

## BOOK REVIEWS

### PREVENTING EXCLUSIONS

Adam Abdelnoor (Heinemann Education, 1999) ISBN 0435800396 (200 pp, £15.99 paperback)

PAMELA MUNN

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Exclusion from school is a serious matter. Schooling is denied a young person, thereby depriving him or her of the opportunity to learn, possibly adversely affecting the likelihood of success in public examinations and thus impacting on life chances. We know from research that boys are up to four times more likely to be excluded than girls and that African Caribbean boys are up to six times more likely to be excluded than their white peers. Compiling accurate statistics about exclusions is difficult because schools do not always inform their local authority of all exclusions, regarding short-term exclusion as an opportunity for all parties to cool off. Nevertheless the best estimates we have are that there were, in England, around 12,300 permanent exclusions from primary, secondary and special schools in 1997/98. Reducing the number of fixed-term and permanent exclusions from school is rightly a government priority. It is part of the role which schools can play to promote social inclusion, both by helping individual youngsters to gain educational qualifications and by helping us all to empathise with people in trouble. No one should underestimate the importance of this task.

This book is one of a few to have appeared recently designed to help schools to tackle the issue. Understandably, teachers dealing with the day-to-day realities of classroom life are less likely to consider the impact of exclusion on young people and their families. They are more likely to be concerned about the maintenance of an orderly and purposeful learning environment, and indeed the life chances of other pupils in the class. Yet we know that schools with similar school populations vary in the use they make of exclusion. We know that exclusion seldom helps young people in trouble; nor does it eliminate all behaviour problems in schools.

The book is unashamedly in support of children who have been or are at risk of exclusion. The author is aware that this emphasis can make the book seem critical of teachers. He tries to soften this by pointing to the system as a whole being unable to cope with the demands made on it by children in desperate need. This is, in his view, not only a resource issue, but also a fundamental failure of schools to be more flexible in trying to accommodate moods and behaviour that have their origins in family life. The need for school rules and routines is recognised, but there is a plea for greater curriculum flexibility and for greater understanding of the troubled lives led by many youngsters at risk of exclusion. Indeed the comparison between young people with physical or learning disabilities and those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties is one of the most telling in the book. The former have recognisable needs, requiring 'easily identified planning and management solutions. The potential benefits of extra school resources and raised social awareness are set against less time for other children. ... Difficult children are more demanding. ... Their problems seem insurmountable and plans made are likely to fail' (p. 57).

There are nine chapters. The first three focus on the need to see children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties as having special needs. The school should meet these needs with the help and support of others. Interestingly, Abdelnoor

advocates a single worker for families in trouble, describing the confusion and dysfunction that can arise when too many agencies are involved. A chapter on the need for an inclusive school ethos follows. The argument is that all the sophisticated specialist help in the world will be doomed to failure unless schools have a genuine commitment to retain children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The importance of developing outreach work from the school base so that the outreach worker has an understanding of school culture, is the main message of Chapter 5. The importance of sensitive assessment of needs once a good rapport between the outreach worker and the family has been established, a description of a number of therapeutic approaches and the possibilities and problems of reintegration into mainstream schooling form the remaining chapters. The main argument is summarised in the conclusion.

From this description, it may seem that the book is written more for the outreach workers or behaviour support teachers than for school teachers in general. This would be a mistake. There is much to give teachers food for thought, although particular therapeutic approaches may be the provenance of a small number of specialist staff. The book is easy to read and the case studies of individual pupils are compelling. This is not a book reporting carefully conducted empirical research. Rather it grows out of the serious reflection of an experienced school psychologist. It is English-oriented, despite the occasional recognition that other parts of the UK may do things differently. It contains a useful list of resources and websites in the appendices.

## POPULAR EDUCATION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN SCOTLAND TODAY

Jim Crowther, Ian Martin and Mae Shaw (eds) (Leicester: National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education, 1999) ISBN 1 86201 041 2 (312 pp, £14.95)

GARI DONN

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‘It would be disingenuous to suggest that there was no conflict between the intellectual independence promoted by the tutorial group and the demands of the module, which meant that the tutor must decide when a student had reached a certain level of “competence”... [yet] it is possible for students to acknowledge and utilise the professional expertise (skills?) of the tutor without conceding their own right to think and act critically...This has traditionally been fostered by the Socratic method employed in WEA tutorial groups.’

Margaret Beveridge writes the above, in her article which draws attention to the possibilities of interweaving instrumental objectives with liberal values. This book comprises twenty-five contributions and is divided into four sections that focus upon popular education in its theoretical, historical, socio-cultural action and practical contexts. However, there are, of course, themes that take the reader through and beyond these contexts. These themes coalesce around the nature of knowledge, the processes of learning and the products in praxis. It is up to each reader to undertake their own journey through the book — a process made easier by the careful interweaving of the different themes.

In Section 1, Ian Martin and his co-writers present a theoretical overview of the relationship between the emerging Scottish State, civil society and popular education. This is an area of interest to all those involved in and committed to ‘democratic

renewal'. The writers draw attention to the importance of active and committed citizenship in the march towards greater material equality and wider social justice. Crowther presents a historical understanding of the interconnections between popular education and the struggle for democracy and notes that popular education is about being 'self-consciously on the side of and committed to democratic renewal; it is the voice of the excluded, exploited and subordinated groups... it is about forging a common project of inclusive citizenship.' These, too, are the important issues to which Lindsay Paterson also draws attention. His focus is the inclusion of women in the movements of educational change.

At another level, the book presents an opportunity to travel a journey of re-awakened self-discovery. We read of the movements of popular education in Scotland (Kelly and Maan on Muslims in Scotland; Fisher on Socialist Sunday Schools; Mansfield on Dundee Jute workers) and movements of social and cultural action (Petrie and Shaw on the disability movement; MacPhail on the Assynt Crofters; McGrath on trade union education and Galloway on the Adult Learning Project). We are also made aware of what is going on elsewhere in the world (see Kane on the situation in Latin America). How many of us have been touched by the experiences of 'been there, done that, felt that'?

The connections in this book are the ones we wish to make as teachers, students, activists, as adults, as adult educators. How we recognise in the writings, for example, of Jean Barr ('Women, adult education and really useful knowledge') and in Margaret Beveridge's overview (of the types of knowledge and assessment now being introduced) the many frequently fulfilling journeys we have made. The literal journeys, on those cold wet, snowy, winter evenings, between Glasgow WEA and Continuing Education buildings and the adult education classes in Dunoon, Oban, Gourock, Rothesay and beyond, as well as the metaphorical journeys into our own learning pasts.

By recalling such journeys, we can agree with Scandrett, for example, that environmental education is about learning to reclaim the environment; it is about not having to accept unconditionally the noise and pollution that now surrounds us. It is about having access to and knowledge of the processes and procedures whereby intrusions into our lives come to be accepted by policy-makers. Scandrett draws attention to the possibilities for praxis and change that come with having and holding onto such knowledge — really useful knowledge.

We can agree with Robert Duncan, writing on the WEA, that the role of human agency may drive the modernist and post-modernist agendas into their next cultural forays, cul de sacs, or sites of meaningful cultural politics. The latter are perhaps the result of dynamic trade union activity in the democratic renewal project of the new Scotland (McGrath).

However, we may — as Martin asks us to — 'problematise' the spaces of debate and remember that learning is a 'process as well as an outcome'. Our own personal journeys are therefore as important as the theoretical and historical understandings. The latter are, of course, central to any coherent and theoretical account of popular education and social movements in the democratic renewal of Scotland of today (and tomorrow). What this book does is invite us to undertake our own journey, and to formulate our own conception of education in civil society.

It is an exciting project. One that says to us: 'Yes! You were there! You travelled to those classes. You worked with those trade unionists. You talked with those students, those adults, those learners, those people. We have all been involved'. But it goes beyond this — the book draws from our past the possibilities for our present and our future. Having been there, let us carry on and go further. The project of democratic renewal takes different forms at different historical epochs. The era we move into will need us: be there!

Oh yes, and buy the book!

## TRAVELLER CHILDREN: A VOICE FOR THEMSELVES

Cathy Kiddle (London: Jessica Kingsley, 1999) ISBN 1 85302 684 0 (174 pp, £15.95 paperback)

BETTY JORDAN

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This book is to be welcomed for a variety of reasons: it is the first of its kind since the seminal Schools Council text (Reiss, 1975), and it extends and fleshes out some of the issues raised in the Swann Report (1985), Hawes and Perez (1997), the OFSTED Reports (1996; 1999) and Kenrick and Clark (1999). It gives an accurate flavour of the Travellers' continuing dilemma with school education. At the same time it opens up an area of disadvantage and underachievement in education which is relatively little known and even less understood. It speaks with authority, and with the permission of the client group it represents, and of their interactions with the dominant group and the institutions supposedly designed to serve all. It exposes the depth of the largely unacknowledged and unchallenged racism and institutional discrimination experienced daily by Travellers. Above all it tells the Travellers' stories sensitively and accurately.

For those of us who have researched in this difficult area, Kiddle's abilities to get to the nub of the matter are worthy of the deepest respect. Her ability to communicate with policy-makers, practitioners and Travellers is reflected not only in the way she synthesises historical, legal, sociological and pedagogical research and information, but also is evident in the quality of the interactions she has achieved with the various players, not least the Travellers. She has no pretensions to being a researcher, and there is no doubt that writing this book was indeed a challenge, but her knowledge of both schools and Travellers allows a depth of analysis and interpretation not normally to be found in 'Traveller' texts.

Written in the first person singular, it is very much a personal account of a journey of discovery, stretching over thirty years of involvement in teaching and working with Travellers. Like any 'good read' it flows, as Kiddle uses a wealth of factual information, evocative incidents and direct quotes to contextualise and sharpen the reader's perceptions, bringing an other's reality into focus. The historical and legal aspects are outlined with many useful references to fuller sources (Chapter 1) and the author's honest and careful reflections help to explain the complexity of the issues which affect Travellers' participation in state education (Chapters 2, 4 and 6). Schools and service providers are now required to be more responsive and supportive of all in our pluralist society, yet still few make much effort to engage Travellers or help raise their expectations of equality of opportunity in state education (Chapters 2 and 3). Even fewer have any understanding of the Travellers' cultures, aspirations and achievements, and the tensions and dilemmas they face in a rapidly changing job market (Chapters 5 and 7). The media tend to focus on the more negative aspects of Travellers' interactions with the majority group and rarely reflect any breadth in reporting underlying issues. This book reveals the richness of Traveller life, as well as the harsh reality, the continued social exclusion and the lack of rights to a school place, particularly for those who are mobile (Chapter 8).

Unusually for writers on Travellers, Kiddle bravely tackles the delicate issue of parental responsibility for ensuring the child has a broad education. Why do so many Travellers reject schooling? Are they afraid to expose their children to taunts and name-calling? Or are they careless of their children's future? The reader will learn that such explanations are too simple, and to appreciate the range of threats which schooling can offer, such as overt racism, bullying and name-calling.

There are clear parallels with the loss of strong cultural identity experienced in other minority groups as school education has broadened their children's minds and provided options for work and socialising beyond the immediate family and community. Travellers, who have had little education and have learned themselves that there is little immediate reward from the experience of school, have little cultural capital to draw on. They thus face particular challenges in making demands and getting appropriate responses from schools. Educationalists like Cathy Kiddle have taken on the task of supporting and enabling Travellers as clients, while at the same time challenging them to risk letting their children share the school experience. As a result more Travellers are beginning and completing their education with the full support of their parents.

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## HOW TO PROMOTE CHILDREN'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE

Carolyn Webster-Stratton. (London: Paul Chapman Publishing, 1999) ISBN: 0-7619-6501-7 (319pp £16.99 paperback)

EFFIE MACLELLAN

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I came across this text by accident and am delighted to have the opportunity to review it. The text observes the American nomenclature of referring to pupils as 'students' and it also uses the American spelling of 'behaviour'. While I found this to be slightly irritating to begin with (when the publishing house has a base in the UK), the content very quickly engaged me and so I became less distracted by these somewhat inconsequential details. The text is intended for teachers (of children aged 3 to 10 years) who are concerned to promote pro-social behaviour, and is organised around eleven chapters.

A fairly detailed introduction sets the context for the remainder of the text: it acknowledges that many teachers themselves can experience considerable stress if they are constantly dealing with what they perceive to be difficult pupils and difficult classes. Such teachers can find themselves weighed down and overwhelmed by difficult children and in their attempts to find ways of managing, can engage in practices which are detrimental and self-defeating. It is therefore important that teachers develop strategies to prevent their stress from becoming debilitating. This theme underpins the remainder of the text.

The first three chapters deal with the pre-requisites of promoting pro-social behaviour: of developing good working relationships with parents, of developing positive relationships with pupils and of being a proactive teacher. These chapters are

premised on the notion that affective learning is as important as cognitive learning and recognise the important role which the teacher plays in providing a framework which assists in the social and emotional growth of the child.

Chapters four to eight focus on how socially acceptable behaviour can be promoted and on how unacceptable behaviour can be attenuated if not extinguished. These chapters draw heavily on behavioural psychology but are written in a non-technical style. Important concepts such as the nature of rewards for appropriate behaviour, the effective use of rewards, ignoring (mis)behaviour, natural and logical consequences and time out are dealt with most carefully. Not only are the concepts explained and exemplified but also the potential for misunderstanding on the part of the reader is anticipated through the author's consideration of, for example, when it is not appropriate to ignore behaviour, the potential effects of mis-matching behaviour and consequence and the pitfalls of time out.

The remaining chapters, nine, ten and eleven consider pro-social behaviour from the pupil's perspective: of the need for pupils to appreciate that they are agents in their own behaviour and that they have a responsibility to manage their behaviour in socially acceptable ways; of the need for pupils to manage their interactions with friends and peers and finally, of the need for pupils to handle their own emotions. These chapters make clear that pupils need to learn to distinguish between realistic and unrealistic expectations of the teacher and that is a mark of the pupil's increasing social and emotional competence to be able to find appropriate and acceptable solutions to his/her own problems.

This text heightens awareness that one of the consequences of human interaction is that there can be differences between people in terms of values, attitudes and understandings and that these differences have to be confronted and resolved rather than ignored or avoided. More than that, however, it takes the ordinary, everyday situations in which both teachers and pupils find themselves and uses these to contextualise the ideas with which teachers have themselves to engage if they are to enable children to extend their family relationships to relate to teachers in school, to learning within a group and to functioning in an educational establishment.

This text would, in my view, be most useful to pre-service teachers and to para-professionals concerned with pre-school and primary education. In very accessible language it provides an excellent introduction to the field of pro-social behaviour. Each chapter's focus is explored both conceptually and in terms of practical implementation and for the keen reader there is also a list of references at the end. For teacher education tutors looking for a text which will both engage the students and enhance their learning in an area which is only beginning to be understood as important, this text should be seriously considered.

## DAVID DALE OF NEW LANARK

David J. McLaren (Glasgow, Caring Books, 1999) ISBN 0-9523649-3-X (£5.99, paperback)

LORNA DAVIDSON

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At the time of writing this review, the documents are in preparation which will be submitted to UNESCO in support of the nomination of New Lanark for inscription on the list of World Heritage Sites. Robert Owen, the Welshman who owned and managed the New Lanark cotton-mills from 1800-1825, is a famous name in the social and economic history of Britain; indeed his fame is international. He is not infrequently referred to as the founder of New Lanark. It is timely, therefore, to revisit the life and career of the enterprising Scot who *actually* founded the settlement, Owen's father-in-law David Dale.

David Dale was born in 1739 into a modest home in rural Scotland. He was to become one of his country's best known entrepreneurs, involved in a great many business, financial and industrial ventures, and as greatly respected for his benevolence and charitable works as for his commercial achievements. By far the most successful of his business ventures, even before it was taken over by Robert Owen, was New Lanark. David McLaren's book attempts to achieve several different things: to provide a more complete biographical account of Dale's life than has previously existed; to assess his business and financial acumen in the context of 18<sup>th</sup> century Scotland; to consider the role his deeply-held Christian views played in his life and work, and, not least, to evaluate the contribution he made to Owen's later success at New Lanark. The book does all of these, but also includes a wealth of fascinating insights into the society in which Dale operated.

Curiously, although we perceive our present-day society to be so much farther advanced than that of Scotland in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, we find surprising parallels with our own time: David Dale, like many modern self-made entrepreneurs, worked tirelessly, made a great deal of money, lived in an architect-designed mansion in the city, had another house in the country, sat on many boards and committees and gave generously to good causes. He was hailed as "a bright luminary to Scotland" and lavishly praised for his generous treatment of parish apprentices. David McLaren is careful to avoid taking at face value some of the more fulsome praise directed towards Dale, and attempts a fair evaluation of his deeds and motivation. How much did self-interest and good business sense influence his actions, at the time when, for example, he continued to pay his workers at New Lanark when production was halted by a fire which destroyed the only mill? When it is remembered that Dale had been hard put to attract sufficient workers in the first place, it could reasonably be argued that it would have been short-sighted to say the least to see them dispersed again for want of a few shillings. Was his accommodation and education of hundreds of destitute orphans any more than a shrewd investment in employment training, from which his own business would reap the benefits? Robert Owen's later treatment of his employees at New Lanark, arguably building on the foundations laid down by Dale, attracts the same arguments. Was he really a liberal and enlightened employer, or did he merely understand that a well-educated and healthy workforce was a huge advantage in an era when industry still depended more on human labour than on technology?

David McLaren's book gives us the chance to make our own judgements, by reproducing the text of some of the few surviving letters written by Dale himself. In 1791, a ship carrying would-be emigrants from the Highlands and Islands was

storm-damaged off the West Coast of Scotland. A combination of opportunism and philanthropy induced Dale to send a representative to Greenock to tempt the sick and disillusioned passengers with work and houses at New Lanark. Clearly Dale needed workers, but his letter published in the Scots Magazine, as well as encouraging others to do whatever was possible to prevent emigration from Scotland, gives a clue, I believe, to his genuine humanity. He writes "I have sent up in waggons a number of families to Lanark, and the rest are *in my house* (my italics), waiting the return of the waggons to carry up the whole". His house was one of the finest in the city at that time, an elegant mansion designed by the eminent Georgian architect Robert Adam; a plan of it and a photograph of the exterior are reproduced in the book. The Highlanders who had endured appalling conditions on board the ship, were undoubtedly filthy and ill, yet he did not hesitate to open his door to them.

Among the most interesting aspects of this book is the way in which McLaren has drawn on contemporary records and documents, such as those relating to the Town's Hospital, the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, institutions in which Dale was much involved. We discover something of the lives of the poor and unfortunate at that period, such as the nature of the practical skills they were taught – working thread lace and tambouring muslin, as well as the education they received from, apparently, a single schoolmaster who doubled as Chaplain – arithmetic, reading, writing and catechising. "*The Catechism was taught from books with misleading titles such as A Collection of Words in our Assembly's Catechism in an Easy and Natural Order, compiled for the use of the Town's Hospital in 1748. This consists of daunting lists of words arranged alphabetically and according to the number of syllables, a companion to the Catechism but with no explanation of its meaning*". McLaren rightly points out that the conditions for the apprentices at New Lanark in Dale's own establishment were superior. In 1796 there were 507 pupils. "Thirteen teachers were employed to teach reading, two to teach writing and one to teach the pupils how to "figure". In addition, there was one teacher who taught sewing and one who occasionally taught church music. Moreover, the apprentices at New Lanark were not housed alongside the aged, chronically sick and mentally infirm as they were in the Town's Hospital.

Similarly, McLaren uses the available records and contemporary newspaper accounts to chart Dale's progress from small businessman to prominent banker and entrepreneur. He became, among other things, the agent for the Royal Bank of Scotland's first branch in Glasgow, Chairman of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, a Bailie in the city, and was equally well-known as a lay-preacher for the Old Scotch Independents.

This book is a valuable source of information about all aspects of Dale's life, but equally, and especially if one were to follow up the references given in the copious footnotes, an excellent summary of such diverse themes as the development of the cotton-manufacturing industry in Scotland, the social and educational provision for the poor and destitute, the rise of independent churches, the development of modern banking and the growth of the city of Glasgow itself. There are numerous interesting illustrations, such as a map of the area around the Gallowgate published in 1783, a plan of the village of Catrine, and a diagram of Richard Arkwright's water-frame.

In another of his letters, written to his father advising him of his infant daughter's death, and reproduced in the Appendix, David Dale writes "*What is our life? It is even as a vapour that continueth a little and then vanisheth away*". What would he have made of the fact that his own life and work has left such a tangible legacy? It is no small achievement to have founded a settlement that over 200 years later is being nominated as a site of outstanding universal value. David McLaren's book is an admirably succinct and readable account of David Dale's life and work.



## MEN IN THE NURSERY: GENDER AND CARING WORK

Claire Cameron, Peter Moss and Charlie Owen (Paul Chapman Publishing, 1999)  
ISBN 1 85396 388 7 (192 pp £16.99 paperback)

CATHERINE ADAMS

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This book describes an investigation into the gendered nature of staff in early years employment. The title should not dissuade readers who seek general issues in early years provision as it raises awareness of differing constructions of the young child, pedagogical styles, views of parental involvement and staff relationships which deserve a wide audience.

Mature entry to training, resistance to macho peer pressure, and gendered career guidance are examples of career pathways which echo other work on male entrants to nursing and primary teaching. The least convincing chapter "The Institution" discusses gendered practice, setting up a case for considering the 'otherness' of male workers, e.g. in relation to life outwith the workplace, in which broad assumptions and generalisations have been made about staff socialising behaviour. The small sample in the study is never claimed as representative of male experience but no analysis of factors such as age or interests is applied to the socialising behaviour of all-female staffs.

"Practice with Parents" aims to identify differences to staff-parent relations achieved by employing men. The chapter also analyses differing views on what constitutes 'parental involvement' stressing the central aim of 'building a relationship', which is problematic for male workers because of the elision of 'parent' and 'mother' in the discourses and literature of the early years. "Parents' responses to male childcare workers" suggests a disadvantage of possibility of abuse but produces various examples of advantage which place a huge responsibility on men in childcare institutions to compensate for missing fathers and demonstrate a balance of domestic/caring roles in society in general. The Child Protection chapter clarifies the authors' view that issues of gender in childcare practice and issues of potential sexual abuse in early childhood services must be separated for the benefit of *all* workers.

Early childhood services are suffused with gendered ideas and understandings. The authors state: "Making gender ... subject to reflexive debate enables questions about the purpose and ethos of caring work to emerge", however workers in this study complain of too few opportunities to reflect on practice. Perhaps the key is suggested in Jensen (1996), which is seminal to the thinking within this book and suggests a 'gender pedagogy'. Davies (1989,1993) and Francis (1998) describe ways of helping young children to see themselves both as producers and consumers of culture and the gender constructions which are part of that culture. Early childhood workers who plan for children to be 'co-constructive learners', as advocated in chapter 1, will, through their provision for children, confront key issues of gender identity and this may help them realise the limitations for women as well as men of gendered views of their own employment. Gender is invisible in childcare until it is consciously invoked. This book initiates a long-overdue discussion.

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