

Editorial

Welcome to this special edition of *EducationalFutures* which is published at a time of immense change in Higher Education. As a community of scholars we in Education Studies face turbulent waters of economic change that surge tsunami like from London and which threaten to swallow some institutions whole. It appears that dictates issued by the government in London also have the potentiality to create academic and institutional 'have and have nots' in terms of research and learning. What we face then is a manufactured ugliness and potential mindless uniformity where the commodification of Higher Education creates a two tier system of research intensive universities and those which are dedicated to teaching alone.

In these dark and somewhat depressing times this special edition of the journal seeks to illuminate the journey that all of us take in our academic careers. This edition presents a careful mix of articles from both senior academics and comparative newcomers to the profession for whom this is their first peer reviewed publication. Setting sail on this journey for the first time was, for some, very difficult and there was a decided nervousness that their creative expeditions would crash upon the rocks of a lack of time or low self-confidence. However, despite these fears all of these authors have reached journey's end and have discovered a brave new world where research, writing and teaching are now symbiotic to their constructions of self as professional educators and academics. In the difficult time and tides that lie ahead there can be no doubt that this interconnectedness of research, writing and teaching is the only way forward for the development of education studies within the new topology that will inevitably dominate the landscape of higher education.

Our first two articles from Steven Ward and Wendy Bignold carefully consider what a university should be in the 21st Century. Ward in his paper draws upon Humboldt and the medieval origins of the university to examine the traditional relationship between the state and university knowledge. Ward argues that the current financial discourse around university fees and neo-liberal economic policy is marginalising the debate which should be held about the nature of university knowledge and the effects of the free market upon higher education. Wendy Bignold also examines what a modern university should be and by employing John Henry Newman's 'Idea of a university' she details how at one university, curriculum content in education studies has been reconstructed. Bignold concludes her article by suggesting that in these dark times of educational and economic change we should consider not just the mere formation of students but their transformation into active, informed global citizens.

In our third article Jon Nichol and Penelope Harnett move the debate regarding curriculum and student formulation into the context of schools and teacher training. Based upon a detailed survey of school's history provision, conducted by the Historical Association, Nichol and Harnett argue that whilst there is much currently to celebrate in primary history a grim future lies ahead. The survey results reveal a crisis of teacher professionalism especially in its orientation to assimilation of up-to-date academic and educational subject knowledge of history and the values, beliefs and attitudes that underpin expert history teaching. Based upon these findings they

argue that a radical re-think of both Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is urgently required.

Our final two articles seek to examine curriculum, both overt and hidden, that operate with our primary schools and universities and how trainee teachers are inculcated into 'perceived forms of wisdom' that actually might undermine rather than develop professional educators. In their paper Colin Wong and Alan Hodkinson outline research with academics, students engaged in ITT and also teaching staff from primary schools into homophobia in primary schools. The findings they detail are disturbing suggesting that homophobia exists within primary settings and that children as young as five employ discriminatory language. Based upon these findings, Wong and Hodkinson argue that there is need for the inclusion of anti-homophobia work in the induction of students entering teacher training institutions, in ITT curriculums and within CPD courses. Deirdre Hewitt's article links Foucault's discussion on power and dominance with the government directive to teach synthetic phonics in English schools and how this has impacted upon ITT curriculums taught in universities. Hewitt demonstrates how teachers are dominated by a government power and how university educators now play 'the accountability game'. Compliance and accountability she contends now reign supreme in the world of the university and in the classroom and this has led to the imposition of a very narrow and impoverished view of reading on teachers, students and thus on children.

The editorial team trust that these papers are of interest, to you the readership, and that further they have illuminated the journey that academics take in developing research, writing and teaching in the context of university education. Although writing for publication is difficult and time consuming, the authors published here have all found it a worthwhile and fulfilling journey to take. We hope that this edition therefore might serve as an inspiration to those of you that have yet to commence this journey.

Best wishes

Alan Hodkinson, Wendy Bignold, Sue Warren and Chris Wakeman

Executive Editor

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