

SOCIETY FOR EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS AND EDUCATION IN A CHANGING
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BRIEF ENCOUNTERS:



EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
AND THE PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL

IVOR GOODSON



“ The problem is to give every man (sic) some access to a complex cultural inheritance, some hold on his personal life and on his relationships with the various communities to which he belongs, some extension of his understanding of, and sensitivity towards, other human beings. The aim is to forward understanding, discrimination and judgement in the human field – it will involve reliable factual knowledge, where this is appropriate, direct experience, imaginative experience, some appreciation of the dilemmas of the human condition, of the rough-hewn nature of many of our institutions and some rational thought about them. ”

(Schools Council 1965, para. 60)



“ “ The existence of a climate of political, social and educational ideas sympathetic to research pursuits, and in which research is seen by policymakers, administrators, heads and classroom teachers as capable of making a real contribution to the rationality of decision making. ” ”

(W. Taylor, 2006, p.7)



First that they accept the desirability of mounting free and open-ended discussion of controversial, social and personal issues with adolescents in their classrooms. Second, that they have reached this conclusion thoughtfully, recognising this as difficult work which will tax both them and their pupils and are prepared to try to press towards higher standards than have so far been achieved. Third that they accept the need to work towards a relationship with adolescent school leavers which helps them grow up by stressing their maturity and responsibility rather than attempting to prolong their childhood and dependence. Fourth, that they are prepared to create a suitable environment for discussion in their schools, this means in the main a classroom set out for discussion, in which desks or chairs and tables have been rearranged to make a room where discussion is more appropriate than instruction instead of a room where instruction is more appropriate than discussion.



(L. Stenhouse, 1968b, mimeo)



School reformers in the past often complained about what was called 'The Blob' – the network of educational gurus in and around the universities who praised each other's research, sat on committees that drafted politically correct curricula, drew gifted teachers away from their vocation and instead directed them towards ideologically-driven theory.



(M. Gove, 23 March 2013)



Almost certainly we are moving into an age of totalitarian dictatorships - an age in which freedom of thought will be at first a deadly sin and later on a meaningless abstraction. The autonomous individual is going to be stamped out of existence. But this means that literature, in the form in which we know it, must suffer at least a temporary death. The literature of liberalism is coming to an end and the literature of totalitarianism has not yet appeared and is barely imaginable. As for the writer, he is sitting on a melting iceberg; he is merely an anachronism, a hangover from the bourgeois age, as surely doomed as the hippopotamus.



(G. Orwell, 1957, p. 48)


Periodisation in national contexts^[1]

National Case	Periods
ENGLAND	<p>1945 -1979: Progressive narrative on welfare state expansion.</p> <p>1979 -1997: Marketisation narrative.</p> <p>1997 - 2007: Narrative of the middle way: targets, tests and tables.</p>
FINLAND	<p>1945 - 1969: Preparatory phase building the welfare state.</p> <p>1970 - 1989: The golden age.</p> <p>1990 - 2007: Restructuring.</p>
GREECE	<p>1945 -1967: Post-war period.</p> <p>1967 -1974: Dictatorship.</p> <p>1975 - 1989: Welfare state building.</p> <p>1991 - 2007: Restructuring.</p>

National Case	Periods
IRELAND	<p>1970 -1986: The demise of apprenticeship and increasing secularisation.</p> <p>1987 -1997: Envisioning the future partnership a new approach.</p> <p>1997 – 2007: Opening the floodgates of reform.</p>
PORTUGAL	<p>1945 -1974: Dictatorship.</p> <p>1974 -1976: Revolutionary period.</p> <p>1977 - 1985: Normalisation.</p> <p>1985 - 2007: Restructuring.</p>
SPAIN	<p>1939 -1976: Dictatorship.</p> <p>1977 – 1990: Normalising.</p> <p>1990 - 2000: Welfare state building.</p> <p>2000 - 2007: Restructuring.</p>
SWEDEN	<p>1945 – 1975: Welfare state expansion - services for all.</p> <p>1975 - 1992: Decentralisation and deregulation.</p> <p>1992-2000: Marketisation.</p> <p>2000 - 2007: Quality agenda.</p>

The main features of public service restructuring in the case studies

- Decentralisation.
- Development of an emphatic discourse of privatisation and marketisation (habituation).
- Standardisation of instruction and assessment.
- Sacrifice of the critical mission of professional education/training to practical and technical training in economic interests.
- Conversion of public services to private.
- Business takeover of education and care supply and teacher and nursing supply.
- The creation of quasi markets for consolidating the processes of privatisation.
- Authorities forming agencies for contracting out services to private suppliers.
- Costs of administration shifted from costs of public ownership and control to costs of managing and monitoring outsourced delivery.
- Increased costs from franchise effects (un/under-employment) on public employees.
- The increased objectification of labour and increases in the value form of labour.
- A dissemination of a view of learners and care recipients as economically rational, self-interested individuals and the reconstruction of supply in line with this vision.
- A redefinition of democracy in terms of consumer choice.
- An increased objectification of teachers and nurses, learners and patients, care and curricula and (increasingly) professional education and educators as factors of production.
- The creation of a labour buffer (surplus army of labour) in the education and care sectors at the same time as (at least in some education sectors) posts are increasingly difficult to fill and notoriously difficult to maintain continuity in.
- Increased class differences in terms of education and care supply and consumption: i.e. in terms of who provides care and to/for whom.
- Increased inequalities in service work conditions.
- Increases in quick training programmes to maximise economic gains.
- Increases in judgement of performances according to consumer values.



“The passive attitude will come back, and it will be more consciously passive than before. Progress and reaction have both turned out to be swindles. Seemingly there is nothing left but quietism - robbing reality of its terrors by simply submitting to it. Get inside the whale -or rather, admit you are inside the whale (for you are, of course). Give yourself over to the world-process, stop fighting against it or pretending that you control it; simply accept it, endure it, record it.”


(G. Orwell, 1957, pp. 48-49)




The era of market triumphalism has coincided with a time when public discourse has been largely empty of moral and spiritual substance. Our only hope of keeping markets in their place is to debate openly and publicly about the meaning of the goods and social practice says we pose.



(M. Sandel, 2012, p. 202)



This form of soft dictatorship does not require mass violence to stay in power. Instead, it relies upon a cadre of elites to run the bureaucracy , the state, media, the courts and in some places state companies. These modern-day clerks understand their role which is to defend the leaders however dishonest their statements, however great their corruption and however disastrous their impact on ordinary people and institutions. Close associates of the party leader can become very wealthy receiving lucrative contracts or seats on state company boards without having to compete for them. Others can count on government salaries as well as protection from accusations of corruption or incompetence. However badly they perform they will not lose their jobs.



(A. Applebaum, 2020, pp. 25-26)



Pragmatists, working within the school of effectiveness paradigm believe the efforts to alter the existing relationship between social class and student achievement by bringing about societal changes are naive perhaps quixotic. We prefer to work within the constraints of the current social order.



(Reynolds and Teddlie, 2001, p.71)

Democracy, Henry Simons, says:

... implies a continuing process of relevant discussions and enquiry among professional truth seekers or academic problem solvers, who though scrupulously detached from active politics and factional affiliations subtly and unobtrusively guide or arbitrate political debate by their own discussions.

(H. Simons, 1948, p.8)