsible.

Even if we overlooked available evidence, both contemporary and historical, and accepted the conclusion that our schools are in such a sorry state as to warrant abolishing them, we must ask what will happen when their doors are closed for good. What, in other words, will our youth be doing during the hours they normally spent in school?

The answer to that question is a bit vague, to say the least, in the writings of most critics, but usually it is assumed that school-age children, free from the 'artificial' demands of the classroom, will be enthussiastically engaged in learning (Goodman calls it 'incidental learning') through contact with 'real-life' situations. Guided by nothing more than natural curiosity and an instinctual love for learning, our children will presumably wander over the streets and fields of our land, gathering rosebuds of wisdom along the way. Adults, gladdened by the sight of these wandering scholars, will hail them as they pass and will invite them into the shops and factories and offices and hospitals, where they will become apprentices and learn at the feet of their elders those skills and trades that will equip them to take a productive place within our society.

Of course, no self-respecting critic would accept this caricature of the post-school era, but the romantic idealism contained in such an image is strongly evident in the imagination of many who criticise our current educational scene. However, when they begin to muse on how this Whitmanesque ideal might be achieved, something very much like the structure of our present schools, or at least the best of them, begins to emerge.

The chief difficulty with many advocates of the 'incidental learning' position is their failure to distinguish between learning and education. For most of us incidental learning of one sort or another is indeed occurring all the time. As I glance up from my desk at this very moment, for example. I have just 'learned' that my neighbour is about to mow his lawn! But education obviously involves much more than the accumulation of such fortuitous bits of information. It involves learning that is prescribed and planned and guided. Humans can indeed educate themselves, but experience seems to show that the process occurs more effectively with outside help. It was with this realisation that the idea of a teacher was born. When our forebears began to come to grips with the fact that not all adults could spend their time at such a pursuit, the notion of a school was in the offing.

Doubtlessly, there *are* children who, freed from the formal demands of schools and with a minimum of adult guidance, would set about the laborious task of educating themselves. But whether all or most children, if pressed to do so, would turn out to be such self-motivated learners is indeed doubtful. Moreover, there is at least some reason to believe that those who would suffer most from the absence of classroom constraints and teacher guidance would be those children who already exhibit signs of educational impoverishment. Thus, left to their own devices, or largely so, our out-of-school learners would likely behave in ways that would have the result of exaggerating the cleavages that already separate social class groups within our society.

Finally, even if educators or their critics wanted to set children free to learn on their own without the confines of a school and all the restrictions it implies, there is ample reason to believe that parents and other adults in our society would not stand for it. Like it or not, our schools presently perform a custodial function as well as an educational one. Parents, particularly those of young children, simply do not want their offspring to be unsupervised during much of the day. We could, of course, substitute compulsory day-care centres or neighbourhood clubs for compulsory schools, but, when we consider the management of such alternatives, they begin to look not all that different from what used to go on in the empty schoolhouse down the block.

In summary, the arguments of the de-schoolers suffer from two serious flaws. They begin with a false picture of how bad things are in our schools today, and they end with a highly romanticised notion of what might be substituted for our present educational system.

Meanwhile, back in the classroom, there is a lot of work to be done. Our inner city schools, particularly

(Continued over)

School Without Walls

Mary Stapleton

Mary Stapleton has taught in a wide range of special schools and is an Education Tutor at Gipsy Hill College of Education. Having been co-chairman of the English Section of the World Education Fellowship, she is convenor of its recently formed Working Party 'School Without Walls'.

'I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any.'
—*Mahatma Gandhi*

Schooling—like agriculture—appears to be in danger of becoming a battery-type system. Members of the School Without Walls group are concerned that it should become a free-range activity, this being more appropriate to the mental health of human beings. The working party is an informal one, meeting sometimes as an action group, sometimes as a 'thinking group' to exchange ideas, and from time to time working to collect facts and information concerning enterprising alternatives which may help and encourage others to make better use of human and material resources in education. We claim to be a small, inter-professional group of people including architects, community workers, parents, students and teachers, and by coming together in this way have realised more clearly than before that education is more than schooling, and that it is a lifelong activity which need not necessarily take place in institutions. In fact we have come to realise that it is when people are institutionalised and strictly time-tabled within these institutions, that they are likely to be cut off from many valuable human and material resources whereby they could 'live and learn' at one and the same time.

In this short article we should like to share with readers of **Forum** some of the matters that have been under discussion by the working party, over the past few years.

We have looked at some of the structures within our present schooling system, and have found that there are still some fortress-like schools of the kind described by Patrick McGeeney[1] where parents are not allowed to penetrate even into the playground surrounding the school, and where teachers are fearful of letting the children out of their sight. Some do not even use adequately the resource bays off their classrooms, and corridor space stands empty because they are fearful that they will be unable to control the work that goes on there. On the other hand, many 'community schools' now exist, such as the enterprising ones at Minsthorpe in Yorkshire, and Shirebrook in Derbyshire, where the boundaries of the school are more like permeable membranes than rigid barriers, thus allowing the community to infiltrate and the school to move out to serve the neighbourhood. We acknowledge 'community schools' as forward-looking places in relation to the use of local resources, but have also been asking ourselves whether a school or college still needs to be seen as the main base in which students have to spend most of their time? Should a school be in one particular place, or could it nowadays be thought of as a series of reference points, a variety of resource bases matched to the needs of both children and adults? When we read of Royston Lambert's proposals for Dartington School[2] these seemed to us to be a good example of the way in which a school, by being dispersed over a number of bases in this country and abroad, could serve its pupils better and enable them to live more

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(*American de-schooling continued*)

high schools, *are* disaster areas, too many of our students, particularly our adolescents, *are* being turned off by their school experience, the bureaucratic structure of our schools, particularly our larger ones, *is* more abrasive than it need to be, our graded system *is* too rigid and requires loosening up, our teacher certification laws *are* shamefully archaic and prevent many good people from taking their place in the classroom, our schools *do* need to be linked to the communities they serve in more imaginative ways.

These *are* serious problems, badly in need of solution. The crucial question is whether their solution requires the abandonment or the overthrow of the entire system. To answer that question we must consider what is *right* about our schools as well as what is wrong with them. In balance, at least as seen from the inside, the pros clearly outweigh the cons.

fully whilst learning.

Leading on from the assumptions behind the Dartington scheme came the question we asked ourselves as to whether school bases would be needed at all? To study this we looked at the concept of 'non-school' as shown in John Bremen's plans for the Parkway Program, Philadelphia[3], and were interested to discover that this kind of city-based alternative to school was being offered in other parts of the States too. We saw the need to look critically at the fact that schemes, such as the one proposed for Chicago students[4], were tied to the American system of motivation through the gaining of credits over a stipulated period of time. Even so, we saw advantages in the system in that the pupils were freer to make decisions; to consider choice in the way they would learn; to choose their own teachers; to make fuller use of existing institutions apart from the schools; and yet to remain supported whilst learning to educate themselves, by coming into regular contact in small groups with a tutor-counsellor who cared about them and was in tune with this system of learning.

In receiving a taped message from the 'Village School' — an alternative programme organised by Greatneck School, New York—we became aware of the importance of having administrators who were brave enough to allow alternatives within the existing system, so that these experiments could be given equal backing financially. In contrast, we have found a number of attempts in Britain to provide alternatives to the state schooling system with inadequate financial help from the authorities. How can the value of John Ord's work in Liverpool[5] be estimated in relation to the official system if money is not forthcoming? These 'free schools', through which we might learn enterprising ways of using resources, are being cut off at the roots. It has been encouraging, therefore, to read of plans made by Royston Lambert to develop his ideas further — in relation to the ROSLA scheme — and work from a house-base as do 'free schools' in this country, but with the added blessing of the Department of Education and Science who are prepared to look at this as a research project concerned with community resources and self-directed education.

What do we mean by community-based learning, and what do we mean by a fuller use of community resources? Our working party has been thinking about these matters, and in doing so we have come to realise how many wasted opportunities there are concerning 'use of plant'. Even if we confined ourselves to listing the number of firms in the London area that had efficiently-run cinemas unused at many parts of the day, we should have unearthed a very valuable resource that could be shared if only we would learn how to share! Some firms already produce films for use in education. Why could they not also lend the premises on which to show these films, and provide a network of services for both adults and children?

There are, of course, many arguments against a school using public resources, one being that if, for instance, a school used the public baths instead of going to the expense of having its own, this would result in stricter time-tabling and fewer possibilities of varying the sizes of groups going swimming at one time. Arguments for the use of public amenities would be strengthened if we could rid ourselves of the notion that all children of school age had to be based at school for five whole days in the week. Under this present system many young people go unescorted in their 'own time'—that is their 'home-based time'—to the public swimming pool to learn to swim under an expert instructor, whilst they go escorted by a teacher, in herds, in buses or crocodiles from the school-base to the baths. Why do pupils have to 'clock in' at school and then be herded to the baths on a Tuesday or a Thursday, whilst they are quite capable of getting themselves there on their own on a Saturday? We need to re-think this organisational barrier between home-based and school-based time.

With younger children the problem of being escorted by an adult will arise. Many primary schools are already using parents and other adults as helpers escorting children from the school-base on visits to the local shops, parks or other places of interest, so that the children can experience something beyond the concrete playground, and benefit from the attention and experience of the adults on hand to listen, talk and discuss. If this can be organised so efficiently from a school-base in term time, and equally efficiently in the holidays through parents working together in 'holiday fun' schemes, why cannot the two ideas be brought together so that there is an organisation whereby children do not necessarily have to be 'taken to school' every day from Monday to Friday in order to be 'brought out of school', but can be collected by these same adults direct from home? As the working week for some adults becomes shorter there are likely to be more people who would be willing to give part of their time to children and to share in the responsibility for their care.

If people are to enjoy more fully the resources of the material environment at a distance from their school or home base, we need to be realistic about the means of bringing them to the resources. We know that one reason why many pupils are still kept firmly within the bounds of a school campus is related to the fact that teachers are, during school hours, *in loco parentis* and rightly conscious of their obligations to parents concerning the safety of their pupils. It is interesting to note that teachers often feel freer to let their pupils out of their sight on school journeys, rather than at school, having then had a signed agreement from the parents that they are trusted to take the children abroad. It becomes much easier, in these circumstances, to behave like a reasonable parent and take a reasonable risk which, in turn, satisfies the children by allowing *them* a reasonable amount of risk or adventure! We wonder whether the time has now come for parents to acknowledge that this freer movement should be part of any school-based day? Only if we give people freedom of movement can we also educate them to be responsible for their actions. The amount of freedom of movement would, of course, depend to some extent on the ages and capabilities of the children, and on the environmental circumstances. In studying 'mobility' we came to the conclusion that much could be done to help children to work near to the appropriate resources by putting their classroom on wheels. Robin Webster[6], an architect in the group, has been exploring the possibilities and finding examples of people using mobiles so that a class activity was made more effective from both the point of view of the learning and of the lessening of wear and tear on teachers and children, by enabling the children to work for a longer time on the appropriate site, whether this were by a city museum or a country pond, with their own resource base fitted out for the task. In exploring the idea in relation to a converted double-decker bus, we have tried to emphasise the idea of effective mobility rather than to set up a double decker bus as being the best model, and have been collecting information on other forms of mobiles. Various play-mobiles have had publicity through Television. 'School of the Air', Children's Caravans, and trains fitted out for school journeys are better known in other parts of the world. In this country we have noted two mobiles as being of special interest: a bus called 'Abigail', now fitted with Pulman-type seating for work on the site, used by a Primary School in Bletchley, and the mobile science laboratory which has been used so successfully by Kirkby Fields College of Education with city children in the Lake District. We should welcome for our 'index', accounts of other experiments in mobility or ideas for uses of vehicles.

Even more important than material resources in our lives are our contacts with the many kinds of people who have expertise to share or skills to pass on. So, in looking at resources beyond the home and the school, we have been considering the matter of human resources, and have found a number of people, including sculptors and artists, who are giving much of their time to children at weekends or in holidays, yet whose work is not always recognised and acknowledged as desirable or practicable to take place on a 'school-day'. We wonder how long it will be before it is recognised that a whole day spent by a small group of children in an artist's workshop could be as valuable to those children as a small 'dose' of painting on the time-table once a week? We only have to read autobiographies to realise the number of men and women who have been strongly influenced by people other than their teachers. Children are, at present, cut off from the world of work. Even schools such as Ifield School, Gravesend, that try to cater in a systematic way for their pupils to have real work experience, find themselves restricted by regulations; and there are times when community services organised from a school base deteriorates into an exercise or a subject on the time-table instead of being the real kind of work experience and human experience that it was meant to be. In their time the Factory Acts were badly needed to protect children from hard labour. Do we now over-protect children and young people? Do we hold on too long to outdated regulations so that they no longer serve but strangle us? In our School Without Walls group we have tried to keep the slogan in mind: Function first—structure second. If the function is right the organisational structure to fit the need can be found. We are concerned that an edict has been made over the Raising of the School Leaving Age, since this implies that people are to be slotted into an existing system called 'school' without the value of that kind of organisation being questioned.

In 1969 the working party made a statement which ended with these words:

> 'In providing for this kind of education through real experience, there will need to be a move towards self-initiated, self-assessed learning. We envisage children working through small group-bases with counsellor-tutors, utilising the community resources. Teaching is no longer confined to school buildings,

and need no longer be tied to a school base.'[7]

We hope that parents, teachers, and all who are concerned in education, including, of course, the pupils themselves, will work imaginatively to meet their needs, achieving this through new combinations of structure and organisation; giving them opportunities to work, to meet people, and to take some responsibility for their own learning, in ways that will help each one to stand on his own feet.

References

[1] Patrick McGeeney: **Parents are Welcome** (Longmans 1969).

[2] Minsthorpe High School and Community College, South Emsall, Doncaster, Yorkshire.

[3] Shirebrook School, Common Lane, Shirebrook, Nottinghamshire.

[4] Royston Lambert: 'What Dartington will do'. **New Society,** 30.1.69.

[5] Brochure obtainable from: The Information Officer, Parkway Program, Parkway, Philadelphia, USA.

[6] 'City Pupils Educated Among Lawyers and Electricians'. **Teacher.** 4.2.72.

[7] Information obtainable from: Superintendent of Schools, Scarsdale, New York, USA.

[8] Scotland Road Community Trust, 149a Limekiln Lane, Liverpool 5.

[9] Royston Lambert: **Alternative to School.** Dartington Hall, Devon.

[10] Robin Webster: 'Introducing the Learning Bus'. **Where,** August, 1971.

[11] Details from: Mr D J Smith, Headmaster, Abbeys County Junior School, Bletchley, Buckinghamshire.

[12] Details from: Mr David George, Kirkby Fields College of Education, Kirkby, Lancashire.

[13] Denys Brown and Ann Henson: 'Learning in a Working Day World', **Special Education,** January, 1972.

[14] Mary Stapleton: 'Planning the School and its Environment', **New Era,** November, 1969.

Innovation in Education: a Brief Bibliography

Compiled by **Jack Walton**

One advantage of this bibliography is that most of the suggested reading is either chapters of books or articles; they are brief. It is certainly not an exhaustive list. Contributors from other countries, for example, have been omitted purposely as the bibliography is concerned with the English educational system. Apart from one unpublished paper all publications listed are easily obtainable. Consideration of some of them may be of help to teachers and head teachers engaged in innovation.

BERNSTEIN, B: 'Open Schools, Open Society?' *New Society* Sept 14, 1967.

Bernstein, drawing upon Durkheim, suggests that schools are tending to change the emphasis in their principles of social integration and move towards a more open type of organisation. He considers the implications of this for pupils and teachers.

BERNSTEIN, B: 'On the Classification and Framing of Educational Knowledge'. *Knowledge and Control* Michael F O Young (ed). Collier Macmillan, 1971.

In this chapter Bernstein follows up the *New Society* article and looks at the curriculum in more detail. He is particularly concerned with the difference between the collection code (insulated content as in traditional grammar school subject timetables) and the integrated code (reduced insulation between content, ie, IDE). He considers the relationships and attitudes associated with each and suggests the possible consequences of a move from one to the other.

EGGLESTON, S J: 'The Process of Curriculum Change'. *Paedogogica Europa* 1970/71.

S J Eggleston, editor of *Paedogogica Europa,* contributes an interesting introductory chapter which points the direction in which curriculum change is moving. Briefly the move is in the direction of a greater autonomy based on far less establishment type variables than previously.

HALSALL, E: *Becoming Comprehensive.* Pergamon, 1970.

An extremely useful book not only to heads but to all teachers involved in reorganisation. The authors of the various chapters have attempted sincerely to consider the problems, challenges and tensions associated with the reorganisation of secondary education.

HOYLE, E: 'How does the curriculum change? 1. A proposal for enquiries', and 'How does the curriculum change? 2. Systems and strategies'. *Journal of Curriculum Studies.* May and November 1969.

In the first of these papers Hoyle considers the various components of curriculum change. He examines the relationship of social change to curriculum change and looks at the ways change spreads. The second paper focuses upon innovation in schools and strategies of curriculum change.

HOYLE, E: 'The role of the change agent in educational innovation'. *Curriculum Organisation and Design.* J Walton (ed). Ward Lock Educational 1971.

Hoyle's particular concern here is with the process of change. He advances seven propositions relating to educational innovation in contemporary Britain, then considers the function of the change agent and finally looks at the achievement of change.

KELLY, P J: 'The process of curriculum innovation'. *Paedogogica Europa* 1970/71.

This chapter presents a useful analysis of the stages of curriculum innovation. The role of the teacher in this process is considered. Kelly concludes by urging that 'the diversity and phasing of curriculum development need careful co-ordination'.

MUSGROVE, F and TAYLOR, P H: *Society and the teacher's role.* Routledge 1969.

This pleasantly thin volume describes research into teachers' role conceptions and uncertainties in different types of schools and neighbourhoods. Whilst the book is not directly concerned with innovation nevertheless the changing educational pattern is very much the backcloth to the development of the authors' main thesis which is an argument for a client-centred educational service.

OWEN, J G: 'Strategies of Curriculum Innovation'. *Journal of Curriculum Studies.* November 1968.

Owen takes a hard look at curriculum innovation in this paper. He is concerned with the need to find a strategy, to examine what militates against its formulation and hence to identify what makes for an effective strategy. He raises the question of whether innovation, if it cannot be institutionalised, is after all worth it. The function of leadership in innovation is considered. This article gives very practical help to all involved in curriculum or organisational change.

OWEN, J G: *Change and innovation in education.* Unpublished paper.

In this as yet unpublished paper Owen posits a difference between change and innovation. Innovation is concerned with something new rather than with the rearrangement of old constituent parts of a pattern. His emphasis on the dynamic character of innovation and its demands on teaching staff are points well worth taking if one wishes to make innovation effective.

OWEN, J G: 'Curriculum innovation in the USSR'. *Journal of Curriculum Studies.* November 1969.

It is very useful sometimes to rest from one's own labours in the curriculum field and look at what is happening in other countries. This brief paper by Owen on curriculum innovation in Russia gives us a picture different from the British one not only in the degree of compulsion, or near compulsion, but also in what seems to be a thorough attempt at co-ordination of work between the various people and organisations involved. It is often difficult finding what is happening in the Soviet Union so that an article on this topic is particularly useful.

OWEN, J G: 'Educational innovation: the human factor'. *Journal of Educational Administration and History.* June 1970.

An interesting consideration of people involved in innovation, both inside and outside the school. In considering the roles of management in innovation Owen suggests that management should be aware that innovation, like all creative forces, can be disruptive and requires certain levels of tolerance. It is about these levels of tolerance that managers of change have to be both clear and careful.

SHIPMAN, M D: 'Innovation in Schools'. *Curriculum Organisation and Design.* J Walton (Ed). Ward Lock Educational 1971.

This introductory chapter is an interesting account of the decline and demise of curriculum projects in a number of schools, written with a dry sense of humour. The reason for the failure of the projects will be recognised by practising teachers.

SHIPMAN, M D: 'Order and Innovation in Schools'. *New Society.* 15 December 1969.

This article refers in particular to secondary schools. It starts with a consideration of the interaction between teacher and pupil in the traditional classroom and moves on to an account of classrooms where innovation is taking place. Shipman highlights the tightrope on which the innovator in the school attempts to walk. He concludes by suggesting that curriculum innovation must be viewed realistically with the often reluctant pupils very much in mind.

WALTON, J: 'Anatomy of Innovation'. *Forum.* Spring 1970.

A brief attempt to describe changes in education against the background of societal changes. The lack of fit between organisational and curriculum changes is considered. The pressure upon teachers is examined. It is emphasised that innovation should be associated with a constant dialogue between all concerned with the developments that are proposed.

Reviews

Linguistic Skills

Language in Use, by Peter Doughty, John Pearce and Geoffrey Thornton: The Schools Council Programme in Linguistics and English Teaching. Edward Arnold and the Schools Council, (1971), £1.70.

Given that most of the school curriculum is linguistically mediated, it would not be surprising if a good deal of educational failure were in part linguistic failure (by both teachers and pupils). The work of Douglas Barnes for example has shown us the kind of barriers to learning that are erected when the conceptual load which teachers ascribe to the everyday language of their subject matter differs from that ascribed by pupils to the same everyday language. Such teachers assume that language is transparent in relation to their curriculum.

Work in this area is relatively novel, and suffers from the fact that we do not have as yet a precise analysis of the kinds of linguistic skill which pupils need to navigate successfully in schools. It is nonetheless perfectly obvious that the kind of language skill required to write up notes of experiments in Biology differs from that involved in an 'imaginative' essay, and differs again from the (oral) skills called upon in small group discussion. It may be obvious, but it is also true that such matters are usually neglected, to the extent that ten years ago it was found that there was no term in the lexis of education to describe skill in Spoken Language. (We now have oracy).

The authors of **Language in Use** claim that language users need to consider what language is appropriate in any given situation, that language can be looked at from the point of view of its formality or informality, that there is a relationship between the spoken and written modes of language, but that the two are not identical, nor is one inferior to the other, that language use is to some extent environmentally determined and to some extent determined also by the relationships established by the participants in any language act. They claim also that since in a crude sense at least all native speakers of a language have mastered that language then they possess intuitions about its nature and functions. The aim of the **Language in Use** programme is to draw on these intuitions by presenting to pupils varieties of language as analysed above; these are to be discussed and practised and later it is hoped internalised to become part of the individual's increased linguistic competence.

Language in Use is material written for the teacher (each school needs only one copy). It consists of 110 separate units, each of which provides an outline for a sequence of lessons. The units are grouped together into ten themes, and the themes into three broad divisions, concerned with language itself, its place in individual lives and its role in society. Sample unit titles are 'Words and diagrams', 'Regional Speech', 'Conversation between friends', 'The language of school subjects' and 'Making a Script'. The material is devised for use with pupils aged 11-18; it is for the teacher to decide the level of sophistication at which he works with any unit, and he can fit units as he wishes into his work schedule. The present public edition of **Language in Use** is the third version of the material; two previous trial editions were rewritten after evaluation by teachers in the classroom (5000 hours).

One final observation; the work suggested in **Language in Use** with its emphasis on discussion and its willingness to treat seriously pupils' observations could only take place within a democratic school framework. In one unit pupils are asked to compare scripts marked by different teachers and work out the bases of the teachers' judgements. I know of many schools where English teachers would be outraged by that particular suggestion.

BRIAN HARRISON
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More on Streaming

Streaming: Two Years Later, by Elsa Ferri, NFER (1971), 114 pp. £2.10.

In the sixties I was headmaster of one of the schools involved in the research project carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) at the Minister's request into the effect of streaming and non-streaming at Junior level.

It is now particularly interesting for a committed non-streamer like myself to read this follow-up study on the further progress of over 1700 of the children who took part in the original survey as, between the ages of 10+ and 12+, they have moved through the lower reaches of 83 secondary schools of varying types.

A major purpose of the previous investigation (described in **Streaming in the Primary School** by Joan Barker Lunn NFER, 1970) had been to define the effects on children's development of two very different educational environments, the one in a formal streamed school with its emphasis on the attainment of set academic standards and the other in a school, consciously non-streamed, basing itself on a more child-centred approach with learning arising out of practical experience and discovery in a more informal way.

The comparison then made had shown that whilst academic progress had remained largely unaffected, children of average and below average ability, in other words the majority, organised on a non-streamed basis had developed more positive attitudes to their schools and to themselves, and, further, they were also taking a much greater part in school activities than their streamed counterparts. There was also, as might have been hoped, some evidence to suggest that children taught by the more flexible methods usually associated with non-streaming had benefited in the open ended nature of their thinking.

The interest now was to see how far-reaching the type of primary school

attended had proved to be.

There can be no doubt that there had been particular problems of adjustment for children from the non-streamed schools moving into the field of selective secondary education. Whilst in general the less able pupils, especially boys, had, perhaps understandably, gained in self-esteem in the secondary modern environment the brighter children, especially girls, had developed a poorer self-image and this was particularly marked in the case of pupils who had attended non-streamed Junior Schools. Likewise differences previously noted in participation had been largely obliterated but, more positively, the report found some tentative evidence that the same group had continued to show a superior performance in divergent thinking after two years in the Secondary School.

Much of this is understandable for, as Elsa Ferri points out, the influence of organisational policy and teachers' attitudes on development noted at Junior level is hardly likely to be less decisive at the Secondary level and it would seem to be in this field that we should be looking for the answers to the newer questions raised in this latest report.

As she implies, the most effective follow-up now would be to focus attention on pupils who have experienced the same forms of organisation in both departments, Junior and Secondary, but there are difficulties in this. Apart from the relatively small number of non-streamed Secondary schools at present in being, the teachers who work in them, faced with new circumstances and increased pressures, often adopt different approaches from those favoured in the non-streamed Junior school.

If the benefits of the non-streamed Junior School are to be carried forward and enhanced in a really comprehensive system of education the answer would seem to lie in a continuation of this dialogue with increased attention to the working experience of the Middle Schools.

Meanwhile the NFER is making an invaluable contribution by providing the data from which we can draw our conclusions and make our decisions. The volume under review is slim but is packed not only with facts and figures lucidly presented but with concise deductions which set one thinking and point the way ahead.

GEORGE FREELAND

International Comparisons

Innovation in Education: Sweden, Germany, Norway, United States, England. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1971

The common preface to these five case studies, produced by the Centre for Educational Research and Development of the OECD, notes that they are descriptive in nature, by authors writing in their personal capacity, and so represent 'five quite individual syntheses and interpretations of vast amounts of information'. All the reports, however, relate to nations which 'have a long and honourable tradition of public education, an industrialised economy and a high standard of living'; and within which the demand 'of many more people for more and better education' has met with a response in terms of reform – of structure, curriculum, learning systems.

It is, perhaps, simplistic to interpret educational reform solely in terms of response to popular demand, insofar as it rules out of account the more basic economic and political pressures, the changing forms of social control, to which educational provision is subject in modern industrialised societies. The outcome is likely to be that the descriptive picture begins with the educational system, or within it, so that conclusions are limited to the realm of the sociology of education. And, in fact, though the reports vary widely, the main emphasis lies here.

Covering the United States, Professor Leila Sussman, of Tufts University, Massachusetts, defines 'educational innovation' as that part of educational change 'which consists of technical or social inventions deliberately implemented'; a definition which presupposes an ongoing, if undirected process of social change of which educational change is a component. It is later suggested that the process of educational innovation is 'a topic related to the sociological theory of complex organisations' which has so far been little studied. Accordingly it is covered here mainly in terms of a single sociological study of six urban school districts. Equally, the section on the need for educational research and researchers depends on a handful of sociological papers and these tend to deplore that funds for research are awarded to schools of education rather than to the more highly qualified academics to be found among 'behavioural scientists'.

This connects interestingly with observations about Sweden compiled by Stuart McClure, as the outcome of a special visit. Stressing the great importance given here to research and development he suggests that to place so much faith in this is, in practice, to rely heavily on the social scientists; not only on what they have usefully done so far, but what they may be able to do in future. 'This reliance on social scientists to produce quasi-scientific prescriptions for the curriculum, like the centralised administration (also characteristic of the Swedish system), must have an important bearing on the role and function of the practising teacher'. Indeed it could be argued that the more completely the social scientists vindicate the faith placed in them, 'the more the present role of the practising teacher is being undermined'.

On the same topic, perhaps the key one, Anne Corbett, having stressed the grass roots of much innovation in England, asks whether the schools can continue to participate so closely. 'There are signs that development work signals a one-way route out of schools to universities and colleges of education, administration and advisory work. A

two-way mobility needs to be encouraged by the career and salary structures. For there is no doubt that the strength of English education has come from developing upwards. It should not lose the roots from which it has grown'. So far, however, as she also observes, innovation in England is not yet adequately documented; accordingly **Forum** proved a useful source.

There is an informative study of West German developments by Dr Helga Thomas of the Max-Planck institute for educational research in Berlin. Here one of the chief problems, in direct contrast to the situation in Sweden, is the absence of a central authority, the disadvantages of which have been brought to light by the beginnings of a major organisational innovation, the establishment of comprehensive schools. This has started off a chain reaction in pinpointing deficiencies, in curriculum studies, in institutions and plans for educational research, though a beginning has now been made. The need to mediate effectively between research and practice is, once again, emphasised. 'Hitherto, it has been quite unusual to have teachers participating in the planning and execution of research projects, the development of curricula and – in so far as it was done at all – the evaluation of teaching experiments. Teachers' training, too, has if anything abstained from investigating the teacher's role'. It is not surprising, then, 'that research and practice have diverged, with teachers seeing research as an intolerable surveillance of their work and research workers often acting as if they are in sole possession of the truth'. It is urgent, therefore, 'to convey the thought to research workers that they have an obligation, and by no means a secondary one, to communicate research findings to the schools'.

Norway has a National Council for Innovation in Education, the deputy director of which, Per Dalin, contributes a study. The council was established as the outcome of an 'Innovation in Education Act' passed in 1954 but its influence was not effective until the 1960's. Here again, as in Sweden, an over centralised and rigid system is seen as the chief barrier to innovation. A model for the process of innovation is outlined, which has been under discussion in parliament. It begins with the individual teacher claiming that there should be freedom at this level to frame a development programme. At the next level there are expert advisory councils for each type of school to which are assigned responsibility for 'rolling reform' work such as curriculum development. Then comes the national council, charged to stimulate all forms of experimentation and carry them through the preliminary stages of testing and field experiments. This, then, acts as the mediator between the schools and research institutions.

Only a few particular points have been extracted from studies which provide much information, as well as interesting analyses. These five studies can be obtained, free of charge, by writing to the OECD Publications Office, 2 rue André-Pascal, 75 Paris 16e.

JOAN SIMON

Reform with care

An Introduction to Curriculum Development, by R G Cave. Ward Lock (1971), 112 pp, £2.20 hard, £1.20 paper.
Curriculum Organization and Design, ed J Walton. Ward Lock (1971), 86 pp, £1.30.

The curriculum reform movement seems to be growing exponentially: the growth rate over tha past five years is remarkable. Teachers and schools are in some danger of being overwhelmed by the movement, and there is a probable polarization between enthusiasts and sceptics.

Ronald Cave has written **An Introduction to Curriculum Development** with these dangers in mind because he believes that 'curriculum development holds out a promise of benefits on a scale that can revolutionize our present system', yet fears that ill-conceived reform work may play into the hands of conservatism. He hopes his introduction may prove useful to teachers who would like to participate but feel inadequately informed and out of touch. Certainly there is descriptive and explanatory material that may help them: much jargon, systems analysis, gaming and simulation techniques are explained and brief summaries given of the theories of the main exponents.

Jack Walton has assembled papers given to a conference of secondary teachers at Exeter University Institute of Education. His own paper provides a theoretical basis from which teachers in a school may plan and structure reform in their own areas of the curriculum: he stresses the importance of first clarifying objectives and then deciding how to implement these in a structured way. The focus of this book is school-based curriculum reform, and the emphasis in the first four papers is on planning and management of innovation. The theme is set by Martin Shipman and developed by Malcolm Skilbeck and Ken Shaw, all of whom pay considerable attention to authority, leadership and communication structures within a school. A cautionary note is struck throughout on the many pitfalls that can so easily frustrate autonomous attempts at curriculum reform. Eric Hoyle considers in what ways an outside agent may facilitate effective innovation.

Three chapters on group work in schools are more directly related to tasks confronting an individual teacher. Here Frank Worthington's contribution again strikes the cautionary note in warning against rejecting the value of efficient instruction in favour of over-insistence on learning by discovery and indiscriminate use of group methods for their own sake. This point is backed by his careful exposition of a rationale for group methods and by some pertinent advice from a consultant psychiatrist.

As appendices there are two short accounts of very different innovation in two secondary schools. Their inclusion emphasises a further theme of this book —that reform must be planned firmly in the context of each particular school, and with enthusiasm tempered by cerebration and awareness of local constraints.

NANETTE WHITBREAD

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