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## Link to Article

<https://educationstudies.org.uk/?p=16037>

## Foreword

Welcome to Vol 12.1 of Educational Futures our main volume for 2021. In a second Covid disrupted year we are absolutely delighted to be able to offer our readers a great edition thanks to the hard work of the authors, reviewers and BESA staff, especially Stephen Ward who has supported me magnificently throughout this very difficult year. Thank you all! This is the first edition after our first ever virtual conference, which was an outstanding success, and we have a number of articles in progress from the conference, so a further special thank-you to our organiser Dylan Adams. It is also our first edition with our teaching excellent section, the Doctorina Excellentia, and this has attracted a number of articles which are in progress and our first publication thanks to Alison Glover. Please continue submitting your articles to us and contribute to the growing reputation of our DOAJ-listed journal to ensure we go from strength to strength. All articles submitted are acceptable at the time of writing for submission to the Research Excellence Framework.

Our Research Articles begin with a topic which is attracting a lot of research in education, that of comedy in the classroom. Cathal O'Siochru of Liverpool Hope University explores the way comedy in the classroom can have an effect on education in 'When I grow up I want to be a comedian! Assessing the impact of comedy and laughter training on the emotional and social well-being of schoolchildren'. This is an interesting topic for researchers and practitioners alike and adds some new insights into what might and might not work. Our second article is by Sandra Abegglen (University of Calgary, Canada), David Blundell (London Metropolitan University) and Jessie A. Bustillos Morales (Oxford Brookes University). Entitled 'Eco-education: A response to the Anthropocene and an uncertain future'. The article examines two case studies and argues an eco-education approach which goes beyond sustainability as a curriculum topic and gives a deeper eco-system orientation to the world we live in.

With the current international focus on climate change and ecological awareness it is a particularly welcome and thought-provoking contribution. Our third article by Zeta Williams-Brown and Michael Jopling of Wolverhampton University is an interesting and indeed important article, “‘Children are more than just a statistic. Education is more than government outlines’: Teachers’ perceptions of the standards agenda’. It gives a much-needed voice this year for those who have worked in difficult conditions in schools and often go unheard. Their opinions as elucidated in this article are much welcomed in this journal and should be listened to.

Our fourth article from Michael Power of Chester University is a most welcome return to publications from an institution with a long history of working with BESA. His article, ‘An analysis of the common characteristics of intervention strategies used in secondary education’, examines intervention strategies in secondary schools and advises a framework which encourages teachers to examine the intervention strategies in their own institutions. Any approach to empowering practitioners is welcome in this journal and I would ask readers to consider the approaches advised in this article as part of their reflective processes. Our fifth article by Anee Yostrukul of Edge Hill University is another article from an institution with a long history of research dissemination through Educational**futures**. Her article, ‘How can student-staff partnership in curriculum design impact upon learning experience and engagement?’, is based on her research with higher education students and examines how students react when asked to participate in curriculum development, a viewpoint of interest to all of us in higher education. Our sixth article, the second from Chester University, is by Daryn Eagan-Simon and is entitled ‘Moving in the wrong direction: A critical history of citizenship education in England from the early twentieth century to the present day’. It is a topical article looking at the way citizenship has developed and changed through history with clear emphasis on the relatively recent changes from participatory dispositions and the enhancement of political literacy to an emphasis on citizenship education for personal responsibility, financial literacy and volunteerism. Our seventh article is a thought-provoking contribution from Caroline Bagelman, Chris Keelan, Mona Massumi, Jan Springob called ‘Precarity and pedagogic rights: How teacher-training programmes prepare trainees for the realities of migration in the classroom’. This transnational study from Germany and the United Kingdom advocates for the importance of opportunities for reflection and action in training for teachers involved in

working with refugees to allow them to develop the know-how to make sensitive judgements.

### **Doctorina Excellentia**

This new section has its first article outlining excellent teaching practice (Doctorina Excellentia) and we are very excited to have Alison Glover's article 'Using images to develop group discussion and actions for sustainable development'. It gives an excellent outline of the way Alison has used pictures to enhance learning. This is a section we are keen to develop and, with a number of working articles in progress, we can only thank Alison for open this section in very fine style.

### **Book Reviews**

Our first review is by Stephen Ward outlines Michael J. Sandel's (2020) book 'The Tyranny of Merit: What's become of the common good?' This review gives an excellent outline of the book and summarises the difficulties of creating a meritocracy as access to the institutions which might create a meritocracy is not equal for all. Our second review is a succinct summary of Ben Williamson and Anna Hogan's 2020 book 'Pandemic Privatisation in Higher Education' by Richard Sanders. Richard identifies a number of key things close to all educationalists' hearts as data is collected and used all the time by EdTech companies with the data positioned to limit the purposes of education, while furthering the market for commercial organisations to deliver their own 'experimental' educational offerings.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Educational**futures** and we would welcome contributions to our future volumes for any of our three sections: traditional academic articles, teaching excellence articles and book reviews.

Joe Gazdula, Edge Hill University

Editor, Educational Futures