
Editorial

Wayne Hugo

Seven articles, one introduction, and two book reviews make for a bumper edition. Some explanation of its structure is necessary. It is a special focus edition, with the first four articles focused on the poetics of pedagogy. The introduction elaborates on what this phrase means as well as commenting on how the four papers by Hoadley, Slonimsky and Shalem, Bolton and Rule work the field. This leaves for editorial comment the three other papers and the two book reviews.

Crain Soudien's evocative paper explores the city of Cape Town and the role education has played within it. His specific focus is on how different kinds of schools within the city have historically mediated issues of citizenship and provided a sense of place and belonging to its young members. The use of the city as his organizing field is a fertile one, opening out Educational Studies in South Africa to a burgeoning area of research. Not only have cities become major players in a globalizing world that increasingly runs riot over state boundaries, but the studies that take cities as their focus sit at the cutting edge of current research in architecture, geography, sociology and anthropology. Under various catch phrases like New Urban Sociology, World City Research and Recombinant Urbanism this field asks questions about the most recent ways of living and how these play out issues of power, inequality, identity, time/space, urban design and technological development (to name but a few). Soudien works carefully at opening the reader out to the seductions of this space. He begins by moving us away from the idealistic conceptions of the city found in Aristotle (and Plato and Augustine we might add) into the seething world of Blake's London and its mind forg'd manacles. This is how he works with the post colonial city of Cape Town and its very recent colonial past. All that was solidly civic (the town hall), good (the cathedral) and true (the university) located itself in the dominions of the settlers. On the other side all that was devious and hungry looked up at these purities with lust and envy. It is a world where, to succeed, one needs much more than a basic education. It is a place where all sorts of cultural, economic and social capitals are needed to network and survive. How did schools work within such a skewered topography to produce knowledgeable citizens, especially when those who were non white and within the city walls were driven out with the Group Areas Act and relocated beyond its boundaries? Soudien here points to the development of a range of formal and non formal educational initiatives in Cape Town that resisted the expulsion of non whites and fought for the ideal of a free Cape Town. These initiatives focused in on the high status subjects of

the curriculum and taught them in an uncompromising manner. Behind the endeavor was the attempt of parents and concerned citizens to provide the young and discriminated against with role models and enough cultural capital to negotiate the complex world of Cape Town in an intellectually satisfying and civic-minded manner. This quickly sketched picture of an alternative educational system within the heart of colonial Cape Town is then used by Soudien to negotiate the difficult question of what kind of education we should be planning for our own post millennial young. We should not stand back from insisting on a high skills, high content school curriculum, Soudien argues, but nor should we forget the necessity of an education that reveals the exclusionary logics of just such a curriculum and the very real need for a civically-minded education that points to the despised other we unwittingly carry within ourselves. Holding these two ideals together should enable us to work in a current world in modern, but caring, ways. Such is the cosmopolitan ending to his whirlwind tour.

Willie van Vollenhoven, Johan Beckmann and Seugnet Blignaut work with another rapidly increasing field and its intersection with education in South Africa – law. Their interest is fairly similar to Soudien, they ask how we produce civically-minded young people able to participate effectively in a constitutional democracy. Their argument works from a central premise that the right to freedom of expression is at the core of a democracy. Their secondary premise is that this right is not being respected in a balanced way within South African Schools. Their conclusion? Democracy is in danger within South African schools and, by implication, within South Africa as a whole. Hence their title: *Freedom of expression and the survival of democracy: has the death knell sounded for democracy in South African Schools?* Their answer, based on the syllogism, is Yes. It is a dramatic but dangerous gambit, so we need to explore their argument carefully to see if their conclusion holds and whether we should be upset by its claim if it does. The authors firstly work on establishing the importance of their first premise and they do this by making freedom of expression a prerequisite for both critical thinking and democratic functioning. Enhancing and respecting freedom of expression develops and encourages independent and critical thinking. The question we have to ask is whether this seemingly obvious statement is correct within a pedagogic world where development from first steps to mastery is the issue. It is a question of whether democratic logics have first say within a pedagogic world, or differently put, whether schools do not work very differently from the cultural, political and social worlds beyond it. Within the structure of how thinking develops the prerequisites for critical thinking are to remember, understand and apply knowledge before any reasonable form of critical thinking can take place. It is fairly clear that one can move through these phases in an apprenticeship master slave relationship or a democratic relationship where freedom of expression holds sway. Which

is the most effective, I would suggest, is open to debate within the pedagogic field. How one develops the necessary skills to enhance a democracy in classrooms could mean a starting point that is non democratic, such are the paradoxes of pedagogy. It works with the dialectics of development and vertical knowledge structures that have very different logics to a reflective mirroring of democratic practice within schools. It is not that the authors do not qualify freedom of expression in terms of value systems or temper its realization within schools with the recognition that total freedom of speech is not feasible within a school code. Here they argue for a balance between the legitimate interest of a democratic society and individual learners in freedom of speech, and the duty of the school to maintain order and discipline. But this is a call for balance between two regulative domains, that of society and that of the school. The paper is very strong on working through the details of such a settlement and how within South African schools there has been a tendency of the integulative domain to dominate the external regulative domain of a constitutional democracy. That is why we publish it. But what is left out of this discussion is the instructional domain with its pedagogic principles and knowledge structures, where it could ironically be said with relief that the death knell of democracy has sounded within schools, for here democracy militates against its own realization if made the dominant logic within a field that works hierarchically. What this highly stimulating paper makes clear is that we are going to have to think very carefully about how the boundaries of law and education intersect as we grapple with the question of how to produce highly skilled and civically-minded young people in our slowly maturing constitutional democracy.

Linda Chisholm and Mohammad Sujee statistically explore the desegregation of learners in post apartheid South African schools. The fundamental pattern is asymmetrical – learners are moving away from township schools to other schools but there is no significant movement in the reverse direction from other schools to township schools. There is movement from *a* to *b* but no movement from *b* to *a*. This pattern repeats itself with certain qualifications throughout the old racial hierarchy of schools: working its logic from the African Department of Education schools (*a*); upwards through the Coloured House of Representatives schools (*b*); and the Indian House of Delegates schools (*c*); through to the White House of Assembly schools (*d*) – movement from *a* to *b* to *c* to *d*, with no significant movement in the other direction. Put as a rule of thumb: integration comes with migration. As Blacks move into Indian schools, so Indians move into White schools, so Whites move into ‘?’. A number of problems present themselves for immediate investigation. What has happened to *a*, has it become empty as learners flee for richer pastures or is it being filled with those coming in from rural areas? What has happened at *d* as it filled up with learners from *a*, *b*, and *c*? Clearly it is not an infinite set, so either it is bursting at the seams or some white learners have gone

somewhere else, to private schools (*e*), or home schooling (*f*), anywhere, but certainly not back to *a*. What impact does class play on such movement? Does it mean that the new black middle class have used their money to jump from *a* to *d* and *e*, skipping *b* and *c*? Just how the new black middle class educates its young becomes a dominant conundrum that will need rapid unlocking from the research community. And what of the other anomalies? There has been hardly any notable movement of *a* to *b* within the Western Cape, due to many of the coloured schools being as poverty-stricken as the black schools, or possibly due to other reasons about which we can only speculate. Then there is the strange appearance of the racial category ‘Other’ in the Western Cape that does not fit Black, Coloured, Indian or White classifications. Within White and Indian schools in this province, the category ‘other’ is used to classify 41 per cent and 55 per cent of the school-going populations respectively. Is this because these institutions are critiquing the racial classification systems or are they obscuring the true levels of integration for more local and sinister reasons? What is clear is that the initially simple asymmetrical equation complexifies itself rather rapidly as we move through the paper, generating important research questions from a basic statistical analysis. That is its virtue, the way in which it combines statistical analysis with sociological finesse in a manner that unlocks questions for further research.

Finally, this edition has two book reviews, one of the modern educational classic *Changing Class*, and the other of a text book in Environmental Education that does not quite do its job properly. Both reviews have taken to the style initially displayed with such intensity by Dempster’s response to *The Architect and the Scaffold* and it is a style we would like to encourage from our readership. Book reviews are creative spaces that allow for direct engagement, setting up of debate lines, venting jealous barbs at others’ literary and academic successes, or just catching a little of the limelight already shining through. Academic rigour is still demanded but the space for a little play is larger than what article submissions hold, so please fire carefully forth at whatever the latest educational texts of relevance to South African education bring our way.

Wayne Hugo
School of Education and Development
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Pietermaritzburg

hugow@ukzn.ac.za