LOOKING AGAIN AT NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL EDUCATION TOWARDS A NEW PARADIGM

Prepared by

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CHAPTER I

LOOKING AGAIN AT NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL EDUCATION - TOWARDS A NEW PARADIGM

By Alan Rogers

Alan Rogers explores the confused usage of the terms non-formal and informal education and suggests a way forward.

a. Introduction

contents: **introduction** | **defining non-formal education** | **non-formal education in the field: from the 1980s to today** | **non-formal education and lifelong learning/education** | **towards a new paradigm** | **bibliography** | **how to cite this article**

There is a renewed interest in **non-formal education** (NFE) today. And it is significant that this interest comes not so much from the so-called 'Third World' (I use this term to refer to poor countries in receipt of aid from rich countries, because many other persons use it as a short-hand. But I find it objectionable - see **non-formal education, colonialism and development**). As the Council of Europe recently said,

The Assembly recognises that formal educational systems alone cannot respond to the challenges of modern society and therefore welcomes its reinforcement by non-formal educational practices.

The Assembly recommends that governments and appropriate authorities of member states recognise non-formal education as a de facto partner in the lifelong process and make it accessible for all (Coun Eur 2000).

b. Defining non-formal education

The original version of **non-formal education** emerged in 1968 (Coombs 1968). It arose in the context of the widespread feeling that education was failing (e.g. **Illich** 1973), not just in developing countries but also in so-called Western (or Northern) societies as well (e.g. Bowles and Gintis 1976 among others). In the West, the reform movement took different forms, but in all planning and policy-making in relation to education in developing countries from 1968 until about 1986, non-formal education was seen as the panacea for all the ills of education in

those societies (**Freire** 1972 and others). Most aid agencies included non-formal education in their portfolio of interventions, and the sums spent on it (much in Western countries especially USA for academics, research centres, consultants, publications and reports etc), were substantial. By many non-formal education was seen as the 'ideal' form of education, far better in all respects than formal education. By others however, it came to be seen as a sub-system of education, certainly not superior and by some as considerably inferior to formal schooling. It could even be described as a temporary 'necessary evil' in situations of crisis until formal schooling could be restored (Pigozzi 1999).

The discourse of non-formal education divided the world of education into two, one of the many famous dichotomies of the period. On the one hand is formal education:

Formal education as used here is, of course, the highly institutionalized, chronologically graded and hierarchically structured 'education system', spanning lower primary school and the upper reaches of the university (Coombs and Ahmed 1974:8).

But formal education was never closely defined - the use of the words 'of course' in this quotation shows that it was assumed that everybody could recognise the formal system of education.

On the other hand is non-formal education. Non-formal education was defined as every educational activity outside of formal:

Nonformal education … is any organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the population, adults as well as children (Coombs and Ahmed 1974: 8).

But that too was very imprecise, and every country interpreted non-formal education in their own way. For some, it meant every educational programme provided by the Ministry of Education apart from the schools and colleges (e.g. adult literacy classes). For others, it meant educational programmes like schooling provided by non-governmental agencies (NGOs). For yet others, it comprised all the educational and training activities of other Ministries (Women's Affairs, Health, Labour and Employment, Youth and Sports and Culture etc etc). Others again included within non-formal education the individualised learning programmes for different and specific learning groups - women's discussion groups, for example, programmes which approximate closely to social work and specialist counselling, whether provided by the state, NGOs, commercial agencies or other civil society bodies (religious organisations, trade unions, new social movements etc). Some took it to mean every educational activity apart from schools and colleges, including radio and television programmes, the print media (newspapers and magazines etc). Whenever one reads any statement about non-

formal education at that time, it is important to ask what definition of non-formal education is being used.

There was a third element - informal education. But when one looks carefully at what Coombs and Ahmed say about informal education, there is a major problem which many writers at the time pointed out. They are really speaking about 'informal learning', not informal education'. Like everybody else, they define 'education' as planned and purposeful learning; but they call 'informal education' all that learning that goes on outside of any planned learning situation - such as cultural events.

Informal education as used here is the lifelong process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences and exposure to the environment - at home, at work, at play; from the example and attitudes of family and friends; from travel, reading newspapers and books; or by listening to the radio or viewing films or television. Generally, informal education is unorganized and often unsystematic; yet it accounts for the great bulk of any person's total lifetime learning - including that of even a highly 'schooled' person (Coombs and Ahmed 1974:8).

In other words, it is very close to what some people define as 'experiential learning' (another term which carries wide divergences of meaning whenever it is used). Since it is unorganised, total lifetime learning, it is clear that we are talking here about informal learning, not informal education. This is a vital distinction to make, for it remains a fact that almost everyone who used the non-formal education discourse either omitted informal education altogether or they used the term in the sense of informal learning. Nobody at this time defined informal education except in terms of unstructured learning. The non-formal education discourse divides the world of education into two, formal and non-formal, all of which is set inside a wider context of informal learning.

c. Non-formal education in the field: from the 1980s to today

From 1986 the debate about non-formal education (one of the most extensive in education's history) declined. Today there is almost no discussion about the nature and role of non-formal education apart from a few articles which simply repeat the earlier debate (and they reveal clearly its inadequacies). But during the 1980s and since then, programmes labelled non-formal education have spread enormously throughout Third World countries. And (as with the Education for All debate which began prior to the Jomtien Conference in 1990 and still informs much educational policy and planning in developing countries), the term has been hijacked by children's education. There was one strand of non-formal education from the start which included children's alternative schooling (for out-of-school-youth), but this normally concentrated on those younger persons who were too old to go to school. Now large programmes of schooling for school-aged children are run under the title of non-formal education: BRAC in Bangladesh for example,

runs over 34,000 Non-formal Primary Schools and other providers take that figure up to well over 50,000 such schools. Similar programmes are run in many countries in Asia and Africa: Mali has a large non-formal education primary school programme (community schools). In other countries such as the Philippines and Thailand, national non-formal education programmes of accreditation and equivalency for adults have been created, offering a second-chance schooling to those who missed out or did not complete their primary schooling.

There are of course some exceptions to this trend of identifying non-formal education with alternative schools for children and adults. The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) has set up a non-formal education working group which sees non-formal education in a wider sense than this (but also including non-formal schools for children). They want to try to identify all parts of the non-formal education world (agricultural and health extension, for example, women's programmes, income-generation training, environmental enhancement activities etc) and seek to integrate then into one non-formal education system, so that all such activities can be co-opted by government to help with the development of the country. Ethiopia is a prime example of this approach, with its national Directory of non-formal education. Under structural adjustment, with a smaller role for the state, it is felt to be important that all agencies engaged in any form of education and training, especially civil society bodies such as trade unions and the churches and other religious bodies, should contribute towards the national development goals.

But on the whole non-formal education in this context (education in developing countries) now seems to refer to more informal ways of providing schooling to children (and some adults who need it). When asked what is 'non-formal' about such a national system of schooling leading to recognised certificates or equivalent qualifications, the answer comes back that they are more 'flexible'. They have less well qualified and trained teachers. They have a simplified form of curriculum. They often have different teaching-learning materials. They are frequently part-time and have more flexible dates of terms than the so-called formal schools. In some cases, they are viewed by educationalists and parents alike as a better form of schooling than the state schools; at other times, they are viewed as inferior, second-class.

d. Non-formal education and lifelong learning/education

Today, as we have seen, there is a new interest in the concept of non-formal education. It comes from a very different arena - Western post-industrial societies, and from a very different source - the discourse of **lifelong learning/education**. If one constructs education as a unitary activity which exists throughout life, then it becomes important to find new ways of breaking it into manageable units for handling the concept. The former divisions into primary, secondary and higher are precisely what lifelong learning/education wants to get rid of. Lifelong learning/education sees learning as taking place not simply in

schools and colleges but throughout the whole of life, in many different locations and times. In order to embrace the totality of all forms of education under the rubric of lifelong education, the discourse of lifelong learning speaks of education "formal and non-formal" (sometimes with "informal" education or learning thrown in as well). Since lifelong learning/education has itself been co-opted by the states to two main aims, helping economic growth and promoting active citizenship, then the interest of the state and other agencies in non-formal education is with its contribution to these two ends (Aspin et al 2001; Field and Leicester 2000).

But there is great uncertainty in this context as to what constitutes non-formal education, what the term refers to, what is its meaning. There are at least two main reasons for this. First, with the increasing diversity of formal education, it is no longer clear what is and what is not included under the rubric of formal education. Is open and distance learning part of formal or non-formal education? Are private commercial educational programmes leading to officially recognised (often state-sponsored) qualifications part of the formal system or not? What about e-learning? What about the many different forms of schooling which are emerging? What about commercial 'universities' or work-based degree programmes? Where does formal end and non-formal begin?

Secondly, the term non-formal education now covers a very wide continuum of educational programmes. At one extreme lies the flexible schooling model - national or regional sub-systems of schools for children, youth and adults. At the other extreme are the highly participatory educational programmes, hand-knitted education and training, tailor-made for each particular learning group, one-off teaching events to meet particular localised needs. Most educational programmes will of course lie somewhere between these two points. But to include both kinds of provision under the heading of non-formal education tends to lead to confusion, for they are very different in spirit and in form.

e. Towards a new paradigm

This distinction is sometimes conceptualised in terms of contextualisation. Some learning activities and teaching-learning materials are highly contextualised - chosen or created for this one learning group alone with considerable involvement of the learner group in the design of both curriculum and learning materials. This is sometimes called self-directed or participatory education (Mocker et al 1982; Campbell and Burnaby 1999). Adult education at one time was based on this principle - adults chose what they wanted to learn, so that the curriculum was built by each learning group and around their particular interests. The outcomes were not pre-set but chosen by the participants, and the evaluation was made by the participants in terms of their personal satisfaction with whether the programme met their individual needs at the time. Other learning programmes are however less highly contextualised, with pre-set outcomes, a pre-set curriculum (however adapted it might be to the group), brought-in materials

(which may again be adapted or supplemented by each participant group), and standardised forms of evaluation.

One way of understanding this distinction is through group dynamics and organisational theory. Groups can be located on a continuum from very formal to very informal. A formal group is one which does not change as new members join it. The army is a clear example of a formal group. An informal group is one which is highly dependent on the individual members, so that if someone joins or leaves, the nature of the group and the activities it can undertake will also change. A drama group or a sports team are examples of this kind of group. If someone from a drama group leaves or a new person joins, the whole team is affected and the kind of plays which the group can perform will also be different. Most groups of course lie somewhere in the middle and groups often move along the continuum in both directions.

If we could apply this to education, such a concept would help us to define formal as well as non-formal education. We could say that at one extreme of this continuum lies formal education - education which does not change when new participants join. A university chemistry course will not change according to the participants. It may well change for other reasons but these are determined by the provider, not in consultation with the student-learners. A school history curriculum is set by the educational agencies - it rarely varies very much according to the interests of the class being taught. If you visit several such learning programmes, you will be able to identify the common elements. At the other extreme lies the educational programme or activity which is made up by the facilitator/teacher in association with the participants - a creative writing course or a reading circle, for example. The most extreme form of this kind of education and training is the single-learner provision to meet an individual need. If you visit several such programmes, each will be doing different things with different aims and purposes, and it will be harder to identify the common elements.

Most educational programmes of course lie somewhere between these two extremes. A women's assertiveness group for example will have some common elements as well as highly individualised or participatory activities. Some forms of schooling find ways of including the particular interests of the different classes within the learning programme. Most programmes will be partly formal and partly informal. Some parts of the programme will be determined by the participants, others are given by the providing agency. And most programmes will move along this continuum in both directions from time to time - going from formal to informal and from informal to formal. Both forms of education are important elements in the total learning experience.

But we need to identify what kind of areas of the programme are in fact devolved to the learning group and what parts are retained by the providing agency. For example, in many forms of non-formal schooling, issues of the time and location of meetings, the dates of 'holidays', and such logistical issues are often left to the

local community to determine. But matters of the curriculum and teaching-learning materials, the length of the learning programme, the form and timing of the evaluation process are all matters reserved to the providing agency. There is an assumption (often shared on both sides) that the participants are not capable of determining such matters. This is what I would call **flexible schooling** - the standardised elements common to all such learning groups are clearly schooling but the participatory elements mean that it is schooling made flexible to the local group concerned.

We have then an educational continuum as follows:

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formal education   **flexible schooling**   **participatory education**
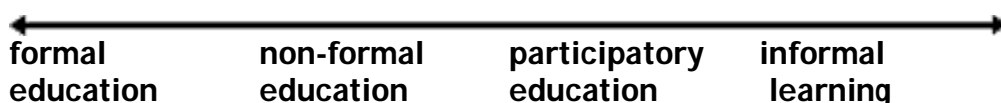
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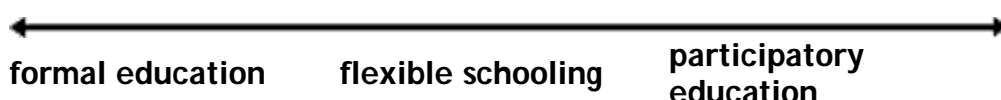
But unfortunately at the moment the term 'non-formal education' (that is everything that is not formal) is used to cover *both* flexible schooling and highly participatory education. And that is the cause of the confusion which the term arouses in the minds of the listener.

I wonder whether a more useful set of descriptors might not be as follows:

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formal   **non-formal**   **informal**

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- non-formal then covering flexible schooling and informal education covering highly contextualised, highly participatory educational activities.

And to make sure that we do not fall into the problems created by Coombs and Ahmed in their classic studies, we could draw a distinction between education and learning and extend the continuum in this way:

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formal   **non-formal**   **participatory**   **informal**
education   **education**   **education**   **learning**

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- informal learning being all that incidental learning, unstructured, unpurposeful but the most extensive and most important part of all the learning that all of us do everyday of our lives, as I have shown elsewhere (Rogers 2003).

These are not of course categories. The boundaries between each of these 'sectors' are very fuzzy indeed. But the distinctions are very real. Learning is the keystone; it is the original matter out of which all education is created. Somewhere along the learning continuum, we come to purposeful and assisted learning (education in its widest sense). When we control this and individualise it, learn what we want for as long as we want and stop when we want, we are

engaging in informal education. When we step into a pre-existing learning programme but mould it to our own circumstances, we are engaged in non-formal education. When we surrender our autonomy and join a programme and accept its externally imposed discipline, we are immersed in formal education.

Would such a reconceptualization of formal and non-formal (and informal) education help to sort out the confusion which undoubtedly exists?

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CHAPTER II

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Within policy debates a common differentiation has been made between different forms of provision. Informal, non-formal, and formal programmes have been viewed as very different. Here we explore this categorization and some of the forms of work that exist under the non-formal label in southern countries.

a. Introduction

contents: | **introduction** | **the idea of non-formal education** | **the use of the term** | **formal and non-formal programmes** | **top down - bottom up** | **pointers to evaluating non-formal education** | **conclusion** | **further reading and references** | **links**

Non-formal education became part of the international discourse on education policy in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It can be seen as related to the concepts of recurrent and lifelong learning. Tight (1996: 68) suggests that whereas the latter concepts have to do with the extension of education and learning throughout life, non-formal education is about 'acknowledging the importance of education, learning and training which takes place outside recognized educational institutions'. Fordham (1993) suggests that in the 1970s, four characteristics came be associated with non-formal education:

- Relevance to the needs of disadvantaged groups.
- Concern with specific categories of person.
- A focus on clearly defined purposes.
- Flexibility in organization and methods.

In many northern countries the notion of non-formal education is not common in internal policy debates - preferred alternatives being **community education and community learning**, **informal education** and **social pedagogy**.

b. The idea of non-formal education

As Fordham (1993) relates, in 1967 at an international conference in Williamsburg USA, ideas were set out for what was to become a widely read analysis of the growing 'world educational crisis' (Coombs 1968). There was concern about unsuitable curricula; a realization that educational growth and economic growth
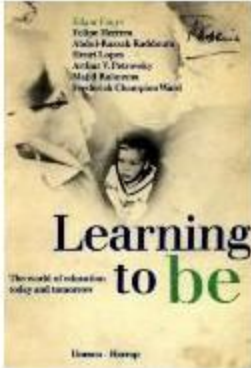
were not necessarily in step, and that jobs did not emerge directly as a result of educational inputs. Many countries were finding it difficult (politically or economically) to pay for the expansion of formal education.

The conclusion was that formal educational systems had adapted too slowly to the socio-economic changes around them and that they were held back not only by their own conservatism, but also by the inertia of societies themselves. If we also accept that educational policy making tends to follow rather than lead other social trends, then it followed that change would have to come not merely from within formal schooling, but from the wider society and from other sectors within it. It was from this point of departure that planners and economists in the World Bank began to make a distinction between informal, non-formal and formal education. (Fordham 1993: 2)

At around the same time there were moves in UNESCO toward **lifelong education** and notions of '**the learning society**' which culminated in *Learning to Be* ('The Faure Report', UNESCO 1972). Lifelong learning was to be the 'master concept' that should shape educational systems (UNESCO 1972:182). What emerged was an influential tripartite categorization of learning systems. It's best known statement comes from the work of Combs with Prosser and Ahmed (1973):

Formal education: the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded 'education system', running from primary school through the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialised programmes and institutions for full-time technical and professional training.

Informal education: the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment - from family and neighbours, from work and play, from the market place, the library and the mass media.

Non-formal education: any organised educational activity outside the established formal system - whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity - that is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives.

The distinction made is largely administrative. Formal education is linked with schools and training institutions; non-formal with community groups and other organizations; and informal covers what is left, e.g. interactions with friends, family and work colleagues. (See, for example, Coombs and Ahmed 1974). The problem with this is that people often organize educational events as part of their everyday experience and so the lines blur rapidly. As Fordham (1993) comments, these definitions do not imply hard and fast categories. In particular, there may well be some overlap (and confusion) between the informal and the non-formal.

Just how helpful a focus on administrative setting or institutional sponsorship is a matter of some debate. Once we recognize that a considerable amount of education happens beyond the school wall it may be that a simple division between formal and informal education will suffice. It has certainly been the argument of Jeffs and Smith (1990) that the notion of non-formal education has limited use when thinking about process.

c. So why the term's currency?

Just because something does not make sense in terms of process, does not mean an idea doesn't retain its currency. It has been a convenient way of talking about funding rather than the actual process. As Graham-Brown (1991: 64) says, dividing formal education from out of school education or so-called non-formal education is artificial in many ways. But in some countries, this division reflects the gulf between government provision through the school system, on the one hand, and the needs and interests of marginal populations who are most alienated from the system on the other.

The range of initiatives and programmes that have adopted the title 'non-formal' are many and various. They include literacy and basic education for adults and young people, political and trade union education, 'catching-up' programmes for school drop outs, pre-school education for young children, political and trade union education and various kinds of educational work linked with development initiatives including agricultural extension and training programmes and health education. They also shade over into various examples of both state and private vocational training programmes. The McGivney and Murray (1992) collection *Adult Education in Development* gives a good feel of the sorts of initiatives this might include. They look particularly at health education, literacy, rural development and the role of women in development. However, it can be confusing to use terms like adult education in the context of Southern education - given the age distribution of populations and the large numbers of young people involved in non-formal programmes.

What is also apparent from the literature is that it was politically useful to use a term like non-formal education. As Shukla (1985) has argued by the mid 1960s it was becoming clear that an education system based around schooling could not be sustained because of the sheer cost to already fragile economies. A search for 'new' techniques was therefore on. Second, within the north it was becoming clear that the school was only one amongst many potential educative elements. Concepts such as '**the learning society**' were gaining some currency. Third, there was the impact of movements such as that of deschooling (after **Illich**).

These were essentially 'western' concerns. At the same time a number of socialist countries initiated large programmes for changing the consciousness, skills and organizations of their populations. They typically used many of the forms that we now label as non-formal education:

Specially trained educators (maybe for 4 or 5 weeks) (not teachers) sent out to local villages etc to set up and run programmes and recruit further helpers and group members.

- The use of mass media such as radio and television, things like newsheets and comics.
- Provision on a mass scale - a whole region or country is targeted.
- Sometimes formal, sometimes informal sanctions against those who did not participate.

Many of these programmes apparently met with considerable success. In this respect Russia, Cuba, Tanzania, Somalia, Ethiopia and Nicaragua were often quoted as having organised successful mass campaigns - particularly in respect of literacy (Coles 1987: 38).

By the mid 1970s a number of non-socialist countries were beginning to turn to the idea of mass non-formal education. It was clear that there remained a large scale and apparently growing problem of illiteracy. It was also clear that economic and social development depended on bringing about changes in many people's thinking.

The development process is in fact an educational process, or rather it should unfailingly be viewed as such. We cannot therefore conceive of development in the absence of education any more than education in the absence of development. (Faundez 1988 quoted by McGivney & Murray 1991: 10)

How, for example, were people to learn to plant new crops or varieties or to farm in ways that might increase production?

There was a further shift amongst the donor agencies working in the South. Whereas there had been a great emphasis on the provision of plant, and particularly prestigious projects, there was a growing realization that development primarily depended on the people themselves and that much more stress should be placed on improving their quality of life. This called for new approaches to formal education; it also gave considerable impetus to non-formal education, and especially to basic education for those who had been largely neglected - the urban and rural poor (Coles 1987: 37). The problem was that these sorts of programmes had not been tried in the market and political conditions associated with Southern capitalist societies.

d. Contrasts between 'formal' and 'non-formal' programmes

Simkins (1976) analysed non-formal education programme in terms of purposes, timing, content delivery systems and control, and contrasted these with formal educational programmes. The resulting ideal-types provide a useful framework - and bring out the extent to which non-formal education initiatives, while emphasizing flexibility, localness and responsiveness remain located within a

curricula form of education (in contrast with those forms driven by conversation).

Ideal-type models of normal and non-formal education

	formal	non-formal
purposes	Long-term & general Credential-based	Short-term & specific Non-credential-based
timing	Long cycle / preparatory / full-time	Short cycle / recurrent / part- time
content	Standardized / input centered academic Entry requirements Determine clientele	Individualized / output centered Practical Clientele determine entry requirements
delivery system	Institution-based, isolated from environment. Rigidly structured, teacher- centered and resource intensive	Environment-based, community related. Flexible, learner-centered and resource saving
control	external / hierarchical	self-governing / democratic

(Adapted by Fordham 1993 from Simkins 1977: 12-15)

e. 'Top down and bottom up'

One of the enduring themes in the literature of non-formal education, according to Fordham (1993), has been that the education provided should be in the interests of the learners and that the organization and curriculum planning should preferably be undertaken by the learners themselves: that it should be `bottom up'. It is also often argued that this should empower learners to understand and if necessary change the social structure around them. Fordham (1993) continues: 'Examples where there is a genuine sense of ownership are not easy to find; and almost all have an element of community outreach as part of the general organization'.
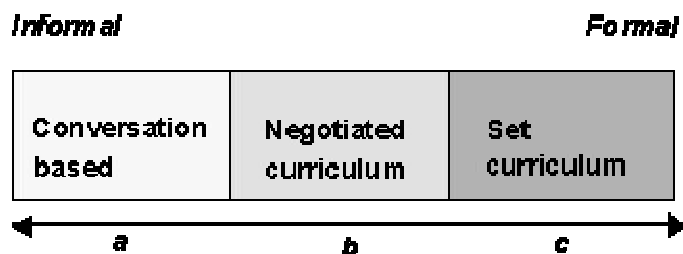
On the other hand examples of top-down non-formal programmes are all too common. Almost all employer-led and State provided training falls into this category. This can be seen as paralleling the distinctions that Jeffs and Smith (1990, 1999) make between formal and informal education via curriculum. In this way formal education would broadly approximate to top-down curriculum formation (c); non-formal to bottom-up or negotiated curriculum formation (b); and informal education would arguably be a non-curriculum or conversational form (a).

f. Pointers to the success of non-formal programmes

As Graham-Brown (1991: 74-77) has argued in respect of literacy programmes there are a number of dimensions that have proved to be crucial to effectiveness:

- Training and motivation of literacy workers.
- The quality and relevance of materials.
- The reinforcements of literacy.

It is clear from the studies of literacy campaigns that both the commitment and skills of literacy promoters are very important. Enthusiasm is not enough. It is not that straightforward to facilitate learner participation in dialogue and discussion. Certain skills are needed to put across ideas and so on. Many of the literacy workers are young (mostly between 18 and 25 in the successful Botswana campaign). This meant that they need not be automatically accepted or appreciated. In some campaigns there has been a considerable effort to try to recruit older workers and those who are known and held in good regard in a locality. In many campaigns workers are paid, and the job accords them some status (although not necessarily accreditation or certification). Where volunteers are recruited, for example in the Kenyan initiative, and who live in the local communities, the main incentive is often the hope that this might lead to a full time job.

There has also been an emphasis on developing appropriate materials. Most of the various national literacy campaigns have had some central unit which developed materials etc for the workers etc. to use. To this must be added things like the production of regular radio programmes to support initiatives. However, this is both expensive and sophisticated and it is not proved that easy, for example, to update and change materials quite as has been needed.

Then as Graham-Brown (1991: 76) suggests, once people achieve basic literacy, whatever its precise form, the process creates further demands for post-literacy education, whether to 'catch up' on missed formal education, or to develop organizational or practical skills. At this point things can become quite expensive and complex. The demands are now more sophisticated.

To these specific questions must be added some further problems. To begin with, given that initiatives involve voluntary participation - how are people to be attracted on sufficient scale. This is much less of a problem in systems where there is large scale schooling some legal basis for attendance. The successful campaign in Botswana, for example, touched about 20 per cent of the population - it still left quite a few people illiterate.

In addition, unless the school system is discredited for some political reason, a lower valuation tends to be put on non-formal education, especially for young people. They do not hold the same status (they are local and not special) and often do not lead to accreditation. (Graham Brown 1991: 77)

g. In conclusion

The notion of non-formal education has been a significant feature of policy debates around education in southern countries for three decades. It has drawn attention to the importance and potential of education, learning and training that takes place outside recognized educational institutions. There are questions about usefulness of the notion when looking at the process of education. It has also gone in and out of fashion. Fordham (1993) comments that if we try to correlate the flourishing of non-formal education and political change then the 1970s can certainly be described as the decade of non-formal education (Rubenson 1982). Similarly the 1980s saw the neglect of non-formal education and Fordham suggests that this was in tune with the politics of the decade, accompanied by greater inequalities both within and between countries. Given the extent to which notions of **lifelong learning** and associated ideas have gained ground in recent years it will be interesting to see how the language of policy debates will change over the next few years.

h. Further reading and references

Coles E. K. T. (1988) *Let the* People *Learn: The establishment of a department of non-formal education in Botswana*, Manchester: The Centre for Adult and Higher Education, University of Manchester. 137 + ix pages. Provides an interestingly detailed account and review of one attempt to organize non-formal education.

`recommended` Coombs, P. H. with Prosser, C. and Ahmed, M. (1973) *New Paths to Learning for Rural Children and Youth*, New York: International Council for Educational Development. One of several reports involving Coombs that popularized the institutional or bureaucratic categories of informal, formal and
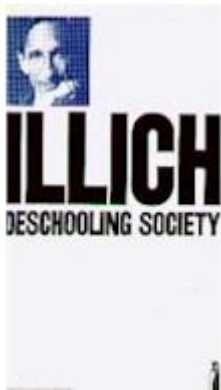
non-formal education. See, also, P. Coombs and M. Ahmed (1974) *Attacking Rural Poverty. How non-formal education can help*, Baltimore: John Hopkins Press.

Foley, G. (1999) *Learning in Social Action. A contribution to understanding informal education*, Leicester: NIACE/London: Zed Books. Explores the significance of the incidental learning that can take place when people are involved in community groups, social struggles and political activity. Foley uses case studies from Australia, Brazil, Zimbabwe and the USA that reflect a range of activities. Chapters on ideology, discourse and learning; learning in a green campaign; the neighbourhood house; learning in Brazilian women's organizations; and political learning and education in the Zimbabwean liberation struggle.

Fordham, P. et al (1979) *Learning Networks in Adult Education. Non formal education on a housing estate*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 250 + viii pages. This is a substantial account of a neighbourhood project which provides a number of insights into community based provision. Picks up on the definition of non-formal education put forward by Coombs et al.

recommended Illich, I. (1973) *Deschooling Society*, Harmondsworth: Penguin (now published by Marion Boyars). 116 pages. Very influential statement concerning the divisive and dampening effect of schooling. Argues for the disestablishment of schooling and the creation of learning webs. See also his (1975) *Tools for Conviviality*, London: Fontana (now published by Marion Boyars), for a wider political and economic statement

Simkins, T. (1977) *Non-Formal Education and Development. Some critical issues*, Manchester: Department of Adult and Higher Education, University of Manchester. 77 + iv pages. Helpful survey of thinking and practice with case studies (the village polytechnics, Kenya; mass education campaigns in Tanzania; Cuba's 'Schools in the Countryside').

Steele, T. and Taylor, R. (1995) *Learning Independence. A political outline of Indian adult education*, Leicester: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education. 151 + vii pages. Fascinating overview of programmes and changes in Indian adult education since the 1940s that looks to a political analysis of its role. Chapters examine the English studies and subaltern histories; education in British India from the early years to independence; Gandhi and the dialectic of modernity; education and social development in India from 1947 to 1964: Nehru and Congress; social education and the dream of nationhood; the non-formal revolution and the National Adult Education Programme; Post NAEP - radical populism and the new social movements; and towards a transformative pedagogy.

recommended Thompson, A. R. (1981) *Education and Development in Africa*, London:

Macmillan. 358 + viii pages. Excellent overview that is particularly strong on non-formal education. Chapters examine social change and development; education and schooling; politics and education; economics and education; problems in educational planning; problems of educational innovation; the management of educational reform; non-formal education; re-schooling; and linking formal and non-formal education.

recommended Torres, C. A. (1990) *The Politics of Nonformal Education in Latin America*, New York: Praeger. 204 pages. Torres explores the literacy programs in several Latin American countries--including Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada--as the prime examples of adult educational reform. He examines such issues as: Why are given educational policies created? How are they constructed, planned, and implemented? Who are the most relevant actors in their formulation and operationalization? What are the implications of such policies for both clients and the broader society? What are the fundamental, systematic, and organizational processes involved?

Youngman, F. (2000) *The Political Economy of Adult Education*, London: Zed Books. 270 pages. Useful exploration of adult education and development theory, social inequality and imperialism and aid in adult education.

i. References

Coombs, P. (1968) *The World Educational Crisis*, New York, Oxford University Press.

Coombs, P. (1985) *The World Crisis in Education*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Coombs, P. with Ahmed, M. (1974) *Attacking Rural Poverty*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

Fordham, P. E. (1993) 'Informal, non-formal and formal education programmes' in YMCA George Williams College *ICE301 Lifelong Learning Unit 2*, London: YMCA George Williams College.

Graham-Brown, S. (1991) *Education in the Developing World*, Harlow: Longman.

Jeffs, T. and Smith, M. K. (eds.) *Using Informal Education. An alternative to casework, teaching and control?*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

McGivney, V. and Murray, F. (1991) *Adult Education in Development. Methods and approaches from changing societies*, Leicester: NIACE.

Rubenson, K.(1982) *Interaction Between Formal and Non-Formal Education* Paris, Paper for Conference of the International Council for Adult Education.

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UNESCO (1972) *Learning to Be* (prepared by Faure, E. et al), Paris: UNESCO.

CHAPTER III

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

What is community education? A guide and booklist.

a. Introduction

Broadly, we can approach community education as 'education for community within community'. In other words, something called '**community**' is not just the place or context in which education is to occur, fostering community is also a central concern. The process of becoming part of an existing social network in order to encourage dialogue and learning is sometimes labelled as informal education in UK discussions or as community education in Scottish debates. For example, CeVe (Scotland) have defined community education as:

..a process designed to enrich the lives of individuals and groups by engaging with people living within a geographical area, or sharing a common interest, to develop voluntarily a range of learning, action and reflection opportunities, determined by their personal, social, economic and political needs. (CeVe 1990: 2)

However, this particular definition does not put 'education for community' at the centre of the work (although some practitioners may interpret it to do so) - and this dilutes the concept somewhat.

Community education in its stronger sense has parallels in the tradition of community organization in the USA, **sozial pädagogik** in Germany, **animation** in France and socio-cultural work in Belgium. Furthermore, it links up with the thinking and practice of those who have worked for community-based, and **democratic schooling** - and for child-centred education. If approached in many Southern countries, then our focus would most likely be **non-formal education** or **community participation**. It could be seen as close to the Latin American tradition of **popular education** or the French tradition of **la vie associative** with its emphasis on association.

Different practice traditions have arisen in various contexts - but there are some important points of contact and exchange. They have not grown in isolation. For example, in recent years the work of **Paulo Freire** has been influential in each. We can also draw lines historically - for example from **Rousseau** through key thinkers in the social pedagogy tradition to **Dewey** and then on through **Lindeman** and others to **community organization** and **informal education**. Each tradition of practice provides a way to the others - and it is perhaps most helpful to think of them as always existing in relation to one another.

b. Further reading

The listing focuses specifically on the idea of community education. I have done this avoid too much duplication with the other elements of the bibliography. This is a guide to the texts that explore and theorize community education practice rather than a comprehensive listing of all materials in the area. Questions of process, work with different groups, the impact of social division etc. are best approached through the other sections. For example:

- informal education,
- community development and community participation,
- adult education, and
- youth work

I have devoted a special section to the development of community education in **Scotland** where it has taken a significant organizational form.

We lack a full-length text that explores community education (as education for community) in a robust and coherent way. The closest UK texts are Informal Education (Jeffs and Smith 1996) which is really an introductory exploration, Lovett et al (1983) which focuses on adult education and popular social movements, and Local Education (Smith 1994) - which looks to localness. Brookfield (1983) is strong on 'education in the community' and McConnell (1996) provides with a diverse but useful collection of key documents in the making of Scottish community education. Bidwell and McConnell (1982) is an edited collection that hails from an earlier period of Scottish community education The two collections by Poster and Krüger (1990) and Poster and Zimmer (1992) contain some useful explorations of practice and one or two helpful discussions of the idea of community education (see, in particular, Cyril Poster's chapter in Poster and Krüger 1990). Most of the other texts with community education in their title are rather school-centred (for details see the **Community Schooling** listing. I have included Lindeman (1926) and Yeaxlee (1929) because of their strong concerns with education for democracy and local forms of practice.

Bidwell, L. and McConnell, C. (eds.) (1982) *Community Education and Community Development*, Dundee: Dundee College of Education. 131 + v pages (A4). Contains 15 chapters exploring different aspects of community education. These range from reviews of definitions and models through discussions of work in different settings to areas like feminism, and participant control and community education, and community arts and community schools. An important overview of the Scottish scene at that time.

recommended Brookfield, S. D. (1983) *Adult Learning, Adult Education and the Community*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press. 229 + x pages. An investigation of adult education in the community with sections on individualised approaches, group approaches (including community adult education) and themes around

supporting adult learners in the community.

`recommended` Jeffs, T. and Smith, M. K. (1996, 1999) *Informal Education: conversation, democracy and learning*, Ticknall: Education Now. 72 pages. Introductory discussion of informal education that places the fostering of democracy at the core of informal education. Explores the nature of conversation and reflection, organizing the work, contrasts with formal education and the moral authority of the educator.

Keeble, R. (1981) *Community and Education. Some relationships and some issues*, Leicester: National Youth Bureau. 141 pages. Examines the educational elements found in community work and the community work elements that are or could be a part of educational activity. Chapters on community work - a style of social change?; neighbourhood work; education and the shaping of change; community education and democracy (with a focus on schooling); social change (and youth work, community adult education and community work); renewal; and LEA policies.

`recommended` Lindeman, E. C. (1926) *The Meaning of Adult Education* (1989 edn.), Norman: University of Oklahoma. 143 + xliii pages. A classic statement of adult education principles. He argued that education is life; that it should concern itself with non-vocational ideals; that the approach should be via situations rather than subjects; and that the highest values should be placed on the learner's experience. Lindeman paid particular attention to community-based forms of education, the central significance of groups and importance of democracy.

Lovett, T, Clarke, C and Kilmurray, A. (1983) *Adult Education and Community Action. Adult education and popular social movements*, Beckenham: Croom Helm. 163 + x pages. Uses models familiar to community workers (community organization, community development, community action and social action) as a way of approaching community education. After a review of radical adult education developments in the UK and North America, the writers focus on education and community action in Northern Ireland. An important attempt to conceptualize 'radical' community education (as against 'remedial/consensus' and 'liberal/reform' approaches). See also Tom Lovett's exploration of earlier work with the Liverpool EPA (1975) Adult Education, Community Development and the Working Class, London: Ward Lock. 176 pages. (Republished by the Department of Adult Education, University of Nottingham). Among other things it examines the process of 'community' adult education.

`recommended` Mayo, M. (1997) *Imagining Tomorrow: Community adult education for transformation*, Leicester: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education. 172 pages. Paperback ISBN 1-86201-006-4. A readable and very useful overview of education for transformation. Argues that community and workplace-based adult education is increasingly important in first and third world contexts. The book examines globalization and restructuring, and presents a case for the possibilities

of local development as part of longer term strategies for transformation. Chapters deal with competing perspectives; the histories of adult education for transformation; the experience of education for transformation in the South; economic restructuring; adult education and training; analysing political power and building alliances; adult and community education; and cultures of resistance.

McConnell, C. (ed.) *Community Education. The making of an empowering profession*, Edinburgh: Scottish Community Education Council. 372 + viii pages. This book is a collection of 32 readings dealing with the development of the community education profession in Scotland. It is divided into sections dealing with the challenge of change; the boundaries of change; training for change; measuring change; and changing challenges. McConnell provides a substantial introduction.

O'Sullivan, D. (1993) *Commitment, Educative Action and Adults. Learning programmes with a social purpose*, Aldershot: Avebury. 210 + viii pages. This book sets out to explore social programmes dedicated to bringing about change through educative action and the people involved in them. Chapters examine the biography of commitment; the discourse of commitment; educative action; learning encounters via associative forms.

`recommended`Poster, C. and Krüger, A. (eds.) (1990) *Community Education in the Western World*, London: Routledge. 207 + xvi pages. This collection provides a flavour of work in a number of countries - thankfully organized by themes rather than nations. Part 1 deals with defining community education; part 2 with learning in the community; part 3 with business enterprise; part 4 with new challenges, new structures; and the final part is concerned with the experiences of two national centres.

`recommended`Poster, C. and Zimmer, J. (eds.) *Community Education in the Third World,* London: Routledge. 253 + x pages. This book follows a similar format to the previous text - although without the opening discussion of definitions. It could equally have been an exploration of popular education. There are three substantive sections dealing with survival and self-realization; changing economic structures; and developing frameworks for the future. A number of chapters provide good insights to forms of practice that are developing within southern countries.

`recommended`Smith, M. K. (1994) *Local Education. Community, conversation, action*, Buckingham: Open University Press. 192 + viii pages. Examines the work of community educators, youth workers and community workers. Has a locality focus. Includes chapters on being local; being an educator; engaging in conversation; organising the work; curriculum and direction; embedding practice; reflecting in action; and dialogue and praxis.

Yeaxlee, B. (1929) *Lifelong Education. A sketch of the range and significance of*

the adult education movement, London: Cassell and Company. 166 pages. Important first exploration of the idea of 'lifelong education'. I have included this book as Yeaxlee approaches adult education as a movement 'democratic in its inspiration' (p. 23) - and with Lindeman, views it as inseparable from 'normal living'. [Out of print].

COMMUNITY

What is community and why should educators be concerned with it? We explore the development of theory around community, and the significance of boundaries, social networks and social norms - and why attention to social capital and communion may be important.

contents: **approaching the theory of community** | **community and boundary** | **community and network** | **community - norms and habits** | **social capital and community** | **communion and community** | **further reading** | **references** | **links** | **how to cite this article**

Since the late nineteenth century, 'the use of the term community has remained to some extent associated with the hope and the wish of reviving once more the closer, warmer, more harmonious type of bonds between people vaguely attributed to past ages' (Elias 1974, quoted by Hoggett 1997: 5). Before 1910 there was little social science literature concerning 'community' and it was really only in 1915 that the first clear sociological definition emerged. This was coined by C. J. Galpin in relation to delineating rural communities in terms of the trade and service areas surrounding a central village (Harper and Dunham 1959: 19). A number of competing definitions of community quickly followed. Some focused on community as a geographical area; some on a group of people living in a particular place; and others which looked to community as an area of common life.

Beyond this there are issues around the way 'community' appears in political discourse. For some it might mean little more than a glorified reworking of the market. For others, it may be a powerful organizing ideal (such as those concerned with advancing the **communitarian** agenda). Here we will focus on understandings within social theory - and ask why should educators be interested in them?

Approaching the theory of community

It is helpful to begin by noting that community can be approached as a value (Frazer 2000: 76). As such it may well be used to bring together a number of

elements, for example, solidarity, commitment, mutuality and trust. It comes close to the third of the ideals that were inscribed on many of the banners of the French Revolution – fraternity (the others, as you will most likely remember, were liberty and equality). Socialists such as William Morris talked similarly of 'fellowship':

Fellowship is heaven, and lack of fellowship is hell; fellowship is life, and lack of fellowship is death; and the deeds that ye do upon the earth, it is for fellowship's sake ye do them. (*A Dream of John Ball*, Ch. 4; first published in *The Commonweal* 1886/7)

Community can also be approached as a descriptive category or set of variables (see below). In practice the two are entwined and often difficult to separate (Frazer 2000: 76).

Here we will initially explore community in three different ways (after Willmott 1986; Lee and Newby 1983; and Crow and Allen 1995). As:

Place. Territorial or place community can be seen as where people have something in common, and this shared element is understood geographically. Another way of naming this is as 'locality'. This approach to community has spawned a rich literature – first in '**community studies**' and more recently in locality studies (often focusing on spatial divisions of labour).

Interest. In interest or 'elective' communities people share a common characteristic other than place. They are linked together by factors such as religious belief, sexual orientation, occupation or ethnic origin. In this way we may talk about the 'gay community', the 'Catholic community' or the 'Chinese community'. Development in what might be called the sociology of identity and **selfhood** have played an important role in 'opening out the conceptual space within which non-place forms of community can be understood' (Hoggett 1997: 7). 'Elective groups' and 'intentional communities' (ranging, according to Hoggett *op cit* from cyber-communities to car-boot enthusiasts) are a key feature of contemporary life

Communion. In its weakest form we can approach this as a sense of attachment to a place, group or idea (in other words, whether there is a 'spirit of community'). In its strongest form 'communion' entails a profound meeting or encounter – not just with other people, but also with God and creation. One example here would be the Christian communion of saints – the spiritual union between each Christian and Christ (and hence between every Christian). Another is **Martin Buber's** interest in meeting and 'the between'.

There is, of course, a strong possibility that these different ways of approaching community will also overlap in particular instances. Place and interest communities may well coincide – for example in the case of places where many of

those who live there work in the same industry – such as was the case in 'mining villages'. Willmott (1989) argues that it is legitimate to add a third understanding of community – that of attachment – as communities of place or interest may not have a sense of shared identity.

Anthony P. Cohen's (1982; 1985) work around belonging and attachment is a great help in this respect. He argues that communities are best approached as 'communities of meaning'. In other words, '"community" plays a crucial symbolic role in generating people's sense of belonging' (Crow and Allan 1994: 6). The reality of community, Cohen argues, lies in its members' perception of the vitality of its culture (a significant element of this is what Putnam calls 'social capital' – see below). "People construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity' (Cohen 1985: 118). This, and the above discussion, leads us to three key questions:

- How is one community or communion marked off from another?
- What sort of social networks or systems are involved in a particular grouping or encounter?
- What norms or 'habits' are involved?

Boundary and community

Cohen argues that 'community' involves two related suggestions that the members of a group have something in common with each other; and the thing held in common distinguishes them in a significant way from the members of other possible groups (Cohen 1985: 12). Community, thus, implies both similarity and difference. It is a relational idea: 'the opposition of one community to others or to other social entities' (op. cit.). This leads us to the question of boundary – what marks the beginning and end of a community?

Cohen's argument is that boundaries may be marked on a map (as administrative areas), or in law, or by physical features like a river or road. Some may be religious or linguistic. However, not all boundaries are so obvious: 'They may be thought of, rather, as existing in the minds of the beholders' (Cohen 1985: 12). As such they may be seen in very different ways, not only by people on either side, but also by people on the same side. This is the *symbolic* aspect of community (or communion) boundary and is fundamental to gaining an appreciation of how people experience communities (and communion). An obvious example of this is the sorts of ritual people connect with in terms of religious observance, for example, the rites of worship, the objects involved and the actions of the priest, imam or rabbi. Indeed, it is very significant that the notion of community recurs in major religions:

… the Christian ideal of the communion of saints and the congregation and the Eucharist as forms of community; the centrality of *umma* or community in Islamic traditions and contemporary practice and theology; community is prominent

theme in Judaism, and in Buddhism. (Confucianism is not, of course, a religion, but neo-Confucianism is closely intertwined with Buddhism and with traditional religious cults of the family and ancestors, and Confucian norms of family and community life are politically significant in many contemporary contexts. (Frazer 1999: 24)

Each has expression has its own symbols and markers of boundaries defining who is 'in communion' or 'in community', and who is not. The defining of a boundary places some people within, and some beyond the line. The definition of 'community' or 'communion' can, thus, become an exclusionary act. The benefits of belonging to a particular group are denied to non-members. A very obvious example of this is the growth of 'gated communities' in the USA and UK. A physical barrier is erected to keep out, in this case, those who are poor or who are seen as a threat (Blakely and Snyder 1997).

Community as network and local social system

As Lee and Newby (1983: 57) point out, the fact that people live close to one another does not necessarily mean that they have much to do with each other. There may be little interaction between neighbours. It is the nature of the relationships between people and the **social networks** of which they are a part that is often seen as one of the more significant aspects of 'community'.

When people are asked about what 'community' means to them, it is such networks that are most commonly cited. 'For most of us, our deepest sense of belonging is to our most intimate social networks, especially family and friends. Beyond that perimeter lie work, church, neighbourhood, civic life, and [an] assortment of other "weak ties"' (Putnam 2000: 274). As well as helping us to build a sense of self and individuality, such informal relationships 'also enable us to navigate our way around the demands and contingencies of everyday living' (Allan 1996: 2). In a very influential study, Bott (1957: 99) argued that the immediate social environment of urban families was best considered, 'not as the local area in which they live, but rather as the network of actual social relationships they maintain, regardless of whether these are confined to the local area or run beyond its boundaries'. For many social scientists, the idea of 'network' was attractive because it could be mapped and measured. Writers like Stacey (1969) gave up on community as a 'non-concept' and instead explored local social systems. The 'connectedness' (or density) (and other qualities) of social networks help explain or, at least describe, key aspects of people's experiences.

An example of what analyzing networks can tell us is provided by Wenger's study of the support received by older people in North Wales (1984; 1989; 1995 and discussed by Allan 1996: 125-6). She looked at the changing composition of networks using three criteria: the availability of close kin; the level of involvement of family, friends and neighbours; and the level of interaction with voluntary and community groups. As a result she identified five types of support

network. The commonest form was the second followed by the first – and tended to be the most 'robust' in terms of providing people with informal support (Allan 1996: 126)

Wenger on support networks for older people

Wenger identified five types in her study:

- *the local family-dependent support network*. This mainly relied on close kin, who often shared a household or lived locally.
- *the locally integrated support network*. This typically consisted of local family, friends and neighbours.
- *the local self-contained support network. Usually restricted in scale and containing mainly neighbours, this form had relatively little kin involvement.*
- *the wider community-focused support network. Involving a high level of community activities, this form also typically entailed a high number of friends and kin.*
- *the private restricted support network*. Characterized by an absence of close kin, aside from a spouse in some cases, this 'type' also meant few friends or neighbours.

The nature of the networks within in particular place or grouping is, thus, of fundamental importance when making judgments about 'communities' – and the extent to which people can flourish within them. Humans are social animals. Connection and interaction both widen and deepen what we can achieve, and makes possible our individual character. It may even emerge as 'communion' (see below).

There are strong forces working against the formation and health of local social systems. Increasingly we operate across significant distances (for example, via letters, the telephone and the internet) when dealing with financial matters such as banking, shopping and the payment of bills (Beck 1992; Giddens 1984). The various forces linked to **globalization** (commodification, marketization and the corporatization) have led to significant shifts in the locus of power. Governments (whether local or national) have become increasingly market-driven. 'It is not just that governments can no longer "manage" their national economies', Colin Leys (2001: 1) comments, 'to survive in office they must increasingly "manage" national politics in such a ways as to adapt them to the pressures of trans-national market forces'. This has entailed two particular dynamics: a growing centralization in key areas of policymaking in many countries (with local agencies having to meet to centrally-determined targets with regard to the way in which they work and the outcomes they achieve); and a hugely increased presence of commercial

enterprises in local services with the obvious consequence of an erosion of democracy and the notion of there being public goods.

The combined impact of this movement is a drive towards encouraging people to view themselves as consumers of services (rather than participants) and an associated move towards individualization from more collective concerns. In this situation, as Zygmunt Bauman (2001: 3) has commented, we may well look longingly at the notion of 'community - it is the 'kind of world which is not, regrettably, available to us - but which we would dearly love to inhabit and which we hope to repossess'. However, in a world where market ideologies have become dominant and infused all areas of life, we have increasingly lost a sense of working together to make change.

Insecurity affects us all, immersed as we all are in a a fluid and unpredictable world of deregulation, flexibility, competitiveness and endemic uncertainty, but each one of us suffers anxiety on our own, as a private problem, an outcome of personal failings and a challenge to our provide *savoir-faire* and agility. We are called, as Ulrich Beck has acidly observed, to seek biographical solutions to more systematic contradictions; we look for individual salvation from shared troubles. That strategy is unlikely to bring the results we are after, since it leaves the roots of insecurity intact; moreover it is precisely this falling back on our individual wits and resources that injects the world with the insecurity we wish to escape.
(Bauman 2001: 144)

It was this over-focus on private troubles (as against public issues) that was a central feature of **C. Wright Mills**' work - and his argument that we to retain an appreciation of both, and the relationships between them, retains its power.

Community - norms and habits

Whether people are disposed to engage with one another is dependent upon the norms of a particular society or community – and the extent to which individuals make them what de Tocqueville, writing in the first half of the nineteenth century, called 'habits of the heart' (1994: 287) – and this leads us back to our initial discussion of community as a value. To judge the quality of life within a particular community we, need to explore what shared expectations there are about the way people should behave – and whether different individuals take these on.

Three linked qualities appear with some regularity in discussions of communal life: Tolerance – an openness to others; curiosity; perhaps even respect, a willingness to listen and learn (Walzer 1997: 11).

Reciprocity – Putnam (2000) describes generalized reciprocity thus: 'I'll do this for you now, without expecting anything immediately in return, and perhaps without even knowing you, confident that down the road you or someone else will return the favour'. In the short run there is altruism, in the long run self-interest.

Trust – the confident expectation that people, institutions and things will act in a consistent, honest and appropriate way (or more accurately, 'trustworthiness' – reliability) is essential if communities are to flourish. Closely linked to norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement (Putnam 1993; Coleman 1990), social trust – trust in other people – allows people to cooperate and to develop. Trusting others does not entail us suspending our critical judgment – some people will be worthy of trust, some will not.

One of the fascinating things about these qualities is that in a very important sense such expectations do not need to be imposed upon people. As Matt Ridley (1997: 249) put it, 'Our minds have been built by selfish genes, but they have been built to be social, trustworthy and cooperative'. He continues:

Humans have social instincts. They come into the world equipped with predispositions to learn how to cooperate, to discriminate the trustworthy from the treacherous, to commit themselves to be trustworthy, to earn good reputations, to exchange goods and information, and to divide labour… Far from being a universal feature of animal life, as Kropotkin believed, this instinctive cooperativeness is the very hallmark of humanity and what sets us apart from other animals. (Ridley 1997: 249)

To this extent, the cultivation of reciprocity, honesty and trust is less about building alien institutions and structures, than creating the conditions for their emergence. Self-interest may bring people together, but in interaction something else emerges. 'Feelings and ideas are renewed, the heart enlarged, and the understanding developed, only by the reciprocal action of men one upon another'

(de Tocqueville: 515).

Fostering community - social capital

Here I want to suggest that a sense of belonging and the concrete experience of social networks (and the relationships of trust etc. that are involved) can bring significant benefits. However, as we have seen, the sense of attachment and quality of social networks varies greatly between the different 'communities' that people name. It could be argued that we should be focusing on enhancing the quality of social networks etc. rather than the creation or strengthening of 'community'. (This is the line taken by writers such as Stacey 1969). As a way of appreciating the possibilities here I want to look at the idea of **social capital** – and Putnam's (2000) impressive exploration and compilation of evidence concerning its health and benefits. From there I want to return to the idea that in meeting with others there is the possibility of communion – and that this is, for many, a highly desirable goal.

The notion of **social capital** is a useful way of entering into debates about civil society – and it is central to the arguments of Putnam and others who want to 'reclaim public life'. (See Beem 1999 for a discussion and critique of Putnam et al.) This is how Putnam (2000: 19) introduces the idea:

Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to the properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called "civic virtue." The difference is that "social capital" calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a sense network of reciprocal social relations. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital.

In other words, interaction enables people to build communities, to commit themselves to each other, and to knit the social fabric (Beem 1999: 20).

Putnam marshals an impressive amount of material to demonstrate that:

Child development is powerfully shaped by social capital. Trust, networks, and norms of reciprocity within a child's family, school, peer group, and larger community have far reaching effects on their opportunities and choices, and hence on their behaviour and development (ibid.: 296-306)

Public spaces in high social-capital areas are cleaner, people are friendlier, and the streets are safer. Traditional neighbourhood "risk factors" such as high poverty and residential mobility are not as significant as most people assume.

Places have higher crime rates in large part because people don't participate in community organizations, don't supervise younger people, and aren't linked through networks of friends. (ibid.: 307-318)

Economic prosperity. A growing body of research suggests that where trust and social networks flourish, individuals, firms, neighbourhoods, and even nations prosper economically. Social capital can help to mitigate the insidious effects of socioeconomic disadvantage. (ibid.: 319-325)

Health. There appears to be a strong relationship between the possession of social capital and better health. 'As a rough rule of thumb, if you belong to no groups but decide to join one, you cut your risk of dying over the next year in half. If you smoke and belong to no groups, it's a toss-up statistically whether you should stop smoking or start joining' (ibid.: 331). Regular club attendance, volunteering, entertaining, or church attendance is the happiness equivalent of getting a college degree or more than doubling your income. Civic connections rival marriage and affluence as predictors of life happiness (ibid.: 333).

Francis Fukuyama (1999) raises some useful questions around the 'Putnam thesis' and Ladd (1999) is very critical of the approach – disputing the interpretation much of the evidence. However, that was prior to the marshalling of evidence in Bowling Alone (Putnam 2000). The book is a powerful argument for the cultivation of social networks and the norms of reciprocity, trustworthiness and truthfulness they entail. It also draws attention to some of the downsides of such networks – they can be oppressive and narrowing. It is, therefore, important to work for tolerance and the acceptance, if not celebration, of difference.

Fostering community - communion

Elizabeth Frazer (2000: 83) suggests that given the sorts of conditions we have been discussing, the experience of community 'will be both euphoric and fleeting'. However, there is a significant 'pay-off':

On occasion or at such times members experience a centred and bounded entity that includes the self as such; they engage in exchanges and sharing that are personalized; the orientation to each other and to the whole engages the person and, as some are tempted to put it, his or her soul. It is from such occasions that 'the spirit of community' or 'sense of community' is achieved. Here I think we have the 'pay-off' of community... In the relation of community concrete patterns of material social relations are felt to be transcended... [T]he aspiration to community is an aspiration to a kind of connectedness that transcends the mundane and concrete tangle of social relationships.

This moment of transcendence or connection has been explored by various writers – but for me **Martin Buber's** work around encounter and community has been the most suggestive.

For Buber encounter (*Begegnung*) has a significance beyond co-presence and individual growth. He looked for ways in which people could engage with each other fully – to meet with themselves. The basic fact of human existence was not the individual or the collective as such, but 'Man with Man' (Buber 1947). As Aubrey Hodes puts it:

When a human being turns to another as another, as a particular and specific person to be addressed, and tries to communicate with him through language or silence, something takes place between them which is not found elsewhere in nature. Buber called this meeting between men the sphere of the between. (1973: 72)

Encounter (Begegnung) is an event or situation in which relation (Beziehung) occurs. We can only grow and develop, according to Buber, once we have learned to live in relation to others, to recognize the possibilities of the space between us. The fundamental means is dialogue. 'All real living is meeting' he once wrote.

Such meeting isn't just between two people. Buber believed that in such encounters the eternal could be glimpsed. In speech and silence there was great possibility. In dialogue, a person is present to another (and the other), they are attentive and aware - listening and waiting. In the stillness of this 'in-between world' they may encounter what cannot yet be put into words.

Education and community

The case for community as an aim of education (or at least the cultivation of social networks and the associated concern with reciprocity, trust and tolerance) is strong. Indeed, we may follow **Dewey** and argue that working so that all may share in a common life is the aim of education. We may also join with **Buber** and seek to educate so that people may meet each other as truly human. There is also an interesting question of ends and means. Can we educate for community without being in community? Certainly, this has been a key question within debates around schooling for community (see **schooling for community**). In the last few years the idea of community has been the subject of renewed focus among those advancing the **communitarian** agenda (e.g. Etzioni 1995). For educators there are a number of implications as James Arthur (2000) has noted. One of the strongest questions here has been the tendency of political communitarians to plough a fairly authoritarian furrow.

Our problem in this context is the sheer scale of the task at hand. Increased centralization in many areas of government, globalization and the insinuation of market-thinking into many areas of social life undermine the quality of local social systems and obstruct communion. However, the direction we must take is clear. As Zygmunt Bauman (2001: 149) has argued we need to work to 'gain control over the conditions under which we struggle with the challenges of life'. For the most of us 'such control can be gained only collectively'.

Further reading

Anderson, B. (1991) *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* rev edn., London: Verso. 224 + xv pages. Exploration of the processes that created the global spread of the 'imagined communities' of nationality.

Arthur, J. with Bailey, R. (2000) Schools and Community. The communitarian agenda in education, London: Falmer. 165 + ix pages. Helpful review of the main communitarian themes and what might constitute the 'communitarian agenda'. Arthur and Bailey bring out some of the contrasting 'traditions' of thinking and practice and link these, in particular, to schooling. There is also a discussion of the place of religiously affiliated schools.

Bauman, Z. (2001) Seeking Safety in an insecure world, Cambridge: Polity Press. 159 pages. Useful overview of the idea in the context of current debates about the nature and future of society.

Beem, C. (1999) The Necessity of Politics. Reclaiming American public life, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 311 + xiv pages. Useful study of civil society and the essential role of political processes in the renewal of societies.

Bell, C. and Newby, H. (1971) *Community Studies*, London: Unwin. 262 pages. Classic overview of community studies (American and European) with a useful chapter discussing theories of community.

Bramson, L. (ed.) (1970) *Robert MacIver on Community, Power and Society*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 319 pages. Interesting collection of MacIver's work - some of it dating back to the early decades of the century. The chapters on community, association and society are well worth a dip.

`recommended` Cohen, A. P. (1985) The Symbolic Construction of Community, London: Tavistock (now Routledge). 128 pages. Outstanding exploration of 'community' that focuses on it as a cultural phenomenon. Cohen looks at the ways in which the boundaries to communities are symbolically defined and how people become aware of belonging to a community. Chapters examine the 'classical' tradition of community and the contribution of the Chicago tradition; symbolizing boundaries; communities of meaning; and the symbolic construction of community.

Cohen, A. P. (ed.) (1982) Belonging. Identity and social organization in British rural cultures, Manchester: University of Manchester Press. 325 + x pages. This book examines the nature of belonging; social association within localities; and how these may relate to wider appreciations of nation. The book includes some excellent material from ethnographic studies of six rural communities: Anthony Cohen on Whalsay, Shetland; Marilyn Strathern on Elmdon; Isabel Emmett on Blaenau Ffestiniog; Peter Mewett on a Lewis crofting community; Sidsel Saugestad Larson on Kilbroney; and Robin Fox on Tory Island.

recommended Crow, G. and Allan, G. (1994) Community Life. An introduction to local social relations, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf. 229 + xxv. Excellent overview of the sociology of community in contemporary Britain. Chapters examine the various themes running through the sociology of community; community life in past generations; restructuring communities - the impact of economic change; the significance of geographical mobility; ethnicity, solidarity and social segregation; changing ideals of housing and domesticity; urban redevelopment and community action; community and social policy; and the continuing importance of the sociology of community. As an exploration of the use of the British community studies tradition the book is difficult to fault.

Etzioni, A. (1995) The Spirit of Community. Rights responsibilities and the communitarian agenda, London: Fontana Press. 323 + xii pages. Influential US text that argues for the balancing of individualism with social responsibility. The section titles provide an insight into the line: shoring up morality; too many rights, too few responsibilities; the public interest.

Etzioni, A. (1997) *The New Golden Rule. Community and morality in a democratic society*, London: Profile Books. 314 + xxi pages. Interesting development of communitarian debates based around what Etzioni sees as the two cardinal founding principles and core virtues of the good society: social order (based on moral values) and autonomy (or "thick" liberty). The "golden rule" is where these are in equilibrium.

recommended Frazer, E. (1999) The Problem of Communitarian Politics. Unity and conflict, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 279 + ix pages. Very helpful exploration and critique of the subject with some useful material on community.

Hoggett, P. (ed.) (1997) Contested Communities: experiences, struggles, policies, Bristol: Policy Press ISBN 1 86134 036 2. £15.95. Following introductory essays on contested communities (Hoggett) and neighbours (Crow), this book has sections on community and social diversity; local government and community; and community participation and empowerment. The book uses a set of case studies to examine the sources of community activism, the ways communities define themselves and defined by outsiders, and the room for partnerships with different agencies. Internal conflicts within communities are also examined.

Lindeman, E. C. (1921) The Community. An introduction to the study of community leadership and organization, New York: Association Press. Influential early book by a figure central to the development of informal adult education. (There is a brief extract in the **archives**).

recommended Putnam, R. D. (2000) Bowling Alone. The collapse and revival of American community, New York: Simon and Schuster. 541 pages. Brilliant setting out of analysis and evidence concerning the decline and possible reconstruction of civil life in the United States.
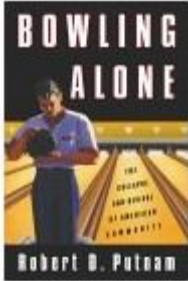
Suttles, G. (1972) *The Social Construction of Community*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Influential work that argues for the significance of individuals and groups in the construction of communities.

Tönnies, F. (1955) *Community and Association*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 293 + xxxiv pages. Tönnies' 1887 work still repays reading. Attention tends to focus on the apparent oppositions of gemeinshaft (community) and gesellschaft (association or society) **-** but there is far more here.

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Links

Bowling Alone: set of pages linked to the book that includes downloadable datasets.

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COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

What is community organization? A review and booklist.

contents: **introduction** | **the importance of the group** | **community organization** | **the radical turn** | **current practice** | **further reading and references** | **links**

It is difficult to point to particular moments in time and say this is where the concerns that we now label community work, community development, community organization or community participation began. We can certainly look to the activities of social reformers and philanthropists in the nineteenth century, for example, the Jewish Board of Guardians or the settlements such as Toynbee Hall in the UK and Hull House in North America. The mutual aid activities of churches and chapels, the YMCA and various working class organizations are also of significance. We could turn to the concern of some colonial administrations to develop local organizations so that some of their work may be undertaken. In Germany we might examine the tradition of social work practice known as sozial pädagogik (**social pedagogy**). In France we could turn to the activities of **animateurs** who came into being at the end of the nineteenth century with the establishment of compulsory education and what became known as the popular education movement. Their task was and is, basically, to promote access to education and cultural/leisure facilities. We could go on listing elements like this. However, we can pinpoint with some

accuracy when the actual terms came into use. Central to this effort is the growing attention to the idea of 'community' in the early decades of the twentieth century in North America.

Lindeman on community

Eduard Lindeman

The aim of community life is to bring about amicable relations between men and groups of men (1921: 1)

An ideal community should furnish to its human constituents:

1. Order, or security of life and property through the medium of an efficient government.
2. Economic well-being, or security of income through an efficient system of productive industry.
3. Physical well-being, or health and sanitation through public health agencies.
4. Constructive use of leisure time, or recreation though public health agencies.
5. Ethical standards, or a system of morality supported by the organized community.
6. Intellectual diffusion, or education through free and public institutions within the reach of all.
7. Free avenues of expression, or means by which all the elements of the community might freely express themselves; free newspapers and public forums.
8. Democratic forms of organization, or community-wide organization through which the entire community might express its thought and see that its will is done.
9. Spiritual motivation, or religious associations which might diffuse throughout all forms of community organization the religious or spiritual motive. (Lindeman 1921: 14-15)

In many respects, Lindeman's list parallels contemporary concerns. The disposition to self determination and democracy was common to a number of North American thinkers (mostly associated in one way or another with John Dewey). Along with Lindeman two other figures cast a significant shadow over our practice today: Mary Parker Follett and Grace Coyle.

The importance of the group

Follett, who was later to work with Lindeman, emphasized creative social experience (1918; 1924). She believed that such experience is the basis of state structure and that moves had to be made to strengthen group life. In particular she argued for the provision of citizen training through free group association, for adult and worker's education and for neighbourhood education. 30). She drew on work undertaken in North American settlements and on the development of community centres in some schools in Boston (the latter looking remarkably like what we have come to know as community schools). Her ideas were enthusiastically taken up in other countries like the UK. Early pioneers of the community association and centre movement were deeply influenced by her work.

Coyle was also interested in the methods of democratic leadership in small groups and in group relations. She was a settlement worker and then joined the staff of the Industrial Women's Department of the YWCA. She began the first sustained programme for group workers in 1923 (Reid 1981: 113) and later went on to draw together a number of formulations concerning group process in an influential book *Social Process in Organized Groups* (Coyle 1930). There followed a series of articles and debates which sought to examine group work as a method and its place within social work in North America. Again what became known as social groupwork (and Coyle's work in particular) was taken up by key figures in the United Kingdom - especially in youth work. Here an interesting contrast appears - and one that remains today and causes some confusion. In the UK youth work became associated with education departments in the state system whereas elsewhere in Europe and North America it tends to be seen as an aspect of social work. In a similar way while UK social work was, and is, narrowly defined and very casework dominated, in the 1920s and 1930s USA social work became characterized by three strands: casework, group work and community organization.

Community organization

Lindeman's book was the first to appear on what became known in North America as community organization. He later was to write what has become one of the classic texts of adult education but his immediate background was as an organizer of boys' and girls' clubs in Michigan (the forerunner of what are now known in the USA as 4-H clubs); and then a lecturer at the YMCA College in Chicago. His involvement in the YMCA movement and his interest in rural community life show

through strongly in his book. Lindeman stressed his belief that the his goals for community could never be completely met and there was always need for compromise. He defined community organization as:

those phases of social organization which constitute a conscious effort on the part of a community to control its affairs democratically, and to secure the highest services from its specialists, organizations, agencies, and the institutions by means of recognized interrelations. (1921: 173)

Here we can see the sort of sequence that appears with some regularity in books about community organization and community work. What also emerges is a broad notion of community organization as furnishing a working relationship between the democratic process and the specialist: 'the democratic process expresses itself or is personified in the total community membership. The Specialist expresses himself, or is personified in the division of labour which produces highly skilled persons and agencies, organizations and institutions, which are equipped to do one thing effectively' (Lindeman 1921: 139). Here too, a sound warning about impatience and the slowness and stuttering progress that such work can involve.

With the second half of the 1940s came a number of classic texts on community organizing (McMillen 1945; King 1948; Dahir 1947; Hillman 1950). A further generation of texts - perhaps the best of which was Ross (1955) further popularized practice. Ross saw community organization as:

a process by which a community identifies its needs or objectives, orders (or ranks) these needs or objectives, develops the confidence and the will to work at these needs or objectives, finds the resources (internal and/or external) to deal with these needs or objectives, takes action in respect to them, and in so doing extends and develops co-operative and collaborative attitudes and practices in the community. (Ross 1955: 39)

He appears to have dual aims:

- the achievement of certain community identified goals; and
- the development of co-operative and collaborative attitudes and practices.

The tension between these goals can be significant and, the definition is dependent on having some agreement as to what is meant by community.

Ross, like Lindeman, was writing with a background of significant involvement in the YMCA movement (although this time in Canada). However, by the time he was writing 'specialist' workers had, he argued, developed a 'distinctive pattern of work which can be utilized in a wide variety of settings to deal with any one of a number of problems' (1955: xii).

The radical turn

Saul Alinsky (1946; 1971) - work was especially influential. He had a history of mobilizing and organizing grass roots campaigns particularly during the Depression in the district known as the Back of the Yards in Chicago (the site of Upton Sinclair's famous novel The Jungle). He caught many people's imaginations through his evident commitment and experience, and his ability to articulate his thoughts in catchy phrases:

As an organizer I start from where the world is, as it is, not as I would like it to be (1971: xix)

The real action is in the enemy's reaction. The enemy properly goaded and guided in his reaction will be your major strength (1971: 136)

Alinsky seemed to offer a model for community action (as against organization or development) and his work was picked up during the 1960s. The development of the civil rights movement; new left and alternative initiatives can be seen as bringing about a 'revolution' in organizing (see Fisher1984). Major state programmes such as the War on Poverty in the United States of America (see Marris and Rein 1967; Piven and Cloward) also underlined a growing emphasis on economic and structural factors in matters more often associated with individual 'shortcomings. North American community organizing began to be widely conceptualized as involving three distinct 'types' of work. Here the work of Jack Rothman (1968; 1974) was of special importance.

Rothman on community organizing
Rothman identified three distinct types of community organizing:

Locality development: typifies the methods of work with community groups used by settlement houses and in 'colonial' community development work. A major focus is on the process of community building. Working with a broad, representative cross section of the community, workers attempt to achieve change objectives by enabling the community to establish consensus via the identification of common interests. Leadership development and the education of the participants are important elements in the process. In this approach great store is set by the values of both participation and leadership.

Social action: is employed by groups and organizations which seek to alter institutional policies or to make changes in the distribution of power. Civil rights groups and social movements are examples. Their methods may be, often are, abrasive, and participation is the value most clearly articulated by those who use this approach. Both leadership and expertise may be challenged as the symbolic 'enemies of the people'.

Social planning: is the method of community organization traditional to health and welfare councils although its scope and arena were enlarged in

the 1960s to encompass city planners, urban renewal authorities and the large public bureaucracies. Effort is focused primarily on task goals and issues of resource allocation. Whereas the initial emphasis of this approach was on the co-ordination of social services, its attention has expanded to include programme development and planning in all major social welfare institutions. Heavy reliance is placed on rational problem solving and the use of technical methods such as research and systems analysis. Expertise is the cherished value in this approach, although leadership is accorded importance as well.

[This outline of Rothman's argument is taken from Brager and Specht (1973: 26-27)]

These elements are drawn in a fairly extreme way. There is considerable overlap between the elements - but the focus on difference is useful in that it points attention to dimensions such as process, the role of the plan, and the tension between the state and dominant groups and those who believe themselves to be excluded.

Current practice

Following Reaganite attacks on welfare and on notions of popular participation, the heady days of radical action seem far away. However, the community organization tradition lives on - and, arguably has become more focused as notions such as 'community practice' have gained in popularity. Here I have included some contemporary accounts and discussions: e.g. Mondros and Wilson's excellent (1994) study of social action organizations; and material from the broader and more watered down tradition of community practice e.g. Hardcastle et al (1997) and Tropman et al's (1995) collection around community intervention (they changed the name from 'practice' to 'intervention' in the third edition to be more inclusive).

Further reading and references

In my selection I have tried to include a number of books that give a picture of the development of thinking and practice. I have also tried to identify a number of key contemporary texts that allow for a rounded picture of the tradition. The literature tends to split into three camps:

- **practice wisdom** texts such as as Brager and Specht (1976);
- **explorations** of campaigns and social protest movements e.g. Fisher 1984; Piven and Cloward (1977); and
- **studies** of community organization(such as Rothman, above; and Mondros and Wilson 1994). A very select group!

Community organization - practice wisdom

Alinsky, S. D. (1946) *Reveille for Radicals*. (1969 edn.), New York: Random House. Written in Alinsky's catchy style, this influential text includes chapters around purpose; means and ends; words; the education of an organizer; communication; beginnings; tactics; ; the way ahead.

Alinsky, S. D. (1971) *Rules for Radicals. A pragmatic primer for realistic radicals*, New York: Vintage. 196 + xxvi pages. Focuses on the building of people's organizations with chapters on programmes; leadership; community traditions; tactics; popular education; and psychological observations on mass organization.

Brager, G. & Specht, H. (1973) *Community Organizing*, New York: Columbia University Press. 363 + xi pages. Became pretty much the standard principles and practice text. Part one deals with contemporary community organization practice; part two with organizing a constituency: the process of community work; Part three looks at institutional relations: the sponsors of community work and Part four at influencing targets - tactics for community change.

Burghardt, S. (1982) *The Other Side of Organizing*, Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman. Exploration of practice wisdom around organizing skills with a concern for practical advice both in terms of the work with community organizations and for the the development and well-being of the worker.

Dunham, A. (1958) *Community Welfare Organization. Principles and practice*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell. 480 + xiii pages. Foundational text that provides an introduction to community organization; examines agencies and programs; and the practice of community organization. Useful historical material plus some good material on records, methods, programming and co-ordination; education; committees and guiding principles.

Hardcastle, D. A., Wenocur, S. and Powers, P. R. (1997) *Community Practice. Theories and skills for social workers*, New York: Oxford University Press. 450 + xii pages. ISBN 0-19-509352-6. One of those classic all-singing, all-dancing, all-American college texts. It has the usual 'problem-solving' roots - but it does a pretty good job in introducing community organization and foundation practice. Part one looks at social environments and social interaction - theories for community practice; the nature of social and community problems; and the concept of community in social work practice. Part two deals with key community practice skills: discovering and documenting the life of a community; assessment; the self/assertiveness; using your agency; work groups; networking; social marketing; advocacy; case management; being there.

Kahn S. (1994) *How People Get Power* rev. edn., Washington: National Association of Social Workers Press. 146 + xx pages (1e 1970). Introductory guide to community organizing - in the tradition of Alinsky. Chapters deal with entering the community; sizing up the community; making contacts; bringing people together; developing leadership; working with organizations; setting priorities; power

tactics; building political power; self help strategies; and leaving the community. There are afterwords on the possibilities and goals of organizing. See, also, S. Kahn (1992) *Organizing: A guide for grassroots leaders*, New York: McGraw Hill.

Kramer, R. M. and Specht, H. (eds.) (1969) *Readings in Community Organization Practice*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall. 458 + xiv pages. Popular and important collection with sections on community analysis; organizational analysis; community problem solving; the roles of professional change agents; the management of social conflict; and social planning.

Kuenstler, P. (ed.) (1961) *Community Organization in Great Britain*, London: Faber and Faber. 164 pages. The first substantial British collection of material - drawing on the (1959) Younghusband Report's definition of community organization. Contains some fascinating material - an overview of community organization in Britain (Kuenstler); the needs of old urban areas (Mays); new estates (Smith): new towns (Taylor); councils of social service (Littlewood and Clements); community associations and centres (Milligan); community and sociology (Dennis); and conclusions (Goetschius). Includes a useful bibliography.

Lindeman, E. (1921) *The Community. An introduction to the study of community leadership and organization*, New York: Association Press. The first text on community organizing and argues for a more scientific approach. Poses various alternatives but argues for the importance of the community organizer learning to work with with the different (and conflicting) forces in a community. Focuses on citizen participation; voluntary action; and interdependence.

Ross, M. G. (1955) *Community Organization. Theory, Principle and Practice*, New York: Harper & Row. (2e with B. W. Lappin 1967). Important and influential text (sold 30,000 copies and translated into five languages). In its second edition, it included chapters on conceptions of community work; the meaning of community organization; basic assumptions in community organization; some hypotheses about community life; aspects of planning; principles relating to organization; the role of the professional worker; and integrating principles and practice.

Rothman, J., Erlich, J. L. and Tropman, J. E. with Cox, F. M. (eds.) (1995) *Strategies of Community Intervention* 5e, Itasca, Il.: Peacock. Companion to Tropman et al (1995).

Steiner, J. F (1925) *Community Organization. A study of its theory and current practice* (rev. edn 1930), New York: Century. If Lindeman (1921) was the first text, this was the first textbook on community organization. He looked to the 'community movement' and explored aspects such as community chests and councils; organized recreation; interchurch co-operation; relationships between national and local agencies.

recommended Tropman, J. E., Erlich, J. L. and Rothman, J. (eds.) (1995) *Tactics and*

Techniques of Community Intervention 3e, Itasca, III.: F. E. Peacock. 482 + xii pages. Collection of 39 pieces. Part one deals with assessment and includes material on need identification, analysing agencies, and knowing yourself. Part two is concerned with option selection - values, feminist practice, assessment frameworks, and ethical dilemmas. Part three, implementation, mobilization and development: planning and organizing includes material on democratic organization, managing tensions, selecting tactics and organizing with people of color. Part four - administration, management and policy - looks at leading and managing community organization; women's ways; on-site analysis; job skills; and policy management. Part five examines programme evaluation. Part six explores some dilemmas of practice - codes of ethics; frameworks for ethical decision making; and experiences of women activists. Last, part seven provides some work guides: personnel management; effective meetings; using community data; guide to research and evaluation; budgeting; and methods of analysis.

Community organization - campaigns and movements

`recommended`Fisher, R. (1984) *Let the People Decide. Neighbourhood organizing in America*, Boston: Twayne. 197 + xxiv pages. Useful historical review periodically organized: social welfare neighbourhood organizing, 1886 - 1929 (settlements, community centers etc.); radical organizing, 1929 - 1946 (New Deal, Saul Alinsky, Communist Party); Conservative organizing, 1946 - 1960 (community development and the cold war; neighbourhood improvement associations); the neighbourhood organizing 'revolution' of the 1960s; the new populism of the 1970s. Includes a bibliographical essay.

Fisher, R. and Romanofsky (eds.) (1981) *Community Organization for Urban Social Change: A historical perspective, Westport: Greenwood Press.* Useful collection which includes chapters on the role and concept of neighbourhoods; the politics of Black protest; and community organizing in the 1970s.

Piven, F. F. and Cloward, R. (1977) *Poor People's Movements*, New York: Pantheon. Excellent study.

Community organization - studies

`recommended`Harper, E. B. and Dunham, A. (1959) *Community Organization in Action. Basic literature and critical comments*, New York: Association Press. 543 pages. Very helpful collection of material from the start of the century. Sections on the community and social welfare; the process of community organization; community organization in practice; agencies and programs; personnel - professionals and laymen; community development in the United States and elsewhere.

`recommended`Mondros, J. B. and Wilson, S. M. (1994) *Organizing for Power and Empowerment*, New York: Columbia University Press. 279 + xxi pages. Important

study of community organizations and the practice wisdom of 84 local to national organizers and leaders. Chapters explore: social action organizations and power; the organizers; recruiting participants; maintaining and deepening member participation; issues; strategy development; implementing strategy; evaluating outcomes; social action organizations; the pursuit of empowerment: strengths and challenges of practice.

Rothman, J. (1974) *Planning and Organizing for Social Change: action principles from social science research*, New York: Columbia University Press. Reviews the literature related to community organizing and social action in the late 1960s.

Spiegel, H. B. C. (ed.) (1968) *Citizen Participation in Urban Development. Volume 1: Concepts and issues*, Washington: Institute for Applied Behavioral Science. 291 pages. Useful collection of readings that examines citizen participation: housing and urban renewal; anti-poverty programs; Alinsky; and inplications for community decision making. Includes a bibliographic essay.

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Burghardt, S. (1982) *Organizing for Community Action*, Beverley Hills: Sage.

Coyle, G. L.(1930) *Social Process in Organized Groups*, New York: Richard R. Smith.

Dahir, J. (1947) *The Neighbourhood Unit Plan. Its spread and acceptance*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Dewey, J. (1916) *Democracy and Education. An introduction to the philosophy of education* (1966 edn.), New York: Free Press.

Ecklein, J. (1984) *Community Organizers*, New York: Wiley.

Follett, M. P. (1918) The New State. Group organization the solution of popular government (3rd impression [1920] with introduction by Lord Haldane), London: Longmans Green.

Follett, M. P. (1924) Creative Experience, New York: Longman.

Hillman, A. (1950) *Community Organization and Planning*, London: Macmillan.

King, C. (1948) *Organization for Community Action*, New York: Harper.

Marris, P. and Rein, M. (1967, 1974) *Dilemmas of Social Reform. Poverty and community action in the United States*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

McMillen, H. W. (1945) *Community Organization for Social Welfare*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Piven, F. F. and Cloward, R. (1971) *Regulating the Poor. The functions of public welfare*, New York: Vintage.

Reid, K. E. (1981) F*rom Character Building to Social Treatment. The history of the use of groups in social work*, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.

Rothman, J. (1968) 'Three models of community organization practice' in *Social Work Practice 1968*, New York: Columbia University Press.

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

While our aims change with situations, all educators, it can be argued, share a larger purpose - to foster democracy. But what does this mean? How might schools look? What is the place of informal education?

contents: | **introduction** | **the meaning of democracy and the meaning of education** | **John Dewey, democracy and education** | **A. S. Neill on democratic schooling** | | **further reading and references**

One of the major tasks that education must perform in a democratic society, Kelly (1995: 101) argues, 'is the proper preparation of young citizens for the roles and responsibilities they must be ready to take on when they reach maturity'. Others put the case that this is *the* aim of education:

We can conclude that 'political education' – the cultivation of the virtues, knowledge and skills necessary for political participation - has moral primacy over other purposes of public education in a democratic society. Political education prepares citizens to participate in consciously reproducing their society, and conscious social reproduction is the ideal not only of democratic education but also of democratic politics. (Gutmann 1987: 287)

For many of the ancient Greeks such participation was a good in itself. Their term for the private individual was *idiotes* (idiot). Such a person was literally a fool as she or he was not interested in public affairs. This grew out in part out of a recognition that humans are social beings. We are what we are because of our interactions with others. We achieve what we do because we benefit from their work. Thus, if we are all to flourish then we must:

Recognize that we share many common interests.

Commit ourselves to consider those interests (and hence the needs of others) when looking to our own.

Actively engage with, and seek to strengthen, those situations and movements

that embody democratic values and draw people together. (Jeffs and Smith 1999: 38)

In this view, we do not simply add together individuals and get society. People's lives are woven together, we share in a common life. As Dewey (1916: 87) saw it, 'A democracy is more than a form of government: it is primarily a mode of associated living, a conjoint communicated experience'.

Beyond being a good in itself, we can also make a case for democracy on instrumental grounds – on the goods that flow from it. In particular, we can focus on **freedoms, rights and material benefits** it affords (Dahl 1998: 44-61) – and upon the **social capital** it generates. These come in significant part through the educative and welfare impact of the **associational** life, relationships and networks linked to it.

We also need to recognize that it isn't just children and the young who need preparing for political participation. Political education is something that is necessary throughout life. It isn't just that many people miss out on a proper political education in their younger years - situations change, new understandings are generated, and it is necessary to explore what these might mean. In this respect the rather narrow concern with skilling that runs through a lot of recent talk of **lifelong learning** and the **learning society** is rather sad.

The meaning of democracy and the meaning of education

Just how we are to approach **democracy** is a matter of considerable debate. Different understandings imply contrasting educational practices. Carr and Hartnett (1996: 43-45) provide us with a useful illustration in this respect. They contrast a 'classical' conception of democracy (in which democracy is seen as a form of popular power) and a 'contemporary' conception where democracy is viewed as a representative system of political decision-making.

Classical and contemporary models compared (after Carr and Hartnett 1996)

	Classical (direct) democracy	**Contemporary (representative) democracy**
View of democracy	Grounded in a way of life in which all can develop their qualities and capacities. It envisages a society that itself is intrinsically educative and in which political socialization is a distinctively educative process. Democracy is a moral ideal requiring expanding opportunities for direct participation.	Results from, and reflects, the political requirements of a modern market economy. Democracy is a way of choosing political leaders involving, for example, regular elections, representative government and an independent judiciary.

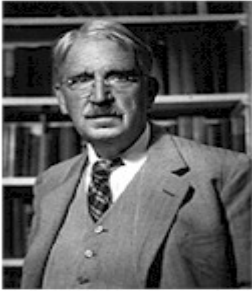| The primary aim of education	To initiate individuals into the values, attitudes and modes of behaviour appropriate to active participation in democratic institutions.	To offer a minority an education appropriate to future political leaders; the majority an education fitted to their primary social role as producers, workers and consumers.
Curriculum content	There is a focus on liberal education, a curriculum which fosters forms of critical and explanatory knowledge that allow people to interrogate social norms and to reflect critically on dominant institutions and practices.	Mass education will focus on the world of work and upon those attitudes and skills, and that knowledge that have some market value.
Typical educational processes	Participatory practices that cultivate the skills and attitudes that democratic deliberation require.	Pedagogical relationships will tend to be authoritarian and competition will, as in society generally, play an essential role.
School organization	Schools are viewed as communities in which the problems of communal life are resolved through collective deliberation and a shared concern for the common good.	Schools are organized around a pyramidal structure with the head at its apex.

A model such as this involve caricatures but the contrasts drawn can help us to approach questions around the direction and purposes of education – and its relation to democratic practices. To some extent the distinctions mirror other familiar dichotomies e.g. between **andragogy** and pedagogy, and 'romantic' and 'classical' forms of education (Lawton 1975 – although his 'classical' position looks more like the contemporary approach above). Indeed, there is some cross-over (not unexpected as someone like **Rousseau** has been associated to the so-called romantic position and can be linked to many of the concerns associated with direct democracy). However, the starting point and aim of education in these forms does take us along a somewhat different path.

As well as curriculum content, these contrasting models also involve some very different ideas as to how the **curriculum** is made. The focus on deliberation and practical wisdom in the classical model will tend to link to **process** and **praxis** approaches to curriculum. The concern with skilling in the contemporary model will lead people toward more **outcome-focused** models.

We can also link these models to debates around the meaning of **community**. The classical model may well link to appreciations that emphasize personal networks and relationships, association and communion; the contemporary model to a view of community as place (territory) and as marketized networks.

John Dewey and education for democracy

In terms of the development of thinking about education for democracy in the twentieth century, it is the figure of **John Dewey** that towers above all. His is the most significant (certainly the best read) contribution to thinking about education and democracy. He approached education as part of a broader project that encompassed an exploration of the nature of experience, of knowledge, of society, and of ethics. As such, he offers us 'the ideal bridge from theories of knowledge, to democratic theory and onwards to education theory' (Kelly 1995: 87). However, consideration of his educational thinking has tended to be isolated from his social and political philosophy (Carr and Hartnett 1996: 54) – so it is with his conception of democracy that we begin.

On democracy. Dewey recognized that many of the then current critiques of democracy, especially with regard to electorate's lack of knowledge, and the distance between the ideals of the classical model and the reality of government had considerable merit. As Ryan (1995: 25) put it:

[T]he problem was to make democracy in practice what it had the potential of being: not just as a political system in which governments elected by majority vote made such decisions as they could, but a society permeated by a certain kind of character, by mutual regard of all citizens for all other citizens, and by an ambition to make society both a greater unity and one that reflected the full diversity of its members' talents and aptitudes.

Dewey argued for the revitalization of public democratic life. Like Habermas in later times, he placed a great emphasis upon the role of communication in this. 'Communication is the process of sharing experience till it becomes a social possession' (Dewey 1916: 9). Through conversation about individual and group wishes, needs and prospective actions, it is possible to discover common interests and to explore the consequences of possible actions. 'This is what generates "social consciousness" or "general will" and creates the ability to act on collective goals. (Sehr 1997: 58). The process of deliberation and communication over collective goals is what Dewey (1927) viewed as a democratic public.

> The development of democracy was an expansion of sociability. The democratic community was in effect the community that best realized the very nature of sociability. Moral growth this involved the acquisition of a capacity for communal life as well as personal fulfillment; we become more fully who we are as we become more able to offer ourselves to others. (Ryan 1998 :407)

A key feature of Dewey's argument was his concern for 'social intelligence' (or social consciousness). Through its cultivation human beings began to develop 'the capacity collectively to enlarge their own freedom and to create a more desirable

form of social life' (Carr and Hartnett 1996: 59).

On education. In *My Pegagogic Creed* Dewey held, amongst other things, that:

Education is the fundamental method of social progress.

> Education is a regulation of the process of coming to share in the social consciousness; and that the adjustment of individual activity on the basis of this social consciousness is the only sure method of social reconstruction.

Education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience; that the process and the goal of education are one and the same thing.

This conception has due regard for both the individualistic and socialistic ideals. It is duly individual because it recognizes the formation of a certain character as the only genuine basis of right living. It is socialistic because it recognizes that this right character is not to be formed by merely individual precept, example or exhortation, but rather by the influence of a certain form of institutional or community life upon the individual and that the social organism through the school, may determine ethical results.

The community's duty to education is, therefore its paramount moral duty.

> If we follow this line of thinking through we can see that people learn democracy by being members of a group or community that acts democratically. In other words, it is through communication and participating in the process of deliberation that we learn to view ourselves as social beings with a concern for the common good, and responsibilities to others. As Dewey (1916: 6) put it, 'the very process of living together educates'.

John Dewey on 'the democratic conception in education

Since education is a social process, and there are many kinds of societies, a criterion for educational criticism and construction implies a *particular* social ideal. The two points selected by which to measure the worth of a form of social life are the extent in which the interests of a group are shared by its members, and the fullness and freedom with which it interacts with other groups. An undesirable society, in other words, is one which internally and externally sets up barriers to free intercourse and communication of experience. A society which makes provision for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through the interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic. Such a society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of the mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder.

This has profound implications for the way we approach schooling (or indeed any other form of education). The school must be 'primarily a mode of associated living, a conjoint communicated experience' (Dewey 1916: 87). Dewey argued that much of education failed because it neglected the fundamental principle of the school as a form of community life.

> It conceives that school as a place where certain information is to be given, where certain lessons are to be learned, or where certain habits are to be formed. The value of these is conceived as lying largely in the remote future, the child must do these things for the sake of something else he is to do; they are mere preparations. As a result they do not become part of the life experience of the child and so are not truly educative. (Dewey 1897, reproduced in Dewey 1940: 8)

Conceiving the school as a community in which communication and deliberation flourishes inevitably leads us to consider the nature of relationships between student and student, students and teachers, and teacher and teacher. As Winch and Gingell (1999) note, if schools exist to promote democratic values it would appear that they need to remove authoritarian relationships. 'Education for democracy thus becomes education freed from authoritarian relationships' (*op cit*).

A.S. Neill and participative education

Dewey was writing as a philosopher rather than drawing upon sustained experience as a practicing educator. It is helpful to turn to another significant twentieth century educator **A. S. Neill** (1883 – 1973). As Jean-François Saffange (1994) notes, when he died at the age of 90 he had spent most of his life in the classroom – as a pupil, pupil-teacher, teacher and headmaster. One of his most significant contributions to educational thinking was to bring insights from psychoanalytical traditions into education. He initially looked to Freud, but was later associated with Wilhelm Reich. However, educationally it was the work of Homer Lane that provided him a model of practice.

Homer Lane (1875-1925) was Superintendent of the Little Commonwealth, a co-educational community in Dorset run for children and young people ranging from a few months to 19 years. Those over 13 years old were there because they were categorize as delinquent. An American by birth, he had early experience as an educator at the George Junior Republic. At the Little Commonwealth from 1913 to 1918 (at Evershot, Dorset) he pioneered what later we came to know as 'group therapy' and 'shared responsibility'. His educational approach involved 'the path of freedom instead of imposed authority, of self-expression instead of a pouring-in

of knowledge, of evoking and exploiting the child's natural sense of wonder and curiosity instead of a repetitious hammering home of dull facts' (Wills 1964: 20). Unfortunately, his work in Dorset came to a rather abrupt end after two of the young female 'citizens' claimed that Lane 'had immoral relations with them' (Wills 1964: 163). As well as having an interest in offenders and expressive forms of education, Lane also worked as a psychotherapist (this also brought him into legal trouble).

A. S. Neill on Summerhill

What is Summerhill like? Well, for one thing, lessons are optional. Children can go to them or stay away from them – for years if they want to. There *is* a timetable – but only for the teachers.

The children have classes usually according to their age, but sometimes according to their interests. We have no new methods of teaching, because we do not consider that teaching in itself matters very much. Whether a school has or has not a special method for teaching long division is of no significance, for long division is of no importance except to those who *want* to learn it. And the child who *wants* to learn long division *will* learn it no matter how it is taught….

Strangers to this idea of freedom will be wondering what sort of madhouse it is where children play all day if they want to. Many an adult says, 'If I had been to a school like that, I'd never have done a thing'. Others say, 'Such children will feel themselves heavily handicapped when they have to compete against children who have been made to learn….

My staff and I have a hearty hatred of all examinations. To us, the university exams are an anathema. But we cannot refuse to teach children the required subjects. Obviously as long as the exams are in existence, they are our master….

Summerhill is possibly the happiest school in the world. We have no truants and seldom a case of homesickness. We very rarely have fights… I seldom hear a child cry, because children who are free have much less hate to express than children who are downtrodden. Hate breeds hate, and love breeds love. Love means approving of children, and that is essential in any school. You can't be on the side of children if you punish them and storm at them. Summerhill is a school in which the child knows he is approved of.

A. S. Neill 1968: 20-23

A. S. Neill was both impressed by the Little Commonwealth and with his

experience of psychotherapy under Lane. He described him as 'the most influential factor in my life' (Neill 1972: 135). Summerhill, the school with which Neill is forever associated was founded by him in 1924. As can be seen from the extract, lessons were optional, students can play if they want, do handicrafts, hang about. Afternoons were completely free for everyone. At five various activities began for those that want to take part. The evenings were also used for various entertainments. If it had not been for the threat of the school being closed by the authorities, Saffange (1994: 219) comments, Neill would have placed no ban on sexual relations.

One of the innovations that Neill took from the Little Commonwealth, was the general meeting in which the vote of staff had no greater weight than that of students.

Summerhill is a self-governing school, democratic in form. Everything connected with social, or group life, including punishment for social offences, is settled by vote at the Saturday night General School Meeting.

Each member of the teaching staff and each child, regardless of his age, has one vote. My vote carries the same weight as that of a seven-year-old....

Summerhill self-government has no bureaucracy. There is a different chairman at each meeting, appointed by the previous chairman, and the secretary's job is voluntary. Bedtime officers are seldom in office for more than a few weeks.

Our democracy makes laws – good ones too…. The success of the meeting depends largely on whether the chairman is weak or strong, for to keep order among 45 vigorous children is no easy task. The chairman has power to fine noisy citizens. Under a weak chairman, the fines are much too frequent. (Neill 1968: 54)

The School was small enough for everyone to attend if they wished. Some matters of school policy were not discussed by the General Meeting e.g. bedroom arrangements, payment of school bills, and the appointment and dismissal of teachers. However, 'the regulation of bullying, of cases of stealing, of inconsiderate behaviour' did come under the care of the Meeting (Stewart 1968: 296). As might be expected the same subjects tend to reappear – behaviour at bed-time and overnight; taking and interfering with private property; damage (ibid: 297). Neill (1968: 59) claims that self-government works. 'You cannot have freedom unless children feel completely free to govern their own social life. Where there is a boss, there is no real freedom'.

This approach to democratic education has the virtue of looking to the school as a community, and of looking to the possibilities of **associationalism**. Dewey, would no doubt argue that it entails a retreat from the curricula responsibilities of the educator. The social background of the students and the concerns of their parents, this was after all a fee-paying school that people chose, may well have allowed some freedom around study that could not reproduced in other settings. It may well also be that the approach's success depends upon having someone like Neill at its heart – a less spirited and able educator would not provide the presence and strength needed to help 'contain' the situation and to stimulate experiment. (Much as **Buber** argues that communities need a 'builder' at their heart). But, as

Stewart (1968: 299) suggests, it would have been very difficult to get the evidence needed to assess the effect and effectiveness of a Summerhill education (and even more difficult to compare it with other schools). However, there is no doubting that Neill was able to create a place where students felt cared for and respected. He also in his own way, and despite himself, 'rehabilitated the educator, that controversial character on the educational scene, which the fierce individualism of our time has struck out of the educational treatises, as if needed to be proved that educational success depends largely on the personality of the teachers, their enthusiasm and commitment.

Further reading and references

Carr, W. and Hartnett, A. (1996) *Education and the Struggle for Democracy. The politics of educational ideas*, Buckingham: Open University Press. 233 + xii pages. Useful collection of essays that detail developments in England and Wales. Includes a very helpful chapter on democratic theory and democratic education.

Follett, M. P. (1923) *The New State. Group organization the solution of popular government*, New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 373 + xxix pages. Influential exploration of 'the group principle', traditional democracy and group organization. The appendix 'training for the new democracy' is a classic statement of community education ideas. Follett was involved in the development of community centers (schools) around Boston - and her resulting proposals and ideas were a significant influence on the pioneers of the community centre movement in the UK.

Frazer, E. (1999) *The Problems of Communitarian Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 279 + ix pages.

Giroux, H. A. (1989) *Schooling for Democracy. Critical pedagogy in the modern age*, New York: Routledge. Very helpful collection of essays that examine schooling, citizenship and the struggle for democracy.

`recommended` Gutmann, A. (1987) *Democratic Education*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. 321 + xii pages. Constructs a theory of education that places the fostering of democracy at its core. Chapters examine the nature of the state; the purposes of primary education; democratic participation; limits of democratic authority; extramural education; educating adults; and the primacy of political education. Pretty much the current liberal standard treatment of the subject.

Held, D. (1995) *Democracy and the Global Order. From the modern sate to cosmopolitan governance*, Cambridge: Polity. 324 + xii pages. The first, introductory, section provides an overview of different models of democracy. Part two looks to the formation and displacement of the modern state. Part three examines the 'foundations of democracy'; and the final part attempts a 'reconstruction' of democracy around the notion of a cosmopolitan order. See also Held's (1987) heplful student text, *Models of Democracy*, Ca mbridge: Polity.

Hernández, A. (1997) *Pedagogy, Democracy and Feminism. Rethinking the public sphere*, New York: SUNY Press. 123 + xiii pages. ISBN 0-7914-3170-3. £10.00. Hernández constructs a 'feminist pedagogy of difference' for cultural workers. She draws upon her experience with the Argentine Mother's Movement to explore the place of critical pedagogy in the struggle for democracy. Chapters explore the remapping of pedagogical boundaries; informing pedagogical practices (democracy and the language of the public); inhabiting a split (feminism, counterpublic spheres, and the problematic of the private-public); recreating counterpublic spheres; and taking a position within discourse.

Kelly, A. V. (1995) *Education and Democracy. Principles and practices*, London: Paul Chapman. 202 +xviii pages. Covers some of the same ground as Gutmann but from a later English perspective (e.g. with some consideration of post modernism etc.). The first part of the book examines the fundamental pri nciples of democratic living; part two, democracy and the problem of knowledge; and part three, democracy and education. Clear and committed treatment.

Lakoff, S. (1996) *Democracy. History, theory, practice*, Boulder, Colarado: Westview Press. 388 pages. Substantial and well written introduction to 'democracy'. The opening section examines the current appeal of the idea, and democracy as the quest for autonomy. Section two runs through the history with discussions of Athenian democracy (communalism); Roman and later republicanism (pluralism); liberal democracy (individual autonomy) and modern autocracy. The third, 'theory' section looks at modern notions of democracy; the individual and the group, and federalism. Section four, 'practice' examines democratization, autonomy against itself and democracy and world peace.

Nemerowicz, G. and Rosi, E. (1997) *Education for Leadership and Social Responsibility*, London: Falmer Press. 166 + xiv pages. Part one of the book looks at different theoretical approaches to constructing an education for inclusive leadership and social repsonsibility. The writers draw from diverse sources here - learning about leadership from children, the world of work, and artists. Part two explores the practice of building educational communities for leadership and social responsibility. Here there is a focus on the campus. Chapters deal with planning and implementing programmes; teachers as leaders; curriculum and co-curriculum; research, assessment and dissemination; and building collaborative communities. The book is the outcome of a fairly large study.

Putnam, R. D. (1999) *Bowling Alone. The collapse and revival of American community*, New York: Simon and Schuster. 540 pages. Groundbreaking book that marshals evidence from an array of empirical and theoretical sources. Putnam argues there has been a decline in 'social capital' in the USA. He charts a drop in associational activity and a growing distance from neighbours, friends and family. Crucially he explores some of the possibilities
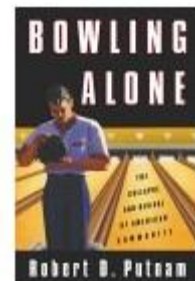
that exist for rebuilding social capital. A modern classic.

Sehr, D. T. (1997) *Education for Public Policy*, New York: SUNY Press. 195 + x pages. ISBN 0-7914-3168-1. This book explores two competing traditions of American democracy and citizenship: a dominant, privately-oriented citizenship tradition and an alternative tradition of public citizenship. David Sehr then goes on to explore how the second tradition can be promoted within schooling (in case material from two democratic alternative urban high schools.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

An emphasis on participation has links with the interest in democracy in community organization and in self-help and political incorporation in the community development tradition. But what is community participation?

contents: **introduction** | **community organization** | **community participation** | **conclusion** | **further reading and links** | **how to cite this article**

Influenced by the political debates of the late 1960s more radical approaches to community work became influential. 'Instead of seeking to help deprived communities to improve their social and environmental circumstances, the new community work activists urged that people take direct political action to demand changes and improvements' (Midgley et al 1986: 20). Saul Alinsky (1946; 1971) - was especially influential. He had a history of mobilizing and organizing grass roots campaigns particularly in the district known as the Back of the Yards in Chicago (the site of Upton Sinclair's famous novel The Jungle). He caught many people's imaginations through his evident commitment and experience, and his ability to articulate his thoughts in catchy phrases:

As an organizer I start from where the world is, as it is, not as I would like it to be (1971: xix)

The real action is in the enemy's reaction. The enemy properly goaded and guided in his reaction will be your major strength (1971: 136)

Alinsky seemed to offer a model for community action (as against organization or development). Major state programmes such as the War on Poverty in the United States of America and the Urban Programme in the United Kingdom also underlined a growing emphasis on economic and structural factors in matters more often associated with individual 'shortcomings'.

Community organizing

The model of practice most commonly associated with this North American

approach to **community organizing** posited three distinct 'types' of work. Here the work of Jack Rothman (1968) was of special importance.

Rothman on community organizing

Rothman identified three distinct types of community organizing:

Locality development: typifies the methods of work with community groups used by settlement houses and in 'colonial' community development work. A major focus is on the process of community building. Working with a broad, representative cross section of the community, workers attempt to achieve change objectives by enabling the community to establish consensus via the identification of common interests. Leadership development and the education of the participants are important elements in the process. In this approach great store is set by the values of both participation and leadership.

Social action: is employed by groups and organizations which seek to alter institutional policies or to make changes in the distribution of power. Civil rights groups and social movements are examples. Their methods may be, often are, abrasive, and participation is the value most clearly articulated by those who use this approach. Both leadership and expertise may be challenged as the symbolic 'enemies of the people'.

Social planning: is the method of community organization traditional to health and welfare councils although its scope and arena were enlarged in the 1960s to encompass city planners, urban renewal authorities and the large public bureaucracies. Effort is focussed primarily on task goals and issues of resource allocation. Whereas the initial emphasis of this approach was on the co-ordination of social services, its attention has expanded to include programme development and planning in all major social welfare institutions. Heavy reliance is placed on rational problem solving and the use of technical methods such as research and systems analysis. Expertise is the cherished value in this approach, although leadership is accorded importance as well.

[This outline of Rothman's argument is taken from Brager and Specht (1973: 26-27)]

These elements are drawn in a fairly extreme way. There is considerable overlap between the elements - but the focus on difference is useful in that it points attention to dimensions such as process, the role of the plan, and the tension between the state and dominant groups and those who believe themselves to be excluded.

Community participation

In the late 1960s there was a series of debates around 'participation' (see, for example, Pateman 1970). While 'participation' may be a vague term its advocates often rely on two key arguments about its value. It:

- makes for justice in decision-making - people have some say in, and influence on, collective decisions.
- has an educative value. Through participation people learn (Beetham 1992).

These interests became formalized in a number of United Nations reports including *Popular Participation in Development* (1971) and *Popular Participation in Decision Making for Development* (1975).

According to Midgley et al (1986: 23) the notion of popular participation and that of community participation are interlinked. The former is concerned with broad issues of social development and the creation of opportunities for the involvement of people in the political, economic and social life of a nation, 'the latter connotes the direct involvement of ordinary people in local affairs'. One United Nations document (1981: 5) defined community participation as:

The creation of opportunities to enable all members of a community to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitably in the fruits of development.

This is a very general definition and raises as many questions as it answers.

As with other traditions of community intervention the theoretical base for the work is relatively patchy (see Abbott 1996). There is material around the context and the specific problems within different societies; and there is a longstanding tradition of writing around political theory. However, much of what is written around process remains at the level of 'practice wisdom' and is not worked into a wider ranging framework.

Conclusion

In recent years there have been some useful developments in thinking around the notion of community participation. This has both involved a critique of 'participatory techniques' when used in the service of unjust and often illegitimate interests (see, for example, Cooke and Kothari 2001) and some more optimistic explorations of participatory approaches that link into more transformational political forms (see Hickey and Mohan 2004). In many respects, as various contributors to Cooke and Kothari (2001) underline, it is still necessary to approach state-sponsored community participation initiatives with some care. Claims to participation can often be little more than the wish to consult within a narrow policy framework. There can be a sharp contrast with the level of

involvement expected within more **associational** forms of democracy or even those approaches concerned with the cultivation of **social capital**. There is certainly a gap between such approaches and what can be seen in some of the more rigorous developments in participatory governance (Hickey and Mohan 2004).

Further reading and references

In my selection I have tried to include a number of books that give a picture of the development of thinking and practice. I have also tried to identify a number of key contemporary texts that allow for a rounded picture of the tradition.

Abbott, J. (1996) *Sharing the City. Community participation in urban management*, London: Earthscan. 247 pages. This book provides an historical analysis of community participation; outlines theories of community participation; and examines the implementation of community participation. Attempts to fill an significant gap in the literature - developing a theoretical basis for community participation.

Burkey, S. (1993) *People First. A guide to self-reliant, participatory rural development*, London: Zed Books. 243 + xix pages. Just what the sub-title says - a compilation of practice wisdom plus some framing. Chapters on understanding poverty; development; self-reliant participatory development; agents of change; the training and support of change agents; getting started; working with people; external relationships; savings, credits and inputs; objectives and principles.

Cooke, B. and Kothari, U. (eds.) (2001) *Participation: The new tyranny?*, London: Zed Books. 224 pages. Popular and useful overview of community participation and participatory techniques.

Craig, G. and Mayo, M (eds.) (1995) *Community Empowerment. A reader in participation and development*, London: Zed Books. Useful collection of material that addresses questions around the extent to which community participation and 'empowerment' are the human face of structural adjustment or tools for democratic transformation. Includes various case studies (both north and south).

Dudley, E. (1993) *The Critical Villager. Beyond community participation*, London: Routledge. 173 + xii pages. Looks at how community-based technical aid can be made more effective and sustainable. Says workers etc. should put themselves in the place of the intended beneficiaries of aid. Argues that participatory research and 'transfer of technology' should not be regarded as rival models of development, but as complementary components.

Hickey, S. and Mohan, G. (eds.) (2004) *Participation: From Tyranny to Transformation? - Exploring New Approaches to Participation in Development*, London: Zed Books. 304 pages. Helpful debunking of simplistic critiques of community participation as largely rhetorical or tyrannical. Explores different

examples of practice and examines recent convergence between participatory development and participatory governance.

Hoggett, P. (ed.) (1997) *Contested Communities: experiences, struggles, policies*, Bristol: Policy Press ISBN 1 86134 036 2. £15.95. Following introductory essays on contested communities (Hoggett) and neighbours (Crow), this book has sections on community and social diversity; local government and community; and community participation and empowerment. The book uses a set of case studies to examine the sources of community activism, the ways communities define themselves and defined by outsiders, and the room for partnerships with different agencies. Internal conflicts within communities are also examined.

Kaufman, M. qnd Alfonso, H. D. (eds.) (1997) *Community Power and Grassroots Democracy. The transformation of social life*, London: Zed Books. 230 + x pages. The contributors attempt to look beneath the rhetoric of community participation, local democracy and grassroots organizing. Can these processes lead to socio-political transformation and economic development? What is the impact of differences of interest and position? Michael Kaufman provides an overview - and this is followed by a series of chapters examining experiences within different central American countries - the struggle for popular democracy around housing in Costa Rica (Silvia Lara and Eugenia Molina); participation and development in Cuban municipalities Harold Dilla Alfonso and Geradp González Núñez; popular organizations in the Dominican Republic (César Pérez) and in Haiti (Luc Smarth); and women and popular organization in Chile (Veronica Schild). Part two has three 'them studies': differential participation (Michael Kaufman); poitical decentralization and popular alternatives (Harold Dilla Alfonso; and new social movement theory and resource mobilization theory (Eduardo Canel).

Mayo, M. (1994) *Communities and Caring. The mixed economy of welfare*, London: Macmillan. 242 + viii pages. Exploration of debates around community participation and community development which attends to experiences in both the north and the south. Some consideration of community education.

Midgley, J. with Hall, A., Hardiman, M. and Narine, D. (1986) *Community Participation, Social Development and the State*, London: Methuen. 181 + ix pages. The book begins with an excellent overview of community participation and is followed by chapters exploring community participation in health, education, rural development, urban development and housing, and social work. Midgley completes the collection with an examination of community participation, the state and social policy.

Spiegel, H. B. C. (ed.) (1968) *Citizen Participation in Urban Development. Volume 1: Concepts and issues*, Washington: Institute for Applied Behavioral Science. 291 pages. Useful collection of readings that examines citizen participation: housing and urban renewal; anti-poverty programs; Alinsky; and inplications for community decision making. Includes a bibliographic essay.

Slocom, R. et al (1995) *Power, Process and Participation - tools for change*, London: Intermediate Technology Publiciations. 251 + xvi pages. Provides a brief overview off approaches and contextual issues; and then sets out a range of tools for environmental and social change such as advocacy, community drama, focus groups etc.

Steifel, M. and Wolfe, M. (1997) *A Voice for the Excluded. Popular participation in development - utopia or necessity?*, London: Zed Books. 265 pages. Retrospective on the UNRISD projects in Latin America in the early 1980s. These projects looked at 'organized efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations'. While written from a particular perspective it does bring out the need to appreciate specific experiences and situations, to look to the context of 'participation', and the differences of perspective between those involved.

*From the cover of Empowering
Communities*

Strachan, P. with Peters, C. (1997) *Empowering Communities. A casebook from West Sudan*, Oxford: Oxfam. 87 + viii pages. This short book examines the experience of the Kebkabiya project. It started as an attempt to improve food security following a famine, and grew into a significant community-based organization.Chapters cover the project, service provision, involving the community, participation and gender, moving toward independence, and the future.

White, S. A. (ed.) (1999) *The Art of Facilitating Participation: Releasing the Power of Grassroots Communication*, New York: Sage. 368 pages. Practical guide.

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INFORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION, COLONIALISM AND DEVELOPMENT

The place of informal and non-formal education in development - the experience of the south.

contents: **introduction** | **the indebted south** | **education in the south** | **the question of colonialism** | **non-formal and informal programmes** | **literacy programmes** | **conclusion: informal and non-formal education and development** | **further reading and references** | **links**

Here we examine some of the arguments surrounding the place of informal, non-formal and community education in development, particularly in the South and ask whether such educational initiatives act as agents of colonialism (or to be more accurate neo-colonialism). To do this we need to review briefly the general economic and social position facing Southern countries; the significance of the debt/aid relationship; and the nature of colonialism. As a way of exploring questions around the contribution of informal and non-formal education I want to look at the changing emphasis on literacy within many Southern countries.

The indebted south

The vast majority of countries in the South have remained locked into positions in the international economic order which impose constraints on national decision-making of a quite different magnitude from those which affect most countries in the North. In the 1980s these inequalities in power and influence were brought into sharper focus by a global recession and a widespread debt crisis among developing countries. A study covering 107 developing countries, of which forty-one were categorized as 'least developed countries', found that between 1980 and 1990 there were significant falls for most 'developing countries' in gross domestic product, public expenditure and private consumption per head (Graham-Green 1991). The latter decreased in 81 per cent of the least developed countries and in 64 per cent of other developing countries. The United Nations (2000) reports that more than 2.8 billion people, close to half the world's population, live on less than the equivalent of $2/day. More than 1.2 billion people, or about 20 per cent of the world population, live on less than the equivalent of $1/day. South Asia has the largest number of poor people (522 million of whom live on less than the equivalent of $1/day). Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest proportion of people who are poor, with poverty affecting 46.3 per cent or close to half of the regions' population (**United Nations Briefing**).

Debt service (the amount of money paid in interest and other charges on loans) increased to claim a greater share of export earnings in 87 per cent of the least develop ed countries and in 84 per cent of the other developing countries during the 1980s. For a number of states in Latin America, and for some in Africa, difficulties in repaying international loans had already started in the 1970s, with the 1973 oil price rises bringing the first major shock to more fragile economies.

Debt increases and decreases

The external debt of developing countries as a percentage of GNP by region Source: UNICEF, *The Progress of Nations* 1999. (**rich world, poor world**)
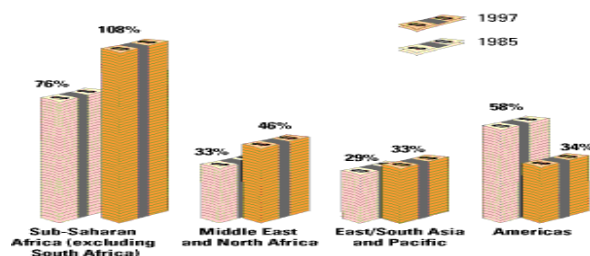
Sub-Saharan Africa: For every $1 received in aid grants in 1999, the countries in the region paid back $1.51 in debt service. They owe $231 billion to creditors, that is $406 for every man, woman and child in Africa. Sub-Saharan countries spend over twice as much on debt service as on basic health care. They spend 6.1 % of GNP on education and spent 5.0 % of GNP on debt service. If Africa's debt were cancelled it could almost double its spending on education. (from Jubilee 2000: **The Eye of the Needle**)

In sub-Saharan Africa, GDP per capita had grown at over 3 per cent a year between 1965 and 1973 but had stagnated between 1973 and 1980. Between 1980 and 1988 it fell by about 25 per cent. More recent figures (United Nations 2000) reveal that the top fifth (20 per cent) of the world's people who live in the highest income countries have access to 86 per cent of world gross domestic product (GDP). The bottom fifth, in the poorest countries, has about one per cent. In 1998, for every $1 that the developing world received in grants, it spent $13 on debt repayment (**United Nations Briefing**).

Education in the South

Between 1950 and 1970, the numbers of those enrolled in schools rose dramatically on a global level, and literacy levels rose, though not as rapidly as had been hoped. Rural communities, and especially rural women, still missed out on educational opportunities. None the less, the hope was that access to education would deliver many benefits: for the nation, a skilled work force to contribute to economic development, national unity and social cohesion, and in some countries, popular participation in politics. For the individual, it promised an escape from poverty, greater social prestige and mobility, and the prospect of a good job, preferably in town. In practice these hopes were often unfulfilled, particularly among the least privileged social groups, but they remained powerful aspirations.

In many countries of the South the debt crisis of the 1980s ended an era of unprecedented growth for education. Countries severely affected by the economic crisis, often compounded by military and political conflict, saw the numbers of children enrolling in school fall, and a marked increase in dropout rates among children who do start school. They saw a decline in opportunities for young people and adults to participate in education. More recently, the situation

has generally improved in a number of countries - although, most significantly, not in sub-Saharan Africa. The United Nations (2000) reports that worldwide:

The number of children in school has risen significantly, from 599 million in 1990 to 681 million in 1998.(However, there are major regional disparities- school enrolments went down in sub-Saharan Africa - from 60 percent in 1980 to 56 per cent in 1996).

Since 1990, some 10 million more children go to school every year, which is nearly double the 1980-90 average.

East Asia, the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean are close to achieving universal primary education.

The number of out-of-school children decreased from 127 million in 1990 to 113 million in 1998. In Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, the number of out-of-school children was halved, from 11.4 million in 1990 to 4.8 million in 1998. (There are significant gender differences, however. Girls represent 60 per cent of out of school children. In a similar fashion attendance tends to be lower in rural areas).

The number of children in pre-school education has risen by 5 per cent in the past decade. Some 104 million children were enrolled in pre-primary establishments in 1998.

The number of literate adults doubled from 1970 to 1998 from 1.5 billion to 3.3 billion. Today, 85 per cent of all men and 74 per cent of all women can read and write. (NB this uses a fairly limited measure)

Some 87 percent of young adults (15-24 years olds) are literate worldwide

Despite progress in actual numbers, illiteracy rates remain too high: at least 875 million adults remain illiterate, of which 63.8 per cent are women – exactly the same proportion as 10 years ago. **United Nations Briefing - education**

Given the scale of indebtedness and the lack of internal funds for education and social programmes, Southern countries have become particularly dependent on assessments and perspectives made by key international and national agencies in the north. Here the various reviews and policy analyses undertaken or sponsored by the World Bank have been particularly influential. As King (1991) argued, the agency map of educational priorities became much more clearly profiled, but this often happened without a corresponding local attempt to analyze national educational requirements. The sheer comprehensiveness of the Bank's analysis of national education systems, and indeed the thoroughness of many of the education missions of other agencies, can sometimes suggest that there is nothing more for the local agencies to say. This is an exaggeration, of course, but it points

to an imbalance between the weight of the external analysis of a country's educational needs and the country's own diagnosis. On some debates about education, the signals broadcast from the agency perspective are so powerful it is difficult to hear the local voices at all.

The problem is that the views of the Bank are borne of a particular perspective and their views on economies and on the education sector are open to considerable debate. The Bank's research insights and opinions are not ordinary research findings but are one significant part of a series of conditions and negotiations about loans to education in the South. Second, there is frustration at the sheer visibility and influence of the polices. Third, there is much indignation that the major Bank polices in education seem to rest so heavily on the work of foreign, Northern scholars and agency staff. The pervasive influence is relatively recent and borne of the economic crisis facing many Southern countries. One reason for the power of the Bank in this area is because their reports are easily available, cheap and well presented. This in a situation where there is relative little literature which looks across a continent or region.

The question of colonialism

Discussion of the dominance of external visions of education inevitably brings us to questions of colonialism and imperialism. *Colonialism* in its most traditional sense involves the gaining of control over particular geographical areas and is usually associated with the with the exploitation of various areas in the world by European powers from about 1500 on. It is often used interchangeably with 'imperialism'. (Imperialism - as the extension of state power and dominion either by direct territorial acquisition or by gaining political and economic control of other areas - of course, has a longer history). Colonialism commonly involves the settlement of the controlling (often western) population in a territory; and the exploitation of local economic resources for metropolitan use. It has taken many forms ranging from models of assimilation e.g. France and Portugal where the occupying power has sought make the colony more formally part of their system and culture; to more segregational approaches such as that adopted by Britain.

Neo-colonialism is usually taken as referring to the economic situation of former colonies post-independence. Here the basic argument runs something like the following. Political de-colonization did little or nothing to alter the economic balance between states and the power of western (and now eastern) capital. International law, institutions such as the World Bank (and banks in general), corporate property rights and the operation of world markets has left control in the hands of the elites in the former metropolitan powers.

Under neo-colonialism, as under direct colonial rule, the relationship between the centre and the periphery… is said to involve the export of capital from the former to the latter; a reliance on Western manufactured goods and services which thwarts indigenous development efforts; further deterioration in the terms of

trade for the newly independent countries; and a continuation of the process of cultural Westernization which guarantee the West's market outlets elsewhere in the world. the operations of transnational corporations in the Third World are seen as the principal agents of contemporary neo-colonialism since these are seen as exploiting local resources and influencing international trade and national governments to their own advantage. (Marshall et al 1994: 332)

The linkage of economic change and education; and the interest of the World Bank in such developments would appear to support the thesis that education initiatives can be the agent of colonialism. This is certainly the case for schools, argues Carnoy:

… schools are *colonialistic* in that they attempt to impose economic and political relationships in the society *especially* on those children who gain least (or lose most) from those relationships. Schools demand the most passive response from those groups in society who are the most oppressed by the economic and political system, and allow the most active participation and learning from those who are least likely to want change. While this is logical in preserving the status quo, it is also a means of colonializing children to accept unsatisfactory roles. In its colonialistic characterization, schooling helps develop colonizer-colonized relationships between individuals and between groups in society. It formalizes these relationships, giving them a logic that makes reasonable the unreasonable. (Carnoy 1974: 19)

This echoes the sorts of arguments put forward by **Gandhi** and Kenyatta with regard to schooling. It is also in this way that **Freire** characterizes colonialism as the culture of silence. The colonial element in schooling (or in informal and non-formal education initiatives) being the attempt to silence particular ways of speaking about the world. To this extent one class or group could be said to colonize another. Sometimes the term domestic or internal colonialism is used to describe such exploitative relationships between the 'centre' (the metropolis) and the 'periphery' (the satellite) of particular societies or nation states. There have been problems around such usage - especially as colonialism has tended to be used in relation to the exploitation of majority populations by minority groups. However, as a metaphor it remains a highly suggestive one - especially as it dramatizes the links with imperial powers.

As well as direct economic and political arrangements, colonialism also involves powerful cultural forces, in particular, language. Fanon (1952) has written graphically of the experience of being colonized by language. To speak . . . means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization" (1952: 17-18). An especially pernicious aspect of this is the way in which this entails taking on a restricting and demeaning sense of self. One of Fanon's main targets was the extent to which 'blackness' in French (or English for that matter) was associated with sin and evil.

In an attempt to escape the association of blackness with evil, the black man dons a white mask, or thinks of himself as a universal subject equally participating in a society that advocates an equality supposedly abstracted from personal appearance. Cultural values are internalized, or "epidermalized" into consciousness, creating a fundamental disjuncture between the black man's consciousness and his body. Under these conditions, the black man is necessarily alienated from himself. (Poulos 1996)

With the work of Said (1985), Spivak (1990) and others we now have a powerful set of understandings concerning the discourses of colonialism and the way in which it is imposed upon institutions and draws people into its net. (This body of literature is sometimes, confusingly, described as **post-colonial** theory. The 'post' here can be variously taken as a historical period after colonialism; as being concerned with those writers who opposed, and hence looked beyond, colonialism; and as somehow linked with the discourse of post-modernism or post-modernity - see Childs and Williams 1997 for a discussion and review). Education systems, in their different forms, are key carriers and promoters of the discourses of colonialism. They are also potentially significant weapons in the countering of such discourses.

Non-formal and informal education programmes

Many of the adult (and **non-formal**) education programmes associated with 'post-independence' governments looked to combat 'colonial mentalities' and to further a commitment to the emerging nation state. (See **Julius Nyerere** in Tanzania, for example, or Steele and Taylor's discussion of Indian adult education programmes). Another overt example of an anti-colonialist programme was Cuba's *Schools in the Countryside* initiative which had as one of its objectives, 'to eliminate economic, political and cultural dependence on the United States' (quoted in Simkins 1977: 49). Certainly, as writers such as Fordham (1993) have shown, non-formal education initiatives became associated with work that was self-consciously 'relevant' to the needs of disadvantaged groups. A number of those involved as educators were concerned with reducing poverty, increasing equity and about greater equality in the distribution of power and resources, but were constrained by political circumstance.

> [E]ducation is not politically neutral. It is an active supporter and faithful reflector of the status quo in society. If the status quo is predominantly unequal and unjust, and it is increasingly so, education will be increasingly unequal and unjust and there will be no place for non-formal education to improve the conditions of the poor. If, however, society is moving in an equalitarian direction, then non-formal education can and will flourish. (Adiseshiah in Fordham 1980: 21)

Torres (1990:129) in his study of the politics of non-formal education in Latin America similarly argues that many **popular education** programmes have had a

clear emphasis on social mobilization and political development. Churches, unions and groups within social movements have been involved in such initiatives - and there has, in some at least, been a concern to resist unwarranted state intervention into civic life.

However, not all informal and non-formal educational initiatives have been so focused on social and political justice. Indeed, it could be said that many have been rather more concerned with creating conditions for capitalist advancement. Often this has been wrapped up with a desire to stimulate economic growth and development (see **adult education and lifelong learning - a view from the south**), but it can end up either advantaging investors (frequently from the former colonial powers) or having little impact on growth. The case of literacy programmes is instructive in this respect.

Literacy programmes

Literacy has become associated in the minds of some policy makers with development. Here I do not need to go into debates about functional literacy and absolute literacy. However, we do need to recognize that during the 1980s and 1990s, political conflicts as much as economic problems have sharpened awareness of the issues in non-formal education. Literacy is seen as a political issue by many governments. High illiteracy figures are often regarded as revealing failures in their education systems. Governments of all political persuasions have, therefore, made at least sporadic efforts to promote literacy among adults, sometimes with substantial funding from international organizations. They frequently made significant use of non-formal programmes. In the 1970s there was a fairly widespread belief that literacy was a sound economic investment which would lead to increased productivity. In the recessionary climate of the 1980s, the short-term returns on literacy were called into question, and generally speaking the long-term rewards of education received less attention. Furthermore, with high levels of unemployment, there are usually sufficient literate candidates for the shrinking numbers of jobs requiring literacy.

What is more, the outcomes of government-sponsored literacy programmes and campaigns have been extremely mixed. Literacy work has largely taken two forms. Short campaigns involving mass mobilization have been one method. Literacy programmes involving ongoing work over a period years, either nationally or targeting selected communities or regions, have been the other. In societies undergoing major political change, 'revolutionary governments' have been generally more able to mobilize people both to teach and to learn. In countries where there is little popular identification with the regime, especially under authoritarian governments, efforts at literacy promotion may be regarded with suspicion or even contempt. It is in these circumstances that non-governmental literacy initiatives have become a focus of interest. It could be argued that greater community involvement and organization may generate challenges to the government - demands for democracy, land reform, and greater access to services

such as education. However, one of the key outcomes of such literacy programmes, Youngman (2000) argues, is that they, and the aid that sustains them, work to legitimate capitalist development and social inequality.

Youngman's study of the National Literacy Programme in Botswana (1978-1987) argued that it was promoted by the state in terms of the modernization of society and the extension of educational opportunity. Aid providers were attracted by its concern with equity.

However…, the programme in fact served to reproduce the class, gender and ethnic inequalities within society. Furthermore, at the political level it constituted a strategy of state legitimation by demonstrating a welfare concern for providing the rural areas with social services. Ideologically, the programme planners in 1979 adopted a narrow and conservative conception of literacy, and consciously reject **conscientization** or mobilization approaches that might have empowered the learners: 'the political element in the [**Freire**] method was not seen as being appropriate to Botswana. There was also a negative response to a somewhat militant campaign' (Townsend-Cole 1988: 41). The overall consequences of the National Literacy Programme, and therefore of the aid which sustained it, was to legitimate Botswana's capitalist development and social inequality (Youngman 2000: 135-6)

King (1991) in his excellent survey of the area draws out three key further trends around literacy in the South

A move from a concern with literacy alone to a concern with the schooling-literacy interrelationship. In some of the literature there has been an assumption that as people become more literate they will encourage their children to go to school. There has been little or no research done of this - and indeed the reverse process may be more relevant. What has been of particular concern to the World Bank and others was that the ability of primary schooling to attract and hold its clienteles was faltering. For as long as primary school enrolments were rising as a percentage of the population then it was possible to believe that over the course of a generation illiteracy would been eliminated. In Africa there is now evidence of declining participation in schooling (this may be one of the impacts of droughts, economic disruption and wars). A further factor in some places has been the levying of fees as the income from taxes and aid has decreased. There have also been worries around the quality of primary schooling in a number of states - particularly those that are poor. Lacking textbooks, adequate facilities and teachers the idea of a full primary education is rather remote.

The reassertion of achievable measures of school and adult literacy. In looking at the achievements of both primary schooling and literacy work a basic question is posed: what is the level of basic education for all, including adults, that should be set as a minimum in order to retain elementary literacy skills? There has been an increased interest in the setting of standard measures of performance and here

the World Bank has been active. This shift along with the others is sometimes referred to as the 'new realism'.

A move from the campaign literature to the analysis of literacy realities. This is evident in the third of our trends. There are still very few detailed and textured studies of work in particular countries or regions. There does seem to have been a shift in the literature however, to more grounded discussions of literacy - and less of the rhetorical, exhortory material.

Street (2001) has assembled a collection of case studies of more recent literacy initiatives which underline a number of the above concerns and that reveal some of the issues around the discourse of non-formal education and literacy .

Conclusion: informal and non-formal education and development

The conclusion must inevitably be that while some informal, non-formal and popular education programmes have had a concern to combat colonialism and 'colonial mentalities' others have effectively worked in the opposite direction. The particular power of non-formal education (and things like community schooling) in this respect isn't just the content of the programme, but also the extent to which it draws into state and non-governmental bodies various institutions and practices that were previously separate from them; and perhaps resistant to the state and schooling. The state often has a significant influence in these organizations - often through the nature of the funding it provides. International aid has a similar impact. Community groups may become part of state education and welfare systems and various activities can become part of school and institutional life. By wrapping up activities in the mantle of **community** there is a sleight of hand. By drawing more and more people into the professional educator's net there is the danger a growing annexation of various areas of life (a particular them of **Illich's** work). Under this guise concerns such as skilling and the quietening of populations can take place.

Further reading and references

Bhabha, H. K. (1994) *The Location of Culture*, London: Routledge. Series of essays that focus on post-colonial identity. Develops a theory of cultural hybridity and the 'translation' of social difference.

Childs, P. and Williams, P. (1996) *An Introduction to Post-Colonial Theory*, London: Prentice Hall. Overview of key theorists such as Fanon, Said, Bhabha and Spivak. Written from a literary theory perspective - but useful all the same.

Carnoy, M. (1974) *Education as Cultural Imperialism*, New York : David McKay. Important exploration of schooling as a means of subjugating people to the interests of the powerful. Develops a theoretical framework that is applicable to education generally.

Foley, G. (1999) *Learning in Social Action. A contribution to understanding informal education*, Leicester: NIACE/London: Zed Books. Explores the significance of the incidental learning that can take place when people are involved in community groups, social struggles and political activity. Foley uses case studies from Australia, Brazil, Zimbabwe and the USA that reflect a range of activities. Chapters on ideology, discourse and learning; learning in a green campaign; the neighbourhood house; learning in Brazilian women's organizations; and political learning and education in the Zimbabwean liberation struggle.

Fanon, F. (1952) *Black Skin, White Mask* (1986 edn. with a foreword by H. Bhabha), London: Pluto Press. Path-breaking study of colonial depersonalization. Examines cultural and ideological processes that create a desire for acceptance and assimilation - and that make for trauma and self-alienation. See, also, (1961) *The Wretched of the Earth*, London: Penguin. on the economic and psychological impact of imperialism and points of resistance and change.

Gandhi in the East End

Gandhi, M. K. (1997) *Hind Swaraj and other writings*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 208 + lxxv pages. Text of the 1910 edition of 'Indian Home Rule' which looked at the complex relationships between the commercial and governmental interests of the metropolitan power (in this case Britain) and the culture, and social and political organization of the colonized - 'It is truer to say that we gave India to the English than India was lost'. As well as historical material, the book also includes chapters on education, passive resistance and machinery.

Graham-Brown, S. (1991) *Education in the Developing World. Conflict and crisis*, London: Longman. 332 + xx pages. Not just concerned with adults, this book provides a good overview of the context for educational policy formation; the nature of provision and explorations of learning and teaching in marginal communities; organizing for literacy; and the future of education in the South.

Green, A. (1997) *Education, Globalization and the Nation State*, London: Macmillan. 206 pages. A development of Green's influential earlier work *Education and State Formation* (1990), this book offers a useful exploration of the impact of globalization on education systems. He begins with a refreshing and necessary critique of postmodernism and then moves on to explore education and state formation in Europe and Asia; technical education and state formation; vocational

education; education and cultural identity in the UK; educational achievement in centralized and decentralized systems; and education, globalization and the nation state.

King, K. (1991) *Aid and* Education *in the Developing World*, Harlow: Longman. 286 + xviii pages. Examines the effectiveness of donor agencies in a number of different educational policy areas - including literacy and non-formal education.

Memmi, A. (1965) *The Colonizer and* the *Colonized,* London: Souvenir Press. A classic study of oppression in colonial settings.

Moore-Gilbert, B. (1997) *Postcolonial Theory. Contexts, practices, politics*, London: Verso. 243 pages. Good survey of post colonial theory and the challenges to it. Looks in detail at the work of Spivak, Said and Bhabha - the criticisms they have faced and the arguments they have put forward. Two final chapters examine the postcolonial criticism and postcolonial theory; and how postcolonial analysis can be connected with different histories of oppression.

Said, E. W. (1985) Orientalism, London: Penguin. Brilliant critique of western attitudes to 'the east' which problematizes many 'taken-for-granted' notions. How are we to approach other cultures? From what perspective do we make judgements? See, also Said's (1993) Culture and Imperialism, London: Chatto and Windus (also Penguin) - series of essays exploring the relationship between culture and imperialism.

Spivak, G. I. (1990) *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, strategies, dialogues* (ed. S. Harasym), London: Routledge. Important collection of Spivak's writings etc.

Steele, T. and Taylor, R. (1995) Learning Independence. A political outline of Indian adult education, Leicester: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education. 151 + vii pages. Fascinating overview of programmes and changes in Indian adult education since the 1940s that looks to a political analysis of its role. Chapters examine the English studies and subaltern histories; education in British India from the early years to independence; Gandhi and the dialectic of modernity; education and social development in India from 1947 to 1964: Nehru and Congress; social education and the dream of nationhood; the non-formal revolution and the National Adult Education Programme; Post NAEP - radical populism and the new social movements; and towards a transformative pedagogy.

Street, B. (2001) *Literacy and Development*, London: Routledge. 240 pages. A collection of case studies of literacy projects around the world. The everyday uses and meanings of literacy and of the literacy programmes that have been developed to enhance them are examined. It includes chapters on Women's literacy in Pakistan, Ghana, and Rural Mali, literacy in village Iran, and an "Older Peoples" Literacy Project.

Thompson, A. R. (1981) Education and Development in Africa, London: Macmillan. 358 + viii pages. Excellent overview of African education practice that is particularly strong on non-formal education. Chapters examine social change and development; education and schooling; politics and education; economics and education; problems in educational planning; problems of educational innovation; the management of educational reform; non-formal education; re-schooling; and linking formal and non-formal education.

Torres, C. A. (1990) *The Politics of Nonformal Education in Latin America*, New York: Praeger. 204 pages. Torres explores the literacy programs in several Latin American countries--including Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada--as the prime examples of adult educational reform. He examines such issues as: Why are given educational policies created? How are they constructed, planned, and implemented? Who are the most relevant actors in their formulation and operationalization? What are the implications of such policies for both clients and the broader society? What are the fundamental, systematic, and organizational processes involved?

Youngman, F. (2000) The Political Economy of Adult Education, London: Zed Books. 270 pages. Useful exploration of adult education and development theory, social inequality and imperialism and aid in adult education.

References

Allen, T. and Thomas, A. (eds.) (1992) Poverty and Development in the 1990s, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Draper, J. (ed.) (1998) *Africa Adult Education. Chronologies in Commonwealth countries*, , Leicester: NIACE.

Fordham, P. (ed.) (1980) Participation, Learning and Change, London, Commonwealth Secretariat.

Fordham, P. E. (1993) 'Informal, non-formal and formal education programmes' in YMCA George Williams College ICE301 Lifelong Learning Unit 2, London: YMCA George Williams College.

George, S. (1989) A Fate Worse than Debt, London: Penguin.

Marshall et al 1994

Poulos, J. (1996) Frantz Fanon, **http://www.emory.edu/ ENGLISH/Bahri/ Fanon.html**, accessed 16/02/2001.

Simkins, T. (1977) **Non**-*Formal Education and Development. Some critical issues*, Manchester: Department of Adult and Higher Education, University of Manchester.

Strange, S. (1998) 'The new world of debt', New Left Review 230: 91-114.

Street, J. C. and Street, B. (1991) 'The schooling of literacy' in D. Barton and R. Ivanic (eds.) Writing in the Community, London: Sage.

Townsend-Cole, E. K. (1988) Let the People Learn, Manchester: University of Manchester Department of **Adult** Education.

PAULO FREIRE

Perhaps the most influential thinker about education in the late twentieth century, Paulo Freire has been particularly popular with informal educators with his emphasis on dialogue and his concern for the oppressed.

contents: **introduction** | **contribution** | **critique** | **further reading and references** | **links**

Paulo Freire (1921 - 1997), the Brazilian educationalist, has left a significant mark on thinking about progressive practice. His *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is currently one of the most quoted educational texts (especially in Latin America, Africa and Asia). Freire was able to draw upon, and weave together, a number of strands of thinking about educational practice and liberation. Sometimes some rather excessive claims are made for his work e.g. 'the most significant educational thinker of the twentieth century'. He wasn't - **John Dewey** would probably take that honour - but Freire certainly made a number of important theoretical innovations that have had a considerable impact on the development of educational practice - and on **informal education** and **popular education** in particular. In this piece we assess these - and briefly examine some of the critiques that can be made of his work.

Contribution

Five aspects of Paulo Freire's work have a particular significance for our purposes here. First, his emphasis on **dialogue** has struck a very strong chord with those concerned with popular and informal education. Given that informal education is a dialogical (or conversational) rather than a **curricula** form this is hardly surprising. However, Paulo Freire was able to take the discussion on several steps with his insistence that dialogue involves respect. It should not involve one person acting **on** another, but rather people **working with** each other. Too much education, Paulo Freire argues, involves 'banking' - the educator making 'deposits' in the educatee.

Second, Paulo Freire was concerned with **praxis** - action that is informed (and linked to certain values). Dialogue wasn't just about deepening understanding - but was part of making a difference in the world. Dialogue in itself is a co-operative activity involving respect. The process is important and can be seen as enhancing **community** and building **social capital** and to leading us to act in ways that make for justice and human flourishing. Informal and popular educators have

had a long-standing orientation to action - so the emphasis on change in the world was welcome. But there was a sting in the tail. Paulo Freire argued for informed action and as such provided a useful counter-balance to those who want to diminish theory.

Third, Freire's attention to naming the world has been of great significance to those educators who have traditionally worked with those who do not have a voice, and who are oppressed. The idea of building a 'pedagogy of the oppressed' or a 'pedagogy of hope' and how this may be carried forward has formed a significant impetus to work. An important element of this was his concern with **conscientization** - developing consciousness, but consciousness that is understood to have the power to transform reality' (Taylor 1993: 52).

Fourth, Paulo Freire's insistence on situating educational activity in the lived **experience** of participants has opened up a series of possibilities for the way informal educators can approach practice. His concern to look for words that have the possibility of generating new ways of naming and acting in the world when working with people around literacies is a good example of this.

Fifth, a number of informal educators have connected with Paulo Freire's use of metaphors drawn from Christian sources. An example of this is the way in which the divide between teachers and learners can be transcended. In part this is to occur as learners develop their consciousness, but mainly it comes through the 'class suicide' or 'Easter experience' of the teacher.

The educator for liberation has to *die* as the unilateral educator of the educatees, in order to be born again as the educator-educatee of the educatees-educators. An educator is a person who has to live in the deep significance of Easter. Quoted by Paul Taylor (1993: 53)

Critique

Inevitably, there are various points of criticism. First, many are put off by Paulo Freire's language and his appeal to mystical concerns. The former was a concern of Freire himself in later life - and his work after *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was usually written within a more conversational or accessible framework.

Second, Paulo Freire tends to argue in an either/or way. We are either with the oppressed or against them. This may be an interesting starting point for teaching, but taken too literally it can make for rather simplistic (political) analysis.

Third, there is an tendency in Freire to overturn everyday situations so that they become pedagogical. Freire's approach was largely constructed around structured educational situations. While his initial point of reference might be non-formal, the educational encounters he explores remain formal (Torres 1993: 127) In other words, his approach is still curriculum-based and entail transforming settings into

a particular type of pedagogical space. This can rather work against the notion of dialogue (in that curriculum implies a predefined set of concerns and activities). Educators need to look for 'teachable moments' - but when we concentrate on this we can easily overlook simple power of being in conversation with others.

Fourth, what is claimed as liberatory practice may, on close inspection, be rather closer to banking than we would wish. In other words, the practice of Freirian education can involve smuggling in all sorts of ideas and values under the guise of problem-posing. Taylor's analysis of Freire's literacy programme shows that:

.. the rhetoric which announced the importance of dialogue, engagement, and equality, and denounced silence, massification and oppression, did not match in practice the subliminal messages and modes of a Banking System of education. Albeit benign, Freire's approach differs only in degree, but not in kind, from the system which he so eloquently criticizes. (Taylor 1993: 148)

Educators have to teach. They have to transform transfers of information into a 'real act of knowing' (op cit: 43).

Fifth, there are problems regarding Freire's model of literacy. While it may be taken as a challenge to the political projects of northern states, his analysis remains rooted in assumptions about cognitive development and the relation of literacy to rationality that are suspect (Street 1983: 14). His work has not 'entirely shrugged off the assumptions of the "autonomous model"' (ibid.: 14).

Last, there are questions concerning the originality of Freire's contribution. As Taylor has put it - to say that as many commentators do that Freire's thinking is 'eclectic', is 'to underestimate the degree to which he borrowed directly from other sources' (Taylor 1993: 34). Taylor (1993: 34-51) brings out a number of these influences and 'absorbtions' - perhaps most interestingly the extent to which the structure of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* parallels Kosik's *Dialectic of the Concrete* (published in Spanish in the mid 1960s). Here we would simply invite you to compare Freire's interests with those of **Martin Buber**. His concern with conversation, encounter, being and ethical education have strong echoes in Freirian thought.

Further reading and references

Key texts: Paulo Freire's central work remains:

Freire, P. (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Harmondsworth: Penguin. Important exploration of dialogue and the possibilities for liberatory practice. Freire provides a rationale for a pedagogy of the oppressed; introduces the highly influential notion of banking education; highlights the contrasts between education forms that treat people as objects rather than subjects; and explores education as cultural action. See, also:

Freire, P. (1995) *Pedagogy of Hope. Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York: Continuum. This book began as a new preface to his classic work, but grew into a book. It's importance lies in Freire's reflection on the text and how it was received, and on the development of policy and practice subsequently. Written in a direct and engaging way.

Biographical material: There are two useful English language starting points:
Freire, P. (1996) *Letters to Cristina. Reflections on my life and work*, London: Routledge. Retrospective on Freire's work and life. in the form of letters to his niece. He looks back at his childhood experiences, to his youth, and his life as an educator and policymaker.

Gadotti, M. (1994) *Reading Paulo Freire. His life and* work, New York: SUNY Press. Clear presentation of Freire's thinking set in historical context written by a close collaborator.

For my money the best critical exploration of his work is:
Taylor, P. (1993) *The Texts of Paulo Freire*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Other references

Kosik, K. (1988) *La dialectique du concret*, Paris: Plon.

Street, B. V. (1984) *Literacy in Theory and Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Torres, C. A. (1993) 'From the "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" to "A Luta Continua": the political pedagogy of Paulo Freire' in P. McLaren and P. Leonard (eds.) *Freire: A critical encounter*, London: Routledge.