



MAPPING THE FIELD

75 YEARS OF *EDUCATIONAL REVIEW*, VOLUME I

Edited by

Jane Martin, Marion Bowl and Gemma Banks



Mapping the Field

From its origins in the University of Birmingham's then Institute of Education in 1948, *Educational Review* has emerged as a leading international journal for generic educational research. Seventy-five years on, *Mapping the Field* presents a detailed account of education theory and research, policy, and practice through the lens of some of the key articles published in the journal over this timespan.

The Foreword written by the journal's editors in Volume I presents a comprehensive account of the changing context for education scholarship and plots the key events in the development of the journal. The articles in Part I discuss some of the underpinning theories and research methodologies which have guided education researchers and practitioners, both past and present. Parts II and III focus on politics and policymaking in education and on the challenges involved in managing educational practice.

The articles included in both volumes of *Mapping the Field* represent a careful selection from the work of scholars whose ideas have been, and continue to be, influential in the field of education. Overall, this major text covers a wide range of topics and offers original insights into educational policy, provision, processes, and practice from around the world.

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75 Years of *Educational Review*, Volume I

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“Being” a Head of Department in an English University

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Foreword: an intellectual history of educational research

Jane Martin, Marion Bowl and Gemma Banks

Introduction

The object of this Foreword is to offer a benchmark for analysis of research in education informed by the published archive (see Figure 1) of one of the longest established and most authoritative journals that has, from the beginning, reflected and portrayed the evolution of scholarship in the field. Providing an intellectual history of the knowledge production process in *Educational Review* and situating developments within a changing social and political context are central aims, enabling readers to confront critically the educational amnesia too characteristic of current policy and practice while offering possible options for the future. The intention is to curate activities, theory and modes of analysis, characteristic methods, traditions of knowledge and professional practice while drawing out the implications of debate over the contribution of discipline-based research in educational settings. In so doing, we work at the point of complex and at times contested interlinkages between disciplinary, institutional, personal and policy histories. We weave a web of dominant influences and forgotten educational traditions, to present an interpretation of how new principles and rationales merge with old ones to see what stays the same and what changes.

The bulk of the narrative draws upon an exhaustive study of journal articles and journal information, institutional, policy, professional and publishing histories, to scope the expansion of the terrain in which *Educational Review* is located.

Following Helen Gunter's 2016 book, *An Intellectual History of School Leadership Research and Practice*, and the typology it offers, we will map and detail: (1) Knowledge contexts, traditions, and key ideas; (2) Intellectuals and intellectual practices; (3) Knowledge production and knowledge networks. We follow Stefan Collini (2006) in using the term intellectual in a sociological and cultural sense to refer to people who have self-consciously drawn upon "ideas" as solutions to social problems and enjoy a level of "cultural authority" in society. Our motive is to comment on the construction of knowledge about education over the lifetime of the journal, but with no attempt to offer the detail and specificity that is the hallmark of the articles selected for inclusion within these two edited volumes. Here we make use of global and historic generalisations, which is good for highlighting some aspects but means we must leave out much of importance. We start with a necessarily brief overview of the journal's beginnings.

Journal beginnings: Birmingham and the English education context

During the Second World War, there was a strong sense within the UK that social and economic changes made a national education system a necessity. In 1944, secondary education



Figure 1. *Educational Review* Archive.

Source: Authors

became universal and free. However, claims regarding the existence of three types of children supported the separation of eleven year olds into one of three types of secondary school – grammar for the academic, technical for the mechanically and scientifically minded, and modern for the practical child. Since passage to the appropriate type of provision meant using some sort of selection criteria, this requirement would be met through verbal reasoning or intelligence tests, whose results gave each child an “intelligence quotient” or IQ, plus tests of achievement in English and arithmetic. Planning was also in train to ensure teacher supply of sufficient quality and quantity, as addressed in the McNair Report of 1944, which sought to raise the status of teacher education and recommended that the existing two-year certificate training college course should be extended to three years, with a greater emphasis on the need for a firmer academic basis (Heward, 1993).

Whereas the university training departments were masculinist workplaces, the women’s teacher training colleges were segregated from other forms of higher education and were of lower status. While McNair described them as lagging in current thought and practice, staffed by over-burdened lecturers who had no time for reflection and academic research, recent research reveals it was an unfairly gendered characterisation that neglects the dedicated professional/vocational commitment of many female educators (Whitehead, 2010). Nevertheless, a massive expansion of professional training was required to satisfy a dramatically increased need for teachers following the raising of the minimum leaving age to 15 (in 1947), a policy commitment to reduce the size of classes in state-funded primary schools, and the post-war baby boom going through the schools.

An Emergency Teacher Training Scheme was in force, and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham, the geologist, and early Antarctic explorer Sir Raymond

Priestley (1886–1974) was convinced universities had a duty to absorb more student teachers and supported a closer alignment of training colleges and university departments to address the historical “stigma” of teacher education. The ambiguous status of professional studies in universities saw pushback from some of Priestley’s counterparts (who viewed the colleges and their poor academic reputation with suspicion), but Birmingham was at the forefront of developments. Birmingham’s Institute of Education was established in 1947 (see Appendix 1). Its journal, *Educational Review: Journal of the Institute of Education University of Birmingham*, launched a year later with Professor Fred Schonell (1900–1969) as founding editor. There were four papers in the first issue: covering different curriculum areas, the adolescent and the cinema, and an assessment of the utility of record cards and internal examinations in schools. Contributors to the first volume (see Figure 2) predominantly comprised Education research staff at the University of Birmingham, headteachers from local schools, and senior education leadership in the region.

Key ideas

Led by Birmingham’s Professor of Education, M.V.C. Jeffreys (1900–1985), the newly founded Institute assumed responsibility for supervising regional teacher training and the provision of a research centre. Priestley chaired the governing body, the Institute Delegacy, composed of representatives from constituent (full member) and associated teacher training colleges, local administrators, and the Institute’s three University Departments. Priestley conveyed his vision in the journal’s inaugural issue:

The teacher who gets his main education and his training in the training college can gain from the university things that he can obtain nowhere else, and it is up to us to make these intangible factors, that together make up the university atmosphere and environment, as fully available as we can. The setting up of Institutes of Education in the universities is, in fact, only another stage in that advance from the “Ivory Tower” conception of the university [...]. If the Institute partnership is to be real, lasting, and beneficial, we must find ways of expanding its usefulness and of providing as much interchange of opinions and ideas as possible among its constituent members. There could be no better way of doing this than through a live Institute Journal, by means of which research and experiment at the Institute and in the colleges and schools may be reported for the benefit of all concerned.

(Priestley, 1948, pp. 1–2)

His message is clear. He and *Educational Review* stood for the idea that moves to bring all training colleges under the academic supervision of universities would raise the status of the teaching profession. The journal’s Editorial Advisory Board was a standing committee of the Institute’s Delegacy, and published content helped connect academic knowledge with professional practice in the Midlands region of the UK when general educational journalism had scarcely developed, and most communication with teachers was via the short course or the occasional lecture (“Twenty-First Anniversary”, 1969, p. 168).

The Institute was explicitly showcased by Jeffreys in the opening article of the second issue (Jeffreys, 1949), as well as in the regular inclusion of “Institute News”. A widely respected philosopher who had published works on the aims of education, Jeffreys attended a national conference held to further education research in 1951 and the *British Journal of Educational Studies (BJES)* was created a year later. Unlike the knowledge exchange *Educational Review* offered, those who founded the *BJES* were concerned to establish a

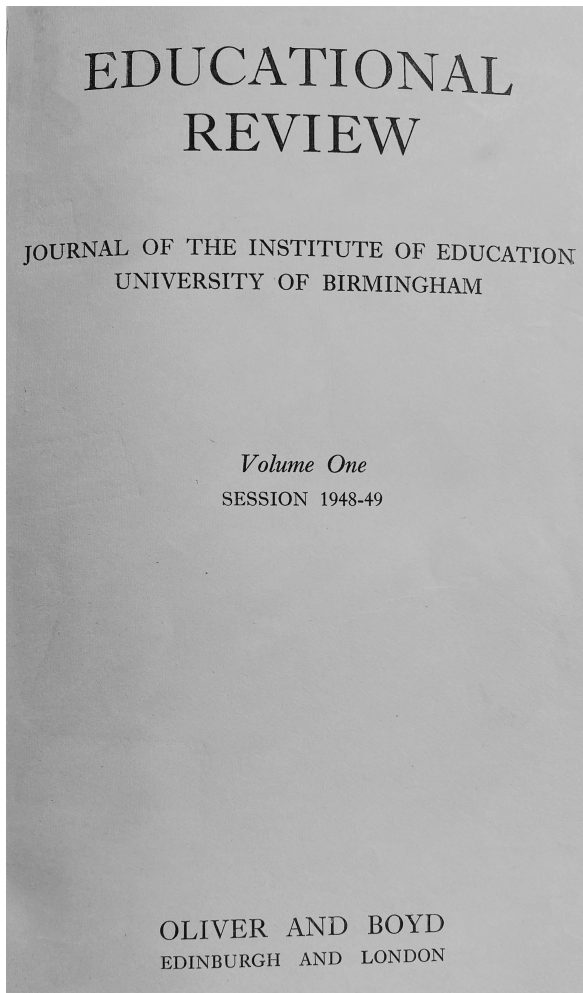


Figure 2. *Educational Review* Volume One title page.

Source: Authors

forum for exponents of the “foundation disciplines” of history, philosophy, and sociology, arguing the journals of the British Psychological Society met the needs of psychologists (Judges et al., 1952, p. 67). The public platform this afforded mattered less at Birmingham where a strong heritage in educational psychology had been established since 1919, under the leadership of Charles Valentine (1879–1964). Fred Schonell (1900–1969), appointed Professor in 1947, followed Valentine’s long service.

Knowledge traditions

Schonell’s publications on diagnosis and provision for “backward” learners were standard works in this period, following the 1920s and 1930s when Warner’s close friend Sir Cyril Burt (1883–1971) was able to translate eugenic theory into medical and educational practice, first in the field of mental defectiveness and later as the leading advocate of

academic selection based on a belief in fixed intelligence ceilings (Chitty, 2009). Taking major responsibility for expanding the Institute's research activities, Schonell developed a project that covered a wide range of topics: methods of teaching English to boys, the reading interests and library borrowings of children, the suitability of textbooks and leisure-reading books, selection of entrants for the teaching profession, and methods of teaching English and history. He was founding director of a Remedial Education Centre, which provided a base for supporting educational psychologists and teachers of children with special needs, becoming one of the few well-equipped laboratories for child study in Britain (renamed Centre of Child Study from 1966).

Schonell's editorial direction was knowledge produced on all aspects of education. He encouraged a greater plurality of voices than the Standing Conference and its organ *BJES*, labelled "something of a professor's club" and "almost exclusively male" (Richardson, 2002). The career development of Molly Brearley (1905–1994), Mia Kellmer Pringle (1920–1983), and Eleanor Schonell (1902–1962), who held university posts at Birmingham, illustrates this (Brearley, 1954; Pringle, 1951a, 1951b, 1957, 1958, 1963; Pringle & Clifford, 1962). Brearley and Pringle established themselves as researchers in developmental and educational psychology there: Pringle was appointed Director of the National Children's Bureau in 1963 and initiated the National Child Development Study as Brearley was joining the Plowden enquiry into children and their primary schools as Principal of the Froebel Educational Institute in London (Cunningham, 2021, pp. 112, 117–18). Eleanor and Fred Schonell were a husband-and-wife team who collaborated in producing standardised ways to test children's academic attainment. At Birmingham, Eleanor helped set up the first school in England and Wales to be dedicated directly to the education of children with cerebral palsy (Schonell, 1949; Woodall, 1949).

In 1950, psychologist Edwin Peel (1911–1992) followed Fred Schonell's tenure as Professor and Head of the Research Department at Birmingham and became editor of *Educational Review*. The first editorial comment appeared a year later, and Peel took the opportunity to reflect on the journal's aim to disseminate not only studies of contemporary policy and practice but historical analyses also. Our first purpose, he wrote, is

to provide a service to teachers and others involved in education, and our second purpose is to provide a forum for the exchange of educational opinion and experience. How may we achieve these ends? The answer lies in four words: practice, research, scholarship, and opinion.

('Editorial', 1951, p. 3)

Psychology remained a particular strength when Peel came to Birmingham and he was part of the orthodoxy that intelligence was measurable by psychometric tests, offering a scientifically sound means of assessing children's potential and allocating children to appropriate types of secondary school well into the 1950s (Wall, 1979, p. 94). Then in the 1960s journal content shows insights from developmental psychologists such as Jean Piaget (1896–1980) impinged on Peel's research and teaching.

Peel edited the journal single-handedly until 1956. The identity he established provided a platform for collaboration between the Institute and teachers in terms of conducting research and engaging with findings that work to open the traditionally closed world of the classroom to public view. We suggest an archive of knowledge production offering a window into past practice, and the professional development of teachers is an important part of Peel's legacy (see, for example, Hines, 1950; West, 1956).

Looking back on the occasion of the journal's 21st birthday, psychologist William Wall (1913–2003), who gained his PhD at Birmingham and served with Peel until 1951, considered the journal's founding

an act of faith in the teaching profession: it was based on a belief that teachers could and would analyse and codify their experience in rigorous ways; and that the general body of teachers was prepared to read and ponder over intellectually demanding material.

(‘Twenty-First Anniversary’, 1969, p. 169)

Reflecting the persistent and pervasive belief in intelligence, Sir Cyril Burt observed:

Were it the custom to award I.Q.s to journalistic offspring, this nursling would, I am sure, be rated near the top percentile; and in saying so, I am not merely voicing a personal judgment, but echoing the verdicts which have been expressed by a wide and various array of readers.

(*ibid.*, p. 165)

Dissemination

Oliver and Boyd were the original publishers, but the University of Birmingham printed the journal from Volume 6 (1953–1954) and did so for over two decades. In the following years, the journal's subtitle mirrored the changing landscape of teacher education. Along with new university “Schools of Education” recommended in 1966 comes “Journal of the School of Education University of Birmingham” from Volume 20 (1967–1968), then “Journal of the Faculty of Education University of Birmingham” in the first three issues of Volume 29 (1976–1977). At this stage, Carfax took over publication of the journal and the subtitle was dropped, removing one of the journal's most explicit local anchors in favour of the generic *Educational Review*. A broadening of the academic base of the National editorial base such that it always draws at least half of its members from outside the University of Birmingham was another development intended to correct any misapprehension that the journal was principally concerned with Birmingham issues (Thomas, 2016, p. 1).

Intellectual practice and knowledge networks: scoping the changing world of educational policy and practice

In this section we situate the concerns of *Educational Review* in the broader social context of national and international policy and practice to locate the journal as a site for field development (Gunter and Fitzgerald, 2008). We follow in the tradition of sociological analysis that conceives of policy as an ongoing process of enactment in government, institutions, networks, and local professional practices including when and where traditional ideas filter through present-day fashionable attitudes. Our interest is in differences and continuities in the territory on which the journal is located and the knowledge production that reflects this.

Intellectuals

Reading of field outputs in the journal has led to identification of significant contributors over the years including Burt (1954, 1958, and 1960) and University of Leicester-based academic Geoffrey Bantock (1914–1997), prominent in the defence of selective grammar

schools for the intellectual élite, and in opposition to progressivism. Bantock contributed five articles of which two were contemporaneous with the publication of his second major book in 1963, *Education in an Industrial Society*, in which he sought to define a differentiated curriculum appropriate to varying capacities (Bantock 1958, 1959, 1960, 1963a and 1963b). Two contributors who differ sharply from the Burt-Bantock emphasis on an élite and on high cultural production are James Britton (1908–1994) and Michael Halliday (1925–2018), who maintained a more democratic view of education.

Britton, who published in *Educational Review* in 1963, was “the most influential British figure in English teaching” (Medway et al., 2014, p. 34). He worked hard at establishing knowledge networks, including the National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE) founded the same year. Other NATE voices, for example John Dixon who published several influential books during the 1960s, also contributed to the journal. Writing about English in schools in 1971, Britton urged teachers across the curriculum to allow and encourage the use of “expressive” language, spoken and written.

Expressive speech is language close to the speaker: what engages his attention is freely verbalised, and as he presents his view of things, his loaded commentary upon the world, so he also presents himself. Thus, it is above all in expressive speech that we get to know one another, each offering his unique identity and (at our best) offering and accepting both what is common and what differentiates us. Secondly, it is in expressive speech that we are likely to rehearse the growing points of our formulation and analysis of experience.

(Britton, 1971, p. 207)

Britton found Halliday’s fully social linguistics approach and his ideas about language in use in context relevant to the understanding of children’s language. For him, teaching English involved language use by students rather than instruction and study, talking and writing about their experience and topics that interested them. This socially focused approach put Britton and Halliday at odds with a journal author on the “nature” side of the long-standing debate on the contribution of genetics and environment to human development – American linguist Noam Chomsky – who suggested human capacity for language is innate rather than acquired during life and proposed the maintenance of traditional grammar teaching (Halliday, 1968, 1969; Chomsky, 1969).

From across the world, we note another significant early contribution from Swedish policy intellectual Torsten Husén (1916–2009) at the forefront of international policy debate concerning selective versus comprehensive education (Husén, 1956). Framing the work of all these researchers and writers is debate regarding fixed “ability” thinking and promotion of the key principle of human educability. By the 1960s, human capital theory, demands for more public expenditure on science and technology to sustain economic growth and development, and rejection of deterministic theories of intelligence translated into support for comprehensive education. In Britain, Labour won the 1964 general election, and the new government made the abolition of selective education a priority, issuing circular 10/65, which requested all local authorities to submit plans for comprehensive reorganisation.

Between 1965 and 1976, the percentage of pupils in comprehensive secondary schools in England and Wales grew from 8.5 to 75.6. Critics saw non-selective education as a formula for decline, and a series of “Black Papers” published by right-wing academics and policy groups between 1969 and 1977 (including Bantock and Burt) was an important focus in which arguments were built, individuals and campaigns connected, and a political identity forged. The first Black Paper targeted progressive methods in primary schools as

the root of a period of liberal anarchism and levelling down. The second attacked comprehensive education as social engineering and a destruction of high academic standards. In “The Rise of the Mediocracy”, for example, psychologist Hans Eysenck (1916–1997) claimed people of “*mediocre* ability” would submerge “people of *superior* ability” (Eysenck, 1969, p. 40). The fourth repeated the claim of Conservative shadow education minister Norman St-John Stevas (1929–2012) who asserted 25 years of “left-wing possession of the educational initiative had caused unprecedented worry and alarm among parents” (cited in Simon, 2010, pp. 396–99, 443, 586).

On the one hand, these narratives came to characterise a new “common-sense” that gave rise to a new global orthodoxy in education whose key themes were increased standardisation, objectives-driven curricula focused on core subjects/knowledge, audit culture, and corporate management techniques. On the other hand, evidence presented in government reports suggests it was not true to claim that standards fell after the comprehensive reform, though it was not unreasonable to suggest they were not good enough as many comprehensive supporters did (Martin, 2020). Flying in the face of the ideological work undertaken by New Right think tanks, it is worth recalling British educationalist Ted Wragg (1926–2005) who identified that those appointed to lectureships in University Schools of Education during the post-Robbins expansion of the 1960s “came largely from grammar schools or independent school teaching” and, he anticipated, “will see out the century with relatively few new appointments” (Wragg, 1981, p. 113). We go on to map the policy landscape and reform agendas pursued with attention to continuities and differences.

Engaging with the past and present

Contradictory ideologies have caused confusion in education both in the past and in the present, as specific areas of policy in relation to issues of equality and inequality illustrate. British designer and socialist William Morris (1834–1896) famously said, “I do not want art for a few any more than education for a few or freedom for a few” (in a lecture on the decorative arts and their relation to modern life and progress in 1877).

Morris inspired the labour movement activist and campaigner for improvements in working-class education Mary Bridges Adams (1855–1939). The daughter of an engine fitter, she was one of the thousands of women who taught but moved out of the classroom into political action as a member of the London School Board between 1897 and 1900. Directly elected and independent of other forms of local government, school boards were responsible for the creation of something resembling a system of state-maintained elementary schooling for working-class children. Adams won a seat with support from the co-operative and trade union movements, based on a manifesto commitment to the abolition of school fees, comprehensive education, free school meals and medical services, education maintenance allowances, a maximum class size of 30, higher salaries, and better resourcing for teachers – a set of policies she would fund through the restoration of educational endowments left for the education of “the poor” but “misappropriated” or “stolen” by private schools during the second half of the nineteenth century (Martin, 2013).

Yet, in English state schools today, there are warnings of a creativity crisis. Whereas private schools have invested heavily in resource for arts provision, the exclusion of arts subjects from new performance measures in 2010 and spending cuts have seen a reduction of provision in state schools (*The Guardian*, 2023). Reflecting on the ethics

of inequality of opportunity in the Raymond Priestley Lecture given at the University of Birmingham in November 1986, philosopher Bernard Williams (1929–2003) observed:

If it is right that the Humanities as subjects make an essential contribution to the understanding of society and that the understanding of society is essentially connected to ways in which we can reflect on it, question it, and hence try to change it: then questions of who should be taught how much of the Humanities are essentially connected with questions of how open or transparent society should seek to be. If an elite were to run society in a relatively unquestioned way, then only an elite would need to have much insight into what it is and where it has come from. But if we believe that in the modern world, at least, that cannot indefinitely work, then the conclusion is not only that it is vital that the Humanities should be pursued as on-going subjects but that access to them, and some kind of knowledge of them, are things that should be as widely spread as they can be.

(Williams, 1987, p. 188)

Sociologists had something to say on the construction and transmission of knowledge and the content of education also. We find Michael F. D. Young, who edited the ground-breaking *Knowledge and Control* reader (Young, 1971), concerned with the problem of cultural relativism in the sociology of knowledge at the time. This, he suggests, risks failing to recognise the dominant form of the curriculum as it exists served particular social functions and the predicament for teachers who might be left feeling paralysed in terms of acting for change. Young calls for a commitment to collaboration between sociologists and teachers through what he calls a “reflexive sociology” which, as he sees it, means a commitment to “an idea of human liberation” that “suggests following through, with those involved, the alternatives that enquiry might point to” (Young, 1973, pp. 210–11).

For teacher educators working on *Educational Review* during the 1960s and 1970s, the implementation of a professional Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree, the loss of the Area Training Organisation function (after 1975) and growing development of subject specialisation led to the development of separate subject departments each under a Professor: Curriculum and Method, Educational Psychology, History and Philosophy, Social and Administrative Studies, and Special Education. In 1979, psychologist Margaret Clark became the first female Professor and co-edited (with Barrie Wade, NATE council member since 1970) a journal special issue devoted to Early Years Education (Clark, 1983). Nevertheless, feeling isolated and lonely, Clark retired early when government cuts encouraged staff reduction (Watts, 2014, p. 25; ‘Inspirational Women’, 2023).

Intellectual practices

In a paper entitled “Sociology of Education at the Crossroads” (1978), authors Len Barton and Steve Walker trace the genesis of a sociology of education in Britain. In so doing, they draw a contrast between “old” and “new” perspectives and dilemmas facing not only *researchers* in the field but dilemmas facing those who *teach* sociology of education also. Programmes leading to teacher qualification are a particular concern, in the wake of calls for the removal of the subject from the curriculum and the substitution of craft skills. They predict dangerous consequences: (1) The classroom and factors relating to classroom experience will be seen in a social vacuum; (2) Sociology of education becomes an “arid, academic affair”, detached from the real-world practice it seeks to explain (Barton and Walker, 1978, pp. 281–82).

With the benefit of hindsight, the timing of the article is striking in terms of intellectual practices and knowledge networks. Published the year of the first of a series of sociology of education conferences Barton initiated and established at Westhill College, Birmingham (which merged with the University of Birmingham's School of Education in 2001), he was to become founding editor of the *British Journal of Sociology of Education* (*BJSE*) two years later (James, 2020). Internally, Barton and Walker's paper for *Educational Review* acknowledges the importance of work by Olive Banks (1923–2006), a founding editorial board member of *BJSE* and pioneer female professor of sociology at Leicester, in summarising three levels at which sociologists study education: (1) The social system or "society"; (2) The school; and (3) The classroom.

Work concerned with research and theory in the field of child psychology and child development is clearly visible in early volumes of *Educational Review*, and professional life histories provide illustrative examples that help us map knowledge networks. Ronald Gulliford was appointed lecturer at Birmingham in 1951, when the Institute was building up educational psychology under Edwin Peel. Gulliford spent 35 years of his working life at Birmingham, remembered for his influence on the academic study of children's educational needs which, he argued, might be caused by physical disabilities or environmental circumstances. A 1954 paper the journal published on the schooling of canal boat children is a rare example of this approach (Conduct, 1954). If Gulliford had fewer outputs than his mentor, Peel, a 1977 paper entitled "Trends in Special Education", exemplifies the expertise he brought when co-opted to serve on the Warnock Committee, which reported in 1978. Warnock provided the first comprehensive review of special education in England, and obituaries highlight Gulliford's impact in "widening the scope and focusing the vision of the committee" (Bayley, 1997).

Knowledge production and knowledge networks

Considering the expansion of activity under the umbrella of cultural studies led by researchers based at the University of Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS, 1964–2002), it is interesting to see *Educational Review* showcase debate on changing language and literacy landscapes, including a paper by John McHardy Sinclair (1933–2007). Sinclair, a Professor of Modern English language at Birmingham, pioneered work on corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, lexicography, and language teaching. Entitled "English language in English Studies", his paper declares: "To teach a child anything at all in English involves assumptions and implications in both language and literature studies. It involves aspects of the system of language, and it involves criteria for the evaluation of effectiveness" (Sinclair, 1968, p. 93).

The study of education using ethnographic methods is increasingly evident from the mid-1970s, and a 1976 paper "Pupils' Views of School" by Peter Woods is typical of interactionist work in this period. "Race and Streaming: a Case Study" by Barry Troyna (1951–1996) is an early example of work representing this area, presenting findings from fieldwork in a multi-racial, boys' comprehensive school in a predominantly working-class area in North London. Pupils were placed in groups according to their academic "ability", and their talk clearly showed the impact of this on their identity work. Whereas top stream Black boys sought to de-emphasise their black identity, the reverse was true of their bottom stream counterparts, Troyna concludes. "The black identity of these pupils, which is being constantly devalued in the wider society, is actually being promoted through their identification with a music which asserts the positive aspect of this identity" (Troyna, 1978, p. 64).

In contrast to the earlier dominance of educational psychology, the journal now reflected the energy and vision of Roland Meighan (1937–2014) who strove to reach a broader audience. Described as the “British John Holt” (American author of the bestselling 1964 book *How Children Fail*) and the “Bertrand Russell of educational philosophy” (Humphreys et al., 2014, p. 2), Meighan, for example, edited a 1973 “special edition” on sociology and teaching soon after coming to Birmingham and followed this up with one from the point of view of the learners in 1978. The epigraph at the start of that edition clearly represents his commitment to the belief that students should determine their own way of learning:

“I don’t think any teacher can understand the problems pupils have; they do not stop and listen long enough, or try to understand. If they did, the relationship between pupils and teachers would improve.” 15-year-old pupil in a Birmingham school, 1977.

(Meighan, 1978, p. 91)

One of the papers in the issue, “The view from the girls” by Lynn Davies, includes a qualifying comment on what would come to be called intersectionality.

Selecting out girls for study presupposes an identifiably different response from the boys, which may not be the case [...]. It also assumes that generalizations can be made about “girls”, when age, stream, background, ethnic origin, the particular school itself, may all mean vast differences in response, and be more decisive factors in determining a viewpoint than the actual fact of gender.

(Davies, 1978, p. 103)

Sometimes the substantial rise in feminist scholarship after the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 translated into practical policies. Launched in 1979, the Manchester-based scheme entitled “Girls into Science and Technology” was an action research project to counteract a tendency for secondary schoolgirls to be filtered through to arts rather than science subjects. Judith Whyte reported on the ground-breaking project in *Educational Review* in 1984 and detected

Boys in laboratories and workshops display a confident assurance in their rightful possession of both the teacher’s attention and the available resources [...] while girls hesitate to take risks with either ‘dangerous’ equipment or answers which might turn out to be mistaken.

(Whyte, 1984, p. 85)

The journal shows how the core concerns of the field continued to develop in response to the interface between policy and practice. One of the most well-known advocates of comprehensive education, Clyde Chitty (1944–2022), joined Birmingham’s School of Education in 1989. In common with his friend and collaborator Caroline Benn (1926–2000), he wanted everyone to enjoy a full education and revolted against structures rooted in a fallacy of fixed potential. With Benn he co-authored one of the most thorough investigations of the comprehensive movement in Britain, *Thirty Years On*, published in 1996. As the role and performance of teachers became increasingly public, he raised fundamental questions.

Schools do not have to be part of the “ideological” state apparatus; and teachers do not have to see themselves as helpless “puppets” of the state. It is surely true that all schools have the twin functions of promoting the achievement of all their students and, at the same time,

enabling students to recognise prejudice, injustice and intolerance in all their various forms. Educating for political activity may be a little ambitious; educating for political awareness should be a realisable aim.

(Chitty, 2010, p. 377)

These words come from the *Educational Review* guest lecture Chitty delivered in 2010. Convinced education has the power to enhance the lives of all, his work is noted for its commitment to “social justice” and to “learning without limits”, free from deterministic beliefs about the so-called “ability” (Warmington, 2009, p. 232), and this shines through the special issues of the journal he edited – one in 1993 entitled “International Perspectives on the Curriculum” and the second in 1995 (with Martin Lawn) entitled “Redefining the Teacher and the Curriculum”. The list of authors is impressive, including Denis Lawton (1931–2022), former Director of London’s Institute of Education and founder of its Department of Curriculum Studies, and Duncan Graham, chief executive of England’s National Curriculum Council (1988–1991).

Suggesting why politics, policymaking, and practice matter in 1973, Michael F. D. Young noted it is “personal commitments that are the grounds for action [...]. The point then is not to ask whether particular research methods are, of themselves, ‘good’ or ‘bad’, but to ask for what and for whom are we providing accounts” (Young, 1973, p. 221). Forty years on, as the pressure on research performance was intensifying, Stephen Gorard (2006) discussed social science knowledge claims and the use (and abuse) of research to justify policy. After his own analysis of the data on the effect of the student intake on examination outcomes, Gorard commented on a lack of clarity in much academic practice.

At present too much social science research seems to make a virtue of being obscure but impressive-sounding—whether it is the undemocratic way in which complex statistical models are presented in journals, or the use of neologisms that are more complex than the concepts they have been, ostensibly, created to describe. [...] Transparency does not, in itself, make a conclusion true or even believable, but it forces the analyst to admit the subjectivity of their analysis and allows others to follow their logic as far as it leads them.

(Gorard, 2006, pp. 91–92)

Gary Thomas (2022) examined the problematic use of research evidence by policy-makers in the field of education more recently. Interested primarily in the motivations of actors and the reciprocity between lay and technical use of words like “evidence” in policy development, Thomas takes three examples since 2006 to demonstrate the selective mobilisation of “evidence” to add weight to UK policy decisions in a way that at best exaggerated the evidence base in question. At a time when research “impact” is considered so important it is our responsibility as an academy, he concludes, not only to question the validity of concepts and call for specification of evidence but to be ready to provide alternative evidence and engage with a broad range of media and social media also.

Internationalising the journal’s content

The earliest issues of the journal were largely focused on the UK context. However, a 1952 issue did include a compilation of accounts of education systems across a range of countries (Dobinson, 1952) and there were other internationally focused articles published during the 1950s that were largely descriptive in nature. One exception to this was

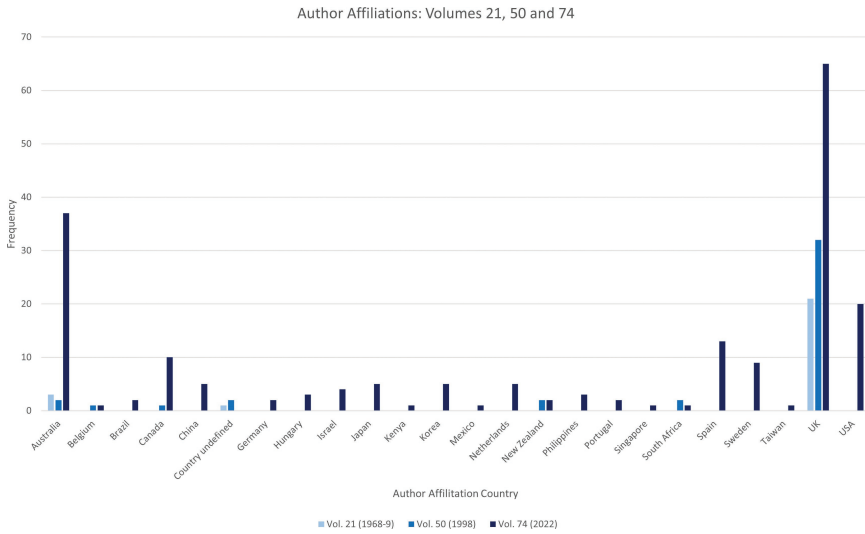


Figure 3: Geographical distribution of authorship in Volumes 21 (1968–1969), 50 (1998) and 74 (2022)
 Notes: Affiliations of all authors of articles and reviews in the given volumes. Excludes authors of other contents such as book reviews, editorials, commentaries, etc. Where an author listed institutional affiliations in more than one country, all countries were counted.

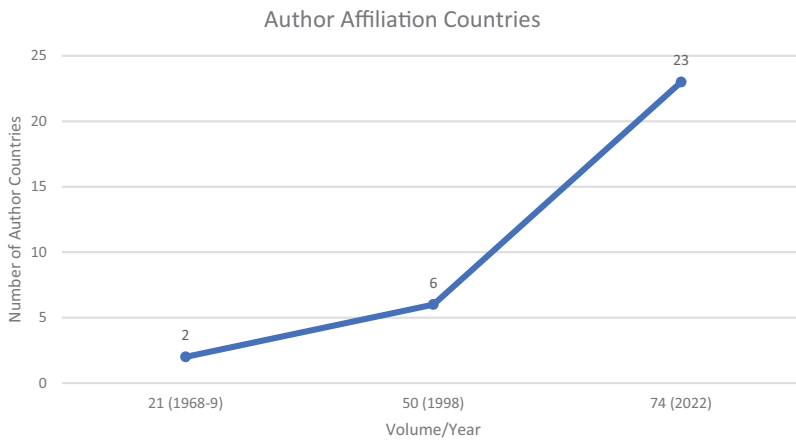


Figure 4: Author Geographical Representation over Time
 Note: Based on the country of authors’ institutional affiliation(s) for all authors of articles and reviews in the given volumes. Excludes authors of other contents such as book reviews, editorials, commentaries, etc. Where an author listed institutional affiliations in more than one country, all countries were counted. Cases where author affiliation was not defined have not been included.

a contribution on education for international citizenship (‘Education for International Understanding’, 1954). International education and education for global citizenship have been recurrent themes over the years. In the mid-1950s and 1960s there was also a focus on post-colonial education, including the issue of English as the language of instruction

in post-independence countries (Dalton, 1961), and a critique of school textbooks which were “silent about the ideas, feelings, economy, techniques, culture and history of colonised peoples” (Jull, 1962, p. 186). There was a steady trickle of articles addressing international issues, primarily from countries formerly colonised by Britain, which addressed a range of educational issues, including educational reforms in post-colonial countries (Duruji, 1978) and rural-urban inequalities (Okpako Enaohwo, 1983).

The intellectual history of Edwin Peel is worth looking at here and the agenda he pursued at Birmingham as head of the Research Department, editor of *Educational Review*, Acting Head of the Institute during the 1960s, and finally head of the Department of Psychology in the new Faculty of Education from 1976 to 1978. The son of an industrial chemist, Peel studied psychology as a postgraduate, using matrix algebra to predict the academic and technical “ability” of children for his doctorate (Watts, 2014, p. 44). A prolific author, he gained a reputation for what his friend and colleague William Wall called “international cooperation” in contrast to “academic tourism, attending conferences here and there and showing his face abroad” (Wall, 1979, p. 98). In 1952, for example, Peel took part in a Psychology workshop in Frankfurt, Germany, with Husén among others. He also spent a considerable time in Africa, Canada, and the Centre for Advanced Study in the Behavioural Sciences at Stanford in the United States, including four years as an external examiner in new universities in East Africa (*ibid.*).

It was not until the late 1980s that a Special Issue of the journal specifically focused on education in a global context. In their introductory article, Lynn Davies and Rex Oram (1988) posed the question: “what counts as ‘development’” (p. 134) in the field of education. This issue included contributions from several African countries and a resource list of articles from “Third World” countries (Moseley and Platt, 1988). Special issues with a specifically international focus have served to widen the international authorship and readership. To date, there have been five such issues:

- 1992 Issues in European Education 44 (3)
- 1993 International Perspectives on the Curriculum 45 (2)
- 2000 The Future of Education: International Perspectives 52 (2)
- 2008 Education of Tibetans 60 (1)
- 2010 Education and Global Justice: A tribute to the work of Lynn Davies 62 (3)

The 2008 Special Issue on Tibetan education is a particular example of inviting contributions from academic voices that might formerly have been unheard. Figures 3 and 4 provide a snapshot of how international authorship of articles and review papers has grown over time. The picture is even more striking when counting author affiliations for all journal content (including book reviews, editorials, etc.); by this measure, Volume 74 (2022) featured authors from 31 countries.

The journal’s commitment to internationalising its content in terms of geographical distribution is embedded in the process of commissioning, reviewing, and publishing articles. First, in seeking peer reviewers to assess the quality of a manuscript, the editors endeavour to solicit reports from international colleagues in the relevant geographical area wherever possible. Second, guest editors for the journal are encouraged to ensure that original articles in special issues reflect a range of international perspectives and the authors represent a spread of institutional affiliations.

Internationalising the editorial board

While the number of international contributions to the journal has clearly grown over the past 30 years, from the late 1990s onwards it was agreed by the Editorial Board that its management structures needed to include a wider geographical range of Board members. Accordingly, the journal's International Advisory Board was established towards the end of the 1990s. In addition, International Advisory Board members were expressly invited to contribute to the journal's 2000 Special Issue: *The Future of Education: International Perspectives*. The International Advisory Board was further expanded in the years that followed and in an editorial in 2016, then-editor Gary Thomas reported that the editorial board had resolved "to ensure that the world knew that *Educational Review* is a journal with a global reach and broad-ranging interests" (Thomas, 2016, p. 1). New members were recruited from the United States, Singapore, New Zealand, The Republic of Ireland, South Africa, Sweden, and the Netherlands. The Editorial Board continues to expand its international membership and actively seeks to involve academics from countries which, historically, have been under-represented in journal issues.

The internationalisation of the journal over the course of its history and the changing composition of the editorial boards to being more inclusive and outward oriented has resulted in far broader geographical representation than in early issues. Indeed, the International Advisory Board currently benefits from the expertise of members from 22 countries.

Educational Review and knowledge production: moving with the times

Then and now

In 1969, William Wall was exuberant. "One thing is clear", he wrote. "The Review has moved with the times. Its preoccupations, both in terms of reported research, accounts of experience, and discussions, are of the late 1960s and look forward to the '70s" ('Twenty-First Anniversary', 1969, p. 170). He was not mistaken in there being grounds for celebration. At the age of 21, *Educational Review* had outlived two of the three other cognate journals formed by English university institutes of education: Hull (*Studies in Education*, 1947–1963); Leeds (*Research and Studies*, 1949–1963). In its sixth decade it became the last survivor when Durham's *Research Review*, formed in 1950 and renamed *Evaluation and Research in Education* in 1987, was incorporated by *Educational Research and Evaluation: An International Journal on Theory and Practice* in 2011.

Journal content was first indexed in the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) in 1956 (Clarivate, 2023a). Three decades later, the introduction of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in the United Kingdom to evaluate the quality of research undertaken in British universities contributed to the development of performance league tables of one sort or another. Over the last forty years, the growth and spread of high-stakes accountability and use of corporate management techniques in education policy has become visible in the introduction of national research evaluation systems in Australia, Denmark, Hong Kong, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Portugal. We suggest this has brought us into a new kind of internationalism connected with what Michael Apple (2005) identifies as "doing things the 'right-way'" to convey the wider political context and ideological agenda. In the last decade, the reinforcement of an accountable higher education system has seen *impact* made a growing element of research assessment, in addition to the traditional focus on the quality of academic publications subjected to peer review.

Given this context, various quantitative measures of the journal's impact are available today, including through Scopus (Elsevier, 2023) and Clarivate's Journal Citation Reports (JCR) (Clarivate, 2023b). The JCR (which holds records for *Educational Review* dating back to 1997) hosts the Journal Impact Factor (JIF), which uses citation metrics to gauge the impact of journals on an annual basis and rank them accordingly. On this point we celebrate the journal's competitive metrics as they "evidence both the reach and impact of each article we publish and the journal's success in the dissemination of a body of research that makes original contributions to the development of education as a field of study" (Martin, 2021, p. 135). At the same time, we see related risks in the advocacy surrounding scholarly league tables that have gained momentum in recent years as the influences of neoliberalism and globalisation continue to have significant (if still contested) effects on academic life. Therefore, we would caution that while authors may use citation metrics in relation to their decisions regarding where to publish, they should form part of a holistic evaluation (Hicks et al. 2015).

Annual download figures (c. 448,000 for *Educational Review* content in 2022), acceptance rates, and speed metrics for manuscript processing and publication are further metrics for evaluating the journal's performance. They are all published on the journal's website now (Informa UK Limited, 2023a). Altmetric Attention Scores are also displayed for each published article, tracking engagement with the research across a variety of platforms, such as news outlets, policy documents, and social media (Altmetric, 2022). Even a cursory analysis of the journal's Altmetric data shows a range of National and International organisations draw on research published in the journal to inform their policy documents, including the UK Government, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), The Publications Office of the European Union, UNESCO, and the World Health Organization (WHO). These examples illustrate how the journal's reach has grown since its inception in 1948, while the aspiration to disseminate the best in educational research remains.

In the twenty-first century, a web presence can build community in ways unimaginable to those writing the historic "Institute news". The dedicated journal Twitter account operating under the handle @EdReview generated over 128,000 Tweet impressions during 2022, and had c. 4,600 followers by March 2023. The account posts regularly about new journal content and activities, as well as relevant developments in the education field. Highlights for *Educational Review* include Rebecca Wood's (2021) article on "Autism, intense interests and support in school", which has been Tweeted about over 800 times; Paula Cowan and Henry Maitles' (2007) article on Holocaust education, which has been picked up by over a dozen news outlets as recently as 2020; and Chris Kyriacou's (2001) article on teacher stress, which continues to inform policy documents 20 years later (Barajas-Gonzalez and Urban Institute, 2021).

Special issues

During its 75-year history, *Educational Review* has published over 50 Special Issues (see Appendix 2). The first special issue, published in 1964, focused on programmed learning techniques. Introducing this issue and a corresponding "special supplement, a *Handbook of Programmed Learning*" journal co-editor Andrew Wilkinson explained that these

novel formats were intended to highlight the timeliness and importance of the chosen topic and facilitate broad dissemination to a diverse range of readers:

At the present time when the horizons of education are expanding so vastly it is more than ever important that new ideas and research findings should be made cheaply and quickly available to make their contribution to educational decision and practice.

(Wilkinson, 1964, p. 81)

The editorial board's policy on special issues, formulated in 2015 (Thomas, 2016, p. 2), is to commission them only when there is a strong case for publication, in terms of both topicality of content and likely breadth of readership. This case may be made either by members of the editorial board or by colleagues from our wider readership. In addition to special issues, partially themed issues have been published, containing both general articles and a selection of articles on a particular educational research topic, tied together by a discussion article (Martin, 2002). There are also separate Occasional Supplementary Publications and Monographs that fall outside the core numbered sequence of journal issues.

The willingness to experiment has been a trademark of the journal throughout its history. Its "Hall of Fame" article collection, for example, has been a feature of the journal's website since 2015 (Informa UK Limited, 2023b). In 2018, because of the interest shown in the research reported there, the Editorial Board commissioned six of the original authors of Hall of Fame publications to contribute new, shorter articles which reflected on and updated their original work. These articles were collected in a Special Issue, alongside commentaries from other well-known academics (Butt and Dagkas, 2018).

Book reviews

Book reviews have been a staple component of *Educational Review* from its inception. The first issue provided a list of "books for review in later issues of the Journal" ('Books Received', 1948), and the second issue began presenting these as "Book Notices" or reviews. Over time, the format of book reviews has continued to evolve; contemporary reviews now contextualise new publications within the wider literature in the field but offer more succinct evaluations of the new books, while article-length literature reviews constitute a separate contribution to the journal. Comparative reviews of multiple books are also present (e.g. Showunmi, 2017; Thomas, 2023). The Book Review Editors have also, in recent years, opened the journal to proposals for unsolicited full-length book reviews, with the aim of diversifying the range of reviewers and publishers featured in the journal. Twitter has also proven a powerful tool for soliciting book reviews, with the academic/education community rallying to promote reviewing opportunities across their networks.

Influential Reader reviews were launched in 2016. These are short reviews, submitted by doctoral students and early career academics, which focus on a book that has greatly influenced their own research. The format is designed to support new researchers to develop their early writing skills and gain experience of the journal publishing process (Thomas and Fuller, 2017). They are popular not only with reviewers but with readers also; many have been viewed thousands of times and some have generated citations of their own – a notable example being Mehmet Kara's (2020) review of Moore and Kearsley's (2012) book on distance education.

Other activities

Educational Review has been involved in a range of activities from the beginning. During the early years of the journal, Birmingham's Institute of Education looked to meet professional needs through extending research activity into its constituent training colleges. New courses in educational psychology had been established by Fred Schonell's remedial education centre, and the journal promoted the centre's work, especially the focus on child study (Schonell and Wall, 1949, pp. 3–30), besides information about events such as conferences, workshops, and lectures to extend the relationship/s between research and teacher education.

The journal initiated its own guest lectures in its sixth decade, beginning with a presentation from American scholar Michael Apple and response from Clive Harber at the School of Education in the autumn of 2004 (Martin, 2005). Both lectures were subsequently published in the journal (Apple, 2005; Harber, 2005) and Apple's article formed part of the "Hall of Fame" web collection (Informa UK Limited, 2023b). Further, it was revisited in the Hall of Fame special issue (Apple, 2018; McGregor, 2018) and features in the "Politics and Policy-Making" section of the present special issue book. Similarly, Andrew Pollard's 2005 Guest Lecture on the challenges facing educational research was published in the journal and is reproduced in this volume (Pollard, 2006). The guest lectures concluded with Clyde Chitty's "Educating for political activity" (2010) and a response from Mairtin Mac an Ghaill (2010).

Since 2013, the journal has conferred an annual "Article of the Year Award" (Informa UK Limited, 2023c). At the close of every year, the National editorial board judges which article published in that year's Volume merits the distinction of the award, which is given for originality, significance, and contribution to the field. Winners of the award are invited to give a seminar presenting and reflecting on their article and the research which inspired it. In recent years an online seminar format has been adopted which has enabled dialogue with a broader national and international audience than would be possible with an in-person event. This, in turn, hopefully has extended consideration of the specific research topic among a wide community of scholars. Winners and runners-up in the past five years are as follows:

2022	
Winner	'Resilience, advocacy and scholar-activism: responding to COVID-19 in Kenyan, Mexican and British universities' Laura Loyola-Hernández, Christine Kahigi, Peninah Wangari-Jones & Abraham Mena Farrera
Runner-up	"Education as the practice of freedom?" – prison education and the pandemic' Kate O'Brien, Hannah King, Josie Phillips, Dalton, Kath & Phoenix
2021	
Winner	'Towards neuroparenting? An analysis of the discourses underpinning social and emotional learning (SEL) initiatives in English schools' Clare Rawdin
Runner-up	'Teacher job satisfaction: the importance of school working conditions and teacher characteristics' Anna Toropova, Eva Myrberg & Stefan Johansson

2020	
Winner	'Troubling "The Problem" of racial overrepresentation in special education: a commentary and call to rethink research' Wendy Cavendish, David Connor, Taucia Gonzalez, Patrick Jean-Pierre & Kenneth Card
Runner-up	'Evolution of topics in education research: a systematic review using bibliometric analysis' Cui Huang, Chao Yang, Shutao Wang, Wei Wu, Jun Su & Chuying Liang
2019	
Winner	'Measuring privatisation in education: methodological challenges and possibilities' Emily Winchip, Howard Stevenson & Alison Milner
Runner-up	'Widening participation research and practice in the United Kingdom on the twentieth anniversary of the Dearing report, reflections on a changing landscape' David W. Thompson
2018	
Winner	'Rightist gains and critical scholarship' Michael W. Apple
Runner-up	'Extending the theory and practice of education for cosmopolitan citizenship' Audrey Osler & Hugh Starkey

Capacity building

As stipulated in the Aims and Scope statement of the journal (Informa UK Limited, 2023d), we are committed to an inclusive, transparent, and positive peer review and publishing process for writers and referees alike (Martin, 2021). In respect of author submissions, we know and understand the joys and disappointments that manuscript decisions convey but always strive to provide constructive feedback to support the writing process and to do so with sensitivity and due consideration of the emotional labour involved. In respect of peer reviewers, personal communications acknowledge the debt owed to colleagues who so generously gift their time to support the research community in our field. We acknowledge the team effort underpinning the collaborative ways of working that contribute to high author satisfaction scores and positive feedback from authors and reviewers.

Academics at all career stages are represented across the journal's National and International editorial boards, and board members consistently offer guidance to prospective and current postgraduate researchers on publishing opportunities and strategies. Partnership with the Taylor & Francis Reviewer Training Network, which trains the next generation of peer reviewers, also contributes to capacity building in the field (Informa UK Limited, 2023e). Finally, the journal has funded professional English language editing support and additional editorial feedback for a selection of manuscripts since 2021, with the intention of ensuring that no language barriers stand in the way of authors who wish to submit to an English-language journal.

Where next?

Continuities regarding a commitment to the principle that education matters and the belief that the exchange of ideas can improve education for all is one way of reading the

75-year history of the field reviewed here. Notwithstanding, the social context has shifted from a social democratic consensus regarding civic welfarism and the adoption of policies to address inequalities based, *inter alia*, on class, gender, and ethnicity to a neoliberal faith in the efficacy of the market and the prioritising of economic over the social purposes of education (Reay, 2022).

The relationship between academic research and professional practice was in the spotlight in 1940s England in the wake of global conflict, the establishment of universal free state secondary schooling, the raising of the minimum school leaving age to 15, and a teacher shortage. University-based teacher education was seen as a way of raising teacher professionalism, and under the direction of Sir Raymond Priestley, Birmingham took a positive line. Teacher education, teacher professionalism, and educational improvement continue to be a key focus of education policy concerns around the world today, in the aftermath of the deadly COVID-19 virus and ongoing conflict situations across the globe.

Current articles show education is implicated in the discourses and processes of globalisation through ideas of cosmopolitanism, intercultural understanding, and mobility. At the same time, international perspectives also feature through the impact of the Black Lives Matter movement and scholar-activism regarding the need to decolonise curricula, albeit in different ways since the national cultures and histories of different countries still retain a strong influence within the context of global economic change and environmental crises.

Journal content documents changing research foci and the influences of neoliberalism seen in the construction of an accountable teacher environment across all sectors of education, locally and globally, over the last forty years. The metrification of academic journals is part and parcel of all this. At the same time, we suggest the body of knowledge production in *Educational Review* is testament to three things that characterise research in education. (1) The persistent relation between disciplines and theory in the academic study of education in the English-speaking world that Dutch educator Gert Biesta discussed in 2011. (2) The close relationship between education research and educational practice to which Dominic Wyse attested in his presidential address at the 2020 meeting of the British Educational Research Association (BERA) (Hammersley, 2021; Wyse et al., 2021). (3) The importance of interdisciplinary work in the field to inform public debate, knowledge, and understanding and where possible encourage the development of policies that produce socially just education systems across the globe.

We recognise the problems with the use of performance metrics as proxies for quality and that they can shape the behaviour of institutions and individuals in unhelpful ways when it comes to research funding, maintaining a healthy work-life balance, and precarious working conditions. We recognise, too, the potential challenges and further developments of educational research, policy, and practice in the third decade of the twenty-first century. We look to nurture a space for conversation and dialogue among critical pedagogies – an educational site in which we might, to use the language of Michael Fielding (2005), “put our hands around the flame” to disseminate critical case studies of possibility in the work of building a better future for the many and not the few. We invite you to join with us, in *Educational Review*, as we stand on the shoulders of those before us and take forward the struggle for the common good.

The 75th anniversary volumes: criteria for selection of articles

With well over a thousand articles published to date, selecting articles for these volumes has been a challenge. In the end, however, the editors were guided by three criteria. First, it was important to ensure that the articles selected retained contemporary relevance, while

considering some key historical moments in the history of educational policy and practice. Thus, we have included articles from the complete time span of the journal's existence. Second, we endeavoured to identify some of the major themes, theoretical orientations, and methodological approaches which have run through the work published over the years, which reflect a concern with the policy and practice and some of the varied theoretical perspectives which have informed research. Finally, we have paid some attention to metrics: capturing and maintaining the interest of a wide academic readership is important to the journal. We hope you enjoy the read and the opportunity to deep dive into our archive.

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