# THE ROOTS OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

## International Handbook of Educational Change

*Edited by*
Ann Lieberman

Springer

THE ROOTS OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

This volume is part of a set of four. These volumes together form the *International Handbook of Educational Change,* which was originally published in 1998 as volume 5 in the Springer International Handbooks of Education series (formerly known as Kluwer International Handbooks of Education series), and edited by Andy Hargreaves, Ann Lieberman, Michael Fullan and David Hopkins.

The Table of Contents of the entire *International Handbook of Educational Change* has been printed at the end of this volume.

# The Roots of Educational Change

## International Handbook of Educational Change

Edited by:
Ann Lieberman
*Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Stanford, CA, U.S.A.*

Springer

A C.I.P. Catalogue record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

The Roots of Educational Change: ISBN-10 1-4020-3289-7
Extending Educational Change: ISBN-10 1-4020-3291-9
Fundamental Change: ISBN-10 1-4020-3292-7
The Practice and Theory of School Improvement: ISBN-10 1-4020-3290-0
Set: ISBN-10 1-4020-3423-7
The Roots of Educational Change: ISBN-13 978-1-4020-3289-9
Extending Educational Change: ISBN-13 978-1-4020-3291-2
Fundamental Change: ISBN-13 978-1-4020-3292-9
The Practice and Theory of School Improvement: ISBN-13 978-1-4020-3290-5
Set: ISBN-13 978-1-4020-3423-7
Springer Dordrecht, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York

The volumes can be purchased separately and as a set.

---

Published by Springer,
P.O. Box 17, 3300 AA Dordrecht, The Netherlands.

*Printed on acid-free paper*

springeronline.com



Printed in the Netherlands.

# Table of Contents

*II. Expanding the Dialogue*

# International Handbook of Educational Change - Introduction

ANDY HARGREAVES
*Department of Teacher Education, Curriculum and Instruction Lynch School of Education, Boston College, MA, U.S.A.*

ANN LIEBERMAN
*Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Stanford, CA, U.S.A.*

MICHAEL FULLAN
*Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Canada*

DAVID HOPKINS
*Department for Education and Skills, London, U.K.*

This set of four volumes on *Educational Change* brings together evidence and insights on educational change issues from leading writers and researchers in the field from across the world. Many of these writers, whose chapters have been specially written for these books, have been investigating, helping initiate and implementing educational change, for most or all of their lengthy careers. Others are working on the cutting edge of theory and practice in educational change, taking the field in new or even more challenging directions. And some are more skeptical about the literature of educational change and the assumptions on which it rests. They help us to approach projects of understanding or initiating educational change more deeply, reflectively and realistically.

Educational change and reform have rarely had so much prominence within public policy, in so many different places. Educational change is ubiquitous. It figures large in Presidential and Prime Ministerial speeches. It is at or near the top of many National policy agendas. Everywhere, educational change is not only a policy priority but also major public news. Yet action to bring about educational change usually exceeds people's understanding of how to do so effectively.

The sheer number and range of changes which schools are now confronting is staggering.

Educators have always had to engage with educational changes of one sort or another. But other than in the last three decades or so, these changes were infrequent and episodic and they never really affected or even addressed the core of how teachers taught (Cuban, 1984). The changes were in things like how subjects were organized, how grade levels were clustered together into different school types, or how groups of students were divided between different schools or integrated within them according to ability, gender or race. Thus when educational

*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* vii-xi.

historians chastise contemporary change advocates for ignoring the existence of educational change in the past and for exaggerating current crises and change demands "as a marketing device to promote the new possibilities of education in a new century, designed to appeal to consumers of different kinds who are grown weary of the old familiar product" (McCulloch, 1997), they are only partially right. While educational change has always been with us in some sense or other (as also, of course, has educational continuity), many of the changes are very different now, in both their substance and their form.

Since the 1960s, educational change has became a familiar part of teachers' work, and has more directly addressed issues of what teachers teach and how they should teach it. Following the launch of Sputnik and the emergence of post-war egalitarian ideals, public education has been treated as a crucible of technological and economic advancement and as a creator of greater social justice. In the 1960s and 70s, teachers in many countries had to deal with the rhetoric and sometimes the reality of curriculum innovation in mathematics, science and the humanities. They saw students stay in school longer, the ability ranges of their classes grow wider and the walls of their classrooms come down and then go up again just a few years later. Successive waves of different approaches to reading or mathematical learning swept through their classrooms, each one washing away the marks left by its predecessors.

It was in these times of educational expansion and optimism that educational change really began in earnest - as also did the study of it. From the late 1960s and early 1970s, researchers like Matt Miles, Per Dalin, Lou Smith, Neil Gross, Lawrence Stenhouse and Seymour Sarason studied the growing phenomenon of educational innovation - whether in the shape of large-scale curriculum projects and packages, or in the form of newly-created innovative schools. They showed how and why large-scale curriculum innovations rarely progressed beyond the phase of having their packages purchased or "adopted" to the point where they were implemented fully and faithfully, and could bring about real changes in classroom practice. At the same time, they also revealed how the promise of exceptional innovative schools usually faded over time as their staffs grew older, their charismatic leaders left, and the system withdrew permission for them to break the rules.

As the limitations of large-scale curriculum innovations became apparent, educators began to treat the individual school as the centre or focal point of educational change efforts. School-based curriculum development, and school-based staff development initiatives proliferated in many places, instead of development being imposed or initiated from faraway.

Research on what made teachers effective in their classrooms also expanded to address what made schools effective or ineffective as a whole, and as lists of effective schools characteristics were discovered (such as creating a safe and orderly environment for learning, or setting and checking homework regularly), these were sometimes then used as administrative blueprints to try and make particular schools

become more effective over time. Many districts or other administrative authorities initiated "effective schools" projects on this basis. Some schools and districts supplemented and sometimes supplanted this science of school effectiveness with a more loosely defined and humanistically interpreted art of school improvement - the process of how to help schools and their staffs become more effective through setting clear goals, creating staff involvement, measuring progress over time and so forth.

Ironically, this approach to school improvement was then translated back into a rational science by many educational systems. It was treated as a process of planned or managed change that schools could be moved through step-by-step, stage-by-stage, guided by the school's improvement team that its region or district mandated it to have.

When these various school-centred changes and improvements didn't work well enough or fast enough (and sometimes even when they did), impatient educational administrators (and American urban school superintendents with an average job tenure of less than two years can be very impatient indeed), imposed their own reform requirements instead. So too did ideologically driven politicians, whose agendas of educational reform have often been shaped by the desire to create public indignation (which they promise their measures will then answer), or by the private idiosyncrasies of their own educational pasts, (which their reforms are meant to cherish or purge).

This quarter century or more of educational change processes and initiatives that have been meant to alter learning and teaching in our schools, has left us with a mixed legacy. On the one hand, studies of what works and what doesn't across all the different change strategies have created a truly powerful knowledge base about the processes, practices and consequences of educational change. During this period, research studies have shown, for example, how educational change moves through distinctive stages of initiation, implementation and institutionalization; how people who encounter changes go through successive "stages of concern" about how those changes will affect them; and how people respond very differently to educational change initiatives depending on what point they have reached in their own lives and careers.

Some of the research findings on educational change have even been accorded the status of generalizable rules or `lessons' of change. These include the maxims that practice changes before beliefs, that successful change is a product of both pressure and support, that evolutionary planning works better than linear planning and so forth (these `lessons' have been synthesized especially effectively by Michael Fullan, 1991, 1993).

So extensive is the current knowledge base of educational change that it has come to constitute a field of study in its own right - drawing on and transcending the disciplines of sociology, psychology, history and philosophy, as well as the fields of curriculum and educational administration. In a way, educational change has now really come of age - but while this is a significant academic achievement, it is also where the problems of the field - the second part of its legacy - also begin.

Our experience of educational change today is stretching far beyond our experience, knowledge and investigations of it in times gone by. While the existing

knowledge-base of educational change is impressive, it is no longer really sufficient to address the unique change problems and challenges that educators confront today.

Contemporary patterns of educational change present educators with changes that are multiple, complex and sometimes contradictory. And the change demands with which educators have to deal, seem to follow one another at an increasingly frenetic speed. A typical primary or elementary school these days may be considering a new reading program, developing cooperative learning strategies, thinking about how to implement new computers, designing a better parent newsletter, and trialling portfolio assessments all at the same time. The portfolio assessments favoured by the region or the district may have to be reconciled with imposed standardized test requirements by the nation or the state. A push to develop a more integrated curriculum and to recognize children's multiple intelligences may be reversed by a newly elected government's commitments to more conventionally defined learning standards within existing academic subjects.

All this can make teachers and administrators feel that the systems in which they are working aren't just complex but downright chaotic. This chaos is partly inherent in societies and organizations where information circulates and decisions are made with increasing speed. It is also the result of educational policy constantly being shaped and altered by different and competing interest groups in an ideological battle for the minds of the young. And sometimes it even results from a kind of *manufactured uncertainty* that more than a few governments wilfully create to arouse panic, to set pretexts for their policy interventions and to keep educators and everyone else off-balance.

Few of the existing theories and strategies of educational change equip educators to cope effectively with these complex, chaotic and contradictory environments

- Rational theories of planned change that move through predictable stages of implementation or `growth' are poorly suited to schools where unexpected twists and turns are the norm rather than the exception in the ways they operate.
- The conventional academic and behavioural outcomes that defined the core of what an effective school should produce in the past are outdated in an age where many people now clamour for schools to develop higher-order thinking skills, problem-solving capacities, and the habits of collaboration and teamwork. Complex as the world of education is, people expect more and more from it, and the effective schools of the past cannot deliver what many expect of schools today.
- Theories and models that helped educators know how (and how not) to implement single curriculum innovations are of little use to schools where innovations are multiple and priorities compete.

While we have learned a lot about how to improve individual schools or small clusters of schools with additional resources, exceptional leaders, the ability to attract or shed particular kinds of staff members, and discretion to break the

> rules; we are only just beginning to understand the challenges of scaling reform up from small samples of improving schools, to entire school systems. The existing knowledge base of school improvement has shown us how to create islands of improvement, but has been less helpful in assisting people to make archipelagoes from islands, and still less in showing them how to build entire continents of change.

It is time, therefore, to reflect at some length about what we already know and have learned about educational change and to explore how the field can and should be pushed further, to help educators understand and deal effectively with the immensely complex change problems that are customary today. Each of the four volumes on *Educational Change* addresses these fundamental issues in its own distinctive way.

## REFERENCES

Cuban, L. (1984). *How teachers taught: Constancy and change in American classrooms, 1890-1980.* New York: Longman.

Fullan, M. (1991). *The new meaning of educational change.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces.* London: Falmer Press.

McCulloch, G. (1997). Marketing the millennium: Education for the twenty-first century. In A. Hargreaves, & R. Evans (Eds.), *Beyond educational reform.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

# Preface

This book attempts to delineate the roots of a self-conscious field of educational change that grew up in – and grew out of – the turbulent political, social, economic and cultural life of the post-World War II years. Its authors, who provided many of the seminal writings that helped to create and shape the field, examine their work from current perspectives.

The issues they raise allow us to see the connections between the recent history of education in general, and the field of educational change in particular. (Individual abstracts for each chapter have been omitted so as not to distract the reader from seeing these contributions as integrated parts of the development of the field as a whole.)

In the 50s and 60s these scholars represented a broad spectrum of innovative thought and action shifting the focus of research in education and school improvement to studying – and interacting with – schools as organizations and cultures. They wanted to find out, for example: how people learn in groups; or how the world of school affects the world of classrooms; or how policies do or do not make their way from federal, state and district into schools and classrooms.

These new questions gave rise to new research methodologies which in turn gave rise to new questions such as: What differing perspectives do school people hold and how does that define what schools are like? And what effects does the school context have on innovative ideas? The questions grew in complexity as did the ways of studying them. Several authors show how multiple research methods became important to understanding problems concerned with the integration of policy and practice, particularly as related to innovation and change in schools (See Lortie, Miles, McLaughlin, Smith, this volume).

The range of issues that they deal with – from the effects of the GI Bill to the effects of school environment on student learning, from the political realities of educational policy to the social realities of teachers – are explored and revisited. These issues, leading to controversial themes involving change, school and community, continue to nourish the field and its many branches, as we will see in the succeeding three sections of this Handbook.

Since 1945 broad social forces – the post-war economic expansion, the Cold War, the Civil Rights Movement – and unprecedented scientific and technological change – from space exploration to the rise of the computer age – have affected educational research, theory and practice. Coming from government policies such as the "War on Poverty" and the GI Bill, and influential reports and movements such as "The National at Risk" and "The Effective Schools movement", we have struggled to understand the successes and failures of the past, while trying to reach fuller understandings of the problems and possibilities for educational change and comprehensive school reform in the future.



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* xiii-xiv.

The field of educational change, as it has come to be known, owes its origins to the authors represented in this book, who with their vision, knowledge and hard work created the roots from which new knowledge would grow. As Matthew Miles put it:

> *People forget that roots exist. But from sturdy roots flow a here-and-now trunk, main branches, leaves, flowers and fruit . . . effective school change efforts today need a conceptual base in work that's gone before.*
> Miles, p. 37 (this volume)

Ann Lieberman

# Introduction

# The Growth of Educational Change as a Field of Study: Understanding its Roots and Branches

ANN LIEBERMAN
*Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Stanford, CA, U.S.A.*

In twenty five years of teaching graduate students about schools and ways of improving them – for both students and their teachers – I have sent many of them to "review the literature on change". Inevitably, faced with the confusion of selecting from hundreds of books ranging from theories of planned change to the history of particular movements in education, dealing with problems of leadership, school culture or attempts to define the "meaning" of educational change, and even offering a variety of organizational strategies to effect change – they ferret industriously through this literature struggling to make some sense of it all. What is the genesis of these ideas? Where do they come from? How can students come to understand the development of this field of educational change from its seminal "roots" to its contemporary questions – many of which are branches of trees that were planted long ago and that have, in seemingly erratic and unsystematic ways, grown up over time? Perhaps this modest collection of essays will help them – and us – to gain a more incisive understanding of this field, a field that has its roots in "history and biography and their intersections within . . . society" (Mills, 1959, p. 6).

A number of historians have written about reform in American education, (see for example, Cremin, 1961; Katz, 1968; Ravitch, 1988; Tyack, 1974), but our focus is on the beginnings of a self conscious field of study of educational change that emerged in the period after World War II. With the growth of higher education and the building of hundreds of public universities throughout the nation, and in the midst of a rapidly expanding economy, social mobility became increasingly dependent on higher education, and public policy both responded to and helped shape the demand.

## POST WORLD WAR II AND THE CHANGING SOCIETY

After World War II, as veterans returned home and the GI bill made it possible for many to pursue studies in higher education, colleges and universities expanded at a rapid rate. This in turn led to evaluating the ability of public schools to produce



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 1-8.

students who could take advantage of the growing technological and scientific discoveries that had helped the United States to win the war (See Sarason, this volume). Federal aid to education for the first time was considered essential to improve schools, even though this had traditionally been an area of state control. Education was increasingly seen as critical not only to the well being of the post-war industrial society, but as a major component of the competition for supremacy with the Soviet Union in the growing "cold war". It didn't take long before the k-12 schools were under attack for not fulfilling their mandate to keep up with, and surpass the Soviets, which intensified when their Sputnik became the first spacecraft to orbit the earth.

The Cold War – with Sputnik as the symbol – and the growing pressure from parents who saw education as the means to better jobs and successful lives for their children in the more complicated and burgeoning economy of the 50s, brought forth a spate of educational reforms particularly aimed at changing the curriculum in schools. Criticism centered on the teaching of math and science, focussing on the need for teachers to be held to specific objectives. Sponsored by the growing infusion of federal funds through the National Defense Education Act of 1958, the National Science Foundation and other private foundations, educators began to look more closely at schools, classrooms and the curriculum and how to improve them (Goodlad, 1966). Who was to take responsibility for these changes? How were they to be made? What conditions would be necessary to support serious reform? These were some of the questions that were gaining national attention as, for the first time, large amounts of federal funds were being appropriated to improve schools.

## IMPROVING SCHOOLS THROUGH CURRICULUM REFORM

The most famous of the curricular reform efforts evolved from the Woods Hole Conference run by the National Academy of Science (Bruner, 1960). Although the conference was about the improvement of science teaching, the ideas discussed there soon became the manifesto for teaching other subjects as well. Bruner explicated his theory of how subject matter should be heavily connected to a wide variety of materials and practices that engaged students in learning experientially and conceptually about the meaning of the subjects they learned. He posited that schools should teach not only basic understandings of science, but how scientists think, pose questions and go about finding solutions. This approach to learning was eventually encompassed in a curriculum that he conceived entitled, "Man: A Course of Study." Using this approach, academics at several prestigious universities promoted the adoption of other curricular reforms,organizing summer institutes for teachers on campuses throughout the country (see Kliebard for recurring curricular themes as topics of reform).

Underneath the seemingly placid surface of the Eisenhower years, the decade from 1950–60 was incubating issues that would have immense repercussions on how and what the schools should teach and how and what students should learn.

School integration, the growing development of new technologies, and the shape and substance of American education were constant topics of concern (McClure, 1971, p. 47). But the problem of inequality soon eclipsed all others as a movement swept over the country which was to affect every institution in American life.

## CHANGING SCHOOLS AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

At the same time that curriculum reform efforts were at their peak, the Civil Rights Movement swept over the country and the "War on Poverty" began. It was a time when the passion and fervor for equality affected the whole of American society which became aware, as never before, of the gross inequities that existed in housing, employment and schools, as well as in the daily life of ordinary Black citizens (Marable, 1991; Branch, 1988).

The Supreme Court, in the case of Brown vs. The Board of Education in 1954, concluded that schools that were segregated racially were inherently unequal, involving the federal government and state governments in seeking ways to integrate schools while providing better education for all students. Eventually appropriations in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 provided money for a wide variety of educational programs to support equity and the improvement of schools (See Smith, this volume). It was the evaluation of these efforts, yielding information on how schools used the money and how the programs for change actually made their way into school practice, that began to reveal the complexity of schools as social organizations and the enormous difficulties that were involved in trying to change them (See Giacquinta this volume).

## LEARNING FROM LARGE SCALE SOCIAL LEGISLATION

The first large scale evaluation of several of these innovative programs which took place during the 60's provided sobering data. Under the auspices of the Office of Education, a major study was mounted to find out what effcts schools had, if any, on economically disadvantaged students (Equality of educational opportunity, 1966). The overriding message, of what came to be known as the "Coleman Report", was that a family's economic background was most important to student success in school and that schools could play only a minor role in alleviating the educational inequities of students coming from conditions of poverty. This report raised significant questions about the role of the schools, the family and the federal government in helping to combat poverty. (The assumption had been that a variety of federal programs would increase opportunity, combat poverty and make better schools.) The report had many critics as well as supporters, stimulating a number of researchers to both critique the data and look for other explanations of how and in what ways schools could make a difference, particularly to students from poor communities (See Jencks et al., 1974; Mortimore, this volume).

Such large scale studies brought attention *for the first time* to looking at schools

as cultures, with their own particular contexts, providing new ways to understand teachers, leadership and the problems of change. Researchers now began to look inside the school trying to assess how new curricular, pedagogical and organizational ideas were organized, how teachers worked with their students and with each other, and what the role of leadership was. They puzzled over why schools with similar populations, curricula, and locations looked so different.

It became important to find out what school-based educators did, how they thought, and what structures facilitated or impeded their improvement. A new literature emerged asking questions in ways that formed the basis for the next several decades of study (see for example, Lortie, 1975; Sarason, 1971; Giacquinta & Skilbeck, this volume), involving reformers in what came to be called the "effective schools movement" in the United States and Europe.

## THE TEACHERS' WORLD AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF PRACTICE

There were numerous conceptual breakthroughs in the building of knowledge about teachers, schools and the improvement of practice during the 70s. Researchers, now more sophisticated about the powerful effects of the society on schools, began to shift their attention to deeper and more complicated syntheses. Where Waller (1967) in his classic work described teaching as being a job for people not as "bright" as other professionals, and the school as a good place for "unmarriageable women and unsaleable men", Lortie's important study of schoolteachers (1975) demonstrated a more complex reality about teachers and the *contexts* of teaching. His insights into the tenuous connection between teaching and student learning and the "endemic uncertainties" that teachers felt as a result, the isolation of teachers from other adults and the importance to them of intrinsic rewards, brought conceptual richness to understanding the social realities of teaching and the consequent need for change (See Lortie this volume; see also Cuban, 1984; Lieberman, 1992). But how was this to happen? Who or what was to be the target for change?

## SCHOOLS AS CULTURES AND THE CHANGE PROBLEM

The social system of schools and communities had been studied in earlier times (Lynd & Lynd, 1937; Hollingshead, 1949; Gordon, 1957; Coleman, 1962). These were all important contributions for their time:

> schools had ambiguous goals, were vulnerable to the external society, and made varied adaptations to these pressures. Schools, long thought to be universal – and therefore subject to the same treatment – were also different in their particulars. How then were schools, both individually and in general, to be understood and improved?

It was Sarason's book *The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change* (1971), that linked the external pressures of the society to the powerful norms internal to the school teaching a whole generation of educators to consider "behavioral and programmatic regularities", as well as patterned ways of behavior in creating conditions for school improvement. Schools are cultures he maintained, and changing a culture is far more complicated than simplistically assuming that new curricula, or new pedagogical techniques – even though they might be improvements – could be delivered to schools in self contained packages that would immediately change what and how teachers taught.

## LINKING INNOVATION AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

During the 70's, as schools were being pressed to make their organization more humane and their curriculum more relevant to their students, researchers found fertile ground for studying innovations in curriculum, pedagogy and organization. Studies focussed on the links between innovative ideas and the organizational processes that served as barriers to or supports for these changes (See Giacquinta & Smith, this volume).

Researchers argued about "fidelity to an innovation": teachers were often blamed for changing innovative ideas to suit their classroom context, and schools promising big innovations often produced small changes. The range of responses raised new questions for research on different aspects of educational change. Were materials to be developed that would be "teacher proof"? Were innovations being created without an authentic understanding of what was practical and possible in schools? Were schools and their principals simply going after money, without commitment to serious change? Was there a lack of understanding of the role of teachers, schools and principals and their role in educational change? For the federal government, it was important to know whether the "Great Society's" educational programs that were supporting massive social reforms in education, were making a difference in the quality of schooling (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973).

## THE IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEM: LINKING POLICY TO PRACTICE.

A major study that shifted the field's understanding of schools, innovation and change was the Rand Change Agent Study released in 1978 (see, Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; McLaughlin, this volume; Fullan, this volume). This study, of the effects of public policy on educational change conceived in the late 60s and carried out in the early 70s, revealed that implementation – the process whereby a school actually makes changes – was the significant problem. How, why and in what ways new ideas are implemented turned out to be the major keys to understanding the problems of public policy in relation to changing schools. And

in doing this the study also pointed to a whole new way of looking at educational improvement: from the perspectives of federal policy makers and local schools and their communities.

At roughly the same time, Goodlad and his colleagues were reporting on a five year study of a group of schools in Southern California that had been involved in an improvement process (See Bentzen, 1974; Goodlad, 1975). Both studies, one a national study of schools, and the other an in-depth regional study over a five year period, showed similar findings: Changing schools was a long term process which involved an understanding of "the policy problem" and the local culture of individual schools and their teachers. Teachers and principals changed their practices and ideas depending on the contextual conditions. (Leadership, school culture, staff development, networks of schools were topics to be replayed and have continually resurfaced as critical themes in the change literature). These large scale studies provided important data, information and interpretation essential to the growing understanding of the process as well as the content of educational change (see Fullan, this volume; Rand Change Agent Study, 1978; Goodlad, 1975).

## APPLIED BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE: FOCUSING ON RELATIONSHIPS AND GROUP PROCESS

Unrelated to these specific developments in the process of educational change, social scientists were becoming involved in studying and influencing changes that were taking place in work, community and family (Bennis, Benne, & Chin, 1961; Cartwright & Zander, 1968). Based on the work of Kurt Lewin a field of study was clearly in the making:

> A field of study and professional training in applied behavioral science is taking shape. The intellectual challenge comes from the necessity of developing an adequate theory of the process through which knowledge is applied. The practical challenge lies in inventing and developing social technologies consistent with our best social and behavioral knowledge and adequate to the practical and moral requirements of contemporary change situations.
>
> (Bennis, Benne, & Chin, 1961, p. v)

The first edition of Bennis, Benne and Chin's work, published in 1953, was the most comprehensive book about social change upto that time. Introducing a language of "planned change", they conceptualized the change process as having four different orientations: *rational-empirical* , emanating from the enlightenment; *normative,* about the idea of social intelligence and learning in groups; *re-educative*, concerning organizational structure and more deliberate change; and *power-coercive* , change brought about by confrontation, non-violence or the use of political institutions (Bennis, Benne, & Chin, 1961, pp. 58–9). These were important theoretical descriptors of the way change appeared to happen, but they did not speak to the problems of *educational* change in general, nor to school or classroom change in particular.

Although the model describing the process of planned change as a sequence moving from research, to development to dissemination (RD&D) lasted several decades, it had serious limitations. As an expert on planned change noted: "In policy-making environments, research comes well after the application of "craft knowledge, the mastery of general principles and a feel for the context" (Huberman, p.7). He also critiqued the RD&D model as being "hyper-rational and technocratic", and insensitive to the unique properties of school cultures (Huberman, unpublished paper).

But the ferment that the Group Dynamics movement (as it was called) created stimulated action and research about organizational change, intergroup relations, organizational development as well as other areas of educational change, providing an impetus for the growth of research in the 60s and early 70s. Researchers from psychology, sociology, political science and anthropology began to turn their attention to schools as organizations while at the same time some educators were creating innovative curricular efforts aimed at changing the schools.

Despite this concentrated activity, the application to educational organizations did not come easily. In fact, at the end of a year long seminar held at Teachers College, Matthew Miles summed up by saying, "Basically, the problem is that we do not *understand* - do not know with any clarity or precision the answers to questions about almost every imaginable aspect of innovation in education." (Miles, 1964, p. 40).

## CULTIVATING THE ROOTS AND BRANCHES OF THE FIELD OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

In the decades that followed Miles plaintive summation, the field of educational change has put down roots and grown in knowledge and influence. It has been influenced by historical events, such as the growth of a federal presence in educational improvement and worldwide shifts to a global and technological economy, and nourished by the contributions of a number of individual scholars who were to make enriching our knowledge of the process of educational change their life's work. They were to become the "intellectual crafts people" (Mills, 1959, p. 195) who, rooted in the realities of their own and others experiences, laid the basis for the field as we know it today. It is in that spirit that we seek to build on their work in light of the social and economic realities of our time, and help schools and the communities they serve become better able to meet the complex challenges of the future.

## REFERENCES

Bennis, W. G., Benne, K. D., & Chin. R. (1961). *The planning of change*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Bentzen, M. M., & Associates. (1974). *Changing schools: The magic feather principle.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Berman, P., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1978). *Federal programs supporting educational change* (Vol. I-VIII). Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1974–1978.

Blau, P., & Scott, R. W. (1962). *Formal organizations: A comparative approach.* San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co.

Branch, T. (1988). *Parting the waters: America in the King years, 1954–1963.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Bruner, J. S. (1960). *The process of education.* New York: Harper

Carpenter-Huffman, P. (1974). *Change in education: Insights from performance contracting.* RAND Educational Policy Study. Cambridge, MA.: Ballinger Publishing.

Cartwright, D., & Zander, A. (1968). *Group dynamics, research and theory* (3rd Edition). New York: Harper and Row. (The first edition was written in 1953).

Coleman, J. S. (1962). *The adolescent society.* New York: Free Press of Glencoe.

Coleman, J. S, Campbell, E., Hobson, C. McPartland, J. Mood, A. Weinfeld, F., & York, R. (1966). *Equality of educational opportunity.* Washington: National Center for Educational Statistics.

Coleman, J. S. (1982). *National Center for Educational Statistics conferences, critiques and references on the subject of public and private schools.* Washington, D.C.: The Coleman Report.

Cremin, L. A. (1961). *The transformation of the school: progressivism in American education 1876–1957.* New York: Knopf.

Cuban, L. (1984). *How teachers taught: Constancy and change in American classrooms, 1890–1980.* New York: Longman.

*Equality of educational opportunity/United States Office of Education.* (1966). Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office (known as the Coleman report).

Goodlad, J. I. (1966). *The changing American school.* Sixty-Fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Goodlad, J. I. (1975). *The dynamics of educational change.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Gordon, C. W. (1957). *The social system of the high school: A study in the sociology of adolenscence.* Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.

Havelock, R. (1973). *The change agent's guide to innovation in education.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Educational Technology Publications.

Hollingshead, A. B. (1949). *Elmtown's youth: The impact of social classes on adolescents.* New York: J. Wiley.

Huberman, M. (Unpublished paper). *Roots: An essay on research and change.*

Jencks, C. S, Smith, M., Acland, H, Bane, M. J., Cohen, D., Gintis, H., Heyns, B., & Michaelson, S. (1972). *Inequality: A reassessment of the effect of family and schooling in America.* New York: Basic Books

Katz, M. (1968). *The irony of early school reform: educational innovation in the mid-nineteenth century Massachusetts.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Lieberman, A. (1992). *The changing contexts of teaching.* Ninety-first yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lynd, R.S., & Lynd, H. (1937). *Middletown in transition.* New York: Harcourt Brace and Co.

Marable, M. (1991). *Race, reform, and rebellion: The second reconstruction in black American, 1945–1990.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

McClure, R. M. (1971). The Reforms of the Fifties and Sixties: A Historical Look at the Near Past in *Curriculum retrospect and prospect.* The seventieth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Miles, M. B. (1964). Educational Innovation: The nature of the problem in *Innovations in education.* New York: Bureau of Publications.

Miles, M. B. (1964). *Innovations in education.* New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College.

Mills, C. W. (1959). *The sociological imagination.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Passow, A. H. (1986). *Rethinking school improvement.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Pressman, J., & Wildavsky, A. (1973). *Implementation.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ravitch, D. (1988). *The great school wars: A history of the New York City public schools.* New York: Basic Books.

Rogers, E. (1962). *Diffusion of innovations.* New York: Free Press of Glencoe.

Sarason, S. (1971). *The culture of the school and the problem of change.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Schaefer, R. J. (1971). "Retrospect and Prospect" in *The curriculum: Retrospect and prospect,* The Seventieth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part 1. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Tyack, D. B. (1974). *The one best system: A history of American urban education.* Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.

Waller, W. (1967). *The sociology of teaching.* New York: John Wiley and Sons.

# I: The Roots

# World War II and Schools

SEYMOUR B. SARASON
*Professor Emeritus, Yale University*

My interest in educational reform has very personal roots. Needless to say, the roots of the educational reform movement require a social-historical explanation but, I assume, that kind of explanation can be illuminated by personal accounts which, albeit idiosyncratic, says something about the social-historical context. I have long been intrigued by the fact that some of the more well known participants in the reform movement come from very different backgrounds and life experiences. It is my impression that the number of these participants is greater than in any previous era. That in itself points to the importance of a distinctive social-historical context. For what it is worth I begin with a personal account.

In 1993 I wrote a book *You are Thinking of Teaching?* To begin this personal account I can do no better than to give the following excerpt from that book.

> When you review your twelve years as a student, which teachers come quickly to mind? Let me personally answer the question. Because I am undoubtedly a very senior citizen, I have to point out that the teachers I remember now are the same teachers I remembered when I was much younger. For example, when I was in graduate school – approximately six or seven years after being graduated from high school – a number of my student colleagues and I were discussing the nature of memory, in the course of which someone suggested that each of us write down the names of the teachers we had in our public school days. We were quite surprised at the relative shortness of our lists. (We could recall in our mind's eye several teachers whose names could not be dredged up.)
>
> My list then was what it is today, and in this order: Miss Stephenson, Mr. Coleman, Miss Collins, Mr. Triest, Mr. Hunkins, Mrs. Schweig, Mr. McDonald. The last two names were not teachers. Mr. McDonald was the principal of my elementary (K-8) school, and Mrs. Schweig was the assistant principal. But they were unforgettable because I and others viewed them as fearsome, punishing, if not child-devouring. The fact is that I can recall not a single instance when I interacted in any way with either of them, and I can recall no instance when I saw them in any way punish or discipline a child. But to the children in that school, Mr. McDonald and Mrs. Schweig were to be avoided like the plague. If you were in the hall and you saw either of them, your heartbeat mightily escalated, especially if they appeared to be approaching you. Why are they, who were not my teachers, on my list? For one thing,



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 11-24.

I cannot think of my elementary school days without their images being conjured up, I feared them. For all I know, they may have been lovely, decent, sensitive, supportive people, but you couldn't prove that by my testimony or that of my classmates. They never did or said anything to give students the feeling that they could be trusted. There is a difference between fear and respect. We feared them. We saw them as seeing us as potential criminals. We loved and respected Tom Kelly, the police officer who directed traffic at the busy intersection where the school was located. He was a delightful, friendly, joking, lovable person. When he was killed by a car at that intersection, we cried. If that had happened to Mr. McDonald or Mrs. Schweig, we probably would have been sad, but we would not have cried.

Why do I start with Mr. McDonald and Mrs. Schweig? For one thing, I wish to emphasize that how a child views an adult in the school may be dramatically discrepant with how that adult intends or would like to be viewed. I have no doubt whatsoever that Mr. McDonald and Mrs. Schweig did not want to be feared. But I can recall nothing said by either of them or any of my teachers to change my basic stance of fear, my belief that if they approached me, I was in trouble. (It was not until I was an adult that I learned that that is precisely what many parents believe: if they are asked to come to see the principal, they are going to hear bad news. Parents are not accustomed to being summoned to school to be told good news.) The more general point I wish to make is that young children, like everyone else, form impressions of others less on the basis of what they say or do not say and more (much more) on what they experience in their give-and-take with others. And by experience, I mean circumscribed instances in which the needs, expectations, and goals of a child are positively or negatively affected by the words and actions of an adult. It is not that actions speak louder than words but that actions are incomparably more fateful than words. I may very well have been told that Mr. McDonald and Mrs. Schweig were not to be feared, but there was nothing in my personal experience to lead me to change my mind. Fear is the enemy of trust, and trust is the interpersonal vehicle by means of which different personal worlds can begin to overlap. I had absolutely no basis for trusting Mr. McDonald and Mrs. Schweig.

As I have looked back and replayed my school days on my internal video screen, there were very few teachers I can say I trusted. Let me hasten to add that I never feared a teacher the way I did Mr. McDonald and Mrs. Schweig. Why, then, were there so few whom I did trust? Why when I think of trust do I think only of Mr. Coleman and Miss Stephenson? One reason is that I believed they were interested not only in my academic performance but in me, that is, what I thought and felt. When I gave a wrong answer to a question, they did not say "That is wrong" and call on another student. They tried to determine why and how I arrived at the wrong answer. And they did that calmly, patiently, as if I had piqued their curiosity, which they had to satisfy. With other teachers, I would not volunteer an answer unless I was absolutely, 100 percent sure my answer was correct. With Mr. Coleman and

Miss Stephenson, I was relaxed and not fearful of appearing stupid. In fact, I enjoyed those give-and-take interactions. Their classes were interesting, they asked us interesting, even puzzling questions, they challenged us to draw on our out-of-class experience. And in doing so, they did one other thing: they revealed why and how they thought as they did. We learned a lot about them as people. If I had to put in one sentence what has stayed with me from their classes, it would go like this: "There is more than one way to think about and solve a problem."

When I think of these two people (they were more than the label teacher conventionally conjures up), the word fair always comes to mind. That is a hard word to define briefly. For my present purposes, let me just say that it appeared as if who you were, and how "smart" you were, were never grounds for ignoring or devaluing you. Regardless of who and what you were – and the students were very heterogeneous on any variable you can name – you counted.

Let me now tell you about Miss Collins, whom I had in the ninth grade and who influenced my life. She did not have the "open," challenging style of Miss Stephenson or Mr. Coleman. I never felt I knew her or that she was particularly interested in me other than as a performing student. She was a prim, constricted, low-key curriculum-oriented woman who in her quiet way ran a quiet class. If she rarely smiled or expressed any strong feeling, she was not intimidating. She taught Latin. In those days (shortly after the Civil War!), you took Latin if you were college-bound. You would be right if you assumed that students took Latin with the same enthusiasm they took a medicine. Then, slowly but steadily, Miss Collins began to demonstrate how some of the words we used every day derived from Latin. To me and a few other students, it came as a revelation that English mightily derived and developed from Latin. Yes, it was a Latin class, but to me it was also a class in the English language, my language. It was Miss Collins who stimulated us to look upon a dictionary as a kind of detective story. If Miss Collins was not an interpersonally interesting teacher, she was an intellectually mind-expanding teacher. She made "dead" Latin personally "alive."

Now to Mr. Hunkins and Mr. Triest (and many others whose names I cannot recall). The first word that comes to mind is uninteresting. Not only were they uninterested in me (or any other student), but they did not seem interested in anything, including the subject matter. It is as if they came to a class with a recipe (= lesson plan) that said "Do this first, that second, and that third, and if you follow instructions, you will end up with a palatable dish you will enjoy." There was nothing to enjoy! We were treated and felt like robots. More correctly, it is as if we had empty heads and hearts. The fact is that a lot was going on in my head and heart, but God forbid that I should put it into words. My job was to learn what I was told to learn even though in my "unformed" mind, I knew there was a difference between learning and understanding. And I learned one other thing: even if I learned but did not understand, do not ask questions, do not reveal your stupidity, do

not ask "why" questions, do not take up valuable teacher time. By conventional standards, I was a "good" learner. By my own standards, I was a very poor understander. The classroom was no place to seek or expect to gain understanding. It was a place to get good grades, to appear as if you understood, not a place to ask questions that nobody else seemed to have (which, of course, was not true), but a place in which you had better be able to answer the seemingly scores of questions the teacher asked. None of these teachers invited questions. On the contrary, they made you feel that if you asked questions, you were either stupid or a show-off. None of the teachers responded to questions the way Miss Collins did. I said she was prim, low-key, undemonstrative of feeling. But when you asked her a question about whether a particular word in English derived from Latin, her eyes took on an excited cast, an ever so small smile seemed to struggle for expression, and she helped you to answer your question. I can sum up by saying that in these other classrooms, productive learning was defined by the number of questions I could answer, how well I could regurgitate what I was supposed to learn. That definition does contain a kernel of truth, but only a kernel. Another way of summing up is to say that the bulk of my classrooms were uninteresting, boring, and without much point.

Why do Mr. Triest and Mr. Hunkins stand out in my memory? Why do I remember their names and not those of similar teachers for whom subject matter was infinitely more important than what was going on in our hearts and minds? The answer is that I did not respect them. There were many teachers who were riveted on subject matter, but in some inchoate way, I concluded that they cared about the subject matter, if not about us. Mr. Triest and Mr. Hunkins, I and others had to conclude, cared about nothing except getting through class without once getting up from their chairs. Their classes were ones in which nothing seemed to make sense. Mr. Hunkins taught introductory chemistry, Mr. Triest introductory German. We ended up having no respect for or interest in Mr. Triest, Mr. Hunkins, chemistry or German. There are people today who assert that the level of learning in a classroom is largely affected by factors extrinsic to the classroom, for example, family socioeconomic status. They never had the likes of Mr. Triest and Mr. Hunkins!

I could go on and on, but I do not see the point. I have revealed enough to buttress the conclusion that by the time I finished high school, I had had experiences quite relevant to conceptions of what makes life in a classroom interesting and challenging or boring and even deadly. Needless to say, I did not know that I had learned a lot about the ingredients working for and against productive learning. I was just a high school graduate. It could never occur to me that I had experiential assets relevant to matters educational. Who was I to pass judgment on teachers, classrooms, and the nature of learning? Is there any doubt whatsoever that my teachers would view me as without assets on the basis of which I was justified to come to conclusions? *If after high school I had entered a teacher preparatory program – and in those days,*

> *you could do just that – it would have been with the attitude that nothing in my school years was of value in learning to become a teacher.* I would have looked at my college teachers from precisely the same stance from which I had looked at my public school teachers: I knew nothing, they knew it all; their job was to pour in, mind was to absorb; I had only deficits, they would provide me assets; they were entitled to opinions because they had experience, I was not so entitled because I lacked experience.

Why, for the purposes of this paper did I italicize the sentence above? Because what I expected when I went to college was almost the polar opposite of what I experienced in grade school. We were not treated by our instructors as empty vessels that needed filling. With few exceptions they were like Miss Stephenson and Mr. Coleman. They sought our questions and reactions. They obviously relished intellectual give and take. We were expected to have opinions which we should feel obliged to express. We were not made to feel that we should or had to cover a certain amount of material that day in that class. *We counted as individuals. We respected, trusted, and liked the bulk of our instructors. The world of the classroom and the "real world" looked different and connected.* I said "classroom." The fact is that in those days *all* freshmen took the same introductory courses which were held in a lecture hall, the number of students averaging about forty in number. (Each introductory course had two or three sections.) It is impossible for me to exaggerate the difference between what I experienced in my freshman year and what I experienced in grade school. In June, 1935 I was "only" a high school student not entitled to an opinion. Two months later in September I was being treated as if I had an intact brain. I did not know it then but I was learning the *positive* aspects of the self-fulfilling prophecy. If you treat people as if they have brains, far more often than not they will demonstrate they have brains.

My first professional position (in 1942) was in a brand new state institution for mentally retarded individuals. It was explicitly to be an educational facility, not a warehouse. During the 3–1/2 years I was there I learned several things. First, I daily saw the *negative* consequences of the self-fulfilling prophecy. Second, the resistance of staff to any challenge to the *status quo*. Third, the institution had a culture one of its obvious aspects being that what people said publicly was often at variance with what they said privately. Fourth, pedagogy consisted of mindless drill, drill, drill.

My years in this institution are described in detail in my autobiography *The Making of an American Psychologist* (1989). Crucial in my development there was my relationship to Henry Schaefer-Simmern, a political refugee from Nazi Germany, who was an artist, art historian and art theorist. He came to the institution two days a week to work with several groups of the "children" (that is what they were called) in his studio. It was Schaefer who literally demonstrated to me – no one else was interested – what it meant to start the learning process *where the child is*. His book *The Unfolding of Artistic Activity* (1948) is truly a remarkable document. It is not happenstance that John Dewey wrote the foreword to that book. And it certainly is not happenstance that I began to read Dewey about whom

I had learned nothing in my graduate school years. The combination of my grade school experience, knowing Schaefer-Simmern, and becoming knowledgeable about Dewey was of bedrock importance in my thinking about schools, contexts for productive learning, and teachers and teaching.

When I came to Yale in 1945 I initiated a research project in the public schools. This meant that I had to spend a lot of time in a lot of schools in a lot of classrooms. I met and talked with scores of teachers and principals. The different things I had learned in my first professional position began to get organized in my head. Why, I asked myself, were classrooms so amazingly similar in organization, student role, teacher role, and ambiance? Uniformity is inherently neither a virtue or vice. But this was a uniformity that helped explain why classrooms seemed to be uninteresting and unstimulating. Teachers were the source of all knowledge, students were expected to absorb that knowledge by memorization and drill, the outside world never entered the classroom, teachers asked questions and students answered them. My grade school days were staring me in the face! Also, teachers had little or nothing to do with each other. During lunch they talked about everything but learning and pedagogy. No school had a forum where professional matters were discussed. And they read next to nothing in the professional literature. Schools, I had to conclude, had a culture that needed systematic description and study but the requirements of my research project did not permit pursuing such study. That came later.

What deepened and broadened my initial musings about the culture of the school came from developments in the larger society. More specifically, it was during the years of my research project that the federal government took actions that were dramatic departures from a longstanding tradition: Education was not an arena into which the federal government should intrude. But intrude it did because it became obvious that our cities lacked the resources adequately to meet the needs of an ever increasing school population, which was a direct consequence of World War II. I found myself in the position to observe how the federal legislation was being perceived and interpreted by school systems and how those programs were introduced and implemented in schools. Those were sobering observations because it was obvious (at least to me) that the implementers seemed to proceed as if there was no school culture that needed to be understood, to be taken into account. That is when I learned that even though the implementers had years of experience in schools their "technology for change" exposed their ignorance of or insensitivity to the school culture. One other thing was impressed on me: The evaluation of these programs – and programs seemed to increase geometrically each year – was either pathetically inadequate or a whitewash or both.

At the same time that I was conducting my research in the schools (on test anxiety) I was collaborating with Burton Blatt at Southern Connecticut State College (now University) in developing and implementing a new approach to the preparation of teachers. Burt was a remarkable person and thinker, and that is an understatement. Needless to say, it was Burt, who died at an early age, who helped me round out my education about schools, school systems, and preparatory programs. There were three people, each of them an intellectual gem, who

profoundly influenced me: Henry Schaefer-Simmern, Burton Blatt, and Thomas Gladwin who was an anthropologist with whom I collaborated and who taught me the importance of culture in understanding people and institutions. It is inconceivable that I could have come to my point of view about schools and the change process without the many ways they shaped my thinking. I was a lucky guy to have them as friends and teachers.

In 1962 I started the Yale Psycho-Educational Clinic precisely to study the culture of schools. I directed that clinic for eight years. In my autobiography I call them the "Camelot years" because it was during those years that I experienced schools in diverse ways that gave me an exhilarating sense of growth. Those years spanned most of the decade of the legendary sixties when every major societal institution came under attack. Everything seemed to be related to everything else. Everything I have written since those years largely derives from what I experienced during the years at the clinic.

In 1971 I wrote *The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change*. In 1996 a new edition of the book was published with the title *Revisiting the Culture of the School and the Problem of Change.* "Revisiting" refers to the opportunity afforded me to add a number of chapters that addressed the question: What has changed in the twenty five years since I wrote the book? There are two points in those chapters that are relevant here. The first is that what I wrote in that book is – obviously in my opinion – as relevant today as it was when it was first published. The second point is that as I have replayed my experiences in schools before the sixties all of the major societal problems that came to the fore *in* that decade were already manifest in our schools *before* that decade. They were, so to speak, sproutings but I and everyone else were insensitive to them, i.e., to their significance as barometers of a *social* change that began during and after World War II. That does not mean that if we were sensitive to those barometers we would not have been as surprised as we were when the sizzling sixties erupted; when it become crystal clear that a social change was occurring in American society. What it does mean is that the earliest phases of a social change would become manifest in schools, and I would say inevitably so. We do not become aware of the social change until it hits us in the face, long after the seeds of change have sprouted. I cannot here say more about this. My recent book *The Barometers of Change. Individual, Institutional, and Educational Transformations* (1996) gives more detail.

So much for some of the roots of my personal interest in educational reform. Let me now turn to the social-historical roots of the educational reform movement.

How will future historians describe and explain the educational reform movement of the past four decades? We would expect those historians to be, initially at least, overwhelmed by the mass of data available to them: the printed word, statistics, videos. What to us is the present will be for them a distant past. Their professional task will be to scrutinize the data in order to determine whether there are obvious themes or issues that, so to speak, hit one in the face. The historian must "reduce" the data in some way, to separate the trivial from the important, the transient from the enduring, the light from the heat of controversy, the

prophetic from the noise around it. That is not an easy task, which is why for any one era or social problem there are many historians. One historian may see a particular pattern in the data while another historian may see the same pattern but weighs its parts differently. One historian may emphasize variable x while another may see that variable as relatively unimportant compared to variable y or z. Historians do not have an easy task and in the case of educational reform the mass of data we are making available to them will cause most of them to investigate other eras and problems.

But the historian is not content to ferret out major themes or issues from the data which he or she has read. The historian wants to understand how those themes may reflect *our* psychology and values, neither of which is made very explicit but rather taken for granted by us. That is to say, precisely because we have lived in a particular era and society there are axioms, beliefs, and world views which we regard as so right, natural, and proper that we have no need to articulate them. So, although the historian knows what we have said, written, and done, like those in any era we were not fully aware (or not aware at all) of what has undergirded our thoughts and actions, i.e., to an undetermined but large extent we are prisoners of our times. The process and force of the socialization process make it extraordinarily difficult for us to fathom the roots of our thoughts and actions. For example, for a very long time women were seen and their "psychology" explained in ways that justified their status as second class citizens. It all seemed so obvious: the logic seemed so clear and unassailable. And the same was true for how children learned, who should teach them in what ways and for what purposes. How children learned and what they needed were hardly disputed. It is these unarticulated assumptions, these locked-in concrete explanations, that the historian seeks to unravel if only because he or she will be viewing us from a perspective different from ours, i.e., the future historian will not be living in *our* world. If it is understandable that we, today, envision a future that is not all that different from the present, the future historians will make much of our naivete, of our imprisonment in our era, of our inability to take seriously that the present is not pregnant with *a* future but with many possible futures.

The historian has another problem. When he or she studies our era in which educational reform has been so prominent a feature, an unavoidable question arises: Why did that movement arise when it did? What were its precursors? What set the stage for that movement? Why did the roots of the movement sprout when it did? Was it a slow sprouting that gathered momentum? Were there socially cataclysmic events that transformed sprouting into metastatic growth? The historian has the conceptually demanding task of making connections between two successive eras. The era of educational reform did not have a virginal birth.

The questions I have raised have long intrigued and puzzled me (and not only in regard to educational reform). That explains why I made an effort to organize my answers in my most recent book *Barometers of Change. Individual, Institutional, Social Transformation* (1996). The overarching theme of the book is that nothing about our society today is explicable apart from an understanding of the nature

and consequences of World War II. Let me, all too briefly, summarize my argument.

1. World War II was a *world* war to an extent that World War I was not. World War II changed everything and everyone. In a population of one hundred and fifty million people, ten percent entered the armed forces. The disruption in the lives of individuals, families, and institutions was enormous.

2. The war pitted the forces of freedom against those of tyranny and racism. The rhetoric of freedom was understandably not embraced with enthusiasm by racial and ethnic minorities who had long experienced discrimination and degradation. *During* the war there were race riots, and the pressure mounted to end segregation in the armed forces. At the same time that the war engendered a sense of national cohesiveness, it also brought racial conflict to the fore.

3. As in the case of World War I, World War II exposed the fact that a very sizeable number of people had to be rejected for service on the grounds of illiteracy. Even so, a significant portion of those selected for service was for all practical purposes unable to read or write or compute at a level necessary to be of value to the military which, as a result, created its own programs to bring recruits up to a third to fourth grade educational level.

4. Because of manpower needs and shortages there was a *mass* migration to industrial and manufacturing centers in our urban areas: from rural to urban, from the south to the north. Generally speaking, the migrators had low educational levels and reflected a cultural orientation rather different from those who had grown up in the cities and, again generally speaking, had higher educational backgrounds. What we later called the "urban problem" began during the war and schools reflected it. School populations in our cities began to increase the backgrounds and outlooks of students more heterogeneous than ever, and the consequences of the housing shortage for children were adverse. Schools were not a societal concern, winning the war was.

5. The war's end was greeted with relief and joy, to indulge understatement. But they were also accompanied by several explicit attitudes. First, the world that was had to be supplanted because that world was the one that spawned the Great Depression and World War II. Second, it was the responsibility of the older generations to insure that children would grow up in a new order of things in which they would have opportunities to live safe, productive, stimulating lives. And opportunities included schooling in which "a child would realize his or her potential." There would and should be no racial, social, economic, ethnic obstacles to a child's development. The future generations must not experience what the parental generations had. How to rear children for a new world was both problem and opportunity. Books about child rearing began to appear. More parents read Spock's book than read the Bible.

6. The baby boom was predictable but the society was unprepared for it, especially our cities whose financial resources were inadequate. Schools were overcrowded, juvenile delinquency became a national concern, supportive services to teachers sparse or non-existent. The flight from the cities began. Even in the

growing, affluent suburbs they could not build schools fast enough. It was infrequent but not rare that new schools would go on double session when they opened their doors.

7. What deserves emphasis is that a significant fraction of parents came back from service unwilling to be passive observers of the educational scene. They looked at "authority" with skepticism and assertiveness. If there had always been a semi-silent cold war between educators and parents, that war heated up considerably soon after World War II ended. Educators were not used to parents who had opinions.

8. The most objective barometer of what was happening in our cities and their schools is that in the early fifties and with great reluctance and over the objections of many political figures, President Eisenhower got Congress to pass legislation giving aid to city schools. That was a first, a dramatic change and departure from longstanding policy about the federal role in education. It was recognition of what was happening to and in our schools in the immediate post war years. It was reactive, not proactive legislation.

9. Science and technology played crucial roles in winning the war. Would this country have the quantity and quality of highly trained, highly educated personnel to exploit scientific and technological advances and to maintain its leadership in a dangerous, unpredictable world? If the war's end brought peace, that peace was threatened – and very soon after hostilities ceased – by the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union. Both within the military and academia (the "hard" sciences) there were individuals who began to express concern that our educational institutions, *particularly the public schools*, did a distressingly inadequate job in educating students in scientific subjects. The point here is that this criticism and concern were voiced in the immediate years after the war, i.e., before curriculum reform became the industry it did. The number of critics was small but they were well placed and influential. In the university the departments and schools of education were always objects of criticism and disdain, and it is not happenstance that these early critics considered them to be part of the problem and not of the solution.

The picture I have described was more complicated than these nine points suggest. But I think that if I gave a more complicated picture, as I endeavored to do in my book, it would in no way alter this conclusion: the roots of what we now call the education reform movement were planted and began to grow during and immediately after the war. That, I hasten to add, does not mean that there was a recognizable pattern allowing one to predict what later developed. No one did or could make such a prediction. What we call social change reflects a *coalescing* of different barometers (roots) and that coalescing depends on societal forces and events many of which are neither predictable or controllable. What we call the post World War II social change was not recognized as such until the decade of the sixties. It was in that decade that we were made aware that what had appeared to be discrete barometers had coalesced. And it was in that decade that it became clear that educational reform was about more than education in the conventional sense. Constitutional issues, community control, parental involvement, gender

issues in the classroom and books, teenage pregnancy, drugs, violence, single parent families, multi-culturalism, sex education, before and after school programs – these and more impacted on the school scene. In all respects the schools reflected and had to take into account a post World War II upheaval and change. It was as if everything had become related to everything else.

Let me now relate an experience that confirms what I said about the significance of World War II and its immediate aftermath. It also exposed my parochialism as well as my not taking seriously the possibility that if my historical analyses was semi-correct, it was applicable to other western countries.

In November 1995, I attended a small international conference in Germany on "teacher burnout." I knew that teacher burnout was a problem in the United States. I did not know, and I was quite surprised to learn, that it was a problem in Europe. But in another part of my head I knew rather well what devastated Europe was like after World War II. It was not only that Europe was a physical shambles but that new philosophies, outlooks, and world views had emerged and were taking hold. It is not easy to characterize what was emerging but several themes were explicit: Life was essentially meaningless, man was alone in a non-divine universe, imprisonment in an unwanted privacy was the fate of the individual, the old social-political-moral order was worse than bankrupt, life was absurd. The plays of Beckett, the tomes of Sartre, the plays of Inonescou, the writings of Genet and Celine reflected a zeitgeist in which optimism was notable by its absence. "The theatre of the absurd" referred not only to what was being portrayed on the stage but to the larger society as well. Given what had happened to Europe it would have been surprising if these themes had not emerged.

But I knew one other thing. Beginning in the late forties and early fifties, the writings of the Europeans I have mentioned not only became known in the United States but were warmly embraced, especially by young people and academics. What that signified – what it *should* have signified – was that themes subsumed under the concept of "counterculture" had a ready and eager audience in certain groups in this country. Put in another way, albeit in a more diluted and inchoate way the psychological and social disruptions caused by World War II engendered thoughts, feelings, and outlooks similar to those Europeans experienced. We like to think that the social change which became blatantly clear in the nineteen sixties was peculiarly American. The fact is that social change had also been developing in Europe and for similar reasons. We think of the sixties as one of rebellion in which every major societal institution was under attack, especially from young people. That was no less true in Europe. The youth of Europe were kin to their American counterparts. James Jones' novel *The Merry Month of May* well describes the phenomenology of European youth.

So why was I so surprised to learn at the conference in Germany that teacher burnout was as much of a problem in Europe as in the United States? Why should it have surprised me that teachers felt imprisoned in a bureaucratic system that crushed initiative, stifled the sense of personal growth, expected more and gave less support, at the same time teachers were faced with unmotivated, or recalcitrant, or unruly students, or all of these? Why should I have been surprised that European

schools would be plagued, disconcerted, or overwhelmed by diverse and significant racial-ethnic migrations that, of course, mightily impacted on schools (among other institutions), migrations that were direct consequences of World War II? And, of course, why should I be surprised that bilingual issues were upsetting for European educators?

What bothered me was less my parochialism than my failure to take seriously what I had conceptualized and written in *The Barometers of Change* about World War II and social change. World War II had unleashed world wide societal dynamics which inevitably set the stage for the recognition that although the world had changed, the basic institutional character of schools had not changed. The response to that recognition has been the education reform movement. Why, then, are so many people dissatisfied with the results, and why are so many reformers literally "burned out" in the United States and Europe? For me, at least, the conference provided a partial answer, one that is implicit in all I have previously written but until now have avoided writing about with the concreteness it deserves. It concerns the governance of our schools.

Following World War I an attempt was made to create a degree and form of world governance that would prevent wars. The League of Nations failed. After World War II, in recognition of the League's failure, the United Nations was created. Although far from a robust success, the United Nations has not been a failure. The significance of both attempts is the recognition that the absence of some degree and form of world governance was an invitation to disaster. Even countries like the United States which looked upon the League as a restriction of its autonomy, as a kind of cure that was worse than the disease, fostered the development of the United Nations. If in 1920 anyone would have predicted that within fifty years American troops would participate in a United Nation peace keeping operation, that person would have been regarded as psychotic. What happened in the interval, of course, was the recognition that some degree and form of world governance was absolutely necessary.

If everything changed as a result of World War II, the governance of schools has not. By governance I do not mean how a single school should be governed, or how a board of education should function, or how a state department of education should oversee schools. What I mean is the political-legal-administration of the *system* of schooling. If anything is clear, it is that this system has been a dismal failure in at least two respects. First, it did not foresee what was happening in our schools. Second, what the system has done in regard to the recognition (finally) of the inadequacies of schools has had little effect, to indulge understatement. What I am saying is true in Europe as well as in the United States. The European participants in the conference left me in no doubt on that score. The conference was on teacher burnout, although there was unanimous agreement that teacher burnout was inextricably related to student burnout, i.e., as students go up the grades their interest in and motivation for learning decreases. The range of discussion was wide but in one or another way criticism of the system of education (the governance issue) was explicit.

The League of Nations and the United Nations had a clear purpose, an overarching one. What is the overarching purpose of our system of schooling? I find it symptomatic that when I ask educators that question there is not a unanimity of response. A system, any human social system, that does not have an unambiguous, agreed upon overarching purpose is wasteful of resources, human and otherwise. And when that is the case of the educational system the consequences are socially destabilizing.

In my previous books I have discussed what I think is the overarching purpose of schooling. In the most succinct form it is: to create those contexts of productive learning in which the energies, motivations, and goals of students *and* teachers are developed to produce a sense of personal-intellectual growth. That purpose is not now being achieved and it cannot be under the present system. Beginning with that purpose, what we need to do is to develop a system of governance that will take that purpose seriously. If we start that way, unencumbered by the system as it now is, we stand a chance of creating a system that will be more consistent with that overarching purpose. It will be a system quite different than the one we have.

World War II dissolved opposition to some degree and form of world governance. As I said before, that war changed everything and everyone. The failure of the system of educational governance to sense and adapt, both proactively and reactively, to a changed world has contributed to a weakening (if not the shredding) of the social fabric. We have learned many things from the educational reform movement and the most important thing I have learned is that as long as we continue to avoid the governance issue we will not capitalize either on our successes or failures. I know I will be accused of pie-in-the-sky hopes, of being impractical and unrealistic. To such criticism I can only respond in what will appear to be a self-serving way: Beginning in 1965, orally and in print, I predicted that the educational reform movement will have little or no general positive impact. I can point to a school here and a school there where the overarching purpose is taken seriously but I can point to no school system where that is even remotely the case. Indeed, school systems, especially in our cities, are obstacles to creating and sustaining contexts of productive learning. What has been missing in the educational reform movement is discussion of the existing system qua system. Are we doomed to work within a system the virtues of which escape me. In most of my books I refer – ad nauseum some would say – to the constitutional convention of 1787. I mention it here again because what was noteworthy about that convention was a clear resolve: "The Articles of Confederation by which we are now governed are inadequate and dangerous, we will never be able to forge a nation, we must start from scratch and come up with a system that stands a chance of insuring protection of the freedoms we desire." That insight, that resolve, that willingness to take risks, mark that convention as one of the great events in human history. They did not tinker. The stakes were too high for that. That is how we should approach the creation of a new system of educational governance. I shall be devoting my next book to that problem, knowing as I do that I do not have a corner on wisdom, creativity, and imagination. Our constitution was developed

by a *group* of unusual people who discussed, argued, debated for three months in hot, steamy Philadelphia. Can you imagine getting a group like that together for that length of time today? That rhetorical question implies an important part of the problem: the lack of a national leadership who sees that the basic problem is one of the philosophy, form, and purpose of the system of educational governance.

## REFERENCES

Sarason, S. B. (1971). The culture of the school and the problem of change. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Sarason, S. B. (1989). *The making of an American psychologist. An autobiography.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sarason, S. B. (1993). *You are thinking of teaching? opportunities, problems, realities*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sarason, S. B. (1996). *Barometers of change. individual, institutional, social transformation.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sarason, S. B. (1996). *Revisiting the culture of the school and the problem of change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Schaefer-Simmern, H. (1948). *The unfolding of artistic activity, its basis, processes and implications*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

# Finding Keys to School Change: A 40-Year Odyssey[1]

MATTHEW B. MILES
*Center for Policy Research, Sparkill, New York*

I've been working at understanding change in schools for more than forty years. Being given a license to reflect on my intellectual adventures in the study of school change – in public – is a delightful and faintly alarming charge. I need to avoid sheer narcissism on the one hand, and detached encyclopedic syntheses on the other. And not succumb to the old codger's temptation to claim pioneering knowledge that has been ignored by recent young upstarts! These risks bring a certain frisson to the enterprise.

This volume's metaphor of "roots" is attractive. Roots are deep, hidden, invisible. So people forget that roots exist. But from sturdy roots flow a here-and-now trunk, main branches, leaves, flowers and fruit. By analogy, effective school change efforts today need a conceptual base in work that's gone before. The problem is that some current ideas about change in schools are, to put it charitably, poorly rooted.

## CONVENTIONAL WISDOM ABOUT SCHOOL CHANGE

There is no shortage of conventional wisdom about school change. Many ideas have had remarkable staying power for the past 40 years. Here are some, drawn from Fullan & Miles, 1992 (Fig. 1).

Such propositions are very limited in helping us understand what really drives school change. Although they often have a kernel – or at least a ring – of truth, they also have many intellectual and practical faults. Note, for example, the sheer, self-sealing tautology of (a) Or the abstract, unfalsifiable style of (b) Of course it's true. But (to recast Henry Murray's comments on persons) every school is also like *some* other schools in some respects, and like *all* other schools in some respects.

Maxims like (c) have a seductive husk, but are probably wrong at the core. It does strain credulity to the breaking point to say that the schools we see today are no different from those of yesteryear, or that this is just "another swing of the pendulum", or (tacitly) that all change efforts are hopeless. Rather, such *propositions* are hopeless and self-defeating.

Proposition (d) has always been useful as a handy excuse for failure in change efforts. But what evidence there is on it (Miles, 1981; Miles & Louis, 1987) leads to the verdict "not proven."



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 25-57.

a) Resistance is inevitable, because people resist change.

b) Every school is unique.

c) *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*

d) Schools are essentially conservative institutions, harder to change than other organizations.

e) You just have to live reform one day at a time.

f) You need a mission, objectives and a series of tasks laid out well in advance.

g) You can never please everyone, so just push ahead with reforms.

h) Full participation of everyone involved in change is essential.

i) Keep it simple, stupid: go for small, easy changes rather than big, demanding ones.

j) Mandate change, because people won't do it otherwise.

**Figure 1: Faulty maps of change.**

Many propositions come in mutually-canceling pairs, like (e) and (f), or (g) and (h); A good look at the organizational literature, and a recent study of major change in urban high schools (Louis & Miles, 1990) suggests quite clearly that *neither* of the paired alternatives is valid as a guide to change in schools.

Others, like (i) and (j), are based more on "obviousness", [2]stereotypes and wishes than on empirical data; they often have inexplicit or untested assumptions underlying them. In the case of (i), we can infer assumptions about "economy of effort", along with condescension about the abilities of "practitioners". But over the years it has been repeatedly found that more-substantial change efforts addressing multiple problems are more likely to succeed than small-scale, easily-trivialized

innovations (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977; Huberman & Miles, 1984). And as against (j), we can rely on McLaughlin's (1990) well-grounded proposition that "policy can't mandate what matters", because "what matters" requires local capacity, will, expertise, resources, support, and discretionary judgment.

Finally, many propositions about school change lack an underlying causal mechanism; they have no clearly-identified "engines" or "drivers" – key variables that exert influence and lead to changes in other variables. For example, the implicit engine in (h) is probably something like "commitment"; it's assumed that participation will lead to commitment to jointly-made decisions, and thus to increased likelihood of implementation. But this is never made clear.

It would be worse than presumptuous to imply that my work over the past four decades has located *the* key variables in school change. Here I simply want to describe an odyssey – to provide a personal/historical review of projects on school change that have engaged my energy since the early 50's. I'll examine basic strategies for changing schools, and the driving ideas underlying them. I consider those ideas to be key variables for understanding the big (and small) questions of school change, both when I was first exploring them, and now. I'll place these ideas in the changing historical context, from the 50's through the 90's. After this retrospective account, I'd like to look forward and consider what the next few decades may bring us in the way of knowledge about school change.

## A SCHOOL CHANGE ODYSSEY

The odyssey is summarized in Fig. 2. I'll discuss ten major school change strategies. For each strategy, I'll mention projects I was involved in, include some conceptual exhibits, identify the basic, driving variables that I believe were involved, and comment on their utilization in school change, both at the time and currently. These projects naturally involved significant colleagues. Colleague networks are always crucial in understanding how key concepts develop and become more coherent. I'll indicate my main connections, feeling unhappy that dozens of good people I've worked with will go unnamed.

1. *Training for group skills.* In the postwar ferment of 1948, Douglas McGregor, the father of "Theory Y" (the human-sciences alternative to command-and-control "Theory X") and his colleague Irving Knickerbocker were transforming Antioch College, to which I'd just returned from the Army. I have a vivid memory of sitting in an intense group training session and saying to myself, "If it makes me feel this way, I want to spend my life doing this."

More conceptually, the potential of group dynamics for human learning and social change struck me as very large. In 1952, I was halfway through graduate school at Teachers College, studying social psychology with Goodwin Watson and working as a research assistant at the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute. With Max Corey and Harry Passow, I worked on a series of workshops based on the "action research" ideas of Kurt Lewin, with teams of principals and teachers (Passow,

| Strategy and targets | Illustrative Projects | Key variables |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Train individuals (principals and teachers) in group skills. | Leadership Training Project 1953 - 1958<br>NTL Laboratories, 1954-1973<br>Encounter Group Study, 1968 - 1972 | Process analysis |
| 2. Clarify concepts of innovation diffusion and adoption | Innovation in Education, 1961-64 | Technical rationality<br>Choice<br>Temporary system. |
| 3. Engage schools as organizations in self-renewing activities | Organization Development in Schools, 1962-66<br>COPED (Cooperative Project in Educational Development) 1964-1967<br>OD State of the Art Study, 1978<br>Effective Schools Adoption Study, 1983 | Organization health (as vision)<br>Data feedback.<br>Normative change |
| 4. Transfer knowledge of effective practice to users | AERA Research Utilization Committee, 1967<br>Experience-Based Career Education, 1973-75<br>Documentation and Technical Assistance Project, 1976-79 | Knowledge utilization<br>Networking<br>Capacity-building |
| 5. Create new schools | Project on Social Architecture Education, 1974-78 | Legitimacy for planing and design<br>Social/educational design |
| 6. Support implementation | R&D Utilization Project, 1976-79<br>Study of Dissemination Efforts Supporting School Improvement, 1979-82 | Causally configured sequences:assistance, mastery, commitment, stabilization |
| 7. Lead and manage local reform | Project on Improving the Urban High School, 1984-89 | Empowerment<br>Evolutionary planning<br>Resourcing<br>Problem-coping |
| 8. Train change agents | Educational Consulting Skills Training, 1974-82<br>Patterns of Successful Assistance Study, 1983-86 | Trust and rapport-building<br>Organizational diagnosis |
| 9. Manage large-scale reform | International School Improvement Project,1982-86<br>How Schools Improve Study, 1988-92<br>NET Study (Ontario), 1988 | Local strategic grounding<br>Institutionalization |
| 10. Restructure schools | Mapping Restructuring Study, 1991-93 | Shared cognitive maps of content & process |

**Figure 2: A school change odyssey.**

Miles, Corey, & Draper, 1955). This led to my Leadership Training Project, devoted to teaching school people fundamental skills of group behavior.

Beginning in 1954, I worked in National Training Laboratories programs at Bethel, Maine, a relationship that lasted for nearly twenty years. At Bethel each summer, thoughtful colleagues from psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science and education from dozens of universities in this country and Europe[3]

met to invent and refine intensive learning methods. The most famous was the T-group, a high-intensity learning environment where group members discussed and reflected on their own behavior in the group. My T-group experiences impressed me deeply. I felt that the educational world needed a good compendium of experiential learning methods, and wrote *Learning to work in groups* (1959, revised 1980). It was a utilization success; in the burgeoning of group training in the context of the 60's and 70's, the book reached over a hundred thousand users in four languages.

What was the key variable here? It seemed to be *process analysis*, the deceptively simple activity of talking directly about what is going on in a situation (Miles, 1969a), rather than staying on the official task or content level. In an article called "On naming the here and now", I said,

> Like many great ideas, it seems primitive, even stupid, mindless. . . .yet it forms a central component of most interaction designed to benefit or liberate people: therapy, human relations training, encounter groups, much religious and some educational practice. . . . it triggers self-awareness, catharsis, re-orientation. . . . in some unexplained, near-magical way. (Miles, 1969a, pp. 1–2).

Figure 3 illustrates what's involved. There's a content stream (explicit words conveying substantive meaning about a nominal task), and a process stream (working procedures, nonverbal behavior, unvoiced feelings and perceptions). A "process comment" such as "When we were trying to decide, two people didn't say why they opposed it, and that made me uncomfortable," made in the content stream at time B, alludes to some immediately prior events at time A in the process stream. Such a comment may be ignored in favor of other content, acknowledged briefly and acted on, or lead to an extended discussion of process. (Meanwhile, of course, the here-and-now process stream continues on its inexorable way.)

Process analysis is thus essentially shared self-analytic behavior including awareness, communication, and usually evaluation, a sort of "sustained mindfulness"

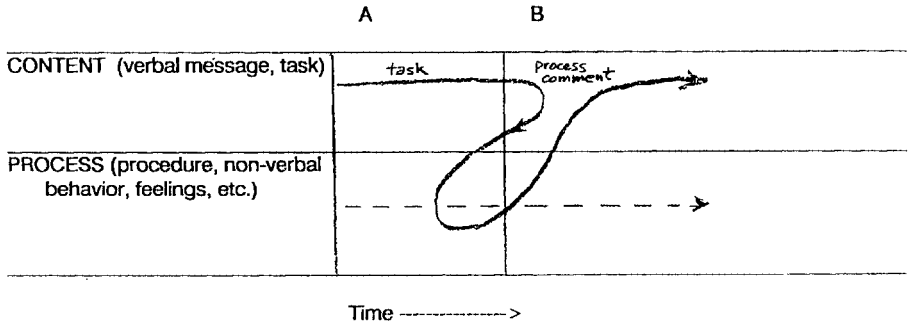



**Figure 3: Process-analytic behavior.**

that leads to further diagnosis and action-taking. There is a good deal of empirical evidence (see, for example, Miles, 1965c; Lieberman, Yalom & Miles, 1973) that process analysis reduces anxiety, increases congruence and improved communication, enhances interpersonal acceptance, and enhances personal and group capacity (conceptual frames, self-esteem, improved coping, collaborative skill, for example). There's also a sense in which process analysis is empowering: it reduces status-based information gaps. Knowledge is power, in effect.

Self-analytic behavior is, I believe, a key "engine" in school change efforts, and has been in explicit use since the widespread use of T-groups with school people beginning in the late 50's. My illustrations are at the interpersonal and group level; as we'll see shortly, self-analytic behavior in schools as organizations is also key. Change strategies weak in process analysis are quite likely to fail; given a new group and a demanding task, sustained and skillful process analysis is critical for success (see, for example, the case studies of restructuring by Lieberman, Darling-Hammond, & Zuckerman, 1991). Process analysis is also central in coaching, hands-on training, technical assistance and consultation.

And it's key for classroom learning as well (Miles, 1964a, 1971). Kenneth Benne, my first Bethel T-group mentor, wrote 40 years ago that the knowledge, skills and attitudes centering on group participation constitute

> valuable subject matter in its own right – subject matter which deserves an important place in the general education of our people. (Benne, 1952)

So far that has not happened, but the current rapid diffusion of cooperative learning, which leads not only to better traditional outcomes, but to group and social skill as well, makes me optimistic that Benne's vision may yet materialize. Cooperative learning owes an immense intellectual and technical debt to the early work in process-analytic learning.

2. *Innovation diffusion and adoption.* The now-mythical 60's, stereotyped as the mere ascendance of love, peace and hippiedom, were in fact a transforming, exciting time for school change. In 1964, I wrote:

> While rueful pessimism about educational change is hardly rare in America today, the present zest for educational innovation, and the remarkable rate and diversity of educational change . . .frequently call out the label "revolution". . . Innovations of all sorts – set theory, team teaching, trimester plans – are being advocated vigorously, installed, and (sometimes) evaluated. A very wide variety of strategies. . .is being employed: polemical, manipulative, technological, prestige-based, experimental, moralistic. . . But the dominant focus. . .tends to be on the *content* of the desired changes, rather than on . . .change *processes* (Miles, 1964b, pp. 1–2).

The efflorescence of national subject matter projects, NSF training institutes, language labs, programmed instruction, and dozens of other innovations was truly striking; change rates were clearly accelerating sharply over the pessimistic "50-year lag" estimates Paul Mort made at Teachers College. In 1961, to explore the

dynamics of innovation in schools, I convened a year-long multidisciplinary seminar with participants ranging from Lawrence Cremin and Wells Foshay to Goodwin Watson, Amitai Etzioni, and Paul Lazarsfeld; it led to a volume with three dozen contributors called *Innovation in education* (Miles, 1964a).

If the book had a meta-strategy, it was to clarify the basic concepts of innovation diffusion and adoption for developers, for strategic planners, for adopters, for users. It posed questions about many issues: the nature of educational systems, innovations themselves, change processes, innovators, the eventual fate of innovations, and the capacity of "innovating systems".

What were the key variables driving the innovation diffusion/adoption strategy? I'll argue that two major underlying ones were *technical rationality*, and *choice*. Innovations were developed because they were technically better than the (ineffective, outmoded, entrenched. . . .etc.) present practice, and would lead to better results. And given the incredibly complex web of relationships in American education among formal and non-formal educative agencies, knowledge producers, vendors, mass media, foundations, testing organizations, government agencies, accreditation groups, and professional associations (Miles, 1964a; Wayland, 1964), schools and school systems would have to choose, to decide which of the available wares to "buy".

These two key variables drove some others – less desirable, maybe. Technical rationality led to insistence on innovation quality, to "fidelity" of implementation, and ultimately to a search for "teacher-proofness", paralleling Herman Wouk's dictum that "the Navy was designed by geniuses to be run by idiots." And the focus on choice emphasized "awareness"-type diffusion strategies, and probably an over-emphasis on individual (that is, administrative) adopters. But never mind; these cavils come from a later, more implementation-centered perspective, to which I'll return. Meanwhile, technically-good innovations, deliberately chosen, are not be sneezed at.

Another key variable became apparent during our innovation seminar. I came to see that innovations were invented, developed, spread, and implemented through *temporary systems*: project groups, task forces, retreats, workshops, research projects, visits, demonstrations, consultative relationships. Like poker games, parties, juries, concerts, polar expeditions, carnivals, political marches, and battles, they were

> interstitial, temporary structures. . .[that] operate both within permanent organizations and between them; their members hold from the start the basic assumption that – at some more or less clearly defined point in time – they will cease to be. (Miles, 1964c, pp. 437–438)

Temporary systems, I argued, were especially suited not only to compensatory maintenance (like the office party) or to short-term task accomplishment (as in the research project), but, rather centrally, to bringing about change. Bounded by time and often by physical isolation, temporary systems could bypass the status quo of permanent systems, mobilize high energy, open up communication, devise creative alternatives, and flatten the power structure. Temporary systems could

induce significant changes not only in their own members (as in T-groups), but in the structure and operations of the permanent systems to which they were attached, via action decisions, new relationships and commitments. They tend to develop norms favoring equalitarianism, authenticity, experimentalism, risk-taking, and "newism"- a positive stance toward innovation.

Of course temporary systems could get overloaded, disconnected/alienated from their permanent-system counterparts, and fail to make needed linkages, but I believed then and still do that they are a prime setting for changing schools. In 1964 I noted:

> The deliberate use of temporary systems opens the possibility of a more manageable process of educational change. Systems like committees, in-service institutes and workshops, interinstitutional visiting teams, accreditation groups, and conferences of all sorts are already in wide use. Creative attention given to the invention and use of new types of temporary systems could show very high payoff. (Miles, 1964c, pp. 485–86).

One of my pleasurable memories is of a "temporary system" created by Dale Lake, Mary Budd Rowe and myself for National Science Foundation summer institute directors in 1972; not surprisingly, we did running process analysis and carried out shared redesign of the temporary system itself, to teach the skills of designing and operating temporary systems. It worked, and could easily be replicated today for the thousands of school people who create and manage, not always well, the school-based management groups, retreats, workshops, and task forces that are the vehicles for school change today.

3. *Organizational self-renewal.* As I considered these change strategies, it became increasingly clear that individuals were not necessarily the prime targets of school change efforts; we had to think of the school as an organization with some special characteristics, such as ambiguous goals, variable input, vulnerability, and low interdependence (Miles, 1965b, later Miles, 1981). In the late 50's the first industrial experiments using process analysis with intact groups had been tried, led by people like my Bethel colleagues Paul Buchanan and Herb Shepard. The term "organization development" was coined, and OD departments were founded in a number of Fortune 500 companies. (For a historical review, see Miles & Schmuck, 1971.)

In 1963 I launched the Organization Development in Schools project, aimed at adapting/testing OD techniques for school change. In the project, we worked hard with two school districts, often with difficulty (one superintendent said after a team training intervention that it was like "poking at a tree trunk with a toothpick."), and with some notable successes as well (more innovativeness, improved decision-making, faculty cohesiveness, etc.: see Schmuck & Miles, 1971). Both this project, and the Cooperative Project in Educational Development (COPED), which involved teams from five universities, each working with a cluster of school districts, were aimed at inducing organizational self-renewal (Miles & Lake, 1967; Watson, 1967a, 1967b) through tactics of training, process consultation, data feedback, problem-solving, and structural change.[4]

What were key variables in this work? An early, major one appeared when we realized we needed a working vision: what would a school look like where OD had been successful? The concept was of *organization health:*

> . . . a set of fairly durable *second-order* system properties, which tend to transcend short-run effectiveness. A healthy organization not only survives in its environment, but continues to cope adequately over the long haul, and continuously develops and extends its surviving and coping abilities. (Miles, 1965c, p. 17)

Fig. 4 lists ten dimensions of organization health (collapsed into 7 in the figure), ranging from goal appropriateness to problem-solving adequacy, putting them in the larger organizational context. They were drawn by heuristic analogy from the behavior of persons and small groups. For example, the idea of "goal appropriateness" was illustrated by considering

> the obsessive patient who sets the clear, accepted, achievable goal for himself of washing his hands 250 times a day. The question remains: is this an appropriate goal in light of what else there is to do in life? (Miles, 1965c, p. 17)

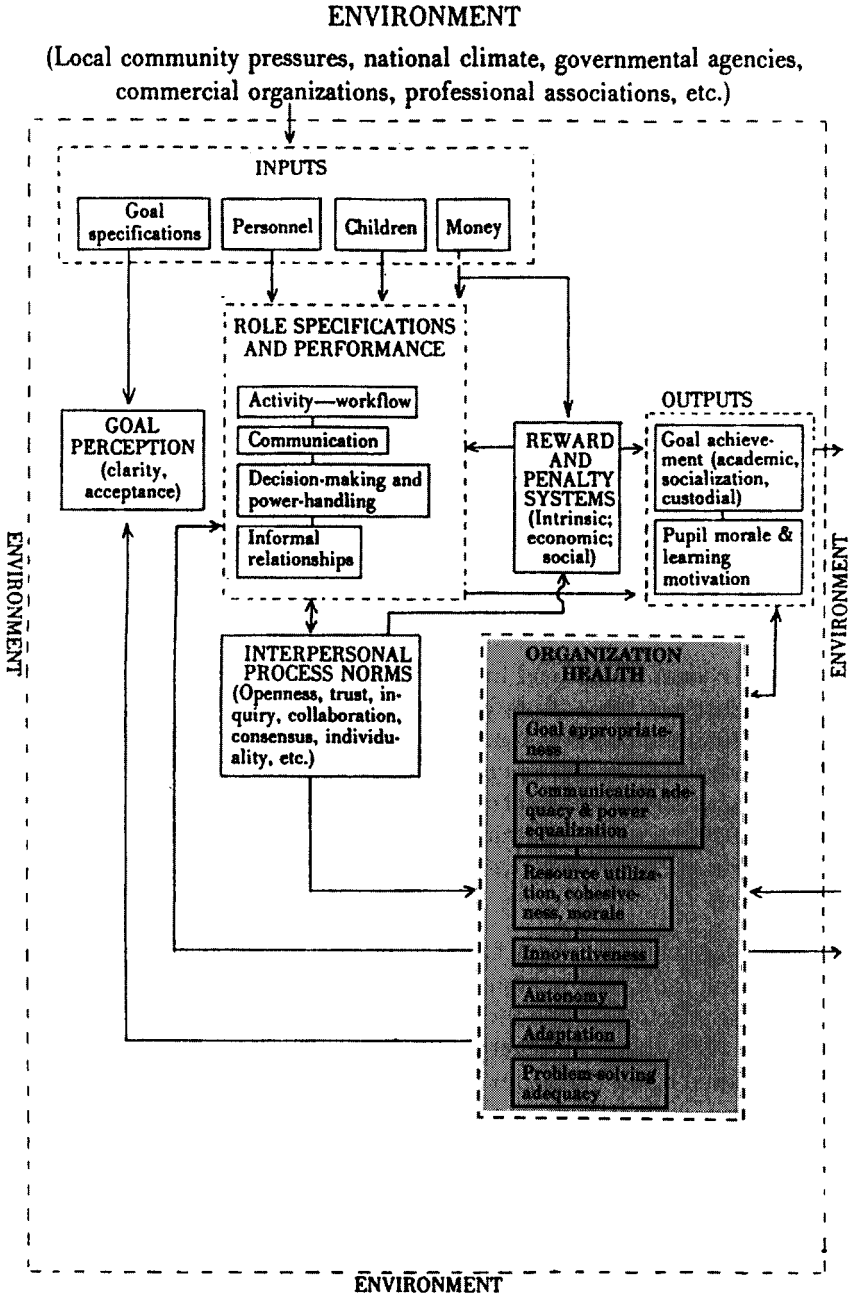
Similarly, the dimension of "innovativeness" was derived this way:

> A healthy system would tend to invent new procedures, move toward new goals, produce new kinds of products, diversify itself, and become more rather than less differentiated over time. In a sense, such a system could be said to grow, develop and change, rather than remaining routinized and standard. The analogue here is to the self-renewing properties of a Picasso, or to Schachtel's (1959) "activity" orientation (curious, exploring) as contrasted with "embeddedness" orientation (tension-reducing, protective) in persons (Miles, 1965c, p. 20)

The concept has had a very long half-life; to this day I get correspondence on it, instrumentation for it, and requests for reflective updating. I conclude, just as in the case of the effective schools movement (Miles, Farrar & Neufeld, 1983; Miles & Kaufman, 1985) that a legitimated list of markers or criteria for a desired state of organizational being – a "vision," in current parlance – is a crucial element of any deliberate change strategy.

What was the main variable driving OD? Looking at OD practice, we believed it was *data feedback*, a meso-level equivalent of process analysis. Fig. 5 shows the conceptual framework: organizational data, fed back to meetings (both within and across roles), accompanied by group-level process analysis induces mutual support and goal-oriented attention to problems; the resulting action decisions, structural and cultural changes make for greater organization health.

A second driving variable, as implied in the "cultural" label, is the idea of *normative change* (Miles, 1969b). OD interventions normally have a major impact on the norms of a school: the tacit do's and don'ts that sanction behavior in face-to-face




From Miles, 1965b

**Figure 4: Schematic model of organizational functioning and change.**

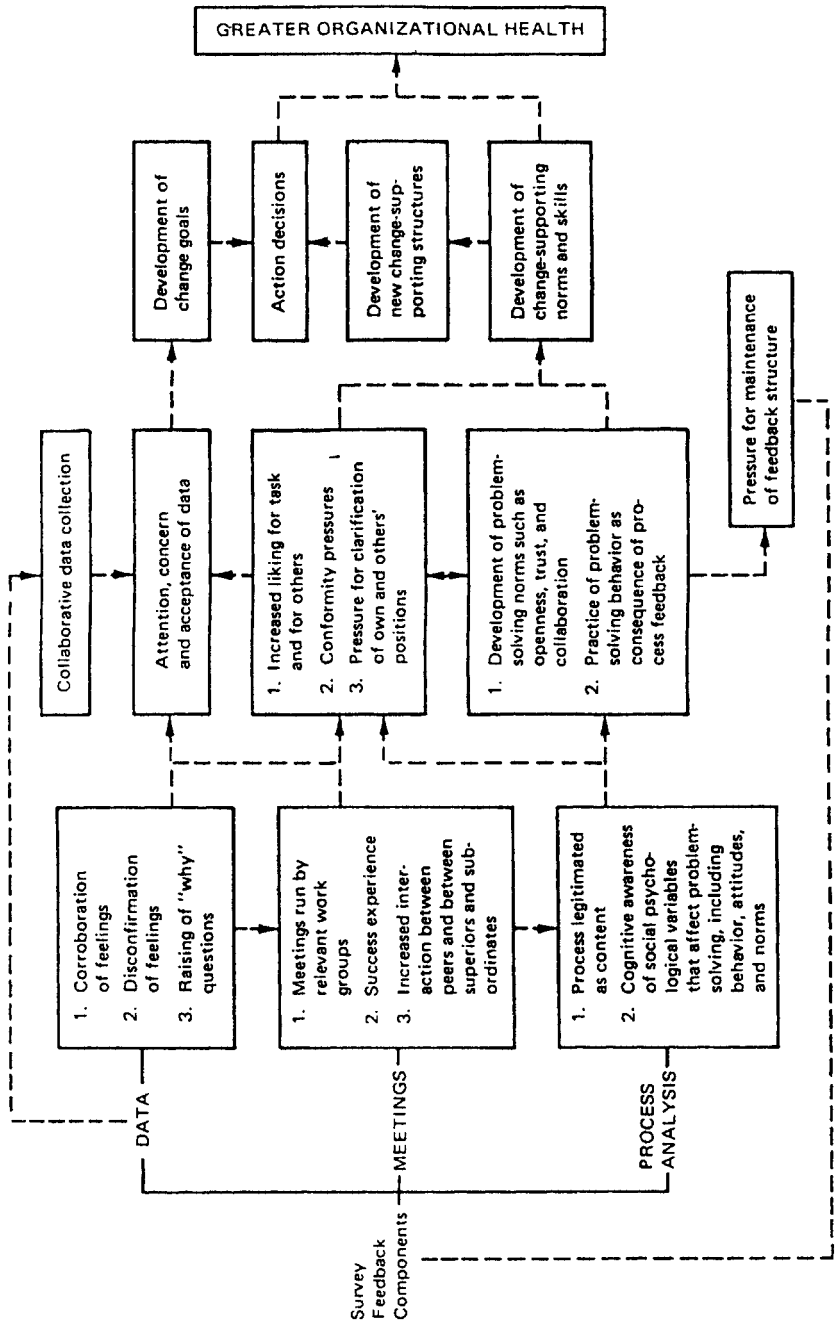



Figure 5: Reasons for success of data feedback in organizations.

From Miles et al, (1966) and McElvaney & Miles(1971)

settings. Data from the COPED project indicated a good deal of pluralistic ignorance (for example, teachers estimated that only 35% of their colleagues would "question well-established ways of doing things", while 64% of individual teachers said they themselves would do so).

Data feedback and clearer communication help to align perceptions with privately-held attitudes, and provide support (in this instance) for innovativeness as a stance; the old, incorrectly perceived norm loses its force. Other important norms we studied dealt with openness, trust, collaboration, inquiry, conflict, and expression of strong emotion.

What about utilization? In spite of a book on OD in schools (Schmuck & Miles, 1971), and the solidly-done *Handbook of organization development in schools*, running through three editions (Schmuck & Runkel, 1985), OD as such was not quick to diffuse nationally in schools (Fullan, Miles, & Taylor, 1980), even though it had clear impact when implemented. A possible reason was its emphasis on relations among adults in the organization, and under-attention to pedagogical and curricular issues. The substantially wider diffusion of "effective schools" and "effective teaching" programs, which also rely heavily on the OD key variables of data feedback and normative change (Miles, Farrar, & Neufeld, 1983; Miles & Kaufman, 1985) may well be due to their stronger emphasis on classroom and teacher-student issues (high expectations, basic skills emphasis, time on task, clear outcome measures, etc.) and the basis of the effective schools factors in actual cases of "success". (Even so, note that many complaints have been made that effective schools programs have dealt with "painting the cafeteria" issues, stopping at the classroom door – and that "effective teaching" programs have done little to reduce teacher isolation and aid collaboration.) Linking organizational and pedagogical issues can be done (Anderson et al., 1987), and is clearly crucial, as some thoughtful current observers have pointed out (Corcoran & Goertz, 1995; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995).[5]

4. *Knowledge transfer.* Another strand of my work during the late 60's and 70's involved helping to reconceptualize the traditional R&D pipeline that was supposed to run smoothly and mechanically from theory to research to development to diffusion, adoption, and use of knowledge-based "products". The labs and centers and ERIC had started in the 60's, and work on knowledge transfer during the 70s was incredibly intense and widespread: we saw the creation of the National Center for Educational Communication, the National Institute of Education (NIE) itself, the National Diffusion Network, the Dissemination Forums, and many other initiatives (Miles & Haughey, 1992.) In 1967, with Mitch Brickell, I founded the AERA Research Utilization Committee, to focus on issues of active knowledge use. Could we think of knowledge transfer as something driven by users with a problem-solving orientation, as Havelock, Guskin, Frohman, Havelock, Hill, and Huber (1969) monumental synthesis of 3,931 studies proposed?

Many others were thinking that way too. In this period I worked as an adviser for several projects: the pioneering Pilot State Dissemination Project, led by Sam Sieber and Karen Seashore; the Experience-Based Career Education Project, based in a number of regional laboratories, which emphasized supported replication

efforts; the R & D Utilization project led by Karen Seashore Louis at Abt Associates, and with the Documentation and Technical Assistance Project, led by Dick Schmuck, Phil Runkel, Tom Wilson, and Don Moore, which involved strong emphasis on local problem-solving, and inter-district transfer of learnings and practices (Miles, 1980b).

What were the driving variables in the knowledge transfer strategy? One was the idea of *knowledge utilization* as such. We needed to reject the concept that the user is simply engaged in obedient execution of the instructions for a canned product. Rather, the person, in a school, is working in a constructivist, sense-making mode to bring coherence to a new idea/practice, during the process of recasting it and connecting it to the immediate working context.

A second was the idea that good knowledge transfer strategies necessarily involve *capacity-building* efforts; people need support in becoming better scanners, knowledge-seizers, adapters, inventors, implementers – not just for this particular practice, but for all those to come. Capacity-building efforts also need to be addressed to *schools* as organizations (see Runkel, Schmuck, Arends, & Francisco, 1978 – and currently, Corcoran & Goertz, 1995).

And finally, just as it had become clear that organizations, not just individuals, had to be seen as change targets, the role of *networking* in school change began to stand out. Informal networks – across schools and districts, and with individuals, schools, or districts as members, enabled "low-energy access to trusted information" (Lake & Miles, 1975), and carried the potential for low-cost exchange of other resources as well: emotional support, influence, work, expertise, materials, advice, etc. At the same time, it was clear that strategies for building networks were not mysterious (Miles, 1978), but could be taught and learned.[6]

How well has knowledge about knowledge transfer been utilized? Let's just say charitably that it's been quite uneven; most of what has filled the pages of the journal *Knowledge* since the late 70's has not found its way into policy. In 1974 I noted that though there was an Educational Products Information Exchange (which Ken Komoski founded in 1967 and still runs today), there was no Educational *Processes* Information Exchange. The "conventional wisdom" propositions suggest that we could use one. A research center proposed by OERI in 1990 to study and develop better knowledge utilization strategies was suddenly abandoned. There are, however, some current ambitious OERI efforts to develop and strengthen a National Education Dissemination System, so better utilization may be ahead.

5. *Creation of new schools.* The late 60's and early 70's saw widespread use of another change strategy: creating a completely new school as a whole. There were enough alternative schools to make a national network, and nearly 25% of all school districts were creating alternative programs, open-space schools, community-based schools, or adding new buildings. There was much hope that "making it new" is better, maybe even easier, than tinkering. That hope is strong today, as in initiatives like the New American Schools, the charter school movement (laws in 19 states, N=234 actual schools, as of this writing), the New Visions projects, and

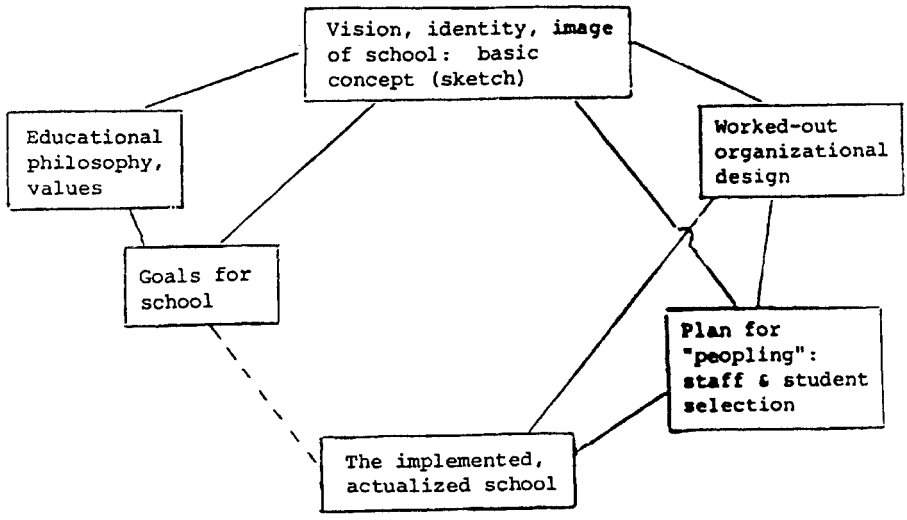
the small alternative schools spreading in New York City. A recent listing of public and private alternative schools (Mintz, Solomon, & Solomon, 1995) has over 6,000 entries.

In 1974 I began the Project on Social Architecture in Education, my first serious qualitative study. It followed six new public schools over three years as they were designed (and redesigned), implemented, and (partially) stabilized. The results appeared in Miles, Sullivan, Gold, Taylor, Sieber, & Wilder, 1978; Miles, 1980a; and Gold & Miles, 1981. In brief, we learned that good new schools can be created, but that the task is very demanding, more complex than expected, and requires assistance and political protection. There's plenty of slippage between dreams and the actually-emerging social system of the school.

What are the key variables in a social-architectural strategy? I'll single out a couple. First, the idea of expanded *legitimacy for planning and action.* Much prior work on school change had implicitly assumed that change would be planned, sold to teachers and managed by the principal, with a little help from the central office. We began to see the central importance of an empowered cross-role group, with a license to take control of the change process and content during planning and implementation.

Such a group, like the steering groups and site-based management councils we see everywhere today, has to create political stability, and produce the series of outputs shown in Fig. 6 (which owes a lot to my Dutch colleague Rein van der Vegt).

One of the most critical variables we saw at work was skill in *social and educational design:* creating an actualizable social and pedagogical set of structures




From Miles, Sullivan, Gold, Taylor, Sieber & Wilder, 1978.

**Figure 6: Planning/implementation outputs in the creation of new schools.**

(and a supporting culture) well-linked to the goals, philosophy and vision for the school, with a congruent plan for "peopling" the school – a design that was actualizable. Good design work turned out to be far more complex than the groups we studied had ever dreamed of, not to mention far more politically sensitive as well: a principal who boasted that he "could run an exemplary school in an outhouse if necessary" found himself out of a job, with parents fighting the staff over walling up open space classrooms (Gold & Miles, 1981).

What about utilization of these ideas? As an experimental effort, Beverly Taylor created a set of four highly interactive new-school planning guides, *Mapping new schools* (1978). It went to several thousand users through the early 80's. But though our work is in ERIC, only a handful of the 682 bidders on the New American Schools project sought the guides. Perhaps new-school planners assume they have to design *de novo*.

6. *Supported implementation.* In the mid and late 70's, there was a kind of sea change in the way people thought about improving schools. The "adoption" perspective inherent in the innovation-laden efforts of the 60's had been thrown into doubt by some very visible studies of implementation failure (Smith & Keith, 1971; Gross, Giacquinta, & Bernstein, 1971).

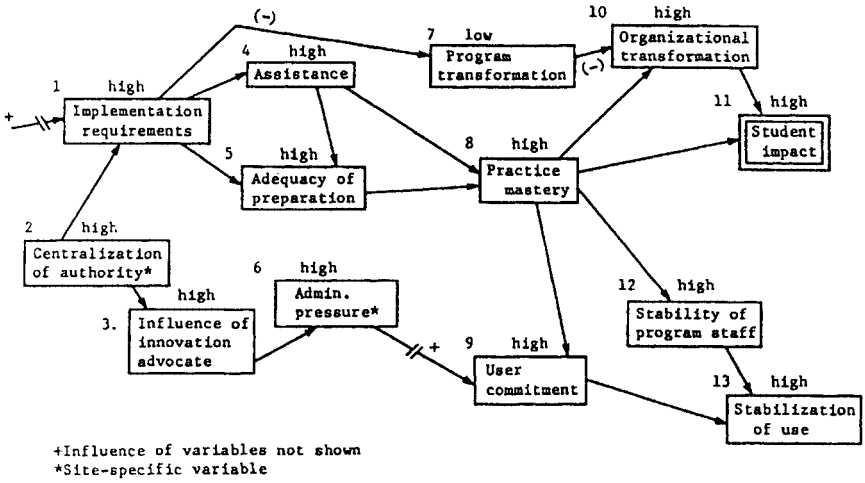
In its place, gradually forming, was an "implementation" perspective. Rather than focus on the quality of the innovation, the focus was on quality of *use*; rather than attend to user "awareness/interest", we needed to support the user's development of coherence and *meaning*. Implementation was an extended process, not a bounded event like the decision to adopt, as Gene Hall forcefully pointed out. Fidelity was naturally replaced by adaptation; "teacher-proofness" as an ideal was out, and assistance to the struggling user was in (hence "supported implementation"). Above all, we needed to move intellectually from add-on or drop-in concepts of change "within the system" to change *of* the system itself. This view was perhaps most clearly articulated by Paul Berman (1981) and Michael Fullan (1982).

I've already mentioned the R&D Utilization Project (Louis, Rosenblum, Molitor, Chabotar, Kell, & Yin, 1981), which examined what happened at the school and district level when R&D-based practices were being chosen, implemented, and stabilized. Beginning in 1979, I advised the Study of Dissemination Efforts Supporting School Improvement, a truly mammoth study of the implementation of externally and internally-developed innovations in 146 school districts across the country, working with colleagues David Crandall, Charles Thompson, Susan Loucks-Horsley, Ron Havelock, Gene Hall and many, many others (Crandall & associates, 1982). In a few short months I found myself co-directing the ethnographic component with Michael Huberman, studying 12 of the schools in some depth (Huberman & Miles, 1983, 1984).

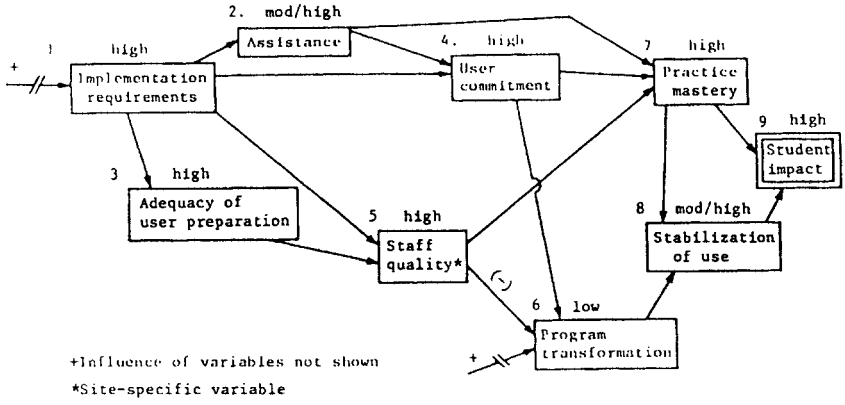
We were able to develop new, more-systematic methods of qualitative data analysis, notably matrix and network display (Miles & Huberman, 1984) that let us draw strong, well-grounded causal conclusions (Huberman & Miles, 1989). We could see clearly what had led to what over the course of two to six years of implementation effort in a school.

Figs. 7 and 8 show examples of causal nets: what led to high or low student

Tindale site: Enforced, supported mastery as a route to high student impact




Perry-Parkdale site: Stabilized, committed mastery as a route to high student impact



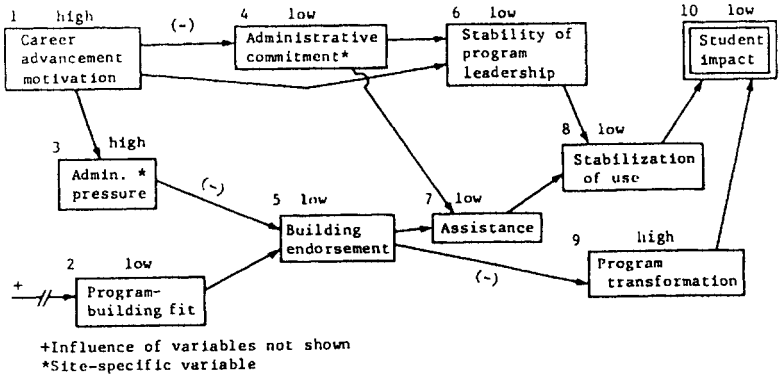

From Huberman & Miles (1984)

**Figure 7: Causal maps for high student impact.**

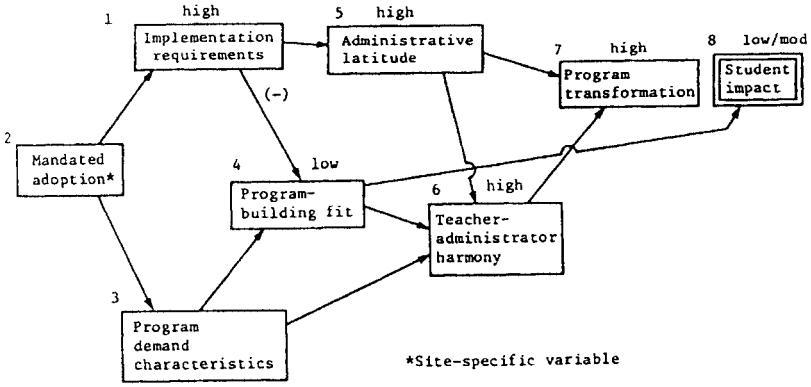
impact in specific schools we studied? (These are not a priori conceptual frameworks, but are based on assembly of data drawn from extended site contacts: current and retrospective interviews, documents, observations.) As we noted:

The main factors explaining student impact were *user-commitment*, along with strong *assistance* that led to *practice-mastery* and *stabilization of use*. The most

Provile site: Weak commitment as a route to low student impact




Astoria site: Program blunting as a route to low student impact




From Huberman & Miles (1984)

**Figure 8: Causal maps for low student impact.**

frequent scenario (six sites), "stabilized mastery", stressed these factors. Two other sites added the feature of "enforcement", with the extra feature of administrative pressure and restriction of undesirable changes in the innovation. The low-impact sites suffered either from low commitment, or from what we called *program blunting* – reducing the thrust of the innovation so that its effects were trivial. (Huberman & Miles, 1984, p. 229)

What were the key variables emerging here? Continued *assistance* was major. Front-end "preparation" rarely helped with initial use, which was invariably "rough", full of difficulties. As we said:

> Large-scale, change-bearing innovations lived or died by the amount and quality of assistance that their users received once the change process was under way. (Huberman & Miles, 1984, p. 273)

And teachers' *mastery* of new practices was similarly powerful. Learning how to do something well, assuming that the "something" was of good quality, was what made the difference for students – *if* the practice was well stabilized in the school as well. And – an important and – mastery heightened teachers' *commitment*.

At a meta-level, the important learning here was that single variables, or even MIRV-like multiple variables, could not help us understand school change. Rather, *causally configured sequences* were at work. Assistance led to mastery, and mastery to commitment (no more mythology that commitment needed to be high at the start) and to stabilization; mastery of a new classroom practice meant student impact. We could also see that administrators could succeed with mandating or pressuring, but how? They had to sweeten the bargain with assistance.

School change was thus a matter not just of planning, nor of finding and installing "good practices", but of an organically-led and managed process deeply influenced by the local context, with some predictable regularities and a great many unforeseen contingencies. It could be considered "local reform".

These findings have been utilized only moderately well; their diffusion has been far outpaced by the best-selling book on qualitative data analysis methods (Miles & Huberman, 1984, 1994) that we wrote in parallel with *Innovation up close*.

7. *Leading and managing local reform.* Now we come to the 80's, a time of sharply reduced Federal support for change in schools. Districts and schools were much more on their own, many of them pushing hard on effective schools and effective teaching programs (Miles, Farrar, & Neufeld, 1983; Miles & Kaufman, 1985).

What would a successful process of that sort look like, if it were examined in settings notorious for their prior intransigence and ineffectiveness – big-city high schools? In 1984, my colleagues Karen Seashore Louis and Eleanor Farrar joined me in launching the Project on Improving the Urban High School. Adapting the DESSI model, we did a national survey of 178 big-city high schools that had been carrying out comprehensive reforms including effective schools programs, and studied five high schools in depth in Boston, New York, New Jersey, Cleveland and Los Angeles that had been carrying out local reform efforts for three to five years. (Incidentally, though all had been engaged in some form of "effective schools" program, such programs were typically only one of a complex "braid" of change activities playing themselves out over years.)

We wanted to understand both how these locally-transforming efforts were *led* (inspiration, mobilization, vision-building, problem-solving, learning) and *managed* (goal-setting, facilitation, coordination, monitoring, rewarding). In effect, we wanted to study the "naturalistic practice" of change. We did retrospective and current data collection for a year, then returned two years later for a follow-up. In the meantime we spent a good deal of time examining the current management literature on organizing for change, aiming to connect it with our findings. The

results appear in Louis & Miles (1990, 1991a, 1991b) and are summarized in Miles & Louis ( 1990).

Fig. 9 combines ideas on the process of transition from an old to a new state of affairs with a display of the key variables we found – in both the national survey and our case studies – to distinguish successfully-changing urban high schools from those that tried but didn't make it. We defined success as including well implemented programs, improved organizational functioning, student impact, and institutionalization of changes.

The ideas of vision-building, pressure and initiative-taking, and assistance have already been outlined. The idea of *empowerment* is an extension of the concept of *legitimacy for planning and action*, indicating in sharper terms that we found reform success closely associated with the presence of a cross-role planning team with clear decision power over change-related matters (such as project budgets, staff development, staffing patterns, and released time).

Three added variables were tied to successful local reform in these schools. First, it was quite clear that the planning style was not, in fact, "architectural", but *evolutionary*. The effective planning/steering groups we watched and surveyed treated the local reform effort not as execution of a blueprint, but as a journey in

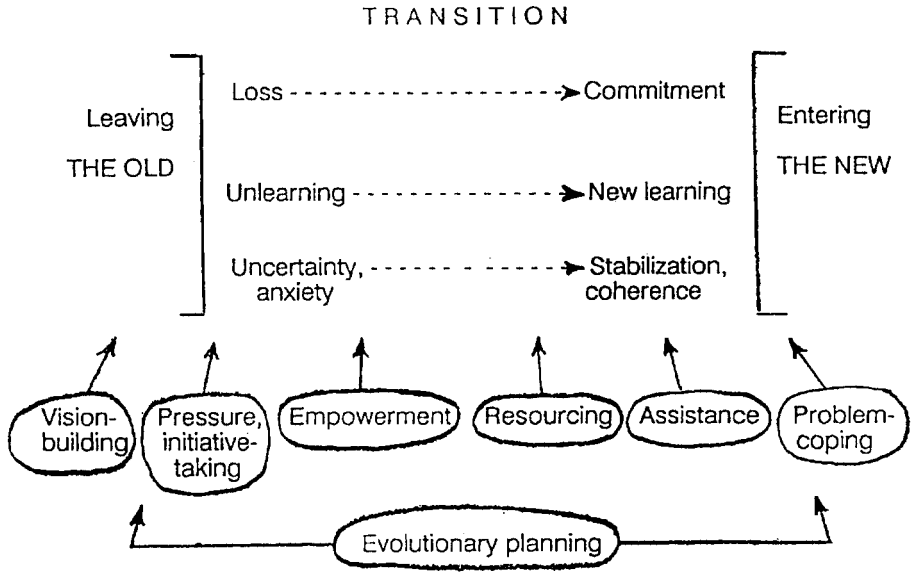



**Figure 9: Key leadership and mangement themes.**

the service of an evolving, increasingly shared vision. A second key variable follows from the fact that change is a notoriously resource-hungry process. Our effectively-reforming schools were good at *resourcing*: scanning for the substantial increment of resources needed to go beyond "keeping school as usual" and acquiring them: not only money, but time, educational content, technical assistance, and influence.

And we were especially struck by the ability of successful sites to do good *problem-coping*: they acted vigorously, as if their motto were "problems are our friends." They also typically applied deeper, structurally-oriented solutions to the more difficult, important problems, while being flexible enough to use a Band-Aid approach to minor issues.

These findings, well grounded in successful local reform efforts, have resonated well when they're used in planning workshops with local school improvement teams; they have a kind of toughness and durability about them that leads me to believe that the full configuration of variables in Fig. 9 is very promising as a guide to local school change. And they've been praised as "the best currently available discussion of emerging organizational theories and analyses concerned with successful initiation and implementation of change." (Levine, 1991)

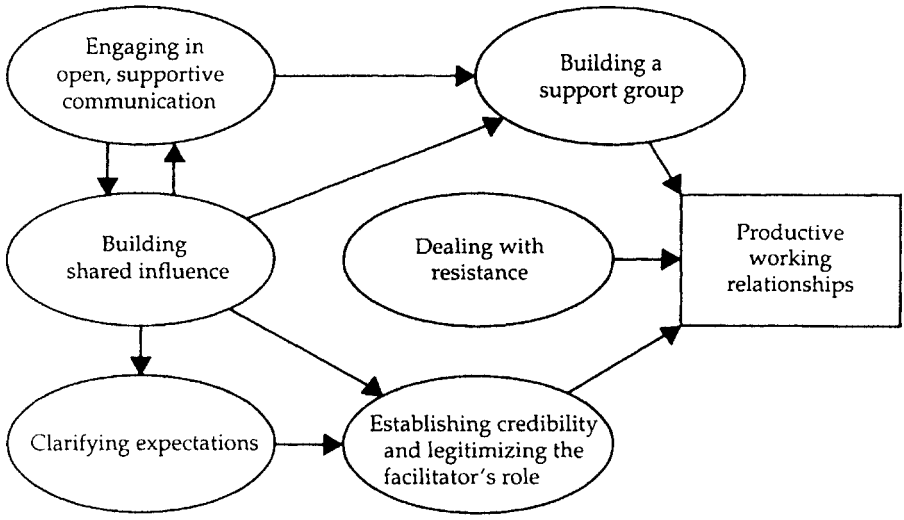
8. *Training of change agents.* I'd long been interested in the idea that training people in the skills of facilitating change could be a promising strategy; it could induce a sort of "multiplier effect", diffusing the sorts of skills just mentioned, for example. Work at a conference led by Ron Havelock on the training of change agents (Havelock & Havelock, 1973; see also the current Havelock & Zlotolow, 1995) piqued my interest, and I joined colleagues in the Netherlands[7] for a series of intensive educational consulting skills workshops. That led in turn to the study Patterns of Successful Assistance in Urban School Improvement Programs, with colleagues Ann Lieberman and Ellen Saxl.

In the 80's, formally-identified change agents were increasingly visible in schools. We followed 17 New York-based "change agents" around in their work, interviewed them, their managers, and their clients, and extracted a series of 18 key skills that seemed frequently and typically used, distinguished more from less-successful change agents, and mentioned as "strengths" and/or desirable for training of change agents (Miles, Saxl, & Lieberman, 1988).

Some skills were general: good facilitators were without exception interpersonally easy (though they had a wide range of personal styles), competent in groups (aha!), could do training of adults, and were themselves good teachers with content and pedagogical expertise. They were also well organized.

Personally, they were good at taking initiative (a familiar variable), as well as at working with key processes (conflict mediation, collaboration, and conflict mediation). The resourcing theme also reappeared, as did the theme of managing change.

One major variable stood out: *developing trust and rapport.* A great deal seems to depend on a change agent's ability to develop a strong, supportive, contractually clear relationship with specific "clients" – groups and individuals involving in change efforts. Fig. 10, drawn from the extensive training manual we developed for facilitators (Saxl, Miles, & Lieberman, 1990) shows the cluster of connected variables involved.




From Saxl, Miles & Lieberman (1990)

**Figure 10: Key variables in building trust and rapport.**

A second key variable was *organizational diagnosis*; it was clear that successful change agents needed conceptual frameworks for understanding schools as organizations, and needed to know how to collect data, how to feed it back (again aha!) and how to help clients plan action. Here I can report a utilization success: the training manual, called ACE (Assisting Change in Education), is diffused by a major professional association, ASCD, through a range of national and regional workshops for users of the material. ASCD has become a trainer of trainers of trainers, a multiplier effect indeed.

9. *Managing systemic reform on a large scale.* Though some of the projects I'd worked on had national scope, the American educational system is such a "maze of independence", as my colleague Charles Kadushin once put it, that seriously integrated reform efforts at the state level, let along the national one, were often considered out of the question. Though calls for "systemic reform" began appearing in the early 90's (David & Shields, 1991; Smith & O'Day, 1991), and have been followed by many state-level and some national initiatives (Cohen, 1995) along with speculations about what will be required for "scaling up" (Elmore, 1995), serious progress is still currently slow, if we take multiple criteria such as use of new content standards, a broader approach to assessment, widespread, student-oriented changes in classroom learning environments, accompanied by local school governance and collegial decision-making.

That may be in part because we don't have our hands on the right variables.[8] Other countries seem to have more nerve, more ideas, and less of a hobbling history on the issue of large-scale change than we do. Beginning in 1982, I worked to

found and helped lead the International School Improvement Project, a collection of several hundred researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners from 14 OECD-countries. ISIP's aim was, through intensive work conferences, research syntheses and comparative case analysis, to understand generic themes in school improvement, drawing conclusions that could be useful in large-scale reform efforts. The project, through six major work groups, produced fourteen books and technical reports, starting with an overview of major school improvement concepts (van Velzen, Miles, Ekholm, Hameyer, & Robin, 1985), and continuing with topics ranging from the principal's role to support systems, school-based review, large-scale change strategies, school development models, and institutionalization.[9]

For me, the project had many concurrent and following spinoffs: a definitive Netherlands conference on the nature of large-scale change strategies (the sort where the first wave of pilot schools is 50, the second wave 300, and the third wave several thousand); advisory work on a study of the country-wide integration of the previously separate kindergarten and elementary schools in the Netherlands (van der Vegt & Knip, 1992); and a fascinating project designing the strategies required to implement active use of computers throughout the province of Ontario, involving 92,000 teachers in 180 districts (Fullan, Miles, & Anderson, 1988).

Two later large-scale reform projects were the World Bank/IMTEC study, How Schools Improve, a careful look at the processes and outcomes of major national reforms in Colombia, Ethiopia and Bangladesh, as seen at the local-school, district and national levels (Dalin, Ayano, Biazen, Jahan, Miles, & Rojas, 1992), and (also World Bank/IMTEC) Roads to Success, an analysis of more- and less-successful primary schools in Pakistan (Farah et al., 1996).

What were some of the key variables here? One might be called *local strategic grounding*. It was clear in the ISIP and World Bank studies that success required strong, locally-potent attention to the sorts of variables I've already listed – for example, empowerment, assistance, mastery, commitment, stabilization – regardless of the degree of centralization in a particular country. In the Ontario study, we documented vast differences between the central Ministry and local school people in their views of the innovation's characteristics, the commitment required from administrators, staff development needed, and so on. Fig. 11 shows the long-term strategy we developed to link these differing worlds, with six major "streams" of effort, all of which have been named as "key variables" in this talk.

Thus large-scale reform strategies must be closely grounded in the assurance of local key variables. This concept goes somewhat beyond Elmore's (1979–80) useful "backward mapping" concept, in that *continued* close central-local interaction is critical for "evolutionary planning" and problem-coping as implementation goes forward. That contact cannot simply be "inspection" and "enforcement" (as in our study of less-effectively reforming Bangladesh), but requires active empowerment and local capacity-building (as in the equally mandative but more-effective Ethiopian case).

The ISIP experience, like the *Innovation up close* study and the change agent skills study, also clarified the importance of a key variable neglected in studies of school change before the 80's: *institutionalization*. Changes – whether specific innovations, pervasive processes like school self-study and renewal, or even

| Strategic Stream | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Competence development | Develop workshops: orientation, classroom mgt. implementation. Invite in-service proposals. Revise Bits & Bytes, revise AO course. | Give workshops widely. Carry out proposals. | Continue with new adopters. | Continue. |
| B. Consultant development | Locate local consultants Develop and begin skills training Link CRDI and NET plans | Give training. Develop regional support structure. | Continue. | |
| C. Stimulation/ facilitation of naturalistic practice | Set up matching grants scheme; invite proposals for pilots, inservice programs. Invite conversion projects (8-bit/GEMS). Let contract for documentation design. Develop feedback/learning systems | Do pilot implementation projects. Documentation and feedback. Do conversion projects. | Do follow-on projects. Invite demonstration proposals. | Do follow-on projects. Demonstration sites begin. |
| D. Diffusing/ supporting effective practice | Set up review panel and process for identifying existing good practices. Early grants to potential D/Ds for development work. Software evaluation guide developed. Help lines working | Potential D/Ds refine practices Research on effective software implementation characteristics | | D/D's funded for work with schools TV Ontario does awareness broadcasts; regional awareness conferences. D/D's and schools start contracts. |
| E. Networking | Mini-grants for network building. Conference of GEMS users. Support ECNO | Continue Repeat GEMS users conference, start GEMS association. | | |
| F. Building orgalnizational capacity | Develop project management skills workshop. Invite capacity building proposals. Diagnose infrastructure, plan to strengthen. | Give workshop. | | Continue. |

From Fullan, Miles & Anderson (1988)

**Figure 11: Preliminary sketch of strategic streams and components: implementing microcomputers in Ontario schools.**

structural changes in governance, student groupings, curriculum, time schedule and teacher roles – do not normally survive on commitment or even evidence of efficacy. Institutionalization means a change is treated as a normal, taken-for-granted part of organizational life; and has unquestioned resources of time, personnel and money available (Miles, Ekholm, & Vandenberghe, 1987). In some ways, the question is how to *stop* undesired change (erosion, trivialization, meaninglessness) from occurring. Shared vision, assistance, mastery, commitment help implementation – and also institutionalization. But more is required: changes need to be embedded in stable organizational routines, be well linked to policy above the school level, and not require sustained extra energy (Miles & Ekholm, 1991).

10. *Restructuring schools.* The idea that intensifying a failing effort, or improving it incrementally, is doomed to failure is an attractive one. Transcending "business as usual" in schools via structural redesign makes both intellectual and practical sense, is easy to sell politically, and may well work (as we found in our studies of problem-coping in urban high schools, and in the Social Architecture project.) Thus it's not surprising to see the immense array of restructuring projects currently being implemented and studied through a range of supportive centers and networks: the Accelerated Schools project, the Coalition of Essential Schools,

Re: Learning, The League of Professional Schools, National Alliance for Restructuring Education, Foxfire, Impact II, Chicago school reform, the New American Schools projects, Paideia, Center for Educational Renewal, Comer's School Development Program, Success for All, the National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching, the Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools, the Annenberg Challenge, and many, many others.

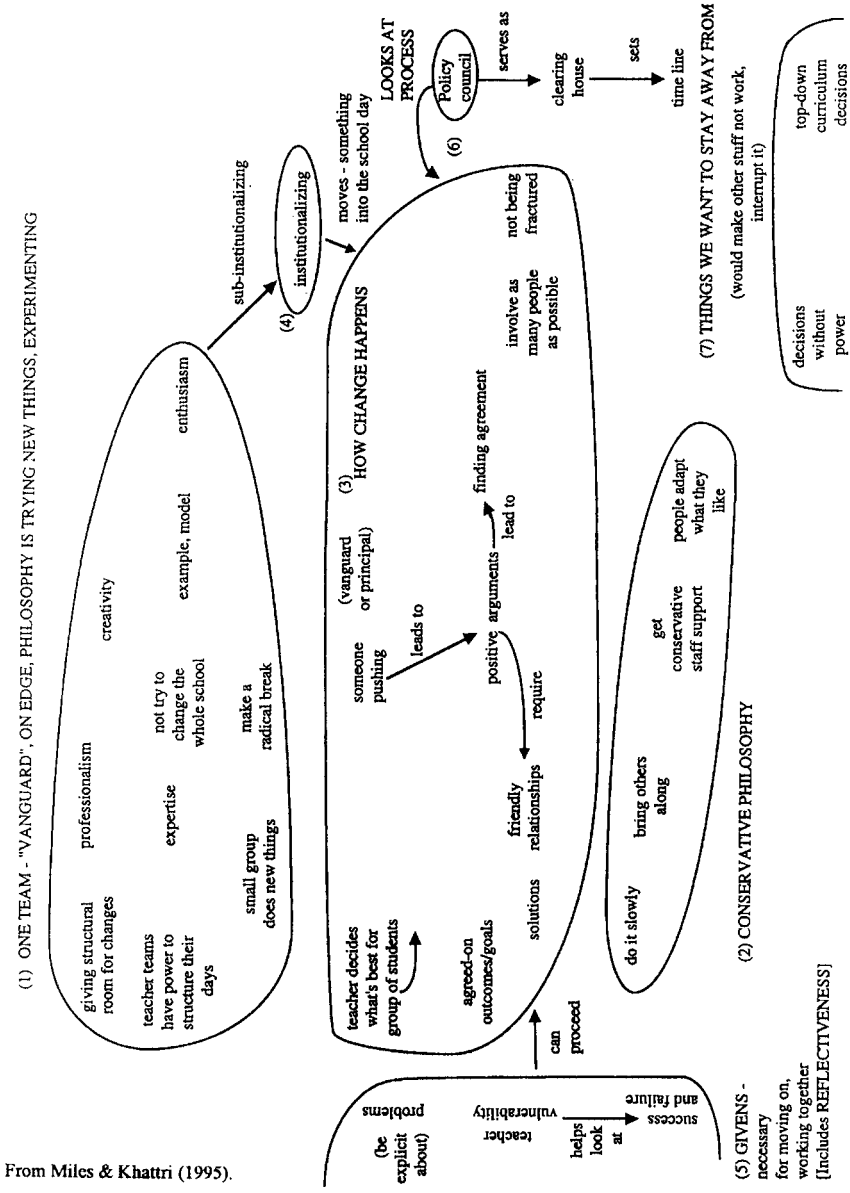
My recent project, Mapping Restructuring, with Nidhi Khattri, stemmed from the empirical observation that there's plenty of vagueness and confusion about what "restructuring" actually involves, in spite of valiant efforts at clarification (e.g., David, 1987; Harvey & Crandall, 1982; Elmore & associates, 1990; Murphy, 1991). Furthermore, the path of restructuring work is quite complex and demanding (Lieberman, Darling-Hammond, & Zuckerman, 1991). These issues have led me almost full circle – as in most odysseys – back to concern with individuals. The project, was aimed at eliciting the cognitive maps of school people involved in restructuring efforts: how they see the *content*, what can be restructured in schools, from time schedules to student and teacher roles to governance; and how they see the *process*, how restructuring efforts should proceed, from shared decision-making to staff development, conflict management and experimental tryouts.

The study adapted cognitive mapping methods developed by Champagne, Klopfer, Desene, and Squires (1981), using them twice over the school year with key people in two schools to assess cognitive changes, and what led to them. People's cognitive maps are often highly differentiated and integrated, well surpassing in complexity most of the figures included here. A sample is shown in Figure 12, drawn from Miles & Khattri (1995); Peter's map of how restructuring proceeds in the alternative high school where he works emphasizes a dialectic between a "vanguard team" and conservative ones, resulting in a working consensus about change processes, along with norms supporting reflection on success and failure.

A key variable here was the idea of *shared cognitive maps* of both restructuring content and process. In Peter's school, there was a shared sequence model for decision-making about structural changes (small group takes initiative, makes a proposal, faculty agrees to try out, proposal is revised on basis of experience, faculty decides to firmly keep as regular practice). There was also more map consensus about the importance of improved classroom practice and redesign of teacher and student roles. The shared maps supported much more extensive, pedagogically sound restructuring than in a comparison school that lacked agreement on the what and how of restructuring.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

It's not hard to see some underlying themes in this odyssey. First, it's clear how the implicit. at first unquestioned, paradigms of school change have been recast and transformed over the last four decades. Simplistic ideas of self-implementing, "teacher-proof" innovations have given way to more-complex – but coherent –




From Miles & Khattri (1995).

**Figure 12: Cognitive map: Peter's view of how restructuring proceeds.**

images of how new pedagogical practice is mastered in high-capacity school organizational settings.

Second, though the ideas have moved from individual to group, to organizational and larger-system contexts, the earlier variables remain relevant.[10] Rational choice of innovations is still needed during new-school design, and in restructuring. Process analysis is still crucial during ambitious large-scale reforms. Local organizational capacity is critical both for real change in classroom practice, and for "going to scale" in a district, state or country.

*Looking forward by looking backward.* In school change as in life, there are grounds for pessimism and optimism. On the dark side, we can note that schools are faced with "wicked" problems without known solutions; that there are truly terrible, astounding inequities across schools and districts (Kozol, 1991); that educational change is a "soft technology", hard to transfer; that resources are extraordinarily thin just when (and where) the demands for change are most fervent; and that many of the changes being currently proposed for schools have to work against the historically pervasive, comforting belief that teaching is trying, often vainly, to transmit objective knowledge to passive, intractable receivers (Cohen, 1988).

But tenacious optimism, a stance we often saw in our studies of change agents, is also justified. This review underlines my belief that knowledge about school change has in fact cumulated, become more coherent. Serious, experimental school change efforts are widespread, not just focused on organizational issues, but on the development of professionalization, and the core technology of schools – teaching and learning. The infrastructure for supporting school change, from labs and centers, to networks, associations, state departments, and universities, has become more sophisticated. And the political will to reform schooling is no weaker – and perhaps stronger – than it ever has been in America.

What will the future of educational change look like? Here I'll take a leaf from Edward Bellamy (1888), whose classic *Looking Backward, 2000–1887* took for granted the "present" state of affairs in 2000 – an enlightened socialist state – and compared it retrospectively with the "then" of 1887. Many staff developers helping schools create "visions" have found that "looking backward" frees up people from paralysis about an "unknowable" future. (If we treat it as if it's already happened, it must be possible.)

So: let's take a near-term perspective, about half of the span I've reviewed here. It's 2020. Looking back over the past 25 years, what have we learned about educational change? Here's my summary.[11]

1. Through most of the late 20th century, socio-economic class (and by extension race) was seen as a marked – even the decisive – influence on learning; poor, lower-class children consistently underperformed their more-advantaged counterparts. As early as 2005, it had finally become clear exactly what mechanisms were responsible for the association between social class and learning. It took nearly another decade to invent and debug reliable interventions to counteract these effects, but they work well now. Are we becoming a classless society? No, that's an

oxymoron. But the reality is that the great majority of poorer children, and children of color, now learn as much as their more-advantaged counterparts.

2. Educational "progressives" from Pestalozzi and Montessori to John Dewey have classically advocated an "inquiry" approach to teaching. The rhetoric of 1990's reform was strongly inquiry-oriented, infused with terms like "active learning," "discovery," "teaching for understanding," "construction of knowledge," "student empowerment." But the reality of educational practice then was predominantly "frontal teaching," dominated by teacher talk interspersed with student responses to fixed-answer questions (Goodlad, 1984). From the mid-10's onward, it's fair to say that a well-defined, stable approach to "authentic pedagogy," as initially defined by Newmann & Wehlage (1995) had diffused well beyond a "tipping point" of 40% of classrooms at all levels; the figures are of course higher for elementary schools. (Most analysts would agree that the increasing use of students as researchers on classroom practice played a very strong part in both the reconceptualization of teaching and the diffusion of practice.)

3. A major key to that shift appears to have been the development of strong, economical methods for learning and "transferring" educational practice. The work on microteaching and coaching in the 70's and 80's became much more sophisticated with Lampert & Ball's (1996) methods for reflecting on practice through networked video/computer display; other early harbingers were J. Shulman's work (1992) on teaching cases, and Borko & Putnam's (1995) experience-based approach to helping teachers learn constructivist teaching. What passed for "professional development" in most schools and districts in the 90's now seems pathetic and almost grotesque, when learning approaches like "intensive reflexiveness", "focused networking," "cognitive remapping," "virtual teaching," and "supportive confrontation" are taken for granted.

4. It's amazing that it's taken as long as it has to develop a reliable accounting scheme for the true costs of educational change. Miles & Louis proposed in 1990, with some empirical data, that serious school-level reform might take as much as 20% of running resources, some added on and others redirected, for a period of 2 to 3 years. It was also frequently proposed then that district and school resources for change should regularly approximate those for industrial or public-sector research and development (say, 3–7%). But no one really understood what was involved. The present CAS (Change Accounting Scheme) standards, first developed in 2007, seem to be very realistic and widely accepted, taking into account as they do staff, student, administrative and citizen time allocations, add-on resources (both in-kind and dollar), opportunity costs, and down-the-line benefits. The CAS national database has already been extremely helpful.

5. Back in the 90's, change researchers and reformers spoke of "reculturing" the school, as a necessary accompaniment to "restructuring." (e.g., Fullan, 1991; Dalin, 1993). The working norms of desirable school cultures (e.g., support for innovativeness and risk-taking, moral commitment to students, collegial exchange and inquiry) were generally known even then, but how to bring about durable normative change remained an intuitive, mysterious matter, seen as dependent on charismatic leaders or newly-selected staff, or as requiring an extended

organizational self-study. After a large number of intensive longitudinal studies, we now have reculturing strategies that are widely agreed to be open, coherent, non-manipulative, and measurably successful (the Council of Great City Schools 2023 report cites an average 73% success rate, sustained for at least 4 years).

6. In the 90's change researchers spoke of "getting better at change" (Fullan, 1991) and "building capacity" (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Corcoran & Goertz, 1995). But no one had a very clear model of just what this involved. It took a series of conceptual and empirical breakthroughs, well into the 10's, before we came to understand just how a "school"[12] actually manages both change and its twin, stability, in a coherent way. It's especially encouraging that the "capacity" measures – and the capacity-building strategies – we have now appear to be just as predictive in "developing" countries (as the 20th century locution had it) as in so-called "developed" ones (though that term itself seems more than a little bizarre in light of the turbulence of the past thirty years).

7. So: we know a lot about school change today in the 20's that was only dimly seen 70 years ago when Miles started his odyssey. But our "knowledge" is, like all knowledge, shot through with ignorance, blissful and otherwise. Good. The pursuit of newly-found ignorances "drives" inquiry, as they used to say back then. Today we understand it more deeply: worthwhile life, in and out of schools, is mainly devoted to finding things out.

## ENDNOTES

1 This article was adapted with additions from Miles (1993).

2 Gage (1991) has reported some wonderful explorations of "obviousness." On receiving the results of actual research studies, over three quarters of respondents called the results "obvious." When another group was given *opposite* results from the same studies, a majority found *them* obvious! Well, we all knew, obviously, that people consider the findings of social science studies to be obvious, right?

3 The Bethel laboratories had a strong impact on their participants' group and organizational skills. But the colleaguely contact and learning, across universities and across fields, was equally profound for the "trainers." Here I can only mention a few of the dozens of colleagues I worked with over the years: Kenneth Benne, Richard Beckhard, Warren Bennis, Robert Blake, Peter Block, Jan Clee, Jack Gibb, Jack Glidewell,Roger Harrison, Gunnar Hjelholt, Murray Horwitz, Robert Kahn, Abraham Kaplan, Sherman Kingsbury, Harold Leavitt, Traugott Lindner, Barry Oshry, Max Pag_s, George Peabody, Henry Riecken, Edgar Schein, Richard Schmuck, Herbert Shepard, Marjan Schröder, Peter Smith, Robert Tannenbaum, Herbert Thelen, and Alvin Zander.

4 Some of my key colleagues in this project were Dale Lake, Goodwin Watson, and Paul Buchanan (Columbia); Richard C. Schmuck, Ronald Lippitt, and Ronald Havelock (Michigan); Robert Chin and Don Orton (Boston); Fred Lighthall (Chicago); and Warren Hagstrom (Wisconsin).

5 Both in the "innovation" domain, and in that of school self-renewal, I should point to the network of North American colleagues I first encountered in the early 70's through IMTEC in Norway, led by Per Dalin; they included David Cohen, Eleanor Farrar, Michael Fullan, John Goodlad, Milbrey McLaughlin, Seymour Sarason, and many others.

6 NIE sponsored a ground-breaking conference on this topic in 1978; some key colleagues at it included John Goodlad, Charles Kadushin, Dan Lortie, Allen Parker, Seymour Sarason, Donald Schön, and Louis Smith.

7 Rein van der Vegt, Georg Bruining, Marvin Egberts, Ray Cadwell, and Jan van der ligt.

8 Olson (1994) collected "lessons" on scaling up from a series of reformers; these included clear purposes, school buy-in, school autonomy, district commitment, strong leadership, training and

support, sense of connectedness, maintenance of consistency, adequate time and costs, and quality control. These are plausible, experienced-based ideas, but we still lack a clear sense of which are crucial, and how strategies can be built combining them.

[9] Some key colleagues in ISIP were Ray Bolan, Robert Bollen, David Crandall, Mats Ekholm, Michael Fullan, Uwe Hameyer, Werner Heller, David Hopkins, Lawrence Ingvarson, Kenneth Leithwood, Karen Louis-Seashore, Eskil Stego, Uri Trier, Roland Vandenberghe, Rein van der Vegt, and Wim van Velzen.

[10] cf. the discussion of school change models and processes by Sashkin & Egermeier (1993), who distinguish strategies that focus on fixing the parts (innovations), the people (training), the school (oganizational capacity), and the system; they too emphasize the importance of integrating strategic approaches.

[11] I'm indebted for some of these ideas to a thoughtful seminar discussion at the University of Karlstad, Sweden; thanks to Mats Ekholm and his colleagues.

[12] We use this term for backward comparison, even though what we understand as a "school" today has shifted enough from the 90's version to make the term problematic. The shifts in physical location, extended vs. bounded memberships, use of what was then called "cyberspace", non-compulsory attendance and many other features have been far more substantial than most people realize. For a shock, try viewing Wiseman's (1968) film *High School*, or his follow-up *High School II* (1994).

## REFERENCES


Anderson, B., Odden, A., Farrar, E., Fuhrman, S., Davis, A., Huddle, E., Armstrong, J., & Flakus-Mosqueda, P. (1987). State strategies to support local school improvement. *Knowledge: Creation, Diffusion, Utilization,* **9** (1), 42–86.

Benne, K. D. (1952). Theory of cooperative planning. *Teachers College Record*, **53**, 429–435.

Berman, P. (1981). Educational change: An implementation paradigm. In R. Lehming & M. Kane (Eds.), *Improving schools: Using what we* know (pp. 253–286). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Berman, P., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1977). *Federal programs supporting educational change. Vol. VIII: Implementing and sustaining innovations.* Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

Borko, H., & Putnam, R. (1995). Expanding a teacher's knowledge base: A cognitive psychological perspective on professional development. In T. R. Guskey & A. M. Huberman (Eds.), *Professional development in education.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Champagne, A. B., Klopfer, L. E., Desena, A. T., & Squires, D. A. (1981). Structural representations of students' knowledge before and after science instruction. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, **18** (2), 97–111.

Cohen, D. K. (1988). *Teaching practice: Plus ça change.* East Lansing, MI: Teacher Education Resource Center. Michigan State University. Issue Paper 88–3.

Cohen, D. K. (1995). What is the system in systemic reform? *Educational Researcher,* **24** (9), 11–17, 31.

Corcoran, T., & Goertz, M. (1995). Instructional capacity and high performance schools. *Educational Researcher,* **24** (9), 27–31.

Crandall, D.P., & associates. (1982). *People, policies and practices: Examining the chain of school improvement.* Ten volumes. Andover, MA: The Network, Inc., 1982. Contract #OE30–78–0527, U.S.Department of Education.

Dalin, P. with Rolf, H.-G., & Kleekamp, B. (1993). *Changing the school culture.* London and New York: Cassell.

Dalin, P., Ayano, T., Biazen, A., Jahan, M., Miles, M. B., & Rojas, C. (1992). *How schools improve: International report.* Oslo, Norway: IMTEC.

David, J. L. (1987). *The puzzle of structural change.* Paper prepared for the Symposium on Structural Change in Secondary Education. Madison, WI: National Center on Effective Secondary Schools.

David, J. L., & Shields, P. M. (1991). *From effective schools to restructuring: A literature review.* Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

Elmore, R. F. (1979–80). Backward mapping: Implementation, research and policy decisions. *Political Sciences Quarterly*, **94**, 601–616.

Elmore, R.F., & associates. (1990). *Restructuring schools: The next generation of educational reform.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Elmore, R. F. (1995). *Getting to scale with good educational practice.* Cambridge: Harvard University, Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

Farah, I., Mehmood, T., Amna, J. R., Ashams, F., Iqbal, P., Khanam, S., Shah, Z., & Gul-Mastoi, N., with the collaboration of Miles, M.B., Hunte, P., & Chesterfield, R. (1996). *Roads to success: Self-sustaining primary school change in rural Pakistan.* Oslo, Norway: IMTEC, and Karachi, Pakistan: Institute for Educational Development, Aga Khan University.

Fullan, M.G. (1982). *The meaning of educational change.* New York: Teachers College Press, and Toronto: OISE Press.

Fullan, M. G., with Stiegelbauer, S. (1991). *The new meaning of educational change.* New York: Teachers College Press, and Toronto: OISE Press.

Fullan, M. G., & Miles, M. B. (1992). Getting educational reform right: What works and what doesn't. *Phi Delta Kappan*, **73**, 745–752.

Fullan, M. G., Miles, M. B., & Anderson, S. E. (1988). *Strategies for implementing microcomputers in schools: the Ontario case.* Toronto: Ministry of Education of Ontario, Canada, 1988.

Fullan, M. G., Miles, M. B., & Taylor, G. (1980). Organization development in schools: The state of the art. *Review of Educational Research*, **50** (1), 121–183.

Gage, N. L. (1991). The obviousness of social and educational research results. *Educational Researcher*, **20** (1), 10–16.

Gold, B. A., & Miles, M. B. (1981). *Whose school is it anyway? Parent-teacher conflict over an innovative school.* New York: Praeger.

Goodlad, J. (1984). *A place called school: prospects for the future.* New York: Macmillan.

Gross, N., Giacquinta, J. B., & Bernstein, M. (1971). *Implementing organizational innovations: a sociological analysis of planned educational change.* New York: Basic Books.

Harvey, G., & Crandall, D. P. (1988). *A beginning look at the what and how of restructuring.* Andover, MA: Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands.

Havelock, R. G., Guskin, A., Frohman, M., Havelock, M., Hill, M., & Huber, J. (1969). *Planning for innovation through dissemination and utilization of knowledge.* Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research, Center for Research on Utilization of Scientific Knowledge.

Havelock, R. G., & Havelock, M. (1973). *Training for change agents: a guide to the design of training programs in education and other fields.* Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research, Center for Research on Utilization of Scientific Knowledge.

Havelock, R. G., with Zlotolow, S. (1995). *The change agent's guide, 2nd edition.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications.

Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B., with Goldberg, J. A., & Taylor, B. L. (1983). Innovation up close: A field study of 12 sites. In of D. P. Crandall & associates (Eds.), *People, policies and practices: Examining the chain of school improvement* Vol. IV. Andover, MA: The Network, Inc. ERIC No.ED 240 716.

Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (1984). *Innovation up close: How school improvement works.* New York: Plenum.

Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (1989). Some procedures for causal analysis of multiple-case data. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, **2** (1):55–68.

Kozol, J. (1991). *Savage inequalities: Children in America's schools.* New York: Crown.

Lake, D. G., & Miles, M. B. (1975). *Communication networks in the designing and starting of new schools.* Paper read to Symposium on Communication Networks in Education: Their Operation and Influence at the American Educational Research Association meeting.

Lampert, M, & Ball, D. (1996). Aligning teacher education with contemporary K-12 reform visions. In L. Darling-Hammond (Ed.), *Teaching and America's future.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Levine, D. U. (1991). Review of Improving the urban high school: What works and why. *Educational Studies*, 551–554.

Lieberman, A., Darling-Hammond, L., & Zuckerman, D. (1991). *Early lessons in restructuring schools.* New York: National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching. Teachers College, Columbia University.

Lieberman, M.A., Yalom, I. D., & Miles, M. B. (1973). *Encounter groups: First facts.* New York: Basic Books.

Louis, K. S., & Miles, M. B. (1990). *Improving the urban high school: What works and why.* New York: Teachers College Press, 1990.

Louis, K. S., & Miles, M. B. (1991a). Managing reform: Lessons from urban high schools. *School effectiveness and school improvement*, **2**(2).

Louis, K. S., & Miles, M. B. (1991b). Toward effective urban high schools: The importance of planning and coping. In W.A. Firestone, J. Bliss, & C. Richards (Eds.), *Rethinking effective schools* (pp. 91–111). Third Rutgers Invitational Symposium on Education. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1991.

Louis, K. S., Rosenblum, S., & Molitor, J. A., with Chabotar, K. J., Kell, D., & Yin, R. K. (1981). *Strategies for knowledge use and school improvement.* Washington, DC: National Institute of Education.

McElvaney, C. T., & Miles, M. B. (1971). Using survey feedback and consultation. In Schmuck, R. A. & Miles, M. B. (Eds.), *Organization development in schools* (pp. 113–138). Palo Alto: Mayfield Press.

McLaughlin, M. W. (1990). Rand change agent study revisited. *Educational Researcher*, **19** (9), 11–15.

Miles, M. B. (1959). *Learning to work in groups.* New York: Teachers College Press. (Also printed in Spanish (*Aprendizaje del trabajo en grupos*, Buenos Aires: Troquel, 1965); in Portuguese (*Aprendizagem do trabalho em grupos*, Sao Paulo; Editora Cultrix, 1968), and in Dutch (*Werken met groepen*, Alphen aan den Rijn: Samsom Uitgeverij, 1973). Second edition (English), Teachers College Press, 1980, and (Dutch) Samsom, 1981.

Miles, M. B. (Ed.). (1964a). *Innovation in education.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Miles, M. B. (1964b). Educational innovation: The nature of the problem. In M. B. Miles (Ed.), *Innovation in education* (pp. 1–46). New York: Teachers College Press.

Miles, M. B. (1964c). On temporary systems. In M. B. Miles (Ed.), *Innovation in education* (pp. 437–492). New York: Teachers College Press.

Miles, M. B. (1964d). The T-group and the classroom. In L. P. Bradford, K. D. Benne, & J. R. Gibb, (Eds.), *T-group theory and laboratory method: innovation in re-education* (Chap. 17, (pp. 452–476). New York: Wiley.

Miles, M. B. (1965a). Changes during and following laboratory training: A clinical-experimental study, *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, **1**(3), 215–242.

Miles, M. B. (1965b). Education and innovation: The organization as context. Eleventh Career Development Seminar on Change Perspectives. Auburn, Alabama: Auburn University. In M. G. Abbott & J. T. Lowell (Eds.), *Change Perspectives in Educational Administration* (pp. 54–72).

Miles, M.B. (1965c). Planned change and organizational health: Figure and ground. In R. O. Carlson, A. Gallagher, M. B. Miles, R. J. Pellegrin, & E. M. Rogers (Eds.), *Change processes in the public schools* (pp. 11–36). Eugene, Oregon: Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration.

Miles, M. B. (1969a). *On naming the here and now.* Menlo Park, CA: Educational Policy Research Center, Stanford Research Institute.

Miles, M. B. (1969b). The development of innovative climates in educational organizations. Research Note, Educational Policy Research Center, Stanford Research Institute, EPRC 6747–10. Contract OEC-1–7–071013–4274. Also published in *Tijdschrift voor Agologie* (Journal for the Study of Planned Change), 1972, *1*, 16–33.

Miles, M. B. (1971). Structure and process in the class as a social system. In *Process education: its meaning and merit.* Proceedings of 1970 ERIE Conference on Process Education. Syracuse: Eastern Regional Institute for Education.

Miles, M. B. (1974). A matter of linkage: How can innovation research and innovation practice influence each other? In S. V. Temkin & M. V. Brown (Eds.), *What does research say about getting innovations into schools: a symposium.* Philadelphia: Research for Better Schools. Publication No. OP-305.

Miles, M. B. (1978). *On networking.* Washington: National Institute of Education.

Miles, M. B. (1980a). Innovation from the ground up: Dilemmas of planning and implementing new schools. *New York University Education Quarterly,* **11** (2), 2–9.

Miles, M. B. (1980b). *Linkage in a new key: The DTA experience.* Chicago: Center for New Schools.

Miles, M. B. (1981). Mapping the common properties of schools. In R. Lehming & M. Kane (Eds.), *Improving schools: Using what we know* (pp. 42–114). Santa Monica, CA: Sage..

Miles, M. B. (1993). Forty years of change in schools: Some personal reflections. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, **29**(2), 213–248.

Miles, M. B., Calder, P. H., Hornstein, H. A., Callahan, D. M. & Schiavo, R. S. (1966). Data feedback and organizational change in a school system. Paper read to American Sociological Association meeting, August. Excerpted in W. G. Bennis, K. D. Benne, & R. Chin (Eds.), *The planning of change* (rev. ed.) (pp. 457–467). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969.

Miles, M. B., & Ekholm, M. (1991, April). *Will restructuring stay restructured?* Paper presented at AERA Annual Meeting, Chicago.

Miles, M. B., Ekholm, M., & Vandenberghe, R. (1987). *Lasting school improvement: Exploring the process of institutionalization.* Leuven, Belgium and Amersfoort, the Netherlands: Acco.

Miles, M. B., Farrar, E., & Neufeld, B. (1983). *Review of effective schools programs* (Vol 1, 2, 3). Cambridge, MA: Huron Institute.

Miles, M. B., & Haughey, C. F. (1992). The leadership role of the United States Department of Education in creating and supporting a national education dissemination system. *Knowledge: Creation, Diffusion, Utilization*, **13**(3), 241–247.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1984). *Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new methods.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Miles, M. B., & Kaufman, T. (1985). Directory of Effective Schools Programs. In R. Kyle (Ed.), *Reaching for excellence: an effective schools sourcebook.* Washington: U.S.Government Printing Office.

Miles, M.B ., & Khattri, N. (1995). *Thinking about restructuring: The maps in our minds.* New York: NCREST (National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching).

Miles, M. B., & Lake, D. G. (1967). Self-renewal in school systems: A strategy for planned change. In G. Watson (Ed.), *Concepts for social change* (pp. 81–88). Washington: National Training Laboratories.

Miles, M. B., & Louis, K. S. (1987). Research on institutionalization: A reflective review. In M. B. Miles, M. Ekholm, & R. Vandenberghe (Eds.), *Lasting school improvement: Exploring the process of institutionalization* (pp. 25–44). Leuven, Belgium: Acco.

Miles, M. B., & Louis, K. S. (1990). Mustering the will and skill for change. *Educational Leadership*, **47**(8), 57–61.

Miles. M. B., Saxl, E. R., & Lieberman, A. (1988). What skills do educational "change agents" need? An empirical view. *Curriculum Inquiry* **18**(2), 157–193.

Miles, M. B., & Schmuck, R. A. (1971). Improving schools through organization development: an overview. In R. A. Schmuck & M. B. Miles (Eds.), *Organization development in schools* (pp. 1–27). Palo Alto: Mayfield Press,

Miles, M. B., Sullivan, E. W., Gold, B. A., Taylor, B. L., Sieber, S. D., & Wilder, D. E. (1978). Final Report, *Designing and starting innovative schools: A field study of social architecture in education).* New York: Center for Policy Research, 1978. NIE-G-74–0051. ED 170 828–834.

Mintz, J., Solomon, R., & Solomon, S. (Eds.). (1995). *Almanac of educational choices:private and public learning alternatives and home schooling.* New York: Macmillan Reference Publishing.

Murphy, J. (1991). *Restructuring schools: capturing and assessing the phenomena.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Newmann, F. M., & Wehlage, G. G. (1995). *Successful school restructuring: a report to the public and educators by the Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools.* Madison, WI: The Center.

Olson, L. (1994). Learning their lessons. *Education Week*, November 2.

Passow, A. H., Miles, M. B., Corey, S. M, & Draper, D. C. (1955). *Training curriculum leaders for cooperative research.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Runkel, P. J., Schmuck, R. A., Arends, J. A., & Francisco, R. P. (1978). *Transforming the school's capacity for problem solving.* Eugene, OR: Center for Educational Policy and Management, University of Oregon.

Saxl, E. R., Miles, M. B., & Lieberman, A. (1990). *Assisting change in education: a training program for school improvement facilitators.* Washington: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Sashkin, M., & Egermeier, J. (1993). *School change models and processes: a review and synthesis of research and practice.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (Programs for the Improvement of Practice).

Schachtel, E. (1959). *Metamorphosis.* New York: Basic Books.

Schmuck, R. A., & Miles, M. B. (1971). *Organization development in schools.* Palo Alto: Mayfield Press, 1971. La Jolla, CA: University Associates, 1977.

Schmuck, R. A, & Runkel, P. J. (1985). *The handbook of organization development in schools* (3rd ed.). Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield.

Shulman, J. (Ed.). (1992). *Case methods in teacher education.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Smith, L. M., & Keith, P. M. (1971). *The anatomy of educational innovation.* New York: Wiley, 1971.

Smith, M. S., & O'Day, J. (1991). Systematic school reform. In S. Fuhrman & B. Malen (Eds.), *The politics of curriculum and testing* (pp. 233–267). Philadelphia: Falmer.

Taylor, B.L. (1978). *Mapping new schools: A series of four new-school planning guides.* New York: Center for Policy Research.

van der Vegt, R., & Knip, H. (1992). Implementing mandated change: the school as change contractor. *Curriculum Inquiry*, **20** (2), 183–203.

van Velzen, W., Miles, M. B., Ekholm, M., Hameyer, U., & Robin, D. (1985). *Making school improvement work: A conceptual guide to practice.* Leuven, Belgium and Amersfoort, The Netherlands: Acco, 1985.

Watson, G. (Ed.). (1967a). *Change in school systems.* Washington, DC: National Training Laboratories.

Watson, G. (Ed.). (1967b). *Concepts for social change.* Washington, DC: National Training Laboratories.

Wiseman, F. (1968). *High school.* Cambridge, MA: Zipporah Films.

Wiseman, F. (1994). *High school II.* Cambridge, MA Zipporah Films.

Wayland, S. R. (1964). Structural features of American education as basic factors in innovation. In M. B. Miles (Ed.), *Innovation in education* (pp. 587–614). New York: Teachers College Press.

# Listening and Learning from the Field: Tales of Policy Implementation and Situated Practice

MILBREY W. MCLAUGHLIN
*Stanford University*

## DISCOVERING THE IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEM

Why are policies not implemented as planned? Why are classroom practices so hard to change? The "implementation problem" was discovered in the early 1970's as policy analysts took a look at the school level consequences of the Great Society's sweeping education reforms. The 1965 passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), with its support for compensatory education, innovation, strengthened state departments of education, libraries and, subsequently, bilingual education, signaled the substantive involvement of the federal government in local educational activities. ESEA's comprehensive intergovernmental initiatives meant that implementation no longer was just primarily a management problem, confined to relations between a boss and a subordinate, or an administrator and a teacher, or even to processes within a single institution. Implementation of the Great Society's education policies stretched across levels of government – from Washington to state capitals to local districts and schools – and across agents of government-legislative, executive, administrative. As federal, state and local officials developed responses to these new education policies, implementation issues were revealed in all their complexity, intractability, and inevitability.

Discovery of the general "implementation problem" came as something of a surprise to planners and analysts. Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky in 1973 were among the first to herald implementation issues in federal public policy. They detailed "How great expectations in Washington are dashed in Oakland; or, Why it's amazing that Federal programs work at all," and recounted a "saga of the Economic Development Administration as told by two sympathetic observers who seek to build morals on a foundation of ruined hopes." Implementors, they reported, did not always do as told (as proponents of scientific management would have it) nor did they always act to maximize policy objectives (as many economists would have it). Instead those responsible for implementation at various levels of the policy system responded in what often seemed quite idiosyncratic, frustratingly unpredictable, if not downright resistant ways. The result was not only program outcomes that fell short of expectations but also enormous variability in what constituted a "program" in diverse settings.



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 58-72.

## THE RAND CHANGE AGENT STUDY

The Rand Change Agent study was being designed and carried out in this climate of alarmed discovery. If Pressman and Wildavsky wanted to know about the complexities of policy implementation more generally, we were interested specifically in how federal education policies made their way through levels of government and practice. From 1973 through 1978, the Rand Corporation carried out a national study of four federally funded so-called "change agent" programs, policies intended to introduce and support innovative practices in the public schools[1] The projects included in the Change Agent Study were the products of federal policies conceived in the late 1960's, and local plans developed in the early to mid-1970's. They represented the first significant federal-level attempt to stimulate change in local educational practices and were based in relatively unexamined assumptions about the problem of change in public schools and the role of government (or policy) in affecting it. Policy makers formulating these early federal education initiatives assumed a relatively direct relationship between federal policy "inputs", local responses, and program "outputs." Policy of that period generally ignored the contents of what economists called the "black box" of local practices, beliefs and traditions. The theory behind these substantively distinct federal programs was that more money or better ideas – enhanced "inputs" – would enable local educators to improve school practice. A cynical, retrospective description of that era of federal education policy might dub it the "missing input model of education policy."

The Rand Change Agent study differed from previous large education research studies in two important ways. One, it combined quantitative survey methods with qualitative field work strategies. [2]Two, the study asked questions of "how" and "why" as well as looking at what local implementors did with federal program funds and frameworks. Field research was key to Rand's attempt to unpack the implementation perspective.

Rand found that local initiatives supported by federal funds were by and large consistent in focus and direction with what policy makers had in mind. However, Rand analysts found that project "adoption" was only the beginning of the story: Adoption of a project consistent with federal goals did not ensure successful implementation. Further, Rand found that even successful implementation did not predict longrun continuation of projects initiated with federal funds once these funds were withdrawn. The Change Agent study concluded that the net return to the general investment was the adoption of many innovations, the successful implementation of few, and the long-run continuation of still fewer.

A general finding of the Change Agent study has become almost a truism: *it is exceedingly difficult for policy to change practice,* especially across levels of government. Contrary to the 1:1 relationship assumed to exist between policy and practice, the Change Agent study demonstrated that the nature, amount and pace of change at the local level was a product of local factors that were largely beyond the control of higher-level policy makers. To further complicate matters, these local factors

changed over time and so created substantively and strategically different settings for policy. Specifically, Rand concluded that:

*Implementation dominates outcome.*

Local choices about how (or whether) to put a policy into practice have more significance for policy outcomes than do such policy features such as technology, program design, funding levels, or governance requirements. Change ultimately is a problem of the smallest unit. What actually happens as a result of a policy depends on how policy is interpreted and transformed at each point in the process, and finally on the response of the individual at the end of the line.

*Policy can't mandate what matters.*

What matters most to policy outcomes are local capacity and will. The local expertise, organizational routines, and resources available to support planned change efforts generate fundamental differences in the ability of practitioners to plan, execute or sustain an innovative effort. The presence of the will or motivation to embrace policy objectives or strategies is essential to generate the effort and energy necessary to a successful project. Local capacity and will not only are generally beyond the reach of policy, they also change over time. The Change Agent study described how local events such as teachers' strikes, fiscal retrenchment, desegregation orders, or enrollment decline can negatively affect both capacity and will as they engender competing pressures and define constraints upon local action.[3] Further, teachers' will or motivation is contingent on the attitudes of school administrators or district officials. So while teachers in a site may be eager to embrace a change effort, they may elect not to do so, or to participate on only a *pro forma* basis, because their institutional setting is not supportive. Consequently, the enthusiasm engendered in teachers may come to little because of insufficient will or support in the broader organizational environment, which is hard to orchestrate by means of federal (or even state) policy. Teachers' motivations and actions are embedded in a larger social and political context that mediates their responses to policy.

*Local variability is the rule; uniformity is the exception.* While classrooms, schools and school districts share common features – curriculum structures, grade structures, student placement policies as examples – the Change Agent study found that they also differed in fundamental and consequential ways. A high school English course in a wealthy suburban classroom differs substantially from a course offered under the same title in an inner city school. The problems confronting California school administrators differ markedly from those faced by colleagues in Kansas.

*Implementation signals mutual adaptation.*

Local implementation was revealed as a process of mutual adaptation between program or project percepts and local realities. Sometimes this adaptation meant dilution or derailment of project objectives. Other times these local responses provided important local knowledge and modification. Traditionally, variability has been an anathema to policy makers and cast as the plague of efforts to reform schools because it signaled uneven local responses to policy objectives. Also, variability has been interpreted as warning of trouble in the system. The Change Agent study raised the possibility that mutual adaptation and local variability may be a good thing – that it could signal a healthy system, one that is shaping and integrating policy in ways best suited to local resources, traditions and clientele. "Adaptation" replaced "adoption" as a goal for education change policies largely as response to these Change Agent study findings.

The Change Agent study underscored the critical role of local implementation and the "street level bureaucrats" who decide about classroom practices and the factors that affect teaching and learning.[4] Beyond identifying that important perspective, however, the Change Agent study and other implementation research provided only limited understanding of teachers' realities and the influences that shape what goes on in schools and classrooms. From its perspective on local implementation, the Change Agent study thus framed a major challenge for analysis: *linking macro and micro levels of policy, analysis, and action.* Macro analyses and policies operate at the level of the system, and stress regularities of process and organizational structures as stable outlines of the policy process. Individual action, seen through the macro lens, is understood in terms of position in a relational network. Micro analyses, policies, and perspectives, conversely, operate at the individual level and interpret organizational action as problematic and unpredictable outcomes of "street level bureaucrats," or autonomous individuals. The Change Agent study elaborated the macro perspective on implementation and practice, but provided little insight into how and why local implementors-most especially teachers – respond as they do. The Change Agent study left unanswered the central question: What are the factors that affect teachers' responses to policies aimed at changing classroom practices?

## CONTEXTS THAT AFFECT TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Center for Research on the Context of Secondary School Teaching, begun in 1987, assumed as its mission understanding the factors that enable or constrain teachers' work, and expressly set about to take up the analytic challenge posed by implementation research.[5] What are the contexts that matter for teaching and learning? How can understanding of teachers' workplace contexts inform policy responses to the "implementation problem?"

*Taking teachers' perspective*

The Context Center research attempted to move from an "outside in" view on practice to an "insiders'" perspective on the factors that influence teaching and learning. From a teachers'-eye view, what dimensions of the school setting are most influential in shaping the ways teachers think about practice and what they do in the classroom?

Rand's Change Agent study, and other subsequent research that probed relations between policy and practice, involved extensive field work and included teachers' responses to questions of policy implementation and program effects. The first and difficult lesson learned as we piloted our interview protocol was that research consistent with an insider's view required more than mere solicitation of teachers' views on policy and practice. Research aimed at understanding teachers' perspective needed to look at the world of everyday practice through the same lens. The so-called "backward mapping" strategies favored by policy analysts – interview and data collection procedures which sought to map up through the policy system from the classroom, understanding the transformations and decisions made at each level [as Pressman and Wildavsky sketched in 1973]–turned out to be a top down or outsider strategy because the categories assumed by interviews with teachers reflected realities of the policy system, not the classroom.[6] Teachers, we quickly learned, do not backward map; they struggle daily with the multiple and diverse demands on the classroom energy, expertise, and capacity. Questions framed by a backward mapping approach were analysts' questions, not teachers' questions. Teachers' maps, we learned, were largely indifferent to the topography and landmarks of education policy. Teachers rarely saw policy or organizational boundaries as critical influences on their work. They pointed instead to colleagues, networks and non-formal agencies and professional organizations, and other activities that tend to fall outside formal policy or organization lines as significant to their conception of practice and career.

The first thing we learned from the Context Center work even before we launched into our program of research had to do with analytic lens. "Micro," we discovered, was not simply the other end of "macro." Rather these perspectives represented two importantly different conceptual schemes and analytic frames. The answer to an analytic question posed by the implementation research, most specifically the Change Agent study, "Does the complimentarity of macro/micro realities mean that a single model of analysis can be applied up and down the system?", was no. Different theoretical perspectives and understandings applied to each. Teachers' perspectives on teaching and learning are rooted in fundamentally different premises of action, if not different goals, than those of the outside researcher, policy analyst or policy maker. These initial lessons were reinforced and elaborated throughout the course of our research project and generated insights and understanding which otherwise would have been hidden from view.

Once we asked "what's it like to teach here," and "what are the factors that influence how you feel about yourself as a teacher," teachers enabled us to see schoolteaching from their view.

*What matters most in teachers' workplace context?*[7]

By teachers' reports, students are the workplace "context" of greatest consequence. Students were the basic reference teachers used when they talked about their schools, colleagues, classrooms, and commitment to teaching. Teachers focused on their students' academic abilities, needs and interests, attitudes, and backgrounds as they explained what they did in the classroom and evaluated their own effectiveness, and their sense of engagement discouragement with teaching. In fact we found that teachers discriminate their sense of professional efficacy on a period by period basis, depending on who sits in their classroom.[8]

Teachers distinguished between "traditional" students, the generally advantaged college-bound students who provide well-understood contexts for teaching, and "nontraditional" contemporary students who bring diverse needs, learning styles, cultures, family supports, talents and interests to the classroom. Teachers' responses to the challenges to tradition presented by today's students varied substantially among and within schools. We saw three broad patterns of practice in contemporary classrooms: keeping traditions, adapting context and expectations, and reinventing practice in ways that challenged institutional expectations, norms, and directions. Most teachers in our sample continued traditional practices and saw the behavior and achievement problems in their classrooms primarily as students' problems, exacerbated by inadequate support or discipline at the school. Teachers who viewed contemporary classrooms this way tended to frame their responses in terms of tougher rules and enforcement, and justify their practices in terms of traditional subject area orthodoxies. Teachers who responded in this way to contemporary students quickly became cynical, frustrated, and burned out. So did their students, many of whom failed to meet expectations established for the classroom.

Teachers who responded to contemporary students by adapting content and expectations cut back on content and expectations for achievement also located the "problem" of today's classrooms in the student and divergence from institutional notions of the "good student." Often this retreat from traditional academics represented a well-meaning attempt to structure a supportive classroom environment. However, some teachers adopting this perspective believed that many of today's students could not or would not do more challenging work. Regardless of teachers' rationale, both teachers and students in these classrooms found themselves bored and disengaged from teaching and learning.

Other teachers struggled to rethink connections between students and subject matter and reinvent practices for their classrooms. These teachers viewed the challenges of their contemporary classrooms in terms of a lack of fit between schoolteaching as they had always practiced it, and the students who filled their classrooms today. Teachers who effectively engaged contemporary students and fostered their success with challenging academic content generally moved from traditional, teacher-controlled pedagogy to work interactively with students. These teachers also reported higher levels of professional engagement and commitment than did their colleagues pursuing other forms of practice.

*Situated practice*

Situated practice in most settings we studied resembled the "reflexive conservativism" Dan Lortie described in 1975. Students and content were considered in traditional terms, and "construction of practice" involved calibration of the fit between the students who filled the classroom, and the grammar of established practice. However, we also saw that reinvention of practice seldom constituted what some call "missionary constructivism," in which teachers calibrate students' needs and learning on a daily basis. (Such on-going "co-construction" would generate cognitive overload in all but the smallest, most homogeneous classrooms.) Teachers who reinvented practices also relied on routines; the difference in these classrooms lay in how these routines were established and the frame within which they operated.

All practice is constructed, even when it maintains traditions. The important point for policy and practice is that not all teachers respond the same ways to similar students, and not all teachers' responses lead to positive outcomes, either for themselves or their students. As schoolteaching was constructed, we saw that teachers' practices could be understood in terms of the multiple contexts within which it was embedded. District, school, and department contexts all influenced schoolteaching in particular ways. District contexts shaped teachers' sense of professionalism and esteem. School contexts created an overall frame for schoolteaching, and established priorities for practice and general norms of collegiality and learning. Departments comprised teachers' upclose professional community and touchstones for their practice.

While teachers' multiple, embedded contexts affected their practice, we found that the significance of multiple contexts was not additive. We saw that proximate context, the professional setting closest to schoolteaching, had the greatest influence on how teachers understood their roles and the expectations they established for teaching and learning. Whether reflexive conservatism or reinvention described schoolteaching depended in fundamental ways on the character of teachers' closest professional community. Up-close context-the academic department in comprehensive high schools, the school community in small, mission schools – was a powerful influence on schoolteaching because it was the medium in which teachers could focus (or not) on strategies for connecting particular students to particular content and the consequences of teaching practices situated in actual classrooms.

Our focus on schoolteaching and how teachers think about their practice brought the role of teachers' professional communities to the foreground as a primary influence on teachers' conceptions of their work, and enabled us to refine notions of "collegiality," "community," and teachers' professional growth.

## FEATURES OF TEACHERS' LEARNING COMMUNITIES

We saw that what goes on in a teacher's classroom is not just a function of what an individual brings to it. Schoolteachers' practice and careers were fundamentally

tied up in the ethos of their professional community. Weak communities where traditional norms of individualism, conservativism and presentism operated by default were typical in our sample of schools. Most teachers work in settings characterized by professional isolation and a lack of shared sense of practice. Strong professional communities, uncommon in American public schools, are distinguished by a strong technical culture, or sense of "how we do things here." Strong community provided clear frame for practice. But we found that not all strong communities learned in ways that generate new knowledge or make traditional assumptions problematic. Some teacher communities, united around institutional norms and expectations, reproduced these traditional visions of practice, if indeed any learning took place at all.

Learning communities of teachers in departments or schools were essential supports for the intensive teaching technologies associated with reinvented practices, and the collegial consciousness and knowledge they assumed. Learning communities were necessary for teachers to move from traditional classroom scripts to think about their practice in new ways. Teachers' learning communities differed in a number of ways from other forms of professional communities. A learning community of teachers generated *different kinds of knowledge* and undertook *different types of action* than did individuals acting alone, or than teachers working in strong but static professional communities.

Teachers who were members of a learning community learned about different aspects of their own and others' practices, employed different forms of teaching technology, and engaged different types of social relationships than did teachers teaching in other professional community settings. These were differences of *kind*, not just of *degree*, and were evident on at least four dimensions of community.

*Norms of collegiality* comprised one such dimension. Learning communities propelled members together to discover new knowledge and understandings through social means. Change that directly challenges institutional norms and roles requires rethinking existing routines, adding new things to an instructional repertoire, learning when and how to use new practices as well as established routines. Debate and argument among members of a professional community forge and sustain these new conceptions of practice. A teacher cannot argue alone! Community was essential to "unlearning" and reinventing "sacred stories" of traditional practice.[9] Learning communities assumed social interdependence and were personalized in much the same way as were the classroom environments teachers strove to create.[10]

Learning communities also were signal in that they typically comprised *democratic social systems*. Central to relationships in learning communities was egalitarian posture and the view that all members were simultaneously learners and experts. Contrary to the status hierarchies that describe most secondary school settings, all teachers taught a range of courses; all teachers assumed responsibility for all students.

*Boundaries of community* also differed in communities where teachers actively sought and appropriated knowledge. Boundaries were both open and mediated outside influences. Learning communities did not simply pass through institutional

expectations or education policies without review for compatibility with the shared understandings of members. Learning communities also buffered members from negative conditions existing in the larger context. In juxtaposition to their buffering role, teacher learning communities actively pursued resources from outside that were valuable to their shared enterprise. They were *open* systems which imported new ideas and which embraced professional relationships that spanned the boundaries of their organization unit.

Finally, learning communities had a *coherent technical culture*. Learning communities acted as a body, as a community, to assess practices, develop new ones, and establish norms for practice. Learning communities were student-centered in their focus on students and learning outcomes. While learning communities worked self-consciously to define "we" and the way-we-do-it-here, the unifying goal was enhanced student learning, not identical forms of practice or tight boundaries around community. This collective focus on student learning brought coherence to teaching and learning in the school setting, and established shared responsibility among teachers for students' success.

The knowledge generated by a learning community built from known routines and collective contributions to craft new knowledge that extended beyond established professional scripts and the expertise of any individual member. In an important sense, the *process* of generating knowledge was the *product* because it achieved collective validity for the understandings and benchmarks forged along the way. In this sense, the strong collegiality of a learning community enhanced rather than undermined teachers' sense of professional autonomy and agency. Intensive collegiality promoted intensive teaching technologies – the challenging but professionally satisfying work of on-going inquiry into the relationships between teaching and learning.

## IMPLEMENTATION REDUX

These understandings about contexts that matter for teaching and learning, and the factors that shape teachers' beliefs about practice and attitudes about their students, provide a different perspective on the "implementation problem," and on research and policy responses appropriate to it.

### *Implications for research*

As became clear even before we went into the field with this multi-site, multi-year study, relations between research and practice, or between theory and practice, do not go in one direction only. Teachers have long commented that no theory is ever sufficiently well worked out to be "applied" in practice; theory cannot anticipate all of the local contingencies and street-level realities that mediate theory or theory-defined solutions. Neither can social science categories or unitary theoretical perspectives fully capture the reality of schoolteaching or teachers' perspectives

on practice. For one, categories developed outside of the world of practice risk missing important information about factors that affect teaching and learning. They also risk misunderstanding their significance to teachers and consequences for the classroom.[11] Conversations with teachers and observations of their work highlighted the dislocation between many assumptions made by researchers looking at schoolteaching from the outside, and the theories of action followed by individuals working within the system.

In addition, single theoretical perspectives feature particular dimensions and processes of schoolteaching and teachers' workplace contexts, and obscure others. Organization theory provides concepts of routines, bureaucratic control, and structure that explain important aspects of teachers' workplace. An institutional frame accents other important dimensions of teachers' approach to their classrooms, such as norms of practice, expectations from the broader policy system, or conceptions of content specific to an instructional domain. A social systems viewpoint focuses on factors such as professional relationships and community. Any single theoretical perspective by definition can provide only partial understanding of the factors affecting schoolteaching. Schoolteachers, however, integrate these perspectives everyday in their classrooms as they bring students together around content.

The intensive or transformative teaching strategies teachers used to connect both nontraditional and traditional students to academic content broke or at least challenged institutional frames of "good teaching" and overturned traditional notions of the "good student." The Context Center's research shows how necessary it is for social science to similarly break frame and challenge traditional research technologies as a way to better understand schoolteaching and factors that affect it.

We also saw the need to contextualize research. Practitioners benefitted little from past studies that presented only aggregate statistics and decontextualized findings. Further, most lines of research on promising practice or school effects ignore those contexts that teachers say are most critical to their beliefs and practices – students and subject area. Schoolteaching does not take place in generic classrooms stripped of subject matter concerns, mindless of the backgrounds, needs, and interests of the students who come to school, or impervious to department, school, district, and other context influences. To ignore context is to ignore the very elements that make policy implementation a "problem," and contribute to the highly variable local responses that trouble policymakers.

For research, and for policy and practice, problems have the same status as solutions. Assumptions about "what's the problem" define choices of analytic tools and strategies for education policy and practice. The dialogue between research and practice around problem formulation and interpretation of evidence is likely to be as informative as efforts to derive principles from theory. Our effort to understand schoolteaching in context recalls the maxim that ideas and questions are often discovered in the realm of practice well before they can be grasped in theory.

*Implications for policy*

The implementation problem arose as policy reached across levels of government and domains of practice to influence outcomes for students. The Context Center's research provides some different ways of thinking about relations between macro policy strategies and micro realities of teachers' classrooms. Chorus and refrain in our study of schoolteaching and our understanding of the conditions that support teachers' learning and change is the critical importance of professional relations. Opportunities for teachers to talk with colleagues about teaching, think about new ways of doing things, hammer out shared understandings about the goals of schoolteaching were the common feature across diverse environments where practices were rethought in ways that benefitted both teachers and students. Teachers' ability to respond effectively to the diverse needs, interests and talents students brought to their classrooms and implement the conceptions of teaching that motivate reform turned on their ability to have these relationships.

*A changed policy perspective.* This relational perspective on schoolteaching shifts the focus for analysis and action from the individual to the group. The professional communities in which teachers grind new lenses for practice are multiple, often only roughly coterminous, and exploit the collective knowledge and understanding of the group. Teachers' learning communities cannot be reduced to an aggregation or sum of individuals' attributes, motivations, or effects. Teachers' learning communities profit from the collective experience of participants, and the "whole" is both greater than and different from the sum of individual parts.

This phenomenological perspective centers implementation issues and concerns in social affiliations and opportunities for professional discourse, rather than individual actions or organizational routines. There are signs that the policy system is shifting its theoretical base from rational coordination, contracts and other aspects of bureaucratic organization that have structured the grammar of schooling in this century to incorporate interpersonal relationships and ties. For example, policymakers at all levels of government have begun to turn to practitioner networks and communities as strategies for generating and sharing knowledge about practice and implementing new curricula frameworks.[12]

A relational or social systems frame for education reform takes the promotion and support of teachers' learning communities both inside and outside of school as integral to their ability to respond successfully to presses for change.[13] Such a policy frame would include features such as:

- increased opportunities for professional dialogue
- reduced teachers' professional isolation
- a rich menu of embedded opportunities for learning and discourse
- professional development opportunities to connected to meaningful content and change efforts
- restructured time, space and scale within schools.

This is not to suggest a dichotomous, either/or view about effective education policies. Just as teachers need classroom routines and structures when reinventing

practices and rethinking "old stories," so are the tools of organizations important to managing schools and making the system function. But to be effective, the bureaucratic tools and organizational products, which dominate the policy landscape in the 1990s, need to work within and through strong professional communities that exist in the multiple contexts of schoolteaching. Educational policies on the books at in the late 1990s do not have much control over or investment in teachers' relational capital.

A quick look across the education reform landscape at the end of the 1990s shows how central up-close teachers' learning communities are to achieving reformers' goals. The many governance reforms, collected under the banner of site-based management or restructured schools, for example, can result in significantly changed teaching and learning only if teachers have opportunity to talk together, understand each others' practice, and move as a community to visions of practice that represent the site's conceptions of best practice. If teachers are not learning together, reflecting together, examining student work together, changes in governance structures, and increased site-level professional autonomy, likely will mean little in terms of student outcomes. What is most important to restructure, our research suggests, are the relationships among teachers and the organizational conditions that support discourse and strong community.

Standards-based reforms, which aim to foster classrooms where every student learns challenging content, must be supported by a site-level teacher community where practices and expectations can be developed that enable every student to have access to high quality instruction. Absent such a community, classroom practices likely will differ in significant ways within a school, and signal different opportunities for students (and for teachers). The "coherence" sought by systemic reform strategies such as standards-based reform ultimately sits at the bottom of the system as teachers respond to their students and decide about what and how to teach. In order for students to experience coherence of the type envisioned by reformers, teachers in their school setting must subscribe to a shared technical culture.

An important answer to the questions "why are policies not implemented as planned?," or "why is change not sustained?" sits in teachers' proximate professional community. Traditional norms and scripts for action cannot be unlearned in isolation. Teachers cannot undertake alone the type of new learning and change in beliefs and practices reformers assume. Further, teachers who enjoy supportive out-of-school learning communities such as those advanced by subject area networks and professional organizations, have difficulty sustaining change, or enacting new knowledge, when their up-close professional community is either weak and disconnected, or united around a perspective from that they have learned. In weak communities, teachers each carry on as they see fit and understand. Policy is translated [if received at all] on a classroom by classroom basis, but sustained learning or deep individual change is extraordinarily difficult.

An up-close learning community appears necessary to carry out and nourish the visions of practice embodied in the original change agent programs. Today's reformers ask even more of teachers. American teachers confront unprecedented

demands for reform – calls for teachers to do better, and to do differently than they have done before. Efforts to raise standards for what students are expected to learn take place in the context of a "revolution" in cognitive science. New theories of learning frame new conceptions about important outcomes of learning and, by extension, ideas about school: higher-order thinking skills and deep understanding of the conceptual structures of knowledge domains take center stage in classroom instruction. Implied is a classroom environment more responsive to diverse student abilities and interests, where instruction emphasizes cooperative learning strategies, provides direct opportunities to construct knowledge and understanding, and incorporates performance assessments that tap students' conceptual development rather than mastery of rote knowledge. The extent to which teachers can succeed in meeting these goals depends on their success in wrestling with the deep, hard changes in beliefs, attitudes, and practices they assume.

Context matters in many big and small ways to teachers' work and careers, and so to policy implementation. The character and quality of schoolteaching found in any classroom on any day signals much more than the attributes, energy and expertise of an individual schoolteacher. Teachers carry conditions of their multiple contexts into their classrooms as normative frameworks, concrete supports, perceived or actual constraints for the construction of practice. This observation pushes thinking about relations between policy resources and individual actions in different directions than that represented in much education research, policy and policy analysis. The link between macro-level policies and micro-level practices sits, for better or worse, in teachers' professional communities. The professional community within which a teacher moves and works can embrace, ignore, reject, or undermine goals advanced by policy. Teachers' professional communities can transform policy intentions and tools, for better or worse, in ways unimagined or unintended by reformers. Individual teachers' responses reflect those of their professional community context.

The power of teachers' professional communities both complicates and amplifies opportunities for a "policy effect." Teachers' multiple professional communities make complex the relation between policy and practice, because policy passes through and is interpreted by multiple communities of practice. Communities that operate at the level of the profession, district, school and department all exert important and somewhat different influences on teachers' conceptions of practice. Where these communities are aligned in terms of technical culture and norms, policies consistent with these views are amplified and carried into classrooms on multiple channels. When professional communities misunderstand or contest policy goals, the road to the classroom is difficult. When teachers have no up-close community in which to wrestle with the new frames for teaching and learning assumed by reformers, classroom consequences likely will signal only superficial change, if any change is evident at all.[14]

Implementation redux locates the medium for education change in the multiple contexts of schoolteaching, and situates the occasion for teachers' learning in their professional relations and community. It frames policy questions and opportunities for policies in terms of where and how teachers learn, and describes policy outcomes

in terms of the situated character of practice. Implementation redux understands (as was discovered in the 1970's) that it is extremely difficult for policy to change practice, but that the connection between policy and practice ultimately will be made or missed in teachers' professional communities.

## ENDNOTES

[1] Paul Berman was the project director for this study; I was the deputy project director. Berman and I were assisted by an extraordinary interdisciplinary team of researchers: Gail Bass, Richard Elmore, Todd Endo, Peter Greenwood, Dale Mann, Jerome Murphy, Anthony Pascal, Edward Pauley, John Pincus, Marta Samulon, Gerald Sumner, John Wirt and Gail Zellamn all played central roles in the project. The federal "change agent" programs included in this research included support for the development of local innovative practices, and programs focused specifically on career education, bilingual education, and reading. For a summary of this research, see Berman & McLaughlin, 1978.

[2] Initially, federal reviewers of the Rand design were skeptical about the value of the expensive field work component. Full agreement was reached only on the rationale that field work would enable Rand researchers to validate the survey measures. Field work as a mode of inquiry was far from mainstream social science in 1973.

[3] Mary Metz of the University of Wisconsin adds the important caveat that while it is difficult to mandate what matters, "*what* you mandate matters."

[4] Richard Weatherley and Michael Lipksy (1978) elaborated the important notion of street-level bureaucrat, the individual at the "bottom" of the system who ultimately decides about policy.

[5] The Center for Research on the Context of Secondary School Teaching (CRC), located at Stanford University, was founded in 1987 with a five-year grant national center grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement [Grant #G0087C0235]. Since 1991, the CRC has been supported with funds from the National Science Foundation, the Mellon and Russell Sage Foundations, and has enlarged its scope of research to include elementary and middle schools, as well as secondary school. Since 1992, the CRC's name has been the Center for Research on the Context of Teaching.

[6] Richard Elmore (1979–80) elaborated notions of backward mapping for education policy as a response to prevalent analytic models which minimized or overlooked voices and perspectives from the bottom of the system.

[7] The research described here is summarized in Mclaughlin & Talbert (1993). This section draws heavily on McLaughlin & Talbert (forthcoming)

[8] Teachers' period by period distinction among their classroom settings provides an excellent example of how social science categories fail to fit teachers' lived realities. Teachers' sense of efficacy, we learned, is not a global trait as considered in most education research, but instead is constructed uniquely in terms of the characteristics of the different classrooms taught by the same teacher. See Raudenbush, Rowan, & Cheong, 1992.

[9] There is a downside to this manner of intensive collegiality. Some teachers feel that the level of personal vulnerability, engagement, and interdependence that hold these communities together is more than they can or want to experience in the school workplace.

[10] For example, we initially took "effort," as widely used in the sociological and education research literature, to be an indicator of professional commitment. The greater teachers' reported effort, we reasoned, the greater their commitment to teaching. Such an assumption was wrong-headed, teacher advisors quickly told us. Greater effort, they explained, more likely would signal less professional competence.

[11] For example, the National Science Foundation's State Systemic Initiative relied on state and local networks of teachers are a primary implementation strategy. California's SB 1274 provides supports for restructuring schools through networks and through discourse communities established to focus teachers on the challenges of changing school habits.

[12] The policy implications of this frame for professional development is elaborated in Linda Darling-Hammond and Milbrey W. McLaughlin (1996). Ann Lieberman (1996) details the practices associated with this perspective.

[13] This perspective offers a way to understand the plight of Mrs. O., the teacher David Cohen (1990)

made famous for her lack of significant reform. Mrs. Oublier made all the superficial changes called for by the state's math reform initiative, but had no opportunity to break the frames that held her practice. A case of new wine and old bottles.

## REFERENCES

Berman, P., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1978). *Federal programs supporting educational change: Volume VIII. Implementing and sustaining innovations.* Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, R-1589/8-HEW.

Cohen, D. K. (1990). A revolution in one classroom: The case of Mrs. Oublier. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, **12**(3), 327–345.

Darling-Hammond, L., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1996). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. In M. McLaughlin & I. Oberman (Eds.), *Teacher learning* (pp. 202–218). New York: Teachers College Press.

Elmore, R. (1979–1980). Backward mapping: Implementation research and policy decisions. *Political Science Quarterly*, **94**(4), 601–616.

Lieberman, A. (1996). Practices that support teacher development. In M. McLaughlin & I. Oberman, (Eds.), *Teacher learning* (185–201). New York: Teachers College Press.

Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McLaughlin, M. W., & Oberman, I. (1996). *Teacher learning: Newpolicies, new practices.* New York: Teachers College Press.

McLaughlin, M.W., & Talbert, J. E. (1993). *Contexts that matter for teaching and learning.* Stanford University: Center for Research on the Context of Secondary School Teaching.

McLaughlin, M. W., & Talbert, J. E. (forthcoming). *Schoolteaching in context.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pressman, J., & Wildavksy, A. (1973). *Implementation: how great expectations in Washington are dashed in Oakland; or, Why it's amazing that Federal programs work at all, this being a saga of the Economic Development Administration as told by two sympathetic observers who seek to build morals on a foundation of ruined hopes.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Raudenbush, S. W., Rowan, B., & Cheong, Y. F. (1992). Contextual effects on the self-perceived efficacy of high school teachers. *Sociology of Education*, **65**, 150–167.

Weatherley, R., & Lipsky, M. (1978). Street level bureaucrats and institutional information: Implementing special education reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, **47**, 171–197.

# The Vital Hours: Reflecting on Research on Schools and their Effects

PETER MORTIMORE
*Institute of Education, University of London*

Twenty one years ago – in 1975 – I went to work with the now famous child psychiatrist Professor Sir Michael Rutter and with Dr Barbara Maughan and Dr Janet Ouston on a new study of secondary schools being planned for later that year . The study was published in 1979 by Open Books in the United Kingdom and Harvard Press in the United States under the title Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and their Effects on Children (Rutter et al., 1979a).

After nine years teaching in London secondary schools, and part-time evening study first for a degree and then for a masters' in educational psychology, I found the atmosphere of a medical research centre and working with a small research team on a new assignment, challenging and invigorating. The results which emerged from our three and a half year project proved exciting – disputing received opinion about the effects of schools and causing the educational research community to think again about its methods. Since then a body of research about school effectiveness and improvement has established itself in many different countries as one of the more productive areas of educational inquiry. It has also stamped its influence on aspects of policy and on educational practice in schools and classrooms.

In this chapter I will comment, briefly, on the mood of education in the early 1970s and the rather pessimistic views of schooling prevalent at that time. I will describe the methodology we adopted in the research and set out our major findings and the mixed reactions their publication evoked. I will report on some of the research which has followed Fifteen Thousand Hours. Finally, I will provide a participant's retrospective overview of the value of the research and some comments on the implications of this body of research for education systems.

## THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION IN THE EARLY 1970'S

Views of schooling vary according to the economic mood and needs of the times and are adjusted according to the perceived benefits or disbenefits conferred by schools in relation to their costs. Thus, during the nineteenth century in England when there was an overwhelming need for unskilled labour, schools were seen as largely the responsibility of the church or of private bodies. Public provision was only made for the minority and – even here – the emphasis was on the need for



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 73-87.

low costs: "*. . .if it is not cheap it shall be efficient; if it is not efficient it shall be cheap. . .*" in Robert Lowe's much quoted phrase (Johnson, 1956). The driving force for a better education system was emancipation and the need for an electorate at least partially educated. England lagged behind a number of more advanced European countries in the establishment of a national education system (Green, 1990). In both the United States and the United Kingdom today there is a mood in which some see large scale investment in urban schooling an unacceptable drain on public resources and others fear a reaction to the seeming lack of success will lead to disinvestment (Boyd, 1995).

By the 1970s the optimism, which during the earlier part of the century had permitted the establishment of free and compulsory schooling, was giving way to feelings that schools had failed to deliver their promise. The "*emergence to prominence of the sociology of education in the late 1950s in Britain and the discovery of poverty in the United States in the early 1960s*" (Silver, 1994) suggested that schooling failed to alleviate many social problems. Studies investigating the efficacy of initiatives to combat poverty, increase opportunity and pursue equality were commissioned in both countries. The conclusion of the research endeavours, culminating in the work of Coleman et al. (1966) and Jencks et al. (1972), was the view that schooling could play only a minor role in countering the influence of social class and family background.

The difficulty the education world had in accepting this conclusion led to research studies which sought to disentangle the effects of what the school tried to do from the influence of what the pupil brought into the classroom. This quest – strongly motivated by a moral concern for disadvantaged children and the seemingly limited opportunities available to them – led to a further swing of the pendulum towards the search for a positive role for schooling. This movement was inspired in the United States by the late Dr Ron Edmonds's catch phrase "*all children can learn*" (Edmonds, 1979).

In England the same issue was first picked up by a child and adolescent psychiatrist (rather than by educationalists) who had come to this view as a result of his investigations into the various influences on children's development. Michael Rutter and his team of researchers at London University's Institute of Psychiatry had already carried out a comparative study of ten year-olds living in two contrasting environments – a semi rural setting on the Isle of Wight (just off England's south coast) (Rutter, Tizard, & Whitmore, 1970) and London's inner city (Rutter, Cox, Tupling, Bengor, & Yule, 1975). Having explored the influence of these neighbourhoods on the lives of children and their parents, it seemed only natural to go on and investigate the impact of the school. This approach received the enthusiastic support of a group of London head teachers (principals). The research team had already collected extensive personal and educational information ( including reading and non verbal intelligence tests and teachers' ratings of pupil behaviour) on a large sample of children in their primary (elementary) school years. This data base provided the foundation on which Fifteen Thousand Hours could be built.

## FIFTEEN THOUSAND HOURS

The title of the study was derived from our estimate of the total time children spent in schools during their eleven years of compulsory schooling. The aim of the study was to answer two questions: *do different schools have different effects on children's progress*; and, if they do, *what is it about some schools which makes them more successful than others*?

The study focused on twelve non-selective maintained (publicly-funded) secondary schools serving socially disadvantaged, inner city areas. These were the schools which had taken a relatively high proportion of the sample of children studied in an earlier research project on whom detailed information was available. The schools included those which were mixed and single sex, with and without religious affiliations (permitted under British regulations), housed in old and new premises and varying in size from 500 to nearly 2,000 students.

In order to answer the question as to whether schools had different effects, we collected data on four independent outcome measures: students' attendance; behaviour in schools; results in public examinations (set and marked anonymously by external examination boards); and officially recorded delinquency rates. As we stated at the time, we did not believe that these four measures reflected all the aims of schooling but we felt that they could provide a reasonable indication of whether the school was exerting an influence. We followed the whole age-cohort of the original sample of students up to the end of their years of compulsory schooling and then, in a further study, into their subsequent study or entry into the world of employment.

The findings showed that there was marked variation between the schools on each of the four outcome measures, even when – using the data collected in the primary years – we had taken account of differences in the intakes of students. On the measure of academic achievement, for instance, we constructed a weighted score which combined results from the two separate systems of examinations used at that time and correlated these with the children's measured performance at the earlier age and with information on social background. When this was done, the school with the best results gained 70 per cent more passes than expected; the one with the least, 60 per cent less. For the measure of delinquency, we sought permission to obtain classified information from police files. For the measure of attendance we gathered information from schools' daily registers. As with academic attainment, school differences remained even when background factors were taken into account. In each case, it was clear that school variation could not be explained away by differences in the intake characteristics of the students.

The fourth outcome, behaviour in schools, was made up of a scale of a large number of items drawn from our extensive observations in the classrooms and playgrounds and of students' self-reported behaviour. Some of these items were trivial – not having a pen or pencil in class; some were serious – acting aggressively towards the teacher or another student. The scale worked; schools which recorded a high number of trivial items also were more likely to have a number of the more serious ones. In fact, we found substantial (five fold) differences between schools.

These could not be related directly to the intake characteristics of the students It was clear that the kinds of behaviour the students were showing in their secondary schools were not simply a continuation of former patterns learned in primary schools but were more likely to be the students' response to the situation in their secondary schools. Each of the four outcome measures told the same story and, although there was some variation, the general trend showed a clear tendency for schools which ranked highly on one measure also to have higher measures on the others. We concluded that the first question, as to whether different schools had different effects on children's progress, had been answered in the affirmative.

In order to answer the second question – *What is it about some schools that make them more successful than others?* – we first examined a wide range of factors to do with the size, sex composition and other physical and resource factors which we knew varied between the schools. With only one or two exceptions, we found that these factors bore little, if any relationship, to the different rates of pupil progress which we had observed.

We turned, therefore, to an examination of the mass of information we had accumulated from our interviews with teachers, questionnaires completed by students of different ages, and from the extensive observations we had made over the three previous years. We found that a large number of items could be related statistically and educationally to the patterns of the outcomes achieved by the different schools. We found, for instance, that teachers' emphasis on the academic life of the school was an important signal to students of the prime purpose of schooling. We also noted – from our observations of over 500 lessons – that the way teachers interacted with students and organised their classroom teaching was critical. Those that drew predominantly on whole class approaches seemed more likely to promote progress than those who focused mainly on individual students. Rewards appeared more likely to change students' behaviours than did punishments. The conditions – both physical and psychological – deemed suitable for students also seemed to have a marked effect on student progress as did the level of responsibility permitted them by the school. Finally, we concluded that the schools most likely to be associated with positive outcomes had created a particular ethos: a positive view of young people and of learning.

The conclusions that we reached, in 1979, were that schools could make a difference and that it was possible to identify some of the factors which made that difference possible. Few of the factors we had identified came as a surprise to teachers although, interestingly, many of the factors that some teachers thought would be important (such as rote learning, small groups and strict punishments) and were not found to be so. Most of the factors which emerged as being strongly associated with positive outcomes fell within the control of principals and teachers and few appeared to be determined from outside of the school. Our conclusions, therefore, were that schools could do much to promote progress and that, even in socially-disadvantaged areas, they could be a force for the good.

## REACTIONS TO THE STUDY

In describing the reactions to the study I will draw on an analysis I undertook for a chapter on the practicalities of doing educational research (Mortimore, 1991). The results of Fifteen Thousand Hours were first made available to the principals and teachers in the summer of 1978. Their perceptive comments helped us to interpret our findings for the book of the study, published the following year. The book launch was accompanied by a considerable amount of press commentary.

There were two detailed accounts published in the New Statesman (Rogers, 1979) and in New Society (St John Brookes, 1979) and there were a large number of articles about the research produced in the broadsheet and tabloid press. The newspaper comments were inaugurated by the *Observer* which broke the publisher's embargo with an article headlined *When Potted Plants are Better than Discipline* (Stevens, 1979). This was followed by an article by a Member of Parliament, Rhodes Boyson, in the News of the World which focused on the negative findings of the study (Boyson, 1979). *The Yorkshire Post* highlighted more positive aspects in a piece entitled Lessons for a perfect School (Whitehouse, 1979). *The Nottingham Evening Post* used the headline *Education Myths are Exploded* (Bailey, 1979) and the *Daily Express* provided *Your good School Guide* (Kemble, 1979). *The Evening News* carried a series of articles under the headline *Do as I do – not as I say* whilst the *Daily Mail* chose *Schools that harm the Gifted* (Rowlands, 1979). Another paper – the *Southend Evening Echo* – drew on a curious and somewhat inaccurate headline *Less Caning does not spoil the Child* (Oswick, 1979). A review in the *Teacher* – the weekly paper of the *National Union of Teachers* – was supportive of the research in a rather lukewarm way – Secondary findings stress the obvious (NUT, 1979) but the *Economist* devoted three columns to a positive review entitled *Schools Count* (Economist, 1979). Unfortunately, the paper which would have been likely to give the most balanced detailed account – the *Times Educational Supplement* – was unable to do so since its staff were on strike at the time.

Much of this commentary either dealt only with the central finding, that individual schools varied in their effects. Most of the headlines were sensational and inaccurate. Overall, the press attention, although it drew attention to the research, polarised the education community and was not helpful, therefore, to the promotion of the study or to the understanding of complex educational debates. Its major preoccupation was to headlines rather than to the substance of our findings.

The second wave of commentaries, some time later, came from academics. Critical articles were published by fellow researchers (Acton, 1980; Goldstein, 1980; Heath & Clifford, 1980; Tizard, 1980a). As a research team, we felt bound to respond to these articles and we devoted a considerable amount of our time to dealing with the points which had been raised. We wrote specific replies to Acton's comments (Rutter et al., 1980a); to Tizard and to Goldstein (Rutter et al., 1980b) and to Heath and Clifford (Maughan et al., 1980). The latter was immediately followed by a further riposte from its authors (Heath & Clifford, 1981).

Two further collections of discussion papers were produced as a result of

symposia devoted to the study at the Thomas Coram Research Unit (Tizard et al., 1980) and at Exeter University (Dancy, 1979). Both provided space for our responses (Rutter et al., 1979b; and Mortimore, 1979). *The British Journal of Sociology of Education* also devoted twelve pages to a review of the study. Comments were invited from three sociologists: David Reynolds, whose evaluation was mixed; Andy Hargreaves who was rather critical and Tessa Blackstone who, on the whole, was positive (Reynolds, et al., 1980).

Academics were not the only reviewers of the work. Practitioners – especially from London – also expressed views: Peter Newsam, then the Education Officer of the Inner London Education Authority, provided a positive half-page review in the Observer (Newsam, 1979); Trevor Jagger, then the staff inspector for secondary schools in the ILEA wrote a supportive review in Education (Jagger, 1979); and Marten Shipman, a former director of ILEA's Research and Statistics Unit wrote a positive review in Research in Education (Shipman, 1980).

As if all this was not enough, over the next year, *Education*, the *Times Educational Supplement* (now back in print) and the *Education Guardian* each gave space to a second look at the study. *Education* published a piece by Ted Wragg in which he summarised the arguments expressed at the Exeter Symposium (Wragg, 1980). In an article entitled *Second Thoughts on the Rutter Ethos* in the *Times Educational Supplement*, Bob Doe also drew on the Exeter publication to summarise criticisms and replies (Doe, 1980). In the *Education Guardian* Maureen O'Connor, in a delightfully headlined article – *Fifteen Thousand Hours that shook the academics* – drew on Goldstein's, Heath and Clifford's, Tizard's and Acton's critiques and the responses to these. (O'Connor, 1980).

These were the reactions to the study in England. There was also a considerable reaction in the United States although, unfortunately, I was not able to document it so thoroughly. However, it is interesting that the most critical review carried in the *Educational Researcher* (Armento, 1980) was itself severely criticised by two other academics (Owens, 1981; Gideanse, 1981).

The effects of all this attention were both negative and positive. The negative effect was that the complex findings of a detailed longitudinal study were often trivialised. Furthermore, some journalists and commentators seized the opportunity to claim support for their particular hobby-horses regardless of whether, in fact, the data lent them any support. This meant that those in the education community who did not read the actual book sometimes gained a misleading idea of our work. It also meant that many academics were eager to criticise the study simply because of its extensive dissemination. The positive results were that a number of principals, teachers and others involved in the education service were alerted to the study. At that time, there was not a strong tradition of practitioners taking account of educational research and all this publicity made it more likely that they would encounter the study and, perhaps, use it in their own work – as a yardstick for measuring the performance of their own school.

## THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE STUDY

Looking back over the seventeen or so years since the study was published, it is clear that Michael Rutter – as leader of the research team – made an enormous contribution to the field of educational research. There were at least three major achievements of the study. First, it was ground-breaking in its methodology through the way it focused on outcomes and worked back from these (backward-mapping) to the processes of schooling. By using successful outcomes as our criteria, we were able to identify the importance of, for instance, the academic emphasis of effective schools; the need to stress rewards rather than punishments; and the quality of the conditions available to students. In this way we were able to pioneer more hard-nosed, less objective views of what worked in schools.

Second, by including in outcomes the measures of attendance, behaviour and delinquency, we were able to stress the role of schools in the general development of students. Many of the subsequent school effectiveness studies have been criticised for restricting their outcomes to academic goals; this particular criticism cannot be applied to *Fifteen Thousand Hours*. Third, by taking account of differences in the student intake characteristics, we were able to make crude but genuine comparisons between schools. Without such adjustments, it is simply not possible to make a fair judgement about the capability of the school to promote the progress of individual students. Sadly, as the use of league tables of results in a number of countries demonstrates, this lesson has still not been fully learned.

Of course, the methodology was not perfect. Which empirical research study ever is? Many of the technical criticisms made at the time of publication were justified. In particular, the statistical analyses which we undertook and the ways in which we endeavoured to control for intake now appear crude in the light of the subsequent methodological advances in, for instance, multi-level modelling (Patterson & Goldstein, 1991; Thomas & Mortimore, 1994). It is also true that we paid insufficient attention to the curriculum in the schools and to the attitudes of parents to the education of their children. That said, the study's findings have stood up fairly robustly over the years. My own subsequent re-analyses of the same schools over time, undertaken during my tenure as Director of Research and Statistics for the Inner London Education Authority, reassured me that our conclusions were well founded.

## SUBSEQUENT STUDIES OF SCHOOL EFFECTS

Since the publication of Fifteen Thousand Hours there have been a small number of longitudinal studies of school effectiveness carried out in many parts of the world. In the United States, for instance, a major research endeavour – the Louisiana Longitudinal Study (Teddlie et al., 1984; Teddlie, Kirby, & Stringfield, 1989) – has made significant methodological progress and has produced some very interesting findings. Additionally, the number of studies, critiques and related commentaries

undertaken by researchers, practitioners and policy makers is now vast, filling 41 pages of references in the latest review by the North West Regional Educational Laboratories (NWREL, 1995).

In the United Kingdom, detailed research studies into school effectiveness have included those carried out in south Wales following on from the work of David Reynolds (Reynolds, Jones, & St. Leger, 1976), the Scottish longitudinal study (Gray, McPherson, & Raffe, 1983), the inner London study of primary schools (Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis, & Ecobb, 1988); the study of children in infant schools (Tizard, Blatchford, Burke, Farquhar, & Plewis, 1988); and a study focusing on the progress of students from minority ethnic groups (Smith & Tomlinson, 1989). All these investigations found clear evidence of school differences in students' outcomes. Each of the research teams used this evidence to argue that such variety was not simply due to the effects of schools receiving different types of students but, rather, that they were associated with differences in the way the schools were managed and in the quality of teaching and learning.

Similar studies have been undertaken in parts of the world as diverse as Norway (Dalin, 1989) and Israel (Bashi, Sass, Katzir, & Margolin, 1990). In the Netherlands there has been particular interest in questions of methodology (see, for example, Brandsma & Knuver, 1989; Creemers & Lughart, 1989; Scheerens, 1992; Luyten, 1994). In Australia, there have been many studies, critiques and reports of developments in this field (Fraser, 1989; Beare, 1984; Angus, 1986; Ramsay and Clark, 1990; Chapman, Angus, Burke, & Wilkensen, 1991; McGaw, Banks, & Piper, 1991; McGaw, Banks, Piper, & Evans, 1992; Ainley & Sheret, 1992; Banks, 1992; Cuttance, 1995; Hill, Rowe, & Holmes-Smith, 1996; Hill & Rowe, in press; Rowe, Hill, & Holmes-Smith, 1995; Townsend, 1996). Finally, there is a new comparative study of schools in nine different countries (Reynolds & Teddlie, 1995).

## SCHOOL MATTERS

The longitudinal study which followed most directly from *Fifteen Thousand Hours* was *School Matters*. This was designed in the light of the debates about the earlier study. The attraction of planning a similar project which could take advantage of the methodological advances and the emerging new methods of statistical analyses (such as probabilistic cluster analysis and multi-level modelling) was irresistible. As the newly-appointed Director of Research and Statistics for Inner London, I seized the opportunity to plan such a study only, this time, focusing on primary rather than secondary schools.

The aims of the research were to produce a detailed description of the organisation and curriculum of primary schools; to document the progress and development of a cohort of 2,000 students; to establish whether some schools were more effective than others, once account had been taken of variations in the intake characteristics of students; and to investigate differences in the progress of groups of pupils.

The study ran for four years and was able to follow the cohort for the whole of

the junior phase of schooling (from ages 7 to 11). Like the earlier study, confidentiality was offered to all participants and a variety of research techniques were used including classroom observations, home interviews with parents (with interviewers speaking the language of the family) and a multitude of student tests, attitude surveys and other statistical data.

The results showed that, like secondary schools, primary schools were uneven in their effects. They varied considerably with some appearing to enhance pupils' cognitive rather than their non-cognitive progress and development and some doing the opposite. A number managed both. We also identified a number of characteristics in the processes of schooling which were associated with promotion of greater progress. Using the various lists of process factors from these two studies and from relevant other research, my colleagues and I have drawn up a list of the characteristics of effectiveness (Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1994).

## ELEVEN FACTORS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

1. Professional leadership
2. Shared vision and goals
3. A learning environment
4. Concentration on teaching and learning
5. Purposeful teaching
6. High expectations
7. Positive reinforcement
8. Monitoring progress
9. Pupil rights and responsibilities
10. Home-school partnership
11. A learning organisation

These factors must not be seen as a blueprint for effectiveness and the way they can be enacted will vary between schools. It is important to stress that they have not been conclusively shown to be essential but, given the consistency of their identification by researchers working in different countries and employing different methods, the probability of their importance is clear. The number of studies that have been reviewed to create this list is large (approximately 160). Those wishing to consider it in relation to an exhaustive account of the field of research should consult Reynolds et al. (1994) or North West Regional Educational Laboratory (op cit).

Interestingly, we found that schools did not appear to differentiate between students from different groups. In other words, at this age, schools which helped boys also helped girls; those which helped pupils from the ethnic majority also helped those from minorities; those that helped advantaged families also helped disadvantaged ones. In this respect our findings were different to those of secondary school research.

*School Matters* drew directly on the design but used a more sophisticated

methodology than its predecessor Fifteen Thousand Hours. It addressed questions to do with the curriculum and family influence more directly than had been done in the previous decade. It was also built on a more secure foundation of 50 randomly-chosen schools and it benefitted in that, as its director, I was able to draw on my experience working with Michael Rutter and on the various debates which had taken place since the publication of the earlier work.

## FURTHER STUDIES

Based on the *Fifteen Thousand Hours* tradition, my colleagues and I have addressed a number of technical issues concerned with the judgement of school effectiveness and what is now termed the value-added component (Mortimore, Sammons, & Thomas, 1994). We have just completed a new secondary school study examining the stability (or lack of it) in students' academic results over time; the possibility of differential effects within the same school; and the effects of context on school performance. We have looked at trends in examination value-added scores over three years and have found that the overall results of schools are indeed relatively stable, but that this stability conceals a considerable amount of change within various subjects: what we have termed the *'swings and roundabout effect'*. This operates through results in some subjects improving and thus compensating overall for the deterioration, from one year to another, in other subjects. We also found interesting subject patterns, with overall correlations of 0.8 between the total examinations score of one year and another, but varied effects in individual subjects. History was relatively highly stable, with correlations of 0.92 between 1990 and 1991 and 0.71 between 1991 and 1992, whilst the equivalent correlations for French were only 0.48 and 0.38.

We have thus uncovered a complex picture of schools producing differential effects for students of different prior attainments as well as for those from different ethnic backgrounds. We also found differences, although to a lesser extent, based on gender and social background. Somewhat alarmingly, we found all students were likely to perform poorly in ineffective schools and departments, with the exception of some minority ethnic groups who were able to pull themselves up and achieve above the level of their white counterparts. Furthermore, most students seemed likely to perform well in generally effective schools but those students with particularly advantaged backgrounds performed even better than their already high performing peers. The results are reported in full in Sammons, Thomas, and Mortimore (1995) and Thomas, Sammons, Mortimore, and Smees (1995).

The quest for more detailed research into school effects continues. In a recent Australian study looking at primary students' attainments in English and mathematics (Hill & Rowe, in press) substantial variation was found between schools. School effects of 16 – 18 per cent of the variance were identified but these shrank to 5 – 8 per cent once the school classes of the students were taken into account. Interestingly, the proportion of variance explained by the class ranged

from 16 – 44 per cent for English and from 47 – 56 per cent for mathematics, suggesting that the impact of the school was experienced through the greater impact of the class.

In a further study the research team has concluded that *"in Australian elementary schools, the influence of home background characteristics tends to be small once adjustments have been made for prior achievement. . ."* The researchers are now engaged in teasing out the *"myriad influences that best predict student progress."* (Hill et al., 1996)

So we see that the macro system analyses of the sixties (Fifteen Thousand Hours) gave way to the school level analyses of the seventies and eighties (School Matters) and these, in turn, are now giving way in the nineties to the micro analyses of the department (Differential School Achievement) and the classroom emphasis of the Australian Team. I suspect that the research of the next few years will focus on the progress of the individual learner, aided and abetted by developments in new technology.

## THE LEGACY OF FIFTEEN THOUSAND HOURS

What, in summary, has been the achievements of the original study and the many others which have been influenced by *Fifteen Thousand Hours*? It would be easy to over-claim in answer to this question in relation to any one piece of research but it is probably fair to assert that the work of school effectiveness researchers has over the last twenty years:

- moderated over-deterministic sociological theories about the dominating influence of home background
- qualified an over-reliance on psychological individualistic theories about learning with some important findings about the context of learning
- focused attention on the potential of institutional influences with their differing cultures and ethos
- provided – as a result – a more optimistic view of teaching and renewed attention on learning concerns as well as on school management
- advanced the methodology of the study of complex social effects
- stimulated many experiments in school improvement
- contributed to a growing set of theoretical ideas about how pupils learn in particular school settings and about how schools change.

## WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH OF THIS TYPE OF RESEARCH?

There are numerous possible implications stemming from the work carried out on the effects of schooling. Perhaps the most important of all is the confirmation of the potential power of schools to affect the life-chances of students. Although the

difference in scholastic attainment likely to be achieved by the same student in a contrasting school will not be great, in many instances, it represents the difference between success and failure. When coupled with the promotion of other pro-social attitudes and behaviours, and the inculcation of a positive self-image, the potential of the school to improve the life-chances of its students is considerable.

The second major implication relates to governments. It needs to be recognised that whilst legislation can provide a helpful framework for achieving an education system of high quality, its achievement can only be delivered by the conscious strategies of teachers and administrators, and the purposeful commitment of students. Excellence cannot be mandated by politicians or bureaucrats. Governments, both central and local, would do well to realise this and ensure that any new legislative framework that is created is designed to stimulate and elicit from those involved, ownership, commitment and dedication rather than to create learned helplessness and resentment.

The third major implication relates to practitioners. A critical body of knowledge – replicated, in many cases, over time and in many different settings – has been established. This knowledge needs to be drawn upon more frequently in the quest for better schools. Some practitioners complain that information drawn from research studies is rarely made accessible or disseminated widely. This criticism undoubtedly has some validity: research journals seldom make compulsive reading for teachers. It is not true, however, that efforts to disseminate widely the findings reported in this chapter have been half-hearted. Many conferences and meetings of principals' associations in many different parts of the world have included presentations on this topic.

The fourth and final implication concerns the work of researchers. The literature on school effectiveness is now substantial. There are numerous books, journal articles, chapters in edited collections, and conference papers on this topic. There are, however, far few detailed empirical studies than there are critiques and commentaries. If the field is to flourish, more empirical work is needed. Further studies extending the focus from schools to other educational institutions would help to broaden still further the knowledge-base. Possibly even more important is the need for careful experimental work to assess the main correlational findings of the earlier studies. This, coupled with a compilation of an adequate theory both of what makes schools effective and of how to make them more so, would be of value to the educational community.

## REFERENCES

Acton, T. (1980). Educational criteria of success: Some problems in the work of Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore and Ouston. *Educational Research*, **22**, 163–69.

Ainley, J., & Sheret, M. (1992). *Effectiveness of High Schools in Australia: Holding power and achievement.* Paper presented to the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement, Victoria, British Columbia.

Angus, L. (1986). The risks of school effectiveness. A comment on recent education reports. *Australian Administrator*, **7**(3) 1–4.

Armento, B. J. (1980, September). Fifteen thousand hours: A review. *Educational Researcher*, **9**(8), 27–28.

Banks, D. (1992). *Effective schools research: A multilevel analysis of the conceptual framework*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Melbourne.

Bailey, R. (1979, 22 March). Education myths are exploded. *Nottingham Evening Post*.

Bashi, J., Sass, K., Katzir, R., & Margolin, I. (1990). *Effective schools – From theory to practice: An implementation model and its outcomes*. Jerusalem: Van Leer Institute.

Beare, H. (1984). Effective Learning: The recognition and promotion of effective schools. *W. A. Principal*, **1**(25) 7–37.

Boyd, W. (1995). *Productive schools from a policy perspective: Desiderata, designs and dilemmas*. International Conference for School Effectiveness and Improvement, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands.

Boyson, R. (1979, 18 March). Secret shame of Britain's schools. *News of the World*.

Bransdma, H., & Knuver, J. (1989). Effects of school and classroom characteristics on pupil progress in language and arithmetic. Developments in School Effectiveness Research. *International Journal of Educational Research* (special issue), **13**, 777–788.

Chapman, J., Angus, L., Burke, G., & Wilkensen, V. (Eds). (1991). Improving the quality of Australian schools. *Australian Education Review*, **33**, Hawthorn, Victoria: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Coleman, J. S., Campbell, E., Hobson, C., McPartland, J., Mood, A., Weinfeld, F., & York, R. (1966). *Equality of educational opportunity*. Washington: National Center for Educational Statistics.

Creemers, B., & Lugthart, E. (1989). School effectiveness and improvement in the Netherlands. In D. Reynolds, B. Creemers, & T. Peters (Eds.), *School effectiveness and improvement* (pp 89–103). Proceedings of the First National Congress, London 1988. Groningen: RION Institute for Educational Research/School of Education, University of Wales College of Cardiff.

Cuttance, P. (1995). Building high performance school systems. *School Effectiveness and Improvement*. Leeuwarden.

Dalin, P. (1989). Reconceptualising the School Improvement Process: Charting a Paradigm Shift. In D. Reynolds, B. Creemers, & T. Peters (Eds.), *School effectiveness and improvement* (pp 30–45). Proceedings of the First International Congress, London, 1988. Groningen, RION Institute for Educational Research/School of Education, University of Wales College of Cardiff.

Dancy, J. (1979). Fifteen thousand hours: A discussion. *Perspectives 1*. Exeter University.

Doe, B. (1980, 13 June). Second thoughts on the Rutter ethos. *Times Educational Supplement*.

Schools Count. (1979, 31 March). *The Economist*.

Edmonds, R. (1979). Effective schools for the urban poor. *Educational Leadership*, **37**(1), 15–27.

Fraser, B. (1989). Research synthesis on school and instructional effectiveness. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 13(7), 707–720.

Gideanse, H. (1981, January). Letter to the Editor. *Educational Researcher*.

Goldstein, H. (1980). Fifteen thousand hours: A review of the statistical procedures. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, **21**(4), 364–6.

Gray, J., McPherson, A., & Raffe, D. (1983). *Reconstructions of secondary education: Theory, myth and practice since the war*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Green, A. (1990). *Education and state formation*. New York: St Martin's Press.

Heath, A., & Clifford, P. (1980). The seventy thousand hours that Rutter left out. *Oxford Review of Education*, **6**(1), 3–19.

Heath, A., & Clifford, P. (1981). The measurement and explanation of school differences. *Oxford Review of Education*, **7**(1), 33–40.

Hill, P., Rowe, K., & Holmes-Smith, P. (1996). *Modelling student progress school effectiveness and improvement*. Minsk, Belarus.

Hill, P. & Rowe, K. (in press). Multi Level Modelling in School Effectiveness Research. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*.

Jagger, T. (1979, 25 May). The school factor. *Education*.

Jencks, C. S., Smith, M., Acland, H., Bane, M. J., Cohen, D., Gintis, H., Heyns, B., & Micholson, S. (1972). *Inequality: A reassessment of the effect of family and schooling in America*. New York: Basic Books.

Johnson, B. (1956). *The development of English education* 1856–82 (p. 116) with special reference to the work of Robert Lowe, M. Ed., University of Durham,.

Kemble, B. (1979, 22 March). Your good school guide. *Daily Express*.

Luyten, H. (1994). *Stability of school effects in secondary education: The impact of variance across*

*subjects and years*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, 4–8 April, New Orleans.

Maughan, B., Mortimore, P., Ouston, J., & Rutter, M. (1980). Fifteen thousand hours: A reply to Heath and Clifford. *Oxford Review of Education*, **6**(3), 289–303.

McGaw, B., Banks, D., & Piper, K. (1991). *Effective schools: Schools that make a difference*. Hawthorn, Victoria: Australian Council for Educational Research.

McGaw, B., Piper, K., Banks, D., & Evans, B. (1992). *Making schools more effective*. Australian Council for Educational Research.

Mortimore, P. (1979). The study of secondary schools: A researcher's reply, *Perspectives 1*, Exeter University.

Mortimore, P. (1991). The front page or yesterday's news: The Reception of Educational Research. In G. Walford (Ed.), *Doing educational research* (pp. 210–233). London: Routledge.

Mortimore, P., Sammons, P., Stoll, L., Lewis, D., & Ecob, R. (1988). *School matters: The junior years*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Mortimore, P., Sammons, P., & Thomas, S. (1994). School effectiveness and value added measures. *Assessment in Education*, **1**(3), 315–332.

Newsam, P. (1979, 25 March). Teacher knows best after all. *Observer*.

NUT. (1979, 30 March). Secondary findings stress the obvious. *The Teacher*.

NWREL. (1995). *Effective schooling practices: A research synthesis update*. Portland, Oregon.

O'Connor, M. (1980, 22 July). Fifteen thousand hours that shook the academics. *Education Guardian*.

Oswick, C. (1979, 27 March). Less caning does not spoil the child. *Southend Evening Echo*.

Owens, R. G. (1981, January). Letter to the Editor. *Educational Researcher*.

Paterson, L., & Goldstein, H. (1991). New statistical methods of analysing social structures: An introduction to multilevel models. *British Educational Research Journal*, **17**(4), 387–393.

Ramsay, W., & Clark, E. E. (1990). *New ideas for effective school improvement: Vision, social capital, evaluation*. London: Falmer Press.

Reynolds, D., Jones, D., & St. Leger, S. (1976). Schools do make a difference. *New Society*, **37**, 321.

Reynolds, D., Hargreaves, A., & Blackstone, T. (1980). Fifteen thousand hours: A review symposium. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, **1**(2), 207–219

Reynolds, D., Teddlie, C., Creemers, B. P. M., Cheng, Y. C., Dundas, B., Green, B., Epp, J. R., Hauge, T. E., Schaffer, E. C., & Stringfield, S. (1994). School effectiveness research: A review of the international literature. In D. Reynolds, B .P. M. Creemers, P. M. S. Nesselrodt, E. C. Schaffer, S. Stringfield, & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Advances in school effectiveness research and practice*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Reynolds, D., & Teddlie, C. (1995). *World class schools: Preliminary analysis of data*. ISERP Team, Department of Education, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Rogers, R (1979) How good schools can change children, New Statesman, 23 March.

Rowe, K., Hill, P., & Holmes-Smith, T. (1995). Methodological issues in educational performance and school effectiveness research. *Australian Journal of Education*, **39**(3), 217–248.

Rowlands, C. (1979, 22 March). Schools that harm the gifted. *Daily Mail*.

Rutter, M., Tizard, J., & Whitmore, K. (Eds.). (1970). *Education, health and behaviour*. London: Longman.

Rutter, M., Cox, A., Tupling, C., Berger, M., & Yule, W. (1975). Attainment and adjustment in two geographical areas. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, **126**, 493–509.

Rutter, M., Maughan, B., Mortimore, P., & Ouston, J. (1979a). Fifteen thousand hours: Secondary schools and their effects on children. London: Open Books.

Rutter, M., Maughan, B., Mortimore, P., & Ouston, J. (1979b). Fifteen thousand hours: School influences on pupil progress: research strategies and tactics. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 2(4), 366–8.

Rutter, M., Maughan, B., Mortimore, P., & Ouston, J. (1980a). Educational criterion of success: A reply to Acton. Educational Research, 22(3), 170–4.

Rutter, M., Maughan, B., Mortimore, P., & Ouston, J. (1980b). *The researchers' response* (Bedford Way Papers 1). London: University of London, Institute of Education.

Sammons, P., Hillman, J., & Mortimore, P. (1995). *Key characteristics of effective schools: A review of school effectiveness research*. London. Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

Sammons, P., Thomas, S., & Mortimore, P. (1995). *Accounting for variations in academic effectiveness between schools and departments: Results from the "Differential Secondary School Effectiveness Project" – A three-year study of GCSE performance*. Paper presented at the European Conference on Educational Research/BERA Annual Conference, Bath. 14–17 September.

Scheerens, J. (1992). *Effective schooling: Research theory and practice*. London: Cassell.
Shipman, M. (1980). Fifteen thousand hours: A review article. *Research in Education*, May
Silver, H. (1994). *Good schools effective schools: Judgements and their histories*. London: Cassell.
Smith, D., & Tomlinson, S. (1989). *The school effect: A study of multi-racial comprehensives*. London: Policy Studies Institute.
Stevens, A. (1979 7, January). When potted plants are better than discipline. *Observer*.
St John Brooks, C. (1979). Fifteen thousand hours (review). *New Society*, **20**, 493–4.
Teddlie, C., Falkowski, C., Stringfield, S., Deselle, S., & Garvue, R. (1984). *The Louisiana school effectiveness study phase 2*. Louisiana: Louisiana State Department of Education.
Teddlie, C., Kirby, P., & Stringfield, S. (1989). Effective versus ineffective schools: Observable differences in the classroom. *American Journal of Education*, **97**(3), 221–236.
Thomas, S., & Mortimore, P. (1994). *Report on value added analysis of 1993 GCSE examination results in Lancashire*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
Thomas, S., Sammons, P., Mortimore, P., & Smees, R. (1995). *Stability and consistency in secondary school effects on students' gcse outcomes over 3 years*. Paper presented at ICSEI Leeuwarden, The Netherlands.
Tizard, B. (1980). Fifteen thousand hours: A review. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, **21**(4), 363–4.
Tizard, B., Burgess, T., Francis, H., Goldstein, H., Youngs, M., Hewison, J., & Plewis, I. (1980). *Fifteen thousand hours: A discussion* (Bedford Way Papers 1). London: University of London, Institute of Education.
Tizard, B., Blatchford, P., Burke, J., Farquhar, C., & Plewis, I. (1988). *Young children at school in the inner city*. Hove & London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
Townsend, T. (1996). School effectiveness and restructuring schools. School *Effectiveness and Improvement*. Minsk, Belarus.
Whitehouse, A. (1979, 21 March). Lessons for a perfect school. *Yorkshire Post*.
Wragg, T. (1980, 14 March). Second thoughts on the Rutter Report. *Education*.

# A Kind of Educational Idealism: Integrating Realism and Reform

LOUIS M. SMITH
*Professor Emeritus, University of Washington*

## FORESHADOWING THE ISSUES

By intent, this essay has several major guiding assumptions. First, it has an autobiographical flavor, that is, it attempts to capture an individual's thoughts and activities from the early days of educational reform in the mid twentieth century. "Being around" and "involved" at that time carries its own kind of insight and testimonial. Second, an early case study of Kensington, an innovative elementary school, *Anatomy of Educational Innovation* (Smith & Keith, 1971) caught the imagination of a number of educators in schools and universities. Third, such an event – an innovative school and a book length monograph describing and conceptualizing the first year – had its own antecedents and consequences. Stories and conceptualizations became strands of educational innovation and change in their own right. These strands are a part of this small piece of educational history. This essay speaks to those as well. Fourth, the very task of writing about these events is a creative process and takes the author and reader into unexpected directions, yielding more ideas about the nature of educational idealism, realism, and school reform. Such are the tasks of this essay.

## THE REALITIES OF COMPLEXITIES

Strangely perhaps, this story of the innovative Kensington Elementary School and other innovations began several years before in an urban classroom of the Washington School, in an impoverished area of the City of St. Louis. At that time it was "realism" we were after, yet we were using an innovative inquiry style that went by the varied labels of "case study," "micro-ethnography of the classroom," "participant observation," and "qualitative inquiry." More recent labels might refer to our approach as "action research" or "collaborative inquiry," in-vogue approaches for at least some parts of the educational community.

Our beliefs at the time are seen with minimal rewriting of history by reference to two short paragraphs in the preface of that book.



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 88-108.

> We think *The Complexities of an Urban Classroom* is probably the most intensive analysis that has been made of a single classroom. It is most likely the first time a college professor has spent all day every day within a slum classroom as an observer. It is probably the most intensive cooperative effort between an elementary school teacher and an educational psychologist to bring their varying points of view to bear on the day-to-day issues of teaching. Finally, the self-conscious attempt to describe carefully the mundane day-to-day events and then to interpret these within an internally consistent language makes the book a unique attempt to theorize about the problems of teaching. In consequence, it possesses a general as well as a particularistic view. (Smith & Geoffrey, 1968, p. v)

The reader will recognize in the text the quiet but latent nationally recognized voices of George Homans, Robert Merton and Hans Zetterberg who influenced the beliefs in this perspective. At a local level, the faculty and students of the Graduate Institute of Education at Washington University, and especially Larry Iannaccone and Sandy Charters, provided ideas, models, and support.

Our beliefs rippled outward in remaining pages but especially relevant for the present discussion is the next paragraph of the preface.

> We believe our book will have several audiences, for it has several unusual features and can be read from several vantage points. Because the problems of urban education are timely, the layman, who usually has no clear perception of life in a classroom of a slum school, should profit from the extended detail reported in the fieldnote excerpts. Our intent has been to build clear and realistic images for readers whose elementary school backgrounds are foreign to the lower-class culture and yet whose positions in contemporary society require them to make intelligent decisions in this area. If we have made clear the magnitude of the urban education problem and some of the specific dimensions, we will be heartened. We have strong faith in the power of an aroused and informed citizenry to improve its present-day circumstances and institutions and in the power of public education to produce citizens who will approach the problems of the next generation with intelligence and courage. (Smith & Geoffrey, 1968, pp. v-vi)

At the time we did not enter into the difficult value issues and the content of the decisions that might be in contestation. It was the "realities," raised in anecdotes, images, vignettes, and conceptual analyses that we wanted to convey, starting points to bring one's values and hopes into play for the redesign of urban teaching and learning.

I would argue today that realities may well be multiple as people come to grips with what it is that is going on and what it is that needs changing. The nature of the changes follow from this kind of description and analysis *plus* the kinds of values and conceptions of the ideal individuals and the good society one hopes to help create through schooling. Now, three decades, and many changes later I would argue the need for more recent but similarly intensive views of schools and

classrooms. One does not have to focus on just the broadest issues of violence, abortion and right to life views, and affirmative action to realize that contention is widespread regarding values underlying the good life, the good society, and the role and responsibility of public schools in educating children. Busing, vouchers, Christmas tree displays, and creation science are close by in every public school and school district.

## EXPLORING DOMAINS OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION

The 1960's, especially with the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965, provided a context for opening multiple domains of educational innovation. Without realizing the broader significance at the time, my colleagues and I found that we were caught up in the proverbial tidal wave of educational change, innovation, and reform. In retrospect, I have labeled these "domains of educational innovation and reform." Some of these domains were quite specific, others quite general, some were organizational and structural, others were more substantive and programmatic, and others had to do with new methods of inquiry. In day to day practice many of these elements overlapped, synergistically, to use a phrasing of the times. Without question, for a young academic with a bit of talent, good training, and interests in the improvement of education those were "heady times." Idealism and optimism were everywhere. Though specific choices and decisions were always difficult at the time, explorations seemed limited mostly by our time and talent.

### *The Innovative Kensington Elementary School*

After our semester in the Washington School, and as we were involved in writing that project report and later its conversion into a book, the opportunity arose to become involved in the Kensington Elementary School. An important generalization lurks here: in my experience opportunities never seem to sequence themselves well, schedules need to be juggled, work loads expand faster than resources (both personal time and energy and financial), and one commits to a motivational and intellectual ride that is beyond one's wildest imagination.

The Milford School District and Kensington School administrators were preparing for a major educational innovation: a uniquely designed building, unusual staffing, and radical programming of an elementary school. They came to the Graduate Institute of Education's Bureau of Consultant Services for a possible study of their efforts. They had a control group experiment in mind, but were willing to listen to my counter proposal for a more qualitative, participant observer, ethnographic, case study approach.

Several further major generalizations were implicit then. I had found the qualitative research stance to be a natural fit with several basic personality dispositions

of mine, ungodly open to every ounce of creativity I possessed, and a methodology that I wanted "to run." Later I was to borrow a phrase from Tom Wolfe's (1979) *The Right Stuff*, I wanted to fly the edge of the methodological envelope. An intriguing new methodology drove much of the inquiry I was to do over the years. Biographical antecedents and consequences exist in educational innovation.

A second generalization was developing, I found most school administrators willing to listen, discuss, and negotiate research proposals and activities when one makes "reasonable" and "creative" arguments. Not always, but usually. I still don't understand quite why I found this to be so.

Third, funding options at that time were also in flux. Innovations were occurring. The Office of Education's "small contract program," grants of less that $7500, had been created and was open for competition. We had won one of these with the project that became *Complexities*, and we submitted then and won one for what would become *Anatomy of Educational Innovation.* That funding innovation I found remarkably important, particularly when one is tackling problems and methods that are outside conventional norms.

Fourth, the Milford School Board discussed and voted approval for the project. As duly elected citizens, the board members acted as representatives for the community. That kind of governance is an important innovation that has lasted for decades if not centuries now in America's local public schools. At the time I didn't give much thought to that, but in recent years, as the politics of educational innovation has grown in importance in my mind, I have found that that long ago innovation, the annual election of school board members, is very important. More of the tangled roots of educational innovation and change are becoming apparent.

The preface to our book *Anatomy* suggests some of our broader beliefs about educational innovation some 25 years ago.

> As the manuscript of this book is being set in galley and page proofs, the world of education – classrooms, schools, and ideas – continues in great ferment. Major reports such as *Crisis in the Classroom* and *Children and Their Primary Schools* are suggesting new waves of change to replace now older modes advocated in the *Restoration of Learning* and *Education for All American Youth.* (Smith & Keith, 1971, p. v)

At the time we didn't do anything special with those observations and comments. The Educational Policies Commission book had been published in 1944. I had read it as an undergraduate in the late 1940's and had been taken with its brand of community schools and progressive education. Arthur Bestor's book, along with his earlier *Educational Wastelands* (1953), had created a stir in the late 1950's. The ideological confrontations and the potential political implications were not especially salient and important for me then. Neither was the implicit historical perspective important for me at that time. This, too, would return with great force later, both substantively and methodologically. In retrospect, I now find myself being and behaving then somewhere between naive and stupid. Yet I felt then, and still feel now, that we wrote a very fine and important book.

Rather than those issues, at the time, we raised in the next paragraph of the preface several other important problems and ideas in the inquiry into and the substantive issues about school innovation and reform. We said then:

> Through all this we are struck with the calm voice of Professor Maslow (1965) who has urged educational innovators to be "good reporters" and to tell the story of their attempts at change. (Smith & Keith, 1971, p. v)

We were intentionally buttressing our efforts with the wisdom of a pre-eminent American third force psychologist who in a one page note seemed to be making our case for us, a case that many educational psychologists would not accept from us alone. But we didn't run his broader substantive ideas at greater length in the preface nor in the text itself. Nor do I recall how I found that reference in the *Humanist*, a journal I would be sympathetic to but which I didn't read regularly. But a further generalization exists, "other occasions will arise," and in a recent book chapter (Smith, in press-a) Maslow's "the authoritarian character structure" from 1943 plays a major role in the argument I made there. The bigger generalizations may well be that there are currents of ideas and people who hold those ideas with whom one unconsciously or semi-consciously identifies with, and these ideas and people will reappear as one thinks through major issues in educational innovation. Later I will entertain some issues in life history, biography and autobiography which are important for a more fully developed point of view about innovation and change. Here it is the roots of thinking about innovation I am noting.

The second paragraph in the preface continued.

> A series of circumstances led us to be that limited part of a courageous and important attempt to remake public education, in the rather typical middle class suburban school district of Milford. The setting was the Kensington School, a unique architectural structure with open space laboratory suites, an instructional materials center, and a theater, designed in what might be described as the square lines of classical Greek simplicity. The program exemplified the new elementary education of team teaching, individualized instruction, and multi-age groups. A broad strategy of innovation – the alternative of grandeur, the utilization of temporary systems, and minimal prior commitments – was devised and implemented. The intended outcome was pupil development toward maturity – a self-directed, internally motivated, and productive competence. (Smith & Keith, 1971, p. v)

In retrospect, I find that to be a densely packed paragraph revealing the nature and hopes of the Kensington School experience. We thought that the effort was courageous and important. We thought that the setting was rather typical suburban middle class. Although not mentioned in the preface the effort was local – ESEA was still a year or two away.

The particulars involved new architecture and space, the program was a collage of new ideas and arrangements about schooling, and a major strategy of innovation was planned and implemented. Open "learning suite" space, movable furniture

and cabinets, and new spaces – a theater, an acting tower, rear view projection screen, a room for central control of the then new educational technology, and a ceiling heated outdoor play area were all part of the innovative building. Nongradedness, continuous progress, a conceptual curriculum, team teaching, no textbooks, and individualized teaching and learning were part of the curriculum and instructional program. Strategies of innovation which we came to call "the alternative of gradeur" replaced "gradualism," and the use of varied temporary systems were part of the overall plan. Even now as I write these comments some thirty years later, I find myself overwhelmed with the magnitude and the sophistication of this group of practitioners who hoped to revolutionize American elementary education in one suburban public school.

The pupil outcomes were summarized at the time in good humor by faculty, and researchers as well, as the development of "fully functioning Freddy." Carl Rogers (1942, 1951, 1972) lurked within the "fully functioning" label, but we did not make anything special of that source at the time. I'm not sure whether the reason then was too many other more immediate educational sources such as John Goodlad and Project Instruction or whether we were still shying away from "psychologizing" a major educational effort. I do know that since *Complexities* I was deliberately trying to escape some of the quantitative and experimental psychological methods I had learned as truth in the Ph.D. program of the psychology department at the University of Minnesota. The big generalization is that one's personality (or autobiography) is important in what one does, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously. Being in an intellectually oriented Education Department rather than a Psychology Department was important as well, and that's another generalization important for a theory of educational innovation.

The preface continued and caught several other significant aspects of the roots of doing, thinking, and writing about educational innovation.

> Elements of tragedy existed. (Smith, in press-a, p. v)

We even designed part of the introduction to our book to resemble a Greek tragedy, to further some of those implications. Writing that is congruent with realities and our interpretations of those realities is another "small" and hopefully creative innovation as well. The preface continued.

> Realities were often less than intentions (Smith, in press-a, p. v).

The contrasts in the "realities" and the "hopes," if not the "is's" and the "ought's" of the philosophers became a major part of the analysis. That still seems an important way of attacking the phenomena of educational innovation and reform. It also began a move toward a consideration of educational theory as practical theory rather than scientific theory, but we had not really encountered R. S. Peters nor Israel Scheffler at that time.

Further generalizations appeared in the same preface.

> Organizational structures and processes contained complexities which were

> "latent, unanticipated, and unintended." Human nature seemed not so malleable as some people hoped and others feared. At the Universities and the research and development centers, the scholarly world of professional education and social science, of which we are a part, has failed to do justice to the complicated problems involved in originating an innovative educational organization. Investigators and theorists have not focused hard enough, long enough, nor carefully enough on the small and mundane as well as the large and important issues and problems necessary for idealistic practitioners to carry out their dreams. Our hope is that this monograph will fill some of those gaps. (Smith & Keith, 1971, pp. v and vi)

As I look back at that part of the preface now, I am struck with the breadth of ideas needing further discussion: sociological functionalism and especially the latent dysfunctions conception and the almost sociobiological notions regarding the degree of malleability of human nature. The integration of Robert Merton and E. O. Wilson remains on the agenda of at least one theorist of educational innovation and reform. And that is a way of restating the culpability of schools of education in the universities and their respective faculties, who still have – in my view – major and special responsibilities, although far from total responsibility, to help investigate and think through the theoretical and practical problems of schooling. The rise of the "classroom action research" movement suggests realms of important collaboration among all kinds of educationists, the redress of grievances, and alterations of power relationships in professional education.

But our preface still wouldn't end easily. The long paragraph continued, and raised several critical ideas and implications.

> Presumably also, some readers will find public policy considerations, if not recommendations, in the discussion. For instance, the recent United States Office of Education's guidelines for the Experimental Schools Program states, "The program of each Experimental School must be implemented in the first year of operation rather than in stages over the 5 years." This opts for Kensington's point of view, what we have called the "alternative of grandeur," as an innovative strategy in contrast to a "gradualist" strategy. Our data suggests that this alternative posed a number of critical and difficult dilemmas for administrators and staff at Kensington. If the Office of Education holds to that requirement, five years from now considerably more should be known regarding a number of hypotheses generated in our case study. (Smith & Keith, 1971, p. vi)

For reasons of other demands and interests I have not pursued the various linkages such as this with our early Kensington efforts. In retrospect, an argument could be made that that was a mistake, but a correctable one. Do I now want to move toward a critique and an integration of scholars such as Fullan, Miles, Sarason, et al.? Thinking my way through that might be a reasonable project, a next outcome of this essay.

*Hanging Out With Educational Innovators: The CEMREL Experience*

For about a decade, roughly 1966 to 1976, I had the opportunity and the privilege to work part time for the Central Midwestern Regional Educational Laboratory, later called by its acronym, CEMREL, Inc. I had a minor role in its founding, and later did a number of projects as a project director and senior research associate. Still later I became part of the evaluation staff, half time at the university and on half time leave at the organization. Mostly I did a series of formative and summative qualitative evaluations. From my point of view the Lab supported my research and from their point of view I brought an ethnographic dimension to the heavily quantitative evaluation unit. Perhaps the most important of these projects was an early evaluation study of a computer assisted instruction program, what Paul Pohland and I called "Education, Technology, and the Rural Highlands" (Smith & Pohland, 1974). This caught the surge of change in enlarging educational evaluation from a narrow results oriented experimentalism to include a qualitative, process oriented, descriptive and interpretive "illuminative" strand. CEMREL's evaluation efforts moved toward including a more focused and rationalized kind of formative evaluation as part of the curriculum development process. Summative evaluations stressed what Howard Russell and I called "a three-legged evaluation model." We combined a pre-post experimental strand, a quantitative survey strand with the qualitative, ethnographic strand. In a sense the methods of psychology, sociology, and anthropology were triangulated.

In addition, personally I found myself caught up in the internationalization of research and evaluation with participation in the Cambridge Curriculum Evaluation Conference, a group that created a manifesto published as the foreword to *Beyond the Numbers Game* (Hamilton, 1977), that has met a total of five times since the first occasion in 1972, and that has had a strong presence in AERA and other educational organizations. This group became a major reference group for me.

Along the way at CEMREL I settled into an organizational arrangement that I defined as half of me, a part time assistant or two, a little secretarial time, and some "slush" for travel and other minor expenses. Initially I thought of it as "my preferred inquiry arrangement," but later I came to argue that that was a powerful research and evaluation stance and, for the times, a relatively inexpensive one. Potency and cost effectiveness are major dimensions. I seem to keep generalizing from the particular and personal to the general and the public. Innovations upon innovations. I believe that the relationship was very positive from both points of view, mine and the Lab's.

But the major point I want to make here is that I was immersed in the culture of an innovative curriculum development organization and I was trying to make myself useful in helping think through evaluation issues. The projects ranged across an early computer assisted instructional program, a new math program, a token economy program, and an aesthetic education program. We did final reports, AERA symposia, essays as journal articles and book chapters, and books. And

along the way I was meeting and working with gifted, highly creative educators doing the day to day activity of curriculum development and evaluation and with national figures who were on curriculum and evaluation advisory committees.

The kind of experiential learning I was involved with, just in hanging around, was incomparable. It provided a context for all of the more specific innovative projects I carried out independently of the Lab per se. And it blended very productively with the highly intellectually active and productive education department, the Graduate Institute of Education (GIE) in those days, at Washington University. For the purposes of becoming an educational innovator, I could not have arranged demography, cultures, and organizations better if I had had the insight and power to do so. Things happened, opportunities arose, I was around and involved, and we created some innovative evaluation strategies which joined the innovative educational curricula being created. It was an exciting and intellectually provocative experience. Those stories have not been told in the detail they deserve, although the Council for Research in Music Education published "Special Issue: CEMREL AEP" (Bulletin No. 43, 1975) with essays by a number of the participants in the aesthetic education curriculum development and evaluation program.

### *Kensington Revisited*

In the mid to late 1970's, several events coalesced. The National Institute of Education (NIE) developed a new initiative for basic research in the general area of school organization and issued a call for proposals. The idea arose that the "mid to long term" progression of educational innovation might be an appropriate instance of such basic research and that a fifteen year follow-up of the Kensington School might be an instance of basic research in innovation of educational organizations. As these ideas were coming together, I had a reassuring chance encounter at AERA with David Cohen a well respected educational scholar then at Harvard. I put the "mid to long term consequences of educational innovation" question to him, and got an immediate reply that he and a colleague had recently been looking into similar issues and that nothing was available in the educational literature. So there I was, a good idea I thought, little available literature, and a possible source of funds. It seemed a natural.

The RFP indicated that the selection was to be a two step process: an initial preliminary proposal which would be peer reviewed, followed by a more extended proposal in which the final judgments would be made. It was an open competition. The first judgment, almost like a triage decision I thought, resulted in an initial small group of highly favored proposals, a second group of good proposals, and a third group of relatively weak proposals. Anyone could submit for the second round, but the submitters knew the risk level they were undertaking. Only a dozen or so proposals would be accepted and funded from the group of ninety to one hundred submissions. In my own head I felt that the preliminary proposal would be where the essential judgment would be made, so I put an inordinate

amount of effort into it. The proposal made the first group. I revised and extended the original proposal and submitted for the second and final round. It was accepted. Later, after the judgments were made and the final acceptances awarded I found out that the preliminary proposal had ranked at the top end of the first half dozen of that first group.

Several generalizations pertinent to educational innovation were reinforced in my mind. First, in spite of the advocacy of cooperation and related values among many groups of innovators in education, which I accept to a degree, when limited resources exist and demand far exceeds those resources, intense competition will occur. It is not quite a zero sum game, but closer than some would hope or believe. Having a zest for such competition seemed a necessity. Second, that whenever the discussion begins, one should early on put one's best efforts into that competition. Third, a time never seems to come when one can "coast" on what one perceives to be a reputation for good work. The need for "proving oneself" never seems to end. Although some may see this as potential cynicism, I would argue for a perspective of realism.

In our initial study of the Kensington School, our book carried the subtitle "an organizational analysis of an elementary school." We had focused on that level and those issues. We stayed with that emphasis in the proposal for the new inquiry. Two interrelated basic ideas were to be examined: what happened to the school and its program over the fifteen years and what had happened to the faculty. In three short paragraphs, our abstract from the full proposal captured the intent this way.

> This research proposes to develop basic knowledge regarding innovative school organizations. Its central thrust is a fifteen year follow up of the innovative Kensington School and its original faculty. This involves a complex interrelationship of organizational theory and field research methods. The principal investigator of the proposed research was also the principal investigator of the original study, *Anatomy of Educational innovation* (Smith & Keith, 1971). The return to the school attempts to answer two questions – What is the current structure of Kensington as an educational organization, that is, has the school reverted to the old Milford as was predicted in the original monograph? Second, what interpretation/explanation can be made of the presumed changes between 1964 and 1979? Methodologically, this will involve a special kind of case study, a mix of ethnography and recent history. Participant observation, interviews/oral history, and primary documents e.g., local newspapers, school bulletins and school records will be used. (Smith, 1977, p. 2)

The "basic knowledge" accent fit the RFP statements and was not incongruent with our overall concerns for important generalizable substantive theory. We thought then – and now as well – that inquiry methods and substantive problems should integrate. The commonalty of the principal investigator on both studies brought important strengths, though we did not see the wealth of possible difficulties and limitations at the time. Finally, we tied the new investigation to a conjecture,

a broad prediction made in the first study. As I reread the statement from two and a half decades ago I still find it powerful and convincing. Eventually our results became a book, *The Fate of an Innovative School.* It carried the subtitle, *The History and Present Status of the Kensington School.* A series of chapters gave "multiple perspectives of an innovative school," attempts to see the school from the points of view of the central office and board, the four principals who have administered the school over the fifteen years, and a parent/community view. In some ways social change, racial and socio-economic, overwhelmed educational innovation and one of our major interpretive themes became "school identity: from the culture of intellectual excitement to the culture of poverty." A community in transition is an event of huge magnitude for a local public elementary school. We chronicled, interpreted, and reported on all this at great length.

The second paragraph of the research proposal focused on the second large problem on our minds at the time.

> The follow up of the original faculty links personality theory of several kinds with organizational theory. From a common sense framework, the questions are simple: What has happened to the original staff? How do they perceive the impact of the Kensington experience on their professional lives? The key concepts are life span/developmental perspectives, career lines, organizational positions. By means of intensive interviews, observations of current work-teaching, administering, etc., and document analysis, we hope to chronicle and interpret the fifteen year period. (Smith, 1977, p. 2)

We kept intertwining common sense questions and ideas and more theoretical questions and ideas. We underestimated items that appeared in the first interview – What happened before you came to Kensington and how did you happen to come? The nature and length of the life histories expanded and proved very provocative.

We titled this book of the trilogy *Educational Innovators: Then and Now.* We did a long descriptive and analytical section on "careers of educational innovators." Simple differentiations along dimensions of position, gender, and age enabled us to trace out significant patterns in this unusual group of idealistic educators. Extended case studies of individual teachers and administrators gave a vividness to our account. In a section on "true believers and educational innovation," beliefs and belief systems became the most extended set of concepts and theoretical interpretations. We moved from Hoffer's "true believer" to more differentiated positions of Rokeach, Adorno, and Bruner, as others entered into our theorizing. Our interview data finally succumbed to a series of substantive chapters: "educational reformers neither die nor fade away: persistence of beliefs in practice," "educational reform as secular religion: the complex nature of belief systems," "the experiential funnel: origins, development and transformations of belief systems," and the provocative "you do go home again: the dialectics in origins and outcomes of belief systems." The innovators of Kensington were unusual, talented, and idealistic individuals. Our major point: when contemplating educational innovation, technical perspectives lose out to the complex personalities and belief systems of the educational innovators developing and carrying out the changes.

The third paragraph of the proposal's abstract was a single sentence.

> In short, the problems, the analytical/interpretive frameworks, and the procedures build upon and extend our prior work. (Smith, 1977, p. 2)

At a very general level we were arguing that programmatic research efforts, research serials if you like, were more significant than one off investigations. I believed that then and I still believe it.

As we pursued the "two problems" of the investigation, the inquiry took an unexpected turn. In the District curriculum library, I had been reading 1950's school newsletters to the patrons of the Milford School District, an innovation that arose in the post World War II "build a school a year" population explosion era. My work table was half way between the superintendent's office and the building coffee pot. When he stopped by on one of his trips to the coffee pot, I raised a speculation that seemed implicit in the newsletters, that the then superintendent was in difficulty with the School Board. He indicated that they had almost fired the superintendent then. We chatted a bit and he left. Later he returned with a large black bound book of school board minutes and opened it to the time of crisis and showed me the debate, the accusations, and the retorts that had gone on. Quickly reading the record, I felt like Pavlov's salivating dog, and I asked if there were more records such as this, to which he said "yes," and to my next question, can I look at them? he said "yes, they are public records." He then showed me a closet off his office where there was a wall of bookcases containing board minutes.

We made arrangements that were to cost me two years in reading and analyzing board minutes going back to 1915. I thought I could sample the record and then found that I wanted to read them all – from start to finish, roughly 65 years of school board history. At that point I was on my way to becoming an educational historian. We now had a third volume to our Kensington Revisited study, *Innovation and Change in Schooling*. It carried the subtitle *History, Politics, and Agency* and greatly enlarged our conception of educational innovation. We now had the story of the historical and contemporaneous context for the building of the innovative Kensington School and its change over the fifteen years, that is, its reversion to the old Milford. The story of the coming and going of superintendents, the attempts to influence school board elections, and the bringing of lawyers into the contestation reads like vivid realistic fiction. School Board minutes are interesting, complex, and potent data. Theoretically we had a large and major new conception, "a longitudinal nested systems model of educational innovation and change." We had an integration of the diachronic and synchronic approaches to the problem of studying educational groups, organizations, and communities, and we had a final chapter carrying the title, "The many faces of democracy in innovation and schooling." Our introductory paragraph to that chapter summarizes a number of "lessons" we learned about educational innovation and the processes of studying the topic.

> Among the many things this study did not start out to be was a political science investigation. An essay on democracy was perhaps as far afield as any

> aim that might have been on our minds. The issues, the data, and the evolving interpretation dragged us in this direction. A half dozen subissues seem knitted together here. The political context of schooling has major significance for innovation and change, significance far beyond our initial appreciation. National and state problems and purposes have vied longer and more intimately with local problems than we had at first realized or understood. The nature and responsiveness of the schools to the wishes of the community has a subtlety, a complexity, and a scope which we found to be startling if not overwhelming. Finally we learned what "voting" was all about: our high school civics teachers can finally rest in peace. (Smith, Dwyer, Prunty, & Kleine, 1988, p. 311)

All in all those ideas seemed an appropriate way station for concluding our enlarged view of educational innovation and change. It opened for us a move from educational issues as technical problems to a point of view that has more to do with educational dilemmas, reflective practices, and choices. Metatheory and paradigms became an increasingly large part of our educational world.

### *The Overriding Fascination with Methodological Innovation*

The ultimate surprise, serendipity, or perhaps better, irony of my concerns for educational innovation was the discovery that my interests lay most fundamentally in innovative methods of educational inquiry. What I first called participant observation and the micro-ethnography of the classroom later was labeled ethnography, qualitative inquiry, and case study methods. These different but similar approaches kept pulling me toward varied substantive problems and varied educational settings. Metaphorically, the fire engine sirens, train whistles, or jet streams of educational problems and visions open to qualitative methods would sound or call and I could never resist.

A kind of reflexiveness existed. For I "studied" or "inquired into" methodological issues by using each substantive investigation as a case study of inquiry methods. Essentially I would keep detailed records – field notes, summary observations and interpretations, documents, and interview protocols – as we worked along on whatever the substantive problem was. Then I would do some kind of story, analysis, and interpretation of the methodological logic of the approach on the new problem. Often we would "invent" some small or large procedure to help us solve the substantive problems. These would be labeled and become the "sensitizing concepts" of methods and procedures, and then they were amplified into "hunches, hypotheses, and conjectures," and often integrated into "miniature theories of methodology." Usually they would become "methodological appendices" to the substantive reports. Later, symposium presentations, essays, and book chapters would appear to formalize some of the thoughts. What seemed at the moment to be common sense problem solving grew to be a major position and rationale for creative and innovative approaches to inquiry.

A brief chronological account will illustrate my meaning and give the reader some important "concrete perceptual images" of what I have in mind regarding "methodology as innovation."

Once again things seem to start with *Complexities*. "Models" became important as we worked off images presented by George Homans in his *The Human Group*. We would do an educational case study that would fit with the half dozen other cases in his book. Becker's *Boys in White*, (1961) Geer's (1964) "First Days in the Field," and Whyte's (1955) appendix to *Street Corner Society*, along with others provided images we could and find stimulating.

Along the way we developed simple but powerful categories of data files: "field notes" as a procedure was in the literature, "summary observations and interpretations" came with a tape recorder to be used in the car going to and from the Washington School, and "documents" seemed to cover all the scattered paper trails that flow through an elementary school classroom.

What we called "interpretive asides," the little insights, bright ideas, interpretations, and points of departure for theoretical analyses were inserted into the field notes. In effect, good ideas situated, to use a more contemporary label, in a specific instructional time and place context became part of the record. A powerful kind of memory record of ideas became available for later qualitative analysis, interpretation, and theory building. Our descriptive narratives, stories, and vignettes had an "operational" integration with concepts, hypotheses, and miniature theories. That was a formidable gain, only partially appreciated at the time.

We created a label "inside/outside roles" for our special researcher relationship. Geoffrey was the insider, the consummate "influential true participant" privy to all that went on in the formal and informal structure and function of the school. I was the more "detached" if not "objective" outsider, the non participant observer who brought an academic university perspective to the task. "Collaboration," "action research," "teacher research" are latter-day shibboleths that increase the valuational perspectives on what we were about. At the time, it seemed just the common sense of two educators each playing out different roles toward an understanding of what it was like to teach a group of poor urban youngsters.

We wrote in the first chapter of our book a long, clear "behavioral" account of how we operated, behaved, acted in carrying out the overall inquiry task. Other methodological thoughts and hunches appeared in the appendix, "further reflections on the methodology." Those ten pages extended the methodological thoughts from chapter one. As I look at that now, I feel we were doing the best of action research on the substantive problem of the practice of educational inquiry. The first paragraph of that appendix stated our position this way.

> The research methodology utilized in this investigation was new to us and is relatively rare in educational psychology. In other disciplines it is more common and goes by such labels as ethnography, field work, and participant-observation. As is obvious, we became enamored of the technique and the possibilities it provided for exploring significant issues in the psychology of teaching. A self-consciousness about our procedures has led us toward these

> further reflections on the methodology of "classroom microethnography." (Smith & Geoffrey, 1968, p. 251)

In retrospect, "enamored" seems a mild form of the interest we developed in the issues of methodology. Soon we would be moving far away from the substantive problem we called here "the psychology of teaching."

The lead sentences in the next paragraph captured further intentions that were to stay with us over the next three decades.

> When we began this methodological discussion we had envisioned a larger and more final essay. Specifically we had wanted to present, and we have, an account of the "microethnography of classroom research," plus an integration of several other lines of work. (Smith & Geoffrey, 1968, p. 251)

It is the clause after the "plus" that is the central point here. We developed an open-ended agenda of issues that gave focus to several decades of further reflections. Just to suggest the tenor of the thought we speculated on novelist John O'Hara's insights into realistic fiction, Malinowski's methodological concerns in the Trobriand Islands, Whyte's search for a theme for his book and finding it in the off-hand comment of a colleague, the two – or three – realities problem, sociologist Zetterberg's conception of theory, mathematician Polya's theory of "plausible reasoning," and the verificational, theory testing qualitative research of social psychologists Festinger, Schacter and Back's group predicting the end of the world. Horizons seemed limitless then – and now.

From a substantive interest in a theory of teaching we moved quickly to two other projects, the study of the creation of an innovative school and the study of an unusual teacher education program. Both were supported by the U.S. Office of Education's small contract program. The innovative Kensington School has already been mentioned. One further reference, actually a footnote from the book, gives meaning to a concept we called "intensity of involvement," a key criterion for validity of data and interpretation.

> Although we were not there [in the school] at "all" times, we did approximate this situation. In the summer workshop and through the first few weeks of September, Paul F. Kleine worked full time on the project. During the study, school was in session 177 days from September to June. The workshop had involved four weeks in August. The observers have field notes from 153 *different* days at the school or in the district and 247 total entries. The latter indicates when both of us were in the field. Although it is possible to speak of 247 man-days of observation, this is faulty in the sense that some of the entries reflect part days and others early morning to midnight days. One of our colleagues phrased it colloquially but cogently when he commented, "you were all over that school." The intensity of involvement is a key issue in the validity of the data. (Smith & Keith, 1971, p. 10)

Field methods as we practiced them are labor intensive and expensive in investigator clock hours, but a bargain in the search for creative insights and interpretations.

A correlate of this notion is the fact that all researchers – principal investigators or research assistants – can use all the creativity they possess. None of the inquiry is what is sometimes called assistantship work, "scutwork," that is, professional activity reduced to technical, by-the-rules labor. Some would argue strongly and plausibly to the contrary (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Our student teaching study (Conner & Smith, 1967) involved us in several innovations. The program itself was unusual for the student teachers spent two weeks in kindergarten, then two weeks in the first grade, and on through the eight grades during the semester. That differed significantly with the Washington University program where the student teachers tended to spend all semester in Miss Jones second grade class or Mr. Brown's fifth grade. Methodologically, the "jig-saw puzzle analogy" arose as we reflected on our analytical procedures. Not only did we have to fit the pieces together but we also had to create the pieces. It seemed a powerful metaphor. Further, in our data gathering we found ourselves observing student teachers in action in the classroom, then observing the conference between them and the cooperating teacher, sometimes observing a similar conference with the principal or the college supervisor, and finally observing the students talking with their peers about an experience in the classroom. Accounts were shaded in description and interpretation depending on the audience. Another simple common sense point? In a sense we found our own multiple meanings of issues in "triangulation" as a methodological technique.

Rather than doing a book on methodology, in 1978 I settled for a long essay, "An evolving logic of participant observation, educational ethnography, and other case studies." In part I was still slaying dragons from my educational psychology days, for I made a case for legitimation using well recognized positions and work of scholars such as Howard Becker and Alvin Gouldner and arguing what I perceived to be particular limitations in the well accepted and influential Campbell and Stanley (1963) essay on quasi-experimental methods. A long section on the use of qualitative methods in the several disciplines also made the case for legitimation and respectability. Finally an even longer section attempted to phrase possible standards or criteria for qualitative work. These were analyzed into four broad clusters: data, descriptive narrative, theory, and metatheory. Arguments were entertained within each. For myself, I sort of declared the general battle for legitimation over and won, and I went on with my specific projects.

Mixed in with this kind of decision was another metaphor. I saw myself as a practitioner, a doer of research and evaluation projects over a wide and varied set of substantive domains and problems. In a major sense, I wanted to be an artisan or artist sculpting or painting or carving a series of artistic products. Each would be a special creation, important in its own right, pleasurable and satisfying to me, and, hopefully, useful to some particular educational audience – an individual teacher, curriculum developer, evaluator, or school administrator. At a second remove, I thought they would be useful to my students. At the time, and without the general label, I was making a case for becoming a reflective practitioner of the art of qualitative inquiry. Increasingly, creativity became a central conception. The

parallels of creativity in teaching, in inquiring, and in artistry arose. The more intensive analysis of those interrelationships remains to be done.

Among the many methodological outcomes of the Kensington Revisited project, the broadening of qualitative methods to history and biography were among the most fascinating. I knew that the life histories of teachers was not the end of that strand. I wanted to do a "for real" biography. That has taken me into a series of interrelated projects. In a tangled way I got interested in the Galapagos Islands, Charles Darwin, and a woman named Nora Barlow. With friends, we took a fascinating vacation trip to the Galapagos. I started to read Charles Darwin. I found a book of Darwin's letters edited by Nora Barlow, who turned out to be his granddaughter. She had done three other late in life books on the Darwin papers. One thing led to another and I started doing a biography of her.

Along the way, using the Barlow book of Darwin's letters I wrote a paper on Darwin's field work while on H.M.S. Beagle. Later, I had an opportunity to do a "profile" of B. F. Skinner for *Prospects*, a UNESCO publication. I began to read widely in biography, for example, Catherine Drinker Bowen, James Clifford, and Leon Edel. I was invited to do a chapter on "biographical method" for the *Handbook on Qualitative Methods* (1994). In a sense, I was building a major experiential methodological context for the Barlow biography. As part of the work on the biography I spent a semester sabbatical in Cambridge, England, mostly working in the University Library. My note taking, letter writing, and thinking about that experience resulted in a 25–40 page essay that wouldn't quit until it had become a 270 page monograph, *Doing ethnographic biography: A reflective practitioner at work in a spring in Cambridge.* Now I have an important "methodological appendix" finished but must await the biography per se. Strange set of events! Overall, I wanted a rationale comparable to the one I had built in educational ethnography. All that slowed the biography by several years. At the time, and now as well, it seemed worth the time and the delays.

The methodological odyssey had a number of other byways, but I want to mention only one more. We have had a strong Ph.D. program at Washington University. Early on qualitative studies were accepted as one approach for studying educational phenomena. Several dozen students have worked their way through this part of our program. Many have remained in the St. Louis community and have become a core of a number of major local efforts to improve education.

In addition, and particularly over the last decade, I have had the opportunity to work with a number of doctoral and post doctoral "students" from around the metropolitan community. The largest group have come from the University of Missouri, St. Louis and Principia College in Elsah, Illinois with others from colleges, universities, and public schools in the metropolitan area. Some were doing Ph.D. work at Universities around the country – Emory, Louisville, and UM-Columbia. Others were post-doctoral students. It was an unusual collection of educators, almost all wanting some kind of alternative inquiry route on a broad range of intellectual problems. The stimulation this provided all of us was stunning. Simple "lessons" were reinforced, e.g. standards of acceptable research are group norms that differ dramatically from department to department and school to school.

Medical schools and departments of psychology are incredible educational social systems. In some of the places, tablets of stone commandments for methods dissolved. Helping change these group norms is a major intellectual and practical issue about which I have spent considerable time and thought. Possible law suits, major conflicts with deans and chairs, and fascinating enhanced professional relationships among a number of us, both faculty and students, have been part of all this. A half dozen important alternative dissertations have been accepted at UM-St. Louis and several are on their way to becoming articles and books and the basis for new projects. As one might guess change in other places has been "a bit" slower!?!

A number of local educators, most with an interest in qualitative methods, have created ARC, the Action Research Collaborative in metropolitan St. Louis. Its annual meetings draw a hundred or so teachers – and administrators – at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Informal linkages occur with CARN, the Collaborative Action Research Network, in the United Kingdom. One might argue that ARC is an institutionalization of several strands of qualitative inquiry. Some of us think we are making small but significant changes in schooling in metropolitan St. Louis. These efforts of a number of my colleagues is a story yet to be told in full detail.

Toward a conclusion of these methodological innovations, I believe that I am making several major arguments. First the statements and activities are practice based, that is they grew out of our ongoing projects.

Second they are a kind of action research. We are continuously trying to improve our practices by observing, noting, reflecting, and writing as we go along. People work individually and collaboratively in varying combinations and projects.

Third, the statements have a strong auto/biographical flavor to them, as I would argue that action research generally does. We try to pay careful attention not only to conscious decisions but also to what seems intuitive or not readily explicable without some kind of a conception of the unconscious. Awareness is a tricky conception.

Fourth, the efforts are cumulative. They build on prior work, they speak to novel elements in the new inquiry problem, and they suggest further steps with later projects. Illustratively, I believe that cumulated experience is very important, but I don't have a clear rationale for why I believe that. In the not so distant future I will find an occasion, a setting and a problem, in which I will take on that one.

Finally I hope I have made the case that changes in inquiry methods is an important educational innovation. For me, the fascination remains.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING IDEAS

As I read back over this essay and think again of some of its implications a half dozen or so items seem relevant as tentative concluding ideas.

I am struck by the significance – continuing through several decades of a busy intellectual life – of our first qualitative study, *Complexities*. It brought a kind of realism and contextualism to my thoughts and considerations of educational

psychology and the nature of schooling. Additionally, in a fundamental sense it was an alternative *way of thinking*, a mode of inquiry into educational issues that I found to be personally and intellectually comfortable, provocative, and amazingly flexible. Without realizing the full implications at the time, this would be the educational innovation that would pervade most of my professional life over the next several decades. Each of the substantive issues, and many were focused on specific educational innovations: teaching, learning, curriculum, evaluation, and school organization, were important, but they were almost vehicles for the bigger innovation, *alternative ways of thinking.*

For reasons that are no longer clear to me, early on I seemed to find an intellectual home in the broad value embedded movements of *democratic liberalism, secular humanism,* and the ideals of *liberty, equality, and fraternity* of the French Revolution. An Oberlin College undergraduate education was vital here I am sure, but the roots are deeper I believe, for the readings, discussions, and debates of those years fell on fertile soil. Forty years in the Department of Education at Washington University echoed and supported deliberations in the multiple variations of these ideas and values.

Idealism, realism, and reform seem to have driven my inquiry and substantive thoughts from the beginning. The titles of books, monographs, and essays indicates some of that substance: the complexities of an urban classroom (Smith & Goeffrey, 1968); anatomy of educational innovation (Smith & Keith, 1971); educational technology and the rural highlands (Smith & Carpenter, 1972); an evolving logic of participant observation, educational ethnography, and other case studies (Smith, 1979); educational innovators: then and now (Smith, Kleine, Prunty, & Dwyer, 1986); the fate of an innovative school (Smith, Kleine, Prunty, & Dwyer, 1987); innovation and change in schooling: history, politics, and agency (1987); biographical method (1992); and now, most recently, urban parent education: dilemmas and resolutions (Smith, in press-b) and Nora Barlow and the Darwin legacy (in process). The blend of ethnography, history, and biography as both substance and method undergirds much of my thought.

*Serendipity*, the happy accidents of an intellectual career and life, seems to have been a part of my activities in and concerns for educational innovation and reform almost from the beginning of my explorations. Joining the faculty of Washington University as a young man in my middle twenties is one such major happy accident. Receiving an invitation to participate in the first international Cambridge Curriculum Evaluation conference in 1972 brought a dimension of internationalism to my experience that has remained in multiple manifestations. It, too, was serendipitous, a marvelously happy accident.

*Internationalism* received a further major increment in a year long sabbatical and research Fulbright at Massey University in Palmerston North, New Zealand. What started out to be an integrative move regarding qualitative and quantitative methods for studying classroom interaction became a foray into philosophy and eventually a realization about paradigms and the coming paradigm revolution. Bright young colleagues pulled me irrevocably into broader issues. And the experience sealed our

interests in being a part of other international communities – Turkey, England, Germany, Israel, and Australia. Ways of thinking led inexorably into alternative *ways of living*. Cultures have considerable power.

I seem to have, most of the time if not always, *a broad, open agenda* of questions, problems, and partially developed ideas. Correlated with this agenda is an ability to *sniff out or see the good idea*, a mix of intuition and a trusting my own judgment, a confidence that the problem was one worthy of pursuing. I've never quite understood where that came from or why I felt that way.

This open ended agenda always seems to be looking for a time and place or a setting in which I can develop and exploit the questions and problems. This seems to intertwine with a kind of *opportunism*, a flexibility in trying to capitalize on available important possibilities. I believed – or rationalized – that there would always be a time and place in the future when other high priority items would be explored.

Mixed within these issues was an evolving set of ideas, methods, and practices. Each new substantive problem and its idiosyncratic setting demanded the invention of small and large methodological and procedural ways of coming to grips with the questions, problems, and ideas. Practices involved those of teaching, learning, and inquiring.

With such a broad, open ended, opportunistic, and evolving agenda a tension and struggle existed for integrity, developing multiple kinds of syntheses. Throughout, the many forms of the personal and the professional cried out for integration and synthesis. A commitment to the tensions and dilemmas of the particular and the general, the concrete and the abstract, and the "is" and the "ought" were never distant from my thoughts and activities.

Being in an education department facilitated and constrained a number of related items. In a fundamental sense it solved the *audience problem* easily, perhaps too easily. Early on I found that I was inquiring, writing, and teaching toward groups of people called teachers – preservice, inservice, and doctoral and postdoctoral. Psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists, while important were not the focal group for me. My thoughts seemed always to flow back into the multiple practices of these several groups of educators.

In a sense, the agenda would never be finished. A kind of unfinalizability existed. At sixty five years and in retirement, this takes on a different complexion than it had thirty years before when one's time and energy seemed limitless. Yet new-old problems continue to surface – train whistles continue to call alluringly.

## REFERENCES

Becker, H. S., Geer, B., Hughes, E. C., & Strauss, A. L. (1961). *Boys in white: Student culture in medical school.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bestor, A. (1953). *Educational wasteland.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Bruyn, S. T. (1966). *The human perspective in sociology: The methodology of participant observation.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Prentice Hall.

Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. C. (1963). Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research in teaching. In N. Gage (Ed.), *Handbook of research in teaching.* Chicago: Rand McNally.
Connor, W.H., & Smith, L. M. (1967). *Analysis of patterns of student teaching.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education, Bureau of Research Final Report 5–8204.
Geer, B. (1964). First days in the field. In P. Hammond (Ed.), *Sociologists at work.* New York: Basic Books Inc.
Hamilton, D. et al. (Eds.). (1977). *Beyond the numbers game.* London: MacMillan Educ. Ltd.
Homans, G. C. (1950). *The human group.* New York: Harcourt Brace.
Maslow, A. S. (1943) The authoritarian character study. *Journal of Social Psychology*, **18**, 401–411.
Maslow, A. H. (1965). Observing and reporting education experiments. *Humanist*, **25**, 13.
Miles, M., & Haberman, A. M. (1984). *Qualitative data analysis.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
Rogers, C. (1942). *Counseling and psychotherapy.* Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
Rogers, C. R. (1951). *Client centered therapy.* Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
Rogers, C. R. (1972). Learning to be free. In R. Biehler (Ed.), *Psychology applied to teaching: Selected readings.* New York: Houghton-Mifflin.
Smith, L. M. (1977). *Kensington revisited: A mid to long term follow-up of an innovative school and its faculty.* Grant Proposal, N.I.E.
Smith, L. M. (1979). An evolving logic of participant observation, educational ethnography and other case studies. In L. Shulman (Ed.), *Review of research in education* (pp. 316–377). Chicago: Peacock Press.
Smith, L. M. (1987). The voyage of the Beagle: Fieldwork lessons from Charles Darwin. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, **23**, 5–30.
Smith, L. M. (1992). *Doing ethnographic biography: A reflective practitioner at work during a spring in Cambridge.* St. Louis, MO: Washington University. (Unpublished manuscript)
Smith, L. M. (1994). Biographical methods. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative methods.* Sage Publications.
Smith, L. M. (in press-a). The complexities of the authoritarian personality: An alternative perspective of Principal Haines. In S. Lee (Ed.), *Emerging perspectives and images of the principalship.* Hampton Press.
Smith, L. M. (in press-b). *Nora Barlow and the Darwin legacy.* Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press. (in process)
Smith, L. M., & Carpenter, P. (1972). *General reinforcement package project: Qualitative observation and interpretation.* St. Ann, MO.: CEMREL, Inc.
Smith, L. M., Dwyer, D. C., Prunty, J. J., & Kleine, P. F. (1988). *Innovation and change in schooling: History, politics, and agency.* London: The Falmer Press.
Smith, L. M., & Geoffrey, W. (1968). *The complexities of an urban classroom.* New York: Holt.
Smith, L. M., & Keith, P. (1971). *Anatomy of educational innovation.* New York: Wiley.
Smith, L. M., Kleine, P. F., Prunty, J. J., & Dwyer, D. C. (1986). *Educational innovators: Then and now.* London: Falmer Press.
Smith, L. M., & Pohland, P. A. (1974). Education, technology and the rural highlands. In D. Sjogren (Ed.), *Four evaluation examples: Anthropological, economic, narrative, and portrayal.* Chicago, Ill.: Rand McNally.
Smith, L. M., Prunty, J. J., Dwyer, D. C., & Kleine, P. F. (1987). *The fate of an innovative school: The history and present status of the Kensington School.* London: Falmer Press.
Whyte, W. E. (1955). *Street corner society.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
Wolfe, T. (1979). *The right stuff.* New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.

# School-Based Curriculum Development

MALCOLM SKILBECK
*OECD, Paris*

The concept of school based curriculum development has been central to my professional concerns and ways of thinking about educational change since the late 1950's. It had two main tributaries: my early experience and dialogue with colleagues as a secondary school teacher in London; and the interest I took as a graduate student in Australia, the U.S. and England in the educational philosophies of John Dewey and Alfred North Whitehead and the international movements of progressive education with their eighteen century roots in the Enlightenment and the Romantic Movement.

But perhaps the real starting point was my conviction as a high school student, that schooling should and could be vastly improved. At that time, fifty years ago, my belief was that educational change, whatever else it might entail, depends on teachers showing more enterprise and a greater creativity in the organisation of the school day, in what they teach and how they help each student to encounter the world of learning. Despite the progress in half a century of educational practice, research and theory, these challenges still face today's schools. The contemporary debates about quality, standards, performance, assessment and so on have thrown up many new system-wide structures and procedures but none should obscure the fundamental importance of the school itself and of teaching as the focus of effort and activity in nurturing basic educational values, fostering student growth and achieving crucial societal goals.

My own career as an educator has taken me to many different settings in several countries and it is in these that I have deepened my understanding of the relationship between the school as an entity or a social organism and the curriculum as a framework for collective action and individual growth. In what follows, I discuss my experience in several of these settings and attempt to draw out the different perspectives to which they have given rise.

In selecting settings of school-based curriculum development in which I have personally participated, my aim is much wider: to draw attention to an international movement in educational reform and to clarify some of the central issues in the debate about the value, effectiveness and feasibility of school-based curriculum development. At issue is not a fragmented set of ideas and experiences but the future of the school itself. The five themes around which I weave my story are these:

1. Teacher professional development and participation: a retrospective.



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 109-132.

2. A national curriculum development centre: Australia;
3. The role of a national curriculum and examinations council: England and Wales;
4. Freedom for curriculum making in the university;
5. The educational perspectives of a multi-national think tank.

## TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION: A RETROSPECTIVE

English education during the ninety sixties went through a period of large scale and, for a country with strong conservative inclinations, quite radical changes, one of whose aims was a new kind of teacher professionalism based on systematic inquiry, research and theoretical analysis.

After some years as a secondary school teacher in London and a lecturer in part-time bachelor degree programmes for U.S. military personnel on air bases in Southern England I moved into the UK university system. For more than a decade my career was in teacher education and educational research in the Universities of Bristol (England) and Ulster (Northern Ireland), first as a lecturer, than as professor and dean. This entailed continuing engagement with experienced teachers, school principals and various support personnel (advisers, counsellors, inspectors) and evaluators and researchers. It included funded development projects involving networks of schools and highly localised work with individuals and groups of teachers and single institutions.

### *Creating a climate of reform: An era of national inquiries and new structures*

A series of notable, independent, national inquiries in the nineteen sixties set the stage for what many people believed would be a new era, for British primary, secondary and higher education. In 1959, under the chairmanship of Geoffrey Crowther, the government's Central Advisory Council for Education (C.A.C.) reported on education for fifteen to eighteen year olds. The C.A.C was a national consultative and advisory mechanism which could be activated periodically by central government to undertake inquiries into designated aspects of education. It was widely and effectively used before being abandoned in the 1970s as governments and administrations, perhaps more intent on controlling and directing, found less use for independent advice.

The Crowther report ranged widely over the expanding field of schooling for those staying on beyond the statutory leaving age (then fifteen years), scrutinising, in depth, that heartland of the selective grammar school the sixth form, which fed students into higher education through the "A" level examinations. The Crowther Committee's emphasis in its analysis of sixth form education was very much on standards and continuity of a tradition of study in depth of a restricted number of subjects at a time when increasing numbers of students were staying on and

seeking entry to higher education. The task was not so much to further extend freedom to schools and teachers for initiative and independent judgement as to ensure that cohorts of appropriately educated students continued to flow through their sixth forms and the advanced upper secondary school examinations ("A levels") into universities and the more prestigious occupations.

Curriculum, in the Crowther view of the sixth form and the culture from which it stems, is "classical": it has a basic form which is believed not to be contingent on time and place or persons but on an objective structure of the disciplines of knowledge. These disciplines, developed in their fundamentals by successive generations of scholars, are shaped into school subject matter by teachers nurtured in them and working through their professional associations (scientists, modern linguists, historians, etc.). Of crucial importance in this process were – and are – the examining bodies which, external to the school and closely linked with the universities, set national standards. These provide targets for students to attain under the guidance of teachers whose job is to prepare their charges for successful performance. While other important curriculum roles for teachers are acknowledged (e.g. moral education) this induction into the culture of the subject is the key one. A key structural element in this approach is the subject department: a tightly integrated unit of single subject specialist teachers working towards a common goal.

The Crowther Report was only partly about the sixth form in the selective grammar schools. It made many recommendations, including a new kind of education for those students who, staying on beyond the age of fifteen, had other destinations than the sixth form and the university. Subsequently, the Central Advisory Council for Education, was reconstitued under the chairmanship of John Newsom, a county education authority officer. It turned its attention to the "other half", those students who, not bound for higher education, were preparing for technical or clerical occupations or simply biding time before entering the labour market as relatively low skilled workers, for whom there was then still a high demand.

In former years these students would have completed an elementary education, perhaps extended into adolescence by two or three years, and then entered the work force. As a result of the eventual raising of the permitted school leaving age from fifteen to sixteen years, recommended by Crowther and endorsed by Newsom, students whose expectations were very largely driven by the prospect of early employment found themselves, willy nilly, in formal tutelage at school well into their adolescent years. As for the attitude of many students towards compulsory schooling, however, in the memorable words of one student who was asked by his headmaster for his response to the new facilities and opportunities: "It could all be marble, sir, it would still be a bloody school".

The 1963 report of the Newsom Committee, *Half Our Future*, was prefaced by this remark, which could be seen as both defining a need and providing a text for a great wave of curriculum change and teacher professional development that ensued in England and Wales. For students covered by the terms of reference of

the Newsom Committee (age 13–16, of "average or less than average ability") the need for a rethinking of the curriculum, of learning and teaching tasks, was underlined.

In the name of the chairman of the Committee, numerous so-called Newsom or "raising the schooling leaving age" (ROSLA) programmes sprang up, with substantial support from central and local government alike. These programmes provided one framework, but by no means the only one, for creative and innovative approaches by schools to the education of the adolescent in the 1960s. No less important was the national drive towards comprehensive secondary education, never fully achieved in England but given powerful impetus by a central government ministerial circular (10/65) which urged local education authorities to hasten and deepen the transformation of the long-established selective system into a comprehensive one. Other forces also at work included, notably, the Schools Council for Curriculum and Examinations, established in 1963 as a kind of national co-operation between central government, local education authorities and the teachers' unions, to foster curriculum innovation and to oversight and bring into play new approaches to national examinations and assessment.

Thus three major developments – the publication of a key document focused on an education that would engage the interests and expand the horizons of students often indifferent or hostile to schools, the implementation of the common or comprehensive school and the establishment of a major national centre to foster and support curriculum and examinations reform – paved the way for innovations in curriculum and assessment in which attention was focused on the roles of the student, the teacher and the school.

Reform in the 1960s was not, however, confined to secondary schools. In 1963, a separately established committee of inquiry, under the chairmanship of academic economist Lionel Robbins, reported on higher education. This report was to have a great impact in the ensuing decades, finally destroying the notion that a fixed "pool of ability" determines the limits of expansion of enrolments in undergraduate degrees and espousing, instead of centrally controlled manpower planning, the principle of expansion according to student demand. The Robbins Report (1963) is a reminder that, in universities in England – and in many other countries – the curriculum is indeed "school" based. It is so in the design process, the selection of sources and reference materials and the assessment procedures. The single institution and the teachers in it play the key roles. This was so much taken for granted that the Robbins Committee confined its comments on the curriculum and teaching to such matters as the desirability of non-specialist degrees and small group and tutorial teaching.

Mention should be made last, but by no means least, of the third of the Central Advisory Council's great reports of the 60s, *Children and Their Primary Schools*, (1967) named eponymously for its chairperson, Lady Plowden. As with Newsom, this report, as well as discussing innovative ideas and practices already in the schools, encouraged and stimulated a wave of initiatives and development in the curriculum for the primary school. Emphasis was placed on addressing children's

interests and meeting their needs in a more responsive way than was (and still is) the common practice.

Partly as a result of this climate of change and reform in England and Wales in the late fifties and into the early seventies that characterised much of the national policy analysis of future educational needs – but for other reasons too – the established and the possible new roles of the classroom teacher came to the fore. It was not that the major reports identified school based curriculum development as the way ahead but that conditions favourable for increased initiative, creativity and curriculum responsibility at the school level were consistently advocated and comprehensively analysed.

Yet another committee, appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science and chaired by the well known grammar school head (and, later, university vice-chancellor) Eric (subsequently Lord) James reported in 1972 on the changes needed in the selection, initial and continuing education of teachers. The attention to the continuing professional education and development of the teaching force in support of a broadly based concept of teacher professionalism was a key feature of the James report.

Although the James Committee sought to underscore the importance of enhanced teacher professionalism through career long education, such a development never resulted in the shift of policy – and of resources – required to make this a reality. But these ideas did coincide with and give added impetus to moves being made in many of Britain's universities for a new orientation to teacher education. Traditionally and typically, the English universities had addressed the initial stage of professional teacher education requirements through post-graduate programmes, usually of one year's duration and following a first degree; these led to a teaching diploma or certificate for future secondary school teachers (the so-called consecutive model). The separate colleges of education had provided concurrent courses, commonly of two- and then of three-years' duration mainly for future primary or early childhood teachers but also for some future secondary teachers and various specialist programmes including technical and vocational and physical education. University provision for advanced study of education leading to the degree of master or doctor (mainly by research) existed and there were many kinds of short "refresher" courses including summer schools; yet, until well into the nineteen sixties, the continuing education of teachers through the advanced study of education was severely limited in scope and scale.

The nineteen sixties witnessed a profound transformation, as a result of which there is now in Britain a comprehensive structure of advanced course work degrees, including "taught" doctorates, a strong education research culture, and a recognition at least in principle that the continuing high level education of teachers is an essential condition of a well functioning and effective educational system. Teacher development and curriculum development, including assessment procedures must go hand in hand.

The sketch above of an era of reform strongly coloured by committee review and analysis tells only part of the story of change in the sixties in curriculum,

schooling and teaching and in conditions affecting educational study and development. A separate chapter would be needed to discuss the innovations through large scale curriculum development projects – in the sciences, mathematics, humanities, social sciences and technical subjects – sponsored by foundations such as Nuffield and the Schools Council. All in all there were many powerful forces at work; indeed a gathering momentum of educational reform in the '60s and early '70s provided a highly favourable national context for innovation. This "era of reports" had highlighted the need for competent, responsible and responsive teachers, for a heightened professionalism in the teaching force, for creative and energetic leadership both within schools and in the systems of which they were part, and for a fresh look at the assumptions, values and structures that governed curricula, teaching and learning. The reports were optimistic in tone, and generally inspired forward-looking ideas along the lines that changes were needed, were possible and could be expected to have beneficent effects. They provided a context for reforms both in the schools themselves and in the universities and colleges responsible for teacher education.

Notwithstanding the constructive analyses and the positive tone of the numerous recommendations made in these reports, major problems in the design and delivery of schooling were to remain. While many of the recommendations were acted upon from the early seventies onwards, there has been in England and Wales in the 80's and 90's a far less optimistic spirit in national policy overviews, mounting pressure on resources and accumulating evidence of great difficulty in providing an education of an adequate standard to all students. But it is not a denial of subsequent constraints and difficulties to affirm that conditions favourable to school creativity and initiative and to teacher professionalism underwent a fundamental change in the sixties. This was a period of substantial quantitative growth: numbers of students – and teachers – in schools increased markedly, new buildings and improved facilities were – if never sufficient – still in abundant supply, the teacher education institutions, both colleges and universities, were expanding and a new national education policy framework and structures for curriculum research and development provided a great stimulus as well as a profound challenge to all who were ready to listen, note and respond.

These were conditions that fostered a climate of innovation and a confidence that the whole education system could be raised to new levels. They were not, as is sometimes suggested today, merely matters of quantity, of providing sufficient places for all concerned, to the neglect of quality considerations. As the major national reports and the establishment of the Schools Council so clearly indicated, there was as much interest in efforts to define or redefine quality, to make schooling more attractive, engaging and relevant to individual and social needs as in ways of providing enough places for all those who needed or wished to be in school.

### *New university and college programmes for teachers*

The climate of national education reform proved congenial to many of us who were teaching in university institutes and departments of education and teachers'

colleges in the sixties. I was appointed in 1963 as a lecturer in education to the University of Bristol Institute of Education. Under the outstanding leadership and liberal guidance of two very fine educators, Professor Ben Morris and Hannah Berry, my job was to teach educational theory to experienced teachers undertaking an advanced academic professional qualification, the Advanced Certificate of Education. For some students, this led through a research dissertation to a Diploma, and on to a higher degree by research. Very soon, we became involved in the development of a masters degree by coursework (M. Ed.). Then, in the aftermath of the James Committee, for initial teacher education and in association with the colleges of education that were linked to the University through the Institute of Education and the faculties of the university, we constructed the B.Ed. degree, which progressively supplanted the college-based certificate.

It very soon became apparent that the national reform agenda of that time could not be sustained unless there were new orientations to the study of education and to the further or continuing education of already trained and experienced teachers. A new level of need and expectation had arisen. The task was to provide the right kind of academic environment for a more thoughtful, reflective and theoretically grounded teacher professionalism. Without strengthened bases of knowledge and sharpened tools of inquiry and analysis, teachers might remain good craftworkers but could not sufficiently respond to the deeper challenges of reform and change that were being so strongly voiced. For initial preparation, the B.Ed. degree, and for advanced study following on a substantial period of teaching experience, the M. Ed. degree, were to be the main academic vehicles. Neither was thought of as other than a marriage of "knowing that" and "knowing how" or, to use the familiar if rather misleading dichotomy – a blend of theory and practice.

With some notable exceptions, the indigenous literature of educational research and theory and of reflective or anecdotal experience was still, in Britain in the sixties, inadequate. There was no tradition of systematic use of the one body of literature in English that could have been of great value, namely the American. Indeed, there was a tendency at first in many quarters to treat this as alien and even to ignore or play down the relevance of the pioneering work of Dewey in philosophy, Thorndike and Cronbach in psychology, Meade and Counts in sociology, Butts and Cremin in history. One of the most urgent challenges was to greatly enlarge the existing base of research and theory and, in so doing, to reconceptualise the fundamental task of the school and the nature of curriculum and pedagogy. The new professional degrees for teachers drew attention to this need and were instrumental in meeting it as, first, the academics and then their students built an indigenous knowledge base for pedagogical action and, over time, broadened it by drawing upon the American and Continental traditions of educational inquiry and analysis.

This task of systematically addressing the need for a comprehensive knowledge base of research and theory has been accomplished, with great if paradoxical success: as educational knowledge has developed, increased and diversified, so has the public level of discontent with the performance of schools risen. This is not

the place to go into the reasons for this discontent; it is enough to say that there appears to be a considerable and perhaps a growing gap between public expectations, the actions of many schools and teachers and the knowledge base that has been generated.

There has always been a gap of sorts. It led some of us in the mid 1960s to the conclusion that the direct engagement of classroom teachers in the major tasks of designing, developing and evaluating-as well as implementing-the curriculum was needed as one contribution to closing it. At one and the same time, practical efforts would be made to improve children's curriculum experience and the base of systematic educational knowledge would be strengthened. This could be accomplished by teachers on degree courses combining the academic study of curriculum constructs with their direct engagement in development projects aimed at trying out ideas and evaluating the results. Courses could – and should – be designed in universities to achieve these objectives and this is how I proceeded in my own courses and seminar discussions in the curriculum strand of the Bristol M. Ed. degree. Groups of quite outstanding students, most of them studying part time, read their way into the literature (usually American to start with) and, in their dissertations, analysed their own development projects, often in the schools in which they were themselves teaching. There were no artificial lines or discontinuities between the academic study and analysis of school level curriculum development: each provided insights and informed the other. Of critical importance was the capacity of experienced classroom teachers to engage in and be well attuned to research, and to be able to interrelate research, the classroom and theoretical perspectives. A fruitful, related development of this theme has been the teacher as researcher or action research movement. (This has close conceptual links with school based curriculum development although its practice has diverged somewhat).

It should not be assumed that there was uniform, consistent progress in addressing these ambitious goals. A great difficulty with the literature of education that was drawn upon in the sixties and seventies, including research design and methodology, was the inaccessibility of the language, the unfamiliarity of the concepts and the rigidities of the academic distinctions that were often drawn between the "disciplines" of knowledge that were held, in Britain at any rate, to provide the intellectual underpinning of the study – and the reflective practice – of education.

It seemed to me then, as it does now, that there was need for analytical frameworks that could serve as bridges between the unexamined, unreflective experience of the practitioner (which often includes the so-called implicit or tacit knowledge about which Michael Polanyi wrote so perceptively and the formal knowledge structures used and developed by theoreticians and researchers who have taken educational processes as their subject of inquiry. There are several such bridges but I can think of none more significant for understanding education and practising the art of teaching than those provided by the systematic analysis of curriculum and pedagogy, supported by research reports, theoretical literature and

field projects. Moreover, such study requires opportunity and provision for continuing professional education: it cannot be adequately undertaken in initial teacher education although that is its starting point.

Throughout the period covered in this paper and in a great variety of settings, it is apparent that the term school based curriculum development has been used in many different ways. This is because it refers not so much to a particular strategy or set of procedures as a basic educational principle and to ways and means of effective educational change at the local level. All usages, however, presuppose an active role for the school both contributory and creative in determining what is to be taught and defining a context for learning. In order to grasp its specific meanings and its significance as a principle for action, however, we need to see it in its contexts of educational policies, values, structures and settings. In this as in other respects school based curriculum development has much in common with the Northern European concept of didactics.

At one level of analysis, school-based curriculum development encompasses the numerous, diverse and often mundane activities undertaken by schools, teachers and students as they go about their normal business of teaching and learning, regardless of ultimate authority for fundamental decisions about the overall shape and content of the curriculum. In this sense, it is part of the normal or ordinary business of the profession of teaching.

At a more systemic level, school-based curriculum development derives from a conception of the school as both locus and prime agent in a complex set of processes ranging from national – or international – educational policies to the distribution through the entire educational system of responsibility for decisions about what is to be taught, by whom and with what means. In this sense, while broad goals and frameworks of subject matter may be – and usually are – nationally determined the school has a definite responsibility in transforming these generalities into actual curricula. Thus, the responsibility of the school for curriculum development cannot be determined either by the individual school alone or by reference only to what schools do: the school is part of a wider context, usually of a system whose elements interact. But within that system it is not simply a delivery agency; it has to create the curriculum within the national (or state/regional etc.) framework.

Moreover, no matter what the level or form of analysis adopted, a misconception needs to be cleared up: school-based curriculum development, while it necessarily involves teachers as key actors, is not reducible to individual teachers constructing *ab initio* and then implementing curriculum entirely and exclusively of their own devising. The "school" is more than the teachers who work in it and "curriculum" is wider and deeper than lesson plans, syllabuses and such like.

In reflecting on my own participation over several decades in curriculum development and analysis, in policy advice, review and evaluation, in several countries and in different institutional settings, I am drawn to the conclusion that schools should not be seen or see themselves as merely places for the delivery of decisions taken elsewhere; schools and teachers have a wide and complex set of curriculum roles to perform. These roles naturally depend in part on the context of policy,

traditions and culture within which they work – and to which they contribute, and in part on the mentality of the prime actors; teachers, yes, but not only teachers. As for the task of local "development" of the curriculum, that, too, is diverse, ranging from quite modest adaptations of highly structured text materials to meet the needs of particular groups of students, to the creation and construction of quite substantial learning programmes.

Over several decades of intense activity in a number of countries, the concept of school-based curriculum development as outlined here has been enriched and many players have thereby contributed to the progressive deepening of understanding of the broader field of curriculum studies. The "movement" of school-based curriculum development has not perhaps provided the mainstream of educational development in any one country or system, yet it is a form of change which is of considerable interest alike to practitioners and policy makers, to researchers and theoreticians. Its time is still to come but its relevance is increasing as countries move further in the direction of decentralisation of their education systems and devolution of many kinds of responsibility to schools.

Thus the current major OECD-wide analysis of unemployment *(The Jobs Study)* and the Organisation's major report on lifelong learning call upon countries to encourage teachers to participate more fully in curriculum development, a recommendation which echoes the conviction that changes made by and within individual schools are a necessary part of national strategies to improve jobs prospects for youth and produce a well educated populace. This growing emphasis on the role of the school provides opportunities for improving the quality and relevance of what is taught and strengthening teacher professionalism. The focus on local decision making and management also raises questions about overall goals of educational systems, frameworks for decision making and monitoring and evaluation procedures. Finally, it concentrates attention by policy makers on ways of achieving greater educational efficiency in resource utilisation and cost containment.

But what of the concepts of curriculum and of education which underpin views about the role of the school?. The definition of school-based curriculum development is impoverished unless it reflects wider views about education, the role of schools, of teachers and of the communities of which they are part.

In my book, *School Based Curriculum Development*, I defined curriculum as "the learning experiences of students, in so far as they are expressed or anticipated in educational goals and objectives, plans and designs for learning and the implementation of these plans and designs in school environments" (1985, p. 21). "School based", in this conception of curriculum, means that major decisions about the design, content, organisation, and presentation of the curriculum, about pedagogy and about assessment of learning will be taken at the school level. These decisions do not preclude major national level decisions on all of these matters nor, as indicated above, do they imply that teachers alone will take the decisions. But, it is essential to pay close attention to the roles of the teacher and the individual school, for two reasons. First, the common but mistaken belief is that the curriculum is "given", that it should be mainly delivered through the study of

texts and other prescribed materials, that examinations and tests provide an appropriate external assessment of teachers as well as students and that they provide a virtual syllabus of ground to be covered. Second, the changes occurring in education and the great array of tasks outlined in policy documents, worldwide presuppose, even where they do not explicitly propose, new roles and responsibilities for teachers. A recent example is the UNESCO report, *The Treasure Within,* which constantly underpins its recommendations for system change with support for teacher professionalism.

The challenge to the notion of curriculum as "given", as a course to be run (instead of running a course) or ground to be covered, needs to be posed in every era. Far from being a passing fad or radical chic, it draws on a long tradition of education which focuses on the learner as the centre of effort and attention. Learning is conceived in this tradition as a process of construction of meaning and progressive enhanced of competence through active engagement with data, materials, ideas, an encounter which takes place in a context extending beyond the individual learner to group and institutional settings and the goals and values which shape them.

The alternative view, likewise embedded in history, treats curriculum as a given, as something determined and set from without, as a corpus of knowledge and skills to be "transmitted", of subject matter to be assimilated and memorised for reproduction in tests and examinations. The school and the teacher thus become means or agents, not primarily of the learner but of the forces that impinge upon the school. Thereby educational values, those that foster the growth and development of the person and in Dewey's (1916) term, the "reconstruction of experience", are readily subsumed within other values such as the individualistic action of "getting the grade" or passing the test, or the collectivist functions of socialisation, or the needs of the economy. The critical as distinct from the adaptive philosophy of curriculum, however, scrutinises and challenges, it does not merely "adjust" or "adapt" to circumstances as they are; the key point, therefore, in this conception of curriculum is the evolving, shifting structure of experience, both personal and group.

Were the learner fully autonomous and, in some ideal sense, self determining, the curriculum could be thought of as a kind of map of the autonomous life, incorporating self-selected and self-governed experience: the learner provides his or her own learning, drawing upon whatever resources seem apt and are at hand. This, indeed, is the overarching aim and it sets a target or goal for continuing, lifelong learning. It is a goal whose realisation could be greatly facilitated by a creative and flexible use of modern information technology, but that is another story.

The significance of the school, however, and of school-based curriculum development is that the school is the agency, the only one in the contemporary world, whose character can be comprehensively defined as educative: its *raison d'être* and the criteria we must use in evaluating it are, through and through, educational. It exists to support, sustain and foster the ability to learn and is thus

a key mediating agency, between those social and economic forces and pressures which seek to impinge upon the learner, the domains of knowledge, skill and understanding, and the learner.

In Alfred North Whitehead's words, "the first requisite for education reform is the school as a unit with its approved curriculum based on its own needs, and evolved by its own staff (Whitehead, 1932, p. 11).

This is not school idolatry or sentimentality directed at a mystique of "the teacher". Rather, it is robust statement about why we have schools at all and the challenge the school must take up if it is to perform its educative role. For the mere transmission of knowledge and the preoccupation with preparing students for national, external examinations or tests are based on ultimately unsustainable claims about what best motivates student learning and what at a given age or stage they "should" en masse know or be able to do. Likewise the ranking of schools as if they were in a horse race (but without assigned handicaps in recognition of their unequal features distorts education goals and values in a quite fundamental way. This compromises the mission of the school, which is to foster the growth of students in appropriate ways, to educate every one of its members. These excessively competitive viewpoints and values are external to education and treat education as instrumental to other ends or purposes, for example social control, screening for occupations or further study and national economic and political competitiveness. Each has its place, of course, but must be consistent with motivating learning.

The educational rationale for school based curriculum development has its own legitimacy which is central to educational inquiry and reflective analysis of why we have schools at all. There are, of course, other legitimate rationales for educational policy and decision making which lead to conclusions of a different order from those I have drawn. Moreover, as I have suggested, the role of the school in curriculum development is never exclusive. But in the immediacy and directness of student learning and in mediating the numerous functions that schools perform under pressure or constraint from society at large, the school should aim to address all of the basic questions about curriculum. In saying that, I do not seek to hypostatise the school or the teachers but to reach a clearer contemporary understanding of the educational rationale for schools and schooling and their place in the wider educational processes of society. However, the school alone cannot and should not try to undertake the whole enterprise of education nor can individual schools or teachers act independently of the wider educational, cultural, social, economic and political spheres within and through which they must function.

No sooner were the ideas and ideals of school based curriculum development being presented than difficulties and objections were raised, many from within the teaching profession itself. First, some difficulties. Does school-based curriculum development presuppose that all aspects of curriculum will be "developed" in the individual school? The answer is clearly "not so" since the transactions between learners and sources and bodies of knowledge and the settings in which they take place depend for their effect on a considerable variety of sources and influences

external to the individual school. These include system-wide statements of educational goals, directions and values, structured learning materials, resources and equipment, books, films, tapes, instruments, the data yielded by field visits and studies, the shared expectations and understanding of groups of teachers and their reference groups and so on. The term to note here is school-based: the school is the site, or setting for decisions, the base from which forays are made into the wider arena and to which, like teachers and students returning from a field trip, are brought the experience, materials and ideas to work into educational projects. Need all teachers be actively involved in curriculum development or, more precisely, are there differentiated roles for teachers – and students, parents, community members and so on? It is not possible, here, to go into the details of role differentiation; suffice to say that as talents and interests vary and as there are different kinds of development tasks to perform, matching procedures are inevitable.

The object of school-based curriculum development is to encourage and enable the school, or communities of students, teachers, parents and others, to be creative and innovatory to draw upon the wide array of resources in constructing and reconstructing those learning transactions that we have defined as "curricula". This implies neither teacher-based curriculum development nor the notion of the school as a free floating entity somehow independent of or indifferent to its environment. Containly this is a challenge and a difficult one for many teachers and administrators.

School-based curriculum development does, however, point in the direction of significant change: a fundamental change in the conception of learning and a no less important change in organisation, management, governance and decision-making: emphasising responsible freedom, responsiveness and accountability by all members of the school community.

In part it is continuing confusion over this conception of school-based curriculum development as the freedom of *inter-dependence* which has been an obstacle to those transformations of national education policies which many of us looked for in the 1960s. The term still gives rise to many misconceptions, as if what is being proposed is every school as a miniature national materials development and evaluation centre.

Perhaps the chief difficulty or barrier to the school functioning in the manner I have outlined is the enduring mentality of significant parts of the teaching profession itself and those who administer the school system. This is the mentality of dependence and the quest for security – or what Eric Fromm called the fear of freedom. It is often disguised as "lack of time/lack of resources" or, even, lack of expertise. Officials and politicians can still act as if they are responsible for an enfeebled profession incapable of taking responsible action or determining what is in the best interests of those in their direct charge.

The time/resource issues are, of course, essentially a matter of management. As the title of a report in 1994 by an education commission in the United States has it, we are too easily "Prisoners of Time". One of the great and fundamentally unnecessary rigidities of schooling is the organisation of the school day into timetabled slots of standard duration and of the atomisation of the curriculum into

content packages that "fit" (or frequently misfit!) these time slots. This is a legacy of the early years of industrialisation and large scale factory production which coincided with (and indeed materially fostered) the establishment of national systems of elementary education. What were initially expedient methods of handling large numbers of students with only basically trained teachers, and accommodating them in banks of standardised classrooms became the norm – the "proper" way of educating children. Criteria of social management, efficiency, order and control and covering the ground in basic subjects prevailed.

Resource scarcity is a relative concept ("relative deprivation"); teachers and administrators in the technically and economically advanced societies who use this as a reason for didactic, textbook-based instructions or constant whole class teaching need to be reminded of the really serious problems of resource scarcity in the poorer two thirds of the world's nations. Resource constraints of some kind are ever present and while they indicate conditions, they are not a reason for organisational inflexibility.

These comments may seem rather hard on teachers and administrators of systems who frequently work under severe pressure and in demanding conditions. They have perhaps greater aptness when applied to school and system leaders: principals, department heads, local and regional officials than to classroom teachers. Often, indeed, curriculum policies are set nationally and quite rigid conditions laid down regarding what is to be taught, in what period of time and how it is to be assessed. These conditions and other structural impediments have, however, been changing and with the moves in many countries towards a greater devolution of financial responsibility, governance, management and other kinds of decision making, there is an emerging challenge to schools to take a more creative and energetic role in determining what is to be taught as well as how to teach it.

## A REGIONAL PROJECT: CULTURAL CULTURAL STUDIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

From 1971 until 1975 I worked as professor of education at the then New University of Ulster, combining this role for most of the time with that of director of the University's Education Centre. This Centre was an unusual, possibly unique, blending of university faculty of teacher education and research with a regional teachers' centre. Governed by a board which included both local/regional and province level education representatives (teachers, local authority and government department), the Education Centre was designed as an expression of the University's interest in partnership with the wider education community.

The first half of the seventies was the period of most intense violence and military and police activity in a Province which has now, for nearly thirty years, experienced almost continuous tension and frequent bloodshed. With occasional exceptions, schools have not been directly involved and indeed have provided havens of calm, settled and constructive life for children many of whom otherwise have been heavily constrained or caught up in clashes between divided communities.

With encouragement from a leading member of the Quaker community in my former university, Bristol, the late Professor Roger Wilson, I proposed to the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust a school based curriculum development project aimed specifically at a quest for common values, experiences and interests among secondary schools from the parochial (Roman Catholic) and state (effectively Protestant) sectors. The schools were to nominate teachers interested in working in teams "across the divide" in professional discussions and in preparing teaching resources and learning activities. The object was to help teachers who in turn would encourage students to break out of the historically moulded sectarian mind sets that their everyday experience outside schools (and inside too) fostered. A project steering group was formed, of school, administration and university representatives, to feed in ideas, oversight the development as it proceeded and identify needs and issues. Within the university, a new postgraduate diploma course for practising teachers was established, which included research data and theoretical literature relating to the project.

When I left the university in 1975 to take up a post in Australia as foundation director of the national Curriculum Development Centre, the Schools Cultural Studies Project was firmly established but still in its early stages. Work continued for several years and it has been reported in a number of studies, most fully (and controversially) by David Jenkins in *Chocolate, Cream, Soldiers*. Whether the Project had any deep or lasting impact on those who participated in or were affected by it is impossible to say, a point not confined to this particular activity. What was important was not only – or even mainly – a search for long term "solutions" to deeply embedded and pervasive problems of political structure, social order and cultural values, but practical interventions of co-operatively minded educators in the immediate daily lives of school children. These were grounded in the belief that the school should seek to confront contemporary social issues and problems, however difficult and divisive they may be, and that teachers should aim even against the odds to help children break out of the narrow and often destructive confines and distortions of particular historical experience.

This is not the concept of the school working individually to adapt or create curriculum but of a collective effort in which the collaborating schools see themselves as an agency of cultural change and renewal. Challenged, particularly by sociologists who point to the school's culturally reproductive function and its transmission of established cultural capital, the reconstructionist thesis is not easy to sustain. Nevertheless, decisions have to be made about what is to be taught. One either bows to the determinist argument and in effect adds one's weight to the reproductionist thesis, or searches for practical ways of expressing critical educational values: truthfulness in the face of lies and suppression of evidence; the cooperative quest for knowledge through strategies of inquiry, structured discussion and informed debate of issues; and the repudiation of violence and authoritarian fiat as ways of solving problems and taking decisions.

These reconstructionist values were among the fundamental underpinnings of the Schools Cultural Study Project. They were put to the test, as was the expectation that schools would so organise themselves as to facilitate local teacher development groups

and effective co-operation in making and using new curricula. Conclusions will differ, evidence is always partial. But it is safe to say that, through the Project, many schools and teachers that would otherwise have maintained the *status quo* took up the challenge to share experience and to innovate in the most sensitive areas of the curriculum where they were potentially most vulnerable to external criticism and pressure. The role of the external funding authority and the university were vital: lacking that encouragement, support and leadership, this kind of local development almost certainly could not have taken place.

Yet, the external funder and the university are in an ambiguous position. The financial and intellectual resources needed to create a multischool project in a curriculum area of great sensitivity are mainly to be found outside the schools themselves. They are mobilised through steering groups which include school principals and a small specialist team working full time. The project teachers, however, are in the schools where they have many responsibilities; they can feel that the initiative lies elsewhere; their colleagues, not directly involved, can resent the special attention the "project teachers" receive from the outside bodies. The Northern Ireland experience brought home the need for better linkages: not only horizontally between the divided school sectors but vertically as well, between schools, external support bodies and the central administrative authority and the regional and national level policy makers.

## A NATIONAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT CENTRE: AUSTRALIA

Australia in the early to mid 1970s was a ferment of political, social, and cultural change. Under the premiership of Gough Whitlam, a federal Labour government sought to transform many aspects of national life, with education prominent among them. Schooling was basically a matter for the States and the Territories; the Commonwealth government – whose constitutional authority in education was minimal – nevertheless determined to take a major role in funding educational development and fostering a more innovative climate in the nation's schools. In higher education, the Commonwealth assumed responsibility from the States for funding the universities and colleges; for schools, following initiatives by previous administrations in support of school libraries and science laboratories, large-scale programmes to fund non-government as well as government schools were introduced. Several new national agencies were established: they included a Schools Commission with funding responsibilities and a substantial role in supporting innovation and teacher development; an Educational Research and Development Committee to fund research, and a national Curriculum Development Centre (C.D.C.). While the State authorities welcomed the flow of resources into the schools through these agencies, they resented the guidelines, directives and accountability procedures which magnified the national level of responsibility, always a difficult issue in a federally constituted country).

Governance of the C.D.C. provided for substantial representation by State

Departments of Education, teachers' and parents' unions, the academic community and others and we consistently presented the Centre as a national collaborative effort not a federal government agency (although the funding was all from that source and the Director as a statutory officer under federal legislation reported to the Federal Minister of Education, not to State ministers.

Through the sixties and seventies, first in the United States then in England and Australia, Sweden and several other countries, there was wave after wave of large scale, national, curriculum development projects which were relatively well funded either through foundations or governments or both. Although in different subject areas (initially mathematics and natural sciences), for different age groups (but mainly secondary school) and with varying objectives and procedures, there were common features which characterised this project development movement. Thus small expert teams were assembled with a heavy preponderance of subject matters specialists; classroom teachers commonly played a lesser role; materials production was almost always a prime purpose, as a mean of "updating" subject content and presenting innovative pedagogies; projects were usually externally evaluated; dissemination strategies including courses for teachers were incorporated but often as the lesser part of the activity.

In some places, and especially in the United States, the idea of "teacher proof" curriculum development took hold, that is, the belief that the project curriculum materials – like new drugs – were to be dispensed by teachers in classrooms but not interfered with. The "package" was seen as intact, often with a highly structured sequence of classroom activities and detailed guidance on how to prepare lessons and present material. "Structure" was indeed a key concept: the structure of knowledge as expressed in the materials, linked to theories about the structure of the human (learner's) mind and the steps or stages of learning to be passed through in order for the mind to be appropriately "developed".

The bizarre notion of "teacher proof" curriculum is easily dismissed and is in any case inconsistent with policies designed to establish teaching on a basis of professional knowledge and capability. Nevertheless, the underlying purpose of curriculum development through well designed national projects was valid: to achieve a pedagogically stronger and more effective organisation of curriculum than was available through the mixture of instruction and fact-dominated texts and examinations that predominated in many educational systems. Similarly, projects which insisted on compulsory teacher induction or training courses as a "licence" to use the materials were grounded in a sound idea, that materials and manuals alone are insufficient and that continuing professional education is a precondition of effective strategies for large-scale change. However, there was also a sense of custodial control or proprietorship in the idea of a licence – to do what good professionals should have the ability to determine for themselves – that was repulsive to many teachers.

This is not the place to go further into the curriculum development project movement; my point is simply that at the time the Australian C.D.C. was established there was a widespread belief in professional educational circles that national,

subject-based projects were what serious, funded curriculum development was really about. The C.D.C. inherited one such project in science and added several of its own making, but its main preoccupations were to lie elsewhere.

In some Australian States, notably Victoria, teacher professionalism in the form of devolved curriculum decision making was being strongly advocated in the seventies not only by teachers' professional associations but by forward-looking state officials. The interest taken by the C.D.C., as by the Australian Schools Commission, in supporting local initiatives was well received. However, it soon became apparent that there were significant gaps or weaknesses in the approaches through either the national subject-centred projects or numerous small scale local initiatives.

Despite their high profile, the subject projects had far less impact on practice than had been anticipated. They tended to exclude or not to connect with the vast majority of teachers, and were not part of a coherent, overall strategy of the kind now referred to as systemic reform. They also depended on a level of additional resources that could not be indefinitely sustained. There was certainly a place for this kind of reform initiative and it contributed to a new understanding of the processes of – and obstacles to – curriculum change but of itself it was insufficient. Nor was it adequately complemented by the "grass roots" ideology of local development, attractive as this was to many activists working in enterprising schools or interest networks.

There were two major problems with the "grass roots" approach: first, that there were neither enough initiatives nor a reasonable system-wide spread of them across the whole curriculum; and, second, that they induced a mentality of partial, piecemeal change which was too heavily dependent on single creative individuals who were frequently unable or unwilling to put in place structures to sustain and broaden innovation. However, as with national projects, the movement of local, small scale initiatives has left an important legacy, both an understanding of micro-level change processes and an enduring concern to ensure that curriculum change builds on and incorporates the initiative and expertise of classroom practitioners both individually and collectively.

While the C.D.C. initially supported both large scale national projects and local initiatives alike, we decided that a further step was needed in response to three elements that were receiving inadequate attention in existing approaches:

- a whole or cross curriculum perspective and framework;
- the variability of teacher response and involvement in constructive work on curriculum;
- the modest financial resources available or likely to be available to sustain comprehensive curriculum development.

For the whole curriculum, whether in primary or secondary schools, a listing of subjects to be taught with guidelines on implementation including topics to be covered, combined with a broad statement of educational goals, was the then favoured approach of Australian state education departments. Except for syllabus and examination committees, there was no strong tradition of large scale teacher

participation in curriculum development. Nor was there universal provision of continuing teacher education or a set of policy-based incentives to foster professional teacher development. An approach drawing attention to the need for this participation and provision and going beyond a catalogue of school subjects was needed. We decided that the old idea of core curriculum needed to be resuscitated and reformulated for contemporary conditions. In order to make a start, we established a national committee representative of a wide range of interests, under the chairmanship of the distinguished physicist, the late Sir Marcus Oliphant. Oliphant was no authority on core curriculum but was a creative intellectual with a high profile. Both qualities were needed if the enterprise were to carry any conviction.

Eventually a report was completed which was issued as a publication, *Core Curriculum for Australian Schools. What it is and why it is needed* (1981). In this document, a case was made for every school in the country to develop its own curriculum, building upon national goals and drawing upon all of the following broad areas of experience and knowledge:

- arts and crafts
- environmental studies
- mathematical skills and reasoning and their applications
- social,cultural and civic studies,
- health education
- scientific and technological ways of learning and their social applications
- communication
- moral reasoning and action, values and belief systems
- work

For each and every area of the core, and in accordance with guidelines and suggestions outlined in the report, schools themselves were expected and encouraged to design curriculum appropriate to the needs of students and local conditions. It was assumed that state departments and authorities responsible for non-state schools and school systems would provide leadership, more detailed guidance and a focusing of resources and that schools would show initiative in drawing upon the wide array of teaching materials available through publications and the varied opportunities for learning available in the wider community. The expectation was that teachers, working in school teams and through their professional associations, would have the capability and sense of responsibility needed to undertake such work and, indeed, that its realisation in practice is an essential element of teacher professionalism. Thus there was no incompatibility but instead a complementarity between the concept of a broadly stated national "core" and school-based curriculum development.

These expectations proved to be too ambitious and were in practice insufficiently related to the decision-making structures in Australian education systems. However, the core concept has continued to inform educational goals and frameworks at the system level.

The liberal philosophy of education which underlay the CDC approach was

overtaken in Australia as in many other countries by a concern for school accountability, expressed through pre-defined standards of student attainment. These "standards" exemplify a widespread yet illicit procedure: norms of attainment established by empirical procedures through which average levels of age-related performance are elevated into goals for all students of a given age or stage. This procedure on the one hand does nothing to encourage very able students to exceed the norms and on the other puts unreasonable pressure on students (and their teachers) who, for one reason or another, cannot or do not meet these "norms". In some countries, excessive and misleading publicity is given to figures of student attainment relating to these norms. Thus vital issues, such as of the rate of progress of every individual and the conditions facilitating or inhibiting that progress, and the appropriateness of specific learning goals and tasks to the particular individuals and groups become submerged in an excessively competitive league table mentality: which schools are "doing best", which countries are "better" than others.

These trends, notwithstanding their significance for national policy making and their reflection of genuine concerns about the quality of education, can become the antithesis of intelligent, student and teacher controlled, curriculum development. Unless much more carefully managed than hitherto, the presentation of comparative performance data is all too likely to raise anxiety and to stimulate a mentality of "winning the race". Much closer attention by policy makers is needed to ways of addressing the needs of learners which are always individual and governed by particular circumstances that are screened out of the testing-standards setting procedures.

## THE ROLE OF A NATIONAL CURRICULUM AND EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL: ENGLAND AND WALES

In 1985, when I returned to the United Kingdom as Professor of Curriculum at the University of London Institute of Education and, concurrently, Director of Studies (Research) at the Schools Council for Curriculum and Examinations, the tide had begun to turn towards the subject-stratified national curriculum and age-based testing, which now dominate curriculum and assessment policy in England and Wales.

In an atmosphere of recrimination, teachers and "progressive educators" were the subject of press and political criticism, blamed for a variety of ills in young people's education and social behaviour. In England, from the time of the publication of a series of "Black Paper" in the 1960s, strong divisions had opened up between those who, on the one hand, were hostile to the introduction of comprehensive secondary schools, "Plowden" type reforms in the primary school and the widening of opportunity in higher education and, on the other, those who favoured a greater liberalisation, humanisation and democratisation of education policy and practice.

The Schools Council became a target for much of the criticism of what was very loosely defined as "progressivism" in education. Its policies and programmes

– reflecting a powerful influence by teachers' unions, innovative local education authorities and a by now active community of education researchers and other specialists in universities and colleges of education – were held to provide a focus for "progressive" ideologies and a power base for their proponents. Criticisms of this kind continue to the present day and, without any effort to provide either hard analysis of the concept or solid evidence, critics lay the blame for inadequate pupil performance at the door of this movement of ideas.

The Nuffield Foundation and Schools Council curriculum development projects directly involved large numbers of practising teachers, and local authority advisers and inspectors, both on secondment as project officers and participating in trials of new materials and practices. The national inspectorate (H.M.I.) also played a major part. Together with union officers and university – and college-based academics from whose ranks most of the project evaluators were recruited, they constituted teams which combined elements of the "top down" national project design and the "bottom up" engagement of school-level practitioners.

Too much space would be required to recount the events that, in the 1980s, led to the collapse of this combination. Suffice to say that, against the advice of an independent Review panel, chaired led by a former high level government official, the then Secretary of State, Sir Keith Joseph, unilaterally closed the Schools Council, replacing it with two separate agencies (which in the 90s were joined together again) and in the process, eliminated the teacher union influence and greatly diminished that of the local education authorities. Over a ten year period, the distinctively British partnership in curriculum development, involving local education authorities, schools, teacher education and education researchers, the national inspectorate, examination boards and the national ministry have been destroyed. In its place a heavily controlled system has been erected with power concentrated in the national ministry and its agencies, compulsory subjects, age-defined levels of attainment and an inspectorate which is playing a very much more prominent role than hitherto in monitoring standards of performance across the whole system.

In this new environment there is indeed need and scope for initiative in curriculum development at the school level, and schools have been given increased responsibility for the management of resources. It is likely to be several years, however, before these new opportunities are widely taken up: the scale and pace of change have been quite extreme and in an atmosphere of continuing criticism of the performance of teachers, schools – and students, – it will be important for new support structures to be provided through local education authorities, networks of co-operating schools, universities, colleges and R&D agencies.

## FREEDOM FOR CURRICULUM MAKING IN THE UNIVERSITY

These observations are made from a distance since in 1985 I resigned my position in London to take up appointment as Vice Chancellor and Principal of Deakin University in Australia. As a major provider of distance education and relatively

recently established, Deakin University appeared to me then in part as a university-level curriculum development centre. In the creation of new and highly innovative programmes of study for students living far from the main campus, the university staff were obliged to rethink every aspect of what they taught and how it might best be learnt. For me – if not always for my new colleagues – this was another form of "school-based" curriculum development.

Indeed, the freedom enjoyed by universities in the design, development, and teaching of courses and the assessment of student learning is what schools of all kinds and at all levels need. This is not to suggest that all university curricula and teaching are satisfactory. This is far from true. However, in a new university experimenting with quite different modes of course design and delivery, pioneering work on curriculum of great potential value to more conventional institutions has been undertaken. On a world scale, the British Open University has been one of the leading path finders in this respect.

The higher education system, in many countries at any rate, has the opportunity by way of appropriate conditions for institution-led curriculum development and it is reasonable to judge its performance with that consideration in mind. That, however, is another story. Returning to the theme of the school as a focus for major curriculum decisions, one more episode will complete this account.

### *The Perspective of a Multi-National Think Tank*

Throughout most of the period reviewed in the preceding pages, I was privileged to act as a consultant and adviser on education to the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). This international intergovernmental organisation comprises 27 of the world's most developed economies, those that have followed the path of what is somewhat euphemistically called the "free" market, and are constituted as parliamentary democracies.

Since the end of the sixties, the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), one of the four distinct education programmes in the OECD, has organised curriculum projects and published reports of trends and developments. In these documents can be traced the evolution of ideas and practices in member countries, if not in a uniformly representative fashion, then as trends and issues which featured in the shifting agenda of policy makers.

Through seminars and workshops, CERI has brought together large numbers of people responsible in member countries for decisions and advice, research and development, teacher education and evaluation. The results have been reported in a series of publications which include *A Handbook of Curriculum Development* (1975), *Creativity of the School* (1974), *School-Based Curriculum Development* (1979), *Thinking to Learn, Learning to Think* (1996), *Curriculum Reform: an Overview of Trends* (1990) and *The Curriculum Redefined: Schooling for the Twenty First Century* (1994). This work continues and will result in a further publication early in 1997.

In these and other publications, there has been constant attention to the role of

the school and of teachers in curriculum development. However, in the 1990 report, *Curriculum Reform: an Overview of Trends*, in discussing data provided by countries, I observed that, at the level of national policy, interest in the specific role of the school was quite uneven. In France, "changes in practice at school level are essentially the result of decisions that are taken at the national level. The role of the teacher is as an intermediary between the official decision-making approaches and the student" (p. 72). Yet, in Finland and other Scandinavian countries, where the concept of "steering by goals" (rather than detailed directives from Ministry centres) has taken hold, increasing attention has been paid to school level decision making and the constructive, active role of teachers in translating broad goals and guidelines into learning content and activities. Everywhere, there remains or has developed a strong central role in defining curriculum goals, broad outlines of subject matter, advice on methods, and control in some form or other of assessment and certification. However, practice varies widely, with some systems, notably England and Wales, strengthening detailed control through a highly elaborated national curriculum and national testing while others, notably Norway, Sweden and Finland, have been devolving greater curriculum responsibility from national centres to regions, localities and schools.

## CONCLUSION

Trends in national systems usually reflect deeply held convictions and structures which are firmly embedded in culture. This is so even when significant change occurs: there is a powerful sense of national interest or concern and this, in spite of the great increase in international communications and co-operation, remains the key to understanding directions of educational policy and practice. Moreover, notwithstanding several decades of development research and evaluation experience, we still lack a solid empirical basis and therefore powerful theories of how best to effect desirable changes in the curriculum. And what is desirable depends on contestable values and judgements. The enterprise of curriculum development is a blend of traditional craft and the quest for desirable futures: well grounded in experience, with a rich literature of interpretation and explanation with strong hortatory overtones. The craft and the quest are neither unreflective nor uncritical but their foundations are still very much those of "what works" here, and "what we want" (i.e. the particular group and setting of specific changes). Although the craft and the quest display many common features – across countries, levels and subject areas – they are marked by diversity, their nature is pluralistic rather than unitary. If there are "general principles", they must be seen as a rather large and varied family from which selections are made for particular purposes. Clear, explicit, unambiguous "objectives" for example, are presented by some as the true foundation for a development process, whereas, for others, they appear to be mechanistic, presumptuous or artificial barriers to intelligent development work rather than the basis of it. However, when assessing students' learning in relation to the curriculum

they have experienced, objectives can be inferred, implicit or tacit though they may be.

What is of undeniable importance is the need, in any kind of curriculum development, for well educated, competent, responsive and responsible teachers, well resourced schools and intelligent leadership. Neither well structured national frameworks and course outlines, nor the so-called teacher-free curriculum, nor the gathering challenge of information technology lessens this need.

The interrelationships of teacher development at all stages from initial preparation to continuing education over a lifetime – and curriculum development, whether through national, regional or local action, seem to me to yield the most important lesson to be learnt from several decades of curriculum reform efforts. This nexus brings together the dispositions, capabilities and aptitudes of teachers, on the one hand, and design models, techniques, structures and pattern of organisation in materials and resources for learning, and modes of assessment and evaluation, on the other. It is through a better understanding of this nexus and more attention to ways of strengthening it that future curriculum change can best proceed. The chief failing of curriculum development during the past 30 years has been the uncertainty or confusion over teacher roles and responsibilities and the reluctance or inability to orchestrate change through the active engagement of the teaching profession and the institution of the school.

## REFERENCES


Central Advisory Council for Education (England). (1963). *Half our future*. (Newson Report). London: H.M.S.O.

Central Advisory Council for Education (England). (1967). *Children and their primary schools* Vol. 1 (Plowden Report). London: H.M.S.O.

Committee on Higher Education. (1963). *Report* (Robbins Committee). London: H.M.S.O.

Curriculum Development Centre. (1981). *Core curriculum for Australian schools*. Canberra: CDC.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education*. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Great Britain, Department of Education and Science. (1972). *Teacher education and training*. Report by a Committee of Inquiry appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science, under the chairmanship of Lord James of Rusholme. London: HMSO.

Jenkins, D. & Associates. (1985). *Chocolate, cream, soldiers. Final evaluation report of the rowntree schools cultural studies project*. Caterine: The New University of Ulster.

Ministry of Education. (1959). *A report of the Central Advisory Council for Education* (England) Vol. 1. Report (Crowther Report). London: H.M.S.O.

National Education Commission Time and Learning. (1994). *Prisoners of time*. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office.

O.E.C.D. (1974). *Creativity of the school*. Paris: OECD.

O.E.C.D. (1975). *Handbook of curriculum development*, Paris: OECD.

O.E.C.D. (1979). *School-based curriculum devlopment*, Paris: OECD.

O.E.C.D. (1990). *Curriculum reform: An overview of trends*. Paris: OECD.

O.E.C.D. (1994). *The curriculum redefined: Schooling for the 21st century*. Paris: OECD.

O.E.C.D. (1996). *Lifelong learning for all*, Paris: OECD.

Skilbeck, M. (1985) *School based curriculum development*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Skilbeck, M. (1990). *Curriculum reform. An overview of trends*. Paris: OECD.

Whitehead, A. N. (1932). *The aims of education and other essays*. London: Ernest Benn.

# Unfinished Work: Reflections on Schoolteacher

DAN C. LORTIE
*Department of Education, University of Chicago*

Things can work out in ways we do not expect. In writing *Schoolteacher*, I hardly foresaw a time when I would be asked to reflect on it in the context of educational change.[1] But since doing so seems to be a good idea to the editors of this volume, and since I trust their judgment, I decided to give it a whirl.

But how to frame such a discussion? I have little evidence of whether-or in what ways – *Schoolteacher* might have contributed to change in schooling; such assessment is particularly difficult since the book contained practically no recommendations for policy or practice. (One exception is the final chapter where I suggested that classroom teachers should become more engaged in research.) Whatever influence it may have had, therefore, stemmed from the presentation and interpretation of data, from analysis rather than prescription.[2] On the presumption that such inquiry is appropriately linked to change, therefore, this chapter deals primarily with analytic and empirical issues and suggestions for new inquiries.

First, I will propose questions about current aspects of teaching which seem largely similar to what prevailed at the time I wrote *Schoolteacher*. I will focus on conceptual issues and empirical refinements which have not, to my knowledge, been dealt with – issues which I did not explore earlier but which I believe merit serious study.[3] In the second part of the chapter, I will discuss some of the changes which have taken place since the Seventies which have (probably) had important effects on the work life of teachers. In both instances, I hope to encourage others to continue work on what it means to engage in classroom teaching in the United States and in other societies as well.

## CONTINUITIES: ITEMS FOR THE RESEARCH AGENDA

Although there are a goodly number of ways in which teaching today is not substantially different from patterns which prevailed during the Seventies, I wish to discuss a few characteristics which I believe remain significant today. They are 1) The nature of psychic rewards 2) The apprenticeship of observation and 3) Issues of classroom autonomy. Although some astute researchers have examined those topics over the last two decades, much remains to be done. I take this opportunity, therefore, to identify questions which strike me as worth further study.



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 133-150.

*On Teacher Rewards*

The examination of rewards in teaching served as the fulcrum around which *Schoolteacher* was constructed; material in the early chapters foreshadowed the examination of intrinsic rewards (Chapter 4) while subsequent chapters dealt, in part, with consequences flowing from their dominance. Yet important questions about intrinsic rewards were not dealt with-either because they they did not occur to me or, at other times, because I lacked the data to examine them. For example, although the book emphasizes the overall salience of intrinsic rewards, it contains little on what might affect the amount of such rewards-on the determinants of different levels in psychic income. Given their prominance in the total rewards received by teachers, knowledge about what increases and decreases such rewards surely has policy implications. In addition, there are subtle differences among intrinsic rewards which are not examined in the book.

*Role commonplaces and rewards*

There are differences in the potential rewards available within various roles in teaching-differences which have yet to be examined in any detail. I refer to such commonplaces as the subject(s) and students taught and the organizational setting in which the teacher works. When we begin to think about those commonplaces and intrinsic rewards, we find underlying considerations associated with each – social psychological considerations which are likely to influence the nature and number of rewards that are likely for teachers in the different positions. One example of such a consideration is the part played by uncertainties about one's effects on students (sometimes associated with ambiguities in goals); such uncertainties complicate processes of self-evaluation and thus affect the degree to which one feels justified in allocating intrinsic rewards to the self. I will develop that example to support my claim that much research remains to be done; whether the (often implicit) hypotheses in the following discussion will prove to be valid is not the major point – the major point, as I see it, is that we currently do not know whether they are or are not true.

*(a) On subjects being taught*:

There are indications that intrinsic rewards-their nature and possibly their extent – are affected by the nature of what is being taught. Specific subjects have particular characteristics which apparently influence their potential for intrinsic rewards, characteristics which derive their influence from a common property-their effects on self-evaluation by teachers. For this discussion, I shall assume that ease in evaluating outcomes-by reducing uncertainty – increases opportunities for intrinsic rewards.[4]

i. *Time perspectives (goals)*: Those who teach social studies may connect their teaching to long-term goals (e.g. good citizenship) which cannot be assessed in

the short-run; mathematics teachers may be comfortable with the next examination as their target and accept its results as reliable evidence of instructional success or failure. Time perspectives probably affect how teachers in academic versus vocational programs experience the rewards associated with seeing their students move into the labor force; for some vocational teachers, there are regular and immediate connections between their efforts and seeing students enter occupational life and assume adult responsibilities.

ii. *Knowledge "definiteness":* It is an obvious point that subjects differ in the "definiteness" of what is being taught and the resulting ease or difficulty in deciding how much students have learned. There are, of course, some subjects (mathematics, conventions of language) where there is relatively high consensus about desired outcomes and some fields where the mastery of relevant skills is readily observed (elements of physical education, use of keyboards). There are others where ambiguity in knowledge (e.g. argumentation and interpretation in social studies and literature) and difficulties in assessing the level of skill attained (creative work in the arts) make it harder for the teacher to undertake self-evaluation with confidence.

iii. *Standardized tests*: We might learn interesting things about teachers in different roles if we inquired closely into when, where and to what extent they use standardized test data as the basis for deciding that they merit – or do not merit – the joys of transitive rewards. Elementary teachers, for example, confront complex issues involved in weighting and summing up student scores in a variety of subjects they teach. Do test results in those subjects which are defined as definite outweigh those which are not? Recalling the large number of elementary teachers who took pride in dramatic results with a single student, how ready are elementary teachers today to respond seriously to testing practices which focus on group means, etc. in lieu of striking results with one or a few individual students?[5]

iv. *Evaluating outcomes differs for teachers according to the social context in which they work*; some must do so in relative isolation, others with the assistance of informed adults. For example, coaches in competitive sports can watch each other's teams, adjudge the basic abilities of the players and evaluate what their colleague has done "to make the most of his material." An individual coach, therefore, may take pride in his season's work buttressed by the knowledge that others with expertise agree – they may, in fact, have awarded him special recognition at one of their meetings. Other adults may not be present to support the pleasure – and underscore the success – of an English teacher who has moved a group of sophomore boys from complete antipathy to (at least) grudging interest in some poems. These illustrations point to two aspects of the social context – visibility of outcomes and the presence of interested adults – which have consequences for how a teacher feels about granting intrinsic rewards to him or herself.

*(b) On numbers of students*:

Although we have had considerable research done on "class size" and its effects, I am not aware of studies which have examined, in detail, the consequences for

teacher reward levels of working with various numbers of students; given that the number of students can range from 150 for high school teachers to 5–10 in special education classes, differences in rewards are more than slightly probable.

One place where study might begin revolves around the criteria teachers use to monitor student outcomes, the differences along the numbers continuum and how the latter affect rewards. For example, do the more intensive contact and closer relationships found where teachers work with only a few students foster particular criteria and assessment practices? How does that greater intensity (often coupled with a longer duration of contact), affect the likelihood that the teacher will feel the rewards of success? Does more complete knowledge about the students make it more difficult-or easier – to feel that one's interventions have made a difference? What about the issues peculiar to working with large numbers of students (e.g. limited contact with individual students)? Do those circumstances press teachers to use more easily measured criteria? More knowledge about these differences might have practical value; its diffusion might help to reduce the invidious comparisons and interpersonal difficulties among teachers which sometimes occur.

*(c) Characteristics of students*:

Taking another perspective on role, we can ask how student characteristics influence teacher rewards. Of the many possibilities here, I will mention only a couple for illustrative purposes.

One factor is the age of students. It is harder for elementary teachers to focus on adult or near-adult student outcomes than it is for teachers in the senior high school grades whose students are closer to the status of grown-ups; this is due largely to their proximity to events which are noticed by adult society – e.g. admission to a desirable college or training for a specific vocation. This is not to say that earlier teachers do not in fact have enduring effects on students, but that the time gap between their work and more adult-like outcomes dilutes awareness of their part in those outcomes. How does that limitation affect the ways in which elementary teachers think about intrinsic rewards? Another problem for those who teach younger students is that later teachers may attribute problems to those who preceded them; what effects-on reward allocations and occupational solidarity among teachers – flow from this particular consequence of work sequences?

The cognitive abilities of students – and the amount of interest they demonstrate in school performance – undoubtedly affect the ease with which teachers can feel that their students are doing (at least) adequate work. We know that some teachers find it difficult to give themselves credit for work done by unusually able students. Which do and which do not? When teachers are confronted with students who do poorly, some adjust their expectations downward-others do not. Despite the fact that teacher expectations are known to have consequences for students, we know remarkably little about their origins, their volatility, their differential

effects on rewards, and so forth. The standards teachers use to judge their performance stand at the heart of how intrinsic rewards are enjoyed or denied; knowing more about those processes may ultimately help to bring effectiveness and the distrubution of intrinsic rewards closer to an optimal balance.

Our understanding of schools as workplaces will increase as we broaden our focus to other than "regular" classroom roles, to persons who work with students in different ways. For example, there are professionals who work with students on a largely individual basis (e.g. mental health personnel); do their psychic rewards differ from those those experienced by classroom teachers and, where that is the case, does it complicate relationships within school staffs? More generally, under what circumstances do differences in reward-seeking among different kinds of school professionals facilitate or hamper relationships across role boundaries? Do such differences affect collective bargaining, particularly in those aspects of the contract which deal with working conditions? We are used to thinking about material benefits and "vested interests;" perhaps there are similar processes at work in the distribution of intrinsic rewards.

*2) Time periods and criteria: A note on method.*

The work reported in *Schoolteacher* was based on interview and questionnaire questions which featured either short or unspecified time periods. The "good day" question was particularly useful, but it was supplemented by general questions (without specific time references) in which teachers were asked to compare the importance of various kinds of rewards. I have a strong suspicion, however, that were we to use different time periods in such research, we might find that they are associated with different criteria for specifying and assessing the intrinsic rewards teachers receive from their work. I would suggest, therefore, that in future studies of intrinsic rewards, teachers be asked to talk about specific rewards they attach to days, weeks, months, grading periods and years – to make explicit the events on which they focus and the criteria they use for diverse time units. Using different time periods might make us aware of complexities we have yet to uncover.

Such study could also look for patterns and rhythms in rewards thoughout the academic year. Teachers seem to hold many beliefs about holidays, climate and other features of the yearly calendar; do such beliefs indicate that there are regular fluctuations in the subjective experience of the academic year? In recent interviews with Chicago teachers, it is apparent that for some, year-end ceremonies are high points. Does this suggest that gratifying events late in the year are likely to offset earlier disappointments? Are rewards affected by the scheduling of other events, such as standardized tests? Knowledge about fluctuations, particularly regular rhythms, would be useful in interpreting observations which are linked to the time of year and for such practical matters as selecting schedules for research.

*3) Some contextual considerations*:

As suggested above, teacher self-allocations of intrinsic rewards do not occur in a social vacuum. There are a variety of influences which can come from "outside" the person who is teaching; they range from the peers in the school to the community-at-large. I will mention only a few here – again, primarily for illustrative purposes. The school settings in which teachers work and their effects should be part of our studies. The physical properties of the school may be involved, for example, as some buildings foster isolation, others interaction among teachers; increased interaction makes it more likely that individual teachers will discuss their work and develop common criteria for evaluating outcomes. The culture of the school, especially norms about sharing information and feelings, will probably affect individual assessments of the results of classroom experience. Task allocations and school schedules may play a part; the presence of colleagues doing similar work (e.g. the same grade or specialty) allows the use of comparisons in making judgments while school schedules affect opportunities for teachers to meet and "compare notes." It seems clear that the school setting should be included in studying how external factors affect the subjective experiences of teachers and their intrinsic rewards.

We hear much these days about the importance of leadership in schools and, in particular, the part it can play in helping members of a staff to share a common sense of direction, or, in popular rhetoric, a "shared vision." When faculty members work within a specific set of goals and understandings, does this, by reducing uncertainty for individuals, increase psychic rewards? At the same time, there may also be circumstances (e.g. an accepted vision too difficult to achieve, as where instructional techniques or resources are inadequate) when it might produce cynicism rather than commitment and satisfaction among teachers. Talk about "shared vision" is so widespread today that it has elements of faddism; we face the tricky problem of distinguishing the merely popular and ephemeral from the serious and sustained efforts by principals and teachers to clarify common goals and to find surer routes to their realization.

Finally, a word about those "other" rewards, extrinsic and ancillary rewards. There have been occasions when I have been read as implying that rewards other than intrinsic ones rewards have little or no importance in teaching work. That is probably something for which I am partially to blame – I did focus heavily on the intrinsic side of things. To say that intrinsic rewards are primary is not to say that other kinds of rewards do not play an important role in where teaching fits into the work organization of the United States. It is clear that salary levels, the presence or absence of public recognition and working conditions in schools influence the number of persons attracted to teaching and the selectivity which universities and employers can exercise. Extrinsic considerations also affect the readiness of persons in teaching to sustain that commitment. Some side effects of low salaries receive too little attention e.g. the need many teachers feel to have additional employment in order to earn sufficient income may take energy away from

classroom work. I have talked primarily about some possible directions for future research on psychic rewards; that is not intended to discourage inquiry into other aspects of the reward system.

### *The Apprenticeship of Observation*

The importance of prior experience as a student has been recognized by increasing numbers of scholars in our field; today we encounter attempts by teacher educators to make deliberate efforts to overcome those influences with their teachers-to-be. One hopes that such efforts will bear fruit; it remains true, however, that much remains to be learned about the carry-over of student experience into the work lives of classroom teachers.

More research on this problem would inform such efforts to make teaching a more reflective undertaking. We need better measures of the continued influence of former teachers; we might begin by developing instruments which ask persons at different stages of their careers – pre-training, during training, different periods after beginning work – to discuss the content and scope of influence from their teachers. (Designing such approaches would call for creativity – rich and comprehensive data are needed to offset the difficulties that scholars have identified with recall data.) Content references by respondents will range from reporting use of a few practices associated with former teachers to strong identification with – and the wish to emulate broadly – one or more former teachers.

The scope of such influence may be narrow or broad, varying from a small proportion of a teacher's work activities to instances where the teacher's work is saturated with experience from student days. I do not wish to imply that emulation – even extensive emulation – is, per se, undesirable; in my opinion, it becomes so only when it has not been examined carefully and subjected to reconsideration. Greater knowledge of differences in the ways and extent to which teachers are influenced by former teachers could inform the work of teacher educators as they help teachers to become more selective in deciding what to retain and what to alter from the past.

It might be useful to study the "malleability" of prior influences to subsequent modification. Observation of beginning teachers, for example, could be accompanied by careful interviewing to track probable influences from the past and followed up later with observation to ascertain which behaviors persisted and which did not. Some teacher educators might be willing to expose different groups of students to different "treatments" in their professional instruction to test alternative approaches to increasing students' self-awareness and readiness to consider ways other than those to which they were previously exposed.

There is another aspect of prior experience which would, I think, make for interesting inquiry. Teachers usually have little difficulty in recalling their former teachers and, particularly, in discussing those they consider "outstanding." In a recent study I did in which teachers were asked to do just that, the respondents

(experienced Chicago teachers) emphasized the nurturant qualities of the teachers they identified as outstanding and did so in essentially personal terms – that is, they talked about the demonstration of affection and concern they had individually experienced. The teacher's current role, of course, includes cognitive goals as well as affective considerations and carries, along with responsibility for individuals, the expectation that she or he will have positive effects on groups of children.

Is the discrepancy between the citing of "outstandingness" in their own experience-and the demands of their own role – of any significance? Does it matter that these teachers are defining the best of teaching in their pasts in ways which omit a large proportion of their current responsibilities? But as Ralph Linton pointed out many years ago, people can believe a variety of different and even contradictory things without serious consequences – provided those beliefs do not require contradictions in behavior.[6] Are these recollections associated with such consequential contradictions?

### *The Question of Teacher Autonomy*

One of the early criticisms of Schoolteacher was that the consideration of teacher autonomy left something to be desired. (If my memory is reliable, it was in a review done by Ron Corwin). I concur with the criticism, and urge others to help clarify this topic.

There is one facet of autonomy in particular to which I now wish I had paid more attention. Teachers can focus on one or two distinct aspects of "autonomy" in the work they do. First, they can insist that they possess knowledge which justifies their exercise of considerable freedom in the selection of what they teach-that they should not be subject to close control by prescribed curricula developed by others. (Briefly, the "what.") The second is that they should be free to make decisions about how to teach material prescribed by others. The general position I took in *Schoolteacher* was that the vast proportion of teachers I studied were considerably more concerned with the second than with the first; there is a specific reference, in fact, to teachers differing from professors in not believing that they should control the curriculum. I did not, however, pay much attention to the distinction between the what and the how nor did I inquire into what specifics teachers associated with the "how." (For example, how much disciplinary practice and policy did they consider to be part of the "how"?)

There are at least two topics which could benefit from research. First, what do teachers include in the "how" they say they want to be able to carry out without interference? To what degree do teachers doing similar tasks agree on what constitutes the "how"? What of those doing different tasks – do we find larger differences among teachers in different grades and/or subjects? At what points do teachers' conceptions of what is appropriate autonomy collide with turf that is claimed either by the principal or – increasingly today – specialist teachers? Since it is so easy to proliferate questions without ready answers, it is evident that we

need to learn a good deal more about the specifics of teacher sentiments of autonomy.

The second topic raises especially subtle and complicated questions. When teachers distinguish between the "what" and the "how" of instruction, they imply that the two are in fact separable. But when is such separation easy to attain and when is it not? Might different subjects offer different numbers of acceptable, alternative pedagogies, and, if they do, would teacher decisions on the how not have different implications for the what? What of affective or moral goals; can one teach effectively the evils of tyranny in ways which are themselves tyrannical? The distinction between "what" and "how," in other words, may not be as clear as it initially appears; further research might reveal that some conflicts arise as a result of this lack of clarity.

A final comment on this matter of autonomy. I recall thinking when I wrote *Schoolteacher* that teacher preferences for autonomy were supported by their insistence on equality within their ranks; if nothing else, I hypothesized, equality among teachers limited the number of persons who were authorized to question or challenge their classroom behavior. Since then, some teachers have accepted a degree of greater differentiation in the rank and status of classroom teachers. (E.g. "Lead teachers" in elementary schools.) It would be interesting to have these instances examined from the perspective of status differentiation and its relationships to the autonomy of classroom teachers. Are they so designed that they do not violate the autonomy of classroom teachers? Do they founder when they begin to impinge on teacher freedoms? Might they indicate a lessening of teacher commitment to autonomy when they occur, a trade-off for some other value? Was the original connection I made between autonomy and equality incorrect?

## CHANGES IN THE CONTEXT OF TEACHER WORK

Although it would not be difficult to develop a longer list, I will focus on how a few major changes (changes that strike me as interesting) may have affected teaching work since *Schoolteacher* was published. Those changes are discussed under two main headings 1) specialization and changes in the division of teaching work and 2) the erosion of traditional conceptions of school organization in the United States.

### *Increased specialization*

One of the changes that has taken place in school work over the last two decades is a marked increase in the division-of-labor among professionals working in schools. The growth of special education has added large numbers of new specialists, and federal and state programs have allowed schools to introduce more subject matter specialists, particularly in urban elementary schools. For example, in some Chicago elementary schools with which I am familiar, the number of teachers who do not have responsibility for a single classroom comes close to the number who do.[7]

*1) New structures for collegial interaction*

One effect of increasing the division-of-labor in an organization is that individuals within it must connect with more persons and, for things to work well, do so in (mostly) smooth and conflict-free ways.[8] A larger proportion of specialists, particularly in elementary schools, presents teachers with novel interactive demands; specialists must also create and sustain effective working relationships. Faculty members confront the need to develop a shared set of norms about how to relate to each other, how to develop and sustain a "professional etiquette" which allows persons to coordinate their efforts without relying on the administrative directives they usually prefer to avoid.

Specialization and the increases in coordination that it requires produce more occasions when teachers – used to working largely on their own – must regularly take each other's interests and viewpoints into account. For example, when more complex schedules assign students and teachers to particular places at particular times, it falls mostly to teachers to heed the clock, adjust their teaching, deliver students on time, etc. Under what circumstances do staff members learn-or fail to learn – to take such responsibilities seriously? Do members of a faculty develop effective ways to sanction colleagues who fail to learn, and, if so, how? How do these new pressures mesh with traditional norms of "live and let live?" What part can and do school principals play in moving peer relationships toward a new balance which emphasizes cooperative rather than individualistic work? Does expansion in the "collegial circle" require new norms about what is proper in relating to students? (E.g. Must faculty members become more conscious than ever of the risks in talking about peers?)

Such issues in school culture and of changes in that culture are provoked by increases in specialization. Since the culture of teaching has been constructed largely around the prevalence of the self-contained classroom (a structure which, of course, constrains interaction among colleagues), specialization processes may not be fully grasped and/or widely discussed among many who have to cope with them. Unfamiliar problems can lead to tensions within the staff. If the bases for these new demands were more widely recognized, it might help those who work in schools to define them as "natural" problems rather than as puzzling eruptions of nastiness among one's colleagues. I suspect that sensitive and readable accounts of how various staffs cope with these issues could "open them up" for discussion and, by encouraging thoughtful resolution, reduce the discomfort that changes may produce.

*2) Inclusion: A major change?*

The movement toward "inclusion" in special education looks like a sharp change in the work life of those teachers who are involved. For unless informal understandings and adjustments are developed which are not part of the formal program of inclusion, it could conceivably mark the end of the self-contained classroom in

schools where inclusion is rigorously implemented. Given the centrality that the self-contained classroom has had in the work life of teachers, that could have important repercussions for the nature of the occupation.

Teachers have, of course, worked together in teams in the past; in team teaching projects with which I am familiar, however, teachers have had choices in whether or not they had to join teams and, when becoming team members, have had much to say about the arrangements affecting their mutual cooperation. They have been able to avoid working together in ways they found uncomfortable; they have generally defined the specifics of collegial relationships. It is also true that districts have required teachers to work together in helping particular students, as in "pull-out" programs where some members of a class receive special attention in a separate place. Inclusion arrangements are a major escalation in the extent to which school districts (probably acting under state mandates) require teachers to work together. Unlike teaming, such pairings are externally imposed; unlike "pull out" programs, teachers must work together in close proximity. All this moves things an appreciable distance from the self-contained classroom as we have known it. Seen as a social form, the self-contained classroom has shown remarkable tenacity; its persistence leads me to wonder whether requiring that classroom teachers and specialists work together in the same space can work well without informal understandings which soften the element of compulsion. We need first-hand study of what is happening in sites where inclusion is taking place. How is participation handled – e.g. can teachers indicate an unwillingess to work in such fashion and have their wishes respected? Do principals ask particular persons to work together only if they are comfortable with the plan and willing to try it out? Is there an understanding that if things do not go well changes can be made? Are there instances (as took place years ago in many "open space" schools) where separation reigns within the classroom as the specialist works with some, the classroom teacher with others and both act as if there were an invisible wall between them? What kinds of teachers – under what circumstances-welcome inclusion and, having undertaken it – express eagerness to continue? Can the understandings and practices worked out in successful pairs be communicated in ways that work for others?

"Inclusion" presents those who are interested in teacher work and relationships within the profession an opportunity to make significant additions to our knowledge. Study of this area has a highly desirable property-the results will be interesting whatever happens. Should inclusion prove to be a lasting and widespread arrangement, it will be possible to identify aspects of teaching work that have rested on the self-contained classroom as they undergo change; for example, the researcher will find it easier to specify the norms and values which hinge on that traditional form yet are not visible until it is altered. On the other hand, if inclusion is, like many other attempted changes, absorbed through a variety of subtle adjustments or ultimately rejected as unworkable, we will learn a good deal about the enduring characteristics of the occupation.

*3) Task assignments and internal relationships*:

Schools are somewhat unusual organizations in respect to the "assignability" of those who work within them. Managers in most settings are able to assign and reassign their subordinates to different tasks as need arises, giving managers flexibility to get the work done. In schools, however, the majority of workers – the teachers – work on fixed schedules with students and are rarely at liberty to take on additional duties during the regular working day other than those prescribed early in the academic year.

Increased specialization makes changes in this pattern. New roles are created where the professional is not tied to a specific group of students and a rigid classroom schedule throughout the day. Persons in such less constrained roles are accessible to the principal for assignment – the principal may ask them to take on duties stemming from his responsibilities, to assist him with administrative and organizational work. Such requests to work directly with an official can become a factor in developing a new career carrying one into administrative ranks; useful experience is gained, one's sense of potential for rising in the hierarchy can be increased and sponsorship may occur.

Theoretically, at least, the implication is that such "assignable" specialists have more opportunities for mobility into positions of higher authority than regular classroom teachers. Is that actually the case? When it is, do hostilities develop between classroom teachers and those specialists who are closer to the seats of local power? We are all familiar with historical patterns of upward mobility which have favored some persons over others, such as special opportunities based on gender and other ascribed characteristics such as ethnicity, religion and race. Does specialization create new "special" opportunities for some? When specialists assume administrative rank, are there particular problems of trust between them and classroom teachers? In short, it might be informative for researchers to examine whether there are unintended consequences for relationships in schools that result from the increasing numbers of persons who work in non-classroom positions.

*The Undermining of Traditional Structure:*

There seems little doubt that the last twenty years have seen impressive changes in American public opinion about the arrangements that should prevail for educating the young. The critical point is not the emergence of a widely-held, ruling set of ideas – in fact, diverse options exist today that have strong support. What is critical is the loss of the widespread legitimacy of the particular structure which was dominant two decades ago. Organizational alternatives are now heated issues – partisans for different forms battle for political supremacy: there are hot arguments about the desirability and potential scope of school choice, whether religious schools should gain access to the public purse, whether the United Stated should centralize curricular standards for the nation as a whole and/or decentralize decision-making to the school level. Gone are the automatic, unreflective beliefs

that there is one best way to organize schools and that it is place. We may not have achieved consensus about how to move ahead in the future, but it is clear that the domain of the sacrosanct has become increasingly small.

I will discuss three changes in the overall context of schooling (1) Local site management (2) Gender changes and (3) The growth of professional development.

*1) Local site management and teachers – the Chicago case:*

Given that teaching is an occupation whose members must work in some kind of organizational setting, structural alternatives have potentiallly significant consequences. Teaching will be affected as structures of schooling melt and freeze and take different shapes; given the difficulty of predicting what will happen in the years ahead, we cannot be sure which changes will prove most influential. We should probably watch as many options as possible while they are in process. I would like to discuss one option with which I have some familiarity – the sharply decentralizated form of governance which has been introduced in Chicago.

A consequence of studying schools in Chicago is that one develops familiarity with a strong version of local site management – stronger than most of those which have taken place in other communities in the country. An advantage is that one becomes aware of consequences which may not arise in milder versions – a disadvantage is, of course, that it is atypical. It seems, however, that there is a more general tendency to move school governance closer to school buildings-and/or to include teachers more fully in school-related decisions. And there are indications that school decentralization can affect how teachers see their work.

When I reported on my studies of teaching in *Schoolteacher*, I talked about the low saliency for teachers of events and issues outside their work with students.[9] Teachers in Dade County, asked how they would choose to spend additional time, rarely selected work on school-wide matters, strongly preferring to expend their efforts closer to their students and classes. To me this seemed consistent with their focus on student-centered intrinsic rewards and their focus on tasks which would increase the likelihood of receiving such rewards.

In a study on relationships between elementary teachers and their principals, I asked teachers (randomly selected in 4 schools) to discuss the degree to which they wished to influence particular aspects of their work environments. To my surprise, they generally assigned considerable importance-and expressed interest in – the school budget, school goals and a few other non-classroom matters. Larger samples are needed to check the prevalence of these sentiments and observation is required to ascertain how ready teachers are to invest time and energy to act on them. (For what it is worth, I have been making informal checks with principals in other schools on this matter and have heard so far that they believe their teachers have increased their interest in school-wide matters.)

At this stage, I can only hypothesize about what this preliminary information means, but it does suggest some ways in which this type of organizational change

can affect teacher proclivities. The reform structure in Chicago schools moves decision-making about the disposition of (some) funds to the school level; although salaries, etc. remain centrally determined, there are significant amounts of discretionary monies available from state compensatory funding for schools with low income students (a common condition in Chicago) and other sources. Teachers, moreover, are represented (they elect 2 representatives) in the local school councils where they work with parents (6 members), community members (2 members) and the principal to decide how to spend those funds. They have the opportunity to influence the distribution of resources in their immediate settings; similarly, the formalization of specific objectives and related programs into "school improvement plans" is ultimately authorized by local school councils.

When governance is centralized at the district level, teachers usually see little connection between school board decisions on budgets and their immediate work lives. Salary levels and working conditions are attended to, usually through collective bargaining, but other expenditures, being district-wide, hold less interest. Nor are they subject to strong teacher influence, given the strict limitations on topics which can be included in collective bargaining. But with serious decentralization to the school level, the proximity and transparency of decision-making, coupled with the ability to affect programmatic and financial decisions, link governance decisions to daily work and increase sharply the engagement of teachers in school governance. This linkage of proximity, susceptibility to teacher influence, local programs and teacher engagement, seen in general and hypothetical terms, could be tested and refined in studies of other decentralization efforts. Should local site management become widespread, we should also watch to see whether it has an appreciable effect on teacher interest and engagement in school-wide issues and problems.

*2) A note on gender*:

There have been large-scale and welcome changes in the role of women within educational organizations since the publication of *Schoolteacher*. This chapter is not the place to go into those in detail, particularly since many other authors have been paying close attention to this topic. Perhaps the major structural change that should be mentioned, however, has to do with hierarchy and women; no longer is there the built-in association of maleness with administrative authority which prevailed for so many decades in American public education. There have been major changes in the opportunity structure for women in public school work which, although not yet equal to those for men, appear to be moving in that direction. I wish to comment here, however, on another change which has received little attention.

I commented in *Schoolteacher* that high schools were somewhat unusual organizations in that they maintained close to an equal balance of men and women on their faculties. At that time, it was difficult to find other instances where a gender balance existed with men and women doing similar work, occupying equal status

and earning similar incomes. It probably remains difficult today – though less so – despite the immense gains women have made in work places over the last two decades.

Although the process of change is taking place very slowly, it now appears as if the balance I discussed is gradually changing. My colleague Robert Jewell informs me that in 1970–71 53.69% of high school teachers were male, while in 1992–93, the percentage dropped to 44.99, a change of 8.7%; in 13 states, the percentage of male teachers in high schools was less than 40%.[10] (Gender proportions changed very little in elementary schools.) This is, admittedly, a slow trend, but if it continues in the same direction, all teaching-high school as well as elementary – may become defined as "women's work." Slow trends, moreover, sometimes accelerate, with "tip-points" appearing at a particular level; it might develop at a faster rate than we expect. This apparent trend raises a policy question (an old policy question, in fact) which should, I believe, be important to educational researchers. It was not too long ago that one saw numerous articles expressing concern about the lack of men serving as models for children-particularly boys – in the public schools. Today the number of children who have no male model in the home has increased greatly yet we hear relatively little on this subject in public discussions of schooling. There are, apparently, fads and fashions in the expressed worries of popular psychology; perhaps it is now thought politically incorrect to suggest that role models should be based, at least partly, on gender identifications. In any event, I hope my colleagues in educational psychology will not mind too much if a sociologist suggests that this might be a useful area for research in their field. What, in fact, do we know about the psychological effects of having teachers of different genders? Is the belief I find among many Afro-American teachers that their students need male role models psychologically defensible? Is there sufficient evidence of the desirability of a gender mixed teaching force to justify concern about the decreasing numbers of men in teaching?

There is another reason for believing, as I do, that American schools should have considerable numbers of men in their classrooms. The reason is that it is far too common in the United States for knowledge and learning (Culture with a capital C) to be labelled as suitable concerns for women but unimportant for men; if schools become the nearly exclusive province of women, such a cultural division-of-interest will be strongly reinforced. Perhaps it would make sense, then, to examine the factors that reduce male participation in teaching and to explore the steps that could be taken to prevent erosion of their numbers.

### *3) "Professional development" and teaching.*

It was not long ago that teachers improved their knowledge in essentially one way-they took courses in colleges and universities. During the early part of the century, thousands upon thousands of teachers upgraded their schooling by taking summer and evening courses. School districts supported such education, recognizing the accumulation of degrees and credits in placing teachers on salary schedules, a

practice which remains common today. Anything more active on the part of school districts and schools – any suggestion that they should become directly engaged in improving the knowledge and performance of their faculties – was normally rebuffed. It was said that supervisory arrangements sufficed and, besides, such functions should be performed by the state. ("Why should we spend our local taxes on people who may move away?")

The situation today is much changed – and continues to change. We now find numerous school districts in which serious efforts are made to help teachers improve their classroom work by engaging them in instructional programs which they initiate and carry out. There is the emergence of the professional school idea and energetic efforts to implement it. The numbers of persons engaged in staff development have increased at a rapid rate as is evident in growth of membership in their associations.[11] How are these changes affecting teachers and their work?

One obvious area for careful research lies in teacher experiences with various kinds of programs of professional development and their effects on how teachers see themselves and their teaching practices. One hopes, of course, that evaluative studies will find that teachers generally benefit from such programs and that they carry over what they learn into their classrooms. What may be somewhat less obvious, however, are the potential symbolics of professional development and the meanings that it may have for the occupation of teaching. Historical forms of control in American public schools (i.e. heavy reliance on hierarchical ordering and forbidding) have not supported the hopes of teachers for professional status. Decisions to invest in "professional development," provided they are conducted in ways consistent with that rhetoric, can give formal and official acknowledgement that professional styles of training and action are germane – that earlier factory models portraying teachers as mere implementors of central programs are no longer viable.

What messages are in fact conveyed in programs for professional development and how much variation occurs in that regard? To what extent are these undertakings consistent with conceptions of teachers as decision-makers with both the right and obligation to make judgments which bear on their work? Which strengthen and which weaken the readiness of teachers not only to assert their collective prerogatives but to assume collective responsibility for the conduct of the teaching cadre?

There is another aspect to professional development which should be the object of research; one can hypothesize that it may provide an incubus for strengthening the technical culture of teaching. Work based in school districts has some advantages over our traditional source of knowledge generation, the universities. Such advantages might serve to supplement work in academic institutions which will, of course, continue to be of enormous importance. Research could center on these advantages and ascertain whether they do or can make a substantial difference in the technical base of teaching.

Among those advantages is the greater sensitivity that local efforts are likely to show to problems that professionals on site consider most important. Local undertakings can represent collective, concentrated attention to a set of shared

issues, a consensus which is hard to find in universities where faculty and student interests are likely to be considerably more diverse. Questions could include the following: how are agendas developed for programs of professional development and what provision, if any, is made to accumulate local experience and subject it to rigorous analysis? Such local programs might, if imaginatively managed, escape the social distance which often prevails when teachers interact with professors, particularly where professors are expected to award grades and engage in other superordinate forms of behavior. When school districts employ persons (full or part-time) who approach teaching with a spirit of inquiry and who possess relevant research skills, do such persons find it easier to engage in close collaboration with teachers in looking for better ways to teach? Do more teachers become convinced that doing research is not the frightening and arcane activity they thought it to be?

In conclusion, let me express my hope that among those who have stayed with me this far, there are some who – previously skeptical – are now persuaded that we need a lot more research on teachers and their work. For my part, I began work on this piece with the usual doubts about whether I would have enough to say. But as my engagement increased, I have had another problem – the need to rein myself in to comply with space and time requirements, to ignore possibilities that might have been explored. That has further persuaded me of the strength of my claim that considerably more research is needed on teachers and their work.

## ENDNOTES

1 Lortie, D. C. *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.

2 Ironically, what may be most germane to change may be the gap between what the book said and what (some) readers wanted it to say. Persons willing to grant the validity of the book's depictions of teaching sometimes referred to them as "hard truths" or used other language indicating that the portrait was less than flattering. They clearly hoped for a reality which was not portrayed. Perhaps such reactions were due in part to comparisons which I, fresh from studying law and medicine, made to the clearly established professions; many readers, it seems, eager for teaching to possess the same standing, interpreted differences from the high status professions as signals for change.

3 Some of the ideas presented in this paper were in response to a discussion of Schoolteacher at an AERA session in 1995. Given that origin and my understanding that the chapter in this book was to be personal and informal, I concluded that it did not call for a literature review; in fact, to include a review would have required a much different piece. I apologize to those distinguished scholars who have followed up on Schoolteacher (often with deep insight and high scholarship) for not mentioning them here. I apologize with special fervor to anyone whose work has, in fact, dealt with the questions that I suggest here for future study.

4 I assume this not simply because it reduces anxiety (and even pain) associated with not knowing whether one's efforts are or are not having an impact, although that is important. It seems reasonable to assume that most teachers will make good use of clarity-that they will use clearer perceptions of their impact on students as feedback to inform subsequent decisions and practices. From a policy perspective, therefore, the more reliable the feedback, the greater the probability that students will benefit from the better informed choices made by teachers. There are probably some teachers of low competence, however, who resist perceptions which require that they deny themselves the psychic rewards associated with reaching students.

5 Lortie, D. C. *op. cit* p. 121

6 Linton, R. *The study of man*. New York, D. Appleton-Century, 1936

7 In the course of writing this, I have become aware how much more readily I cite examples from

elementary rather than secondardy schools. This is probably due to the fact that I have concentrated my research on elementary school principals in recent years.

[8] I wish to thank Sandra Prolman for much of my awareness of this issue of specialization. She is currently doing a doctoral dissertation on this topic at the Department of Education, University of Chicago.

[9] Lortie, D. C. *Op. cit.* p. 164

[10] Personal communication.

[11] I am indebted to Jean Smith, a graduate student at the University of Chicago, for this information.

## REFERENCES

Lortie, D. C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Linton, R. (1936). *The study of man*. New York: D. Appleton-Century.

# Seduced and Abandoned: Some Lasting Conclusions about Planned Change from the Cambire School Study

JOSEPH B. GIACQUINTA
*School of Education, New York University*

In all honesty I had not read *Implementing Organizational Innovations,* co-authored with Neal Gross and Marilyn Bernstein, from cover to cover since my review of the page proofs for its publication in 1971. With a touch of pride, my reaction after completely rereading it was that we had reached quite a few conclusions in the book that were important to the field of planned educational change. My reaction, to be sure, made the writing of this chapter much easier than otherwise would have been possible, especially since it also seemed clear to me that these conclusions remain relevant today.

The research for our book began in the middle 1960's and eventually focused on the in-depth analysis of one elementary school.[1] The teachers there were being asked to carry out fundamental classroom changes. We called this setting the "Cambire School" and the innovation the "catalytic role model" for teachers.[2] Let me first describe the context in which we undertook this research, note several important bumps along the way, and recap what actually happened at Cambire. This is followed by a discussion of lasting conclusions based on Cambire and some suggestions for future research that can contribute to this vital field.

## THE SCHOOL CHANGE CLIMATE IN THE 1960'S

In the middle to late sixties the strong wave of school reform sweeping the country was accompanied by growing federal and private foundation funding for school change projects.[3] Interest in determining the success of these projects naturally was high among policy makers, educators, and the educational and social science researchers involved in their evaluation. Studies mandated by the federal government were growing almost exponentially. Which projects were succeeding? How many were failing? Why were some succeeding and some failing to accomplish their stated goals?

Evidence from subsequent survey research and quasi-experimental evaluations, unfortunately, suggested that many more change efforts were failing than succeeding. Projects, even ambitious ones, seemed to have little or no positive effect on



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 151-168.

the learning of children. Moreover, most of these studies were solely *effects studies*, devoted to establishing the outcomes of programs or projects. Some also established how much money was spent, or whether the requisite numbers of people were hired and involved, or whether the necessary materials were in place.

At the same time the literature on planned change, as it had for many years previously, was giving heavy emphasis to the processes of diffusion and adoption of innovations (e.g., Fliegel & Kivlin, 1966; Miles, 1965; Rogers, 1962).[4] An assumption or outright hypothesis of many change efforts and studies was that the resistance of the rank and file represented the major obstacle to successful change, in education the teachers and/or their administrators. Some of this resistance was seen as a natural tendency of people to oppose change. But a lot of it was viewed as the result of school administrators or policy makers outside the school system *mandating* that changes take place.

Change thinkers held that the key to making change efforts more successful was in overcoming the resistance of personnel. Furthermore, the tactic thought to be most effective in overcoming or avoiding such resistance was called a variety of names including "shared decision making," "subordinate participation," "power equalization," and "collaboration."[5]

## OUR APPRAISAL OF THIS EDUCATIONAL CLIMATE

One criticism we had of the educational change literature was that not enough of it was sociologically based, a perspective we naturally felt would contribute positively to the understanding of planned change efforts. Innovations were most often defined by policy makers as "projects" or "plans" emphasizing goals e.g., fostering children's learning. Some of the time these projects or plans were described in terms of the resources they needed e.g., the people, the money, the time. Often the process of innovation was characterized in individual educator terms much like the change process required of individual farmers or doctors in the adoption of hybrid corn or new medicines.

Far fewer studies of school change at the time defined school innovations as proposed changes *of* organization i.e., changes in the social structure and culture of the school or classroom. Indeed, a school's social structure and culture were viewed as *obstacles* to change rather than the essential *change itself*.

A sound sociological approach to the study of planned change would have required that innovations be *defined* alterations of status and/or role, ultimately focusing on the new role expectations or norms required, say of teachers were a classroom innovation to be put into place. In other words, we believed that central to but largely missing from the study and execution of most educational change efforts was attention to a fundamental sociological question: What new patterns of interaction, explicitly stated or implicitly imbedded in the innovation, need to be enacted, and what old patterns need to be eschewed?[6]

Another major concern we had was the prevalent assumption in the general change literature that making an innovation a reality was a natural consequence

of its successful diffusion, specifically adoption. If a *decision* was made in a system to carry out an innovation (adoption), then the innovation *ipso facto* would be enacted (implementation). This assumption we felt was leading to misdiagnoses about why specific reform efforts were failing. If one assumed that the innovations were indeed being carried out by virtue of their adoption, then their minimal effects would naturally seem more likely the result of poor ideas, not the *inadequate implementation* of possibly good ideas! We saw little focus on or study of implementation as a separate phase in the educational change process. Moreover, we thought that successful implementation was a bit more complicated than putting into place a change strategy that would just overcome or avoid initial resistance, important as this might be.

## THE CAMBIRE CHANGE PROJECT (1966–68): FITS AND STARTS

Originally, the research project that Gross proposed in 1966 had nothing to do with school *change*. It would have placed emphasis on studying whether the organization of a school affects the learning of children. Why did the ongoing structures of some elementary schools seem to be more effective – children were coming to school, cooperating while at school, and learning at or above expected rates – than others? We were particularly interested in looking at this question empirically according to socioeconomic differences among school communities.

Our approach required an in-depth, longitudinal comparison of the ongoing social structures and cultures of four different kinds of schools: a middle class school doing very well, a middle class school doing not well, a lower class school doing very well, and a lower class school doing poorly. We believed that rich, sociological descriptions of what was reoccurring daily in schools would improve our understanding of the nature of these schools and the learning of children who attended them. Results gleaned from such an endeavor, we hoped, would shed light on what was working, what was not working, and why. While we hoped to uncover some sociological seeds for future school improvement efforts, we had no intention of studying change efforts themselves.

A four-month, dogged attempt to find and gain the cooperation of appropriate schools in the greater Boston area, however, changed all of this. We had no trouble finding middle class schools doing very well. We had no difficulty locating lower class schools doing poorly. We did have monumental difficulty and eventually gave up trying to isolate middle class schools willing to admit they were not doing well or lower class schools where the evidence clearly revealed their effectiveness. All three of us were discouraged. We did not have the funds to seek and study schools outside the greater Boston area, and time was ticking on our funded project.[7] At the time I failed to appreciate how lucky we were not to find the necessary schools.

What we had uncovered during our travails were many schools making efforts to introduce major changes in order to become more effective. Sometime during our many discussions about our options given our inability to find the requisite schools (including returning the money to the R&D Center), Gross proposed an

alternative. Might it not be perhaps more valuable to describe and explain the dynamics behind school change efforts, more specifically behind implementation?[8] He argued that without adequate implementation taking place, it would be premature to look for innovation effects anyway. Bernstein and I concurred.

Within a week we gave up the original design and took on the study of a fundamental precursor to increased school effectiveness: the implementation of school innovations. Since the process of implementation especially of ambitious changes seemed to us more time consuming and complicated than the literature would have led one to believe, we continued to think methodologically about doing in-depth, qualitative investigations of a few wisely chosen schools. This approach gave us a better chance of adding something important to the change literature than would a piece of survey research.[9]

Finding schools was not difficult this time around. From many promising sites, we chose two manageable elementary schools.[10] One was located in a central-city neighborhood surrounded by asphalt and a high fence. So, we named it the Fence School during my year of fieldwork there. It was eventually renamed the Cambire School (Latin for change) for the book. The other was located in an affluent suburb surrounded by grass and trees. We called this the Field School. Bernstein spent the year there. Several events happened at these schools during the 1966–67 school year that stopped us from using the Field School in our published work and that enhanced the use of the Fence School.

### *The Field School*

We entered our agreement at the Field School with its principal. I will call her Rona Mills. Our agreement was based on her assurance that she had introduced a major classroom innovation, which she called "humanistic education." We knew that she had received private foundation support for such an effort. According to Mills, teachers were engaging in a new style of teaching and trying to create a different, more humane atmosphere in the classroom for children's learning. During her classroom observations, however, Bernstein was unable to recognize the presence of the innovation in the behavior of teachers. And during her informal conversations with teachers themselves, most said they knew little or nothing about the Mills change effort.

Bernstein asked Mills to accompany her during some classroom visits to help identify those teacher-student interactions reflecting to this new teaching role model. This effort was not very productive. Bernstein came away more confused than ever about the nature of the innovation and what teachers were actually doing in its name. Ultimately, we came to the conclusion that even if it were true that Mills had introduced the innovation, it was at that point in time not being carried out.

At an informal debriefing session with Mills early in the Spring of 1967, we informed her of our finding. During the meeting, she said nothing. Several days later, however, she called Gross and over the phone she told him that she was

incensed. She said that the innovation was not amenable to the measurement approach we were taking (the use of a formal classroom observation schedule with a series of bipolar descriptors) and that we were not "sensitive" enough to see the innovation in operation. She refused to cooperate further and expressed vehement opposition to having any findings based on her school put into print.

We differed about what to do next. Bernstein and I argued that the Fence School demonstrated how easy it was to give the appearance of change without adequate implementation really taking place. We also felt that the case demonstrated how critical the idea of clarity was to the fate of an innovation. The two of us wanted to give Mills space in our manuscript to present her case for why we were off base in our analysis. Nevertheless, we wanted to include the case.

Gross agreed that since Bernstein had spent the entire year trying to make sense of what seemed a nonevent, it would be a shame not to use it. But, he was concerned also about the political ramifications of Mills making the rounds telling influential educators and foundation people that we had missed the boat.[11] In the end, the loss of reputation that Gross worried we would risk in the professional community, were Mills to do her thing, bested our strong desire to write about this valuable case. So, the Field School never made the printed page.

### *The Fence School*

While negotiating entree to the Fence School (Cambire), we discovered that it was a laboratory setting where teachers from the larger system came on a renewable, yearly basis to try new approaches to teaching and learning. In late October of 1966, once I had entered the School, it became obvious that teachers were trying new approaches but piecemeal, in their own individual classrooms. No overarching school change was under consideration or underway. In the middle of November, however, all of this changed.

The Director of the School, Mark Williams, whose office was not physically at Cambire,[12] came to a special meeting of the teaching staff. At this meeting Rudy Gault, the principal responsible for Cambire's day-to-day operations, made a long presentation about an innovation – Williams's version of the English "Integrated Day" – that would revolutionize teaching and learning at Cambire. This happened without telling the staff or us beforehand. Gault and Williams explained the assumptions behind the proposed change, its goals, and the outcomes such a new approach ideally would have. Williams also gave the teachers copies of a fifty-page document he had prepared. It contained all of what he and Gault presented and then some.

Williams enthusiasm about the innovation spilled over onto the staff. Many of them became excited about the prospect of doing something radically different in their classrooms. Williams wanted them to try it immediately. He left at the end of the meeting with the teachers' commitment to enact the proposed change with Gault's help. The fascinating dynamics of this not so subtly mandated educational

change and its ultimate failed implementation unfolded during the remainder of the academic year.

## WHAT SUBSEQUENTLY HAPPENED AT CAMBIRE

Williams actions during and after that November meeting gave rise to the implementation dynamics I characterized in the title of this article: "Seduced and Abandoned." Even though he initiated the innovation, he never had direct contact with the teachers about it during the remainder of the school year. He handed over responsibility for the innovative effort to Gault and assumed, since the teachers expressed a willingness to try the innovation, that they would simply "be able do it on their own." To complicate matters more, Gault had his own ideas about how to improve teaching and learning and, unknown to Williams, the catalytic role model was not high on his list.

In teams of two, the teachers began making efforts to enact their new roles in January. However, by late April only one innovative classroom remained in operation. All the others had completely reverted to the single teacher, traditional model of teaching. The quality of implementation in the one remaining room was so poor-something the two teachers knew but chose to ignore – that this class only served to further demonstrate the failure of the change effort.

During their attempted period of role enactment (January through April of 1967), we observed five key conditions that served as barriers to teachers successfully engaging in the new patterns of interaction with their students. As in the case of the Field School, one was that they lacked *clarity* about their new roles or those of their students. They simply did not know what to do. Often they appeared to believe that the new role meant leaving the children alone. When this happened the classroom became chaotic, and they did not know what to do next or from whom to get guidance and support.

It was also apparent to us that they lacked *the skill and knowledge* required to carry out their new roles. Teachers continued to lament the fact that they did not know how to achieve the goals of the innovation, and that when they did try, they faced difficulties that they were unable to resolve. How could they manage 20 to 25 children who were all of a sudden to become independent learners? They had no skill at helping children do this. When, how, and how often should they intervene in children's activities and for what purposes? They were at a loss as to how evaluations of children would occur without grading.

A third condition was the unavailability of necessary *materials.* The kind of independent child learning mapped out by this innovation would require a great many different kinds of materials that supported a wide variety of choices for children. In order for teachers to carry out their new roles these new learning materials needed to be in hand given the imminence of implementation. The reality was that such materials did not exist and could not be created by teachers on the spot even if they knew what to create, which they did not.

The fourth condition we observed was the *incompatibility of the larger school*

*organization* in which Cambire was embedded. The teaching of specific subjects such as reading and math and the giving of letter grades were not part of the new teacher role and yet the administration of the larger school system still expected Cambire teachers to stress reading and math, to grade their pupils, and to have them score well on end-of-year, system-wide tests. The pressure from outside the school on the teachers to continue with their "old ways" was strong.

The fifth and last general barrier was the subsequent development of *teacher resistance* to (lack of receptivity for) continuing with the innovation. This happened in part because of their exposure to the other four conditions but also in part because of other factors that arose including lack of job security at Cambire, fatigue and role overload from trying to be innovative and receiving little or training and guidance in the process, and a series of role conflicts they faced by being in an innovative school within a system that favored traditional goals and methods. Thus, what ultimately happened was a second "abandonment," this time of the innovation by the teachers.

We concluded that these obstacles were primarily the result of the Director's change strategy. For example, Williams's strategy failed to identify and bring into the open the various types of difficulties teachers were likely to encounter during implementation, it failed to establish and use feedback mechanisms to uncover the barriers that would arise, and in general it failed to establish the leadership necessary to give teachers support and assistance so that they would be motivated and capable of changing in the expected direction. There clearly was no leader or champion at the School for this major classroom innovation.

We were able to witness yet another dynamic damaging to serious implementation. I would call it impression management, similar to that occurring at the Field school, only at Cambire it was more complicated. First some necessary facts. The teachers and Gault never completely relinquished the traditional teaching model even during the height of attempted implementation. They continued to treat reading and math as specific subjects during regular times in the morning with their whole classes. They never referred to the innovation by any name other than "the activity period." Moreover, activity period was something they would do only in the afternoons and eventually only on Thursdays as a reward to students for having worked hard during the week.[13] This was true, except when visitors came.

Cambire, regardless of the reality of the situation, was developing a reputation as a showcase innovative school. Gault was interviewed by the press; a TV network did a feature story on the School; there was even an editorial in a prestigious metropolitan newspaper about the wonderful things going on at Cambire. Many visitors – educators from surrounding school systems – came to see "the innovation in action." Just before visitors or members of the press arrived, the School – orchestrated by Gault often over the loud speaker – would go into activity period. This meant essentially that regular classes would stop and teachers would allow children to do whatever they wished. During these times students were having fun, but one would have been hard pressed to find anything educational about the fun they were having. Put bluntly, teachers were just letting them play. When the visitors

left the school, the teachers reverted back to teaching specific subjects at specific times, especially reading and math.

Outsiders thought they were witnessing pieces of the real thing. The temporary high levels of student-student interaction and of noise (both of which at the time were just beginning to be viewed as symbols of learning by educators) and the physical appearances of the classrooms (learning corners and moveable tables and chairs) gave the impression of fundamental change. In reality these trappings covered up a lack of implementation.[14]

## SOME LASTING CONCLUSIONS FROM CAMBIRE

Our investigation at Cambire helped us reach quite a few conclusions. As relevant to the field of planned educational change today as they were some nearly 30 years ago, I summarize them in the following way: (1) implementation is, in its own right, a separate and problematic stage of any planned change effort; (2) successful implementation is the result over time of a combination of volatile forces, and not just the result of overcoming or avoiding initial resistance; and (3) since the appearance of change often masks what is really happening in a setting, one effective way to get behind appearances is to define the innovation sociologically and, then, observe in depth the extent to which the essential patterns of interaction (new role expectations) are actually occurring.[15]

### *The Separation of Implementation from Initiation*

At Cambire, what happened during initiation did not explain the failed implementation attempt. The actions or inaction as the case may be of Williams, Gault, and the teachers *during* implementation sealed the fate of the innovation. As the metaphor in the chapter's title indicates: the Cambire teachers were *seduced* during initiation by their superiors into trying something "new and exciting" but *abandoned* during implementation to do it on their own. We, therefore, tentatively concluded on the basis of our investigation that implementation really is a separate stage affected by forces that come into play later and, at best, only partially influenced by the dynamics of initiation. Put another way, implementation is not simply the natural extension of adoption as one would have expected from writings typical of the early literature on planned change.

I know of no book earlier than ours that singled out implementation as the central object of investigation and included the concept in its title.[16] One indicator of the subsequent growth of interest in and study of implementation in its own right was the spate of books during the next decade with implementation in their titles (e.g., Charters, 1973; Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973; Williams & Elmore, 1976; Bardach, 1977; Beyer & Trice, 1978; Brigham & Brown, 1980; Williams, 1980; Mauksch & Miller, 1981; Williams, 1982).

Another indicator is the number of published articles and conference papers

making implementation their focus. Two years after the publication of our book, a review-of-literature article I wrote covered in part the rise of implementation studies (Giacquinta, 1973). Some five years later a paper I gave at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Giacquinta, 1978) highlighted the continued growth of implementation research and thinking. It tracked the number of sessions and actual papers devoted to implementation by title from 1972 to 1978, contrasted with its prior lack of attention.

Today, implementation is a "household" word for most practitioners in educational settings as well as change scholars and researchers! It is hard to imagine any serious conversation about schools or about the process of planned change without the word being used once, if not, often. This is not to say that diffusion and adoption are no longer of concern. They are alive and well (e.g., Harper, 1993; Rogers, 1995). There is now, however, a balance between them and implementation. More importantly, few if any current theorists and policy makers assume that adoption leads "automatically" to successful implementation.

Conceptualizing implementation as a separate stage in the process of planned change does not mean that what happens during initiation has *no* influence on implementation. At Cambire, the innovation came from the top down, and while it did not create initial resistance, it seemed to have contributed to the development of other barriers (e.g., lack of clarity among teachers).

The way an innovation is initiated or adopted has continued to be a perennial concern of change theorists, policy makers, and change agents. The literature was crystal clear at the time of our Cambire research about changes that are mandated or initiated from the top: they only lead to resistance among the rank and file who have to carry them out. The counter argument embraced then by many and still growing stronger even today (if this is possible) is that collaboratively arrived at changes are far more likely to produce successful implementation.

We took the position in our book that whether one or the other strategy is more effective is an empirical matter that depends on where and why each is being used. The advent of more theorizing about participation and good research into it (e.g., Clark & Astuto, 1994; Driscoll, 1992; Ferrara, 1993; Ferrara & Repa, 1993; Ferrara & Domenech, 1994; Fullan, 1991, 1993; Kantor, 1983; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Lieberman, 1992; Louis & Miles, 1990; Paris, 1993) makes clear that the participation of the rank and file during early initiation and eventual adoption often does have a positive effect on the success of implementation. Other than overcoming resistance, reasons for its success include that it has led to better (more relevant) change ideas, greater group consensus, and greater commitment of people to innovations and their enactment.[17]

Much of the participatory literature, however, is still hortative in nature. The need remains for more, solid research into when and why participatory strategies have positive consequences and even more need for work devoted to examining the conditions under which they falter. With the current emphasis on school-based management, the possibilities of doing research that would advance our understanding of this domain are considerable.

Unfortunately, definition problems continue to confound studies of and arguments about participation. Do researchers, policy makers, and practitioners use this term to mean that subordinates and superordinates have *equal* say in what happens? Do they use the term to mean power-sharing or simply involvement? When do they use it to characterize change efforts where superordinates have had two-way communication with subordinates about impending changes. Is it used to depict situations where subordinates had the opportunity to provide superordinates with feedback about their ideas and, if so, about which areas or aspects of the change endeavor?

We also need research into the conditions under which top-down change efforts succeed (e.g., Huberman & Miles, 1984). Are there many? Indeed, under what organizational conditions may such a strategy be the *only* reasonable option? When they fail is it because of the absence of participation or because often other conditions are not present, as we found out at Cambire?

Those who mandate change are often portrayed as unfair or without concern for those upon which the change is being "imposed."[18] What do we really know empirically about the wide array of top-down initiation efforts taking place over and over again in the world of work? As in the case of participation, the meaning of top-down or mandated change is frequently unclear.

### *The Difficulty of Achieving Adequate Implementation*

Perhaps we reached an even more fundamental conclusion about planned change based on the Cambire study. Grand and widely-heralded promising ideas in education (and not so grand local inventions as well) have continued to be proposed and adopted over the years only to end up, as did the innovation at Cambire, in the dustbin of attempted implementation. Why is this? The Cambire study suggests that it is because initiation, as difficult as it may be, is much easier to achieve than is adequate implementation. The implementation of a promising innovation is complex, time-consuming, and fraught with potential obstacles hard to anticipate or control.

Cambire demonstrated that inadequate implementation happens when the coalescing and maintenance of many broadly-conceived *desiderata are missing*. Role change requires clarity among members about and receptivity to the new goals and role expectations; member ability to enact the new role expectations; the presence of adequate resources; and, a compatible organizational or social envelope surrounding the innovation. Role change requires considerable time, coordination, support, and encouragement. It requires a deliberate process of *role resocialization*. None of these were addressed by the Director's post-initiation strategy. Simply presenting a "good" idea and giving committed members freedom to carry it out will not suffice.

The picture is further complicated by the fact that these desiderata fluctuate. And so, even when in place, they have to be continually monitored and buttressed. Cambire pointed to the central need for school leadership and management in

assuring the presence and maintenance of these conditions. None of the conditions can be taken for granted, as did Director Williams about teacher receptivity for example.

The growth of implementation studies during the decade after the completion of our Cambire research reinforced what we had concluded about the complexity of implementation. These studies revealed that public school change efforts routinely fell short of their intended marks and many would continue to do so especially because of three obstacles: (1) the difficulties of resocialization, (2) the status-related risks educators had to face, and (3) the instability of the environments in which schools were embedded, often exacerbated by the changing educational policies of the federal government and other funding agencies (Giacquinta, 1978). These obstacles seemed at the time to echo the desiderata from the Cambire study.

Since then, the difficulty of achieving adequate implementation, the centrality of the Cambire desiderata,[19] and the need for leadership in assuring these desiderata have been emphasized even more in the writings and research of educational change theorists (e.g., Fullan, 1993, 1991; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Louis & Miles, 1990; McLaughlin, 1987, 1990; Sarason, 1990).

Though no longer the sole emphasis, receptivity has remained important in theorizing about why change efforts fail or succeed. Yet, an accurate empirical understanding of when and why resistance arises is missing from the literature. Too many writers and researchers seem to take this phenomenon for granted or assume that they know when and why it arises. Probably because of this, few express much interest in studying it, in its own right, as a dependent variable with its own antecedents.

As a result of the Cambire study and my sociological training, I developed an early and continuing interest in receptivity, especially its possible connection to the statuses people hold. Because of their statuses, the Cambire teachers as teachers came to see that they were risking a lot trying to carry out the catalytic role model, especially in the absence of support from the Director. Principal Gault was unreceptive as well. He was actively seeking a more secure principalship in the larger traditionally-driven system and wanted to avoid "dirtying his hands" with such a radical reform. On the other hand, since it was his idea Director Williams supported the innovation without reservation. Indeed, it was in his best interest as a formal change agent in a larger system in great need of reform to foster such innovations. These and other reflections about Cambire led me in the early 70's to articulate a general explanation for receptivity to innovations that I labeled a Status-Risk Theory of Receptivity (Giacquinta, 1975b).

My theory posited that member receptivity to change (1) is largely innovation specific, (2) is strongly associated with statuses people hold (both formal and informal, both inside and outside the work setting), and (3) is a direct outcome of what people think would be the probable benefits and/or losses to them (in terms of status-related perquisites) were they to embrace the innovation.

Over the years, a number of doctoral students under my supervision have used

this perspective to study receptivity within various professionals groups to a wide variety of innovations, for example, public school teachers (Katz, 1992; Ramos, 1980), university professors (Kazlow, 1974; Henry, 1996), and mediators (Lane, 1993). Moreover, my own empirical work in the middle 1970's contrasted the receptivity of teachers, health specialists, school administrators, and school board members to sex education in elementary schools (Giacquinta, 1975a). Two colleagues analyzed the receptivity of nursing faculty and nursing deans to a new role that would combine clinical and academic activities for professors (Yarcheski & Mahon, 1985).

In the main the above research supports my status risk theory, some studies more strongly and in more ways than others. Additional status risk research and investigations using different perspectives on receptivity (e.g., Gitlin & Margonis, 1995) are necessary if we are to fully grasp the nature of this phenomenon in its own right as well as its relevance to the various stages of planned change.

The following set of speculations is about status-related risk taking and "successful" initiation efforts based on participation. If receptivity is status related, and if participation allows those having to enact the change to determine its nature, then would not participants shape or at least try to shape an innovation so that it best benefits them. Furthermore, in case they cannot get their way, might they not compromise on an innovation in ways that assure them more benefits and less risks?

If this kind of dynamic occurs frequently, might it not weaken the force of many innovative efforts? Participation, at least in some portion of change efforts, may work at one level – gaining member consensus and cooperation-but may do damage at another level – undermining the innovation's power to eradicate the difficulty that precipitated it in the first place? A variety of case studies of participatory initiation might be fruitfully carried out with this kind of speculating in mind.

### *The Appearance of Change and the Value of Sociologically-Defined Qualitative Research Designs*

At both the Fence and Field Schools we witnessed the patina of change, the impression of change at Field primarily by talking as if change were taking place and at Fence by talking and more importantly exhibiting sporadically contrived behavior. We would have never been the wiser in either situation had we not been there day in and day out observing classroom interactions and talking informally to teachers. The case study approach[20] proved to be the best way to establish what was actually happening-i.e., to get behind appearances. During the past thirty or so years this approach to establishing actual implementation has been used widely by serious students of planned change.

A truism in sociology is that what you see (on the surface) is very often *not* what you get (the social reality behind the appearance). This notion guided us in the shaping of our original research design and in carrying out the Cambire study as

well. Once the Director had introduced the innovation, we spent considerable time figuring out according to the innovation what the essential patterns of classroom interaction would be. We reasoned that these would have to be consistently present within each classroom and across classrooms in order to judge the innovation as adequately implemented. We also isolated the traditional patterns of interaction that would have to be abandoned.

With these criteria in hand, I embarked on a rigorous three-week period of classroom observations that took me each day to each classroom. I varied how long I stayed in each according to a prearranged schedule. During this period, I triangulated these observations with informal interviews of the teachers about their implementation efforts as well as with formal interviews at the end of my field work at the school. The process of first analyzing the innovation sociologically for underlying new patterns of interaction and then gathering qualitative data based on these as criteria of implementation was labor intensive, difficult, and time-consuming. We could think of no other way to be sure about the quality and quantity of implementation.

Survey research and experiments can be used effectively for the study of some aspects of planned change (e.g., diffusion, receptivity). But, survey designs are weak and experimental or quasi-experimental designs are inappropriate when the purpose of the investigation is to determine degree of implementation and to delve deeply into the reasons why. It is not surprising, therefore, that the qualitative approach has remained the design of choice in this area as witnessed by the studies referred in this chapter, most of a qualitative single-case or comparative-case nature.

The importance of this approach is underscored when one considers the study of technologically-based innovations. The required patterns of interaction are less obvious for this subset of innovations. Policy makers often seem to introduce a technology and then see what happens to member behavior as a result. In my judgment this approach "puts the cart before the horse." Researchers studying the effective use of technologies can ill afford to take such an approach. Before one can tell whether a piece of technology is being used "properly" or "adequately" decisions about the underlying patterns of interaction surrounding the technology must be made.[21] What is critical is the quality and quantity of a technology's particular use not the appearance created by having it physically in place (e.g., Levin, 1990).

For nearly 5 years beginning 1984, I directed a field study into the use of home computers by children for educational purposes, defined as the learning of school-related subjects such as reading, math, and science. In all, seventy family settings were examined in depth in an effort to determine the extent to which children were or were not using their home computers for educational purposes as defined above and the reasons why.

It was the most exhausting piece of research I have ever done and the write up of the results of such a large comparative-case analysis with two colleagues was equally difficult (Giacquinta, Bauer, & Levin, 1993). Nevertheless, the results reinforced the importance of delineating ahead of time the patterns of interaction

(we called this the innovation's social envelope) needed in order to get behind appearances to the actual quality and quantity of use.

Having done this, we discovered that children's educational uses were minimal and in large part because of the absence of many of the *same conditions* prevailing at Cambire long ago labeled as desiderata of implementation. Parents and children had to carry out new roles at home, roles that were unclear to them and that they were resistant to enact anyway. In addition to the lack of parental leadership, other factors also emerged as critical: the incompatibility of school expectations about educational home use, the minimal presence of appropriate software, and the lack of necessary skills and unwillingness to take certain status risks especially among parents.

## OTHER DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH ON EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

In addition to the suggestions for research scattered within the sections above, there are many others that if followed could contribute in important ways to the planned change literature. Below are a few that stand out in my mind. As is typically the case, researchers call for replications of their own work in other settings. I am no different! After thirty years the literature could still benefit from replications of the Cambire study.[22]

Do the five desiderata as they were originally conceptualized apply equally to other comparable change efforts? Unlike the failed attempt at Cambire where they were absent, do their *presence* actually lead to proper implementation. Are their presence or maintenance due to the actions or inaction of administrators during implementation? During initiation? What new findings emerge? Do these conflict with those of Cambire? It also needs to be said that our Cambire model is structural. As a model, it does not conceptualize what happens first during implementation and why, and then what happens next and why, and then what happens next and why, and so on. In other words, it is not a process model. As useful as models such as ours may be, the field would benefit from theorizing and research that is consciously process driven.

Research into whether implementation is more successful when certain desiderata are achieved and maintained before other desiderata would be a first step. Studies could also examine what happens when various combinations of the desiderata are present or absent. For example, what eventually happens to a change effort when clarity is present but not willingness? When willingness and ability are present but not ability? When organizational compatibility and receptivity are present but not resources?

There is also need for more disciplinary-anchored studies. Cambire shed very little light on any specific theory of change. Research could be focused on testing or generating change theory that is connected with say for example sociology's primary theories such as structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, conflict theory, and critical theory (e.g., Fine, 1995; Ritzer, 1990; Wagner, 1984). Each might

have a great deal to contribute to our understanding of change and the study of change might help advance these theories as well.

In the last analysis, of course, there may be no one satisfactory theory of change. However, important theoretical links might still be made with each separate desiderata in our model. In addition to the link I have tried to forge between receptivity and status-related risk taking, other connections might be between: clarity and say communications theory; resources and political theory; ability and resocialization theory; and organizational compatibility and open systems theory.

Greater attention could be given to integrating the change literature *across fields*. Literature on change at times appears to be inbred, for example, within education, or business, or health. What do we know across fields that would be beneficial for organizational change theory in general.

Lastly, the process of planned change characterized in the Cambire book was three-staged: initiation (ending in adoption), implementation (enactment), and incorporation (institutionalization). There are relatively few solid studies of initiation and even fewer of incorporation. As would be expected, there are even fewer studies investigating equally all three stages of change efforts.[23] The field would benefit from more of this kind of longitudinal, long-term, labor-intensive work.

Over the years I have thought often about our original search for schools in the middle sixties and our disappointment in not finding them. The old saw about good coming out of bad applies so well here. The Cambire book would never have been written and my thirty-year career and intellectual adventure would not have been devoted to the study of planned educational change. I only hope that the work Gross, Bernstein, and I did at Cambire along with the work I have done since then has helped scratch the surface of the tremendously challenging area of planned educational change.

## ENDNOTES

[1] At the time of our collaboration Gross was Professor of Education and Sociology at Harvard, Bernstein was a Research Associate in the School of Education, and I was a third-year doctoral student in the Sociology of Education Program. I remain deeply saddened by the passing of both my colleagues, Neal in 1981 and, more recently, Marilyn in 1994. Dedicated to them, this chapter was written with both at my side.

[2] This was an early precursor of "open education." In England where the innovation originated, they called it "the integrated day." This innovation would give students radical control over their learning. Among the many changes in this individualized learning setting, teachers were expected to allow children to learn what they wanted, when they wanted, and with whom they wanted. Classrooms were to be arranged into learning corners. Teachers were not expected to teach isolated subjects such as reading and math nor to engage in whole group instruction or traditional modes of pupil evaluation. The teacher's role became more of a catalyst for learning rather than a director. The children's were to move from passive to active learners.

[3] This included for example all the federal government's ESEA funding especially for so called "compensatory education" programs for elementary schools in hard hit urban areas and the Ford Foundation's heavy involvement in school change especially the decentralization of New York City Public Schools.

[4] While there are articles in Miles's book that mention the term "implementation," the book as

representative of the existing educational change literature demonstrates that diffusion and adoption were the foci of planned change. Although the landmark editions of articles by Bennis, Bennis, and Chin (1961; 1969), do stress organizational processes a great deal, the concept of implementation does not take center stage in this collection either.

[5] In his monumental review of existing studies, Havelock (1969) one of the dominant change specialists during this period reviews the importance of participation in any change strategy.

[6] The concept of "role set" is also fundamental here. As treated by Gross *et al.* (1958) the members of a teacher's most immediate role set would include their pupils, other teachers in the school, and the school's administration. Although in our study and in this article for simplicity sake, focus was placed on the new classroom role expectations for teachers, these expectations were necessarily accompanied by new reciprocal expectations for pupils. If this were not the case, then the notion of new patterns of interaction between and among people would have no meaning.

[7] Harvard was one of a number of universities funded by the federal government as research and development centers to carry out various educational research agendas. Our project was one of those funded by the Harvard R & D Center for a modest amount of money.

[8] Gross's earlier rural sociology research into the adoption of new farming techniques by farmers may have played an important part in his seeing the value of this new focus. I had no clue as to how he came up with the idea.

[9] What convinced me was my reading of Carlson's little classic on the adoption of innovation. In Miles (1965, pp. 329–341) Carlson reports on a piece of survey research dealing with the adoption of an educational innovation among superintendents. In his monograph (1965) Carlson reports on the adoption of other innovations among superintendents and this time includes a little case study as a last chapter entitled, "Unanticipated Consequences in the Use of Programmed Instruction." Teacher actions which undermined the essence of the innovation brought home to me how getting closer to those who enact proposed changes may reveal dramatic alterations in innovations.

[10] For about a month there were actually three schools, the third being a junior high. But, because of the great turnover of its staff and administration and because of interpersonal difficulties with a third fieldworker, it was dropped from the study.

[11] Mills was well connected in the greater metropolitan area and an influential board member of a nationally important private foundation, to which Gross also had connections.

[12] Williams was the Director of the experimental arm of the school system and as such had responsibility for more than the Cambire School.

[13] This was just fine with Gault. Since he did not like the innovation to begin with, the more it was contained or limited, the better.

[14] Ironically, Williams, himself, might have been taken in by the publicity being garnered by the School. Since he never visited Cambire, he had little reason to doubt the "reports," and so believed that because the teachers were doing well, they needed no help from him.

[15] Obviously, one also has to observe whether or not the old patterns of interaction are in evidence i.e., whether or not the old role expectations continue to be followed.

[16] I do not mean to imply that earlier or contemporaneous writings in the middle sixties did not give attention to implementation (e.g., see Ginzberg & Reilley,1957; Goodlad, 1970; Miles, 1965; Sarason, 1971; Smith & Keith, 1971). But, it was scattered and not treated very much as a problematic stage to be studied in it own right.

[17] Few at best have the temerity to emphasize participation's possible downside: watered-down ideas, group conflict, and no individual responsibility on the part of members to really try during implementation efforts.

[18] Today, this issue has become a moral (what is right) as well as an instrumental (what works) matter. Top-down change seems to be viewed as authoritarian and dictatorial in nature. It appears to me that more and more people – especially change theorists and change agents -believe that the rank and file have a right in a democratic society to participate in (influence) their work organization's change decisions especially if these decisions influence them in any way, regardless of whether or not such participation contributes to the effectiveness or efficiency of the change process. In short, participation is fast becoming an end in itself.

[19] They are not necessarily given same labels we gave them e.g., our notion of resocialization compared to the prevailing notion of teacher education.

[20] I employ this term generically to cover a wide variety of naturalistic designs where as a participant observer one spends long periods of time in usually one or at best a few settings observing and talking to participants, developing a log of observations, and analyzing it in words using a complex coding system shaped substantially during the fieldwork (for current discussions of this approach

see Bogdan & Biklin, 1992; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; LeCompte & Preissle, 1992; LeCompte, Millroy, & Preissle, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Wolcott, 1994).

[21] Throughout this chapter I have been using words such as adequate, proper, and successful to characterize implementation. I know that there may be disagreement with this kind of characterization. Using such qualifiers may be viewed as creating arbitrary criteria for judging the worth of change efforts. Some prefer to treat whatever happens in a setting as the appropriate adaptation of an innovation for that setting and group of people.

[22] Oddly enough I have no explanation for why I have never tried to replicate it myself. This is even more curious considering that all of my subsequent empirical work, directly or indirectly, has grown out of the Cambire experience.

[23] There are, of course, some outstanding exceptions (for example see Herriott & Gross, 1979; Huberman & Miles, 1984; McLaughlin, 1987).

## REFERENCES


Bardach, E. (1977) *The implementation game*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Bennis, W.G., Bennis, K. D., & Chin, R. (Eds.). (1961, 1969). *The planning of change.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Beyer, J., & Trice, H. (1978). *Implementing change*. New York: Free Press.

Bogdan R., & Biklin, S. (1992). *Qualitative research for education* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon,

Brigham, J., & Brown, D. (Eds). (1980). *Policy implementation*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Carlson, R. (1965). *Adoption of educational innovations*. Eugene, OR: Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration, University of Oregon.

Charters, W. W. (1973). *Measuring the implementation of differentiated staffing*. Eugene, OR: Center for the Advanced Study of Administration, University of Oregon.

Clark, D., & Astuto, T. (1994, March). Redirecting reform. *Phi Delta Kappan*. **3**, 513–520.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Driscoll, M. (1992). School-community relations and school effectiveness. In R. Crowson (Ed.), *School-community relations under reform* (pp.105–127). Berkeley: McCutchan,

Ferrara, D., & Repa, J. (1993, October). Measuring shared decision making. *Educational Leadership*. **51**(2), 71–72.

Ferrara, D. (1993, Fall). Developing a shared decision making plan, New York style. *School Administrators Association of New York State*. **24**(2), 25–28.

Ferrara, D., & Domenech, D. (1994, Spring). Using surveys for planning and monitoring shared decision making initiatives. *School Administrators Association of New York State,* **25**(4), 10–14.

Fine, G. (Ed.). (1995). *A second Chicago school?* Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Fliegel, F. and Kivlin, J. (1966). Attributes of innovations as factors in diffusion. *American Journal of Sociology,* **72**, 235–48.

Fullan, M. (S. Stiegelbauer, Collaborator). (1991). *The new meaning of educational change*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces*. London: Falmer Press.

Giacquinta, J. (1973). The process of organizational change in schools. In F. Kerlinger (Ed.), *Review of Research in Educational: Vol. 1* (pp. 178–208). Itasca, Il.: Peacock.

Giacquinta, J. (1975a, Winter). Status, risk, and receptivity to innovations in complex organizations. *Sociology of Education.*, **48**(4), 38–58.

Giacquinta, J. (1975b, Fall). Status risk-taking: A central issue in the initation and implementation of public school innovations. *Journal of Research and Development in Education,*, **9**(1), 102–114.

Giacquinta, J. (1978). *Educational innovation in schools: Some distressing conclusions about implementation*. An unpublished paper presented at the American Educational Research Association in Toronto, March 27–31, 19 pages.

Giacquinta, J., Bauer, J., & Levin, J. (1993). *Beyond technology's promise.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ginzberg, E., & Reilley, E. (1957). *Effecting change in large organizations*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Gitlin, A. and Margonis, F. (1995) The political aspect of Reform: Teacher resistance as good sense. *American Journal of Education*. 103 (August), 377–405.

Goodlad, J. & Associates. (1970). *Behind the green door*. Worthington, OH: Jones.

Gross, N., Giacquinta, J., & Bernstein, M. (1971). *Implementing organizational innovations*. New York: Basic Books.
Gross, N., Mason, W., & McEachern, A. (1958). *Explorations in role analysis*. New York: John Wiley.
Harper, C. (1993). *Exploring social change*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
Havelock, R. (1969). *Planning for innovation*. Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research.
Henry, P. (1996) *Faculty use of the internet for scholarly purposes*. (Doctoral Dissertation, New York University, in progress).
Herriott, R., & Gross, N. (Eds.). (1979). *The dynamics of planned educational change*. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.
Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. (1984). *Innovation up close*. New York: Plenum.
Kantor, R. (1983). *The change masters*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
Katz, E. H. (1992) *Receptivity of home economics teachers in New York State to the home and career skills curriculum*. (Doctoral Dissertation, New York University).
Kazlow, C. (1974). *Faculty receptivity to organizational change*. (Doctoral Dissertation, New York University).
LeCompte, M., Millroy, W., & Preissle, J. (Eds.). (1992). *The handbook of qualitative research in education*. New York: Academic Press.
Lieberman, A., & Miller, L. (1984). *Teachers, their world, and their work*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
Lieberman, A. (1992). Commentary: Pushing up from below: Changing schools and universities. *Teachers College Record*, **93**(4), 717–724
Lane, P. A. (1993). *The receptivity of mediators to professional practice innovations*. (Doctoral Dissertation, New York University).
Levin, J. (1990). *Your can't just plug it in: Integrating the computer into the curriculum*. (Doctoral Dissertation, New York University).
Louis, K., & Miles, M. (1990). *Improving the urban high school*. New York: Teachers College Press.
Mauksch, I., & Miller M. (1981). *Implementing change in nursing*. St. Louis, MO: Mosby.
McLaughlin, M. (1987). Learning from experience: Lessons from policy implementation. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, **9**, 171–8.
McLaughlin, M. (1990). The rand change agent study revisited. *Educational Researcher*. **5**, 11–16.
Miles, M., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2nd ed.
Miles, M. (Ed.). (1965). *Innovation in education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
Paris, C. (1993). *Teacher agency and curriculum making in classrooms*. New York: Teachers College Press.
Pressman, J., & Wildavsky, A. (1973). *Implementation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
Ramos, L. (1980). *Receptivity of Puerto Rican school teachers to four proposed innovations*. (Doctoral Dissertation, New York University).
Ritzer, G. (Ed.). (1990). *Frontiers of social theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Rogers, E. (1962). *Diffusion of innovations*. New York: Free Press.
Rogers, E. (1995). *Diffusion of innovations* (4th edition). New York: Free Press.
Sarason, S. (1971). *The culture of the school and the problem of change*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
Sarason, S. (1990) *The predictable failure of educational reform*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
Smith, L., & Keith, P. (1971). *Anatomy of educational innovation*. New York, Wiley.
Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
Sussmann, L. (1977). *Tales out of school: Implementing organizational change in the elementary grades*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Wagner, D. (1984). *The growth of sociological theories*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
Williams, W., & Elmore, R. (1976). *Social program implementation*. New York: Academic Press.
Williams, W. (1980). *The implementation perspective*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
Williams, W. (Ed.). (1982). *Studying implementation*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham Press.
Wolcott, H. (1994). *Transforming qualitative data: Description, analysis, and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Yarcheski, A., & Mahon, N. E. (1985). The unification model in nursing: A study of receptivity among nurse educators in the United States. *Nursing Research*, **34**, 120–5.

# Ecological Images of Change: Limits and Possibilities

KENNETH A. SIROTNIK
*Institue for the Study of Educational Policy, University of Washington*

Lake Victoria, the largest lake in Africa, was once a high quality food source as well as an important field site for studying evolutionary processes. Not any more. The Ugandan government decided to improve the fishery several decades ago by introducing hearty and cacheable perch from the Nile River.[1] It turned out, however, that these fish can reach monstrous proportions (up to 6–1/2 feet and 175 pounds) with an appetite to match. About 10 years after these perch were introduced, they began showing up in increasing numbers in the nets of fisherman trying to catch any of the 300 varieties of smaller, more desirable fish in the lake. Soon, the perch wiped out almost two-thirds of the fishery and left a number of the individual species extinct.

But, no matter, there are now a lot of Nile perch. Too bad they are not highly desired as food by the community. The smaller fish were prized for their taste and their ability to be prepared using a sun-drying process. Nile perch, on the other hand, are very oily and impossible to dry in the sun. The only way to adequately prepare them for eating is to smoke them. And the only way to smoke them is to burn wood. And the only way to get wood is to cut down trees, more and more of them, as these perch rapidly become the only viable fishery.

The destruction of the world's forests, by the way, is a matter of some concern. Tropical rain forests in particular are disappearing at an alarming rate. Over the decade of the 80s, they were reduced by 50% – a yearly loss of forested region the size of the state of Michigan (or about the size of England and Wales together).[2] So what? Fish need to be smoked and houses need to be built. Yet soil needs to be kept in place, and tree roots do this very well. Tree roots also help purify and steady the flow of water, which in turn is connected to climate, weather, and agricultural productivity. The connections are remarkable, and the potentials for disastrous domino-effects are stunning:

> Through evaporation and transpiration, forests enable three-quarters of the world's rainfall to return to the atmosphere. Water rising as vapour falls again as rain in due course. In the interim it remains suspended over the forest in the form of mist or cloud which, by deflecting some of the sun's potentially damaging heat, has a moderating effect that is vital to the wellbeing of the forest. Cloud and forest are interdependent; indeed, their relationship is almost symbiotic, the forest generating the cloud and the cloud protecting the forest. Trees also have a crucial role in the oxygen cycle: by absorbing



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 169-185.

> carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen, they constitute an integral part of one of the world's life support systems. Forests, in short, are of critical importance to the earth.[3] . . . Because of the massive quantity of fixed carbon contained within them, the world's forests are inextricably bound up with the issue of global warming. Deforestation, particularly when caused by burning, releases carbon in the form of carbon dioxide, the main 'greenhouse' gas . . . [and is thus] a significant factor in global warming, albeit much less important than emissions from the burning of fossil fuels.[4]

In the pacific northwestern region of the United States, lies the Olympic rain forest and many other old growth forests, the continued harvesting of which has been the subject of some controversy given increased low land flooding, decline of salmon fisheries, loss of endangered species (e.g., the spotted owl), and negative impact on local economies with loss of lumber related jobs. Close by, is an elementary school in some turmoil due to the introduction of multi-age teaching four years previously.[5]

The idea started with two teachers (first and second grade) who got the support of the school principal in the form of some discretionary funds for new instructional materials. During the first year, the multi-age experiment did not receive much attention school-wide, although another second grade teacher requested an amount of discretionary funds equal to half of what the other two teachers received. The principal denied the request. In the second year, the participating second grade teacher requested the entire class from the participating first grade teacher, further annoying the other second grade teacher whose request for equivalent discretionary funds had been denied. The principal approved the promotion request, thereby abandoning a traditional practice of dispersing students in the promotional process to different classes.

Also in this second year, the idea attracted two more teachers, so four teachers in grades one to four were now participating in multi-age instruction. And again, at the end of the year, all four teachers requested intact class promotions from one multi-age teacher to another, this time causing resentment in two more uninvolved third and fourth grade teachers. As the resentment became vocalized, the principal justified her acts by allowing parents to decide whether or not to continue their child's instruction in the multi-age "program." Due to the inability to meet all parent wishes, some students had to switch back to traditional teachers, creating some hard feelings among parents. Anticipating this problem in the third year, the multi-age teachers started a public relations campaign by recruiting some parents as classroom aides and sending advocacy letters to the parents of their students.

By the start of the fourth year, the traditional teachers were feeling disenfranchised, they voiced concern that their "regular" program was getting a bad reputation, and that they were being unjustifiably excluded from the use of discretionary funds. At this point, the entire school staff had split between supporters of the multi-age teachers and supporters of the traditional teachers; moreover, the fifth and sixth grade teachers were getting nervous – none of them wanted to engage in multi-age instruction, and they were worried about the disparities that would be occurring in their classes once students from both traditional

and multi-age classes were combined. Also in the fourth year, a new principal entered the scene, and, in order to control the staff conflict, ordered the multi-age teachers not to communicate their program plans to parents. By the time of "parent night" in the beginning of the school year, the multi-age teachers had a group of confused and disgruntled parents on their hands, whose only source of information on classroom practices was from their children.

Presently, the situation is pretty much at a stalemate with half the teachers from grades 1 to 4 involved in multi-age teaching, and the rest (including all grades 5 and 6) not. The "problems" anticipated by the 5th and 6th grade teachers are coming to pass – kids from the multi-age classes seem not to have learned enough about fractions, thereby making the math lessons for the 5th grade teachers more difficult.

A little further east of the Rain Forest, near the Cedar River – where restoring the salmon and steelhead fishery is meeting with limited success – is an interesting "alternative" middle school. The school opened its doors over half a decade ago with the mission to provide "an integrated academic core curriculum based on a global citizenship theme." This 6–8 middle school began small, 6th grade only, with just what it advertised – a highly academic, integrated core curriculum, very different from most other junior high/middle schools in this urban school district. Not unlike other such alternative school experiments, this school was supported mainly by white middle- and upper-middle class parents and had trouble attracting a diverse student body. In three years, the school had its three full grades, but it now became apparent that it was very racially imbalanced in a district that mandated certain minority percentages in each of its schools. Ironically, a school with "global citizenship" as its organizing theme did not meet the district's desegregation requirements. The school began exploring taking on either a special education program or an English as a Second Language (ESL) program, with the latter particularly appealing given the theme of the school. Somehow the school ended up with both programs.

The impact was immediate and strong: special education began with a full inclusion model, and both the special education and ESL programs mainstreamed students into most classes, including the academic core. Additional resources hardly accompanied the new programs; at most, 60% time special education and ESL teachers were added to the faculty. Given the global education theme, a "foreign language" – not English – was required. It soon became apparent that the ESL students had a hard enough time trying to learn English, let alone another foreign language (other than their own). The special education students, too, were struggling for a whole set of other reasons. Nonetheless, the word was out that the school had a full inclusion model for special education students – an uncommon practice in middle schools in this district – and the notion of an "alternative" school began to take on new meaning. Soon many new students began arriving who had been expelled from other schools or who just had trouble fitting into the more "traditional" schools.

The impact was now even more dramatic. Discipline problems escalated, teachers continued to try to use novel methods such as cooperative learning and independent self-study with students totally unprepared for these experiences. Many of the ESL students were from war-torn places like Bosnia and Somalia where violence was often the norm. Their interactions with some of the special education students, particularly

the "behaviorally disordered," were less than exemplary. Presently, the school is still struggling to accommodate the needs of its growing "global community." Interestingly, staff are now arguing about changing back to some of the more traditional pedagogical methods (much to the chagrin of some of the original parents) that were eschewed in the original concept plan for this alternative school.

Space does not permit detailing the dozen or so other examples I have collected of the ecological metaphor at work in educational systems and organizations, particularly in places attempting local school improvement and change. And, of course, there are many other examples showing the parallels in the natural world, from atmospheric pollution to zebra mussel infestations. Readers might well be wondering if I will have anything positive to say about ecological images of change, given the examples chosen to illustrate in how many ways our natural or organizational ecosystems can be altered as by-products of interventions. Indeed, I will. But the delicate balance and complex network of interconnections among human and material features in and around schools must be acknowledged, particularly in view of the many negative outcomes arising from interventions (many well-intentioned) in schools that pay little or no attention to the ecology of the setting. Seymour Sarason, recently frustrated a bit by the continued lack of recognition by educators of this critical concept, succinctly commented:[6]

> Changing one aspect of the education system is extraordinarily difficult, both conceptually and practically. Deal with one aspect only, and you quickly confront local and systemwide barriers to change.

What are the roots of the ecological metaphor for educational change and school improvement? To what extent does the metaphor work? To the extent that it does not, what are some of the problems and adjustments that need to be made? It is to these questions I turn in the remaining sections of this chapter.

## ROOTS

How far back does one go? In the time of Aristotle, there were philosophers around talking about the relationship between living things and their inanimate surroundings. Surely there must have been socially oriented folks making this kind of connection to the world of human affairs as well. The interdisciplinary science of ecology, however, as applied in various fields like biology, zoology, and botany, is a relatively recent invention of the early to mid 20th century, although the roots of this begin in more primitive forms in the late 19th century.[7]

Derived from the Greek words "oekos" (meaning house, or home, or place to live) and "logos" (the study of), the word "ecology" was presumably coined by the German zoologist Ernst Haeckel in 1869.[8] Generally, the meaning of the word is unchanged from the times of the early Greeks; ecology is essentially "the science of the relationships between organisms and their environments."[9] Substitute human beings for organisms, and you have the definition of human ecology, which moves

us closer to the use of the ecological image or metaphor in understanding human organizations and organizational systems.

The study of ecosystems, or systems ecology, is essentially the study of reasonably bounded interdependencies between organisms and their environments. These are difficult enough to define in the physical world, given the array of linkages possible even in an ostensibly simple situation (like introducing Nile perch into Lake Victoria). In the social world, it is even more difficult.

For example, in my educational scenarios above, the ecosystems appeared mostly bounded by the school organization, although the connections to district policies and parent reactions were very evident. Although many other examples of ecological change limited to schools are possible, the educational ecology is often considerably larger and includes schools, their inhabitants, their district and school board contexts, their parent and other community constituencies, and the larger governance context (like state and federal policy and political contexts). Good examples of the larger educational ecosystem at work can be found in the trials and tribulations, the repercussions and fallout, of the attempt to institute a national curriculum and assessment in England and Wales, and recent state-based accountability efforts in the US to establish performance-based standards and alternative assessment systems.[10]

When did these ecological notions enter into the world of the social sciences and the study of human conditions and organizations? I'm not sure that there would be agreement on the answer to this question. For some, it may be as early as the recognition that there are multiple, contextual variables that need to be taken into account in order to understand human intentions and interactions. On this account, the work of Kurt Lewin in the 30s and 40s would be seminal, although a case could be made for the work of Emile Durkheim in France about a half century earlier.[11]

Notwithstanding these earlier roots in sociology and psychology and other disciplines not even mentioned here, things were clearly sprouting in the mid 60s and decade of the 70s. For it is during this time that a number of scholars concerned with studies of individuals or collectives were conscious not only of the general problem of the relationship between humans and their environment, but were very deliberate in their use of the word ecology and ecological metaphors in developing conceptual frameworks.

Although there are undoubtedly many examples to choose from, works that spring to mind immediately include the inquires by "social ecologists" Barker and Gump as reflected in their study "Big School, Small School;"[12] Seymour Sarason's critique of attempts at educational innovation and the melding of cultural and ecological metaphors in his book *The Culture of School and the Problem of Change* and, in particular, the chapter "The Ecological Approach;"[13] Urie Bronfenbrenner's critique of laboratory and laboratory-like experimentation in his work in education and psychology, culminating in his article "The Experimental Ecology of Education;"[14] and the multi-year Study of Educational Change and School Improvement project and its many summary reports, particularly John Goodlad's book *The Dynamics of Educational Change* and the chapter "Notes on the Ecology of Education."[15]

Surely there are other seminal examples, and those above obviously reflect my own biases and experiences. For example, not included above nor cited by any of the above authors is Gregory Bateson's work collected in his 1972 volume *Steps to an Ecology of Mind.*[16] Although it could be argued that much in this work pertained more specifically to biological evolution, Bateson's general message (more on this later) is of critical importance to human organizations and their attempts to change for the better.[16] As another example, Gareth Morgan, coming from the world of organizational and management theory, traces what he calls the "organismic" image of organizations (which easily incorporates the ecological metaphor) and cites many notable references (including Bateson) that I have not noted above.[17]

So the roots of ecological images of educational organizations and change are dispersed; they do not really emanate from any one source but are multidisciplinary in nature, as they should be. Moreover, it seems to me that there was an equally powerful, if not more compelling, force in the '60s and '70s that encouraged and perhaps even triggered the movement towards ecological thinking. Although the paradigm shift from positivism to post-positivism had long been accomplished in the philosophy of science, positivism (or at least the wish for positivism, i.e., certainty, generalizable laws of human behavior, and the like) was still alive within much of the social, psychological, and educational research community.[18]

But although positivism was still alive, it was not well. In a seminal address to the American Psychological Association in 1974, for example, Lee Cronbach, having spent considerable research time and effort in multivariate and experimental research, abandoned the quest for nomothetic theory, and suggested that his colleagues in the research community do likewise.[19] In its place, Cronbach suggested a much more contextualized notion of quantitative research, situated in the indeterminacy and complexity of local situations or settings, and even deferred to Geertz's influential notions of "thick description" and the qualitative research movement that had been struggling for recognition in psychology and education for some time.[20] As a nice capstone to the decade of the 70s, and the increasing recognition of a complex, interpretive world, was this rhetorical question by Elliot Mishler: "Meaning in context: Is there any other kind?"[21]

## ECOLOGICAL IMAGES AT WORK

The emerging crisis of confidence in a positivist view of the social world was likely a welcomed relief for educators and researchers like Sarason, Goodlad, and others, who already viewed this world as a place where human interactions and organizational interventions were not easily harnessed and understood. For these scholars, the world was, is, and always will be a messy place. That is not to say that *tentative* understandings and predictions are not possible; it is just to say that they are contingent on more variables than are likely to be understood at any given time in any given setting using any given methods and methodological approach.

Thinking of organizations as *cultural* ecologies, therefore, fits nicely with this alternative world view. Ideas like roles, expectations, rituals, regularities, beliefs,

and motives seem to be useful constructs across time and place; yet it is always interesting to see how these ideas shift in context, how they might combine to facilitate or inhibit innovation and change, and how the ecology of the social system might react to deliberate interventions, whether from inside or out.

Readers will note that my use of the ecological metaphor is not (and will not be) very precise. I will not make use of key ecological concepts such as energy flows, niches, entropy, evolution, and the like. Although it is possible to draw more specific analogues with these ideas, writers like Sarason and Goodlad never did. Instead, they put a sociocultural twist on the metaphor and simply relied on images of human and material connections within educational environments. They focused on schools, but did not ignore the larger ecosystem – the political and economic environment of federal, state, and local policies and interests – within which schools try to function.

John Goodlad's work using the ecological metaphor is a good case in point, particularly as reflected in his 1987 edited volume for the National Society for the Study of Education.[22] For it is in this volume that the various components of the larger educational ecology are elaborated and expanded beyond the still central focus of the school house and all that goes on there.[23] In contrast to a linear, input-output, factory metaphor of schooling that finds meaning in production functions that might explain and control the workings of schools, Goodlad finds meaning in the interconnections that necessarily constitute the educational ecosystem.

For better or worse, schools not only operate within their own little ecosystems (including teachers, students, parents, district, school board, etc.), they attempt to function within larger systems of accountability, economics, political agendas, and local interests and are affected by an array of connections (realized and unrealized) with other related institutions (e.g., social service agencies, the media, secular and religious community associations, colleges and universities, etc.). Thus, Goodlad and the other contributors to the 1987 NSSE volume argued not only for schools as centers of inquiry and change, but for developing and enhancing critical and deliberate associations of schools with state and community constituencies. Moreover, partnerships of schools with local and regional colleges and universities were strongly advocated in view of the symbiotic connections between the quality of schools and the quality of educators prepared to work in them.[24]

This web of interconnections (latent or manifest) in the educational ecology suggests a rather complicated set of issues around sustaining and nurturing the ecology while holding it accountable to meet public interests. Goodlad and others have centered this ecology on the school, on where the action of ultimate importance is, on where teaching and learning and the education of our children and youth are supposed to take place.[25] On the one hand, therefore, a good deal of the authority and responsibility for education belongs in the school house, along with the professional autonomy necessary for educators to deliberate on, make, enact, and evaluate the best possible educational decisions for students.

On the other hand, schooling is a public enterprise, and the public has the right to hold schools accountable. This poses a considerable dilemma – one that is being played out currently in the trials and tribulations of site-based management and other devolution experiments – of how to balance authority and responsibility in

the educational ecology. Although there is not likely to be one best solution, the compromise position suggested by Goodlad may be a good point of departure and certainly illustrates the nature of ecosystem thinking:[26]

> First, the state should back away from its current tendency to focus on principals, teachers, and individual schools in its efforts to assure accountability. Rather, the state should hold the district accountable for communicating the state's goals for education in schools, developing balanced curricula in each school, employing qualified [administrators and] teachers, providing time and resources for local school improvement, and assuring equity in the distribution of these resources. It is reasonable for states to assess the way districts conduct their business. But to seek to monitor from remote state capitals the activities and performance of individual schools and teachers is unrealistic and ultimately damaging. This is a district responsibility. It has not proved feasible for states to assess the consequences of legislation directed at individual schools and their personnel. Further, because much of it is inappropriate for some schools, it is quite possible that such legislation has done as much harm as good. . . .
>
> [Second, the district should genuinely decentralize] authority and responsibility to the local school within a framework designed to assure school-to-school equity and a measure of accountability. Each school is to be held responsible for providing a balanced program of studies. Each school is to develop and present its program and accompanying planning document and budget to the superintendent . . . projected over a three-to-five year period, with annual updating and review. The superintendent and [school] board should . . . avoid detailed specifications for local school planning . . . The essence of the district-school relationship is the review process . . . following appropriate consultation, [the superintendent] should be free to allocate discretionary funds to support unusually creative efforts and to deny funds for failure to plan. . . .
>
> [Third, the] guiding principle being put forward here is that the school must become largely self-directing. The people connected with it must develop a capacity for effecting renewal and establish mechanisms for doing this. . . . If children's reading attainments appear to be declining, improved reading will become a top priority item on the school renewal agenda. This approach to change differs markedly from starting out by bringing in innovations from outside the schools. . . . This is the self-renewing capability school personnel must develop if their place of work is to be productive and satisfying.

Of course, the devil is in the details. Goodlad offered a number of general guidelines in *A Place Called School*, even anticipating today's "site councils" (decision-making bodies in schools composed of parents, educators, and students). Strong school-university partnerships were advocated for the simultaneous renewal of schools and the education of educators. And the ideas of networking and collaboration were expanded to include the concept of educative communities, where schools, in addition to the formal education of students, become centers for community education and action and hubs for networking the resources of other related

community and social service agencies – "an ecology of institutions educating."[27]

A crucial assumption in all these ecological notions is that the system can be healthy or unhealthy (to shift to the related biological or organismic images), and that we have some normative ideas of what "wellness" might be (or not be) in educational ecologies. This was anticipated early on in Goodlad's first proposal of an educational ecology, and has been problematic ever since in terms of unqualified uses of the ecological metaphor.[28]

## BEYOND ECOLOGICAL IMAGES

Natural environments appear to sustain and nurture themselves quite nicely. After the cataclysmic eruption of Mt. St. Helens in the state of Washington, there was nothing but devastation for miles around. Relatively soon, however, flowers were poking up through the volcanic ash, rivers were clearing, and animals were returning. Today, after a mere speck of evolutionary time, the area is enjoying a rebirth of flora and fauna. The aftermath of the enormous fires in Yellowstone National Park (in the sate of Wyoming) – fires that some argued should be unnaturally controlled – present another example of how an ecosystem works and takes care of itself. Natural disasters are just that – natural – and the ecological forces at work in nature take care of these "interventions," naturally.

Enter the human animal; the picture changes. To be sure, we are here, and that is certainly natural, a part of nature, a part of the scheme of things. But we bring with us something that no other living thing has – motives. We act with intention; we bring beliefs, values, and human interests to bear on our actions. In short, we are ideological and political beings, and the natural world is not necessarily equipped to handle this in any healthy way.

For most of human history, this was not much of a threat to the natural world. The power of nature far outstripped human capacity to alter it. Things have changed dramatically, however, in the last century or so with the advent of industry and technology. Darwin's theory of evolution might work fairly well in ecosystems where natural selection and variation in species can act out the survival of the fittest scenario with little or no technological interference. The theory, however, is quickly compromised when human creatures can make choices and act on their environment every bit as much as the environment can act on them.

What is missing from, and what really has no natural place in, ecological science is human morality and the ethical dimensions underlying human intention and choice. The seminal thinking here is Gregory Bateson's, and his eloquence is moving:

> If you put God outside and set him vis-à-vis his creation and if you have the idea that you are created in his image, you will logically and naturally see yourself as outside and against the things around you. And as you arrogate all mind to yourself, you will see the world around you as mindless and therefore not entitled to moral or ethical consideration. The environment will seem to be yours to exploit. Your survival unit will be you and your

> folks or conspecifics against the environment of other social units, other races and the brutes and vegetables.
>
> If this is your estimate of your relation to nature *and you have an advanced technology,* your likelihood of survival will be that of a snowball in hell. You will die either of the toxic by-products of your own hate, or, simply, of overpopulation and overgrazing. The raw materials of the world are finite.(p.29)

Ecological metaphors in the *social* world, like *educational* ecosystems, are doubly handicapped. Not only are they subject to human motives and intentions, they are human constructions in the first place. The public schools were conceived with purpose in mind. And they have been acted on with purpose and intention ever since. Indeed, it is the ongoing conflict in these purposes and intentions between various interest groups that fuels the ever-present debates about what schools are for and what they should be for.

For example, it might be argued that public schools are for the public's interest; and the public is more than any particular family, community, or special interest. In a constitutional democracy, citizens must be capable of thinking critically and making informed decisions that transcend special interests and protect the commonweal of which we are all part. Or, it might be argued that public schools are really for local publics; that they are for educating students in the basic disciplines; and that they are not for developing (and challenging) values and beliefs that more properly belong to the domains of family and community. Or, it might be argued that all this talk of values is really about power and who has it; that interpretations and constructions of public schooling and what it is for or should be for will be conditioned on whose voices are being heard, and whose are not; and that what happens will likely be the result of politics and pragmatics. Or, . . .

The point, here, is that ecological metaphors cannot help much in these debates. But the outcomes of these debates have profound effects on educational ecologies. And there seems to be little way out of this dilemma without invoking other metaphors or images of organizational life. Gareth Morgan's work, *Images of Organizations*, can help us out here, since we can find many that are useful to further understand educational organizations like schools, and we can see how no one metaphor can adequately signal all there is to know and understand about complex organizations and their environments.[30]

Of particular use, would be additional metaphors that see educational organizations as thinking, caring, and critical places where people challenge constructively the assumptions they are making (tacitly or otherwise) in their work.[31] Morgan's images of organizations as "brains" (or learning communities) and as "political systems," combined with "cultural" and "organismic/ecological" images, provide the kind of metaphorical mixture we need, especially when several other important ingredients – like leadership (structural/bureaucratic models) and caring (human resources/relations models) – are also added.[32]

All of this points to the importance of explicitly acknowledging and making available for ongoing critical analysis the moral and ethical dimensions of

educational work. My previous paragraph is loaded with moral and ethical implications, if caring and critically inquiring organizations dealing with conflict and multiple interests are taken seriously.[33] One obvious implication has to do with equity and social justice and how we can incorporate principles of fairness into fundamental conversations about educational purposes and practices.[34]

I hope this kind of talk about fundamental values does not trouble too much my post-modern colleagues, who hear all the other voices that have been routinely disenfranchised regardless of talk of "justice" or any other lofty concepts. I, too, hear these voices (albeit through still alive, white male, Southern California-raised, Jewish ears). And what I hear mostly are the sounds of hope, of caring and fairness, not the sounds of racism, sexism, fascism, homophobia, and the like. Yes, these are all *constructed* ideas; yet, we cannot become mired in the *relativity* of multiple constructions and voices. If we as people cannot come to some important working consensus on fundamental values – reach some important degree of solidarity on what it means to be human in the world with others – then, with Bateson, I think we have little long-term hope for existing in healthy ways other than as hermits or warring clans.

The idea of educational ecosystems, and the images of educational change and school improvement conjured up by this metaphor, can be useful ones, so long as we remember that these systems are not self-contained and deterministic, unaffected by human intention and action. To be healthy, they need a moral conception of what health means. They will need moral leadership to nurture and sustain the conception. And they will need committed educators and educational constituents who strive to deliberate in equitable ways on both what is, and what ought to be, in educational purposes and practices.

* * *

On the shores of Lake Washington – a body of water (within the greater Seattle area) which just several decades ago was so polluted it resembled sludge, and which now is nearly pollution-free due to the foresight and commitment of several community leaders and the local water district – sits a relatively isolated, suburban, affluent community and school district. The achievement scores of this district are among the highest in the state of Washington. This is a school district where nearly all the children are "above average," certainly in the eyes of their parents, as well as in the outcomes of standardized tests. Imagine the middle school (a grade 6 through 8 configuration) proposing the elimination of tracking – that is, the elimination of sorting students into enduring ability groups like "gifted," "average," and "remedial" educational categories, a practice that typically determines the kinds of courses students end up in for much of their secondary schooling experience.

Prior to the mid 1980s, this small school district contained 1 high school, 2 junior high schools, and 3 elementary schools. Due to decreasing enrollments and other fiscal constraints, one junior high was eliminated, turning the remaining school into a "middle school" (grades 7–8) with the high school going from grade 9 through 12. The new "middle school" continued to operate much like a junior high school, with Algebra and a Humanities block functioning as gateways to

advanced curriculum at the high school and, eventually, to the better (prestigious) Colleges and Universities. Only the "gifted students" were identified and selected (based on IQ and standardized achievement test scores) into these advanced courses. Given the affluence of the community and the expected negatively skewed distribution of test scores, cut-off scores were unusually high (e.g., 130 and above for IQ). Many parents, who were certain their children were "gifted" (with IQs of 129 or 125 or 120 or . . .), were becoming increasingly angered that their children were not being admitted to the "gifted" classes.

Interestingly, the 3 elementary schools had become ability grouped, as *total* schools, by virtue of a long history of "special education" students being placed at one elementary school and strong parent advocacy for the very "top achieving" students to be placed in another elementary school. The remaining elementary school had students who were not classified as "special education" or whose parents were not particularly concerned about which school they were in. (In this small district, parents could choose what elementary school their child went to.) The reputation of the "top" elementary school was that they prepared their 6th graders to enter the middle school with a good chance of making it into the "gifted" track.

Enter a new principal of the middle school who happens to be an educator not afraid of controversy and who is a strong advocate of equity and excellence in theory *and practice*. Among the first jobs facing this new principal is to identify the 25 to 30 "gifted" students who would be admitted to the Humanities and/or Algebra tracks. After sorting through the test scores, she quickly realized how unfair the practice was to many other highly competent students who just missed the cut off scores, or whose talents and skill development, regardless of test scores, seemed quite compatible with the "gifted" curriculum. When parents of the excluded children complained bitterly about their children not getting into Humanities or Algebra, the principal was unable to morally justify the school's decisions.

Also in this first year for the new principal, the district decided for reasons of school size and plant efficiency to transfer the 6th grade from all 3 elementary schools to the middle school. The new principal, therefore, had to pave the way for this transition to a 6–7–8 middle school. This decision threw a monkey wrench into the machinery of the "top" elementary school, whose teachers now had to rethink what it meant to prepare 5th graders to be "gifted" 6th graders at the middle school. And the middle school had to face an influx of 6th graders from the other two "less gifted" elementary schools.

Familiar with literature and studies on the tracking and homogeneous vs. heterogeneous debates, the new principal was determined to eliminate "gifted education" at the middle school, and make available a high quality curriculum (including Algebra and Humanities) to all students who wished to take it. She started with an education program for the teachers and parents, using in-service time for reading and discussing the literature against tracking. She soon discovered, however, that the parents were particularly bright and well-educated; they were quite able to pick apart any research study, much like the controversy and contradictory claims argued in the literature by scholars on one side or the other of the debate. Parents were soon bringing in literature of their own to counter the

principal's claims. At one memorable school board meeting, a group of "gifted" parents claimed that the principal (a) was trying to water down the curriculum for all students, (b) didn't care about the particularly bright children, and (c) wanted to eliminate the advanced curriculum (i.e., gifted education).

This small but vocal parent group was aided and encouraged by a small group of teachers whose interests were better served by leaving the situation unchanged. Teachers at the "top" elementary school were concerned that they would no longer be seen as the reputed "best school" in the district, if all kids could get into any program they wanted at the middle school. A teacher at the middle school, who had long been responsible for a major piece of the gifted program, was also threatened by the program's elimination.

With the help and encouragement of the school district superintendent – an educator with the same classroom experience and moral commitments of the principal – the principal came quickly to realize that the issue was a political one. No amount of appeal to educational arguments was going to work; a political issue needed a different strategy, one more in line with negotiating conflict and competing interests. With the superintendent running interference with Board members who were being bombarded by angry parents, the principal organized a major meeting of the most vocal parents against the elimination of the differentiated curriculum, at exactly the time the middle school was agonizing again over what students to select into the 7th grade Humanities block based on the students' IQ scores and 6th grade achievement test data.

The task for the parents at this meeting was simple. All they had to do was apply the criteria and select the top 30 students (from 250) for the "gifted" program. It didn't take long for parents to realize that many more than 30 students had reasonably high test scores even though they didn't quite qualify for the program. Then the principal disclosed the fact that many parents in the room (she did not state which) had children who did not make the cut-offs. At that point parents began to equivocate, arguing that there should be two "gifted" Humanities blocks to accommodate the additional students who were clearly qualified. But given the fairly homogeneous nature of the district's student population, there were still students who were quite able but would not qualify – a very disquieting proposition for parents, wondering if their child would be among the disenfranchised.

This, of course, was the leverage point needed by the principal, who, with a slight but important change in rhetoric, put forth the idea of "gifted education" for *all* students, if they so chose it. In effect, the "gifted program" was not eliminated; it was expanded. This was a welcomed suggestion for most parents. The larger parent group representing the PTSA (Parent, Teachers and Student Association) were also in favor of the idea. (Arguing for the inclusion of "special education" and "regular" students into challenging and exciting classes was never an issue.) The School Board got on board with the idea, and the middle school officially detracked the Humanities program beginning the 1991–92 school year. In all, it took about 4–5 years to accomplish this.

Interestingly, many other events and issues were triggered by this decision. First, once the Humanities block became available to all students, the Algebra track was

also challenged and subsequently opened to all students. Second, teaching and learning expectations were significantly raised for all parents, teachers, and students; teaching well, with challenging curricula including higher level thinking skills, was now becoming the norm regardless of which classes students were in. Third, parents who were still concerned about their "highly gifted" students started a number of after-school enrichment programs open to and benefiting *all* students. Fourth, scheduling classes at the middle school became significantly easier. Prior to this decision, there was only one "gifted" Humanities block, which was offered only during periods 1 and 2; all other courses had to be scheduled around it. But the "gifted" students tended also to be in Orchestra and Algebra; thus those classes had to be scheduled at other periods that did not conflict with these 30 students' total class programs. Now, more than one Humanities block were offered, adding considerably more degrees of freedom to the master scheduling process for all students.

Fifth, the monopoly was broken on who could teach the "gifted" track. Teachers had already begun experimenting with team teaching, they liked it, they welcomed the opportunity to try it in the Humanities blocks, but they also needed some help. Thus, sixth, by increasing class sizes by only one student across the board, the principal was able to free up one FTE (full-time equivalent) and hire an expert resource teacher to work full time with all the Humanities blocks. Seventh, teachers were now working much more collaboratively and much more as inquirers into their own teaching and learning practices. More parents became aware and supportive of the higher quality curriculum being experienced by many more students. With community and district support, capital improvement funds were secured to renovate the middle school facility and build a central, large common area for teacher planning and student and community activities.

Meanwhile, the high school began experiencing an influx of "gifted" students, that is, more and more students from the middle school were showing up who had been through a much more demanding curriculum. Given that so many of the students in this community were college-bound no matter what "track" they were in, the high school had developed a practice of tracking college preparatory courses like chemistry and geometry, which, at a more heterogeneous school, would themselves constitute the upper track curriculum. So, in this high school, there was "Basic Chemistry" and "Advanced Chemistry;" in fact, some courses even had three tracks like "Basic Geometry," "Advanced Geometry," and "Honors Geometry." School board members, parents, and some teachers and administrators were already questioning this practice of tracking within tracks; and with the success of the middle school initiative, these concerns became more palpable. Within a couple of years, these tracking distinctions were significantly reduced at the high school.

* * *

This rather lengthy case description keeps the promise I made at the beginning of this chapter for a *positive* example of an ecosystem at work in the process of educational change and school improvement. And I also wanted to illustrate how educational ecosystems are also political systems of conflicting interests, values

and beliefs; how they are necessarily affected by human intention and motivation; how they need to continually learn from their own decisions and actions; and how important, therefore, critical inquiry, moral leadership, and strategic action are in the educational ecology.

I do have a couple of other positive examples. But I must admit to having many more negative ones. As in our natural world, healthy ecosystems are fragile things. Rachel Carson reminds us quite vividly that with us humans around, the world can be a dangerous place:

> The history of life on earth has been a history of interaction between living things and their surroundings. To a large extent, the physical form and the habits of the earth's vegetation and its animal life have been molded by the environment. Considering the whole span of earthly time, the opposite effect, in which life actually modifies its surroundings, has been relatively slight. Only within the moment of time represented by the present century has one species – man – acquired significant power to alter the nature of his world.[35]

Indeed, with us humans around, we necessarily create a *moral* ecology for both our natural and social worlds. We therefore need to pay careful attention to what we do and why we do it whether we talk of seas, forests, the atmosphere, or human organizations like our children's schools. We will surely reap the benefits and the costs of our moral decisions and actions.

## ENDNOTES

1 For this example (p. 51) and the others to follow, I am indebted to the excellent work by Noel Simon, *Nature in Danger: Threatened Habitats and Species* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

2 *Ibid.*, p. 12.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

5 The school-based examples of educational ecosystems in action that I offer in this chapter are real; however, many features of each example that are not relevant have been altered to protect the anonymity of people, schools, and school districts. I am greatly indebted to my educator friends and colleagues who have generously provided their time in either writing up some of the case scenarios to follow, or in allowing me to gain the necessary information through extensive interviews. Although I have not used all the examples I have collected, key contributions were made by: Susan Galletti, Matt Handelman, Jill Matthies, Michael MacLeod, and Shirley Roberts.

6 Seymour B. Sarason, "Some Reactions to What We Have Learned," *Phi Delta Kappan* 77, No. 1 (1995): 84–85, p. 84.

7 See pp. 1108–1109 in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Volume 14, 15th Edition.

8 See "ecology" in Grolier's, *Academic American Encyclopedia*, Electronic Publishers, 1996 update.

9 *The American Heritage Dictionary*, 2nd College Edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985).

10 For an account on the English experience, see Dick Weindling, "Marathon Running on a Sand Dune: The Changing Role of the Headteacher in England and Wales," *Journal of Educational Administration* 30, No. 3 (1992): 63–76; as for the United States, see the series of reports in *Education Week* beginning with Lynn Olson, "The New Breed of Assessments Getting Scrutiny," *Education Week* 24, No. 26 (1995): 1, 10–11.

11 For examples of Kurt Lewin's work on developing individual "life-spaces," i.e., ecological maps connecting individuals to their environments, can be found in *A Dynamic Theory of Personality*

(New York: McGraw-Hill, 1935) and *Problems of Topological Psychology* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1936). Emile Durkheim's arguments for connecting moral and ethical concerns to social behavior and social organizations were seminal; see, for example, his 1893 work, *The Division of Labor in Society* (New York: Free Press, 1933) and *Suicide* .

[12] Roger G. Barker and Paul V. *Gump, Big School, Small School* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1964). See, also, Roger G. Barker, *Ecological Psychology: Concepts and Methods for Studying the Environment of Human Behavior* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968). A comprehensive collection of articles (reprints) that documents the multidisciplinary nature of this whole ecological movement from the 60's to the mid 70's in psychology, sociology, education, urban planning, etc. can be found in Rudolf H. Moos and Paul M. Insel, eds., *Issues in Social Ecology: Human Milieus* (Palo Alto, CA: National Press Books, 1974

[13] Seymour B. Sarason, *The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1971 and 1982).

[14] Urie Bronfenbrenner, "The Experimental Ecology of Education," *Teachers College Record* 78, No. 2 (1976): 157–204.

[15] John I. Goodlad, The Dynamics of Educational Change (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975). A number of other books utilizing ecological concepts in coming to better understand organizational change and school renewal emerged from this project. See, for example, Mary M. Bentzen and Associates, *Changing Schools: The Magic Feather Principle* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974).

[16] Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1972).

[17] Gareth Morgan, *Images of Organization* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1986).

[18] Space does not permit unpacking this sentence and discussing the epistemological arguments implied. For an interesting exchange on some of the issues, see D. C. Phillips, "After the Wake: Postpositivistic Educational Thought," Educational Researcher 12, No. 5 (1983): 4–12, and the response in the same journal issue (pp. 13–14, 23–24) by Elliot W. Eisner, "Anastasia Might Still be Alive, But the Monarchy is Dead." See, also, Denis C. Phillips, "Postpositivistic Science: Myths and Realities," in Egon G. Guba, ed., *The Paradigm Dialog* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1990).

[19] Lee J. Cronbach, "Beyond the Two Disciplines of Scientific Psychology," *American Psychologist* 30 (1975): 116–127.

[20] Ibid., p. 125; Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

[21] Elliot G. Mishler, "Meaning in Context: Is There Any Other Kind?" *Harvard Educational Review* 49, No. 1 (1979): 1–19.

[22] John I. Goodlad, ed., *The Ecology of School Renewal*, Eighty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987).

[23] Actually, this elaboration really begin earlier in A Study of Schooling and Goodlad's book *A Place Called School: Prospects for the Future* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984). See, in particular, Chapter 10.

[24] For an expanded treatment of these initial ideas, see Kenneth A. Sirotnik and John I. Goodlad, eds., *School-University Partnerships in Action: Concepts, Cases, and Concerns* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1988).

[25] For a full elaboration and extension of this argument, see Kenneth A. Sirotnik, "The School as the Center of Change," in Thomas J. Sergiovanni and John H. Moore, eds., *Schooling for Tomorrow: Directing Reforms to Issues that Count* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1989).

[26] Goodlad, *A Place Called School*, pp. 274–277.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 350.

[28] Goodlad, *Dynamics of Educational Change*, p.20. See, also, *A Place Called School*, pp. 350–357 and *Ecology of School Renewal*, p. 213.

[29] Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, p. 462.

[30] Morgan, *Images of Organization*.

[31] See, for example, Kenneth A. Sirotnik and Jeannie Oakes, "Critical Inquiry for School Renewal: Liberating Theory and Practice" in Kenneth A. Sirotnik and Jeannie Oakes, eds., *Critical Perspectives on the Organization and Improvement of Schooling* (Boston: Kluwer-Nijhoff, 1986).

[32] Morgan, *Images of Organization*. See, also, the structural, human resource, political, and symbolic "frames" used in the discussion by Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991).

[33] For a beginning inquiry into these matters, see John I. Goodlad, Roger Soder and Kenneth A. Sirotnik, eds., *The Moral Dimensions of Teaching* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990).

[34] In my own work, I have tried to deal with these issues in several places; see, for example, Sirotnik,

"The School as the Center of Change," op. cit., and "Critical Inquiry: A Paradigm for Praxis," in Edmund C. Short, ed., *Forms of Curriculum Inquiry* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991).

[35] Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Greenwich, CN: Fawcett, 1962), p. 16.

## REFERENCES

*Academic American Encyclopedia*. (1996). Electronic Publishers.

*The American Heritage Dictionary*. (1985). 2nd edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Barker, R. G., & Gump, P. (1968). *Gump, big school, small school*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bateson, G. (1972). *Steps to an ecology of mind*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Bentzen, M. M., & associates. (1974). *Changing schools: The magic feather principle*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1991). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice and leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1976). The experimental ecology of education. *Teachers College Press*, (78)2, 157–204.

Carson, R. (1962). *Silent spring*. Greenwich, CN: Fawcett.

Cronbach, L. J. (1975). Beyond the two disciplines of scientific psychology. *American Psychologist*, **30**, 116–127.

Durkheim E. (1933). *The division of labour in society*. New York: Free Press.

Eisner, E. W. (1983). Anastasia might still be alive, but the monarchy is dead. *Educational Researcher*, **12**(5), 4–12.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Goodlad, J. I. (1975). *The dynamics of educational change*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Goodlad, J. I. (1984). *A place called school: Prospects for the future*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Goodlad, J. I. (Ed.). (1987). *The ecology of school renewal*. Eighty-sixth Yearbook of National Society for the Study of Education. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lewin, K. (1935). *A dynamic theory of personality*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Lewin, K. (1936). *Problems of topological psychology*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Mishler, E. G. (1979). Meaning in context: Is there any other kind? Harvard *Educational Review* **49**(1), 1–19.

Moos, R. H., & Insel, P. M. (Eds.). (1974). *Issues in social ecology: Human milieus*. Palo Alto, CA: National Press Books.

Morgan, G. (1986). *Images of organization*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

*New Encyclopedia Brittanica*. Vol. 14. 15th Edition.

Olson, L. (1995). The new breed of assessment getting scrutiny. *Education Week*, **24**(26), 1, 10–11.

Phillips, D. C. (1990). Postpositivistic science: Myths and realities. In E. G. Guba (Ed.), *The paradigm dialogue*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Phillips, D. C. (1983). After the wake: Postpositivistic educational thought. *Educational Researcher*, **12**(5), 4–12.

Sarason, S. B. (1971). *The culture of the school and the problem of change*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Sarason, S. B. (1995). Some reactions to what we have learned. *Phi Delta Kappan*, **77**(1), 84–85.

Simon, N. (1995). *Nature in danger: Threatened habitats and species*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sirotnik, K. A. (1989). The school as the center of change. In T. J. Sergiovanni & J. H. Moore (Eds.), *Schooling for tomorrow: Directing reforms to issues that count*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Sirotnik, K. A. (1990). *The moral dimensions of teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sirotnik, K. A. (1991). Critical inquiry: A paradigm of praxis. In E. C. Short (Ed.), *Forms of curriculum inquiry*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Sirotnik, K. A., & Goodlad, J. I. (Eds.). (1988). *School-university partnerships in action: Concepts, cases and concerns*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Sirotnik, K.A., & Oakes, J. (1986). Critical inquiry for school renewal: Liberating theory and practice. In K. A. Sirotnik & J. Oakes (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on the organization and improvement of schooling*. Boston: Kluwer-Nijhoff.

Weindling, D. (1992). Marathon running on a sand dune: The changing role of the headteacher in England and Wales. *Journal of Educational Administration*, **30**(3), 63–76.

# Three Perspectives on School Reform

ERNEST R. HOUSE
*University of Colorado*

PATRICK J. MCQUILLAN
*University of Colorado*

Most research on school reform over the past several decades is characterized by three perspectives-the technological, political, and cultural (House, 1979; House, 1981). Studies based on these three perspectives account for a vast amount of the scholarly literature. An adequate understanding of school reform necessarily involves all three perspectives, though many reformers emphasize only one, a partial knowledge which often results in reform failure because of neglect of the other powerful factors. According to our analysis, successful school reform must be based on all three aspects. In this chapter, we outline the three perspectives and suggest how successful reforms embody an appreciation of all three.

## THE THREE PERSPECTIVES

The technological perspective takes production as its root image or metaphor. Examples include concepts like input-output, specification of goals and tasks, flow diagrams, incentives, and performance assessment. How to do the job is the dominant concern. The parent discipline is economics, and the primary concern is efficiency. By contrast, the political perspective takes negotiation as its underlying image. Key concepts include power, authority, and competing interests. The parent discipline is political science, and the primary concern the legitimacy of the authority system. The third perspective is the cultural, which rests on an image of community. Central concepts include culture, values, shared meanings, and social relationships. The parent discipline is anthropology and the primary concern cultural integrity.

Whichever perspective one adopts acts as an interpretive framework for understanding change and innovation in the schools. Each perspective delineates certain factors that are responsible for change. By framing these educational change processes, the three perspectives serve as guides to social action (Schön, 1979). However, accepting the same perspective does not mean that scholars or reformers necessarily agree with one another. For example, two reformers may implicitly frame the schools' problems as political, yet disagree as to whether centralization or decentralization of governing authority is needed.



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 186-201.

Ultimately, school reforms fail partly because they neglect (or are not able to control) the forces identified by the other perspectives. Purely technological reforms fail because they lack adequate consideration of political and cultural factors. Purely political reforms fail because they lack appreciation of technical and cultural factors, and so on. Reformers typically have an incomplete understanding of school processes and problems. In fact, reform movements are inclined to present simple views, even slogans, in order to generate broad appeal. In our analysis, to be successful requires consideration of all three aspects, and perhaps others of which we are unaware.

## RELATIONSHIP TO DISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE

From where do these three perspectives derive? Partly from first-hand contact with schools and from the academic disciplines themselves. It is easy to see the relationship between economics and the technological perspective, political science and the political perspective and anthropology and the cultural perspective. One might think of society as being organized in three major ways, by the market (economic activity), through the government (political activity) and through civil society, such as professional and religious organizations (cultural activity).

Social scientists study these institutions-banks, stock exchanges, corporations, elections, bureaucracies, political parties, churches, families, and local communities – and formulate how these institutions work, trying to account for their functioning with a set of explanatory concepts. Simplification and abstraction is necessary for the academic disciplines to make any progress at all.

However, actual institutions don't function exactly as disciplinary knowledge suggests. Banks are not only economic institutions, but also have political and cultural aspects. Governments are not only about politics but also about economics and culture to some degree. In their specialization, scholars formulate pure types which don't match the real world, since the world is always more complicated than the abstractions. Although scholars may omit complications without serious consequences, a banker who operated solely on economic theory would encounter serious problems.

**Table 1. Three Perspectives on School Reform**

| Technological | Political | Cultural |
|---|---|---|
| Production | Negotiation | Community |
| Systemic, rational process | Group conflict/compromise | Interaction of cultures |
| Knowledge of technique | Persuasion, inducement | Value change |
| Technique and outcomes | Power and authority | Meaning and values |
| Common interests and values | Conflict over interests | Conflict over values |
| Cooperation automatic | Cooperation problematic | Cooperation enigmatic |
| Innovation | Innovation in context | Context |
| Efficiency | Legitimacy | Autonomy |

The interaction of these perspectives may explain complex phenomena. For example, nationalism is a political concept, but may be explained as arising from a situation in which the rulers of a political unit belong to one culture (or nation) while those ruled belong to a different culture. Political legitimacy may become an issue when ethnic (cultural) boundaries cut across political ones, as a result of historical events (Gellner, 1983). Bosnia and Quebec are examples.

The point is that events occur in real world complexity. In order to understand and explain these complex social events, we apply interpretive frameworks derived from the social sciences, which are invariably partial. Real world events are never completely explained by these frameworks. The same is true for schools. Changing schools requires a broad understanding of the factors that influence their operations. Such understanding is not provided by any single discipline. The problem is compounded for those who try to change institutions, for they encounter the world in its full complexity. Unfortunately, we have no way to integrate all these factors into one conceptual model. The best we can do is display the interactions of many factors at work simultaneously in case studies of educational change, which is what we do in this chapter.

## CHICAGO DECENTRALIZATION

One of the most highly publicized reforms in the 1990s has been the decentralization of the Chicago schools. Individual Chicago schools were required to establish a governing board composed of parents, members of the public, and the principal. Such decentralization resulted from a view of the problem as one of political organization. And anyone who has dealt with the Chicago central administration over the years would agree that the central office served as a serious impediment to change. However, eliminating such an obstacle to change did not mean that change would follow necessarily.

Such a political reform did not address technical and cultural factors. When the new governing board takes control, do they know what to do? Do they know how to change the culture and teaching technology of the school? Although it is still early in the life of this reform, results so far suggests the answer is no. In a case study of one Chicago school, Stake (1995) found that decentralization had little effect at the school or classroom level.

The School Improvement Plan called for improvement in reading, multicultural studies, preparation for further education, even getting the leaky windows repaired. But what consumed the energy of the pedagogical day was even more mundane: accounting for the absent and tardy; finding but one student completing the homework assignment; confronting indomitable rebels; restraining lunch time lines, one to a cafeteria, one to the exit, until other classes cleared. Is the mundane more effectively subdued if one eye rests on lofty goals? (Stake, 1995, p. 137).

The local school council spent its time trying to understand its role. Professionals judged parents and laymen on the governing board not competent to handle many assigned tasks, including evaluating the principal. In general, the broad goals

of the reform remained far removed from the everyday life of teachers and students. One might expect that in some Chicago schools there have been successful attempts to address technological and cultural factors. Decentralization is probably a necessary but not sufficient condition for successful reform. By 1995 there was talk of centralizing the school district again, this time in the Mayor's office. It is safe to predict that this change would not work either, at least not by itself.

In the rest of this chapter, we present cases of school reform which are successful because they managed the technological, political, and cultural factors. We explain the endurance of reform efforts at Central Park East, Green Valley, and in the Dubuque public schools in terms of their ability to attend to these considerations. This is not to suggest that these factors are entirely separate from each other. In practice, there is considerable interaction. Nor is the process linear; these schools attended to these concerns concurrently. Nonetheless, addressing these three dimensions was critical to the reform efforts.

## CENTRAL PARK EAST SECONDARY SCHOOL

Perhaps the best known school in the country is Central Park East (CPE) in District 4, East Harlem. Debbie Meier founded this "school of choice" as part of District 4's choice policy (Meier, 1995). Although the school exists in a poor, minority community, the school's graduates have a high college attendance rate.

In Meier's (1995) opinion the key to the success of these schools is that they are small. Ideally, elementary schools should be 300 students and the secondary schools should be no more than 400. This small size allows for experimentation over a period of time. Small school size is critical for six reasons:

1. Faculty, parents, and students must find enough time for discussion and argument in order to reach consensus as to what the school shall do, and these discussions must be face-to-face. The agreement reached provides a vision for the school and one voluntarily entered. Furthermore, teachers can think and work together collaboratively in a small group. Such collaboration is essential if there is to be a strong school culture or ethos.

2. Faculty must be held accountable collectively to produce the overall school effect. They must have access to each other's work. The work group must be small enough to allow this to happen, to allow teachers to visit each other's classes and engage in peer critique and assistance.

3. Above all, teachers must get to know the students and their work, even the way individual students think. Students must get to know each other and the teachers.

4. Small schools promote personal safety, physical and mental. Teachers can know and respond to students who might be upset.

5. Accountability is a matter of access, not of monitoring. There is no need for cumbersome measurement systems to tell parents what's going on. They can come see, as can central administrators.

6. Small schools immerse students in a school culture that adults have a role in shaping deliberately, rather than abandoning them to a peer culture shaped by the mass media and student interests.

To accomplish what it needs to, the school must have autonomy. It must control budget, staffing, scheduling, curriculum, and assessment. The second essential feature is choice. Creating these successful school experiments in New York City would have been impossible without choice, according to Meier. By making CPE a school of choice it was permitted to experiment with new ideas in a way that would never have been possible if it had been mandated. Such change results in unwilling, unready parents and professionals.

At CPE, every student must complete the requirements of fourteen different "portfolio" areas: literature, history, ethics, etc., and present seven of these areas to a graduation committee for questioning and defense. The committee consists of two assigned faculty, an adult chosen by student, and a student. The purpose of this method of assessment is to strengthen shared and publicly defensible standards. If students fail, they can try again.

Teachers need a framework that enables them to know their students well and acquiring such knowledge takes time and trust. There are six scheduled school hours per week for the teaching staff to meet together. Teachers are encouraged to visit each others' classes and give feedback. What this Central Park East school organization does is maximize everyone's chances to learn about each other, as well as learn subject matter and skills. The framework for school development is at least as important as the program itself.

Central Park East attacks school reform from all three perspectives. Politically, CPE accepts only volunteer teachers and students, thus eliminating much political conflict. In order to do this, it was necessary to secure the approval of the higher authorities. Secondly, the CPE reform makes the establishment of a new school culture a high priority. The small size allows direct influence and makes possible the agreement of the entire faculty on critical issues.

Finally, there is integral teacher training. In the oral exams, students demonstrate competence, and the teachers learn from each other. They can view each other's work. From this a new technology of teaching was developed. We are not suggesting that the CPE staff thought about these problems using our scheme. Rather, successful practitioners take these things into consideration (and no doubt other factors as well).

## GREEN VALLEY JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Located in a White, working class town in the rural Northeast, Green Valley Junior/Senior High enrolls 350 students in grades seven through twelve and has a staff of 30. School restructuring reflects the vision of Stuart Tucker, the school principal.[1] Before his arrival, the school had one of the higher dropout rates in the state, 20 percent, many discipline problems, and sent few graduates to college. The absentee

rate was nearly 20 percent. The school also had a traditional structure – a seven-period day, a faculty organized by departments, and 350 students with 350 different schedules.

Under Tucker's leadership, faculty have been teamed and work with the same group of students in a four-hour time block each day. Professional development became a part of school routine. The school's curriculum centered on "Nineteen Skills" the faculty collectively identified as essential. All staff were assigned 15 advisees with whom they met every day. An Apprenticeship Program had students work as newspaper reporters, teacher aides, auto mechanics, and secretaries, offering them the opportunity to explore potential professional interests while developing socially and intellectually outside the school setting (Muncey & McQuillan, 1996).

The most fundamental feature technologically was that professional development became a routinized part of school life. Faculty had multiple forums in which to reassess their pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment practices. Every Wednesday, for instance, faculty met to address administrative as well as educational matters. As one teacher remarked, "Faculty meetings are always work meetings, and the work is always toward our larger goals – towards better personalization, better assessment, and better curriculum planning."

To expose all faculty to new ideas, Green Valley instituted the "two-week thing." Once a year the school adopted a curricular focus and organized itself into teams of teachers and students, as faculty experimented with interdisciplinary curricula, group projects, active learning, and flexible scheduling. After experimenting for a few years in this way, teachers willing to team permanently were assigned a group of students and given a block of time to structure as they so chose. Eventually, the entire school was teamed. To complement the school's collective undertakings, Tucker often worked with individual teachers and teams. He encouraged teachers to reflect through on their teaching through journals and he visited classes. As he explained:

> My job is constantly to be working with faculty, to try to get them to change. . . .I truly believe that [those who resist change] are not bad people. Often, they're scared. So my job is to say, "Let's work together. You're good at this, let's work on it." And you try to find a way. You compliment the person and put them in a situation where they change.

Moreover, professional development at Green Valley often extended into summer. Typically, teachers met for a week or two to discuss goals and curricula for the coming year.

Politically, these efforts were inclusive, involving the entire faculty, as well as students and parents, in proposed reforms. Second, those involved had considerable autonomy. When he first arrived at Green Valley, for instance, Tucker met with all students to hear how they felt about the school and did likewise with faculty, parents, and community groups. When reforms were adopted, teaching teams had freedom to develop curricula, design schedules, and organize students as they so chose. In the words of one teacher, "Stuart is into everything in good

ways. He can make his case quite powerfully, but the ultimate decisions are always up to us. He steps in only when he really feels it's necessary." While Tucker allowed faculty autonomy, so too did faculty accord students a say. It was not uncommon for students to organize their own field trips, select their own topics for projects, and arrange their own placements in the Apprenticeship Program.

From a political point of view, one development seems critical: While Tucker was the impetus for much change, faculty and student commitment allowed change to endure; and this commitment reflected the inclusive nature of the reform as well as the autonomy accorded those involved. But these were not the only political factors involved. During Tucker's tenure, the school made substantial improvements in student performance-lowering the dropout rate from 20 to three percent, improving daily attendance to over 95 percent, and tripling the number of students who attended college. Such evidence of successful reform provided Tucker and the school with leverage in dealing with faculty skeptics, parents, and the school board. Further, these efforts experienced little resistance. In a non-union state, the local teachers' union had little influence. The school also had no special structures in place, such as magnet programs or Advanced Placement offerings, with interests to protect.

In many ways, the cultural dimensions to reform were entwined with the technological and political. For instance, Green Valley created multiple opportunities – faculty meetings, team meetings, and professional development work with other schools – for faculty and other members of the school community not only to develop new teaching strategies but also to clarify what they believed. While school reforms historically have been more imposed than negotiated, Green Valley took the time to negotiate what reform would mean in practice and for faculty to shape a common set of beliefs.

To complement such discussions, faculty experienced different approaches to teaching and learning. The "two-week thing," for example, while technological in nature, exposed faculty to alternative ways of schooling and shifted beliefs about teaching and learning. Tucker also secured opportunities for faculty to help other schools, placing teachers in the role of reform advocates. Through articulating their goals and organizing workshops, faculty developed new understandings of their own work.

The political also intertwined with the cultural. In dealing with individual teachers, Tucker accorded them autonomy while cajoling them to abandon their routines and consider new ideas. One teacher explained:

> When I first came here, Stuart asked me, "Would you care to go into a teaming situation?". . .And he explained to me some of what he meant. I said, "That's sounds like a large step for me to make. I don't think I'd like to do that right away." So he put me into a regular program, where I did what I was used to doing. Then I began to talk to other teachers, and I began to think about it myself, and the first thing that I came up with was, "Of course, if you're on a team, you've got people to help you out. . . . So, I started out as a conservative member and then I suddenly found *this works great*, let's

> keep doing it, and I kept pushing for that. That's one thing about working here. It's made a different kind of teacher out of me.

The cultural dimension of Green Valley's reform reflected a commitment to questioning the status quo. The school created opportunities for faculty to rethink aspects of school life, to experience alternatives, and to see their peers implement reform. As a result, faculty evolved a sense of common purpose and philosophy, with success being something shared by all.

## THE DUBUQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In 1992, the New American Schools Development Corporation (NASDC), a nonprofit corporation established by the Bush Administration, selected Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound as one recipient of a grant to initiate "break-the-mold" schools. The central organizing concept of Outward Bound's proposal, Expeditionary Learning, was a set of ideas about teaching and learning rooted in the experience of an Outward Bound wilderness expedition. Three Dubuque elementary schools and the city's alternative high school opted to participate (McQuillan, Kraft, Timmons, O'Connor, Marion, S., & Mahalec, 1994).

One key feature of this reform is that schools regularly undertake "learning expeditions" – active, interdisciplinary, student-centered projects that are at the heart of Expeditionary Learning. These extended learning experiences draw on a range of student abilities, require both collective and individual initiative, are informed by an ethic of service, and address character development. In addition, collaborative planning time has been institutionalized. Cooperative learning is commonplace, and special need students are included in most classrooms. Parent and community involvement have increased, especially as learning expeditions have moved beyond the classroom. For example, one learning expedition on "pond life" placed students in the role of "scientists" to collect and analyze their own samples of aquatic life. To assist them, the school enlisted the support of a biology professor, an official from the Department of Natural Resources, a science curriculum coordinator, and a songwriter (AED, 1996, p. 32). As is common, this expedition culminated in a demonstration of knowledge by students that was open to the community.

A look at Central High provides further insight into the nature of these reforms. Teachers here traditionally taught eight 40-minute periods each day, with no cross-disciplinary integration, nor time for collaborative planning. Central now has four learning communities, and each holds a daily "community meeting" to discuss issues of general concern. Teachers are teamed and collaboratively design curriculum. Teams have a two-and-a-half hour block of time each day to schedule as they wish. In addition, Central created a "City As School" program in which students work as interns at such sites as the local YMCA, a florist shop, a veterinarian's office, a radio station, and in elementary schools. The school also

implemented a grading system where students are required to demonstrate either A- or B-level work.

The technological dimensions to Dubuque's restructuring initiatives have drawn extensively on the active, experiential, and reflective aspects of Outward Bound philosophy. Denis Udall and Leah Rugen (1995), Expeditionary Learning staff members, observed:

> [Teachers'] beliefs and attitudes about teaching are deeply affected when they experience and reflect upon their own growth: that is, when they come to understand the impact of an innovation through their own lived experience. In turn, teachers lend a critical degree of meaning and viability to an innovation through their efforts to make sense of it (p.11).

In effect, Expeditionary Learning lets teachers experience what they are to implement and makes the integral values and assumptions explicit – thereby encouraging participants to question some of the taken-for-granted in their professional lives.

To prepare for these changes, the Dubuque schools spent one year exploring and clarifying the idea of Expeditionary Learning. Specific activities were designed to model Expeditionary Learning pedagogy. The first, an exploration of the Dubuque community, served as an introduction to Expeditionary Learning and as a chance to create a resource base for later expeditions. A five-day "mini-sabbatical" teamed teachers to design a learning expedition that modeled Expeditionary Learning philosophy – requiring teamwork, research, creativity, risk, and a public demonstration of learning. A week-long "summer institute" clarified this philosophy and provided time to revise the first expedition. The project also offered opportunities to experience Outward Bound courses adapted for Expeditionary Learning teachers, to participate in workshops directed by experiential educators, and to exchange ideas and experiences with Expeditionary Learning teachers from other cities.

There has been an increase in joint planning time as teachers collaborate within grades and subject areas, across grades and subject areas, and even with teachers from other schools. The district's instructional facilitators participate in these activities, assist teachers in developing curriculum, and attend Expeditionary Learning principal meetings (Timmons, 1994).

As at Green Valley, inclusivity and autonomy played key roles in the political dimensions of Dubuque's restructuring efforts. When Expeditionary Learning was proposed, the superintendent met with teachers and administrators to answer their questions. This set the tone for implementing Expeditionary Learning in the city. Professional development work has included participating teachers, as well as administrators and instructional facilitators. At the school sites, administrators have made teachers and parents integral collaborators, as some measure of site-based management has been initiated at all schools. Parents have not only assisted with learning expeditions but have reviewed student portfolios and other academic work (AED, 1995, p. 21).

Teachers were encouraged to implement Expeditionary Learning concepts at a rate with which they were comfortable. When teachers at Central Alternative High

expressed concern about whether students were learning math concepts adequately, the school debated this issue and added more traditional math classes to the curriculum. When some elementary teachers questioned the value of following their students to the succeeding grade, the issue became the focus of a mini-sabbatical in which teachers designed a multi-year teaching structure in a way that worked for them.

These schools also accorded greater autonomy to students. All learning expeditions, for instance, strive to be student-directed and allow students some say in what they study. At Central Alternative the students in one learning community developed their own business venture around the production of Native American crafts. Although teachers had reservations, they allotted a portion of each day to planning, accounting, phone calls, and letter writing for this project. Other political factors aided change in Dubuque. For one, all teachers were given the option to transfer to other schools if they could not make a full commitment. (None did.)

In addition, certain political factors have been outside the schools' and district's control. In a school board election, the superintendent lost two critical supporters, which placed her tenure in jeopardy. She accepted a position elsewhere (though her successor expressed support for Expeditionary Learning). In 1995, voters rejected a bond proposal so school funding fell below limits that would have allowed Expeditionary Learning to expand to other schools as planned.

In Dubuque there has been attention to issues of culture and belief. The implementation of Expeditionary Learning began with extended discussions among teachers and administrators about the nature of this philosophy, its viability in Dubuque, and what it would look like in classrooms and schools. Such dialogue has been facilitated by professional development, as well as through additional planning time. In the words of one teacher (AED, 1996):

> Having time to write expeditions with our partners was the most successful and valuable part of our staff development activities. We were able to pool ideas and each of us could have a part in collecting resources. We were able to inform and teach one another. Because we were better prepared, the expeditions were more successful and varied (p. 33).

At the Expeditionary Learning schools principals have weekly meetings with instructional facilitators to negotiate aspects of Expeditionary Learning philosophy and, in turn, meet regularly with their staff to discuss related topics. This dialogue has taken many forms. At one elementary school the principal and teachers produced a pamphlet which outlined the connection between the school's mission statement and the ideals of Expeditionary Learning. At Central High faculty conducted peer reviews of learning expeditions as teachers presented their plans to the staff who reacted to the ideas. Speaking to the issue of common beliefs, Central's principal noted the value of summer planning time: "I think the turning point for Expeditionary Learning in the whole school was the summer institute last year. We worked together as a team for ten solid days. This last summer we worked for nine days together. This really brought things together" (AED, 1996, p. 42). Given the centrality of Expeditionary Learning philosophy, which focuses discussions and work, such opportunities can promote shared understandings.

Expeditionary Learning has also promoted common beliefs through modeling. The processes initiated to bring about change parallel the method of collaborative learning, community building, challenge, and risk teachers undertake with students. One district facilitator explained, "We want to make sure that our trainings are conducted in the way we expect teachers to be teaching, that they parallel an expedition" (Timmons, 1994, p. 17). Faculty at Expeditionary Learning schools have adopted a similar strategy. As one teacher noted, "I carried over the team building I learned with the other teachers to team-building exercises in my classroom" (AED, 1996, p. 50). Another added:

> When we started Expeditionary Learning last year, we must have said the phrase 'expeditionary learning' about twenty thousand times a day. But now we hardly use the phrase. I think this is because we have created a culture here which is inherently about Expeditionary Learning. I know for a fact that in our morning expedition we strive to [incorporate] inclusivity, respect, hard work, teamwork and the idea of success and failure (AED, 1996, p. 39).

In sum, Dubuque's restructuring work has offered teachers opportunities to experience new approaches to teaching and learning. Those affected by the reform have a say in what changes would be enacted. And throughout this effort, there has been an ongoing dialogue about the values underlying the reforms and an effort to model these values in relevant contexts.

## SUMMARY POINTS

### *(1) Leadership*

At all three sites where reforms endured, leadership played a central role. The technological – what was implemented and how-represented the vision of the principals or superintendent. At Central Park East, Debbie Meier had the vision about how a school should work, how faculty should interact, and how students should be treated, although this was developed over a period of time. At Green Valley, the apprenticeship program, the "two-week thing," and the advisory system originated with Stuart Tucker. He directed the school's professional development and secured funds so faculty could refine their ideas. In Dubuque, the superintendent, saw Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound as a means to promote changes she felt were needed. Her successor expressed commitment to the ideals as well.

Leadership also played a vital role in the political aspects of these efforts. Meier gained permission to experiment in her school of choice and kept the operation autonomous from the New York system, not the easiest thing to do. While Tucker was the catalyst for much change at Green Valley, he gained grassroots support for his educational plans by including all relevant actors in the reform process and allowing these persons, including students, substantial autonomy in how they implemented reform. Much the same was apparent in Dubuque where inclusivity

was honored in the superintendent's dealings with principals, in the principals' interactions with their faculties, and with the teachers' interactions with students. Further, each Expeditionary Learning school was given a prominent say in how they adapted the design principles.

Culturally, creating a consensus involved drawing in people who shared common beliefs or who developed common beliefs through their interactions. As a Green Valley teacher remarked, "Nobody comes here who doesn't want to be. . .working on teams. . . teaching an integrated curriculum and advising." At Central Park East, the faculty went through numerous discussions in order to arrive at common understandings regarding what constituted a worthwhile education. At each Expeditionary Learning school, there was extensive discussion of what this concept implied as a curricular and pedagogical philosophy. Without shared beliefs, it seems unlikely these reforms would have lasted.

Moreover, the schools sometimes had to transfer or release those who didn't embrace their plans and ideas. The leadership style was not "anything goes." Tucker noted:

> If people were trying to stop stuff, I'd simply say, "If you don't like it, then you should go. As long as I'm principal, that's the direction that we're going. I'm not saying that you're not a great teacher, but. . ."And you either buy in or you buy out.

At CPE, the small staff and intense interactions sometimes led to factionalization and some pursuing their own vision elsewhere. In Dubuque, the teachers at EL schools were offered the option to transfer if they didn't care to be involved. As one principal said, "People need to be committed. If they can't commit, then they need to do something else because these changes are absolutely right for kids." Not one hundred percent of those engaged eventually accepted the changes.

### *(2) Change as the Norm*

By approaching reform and restructuring so systematically, change appears to have become the norm. A Green Valley teacher noted:

> We're always looking at what we're doing and how to make it better. We really discuss and we debate. We never just say, "OK, we're all teamed now, and that's good." We're always looking at the structure of our teams, we're always analyzing our teams. We have the kids, analyze curriculum. They provide feedback on how the team is working together. In the summer we meet with kids and parents when we're planning curriculum. We just never settle for what we have right now. Everything we do is constantly being looked at. And we try things and sometimes they fail. But that doesn't stop us.

Similarly, at Central Park East the school program and professional development processes were constantly under review by the faculty, both individually and collectively. This was integrated into the thinking of faculty and institutionalized in

routine procedures. In much the same fashion, Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound is viewed as an ongoing process of growth, an assumption apparent in the degree to which the teacher-as-learner metaphor guides their professional development work (Udall & Rugen, 1994). Reflecting this view, one teacher outlined why his team had repeated learning expeditions that had been developed the previous year:

> We repeated expeditions so we could do them right. We're refining so many things like portfolio assessments, rubrics, mixing the behaviorally disruptive students with the regular students, and block scheduling. . . .When you do an expedition the first time, things aren't always clearly in focus. For us, it's designing things that take more than one go-through to get right (AED, 1996, 39–40).

### *(3) Scale and Time*

At all three sites, the schools that implemented enduring reforms were relatively small. Aside from one Dubuque elementary schools that enrolled over 500 students, no school enrolled more than 400. People at these schools – students, teachers, and administrators alike – were known. They could form communities through shared educational ideals and because they knew one another.

Size also seemed related to trust. Teachers and students were accorded considerable autonomy perhaps because the schools were small enough to ensure accountability. Administrators knew what faculty were doing. Teachers knew what students were doing. Practices and policies were shared and public features of school life. Also, these reforms were not enacted overnight. They took time and laborious development. It was not as if the reformers had a vision which was implemented and all was well. Rather, people worked out these ideas-adjusting, changing, and advancing better conceptions and practices.

### *(4) Reputation*

Our cases are schools that do not serve the top students in their town and/or districts. Aside from one Dubuque elementary school, these were not flagship schools that served high-SES populations. These efforts were undertaken at schools that served relatively unempowered populations. Perhaps that is one reason such reforms were tolerated by the larger system. We are not sure whether this is a necessary or facilitating condition or an anomaly.

### *(5) Ties with Outside Organizations*

These cases also represent schools that have been part of reform networks, a development that benefited their efforts. For instance, both the Coalition of

Essential Schools and Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound offer a philosophical direction, a foundation of beliefs around which like-minded persons could coalesce, but which allowed schools to design and implement as best fit their needs. To complement their philosophy, both organizations sponsored professional development opportunities and offered funding that allowed schools to take advantage of these opportunities. Moreover, the organizations provided a sense of legitimacy. The Coalition of Essential Schools, based at an Ivy League school, Brown University, and chaired by Theodore Sizer, a prominent school reformer, lent its member schools a measure of prestige, a distinct political advantage. Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound was linked to a long-standing, respected outdoor education network as well as the New American Schools Development Corporation.

### *(6) Professional development blending the technological, political, and cultural.*

Looking at school reform from these three points of view also suggests that professional development may be most effective when it blends the political and cultural with the technical. In a political sense, professional development work was not something imposed from outside; rather, it reflected the concerns and interests of the teachers involved. In cultural terms, professional development was aimed at having faculties reassess taken-for-granted values that informed their teaching practices.

### *(7) Moral Vision*

One thing not included in our scheme is worth mentioning. That is the way all three cases of successful reform treated faculty, students, and parents. All participants were treated with respect and accorded considerable autonomy. One has the feeling in reading these cases that the way people were treated had much to do with why they reacted positively to the reform and shouldered the extra work burden. Debbie Meier is perhaps most explicit about the necessity of treating students and teachers with respect, the idea most central to her vision.

The Common Principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools maintain that "[t]he tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of. . .trust (until abused) and of decency (the values of fairness, generosity and tolerance). . . .[And that] parents should be treated as essential collaborators" (CES, 1984). The design principles that undergird the efforts of Expeditionary Learning (1992) reveal the same orientation as they make "learning and character development" central to their work and assert that learning is dependent on "intimacy and caring" (pp. ii-iii).

## A CHECKLIST FOR INNOVATION

In conclusion, our scheme posits three critical dimensions necessary for successful school reform – the technological, political, and cultural. What does the job consist of

and how does it get done? What factions support and oppose it? Does it involve people in collective, collaborative efforts that lead to common norms? Anyone creating or implementing a successful innovation should be able to answer these questions:

- Will this technique, curriculum, change really make any significant difference?
- How can the teachers learn to do it? How can they practice it safely, without undue risk?
- Is it much harder to do than current practice?
- If so, how can it be made easier to implement?
- How does it fit with the everyday routines now in existence?
- What are the mechanisms for feedback to the teacher?
- What are the political forces in favor of the innovation?
- What are the political forces opposed?
- Are they operating at the same level or in the same realm?
- Are the former stronger than the latter?
- If not, what are some likely political allies?
- Will the innovation itself create new political forces either for or against? If so, how can these be dealt with?
- How does the innovation fit the school culture, including teachers, students, administrators, and parents?
- Is this an attempt to change the school culture in a significant way? If so, how can this be done over a period of time?
- How, and in what contexts, can the values associated with the innovation be modeled?
- What motivation is there for teachers and students to attempt such a change?
- With what other values and assumptions in the school culture might the innovation interact and change?
- How does it related to the culture outside the school?

No doubt attending to these three perspectives on school reform will not guarantee success. However, we believe they are necessary, and that school reforms which neglect these dimensions and their interactions arelikely to encounter significant problems. The incomplete analyses of social reality that the academic disciples provide can mislead by focusing on single dimensions of reality, always more complex and subtle than social science mdoels can fathom.

## ENDNOTES

[1] Green Valley and Stuart Tucker are pseudonyms.

## REFERENCES

Academy for Educational Development (AED). (1995). *Expeditionary learning Outward Bound: Interim report.* New York: March.

Academy for Educational Development (AED). (1996). *Expeditionary learning Outward Bound: Final report*. New York: February.

Coalition of Essential Schools (CES). (1984). *Prospectus*. Providence, RI: Brown University.

Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound. (1992). *Expeditionary Learning: A design for new American schools.* Proposal submitted to the New American Schools Development Corporation, Cambridge, MA.

Gellner, E. (1983). *Nations and nationalism*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

House, E. R. (1979). Technology versus craft: A ten year perspective on innovation. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, **11**(1),1–15.

House, E. R. (1981). Three perspectives on innovation: Technological, political, and cultural. In R. Lehming & M. Kane (Eds.), *Improving Schools: Using what we know* (pp. 17–41). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications,.

McQuillan, P., Kraft, R., Timmons, M., O'Conor, A., Marion, S., and Michalec, P. (1984). *An assessment of outward bound USA's urban/education initiative.* Final evaluation report. School of Education. University of Colorado, Boulder, CO., October.

Meier, D. (1995). *The power of their ideas*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Muncey, D., & McQuillan, P. (1996). *Reform and resistance in schools and classrooms: An ethnographic view of the coalition of essential schools.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Schön, D. (1971). *Beyond the stable state: Public and private learning in a stable society.* London: Maurice Temple Smith Ltd.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Timmons, M. (1994). *An examination of the Dubuque expeditionary learning schools*. School of Education. University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, August.

Udall, D., & Rugen, L. (1995). *From the inside out: The expeditionary learning process of teacher change.* Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound, Cambridge, MA.

# The Meaning of Educational Change: A Quarter of a Century of Learning

MICHAEL FULLAN
*Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto*

I was extremely fortunate to begin my career in the late 1960s at a time when the field of 'implementation' was literally being born. Professionally speaking, I grew up together with implementation over the past three decades. This chapter is a professional autobiography of ideas and concepts covering this dynamic and fertile period of growth in the study of change processes. It is not a review of research. Rather it is an attempt to capture the evolution of the study of change from the perspective of someone who has devoted his work to chronicling, synthesizing and sometimes creating the core concepts that define the study and doing of change.

The chapter is organized into five sections. The first section acknowledges, all too briefly, the pre-1972 contribution to establishing the study of educational change as a field. Sections two through four carve out the twenty-five years of my major published works into three distinct but overlapping periods of development – what I have labeled respectively, 'the implementation phase', 'the meaning of change phase', and 'the capacity for change phase'. Finally, I sum up with some reflections on what we have learned, where we are, and where we seem to be (or should be going) in the future.

## GETTING READY: THE '50S AND '60S

Most people know that most good ideas (and bad ideas for that matter) can be found somewhere in the past. I acknowledge at the outset that many of the ideas in the study of educational change can be found not only in the works of Dalin, Goodlad, Havelock, Miles, Rogers, Sarason, and others who pioneered the field in the 1950s and 1960s, but also in the work from change masters of the past from Dewey in education to the giants like Durkheim, Parsons, and Weber who analyzed societal development more generally.

My interest in this chapter is more immediate. What was pushing educational change in the post war period? I won't say much about the 1950s. It was relatively quiet for most of the decade. The big initial development as Miles (1993) has noted was the National Learning Laboratories (NTL) work in training for group skills and shared reflection, diagnosis and action. For the most part it was 'laboratory' based, detached from the day-to-day instructional issues and functioning of schools.



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 202-216.

To say that NTL and related projects had limited impact is not to say it was on the wrong track. To this day one of the keys to successful change, as I return to in section five, is the *improvement of relationships* – precisely the focus of group development. The history of breakthroughs in the study of change is not the creation of isolated, brilliant ideas, but the intersection of independently discovered elements spontaneously or otherwise coming together at opportune periods of development.

The focus on educational innovation came thundering on the scene during the 1960s. I have previously labeled this the 'adoption' era of reform because the goal was to get innovations out there as if flooding the system with external ideas would bring about desired improvements. This was an optimistic period. The concern, at least in the U.S., was that scientific accomplishments in the West were falling behind those in Russia, and that a large scale national strategy would soon correct the problem. Federal coffers were opened for major curriculum reforms (PSSC Physics, Chem Study, Chemistry, New Math), technology innovations (television instruction, teaching machines), and organizational innovations (open schools, flexible scheduling, and team teaching).

At the same time, the civil rights movement in the 1960s pinpointed scores of inequities. These simultaneous concerns – academic excellence and equity for the disadvantaged – drove federal strategies for improving education. A dramatic presence and influx of federal funds was signaled by the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which channeled resources to the disadvantaged, to desegregation, and to the development and dissemination of exemplary innovations.

These were heady days. Cawelti (1967) reflects the spirit of the time in the opening sentence of a review of "innovative practices in high schools": "Innovation is one of the *magic words* influencing school planning in 1967" (p.1, my emphasis). And it was.

> A lone voice, unheard, quietly pointed out the problem:
>
> A very wide variety of strategies is being employed: polemical, manipulative, technology, prestige-based, experimental, moralistic. But the dominant focus . . . tends to be on the *content* of the desired changes, rather than on . . . *change processes*
>
> (Miles, 1964, pp. 1–2, his emphasis).

It is about this time that I was toiling away in my own abstract laboratory at the University of Toronto, working on my Master's and then doctoral dissertation on the sociology of change. I was supervised, or more accurately, apprenticed with a brilliant young Parsonian, Jan Loubser, fresh from completing his own doctoral studies with Talcott Parsons at Harvard. My master's thesis was on 'Unit Autonomy in India' (to this day I have no idea what this means). My doctoral dissertation was only slightly more grounded, based on surveys of workers' attitudes toward change in different technological settings, and was entitled 'Workers Receptivity to Industrial Change in Different Technological Settings' (completed in 1969).

In 1965, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education was established with an expansive mandate to conduct research and dissemination and graduate studies

on educational problems. In 1968, the Sociology on Education department was added with my supervisor appointed as the first chair. I was hired in July, 1968, along with three others as the founding members of the department. Fortunately (given my state of preparation) for the first year we had no students. As we planned the graduate program (this was strictly a graduate school), I identified the courses I would teach: the sociology of change, modernization in comparative education, and so on. I must say at the time these courses had little more meaning to me than my 'unit autonomy in India'.

Not knowing much, and certainly not much of direct help to teachers, I learned the hard way in those first few years. There were two experiences that had a profound inspirational effect on me. One was reading Seymour Sarason's (1971) book, *The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change*. This book was the conceptual key that opened up a new field of work that has dominated my interests since that time. I also had the opportunity in 1969 to join an international group assembled by the Norwegian, Per Dalin, to begin what turned out to be a long-term association in the international study of innovation and change processes. After completing some case studies of innovations in different OECD countries, Per convened in 1970, a seminal event in Norway with Matt Miles as the head consultant in which we devoted several days to examining 'Critical Concepts in the Process of Change'. This was, I believe, the first international group to focus on the *change process* as a direct phenomenon in its own right.

It was with this background that I began my own intellectual and practical journey into the study of change. In the next three sections I address the main themes of this work (see Chart 1).

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. The Implementation Decade<br>1972 - 82 | • Overview of the Innovative Process and the User (Fullan, 1972)<br>• Curriculum and Instruction Implementation (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977) |
| 2. The Meaning Decade<br>1982 - 92 | • The Meaning of Educational change (Fullan, 1982)<br>• The New Meaning of Educational Change (Fullan, 1991) |
| 3. The Change Capacity Decade<br>1992 - ? | • Change Forces (Fullan, 1993)<br>• What's Worth Fighting For - trilogy (Fullan, 1997; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1997) |

**Chart 1: Three phases of the study of change.**

## THE IMPLEMENTATION DECADE 1972–1982

Around 1970, almost overnight, innovation got a bad name. The term *implementation* – what was happening (or not) in practice – came into use. Goodlad's (1970) *Behind the Classroom Door*, Sarason's (1971) *The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change*, Gross' *Implementing Organization Innovations* (1971), and Smith and Keith's (1971) *Anatomy of Educational Innovation* exposed the problem. People were adopting innovations without asking why, and usage was assumed to be happening (but, as the above authors documented, little was changing in practice). Charters and Jones (1973) worried about 'the risk of appraising non-events'.

I had an opportunity to develop some of my own ideas when I was invited to put together as guest editor, a special issue of *Interchange* on the theme Innovations in Learning and Processes of Educational Change. This resulted in an extensive introductory essay entitled 'Overview of the Innovative Process and the User' (Fullan, 1972). Some of the first ideas leading eventually to the concept of 'meaning' were formulated in this article. My starting point was to say that the problem with much of the literature at the time was that "the focus is on the innovation rather than the user" [parent, teacher, student] (Fullan, 1972, p. 4).

I drew the following conclusions in the 1972 overview:

1. Despite massive inputs of resources during the last 15 years [1957–1972], and despite numerous "adoptions" of innovations, very little significant change has occurred at the school level corresponding to the intended consequences of these innovations.
2. The modal process of change has been characterized by a pattern whereby innovations are developed external to schools and then transmitted to them on a relatively universalistic basis. The consumers or users of innovations (teachers, parents, students) have had a limited role in this process, but rather are seen as relatively passive adopters of the best of recent innovations. Note that primacy is given to innovations (which often become ends in themselves) rather than user capacities to innovate. In other words, instead of innovations being viewed as part of a universe of means, schools are viewed as part of a universe of adopters. Where users did innovate, it was often individualistic – a result of a permissive rather than a participative process.
3. The following implications of the modal process just described are evident:
   a) The values and goals of users as articulated by them have no direct input or influence in the process. The results are that downward innovations do not take hold and diversity of innovations is not allowed for.
   b) Social system or role changes in user systems, which are theoretically part and parcel of the intended consequences of most recent educational innovations, are not recognized and planned for. Virtually every significant change has implications for changes in roles and role relationships; these changes must be part and parcel of the implementation process.

c) The dynamics of the process of role change has been entirely misunderstood and neglected. There is little awareness that innovations require unlearning and relearning and create uncertainty and a concern about competencies to perform these new roles. Consequently, very little preservice preparation is included in plans for change; but more fundamentally, virtually no time, resources, and other supports are built into learning of new roles in the ongoing system *once the change has been initiated.* Since these requirements are not understood and taken into account, even innovations that are congruent with user objectives often fail.

d) Consequent to *c.*, new educational ideas and organizational changes that are introduced become empty alternatives inasmuch as they create unrealistic conditions and expectations for user performance. Structural changes are necessary but not sufficient to bring about significant change. Another way of stating this: understanding a problem and identifying changes needed to correct it are entirely separate steps from knowing how to bring these changes about.

e) The most effective solution can probably never come through the introduction of more and more innovations with additional resources (such as better training in new roles) because the existing systemic context of the user effectively prevents the development of these new roles once they are introduced. Furthermore, the most effective solution does not entail leaving individual users to make their own choices in permissive environments (Fullan, 1972, p. 15).

I concluded by observing that "radical change can come only through the steady development of individual users' capacities to play active roles – a development that has as its starting point very limited capacities, and that has at each stage of the process a kind of inertia that will heavily favor subtle and not-so-subtle drifts into existing and old patterns" (p. 31).

I offered the following model, reproduced as Figure 1.

On the one hand, in incipient form, we see some of the key concepts that were later to be developed: the focus on the active role of teachers and others, meaning, capacity, and the like. We also see some of the fundamental limitations. The very


(Fullan, 1972, p. 3)

**Figure 1: Elements of Effective Educational Change Processes at the User Level**

word 'user' has a passive, recipient connotation; the model is linear with only one-way arrows; there is no place for organization or system development. Despite the best of intentions the concept of external innovation is the driver.

I had a chance to systematically map out the field of implementation research in a review commissioned by the National Institute of Education, which Alan Pomfret and I published in the *Review of Educational Research* (RER) just over twenty years ago (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977). We were also deepening our own knowledge through the School Change Project in Ontario with my colleagues Glen Eastabrook and John Biss where we spent a day a week in schools over a seven year period in the 1970's.

In conducting the RER review I still remember the excitement of consuming the several volumes of Berman and McLaughlin's (1976) landmark *Rand Change Agent Study of Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change.*

Pomfret and I established the importance of examining the 'black box' of implementation in terms of five components of change or non-change: the degree to which changes in practice occurred relate to (a) subject matter or materials; (b) structure; (c) role/behavior; (d) knowledge and understanding, and (e) value internalization. These were, if you like, the *implementation outcomes.* We also reviewed the literature to identify the key *determinants* of implementation which resulted in fourteen factors grouped into the four categories of 1) characteristics of the innovation, 2) strategies employed; 3) characteristics of the adopting units, and 4) characteristics of macro sociopolitical units.

The RER article put the concept of implementation (as a state and as a process) firmly on the educational map and advanced the field by urging researchers and policy makers to focus more and worry more about the dynamics and complexities of implementation. The model was still limited by talking about 'users', and by assuming that the goal was to get innovations implemented; indeed the article read as if schools were implementing one innovation at a time – a fatal flaw that was less noticeable in the quiet '70s, but increasingly problematic as we moved into the 1980s.

## THE MEANING DECADE 1982–92

The source of the next phase of conceptualization literally came to me in a flash. Early in 1980 I had just finished an Advisory Group consultation at the Far West Laboratory and was boarding a plane in San Francisco to return to Toronto. The plane was nearly empty and as I sat down the thought suddenly occurred to me that there was really no textbook that I could think of that dealt with the change process covering implementation. Sarason's (1971) book was insightful but not comprehensive. No writing, including my own, had done justice to the problem of change from the perspective of everyday participants. In the five hour flight I wrote virtually non-stop, starting with the title *The Meaning of Educational Change*, and conceptualizing and outlining every chapter. By the time we landed I had a complete prospectus which changed very little in its basic framework as the book

was written. Getting a publisher's contract was another matter. My proposal was rejected by three different publishers, one of whom said 'it sounds too much like Sarason' (and I guess it did). It was eventually accepted by Teachers' College Press. The book is now considered to be the basic text book on educational change.

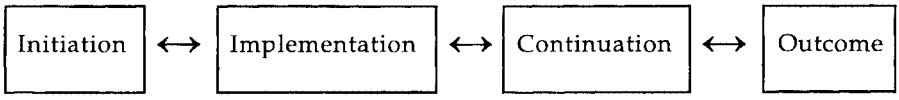
*The Meaning of Educational Change* turned out to be the occasion for jettisoning the term 'user' for the much more liberating and generative concept 'meaning'. I stated the matter in the following way in the Preface.

> If change attempts are to be successful, individuals and groups must find meaning concerning *what* should change as well as *how* to go about it. Yet it is exceedingly difficult to resolve the problem of meaning when large numbers of people are involved . . .
>
> We have to know what change looks like from the point of view of the individual teacher, student, parent, and administrator if we are to understand the actions and reactions of each; and if we are to comprehend the big picture, we must combine the aggregate knowledge of these individual situations with an understanding of organizational and interorganizational factors which influence the process of change as government departments, intermediate agencies, universities, teacher federations, school systems, and schools interact
>
> (Fullan, 1982, p. ix).

In *The Meaning of Educational Change*, I continued to map out the innovative process. While still somewhat linear, there were at least two-way arrows built in (see Figure 2).

More importantly in some ways was that the 'role' chapters enabled me to look at the world of change from the perspective of all the key actors (there were separate chapters on the teacher, the principal, the student, the district administrators, the consultant, the parent/community). I also had chapters on the system as a whole in terms of the roles of governments (federal and state), and professional preparation and professional development. These role and agency chapters, were the beginning of breaking down the "innovations in" bias of the implementation literature.

When it came time to produce a revised edition, I found myself needing to rewrite most of the book. A lot had happened in the 80s (a point I come back to in the conclusion of this chapter). There was a growing tension in the rewrite between




(Fullan, 1982, p. 40)

**Figure 2: A Simplified Overview of the Change Process**

the innovation-focus, and the institutional development or capacity building orientation. The book was such a rewrite we gave it a modified titled calling it *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991).

I pushed deeper into the importance of lack of meaning for key participants:

> Neglect of the phenomenology of change – that is, how people actually experience change as distinct from how it was intended – is at the heart of the spectacular lack of success of most social reform (Fullan, 1991, p. 4).

I coined the phrase 'implementation dip' which remains a useful and lasting concept in the study of change. I divided into two chapters the preparation of teachers from the professional development (instead of the original one chapter) recognizing the growing importance of initial teacher education. In the speculative final chapter, I began to forecast the new emphasis reversing the focus on innovations as the starting point toward individuals and institutions as points of departure. I noted that the future of educational change depended on going 'from innovation to institutional development', from 'going it alone to alliances', from 'monolithic to alternative solutions', 'from negative to positive politics' – all capacity buildings themes. Still, it was a book about innovations and meaning, not capturing the non-linear dynamics of complex change processes.

*The New Meaning of Educational Change* remains, I think, a valuable overview of innovation, implementation, and social system analysis (and no doubt there will be a third edition). For a textbook, the tension between being concerned simultaneously with innovation, and with individual/ institutional development seems to work in characterizing what I call the small and the big pictures and their linkages. But a new tack was also needed. A few of the new seeds were planted in some of my writing around 1990, but it required a different treatment in its own right. Hence the change capacity decade.

## THE CHANGE CAPACITY DECADE (1992-?)

At the time I was writing *The New Meaning*, I signed a contract with Falmer Press to write another book. I produced a very brief prospectus under the title *Productive Educational Change* (later to be called *Change Forces,* Fullan, 1993). Since all my energies were going into *The New Meaning*, I must admit that I felt I had very little new to say for yet another book on change, which no doubt accounted for the non-start in 1990 and 1991.

As a reflective footnote, my view is that if you are actively engaged in leading individual change efforts, conducting research, giving speeches and consultancies, consuming the literature for latest insights – in short, if you are immersed in change – new ideas are bound to come. People often ask me, how I find time to write as a full time Dean of a large faculty of education. Part of the answer is that my academic field (the management of change) and my administrative responsibilities (reforming a higher education institution) substantially overlap. Another part of the answer is that the hardest part of writing is having something to write about.

If you are actively involved in living laboratories of change – and absolutely crucial, if you are *reflectively* learning from what you are doing – you will have ideas to write about. And if you have good ideas to write about, you are bound to find the time sooner than later. At least that is how it works for me.

Two big ideas clicked in the prewriting conceptualization of *Change Forces*. One was that I was beginning to accumulate insights into the change process (from our applied work, new readings, reforming the faculty of education at the University of Toronto, etc.) that were different from what was captured in the change literature. There were hints of them in *The New Meaning* but they were not developed, and some key ideas were missing. I began to read chaos theory and dynamic complexity, and I got the idea that I could take the new insights we were developing and build a foundation around formulating the 'complexity of the change process'.

The second big breakthrough was the realization that 'moral purpose' was a critical change theme. I had written about the difference between progress and change, but it wasn't until I realized that the core goals of change should be to make a difference, which was indeed a change theme – to make a difference is to make a change – which is in turn congruent with what the best of educators wanted to do. Moral purpose and change agentry made perfect partners.

Thus, the non-linearity of chaos theory gave me an opportunity to characterize some of the key new things we and others had been learning, which I captured in eight lessons in a chapter of *Change Forces* entitled 'The Complexity of the Change Process' – lessons like: problems are our friends; premature vision can blind; individualism and collectivism must have equal power; neither centralization nor decentralization work; and so on. The perspective in *Change Forces* is the individual and the group in the learning organization and learning society grappling with dilemmas of managing change by making a difference in the lives of students as well as in their own lives. And doing so under conditions of non-linearity, fragmentation and tremendous stress, as well as tremendous opportunity. *Change Forces* hit a responsive chord. In California alone, 12,000 copies were purchased as part of a teachers' and administrators' study group.

Another series of writings, paralleling *Change Forces* , helped me to push deeper into the capacity building orientation, turning into what is now a trilogy under the general title of *What's Worth Fighting For*. In *Change Forces* I had concluded that the 'system' is intrinsically, non-linear and endemically fragmented and incoherent; that this way of being is the very nature of dynamically complex societies. The only viable defense, I said, was to develop inner and outer learning capacities learning despite the system, to create individual and group patterns of periodic coherence.

Starting with inner learning, I argued that the very first place to begin the change process is within ourselves. In complex societies like our own, we have to learn to cope and grow despite the system. It is not that the system is out to get us (sometimes that is the case), but that it (as it changes in dynamically complex ways) is indifferent to our purposes. Therefore, teachers should look

for their first lessons from individuals who do a better job of learning even under adverse circumstances (Fullan, 1993, p. 138).

Outer learning is about connectedness. In Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) words "if values and institutions no longer provide as supportive a framework as they once did, each person must use whatever tools are available to carve out a meaningful, enjoyable life' (p. 16). The *What's Worth Fighting For* series is about mobilizing and combining the forces of inner and out learning.

The Ontario Public Schools Teachers' Federation approached me in 1987 with the following proposition. They said that the job of teachers and principals had become increasingly overloaded, more debilitating, and less and less satisfying. They asked me to start with the lot of principals and write a short piece that contained powerful, accessible concepts and corresponding action guidelines. Beyond this, the federation gave me only the topic: *What's Worth Fighting For.*

I wrote a short monograph, *What's Worth Fighting For in the Principalship* in 1988, now in its second edition (Fullan, 1997). It became an underground favorite. I took up the theme of inner control, noting that the problem was that principals are not only overloaded and bombarded, but that this very condition fosters *dependence*. I argued that the only solution is for principals to take the initiative to break the cycle of dependence, and to practise 'positive politics'. In short, principals had to act positively *despite the system.*

The principals monograph was surprisingly successful. People, it seemed, wanted an analysis that said that the system was the problem, not necessarily the individual; but also that there were actions that individuals could (indeed must) take within their own control. When Andy Hargreaves joined me in Toronto we got the idea to team up and do a second monograph – *What's Worth Fighting For in Your School* (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). Here we said that it is critical to understand the total teacher in terms of career and life cycle, and it is equally crucial to focus on the 'culture of the school' as one of the most powerful variables affecting teaching and learning. We talked about four cultures – individualism, collaboration, balkanization, and contrived collegiality. We formulated action guidelines for teachers and principals that in effect pushed and supported them to pursue the questions of: what kind of culture do we have; what kind do we want; and how do we get there. Again, we presented principals and teachers with ideas about how to take initiative.

From that point, the trilogy fell into place. I had already argued in *Change Forces* that being plugged into the environment was absolutely essential for long term survival and effectiveness. In the second publication, *What's Worth Fighting For in the School,* we said that the walls of the school are and must come tumbling down (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). In the *What's Worth Fighting For Out There* publication – the third in the trilogy – we observed that the walls of the school are and must come tumbling down (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1997). Again, tackling the system, we argued that teachers and principals must 'move toward the danger' and take the risks of engaging the environment of parents/community, technology, government, etc., if they are to become successful.

The *What's Worth Fighting For* series systematically builds the argument that

individual and institutional development is at the heart of educational reform. Consistent with *Change Forces* the theme of *What's Worth Fighting For* is that individuals must develop their own capacities, they must seek out kindred spirits *and* they must learn from those that disagree with them. At the same time we pursued the new frontier of the role of emotion and hope in coping with the vicissitudes of change (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1997). It is by the proactive actions of these moral change agents working against the grain, that 'systems' have any chance of transforming for the good.

## REFLECTIONS

The 1960s, although naive about implementation, was a period of large scale aspirations for massive reform in education. It was a time of the Great Society initiative when hopes for urban and school reform were high. There followed more than a decade of retreat. The false but promising start in the 1960s almost disappeared in the 1970s and early 1980s. In the latter half of the 1980s there was growing concern at the national level that something had to be done, but it took the form of complaints and immediate calls for action without corresponding strategies.

We have now in the mid to late 1990s returned forcefully to the question of large scale, radical reform in education. We are more cynical by a long shot, but we are also more realistic about what needs to be done. I referred to the third phase of my writing as the 'change capacity' period. It is not that capacity is a new concept. Indeed in the 1960s several initiatives by the National Institute of Education focused on local capacity; organization development (OD) similarly stresses organizational capacity. But capacity takes on deeper meaning when we combine what we have learned over the past twenty-five years.

There are two key dimensions of capacity. One is what *individuals* can do to develop their effectiveness, despite the system so to speak; the other is how *systems* need to be transformed.

I emphasize individual capacity for strategic as well as for fundamental reasons. In *Change Forces* and in the *What's Worth Fighting For* series there is a very strong advocacy that we cannot depend on or wait for the system to change. This is all the more convincing when we realize that chaos theory (and our own experience really) tells us that change is non-linear and that systems are not all that coherent. We must then develop our own individual capacities to learn and to keep on learning, and not to let the vicissitudes of change get us down.

This is also the route to system change. If more individuals act as learners; if they connect with kindred spirits; if more and more people speak out and work with those who have different views, it is likely that systems will learn to change.

At the same time, systems need direct attention as well. In an evaluation study we just completed for the Rockefeller Foundation assessing how four urban districts

(Albuquerque, Flint, San Antonio, San Diego) could build professional development infrastructures to foster the continuous learning and development of *all* educators in those systems, we noted three overriding problems:

1. *The urban context: Community and parents*
   Urban reform and school reform, to be successful, depend on each other. We agree that because many of the problems that plague city schools stem from the problems of the cities themselves, the full solution lies outside the schools as well as within them (Rury & Mirel, 1997). Some have gone so far as to say that it is pointless to work on school reform without prior community building efforts (Mathews, 1996, p. 27). For us, this is not an either/or question. It is essential (among other strategies) to focus on school system infrastructure development, provided that this includes new relationships with communities.

   Analyzing the relationship between urban reform and school reform leads to the inevitable conclusion that professional development strategies, like building infrastructures, must be redefined to include more than teachers. Under conditions of poverty, including large discrepancies in living conditions across classes and races in cities, there can be little doubt that the mobilization of large numbers of caring adults is absolutely central to the chances of success. Therefore, building infrastructures strategies must explicitly encompass the development of, and relationships among, all those adults who can potentially affect the motivation, support, and learning of all students.
2. *Fragmentation or coherence of reform initiatives*
   The Rockefeller building infrastructures is only one of many reform initiatives currently underway in each of the four sites. As we shall show, however, the general problem is that these various projects not only are frequently unconnected, but also may work at cross purposes. At very least, the existence of multiple initiatives often creates confusion in the minds of district educators, not to mention the public, as to how the reform strategies, taken as a whole, actually work. There is a great sense of fragmentation and lack of coherence in many urban districts engaged in reform. This is not just a matter of whether a few people can "explain" rational interrelationships of different reform strategies, but whether educators and others in the district experience and internalize a sense of clarity and direction.
3. *Changing the teaching profession*
   The building infrastructures initiative is best seen in the larger context as part and parcel of a movement to determine whether the teaching profession itself will come of age. As the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996) documents and argues, the teaching profession as a whole is badly in need of fundamental reform: in the recruitment, selection, and initial teacher education and induction to the profession; in the continuous professional development of educators; in the standards and incentives for professional work; and in the working conditions of teachers.

> The fundamental problem with educational reform is that the teaching profession itself has not undergone the changes necessary to put it in the forefront of educational development (Fullan & Watson, 1997, pp. 6–7).

We certainly need to change schools as they are not now learning organizations (Fullan, 1995). We need especially to 'reculture', and 'retime' as well as 'restructure' schools. Restructuring is commonplace and all it does is alter the timetable or formal roles. Reculturing as I have argued in several recent writings transforms the habits, skills and practices of educators and others toward greater professional community which focuses on what students are learning and what actions should be taken to improve the situation. Retiming tackles the question of how time can be used more resourcefully for both teachers and students. Reculturing and retiming should drive restructuring because we already know that they make a huge difference on learning, although they are very difficult to change.

We have also said that schools must radically reframe their relationships to the environment. The boundaries between schools and the outside are already transparent and permeable so teachers may as well act as if this is the case. We have made the case that schools must relate very differently to parent/community, to technology, to government policy, and must engage in a variety of networks and alliances among the wider set of colleagues, universities, businesses and the like (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1997).

These developments are also part and parcel of the need to change the teaching profession itself. The teaching profession has not yet come of age. Teacher education, while finally getting some action lags behind. We titled our recent evaluation for the Ford Foundation, *The Rise and Stall of Reform in Teacher Education* to signify that there is still no sustained reform in initial preparation of teachers (Fullan, Galluzzo, Morris, & Watson, 1997).

As I write, there is new, seemingly more powerful policy and practice initiatives underway. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) has mapped out a comprehensive agenda into five interlocking strategies.

- Get serious about standards, for both students and teachers
- Reinvent teacher preparation and professional development
- Overhaul teacher recruitment, and put qualified teachers in every classroom
- Encourage and reward knowledge and skill
- Create schools that are organized for student and teacher success (NCTAF, 1996)

There are several interrelated national and state initiatives currently in the United States that represent the most powerful combination of agencies ever assembled (see Fullan, Galluzzo, Morris, & Watson, 1997). We ourselves in the newly merged Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto (OISE/UT) are engaged in major reform of teacher education programs designed to produce graduates skilled in collaboration and change, while simultaneously working on transforming schools.

This last section is not intended to review the future of reform in education.

Rather it is a natural outgrowth of the cumulative work on change over the past twenty-five years. You cannot interrelate implementation, meaning, and capacity without coming to the realization that the teaching profession must be very different from the past, and schools as we know them must be so transformed that they probably won't be recognizable.

Nor can you attempt these reforms without soon concluding that the education system cannot go it alone, but must connect much more closely with other potential partners, even though they must work through the difficulties of establishing new alliances with groups with which they have not had strong relationships in the past (like parents/community, business, policymakers, universities, etc.).

If we know anything we know that change cannot be 'managed'. We know that you can know a lot about a particular program, but not be able to get others to act on this knowledge. We know that you can be very successful in one situation, but a dismal failure in another. There is no (and never will be any) silver bullet. It is impossible to ever know enough to engineer change in the next situation.

I started this chapter by observing that I was fortunate to begin my career as the serious study of educational change was just getting underway. I am also blessed with having chosen a topic of study that is by definition never ending.

I hope to continue chronicling and stimulating future thinking and action about change process. Perhaps it is time to do a third edition of *The (Newest) Meaning of Educational Change*???

## REFERENCES


Berman P., & McLaughlin, M. (1976). Implementation of educational innovation. *Educational Forum,* **40**(3)*, 345–70.*

Cawelti, G. (1967). Innovative practices in high schools: Who does what and why and how. In G. Cawelti (Ed.), *The nation's schools.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Charters, W., & Jones. (1973). *On the neglect of the independent variable in program evaluation.* (Occasional paper). Eugene: University of Oregon.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience.* New York: Harper Collins Publisher.

Fullan, M. (1972). Overview of innovative process and the user. *Interchange* **3**, 1–46.

Fullan, M. (1982). *The meaning of educational change.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. & with Stiegelbauer, S. (1991). *The new meaning of educational change.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces: Probing the depths of educational reform.* London: Falmer.

Fullan, M. (1995, Autumn). The school as a learning organization: Distant dreams. *Theory Into Practice,* **4**(34)*,230–235.*

Fullan, M. (1997, 2nd edition). *What's worth fighting for in the principalship*? New York: Teachers College Press. Toronto: Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation.

Fullan, M., & Hargreaves, A. (1996). *What's worth fighting for in your school?* (rev. ed.). New York: Teachers College Press; Toronto: Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation.

Fullan, M. & Pomfret, A. (1977). Research on curriculum and instruction implementation. *Review of Educational Research*(47)*1,335–397.*

Fullan, M., Galluzzo, G., Morris, P., Watson, N. (1997).*The rise and stall of teacher education reform.* Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education.

Fullan, M., Watson, N., with Kilcher, A. (1997). *Building infrastructures for professional development: An assessment of early progress.* New York: Rockefeller Foundation.

Goodlad, J., Klein, M. & Associates (1970). *Behind the classroom door*. Worthington, OH: Charles A. Jones.
Hargreaves, A. & Fullan, M. (1997). *What's worth fighting for out there*? New York: Teachers College Press; Toronto, Ontario: Ontario Public Schools Teachers Federation.
Mathews, (1996). *Is there a public for public schools?* Dayton, OH: Kettering Foundation Press.
Miles, M. (1964). *Innovation in education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
Miles, M. (1993). Forty years of change in schools: Some personal reflections. *Educational Administration Quarterly* (29), 213–248.
National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (1996). *What matters most: Teaching for America's future*. Washington, DC: Author.
Rury, J., & Mirel, J. (1997). The political economy of urban education. *Review of Education* (22), 49–112.
Sarason, S. (1971). *The culture of the school and the problem of change*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
Smith, L. & Keith, P. (1971). *Anatomy of educational innovation: An organization analysis of an elementary school*. New York: Wiley.

# II: Expanding the Dialogue

# Patterns of Curriculum Change

IVOR F. GOODSON
*University of East Anglia*

## PATTERNS OF CURRICULUM CHANGE

Historical studies of school subjects show that the secondary school curriculum, far from being a stable and dispassionately constructed unity, is in fact a highly contested, fragmented and endlessly shifting terrain. The school subject is socially and politically constructed and the actors involved deploy a range of ideological and material resources as they pursue their individual and collective missions.

Behind this focus of inquiry lies an alternative conceptualization to mainstream views of schooling. In many ways, this conceptualization accords with the views of Meyer and Rowan who describe education systems as "the central agency defining personnel – both citizen and elite – for the modern state and economy" (Meyer & Rowan, 1983, p. 83). In this view of schooling, standardized categories of graduates are produced through the use of standardized types of teachers, students, topics and activities. These graduates are allocated places in the economic and stratification system on the basis of their certified educational background. Through this certification role the 'ritual classifications of education' (i.e. student, teacher, topic, school, grade, etc.) have value as currency on the 'social identity market'. This market calls for a standard, stable currency of social typications. "The nature of schooling is thus socially defined by reference to a set of standardized categories, the legitimacy of which is publicly shared" (Meyer & Rowan, 1983, p. 84). This is a constraint on what is possible in education and what will be accepted as conforming to the norm of schooling. But on the other hand "the rewards for attending to external understandings are, an increased ability to mobilize societal resources for organizational purposes." (Meyer & Rowan, 1983, p. 86).

The social function of schooling by this view sets parameters, perspectives and incentives for those actors involved in the construction of school subjects. In our investigation, the activities of these actors can best be understood as individuals or collectives with 'careers' and 'missions' who are dependent for resources and ideological support on external sources. The interface between 'internal' subject actors and their external relations is mediated through the pursuit of resources and ideological support. Resource dependency has two faces: it is experienced as a constraint on strategies of action but can also be viewed as a mode of promoting and facilitating particular versions and visions of school subjects.

The great strength of Meyer and Rowan's characterization of schooling and of



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 219-229.

linking it to an analysis of resource allocation is that our study can focus on aspects of stability and conservation as well as on aspects of conflict and change. This provides an antidote to the dangers of internalism and givenness noted earlier. It also provides a response to Steven Luke's critique of what he describes as 'one-dimensional' or pluralist views of power that focus only on conflict. He argues that the most effective and insidious use of power "is to prevent conflict arising in the first place". Hence to focus solely on conflict is to miss crucial dimensions of power, moreover 'conflict, according to that view, (i.e. pluralism) is assumed to be crucial in providing an experimental test of power attributions: without it the exercise of power will, it seems to be thought, fail to show up'. A further problem relates to issues of consciousness for pluralists 'are opposed to any suggestion that interests might be inarticulated or unobservable, and above all, to the idea that people might actually be mistaken about, or unaware of, their own interests.' (Lukes, 1974, p. 14). Lynd long ago addressed this issue in a forward to Brady's book *Business as a System of Power*, a system which he argues is:

> an intensely coercive form of organization of society that cumulatively constrains men and all their institutions to work the will of the minority – who hold and wield economic power; and that this relentless warping of men's lives and forms of association becomes less and less the results of voluntary decisions by 'bad' or 'good' men and more and more an impersonal web of coercions dictated by the need to keep the system running (Lynd, 1943, p. xii)

By analogy, it is therefore important in our studies of curriculum conservation and change to monitor those 'impersonal webs' which keep the education system running and which provide parameters and maybe indeed 'coercions' as well as 'facilitations' for those involved in the construction and promotion of school subjects.

## SCHOOL SUBJECTS: INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The process model developed by Bucher and Strauss for the study of professions provides some initial guidelines for the study of the internal affairs of school subjects. They argue that within a profession are varied identities, values and interests. They characterize professions as loose amalgamations of segments pursuing different objectives in different manner and more or less delicately held together under a common name at particular periods in history.

They note that conflicts arise at particular points, notably over the gaining of institutional footholds, over recruitment and over external relations with clients and other institutions. At times, when conflicts such as these become intense, professional associations may be created, or, if already in existence, become strongly institutionalized.

The Bucher and Strauss model of professional change suggests that the belief in a subject as monolithic and unified is unlikely to resonate with the reality of the

underpinning subject 'community'. (Bucher & Strauss, 1976, p. 19). The subject community should not be viewed as a homogeneous group whose members share similar values and definitions of role, common interests and identities. Rather the subject community might be seen as a 'social movement' comprising a shifting range of distinct 'missions' or 'traditions' represented by individuals, groups, segments or factions. The importance of these factions will vary considerably over time. As with professions, school subject associations or more *ad hoc* defense groups often develop at particular points in time when conflict intensifies over the school curriculum, resources, recruitment and training. The introduction of the National Curriculum in Britain in the 1987 brought about just such an intensification of conflict and group advocacy and activity.

The internal affairs of each subject community might have been characterized as the 'relations of change' which Ball has defined as: "The power struggles between social groups, coalitions, and segments within the subject community each with their own 'sense of mission' and differing and competing vested interests, resources and influence" (Ball, 1985, pp. 17–18). I have previously argued that school subject communities might be viewed as a political 'coalition' with the constituent subject factions engaged in ongoing political struggle for resources and influence. But it is important to view the subject groups' competition for resources and influence as part of a much wider set of cultural influences. For a start, school subjects themselves are aspects of a 'world movement' which modernizes school curricula around subject themes: each subject then has a broad cultural context. Moreover, how school subjects are located and organized is itself considerably influenced by the political culture of the country under consideration. The following instance illustrates a pattern of structuration for school subjects which was analyzed in some earlier work in curriculum history.

## THE STRUCTURAL CONTEXT OF SCHOOL SUBJECTS: AN EXAMPLE

In previous work, I studied the promotion and definition of secondary school subjects in the 1960s and 1970s in England. In particular I wanted to understand how the missions of subject factions related to aspects of structure. The studies I had undertaken pointed up the importance of aspects of the structure of the educational system in understanding actions at individual, collective and relational levels.' In some ways I was following Giddens question 'in what manner can it be said that the conduct of individual actors reproduces the structural properties of larger collectivities' (Giddens, 1986, p. 24). Certainly I shared the view that 'analyzing the structuration of social systems means studying the modes in which such systems, grounded in the knowledgeable activities of situated actors who draw upon rules and resources in the diversity of action contexts, are produced and reproduced in action.' (Giddens, 1986, p. 25). In studying school subjects such structuration is evidential: "These structures, which might be viewed from the actors' standpoint as the 'rules of the game', arise at a particular point in history, for particular

reasons: until changed they act as a structural legacy constraining, but also enabling, contemporary actors" (Goodson, 1988, p. 87).

Let me briefly summarize my findings from this study. The period of course pre-dates the National Curriculum but as we shall see later, bears an uncanny resemblance to it. The main historical period when the salient structure emerged was 1904–1917.

The 1904 Secondary Regulations listed and prioritized those subjects suitable for education in the secondary grammar schools. These were largely those that have come to be seen as 'academic' subjects, a view confirmed and consolidated by their enshrinement in the School Certificate examinations launched in 1917.

From 1917 onwards, examination subjects, the 'academic' subjects, inherited the priority treatment in finance and resources directed at the grammar schools. It should be noted that the examination system itself had developed for a comparable clientele. The foundation of these examinations in 1858 'was the universities' response to petitions that they should help in the development of 'schools for the middle classes'. The genesis of examinations and their subsequent centrality in the structure of the educational systems are a particularly good example of the importance of historical factors for those developing theories about curriculum and schooling.

The structure of resources linked to examinations has effectively survived the ensuing changes in the educational system (although currently these are now subject to challenge). Byrne (1974) for instance has stated 'that more resources are given to able students and hence to academic subjects', the two are still synonymous 'since it has been assumed that they necessarily need more staff, more highly paid staff and more money for equipment and books' (Byrne, 1974, p. 29).

The material interests of teachers – their pay, promotion and conditions – are intimately interlinked with the fate of their specialist subject. School subjects are organized within schools in departments. The subject teacher's career is pursued within such departments and the department's status depends on the subject's status. The 'academic' subject is placed at the top of the hierarchy of subjects because resource allocation takes place on the basis of assumptions that such subjects are best suited for the 'able' students (and vice versa of course) who, it is further assumed, should receive favourable treatment.

Thus in secondary schools the material and self-interest of subject teachers is interlinked with the status of the subject, judged in terms of its examination status. Academic subjects provide the teacher with a career structure characterized by better promotion prospects and pay than less academic subjects. The conflict over the status of examinable knowledge, as perceived and fought at individual and collective level, is essentially a battle over material resources and career prospects. This battle is reflected in the way that the discourse over school subjects, the debate about their form, content and structure, is constructed and organized. 'Academic' subjects are those which attract 'able' students, hence 'the need for a scholarly discipline' characterizes the way in which the discourse on curriculum is structured and narrowed. (Goodson, 1995, pp. 188–9)

Between the 'internal' missions of subject groups and the external 'publics' stands the bureaucracy vested with the task of operating local and central state systems of education.

In analyzing the place within the British context of the educational state in promoting educational change, Tapper and Salter have argued that the Department of Education and Science, which became the Department for Education in 1992 and the Department for Education and Employment in 1995 was 'an ambitious bureaucracy' long before it launched the 1988 goals for power code – named the National Curriculum: "the central educational bureaucracy, the DES, is an important part of the State because it is the main arena in which attempts are made to translate pressures from the economic base into educational policy. As such it acts as a focus for the exercise of educational power" (Salter & Tapper, 1985, p. 22). The Department took a range of important agenda-setting initiatives, for it

> is best placed to initiate and orchestrate the discussions which will lead to the formulation of educational goals, to create those committees which carry the process one step further, to disseminate the findings that emerge from these committees, and to present the official response to the wider public reaction. At the same time it can put pressure on the local education authorities, schools and teachers to push the experience of schooling in the desired direction. (Salter & Tapper, 1981, p. 43)

Whilst the DES, as the most central agent of the educational state is therefore very powerful, it is not at all clear that this will lead to management or policy which is in harmony with those dominant interest groups linked to the economic base. This is because of the nature of bureaucracy itself (let alone an 'ambitious bureaucracy'). Max Weber noted that 'once it is fully established bureaucracy is among those social structures which are hardest to destroy' (Salter & Tapper, 1981, p. 43).

Hence a bureaucracy can come to have its own interest and mission in the same manner as subject groups. These interests can be loosely coupled with the political regime in government and with the economic structure of the country. Once again, therefore, as with subject groups, we need to understand internal affairs and the missions and agendas of particular bureaucratic factions. Hence with the D.E.S.

> as an established bureaucracy it has goals, needs and ideology which may well run counter in educational policy terms to the demands of the economy. Thus the emergence of policy is conceived of as the result of the interplay between the economic and bureaucratic dynamics; an interplay which can take time to draw to a conclusion given both the shifting nature of economic pressures and the internal inefficiencies in the Department's policy-making procedures. (Such as tensions between long-term planning and Public Expenditure Survey Committee (PESC) requirements, and inter-branch rivalry). (Salter & Tapper, 1985, pp. 22–23)

To put the matter in the simplest terms

> There is no guarantee that the bureaucratic dynamic will work harmoniously with the economic dynamic, no guarantee that it is able to ensure the appropriate policies concerning the organization of knowledge, certification and the attitudes and values inculcated in school will duly emerge to service the capitalist order. For like all institutions the Department has over time developed its own momentum, and its own inertia, which means that its exercise of educational power runs in certain policy grooves. (Salter & Tapper, 1985, p. 24)

Beyond the built-in internal constraints of the bureaucratic dynamic the educational state also collides with the range of constraints at school level we have noted earlier. For in the schools there already exist structured and institutionalized practices which may be defused rather than transformed by self-managing schools. These will be difficult to address and change not least because the lines of control from the central agency at the DES run through a decentralized educational system notable through the local education authorities. These local authorities have their own bureaucracies with their own dynamics and policy preferences. It is, therefore, true with regard to the curriculum of the schools that 'curricular contests won in any one sphere may be lost in another, opening up the possibility of wide variations between sites in their dominant definitions of curricula' (Bates, 1989, p. 228).

The bureaucratic apparatus of the educational state has degrees of autonomy and the capacity to service its own internally-generated demands. In many ways, however, the bureaucratic dynamic does take account of those demands related to the economic base. In more recent times in both Britain and the U.S.A. this has not been unrelated to the increasing participation of businessmen and representatives of the 'enterprise culture' on advisory boards, committees, governing bodies and ad hoc groups. But direct participation is not the major explanation.

Dougherty has spoken of a modality of power which works with and accepts the bureaucratic dynamic and which "operates when policies that benefit private interest groups are enacted by government officials with little or no prior articulation by the groups of their interests and policy preferences." He argues that such action occurs for two reasons: either the officials share the attitudes of the private interest groups (ideological hegemony) or the government officials believe that the private interest groups control resources that they need to realize their own bureaucratic and self interests (inducements):

> The inducement side of the power of constraint has lain in the fact that government officials' sphere of autonomous action is limited by their subordination to a democratic polity and a capitalist economy. Government officials are ultimately dependent for their authority on the assent of the people, as expressed by their votes. But those votes are strongly conditioned by the state of the economy and government provision of politically popular programs. And in a capitalist economy, economic growth and tax revenues

> to finance government programs are dependent on business' willingness to invest capital (Dougherty, 1988, pp. 409–10).

In short the bureaucratic missions, similarly to the subject missions, afford primacy to the pursuit of resources. In their common resource dependency lies the interface with the economic base. As I have argued elsewhere, we need to distinguish between domination (the direct exercise of power by dominant groups) and mediation (the exercise of power by mediating, normally professional or bureaucratic groups). In the following section we shall employ this distinction to reconceptualize power and the operation of the education system as it is evidenced in the terrain of the school curriculum.

## SCHOOL SUBJECTS AND POLITICAL PROCESS

This instance provides some insight into how the allocation of resources, financial distribution, the attribution of status and the construction of career are both *structured practices* and *institutionalized practices*. Hence, I argued that the structure of the system, and its material and concrete form, is associated with the way that particular patterns of curriculum are constructed and re-constructed. In this way, certain priorities and parameters are set for local authorities, educators and practitioners. The political economy of the curriculum particularly of the school subject, is then of vital concern for it is a 'heartland' for the patterning and prioritizing which establishes a particular 'character' for schooling (Goodson, 1995, p. 8). In this regard, John Meyer distinguishes between *institutional* and *organizational* categories.

> 'institutional' connotes a 'cultural ideology' and is contrasted with 'organizational', meaning enshrined within unique and tangible structures such as schools and classrooms. Institutional categories comprise schooling levels (such as primary), school types (such as comprehensive) educational roles (such as college principal) and, importantly for our purpose, curricular topics (such as reading, the Reformation or O – Level Mathematics). In each of these instances, the organizational form as created and maintained by teachers and others is paralleled by an institutional category which is significant for some wider public or publics (summarized in Reid, 1984, p. 68).

The institutional categories Meyer defines are the vital currency in the educational market place. In this market place identifiable and standard social typications are necessary: for students because they are constructing school careers connected to desired social and occupational destinations and for teachers who wish to ensure successful futures for their students and high status, well-resourced careers for themselves. The mission of subject factions links into the marketplace in the pursuit of those rhetorics which will ensure identifiable categories which have credibility in the public mind. For Reid

> successful rhetorics are realities. Though teachers and administrators have to be careful that disjunctions between practice and belief do not escalate to the point where credibility collapses, nonetheless it remains true that what is most important for the success of school subjects is not the delivery of 'goods' which can be publicly evaluated, but the development and maintenance of legitimating rhetorics which provide automatic support for correctly labelled activity. The choice of appropriate labels and the association of these in public mind with plausible rhetorics of justification can be seen as the core mission of those who work to advance or defend the subjects of the curriculum. (Reid, 1984, p. 75)

We have also seen in the foregoing analysis of school subject missions and bureaucratic missions that beyond the internalistic pursuit of ideological support and resources lies the development of patterns of external support. The administration and definition of the institutional categories of schooling is often the task of the state bureaucracies. These institutional categories provide important parameters for the work of school subject missions. We have argued that these provide for the school subject groups discernible 'rules of the game' and that in examining the actions of subject groups in this way we are able to illuminate aspects of structuration.

The administrative operation and definition by state bureaucracies of institutional categories provides here the major terrain within which subject groups undertake their work in the English context. In other countries with varying but often greater effect the institutional categories of schooling both partially derive from and are sustained by groups and individuals external to the educational system. The ideologies and rhetorics of external constituencies are located in the socio-cultural processes which label and support particular categories of the educational enterprise as valid and worthwhile. In this way 'external forces and structures emerge not merely as sources of ideas, prompting inducements and constraints, but as definers and carriers of content, role and activity to which the practice of schools must approximate in order to attract support and legitimation.' (Reid, 1984, p. 68). The external constituencies are, therefore, vital actors in the ideological support for and ongoing discourse around the established institutional categories of schooling. In this sense there is a close ongoing alliance between the state bureaucracy who may formally define and administer institutional categories and the external constituencies who provide ideological support and resources. External relations cover the major constituencies not as formally organized special interest groups such as parents, employer and curious but more broadly concerned constituencies which cover these groups but include scholars, politicians, professionals and others:

> These interested publics which pay for and support education hand over its work to the professionals in only a limited and unexpected sense. For while it may appear that the professionals have power to determine what is taught (at school, district and national level, depending on the country

> in question) their hope is limited by the fact that only the forms and activities which have significance for external publics can, in the long run, survive (Reid, 1984, p. 68).

To win the continued support of external constituencies suitable categories or rhetorics must be defined and as we have seen this then becomes, as in the rules of the game, the core mission of subject groups. They must develop legitimating, rhetorics or mythologies which provide automatic support for correctly labelled activity.

The pursuit of ideological support and resources from educational bureaucracies and external constituencies provides one contextual framework for understanding subject group missions. This is not, however, to assert the singularity of *material interests* over all others with regard to the actions of subject groups. Clearly in the pursuit of financial resources per se these interests may have primacy but in the articulation of subject missions more *idealistic* and moral *interests* emerge. For instance 'I love my subject above all things' is a statement of ideal interests or 'I believe my subject is the major vehicle for human emancipation' is a moral version. Both of these statements provide legitimating rhetorics but they may be deeply held, internalized and believed in just the same way as more material interests are. Indeed the best legitimating rhetorics for subjects successfully merge material, idealistic and moral interests.

Moreover, these different 'interests' may impinge differently at different levels. The construction of a successful rhetoric for the subject may well concede primacy to material interests but once successfully established a subject has to be negotiated and realized at a number of subsequent levels. The subject may be *preactive* at the level of the guidelines, textbook or syllabus but is interactively negotiated at a range of subsequent levels: The subject *department*, the subject *sub-culture*, the daily *micropolitics* of the subject in the school and the *habitus* of the subject, the daily classroom routines of the subject teacher.

The subject group mission, however, is to promote the subject by winning over the legitimating constituencies to ideological support and resource provision. To achieve this task the subject's definition and rhetorics is in a very real sense a political *manifesto* or *slogan*. For the rationale of a particular version of the subject is in this sense political expediency. Successful school subjects must appear as unchallengeable and monolithic essences – (distillations of excellence in a particular form or field of knowledge to take a philosophical slant). The subject then becomes a mythologized monolith which exists regardless of its specific realization as structured or institutionalized practice.

The school subject then must 'have value as currency on the social identity market.' This market calls for a standard, stable currency of social typications. In this sense the missions of school subject groups are just one aspect of the acceptance of the structures of the market and of the structuring of educational systems in the image of that market. The mythologization of school subject categories ensures a fixity in the public mind and an acceptance of the subject 'as currency'.

This currency for the categorical subject remains until it is devalued by unsustainable contradictions at other levels or by major paradigm shifts, organizational shifts or changes in external constituency demands.

## CONCLUSION

### *Curriculum Change as Socio-Political Process*

The nature of curricula change as socio-political process varies – sometimes the political aspect remains somewhat covert, at other times, as in the case of the British National Curriculum, it is overt, almost triumphalist, in tenor and mode. But either way a political process of definition, evolution and negotiation can be discerned. Looking at England in the 1960s and 1970s I have defined four stages in the 'process of academic establishment' for a school subject. In subsequent forms and when taken up in other milieu this process sometimes begins at stage two with promotion, stage three with legislation, to implement that which has been invented elsewhere.

1. *Invention* may come about from the activities or ideas of educators; sometimes as a response to 'climates of opinion' or pupil demands or resistance or from inventions in the 'outside world': "the ideas necessary for creation . . . are usually available over a relatively prolonged period of time in several places. Only a few of these inventions will lead to further action" (Ben-David & Collins, 1966, p. 13).

2. *Promotion* by educator groups internal to the educational system. Inventions will be taken up 'where and when persons become interested in the new idea, not only as intellectual content but also as a means of establishing a new intellectual identity and particularly a new occupational role'. Hence, subjects with low status, poor career patterns and even with actual survival problems may readily embrace and promote new inventions such as environmental studies. Conversely high-status subjects may ignore quite major opportunities as they are already satisfactorily resourced and provide existing desirable careers. The response of science groups to 'technology' or (possibly) contemporary mathematics groups to 'computer studies' are cases in point. Promotion of invention arises from a perception of the possibility of basic improvements in occupational role and status.

3. *Legislation* The promotion of new inventions, if successful, leads to the establishment of new categories or subjects. Whilst promotion is initially primarily internally generated, it has to develop external relations with sustaining 'constituencies'. This will be a major stage in ensuring that new categories or subjects are fully accepted, established and institutionalized. And further, that having been established, they can be sustained and supported over time. Legislation is associated with the development and maintenance of those discourses or legitimating rhetorics which provide automatic support for correctly labelled activity.

4. *Mythologization.* Once automatic support has been achieved for a subject or category, a fairly wide range of activities can be undertaken. The limits are any

activities which threaten the legitimating rhetoric and hence constituency support. The subject at this point is mythological. It represents essentially a licence that has been granted, (or perhaps a 'patent' or 'monopoly rights'), with the full force of the law and establishment behind it (Goodson, 1995, pp. 193–194).

Hence subjects can be successfully invented, legislated and mythologized but even then carry within them the seeds of new cycles of reform, reconstitution and reaction. Once subjects have been mythologized as 'traditional' school subjects, new attempts may be made to re-embrace new pedagogic and utilitarian strategies. Moreover, new government initiatives may themselves cause subject groups to begin again the task of promotion. Hence, when a government legislates a new National Curriculum as in New Zealand and England, subject groups have once again to argue their case and undertake new cycles of reform, reconstitution and political persuasion.

## REFERENCES


Ball, S .J. (1985). Relations, structures and conditions in curriculum change: A political history of English teaching 1970–85. In I. F. Goodson (Ed.), *International perspectives in curriculum History* (pp.17–18). London: Routledge.

Bates, I. (1989). Versions of vocationalism: An analysis of some social and political influences on curriculum policy and practice. *The Journal of Sociology of Education*, **10**(2), 228.

Ben-David, T., & Collins, R. (1966). Social factors in the origins of a new science: The case of psychology. *American Sociological Review*, August.

Bucher, R., & Strauss, A. (1976). Professions in process. In M. Hammersley & P. Woods (Eds.), *The Process of schooling* (p. 19). London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Byrne, E. M. (1974). Planning and educational inequality. *NFER*, 29.

Dougherty, K. (1988). Educational policy making and the relative autonomy of the state: The case of occupational education in the community college. *Sociological Forum*, **3**(3), 409–410.

Giddens, A. (1986). *The constitution of society*. University of California Press.

Goodson, I. F. (1988). *The making of curriculum: Collected essays*, London, New York and Philadelphia: Falmer Press.

Lukes, S. (1974). *Power: A radical view*, London and Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Lynd, R., forward to Brady, R. A. (1943). *Business as a system of power*. NY: Columbia University Press,.

Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B. (1983). The structure of educational organization. In J. W. Meyer & W. R. Scott (Eds.), *Organizational environments* (p.18). California: Sage.

Reid, W. A. (1984). Curricular topics as institutional categories: Implications for theory and research in the history and sociology of school subjects. In I. F. Goodson & S. J. Ball (Eds.), *Defining the curriculum: Histories and ethnographies* (pp. 68–75). London, New York and Philadelphia: Falmer Press.

Salter, B., & Tapper, T. (1981). *Education politics and the state: The theory and practice of educational change*. London: Grant Macintyre.

Salter, B., & Tapper, T. (1985). *Power and policy in education: The case of independent schooling*. London, New York and Philadelphia: Falmer Press

# Change and Tradition in Education: The Loss of Community

MARK HOLMES
*Professor Emeritus, Ontario Institue for Studies in Education, University of Toronto*

## INTRODUCTION

We have apparently passed from modern times to what are characterized, in an appropriate spirit of narcissicism, as postmodern times. Experts seem to agree that times are changing and that our own undistinguished era is something special. Change and improvement, generally used interchangeably with unconscious irony, are more than ever the currency of educational commentary.

What is most noticeable, in the context of the banality of the school-change literature, is its lack of educational substance. It is not just that the journey is seen as being as important as the destination, but rather that motion is seen as a substitute for any clear sense of educational purpose. The implementation process becomes the purpose.

Despite the avowed denial by postmodern writers (Richard Rorty is an excellent representative) of the fundamental truth of any of the myths (or narratives) by which we in the late twentieth century English-speaking democracies have become what we are, there is no accompanying modesty in generalizing prescriptions for the future school. So, at the same time as the lemmings jump off the cliff into nihilism, they chatter in unison of the need for fundamental change. Unfortunately, the lemmings' journey is unlikely to lead to the kind of transformation they incoherently imagine.

School change literature is usually grounded in a series of false assumptions: that in pluralist societies, one change fits all; that everyone (or at least everyone that counts) agrees that the myths underlying our civilization are poor, shriveled things no longer deserving the attention of serious people; that change makes sense even without an agreed idea of what it is one wants to change into; that the future is something experts know and for which educators must prepare young people, rather than something in which every member of a pluralist democracy may be an active participant; and that practices in schools have not become established because they work, but because they are blindly followed by ignorant people not yet liberated by the superior wisdom of experts in school change.

A preferable view of formal education is one that assumes, as a starting point,



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 230-248.

that there can be no universal remedy for future schools first because, by definition, pluralist societies and the parents within them want very different things from their children's education and, second, because the future is unknowable. That perspective is not based on a factual claim to knowledge of the future, but on on a sense of what should be, what is right, given the social context. It cannot claim universal acceptance any more than others, but it does apprehend our social disarray.

Change agents' claim that their particular universal prescription for educational change is somehow "democratic" is ironic. Dewey can be fairly blamed for this nasty little convention, but that does not excuse it. Pluralism allows no single acceptable recipe for all. A universal educational plan is to deny the continuing validity of pluralism.[1] Any such plan should at least illustrate its superiority over rival philosophies of education.

## THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Andy Hargreaves distinguishes between postmodernism, an "aesthetic, cultural and intellectual phenomenon", and postmodernity, "a social condition" (1994, p. 38). He accepts the fact of postmodernity, without necessarily buying into the philosophical ideology characterized by postmodern writers. In practice, he sees postmodernism as being normative, postmodernity as descriptive.

While there is value in the invention of distinctions between fact and value, to help remove intellectual ambiguity, the invention remains just that, a philosophical contrivance. Most people typically fail to recognize such fine (and essentially artificial) lines in their daily lives. Hargreaves himself writes of the existence of flexible economies and new needs. He quotes Reich approvingly on the need for new problem solving skills. The mantras of high-level decision making, critical thinking and high-level problem solving as the new goals of education do not survive intellectual analysis. The quality of a decision lies more in its moral integrity than in its manner of making, and the value of problem solving more in its apprehension of the context of knowledge than in its technique.

Hargreaves notes two aspects of the postmodern condition that may be viewed as negative: the depersonalization of work and workers and the collapse of the common school tied to its community. It is not at all clear that the social conditions of postmodernity are entirely distinct from the intellectual conditions of postmodernism. They both share some basis in fact. There are ongoing changes in the economic structures of western society; and there has been a decline in the belief in important myths such as the Judeo-Christian tradition (as Hargreaves notes). In both cases, however, people react to their perceptions of these changes in different ways depending on their own guiding beliefs. In neither case are the changes novel. Postmodern workers in uncomfortable computerized or downsized environments are no more depersonalized than were nineteenth century factory workers or thirteenth century villeins. And it was Friedrich Nietzsche who announced the death of God, long before Rorty.

It is not immediately evident that either postmodernity or postmodernism exists in any helpful conceptual sense, other than as a shorthand convention used by commentators generally sharing a similar ideology. Postmodernism's alleged foundation in the death of the major myths is little more than a logical and foreseeable development of Nietzsche, the growth of existentialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the intellectual drift into nihilism over the last fifty or so years.[2] As for the economic changes, they are no more significant than the coming of the industrial age in the nineteenth century and the more general changes into a white collar, service oriented, middle class culture with a distinct underclass characterizing the twentieth.

My objection to founding discussion of educational change in an assumption of postmodernism or postmodernity is that a set of arguments springs, as if from a natural source, from the ideas and selected facts normally associated with those jargon terms. The alleged need for flexible learning by students is based on the changing economy and the low likelihood that people will remain in a single job for their entire working life. Flexibility is another cliché used by school change people. Flexibility is considered a good, and is contrasted with rigidity, which is bad. Community is rigid, obsolete. So, one is told that in schools ". . . people become especially attached to the sub-community within which most of their working lives are contained and defined" (p. 214). Here, Hargreaves is referring to secondary school departments, which Hargreaves sees as evidence of "balkanization" (p. 235), a redolent image, written at the time of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. I see the strength of strong subject departments in large secondary schools, which for the most part lack anything approaching community, as a natural and desirable defence of intellectualism (their rigid bounds justified by the barbarians at their gates). Hargreaves believes that ". . . balkanized secondary structures are poorly equipped to harness the human resources necessary to secure flexible learning for students" (p. 235). It is a short step then to predict that in the future "subject boundaries will be more blurred" (p. 237). Flexible learning will require collaboration and organizational responsiveness to provide "continuous improvement" (p. 247).

So a description of postmodern conditions leads inexorably to the kind of teaching and learning we should have in schools, i.e., flexible and collaborative learning, which in turn means the breakdown of subject departments (to which sub-communities teachers cling too strongly) and to the prediction that subject boundaries will be diffused.

Some teachers and parents embrace the postmodern prescription with enthusiasm. Hargreaves, however, places his argument within a Procrustean bed of the postmodern condition. He does not necessarily claim a personal world view, other than by implication, that puts a high value on change, on instructional flexibility and on collaborative learning. He does not express overt dislike of the traditional subjects or even the strong sub-communities that are barriers to the changes he wants. Rather his objection is to barriers to the inexorable march of progress, demanded by postmodern conditions.

None of this implies that schools should ignore the context of work. Schools

legitimately have functions of socialization and training as well as a narrowly defined education. Unfortunately, those predominantly centrist and leftist in ideology who comprise nearly all those working in the area of school change take little note of the actual structure of work, preferring an imaginary one based on postmodern ideology.

They argue that students should be prepared for work that will require them to be flexible, to work collaboratively, to be highly educated, and to be capable of high-level decision making, critical thinking, and complex problem-solving. The values of flexibility and rigidity depend very much on the situation and one's personal beliefs. Raun and Leithwood argue for example that school superintendents ought to be flexible about their own (but not their subordinates') honesty, integrity and religious values, favoring instead pragmatism, participation, and duty (p. 68). An Orthodox Jew and a fundamentalist Christian would not agree, perhaps one reason why they are not found among the ranks of the superintendents studied by Raun and Leithwood. To me, duty is the enactment of the primary virtues in specific contexts. Perhaps a participatory, pragmatic version of duty involves undertaking school improvement projects while failing to tell parents there is no evidence they will actually affect their children positively. Truth must be sacrificed if we are all to march together to a progressive future.

The collaborative work found in high-level jobs in corporations bears no relationship to the fuzzy sharing found in progressive classrooms. Highly paid employees in modern companies such as Northern Telecom have high levels of individual responsibility, however much team members may consult.

As for high levels of education, we are witnessing today a bifurcation in the job market, with a minority of high level jobs being extremely demanding and well paid. At the same time, there is a rapid increase in jobs that require few skills, are often part-time or temporary, and receive low levels of financial reward.

If one were to base schooling on preparation for that market. most school change models would be totally bankrupt; what would be required is a two-tier system, the one highly demanding, competitive, and increasingly specialized, the other low-level and generic. I am opposed to such a model (as I am opposed to all top-down models); schools and education are about more than the current job market. (At the same time, I do believe that schools should prepare young people either for work or for post-secondary education, as well as reach for many other goals).

Unfortunately, the school change literature makes no attempt to come to terms with the real situation faced by young people today, preferring feel-good rhetoric about an imagined future.

## THE SCHOOL CHANGE/IMPROVEMENT MOVEMENT

As an outsider, I see three parts to the general area of school change and improvement: the school effectiveness movement, beginning in the late 60s, based largely on empirical studies; the school change movement, focusing, nominally objectively,

on varieties of change; and the most recent school improvement movement, with a less distinct, often subjectivist focus. The three overlap and merge.

The school effectiveness movement is the one in which I have been most involved, but it is not the major subject of this essay. Effectiveness research has differed from most other research on change in two ways. First, it typically examines naturally occurring relationships between inputs and outputs, from which researchers infer cause and effect. Second, it focuses on highly specific effects, usually defined in terms of performance in the basic skills, the educational purpose most widely held among parents.

Interest in effective school research has declined over the last decade. There is now reasonable consensus on the school factors related to success in the basic skills (but less so on their origin and the causative mechanisms). Further, there is no evidence that large-scale external intervention to change internal school processes can be effective without intensive additional resources, usually only available for small-scale endeavors. Finally, there is some evidence that absence of community may play a key role in the failure of many (perhaps most) schools to educate students effectively in the academic, moral, and spiritual domains (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987). And there is no recipe for instant community.

Community, it will be recalled, is considered irrelevant or obsolete by centrist and leftist educators, even downright harmful. That is understandable. Community is a powerful barrier to the universalization of Western liberal, egalitarian norms based on a carefully selected choice of human rights.[3]

There are other reasons for the decline in interest in school effectiveness. There is the continuing disparagement of the obsession with the basic skills (as against, for example, raised self-concept and improved collaborative skills). There is the philosophical rejection by many influential educators of the clear finding that effective skill teaching depends on direct instruction within a clearly sequenced curriculum (as distinct from individualized learning within a spiral curriculum).[4] Finally, there is continuing aversion to any attempt to examine the actual effects on students of school improvement programs.[5] It is much easier to find evidence of implementation than of improved student achievement. Leaving aside the school effectiveness movement, which, for illegitimate reasons, is moribund, I shall concentrate on efforts to change and improve schools outside the narrow definition of school effectiveness.

## CENTRAL OBJECTIONS TO THE SCHOOL CHANGE AND IMPROVEMENT MOVEMENT

### *Absence of world view*

Efforts to change and improve schools are not based on any clear sense of what schools are for. This is seen by many participants as its great strength. School improvement people are just there to help, not to impose their own ideas.

The *tabula rasa* cannot work for several reasons. As G.K. Chesterton said, when

people cease to believe in God, they do not then believe in nothing; they believe in anything. We live in nihilist times, but there is no evidence that those without strong religious or ideological commitment are lacking in opinions, prejudices, preferences, and irrational beliefs. Alasdair MacIntyre refers to beliefs not grounded in any strong, traditional narrative as emotivism. Educators seem to be particularly prone to emotivism; perhaps it is simply that theirs is made public in their teaching and their sheep-like devotion to the politically correct. Possibly because they no longer hold to (or are told or believe it is inappropriate to teach) their ancestors' moral virtues, they seize with enthusiasm the "improvements" of the day. Even at a time when scientific evidence of human effects on global climate, the ozone layer, and acid rain remains speculative and the possibility of changing them remote, there is only increased passion on the part of crusaders for the true religion. Note how often it is others who are the villains, there never being a suggestion that schools should use less heat or that teachers and students should walk more rather than travel by car or bus. The postmodern credo goes, "I have met the enemy and it is they."

Academics who help to implement collaborative learning strategies come to believe, if they do not at the outset, that collaborative learning is improvement. There are exceptions, but it is human nature to believe that projects into which one pours considerable amounts of time, thought, and energy are both well-intentioned and beneficial. An educator would not, I like to think, use the word improvement for a project for which one had no reasonable expectations of success.

One can rationalize the inconsistency by arguing that the funding agencies genuinely believe in the improvement, while the academic researchers simply act, in good faith, as objective students of the process, advising on implementation but not on the substance of the project. This is probably true of some of the lower level researchers – students and research officers. Even these people, in my experience, keep their private sometimes cynical thoughts to themselves or close friends. More often, they gradually "buy in" to the project. It would be unethical perhaps for them to make negative comments about the substance of a project to the participants. A researcher working on the Ontario project to "destream" ninth grade classes (previously taught at three levels of difficulty) told me sadly that one teacher had said to her, "I find it so difficult to stop caring about the academic achievement of the students although I know collaboration is important." (The intent of destreaming was to "democratize" grade nine and increase the proportion of black students continuing in academic programs. The expensive research on implementation did not look at academic achievement or changes in participation rates. Instead it concentrated on impediments to implementation, notably academic subject departments.)

There is no substantive reason why a school improvement project cannot derive from a grounded narrative. One thinks, for example, of some of the effective schools projects that have attempted to show that the correlates can overcome the (evil?) effects of home background on student achievement. The Marxist, egalitarian

ideology of the hard left does indeed guide some researchers. Ironically, it is the one major narrative that has virtually no currency among people outside the university.

The idea that parental influence should somehow be negated by the state, which has influenced educators well beyond the Marxist fringe, is a particularly strange phenomenon. After all, helping their children is something most people see as being a quintessential part of the parental role. It is no surprise to me that egalitarian politicians and academics embarrassingly choose "élitist" educational options for their children while preaching egalitarian options for others. Leftist academics press their children into segregated "gifted" programs and the children of successful leftwing politicians are often found in the most privileged independent schools. It seems to escape the true believers in their own Utopia that parents, egalitarian and neo-conservative, are similar in one respect; they want the best for their own children, irrespective of the system and its alleged fairness or unfairness.

Michael Fullan, whose classic, liberal study of educational change (1982) captured well the spirit of the educational change movement in its infancy, now endorses the need for some type of moral commitment. Whereas the original work had no reference in the index to the moral or ethical aspects of change (let alone the legitimate goals of education), a more recent work (1993) makes seventeen references to moral purpose (but none to ethics). He summarizes his new rationale for change as being "to make a difference in the lives of students regardless of background, and to help produce citizens who can live and work productively in increasingly dynamically complex societies" (p. 4). This is an improvement, in that there are many change activities that are clearly excluded by that definition, vague and unsatisfactory as it is. Fullan evidently agrees, writing, ". . . most attempts at reform are misconceived" because they do not address teaching and learning (p. 58). He goes on to assert that the clarity of "moral purpose" can be a liability if the vision is "rigid and/or wrong" (p. 67). Rigidity is anathema to liberal school change agents, which may explain their feeble attempts to describe the morality and ethics of educational change.

Not everyone agrees that there should be flexibility in moral purposes, just as not everyone agrees that all young people should be prepared to work and live in increasingly dynamically complex societies. Fullan excludes the Amish people, together with those native people who do not choose to be Westernized. There are numerous others for whom flexible morality and dynamic complexity are seen as part of the problem. None of this would matter if Fullan were simply expressing his own preferences, but he never makes that qualification. Quite the contrary, it is clear he is trying to lay down conditions for all schools.

Fullan quotes, approvingly, Sirotnik's list of "moral requirements" – inquiry, knowledge, competence, caring, freedom, well-being, and social justice (p. 9) – a fine example of the emotivism MacIntyre eviscerates (1981, pp. 16–33). Ignorance and the absence of well-being are apparently immoral, while lying about the results of inquiry would be unimportant. Process is made a higher priority than truth, for which knowledge is presumably a substitute.

A traditional list of virtues in an educational setting would look something like

this: truth (truth, the good, God, and Yahweh are all words used to describe the pinnacle of the absolute); courage; justice; consideration of others; humility; perseverance; industriousness; and personal responsibility. Of these, only justice requires context (within the other virtues) for careful explication, although all are subsidiary to the first – the one that Sirotnik omits. It is difficult to see how virtue can have solid meaning without a foundation of truth ( a belief in the good), combined with the courage to announce it.

For Fullan, the moral purpose of teaching and learning subsides into striving to be an "effective change agent" (p. 13). Fullan makes explicit his rejection of traditional values, "Today, the teacher who works for or allows the *status quo* is the traitor"; and, " . . . *societal improvement* is really what education is about."

Readers may think that improving society is not a bad goal for schools, but there is danger in ignoring the aphorism, "He who would reform the world should first reform himself." There is a danger in enjoining young people collectively to improve society, rather than first to improve themselves. That was the error of the 60s, the era from which school improvement people seem not to have escaped. While I welcome the recent admission by the change movement that education has a moral core, their moral purpose, warm and fuzzy as it may sound, has a relativist, essentially empty (nihilist) base. Their absolute is a denial of the absolute, a worship of change in place of an immutable good.

The French and Bolshevik revolutionaries also saw the *status quo* as the problem, and change the solution. Edmund Burke courageously advanced the cause of American independence in a time of rampant imperialism, but he was also among the first to recognize the horrors and predict the authoritarian course of ungrounded change implicit in the French revolution. Schools can only improve society in one way: by helping produce more virtuous citizens. The 60s idea that children and adolescents can identify and overcome adult wrongdoing soon descended into self-indulgence, an extreme individualism that still bedevils Western society, not least its educational leaders.

Education should be based on something more substantive than chants of improvement, indeterminate social justice, and change. Destreaming grade nine in Ontario flew all those banners, but there is no evidence that things are better, not even a clear statement of what would constitute being better. A problem with social engineering is that it places the social engineers (the change agents and educational leaders) in a place of privilege, determining whose effort and achievement is of most worth, to be judged on the basis of the group from which the individual comes by criteria dreamed up by those in power. Another problem is that social engineering rarely works the way it is supposed to. In Ontario, grade nine is to be streamed again, to the general applause of a public infuriated by the further dilution of academic standards.

The newly declared universal moral purpose in educational change reveals hubris, an assertion that the therapeutic experts know best how to develop the inquiry that will lead to their chosen goals of individual well-being accompanied by high self-concept.

For traditionalists, virtue is based on an absolute; there is little room for flexibility in an absolute, even if, when it comes to application, there are sometimes difficulties and ambiguities. Humility demands that one accepts that there are often various paths that may be taken at a given time, and fellow believers will differ on the best. But all traditional paths are based on an attempt to work towards the absolute. Change is no substitute for the traditional virtues; indeed the open invitation to change necessarily invites a host of misbegotten schemes, something which change leaders at last admit.

The vacuum at the core of the change movement is crucial to understanding its authoritarianism and its inevitable failure. The other problems stem from this central lack.

### *Topdown implementation*

Despite the rhetoric, school change projects are inevitably topdown. For all the talk of democratic decision making, collaboration, and recognizing the importance of teachers, change projects are and must be implemented from the top. Occasionally, teachers may exercise the right of veto, but more usually any resistance will see them accused of being afraid of change and defenders of the *status quo,* the most grievous sin in Fullan's moral code.

Now there is nothing inherently wrong with topdown change. There are often good reasons for legitimate authorities to exercise their authority. Those cases, however, are generally regulatory in nature, not the stuff of change and improvement projects.

### *Control by experts*

Change projects focus on life within the school, usually within the classroom. Parents, the clients, are rarely consulted. The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, written before the rights experts had decided which rights were and were not suitable for ordinary people, included parents' right to the major influence on their children's education. Interestingly, for all the talk of rights in education, this one is scarcely ever mentioned by the educational change people or by anyone in the educational hierarchy.

To most people, that right seems a matter of simple common sense, but it is dangerous to the educational establishment. It implies that parents may override the experts. Fullan's early classic (1982) contains a short section (following the teacher, principal, student, district administrator, and consultant) explaining how schools should involve parents. There is no suggestion there that parents have or should have any authority. Advice to parents essentially explains how they can become helpful participants and how they can develop communication, as supplicants rather than as authorities. In the later book (1993), parents are not considered at all as being relevant to change forces, this despite the fact that in the

Western world there is unprecedented dissatisfaction with the way schools are being operated, with many parents feeling they are disenfranchised by the experts. Where alternatives to the monopolistic, secular school system are feasible, in the Netherlands, Australia, England and in the Canadian provinces of Quebec, British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba, there is an immediate exodus.

The omission of parents is a central shortcoming of school improvement projects. At most, they are informed of the goodies coming their way by public relations. Parents are not at the top, they are at the bottom, if they exist meaningfully at all for the purposes of local school policy. New Zealand and England have made great efforts to give parents more authority in the governance of their local public school. In the large urban and suburban districts of the USA and Canada, proposals to give parents real authority have been much more feeble and not always sincere. In Ontario, for example, "site-based management" has been a topic of discussion in most school districts for several years, but none has given parents meaningful authority, individually or collectively. The newly introduced school councils have neither authority nor parent control. Principals routinely determine the agenda and eliminate any matters pertaining to education.

Parents are not the only ones to be manipulated. Topdown authority within a large, hierarchical organization, tends to give *de facto* authority to the educational experts, the school system administrators, district consultants and the external consultants whom they call upon for help, i.e., those with least direct involvement with or accountability to parents. This intense dependence on experts leads to the deprofessionalization of teachers by means of manipulation, often in pursuit of unhelpful or irrelevant goals. I have written extensively elsewhere on the effect of therapeutics (Holmes, 1990) so will simply suggest three conditions that signify deprofessionalization: i) teachers have little say in choosing the school in which they will teach; ii) school change projects increasingly invade the traditionally individual and professional area of instructional methodology (e.g., by mandating collaborative teaching techniques, by increasing the range of achievement level in classrooms, and by imposing such inadequate ideas as Whole Language); and iii) improvement projects have as one of their aims the giving of a sense of ownership to collaborating teachers (with lead teachers, those more equal than the others, having more ownership than reluctant followers-those dubbed resistant to change). In sum, the professional sphere of the individual teacher, with the responsibility to choose the best teaching methods for the students, accompanied by accountability for the changes brought about, shrinks.

### *Lack of accountability*

For a number of reasons, change projects are rarely subject to rigorous accountability; indeed, what often masquerades for accountability is an investigation of the sites of resistance to change and an examination of the ways in which they can be overcome.

To begin with, the language of change is often so nebulous as to deny measurement. This leads to such self-serving assertions as: the really important things in education (i.e., the things experts are trying to do) are too sophisticated to be measured; teachers' perceptions of improvement are more important than arbitrary objective measures; if the program is properly implemented, then there must be improvement because the things being implemented are indicators of the improvement itself; what we are looking for are improved critical thinking and better decision making, as distinct from the traditional measures of academic achievement.

In addition, measurement may be difficult for political as well as technical reasons. None of those responsible wants negative results-change agents, government officials, administrators, team leaders among teachers, and school system consultants. That is why individual change projects are scarcely ever described as failures and at the same time rarely produce any concrete evidence of success.

Publicly announced evidence of failure would deter participants from involvement in future change projects and change, as one is constantly told, is necessary if schools are to meet the needs of the twenty-first century for flexibility and continuous improvement. Administrators and other leaders (including elected school board members) have no wish to pay for evidence that their pet projects have failed.

### *The leftist character of school change agents*

School change and improvement projects are often characterized by an at least vaguely leftist sentiment, one not shared by the majority of schools' clients. Admittedly, there have been attempts by political leaders in the United States, and, to some extent in Canada, to implement a rightwing, technocratic set of reforms. Those usually take the form of externally imposed regulations with respect to hours of instruction, testing and graduation standards. Those are not the subject of my chapter. I would note parenthetically, however, that, irrespective of their value and success, these measures are introduced by politicians reacting to a clear expression of perceived public will. In many cases, the changes are often a direct response to public anger with the directions chosen by the educational experts. That is the case with the Thatcherite reforms introduced against the almost unanimous opposition of the educational establishment. They did receive, however, strong public approval, with even moderate approval from the leftwing *Guardian* newspaper. In 1997, a rightwing government of Ontario introduced much compromised, minor, technocratic reforms (already adopted in other provinces) in the face of major confrontation with the establishment. Previous efforts at educational reform, attempted by centrist and leftwing governments, had been successfully resisted by the establishment of unions, government officials, and administrators, with the support of academics.

Improvement projects, in contrast, typically originate with or become controlled by officials and educational experts. They are usually on a smaller scale,

although the same ideas often spread from district to district. They often consist of changes in the instructional methods used by teachers (e.g., child-centred instruction, multi-grade classrooms, and integrated subjects).

Fullan's major referents (1993), in the area of educational policy change and school improvement, are John Goodlad (ten references), Ted Sizer (eight references) and Seymour Sarason (nine references). All three are active promoters of school changes. None expresses interest in minority dissent. That is not surprising or necessarily wrong. Academic in education usually make their case from people whose views are consistent with their own. Fullan and his three major referents are all respected members of the educational mainstream. But their world view excludes large numbers of the population. They all prefer their own "democratic" agenda to the inconsistent preferences of parents. The educational mainstream should never be confused with the public mainstream.

Kenneth Sirotnik and Jeannie Oakes, respected names in the school change literature, wrote an introductory chapter to a book they edited (1986). They examined three ways of researching school change. They prefer the "methodology of critical reflection" (p. 81) to naturalistic inquiry and conventional empirical, analytical methodologies. They correctly conclude that critical reflection is a renewing process leading directly to change (particularly in comparison with the other two methodologies). But whose change? The major philosophical references in their edited book are to Habermas (40), Freire (23), and Dewey (16). McCarthy, writing on Habermas, gets eleven references and Richard Bernstein, a follower of Dewey, seven. Goodlad gets ten references.

Some readers will be puzzled by the point being made here. If one is a goldfish in a pond, it is difficult to conceive there is life beyond. They will wonder whom I would like these writers to quote. Aristotle? Plato? St. Paul? Thomas Aquinas? Edmund Burke? Alasdair MacIntyre? Habermas, Dewey and Freire have had enormous influence on educational thought in this century and Fullan, Goodlad and Sarason are important names in educational policy and practice in North America and beyond. My point is not that these eminent people should rely on other sources, but that they should recognize that they are all fish in the same pond, that they do not constitute the world of educational opinion, however dominant they may be in the precinct of the university. Marxism and Deweyan pragmatism are indeed major influences on educational thought and writing today, but they are also fiercely opposed. Among lay people, there is proportionately more opposition to policies and practices derived from Marxist and Deweyan thought than there is among academics. Parents continue to emphasize such traditional concerns as objective evidence of (individual) progress in academic skills, citizenship, and good behavior, aspects singularly absent in today's changed and improved schools.

The very fact that I am unable to point to many significant writers in education today whose ideas about change are ones I should like to be given more prominence is my point. The school change and improvement experts, however divided they may be among themselves, follow a broad left-liberal dogma that excludes large proportions of the population. The debate within the educational establishment is

internecine, mainly between Deweyans and followers of critical pedagogy. Even the broader public debate between progressive and technocratic education is subsidiary.

The claim that change agents are simply interested in change as a process, now only rarely made, is almost always false. There is no theoretical reason why a fundamentalist Christian school should not undertake an improvement project. But it would be astonishing to find implementation of a project aimed at strengthening school discipline, making the curriculum more Christ-centered, and strengthening teacher-centered, direct instruction being helped by any of the big names in the school change business. To be fair, it is unlikely that such a school would seek or desire help from that quarter, for understandable reasons. Who would seek help from the declared enemy? The term "school improvement" does not denote: better use of punishment, greater emphasis on the disciplines of knowledge, replacing high self-concept by humility, postponing sexual activity until adulthood, and more rigorous standardized testing. Its own vision may be murky, but its arch-enemy, tradition, is very clear.

## CONCLUSION

Even the strongest advocates of change concede that large numbers of change projects have gone sadly awry. Fullan acknowledges that many teachers have been turned off by poorly conceived improvement plans. Hargreaves recognizes the problem of disrespect that reformers show for teachers (1994, p. 6). He also notes the problem with highly structured, imposed collegiality and collaborative learning (p. 195), without his losing enthusiasm for the end itself. Unfortunately, if teachers simply volunteer to use collaborative learning of their own devising, without the complex structures required for effective learning, collaborative learning in high school descends to the pooling of ignorance so often seen in primary school groups. Without careful research about the effectiveness of any proposed change in instruction, the change is highly unlikely to prove successful. It should be accompanied by careful testing of results.

The strongest criticism of reform efforts from within the ranks comes from Michael Huberman, who, unsurprisingly, is one of the few who has consistently shown an interest in the outcomes, as well as the process, of change. He advocates a combination of institutional tightness and looseness for the teacher in the classroom. He is skeptical that collaborative activity outside the classroom translates into important change within. Writing as devil's advocate (either with tongue in cheek or self-conscious concerning his apparent heresy), he observes that the innovation literature shows that ". . . practical change is an uneven, uncertain affair that seldom transcends trivial levels when teachers are left by themselves" (1993, p. 25). So, there is an admitted problem in trying to train teachers like seals, but there is little chance of their implementing the desired changes if left alone. Unusually, Huberman also recognizes the importance of the school as

a community, whereas most change experts see the school as having, at most, a "culture" in sore need of change by them.

Unfortunately, Huberman absolves himself from total heresy; collaborative cultures require continuing effort, he asserts, even as he accepts that professional teachers will not likely learn much from one another's practice (p. 32). The editors of the book, Judith Little and Milbrey McLaughlin, put their stamp of approval on collegial activity, noting that it may lead to divergence from "accepted notions of what is good for children", accepted, presumably, by parents and the public (1993, p. 5).

There is an inherent contradiction in the belief that teachers should be constantly and critically aware of problems in the *status quo,* but that any reluctance to accept the reformers' new ideas is not at all a sign of critical awareness, but instead a sign of betrayal of the deity of change and improvement. What change agents want are teachers who are skeptical of all authorities, except them. That latter kind of skepticism is, one is told, treason. Change, after all, is sacred.

While the self-criticism stemming (at last) from the change movement is welcome, particularly as it is voiced by such opinion-leaders as Huberman, Fullan, and Hargreaves, it does not address the most crucial issues. They can be summarized under four themes: the failure of change and improvement projects to address the real problems facing young people in school today; the value relativism explicit in its jargon terms – change, continuous improvement, flexibility, high-level problem-solving, critical thinking, and decision making; the attack on tradition and community, accompanied by a rejection of the consequences of pluralism; and the rejection of objective truth.

The four themes, interwoven throughout this essay, though significantly discrete, are linked in their relationship to the enthusiastic emotivism that guides the movement. It is disingenuous to see substantive value in today's school improvement projects in relation to the problems of young people today. Problems include increasing rates of: single-parent families, associated with poverty and poor educational levels, divorce, common-law partnerships, drug use, violence (young people are both recipients and perpetrators), suicide, breakdown of order in schools, high levels of unemployment in proportion to those affecting older workers, together with poor levels of academic performance and declining commitment to fundamental values. Those trends are described more fully in my book *The Reformation of Canada's Schools* (in press). More detailed data for the United States are to be found in Herrnstein and Murray (1994). I am not suggesting that social problems are caused or can be cured by the school system, but I do think that attempts to improve schools should begin with where they are.

Basing improvement in vacuous notions of inevitable progress is spitting in the wind. Continuous improvement is an idea taken from industry and applied thoughtlessly to education. Continuous improvement is a useful aim if one is building cars or television sets. Research has indeed brought, and continues to bring, improvements in these and other industrial fields.

Schools not only employ human teachers, whose work cannot be limited to technical skills, but they also add value to human beings, not manufactured

products. It is both unrealistic and wrong to announce that all schools should aim for continuous improvement. The reality is that many teachers (and, I expect, principals) reach a peak of proficiency with relatively few (three to five) years of experience. Many older teachers decline somewhat, finding it more difficult to use their skills to reach children as well as they once could. To treat people like machines is to dehumanize them, the very aspect of modern society Hargreaves, for example, most deplores. Certainly, teachers should be given opportunities for professional development, both individual and collaborative as they choose, but the expectation that all schools and their staff should be continuously improving is impractical, arrogant, and mechanistic.

What about students? Should we not expect young people to get better, individually and collectively? That is a more difficult and subtle question. The central task of the school is to improve young people, to change them from what they would become without schooling. I do believe that schools generally could be more effective in teaching the basic skills, academic subjects, physical fitness, esthetic awareness and expression, moral values and spirituality. But that does not mean either that all schools or even all students should continuously improve. A few schools do such a superb job that, realistically, we can more accurately predict decline (if key people leave) than improvement. No more should we imagine that any school will be able to improve all students; students, unlike television sets, exercise free will, and inevitably some will make bad choices.

I described the idea of continuously improving human beings as wrong as well as unrealistic. It is particularly wrong when the people making the claim have no accountable standard for determining right and wrong but at the same time insist that their ideas fit everyone. Right and wrong to change agents are flexible, relative terms. This of course means that what is defined as improvement one year (e.g., enforced collaboration) may become wrong the next. Teachers are well aware of that syndrome.

Even for those of us who believe in a moral absolute, and believe that it should be taught to young people, the idea of continuous improvement is meretricious, if not sacrilegious. We may try to tread a path towards the good, but we are acutely aware of the universality of human weakness, and the centrality of human choice. We all make choices and many of them will be bad ones. Many see humility as the entry to virtue (Kreeft, 1984). Many public schools teach high self-concept as the entry point to active life in school.

Tradition and community are attacked directly and indirectly, by acts of commission and acts of omission. Most of the major trends in education over the last twenty or so years have been unhelpful to the preservation of tradition and community. That is hardly surprising given the belief in change, progress, and novelty. Examples include: the increasing size of schools, particularly of secondary schools; the bureaucratization of schools and school districts (Holmes & Wynne, 1989, pp. 48–50), notably by teacher unionization; the removal of religion from the school; the proliferation of sex education and family life programs based on moral subjectivism; the replacement of true punishment (i.e., as the symbolic and deserved response to wrongdoing) by behavioral management; the growth of "equity"

programs demanding similar rates of "success" for carefully chosen groups, thereby denying the validity of varying cultural and value choices among different social groups, and, fundamentally, denying the legitimacy of parents helping their children. The main reason why Jewish children perform better academically than Baptist children is a difference in parental attributes, values, and behavior, into which sphere the school has few means of legitimate entry.

Now these indicators of deterioration cannot be laid at the door of the current generation of school change experts; but they are part of the historical march of educational progress, based on values and beliefs as ephemeral and unrooted as today's change agents'. Social engineering and value relativism are not postmodern inventions.

Sergiovanni (1994) is among the few mainstream educators who recognize the effects of the casual destruction of community in schools. Even he succumbs to the contemporary cliché that the theoretical appeal of pluralism is inclusiveness. He is incorrect. Inclusiveness is the appeal of cultural homogeneity; applied to pluralist societies it requires homogenization. The problem with homogenization as a Western project is that in the Western, English-speaking democracies we do not agree into whose values and ideologies all students should be inducted, hence the public schools' typical reliance on the low-doctrine triad of tolerance, nonviolence, and consideration for others, a pathetically limited doctrine that itself is crumbling without any more meaningful foundation.

Exclusiveness is a definitive characteristic of community, which is one valid reason why it is so disliked by those who want to impose a single (emotivist) set of values and a single school system on everyone. A unitary school system, community, and pluralism are incompatible. One can have community and a unitary school system (as in Japan) or community and pluralism (as in a few parts of North America where religious and cultural minorities live in peace with their own schools), but not all three.

Cultural pluralism is promoted, accepted, or rejected by the state. Most current rhetoric in Canada favors promotion or at least acceptance. In the U.S. and England, the rhetoric is more mixed.

The traditional attitude towards pluralism in all countries has been one of rejection or reluctant acceptance, never promotion. Over the centuries, Western tradition has uniquely witnessed incremental change towards acceptance. Examples include the independence of the Scottish school system from the English, the traditional autonomy of small, local school districts in the United States, the acceptance of publicly funded religious schools for minorities in most of Canada, and the growth of private Christian and Jewish schools in both countries. Although there is considerable *de facto* and slight *de jure* movement to acceptance of the many more numerous minorities in contemporary society, the school change movement shows no similar sensitivity. Their projects, their cures, their values are seen as being universally applicable. In the United States, the fundamentalist Christian schools are not the only growing segment of cultural differentiation. Charter schools, mainly of a traditional nature, are also growing. Some states, notably Massachusetts, are encouraging school choice and variation among schools. Black

schools deliberately serving a black community are appearing. In Canada, there is a growing private sector of mainly religious schools based on partial government funding. (On the other hand, the Newfoundland and federal governments, armed with a majority vote in a plebiscite and supported by the educational, academic, and media establishments, plan to ban minority Roman Catholic and Pentecostal schools in that province).

The educational improvement experts do not even acknowledge the opposition to their plans outside their pond; at the same time, they see many more differences among themselves than do those outside the pond looking in. What the experts do not acknowledge is what they cannot countenance: the idea that parents in distinct communities should choose the kind of education they want for their children, rather than one determined by a liberal establishment.

I have argued that school improvement efforts are not for the most part of substantive value. At the same time, I do readily accept that many parents (and larger proportions of our societies' élites) share the values and beliefs of the educational experts. Although I do believe that an educational establishment has too much control of quasi-monopolistic education in Canada and England, and to a lesser extent in the United States, that control could not be maintained without support and compliance from leaders outside the system. I also recognize that the technocratic attempts (in the United States and in Newfoundland) to change schools by political action to a more industrial model are in some cases as inhospitable to my own world view as are those of the change agents I criticize in this chapter. They are, however, more democratic in a simply majoritarian sense (if one rejects pluralism).

We live in heterogeneous times, while educational leaders pretend to have a system of common schools. Homogeneous educational solutions will not work for a heterogeneous people. Who is the realist? The admitted minority member who argues we should be setting the national standards applicable to all schools in the pluralist, democratic state, while accepting diverse choices made by parents within those limits? Or the expert who claims universal applicability of a single set of ideas and the legitimacy of imposing them on everyone in the name of progressive change? And who the authoritarian?

It is imperative for me to emphasize that it is not my intent to argue that all schools should start doing things my way, teaching traditional subjects, giving teachers professional freedom and accountability, giving as much emphasis to traditional values and good behaviour as to academics, and making it easy for young people to move to postsecondary education or work. I am not saying, "Not your way, mine." I am arguing that ideas should not be imposed on families whose values are hostile towards them. I am also arguing that many of the ideas are not worth, from my world view, implementing anywhere, at the same time having no objection if parents explicitly make that choice for their children. The rub is that the success of most social engineering depends for its success on imposition on everybody, which is why the educational establishment is so intolerant of dissent.

The realistic starting point is to accept communities of like-minded people who want similar things for their children. Community is not a dead, inert obsolete

concept as critics would have it any more than tradition is a barrier to all positive change. By definition, tradition requires change. By incremental accretion, tradition moves forward (and occasionally backward). If it is founded on a base of objective truth, it is likely to be improving, i.e., building better lives for its children defined in terms of its original, unchanging core belief. Community has bounds; there are those within and those without. There is pride in the community and a strong sense of membership. Sacrifice is necessary for the good of the whole. The principal and teachers of a traditional school represent its values, always imperfectly, but imperfections are not be mistaken for positive attributes, and are not re-defined according to the latest pop psychology.

Communities may be malignant. They can be poisoned from within and from without. Their bounds may become impermeable barriers of opposition to anyone from outside, instead of welcoming new friends. Society, through the state, has a responsibility to ensure accessibility to the schools it supports by those who wish to contribute to the school community, without guaranteeing continuing membership to those who try to tear it apart or reject its values. Society also has a responsibility to prevent the continuance of a malignant community, one that rejects the basic principles of a democratic, pluralist society.

There is growing evidence that community, not only a good in itself because it binds young people together in pursuit of a common good, may also be more productive in terms of academic achievement and other goals shared both by the community and by the larger society (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987).

There is no quick solution to our profound social problems. Educational reform, desirable as it is, will not redress the wrongs of a society that has lost its sense of purpose and of good. What educational reform can do is give parents, individually or within a community, the authority they should have by moral right, to choose the kind of education they want for their child. Plastic improvement projects, cast in the benign-sounding, politically correct platitudes of the day, are no salve for our social and educational wounds, but are simply further evidence of how far we have fallen from a true education.

## ENDNOTES

[1] Acceptance of pluralism does not imply a value preference for pluralism. Analogously, the acceptance of social class does not mean that one sees it as being a desirable structure that should be deliberately augmented by the state. In both cases, acceptance does assume their existence is preferable to or less undesirable than measures that might be taken by the state in an attempt to eradicate them.

[2] Bowers has crystallized the drift of educational liberalism into nihilism (1985).

[3] In Canada, discrimination on the basis of religion is accepted by the liberal Supreme Court despite the Charter of Rights. Roman Catholic schools receive full funding in Ontario, whereas Jewish and Dutch Reformed schools receive no funding. Religion, once prescribed is now proscribed in the public schools. Prescription was not enforced, proscription is. The Supremre Court approves this arrangement on the grounds that Catholic schools were given preference in the original constitution of 1867. In contrast, the Supreme Court has enforced the establishment of francophone schools and the abolition of bilingual (French and English) schools, without any evidence of strong support from the anglophone majority.

[4] The wide acceptance of Whole Language, for example, files in the face of the empirical research and undermines the alleged concern for the disadvantaged, for whom it is particularly unsuitable.

[5] In a comprehensive study of teacher change, Stephen Anderson notes that change studies rarely include an assessment of student learning. "More fundamentally, one might challenge the ethical basis for a model or theory of teacher change that does not incorporate the consequences of teacher change for students. Such a critique applies to all theories and studies of 'implementation' of change in education that fail to account for student impact, and is not unique to CBAM and users of the model to study change" (1997, pp. 358–359).

## REFERENCES

Bowers, C. A. (1985). Culture against itself: Nihilism as an elementin recent educational thought. *American Journal of Education*, **93**,(4), 465–490.

Coleman, J. S., & Hoffer, T. (1987). *Public and private high schools*. New York: Basic Books.

Fullan, M. (1982). *The Meaning of educational change*. Toronto: OISE Press.

Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces: Probing the depths of educational reform*. London: The Falmer Press.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age. Toronto: OISE Press.

Herrnstein, R. J., & Murray, C. (1994). *The bell curve: Intelligence and class structure in American life*. New York: Free Press.

Holmes, M. & Wynne, E. A. (1989). *Making the school an effective community: Belief, practice and theory in school administration*. London: The Falmer Press.

Holmes, M. (1990). Bringing about change in teachers: Ratinalistic technology and therapeutic human relations in the subversion of education. *Curriculum Inquiry*, **21**(1), 65–90.

Holmes, M. (in press). *The reformation of Canada's schools*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Huberman, M. (1993). The model of the independent artisan in teachers'professional relations. In J. W. Little & M. W. McLaughlin (Eds.), *Teachers' work: Individuals, colleagues, and contexts* (pp. 11–50). New York: Teachers College Press.

Kreeft, P. (1984). *The Best things in life*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press.

Little, J. W., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1993). Introduction: Perspectives on culture and control of teachers. In J. W. Little & M. W. Mclaughlin (Eds.), *Teachers' Work: Individuals, colleagues and contexts* (pp. 1–10). New York: Teachers College Press.

MacIntyre, A. (1981). *After virtue*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Raun, T., & Leithwood, K. A. Pragmatism, participation and duty: Value themes in superintendents' problem solving. In P. Hallinger, K. A. Leithwood, & J. Murphy (Eds.), *Cognitive perspectives on educational leadership* (pp. 54–70). New York: Teachers College Press.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1994). Organizations or communities? Changing the metaphor changes the theory. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, **30**(2),214–226.

Sirotnik, K. A., & Oakes, J. (1986). Critical inquiry for school renewal: Liberating theory and practice. In K. A. Sirotnik & J. Oakes (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on the organization and improvement of schools* (pp. 3–93). Norwell, Massachusetts: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

# Educational Reform, Modernity, and Pragmatism

CLEO H. CHERRYHOLMES
*Michigan State University*

Modern times! This phrase has been used for satire, irony, metaphor, and, often, has been spoken in frustration. Many people who admire and follow film might quickly associate it with Charlie Chaplin's movie *Modern Times*. Here is how Mick Martin and Marsha Porter (1994) described the film.

> Charlie Chaplin must have had a crystal ball when he created *Modern Times*. [It was filmed in 1936.] His satire of life in an industrial society has more relevance today than when it was made. . . .The story finds the Little Tramp confronting all the dehumanizing inventions of a futuristic manufacturing plant. (p. 335)

The film caricatures the times in which we live by focusing on themes of regimentation, repetition, control, rationalization, and hectic pace that resonate with some of our experiences some of the time, if not most of our experiences most of the time. It is arguable that the seemingly continuous efforts toward educational reform during the last half of the century exhibit some of the themes in Chaplin's film as many of the efforts that have been promoted were in the direction of increasing control, rationalization, and regimentation. An exploration of the relationship between reform, modernity (what it means to be modern), and pragmatism is the task that I have set for myself in this chapter. I begin with the words reform and modern.

The word reform has several meanings. The lexicographers who compiled *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* define reform as a noun as

> The removal of faults or errors, esp. of a moral, political or social kind; amendment, change for the better; reformation of character, and
>
> A particular instance of this; an improvement made or suggested; a change for the better.

As a verb reform has the following definitions

> Restore or re-establish,
>
> convert, bring back, or restore to the original form or a previous condition,
>
> Cause to abandon wrongdoing,
>
> thoroughly improve one's conduct, and



*A. Lieberman (ed.), The Roots of Educational Change,* 249-266.

> Redress (a wrong, loss, etc.), make good.

It is obvious that reform is a variation on re-form which is characterized as "form a second time, form over again or differently." The word reform points in two directions. In one sense reform looks backward and seeks to recapture something lost that requires restoration. In another sense reform looks forward to successful reestablishment and redress. In the first sense reform seeks to put back into place something that has been corrupted and lost. In the second sense reform anticipates a revived but changed state of affairs, necessarily so because of changed conditions and context if nothing else. But what can such an educational reestablishment and restoration mean in a modern world? What could such looking backward and planning forward involve?

A second operative word in the title is modern. Modern and its derivatives such as modernity, modernism, and modernization have been appropriated in many discourses and practices that include but extend well beyond education. Returning to *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* modern refers

> to the present and recent times, as opp. to the remote past,
> characteristic of the present and recent times, and
> up-to-date in lifestyle, outlook, opinions, etc.; liberal-minded.

In these uses modern means what is going on now, what is latest, what is contemporary.

For a second reading of the meaning of modern I turn to Isaiah Berlin (1990). The term modern has been used to name the historical period in which we live that began, roughly speaking, in the 17th and 18th centuries and is coterminous with the European Enlightenment. I take the liberty of quoting at length Berlin's description of the beliefs that characterized Enlightenment thinkers, whose thought is inextricably caught up in what is called the modern age.

> They [Enlightenment thinkers] believed in varying measure that men were, by nature, rational and sociable; or at least understood their own and other's best interests when they were not being bamboozled by knaves or misled by fools; that, if only they were taught to see them, they would follow the rules of conduct discoverable by the use of ordinary human understanding; that there existed laws which govern nature, both animate and inanimate, and that these laws, whether empirically discoverable or not, were equally evident whether one looked within oneself or at the world outside. They believed that the discovery of such laws, and knowledge of them, if it were spread widely enough, would of itself tend to promote a stable harmony both between individuals and associations, and within the individual himself. . . .They believed that all good and desirable things were necessarily compatible, and some maintained more than this-that all true values were interconnected by a network of indestructible, logically interlocking relationships. The more empirically minded among them were sure that a science of human nature could be developed no less than a science of inanimate things,

> and that ethical and political questions, provided that they were genuine, could in principle be answered with no less certainty than those of mathematics and astronomy. A life founded upon these answers would be free, secure, happy, virtuous, and wise. (Berlin, 1990, p. 60)

As a result of such thinking and its spread the authority of church and state and the stability of one's traditional place in society eroded and changed. These changes generated social conflicts and disjunctures that continue to excite and inspire debate and antagonism.

For a third take on what it means to be modern I draw from John McGowan (1991) who gave the following description of events associated with the Enlightenment and the origins of modern times.

> The challenge to Catholicism by the various Protestant sects, the challenge to Eurocentrism in the discovery of radically different societies in other parts of the globe, the challenge to religion manifested in both new scientific discoveries and new economic practices, the challenge to monarchy/oligarchy in the rise of popular, democratic agitation, and the challenge to traditional patterns of social integration in changing modes of production and distribution and the growth of towns and cities all combine over a three-hundred-year period (1500–1800) to transform Europe. By the end of this period, the West has recognized, in the face of diversity and change, that it is thrown back upon itself to ground, legitimate, and make significant its own practices. (McGowan, 1991, p. 4)

Later, McGowan (1991) writes

> Modernity isolates the individual by encouraging the notion of autonomous, innate (or at least self-developed) qualities that then explain the individual's social accomplishments; the necessary corollary of this isolation is an institutional order that examines, differentiates among, and rewards these various selves. . . . Autonomy is socially created and socially rewarded in modernity. (pp. 248–9)

One consequence, then, of the weakening of traditional religious and subject relationships during the Enlightenment and the concomitant rise of democracy along with the spread of capitalism was to produce individuals who were increasingly independent and autonomous. But this independence and autonomy itself created a need to justify and legitimate one's activities and life because science, capitalism, and democracy prevented one from turning, in secure confidence, to the church, guild, or tribe for final and foundational meanings.

A fourth reading of modern is produced when one considers modernization, a word that denotes progress toward what is modern. Raymond Apthorpe (1985) reported that modernization refers to

> updating, upgrading, renovation, reconstruction or stabilization in the face of adverse social, physical or economic structures. . . .Often all that is meant is professionalism, rationality, planning or progress in general. (p. 532)

He continued that

> modernization can often be best understood not as a particular development – or development theory or method for the study of development or development theory – but rather as a recurring pattern of perennial speech about such development, theory and method, and would-be practical action. In many development studies and policies this tends to be discourse about solutions which are more likely to be in search of, than for, problems. Whose discourse is this? On the whole this is the perennial speech *of* modernizing elites as well as *about* modernizing elites. (p. 532)

This suggestion is remarkable: Modernization is a "recurring pattern of perennial speech" where the motivation to be rational, logical, scientific, and utility-maximizing in seeking progress, profits, accountability, and value-added outcomes produces behavior *where solutions precede the search for problems* which they, our previously identified solutions, can answer. In Apthorpe's view of modernization current elites, professional educators are one, propose answers to questions that they are allowed to draft. Because they were born into, as it were, and educated, trained, certified, and work in a modern profession it should surprise no one that up-to-date educators think in modernist terms and engage in modernist discourses.

On initial consideration the ideas of reform and modernization go together because to reform something would seemingly generate enlightenment and progress, rationality and productivity. But reforming also means restoring, reestablishing, resurrecting, and bringing back something that had previously existed and it is not obviously the case that our educational system was previously rational, accountable, controlled, and productive and that the current complaints about it can be resolved by restoring it to such an earlier stage of grace. Present day educators are modern people who, for the most part, are interested in fashioning the practices and theories of a modern profession. All educational reformers, however, are not necessarily interested in modernizing schools and some are interested, quite clearly, in reinstituting traditional ideas and practices that truly are at odds with modernist aspirations. I will take three tacks in exploring the tangle of calls for educational reform and modernization and propose that American pragmatism, the last of the three, offers many opportunities for thinking about and promoting educational reform.

1. Some people who plead for educational reform reject either partially or outright modern scientific assumptions, procedures, and findings when it comes to the education of their children. They promote in their stead approaches to schools and schooling that emphasize traditional and religious values and beliefs. Educators are confronted, then, with some demands for *anti-modern* changes to schooling in a historically modern age. In this case the reformers are re-formers because they explicitly seek to reestablish beliefs and practices that were dominant in prior times.
2. Other reformers believe that several, if not most, of the serious educational problems are due to the fact that the educational system is not sufficiently

professional and modern. It is a system that requires *modernization*. Such calls for modernization are not surprising given the professional training and certification that characterizes education institutionally. Professionalism itself defines what it means to be modern in its emphasis on rationality, hierarchy, expertise, efficiency and accountability. A perspective that highlights the *lack of modernization* in education clearly reflects a modern attitude that looks to the future instead of backward with re-forming and restorative sentiments as in (1) above.

3. Yet others concerned about the performance of the educational system believe that reform proposals couched in terms of making the system more modern (2 above) are asking more than pleas for rationality, expertise, accountability, linear thinking, task fragmentation, and efficiency can deliver. Those in this group neither reject modern beliefs and practices nor do they seek solutions to educational problems by way of increasing modernization. They believe that there are *limits to modernity* that invite *pragmatist* responses to our educational problems that do not reject or embrace modernist solutions. I now discuss in order these three approaches to thinking about educational reform and change.

## EDUCATIONAL RE-FORM AS AN ANTI-MODERNIST PROJECT

One strategy for educational reform springs from an opposition to modernity itself and constitutes a paradox of sorts. One side of the paradox is the result of educational reforms that call for greater rationality, accountability, expertise, and task specialization that, in themselves, embrace modernity and modern science. The other side of the paradox comes from educational reforms that reject substantial portions of modernity and modern science that are bound up with rationality and expertise. Sometimes it is possible to observe the same people on each of these two sides where they embrace the paradox of asking for a more modern educational system while rejecting significant aspects of modernity itself.

To illustrate this problem with modernity I review the dispute between proponents of the teaching of biological evolution and the teaching of creationist science. The creationist position directly attacks and rejects the findings of evolutionary biology that have been generated since the publication of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859. The Creationist Research Society is a non-profit corporation that was founded for educational and scientific purposes in Michigan in 1963 (Rusch, 1982). The founding principles included a commitment that members of the Society be, "committed to full belief in the Biblical record of creation and early history" (Rusch, 1982, p. 149) and that all members subscribe to the following beliefs.

1. The Bible is the written Word of God, and because it is inspired throughout, all its assertions are historically and scientifically true in the original

autographs. To the student of nature this means that the account of origins in Genesis is a factual presentation of simple historical truths.

2. All basic types of living things, including man, were made by direct creative acts of God during the Creation Week described in Genesis. Whatever biological changes have occurred since Creation Week have been accomplished only within the original created kinds.
3. The great flood described in Genesis, commonly referred to as the Noachian Flood, was an historic event worldwide in its extent and effect.
4. We are an organization of Christian men and women of science who accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. The account of the special creation of Adam and Eve as one man and one woman and their subsequent fall into sin is the basis for our belief in the necessity of a Savior for all mankind. Therefore, salvation can come only through accepting Jesus Christ as our Savior. (Rusch, 1982, p. 150)

The Creationist Research Society has and continues to investigate subjects such as rapid erosion and the creation of geological features such as the Grand Canyon (Wolfrom, 1994)[1] and the distinctiveness of small isolated groups such as those in New Guinea caused by migration and not evolution (Gish, 1975)[2].

Proponents of creation science have been able to get legislation enacted that requires giving creationist science as much time and resources as evolution. Here is Section 1 of Senate Bill 482 for the 73rd General Assembly Session, 1981, for the State of Arkansas.

> Requirement for Balanced Treatment. Public schools within this State shall give balanced treatment to creation-science and to evolution science. Balanced treatment to these two models shall be given in classroom lectures taken as a whole for each course, in textbook materials taken as a whole for each course, in library materials taken as a whole for the sciences and taken as a whole for the humanities, and in other educational programs in public schools, to the extent that such lectures, textbooks, library materials, or educational programs deal in any way with the subject of the origin of man, life, the earth, or the universe.

The bill passed the legislature and on March 19, 1981, the Governor of Arkansas signed into law Act 590 of 1981, entitled "Balanced Treatment for Creation-Science and Evolution-Science.

A suit was filed in U.S. District Court on May 27, 1981 to enjoin the state from enforcing its provisions.[3] In the case of McLean v. Arkansas Board of Education United States District Judge William Overton ruled on January 5, 1982 that the defendants and their employees were permanently enjoined from implementing in any manner Act 590. This is where the matter rests in Federal Law at the moment although creationists continue to be active at the state and local school district level.

In 1984 the National Academy of Sciences in opposition to the creationists' position responded by publishing *Science and Creationism: A View from the*

*National Academy of Sciences.* Here is their candid and forthright statement regarding the educational and political climate that led them to elaborate their position on creationism.

> The hypothesis of special creation has, over nearly two centuries, been repeatedly and sympathetically considered and rejected on evidential grounds by qualified observers and experimentalists. In the forms given in the first two chapters of Genesis, it is now an invalidated hypothesis. To reintroduce it into the public schools at this time as an element of science teaching would be akin to requiring the teaching of Ptolemaic astronomy or pre-Columbian geography. (1984, p. 7)

The National Academy of Sciences observed that "creation science" includes three main judgments:

(1) the earth and universe are relatively young, perhaps only 6,000 to 10,000 years old,
(2) the present physical form of the earth can be explained by "catastrophism," including a worldwide flood, and
(3) all living things (including humans) were created miraculously, essentially in the form we now find them. (1984, p. 7)

The National Academy then proceeded to marshall conclusions that have been reached in scientific disciplines as wide ranging as astronomy, physics, astrophysics, biology, paleontology, molecular biology, biogeography, embryology, anthropology, and genetics that contested the creationist position. Their findings about evolutionary processes are the products of modern scientific research that creationists deny.

For present purposes a further review of the evolutionary versus creationist dispute is not required. Our goals are served by noting that educational reform from the perspective of creationists is a matter of educational re-form where the aim is to restore and reestablish earlier teachings about human origins that existed at least before 1859. But this is likely a highly selective reading of modern science because many of those who support creationism will not necessarily reject other findings of modern science and consequent technological developments, say, when it comes to medical care, air transportation, access to mass media by way of radio and television, or modern communication technologies such as telephone and, of more recent development, e-mail and the Internet. Disregarding how supporters of creationist science parse the world with their beliefs it remains the case that they hold firmly to anti-modern views on matters of educational re-form. The creationist science/evolution dispute, as culturally idiosyncratic as it may be, is a case where a vocal minority seeks to limit the modernization of the public school system by rejecting modern scientific findings. Attempts to reform public schools by trying to make them more modern will be contested and resisted to the extent that such anti-modern sentiments are widely believed. This is a case where the agenda for re-form is determined by looking backward and, as a result attempting, to remove corrupting elements from public education.

## EDUCATIONAL REFORM AS A MODERNIST PROJECT.

A second strategy for educational reform moves in the opposite direction by embracing and seeking to emphasize that which is modern. In contrast to the anti-modernist impulses of the creationists it looks forward instead of backward. Its operative, if often unstated, assumption is that many school problems result from insufficiently modern schools and educational system. In explicating modernization Apthorpe observed, as reported above, that to be modern means professionalism, rationality, planning and progress. Many educational reformers claim that important problems of our schools and educational system are due to the fact that these institutions are not suitably professional, rational, well-planned, and able to demonstrate progress. Simply put, the charge goes, our schools, collectively, are not competent modern institutions. Modernist reformers attempt to correct such shortcomings by seeking to make schools and their operation more modern.

The following discussion of what I call modernist attempts at educational reform comes by way of a review of a major survey of these efforts. Michael Fullan's (1991) *The New Meaning of Educational Change* is a stunningly successful analysis of a large number of attempts to change schools by, in effect, making them more modern. Fullan's description of much educational change research acknowledges that it is thoroughly modern in advocating standards, accountability, control, productivity, and specialization. He shows in detail, however, that many programs and activities carried out under the rhetoric of modernist reform have not been successful. Here is part of the story he tells. I begin with his four approaches to the meaning of change:

1. "the meaning of individual change in the society at large,"
2. "the *subjective* meaning of change for individuals,"
3. "description[s] of the *objective* meaning of change," and
4. "the implications of subjective and objective realities for understanding educational change" (Fullan, 1991, p. 30).

On the first point he quotes Marris (1975),

> *All* real change involves loss, anxiety, and struggle. (Fullan, 1991, p. 31). Real change, then, whether desired or not, represents a serious personal and collective experience characterized by ambivalence and uncertainty. . . .The anxieties of uncertainty and the joys of mastery are central to the subjective meaning of educational change, and to success or failure – facts that have not been recognized or appreciated in most attempts at change. (Fullan, 1991, p. 32)

The subjective meaning of change (the second point above) leads to increasingly differentiated and often contentious interpretations of situations and events. Huberman's (1983) summary of "classroom press" in shaping subjective meanings, for example, includes press for immediacy and concreteness, multi dimensionality and simultaneity, adaptation to ever changing conditions or unpredictability,

and personal involvement with students (Huberman, 1983, p. 33). The effects of "classroom press" foster short-term perspectives, isolation from other adults, exhaustion, and limited opportunities for sustained reflection (Huberman, 1983, p. 33). When these conditions of teaching are combined with "the hyper rationalization of change" (Wise, 1977) in the form of "rational assumptions, abstraction, and descriptions of a proposed new curriculum. . . .there is no reason for the teacher to believe in the change, and few incentives (and large costs) to find out whether a given change will turn out to be worthwhile" (Fullan, 1991, p. 34). The result often is either false clarity without change or painful unclarity without change. Here is Fullan's (1991) concluding sentence to this section that anticipates his later (Peircean) pragmatic argument (and the next section of this chapter), "Ultimately the transformation of subjective realities is the essence of change" (p. 36).

Whereas the subjective meaning of change includes multiple interpretations, the objective reality of educational change (the third point above) proves to be quite elusive. Fullan quotes Berger and Luckmann (1967) on the difficulty of defining objective "reality." There are two questions: (1) "What is the existing conception of reality on a given issue?" (2) "Says who?" (Fullan, 1991, p. 37). Fullan quickly deconstructs the objective reality/subjective reality distinction by pointing out that objective realities are always subject to (subjective) individual interpretation. At this point he makes a pragmatic point by acknowledging that different individuals can trace out differently the "conceivable practical consequences" of the same practices and actions (Peircean pragmatism). Additionally, innovations and changes are multi-layered because some occur on the "surface" of things whereas others involve basic beliefs and identities. The question of objective reality, consequently, is genuinely complex because each classroom innovation is multidimensional and multi-layered where each dimension and layer of innovation is open to multiple interpretations.

> The real crunch comes in the relationships between these new programs or policies and the thousands of subjective realities embedded in people's individual and organizational contexts and their personal histories. How these subjective realities are addressed or ignored is crucial for whether potential changes become meaningful at the level of individual use and effectiveness. (Fullan, 1991, p. 43)

Fullan, finally, contests the rationale behind many proposed educational changes that are many times advanced as a series of causal, although ambiguous, hypotheses. The general hypothesis is that if the pre-modern deficiencies of schools, if you will, such as inefficiency, lack of accountability, and incompetence, can be corrected then our schools will fulfill our desires. There is another way of putting this. It is not that what educators have been doing is wrong headed or inappropriate, the problem is that educators and educational reformers have not done well enough what they set out to do in the first place – produce and operate a modern educational system. Fullan problematizes this. Is it possible for teachers and other

school personnel to bring about the socially desired changes in schools by becoming sufficiently modern? Is it possible to train, induce, cajole, reward, educate, or coerce teachers and others so that they will be rational, systematic, controlled, linear, and specialized enough to take the risks necessary to change existing schools in fundamental ways? Fullan answers in the negative.

In his section, "Why Planning Fails," Fullan identifies several constraints on attempts to institute rationalized change.

> [I]t might be. . .useful to accept the nonrational quality of social systems and move on from there. Patterson, Purkey, and Parker (1986) suggest that organizations in today's society do not follow an orderly logic, but a complex one that is often paradoxical and contradictory, but still understandable and amenable to influence. They contrast the assumptions of the rational conception with those of nonrational conception on five dimensions. *First*, goals: School systems are necessarily guided by multiple and sometimes competing goals. . . . *Second*, power: In school systems, power is distributed throughout the organization. *Third*, decision making: This is inevitably a bargaining process to arrive at solutions that satisfy a number of constituencies. *Fourth*, external environment: The public influences school systems in major ways that are unpredictable. *Fifth*, teaching process: There are a variety of situationally appropriate ways to teach that are effective. (Fullan, 1991, p. 97)

Rationally conceived plans and actions are always subject to such contingencies. Nonrational factors, then, are always already present whenever one attempts to think and act rationally. He tells this story, with occasional variations, repeatedly. Rational procedures have a long history of failing to meet the aspirations and promises of educational change agents and reformers. Educational reform, then, as a modernist project has been widely documented as producing spotty and intermittent successes. Another way of reading Fullan's story is that he has provided a large body of evidence that, in some important respects, we have reached the limits of modernity in thinking about schools. The evidence he marshals can be used to argue that the hypothesis: that if we sufficiently modernize our schools then they will perform as we wish, has been falsified because the ideal of educational modernization is beyond our reach.

## EDUCATIONAL REFORM AS A PRAGMATIST PROJECT

A third way to think about educational reform is to adopt a pragmatist stance toward it. Pragmatism is a term that is often used crudely to mean expediency, immediate payoff, and excessive utilitarianism. Such colloquial and everyday usages, however, are a gross distortion of the richness, complexity, and artistry that constitutes pragmatism. A few words, first, about the meaning of pragmatism before moving to pragmatism and educational reform.

Pragmatism as a school of thought developed as a distinctive school of thought

in the latter part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century. It then fell into a bit of obscurity for 50 years or so until at the end of the century at which time it generated renewed interest and attention. This brief account of a few pragmatist ideas begins with two contemporary pragmatists, Frank Macke and Hans Joas. Macke, a contemporary pragmatist, gives the following broad characterization of pragmatism that fuses thought and action that educational reform also requires.

> Any reflection on the meaning of pragmatism will inevitably remind us that *pragmatism is in essence a discourse on the consequences of thinking.* It is the self-consciousness of discourse: thinking aware of its own presence and history – discourse manifest to consciousness through the moments of its effect. (Macke, 1995, p. 158)

Joas looks at pragmatism a bit differently.

> American pragmatism is characterized by its understanding of human action as a *creative* action. . . .pragmatism focuses on the fact that creativity is always embedded in a *situation*, i.e., on the human being's "situated freedom." (Joas, 1993, p. 4)

Links between the consequences of thinking, creative action, and situated freedom, not necessarily obvious at first glance, become clear when they are traced to the pragmatic maxim of Charles Sanders Peirce. I quote his 1905 version.

> The method prescribed in the [pragmatic] maxim is to trace out in the imagination the conceivable practical consequences-the consequences for deliberate, self-controlled conduct – of the affirmation or denial of the concept; and the assertion of the maxim is that herein lies the *whole* of the purport of the word, the *entire* concept. (1905, 1984, p. 494)

Peirce was concerned with the meaning of concepts that is found in the conceivable practical consequences of their affirmation or denial that was later expanded by William James and John Dewey, among others, to the meaning of actions as well as concepts. But Dewey took thinking about the consequences of action into new territory. Joas describes Dewey's pragmatic thought as an, "inquiry into the meaningfulness to be experienced in action itself" (Joas, 1993, p. 5). Meanings are socially constructed and created in experience, thought, communication, reading, criticism, and action. Because pragmatism is concerned with the consequences of thinking and acting a pragmatist approach to educational reform is, likewise, a discourse on the consequences of thinking about and acting in and on schools.

Meanings are out there, they lie ahead of us. The pragmatist search for meanings that are concerned with reform or re-form or otherwise, therefore, is an inductive process because it is a search and investigation from what is known to that which is unknown, from what is observed to that which is unobserved. As a result pragmatist reform proposals and actions are both forward looking and fallible. Reform plans and interventions are fallible because it is not known how things

will turn out. We know neither whether the future will be like the past nor the ultimate meaning of our conceptions and actions. Meanings are continually deferred even as we affirm concepts and take actions because we are always awaiting the consequences of what it means to affirm beliefs and commitments and enact them. The search for meanings, then, occurs without foundational principles or meta-narratives that tell us where to find them and what shape they will take.

To say that the meaning of educational reform lies in consequences which are fallible is quite different from either an anti-modernist or modernist approach to educational reform. Anti-modern reform proposals are committed to consequences that are not fallible. Modern reform proposals are committed to a range of consequences that are constrained by the values and commitments of modernity, such as higher levels of expertise, more accountability, and stricter and more demanding academic standards. Modern reforms evade an holistic discourse on consequences. But making a case for looking to the results of thinking and acting and looking to consequences for meaning, in themselves, simply raises more basic questions: What kind of consequences should we value? If pragmatism is a way of looking at the world then how should a pragmatist educational reformer look at the consequences of reform oriented thinking and acting? Anticipating consequences in itself, as an isolated activity, can be approached as a highly rational and empiricist activity and is so in the study of rational choices and collective action. Barring ideological or power constraints or both if a discourse on the consequences of thinking is taken seriously it cannot be reduced to technical calculations.

At this point I follow John Dewey's thinking that emerged in his "theory of art, or, rather, his theory on the *aesthetic dimension of all human experience,*" as Joas put it (1993, p. 5). At heart pragmatists are both artists, in their anticipation of consequences, and they are aesthetic consumers and critics, in their assessment of those consequences. Pragmatism is an exploration into the meaningfulness to be found in action and the examples that George Herbert Mead and Dewey often used to develop these ideas were couched in terms of experimentation, play, and art (Joas, 1993, p. 249). Think of educational reform, if you will, as an artistic project that will be judged by aesthetic standards. Compare educational reform to painting a picture, composing a symphony, or writing a poem or novel. An artist or educational reformer comes with imaginative visions as well as with resources and burdened by constraints. The artist or reformer has a problem to be solved. How is it possible to a realize a vision given the opportunities and limitations in a specific while the vision, itself, is continually being re-vised?

Now imagine a pragmatist as educational reformer. She is concerned with what her school organization and processes mean as well as what her educational conceptions and actions mean. Final assessments of meanings, it is worth repeating, are unendingly delayed because the meanings of consequences, in turn, have consequences that have meanings and on and on. Notwithstanding the continual assessment and rewriting of one's beliefs and values, as it were, educational reformers are required to act creatively in the situations in which they find themselves. They have opportunities and resources. They have limitations and constraints. They

have allies. They have opponents. The problems and processes of educational reform, in this view, are artistic and aesthetic that subsume matters of science, management, politics, and ethics. The latter are the resources and constraints with which reformers work, much as artists work, in constructing their projects, products, and outcomes.

It is fair to ask what it means to promote educational reform and to assess it in terms of the aesthetics of everyday experience. A pragmatist educational reformer who follows Dewey's artistic and aesthetic lead would look for beauty, satisfaction, pleasure, things fitting together, productivity, and avoid pain, cruelty, humiliation, and alienation. But what is a beautiful, satisfying, pleasurable, and productive educational reform? In order to answer this we have to have a sense of where our conceptions of beauty, satisfaction. . .come from and how they are mediated. They are learned. They are learned as we read and explore the discourses and practices that precede us. From reading and experience we construct the artistic and aesthetic constructions of ordinary and professional experience in the context of our professions, communities, and societies. And, for pragmatists these communities should be critical because there seems no way to assess seriously the consequences of thinking and acting without the benefit of criticism. Our pragmatist reformer who aims to foster aesthetically pleasing consequences and who also acknowledges being fallible knows, instinctively, the importance of criticism and the benefit of a critical and democratic community. Critical and democratic communities provide ideas and thoughts from which to draw insights and suggestions about previous successes and failures. A discourse on the consequences of thinking, to invoke Macke's phrase, is necessarily social and democratic because solitary contemplation is not discourse and the non-democratic exclusion of some people and their views blocks a candid exploration of consequences. One consequence of being interested in consequences is that pragmatism is biased in favor of social inclusion and opposed to social exclusion.

To conclude this discussion of pragmatism and educational reform I return to Fullan's account of educational change because on the basis of his survey of the research on educational change he outlines one pragmatist strategy. Here are Fullan's six themes for the future of educational change.

The six involve moving from an old, unsuccessful way of managing change to a new mind-set.

1. from negative to positive politics,
2. from monolithic to alternative solutions,
3. from innovations to institutional developments,
4. from going it alone to alliances,
5. from neglect to deeper appreciation of the change process, and
6. from "if only" to "if I" or "if we." (Fullan, 1991, p. 347)

This is a thoroughly pragmatic proposal. The move from a negative to a positive politics (1 above) includes moving from a politics of resisting change from below and imposing it from above to a politics that focuses on the implementation of a few principles. The move from monolithic to alternative solutions (2 above) rejects

universal rationalistic solutions that, to some, are a mark of what is quintessentially modern. Monolithic solutions marginalize specific contexts of change and limit one's flexibility to respond to the contingencies of the change process. In moving away from what is monolithic Fullan emphasizes the importance of planned variations when it comes to changing educational practices. This is one instance if you will, of what pragmatists believe about plurality. Richard Bernstein puts it this way, "There can be no escape from plurality – a plurality of traditions, perspectives, philosophic orientations" (Bernstein, 1989, p. 10). Fullan's suggestions endorse a belief in plurality.

We are well advised, this line of argument goes, *to avert our attention from the text of innovation and focus on the context of the institution* (3 above). This shift from innovation to institution is, perhaps, Fullan's most overtly pragmatic recommendation. Conceptualizing change in terms of specific innovations is one form of a modernist instrumental rationality where goals are stated, options outlined, choices made, and implementations executed. These are slogans of modern times and they bring with it, as he candidly acknowledged, important benefits.

> The innovation paradigm has provided considerable insights into the do's and don'ts of implementing single innovations. We should continue to use this knowledge any time we are working on particular valued priorities. But there is a more fundamental message in the new mind-set that says that thinking in terms of single innovations is inherently limiting, because we are in reality faced with attempting to cope with multiple innovations simultaneously. (Fullan, 1991, pp. 348–9)

By directing our attention away from innovation to institution building he invites us to look at the social and physical context of change as well as the plurality of interests and visions of those involved.

Even though he documents the limitations of modernity in *The New Meaning of Educational Change,* Fullan does not make an anti-modern argument (see Burbules & Rice, 1991 for a discussion of modernity, postmodernity, and anti-modernity). Fullan is not opposed to surveying thoughtfully and systematically one's problems and acting on the insights that are obtained. His argument, however, is to the point that shortsighted concern with innovation may lead one to overlook the fact that successful change often requires more inclusive institutional changes. Fullan puts it like this

> Instead of tracing specific policies and innovations, we turn the problem on its head, and ask what does the array of innovative possibilities look like, if we are on the receiving or shopping end. Thus institutional development. . . is the generic solution needed. Taking on one innovation at a time is fire fighting and faddism. Institutional development of schools and districts increases coherence and capacity for sorting out and integrating the myriad of choices, acting on them, assessing progress, and (re)directing energies. . . .We cannot develop institutions without developing the people in them. (Fullan, 1991, p. 349)

This shift in emphasis from innovation to institutional setting parallels the way pragmatists deconstruct the distinction between text and context.

Seymour Sarason (1990) in *The Predictable Failure of Educational Reform* makes a complementary argument to Fullan's when he asks "For Whom Do Schools Exist?" Educational reformers who highlight innovations rhetorically, at least, place the needs of students first. Sarason develops a counter position like this, "If you, as I have, ask teachers. . .how they justify the existence of their school, the answer you get is that schools exist to further the intellectual and social development of students" (Sarason, 1990, p. 137). If most educational reformers believe that schools exist for students then it follows that their change efforts will be designed to enhance the "intellectual and social development of students." This belief underlies an approach to school reform whereby the "text" of an innovation is emphasized and the "context" of the institution is de-emphasized.

Sarason rejects this idea, that schools exist solely for students. His argument is stunning in its clarity, power, and absence in contemporary thought about educational reform. If teachers, principles, and others whose efforts are required for the reform to succeed do not receive satisfaction and pleasure from the reform itself they will not be motivated to continue it after the external rewards are withdrawn. Here is how Sarason puts it.

> If, as I have asserted, it is virtually impossible to create and sustain over time conditions for productive learning for students when they do not exist for teachers, the benefits sought by educational reform stand little chance of being realized. (Sarason, 1990, p. 145).

Sarason makes the not so obscure but widely overlooked observation that whatever change is desired must be perceived, if it is to be sustained, to be to everyone's advantage. Everyone – students, teachers, administrators, staff, parents-must believe that change provides them either with a net benefit or at least not a net loss because those who see themselves losing as a result of change will either have no incentive to support it or may come to believe that it is in their interest to subvert it. Continuing with this line of argument, it is not likely that everyone – students, teachers, administrators, others-involved in schools will share at the outset the same interests and desires. Furthermore, if these different people "trace out in the imagination the conceivable practical consequences" of any proposed change, then different individuals-educators and students for example – might well value differently the same outcomes. Therefore, a democratic community is required whereby differences can be negotiated, common interests designed useful, and the perceptions of those whose support may prove to be important for long term success are not ignored.

This theme carries into Fullan's next point "from going it alone to alliances" (4 above). The idea of interactive professionalism appeals to expertise, control, hierarchy, accountability, and rationality. It also makes a gesture in the direction of community (a democratic one) and criticism (professional). But there is a paradox, it is a paradox of modernity. There is an emphasis on participation and interaction (a democratic community) at the same time that there is an appeal to

professionalism (expertise and hierarchy). This is a classic case where one might wish to maximize two values simultaneously but, unfortunately, there is no *a priori* reason to believe that this is possible, that is, there is no prior reason to believe that all of those involved in an educational reform will freely and democratically agree with expert assessments and recommendations. There are good reasons to believe that more professionalism, itself, is not the cure for the failures of professionalism. Furthermore, any discussion of professionalism needs to address issues of power and how it operates through professional structures and subjectivities (see Cherryholmes, 1988).

Successful change often requires a willingness to embrace contradiction and inconsistency (5 above).

> Change is difficult because it is riddled with dilemmas, ambivalences, and paradoxes. It combines steps that seemingly do not go together: to have a clear vision and be open-minded; to take initiative and empower others; to provide support and pressure; to start small and think big; to expect results and be patient and persistent; to have a plan and be flexible; to use top-down and bottom-up strategies; to experience uncertainty and satisfaction. (Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 350)

Paradoxes, dilemmas, contradictions, and ambiguity subvert modern impulses to linearity, control, and clarity. These complexities, again, highlight the limits of modernity. The modern and postmodern exist together in Fullan's pragmatic reading of educational change.

His last suggestion breaks with modern conceptions of change in yet another way. He argues against relying upon causal hypotheses (6 above). He insists that we should be wary of basing change on "if-then" thinking. The contradictions and paradoxes of practice and the context within which it is situated work to undermine attempts at isolated interventions. But in this case the point is that the best chances for change exist when the change efforts have personal meaning for the individuals involved, "Acting on change is an exercise in pursuing meaning" (Fullan, 1991, p. 351). This brings us full circle to Peirce's pragmatic maxim. For Peirce the meaning of an intellectual concept was found in the "conceivable practical consequences – that is, the consequences for deliberate, self-controlled conduct, – of the affirmation or denial of the concept." For Fullan successful change requires "pursuing meaning" as the "conceivable practical consequences" of affirming or denying an idea and acting or failing to act upon it.

## CONCLUSION.

This chapter began with reference to Charlie Chaplin's film *Modern Times* that presented an exaggerated, comic, and ultimately depressing view of the present age. I have discussed three approaches to educational reform. First, there are those who have adopted an anti-modern stance in their promotion of creationist science and whose efforts have been curtailed by the courts. Second, there are those who

have sought to further the modernization of schools by way of planned and controlled interventions. These efforts, Michael Fullan has noted, have had episodic success at best and limited staying power. Third, there are those who believe that we should admit that, in some respects, we have reached the limits of the modern impulses to rationalize, control, hierarchize, and increase accountability when thinking about educational reform by becoming wide-ranging, holistic, and aesthetically oriented pragmatists.

Pragmatism is neither modern nor anti-modern although elements of each can be seen in its view of the world. Pragmatism accepts and rejects simultaneously tradition bound and modern ways of looking at the world. It is thoroughly non-traditional in emphasizing creative and playful experimentation and engagement with the world that breaks with traditional, ideological, and dogmatic beliefs. It is thoroughly non-modern in its emphasis on art and aesthetics and the non-rational commitments they require. There is no reason to believe that anti-modernist re-formers will be convinced to adopt a pragmatic approach to education but they are likely to find it more and more difficult to reconcile fixed and unchanging beliefs about the world in the context of rapidly changing global societies and economies that often challenge and occasionally dispose of protected belief systems. There is some reason to believe that educators who see the world with modern eyes will entertain pragmatist ideas as the limitations of the modern vision continue to be documented by their own research. Pragmatism, itself, is a way of living in the world that would have us look to the consequences of our thoughts and actions by pursuing those that are beautiful while continuing to argue and debate and compose and revise versions about what this means.

## ENDNOTES

[1] The following abstract of Wolfram's article exemplifies research that creationists seek to have represented in the public school curriculum. The processes which creationists postulate may be responsible for rapid canyon formation were vividly demonstrated during the floods which occurred in the Midwest during the summer of 1993. Erosion damage to spillways at three sites is described: Tuttle Creek Lake on the Big Blue River at Manhattan, Kansas; Coralville Lake on the Iowa River at Coralville/Iowa City, Iowa; and Milford Lake on the Republican River near Junction City, Kansas. Each location involved not only the removal of overburden, but also rapid erosion of the underlying strata. Details of duration, water volume, and water flow rates are presented and, where possible, these data are compared to those of prehistoric flood catastrophes. It is shown that extensive erosion in a short period of time is possible even in relatively well-consolidated and lithified strata, and that the pattern of erosion sometimes is remarkably similar to certain features found in the Grand Canyon. (Wolfram, 1994, p. 109)

[2] Here is an abbreviated description of the connection between the migration of human populations and creationist science in the words of a member of the Creationist Research Society. While evolutionists generally propose that the origin of races required gradual processes over a vast length of time, creationists postulate that a process. . .could have caused the origin of races in a short period of time. The rapid dispersion that took place following the confusion of tongues at Babel would have resulted in the isolation of relatively small groups. Furthermore, the manner in which God bestowed various languages among this previously monolingual human population may have been so directed as to isolate genetically similar individuals in the same language group. (Gish, 1975, p. 40)

[3] It is instructive to list those who joined together to sue the State of Arkansas in this matter. The

individual plaintiffs include the resident Arkansas Bishops of the United Methodist, Episcopal, Roman Catholic and African Methodist Episcopal Churches, the principal official of the Presbyterian Churches in Arkansas, other United Methodist, Southern Baptist and Presbyterian clergy, as well as several persons who sue as parents and next friends of minor children attending Arkansas public schools. One plaintiff is a high school biology teacher. All are also Arkansas taxpayers. Among the organizational plaintiffs are the American Jewish Congress, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the American Jewish Committee, the Arkansas Education Association, the National Association of Biology Teachers and the national Coalition for Public Education and Religious Liberty, all of which sue on behalf of members living in Arkansas. (McLean v. Arkansas Board of Education).

## REFERENCES


Apthorpe, R. (1985). Modernization In A. Kuper & J. Kuper (Eds.), *The social science encyclopedia* (pp. 532–533). New York: Routledge.

Berlin, I. (1990 September). Joseph de Maistre and the origins of fascism. *New York Review of Books*, 27.

Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (1967). *The social construction of reality*. New York: Anchor Books.

Bernstein, R. (1989). Pragmatism, pluralism and the healing of wounds. *APA Proceedings*, **63**, 5–18.

Burbules, N., & Rice, S. (1991). Dialogue across differences: Continuing the conversation. *Harvard Educational Review*, **61**(4), 393–416.

Cherryholmes, C. H. (1988). *Power and criticism: Poststructural investigations in education.* New York and London: Teachers College Press.

Darwin, C. (1859). *The origin of species.* London.

Fullan, M. (1991). *The new meaning of educational change*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Gish, D. (1975). New Guinea communities and the migration dispersion model. *Creation Research Society Quarterly*,**12**(1), 34–46.

Huberman, M. (1983). Reciptes for busy kitchens. *Knowledge: Creation, Diffusion, Utilization*, **4**, 478–510.

Joas, H. (1993). *Pragmatism and social theory.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Macke, F. (1995). Pragmatism reconsidered: John Dewey and Michel Foucault on the consequences of inquiry. In L. Langsdorf & A. Smith (Eds.), *Recovering pragmatism's voice: The classical tradition, Rorty, and the philosophy of communication* (pp. 155–178). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Marris, P. (1975). *Loss and change*. New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday.

Martin, M., & Marsha, P. (1994). *Video movie guide 1995.* New York: Ballantine Books.

McGowan, J. (1991). *Postmodernism and its critics.* Cornell, NY: Cornell University Press.

National Academy of Sciences. (1984). *Science and creationism: A view from the National Academy of Sciences.* Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Patterson, J., Purkey, S., & Parker, J. (1986). *Productive school systems for a nonrational world.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Peirce, C. S. (1905 April). Review of Nichols: A treatise on cosmology. The *Monist*, **XV**.

Sarason, S. (1990). *The predictable failure of educational reform.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Rusch, W. H. (1982). A brief statement of the history and aims of the CRS. *CRS Quarterly*, **19**.

Wise, A. (1977). Why educational policies often fail: The hyperrationalization hypothesis. *Curriculum Studies*, **9**(1), 43–57.

Wolfram, G. (1994). The 1993 midwest floods and rapid canyon formation. *Creation Science Society Quarterly,* **31**(2).

# International Handbook of Educational Change - Table of Contents

**FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE**
*Michael Fullan, Editor*