

FROM THE EDITOR

STANLEY NISBET

This special edition of *Scottish Educational Review* has been made possible through a bequest from the estate of Professor Stanley Nisbet, one of the founding editors of the journal. As Professor Nisbet himself recalled, writing in a volume celebrating the centenary of educational studies at the University of Glasgow:

At a staff meeting in 1966 Kenneth [Richmond] startled us by proposing that the Department should produce its own journal. With some trepidation we agreed. In June 1967 the first number of *Scottish Educational Studies* appeared, with Kenneth as editor and three departmental colleagues — Tom Bone, Ian Espie and me — as assistant editors. The journal, now re-named *Scottish Educational Review*, is still very much alive and has a good reputation. It soon outgrew its Glasgow tutelage. With support from the other Scottish universities, the colleges of education and the SED [Scottish Education Department] it became an all-Scotland concern. It is now a respected vehicle for critical in-depth comment on Scottish education. (Nisbet, 1994: 13)

In 2004, having myself only recently taken up a post at Nisbet's former institution, I too was somewhat startled to be approached by the current editors of the *Review*, with the invitation to edit this special issue, which was to have a theme of teacher education and professional development. Having overcome my surprise, I was only too delighted to accept the privilege and honour offered.

At the annual conference of the Scottish Educational Research Association in 2004 I had the opportunity to listen to the tributes paid to Stanley Nisbet by his brother John and by Bill Gatherer, former HMI. I also had the pleasure of meeting Isabel Nisbet, Stanley's daughter, and was able to inform her and John of the plans for this special issue. Obituaries for Stanley were also published in the May 2004 edition of this journal (Vol 36, No 1).

Having accepted the invitation to edit this issue, I set about inviting colleagues from across Scottish teacher education institutions — by now of course all of them are within universities — and colleagues from elsewhere in the UK and around the wider world to contribute. It is a testimony to Nisbet's reputation and scholarly achievement that I received approximately three times as many offers of submissions as could be published in a single issue; and it is a tribute to all of those who offered a paper that they duly submitted them. I have selected a total of eleven papers for inclusion here¹ that I believe enable us to develop a critical understanding of key issues in teacher education and professional development in Scotland. However, perhaps by contrast with the original ambit of the journal, approximately half of the papers derive from elsewhere, reflecting the journal's current position as being increasingly UK and indeed international in its scope. That is not to say that the central interest is no longer in matters of Scottish education. Rather, it is to acknowledge that our understanding of education in Scotland may be enhanced through sharing a critical analysis of similar themes in education elsewhere. A Scottish-English comparison is an explicit part of three of the papers, but a comparative sensitivity is also present in several others.

TEACHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A focus on teacher education and professional development is a significant one for several reasons. This focus provides a means of evaluating the condition of an education system — it is through the initial preparation of teachers that one demonstrates not only how highly teachers are valued within a society, but also what

it is that is judged important for them to know and for them to be able to do. The structures, processes and curriculum of initial teacher education and training provide us therefore with an indication of the aspirations that a society holds for its future and in particular for the future citizens who will be taught by students currently entering the profession. Continuing professional development has steadily been taking a more significant place in the education systems of the 'developed' world. On one level this may simply reflect the acceleration of educational change resulting from technological and social change. However, it may simultaneously represent an increasing awareness of the significance of teachers in social and economic development, as the world at large becomes both more competitive and more fragile.

So it is not surprising that research into teachers, teacher education and teachers' work has experienced something of an explosion of activity in recent years. In this special issue, I am delighted to present work from a range of the leading scholars in the field from Scotland and elsewhere.

The first three papers focus on a central theme of initial teacher education (ITE), that of 'partnership'. In this context, the term partnership refers primarily to the relationships between schools and higher education institutions in the provision of ITE. But the term partnership covers much more complex and significant factors than the practical arrangements between institutions, or even the delineation of the roles and responsibilities of the various professional players who are engaged in ITE. As these three papers demonstrate, albeit in rather different ways, partnership concerns the nature of professional education in a very fundamental way, including the relationship between theory and practice, the definition of teaching and the processes of learning to become a teacher.

Donald McIntyre, having had significant involvement in ITE in both Scotland and England offers us an historical account of developments (and non-developments) of partnership in both countries. His conclusion highlights the paradox that while Scotland has had its own professional body for teachers for over thirty years, it is in England where the most significant partnership developments have taken place. Ian Smith and colleagues then examine the Scottish scenario, especially the recent past, in more detail, and suggest that there had been consistent pressure from at least some parts of the HEI teacher education community for significant developments, but that this has not necessarily been mirrored by enthusiasm within the teaching workforce. While both of these first two papers share a view of the relative 'under-development' of partnership in Scotland, the explanations for this state of affairs offered in each paper are very different. The third paper from John Furlong and his colleagues offers an account of recent developments in England. Indeed they claim that the development of partnership in England (and Wales) is the most distinctive feature of provision there and makes it in some ways unique. However, they are not enamoured of the current emphases in the promotion of partnership, which is based on a strongly technical-rationalist model of teaching, as they see it. The implicit challenge therefore, for us in Scotland, is not only to find a way of achieving significant development of partnership, but to ensure that the models we develop are based on a more sophisticated view of teaching (as, arguably, conveyed in the Scottish Standards for ITE, Chartered Teacher and Leadership).

Initial teacher education in Northern Ireland is the subject addressed by Alison Montgomery and Alan Smith. They include some predictions in their paper about the future shape of education in that jurisdiction and an announcement in November 2005 did indeed confirm that there is to be a single unitary education authority in the province. It is perhaps paradoxical that some of the most radical reform in the management of education has happened under direct rule rather than under devolved government. However, some deeper issues, such as the continuing segregated nature of provision, appear set to continue.

Within the UK, there can be little argument that the greatest number of changes

in initial teacher education have been instigated within England. In the name of 'diversity' and largely in response to problems of teacher supply and retention, there has been a burgeoning of new routes of entry into the teaching profession. At the present time, approximately seventeen per cent of new teachers are joining the profession through 'employment-based routes', for example. The paper by Andrew Hobson and his colleagues is one of the first to emerge from a major longitudinal study being conducted at the Universities of Nottingham and Leeds that is investigating the critical question of whether different routes into teaching attract different kinds of people and then produce different kinds of teachers.

In the next group of papers we move on to analyses of aspects of post-initial qualification professional development. Drawing on a project that he is leading on early professional development, based at Stirling and Manchester Metropolitan Universities, which is being conducted as part of the Economic and Social Research Council's Teaching and Learning Research Programme, Jim McNally suggests that professional learning has more to do with the emotions and with relationships than with cognition or competences. While most commentators in education are now firmly of the view that continuing professional development is a critical factor in the improvement of education, the problems of assessing its impact are legion. This is the issue that Alma Harris and her colleagues from several institutions in England address in their paper. We then return to Scotland for an assessment of some of the effects of the so-called 'McCrone settlement', which was probably the most far-reaching set of reforms of the teaching profession for most of those currently working in the Scottish system. This assessment is carried out by Janet Draper and Stephen Sharp who have a long record of tracking changes of teachers' work in Scotland.

Helen Gunter examines the case of 'teacher leadership' to explore differences between English and Scottish approaches, particularly in the 'marketised' contexts that exist to varying extents in the two countries. Those familiar with her work will not be surprised that she emphasises the significance of pedagogic relations in her analysis of a wide range of research in the field. The final paper, by Susan Groundwater-Smith, has a broader range whilst retaining concern about educational markets. It draws from experience in Australia and develops the use of the *Agora*, a growers' market held each month in Sydney, as a metaphor for education. Her concluding plea is one that suits the spirit of 'local internationalism' which I see as imbuing much of the work included in this issue; that is, an awareness of the global society within which state education systems now operate, at the same time as a recognition of the importance of locally developed responses in policy and practice that build upon the particularities of culture and tradition that constitute the 'local', whether that be a small community, a region or a nation.

CONCLUSION

Although regrettably for me, I personally never had the opportunity to meet Stanley Nisbet, I have been deeply impressed by the range of people in Scottish education who did meet him, were taught by him and strongly influenced by him. And although I did not meet him, I too was influenced by him, for, on my bookshelves to this day, is a copy of the volume that he originally wrote in 1957 (although it went through many reprintings), *Purpose in the Curriculum*. This was on the reading lists on the teacher education course that I pursued towards a Bachelor of Education (Honours) qualification in 1975 in Bristol. This book had been one of the first analyses of curriculum in Britain and was still highly valued at that time. The commissioning of this special edition of SER gave me cause to revisit it. It has certainly borne 'the test of time', even if the contexts in which curriculum is discussed now are very different from those of the 1950s. The balance which he advocates between the twin purposes of 'personal growth' and 'adjustment to environment' has clear continuity with the aspirations of today's education policy makers, as exemplified

for example in Scotland, by the *National Priorities for Education*. I conclude by commending this book to those who are involved in the current discussions about the development of *A Curriculum for Excellence* in Scottish schools, as well as to those who are responsible for the development of teachers and of the teaching profession in Scotland and elsewhere.

NOTES

- 1 It may be anticipated that several other papers originally submitted for this special issue will appear in future editions of the journal.

REFERENCES

- Nisbet, S. (1957) *Purpose in the Curriculum*, London: University of London Press.
- Nisbet, S. (1994) 'Thriving practice needs thinking practitioners' in Paterson, H. (ed) *Educational Studies at Glasgow: Past, Present and Future*, Glasgow: The University of Glasgow.