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A Canker by Any Other Name

The Government seems particularly insistent that we should not confuse 'setting' with 'streaming'.

To the ingenuous it might suggest the existence of some kind of collective conscience, the Government knowing, as one supposes they do from the results of much research, that the latter is ineffective at best, and destructive at worst.

Ingenuous, because it should not be forgotten that we live in an era of gloss, spin and snake oil. The word 'streaming' is to be avoided, not because of any conscience to do with the way in which so many young lives were blighted by it, but because there is an awareness out there with the general public, i.e. the voters, who remember it from personal experience. It should be recalled that only 20%, at most, of the general public will remember it favourably; the rest by definition were in lower streams and the sting is still around for many who were placed therein. No, we are soothed, 'setting' is *quite* different, perish the thought it should ever be associated with streaming.

Unfortunately for the Government, their track record of credibility is hardly one that inspires confidence. We were sold a broad and balanced curriculum that sank under its own unnecessary prescriptiveness like an overloaded barge, and the vaunted revision exercise was in fact like a preliminary diet preparing the body to adjust to one of minimum nutrition. So now we have a narrow curriculum, payment by results, tests that were only supposed to be diagnostic and that increasingly act like a selection device (*Independent*, January 26, 1999) arbitrary homework, etc. As far as education is concerned, there is no mystery about the Third Way – it is simply something that goes smartly backwards. How do we know that the emphasis on 'setting' now is not a preliminary to accepting streaming in a few year's time?

Apart from anything else, at primary level at any rate, 'setting' can present considerable logistical problems and the temptation for it to slip into a *de facto* streaming is only too evident. Up to now public attitudes though, have meant that any labels that could immediately identify one's child in the hierarchy were avoided, with the resultant plethora of Cats, Rabbits, Budgies, Roses, Tulips and Daisies etc. It will be interesting to see what the new terms will be, given that such groupings have increasingly official sanction. Will parents now know from four-and-a-half (the suggested age such 'setting' should begin) exactly where their child stands in the pecking order? Will they be pacified by the fact that they are only to be 'set' in the core subjects of English, Maths and Science? (A point to which I will return.)

Perhaps there are more persuasive arguments for setting in some subjects at some points in secondary education but the only truthful argument for its existence in primary schools lies in the insidious poison of league tables. It stands to reason that those identified as being potential or border-line 'test-passers' will benefit from extra help, better resources and more experienced teachers and they will be placed in identifiable sets. It happened in the days of the 11+ and the familiar wheel is cranking round again.

The other fact that makes 'setting' such a weasel word is that while streaming by class is anyway increasingly non-viable in the many schools that have either small numbers or mixed-age classes, for setting one can now read 'within-class' streaming.

The cumulative known and studied effects of such pedagogical practice, including the recent (1998) NFER survey, leave one in no doubt about the deleterious effects on children with low self-esteem, disadvantaged backgrounds, summer birthdays and those from ethnic minorities. In other words those who make up Britain's intractable 'tail' of low achievers. Research evidence, it should also be remembered, has also pointed to the fact that a child's chance of remaining in its initial grouping for the rest of its school career are 88-89%.

Maybe we worry unnecessarily; after all, in the reassuring tones of one who is offering to tarmac your drive for half price, we are told that 'setting' will actually maximise children's chances as they will have better targeted teaching and resources according to their ability. But forget the evidence for the moment that the lower groups have always tended to end up with fewer resources and the poorer and/or least experienced teachers, and concentrate on that artless term 'ability'. What ability? Who decides? Is it decided at four-and-a-half on the basis of the often unbelievably banal and frequently trivial base-line assessments? Why English, Maths and Science? Is ability in other areas to be discounted or deemed an inappropriate measure for this treatment? Or, of course, simply too 'unimportant'?

We are faced with some fundamental assumptions here about the use of the term 'ability'. Assumptions in the first place about what it actually means, i.e. is it being perceived as easily delineated and described along the lines of 'ability is what ability tests test' and admitting of little flexibility, range and development? The more enlightened in the business world have already taken up the idea of social and emotional intelligence, a.k.a. ability, and Howard Gardner's notion of multiple intelligences is also taken seriously. While there is little evidence that either Ofsted and the DfEE do so, more experienced and reflective teachers are uncomfortable and concerned at what they see as directives to adopt outdated, prescriptive and limiting methods based on this dubious notion of fixed ability, or certainly a practice that in its abiding characteristic of being a self-fulfilling prophecy, ends up by acting as such.

However, taking the long-term view it may be a passing phase – goading teachers with confrontational tactics in order to demonstrate control is *a*, if not *the*, characteristic of these times. Evidence for this is demonstrated time and again, particularly by Ofsted, by the manner in which research is derided and how questions proper to the fundamental issues of education are so frequently side-stepped in a way that betrays an incontestable shallowness. As skilful navigators know though, while shallows can be dangerous they can also be negotiated and besides which, they often only show themselves at low tide.

Annabelle Dixon

Preconceptions and Practice in Primary Citizenship Education

Annabelle Dixon

This article is an amended version of *The Times Educational Supplement* Lecture in November 1998 and describes the research undertaken by Annabelle Dixon during the year she was TES Research Fellow at Lucy Cavendish College, University of Cambridge. She was also a member of the primary sub-group of the Crick Committee. Her research concentrated on how a group of headteachers construed citizenship education, the possible reasons for their priorities and the implications for practice and in-service training.

If a certain aridity is indicated by the above title, my ambition is to prove it otherwise as it describes an area, which to me is an endlessly fascinating one: the place where theory, overt or otherwise, meets practice. In other words, in relation to citizenship education in the primary school, what really seems to be influencing the ways in which teachers personally think about the subject and see its translation into practice? Not only do I see this as interesting in its own right but I think it has significant implications for the eventual implementation of citizenship education.

It is also, with respect to education for citizenship, a place about which very little is actually known. David Kerr in his 1997 IEA survey for the NFER on citizenship in English schools, pointed to what he described as the huge gap in our research base about the subject and the almost total ignorance of current practice. Given that most of what knowledge *does* exist, refers to secondary schools and one begins to appreciate the uncharted territory that is represented by the primary schools.

Why choose to focus on preconceptions about citizenship? Besides the variety of attitudes that seemed to be held by teachers my interest in the area was also provoked by the range of emphases that I found in published programmes of citizenship education. What was influencing this range? On reflection, and indeed examination, I thought it might be the basic nature of these preconceptions that were, and indeed are, held about citizenship and citizenship education, whether consciously or otherwise. There seemed to be four areas worth examination: firstly, the nature and variety of these preconceptions and how they might have arisen; next, the way in which these manifested themselves in the attitudes of teachers; thirdly, the manner in which these preconceptions might translate themselves into practice, and finally, the nature of certain problems that can unwittingly arise and what this might mean, not only for citizenship education in the primary school but for future in-service training.

Defining Citizenship

So, in the first place, what might these preconceptions be and how might they have arisen? It goes without saying that it is an area which has attracted a great deal of academic attention. Even as far back as the sixteenth century, a French writer claimed there were over 500 definitions of citizenship, which should give one pause for thought, and indeed it is still a very complex and shifting picture. Academic studies apart, Figure 1 gives one an idea of how many organisations currently consider themselves to be able to offer something in the way of citizenship education. All of them offered, or were asked to submit, their views and experiences to the recent commission on education for citizenship and teaching of democracy chaired by Professor Crick. Some organisations also represented others – the Field Studies Council, for example, being the 'umbrella' for 14 others. On a larger scale, but demonstrating the same problem, a similar list in the USA would enumerate well over a thousand organisations. If we but shared one preconception and the same priorities about citizenship and the education thereof, I doubt if one would see more than a handful.

Historically, many of these preconceptions have their roots in two or perhaps three main traditions, now added to by contemporary concerns about moral laxity, an interest in the nature of moral development and communitarianism. The first or classical tradition is the Graeco-Roman one in which those deemed to be citizens, women and slaves being excluded, had not only the right but the obligation, to take part in civic life. Only by so doing, and it was a matter of pride and self-respect to do so, would the society it represented guard itself against exploitation in terms of tyranny and/or disintegration. This is usually referred to as the 'civic–republican' tradition.

The second tradition variously termed the 'liberal–individual' or 'liberal–democratic' model, dates back in this country to the days of the seventeenth century and its accompanying ferment, and emphasised rights and responsibilities. The clearest exponent of the evolution of this tradition, T.H. Marshall, considered that it had developed, not without considerable struggle, through the establishment of the civil to the political, to the societal and then to the individual life of the citizen, all the time with an increasing emphasis on equality.

The important difference often stressed by writers on citizenship is that this latter notion, the 'liberal–individual' or 'liberal–democratic' one, stresses how civil rights, such as universal franchise and the right to legal representation, once acquired from the state, can be used, if necessary, to defend the individual *from* the state. The citizen, in other words, once secure in his (and latterly and belatedly, her)

Council of England, London. Association for Language Learning, Rugby, Warwickshire. Association for Librarians and Information Managers, London. Association for the Teaching of Social Sciences, Watford. Association of Essex Councils, Chelmsford. Association of Muslim Schools. Association of Northamptonshire School Governing Bodies, Wellingborough. Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL), London. Audit Commission, London. Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN), Bristol. Baptist Union of Great Britain, Oxfordshire. Barnardos, Basildon, Essex. Board of Deputies of British Jews, London. British Association for Early Childhood Education, London. British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), London. British Education Suppliers Association, London. British Humanist Association, London. British Red Cross, London. British Youth Council, London. Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, London. Cambridge Schools Classics Project, Cambridge. Catholic Education Service, London. Changemakers , Welham Green, Hertfordshire. Channel 4 Learning. Charter88, Cardiff. Children's Consortium on Education, London. Children's Rights Office, London. Christian Education Movement, Derby. Church of England General Synod Board of Education. Citizen Organising Foundation, London. Citizenship 2000, London. Citizenship Foundation, London. Civic Trust, London. Classical Association, Bolton. Common Purpose , London. Communitarian Forum, Bury St Edmunds. Community Initiatives in Citizenship Education Regionally Organised (CICERO), Sheffield. Community Service Volunteers (CSV), London. Confederation of British Industry (CBI), Education and Training Human Resources Directorate, London. Cornwall 2000, Bodmin, Cornwall. Council for British Archaeology, York. Council for Education in World Citizenship (CEWC), London. Council for Environmental Education, Reading. Courseware Publications, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. Curriculum and Management Consultancy, Surrey. Demos, London. Design Council, London. Development Education Association, London. Duke of Edinburgh Award, Windsor. Dynamix, Swansea. Economics and Business Education Association (EBEA), The Nuffield Foundation, London. English Heritage, London. English Outdoor Council European Movement, London. European Parliament Office, London. Federal Trust, London. Field Studies Council, Shropshire. Foundation for Civil Society, Birmingham. Free Churches Council, Surrey. Funding Agency for Schools. Further Education Funding Council, Coventry. Geographical Association, Education Standing Committee, Sheffield. Halton Junior Citizenship Project. Hansard Society for Parliamentary Government, London. Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference. Heads, Teachers, Industry, Coventry. Health Education Authority (HEA), London. History Curriculum Association, Lewes, East Sussex. Howard League for Penal Reform, London. Human Scale Education, Bath. Humanities Association, London. Inner Cities Young Persons Programme, London. Insted Ltd, London. Institute for Citizenship Studies, London. Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), London. Institute of Democracy from Mathematics, Oxford. Institute of Legal Executives, Kempston, Bedford. Jewish Council for Racial Equality, London. Joint Association of Classical Teachers (JACT) and Hellenic Society, London. Leeds Development Education Centre. Leicestershire Model United National Girl Assembly (MUNGA). Library Association, London. Library Association, Youth and School Libraries, London. Lloyds TSB Forum, London. Local Government Management, London. London Federation of Clubs for Young People. May Field, Shrewsbury, Shropshire. Merton Education Business Partnership, Morden, Surrey. Metropolitan Police, London. Midlands History Forum, Birmingham. Mitsubishi. Modern Studies Association, Linlithgow, West Lothian. MORI Social Research, London. Motorola, London. Museum of Law, Nottingham. Muslim Teachers Association, Surrey. National Advisory Council for Education & Training Targets (NACETT), London. National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Life Long Learning (NAGCELL), London. National Association for the Education of Sick Children, London. National Association of Educational Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (NAEIAC), London. National Association for the Teaching of English, Sheffield. National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT), Haywards Heath, West Sussex. National Association of Humanities Advisers, London. National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), Birmingham. National Child Helpline Action for Children, London. National Children's Bureau, London. National Consumer Council, Council. National Council for Development of Urdu, West Yorkshire. National Education Business Partnership Network (NEBPN), Co. Durham. National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), Slough, Berkshire. National Governors Council, Crediton, Devon. National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling, Cambridge. National Research Child and Family Department, London. National Society for Education in Art and Design (NSEAD), Wiltshire. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), London. National Union of Teachers (NUT), London. National Youth Agency, Leicester. Norfolk Education and Action for Development, Third World Centre, Norwich. Northbank Curriculum & Professional Development Centre, Sheffield. Northern Examination and Assessment Board (NEAB), Manchester. Nuffield Foundation, London. Ormonde Advisory Service, Birmingham. OXFAM, Oxford. Parliamentary Education Unit, Houses of Parliament, London. Personal Finance Education Group, London. Political Studies Association of the UK, Nottingham. Politics Association, Citizenship Education Committee, Manchester. Professional Association of Teachers (PAT), Derby. Quality Learning Services, Stafford. Remembering Education, Brighton. Religious Education Council of England and Wales, Hertfordshire. RGS - IBG, Bedford. Rockington Teachers Centre. Royal Geographical Society, London. Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), Horsham, West Sussex. RSA Examinations Board , Coventry. Runnymede Trust, London. Save the Children Fund Education Unit, London. Schools Council UK, London. Schools Curriculum Advisory Development Education Association, London. Schools Music Association, Hertfordshire. Second City; Second Chance, Birmingham. Secondary Heads Association (SHA), Leicester. Self-esteem Network, London. Sheffield EBP, Education Business Partnership Network. Shell UK Ltd, London. Social and Community Planning Research (SCPR), London. Society of Archivists, London. Teachers in Development Education (TIDE), Birmingham. Thames Valley Partnership, Thame, Oxfordshire. The East London Communities Organisation (TELCO). The Education Training Partnership, Salford. The Glade Centre, Community Resource Centre, Yeovil, Somerset. The Historical Association (HA), London. The Industrial Society, London. The Methodist Church. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) Education and Training Department, West Sussex. Third Sector Schools Alliance, Windsor, Berkshire. Tourist Concern. Trades Union Congress (TUC), London. Trident Trust, London. United Kingdom Reading Association, Derbyshire. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UK Committee, London. Urban Learning Foundation, London. Values Development Unit, Bristol. Values Education Council, London. Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), Development Education Unit, London. Welcome Trust. Workers Educational Association (WEA), London. World Citizenship Project, London. World Wildlife Fund WWF Surrey

Figure 1. Organisations who currently consider themselves able to offer something in the way of citizenship education.

rights, in relation to the state, had or has, consequently little more obligation than to obey their side of their civil contract. That is, to pay their taxes, and keep the law. Historically – and this is to encapsulate nearly four centuries of development – along with this tradition has gone much debate about the nature and basis of justice, equality, rights and responsibilities, and over time these have found their various ways into this particular tradition.

Elements from these two traditions emerge to show themselves in programmes for citizenship education, even a few discernible at the primary stage. The first, 'classical' tradition perhaps being more dominant in the past in England and still to be observed in other European countries today. Even so, there is a third tradition, born out of the first two, one might say, but which is distinct enough to be considered by writers such as Baglin and Neville Jones amongst others, as one in its own right. This is what they term the 'liberal–republican' model of the United States, and its influence can be detected in recent years as drifting across towards our side of the Atlantic. It is identifiable in a number of contemporary programmes of citizenship education, including a few primary ones. This model, while emphasising the rights of the individual, also stresses that individuals have a duty towards the needs of the community and by so doing they are then perceived to earn the right to be considered a citizen by way of this active involvement.

This notion of 'active citizenship' has been gaining ground in Britain in recent years for a variety of reasons, both pragmatic and political and can be, and is, interpreted in a variety of ways according to those promoting it. It should be noted that it does not necessarily mean active in defending political rights and awareness though, and this has been a matter of growing concern amongst those who place no little importance on political literacy and the support and defence of democratic practices. Those, in other words, whose allegiance can be traced to the classical civic–republican tradition.

Contemporary Influences

Another present day influence is that of the current interest in moral or values education, and, as Monica Taylor (1998) has pointed out in *Values Education & Values in Education*, values are often assumed to be just that: *moral* values, although there are also values of freedom, equality and democratic values. But moral values frequently has as its corollary, the education of 'good character'. While this might seem self-evidently attractive and 'good character' to be coterminous with 'good citizen', many, including Alex Molnar in the USA, are uneasy about the way in which such education programmes there stress docility, obedience and passivity. As even by the end of the 1950s, a USA survey had shown that 153 other traits were considered desirable in character education the emergence of these three particular traits as being predominantly favoured was the cause of this understandable concern. Today America, tomorrow Britain? There is already considerable interest in this country in character education. As such writers point out, though, being politically literate and aware, indeed being politically active, does not, and historically has not, depended on the initial amassing of virtue. Alongside this, there is also an interest in actual moral *development*. Don Rowe, for example, of the Citizenship Foundation, sees the citizen as moral agent and one whose development can be enhanced through engagement with continuous and progressive conflict-based problems in which the discernment of a moral dimension has a very particular importance.

Just to add additional colouring, as it were, there are also pressure groups in citizenship education which emphasise particular responsibilities within the 'liberal–individual' or 'liberal–democratic' tradition and see these particular responsibilities as being paramount, for example some environmental, peace or mediation groups and those that concern themselves with a European or global vision of citizenship. Likewise there are also a considerable number who emphasise a range of human rights issues.

In terms of recent history, little of this used to reach into the British primary school except that of learning certain items of knowledge about King and Country, being made aware that one was a subject, rather than learning what it might mean to be a citizen and that, if anything, one had a responsibility towards a wider community called 'Empire'. Moral development was there in terms of precept, story and occasional reward but rarely wandered into the path of what was then termed civics, especially for younger children. Now not only has the subject matter changed in recent years but the educational methodology has also altered from one that was predominantly, but not exclusively, didactic, for reasons I will suggest later on.

So the picture emerges of three main traditions and contemporary movements such as the emphases already mentioned on active citizenship, moral development and community creation and/or involvement and various emergent right organisations. My intent has been to discover the extent to which these might be discernible in the preconceptions of citizenship education in those presently working at and for the primary stage. Although I think the new Crick Report will be of considerable assistance to those setting about establishing it in their schools, understanding where people are in their thinking beforehand is particularly helpful when considering the ways in which it might be introduced. It thus has particular implications for curriculum development and in-service training.

The Research Project

What then might be these pre-conceptions of citizenship education of those actually working in schools? Can one detect the influence of the various traditions and is it consequently reflected in their priorities and practice? This was the purpose of some small scale research I undertook this year. Statistical significance cannot be claimed for it, as its nature was simply that of an indicative survey.

In the first instance, the exercise involved a partially structured interview and two ranking exercises with ten primary headteachers, each one taking about half an hour. *Finding* a free half hour for some primary heads often meant booking four or five weeks in advance and I remain grateful to all of them for their interest, time and patience. The group of ten was reasonably representative, ranging from two small village schools of 60 pupils each – across at the other end to two quite large urban schools, which had over 200 pupils. The eligibility for free school meals went from 5% to 42%. There were two male and eight female headteachers and their headship experience ranged from two to twelve years.

Besides their preconceptions I was also particularly interested to find out what, if any, might be the differences that the heads perceived in priorities within citizenship education for KS1 (nowadays for many children four-and-a-half to seven-years-old) and KS2. Apart from

Kerr's survey they are very often lumped together as 'primary' and I was interested to find out what distinctions might be being made between the two and what this might reflect.

Items mentioned	Frequency
Knowledge of parliament/democracy/ law	9/10
Importance of kindness, caring, consideration	8/10
Understanding one's place in a variety of communities	6/10
Decision making	3/10
Basic rights	3/10
Understanding different but equal claims of group and individuals	3/10
Mutual agreement on moral code/rules	2/10
Understanding a range of methods for dealing with disagreement	2/10

Items mentioned only once:

Pride in one's country

Personal safety

Discussion

Learning to be unprejudiced

Avoidance of over-criticising one's own country

Figure 2. Frequency of items mentioned as having relevance to citizenship education.

In the first part of the structured interview, I asked heads to complete an open-ended task. My request was that they told me, or wrote down, whichever they preferred, those words, ideas, concepts etc. that came immediately to mind when thinking about the words 'citizenship education'. (None of the heads said that they had done so before I interviewed them.) In other words, I wanted to establish some kind of frame within which they were thinking – their constructs, in effect, to make use of Kelly's term.

As it happened, none said that they had any kind of planned citizenship education in their schools and that they hadn't introduced or discussed things such as democracy or Parliament, though half the sample admitted to regretting this. On a much smaller scale this replicates the findings in Saunders's 1995 survey and Kerr's survey of 1997 about the present day place and state of citizenship education in primary schools.

The results of this exercise were mixed. Some responses were distinctly idiosyncratic, ranging from: "I don't believe in any of this citizenship education. Just make the kids scared enough about their test scores and the behaviour looks after itself", to "I think it all comes down to educating the left hand side of the brain". Some were terse, some prolix.

In all, 24 separate items were mentioned as can be seen in Figure 2, and it was interesting to see if it was possible to detect which preconceptions seemed to be at work. Where a number of items could be held within a more general category they were placed within it. For example, knowledge of Parliament, democracy and law seemed to come within a single one and nine out of ten mentioned it in some form. An encouraging result, it might be thought, although perhaps one should recall that nobody said they actually taught it. At any rate, the words themselves obviously formed part of the heads' construct of citizenship education.

Eight out of ten mentioned caring, consideration, kindness etc. It could be that this particular result indicates a way of seeing citizenship in terms of personal and social values and disposition where social and immediate relationships are concerned. The citizen as a 'good person' and of 'good character' perhaps? Six out of ten mentioned the word community and the importance of realising one's place within it. However no mention was made by anybody at this point, of any kind of engagement within their own or other communities. Some items were mentioned by three and sometimes just two heads, out of a total of ten, all of them items one might have expected to have been mentioned more frequently, for example mutual agreement on a moral code.

Perceived Priorities

Although this initial exercise told me something about the mental set the respondents had towards primary citizenship education, it didn't yet demonstrate their priorities or those they might hold differently for KS1 and 2. In order to ascertain what these might be, the following task was more structured. I asked the heads to ring as many words as they liked from a particular list of words which they personally felt had relevance for citizenship education. (Once for KS1 and once for KS2.) There were 30 words in the list (see Figure 3) culled from what seemed to be a representative sample from programmes for primary citizenship education and I divided them up into a more or less equal number of words representing the different aspects of their programme, for example social virtues such as 'toleration' 'obedience', 'respect' etc; civic elements, for example, 'Parliament', 'law', 'taxes', 'voting' and so on; current issues under debate e.g. 'environment', 'disadvantage', 'racism' etc. and actual practice, i.e. the means by which education for citizenship might be thought to be achieved, for instance, volunteering, teamwork etc. These words were then distributed at random throughout the whole list.

The results were that the social virtues and rules and obedience were mentioned by heads, as being overwhelmingly important for KS1 but that the means of getting there, for example critical thinking and teamwork etc. were seen as the most important for KS2. Interestingly, but a matter of no small concern when the evidence about the importance of spoken language in the early years is considered, being articulate was considered important by only three out of ten heads for KS1 compared to eight out of ten for KS2. It should be noted that only two headteachers had any training or experience at KS1 and perhaps this is an instance where it revealed itself only too clearly. Social issues didn't show any great difference and a sense of fairness was considered highly important for both stages, but civic awareness and knowledge was tilted very much towards KS2, perhaps not too surprisingly.

I hadn't asked heads how relatively important they

Parliament	Environment
Heritage	Courage
Prison	Property
Empathy	Obedience
Respect	Voting
Critical Thinking	Rules
Articulacy	Disadvantage
Responsibility	Taxes
Toleration	Cultures
Democracy	Self-esteem
Fairness	Schools Councils
Friendliness	Racism
Volunteering	Rights
Law	Teamwork
Money Management	Community

Figure 3. Items of possible relevance to citizenship education.

considered these concepts to be, just their relevance for each age group. Only taxation and money management came out as having low relevance for citizenship education in general. An interesting finding when Ken Fogelman of the Centre for Citizenship Studies in Education has said that he considers "... the life skill of personal money management is one which underpins citizenship".

The next exercise then turned to a consideration of what they might consider to be of importance in a programme of citizenship education. At this point I asked for a questionnaire to be completed which involved rating items from 'very important' to 'not at all important', after which I asked them to rank these items in absolute order of importance to them. As before I asked for a differentiation to be made between KS1 and KS2.

As can be seen in Figures 4a and 4b, although there was a considerable overlap between the words in the first list and the questionnaire, there were fewer of them, seventeen as opposed to 30 and it included more of those words that are to be found in the recommendations of the Crick report, such as 'community', 'justice' and 'debate'. Each item was accompanied by a few words on how they might be used as part of the citizenship curriculum.

Indicative Clusters

It is perhaps unrealistic to talk about 'results' with such a small sample but there appeared to be what might be described as "indicative clusters" around certain terms which Figure 5 seems to reveal.

Many heads, for example, were very emphatic about fairness and seemed to see it as meaning 'equality of treatment', I think, across a broad spectrum, bearing out Marshall's assertion that this will continue to be the dominant emphasis. Quite a number said that they supposed those

CITIZENSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE 1998

Key: 1 Very important, 2 important
3 not very important 4 unimportant
5 not at all important

	1	2	3	4	5
PARLIAMENT e.g. What is it? What is an MP? What are political parties?					
FAIRNESS e.g. Equal treatment/equal division of resources.					
RULES e.g. Who makes them? Is this different for different situations? What happens if you don't keep them? Who decides? What makes a good/bad rule?					
CRITICAL THINKING e.g. Being able to reflect and/or question statements and opinions (their own and others).					
PROPERTY e.g. How do we know who owns things? What do we do to find out? Individual and communal property. Can you share property/things? Always?					
ENVIRONMENT e.g. Awareness of: living creatures, plants, general surroundings. Ways in which it can get spoiled/looked after.					
VOTING e.g. Why do it? Voting at elections; voting in other circumstances; Who can't vote? Has everybody always been able to vote?					
RIGHTS e.g. What are they? Who has them? How do we know? What form can they take?					

Figure 4a.

	1	2	3	4	5
EMPATHY e.g. Personal imagination. What it might feel like to be in someone else's situation? How might it affect your opinion?					
JUSTICE e.g. Who deserves what? Who decides? On what grounds? (Basic legal system)					
DEMOCRACY e.g. Is this what we call being ruled by one person? Is this a fair way to organise a country?					
DEBATE e.g. Being able to agree/disagree; state an opinion and accept that others might think differently; see it as a way of resolving a problem?					
RESPECT e.g. For each other. e.g. Abilities/differences/ race/beliefs/property/environment/rules, etc.					
COMMUNITY e.g. Appreciating different kinds/active participation at different levels.					
RESPONSIBILITY e.g. Towards whom? What? Has everybody got some kind of responsibility? In what situations? How do they show it?					
MONEY e.g. How do we manage it? Do we need it? Are some ways better than others?					
DECISION TAKING e.g. Knowing what a 'decision' is/starting to recognise consequences of decisions/widening the opportunities for taking decisions					

Figure 4b. Items of relative importance to citizenship education.

terms they saw as very important really described their behaviour policy, and the inclusion of property and environment high on the list suggested that perhaps many of the words were indeed context-bound, i.e. they served the immediate needs of the school rather than being embedded in a more general set of civic principles. The

A) Items rated as equally important for both key stages:

Very important:

Fairness
Rules
Environment

Important:

Respect
Responsibility
Decision making
Empathy
Property

B) Rated as more important for KS2:

Knowledge about parliament
Rights
Critical Thinking
Debate
Voting

C) No item rated as more important for KS1

D) Rated as relatively unimportant at either KS1 or KS2

Justice
Democracy
Money

Figure 5. Results of item rating for KS1 and KS2.

fact that the notion of justice was considered relatively unimportant may be for a number of reasons; firstly because of its unfamiliarity as a term in primary schools, or secondly that they share in the confusion of what Hogan calls the various, often conflicting 'grammars' of justice, e.g. utility, toleration, natural rights etc. Or it could simply have been that they understood justice as meaning 'fairness' and felt that it had already been dealt with. They may also have been misled by the way in which I described it, but the fact that it is linked with democracy on a low rating may also be indicative. Two heads said they wouldn't bother teaching about Parliament or voting except in election years. All in all not a very encouraging picture for the future of political literacy.

As I expected, and human nature being so prevalent, as Kurt Hahn once observed, some heads simply went through the questionnaire ticking 'very important' to everything for both key stages. Thus the final task was a ranking exercise, in order to get some sense of discrimination and priority. I used the same terms as before as they were already familiar. Many heads reported this as being the hardest task but also said that it had helped them to clarify their thinking. They were requested to place as many or as few terms as they chose in order of absolute importance to each key stage. Most selected about ten words.

The resulting picture can be seen in Figure 6 – the clusters were once again something that give cause for reflection, if not actual concern. Debate, for example, coming low at both key stages. Secondly, although expected at KS1 perhaps, notions of democracy and justice, Parliament and voting came lowest in the rankings for KS2. If these results were to be replicated on a larger scale, I think they might indicate the emphasis that in-service training might have to take, given the important place they all have in the recommendations of the Crick Report, especially as far as political literacy is concerned.

The overall impression was that the heads' preconceptions about citizenship derived to a large extent from the liberal–individual tradition, with some influence

Rank Order	*Position*	*Rank Order*
KS1		***KS2***
Responsibilities + Respect	1	Respect
Fairness	2	Responsibility + Decision taking + Rules + Critical thinking
Rules + Empathy	3	Community + Empathy
Critical thinking + Rights + Community + Environment	4	Rights + Fairness
Decision Taking	5	Environment
Property	6	Debate
Parliament + Debate + Voting+ Democracy	7	Parliament + Property + Voting + Democracy + Money
Justice + Money	8	Justice

Figure 6. Rank ordering of items judged relatively important for KS1 and KS2.

from the liberal–republican one but there seemed far less awareness of a tradition that considers the upholding and defence of democracy as important. Current concerns within society are in evidence but didn't seem linked to any overall notions of citizenship as such.

Methodological Approaches

So how do these preconceptions translate into practice? How would schools set about *teaching* the key concepts, the knowledge, the skills and the understanding that citizenship education now requires? In my interviews I included debate, critical thinking, decision-taking and team work as examples of possible methodologies. As already noted all four were considered pretty unimportant as far as KS1 was concerned, which raises the question as to whether their emphasis at KS2 is either because the children's lack of these skills suddenly becomes noticeable or because it's not considered appropriate in some way. As one head rather revealingly asserted: "KS1 is for learning rules, not learning to think".

According to the evidence from the various surveys previously mentioned, citizenship is presently taught in a very haphazard manner in primary schools, if at all, but they're not the only organisations who promote it or indeed have experience in the teaching of it, as demonstrated by the extensive list illustrated in Figure 1. I was interested

n=39

PRACTICE	PERCENTAGE OF MENTION
Debate and Discussion	86%
Use of pictures, videos and photos	59%
Co-operative games	51%
Drama: role play,puppets etc	46%
Creative arts:painting,drawing, model making	36%
Brainstorming exercises	31%
Graphic exercises: captions, cartoons, posters, alphabets	25%
Story (writing)	21%
Story (listening)	18%
Circle Time	16%
Factual Information (didactic)	15%
Community action	13%
Visits/Visitors	10%
School Council format worksheets/questionnaires/quizzes	8%
Music	5%
PE/Maths/Gardening/Pets/Cooking	2.5%

Figure 7.

to find out what kinds of methodologies or practice such organisations used and how they justified their choice of such methods. I reviewed the materials of nearly 40 organisations that have a stated and particular interest in primary citizenship education or an aspect of it, and the picture that emerged is to be seen in Figure 7.

The overall impression from these organisations is their recommendation of active involvement, particularly in the use of the arts at 50% and above. Community involvement is only mentioned by 13% but co-operative games by 51%. Factual information given by formal instruction is recommended by 15%. It wasn't possible to tell whether the recommendations were based on what had been found to be successful practice as interestingly, only one organisation mentioned any trialling, feed-back or pilot studies of their materials. Even so, if such programmes are used, the strong emphasis is on debate and discussion by 86% of the organisations can only remind one that being articulate must be of considerable advantage here, if not a necessary pre-condition and we have already seen how low in importance it was rated by heads for KS1 children. This despite increasing research evidence, for example from Dorothy Bishop at the MRC Cambridge (1998) and Keith Stanovich at Ontario that the inarticulate child goes on to become the poorer reader and the poorer readers feature very largely among the disaffected, the excluded and anti-social, i.e. those frequently considered to be 'poor' citizens.

Theoretical Support

These then are the choice of methodologies adopted by what seem to be the best known organisations in the field of citizenship education, that is, amongst those who offer primary materials – 39 out of 200. They seem to be based on what in practice they feel to be attractive and successful with younger children, for I found that less than 5% felt they should justify their practice by theoretical reference – even though they would find considerable support, as in the case of justifying the place of social games and drama, in the work of Judy Dunn, for example.

The recourse to what children find interesting and attractive is a significant pedagogical change in itself when the very largely didactic methods of 40 or 30 years ago are recalled. An illustration from one example of popular fiction of the times sets the scene: Ginger, best friend of William of 'Just William' fame, sums up what may well have been a common response to citizenship education in those years: "My aunt gave me (a book) las' birthday, called 'Civics' or somefin' and it was so dull I didn't read it till las' week when I had that cold and I felt so mis'rable I wanted a mis'rable book, so I read it". Indeed the attested failure of those methods to produce interested and involved young citizens may have been what led to an entirely pragmatic shift of methodology without need of support from theory.

Kohlberg, who took a developmental approach to the acquiring of moral judgement is one of the very few theorists who is mentioned by name in the context of citizenship education. To treat his theory to compression is to inevitably distort it somewhat but one could say that he saw this progression as starting with the age and stage of children when they kick and shout at the silly chair for tripping them up and progressing to the young adult who can take a dispassionate view of an argument, being able to view it from a number of sides. He saw the intermediate years as being characterised by certain identifiable stages of moral judgement, each successive one being noticeably less egocentric and more detached than the one before. Feminists such as Carol Gilligan and others have had certain reservations though and hold that the 'masculine' virtues of intellectualisation and objectivity made it appear in tests that girls were less mature in this field than boys, when they felt that in fact girls were taking into account, other more 'humane' variables.

In Holland, this argument has gone beyond the level of academic debate. Up until a few years ago secondary schools had separate curricula for Personal, Social and Moral development and Citizenship. Many felt this perpetuated the divide between women's and men's lives and concerns and devalued the former. Now, a new compulsory subject has been introduced called 'Caring' which covers responsibility towards self, family and community. Those who are persuaded by the developmental theorists demonstrate it in their recommended practice and materials, most noticeably in this instance by the Citizenship Foundation. The implication of the recent research by Shweder & Turiel who stress the importance of social context in children's moral judgements has not yet been addressed but is an interesting contribution.

Potential Problems

The above has attempted to give some overview across the range of suggested, if not actual, practices in the field of primary citizenship education. It has not yet touched on the possible problems that can and do emerge.

For example the development of maturity and discernment in matters of moral judgement, even the discernment that there might be a moral *dimension* to certain events and relationships is not, as we have seen, the priority

a) educating young people to conform to social mores and rules

b) educating moral judgement and reasoning

c) fostering prosocial behaviour, altruism and taking responsibility

d) engendering moral autonomy and resistance to conformity pressures

e) educating moral emotions and caring

f) preventing anti-social behaviour through internalised guilt

From: *The Effective Citizen*
Helen Haste, Konstanz, 1998

Figure 8.

of all those advocating citizenship education and this is necessarily going to be reflected in their choice of practice. That there are different priorities is not always easy to discern at first glance and that they bring along certain important problems in their wake might be profitably borne in mind by those planning in-service training.

Helen Haste of the University of Bath for example, has recently drawn together a group, of what, at first glance, might appear to be an unexceptional list of the aims of citizenship education (Figure 8), as applicable, I think, to primary as well as secondary schools. On inspection though, as she points out, a number of them not only emphasise different values, for example the pair (a) and (d) and (b) and (e) and (c) and (f) but that in order to obtain either of these pairs, it would be very likely that one would have to use very different methodologies or practices.

Mixed messages appear to surface in a number of contexts. For instance the use of Schools Councils, an example of democratic procedure, was mentioned by only 3% of the surveyed organisations but over half of the headteachers saw it as a vehicle for education in democratic procedures. Nonetheless, in conversation eight out of ten allowed that schools as institutions were even less likely to represent the best of democratic principles than they were ten years ago. As one respondent said: "Tests may be medicine but league tables are poison when it comes to being honest about democracy in schools". Another problem may be that society is sending out rather confused messages here about fairness and will have to address the paradox that a simultaneous emphasis on co-operation and competition brings in its wake. Children themselves pick up such inconsistencies only too quickly. There is interesting work in the USA, most noticeably by de Vries, on the establishment of 'democratic classrooms' in early years education and a seeming reduction in anti-social behaviours.

In conclusion, I think problems such as I've mentioned, for example, the establishment of a common understanding and mutually agreed goals, the choice of appropriate methodologies and the dangers of the inconsistent modelling, are difficult but not intractable. They do need the recognition though, that they *are* problems and need addressing if we are to go forward with a consistent and coherent programme of curriculum development.

Contemporary Research

Finally, could one *ever* suggest that there might be certain kinds of practice in schools that would eventually result in a higher level of *adult* democratic activity such as community involvement, willingness to vote and a higher evidence of the civic virtues (as Patricia White has described them)? Those who are less likely to commit crime, and more likely to keep their jobs and marriages? (and what this means for social stability). Although I would have had to say until recently that such evidence, though interesting, might be hard to find, research has now become available that suggests that, surprisingly, there might be educational practices that have this potential.

Recently the results of a long term, 30 year survey in the USA has been published; Schweinhart & Weikart's 1997 survey looked at the adult lives of those who, for three, sometimes two years, had been involved in one of three educational programmes when they were between three and six years old. The children were matched for intelligence, and all three groups came from a struggling socio-economic background. They attended either a formal programme emphasising little but the early acquisition of skills but one that was considered 'fast-track' for disadvantaged children, a *laissez-faire* one with low adult engagement or expectations, or one that called itself Highscope, which engaged with the parents and emphasised an activity, play-based programme in which children were encouraged towards mastery and to take their own decisions and had time and opportunities to explore social relationships. It was this last programme which showed such seeming benefit in later life. Judging by their adult lives – in their late 20s – those who attended the *laissez-faire* programme didn't do too badly, but for those who 'played at schools' that is, the fast-track programme that concentrated very largely on acquiring just formal skills, the results were statistically, quite significantly negative. Those who had attended this formal skills programme at an early age were three times more likely to go to prison and be excluded from senior school and three times *less* likely to vote, become involved in their local communities and hold down steady relationships or jobs, than those children who attended a Highscope programme, for whom the opposite was true.

The findings are similar to another recent survey carried out in Portugal by Maria Nabuco & Kathy Sylva (1994) of the University of Oxford and it may be that such surveys cannot help but have policy implications – particularly with reference to the education of our future citizens. An emphasis

on early education programmes that encourage the kind of activities that involve social relationships may prove to pay much greater dividends to society than well-intentioned 'fast track' compensatory programmes at an inappropriately early age.

Rediscovered Pioneer

In this respect I would like the final words to belong to a rather remarkable woman whose life I recently came across when, by chance, I was asked to write a review of her biography. Phoebe Cusden was born in 1887 and had a lifelong interest in democracy. She was the model of an involved citizen serving on endless, and probably thankless, committees to better social conditions in Reading where she eventually became Mayor in 1946. Somehow she found time to concern herself with nursery schools and became head of the Nursery School Association in the 1930s. She wrote the definitive account of the movement up until that date and these words are taken from her book:

> *I believe the greatest contribution of the Nursery School is that it is a training ground for democratic citizens – citizens who will have learned not what to think – but how to think.*

It wasn't just intellectual development she valued either, as she went on to say:

> *... exercise in self-reliance, unselfishness and willing co-operation which are also features of the Nursery School, will go far towards producing the kind of citizen so vitally necessary if democracy is to be capable of the tasks that devolve upon it – or even to survive.*

In other words, in 1937 Phoebe Cusden was not only aware of the preconceptions that she brought to her notions of citizenship, but she had an intuitive grasp of the kind of practice that was needed to bring it about.

Conclusion

Originally the focus of my attention was on the whole of the primary age range. This was an area where I felt the real foundations of attitudes, skills and understanding of our future citizens were and are laid down. With the research evidence that is presently accumulating, I have now come to the point of offering the radical suggestion that perhaps we should now be turning our time, attention and resources to a particular part of the primary age range, i.e. the very earliest years of education, for the foundation of an effective citizenship education. For, with the support of a growing body of evidence, it appears we should now consider that there could be a critical and crucial stage for the development of social attitudes and relationships.

One that, if attended to, and given the appropriate provision and practice, would seem to result in what society rightly sees as a priority for its survival, the emergence of genuinely concerned and committed citizens.

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Leicestershire's Phase III Development of Community Schooling: the suffocation of a remarkable initiative

Roger Seckington
Roger Seckington, now an Honorary Editorial Board Member, served *FORUM* for many years as chairman before his retirement. He was formerly Principal of three Leicestershire Community Colleges. Besides his deep regret at the failure of successive governments to develop a coherent community education policy, the main focus of his article is to illustrate how good LEA practice and initiatives in the field of community education were brought to an end by central government measures in the 1980s and early 1990s.

By the late 1960s/early 1970s the County of Leicestershire had established a fully comprehensive system of secondary education. Almost uniquely this was based on a two-tier scheme of 11-14 high schools and 14-19 upper schools. Each comprehensive school or 'family' of high schools feeding an upper school operated fairly comfortably on a neighbourhood basis, notwithstanding obvious differences between individual catchment areas, some leakage to the private sector and the existence of a selective system within the City of Leicester. Some parents, anxious to enter their children into a fully comprehensive neighbourhood school, moved into an appropriate county catchment to achieve this aim. Certainly at this time there was a buoyancy and confidence in Leicestershire schools, attracting national and international attention. New schools opening then were at the very frontiers of development. Leicestershire had established all-ability schools operating on a neighbourhood basis but was also making rapid progress in the largely pioneering development of community schools.

Ashby Ivanhoe, Leicestershire's first community college, opened in 1954. Very appropriately it was opened by Henry Morris. In 1937 Stewart Mason (Leicestershire's Director of Education from 1947 to 1971) went to Cambridgeshire as a junior HMI, and "there he met the man who was to be one of the most important influences in his life and career, Henry Morris".[1]

In the 1930s Morris had established a number of Village Colleges in Cambridgeshire and these were used as the model by Stewart Mason in his memorandum on Community Education produced in 1949. His scheme "envisaged three main grades of institution serving community purposes: the College of Further Education carrying out the greater part of the part-time 'County College' type of education for 16-18 year olds; the 'Village College' on the Cambridgeshire pattern attached to a secondary school; and the 'Village Centre' (in towns, the Neighbourhood Centre) attached to a primary school".[2] In the jargon, Ashby was a Phase I community college. It was to be fifteen years before the introduction of Phase II and during that period the number of Phase I community colleges grew steadily to about ten. So to be one of the ten or so members of LAW (Leicestershire Association of Wardens) in the early 1970s was a fairly select business but a period of rapid growth in community education was just over the horizon.

Practical Changes

Recognising that school buildings and the activities that can develop in them are an asset for the whole community Phase I community colleges made that huge step away from exclusive use by a particular age group during the 'school' day to much wider community access. Headteachers were called heads and wardens (after the Cambridgeshire model) which rather reflected the duality of use – a school by day and a range of physical, cultural and educational activities during the evenings, weekends and school holidays. A community tutor – adult in the first instance – had the task of developing and managing the community programme. Initially modest but none-the-less significant adaptations were made to buildings to give adult accommodation like an adult lounge/coffee bar, office for the tutor or a classroom for adult classes. Later, youth facilities were added. Strategies for servicing buildings open for longer hours and often at weekends or in traditional holiday periods were developed. A process was started in Leicestershire in 1954, gradual at first but with gathering momentum by the late 1960s and beyond, which saw a huge growth in community education provision requiring radical work on the design of buildings, the management of the physical plant, community staffing and the development of extensive community education programmes.

There would be no mistaking Leicestershire's commitment to community education in the 1970s. Stewart Mason had started the process and together with his deputy Andrew Fairbairn had overseen a steady and progressive development of community education provision. Andrew Fairbairn was appointed as Director of Education in 1971 and his remarkable leadership was to continue until 1984. The number of community colleges was to more than quadruple, provision based on primary schools steadily increased and, following local government reorganisation in 1974, the City of Leicester's extensive community provision was included. Advisers and officers were concerned with the whole service, were working towards a unitary provision and a concept of lifelong education that would eventually extend across the whole authority.

Phase II in this developing strategy was introduced in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the opening of new colleges at Bosworth, Wreake and Countesthorpe. Critically, a new full time appointment of a Head of Community Education was made supported by two community tutors (youth and adult). Professional management of the community education programme was enhanced, the design of buildings better reflected a pattern of continuous use and premises officers working a shift system maintained the buildings. The community college head was now called

principal to reflect the increasing unitary nature of the provision.

Introduction of Phase III

The first Phase III college, Hind Leys in Shepshed opening in 1976 (the year in which James Callaghan gave his Ruskin Speech, the first shot in the so-called Great Debate), was followed by Earl Shilton and Groby in 1977. Babington and Moat in the City of Leicester opened in the early 1980s. These five newly designated community colleges were pioneers in a phase of development intended to spread in time across the whole LEA. Events, already in train when these colleges opened, were such that this potentially very radical initiative did not extend beyond the five colleges and ended altogether two decades later. Of course, each of the five Phase III colleges was unique in reflecting their catchment, staffing and premises. They were all in new buildings whose design and construction reflected the integrated approach expected. There were, however, several common elements which distinguished this phase as being significantly different from its predecessors. I would highlight three key features particular to the Phase III colleges.

Vice Principal

In the earlier phases the senior community appointment had been at head of department or assistant principal level and paid on FE rates. Now an additional vice principal appointment was possible, giving a team of three or four vice principals. The best demonstration of a wholly integrated approach would have been to mix and share the tasks and responsibilities across the team. In practice, the new colleges were anxious to recruit people with good experience of community work to ensure a brisk and confident start so the traditional divisions of curriculum, pastoral support and community tended to remain. A lost opportunity perhaps but there is an understandable tendency in most organisations to develop a structure because it gives clarity and focuses skills and strengths where they are needed. But of critical importance community work was given equal status and planning and organisation was on a whole-institution basis.

Block Finance

By today's standards of schools managing their own finances, the Block Finance scheme introduced in 1977 will seem quite modest. At the time it was a fantastic departure from traditional LEA practice. Each college was allocated a Budget along the same lines as FE colleges of that period. In many ways it foreshadowed LMS of a decade later. Virement was possible between headings and the whole system allowed for good housekeeping. Whilst the Block Finance scheme gave a measure of local flexibility to Phase III community colleges, the LEA still remained responsible for strategic and macro financial planning.

Community Teachers

I doubt if the huge potential of this initiative has ever really been fully appreciated. If it had been given a less circumspect start, then allowed a period of steady development and been adopted in an increasing number of community schools (as originally intended), it might have changed in a very fundamental way how community schools were organised. Regrettably it was more expensive and at a time of increasing budgetary restraint its future was in doubt from the start.

"This new initiative meant that each member of the teacher staff had an option to take up an annually renewable community contract to work on some area of the community education programme."[3] The notional division between the school and community contracts was 90:100. Thus a school with 50 teachers based on PTR offering 90:100 community contracts would have an actual staffing of 55. The benefit to the statutory curriculum is obvious and the community education programme was further enriched by tapping into this larger pool of trained providers. "Teaching staff with community contracts had time off in lieu and an additional payment of £500 per annum for each 10% contract."[4] Considerable flexibility existed in determining an individual contract within the notional 90:100 institutional figure. So some 80:20 'across-the-board' head of departments were appointed with responsibility for the whole college programme in their area of work, e.g. Design. Some 70:30 appointments were made to give support in areas like youth work. Contracts were renewed annually so could also be used for development work. In some cases the time-off in lieu may have been spread across the year but the community element concentrated on a particular period such as summer play schemes. Quite a challenge to a profession used to working a regular annual contract based on a well defined working day and a carefully constructed timetable. A great deal of community work takes place outside that well defined working pattern – evenings, weekends and school holidays. The community teacher scheme was devised to give some increased flexibility to the dual system of a team of teachers working a school day and others being employed outside those hours for adult and youth work. A major step towards a more holistic approach.

The community teacher contract was an opt-in scheme. The potential for exploitation of teachers in a scheme trying to establish greater flexibility in the working pattern is all too obvious. Understandably, union negotiators were anxious to ensure that it *was* an opt-in-scheme. Also they obtained an additional payment for sessions worked outside the normal school day. This payment may be judged as a skilful piece of negotiation and it was certainly welcomed by individuals opting-in and thus eased the introduction of the scheme, but it was one of the factors that led to the eventual demise of the scheme. This could really be sensed at the time. The original intention had been to adopt a flexible approach to the working week in which community teachers would have contracted for ten out of a fifteen or twenty session week. Had the practice been established, taken root and spread beyond the original pilot colleges, it could have been one of the most radical challenges in education in modern times.

The End of the Initiative

Phase III was an LEA initiative. In 1974 as a result of the Maud Report, Leicestershire had been enlarged to include Rutland and the City of Leicester. The nature of the service was bound to change as the LEA more than doubled in size. Andrew Fairbairn's leadership was, very fortunately, in place until 1984 but the effects of increasing politicisation of the service and a growing bureaucracy with endless meetings and a vast outpouring of paper were obvious. Central government during the Thatcher years set about emasculating, indeed almost dismantling, LEAs. Community schooling – particularly Phase III – couldn't

survive these vicissitudes unscathed. As the reaction of users showed in 1979 when a one-third cut in the community education budget was required and rumours of possible college closures circulated, the 'hands-off-our-colleges' outcry from the electorate was a powerful lobby. Community schools continue and the LEA is still funding care staff and is providing a framework through commissioning agreements. Community workers are using the new funding and support structures available to them. "Despite cuts and changes, we are committed to continue to function as a college that serves the whole community."[5] Phase III, however, could not be funded under LMS and has been phased out with community teacher contracts ceasing in 1994/95. The growth towards a fully unitary approach has been halted or at best frustrated.

Did the Phase III community teacher scheme work? Regrettably it was more a case of what might have been rather than what was. Undoubtedly all five colleges worked well-providing vigorous community education programmes which in some cases were of a real pioneering quality. In terms of the programme provided, many Phase II colleges were just as vigorous and often more extensive. Where there were measurable differences was in the organisation and management of Phase III. Phase III moved college organisation further along the continuum from dual use to the goal of a fully integrated, unitary approach. Financial and premises management were unified. Everybody working in the community college had to commit themselves to a full acceptance of a wide community brief and most had a contractual involvement in part of the community programme additional to the 'school' teaching element. Furthermore some progress was made in the challenging area of a more holistic approach to the curriculum. What the progressive development of this type of community schooling might have achieved by challenging the very basic structure of educational provision can only be a matter of speculation. A point was almost reached when it would have been possible to organise the 'school' day on a three or even four session basis with students selecting sessions. There were (and are) a host of difficulties such as transport, contracts of employment and servicing but the attraction of having specialist facilities and personnel available over a longer time frame is obvious.

The Loss of a Unique Opportunity

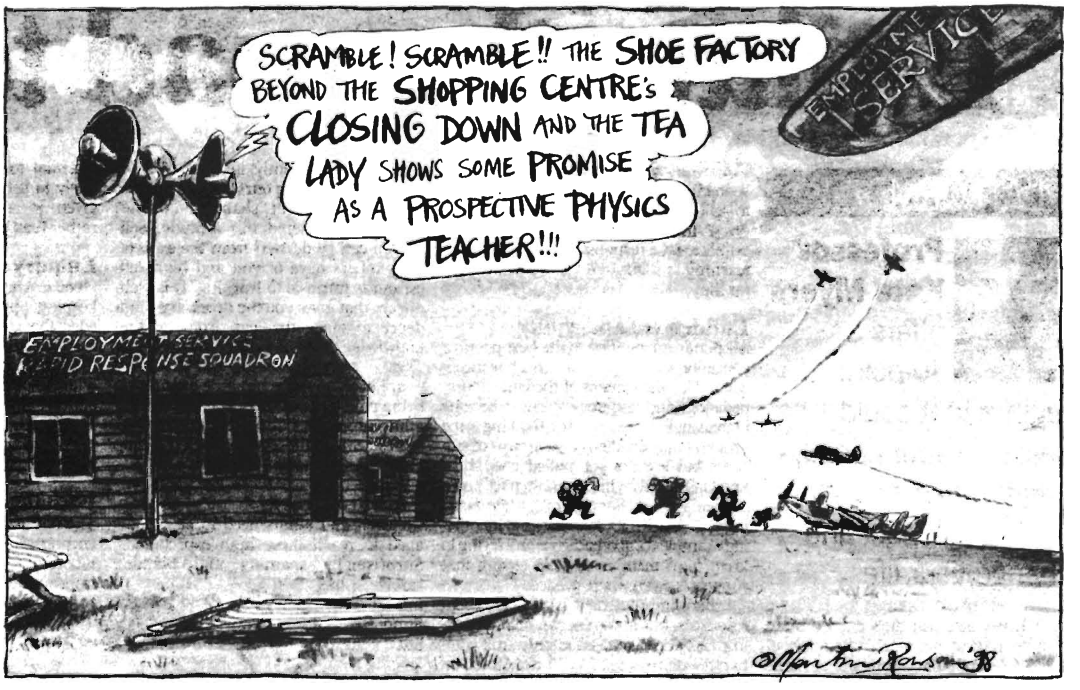
The Education Act of 1944 laid down that "it shall be the duty of the local education authority for every area so far as their powers extend, to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient education throughout those stages shall be available to meet the needs of the population of their area".[6] Hardly a powerful mandate for community schooling but none-the-less clearly setting a framework from which a process of lifelong learning could be incorporated into the existing school system. It was in response to this opening that Stewart Mason wrote his 1949 memorandum on Community Education, the starting point of Leicestershire's remarkable contribution to a process of lifelong education. Subsequent government legislation ignored the contribution that schools could make to the process of lifelong education. Worse, it seemed that too often the centre was unaware that community schools existed. The recent determination that 'community' will be one of three categories of state schools thus tragically diminishes the description of a genuine comprehensive neighbourhood community school. What is needed is a thorough re-appraisal at a national level of the role that schools can play in a process of lifelong education. That should include re-visiting the developments that took place in LEAs like Leicestershire and that were so crudely interrupted in the 1980s.

Notes

[1, 2] Donald Jones & Stewart Mason (1988) *The Art of Education*. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

[3, 4, 5] Freda Hussain & Tony Hughes (1995) A comprehensive community college, *FORUM*, 37, pp. 52-54.

[6] The Education Act 1944.



Martin Rowson, *The Times Educational Supplement*, 30 October 1998

Ofsted is Inaccurate and Damaging: how did we let it happen?

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Carol Taylor Fitz-Gibbon is a Professor of Education and the Director of the Curriculum, Evaluation and Management Centre at the University of Durham. Originator of the A-Level Information System (ALIS) and contractor for the Value Added National Project, she introduced 'Value-added' analyses in the evaluation of the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative in the 1980s. She presently teaches research methods for post-graduate degrees.

It was predictable before any Ofsted inspector set foot in any school that the so-called 'judgements' would be inaccurate. But the *impact* of the inspections was more difficult to predict, because the very fine teaching profession in the United Kingdom usually makes even poor ideas from government work. Alas, the impact has been worse than one could have imagined (Appendix, p. 16). We must therefore ask ourselves how this dreadful misuse of public money, now heading for £120M to £170M a year, came about. These, then, are the three topics to be briefly introduced in this article: inaccurate judgements, net negative impact and learning from history.

Inaccurate Judgements

When is a guess to be dignified with the term 'judgement'? The answer to this question comes from the methodology of research in general, and educational research in particular. Three fundamental questions have to be asked regarding the adequacy of the *sample*, the *reliability* of the judgements and the *validity*. Regarding the sample, we must ask if it is large and sufficiently representative. Thus we would want to know, *on the basis of some research*, whether pre-announcing an Ofsted visit to a school seriously jeopardised the inspectors' intentions to see the school as it really is. We would need to know, *on the basis of research*, for how long it is necessary to stay in a school to get a sense of how it normally functions. We would need to know, *on the basis of adequate research*, for how long it is necessary to sit in a classroom, and on how many different occasions, to get an accurate estimate of the quality of the teaching. Not one such study had been conducted when the new Ofsted regime was announced.

Even if we can set aside our worries about the evidential basis, i.e. the sample on which Ofsted's judgements are resting, we would expect, in research, that the reliability of judgements was investigated. Reliability concerns the issue as to whether different inspectors would all agree on what they were observing, and how to rate it. Even when shown a video of a classroom, inspectors frequently give it rather different ratings. Which rating is to be accepted? Or are they to be averaged? There are methods for addressing this issue and they should have been applied before Ofsted had the temerity to judge individual teachers. HMI had long before concluded that such judgements would be insecure. Finally, after many years of criticism, Ofsted did one study of inter-inspector reliability. Instead of commissioning an independent body, the study was run by Ofsted, using the 17% of invited inspectors who volunteered, who all knew they were part of this study, and most of whom had worked together in the past. In other words, in the one study of reliability, the sample was unrepresentative, very likely biased, and too small. Furthermore it provided almost no data on the use of the extreme ends of the seven point scale for rating the performance of teachers. It was amateurish and insufficient evidence on which to base a system.

Despite inadequacies in sampling and the lack of established reliability, could it be that nevertheless inspectors can arrive at the right conclusions? This is the issue of validity. One very simple study that could have been conducted concerned inspectors' judgements of the progress made by pupils. As Chris Woodhead emphasised to the first Parliamentary Select Committee hearings on Ofsted, inspectors judge pupils' progress as well as their levels of attainment. These judgements of progress should have been compared with measured 'value-added' data. Sir Stewart Sutherland rejected an offer to assist with such studies. He also rejected an offer from Professor David Wood, an international authority on classroom observation, on help in methods of observing in classrooms. In short, the preliminary research studies that should have underpinned any system of evaluating schools had not been done, so that anybody who knew anything about research methods should have been deeply suspicious and actively in opposition to Ofsted, for there was much at stake.

Some supporters of Ofsted have argued that it is not a research project and it does not have to meet the established standards for quality research. But adequate reliability and validity are not options; they are fundamental to the fair and accurate interpretation of judgements or observations. Furthermore, Ofsted needs *higher* standards of reliability and validity than research because Ofsted reports do not gather dust on library shelves to be read quietly in the groves of academe. In contrast the reports have highly consequential impact on individuals (as in the example provided in the Appendix, p. 16). Justice demands that they are fair and accurate to a very high degree.

Impact

"Must a Christ die in every generation to save those with no imagination?" (George Bernard Shaw). It seems as though the profession had to go through the Ofsted experience to find out how destructive it was to have poor methods applied to the evaluation of teachers' competence and schools' reputations. However, this was not just a matter of lack of imagination, but more fundamentally a lack of knowledge of proper research methods. Science can save us from a lack of imagination by making us sober about our guess-work.

The damage that can result from an inspection system of unknown reliability and validity was made all the greater by the absolute power that was invested in Ofsted inspectors. Their judgements cannot be questioned in a court of law.

Of course, it would be extraordinary if the millions of pounds spent every year supporting Ofsted teams had not resulted in some schools finding ways to improve. However, many schools were already vigorously seeking to measure their effectiveness and find ways to improve where this was possible. Such efforts were sometimes stimulated by the publication of school performance tables and the pressures introduced by local management of schools. However, the A-level Information System (ALIS) started years before these events showed that many schools have an intrinsic interest in their work and in measuring their own effectiveness. To add to the pressures of League Tables and competition for students the additional pressure of an inaccurate system of inspection was quite unnecessary. Nevertheless it can be conceded that inspectors' observations may have sometimes been helpful. Moreover, giving questionnaires to parents is an appropriate way to make sure that the parents' voice is heard through the conduit of the inspector. (Incidentally, I am puzzled that we have not heard more from Ofsted about the views of parents. Were they perhaps too positive? Let us not forget that most surveys have shown that parents are very positive about their own children's school. Moreover, the public in general is far more positive about teachers than they are about politicians so it is also a little puzzling as to why education has suffered so badly.)

Given that the Office for Standards in Education had no proper standards for inspection, it was necessary to create Ofstin, the Office for Standards in Inspection. Only retired headteachers could be invited to join because it would be too dangerous for any head in post to invite retribution on his or her school. The retired headteachers in Ofstin organise conferences, provide a forum, have created publications, and Bob Fisk and John McNicholas approached the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, which provided £62,000 for an independent study of Ofsted. Professor Maurice Kogan and his team will be reporting shortly on that independent inspection of inspectors. Interestingly, it was the 'democracy' remit of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust under which this grant was given. One might well ask whether teachers' democratic rights were violated by Ofsted. Who has a duty of care regarding the welfare of teachers? In the United States' Constitution, everyone is guaranteed 'due process' before they are publicly attacked or lose their jobs. They are also guaranteed freedom from 'cruel and unusual punishment'. Is it not cruel and unusual to declare the year that a headteacher is retiring after nineteen years in post that his is a 'failing' school? That happened very early on in Ofsted's regime, and the basis of the failure of the school was utterly flimsy. It included the statement that "The school promotes satisfactorily the pupils' moral and spiritual development but not their spiritual and cultural development". How can grown-ups write such unsubstantiated nonsense?

Another negative impact of Ofsted was the recruiting of 616 primary headteachers as 'additional inspectors'. Only 38% returned as heads. It is no doubt easier to inspect others than to run the highly complex and challenging organisation that is a school.

We now face a crisis in recruitment to teaching that is so severe that a million pounds has been spent by the Teacher Training Agency trying to convince people to enter teaching and there are unfilled vacancies in many schools, particularly in the stressed inner-city schools that Ofsted has disproportionately failed.

This serious situation cannot have been helped by the stress of unjust inspections that is clearly illustrated by the many letters received by Ofstin.

Learning from History

How did this disgraceful chapter in British social history occur? It is extremely difficult to interpret history. There are many possible causes for the effects that we observe so that history is essentially speculative. Nevertheless a few possible lines of explanation are as follows. The Conservative Government, under which Ofsted was created, was not committed to state education. Indeed, off the record, one minister said "There won't be any more state schools in ten years". Thus a concern to avoid damaging state education was not a priority. So how was the legislation drawn up?

Exactly how the extraordinary legislation that created Ofsted was put together and became law must be the topic of a thesis some time. It was extraordinary because of the total power invested in inspectors. The legislation also included a threat to schools that if they didn't give their data to the inspector, they could be subject to a Level 2 fine. It was even written into the law, that if the data were on a computer then the teachers must help the inspectors to get it off the computer.

How on earth did it occur, this paranoid, unprofessional legislation with no sense of checks and balances, and with an appalling approach to the teaching profession? Why could the profession not stop it? I think it was largely because teachers and, unfortunately, their professional organisations, were naïve. HMI (Her Majesty's Inspectors) had behaved well. No doubt the new inspection system would behave well. In addition to this naivety, teachers and their professional organisations lacked adequate training in research methods that would have alerted them to the nonsense of the claims that were being made for the accuracy of inspections. There were people in universities who knew better, who knew that the methodology was amateurish, last-century stuff, and not adequately researched and validated but to their shame, universities were largely pusillanimous. They kept quiet.

Furthermore, some academics encouraged Ofsted to believe that the so-called findings of school effectiveness research were a reliable basis on which to judge schools. School effectiveness research provided 'correlates' of effective schools. Thus effective schools were said to have strong leadership, whatever that meant, and a safe and orderly environment (as though anybody was campaigning for unsafe and disorderly environments). However, using the

same methods as school effectiveness research you would actually find, in almost any survey, that the progress pupils make and their levels of attainment are higher in large classes than in small classes. So should schools be encouraged to have strong leaders and large classes? This illustration shows the fallibility of the school effectiveness research which elevates correlation to the status of causation. In the early days Ofsted quoted school effectiveness research as though it were infallible. Then they inspected teacher training and universities started to question them. Chris Woodhead then started to call findings of school effectiveness research 'banal'. It would all be quite amusing, had it not been such a dreadful waste of public money, and as the mailbag to Ofstin shows, a devastatingly painful experience for many highly professional and dedicated people.

Some responsibility for this state of Ofsted must be borne by those who appointed a Professor of Religion as the first Chief Inspector. Serving as the Vice Chancellor of London University and also Chair of the Health Trust, Sir Stewart Sutherland was the first HMCI, part-time. He had no qualifications in evaluation, measurement, or research methods. Why does the government feel able to appoint people without relevant qualifications? Why did teachers' associations not protest at this? And why don't universities guard what is even in their own self-interest – standards in qualifications? The second HMCI is a teacher of English. Neither gentleman has shown the slightest interest in applying research methods. They have trusted their own judgements with a confidence exhibited only by those who have never checked their judgements scientifically.

There Is Hope

There is every hope that Ofsted's days, in its present form, are numbered. Charles Clarke, Under Secretary of State for Education in the School Standards Unit of the DfEE, has stated that school inspections will be light if schools have good self-evaluation systems. This would bring the inspection of schools more in line with the better system run by the Further Education Funding Council for colleges which approaches inspection more as a professional audit. UK schools currently lead the world in self-evaluation systems. They have shown that teachers are quite willing to be accountable if the methods of assessment of their work are clear and believable. We should celebrate this impending triumph of science over what I have demonstrated are entirely unvalidated guesses.

APPENDIX

[The Editors would like to point out that contrary to usual practice, the names of the staff and the school given here are not fictional. Full permission has been given by governors, staff and parents to use their real names as they feel it reinforces the message that the travesty of an inspection that they experienced happened to real people in a real place.]

Nottingham, 15 September 1998

Dear Ofstin

It is now one year since our School, Seagrave Primary, began preparations for our Ofsted inspection. Like all other schools we gathered together all the required documentation and as much evidence from previous years that we could, in order to give our team of inspectors a true picture of the nature of 'our school'. This extra work took many, many hours, in evening, holidays and at weekends. I must stress that no 'new' documents were instantly produced – the school had worked long and hard to formulate policies and structure the school's curriculum delivery for many years. Under the strong leadership of Margaret Beevers the whole staff had made corporate decisions which have proved workable and which have a feeling of 'ownership' for all the staff who work at the school.

Seagrave School has been, and still is, much respected by the local Community, other local schools, visiting teachers, professionals and L.E.A. advisers and Inspectors. We are a very professional and committed staff who work for the highest possible educational and behavioural standards in a challenging area.

There was little doubt in our mind that we would pass our inspection. We knew we had weaknesses in some areas, and these were prioritised in the School Management Plan. We had taken S.A.T.s since they were first introduced, and improvements had been made each year, with natural 'ups and downs' from one group of children to another. We have relentlessly delivered the National Curriculum, and worked hard at each modification. The structure of management had developed and changed as systems were introduced, and all members of staff had areas of responsibility fitting their teaching strengths.

Our inspection took place during four days beginning on February 9th 1998. We naturally felt apprehensive, but were also positive in our approach to the week. The visits of the Registered Inspector were informative and professional. We knew that our team of Inspectors had little actual teaching experience in Primary School, let alone any on a tough housing estate in a large city – only 2 out of 7 had actually taught a class of Primary children except as 'visiting experts'. However we had faith that other experience and training would have provided a degree of understanding as to the challenges and difficulties faced each and every day in schools like Seagrave.

Our faith was shattered by the numerous incidents which occurred during the inspection, and the unbelievably harsh judgement delivered by the Registered Inspector. So many questions were left unasked, so many conversations displayed the lack of understanding and experience of Primary practice. It was, according to the criteria, a 'professionally' executed inspection, though many members of staff were uncomfortable with various situations and incidents that occurred. We failed. On reading the final report, the judgement appears to be based on academic results, with vague reasons for these squeezed from any possible negative opinion that could be laid at the door of teaching or management.

We have no poor teachers at Seagrave School. You can not be a 'poor teacher' and survive in schools like ours. All teachers can have a 'poor' lesson – it is very easy for things to 'go wrong' when there is a struggle to even get some children off the yard, into line, onto a seat, and ready to learn!

The management is decisive and respected. A school can not operate so well with all the underlying problems without exceptional management. The entire staff, parents, community, 'experts' with great knowledge of the school, and even the report itself give evidence of the obvious strength in leadership given to the school.

We were left, in mid-February, with a devastated, demoralised staff. All the depth and breadth of experience, gained through years of teaching in a wide variety of schools, had been dismissed as 'failing' practice. Never-the-less, despite many personal problems with health and stress, every member of staff at Seagrave has been in post, working as hard as ever for the good of the children and the improvement of the school.

People who work in challenging areas put their lives and souls into the task. The teachers would be 'beacon' teachers in more fortunate schools. It is an area of the teaching world that receives little thanks or appreciation, and yet the task is faced year in, and year out, by the most dedicated of the profession.

We educate in the broadest sense of the word and offer our children a quality of education which would be hard to better. We take each young individual and try to lead them:

- *to achieve their best academically*
- *to develop a positive attitude to life and work*
- *to become independent*
- *to develop a moral and ethical code*
- *to an understanding of community*
- *to a strong commitment to self development*
- *to a sense of family and commitment to others*
- *to a love of the arts*
- *to an enjoyment of sport and adventurous activity.*

How can so-called 'experts' not recognise the extra-ordinary skills that are displayed continually by teachers such as those at Seagrave School?

How can the Government brand Level 3 children as failing?

I could ask countless questions – but it would seem to be pointless.

However, I do believe that it is totally unjust to fail a teacher's lesson, give no explanation as to why a lesson was so judged, and not allow a teacher to receive a copy of the judgement. This may seem a very small point, taken from a multitude of comments that I could make. But one of the main reasons for the school's failure would appear to be the percentage of lessons judged as failed. This led to the belief that teaching 'rigour' was lacking. This led to the judgement that the S.A.T. results were poor because of all the inadequacies of the staff. The overall picture of a school with children making adequate and good progress despite many disadvantages was clouded by many judgements by inexperienced observers. These judgements being claimed as 'sound', and yet unseen and unquestioned by the people being judged.

Until this year I, personally, have loved my career. My family have despaired at the endless work, work, work. They have laughed at the strange 'things' bought or collected whilst 'on holiday'. They have helped and supported in effort and time.

Over the years, I must have helped to teach well over 1,000 children how to read, write, do their mathematics, and learn all the variety of skills needed to grow into useful adults. Four days in February 1998 have scarred my memories forever. I, personally, had no failed lessons. I, personally, was not criticised. But we are a team at Seagrave School, and I witnessed the most pointless misjudgement of the school.

A school of which the Government and DfEE should be proud.

I question how this system can possibly be justified, with the cost in personal lives, pointless paperwork, and enormous financial outlay?

Schools would make improvements with a system of self assessment and positive external support. A cost-effective, rigorous system that would not cause the irreparable damage of the present system should be devised. The teaching profession deserves more honour in its judgement.

In conclusion – we are still working excessive overtime to try to manage all the expected changes in delivery of the Primary Curriculum as well as managing our detailed 'Action Plan' and the impending visits of yet more 'experts'. These tasks come second to the real job of trying to decipher what 6-year-old Katie is trying to say, and finding some swimming kit for Darren, who has not got any because it is at Dad's, and Mum won't speak to him anymore.

I have waited six months to write this letter. This is the sixth draft. I firmly believe that I now have our inspection 'in perspective'. I felt that you should be aware of 'my' perspective.

Yours sincerely

Philippa Weeks

January's Quote of the Month

"The purposes to which national test results are now being put are profoundly deprofessionalising, subverting good practice in assessment and, consequently, in the process of teaching and learning."

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers, which said the testing regime is distorting the school curriculum.

The Good News: feminism, equality and teacher education

Gaby Weiner
Gaby Weiner is Professor of Teacher Education and Research at Umeå University in Sweden. She moved there from her post as Professor of Education and Director of the Educational Research Unit at South Bank University in 1998. She has published widely on social justice, equal opportunities and gender issues. In this article, a revised version of her inaugural lecture at Umeå, she argues that feminist pedagogy is only at the start of its potential to make considerable and positive differences to the ways in which women perceive themselves in the domain of education.

The topic of this article – the good news of feminism – was chosen because of a conversation I had when I recently started a new job. I was warmly greeted by a female colleague who expressed great delight that the new professor was a woman. However, later on in our conversation, she made it very clear that while she was very sympathetic to, and supportive of, gender equality, she was less sympathetic to feminism – and indeed described feminists as generally angry, aggressive and unpleasant. She also implied that some of her other colleagues shared this view.

My experience of feminism, however, has been very different. My life has been greatly enriched by feminism and most of my research has been framed by feminist perspectives. In fact, one reason for changing jobs was the range of interests in, and the quality of, feminist work in education at my new place of work, Umeå University in Sweden. I thought, however, that exploring what feminism might offer to teacher education where I am now based, would mark a valuable starting point for my work. I therefore want to focus here on the 'good news' of feminism – as an enriching and challenging perspective – to balance its 'bad news' about the still remaining inequalities between women and men.

This article thus has two parts: it offers an argument for the adoption of a feminist perspective in teacher education, and it then explores what adopting such a perspective might mean in practice. It is shaped by the fact that I have spent the last twenty years or so, researching and writing about gender and education in the Britain, but also draws on a range of material, in particular from the USA and Nordic countries.

Why a Feminist Perspective Now?

In the western world at present, we are seeing what Hester Eisenstein terms a 'gender shock' (Eisenstein, 1991) and the Norwegian researcher Ivar Frønes (1996) calls a 'revolution' in women's lives and in girls' participation in schooling. Of all post-war educational inequalities – which include class, 'race' and ethnicity, nationality, religion – gender patterns have shown the greatest shift, in ways unanticipated 30 or 40 years ago. In many countries, for example, Britain, Sweden, Australia, girls have overtaken boys in examinations and closed the 'gender gap' in most previously male dominated school subjects such as maths and science (MHSA, 1995; Arnot et al, 1996; Powney, 1996).

Young people's perception of gender issues has also changed to greater openness about male and female roles in society. They recognise that they need to change their conceptions of what it means to be male and female, because of changes in the family and in the world of work. Girls and young women are more confident and positive about their future lives and opportunities, and boys and young men are more aware of the place of work in women's lives (Arnot et al, 1996). Girls are also entering universities as undergraduates in equal or slightly larger numbers to boys although in different subject areas (MHSA, 1995).

There have been a variety of explanations for why this has happened: media impact on youth cultures and consumerism, changes in family life and in marriage and divorce patterns, and changes in the labour market. Few also doubt also that feminism – of mothers and of teachers – has also been highly influential, although no one is quite sure to what extent.

But in case we become over-optimistic, various studies have also shown that these transformations have not been the same for all girls or all boys, and that those from working class backgrounds have shown least evidence of change (Teese, 1995; Weiner, 1998). Shifts in young people's perspectives, also, have not translated into many gains for women in society as a whole – except, perhaps, for women in politics here in the Nordic countries (Oláh, 1998). Occupational choices for both sexes remain conventional and stereotyped within a labour market that remains sexually divided and generally oppressive to women. What has come to be known as the 'glass ceiling' prevents women from gaining the top jobs in the civil service, industry and commerce, and women's lives, pay and conditions across the globe are generally poorer than men's. So inequalities between women and men still remain.

Feminism's Bad News

The 'bad news' of feminism is that it has attracted much hostility since it emerged as a fully fledged movement in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, in the 1970s, as the Finnish researcher Solveig Bergman shows, feminism

in Finland and Germany was associated with 'man-hating' (Bergman, 1991). In the USA and Britain it was seen as anti-feminine and 'bra-burning'. Journalists and newspapers across the world depicted feminists variously as ugly, angry, aggressive, anti-men, anti-sex, and anti-pleasure.

In 1998, the highly respected British journalist and feminist Polly Toynbee wrote in *The Guardian* newspaper about feminism's negative image as 'boring'. "It's predictable, worthy, *passée* and devoid of glamour. It's also social death. Introduce someone as a feminist and people run as from a Christian, vegan or stamp collector" (Toynbee, *Guardian Weekly*, 12 July 1998).

In the Swedish daily newspaper *Aftonbladet* in August, Åsa Vilbäck, a young woman of 27 announced 'Nej, jag blir aldrig feminist' ('No, I shall never be a feminist') (Vilbäck, 1998). Gender studies of Swedish schools have become associated with the title 'misery' research, described as "research with a ... pessimistic tone" (Ekholm, 1994, p. 35). This is because it has been necessary to focus on the 'misery' factors of women's poor treatment in order to convince people with strong social democratic traditions and welfare states, that gender inequalities still exist and are unacceptable.

Commentators have pointed out that compared with the USA or Britain, feminism in the Nordic countries has lacked a 'radical' edge because it has been associated with state policy. The state rather than the women's movement has promoted changed sex-roles because of the need for women in the Nordic labour market (Baude, 1979). In the context of Finland, Solveig Bergman suggests, there is a paradox.

> *On the one hand, we have the image of a country that is in the forefront of gender equality: strong, emancipated women, who were the first in Europe to gain the vote, women with a high degree of political participation, full-time employment and a high educational level. On the other hand, on the basis of 'everyday experience', Finland is a country which in many ways appears ... patriarchal and sexist ... (Bergman, 1991, p. 210)*

So, it seems, feminism remains necessary at the social and political level, even in countries in which women's formal emancipation is assumed to have been fully achieved – because 'everyday experience' tells us that in many contexts, women are still treated as inferior and marginal.

Feminism's Good News

I suggest that feminism has another more positive and, perhaps, enriching side. The good news of feminism is that it has inspired thousands of women (and not a few men) to break out of epistemologies that have diminished them. It has, for example, enabled us to acknowledge women's contribution to history, to science, to commerce and industry, and to everyday life. Feminism has also challenged forms of knowledge and practices which have promoted only the male point of view, or which have derided women's capacity to think or act. It has introduced new images of women to challenge the post-enlightenment construction – of women in the home and men everywhere else (see, for example, the beautiful illustrations in the *Medieval Women* address books and diaries, published by Collins).

I want to argue that feminism also has an important contribution to make to education and teacher education, not least because half of the pupils, most teachers and a high proportion of teacher educators are women. As one of the most influential and challenging social movements of this century, feminism has fundamentally changed the way we think about the education of girls and boys, and about women and men. And it is this which has helped girls to see that education can work for a new and better future for them.

Feminism and Education

But what is feminism? In fact, it has had different forms, with different titles and meanings, at different times in different countries. It was referred to as 'the woman question' in nineteenth-century Britain, as 'womanism' by black feminists in the USA in the 1980s, and as 'jämställdhet' in the political sphere in Sweden, from the 1970s onwards. A classic definition of feminism offered by the British sociologist Ann Oakley is "of keeping in the forefront of one's mind the lifestyles, activities and interests of more than half of humanity – women" (Oakley, 1974, p. 4). I think it is rather more complex than that and want to suggest that feminism has three main dimensions.

- *Political*: to improve the conditions and life-chances for girls and women so that they have equality with men.
- *Critical*: to provide an intellectual critique of dominant male forms of knowing and doing.
- *Practical*: to develop more egalitarian, open and ethical forms of practice aimed at increased participation.

Feminists have worked along all three dimensions within education. For example, earlier work highlighted educational differences between girls and boys, and in particular, girls' poorer achievement in maths, science and technological subjects in the 1970s and 1980s (Northam, 1982; Eddowes, 1983; Harding, 1983; Burton, 1986; Berge, 1993; Staberg, 1994).

They criticised prevailing theories about gender of educational psychologists and sociologists because they seemed to promote female inferiority as 'natural', and even functional to society (Acker, 1994; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). Feminists also focused on how school knowledge stereotyped and made invisible girls' and women's experience (Kelly, 1981). The point made was that school subjects had been distorted in order to portray conceptions of women as domestically-orientated and confined to the sphere of the family. Thus, attention was devoted to showing how the school curriculum could be changed to widen perceptions about women's lives. Feminists also focused on gender differences in classroom interaction (Wernersson, 1977) and developed collaborative 'action research' projects together with schools (Berge, 1997; Vé, 1997). A key issue for education was that feminism was also conceived of as a value-system and practice which encourages democratic participation, openness and critical thinking.

But feminists working in education also reflected theoretical differences within feminism (see Weiner 1994). For example, *Liberal* feminists focused on girls' 'failure' or underachievement in the schooling system – misery research – in order to campaign for change (Byrne, 1978). *Radical* feminists focused on the male-orientation of school subjects and the ways in which power is exercised unequally in the classroom (Spender, 1980; Clarricoates, 1978). *Marxist* and *socialist* feminists looked at ways in which education and schooling reproduce sexual inequality alongside and in relation to class inequality (David, 1980; Griffin, 1985). *Black* feminists focused on the endemic nature of racism and sexism and the interaction between the two within schooling (Wright, 1987; Mirza, 1992). More

recently, feminists have turned to studying masculinity as it has become clear that boys and young men too need to adjust to fresh demands of the family, school and the labour market (Epstein et al, 1998).

Feminism and Teacher Education

When we come to look at teacher education in different countries, it becomes evident that while there are similar professional concerns, e.g. about how to produce good teachers, there are differences because of specific national priorities and orientations. Yet it is also clear that in Europe, gender has been a low priority overall (Davies, 1994). Given the relatively high proportion of female teacher educators, it is difficult to see why.

My argument is that teacher education needs to reconsider its association with feminism for a number of reasons. Feminism helps us acknowledge the contribution that women have made and continue to make to teacher education. It focuses on and can help to reduce social inequality. It can also address the kind of social and cultural changes we have witnessed regarding men and women's work. It is also able to illuminate inequalities other than gender, for example, those of social class, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality etc., because women experience these other inequalities and oppressions too (Tong, 1989).

Feminism's emphasis on practice is especially important for teacher education. Drawing from Paulo Freire's ideas in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* of combining learner-centred education with explicit goals for social change (Freire, 1972), feminists have used the term 'feminist pedagogy' to connect the insights of feminism with past ideas about the transmission of knowledge (Culley & Portuges, 1984).

Feminist Pedagogy and Teacher Education

What then is feminist pedagogy? One of the main concerns of feminists working in education has been to remove the blocks which prevent girls and women (and other alienated learners) from fully participating and engaging with education. In so doing, they have tried to make a connection between theory and practice, between the public world of work and the private boundaries of the family, between knowledge and experience, and between awareness of the culture and awareness of the self. A Swedish version of feminist pedagogy refers to 'women's pedagogy' as less abstract, aimed at being more connected to experience, and linking thought and feeling, home and work, the self and others (Härnsten et al, 1994). It uses the method of 'real talk' (p. viii) which involves listening, exploring and speculating rather than the traditional male pedagogy of 'didactic talk' which is seen as more defensive and impersonal.

I want to argue that feminist (or women's) pedagogy as above offers an exciting framework for practice, which involves 'real talk' and genuine engagement with the learner. It also embraces a variety of knowledges and values. For example:

- Commitment to and responsibility for, promoting greater educational equality.
- Awareness of changed gender patterns and other up-to-date research on gender (and related fields of research).
- Consciousness of how power relationships operate – between men and women, boys and girls, in the classroom, lecture-room, playground and sports-field.
- Concern to challenge the hidden, often terrifying, aspects of school life such as bullying, harassment, homophobia, racism or sexism.
- Giving value to the experience and knowledge which pupils and students bring with them.
- Encouragement of critical thinking from pupils, students, teachers and lecturers.
- Showing transparency of practice and a willingness to change.
- Matching our practices and behaviour to the values that we hold.

If we use such a mix of knowledges and values to frame our practice, what kinds of practical outcomes are we likely to see? It is difficult to specify, as things will differ according to the individual or group of learners, subject and level of the work involved. Nevertheless, at a more general level, we might expect to see changes to curriculum and to classroom organisation to allow for increased participation of wider groups of students. We would hope to see the breaking down of hierarchies and power-networks that exclude particular groups and individuals (whether pupils or teachers). We would see higher levels of intervention to prevent bullying, racism and sexism, and homophobic behaviour. There is likely to be a greater valuing of pupils' experience and knowledge, and closer involvement of students in planning and evaluating their school and university experiences. At the same time every effort will be made to challenge students' narrowed conceptions, prejudices and stereotypes and to help them envision an expanded, divergent future.

My argument is that while feminist pedagogy, such as I have proposed, arises out of the need to deal with girls' and women's subordination, it is also able to make a difference to other groups – because power operates in similar ways to keep down different groups. And therefore it needs to be challenged, using similar strategies of contestation and resistance.

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Martin Rowson, *The Times Educational Supplement*, 8 May 1998

'Setting a *Good* Example': what can we do?

Rosemary Roberts
Rosemary Roberts is Director of Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP), a project that works with parents in disadvantaged areas to support children's very early learning and self-esteem at home. She was formerly a headteacher of a LEA nursery school, and has taught children throughout the primary age-range. Her thinking is also informed by the Oxford-Tavistock Clinic course in psycho-analytical observational studies.

This article was written as a result of a series of discussions about ethical issues in working with young children. In a world somewhat overwhelmed by Desirable Outcomes and Baseline Assessments, it focuses on young children's learning in the moral and spiritual domain, and on the role of adults in that learning.

My task is to try and add a very practical perspective to this discussion. However, in order to do so I need to start by looking again at what we *mean* by 'good', as in 'setting a *good* example'. In our work, discussions about 'good' adult behaviour and 'good' children tend to focus on 'moral' behaviour; but here I would like to bring in the spiritual dimension. This is because I suggest that adults' and children's spirituality or 'good-ness' is what very often informs their response to other people and to the world. And I want to make an explicit connection between 'good' and creativity. If I succeed, the connection with creativity will underpin ideas of 'what we can do' and provide us with an enormous range of provision, situations and ideas.

What do we mean by 'good'? Clearly there will be as many definitions of this as there are people who address this question. For me, Aldous Huxley says it very well, although many people will want to translate the 'Him' at the beginning into something with which they feel more comfortable, perhaps 'the spirit', or even simply 'the good'.

> *We apprehend (Him) in the alternate voids and fullness of a cathedral; in the space that separates the salient features of a picture; in the living geometry of a flower, a seashell, an animal; in the pauses and intervals between the notes of music, in their difference of tones and sonority; and finally, on the plane of conduct, in the love and gentleness, the confidence and humility, which give beauty to the relationships between human beings.* (Aldous Huxley)

This extract would seem to identify a very important – and useful – link between *creativity* and 'good' – or some of us might call it 'spirituality'. We are used to thinking about children's 'awe and wonder' (the reference to 'living geometry') and about the complexity and beauty of relationships that Huxley describes. But perhaps we are not so clear about the way that great architecture, painting, drama, story-telling, poetry and music can feed the awareness of good or growth of the spirit; or the way that *children's* creativity – or indeed our own – can help it to grow.

So I am linking 'setting a good example' with three sorts of creativity:

- First, supporting and feeding the children's own; and surely theirs is often most evident in their play, especially in relation to each other.
- Second, the example we can give them by our willingness to share *our own* creativity and wonder at the world.
- And third, the example we can give them by sharing great architecture, painting and music with them right from the beginning.

This link between 'goodness' and a wide range of practical and creative experiences is potentially very positive for practitioners, but such a link may also generate challenges.

What Makes 'Setting a *Good* Example' Harder?

Clearly there are a host of complexities that make 'setting a good example' harder. I would like to bring in two other voices here – in order to highlight briefly the limitations imposed on this area of our work by current directions of teaching and curricula in schools and early years settings.

The first voice is a philosopher called Thomas Green, writing in 1971. This is what he says – and it relates both to the purpose and to the process of education:

> *One way to destroy the motivation to learn, is to effectively abort the childlike capacity for awe and wonder. We do this quite efficiently when in teaching we take the description of a phenomenon to be its sufficient explanation; thus losing sight of how contingent is our knowledge, we lead students to entertain contingent truths as though they could not be otherwise. We build an image of the world in which the conditions of wonder are banished because the presence of mystery is seen always as a temporary inadequacy shortly to be corrected. We cultivate curiosity, if at all, by divorcing it from the capacity for awe. Thus, in our teaching and curricula it is only rarely that a child discovers how thoroughly in every quarter our knowledge is an act of imagination and interpretation.* (Thomas Green, 1971)

If Thomas Green is right in what he is saying here about teaching and curricula, this would seem to constitute a major obstacle in retaining and developing the sort of work in schools that will feed the spirit. Perhaps the struggle to retain an appropriate curriculum and good practice in the early years – the context of these ethical issues – becomes all the more fundamental when we look at it through Thomas Green's perspective.

The second voice is an American poet, Vachel Lindsay, born in 1879. As a young man Lindsay tramped through the Mid-West and Southern States of the USA on a mission to spread poetry. He carried a pamphlet called *Rhymes to*

be Traded for Bread which he took to the door of every farmhouse. He would relate stories, recite poetry and entertain children in return for a night's bed and food.

This is a poem called 'The Leaden-Eyed'. Some of the references, for instance 'its poor are ox-eyed', and 'they die like sheep' possibly will strike 'millennium-tuned' ears as somewhat distracting and unhelpful; but essentially it is about Lindsay's dismay that the children he met every day seemed to be starved of dreams, of a sense of achievement, of real heroes, of a sense of individuality.

The Leaden-Eyed

Let not young souls be smothered out before
They do quaint deeds and fully flaunt their pride.
It is the world's one crime its babes grow dull,
Its poor are ox-like, limp and leaden-eyed.

Not that they starve, but starve so dreamlessly,
Not that they sow, but that they seldom reap,
Not that they serve, but have no gods to serve,
Not that they die but that they die like sheep.

(Vachel Lindsay, 1879–1931)

What Lindsay was saying here at the turn of the century is not so far from Thomas Green 25 years ago. There has been a great deal of water under the bridge since then in relation to the lives of children both in and out of school. For me the things that both Green and Lindsay were saying connect with issues about the fundamental *purpose* of education, and with values that perceive spirituality or 'goodness' as linked with creativity. After all, for young children to be short of individuality, dreams, real heroes, and a sense of achievement, is surely to be short of play, that most creative medium of all.

What Makes 'Setting a *Good* Example' Easier?

My suggestion about what makes 'setting a *good* example' easier is derived from a conviction that the effective transmission of values is essentially a modelling process. Concepts of individual worth, honesty, right and wrong, justice, entitlement and collective endeavour are within the scope of young children's understanding, provided they experience these things in a concrete way. Because these concepts are 'caught' rather than 'taught', it is our own actions, our relationships with others, our response to the environment and our commitment to our communities, that constitutes 'provision' in this area. Although this sounds daunting, we only have to think about 'the good' in ourselves and each of our colleagues to realise what rich provision that is. Perhaps our job is to be consistently on the look-out for 'the good' in other people, in the world, and in people's creativity and representation of the world; and then to find ways to make that 'good' more explicit to the children with whom we work.

So How and Where Can 'Setting a *Good* Example' Be Done?

In the final chapter of *A Curriculum Development Handbook for Early Childhood Educators* (Siraj-Blatchford, Ed., 1998), a structure for planning and provision is proposed which incorporates the following four areas:

- Developing a sense of self
- Relationships with others
- Awareness and response to the cultural and physical environment
- Linking emotions and learning dispositions

The practical implications for 'setting a *good* example' can be considered in three areas:

- Providing appropriate experiences
- Adults' role
- With children: observing, reflecting, discussing

Setting a *'good'* example	Providing appropriate experiences	Adults' role	With children: observing, reflecting, discussing
Sense of self			
Relationship with others			
Awareness and response to environment			
Emotions + Learning Dispositions			

Figure 1. Suggested proposals for a planning tool to help identify *practical* opportunities and strategies.

'Relationships with others' is clearly a crucial element, and with limited space I want to suggest four *strategies* mainly about this area, together with some ideas about some useful *contexts*.

Four strategies for 'Relationships with others':

- Provide opportunities for children to explore, develop and practise *independence* through making choices, taking responsibility, working towards self-discipline.
- Provide an environment in which children's *exploration, talk and play* are the primary ways in which they learn.
- Provide a setting which constantly seeks to maximise opportunities for *interactions* between children, and between children and adults.
- Ensure that adults perceive children as 'half full' rather than 'half empty', as the *starting point* for learning.

Especially useful contexts for these strategies:

- Transitions: starting and leaving places
- Supporting parents in their role
- Circle times with small groups of children
- Days out and new experiences
- Cooking and eating

Lastly, here is a slightly re-ordered and expanded version of the familiar 'Desirable Outcomes' which highlights *practice*. The DfEE elements are in bold:

- When adults and peers like children's ideas and follow their lead, they will **be confident**.
- When children are warmly accepted as important

people in their own world, they will **show appropriate self-respect**.

- When other people are willing to listen to them and take them seriously, children are **able to establish effective relationships with other children and with adults, and to work as part of a group.**
- When adults hold appropriate expectations of individual children based on careful observation of them, those children learn to **work independently, to concentrate and persevere in their learning, to show the ability to initiate ideas and to solve practical problems.**
- When children are given responsibility for making choices and for themselves, they **demonstrate independence in selecting an activity or resources and in dressing and personal hygiene.**
- When children know that they can trust people to be concerned about their feelings and needs, they **are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, and they take turns and share fairly.**
- When 'important adults' acknowledge and appreciate each child for exactly who they are, children learn to **show respect for people of other cultures and beliefs**.
- When children are well cared for and their own property and environment is respected, they **treat living things, property and their environment with care and concern**.
- When adults enjoy being with children and share their own responses to a range of shared experiences and events, children feel 'enjoyed' and **can respond to relevant cultural and religious events and show a range of feelings such as wonder, joy or sorrow**.
- When children experience time and time again that the important people in their lives take time for them – to listen, to explain things, to let friendship flourish, **they express their feelings and behave in appropriate ways, developing an understanding of what is right, what is wrong and why.**

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Martin Rowson, *The Times Educational Supplement*, 1 January 1999

The College of Teachers: a new era for professional self-determination?

Trevor Kerry
Professor Trevor Kerry is Vice President of the College of Teachers and a Research Fellow at the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside. He has written extensively, particularly in the field of effective teaching and has held a wide variety of posts within education. He is editor of *Education Today* and is also presently enjoying some part-time teaching in a local primary school. In this article, Professor Kerry argues that teachers' control of their own professionalism, which has seen serious and unparalleled erosion in recent years, lies with supporting the new College of Teachers (formerly the College of Preceptors) and here he describes its history, principles and function.

A recent article rejoiced in the somewhat incredulous headline: 'A College of Teachers – whatever next?'

The sub-editor who let his or her surprise slip into the open was right. It is indeed incredible that it has taken until 1998 for such a College to exist. After all, the medical profession, surveyors, estate agents, legal executives, nurses, photographers and plumbers, all have their own professional associations which promote a code of practice and support the work and training of their members. But teachers surprisingly do not.

Now, that situation is changing. The former College of Preceptors, in collaboration with a number of influential subject and phase associations, has transformed its Royal Charter and the College of Teachers now exists. Embryonic it may be – but embryos have amazing potential. So this article outlines some of that potential, and invites you to contribute to the growth of an organisation that has the latent ability to become one of the most significant on the English educational scene. First, however, a little history is in order.

The former College of Preceptors celebrated 150 years of its existence in 1996. In recent years some had viewed it is as a rather anachronistic organisation. (This was partly due to the rather daunting name, and partly because the College preserved its right under Royal Charter to use post-nominal letters and to wear academic dress on appropriate occasions – exactly as every Chartered university does, and few would want to discard their traditions!) But the truth is very different, and of a very far-sighted and creative organisation. Above all, it was one of the first – if not *the* first – body in England to recognise that teachers need to be properly trained for their role, and that initial training needs to be supported by continuous professional development. The College founders were great innovators, for such a view was revolutionary 150 years ago. So the College of Preceptors inherited a mantle of innovation which has included:

- Leading the move to establish education as subject for study and research in universities.
- Appointing the very first professor of education (in the 1870s!).
- Providing formal qualifications for teachers' professional development (the grades of Associate, Licentiate and Fellow awarded under its Royal Charter).
- Providing examination certificates for secondary school students in a move which evolved directly into current GCE/GCSE examinations.
- Pioneering the development of education management courses as long ago as the 1950s, by running vacation programmes.
- Being in the vanguard of developing very successful training for school governors and support staff.
- Ironically, becoming best known abroad, especially in Third World countries, for its teacher education courses and qualifications – a field in which it is still very active in its new incarnation.

In 1996, the College of Preceptors would have celebrated the 150th anniversary of its Royal Charter; but in keeping with its innovative past it chose instead to seek the Queen's approval for a change of name. The petition was granted by Her Majesty, leaving the way open for the collaboration with others that has been referred to above. Thus, yet another door opens on innovation: the move to establish a College of Teachers, for teachers and run by teachers, to safeguard the professionalism of teachers.

An Association Too Far?

But surely there are enough societies and associations around already, one might ask? Indeed, the hard-pressed teacher is already constrained under the Government's own General Teaching Council, and is virtually obliged to belong to a teacher union. So is this an association too far?

Personally, I don't believe it is. The various teacher unions have very particular and proper concerns: to protect matters relating to pay and conditions of service on the one hand, and to provide insurance and indemnity to teachers on the other. The GTC, by contrast, will be a government-inspired and government-controlled body. But there is no single organisation that represents the professional views of teachers, that is free of any political stance, that is concerned above all with the art and science of teaching, and that gives accreditation to the professional development of teachers. The teaching profession has always been weak

precisely because its professionalism has *not* been safe-guarded by an over-arching body as it is in other professional fields. The establishment of the College of Teachers provides just this opportunity for reform of professionalism.

The heart of all that teachers care about, and the College's own aims, are identical: to improve pedagogy. Our students and pupils, and their effective learning, are our prime concern. The College has to be driven by that guiding principle. In recent times, many issues of learning, teaching and curriculum seem to have been surrendered by the profession to those outside it: politicians, lay personnel, society at large. Teachers have to re-discover themselves as leaders and experts in the process of pedagogy, and to take control of their profession rather than have others control it. To do this they will have to find a new 'intellectualism' that values the process of thinking about and researching their teaching, and they will have to re-assert their commitment to the highest quality of classroom practice. The two go hand in hand. Teachers, managers, researchers and inspectors/advisers have to find common cause, and mutual respect, to this end. The profession has to find a new unity in an uncertain climate.

Membership

It is anticipated that membership of the College of Teachers will give teachers at all levels in the education service, along with headteachers and those involved in research and Higher Education, status through association with an established and respected body – as membership grows, so will that status. The College will enhance teachers' professional qualifications and experience, be tangible evidence of their standing within education, and offer opportunities to play a part in advancing the reputation of the teaching profession. The profession has undergone a long period of denigration by politicians and attrition through political reform of education. The time has come to reverse this trend. Membership of the College (MCT) will, it is hoped, become a badge of professional pride and equate to chartered status in other professions.

Members will, of course, be bound by a Code of Practice. They will receive a number of tangible benefits for joining: a regular Newsletter, access to a Regional structure of meetings and events, and opportunities to advance through the College's qualification structure. They will also receive the College of Teachers' journal *Education Today*, which is evolving to be a refereed publication of high standard yet one which is readable and of immediate relevance to teachers who enjoy engaging in intellectual debate and research into professional issues. The emphasis of this journal will be unashamedly about the process of teaching.

Under its Charter, the College is governed by a Council elected by the membership; a quarter of the Council retire each year so there is plenty of scope for the management of the College to evolve. The Council members, in turn, elect the honorary officers. There are three Vice Presidents, a Secretary, a Dean (to oversee academic matters), and a Treasurer. Committees have been streamlined in the new organisation, but the qualification structure is still in the hands of an Academic Board to decide policy and an Examinations Board to carry out the work of accreditation and awards. The College has a variety of qualifications at various levels including:

- A Certificate of Educational Studies (COES).
- The Associateship Diploma (a post-qualification award).
- A Diploma of Advanced Studies in Education.
- The Licentiateship Diploma (first degree equivalent and recognised by the DfEE for salary purposes, now mostly accessed by foreign students).
- The Fellowship (by thesis or published work – at MPhil level).

The College holds an Annual Award ceremony, at which qualifications are given to those who have earned them during the previous year. It also holds an annual Charter Fellows evening at which a number of honorary Fellowships are granted under the Royal Charter to those who have given distinguished service to teaching and education. These events are opportunities for distinguished speakers to give lectures of national significance about current issues in education. The Regional committees are responsible for mounting local in-service and professional development events. These represent the public face of the College, and in the future a higher profile will be sought for them.

Developments and Extensions

An increased membership for the College of Teachers in England might well be a signal to extend its work abroad, in particular in those countries where teacher education is an emerging phenomenon. The influence of the College in emerging societies, such as South Africa and Lesotho, cannot be under-estimated. Attitudes towards education in these and similar locations will have an enormous effect on their future development, and a knock-on effect for the whole world. To play a part in forming the systems and attitudes here is a humbling experience. But the flexible approach that the College of Teachers adopts towards professional development courses in this country is also important. Some years ago, when I was a senior LEA officer, I needed to develop some very specific training to meet a need to develop aspiring primary staff for deputy headship posts. An association with the College allowed my colleagues and me to tailor a course to local need, and to gain accreditation for it. In the same way, Suffolk LEA, in collaboration with the College, developed a course for teachers acting as mentors. More recently a scheme has been drawn up to allow individual schools to accredit in-house professional activity. All of these models of professional development give greater autonomy to teachers in controlling their own training than do traditional schemes. The scope for extending this concept in an enlarged College of Teachers is enormous.

In its new form and with its new partnerships with other organisations, the College of Teachers is now poised to make what could be one of the most significant break-throughs in education for the last one hundred years. But, to achieve this, it needs the whole-hearted support of teachers. It needs this at a time when the profession is feeling most vulnerable. Yet that is precisely why the profession needs its own College. The next step, and the success of the College itself, lies with teachers. Each of us must take the active decision to join up with the new organisation. In doing so, we will be signalling solidarity with many existing teacher-members, but also following in a tradition that sees many famous names associated with the College through its honorary Fellowships – among whom are Baroness Blackstone, Professor Ted Wragg, Sir John Daniel, Tim Brighouse and Lady Plowden.

A recent letter in *The Daily Telegraph* (3 October 1998) by Dr Peter Greenhalgh laid down the challenge:

[The] new College of Teachers ... offers teachers a chance to give their profession the status and self-regulated standards of training and excellence which others, such as medicine ... engineering, science and accounting and architecture enjoy. It remains to be seen if teachers will respond to this initiative...

A Last Chance?

I would go one step further. It may be the last chance, before the erosion of recent years removes the potential for teachers to speak with other than a fragmented voice. When teachers can be divided simply into sub-groups (by phase, subject, role or any other means), and these labels become barriers to professional cohesiveness, we become easier targets for those who would denigrate the profession. A College of Teachers gives reality to our attempts to respond to political innovation and public scrutiny from a position of increased strength. Forgive a few moments of personal reflection. In my career I have taught primary, secondary, FE and HE students; I have taught English, maths, science, history and RE; I have been a teacher, lecturer, middle manager, senior manager, adviser, inspector, researcher and author. But the harmony that has bound together this cacophony of activity has been the *process of teaching*. That is the fundamental skill and focus that the College of Teachers is dedicated to preserve, develop and reflect into the public domain.

So, those who would like to support this move towards enhancing the professionalism of teachers would be welcome to apply for membership of the College. Enquiries should be addressed:
Chief Executive Officer
The College of Teachers
Coppice Row
Theydon Bois
EPPING
Essex CM16 7DN
Tel: 01992-812 727; Fax: 01992-814 690)
You may join as an individual member (at a reduced rate if you already belong to one of the professional associations in affiliation to the College). Alternatively, individual schools, colleges and groups such LEA advisory services and teachers' centres can become institutional members. The College is also looking to create an associate (not full) member category for those who are not qualified teachers but who support the work of teachers (governors, support staff and administrators), and who empathise with the College's aims and objectives.

Martin Rowson, *The Times Educational Supplement*, 29 May 1998

The Comprehensive Success Story

John Dunford
John Dunford is General Secretary of the Secondary Heads Association. He was previously Head of Durham Johnston Comprehensive School in Durham. His article is a reminder of the remarkable achievements of comprehensive schooling, often working against the considerable odds of LEA prescriptiveness, media hostility and government interference.

More than 90% of young people of secondary school age are educated at comprehensive schools in England and Wales. As long ago as 1974, the proportion was 69% and it has been steadily increasing since the first comprehensive schools opened in the early 1950s. Comprehensive school is therefore the norm for almost all young people between the ages of 11 and 16. Why, then, do such schools still have to be defended as if they were a new-fangled notion recently imported from some strange distant land?

The Factual Evidence

I find myself surprised at having to ask this question for three reasons. First, these well-established schools have been raising the level of attainment of young people for many years. The achievements of 16-year-olds in GCSE examinations are vastly better than the results 20 years ago in GCE Ordinary levels, with 45% of young people gaining the benchmark five passes at grades C or above in 1998, in comparison with 25% attaining a similar level in 1979. At GCE Advanced level, the percentage of 18-year-olds passing in at least two subjects rose from 14 to 28%, and the pass rate has grown during this period from under 70% to well over 80%. Contrary to the impression created by the ritualistic annual denunciations of a minority of academics and politicians, there is no evidence that the standard of these examinations has fallen. Numbers in higher education have increased from 7% of the population in the 1960s to 33% today, and comprehensive schools have successfully answered the challenge of providing the universities with a sufficient number of well-qualified students to enable this huge increase to take place.

Secondly, those with direct experience of the modern comprehensive school are almost all happy with what the schools provide. Surveys of parents constantly reveal a very high satisfaction ratio when they are asked to comment on the quality of their own children's education. The overwhelming majority of comprehensive schools are given successful reports after rigorous independent inspections. Only a tiny proportion, 2%, are deemed to be failing.

Thirdly, I have spent all but the first two years of my 28-year teaching career in comprehensive schools and I have been able to witness at first hand the quality of what has been on offer there. From 1982 to 1998 I was head of Durham Johnston Comprehensive School, an LEA-maintained 11-18 mixed school with 1500 pupils on two sites on opposite sides of the city of Durham. It was a truly comprehensive school where we educated the children of university professors, as well as those of unemployed parents with no aspirations for their sons and daughters.

Partly through the experience of this school during the last 16 years, I want to look at the progress of comprehensive schools and to reflect on their current position. The period neatly divides into two halves, separated by the introduction of Local Management of Schools (LMS) in 1990.

Negative Policies: LEA

Up the 1990, the money over which the school had control rose to a mere £30,000, supplemented for part of that time by a few thousand pounds extra from the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI). It was deeply frustrating to have so little to spend on books and equipment, especially when we began to need expensive computer systems. The Parent Teacher Association helped a little, but not much. Even more frustrating was the lack of flexibility in staffing. The LEA decided how many teachers the school needed and there was a similarly inflexible allocation of non-teaching staff – three secretaries, three caretakers and two laboratory assistants. In County Durham, as elsewhere, school rolls were falling during the 1980s. For most schools, this meant a gradual reduction in the size of the teaching staff, largely through premature retirement and redeployment. It was a matter of pride in the county that the decrease in the size of the teaching force was achieved without any redundancies. Shrinking schools dispensed with the services of many older, or less effective, teachers in this way, promoting younger teachers internally to positions of responsibility. Few posts were advertised, except in the County's own internal mail. For Durham Johnston Comprehensive School, which maintained or increased its size each year, all vacancies had to be filled by teachers redeployed from other county schools. If someone more or less fitted the job description, the Local Education Authority advisers put great pressure on the school to take the redeployed teacher. Only in June and July each year, when the 31 May deadline was well past, could the school advertise a post or take on a newly qualified teacher. By then, nearly all the best young teachers had obtained jobs elsewhere. Up to 1990, therefore, both the quantity and the quality of the teachers in comprehensive schools in LEAs such as Durham, where redeployment was the rule, were constrained by the LEA. It was very difficult to improve a school, or to change its culture, when no external appointments could be made. The price of avoiding redundancy was high, affecting the educational

opportunities of every young person in the comprehensive school system at the time.

Negative Policies: central government

Meanwhile, the schools had been suffering nationally from a lack of commitment by the Government and a growing lack of trust in teachers. Mark Carlisle, the first of Margaret Thatcher's Secretaries of State at the Department of Education and Science (DES), introduced the Assisted Places Scheme (APS) in 1980, with the aim of enabling 'bright' children from poor families to attend independent schools. The APS did both actual and psychological damage to comprehensive schools. Most independent schools joined the scheme, enabling them to maintain high academic entry levels, but many of the APS children were from middle-class backgrounds. Comprehensive schools, especially in the south-east of England and in the larger cities, were deprived of many of the ablest children in their potential intake. When league tables of school performance later came to be published, it was particularly galling for such schools to observe the inflated results of the independent schools to which APS money had sent some of their potentially best students. The psychological damage was worse: the message of APS may have been misleading, but it was abundantly clear – bright children receive a better education in independent schools than in comprehensive schools, so the country must be prepared to pay the extra money. (The annual cost of an APS place was considerably greater than the amount spent on a pupil in a state school.) It was a message which was not lost on newspaper editors, as well as parents, pupils and teachers. It is particularly ironic that the architect of the APS was Mark Carlisle who, by his own admission, had no experience of state education, either for himself or his children, when he was appointed Secretary of State in 1979 (Ribbins & Sherratt, 1997, p. 55).The mid-1980s saw a needless and damaging dispute between the teachers and Sir Keith Joseph, who had become Secretary of State in 1981. In 'withdrawing their goodwill' and refusing to take part in any voluntary activities, the teachers brought an end to many school activities. The brunt of this action was borne in the comprehensive schools, which were never the same again. In common with other comprehensive schools, the number of extra-curricular activities at Durham Johnston did not return to the pre-dispute level for many years; in some schools, they have still not done so. Joseph never understood the extent of the damage he had caused and it was the teachers themselves who shouldered the blame.

Maximising Opportunities

One *raison d'être* of the comprehensive school has been to create the maximum number of opportunities for the maximum number of young people. "Creating opportunities for success" for young pupils and their teachers has been the driving force behind many headteachers, including this one. At Durham Johnston we attempted to overcome the narrowing of opportunity which resulted from the teachers' action and, subsequently, from the overcrowded but narrow National Curriculum, by starting an Activity Time on Friday afternoons. Sport, chess, drama, debating, orienteering, rambling, Russian, Greek, Italian – we offered them all, and many more. From 1990, LMS enabled comprehensive schools to offer a wider range of opportunities. An example from Durham Johnston illustrates this. I had always wanted the school to have one of the LEA's occasional artists-in-residence, but never managed to persuade the Art Adviser, whose budget for this project was pitifully small. Since LMS, Durham Johnston has had an artist-in-residence every term, usually for a week at a time. The cost was relatively small and a local company made a contribution, but the benefit to both young people and teachers was enormous, as the school was blessed with a rich variety of artistic talent over the next eight years – printmaker, painter, airbrush artists, stained-glass artist, composer, singers, dancers, poets, writers, a story-teller, drama producers and playwrights. Among many highlights was the sculptor who executed a four-metre high statue to commemorate the 650th anniversary of the Battle of Neville's Cross, which had been fought partly on what is now the school's playing fields. The pupils contributed to the design of the imposing piece which stands just inside the main gate. LMS brought greater responsibilities, including a budget of £3M instead of £30,000, but it was the management freedom, rather than the additional financial responsibilities, which created the greatest opportunities. Redeployment disappeared overnight and we were able to recruit teachers of exceptionally high quality. Schools could now translate their management priorities into action, instead of into fruitless letters to the LEA asking for some minor adjustment to standard procedure. Employing extra non-teaching staff was a high priority for many schools, as was the improvement of the school environment. Carpets were laid and rooms were decorated more frequently – small things perhaps, but an important contribution to teacher and pupil morale. The growth of the self-managing school has been one of the success stories of late twentieth century educational policy, enabling comprehensive schools to improve the quality and range of their provision.

Persistent Problems

Much of the rest of Government policy during this period has made the job of comprehensive schools more difficult and the background to the situation in which these schools have worked has been discouraging and demoralising. This has especially been the case for schools in socially disadvantaged areas. Apart from the Assisted Places Scheme, already mentioned, the policy of open enrolment, the inspection regime and the annual performance tables have all magnified the difficulties of schools in deprived areas. In many of the worst housing estates in the country, where police and social services are failing to cope with the problems of unemployment, drugs and crime, the school has been almost the only focus of hope for young people and their parents. The teachers in these schools do a truly magnificent job for their children, their families and for society as a whole. Yet, these schools are pilloried in the media for low expectations and poor results and this public lashing has frequently extended to all comprehensive schools. The task has also been particularly difficult for those schools which bear the name 'comprehensive', but which have to operate alongside local selective schools, a situation which still exists in 36 LEA areas. The annual performance tables cruelly expose their position, trumpeting the performance of the selective schools and taking no account of the ability of a school's intake. There is strong evidence to suggest that, in LEA areas with similar socio-economic composition, examinations results are better in those with faulty comprehensive school systems than in those which have retained selection (*Guardian*

Education, 3 November 1998). Although GCE Ordinary level and CSE mercifully disappeared in 1986 and were replaced by the General Certificate of Secondary Education – a comprehensive examination at last for a comprehensive school system – much of what has happened since then has retreated from the 'comprehensiveness' of the original concept. The tiering of GCS examinations and, worse still, the failure to introduce radical reform of post-16 qualifications has handicapped comprehensive schools, forcing them to operate without a properly integrated curriculum and qualifications system.

Celebrating Success

In spite of media hostility, bad legislation and lack of support from the Government, poor quality leadership from many local education authorities, the retention of selection in some areas, a period of difficult social development in the country, an inappropriate curriculum and a level of accountability which constantly exposes any perceived failings in the system, comprehensive schools have succeeded magnificently. The challenge for the individual teacher in comprehensive schools has been to teach the highest achievers in one lesson and slowest learners in the next. For me, this was part of the attraction, as well as the challenge, of my 26 years in comprehensive schools, and this variety is surely one of the factors which, with a proper salary structure and improved conditions of work, should bring the best young graduates into the teaching profession. The small numbers entering higher education in the 1950s and 1960s reflected the demands of a society which was content to educate only an élite at university. The greater numbers earning degrees now reflect a recognition that the next millennium will require a much better qualified workforce. The development of the school system has followed a similar pattern. The grammar and secondary modern schools served the needs of the society in which they were conceived. The social cohesion required for success and stability in the twenty-first century demands a continuing emphasis on improving the standards of education for all young people. The comprehensive school is the most appropriate educational structure for such a society and these schools should enter the new millennium with confidence in their future as well as their past.

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The Inclusion of Children with Complex Learning Needs into Mainstream Primary Schools

Gwyn Webster
Gwyn Webster, a primary headteacher in Kent, has also taught in the States as part of a county-based educational and cultural exchange programme for which he was responsible. He is currently focusing on the effects of Ofsted inspections on school improvement as part of his MA (Ed) course at Canterbury Christchurch College. His article is concerned with those factors that contribute favourably or otherwise to a primary school's capacity to be able to offer inclusive education to children with learning problems.

Set against a background of competing arguments for and against including children with complex learning needs and the element of inclusion in the Government's Green Paper (1997) *Excellence for All Children: meeting special educational needs,* this article touches on the experiences of a primary school which included pupils with Down's Syndrome and Asperger's Syndrome. My belief in, and commitment to inclusion remains firm, for pupils who are able to cope with mainstream schooling without prejudicing the education of other children. The staff must be confident of meeting their needs. Of most importance, the children must be able to benefit themselves from inclusion. My reasons for supporting inclusion are that it combats discriminatory attitudes and leads to more welcoming communities. However, I do not go as far as Murray & Penman (1995) by endorsing their claim that segregation is morally offensive, or subscribe to Dessent's (1987) viewpoint that special schools do not have a right to exist, and that they only exist because of the limitations of mainstream schools. I will steer clear of differences of opinion between the Special Educational Needs National Advisory Council (SENNAC) and the Centre for Studies of Inclusive Education (CSIE): SENNAC advocating the need to retain special schools and CSIE supporting the end of segregation and full integration.

Underpinning all this is my belief that if the needs of individual children are to be fully addressed, then parents, teachers, LEAs, advisors and policy makers must strive to achieve a working partnership between special schools and ordinary schools which enable effective individual plans to be developed and implemented. In other words, children ought to have access to resources in appropriate placements in a flexible way. It is not advocating the demise of special schools as ordinary schools develop necessary skills, competencies and strategies for accommodating children with complex learning needs. Rather, it wishes to examine factors which contribute to successful inclusion and to set that within the experiences of one ordinary school.

To Include or Not to Include?

The human rights movement, the equal opportunities lobby, and the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education, agreed by representatives of 92 governments and 25 international organisations, all favour inclusive education. Inclusive education goes beyond integration. Integration assumes that additional arrangements will be made to meet the needs of pupils within an ordinary school. Inclusive education will require a restructuring of schools, redeployment of staff with expertise, and a revision of how schools are funded. The point here is that greater consideration is being given to placements for pupils with complex learning needs. Moorcroft-Cuckle's (1993) study indicates that where this trend to mainstream placements fails, it is due to a change in the nature of support offered to the school. Reports on special education such as Warnock (DES, 1978) and its definition of 'functional' inclusion, i.e. pupil's needs being wholly met within an ordinary school and working alongside peers, The 1981 Education Act, The 1986 Disabled Persons Act, The Children Act (1989), and most recently the Code of Practice (1994), gives parents the encouragement to choose mainstream schooling. To quote from *Choice and Diversity* (DFE, 1992):

> ... *parents retain their duty under section 36 of the Education Act 1994 to ensure that the education their child receives is suitable to any special education needs he may have. (9.4, p. 41)*

To secure the support for inclusion is another matter. High on the list of discussions regarding admission to mainstream school will be check lists similar to Mortimer's (1995), used to facilitate a smooth induction to school, but above all, used to ensure that the child's needs can be met. The process of information gathering, interviewing, initial visits and links with multidisciplinary agencies is time-consuming and class teachers willing to be responsible for children with complex learning demands will need time to undertake these extra responsibilities and support. The purpose being to ascertain that a mainstream school is the right choice for a particular pupil. Each school will need to specify its admission criteria. Parents will need to satisfy themselves that the school has the necessary resources and skills to meet the needs of their child. It needs to be more than an act of faith on the part of parents, and more than a wing and a prayer on the part of the LEA and the school. After all, a child with complex learning needs will most certainly have a statement of educational need and the LEA is obliged by law to meet and support parental preference for their choice of school.

> *LEAs will retain responsibility for identifying and assessing pupils with SEN, making statements and arranging for their special educational provision, including placements, reviews of statements and reassessments. (DFE, Choice and Diversity, 9.5, p. 41)*

However, mainstream schools and the LEA are brought into conflict when a school attempts to secure the necessary level of support which satisfactorily differentiates the

allocation of funds to schools in relation to Special Educational Needs. It is here that the LEA is caught between shrewdness and the need to use resources wisely. Limited budgets restrict schools and LEAs in responding to a needs driven model for SEN. Indeed, the future of all SEN provision is for the recognition that the Code of Practice is not 'cost neutral' and that 'new' money has to be allocated to SEN. To include or not to include pupils with complex learning needs will certainly be influenced by the level of support in the statement. The rapid increase in statements and the funding differential between grade 3 and grade 4 diverts resources from supporting pupils at grades 1 to 3 of the Code of Practice and because of this statements can be seen as barriers to full inclusion. Yet, the present system encourages parents to seek the assurance of a statement to secure the appropriate level of support. Inclusion as visioned by the Green Paper will need to consider alternative systems to statements of special educational need. Nevertheless its success hinges on its resource base and the ability to provide the right level of expertise in mainstream schools.

Moves Towards Inclusion

Inclusion is an evolving scene and the Sarah Duffen Centre, Portsmouth has begun to compile a data base of all pupils with Down's Syndrome (www.downsnet.org). An in-depth study by Lorenz (1995) of one northern LEA indicates that some areas of the country are moving towards inclusion sooner than others. However, there are major challenges to overcome. Hornby (1995) sees the lack of additional resources as the major obstacle. Intended improvements in provision, with respect to the ways in which ordinary schools are funded and resourced, is vital. Successful inclusion is also dependent on staff expertise.

The bedrock of any form of inclusion is the pivotal role of the SEN coordinator, the commitment of the staff, the quality of support staff, the attitude of parents and other pupils. In particular the relationship, expertise and role of the support teacher/classroom assistant is central to successful inclusion. This 'velcro' model of support, as described by Wedell (1995), one support teacher to each SEN pupil, while not the most efficient use of resources, is the one most widely used. Figures from 1991-93 show an increase in classroom assistants in primary schools from 6342 to 9304 (*The Times Educational Supplement*, 7 October 1994). There is no clear analysis of the role of the classroom assistants but it would appear that many are engaged in SEN support with the majority holding no qualification or training in SEN. What is clear is that the traditional role of the classroom assistant is changing, but it remains unclear where professional boundaries lie. The working relationship between teacher and classroom assistant is one that is best developed along professional lines. Issues such as confidentiality, assessment, marking work, contributing to written reports, and reporting to parents will need to be agreed. Whilst retaining overall responsibility, classroom teachers are in a unique position of being a 'role' model for the classroom assistants. The last five years have seen a shift away from mothers helping in the class to mothers seeking training to be professional helpers. LEAs recognise the need for a national framework for the training of learning support assistants and the need to provide a good range of training opportunities locally. Ideally, a fully accredited training framework should be in place which provides both basic competency training and the opportunity to progress to higher qualifications. Over-subscription of in-service training for classroom assistants indicates the willingness of the classroom assistants to fulfil these supportive roles and develop these competencies. Specific courses allay misconceptions that pupils with Asperger's or Down's Syndromes are not simply slowed-down versions of normal development. These courses, as well as raising awareness, also raise professionalism, and contribute to successful inclusion by focusing on meeting a child's educational needs.

Rayner (1994) suggests that there ought to be a revised definition of educational need. Dainton (1995) lends weight to this argument with an emphasis on 'continuity and progression'. Current delivery of SEN, according to Webb (1994), is dogged by the growing number of exclusions. It is a fact that under local management schools are faced with managerial decisions with respect to SEN. Excluding troublesome children frees up expensive resources and teacher time for pupils who might derive greater benefit. There is no evidence to suggest that schools are reluctant to include pupils with complex learning needs because of financial implications. However, experience has made me aware that successful inclusion is dependent on securing funding additional to a school's allocated budget. A statement ought to detail 'provision' without fear or favour. In reality where does one go if a statement offers provision for which there is no hope of funds?

Barriers to Inclusion

In his critical appraisal of the Code of Practice, Dyer (1995) feels that the Code fails to meet the issue of speech therapy – a fundamental requirement for pupils with Asperger's and Down's Syndromes. Through Dyer's eyes there remains confusion over responsibility for speech therapy between the National Health Service and the LEA. Naturally both will be protective of respective budgets while trying to reconcile whether the speech therapy is based on a medical diagnosis or seen as an educational need. To my mind this is bureaucracy getting in the way. The National Commission on Education (1993) highlights the disincentives for SEN. Funding, or lack of it, being the barrier to inclusion. On a positive note, the aspiration, the reminder, the reason for supporting inclusion and its success may be best explained by Pring's (1976) philosophical question 'Why am I here?'

> *Don't forget the child is a living thing with thoughts and beliefs, hopes and choices, feelings and wishes; helping him with these must be what education is about, for there is nothing else to educate. (Pring, 1976, p. 77)*

Helping 'ordinary' children with these principles in mind is what teaching is about. Helping 'special' children brings greater satisfaction, and seeing ordinary children helping them brings the greatest satisfaction.

To my mind this serves as reason enough to include children with complex learning needs for them to gain and for those around them to gain also. The move towards inclusion is dependent on several factors. The principle of inclusion in the Green Paper has been met with general approval but reservations were expressed about the practicalities. Barriers to inclusion will arise from inadequate funding, the lack of trained staff and negative attitudes. Two thirds of the parents who responded to the Green Paper consultation were concerned about the DfEE's wish to see more children getting the help they need without a statement of SEN. Support for the Green Paper will have to overcome the findings of research carried out by NFER in 1995.

Fifty-five LEAs responded to a questionnaire, interviews were held with LEA staff in 21 LEAs and there were school-based studies in 5 LEAs. The study focused on secondary schools but the findings of Lee (1996) can be applied to primary education.

To paraphrase the research: "Obstacles to increasing inclusion were perceived by the LEAs as related to limited resources, a shortage of mainstream places in some areas, and unfavourable attitudes of parents and teachers in both special and mainstream schools" (Lee, 1996). The infrastructure, the practicalities and the willingness of all concerned need to be embodied in a vision for inclusion. That vision remains to be described in detail and shared. As with all good practice and pupil learning environments the question for all parents and all teachers is, 'Would I like my child to be taught in this class?' If yes, then inclusion will be realised.

It would be easy to say that the major factor which contributes to successful inclusion of children with complex learning needs depends on adequate resourcing of schools within a coordinated LEA plan of provision. From a wider understanding, successful inclusion is dependent on a school's ethos of accepting responsibility for the education of the children in the locality. There needs to be a full appraisal and a shared understanding of the pupil's needs. A school needs to be willing to take on the reorganisation of structure, curriculum delivery and staff roles necessary to achieve effective use of resources in responding to a diversity of a pupil's educational and emotional needs. There needs to be an awareness that this is a shifting scene and that the human elements are unique in their strengths and weaknesses. To add depth of understanding there needs to be on-going professional development of all staff to enhance a school's capacity to meet pupil needs. This is particularly so for the SENCO and this understanding needs to be passed on to parents. Liaison is all important especially with specialist expertise. Above all there needs to be a commitment and a desire to make it work which goes beyond egalitarian sentiment. Teachers need to be given an adequate knowledge and understanding of learning processes at initial teacher training, and then have this consolidated but more importantly, deepened, by further training.

A Vision for Successful Inclusion

To be successful, inclusion has to be planned and supported (Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1991), and based on established principles of good practice (Hegarty et al, 1981). For any change to be successful, according to Fullan (1992) the process of change has to be understood. It is not a predictable process, it depends on people, on timing, and on current thinking. Central to this vision and wishing to include children with complex learning needs, it was necessary to rethink the structure of my school to respond to the needs of all children. In the school's experience none of the methods for establishing SEN funding had ensured an equitable distribution of resources on the basis of individual pupil needs. Negotiations over individual statements had resulted in varying hours of classroom support for each child. In an attempt to meet the growing number of SEN pupils in the school, and to support the pupils with complex learning needs more adequately, the governors made a proposal to the authority of fully supporting one child with complex learning needs in each of its five classes, with one support staff per class, and one specialist teacher within the school. This was not approved on the grounds of cost, and because it was not part of the LEA's strategic plan. Was it just thrift rather than educational decision making (Gerwirtz et al, 1995) which caused this school initiative to fail? How would it be received now, five years later?

It was two years after making the initial proposal that the school was granted a formal discussion with the LEA. The outcome was that the school agreed to an in-depth inspection and evaluation of how it met the needs of all pupils in order to satisfy the authority's criteria, i.e. that no child would be disadvantaged by including children with complex learning needs. Despite a very favourable report, a managerial decision by the LEA rejected the school's proposal. The effect of this decision was to dishearten staff and cause the school to reconsider the inclusion of pupils with complex learning needs since in practice it found that to be fully successful, each pupil needed full-time support. It was seven years ago that the school began a policy of inclusion. Two years ago there was a pupil with complex learning needs in each of the five classes: three with Down's, two with Asperger's Syndrome. Over a period of eighteen months one pupil with Asperger's and one pupil with Down's Syndrome have been withdrawn. Has the school failed these pupils? Or is it that the system has failed them?

In one case, lack of information from the parents, demands for far more than their child's needs warranted, the failure of the school to provide in another, and the inability of the authority to respond swiftly, led to conflict between the parents and the school. Both children transferred to separate neighbouring mainstream schools, selected by the parents, with increased levels of support. Support which was initiated at my school but came too late for the parents or for their children prior to transfer. Successful inclusion depends on honest dialogue, early identification and assessment. For three pupils inclusion has succeeded. We do not see them as 'special' and neither are they treated as special by staff or pupils. Perhaps for this reason they have a high degree of self-esteem, and have gained through a reflective, inter-activist, child-centred approach with high teacher expectations. I would not like to generalise on Sandow & Daniels's (1985) conclusion that there is very little understanding about how children with learning difficulties acquire knowledge. What is important to recognise is that children with complex learning needs learn in a different way to normal development. If schools do not support the principle of inclusion then those children will grow up continuing to be seen as segregated and marginalised because of it.

LEAs need to create the infrastructure in schools before contemplating placements. SENCO's need working conditions which allow them to be effective. In primary education this means time to contact other agencies and to access services and support. Neither should schools already including children with complex learning needs feel frustrated by the pernicious effect of Ofsted judgements of the school within League Tables. In ten years time inclusion, given the current trend, will perhaps be more widespread, parents will have more choice and mainstream schools will have the expertise, and specialist staff to make it successful.

Conclusion

The Papadopoulos address (1995) neatly sums up the reasons why one should wish to include. In looking ahead he advocates the need to promote a 'new humanism' through education with the aim of knitting together the disparate natures of our cultures. Whether this is wholly possible for

all children has not been the focus of this article. The development of Papadopoulos's ideal is a major challenge facing the twenty-first Century. I would support the notion that a process of inclusion into ordinary schools could serve as a way of not marginalising children who are different and this could lead to more tolerant, sensitive and thoughtful societies. It could serve as a way to raise levels of social awareness, a fundamental aim of education. Keeping the balance is also important. Schools which include pupils with learning difficulties must ensure that provision for abler pupils is not compromised and must take proactive measures to assure governors and parents on the changing nature of the school. The dilemma is that by giving too high a profile to SEN the school may not be viewed by parents as having a high level of pupil achievement. For any school initiative to succeed fully, it would probably have a higher success rate if it coincided with an already identified strategic plan of the LEA. It is easier for a school to fall in line with an authority, than for an authority to fall in line with a school. Despite careful attention to the process of change, initiatives can be compromised because of the complexities of human nature, the political climate, the financial resource base and the timing. The litmus test for successful inclusion is when a child does not seem so 'special' after all. It is then that the process of inclusion has really begun to happen.

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Key Skills and the 'Learning Curriculum': a way forward

John Quicke
Professor John Quicke of the Department of Educational Studies, University of Sheffield, writes below in response to Ian Duckett's article in the previous issue of *FORUM* because he is concerned over what seems to be an artificial split between 'knowledge' and 'skills' in Duckett's recommendations for curriculum development. Professor Quicke advises that rather than thinking of them in terms of a difference between the two they should really be considered in terms of different discourses.

The kind of development of the curriculum advocated by Ian Duckett (*FORUM*, 40(2), pp. 56-57) is to be welcomed, but I still think there is a danger in splitting 'knowledge' from 'skills', even as components in an "embracing discourse". What are described as key skills – e.g. communication, collaboration, problem solving and critical thinking skills – are always and already, so to speak, part and parcel of what it means to acquire knowledge in any knowledge domain. Learning about biology, for instance, is (or at least should be) about becoming an active participant in the practice of a community of people who are thinking and acting as biologists. Of course, people operate at different levels; some are more experienced than others, some are experts, others novices or inductees, but the processes at work are the same for all. Becoming a 'good' biologist means being able to communicate at some level (even if this just involves a student defining a biological concept when asked to do so by a teacher) and it means developing an understanding of biological research methodology, thus thinking critically etc.

A Way Forward

A way forward here, I think, is not to think in terms of a difference between 'knowledge' and 'skills' but rather in terms of different discourses. Thus, as I have pointed out elsewhere (Quicke & Winter, 1994, 1995), in teaching students to 'learn how to learn' it is useful to keep in mind that one is introducing two discourses – one the formal discourse of the subject and the other the discourse of learning or what might be called the 'learning curriculum'. This curriculum has its own concepts and language, e.g. planning, hypothesising, taking account of evidence etc., and can, if appropriate, be taught as a separate subject, since clearly, if it is OK for knowledge to be divided into subjects, there is no reason why 'learning' should not constitute a subject.

In the light of this, it seems to me that the whole debate in this area would be more productive if it revolved around the nature and content of the 'learning curriculum'. There is much to contest here. At present, the dominance of the idea of key skills means that knowledge about learning is defined rather narrowly in terms of behavioural and cognitive processes rather than in social psychological, sociological and philosophical terms. A curriculum which took account of all those forces in the environment which facilitated or impeded learning and which raised questions about 'what it means to know' would be a richer and far more radical curriculum than, say, a programme in thinking skills. In this context, the 'good' learner would be one who became a 'better' learner through acquiring a deeper knowledge of what learning meant in the institutional context in which they were located and what it could and should mean. He or she would develop critical insights derived from a developing understanding of the self-in-context. The learning curriculum would relate to other disciplines in the same way that those disciplines should do to each other – as open disciplines fostering interdisciplinary conversation and mutual enquiry.

Results from Research

In the research carried out by Christine Winter and myself in a secondary school context it was evident that low achieving pupils were quite capable of reflecting upon their learning experiences in a way that enabled them to develop insights into the social context of learning. It was also evident that all matters to do with learning could not be separated from the micro-politics of schooling and that there was a 'natural' development from reflection on cognitive processes to awareness of social justice issues.

At all levels of the education system, curriculum thinking is still too hide-bound by unhelpful dualisms like the academic/pastoral, the liberal/vocational and knowledge/skills. Sometimes such distinctions are useful, but in the present circumstances our thinking needs to be more fluid and we need to be on guard against jumping from the frying pan of traditional disciplines into the fire of a skills-based curriculum. Ian Duckett seems to be aware of this but it's one thing to state the need for integrating a knowledge and skills approach and quite another to construct courses which actually achieve this. I would suggest that in going beyond a basic skills model we do not need another version of a skills curriculum, even one conceived with due regard to context, but a properly debated learning curriculum which, in my view, would need to be grounded first and foremost in the development of the critical and reflexive awareness of individual learners.

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'Teaching by Topics' Revisited in the National Literacy Strategy

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Thirty years ago, one year after the Plowden Report, a book entitled *Teaching by Topics* was published. It appeared at a time when new ideas concerning primary curriculum development were blossoming, in an attempt to move teacher's thinking forward about what constituted 'learning', and its effect on the styles of education being offered to young children.

In his introduction, the author indicated that two issues influenced his rationale for writing. First, that since the 1870 Education Act, the major advances in education had been made primarily in the field of governmental organisation and administration. And second, that since the 1944 Education Act, he believed that "education had witnessed the early stages of a revolution in our methods of teaching". Sounds familiar? He then continued:

> *this spirit of progress is best reflected in our present attitude to the teaching of reading and mathematics in the primary school. Here the child's needs are increasingly taking precedence over the academic demands of the subject matter, particularly when opportunities arise for encouraging a child to discover knowledge for himself.*

When speculating on the worthiness of 'topics', 'projects' and 'centres of interest', the author observed that all had long been regarded as effective and attractive teaching methods. However, where teachers were tied to a strict 'syllabus of work', topic work could not be relied upon to hammer home those specific items of knowledge demanded by many public examinations. He recognised that, as a result, doubts had arisen as to the ultimate usefulness of topics, acknowledging that some teachers believed children could acquire such knowledge by the older methods of teaching. The author conceded that, to a limited extent, these opinions could be justified, but only if a child is regarded as "a tankard to be crammed with its full pint of knowledge from the teacher's inexhaustible jug". At no time, suggested the author, should topic work ever absolve the teacher from their obligation to see that children are given "a firm grounding in the basic principles of reading, writing and mathematics, for this must always be the first task".

Since this statement in 1968, considerable debate has ensued concerning the merits of topic work. Twenty years on, Tann (1988) proposed that "good topic work is the epitome of all that is best in British primary schools". She recognised it as "an all-embracing way of working and one which is infinitely flexible"; and again reminded us that topic work cannot be defined in any fixed curriculum or organisation terms – "it is more a way of learning and a way of teaching".

Imaginative Linking

But wait a moment, isn't 'a way of learning and teaching' what the National Literacy Strategy is currently espousing? Therefore, isn't it conceivable that by applying some imaginative thinking to the links between literacy and other areas of the curriculum, topic work can again be developed into a very effective form of learning?

For this to happen, teachers need to look very carefully at how they are interpreting the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching. They need to address this issue in order that they can develop a teaching method whereby the children's active co-operation is employed. If this is achieved, it will then encourage children to learn for themselves. However, if teachers fail to acknowledge the implications of this issue, then there is a danger that their response to the Framework for Teaching will become over-prescriptive, too tightly structured and regimental in design.

In the next few months teachers have a momentary 'golden opportunity' to get it right, if they seize the chance. Recent QCA and DfEE pronouncements have created the opportunity to re-allocate the time and depth of consideration which can be applied to the delivery of the National Curriculum Orders for foundation subjects. Teachers need to trust their own professional instincts and beliefs about how children learn if they are to act on this. They need to find the balance between a prescribed framework and a new creative approach so desperately required in primary education. They need to decide which is more important – the political aims of a government or a learning environment best suited to develop a child's ability to teach itself?

Currently, the most important element teachers must insist on is to put back creativity into primary education. It is a fundamental principle of the development process. Obviously, just as topic work did 30 years ago, this suggestion may cause palpitations for some because, as Handy (1997) observes:

> *Creativity needs a bit of untidiness. Make everything too neat and tidy and there is no room for experiment. Keep a tight rein on costs and there is no cash available to try new things or new ways. Cram your days too full and it's hard to find time to think.*

But think about it they must because there is much that is intrinsically good in the National Literacy Strategy. If only

teachers take the time to consider, they will see that it is based on a range of successful models of teaching of reading and writing. But to mature, as it needs to, the National Literacy Strategy must be subject to experiment. Teachers need to be 'untidy' as they develop it. And they need to stop 'cramming their days too full' in order to reflect on what they know to be the most beneficial elements of creativity. Teachers should be setting out to discover new ways of improving the quality of literacy teaching they employ during the 'hour'. They should be thinking on ways of harmonising the primary curriculum, in a meaningful and creative manner.

Only when this is achieved will teachers be in a position to provide young children with the necessary range and scope of integrated learning experiences that have historically proved to be the most successful element of primary education.

Space to Experiment

In order to undertake this exercise successfully, teachers have to be given, as Handy (1997) again puts it: "a bit of slack to give us the space to experiment", otherwise primary education will be, just as Voltaire described history, "nothing more than a tableau of crimes and misfortunes". Many of these more complex and sophisticated issues will also relate to the National Numeracy Strategy, which is about to steamroller its way through the primary curriculum after Easter 1999. I hope that it will not be approached too dogmatically. Likewise, teachers should no longer allow the vagaries of political fads and unrealistic expectations, prevent them from teaching the life-enhancing skills needed by young children to succeed in our rapidly changing society.

Now I return to where I began, by fully acknowledging the author of *Teaching by Topics* as a creative thinker who provided my generation with an essential element required in a first-class primary education. Not only was I taught how to think for myself, but I was also provided with the tools of learning so that I could teach myself.

Will the children of today offer similar thanks to their teachers? I seriously doubt it if their creativity continues to be confined as a consequence of constantly changing national strategies. The post-war generation of teachers rejected the cash-starved, sterile, rigid educational system dominated by the curricula and government administrators they had inherited. They replaced it with sound principles based on how children learn, including their natural creativity. Isn't it about time the present generation made use of this current 'opportunity', to do the same? 'How children learn' still needs to remain the central tenet of all thinking teachers when incorporating the National Literacy Strategy into the primary curriculum.

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Martin Rowson, *The Times Educational Supplement,* 26 June 1998

Book Reviews

A Life in Education

BRIAN SIMON, 1998
London: Lawrence & Wishart. 184pp. £12.99.
ISBN 0 85315 866 5

A Life in Education compresses 60 years of passionate involvement in all the main causes and issues in education into less than 200 pages. The involvement with education that Brian Simon recounts here with characteristic clarity and a light touch was influential enough to bring about change in the way every child in Britain was educated. Yet the most extraordinary aspect of this *Life in Education* is the fact that in all those 60 years there was only one occasion when the author was directly invited to give evidence of his research to a government body – all the other momentous changes in educational practice which he researched, advocated and argued for came about while Brian Simon, a member of the Communist Party since his student days at Cambridge, was excluded from a participation in the policy-making process of the main political parties. It was not always so. Immediately following his Cambridge degree, Brian Simon was engaged in full-time work as an officer of the National Union of Students. This position in turn led to an invitation in 1937, when still only 23, to join a Labour Party advisory committee to develop policy on education. It was the first, and last, opportunity to participate in policy-making from the inside. When he returned to education in 1945 following five years of active war service, the Cold War ensured that those with Communist sympathies were shunned by the major political parties.

Paradoxically, it becomes clear from the account of Brian Simon's strenuous life that this exclusion from the mainstream led him to base his influential advocacy of the abolition of the 11+ and of streaming in the primary school on impeccably researched analysis. So solid was the case that he built up against the assumptions of the psychometric testers that even the formidable Oxford philosopher A. J. Ayer was convinced of the case against the 11+ when questioning Simon and colleagues for the Plowden Committee.

Brian Simon's lifelong struggle for justice and democracy in education was in many ways a continuation of the work of his parents, and particularly of his mother, Shena Simon, to advance the cause of publicly-provided education. Thus, he enjoyed the support of both his parents for the way in which he chose to spend his life; through the political involvement of his parents he was able to learn from some of the most influential figures in education in the pre-war and early post-war years. The Simon family had risen to prominence in Manchester and it was in Manchester's twin city of Salford that Simon finally took up the teaching career he had planned since leaving university but which had been delayed first by his work for the National Union of Students and then by the Second World War. His description of this experience and of one of his first classes in a desperately poor area reveals that the occasion on which he first faced "thirty children aged 8" of whom "seven or eight could scarcely read" was a defining moment. "There is no doubt", he writes "that I learned a lot about teaching at Abbott Street ... In general I constantly felt what an immense amount could be done with these children in the right environment". Here then was the starting point for the lifetime of educational research, analysis and advocacy of policy change that Brian Simon was to undertake. His research began while he was still a classroom teacher and continued and flourished when he was appointed Lecturer at the (then) University College at Leicester, now the University of Leicester, in 1950. An account of that research makes clear how fortunate Brian Simon was in his wife and partner in research, Joan Simon. Her 'life in education' deserves a separate account, but her husband makes clear how much of his work was dependent on her active collaboration and support.

The long campaign to end the 11+ and establish the comprehensive school, and to abolish the practice of streaming children from the age of 7 in the primary school, seemed to be reaching a successful conclusion by the end of the 1970s. It is worth noting that Brian Simon managed to play a leading role in these campaigns while carrying a heavy administrative and teaching load and producing outstanding works chronicling working-class movements for educational change. *FORUM* was founded by Simon and colleague Robin Pedley in 1958 and played a vital role in the campaign although, as Simon writes "the job ... ate largely into my time for over three decades". But even in his account of these triumphant years a word of warning is sounded that the movement for educational reform was losing its way. The problems were twofold, and related to both curriculum and pedagogy in the now unstreamed primary schools and comprehensive secondary schools. Simon writes that "The Plowden Committee actually called for a type of university tutorial discussion between the teacher and the individual pupil, ignoring the reality, in a class of thirty, of twenty-nine other pupils clamouring for the same attention". Simon's major research project with Maurice Galton – ORACLE – revealed the lack of effectiveness of the new 'individualised pedagogy' which had become accepted primary practice. He developed his views on the mistakes that were being made in an article 'Why no Pedagogy in England?', views which he later refined and extended in a subsequent publication. These two articles deserve to be recognised as analysing the most important issues in English education today. Yet the fundamental questions they pose are still ignored in the current superficial debate around the issues of 'whole class' and 'group/individualised' teaching methods. If research in education is to have a future agenda, the first item on it should be to understand and respond to the insights in these two brief essays.

The second problem that undermined much of the advance of the 1970s was that of cultural relativism. Here, Simon refers to the left in the 1980s as "culpably leaving the defence of 'standards' in education to Rhodes Boyson". But the more pressing issue of defence of the common school during the period of Conservative government claimed Simon's attention. Perhaps he did not sufficiently appreciate the extent to which the decay of local democracy

and the influence of the cultural relativists had made the comprehensive school a vulnerable target. But the comprehensive ideal survived 'the long agony' of 18 years of Conservative Government. The sustained campaigns fought by Brian Simon and others during that period must take some of the credit. What also emerged from this turbulent period was the extent to which comprehensive education commanded widespread popular support among parents. *A Life in Education* ends by welcoming the incoming 1997 Labour Government. We must hope this Government will not be spared Brian Simon's incisive analysis and that it will learn from his wisdom.

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Speaking from Memory

HAROLD ROSEN, 1998
London: Trentham Books. 208pp. £14.99.
ISBN 1 85856 082 9.

It seems that as we grow older, and think more about what has happened to us in our lives in and out of schools, our own writing has more and more recourse to autobiography. Harold Rosen, in his *Speaking from Memory*, argues that autobiography is incorrigibly human and "always lurking in the sub-text of our language and thinking can break through at any moment".

This is a fine and pioneering book, coming from a genuinely popular scholar whose work has always sought to demystify and engage. For only a true 'organic intellectual' to use Gramsci's term, could have written *Speaking from Memory*. Autobiography as a genre has, throughout literary history, been relegated to a lower division of the canon. As Rosen notes, it has lived under a "disreputable penumbra" and frequently been seen by the scholarly hierarchs as too ordinary, "neither-class" and life-inspired to be significant. That, of course, *is* its vital significance – it is an expression of "common talk ... a universal possession".

Teachers of English know this well, and employ autobiography as an essential form with their students. Rosen rightly celebrates the tape recorder as a major democratic machine, and with it oral autobiography and oral history have taken on a vibrant life in the classroom. For Rosen has always been as interested in oracy as he is in literacy – not exactly a fashionable position in present times (how about a daily 'Oracy Hour' when pen, paper and computer screens are all prohibited from taking part?), and he knows that speech is the parent of the written word. The alchemy of autobiography is that it transforms for a lifetime and beyond "ephemeral, fortuitous and fragmentary voices" into texts. In this way, Rosen argues, memory is rendered into discourse, and transient narrative becomes capable of wide and generative dissemination.

His book spoke to me because I have seen what he argues happen – many times. Most recently, during an 'oral herstory' campaign in Fir Vale, north-east Sheffield, when a large group of teenage girls from the local comprehensive school and Pakistani, Yemeni, Somali, Caribbean, Bengali, Syrian and white south Yorkshire families interviewed their mothers, collecting their life stories and in each case employing their first languages. They transcribed them, translated them, edited and shaped them and they were published as a local community history, *Lives of Love and Hope*. These diverse Sheffield voices thus broke through a 'tongue-tied silence' and now squat within the pages of a book on domestic bookshelves, in secret drawers and in public libraries, ready to leap out at the reader.

Rosen's objective is, as usual, admirably democratic: "to wrest autobiography from the grasp of the literary theorists and academic circles and ultimately show what an everyday thing it is". An everyday thing indeed, in pubs, playgrounds, queues, canteens and streets, the voice of autobiography is the voice of life itself, the grounding for the eventual written word. And as if to prove it, the most lucid and gripping sections of Rosen's own book on autobiography are the autobiographical passages. When he writes about his grandmother ("a steely woman"), or his communist mother's indignant protests against her schoolboy son being compelled to carry a union flag to school to celebrate Empire Day – or his citing of his son Michael's poetry as a startling example of autobiography in verse – it is in such moments that his book burns with a special fire.

But Rosen's contribution to the study of ordinary people's – and particularly their children's – language and writing, has always been an especially precious one. I'm glad to have been asked to write this review too – because it means that I can thank him – like thousands of others would want to, and say how much, through decades and many struggles for words, his work has inspired and nourished me.

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Assimilating Identities: racism and educational policy in post-1945 Britain

IAN GROSVENOR, 1997
London: Lawrence & Wishart. £12.99.
ISBN 0 85315 839 8

On the final page of his *Assimilating Identities*, a lucid and revealing study of racism and educational policy in post-1945 Britain, Ian Grosvenor declares that "the educator himself needs educating" – having already quoted the vital words of A. Sivanandan: "Knowledge is not a goal in itself, but a path to wisdom; it bestows not privilege so much as duty, not power so much as responsibility. And it brings with it a desire to learn even as one teaches, to teach even as one learns."

Having already reviewed this book once before, I wondered if there was anything more for me to write about it. Reading it again, I found the stimulation on virtually every page. For what Grosvenor does so skilfully is not expostulate or wave his verbal arms around about the racism that has been so signal a factor in British education since the last War, he allows history to tell its own story – with the help of his insightful and startling researchers.

Having worked for six years for a large urban local education authority, I discovered gradually how racism works in such a powerful and influential institution. So I was ready for Grosvenor's chapter on Birmingham LEA's policy and practice around racism during the 1960s. But

that did not mean I was any the less shocked. It shows more how British racism works in its education system than almost anything else I have read. The 'draught' is everywhere, blowing through every office and committee room – revealed in memos, side-comments and between the lines of many a policy document, for as Grosvenor observes in a comment applicable to many other English LEA official attitudes: "Black children were defined as a 'problem' and assimilation was the policy goal". Stereotypes and caricatures were rife. One report by the local Inspector of Schools in 1969 referred, in a collective sense, to the "non-learning immigrant", and continued by offering thumbnail descriptions of the 'cultures' which made up a cartoon of Birmingham's black communities: "the exuberancy and volatility of the West Indian, the weakness but obvious charm of the Indian and the aloofness of the Pakistani".

Away from these invented and demeaned 'types', the communities struggled in their real lives to break down this racism by their own organisation and institution-building. And Grosvenor devotes a long and invaluable chapter to describe this process. He details the initiatives of supplementary classes, Saturday Schools and Language Schools that emerged, usually in the teeth of local headteacher opposition and the racist ignorance and hostility of jurassic politicians like Peter Griffiths or Enoch Powell. The LEA refused to allow the teaching of Punjabi in Birmingham schools in 1965, declaring that it would undermine the pupils' learning of English. While one local headteacher denied the local Caribbean community their right to use 'his' school for supplementary classes, on the basis of these convictions: "I am a bit sceptical about the ability of the West Indian community to run a school of any real educational value. I've seen what the standards of West Indian parents are, and how backward education in the West Indies is". He clearly saw no further than his rum punch.

This is what black communities have had to endure, and what still characterises many of the corporate attitudes of the British education system. Grosvenor's book is an instructive and insightful text in helping to tear down that mystification, and needs to be read and internalised by teachers, parents and students of education alike.

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