
Editorial

Journal of Education is pleased to be associated with a further Kenton Special Issue of the journal. Editorial comment is offered separately by both the journal Editorial Committee and the Kenton-appointed Editors, Dennis Francis and Angela James, both of the University of Natal.

The Journal of Education Editorial Committee

A brief outline of the partnership behind this Kenton Special Issue might be of interest to readers unfamiliar with this history.

In early 2000, the Kenton Education Association (KEA) - represented by Linda Chisholm, Crispin Hemson and Maureen Robinson - approached the journal in line with its interest in securing a route for the publication of selected papers from their annual conference in an accredited journal. With the possibility of a longer term agreement in mind, the first issue was produced on the basis of a number of agreed principles. Since then, the arrangement has continued on a year-by-year basis. Key principles are:

- All Kenton papers are refereed anonymously in line with normal journal practice.
- The Kenton Special Issue is edited by Kenton-appointed editors, with the journal Editorial Committee playing a supportive role as appropriate.
- KEA would use funds from conference attenders to contribute to cost of production - but not distribution - of the Kenton Special Issue.
- The journal would manage printing and distribution.
- Those attending the KEA Conference would receive (at no cost) the Kenton Special Issue, as well as normal editions of the journal.
- KEA would provide membership lists and addresses to enable distribution.

With some technical assistance from the journal Editorial Committee, the two KEA appointed editors, Angela James and Dennis Francis, have managed the production of this issue with considerable commitment and energy.

Journal of Education greatly values its association with KEA and hopes it will continue.

With respect to normal editions of the journal, we need to record the substantial recent increase in the number of submissions received, and comment on

implications. For the journal, of course, this increase is gratifying (even though one suspects that funding and other institutional pressures may, in part, account for the upsurge). The most serious implications, however, are for submitting authors. ‘Normal’ delays in refereeing are likely to be exacerbated. Inevitably, too, an ever increasing percentage of submissions will be unsuccessful. As journal space and capacity to publish are both finite, it may well be that even some articles adjudged by referees to be ‘publishable’ will not see the light of the day. While the undoubted outcome of greater competition will be a high standard of journal article, this comes at a cost. The younger and developing researchers are likely to pay that cost. From the journal side, there is unfortunately little we can do other than continue our endeavour to make scholarly debate accessible to as broad a readership as possible.

We wish particularly to thank the (anonymous) public-spirited referees who do a great deal of unacknowledged work behind the scenes, together with members of the Kenton Education Association for their support.

The Kenton Editorial Committee

In November 2003, we came into the editorial process as Kenton publication officers for the *Journal of Education* (Kenton Special Edition). We were new to this experience and excited about the challenges that lay ahead of us. After much uncertainty and stumbles as to what was expected of us, we laboured on and produced this edition. The editorial process has been a learning curve for us and we have relied and depended heavily on Ken Harley. The contribution of the referees to the construction of this issue is acknowledged with grateful thanks. Referees went to some pains to provide detail in the hope of being helpful to both contributors and us.

This edition of *Journal of Education* derived from a recent Kenton conference, 'Educational Research and Reform for Social Justice', hosted by the School of Education at University of the Witwatersrand. The basic focus of the Conference was on the nexus between educational research, policy formulation and effective implementation. How does research inform policy formulation, what are the difficulties involved in the translation of policy formulation into effective practice, and how does the experience of both formulation and practice modify research? Allied to this is a concern with the contribution made by the nexus to the achievement of the goal and process of social justice, which is a key tenet in the development of the post-Apartheid social order. It is within this framework that contributors to this issue have constructed their articles. There are six articles in this volume of the *Journal of Education* and they cover a range of topics - from theoretical philosophical to policy formulation and research bringing about social justice to practitioner action and practical applications.

Tony Moodie's article challenges the rational-empirical mode of knowing, situated within the framework of an observer-world dualism. This, he states, has had a 'tightly regulative filter' in what knowledge is permissible and how we come to know what we know and what may be regarded as valid knowledge. He starts the article with a question - The West versus the rest? He then gives a critical historical perspective of Western domination of the modern world, which has its roots in the 'Enlightenment'. Throughout the article he raises the epistemological issue of knowledge production and valid knowledge being determined by the West. He argues that in these post-modern times alternative ways of knowing has a place and needs to be recognised - the self, individual and cultural knowledge systems are more than 'superstition or taboo'.

In their article, Ken Harley and Volker Wedekind, focus on the study of education at two levels - curriculum and knowledge production. They argue that research in education, and more specifically education policy studies, is functioning in a 'disciplinary displacement' framework. This leads to researchers, policy makers and educationists embracing certain mythological truths without taking cognisance of substantial and sustained evidence and argument that counters the myth. They raise questions and arguments about 'progressive' policies - what makes them 'progressive' and do they lead to 'progressive' pedagogy? Will the 'progressive' policies bring sunshine to all or do they have a darker side - 'which can function wittingly or unwittingly as a repressive form of control'?

John Aitchison's article sets out to show how in the last ten years, the process of adult education and training policy formulation in South Africa was influenced by global trends. It is a critical description of some of the contradictory ways in which the charting of a progressive bill of rights runs counter to the design of an education / training system, which in turn runs parallel to the demise of established university-based adult education departments. The article is a useful and much welcome contribution to understanding some of the developments in the last ten years - particularly since there has been a dearth of critical engagement with adult /training policy in the academic literature.

Enslin, Pendlebury and Tjiatta's article 'Knaves, Knights and Fools in the Academy' is a critical portrayal of social justice infused or regularised into higher education. They argue that attempts to monitor and regulate universities are likely to be counter- productive. The article begins with a brief description of emerging quality assurance practices in South African higher education. The article then explores the ideal of the deliberative university as suggested by Bohman (1966), where for example - implementation of effective deliberation is a key to reforming institutions so that they meet democratic standards. The writers take issue with the metaphor of 'knave' (a free-rider when controls are not present) and 'knight' (committed, upholding the principles and ethics as espoused by Petit, 1977). The article concludes: 'The intangible hand of regard-based sanctioning is more effective than either the invisible hand of effective marketing or the hand of tough management'.

Hill's paper, structured in four parts, explores globalisation, reflective practice and assessment as themes that have dominated education discourse over the past decade. In part one she explores the relationships between these themes, against a background of Giddens's (1990) theories of social interaction in conditions of modernity. In the second part of the paper she examines some key statements

from policy documents to discover ideological drivers in the discourse. In the third part she refers to resistance in the discourse to market related imperatives in Education and contested notions of professionalism originating in the question of teacher agency. In concluding her argument she suggests that the field of Education is facing an epistemological crisis.

Wendy Macmillan draws on a qualitative study of a group of final year pre-primary teacher college students. She argues that a narrative analysis allows one to develop an explanation of *how* people interpret their social locations and personal histories through the discourses and material contexts to which one has access. Similarities and differences between individual accounts are highlighted, and explanations for these are posited. The paper concludes with a discussion of the potential contribution of narrative analysis as a conceptual tool for understanding social identity.

In ‘Who are we? Naming ourselves as facilitators’, a team of four writers argues that effective teaching in the area of social justice requires the renegotiation of the ways in which facilitators see themselves in terms of racial identity, and that this makes an important contribution to the development of an appropriate professional identity. The writers reflect critically on their engagement in teaching to student teachers a course that focuses on diversity, and in which the issues of race and racism were a dominant concern for both staff and students.

These are the articles for this edition. Readers of the *Journal of Education* are invited to submit correspondence on the subjects raised in this edition.

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