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Contents

Editorial

Welcome to Issue 3 of ***Spark***.

Spark *continues into its third edition with examples of students' outstanding work in Education Studies and Early Childhood Studies. As an editorial team it was decided to allow for individual pieces of work to remain as original pieces, allowing for individual difference (including slight variation with referencing within the Harvard Style). This issue has a range of topics that I am sure you will find interesting and we look forward to any comments on this issue.*

Leanne Mills *(Student editor)*
Level 6 Education Studies and Early Years

Spark *continues to evolve in this third issue. We are keen to hear your views on this publication. We are also seeking suggestions for topics you would like to see included. Please send your comments to me at d.c.gallard@ljmu.ac.uk*

Diahann Gallard *(Coordinating staff editor)*
Senior Lecturer

Identification And Analysis Of The SEN Green Paper (2011) Support And Aspiration: A New Approach To Special Educational Needs And Disability And Rationale For Further Inquiry

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Education Studies and Special and Inclusive Needs student

This paper will explore key characteristics of the current Government's reform proposals for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy, provision and practice. It will consider the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals whilst identifying possible implications of these reforms for schools, professional bodies, parents and students. It will discuss the context in which the proposals were developed and subsequent critiques. In addition to this it will put forward rationale for further inquiry into issues resulting from the proposals.

The current SEND system is based on provision of support for students manifested through statementing, School Action (SA) and School Action plus (SA+) (DfES 1996 and 2001). The Green Paper (2011) makes multifarious proposals for reform to this system. A new procedure to ascertain Special Educational Needs (SEN) is proposed within the reformed Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Assessment (DfE, 2012). A new operative single assessment process is proposed to replace statementing with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), in addition to an option of Parental Personal Budgets. Vasagar (2011) cautions that services offered to parents will be reduced by the proposals and Peterson (2011) suggests there may be insufficient funding to cover a child's basic needs. Drawing on Gove (2011), it is possible to suggest the context for these changes represents an overarching Government strategy to decentralise services and cut costs. The realisation of these radical proposals will transfer control from Governing bodies to "professionals…parents" and "local communities" (DfE, 2011:2).

Concerns were raised regarding the omission of key recommendations made within the Lamb Inquiry (2009), which aimed to improve parental confidence in the SEND system. The Green Paper's proposals place high levels of emphasis on parental dissatisfaction and infer that the system was dysfunctional. However the Lamb Inquiry cited high levels of parental satisfaction (Lamb, 2009). This potential discrepancy between the justification for proposals and the feedback from consultation with parents is confirmed by Lewis, et al, (2007) and Parsons et al, (2009) who make reference to consistent parental satisfaction and share the view that adjustments must accurately reflect the views of service users in order to be beneficial.

The Labour Government's, Removing Barriers to Achievement (DfES, 2004), focused on inclusive education, endorsing the role of Special Schools only within an inclusive school system that concentrated on inclusion and minimised segregation. Cambra and Silvestre (2003) state that inclusion positively influences socio-affective development, fostering and embedding coping strategies that can support SEND beyond education. However, this policy approach is implicitly maligned in the Green Paper (2011) and through Government rhetoric, via an emphasis on removing the bias of inclusion (Cameron, 2011). Runswick-Cole (2011) suggests the assumption of a bias towards inclusion is fragile in that the actual marketisation of schools under previous Governments arguably failed to represent true inclusive practice. Armstrong (2005) concurs that the view of inclusion as an individualised process fails to equate the process with wider social conception of equity, fundamentally compromising the agenda, rendering critiques of the theory of inclusion as void. This is refuted by Teather (2011) who argues that the new proposals will enhance opportunities for inclusion. This can be linked to Barton (1997) who cautioned that the original conception of the inclusion agenda was not impartial but intrinsically linked to social constructs related to concepts of "equality, politics, power and control".

A pivotal issue within The Green Paper (2011) is the perceived over identification of SEND, based on research evidence from Ofsted (2010) and Warnock (2005). However counter evidence suggests the opposite is true of the statementing process, as only 2.8% of pupils with recognised SEND have a Statement of Special Educational Needs whilst 17.8% do not (DfE, 2011). Further reductions in legally binding definitions of need will arguably lead to a greater number of children being unable to access appropriate support. Vasagar (2011) states that the number of children with SEND being denied a Statement of Special Educational Needs has almost doubled since 1995 due to financial implications rather than genuine need. If this was the case prior to The Green Paper (2011), it is likely that those with profound and severe disabilities may find it more difficult to obtain an EHCP as it carries greater financial implications. The L.A are subject to severe austerity measures raising further concerns as to how multi-agency approaches will be enhanced if major health reforms are in disarray (Power, 2011). Burnham (2012) concurs that The Green Paper's vision of integrated services will be almost impossible to achieve due to the systemic fragmentation of the National Health Service and Education sector.

Further to this the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal, at present cites the child's needs as the only relevant criteria whilst the proposals place emphasis on prioritising a Councils 'local offers' (Vasagar, 2012). This is in conflict with the proposal to increase parental choice. The new proposals could potentially reduce inclusion due to the increase of Academies and Free Schools within a frame of educational marketisation (Ball, 2008). Freedom from L.A governance (DfE, 2010) could lower the propensity for inclusive practice with more opportunity to be selective, disregard parental preference and hold greater autonomy over the demographic of students. Another matter is the internal autonomy given to schools regarding the redefinition of SEND by removing SA and SA+ (DfE, 2011). The Education and Skills Committee, (2006) suggest that children on SA and SA+ are often the most vulnerable, pose the greatest teaching challenge and have complex home-lives. Thus it is possible to argue that

removing focus on these pupils towards a focus on students with legally defined SEND will impact negatively on teaching staff and marginalise their ability to support these pupils.

This assignment has identified extensive rationale for further inquiry. Conflict between austerity measures and enhanced services is clearly evident (Vasagar, 2011, Burnham, 2012 and Power, 2011) warranting further consideration. This will necessitate exploration of wider financial Government proposals beyond educational discourse. The disparity between parental views (Lewis et al, 2007; Parsons et al, 2009 and Lamb, 2009) and the portrayal of these views give good reason for an inquiry into the way in which consultations are interpreted to justify proposed reforms. This analysis will be continued using relevant scholarly publications and literature. The potential impact of these proposals on the 'frontline' (DfE, 2011:2) also warrant further inquiry, however it is possible to suggest that the true impact of these reforms can only be measured following their application, by which time it will be too late to amend those proposals that are argued to pose the greatest risk to those working with and experiencing SEND.

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Questioning Within A Sociocultural Constructivist Classroom: Creating Critical Sceptics

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The notion of effective pedagogy within the Primary classroom has evolved into one of contemporary education's most debated and widely researched considerations (Kyriacou, 1997). The alignment of effective teaching and objectivity through definition, is essentially unchartered and relatively dismissed territory due to the ever-changing and transforming teaching environments that occur throughout the demands of the national curriculum (Bennet, 1988). Speculative deliberation over what contributes to effective teaching has figured profoundly throughout educative philosophy. Founding from such theories as Socrates's considerations of hierarchical values of epistemology, towards Sir Ken Robinson's vision of unchained creativity; the term has become evolutionary in its definition allowing subjectiveness and circumstance to manufacture its meaning (Kenny, 2010 and Jessen, 2012). In response, and as Skinner (2010) purports, the constructs of effective teaching can at least be generically stipulated by addressing pedagogical traits that have attained, or better still, exceeded inaugural expectations.

Furthermore, the sociological, psychological and philosophical pillars that consistently contribute toward developments within teaching have, as Skinner (2010) denotes, recognised evidentialism as verification for its proposals of what is effective through qualitative and quantitative research. Such fieldwork, as Bennet (1988) upholds, is of course open to interpretation and debate thus reiterating Jessen's (2012) proposition that there is no clear evidence to suggest there is one definitive model of effective teaching. It is the focus and aim of this paper to explore the concept of effective teaching through an applied, objective and critical lens. Reference to a variety of learning theories, political ideologies and

teaching methods will be made throughout allowing detailed, critical and comparative discussion.

It is first of all significant to explore the term ‘effective pedagogy’ by understanding its historical and philosophical roots and how the term is applied through literature regarding the Primary education climate. Plato’s dialogue of knowledge guided by Socrates titled, ‘The Theaetetus*’,* is perceived to be Western philosophies most important consideration of epistemology and in turn an influential proposition to the question: What is knowledge and how best to facilitate it? (Kenny, 2010). Plato theorised that knowledge was, in essence, a perceptual exploration of the senses based upon a theme, subject or ‘*logos’*. An individual who has used criticality and scepticism through intrinsic questioning or via the support of another, will inherently acquire more valuable insight and wisdom of the theme (Plato, 2008). Although, as Socrates lucidly instigates in the conclusion of the discussion, the Theaetetus fails to completely discern the true meaning of knowledge yet credits Plato’s affluence in identifying and exploring the pathways toward acquiring it (Kenny, 2010). It is apparent to this day that what is considered as grounding for effective pedagogy stems from the epistemological statements made throughout the Theaetetus and by Socrates himself by suggesting, “I cannot teach anybody anything. I can only make them think” (Boyes and Watts, 2009: 179).

It is equitable to say, from one aspect of Western philosophy, that effective teaching could be perceived as facilitating learner initiated and discovery based processes of epistemology; where questioning, criticality and scepticism are deemed pedagogical objectives of such a premise (Tienken *et al*., 2009). This has, as Bigge and Shermis (1999) document, not always been the applied and proposed practice outlined by the acting education authorities. As the authors reflect upon such a proposition, it is evident that circumstantial attributes correspond positively. Cunningham (2002) illustrates how Primary education in the first third of the twentieth century was inexplicably vacant of student initiated learning. This is

argued by many educational observers, such as Gardner (2005), due to the factual and skill based learning objectives indoctrinated by state-run schools. Inadvertently due to large class sizes, fixed classroom furniture and severe limitations to literature and equipment; that was deemed as 'effective pedagogy' emanates from a culture of autocratic, stimulus-response and teacher-led learning. The behaviourist learning theories of Classical and Operative Conditioning coined by Ivan Pavlov and John Watson respectively and procurable at the time, help support Gardener's (2005) claims that creative, problem-based and experiential learning were structurally seldom endorsed within the Primary classroom (Gray and MacBlain, 2012). Due to such theories lacking consideration for the impact of the learners intrinsic motivation, belief systems or accumulative life experiences; it became apparent, as John Dewey (Cited in: Wirth, 1966: 63) uncovered, that the definitions of effective teaching consisted of class management skills and the volume of knowledge that could be resurfaced on request.

In 1937 proceeding a catalogue of concerns from leading educationalists regarding the aims and objectives of Primary education, a government issued Blue Book entitled, '*The Handbook of Suggestions'* was published. Deemed at the time by many authors of the 'Journal of Education' as a pedagogical Bible, the 'Handbook' provided a genesis to an expansive and applied doctrine of effective practice (Cunningham, 2002). As Conner and Lofthouse (2003) explore, the most crucial consideration the document offered was a shift of pre-eminence from subject superiority to the development of the child, and from teachers as trainers, to facilitators of cognitive, social and physical development. Perrott (1982: 4) expounds the significance of such educational transitions as revolutionary and evolutionary regarding definitions of effective pedagogy. As the author details, "observable indications of effective teaching" can be exhibited when there is clear evidence to show that pupils begin to value and think positively regarding their role as active and not passive learners. Such political expansion within Primary education has been considered to be the fundamental catalyst in the development of child-centred teaching

(Gardner, 2005). Moreover, this in turn induced a considerable array of applied pedagogical methodology and theory which this paper will now look to examine.

The gradual shift from subject superiority toward holistic child development within the Primary classroom enlightened considerable research and study into the roles children undertake in their own learning (Gordon, 1985). Most notably was the influential learning theories constructed by the eminent Jean Piaget which fundamentally challenged and polarised constructs of behaviourist and, what was conceived as, cognitive constructivism learning ideologies (Gray and MacBlain, 2012). Piaget's research aimed to outline the significance of the learning process and advocated that knowledge and meaning was effectively gained through the synergy or construction of a child's own ideas and their experiences in the learning environment (Bigge and Shermis, 1999). This proposition gave birth to the idea that children were in essence 'lone-scientists' and exercise their learning through more independent interaction and exploration of cognitive activity (Silcock, 1993).

The 'lone-scientist' philosophy coupled with one of Piaget's most esteemed suggestions which inherently contradicted with many *traditional* values of teaching; was the notion of placing limited emphasis on the role and responsibilities of the teacher **(**Piaget, 1967 and Gray and MacBlain, 2012). Harvey and Chickie-Wolfe (2007) discuss Piaget's claims by considering the resulting effects and benefits independent learning has on the child within the Primary classroom. Within a cognitive constructivist learning environment, the notion of independent enquiry allows teachers considerable opportunity to evaluate and diagnose a child's journey through the cognitive or intellectual stages of learning which, as Silcock (1993: 108) denotes, can ultimately provide personalised and progressive" learning interventions. As highlighted by Hastings (1988), such learning initiatives acknowledge the position maintained throughout the Plowden Report of 1967 (CACE, 1967). The contributing members of the Plowden committee collectively agreed that independent or personalised learning

essentially optimised and supported the learning process of the child (Skinner, 2010). Furthermore, this in turn, through self-prescribed questioning structures and reflective approaches towards a child's own development; it is evident, as Dean (2005) effectively combines Perrotts's (1982) previous suggestions on effective practice, that observable attributes of positive attitudes to learning can be enhanced when students exhibit intrinsically motivated and positive signs of self-discovered learning processes.

As a *regularly* applied method of teaching, it is apparent as many critics of the proposals document, that personalised, one-to-one learning is essentially an uneconomical, inefficient and socially deconstructive pedagogical approach within the Primary classroom environment (Skinner, 2010). The Plowden Report (CACE, 1967), and more recently the Cambridge Primary Review (CPR, 2009) as expected, reconcile such claims by addressing the issues of class size and diversity of ability making the strategy incompatible as a dominant teaching methodology. As an alternative, both reports advocate the significance and versatility of collaborative and reciprocal learning founded under an array of considerations surrounding the advantages of the social-interactionist classroom (Ryan, 1998). These recommendations prompted and encouraged teachers to facilitate learning between groups of students under an extended branch of constructivism which concurrently opened doors towards much more creative and interactive learning scenarios. Garrison (1995) helps support the Plowden Report (1967) endorsements by debating the holistic development of the child when the cognitive constructivist framework is applied. Garrison considers that although the volume of learning progress that children can make within the framework is highly admirable, the depth of epistemological routes toward cognitive development and applied understanding could be argued to lack breadth and versatility within unfamiliar learning contexts. The study and research surrounding sociocultural learning inspired Lev Vygotsky to construct, as Kumpulainen and Wray (2002) advocate, a revised or holistic model of constructivist learning theory. Vygotsky believed that moderated

sociocultural learning provided children with a broader scope of epistemological context as learners have considerable opportunity to share, communicate and consider the ideas and suggestions of social and environmental resources. Kumpulainen and Wray (2002: 20) help clarify the progresses made through Vygotsky's theory by confirming that:

> *"The sociocultural view stresses participation in cultural activities, whereas the cognitive perspective gives priority to the individual's sensorimotor and conceptual activity. The sociocultural view assumes that cognitive processes are part of social and cultural processes."*

The pedagogical advances forged from sociocultural learning can be underpinned by the dovetailing effect of Jerome Bruner's consideration of 'scaffolded' learning which supplements Vygotsky's highly regarded theory of the 'Zone of Proximal Development' (Gray and MacBlain, 2012). It is widely considered that both theories have offered a potent critique against the Piagetian notion of suppressing the emphasis of teacher interaction throughout the learning process. On the contrary, both Bruner and Vygotsky notably share the view that children's intelligence can be examined and measured more effectively when learning is supported by a "more skilled and knowledgeable other" within the immediate social-learning environment (Burns and Joyce, 2005: 3).

Although counter arguments that suggest children that have more control and responsibility of their own learning inherently procure greater intrinsic rewards (Sotto, 1994), the interaction with more skilled individuals essentially increases the child's accessibility to a more inclusive and communication-enriched learning environment (Croll, 1996 and Salomon and Perkins, 1998). The applied notion of 'scaffolding' coined by Bruner, effectively integrates the teacher within the educative process by addressing each child's or focused learning group's unique zone of proximal development (Rojas-Drummond *et al.,* 2006). The Zone of Proximal Development in Vygotsky's own words is characterised by "the

distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential problem solving as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more able peers" (Vygotsky, 1978: 86). Essentially, as Dean (2005) explores, Vygotsky's theory suggests educators capture and allow learners to work within the optimum zone of cognitive processes between a platform of existing knowledge, and the ideal learning goal.

The synthesis of the two theories allows a range of effective pedagogical principles to be utilised and expounded within a wide range of learning environments (Bigge and Shermis, 1999). Fernandez *et al.* (2001: 41) identify six key functions that a teacher can adopt through the collaborative Brunerian and Vygotskian perspective that provide distinct models of effective pedagogy. However, as the authors point out, there are two functions in particular which explicitly juxtapose critical differences between cognitive and sociocultural constructivist theories whilst also defining and presenting the most significant aspects of 'scaffolded' learning. The first function relates to encouraging learners to adopt efficient and logical learning processes to essentially simplify and deconstruct problems to a challenging yet manageable format. The second function promotes an "idealised model of required actions" that are argued by Wood *et al.* (1976) to outlay a deep-rooted blueprint for learners to practice critical thinking, scepticism and evidential learning. Contrary to sociocultural constructive models of teaching, it is fair to assume that the documented learning outcomes and socio-communication skills mentioned in the proceeding section wouldn't be advocated as strongly within a Piagetian focussed classroom of 'lone-scientists' (Fernandez *et al.,* 2001).

One premise of 'scaffolded' learning which closely interacts with the Socratic statement issued at the start of this paper, is suggested by Tienken *et al*. (2009) to effectively facilitate the two functions mentioned above. The art and application of effective questioning in the Primary classroom is argued to be the most accessible pedagogical trait to aid and engineer a learner's insight and awareness of passages to academic

attainment (Paul and Elder, 2008). Waterhouse (1983) pre-hypothesises the statements and learner objectives made by the National Curriculum (DfEE, 1999) by demonstrating the significance open-ended questioning has on promoting doubtful and sceptical attitudes to information in Primary school aged children. Such notions, as Waterhouse illustrates, stimulates thinking by 'scaffolding' imagination, reflecting upon evidence and evaluating the views and opinions of others. Moreover, it is well documented by Sotto (1994), Perrott (1982) and Wood *et al.* (1976) that these pedagogically guided learning processes increase the probability of students working within their Zone of Proximal Development conclusively optimising the learning environment. Nonetheless, there is considerable evidence to suggest that 'scaffolded' learning through open questioning can, in many cases, diminish or slow the rate of learning as children can at times be indecisive and frustrated by guided or self-directed discovery (Brophy and Good, 1986). The use of closed-questions that desire singular or binary responses can present children with definitive information that allow students to construct critical enquiry skills through reflecting upon evidence and personal justification. In addition, the incorporation of closed-questioning has the potency to recover a progressive pace of learning avoiding procrastination and avoidance of tasks (Skinner, 2010). The interpretations and evaluations of Dean (2005) entail that the effective teacher will utilise situational evidence to combine the two ideologies thus promoting a dynamic learning environment adding value to both cognitive and sociocultural models of constructivist teaching.

To help document the sincerity and need for investigating effective practice, it is significant to address how the evidence that supports, or in many cases objectively defines certain aspects of effective pedagogy, are being disregarded in certain sectors of contemporary education and ultimately regressing the cognitive potential of affected children. Within a socio-political and educational policy landscape, the notion of scepticism and evidence based enquiry has remarkably become a contested and clouded issue in approximately 33% of Primary schools in England (BHA, 2012). As mentioned above, the cognitive, academic and interpersonal

outcomes of critical thinking and evidential learning allow young children to adopt a blueprint of successful educational strategies that not only equip them for the classroom, but for nearly every experience in their lives (Dawkins, 2010). Primary schools founded upon religious values commonly known as 'Faith Schools' are in many circumstances, as Richard Dawkins investigates, disregarding evidential learning and utilising belief systems as educational instruments within the most impressionable phase of their students' lives (Hand, 2003). This, as presented in the outset of this report, reflects a vivid mirror image of behaviourist learning where the teaching of facts, or in this case, *beliefs* as facts, take precedence over critical questioning and sceptical enquiry (Chandler *et al.,* 1990). Issues such as the age of the earth, the theory of evolution or, in extreme circumstances, the morality of sexuality and personal identity are being shrouded in a learning environment which devote its grounding from religious scripture which categorically dispels justification and evidence for its claims (Hand, 2003).

To conclude, the definition and application of 'effective pedagogy' through exploration of learning theory can still be considered as a subjective and highly manoeuvrable term depending on classroom and learning-focus variables. Referring back to Skinner's (2010) claims that effective teaching can be at least generically stipulated by addressing pedagogical methodology that has attained or exceeded expectations certainly becomes viable considering the notion of 'scaffolded' learning in the socio-cultural classroom. As Plato and Socrates uncovered, the learning process and the art of critical enquiry through questioning, confirms the theory that effective epistemology arises from the marriage of cognitive processes and the scaffolding social frameworks of the teacher and the social environment. Predominately underpinned through the work of Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky, Socrates's statement, *"I cannot teach anybody anything. I can only make them think"* acts as a clear foundation to the pedagogical concepts discussed throughout this article and contemporary practices in the Primary classroom.

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The Development Of Cognition And Affect

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This paper will critically discuss how individual difference resulting from innate and environmental factors can impact on children's cognition and affect. First, it will consider the term 'individual difference' and highlight neuroscientific developments which have led to new insights about how the brain is formed and stages of cognitive functions. Secondly, how the environment, both in the womb and post birth, can impact on neural development and emotional learning. It will then go on to discuss how biological traits may be altered and traditional intelligence can be affected by emotion. Finally, after discussing the interrelation of thinking and feeling, it will highlight the importance of aiding emotional regulation in children.

> *"Cognition can be defined as the set of processes that enable us to gain information about our environments-processes such as learning, memory, reasoning and problem solving."* (Goswami 1998, p.1)

> *"Affect is an individualistic, physiological based predisposition to behave either positively or negatively towards an objective or idea."* (Muncy 1986, p.227)

Every human being is a unique individual and no two brains develop in the same way. Therefore, individual difference is a fundamentally human characteristic. However, people make assumptions about what is classed as 'normal' or 'typical' based on their encounters with people they see in everyday life. Although the term 'normality' is often misused in a negative way, it is still necessary to use comparative studies of typical abilities and growth in order to determine a level of something. By having a baseline of typical functions and behaviours, for example, we can identify whether a

child has learning difficulties or whether they learn abnormally fast, making them bored of the conventional curricula (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011). Individual differences in children are the result of inherited genetic factors or environmental experiences but the question as to which has the most influence on development, has been central to developmental studies for many years. Bee and Boyd (2004) state that Jean Piaget, a leading figure in cognitive-development theory, made close observations of systematic shifts in the way children think. His research led him to make several assumptions, most influential of which was that children actively adapt to their environment, based on their explorations.

Piaget thought that all infants began life with the same skills and moved through a fixed sequence of stages in their development. However, David *et al* (2003) note that technological advances in neuroscience, which has dominated research for some years, have enabled new discoveries to be made about the human brain's formation, growth and cognitive activity. This highlighted Piaget's underestimation of the infant's cognitive development and the effect of the environment on the child.

Goswami (1998) adds to this by saying Piaget noted that cognitive representations do not properly emerge in children until the end of the sensory-motor stage, which is approximately eighteen months of age. If this was so, babies would have to wait some time before they could engage in any cognitive activity. However in 1980, researchers tested the memory of neonates at twelve hours old. They found that babies were able to identify their mother's voices and therefore were able to store memories whilst in the womb. This indicates that memory and learning happens in the womb as a cognitive function.

Nabuzoka and Empson (2003) describe maturation as the biological process that determines a sequence of changes in behaviour, growth and abilities in all typical human beings. Research has shown that genetically determined rates of maturation attribute to variations in children's development. However, Fox *et al* (2010) explain how the foetus's

exposure to the womb environment can impact on maturation and result in gene mutations. The mother's behaviour whilst pregnant, can cause long-term disruption of cells and impact on behavioural development. Bee and Boyd (2004) highlight that a child may have inherited high levels of cognitive abilities, for example, but if his mother drinks alcohol regularly during pregnancy these genes may be altered and produce less cognitive outcomes in later life. Poor nutrition, diseases contracted by the mother, substance abuse or high levels of stress can have detrimental effects on the developing neural circuitry of the foetus.

Keenan and Evans (2009) explain that neurons begin developing in the embryonic stage and are nerve cells which send and receive electrical signals throughout the nervous system and the brain. A neuron is made up of a cell body, an axon, dendrites and terminal buttons. The dendrite receives signals from other neurons and transmits this information to the cell body, along the axon to the terminal buttons. The gap between the dendrites of one neuron and the terminal buttons of another neuron are known as the synapse. The information transmitted across this gap is aided by chemical signals called neurotransmitters.

David *et al* (2003) point out that by the time a baby is born, it will already have produced most of the neurons it will ever need. They also highlight how previously, it was thought that the brains of infants were less active than adult brains. Research by neuroscientists now indicates that the neonate's brain activity is much more active than adolescents and this reduces considerably with age. Bee and Boyd (2004) note that synaptogenesis, the process of synapse formation, occurs at a rapid rate in the cortex, during the first two years of life. After this period, the brain naturally overproduces these synaptic connections, some of which become redundant and die, whilst others remain. Connections which are stimulated through repeated use tend to become a permanent part of the child's brain architecture, whilst those that are not used are subsequently lost, particularly during sensitive periods of development (David, et al. 2003).

Fox *et al* (2010) state critical and sensitive periods are times during cognitive development when the brain is programmed to be especially responsive to experiences, in the form of patterns of activity. If the absence or presence of certain experiences results in irreversible change, then it is referred to as critical. Mundkur (2005) explains caregivers, who talk to their children regularly, enhance their child's ability to produce good language skills and language brain systems. However, caregivers who do not do this encourage stunted language abilities in their child. This is because the critical period for learning natural languages is within the first six years of life. Similarly, sensory experiences and stimulation within the first few years determine neural connectivity and synaptogenesis that remains throughout life.

Keenan and Evans (2009) highlight that the cerebral cortex is the most advanced part of the brain and because it is still considerably undeveloped at birth, requires lots of visual and auditory stimuli to develop. Therefore, infants need a particularly stimulating environment to help the progression of higher cognitive functions such as language, vision and motor abilities. Fox *et al* (2010) give some examples of infant's needs which include variations in light for good vision, exposure to a rich variety of tones to become proficient in language and also emotional support and familiarity of a caregiver.

The period of emotional learning and trust begins early in life, through the parent's interactions with the child. This lays the foundations for the child's future emotional expectations. The repetition of the child's experiences, whether they are neglectful or attentive, impact on the security a child feels in the world. Severe stress during this time can damage the brain's learning centres and affect the child's intellect, making him anxious, suspicious and unable to focus. Therefore, highlighting the importance of babies learning that people can be trusted to attend and care for their needs, and that their own efforts are effective in getting that attention (Goleman, 1996).

Lindon (2010) explains that when young children experience positive emotions, are well rested and able to make their own choices, neurotransmitters which help messages to cross the synapses, work best and aid children's learning. When the body is stressed the brain naturally secretes cortisol hormone in all human beings. If children are stressed through repeated experiences of emotional harshness and unpredictable behaviour from their caregivers, they produce high levels of cortisol and are unable to learn in positive ways. This prevents the prefrontal cortex from developing efficiently and can make children unable to have empathy for others in later life or develop self-control. Instead, they may produce anxious, aggressive or hypersensitive behaviour. Goleman (1996) goes on to say that personality traits, such as temperament, are genetically endowed at birth. These may result in a child who is born calm and placid or difficult and testy. Studies of children who were naturally shy found them to be more reactive to mild stress. This is because their neural circuitry made them more prone to emotional arousal and so they suffered from anxiety. However, the developmental psychologist Jerome Kagan, studied innate traits in children and found parents who taught their children to regulate their emotions were able to aid their children in altering innate dispositions, such as shyness or fearfulness.

Chammorro-Premuzic (2011) note the heritability of intelligence has long been accepted as a norm, with the aid of studies on monozygotic twins with identical genes. Intelligence has traditionally been measured by standardised performance tests, requiring participants to use the correct solution to cognitive problems. However, critics such as Howard Gardner argued that the traditional concept of intelligence is not sufficient as it predominantly focuses on academic abilities, offering no preparation for life's vicissitudes. He suggested that individual differences in intellectual abilities should be measured in terms of multiple intelligences. Moreover, traditional intelligence tests do not test the emotional state of the person. Research was carried out on a group of school boys who were doing poorly in school but had high intellectual capacity. The studies found evidence of impaired cortical functioning in the boys who were impulsive,

disruptive, anxious and troublesome. Despite intellectual potential, these children were seen as being at high risk of academic failure, alcoholism and criminal activity in later life, due to their inability to regulate their emotions. The key competencies which enable a person to manage their own feelings and know how to deal with other people's feelings are known as emotional intelligence. People who have these skills are more likely to be content with their lives, fostering their own productivity with the mastered habits of the mind (Goleman, 1996).

The storehouse for emotional memories lies at the centre of the limbic structure of the brain, known as the amygdala. This, along with the hippocampus which retains the context and specific details of emotions, make up the emotional part of the brain. The neocortical regions are largely the thinking part of the brain which is assisted by the prefrontal lobes. When the rational brain and the emotional brain work well together, emotional intelligence and intellectual ability arises. However, sometimes the amygdala is able to hijack the brain. When visual or auditory signals are sent to alert the brain to get ready to respond to a certain situation, a message is sent to the amygdala before a slower signal reaches the rational brain. Therefore, emotionally hijacking the brain and causing it to react in irrational ways (Goleman, 1996). Park and Tew (2007) state that it is impossible to isolate the thinking parts of the brain from the feeling parts because they are dependent on one another. Feelings help us to receive, remember and recall information and to build relationships which stimulate learning. If we experience strong emotions for too long, it breaks down our ability to link the feeling and thinking parts of our brain together. Davis *et al* (2010) studied children's ability to use strategies for alleviating negative thoughts. They found that children as young as three could recognise that thoughts affect feelings and by five, were able to adopt regulatory responses to emotional situations. They note the positive impact on children when they are made aware that goals, thoughts and emotions interrelate and by changing thoughts and goals, they can alter emotional experiences.

Lindon (2010) suggests practitioners should be bringing mind and heart together in the classroom and educate children to be self-aware, have self-control, co-operate, empathize, listen and resolve disputes, alongside traditional forms of studies. Park and Tew (2007) demonstrate how children are taught emotional literacy in the classroom by encouraging them to practise thinking collectively and individually about how feelings can shape their actions, and by using emotional understanding to enrich their thoughts. Children who are taught to regulate their emotions are less likely to experience difficulties later in life, for example, when forming relationships and adjusting to school and are therefore, more likely to enjoy academic success.

Research has shown how genetic factors can restrict the range of pathways that development can take but these are not fixed because they are dependent on a wide variety of environmental circumstances. These experiences can affect the biological make-up of the child from the embryonic stage and throughout life. With the help of new developments in neuroscience and a better understanding of the interrelation of feelings and thinking, practitioners can aid children in emotional learning and provide the stimulation they need at the right time, ensuring more successful outcomes in later life.

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The Assumptions Made In The Media About Schools

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Social class and the differences it offers children within the education system, such as the type of school, the curriculum followed and the opportunities available post-compulsory education, will be explored through the context of a 1960s film, To Sir with Love (1967) and a film set in the 1980s, The History Boys (2006). The political and socio-cultural contexts of each film's release will be analysed and discussed in relation to the representation of primarily, the educational establishment and the educator, whilst making reference to the pupils, thus enabling the films to be compared and contrasted, avoiding presentism, a modern view on a historical concept.

Films provide a medium through which education and educators are portrayed however, this relationship can be precarious, as Reed Scull and Peltier (2007) illustrate, educators have been represented as seducers, heroes, victims and perpetuators of the system. To Sir with Love (1967) depicts a familiar theme of a heroic teacher who, against the odds, manages to turn a class of unruly teenagers in a Secondary Modern School in London's East End around by teaching them self-respect, instead of mathematics and literature. Bell, cited in Smithers (2004) criticises the lack of a coherent and structured curriculum in the 1960s, which is evident by Sir declaring, "*Those are out, they are useless to you*", as he throws a stack of books in the bin (Clavell, 1967). The national curriculum was not established until the 1988 Education Reform Act where previously, schools, depending on their 'status', taught a curriculum 'based on a hierarchy of mentalities' (Goodson, cited in McCulloch and Sobell, 1994: 278). Yet, this is portrayed as being perfectly acceptable, reflecting Fiske's theory, cited in Brittenham (2005), where the viewer does not question ideology, instead, is led to believe that Poitier, the heroic

educator has turned their fortunes around, despite learning later that only one pupil has managed to gain employment. This acceptability is further supported by acknowledging the social and political context, whereby Gillard (2011) articulates that unemployment was low therefore, supporting Fiske's theory and ultimate acceptance of the situation which is in stark contrast to that depicted in The History Boys (2006).

Ironically, failure is viewed as gaining employment as a milkman, "*As a milkman? After the holidays you will be coming back to try for Oxford and Cambridge…in the meantime, try do something, fitting"*" (Hytner, 2006). Browne (2005) suggests that portrayals in film represent social values and illustrate issues of concern (cited in Reed Scull and Peltier, 2007) and when frequently exposed to a particular set of beliefs, will possibly change a person's viewpoint, cultivation theory (Reed Scull and Peltier, 2007; Gerbner, 1966). Ayers (1994) defends the teaching profession, arguing that portrayals of formulaic teaching and learning, whereby the outcomes are predictable, are damaging although, Fiske maintains that television realism only creates complications that can be addressed immediately within the narrative in order to avoid viewer uncertainty and ideology being questioned (cited in Brittenham, 2005).

The concept identified by Fiske above, can also be related to The History Boys (2006) through the demise of Hector, the general studies teacher who offers the pupils a lift home on his motorcycle, fondling them in the process. Schwartz (1960: 82) stipulates that teachers are 'expected to guide the moral and ethical values and behaviour' yet, the actions of Hector contradict this idea. Despite Hector's feeble attempts to explain and justify his actions, *"…nothing happened; the transmission of knowledge is itself an erotic act",* and *'"…I didn't actually do anything, I mean it was a laying on of hands, I don't deny that but more my way of benediction than gratification"*, is met with responses, *"…this is a school and it isn't normal",* and, *"A grope is a grope"* (Hytner, 2006). These replies give the viewer a sense of clarity in what is an ambiguous and unconventional matter with the truth becoming indeterminate, a view

supported by Dalton (2010). Furthermore, the pupils themselves acknowledge and ultimately challenge the boundaries of adult-child relations and student-teacher relations by blurring the lines of acceptability (Talburt, 2010). This is evidenced by the pupils acknowledging and tolerating the physical attention of Hector, Dakin asks Scripps, "*What happened with Hector on the bike?"*, and Scripps responds, *"As per. I think he thought he'd got me going. In fact it was my Tudor Economic Documents, Volume Two"* (Hytner, 2006). It is evident as the film progresses that the pupils gradually begin to replace enthusiasm from Hector's lesson, to Irwin's, adding to what Russ, *et al.* (2002) would define as loss of credibility which they determine is a characteristic for minority teachers.

The notion of lack of credibility as identified by Russ, *et al.* (2002) above, arguably is not evidenced within To Sir with Love (1967). Whereas in The History Boys (2006), Hector's actions, damage the perception and representation of teachers within the film, contended by Reed Scull and Peltier (2007) yet, this cannot be said of Thackeray, Sir, in To Sir with Love (1967). Unlike the outgoing, larger than life character of Hector, which incidentally is why the casting of Griffiths is so significant (Stevens, 2013), Thackeray, played by Poitier, exemplifies sexual restraint which Keroes (1999: 75) asserts is in direct response to his 'identity as both a black man and a teacher-father figure'. Thackeray, rebuffs the attention of a colleague, Gillian and a pupil, Pamela by consistently being unavailable and showing no emotion thus removing any possibility of becoming a 'threat' to women (ibid). For example, he laughs off Gillian's remark about Pamela fancying him, when she says, *"…not that I blame her"*, and later when Pamela suggests that she tidy his desk, he replies, *"…that won't be necessary"* (Clavell, 1967), therefore, supporting and maintaining the social perceptions of inter-racial relationships. The casting of Poitier is significant as the film manages to address the racial tensions of the time by promoting the image of blacks and moving away from the customary stereotypical portrayals of black men in white films (Keroes, 1999).

In the 1960s Britain and America experienced social and political unrest regarding immigration and the rights of ethnic minorities. Martin Luther King (1963), stated, 'the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination' ('I Have a Dream, 2007). Conversely, in Britain, Enoch Powell expressed concern about immigration where he stated, 'The discrimination and the deprivation, the sense of alarm and the resentment lie not with the immigration population but among those who they have come' (Enoch Powell's Rivers of Blood Speech, 2010). The discrimination stated by Powell is depicted within To Sir with Love (1967) however; it is directed at Sir in particular, with remarks from Weston, *"…you should row home while you have the chance",* and by the pupils, 'Chimney sweep' and 'Blimey, red blood'. Furthermore, the issue of race and discrimination is also indirectly hinted at by Seales, *"It's me mam…she's English. You're like my old man 'cept you're bigger and younger…I'll never forgive him, what he did to my mother, well he married her didn't he*'" (Clavell, 1967). Here, Clavell (1967) subtly explores the consequences of mixed-raced relationships, without revealing any specific details. The viewer is instead left to ponder what these consequences are however, Rayner (2005) identifies levels of discrimination are still on the increase. Nevertheless, in the context of the film the remarks arguably lack conviction, showing ignorance as opposed to aggression, depicting an ingrained belief that romanticises race thus, addressing and supporting the social issues at the time. Comparably, whilst The History Boys (2006) does not directly address issues of racial inequality, race is mentioned but it is approached through humour, Crowther says to Akhtar, *"Well, you all look alike to me anyway"* (Hytner, 2006). This remark, like in To Sir with Love (1967), is not said with menace instead, it reflects social misgivings at the time.

When reflecting on how education has come to be, the role of social class as identified by Reay and Ball (1997) offers a vehicle that provides historical instances of social injustice. The discourse of education, particularly for those from a working-class background, can be seen in government reports spanning from the Taunton Report in 1868 to the

Newsome Report in 1963. For example, the Hadow Report (1931), the Spens Report (1939) and the Norwood Report (1943) (Gillard, 2009; TES, 1999) each, make recommendations that helped to shape the 1944 Education Act, resulting in a tripartite system, to educate the different social classes and 'types of mind' (Ball, 2011: 66). However, despite the attempts to provide an education for all, the concept of 'parity of esteem' arguably failed with McCulloch and Sobell (1994) identifying discontent amongst the teaching unions, where it was thought that the implementation of three different types of school would castrate the opportunities of children, and instead permit only the prospects of their social class. Equally, parental knowledge of the education system and social class awareness is essential when attempting to navigate the system that is by and large geared to the middle-class. Reay and Ball (1997) describe it as the working-class playing to lose a middle-class game.

To Sir with Love (1967) demonstrates how social class and the restrictions it places on education and life chances, when a pupil in a Secondary Modern School asks Sir what he used to do, to which he replied, *"I was very poor…I waited tables, I cooked in a hamburger joint, I washed dishes for a time, cars"* (Clavell, 1967). These occupations reflect those that can be classified as being in the 'V' category of occupational classifications (Gilbert, 1995) and ultimately exemplify the occupational opportunities available to the pupils. This is further demonstrated by Denham, when he shuns the chance of Thackeray putting in a good word for him to become a boxing teacher, instead choosing to be a 'barrow', a fruit seller (Clavell, 1967). Consequently, Denham is, as Reay and Ball (1997) would argue, acknowledging his place in society which emphasises the notion expressed by Bourdieu, cited in Reay (2010) that the working-class are oblivious to the opportunities that education generates. Similarly, The History Boys (2006), set in a State Grammar School in Sheffield, depicts comparable occupations, with Lockwood working as a milkman in the holidays, with the others adding, *"I'm on the bins Sir, I'm a bouncer Sir, lavatory attendant Sir"* (Hytner, 2006). However, these occupations are

offered to tease the headmaster, being viewed as beneath them, especially now that they have the opportunity to apply to Oxford and Cambridge, despite being a group of working-class boys.

The difference in the future chances afforded to the pupils of The History Boys (2006) is in no doubt due to the privileges attendance at a Grammar School brings. For example, the viewer learns that there is a recognisable curriculum that is both factual and cultured through the teachings of Mrs Lintott and Hector respectively. The curriculum arguably addresses the aspirations of the middle-classes as identified by Ball (2011) and what with the boys lacking the cultural capital exhibited by those who 'usually' gain acceptance into Oxford and Cambridge, they need additional help (Ball, *et al.* 2002). The headmaster recognises this, noting that the pupils are 'clever but they're crass' thus, requiring that extra 'flair…charm…[and] polish', to be successful in their applications, he decides to employ Irwin, an Oxford graduate. The ultimate success of the boys, all receiving acceptance letters is questionable in its authenticity. The pupils have been accepted, although not without the specialist knowledge of Irwin, provided by the school thus, supporting the notion of a heroic teacher and indicating the opportunities available to those pupils who attend a Grammar School.

Following their educational experiences at Oxford and Cambridge, the boys enter occupations such as 'Headmaster…Magistrate…Tax Lawyer…Teacher' (Hytner, 2006) which is in stark contrast to the pupils all exclaiming that they are yet to have found a job in To Sir with Love (1967), with one exception a little later in the film, where a pupil says to Thackeray, *"I got the job I wanted…Page Boy at the London Hilton".* Reay (2001) identifies the negative consequences due to the lack of positive representations of the working-class in films, which in this instance is reflected in the absence of the pupils obtaining jobs in To Sir with Love (1967). The suppression of the working-class pupils is demonstrated in the lack of opportunity regarding occupation and further education with Leathwood (2006) indicating that in 2001, 1.72% of those from social class V, obtained university acceptance compared to over 60% of those from

middle-class backgrounds. Nevertheless, this is balanced in the film by meeting the expectations required of them, for example, the headmaster explains, ‘Most of our children are rejects from other schools. We have to help them, we have to teach them what we can and as much as we can.’ (Clavell, 1967). Therefore, completing school is an achievement. This viewpoint not only mirrors the political expectations as identified by Arnold whereby ‘each class in society has, or ought to have, its ideal, determined by the wants of that class, and by its destination’ (cited in McCulloch, 2006: 689) and subsequent policy initiatives. Moreover, it conveys a social reassurance of acceptability, supported by Fiske, who asserts that radicalism, in the context of realism displays an ideology that creates only what it can fix (cited in Brittenham, 2005).

Whilst achievement is clearly a factor in explaining the differential participation rates in Higher Education, it is not the sole reason (Leathwood, 2006). Bourdieu’s theory of cultural capital (cited in Reay, 2010), alongside historical government and arguably modern day educational policies such as the division of the types of school depending on ability, established in the 1944 Education Act and somewhat similarly, the system of academies and free schools today, has had huge implications on future life chances depending upon social class. This stratification is evidenced in the films depicted above, where the pupils from To Sir with Love (1967) were exposed to a different curriculum and overall expectations, compared to those from The History Boys (2006). The films depicted representations of educational settings and educators, whilst reflecting the social and political influences of the time, which was highlighted by the castings of Poitier and Griffiths, exploring issues of race and sexuality.

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The ‘Real World’ And The ‘Reel World’ In Education

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Film and television fiction, whilst being used as a source of entertainment, often reflects what is occurring or has occurred in the real world within education and the wider society (Frankel, 2008 and Dalton, 2006). Society, class, political and educational change are often featured and this paper will explore the film ‘Dead Poets Society’ (Weir,1989) and the programme ‘Teachers’ (Channel 4,2001-2004) and examine the assumptions made about the ‘real world’ from the ‘reel world’, focussing specifically on the school setting and the teachers themselves. Whilst there are a number of teachers featured in each, due to the unorthodox style of teaching of the main characters, John Keating in Dead Poets Society and Simon Casey in Teachers (Ellsmore, 2005) and the similarity in their roles, the focus will be on these male, English teachers (within their different school settings, an elite preparatory boys school in America in 1959 and an English inner-city Comprehensive school in 2001).

Within popular culture, teachers are often represented as a caricature of teachers within the real world, emphasising their qualities to make them as defined by Fisher, et al. (2008) and Moore (2004), the ‘good teacher’ or the ‘sad and bad teacher’. Whilst looking at both John Keating and Simon Casey, it would appear they are very different; John being an experienced teacher who is caring and passionate, whilst Simon is newly qualified, lazy and immature. However, upon investigation, their styles have many similarities. They grasp their pupils attention, John whistles when entering the room, mimics a game show host in class and asks to be addressed as ‘Oh Captain, My Captain’ (Weir, 1989). Simon asks his pupils to call him by his first name, which is not the norm within English education and smokes with his pupils whilst discussing their personal lives. Whilst Simon sees teaching as an interference to his personal life, John has sacrificed his, stating he ‘loves teaching too much’ (Weir, 1989), yet their overriding

similarity in categorising them both as inspirational teachers (Ellsmore, 2005) is that they use an alternative curriculum to encourage their pupils to become free thinkers. John often says he wants to teach his pupils to think for themselves to teach them of 'the dangers of conformity' (Weir, 1989), despite his colleague's protestations that they are unable to and Simon wants to encourage his pupils to be able to 'express themselves as individuals' (Teachers, Episode 3, 2001). If in defining a good teacher, the qualities are that they are charismatic and inspirational (Raimo, et al. 2008), then both Simon and John are to be considered good teachers. Whilst both heroic teachers in the eyes of their pupils, they are not so with their colleagues, primarily Mr McAllister in Dead Poets Society and Jenny in Teachers. Yet, many real world teachers have cited both of these characters as inspirational and a motivation into embarking on a career in teaching (Frankel, 2008, Barton, 2005 and Robertson, 1997).

Irrespective of how much the teacher would like to assert themselves and their personal guidance on the pupils, it is inevitable that as within the real world, much is out of their control due to the nature of educational structures. Bauer (1998) recognises that regardless of which category of teacher one falls in to, political influence means that although a teacher can be seen as revolutionary in the eyes of the students, they have very little influence over the content of what they teach and why they teach it. Concurred by Ellsmore (2005) it is difficult within the constraints of a school to be unique and inspiring when the curriculum of a school is so restrictive. This bears a resemblance to Simon's head of subject who states that their responsibility is 'to teach to the syllabus to allow the pupils to pass their exams, anything else is a waste' (Teachers, Episode 6, 2001). Various policies in both the UK and the USA show the importance of good teachers within education, such as the Highly Accomplished Teacher and New Labour's introduction of the Advanced Skills Teacher (Fuller, et al. 2010). However, these titles incur an additional workload and show that in the eyes of the government, an excellent teacher is one that has expert knowledge, and supposedly the best skills for the job (Sutton,

et al. 2010). This does not allow for the individualism and creativity as seen to be the good teacher in popular culture.

The construct of these two teachers in themselves is interesting to note. Teaching is seen as a feminine, caring role (Keroes, 1999), however the two main teachers being discussed are both male. In 1960 in America, only 31.3% of teachers were male (Digest of Education Statistics, 2012) and similarly, in 2000 in the UK, only 46% of Secondary teachers were men (DfES, 2001) and men with only 0-4 years of experience, as in the case of Simon, accounted for only 16.5%. Thomas (2006) also notes that English teachers in secondary schools are predominantly female. This could furthermore be seen to make these particular teachers more revolutionary, differing from the norm. Conversely, it could be argued that it once again removes the 'real' from the 'reel' and as explored by Wood (2011: 317) men feature as teachers in popular culture as a glamorous 'phenomenon'.

Whilst Dead Poets Society was set in 1959, it was released in 1989, which followed a time of reformation within American education as the then President, Ronald Reagan, felt that the emphasis of excellence was no longer present and wanted this to be re-established (Berube, 1994). Ellsmore (2005) highlights how the release of the film at this time would have been significant to both teachers and institutions, re-enforcing traditional values back into education through the use of popular culture. Dead Poets Society is set in Welton Academy, an elite preparatory school whose function is to prepare its students for college or university. The opening scenes of the film show us that this is a school for the upper classes, those with the capital, both economic and cultural, to be able to send their children there. During these scenes we are introduced to the motto of the school 'Tradition, honour, discipline and excellence' (Weir, 1989). Whilst again this is a fictional setting, it allows us to understand the style and expectations of a preparatory school, as although education during this time was very progressive (Berube, 1994) the private schooling system still held its traditions in its schools and the curriculum within. We are told that John attended the school himself, also reflective of the

practice within these schools; those who teach there will have attended if not the same school, then an equivalent, replicating the class structure. Keroes (1999) notes however, that even in a situation such as this, where pupils and teachers are from similar backgrounds, due to the power of the teaching role, there is a distinction between them. John tries to keep this gap, whereas the pupils want to emulate the time John spent at the school, recreating the Dead Poets Society. It is evident that when boundaries are removed in the teacher-pupil relationship, it is difficult to then keep a clear distinction between the two.

During the 1950s in America new laws were being passed with regard to race equality, and following 'Brown vs Board of Education of Topeka' in 1954 (Anderson, 1966), policy was put into place to stop segregation of black and white pupils in schools. There are however, no black pupils shown to be at Welton and although this may therefore not seem to be representative of the time, it may be a more true portrayal of the elitist schools, who were strongly in opposition of the ruling (Muffler, 1986). Inequality falls not only within the school itself but in the education system as a whole. Bourdieu (1993) discusses that as the higher classes are controlling the system, not only do they prosper from it, they are able to then ensure it allows for a continuation and that it serves future upper class students. Although being traditional in their function of educating, Bauer (1998) also highlights how the majority of the teachers within a prep school setting, which are primarily boarding schools, are seen as surrogate parents whilst the boys are away from home. Due to the upper class upbringing of the boys this would mean they have automatic respect for their teachers. The class, and therefore cultural capital, of the pupil not only affects their educational opportunity, it is present in all areas of their life, affording better life chances to the pupils attending these institutions, a view which is supported by the work of Bourdieu (1986).

There is an assumption that teenagers in the USA believe they have a greater chance of social mobility (Frith, 1984), however, their belief is not the only factor in comparing the behaviour and outcomes of the students within these two establishments; the geographical location is only one

differing factor between the two schools being compared. Welton Academy is represented as an American preparatory school, with ‘75% of its pupils going on to Ivy League universities’ (Weir, 1989) and whilst not named as such it is felt that the English Public Schools, such as Westminster and Eton are the equivalent for preparing pupils to gain access to university, with 96% of students from public schools attending university (Leslie, 2013). Leslie also highlighted that after university, access to higher paid jobs favours those from private education, as they are more knowledgeable about how to achieve these positions. Having the capital to make the best choices is afforded to those from the higher classes and whilst successes are seen within comprehensive schools, Reay (2010) highlights that for those wishing to access the best universities, the school which a pupil attended will be taken into consideration.

Education of the lower classes, primarily in inner-city comprehensives such as Summerdown Comprehensive in Teachers, has historically been seen to be failing its students for a number of reasons and this inequality compared to elite education is enforced by the seeming lack of parental investment (Reay and Ball, 2006). Whilst the teachers in a boarding school as highlighted, take on a parental role, the pastoral care within a comprehensive is again directed by curriculum. As shown in Teachers (Episode 4, 2001) a questionnaire is used to cover personal topics and no real guidance is given or taken seriously. This compared with the fatherly roles in Dead Poets Society, such as driving the boys to the theatre shows a vast contrast between the time and care invested in the pupils. Simon appears to want to be friends with his pupils rather than a father figure, which again confuses the boundaries of the teacher-pupil relationship. Images of comprehensive school pupils often focus on the failures, what they cannot do and what they are not able to do, due in some cases to their, or their parents, lack of capital. Reay (2001) discusses how this then contributes to the lack of educational support received in school. The aspirations of the pupils in Welton Academy are to become doctors or lawyers, whereas those at Summerdown are not likely to even pass their

exams, with the exception of one intelligent pupil who stands out and one pupil who Simon has inspired to become an English teacher. Bourdieu highlights that many people from the working classes are not fully aware of the benefits of a good education and therefore do not actively engage when in school, regardless of the nature of the institution (Reay, 2010).

Whilst being a fictional television programme, Teachers was first aired in 2001, shortly following the election of New Labour, therefore the themes throughout are reflective of New Labour ideology. The focus is on the National Curriculum and achieving as highly as possible in the league tables with the Head Teacher stating, *"…we all need good results, not just the pupils"* (Teachers, Episode 3, 2001). Simon himself states that he needs his pupils to gain good results to 'justify his existence' (Teachers, Episode 3, 2001), however he struggles to stick to the curriculum as he wants to make his lessons exciting and to allow his pupils to reach their 'creative potential' (Teachers, Episode 1, 2001). This is in contrast to the beliefs of his head of department who won't allow for this, telling him to only teach what is on the syllabus. New Labour's policy created a 'market orientated philosophy' (West and Pennell, 2002: 3) where competition was prevalent and this is the feeling of a number of teachers currently; that there is too much paperwork, it is too target driven and that teaching is no longer about the pupils (Barton, 2005). Similarly in Teachers it is stated 'Nobody knows who knows what anymore' (Teachers, Episode 1, 2001). Whilst Teachers recognises these real world constraints, Scanlon (2008) highlights that the real expectations are not shown in these images and that responsibility and accountability in and outside of the classroom are not truly reflected within popular culture portrayals of teaching.

Ritchie (2010) argues that within popular culture, no real teaching is done by the teachers and that the teachers featured represent how real teachers would like to act but would not be able to, whether this be for moral reasons or that the constraints of teaching simply would not allow time for. Whilst the teachers in popular culture are fictional and far removed from reality, it is clear that there are influences from the real world within their characters and stories. Many teachers have been

influenced by a favourite character to join the profession (Warren, 2001) and many use character traits from films and television to develop their own teaching styles (Raimo, et al. 2008,). With numerous government recruitment drives to get talented people into teaching, such as the current education secretary Michael Gove investing an additional £10million to support Initial Teacher Training (DfE, 2013), showing teachers such as Simon and John within the media can inspire those who want to be heroic teachers, whether it be a natural calling or a career choice they have made (Burbach and Figgins, 1996). It is necessary to have these positive images of teachers within the media as writing in 1989, Crume recognised that people were not entering the profession due to the negative portrayal of teachers whereas in the years directly following the airing of Teachers, there were a record number of trainee teachers (Asthana and Townsend, 2004). Born from these real life influences from the media, Farhi (2010) and Scanlon (2008) assert that it is now difficult to see if popular culture reflects what is happening in society, or if in fact society is reflective of it.

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Creativity And Imagination in Early Childhood Education

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There have been many theories introduced over the years of how to teach creativity to young children; whether we should teach creatively or we teach *for* creativity. The debate was first introduced by the NACCE report (1999) which illustrated the distinction and relationship by focusing on empirical research and it is a debate that is still on-going today (cited in Jeffery and Craft, 2004). Duffy (2006) talks about the human need to be creative and suggests the human desire to be creative has been present throughout history in all communities. This statement may be true as the importance and significance of supporting young children's creative development was present in the Plowden Report (1967) which promoted creative learning through 'discovery learning', and proposed that children learn through discovery and should be permitted to take an active role in the definition of their curriculum (cited in Craft, 2002). Plowden also touched upon the role of play in the curriculum and stressed that play was seen as a vehicle for fostering imagination (Craft, 2002).

Another key theory of the role of creativity is the 'big C' 'little c' debate. 'Big C' or high creativity is the level of creativity associated with innovation, novelty and excellence in a particular field (Feldman, et al. 1994). 'Big C' creativity is about breaking with past understandings of creativity and challenge a domain. Duffy (2006) suggested that in order to be creative you have to do exceptionally well in a particular field, such as the arts, music or literature. However 'little c' challenges this notion and enables individuals who may not consider themselves creative in any field to find different routes and paths into creativity. In fact 'little c' is not about mastering a particular craft but about personal assistance (Duffy 2006). This debate leads us to the think about the role of creativity in classrooms

today. The ‘little c’ concept seems the most accessible to all young children and it has been suggested that accessibility to creativity is the best way to encourage creative development, not only in children who excel in a particular field but to all children within the classroom.

Imagination and Creativity are insentiently linked because imagination plays a big part in how we think creatively. However Duffy (2006) states that although they are linked together they are not interchangeable and in order to promote them effectively we need to be clear on how they relate to each other. Imagination allows us to create scenarios; it can harness our fear of the unknown as well as allowing us to formulate new ideas and inventions. Crowley (2005) illustrates the barriers young children can face when trying to use their imaginations by suggesting that, although young children are usually willing to use their imaginative powers, the teacher will normally encounter plenty of barriers (including fear of what others may think) leaving little to the imagination. There have been theories put forward of how a teacher or practitioner could encourage imaginative thinking, one suggestion is ‘the circle of imagination’ (Crowley, 2005). This is where the teacher will ask the class to stand in a circle and pass around an invisible object, the children should then interact with them and make them appear ‘real’, such as struggling to lift a heavy box. In promoting and stimulating each child’s imagination their creative development as a whole is likely to progress.

In terms of what provision is currently in place to support children’s creativity and imagination is in within the current Early Years curriculum. Creative development has always been a main principle of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory framework (DCSF, 2008) however in Dame Claire Tickell’s Review of the EYFS (2011) she suggested that the role of play should be supported more by creativity and exploration. She touched upon the role the environment plays in creative play but if we want to express their creativity we need to provide an environment in which they can do this (Duffy, 2006). After the Tickell report the current government revised and released a new Statutory Framework for the EYFS (DfE,

2012) that was implemented in all classrooms in September 2012. This framework took the advice of Tickell's review and Expressive Arts and Design is now a specific area of the EYFS curriculum, within a focus on being imaginative. A greater emphasis on how imagination can promote creative development in young children through many different forms such as music, drama and dance.

Tickell's review in 2011 concluded that more could still be done to support children's creativity and imagination with the early years of their life. Over the years many people have tried to define 'creativity', the NACCCE (1999) stated that creativity is an 'imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are of original value' (p.29). It has become apparent that one person's view of creativity can be drastically different to that of another's, and this could influence a teacher and their teaching in ways that may not be intentional but could create barriers for the children involved. Views of creativity have not only influenced teaching on a small scale, but on a large international scale (as with Italy's Reggio Emilia approach), and perhaps we should now take account of very different approaches to supporting creativity and imagination and look towards having creativity as a guiding pedagogy in early education.

[Addendum: Although creativity has always been a central part of the Early Years curriculum, more emphasis has now been given to creativity within the Revised EYFS framework.]

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