

## **Community Education, Learning and Development (3<sup>rd</sup> edn.)**

Lyn Tett & Ian Fyfe (2010). Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic Press.  
ISBN 978-1-906716-10-3 (pp. 126, £14.99, pb.)

**Review by CHRISTINE BARBER**

---

This book was first published in 2002 under the title 'Community Education, Lifelong Learning and Social Inclusion' in the series Policy and Practice in Education. It quickly became a popular text and this third edition, with the new title 'Community Education, Learning and Development' has the potential to gain even greater popularity amongst practitioners, academics and students who identify with community education's primary purpose, 'education within and for communities'. This audience includes professions, such as teaching and social work, who to achieve social justice engage in community-based inter-professional practices.

In this revised and expanded edition, Lyn Tett has extensively developed her discussion of community education to include aspects of learning and development, and a pertinent new chapter by Ian Fyfe, 'Young People and Community Engagement' has been included. Although this is a small book, it has a big spirit! The text is energetic, illustrative, comprehensive and convincing and, as such, it successfully raises our awareness of the conceptual, policy and political ideas that underpin community education and the range of contexts for community education practice.

The first chapter focuses on the social and economic developments in the nineteenth century that led to demands for social reforms and argues that the practices that followed represented two main traditions, which either challenged or supported the status quo. Moreover, the author provides a critical insight into how these traditions are still prevalent in policy and practice today. This chapter also fully explores the notion of 'community' and presents the perspective that the concept of community has been used in policy and practice to create boundaries around what counts as acceptable action for community educators.

By examining government policies and the ensuing practice developments, chapter two impressively locates how community education developed in Scotland and, in doing so, reveals the periods and contexts when real differences were made to the lives of people. In chapter three, the author addresses the 'lifelong learning policy agenda' and warns us that even though this commitment to lifelong learning can provide opportunities for growth, development and fulfilment, without careful intervention within a social justice framework, it can also result in reinforcing inequalities.

In the next three chapters, a variety of community education, learning and development projects are utilised to powerfully illustrate the ways in which

practices can challenge narrow policy conceptualisations. These practice contexts encompass family literacy and health education, young people and community engagement, partnerships, community capacity building and active citizenship. A crucial stance is adopted, whereby the dominant discourse that places people as victims who need to have 'experts' to show them what to do is confronted. In its place, ways in which people can take back control, name their problems and find appropriate solutions are debated. Through these discussions a compelling case for the adoption of a model of lifelong learning which focuses on democratic renewal is revealed.

The final chapter argues that the task of community educators and those concerned with learning and development is certainly not an easy one. The author advocates that whilst addressing competing interests, they must discover ways in which the voices of those that are excluded are heard, listened to and acted upon. Furthermore, the author asserts that the foremost challenge for community education 'is to support the type of learning and development that leads to social justice for everyone through the development of imaginative and transgressive solutions to seemingly intractable difficulties'.

This book does exactly what it claims to do! It effectively illustrates the conceptual and political debates surrounding the role, purpose and practice of community education, learning and development; a goal it accomplishes well. So well, that indeed it is already recognised as one of the key resources in the field of community education, learning and development in Scotland.

In line with the comments made by the authors, it is important to reinforce the view that in response to changing local, national and global educational priorities, community education, learning and development is 'ever evolving' and therefore, texts such as this can quickly become dated and thus need ongoing review and revision. The following examples underline this non-stop state of change: the significant effects of government budget cuts on services, the momentous developments that are taking place in relation to the UK government vision of the 'Big Society' and the recent politicisation of young people.

In this writer's institution, community learning and development, social work and primary teaching lecturers have found this book to be invaluable in the contribution that it has made to their teaching and learning on both the community learning and development programme and the inter-professional modules, such as 'Working Together to Achieve Social Justice'. As a key text on a number of modules, students have found it to be accessible, engaging and a major influence in their drive to create a more democratically just society.

I unequivocally recommend this book to all educators who are concerned with the learning process in formal, non-formal and informal settings.

## The Philosophy of Education: an Introduction

Richard Bailey (Ed.) (2010) London: Continuum.  
ISBN: 978-1-84706-019-8 (pp. 184, £22.99, pb).

### Review by CLAIRE CASSIDY

---

This book is an interesting contribution to the arsenal of university education textbooks, not least because many Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses have lost the philosophy of education component in their courses. At a time when Donaldson's review of teacher education, *Teaching Scotland's Future*, has just been received with suggestions that a four year BEd (Hons) may not be the most appropriate way to educate Scotland's future teachers, we may see a further erosion of this important subject.

Given that some ITE students have only a brief encounter with philosophy of education, while others are fortunate enough to study it in at least one year of their course, it makes it hard to gauge exactly how this book might be used, or at whom it is aimed. Certainly PGDE students in Scotland are more likely to be in the former category while the experience for BEd students is more varied. If this book has been compiled with a view to supporting the novice reader with little course input on the topic then it promises much.

The text comprises thirteen chapters, each written by a philosopher of education. What is perhaps helpful to the reader is that the chapters deal with questions for philosophical consideration rather than being separated under key thinkers. A wide range of philosophers' writings and ideas are used to explore the questions raised. Questions addressed include: What is education for? (Roger Marples); What should go in the curriculum? (Michael Hand); Can we teach ethics? (James Conroy); Do children have any rights? (Harry Brighouse and Paula McAvoy); Can schools make good citizens? (Tristan McCowan); Should the state control education? (Judith Suissa); Educational opportunities – who shall we leave out? (Carrie Winstanley); Should parents have a say in their children's schooling? (Dianne Gereluk) and What's wrong with indoctrination and brainwashing? (Richard Bailey). These questions are topped by chapters by Paul Standish, explaining what philosophy of education is and Richard Pring, justifying why education needs philosophy – and tailed by chapters on reading the philosophy of education and writing the philosophy of education by John Gingell and Richard Smith respectively.

The initial two chapters are somewhat lengthy and assume, it seems, that there will be no lecturer or tutor supporting the student in their venture into philosophy of education. In some ways this may be helpful. However, if the student has accompanying classes, then the information here is likely to be covered in the introductory lecture and in a manner that is more concise and relevant for the constituent readers in terms of context and exemplification. The tone aims to be conversational which is laudable and while it is informative and leads the reader gently into the subject, it is also somewhat dry in places. The second part of

chapter one, dealing with writing philosophy of education, is perhaps misplaced and would be better served toward the end of the book where the reader might, by that time, be considering undertaking a philosophical dissertation.

The book is presented clearly with frequent signposting of questions for consideration by the student, these linking to the overarching chapter question. The questions are placed in textboxes and link to the ideas presented in the chapter. Further, the questions or, in some cases, tasks relate to what students will have seen or done on their school experience placements. Certainly, for those who have classes in philosophy of education, there is the possibility that the tasks or questions might be adapted for use in tutorials or lectures. To support the reader further each author provides some further reading and several also offer websites to be followed-up. What is really useful in the further reading section is that the authors explain a little about the texts they recommend and how accessible they may be to the reader. All this is designed to support the general questions posed along with the accompanying explanations and explorations of each of the topics. The ideas presented are both relevant and challenging.

The key criticism of this textbook is its decidedly Anglo-centric perspective. For ITE students outside of England, and in Scotland in particular, they will find some, but far from all, of the book relevant. The examples provided tend to relate to England; the legislation, policy and curricular contexts set are also situated south of the border. There is no acknowledgement that in Scotland, for example, Education for Citizenship takes a different form to that in England or that there is a presumption of inclusion for all and that Special Educational Needs is a term no longer in use. Indeed, there appears to be no mention of any curriculum other than England's National Curriculum which narrows the audience for the text more than necessary. So, while *The Philosophy of Education: an Introduction* promises much to the reader new to philosophy of education, the authors make some needless assumptions and omissions. There are still some courses that offer philosophy of education to their BEd students; there are examples that can be more widely drawn upon to illustrate the questions raised and dealt with here; and there are policy and curriculum developments outside of England that might offer new and different perspectives upon which both the authors and readers might draw. Overall, however, there is some worth in the text. For those who are not likely to encounter more than a passing reference to philosophy of education, it offers clear support in problematising education and in suggesting routes to answering the questions highlighted. For those lucky enough to study this topic, it provides reinforcement and contexts against which students might try out their own thinking in order to come to their own philosophy of education.

## **Politics, Modernisation and Educational Reform in Russia from past to present**

David Johnson (Ed.) (2010) Oxford: Symposium.  
ISBN 978-1-873927-41-0 (pp. 176, £24, pb)

**Review by GARI DONN**

---

David Johnson commences his editorial introduction of this interesting set of eight papers on education in Russia, with the question: what emphases are placed on education in different political systems? He notes that the answers are formed at the confluence of political and scientific thought. So, in looking at educational 'developments' in Russia, the relationship between international political relations and educational ideas becomes an important unit of analysis.

There are, he suggests, three permutations of this relationship. Firstly there is a climate of engagement where educational ideas and examples of practice from elsewhere are encouraged by the State – the knowledge exchange and transfer arrangements we see in so many countries. Secondly, there is a 'climate of disengagement' where, during the Soviet era for example, ideas from elsewhere were treated with suspicion and subject to ideological scrutiny. For many years in Soviet Russia, education was seen as the backbone of capitalist western countries, so transfer or imitation and policy borrowing were certainly not encouraged. Thirdly, a climate of 're-engagement' started with Gorbachev's educational reforms so that a period of exploration and experimentation with democracy gained momentum.

In the main, the selected articles address this third approach. The challenges include the contested terrain of educational reform in a chapter by Robert Harris. He argues that whilst the State may not have supported liberal ideology and individual personal development, certain thinkers – having been educated outside Soviet Russia – did embrace such values. The contested world-views of 'Westernisers' and 'Slavophiles' needed to be resolved.

Such political and cultural dilemmas of democratisation are discussed by Margarita Pavlova, and Judith Marquand. The former suggests that 'difference' emerged in Russia in the late 1860s (although of medieval origin) and, since then, contrasting themes have been played out between 'Western rationalism, utilitarianism and mechanisation' and 'Slavophile cultural nationalists' with a focus on the cultural superiority of Russian or Slavic culture and, hence, the irrelevance of the European experience for Russia. She argues that this duality or 'bi-polarity', has not been unproblematic and appears in every permutation of the political-historical-educational nexus (p.11).

The latter, Marquand, records that throughout the 19th century, Russian scientists were determined that Russian education would not lag behind European education. After all, Peter the Great, Catherine II and Alexander I were all seen as 'Westernisers'. It is therefore understandable that Russian universities resembled German institutions. Indeed, under the Bolsheviks, the higher education system became centralised and controlled by the Party. Whilst teaching methods (rote



learning and passive absorption of knowledge by learners) were imitated from the West, mainly from Germany, policy, textbooks and curriculum were all prescribed in detail leaving little room for individual initiative or variation (p.73).

The structural and policy challenges for reform of higher and vocational education are discussed by Fedotova & Chigisheva in their paper 'Restructuring the Governance and Management Structures of Higher Education in Russia'. They note that 19th century Russian tertiary education owed its origins to 'a policy of an imperial-military-feudal regime' (p.83). They highlight how attempts to put working people and peasants at the centre of educational reforms 'came unstuck' with the Higher Education Act of 1996 when 'a new structure of ownership was recorded which symbolised that Russian higher education had become part of the new market economy' (p.92).

In his article, on Classed and Gendered 'Learning Careers': transitions from vocational to higher education in Russia', Charles Walker also addresses the influence of Western market reforms. He argues that although the Communist Party was committed to the establishment of egalitarian society, ultimately, higher education remained the preserve of a white-collar intelligentsia (p.100). In his study, he found that both young men and women faced gendered and class barriers in their attempts to transition from vocational and training courses into higher education or on to employment.

Elena Minina, with a focus on psycho-social issues, shows how difficult it is to unite public opinion. She outlines the problems through an examination of the introduction of a national test. Not only, she suggests, are there class and gender divides, but there are also regional and ethnic disparities, and – let us not forget – the fearful influence of corruption. So, we come to understand, to work on the national level in the Russian context, is an almost herculean task.

Therefore, perhaps families need to be at the heart of policy-making, Andrea Laczik suggests. Yet whilst the UN Declaration on Human Rights in 1948 accorded education as a Human Right, still, over sixty years later, we see class, gender, ethnicity and region all interfering in a child's right, and a person's right, to education.

So we come to ask who should, could, can make the bold move to universal rights in education in Russia. In the final article, James Muckle argues that there would appear to be no consensus about the role of the individual in acquiring the human right to education vis-à-vis the role of the state in providing education. We have seen throughout this edited volume that historical, political and economic factors have all played a substantial part in Russia's educational reforms. Now, we see the growing distinction between that socio-historical past and the current Western-originating globalised economic present. Whereas the socio-historical may have forefronted universalism in education policy and provision, globalisation and economic liberalism of the market focus on individualism. In Russia, as now we see clearly elsewhere, 'it is not entirely surprising that the population turns to the government for guidelines on education' (p.162). Indeed, these are interesting times we live in!

These papers all attest to the changing role of the nation state, culture and thought and, in general, to a 'worldview'. Johnson is clear in his editorial goal of addressing the methodological approaches and theoretical frameworks to be adopted in making educational comparisons not only across cultures or nations but also across 'worldview'.

He suggests that in line with scientific understandings, predictability and significance may well be the 'tests' one can use to establish 'difference' or 'similarity' across cultures and systems. The authors take their well-focused lead from this position.

## **Educational Transitions. Moving Stories from Around the World.**

Divya Jindal-Snape, (Ed) (2010) New York and London: Routledge.  
ISBN10: 0-415-80591-0 (pp.261, £75, hb.)

**Review by ALINE-WENDY DUNLOP and HILARY FABIAN**

---

This book explores educational transitions from childhood through adolescence to adulthood. Whilst recognising overall the interactional rather than the maturational, it is organised with each section allocated to an age-specific transition – early years to school; primary to secondary; and school to post school – with an initial section focused on understandings of the theoretical processes of transitions. It outlines how academic, social and emotional experiences are navigated and the skills required by all those involved to ensure that expectations and reality match. The book locates transition as a global concern and as such draws together authors from different continents – Europe (Finland, England and Scotland), North America (USA), Australasia (New Zealand), Asia (Japan) and Africa (Nigeria). The introduction sets the scene well, outlining types of educational transitions.

As what might be called 'veterans' of transitions research we have found it refreshing to review an edited book on educational transitions with numbers of authors whose work is less familiar to us, and also to find some old friends such as Sally Peters and Maurice Galton. The work presented in this volume is a mix of empirical chapters and those which are more focused on reviewing particular aspects of transitions. An early chapter by Jindal-Snape and Miller raises the importance of self-esteem and its relationship to resilience, self-worth and social competence, all visibly important ideas in terms of school transition and a sound contribution from psychology to thinking about all sorts of transitions, including educational. Hannah, Gorton and Jindal-Snape reflect on the application of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theories as frames for transitions research; like others, they find him useful. In our view his work lends itself to proposing interrelationships between different theoretical positionings (Dunlop, 2010) as well as to practical systems, in that his own theorising was dynamic not static, changing and developing over time (e.g. Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986, 1989; Bronfenbrenner and de Ceci, 1994).

The best of the work in this volume introduces readers to new concepts that may not have been part of their previous thinking in relation to transitions. For example, Peters makes use of children's 'working theories' and the notion of 'funds of knowledge' in her beautifully-crafted chapter that achieves a balanced mix of theorising, research data and practical applications. She writes about the

discrepancies or translation that goes on from policy to practice and the ways in which, faced with the opportunities of new curriculum that have the potential to make links for children and young people, teachers in practice too often show 'resistance, adaptation and mediation' and focus on finding a fit between their existing belief systems, theories and practical approaches rather than re-framing their thinking. At a time when world-wide curriculum reform and high expectations for improved school outcomes combine, the re-framing described by Peters can be argued as a necessity at all points of transition in education.

Galton finds a major shift has come about in many local authorities in the treatment of pupils as they near the time of new school entry and makes an interesting observation on the importance of maintaining some discontinuity in the move to a new school so that pupils sustain a sense of their own change of status. There remains too much focus on a fresh start rather than continuity and collaboration across the divide between primary and secondary and too many pupils experience a dip with some 12% not recovering from this over time. Longitudinal studies that span from preschool to late secondary are rare but might be able to inform us whether it is the same children who experience these dips at primary entry and secondary entry and to think about characteristics of their transitions, their schools, their families and the child's dispositions in order to minimise such effects (Dunlop, 2011, forthcoming).

Such issues are the challenge of transitions for pupils and should also be a challenge to all teachers. A message that builds through Jindal-Snape's *Moving Stories* is a perspective that recognises transitions take time, that they are a process and that they affect all stages of education. In the final chapter Jindal-Snape artfully draws together the transition trends from each of the authors and analyses the collective contribution to identify implications for practice and policy and to highlight future research possibilities in this field. The voice and agency of those involved in transition gains importance in this stimulating and worthwhile book.

## REFERENCES

- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) *The Ecology of Human Development. Experiments by Nature and Design*. Cambridge, MA: & London: Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986) Ecology of the Family as a Context for Human Development: Research Perspectives. *Developmental Psychology*, 22, 6, 723-742.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1989) Ecological Systems Theory. In R. Vasta (Ed.) (1992), *Six Theories of Child Development : Revised Formulations and Current Issues* (pp. 187-249). London & Bristol, Penn.: Jessica Kingsley.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. & Ceci, S.J. (1994) Nature-Nurture Reconceptualized in Developmental Perspective: A Bioecological Model. *Psychological Review*, 101, 4, 568-586.
- Dunlop, A-W (2010) *The theoretical foundations and some key results of transitions to school research in a Scottish context*. Starting School Research, Policy and Practice Event, Charles Sturt University, Albury, Australia, October 12-15, 2010
- Dunlop, A-W (2011) Transition Trajectories - Insights and Outcomes - A longitudinal perspective on stories of educational transition from pre-school to school leaving. *Forthcoming*.
- Fabian, H and Dunlop, A-W (2007) *Outcomes of Good Practice in Transition Processes for Children Entering Primary School*. Paper prepared for the UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007.



## Children and Citizenship

Antonella Invernizzi and Jane Williams (Eds) (2010) London: Sage Publications Ltd.

ISBN: 978-1-4129-3537-1 (pp. 216, £75, hb.)

**Review by STEPHANIE FARQUHAR**

---

This edited collection makes great attempts to tackle the challenge of defining the multi-faceted notions of citizenship. Jaap E. Doek, in the foreword of the book, acknowledges that 'citizenship eludes definition [...] and is variable, contextual and often contested'. Far from this being a criticism of the book that follows, it instead succinctly describes the overall nature of the book; that its purpose is to define citizenship within many different contextual levels – whether local, national, multinational, in the family, at work, within the law or within traditional representations of childhood. One of the triumphs of the book is that it indeed looks at citizenship through many conceptual levels and makes steps towards models for defining citizenship, and how these concur or conflict with traditional notions of childhood and national and international law. The separation of the book into three parts results in a progressive, academic yet easy-to-follow journey through the conflicting definitions and models of citizenship, to how and whether these definitions can mould with traditional perceptions of childhood, and furthermore, how representative the Law is for meeting with children's citizenship-related needs.

Part one, comprising chapters one to six, deals with the notions of children's citizenship and makes varied attempts at definitions from broad and differing angles. Lister, chapter one, tries convincingly to 'unpack the building blocks of citizenship' through the exploration of the impact of membership, rights, responsibilities and equality through a feminist critique which provokes much thought on how children should be seen as 'equal but different from adults'. Lockyer, chapter two, links in with how citizenship has been introduced to the English curriculum through the Crick Report and makes strong efforts to grapple with the ideas of active citizenship from above. In contrast to Lockyer, Liebel's contribution focuses on a top-down approach to citizenship education because of his definition of citizenship as a 'social relationship' where children are isolated politically from decision-making. A prehistory of children's citizenship is overviewed in Milne's piece, and this allows a dialogue of the two conflicting standpoints of children's rights and adult needs for child protection, which in turn relates well with Fortin's argument – that the implementation of the UNCRC 'lacks teeth' and that adults are sceptical of children's rights. The first part concludes with Ennew's observations of children's tokenistic participation and lack of real and meaningful involvement within five UN global meetings.

Moving on from attempts to define citizenship, part two makes efforts to answer whether or not the traditional conceptions of childhood are compatible with children's rights and citizenship. The observations of James et al. emphasise the impact the pre-conditioning of children, by adults, to make children realise that they

need adult protection, and in turn highlight why children see themselves through adult perceptions of 'not-yet-fully-formedness'. Chapters eight and nine, by Jones and Alderson respectively, both look at the economic and capitalist perceptions of childhood, and how the transition to adulthood can be achieved through economic independence. Chapters nine and ten have much in common, in that they both observe the English conception of citizenship within schools, Alderson noting that English children's legislation has economic motivations and Morrow noting how children's participation, both within schools and civically, is tokenistic and leads to exclusion. Invernizzi, concluding part two, looks at how child work in Peru and the Algarve challenges perceptions of childhood work through the lenses of survival, socialisation, autonomy and exploitation.

The final part, comprising chapters twelve to fifteen, examine extensively how policies and the Law think about children's citizenship. Piper's piece shows how the law sees the child in many different roles – as a victim, threat, current citizen and future producer – and how a 'rethinking of the law' is needed in order to give children a stronger voice. Chapters thirteen to fifteen analyse how the Law views children's citizenship at EU and UK levels. Stalford emphasises the 'mutual benefits of the adult-child dynamic' within an EU context, whilst Clutton aims to evaluate the adoption of citizenship education in UK post-devolution. Williams and Croke end the book with their research into children's rights through a 'trusteeship vs. beneficiary' model.

The collection makes deep yet broad attempts to outline the many conflicting definitions of citizenship and contextualises them in a multifaceted and meaningful way within the traditional conceptions of childhood and international child law. Professor Michael Freeman, in my view, described this thought provoking and stimulating collection in a nutshell when he said that it makes innovative attempts to recognise that 'children are as much part of society as adults'.