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Inclusive education and teacher education

A basis for hope or a discourse of delusion

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Inclusive education and teacher education: a basis of hope or a discourse of delusion

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Professor Len Barton

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Introduction

In thinking about this presentation I asked myself what should be the main characteristics of an inaugural lecture? I decided that given the presentations I have heard and read and the varied nature of the audience it should be celebratory, entertaining, informative and provocative.

Whilst recognising that the issues I will attempt to address are complex and contentious and that in a single presentation the necessity of selecting particular points for consideration will be manifestly clear, I propose to examine the following concerns. Firstly, I will explore the question of celebration in relation to my experience within higher education. Secondly, I will highlight some of the initial issues I engaged with in relation to special education. Thirdly, I will trace some key insights into what I have learned from the writings, songs, poetry of disabled people with regard to the question of disability and inclusion. This has involved a disturbing and exciting learning experience. Fourthly, I will highlight some key aspects of Inclusive Education. Fifthly) I will relate some of these issues to the question of teacher education. Finally) I will make some concluding remarks. Hopefully) some aspect of this presentation will thus be of interest to all members of the audience.

Celebration

I have had a very privileged academic life which has included the opportunity of working with many stimulating and challenging students and establishing long-lasting working relationships and friendships with a significant number of academic colleagues both nationally and internationally. I have also been able to develop this in relation to disabled scholars and activists.

Whatever I have been able to achieve it could not have been done without the support derived from these collegial) close working relationships. This evening is an opportunity for me to celebrate these fundamentally significant influences on my life) my thinking) my actions and to thank all of those involved) some who are in this room) for providing me with such wonderful supportive and effective relationships. Our interests have spanned several crucial concerns including: the struggle for equality) a dignified view of difference) social justice) non-oppressive conditions and relations for all people) freedom of speech and the centrality of critical analysis and debate.

In these engagements we have shared disappointments) frustrations) and the excitement of contributing in some small way to change and the development of knowledge and understanding.

Part of my professing tonight is to encourage the belief in) and support of) collegial) critical friendships and relations.

Sociological approaches to special education

Having worked in the field of post-school segregation provision I was appointed to a lectureship in the sociology of education at Westhill College of Higher Education in Birmingham. During my time at this institution I began to be interested in developing a sociological approach to special education, policy and practice. It was during the early part of this period that I established a very important working relationship and friendship with Sally Tomlinson. Our work together covered several concerns and issues. Viewing special education sociologically entailed us exploring questions of power, politics and social control. We were concerned with developing an approach to special education in which social interests rather than individual differences and deficits were to be a fundamental focus of analysis. Our critical concerns involved examining the nature and function of policy-making and implementation at national and LEA/school levels of the system. This included an analysis of key texts such as the Warnock Report and the 1981 Education Act and specific policy initiatives such as (statementing) and (integration) and the meaning and function of the discourse of (special educational needs). Particular criticism was also focused on the significant influence of forms of psychological thinking on practice in relation to the identification and treatment of disabled children and adults. This included challenging particular forms of psychological reductionism and the emphasis given to individualistic, within-the-child conceptions legitimised) for example, by assumptions concerning the significance of IQ.

By seeking to introduce sociological thinking in this area we attempted to challenge some dominant assumptions including:

- That special educational policy, provision and practice were unquestionably good for both the pupils involved and the actual system as a whole.
- That the predominant perspectives about within-the-child factors were a sufficient explanation for understanding the significant issues involved in terms of disabled pupils and children's experiences and opportunities.
- That professional decision-making was overwhelmingly in the best interests of those for whom the decisions were claimed to be made.

These assumptions were analysed through a range of questions and alternative

ways of conceiving and developing the issues involved. These agendas entailed examining:

- The relationship of special education to the educational system) the wider socio-economic and political aspects of society and the social functions of education.
- The nature and inter-relationship between how categories and classification systems were created, maintained, changed and the consequence for both the labelled the labellers and the wider social order.
- The role of professionals and their vested interests in terms of the control of life chances and identity formations of disabled children and adults (Barton and Tomlinson 1981; Barton and Tomlinson 1984; Barton 1997).

Whilst engaging with these interests it became increasingly evident that there was a dearth of comparative sociological literature available on these issues. This became a further dimension of our work. Indeed, in the editorial to the *World Year Book of Education* in 1999 on the issue of Inclusive Education, Daniels and Garner maintain that this interest of ours, expressed in 1984, for an expansion of comparative studies of this kind, was 'a really prophetic advisory note to future authors' (Daniels and Garner 1999: 7) and still remains significant today. In reflecting on this period of work it is clear that my motivation for such endeavours was inspired by two factors. A discipline-based interest in terms of what the sociological imagination could contribute to the demystifying and understanding of this particular field of study. Also, by a quasi-Christian set of influences in which the desire was fundamentally about what I could do for and on behalf of such vulnerable and essentially dependent individuals and groups.

Disability Studies

In this phase of my research interest, again the establishment of a working relationship and friendship, this time with Mike Oliver, was very significant. Mike, who was then a lecturer in higher education and later became the first Professor of Disability Studies in this country) became my mentor.

One of the significant changes in my perspective and understanding) resulting from my studies of the writings) poetry and songs of disabled academics and activists) was an appreciation of the fundamental importance of the voices of disabled people. This increasingly informed awareness that disabled people have views about how they wished to be defined) what role they should play in the struggle for change) what that change involved) entailed for me a new imperative of learning to listen to and respect disabled people. The insights and understandings derived from this re-educative process challenged my well intentioned but nonetheless deficit

and dependency-creating assumptions. It influenced and continues to inform my research and teaching concerns in the field of education.

An awareness of history can provide us with significant insights into the diversity of human existence over time. History is both created and recreated by human action and as Giddens notes, this is 'the double involvement of individuals and institutions) (1986: 11) in that such struggles also 'produce outcomes that they neither intend nor foresee' (157). Undertaking an historical analysis is a complex task in that we cannot merely read off the present from the past. However, an historical analysis of language- in-use 'helps us to understand past values and social attitudes' (Digby 1996: 3). One of the advantages that we now have is an increase in historiographies of physical and mental impairment (Scull 1979; *Oxford Review of Education* 1983; Humphries and Gordon 1992; Franklin 1994; Trent 1994; Noll 1995; Wright and Digby 1996).

A significant insight derived from such work is the recognition that disability is a social construction and has meant different things in different historical periods and cultural contexts. This is reflected in the shift of official categories and their meaning including, 'moron' 'imbecile' 'idiot', 'insane', 'feeble-minded', 'mentally deficient', 'subnormal', 'mentally handicapped' and 'learning difficulties'. These categories are themselves a reflection of particular socio-economic and cultural developments and the differential ways in which policy and service provision are associated with particular conceptions. Historically, therefore) disabled people have experienced a range of responses in both official and commonsense discourses, including fear, hatred, pity, over-protection and patronisation.

Disabled people and their organisations are increasingly involved in providing alternative, empowering conceptions in contrast to those that have supported and legitimated disabling barriers in both policy development, practice and everyday interactions.

In a discussion about the importance of a feminist perspective to disability politics Morris (1991) contends that:

Our anger is not about having (a chip on our shoulder, our grief is not a failure to come to terms with our disability. Our dissatisfaction with our lives is not a personality defect, but a sane response to the oppression which we experience.

(Morris 1991: 9)

In seeking to take the voices of disabled people seriously it is necessary to understanding the contexts in which they are expressed, the content of these voices and the purposes of such expressions. One of the most fundamentally important

perspectives that I have had to engage with in this learning process has been that of the social model of disability. This model is the product of the struggles of disabled people and their organisations against discrimination, exclusion and oppression and their desire for a better life based on alternative definitions and understandings relating to the issue of disability. It is their model, they created it and continue to argue over its meaning and validity.

The social model serves several purposes. Firstly, it provides a framework and language through which disabled people can describe their experiences. Discrimination, exclusion and inequality can be named and challenged. Secondly, it offers a means through which the question of disability can be explained and understood in terms of wider socio-economic conditions and relations.. Thirdly, it provides a basis for support and collective engagement of disabled people. Finally, it is a means through which the non-disabled world can be provided with an alternative and positive view of disability. Thus it has a very important educative function. So, the definitions and interpretations entailed in this issue must not be viewed as natural or immutable. They are complex and contestable social creations. As such they need to be struggled over.

A social model approach recognises that the question of disability provides us with an opportunity for raising serious questions about the nature of the existing society we live in and the kind of society we desire or hope for. Why and how a society excludes particular individuals and groups involves processes of categorisation, in which the inferior, the inabilities, unacceptable aspects of a person's makeup, are highlighted and legitimated. Which definitions are seen as significant, why and with what consequences, must therefore, be the subject of serious critical scrutiny. How we define (disability' is therefore crucial because it will influence our expectations and the ways in which we interact with disabled people.

Recognising the centrality of institutional, ideological, structural and material disabling barriers within society is fundamental to a social model of disability. It is an unadaptive, unfriendly and hostile set of material conditions and social relations that cumulatively contribute to the marginalisation, disempowerment and exclusion of disabled people. This is where the critical analysis has to focus and the changes have to take place.

The definitional support for the social model is to be found in the statement on Fundamental Principles of Disability which resulted from a discussion between the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation and the Disability Alliance. The UPIAS position is quite clear:

Disability is something *imposed* on top of our impairment by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. Disabled people are therefore an oppressed group in society.

(UPIAS 1976: my emphasis)

This statement as Barnes (1997) notes, has since been broadened to include all impairments, physical, sensory and intellectual and is the official position of the British Council of Disabled People and the Disabled Peoples' International. Thus Oliver contends:

All disabled people experience disability as social restriction, whether these restrictions occur as a consequence of inaccessible built environments, questionable notions of intelligence and social competence, the inability of the general public to use sign language, the lack of reading material in Braille or hostile public attitudes to people with non-visible disabilities.

(Oliver 1990: xiv Introduction)

Disability is thus a significant means of social differentiation. The level of esteem, social standing of disabled people, is derived from their position in relation to the wider socio-economic conditions and relations of a given society. This perspective challenges both professional and public perceptions of disability. It involves more than changes to access and resources issues. It is about the struggle for rights, social justice, citizenship and anti-discrimination legislation (Equality Studies Centre 1994).

It is essential that we do not underestimate the seriousness with which this task is viewed by disabled people. There are no quick, slick, easy answers to what are fundamental issues, as Rachel Hurst vividly reminds us:

For disabled people in particular) the interaction between our right to individual freedom and choice and control over our own lives and our rights to non-discrimination and inclusion measures is crucial. Our exclusion has been so systematic and rigorous that there is a need for fundamental changes to society in order to support our inclusion.

(Hurst 1996: no page numbers)

Indeed, in terms of a global dimension through, for example, the impact of wars and famine 'the lifestyle of the overwhelming majority of disabled people is characterised by poverty and social isolation' (Barnes 1996: 10).

The social model approach provides a radical alternative to other dominant perspectives. Disability is not viewed as a tragedy, a punishment, or the result of some sin(s) of the parent(s), or the individual concerned, it is not a sickness in need

of a cure, it is not a subject for charity and sentimental, patronising and dependency-creating attitudes and relationships. It is a human rights issue.

From this perspective, disabled people including children and adults experience varying degrees of discrimination, exclusion and stigmatisation. This includes being treated as less than human, being viewed as objects of charity, being excluded from the work force and living on or below the poverty line, being unable to experience the entitlements of citizenship resulting in a lack of real participation in social encounters and decisions over issues affecting their lives (Barnes 1991; Barnes and Mercer 2003).

In presenting this brief overview I am aware of the dangers of essentialism in relation to the notion of disability, thereby giving the impression of sameness. Disabled people are not a homogeneous group. The difficulties and response to being disabled are influenced by class, race, gender, sexuality and age factors. These can cushion or compound the experience of discrimination and oppression. Some individuals experience simultaneous oppression thereby experiencing differential impacts on internal oppression, self-pride and collective identification. I also recognise the possible differences in terms of (internal oppression' that will be experienced between those who were born with particular impairments and those who experienced them at a later stage in life. This will include the extent to which individuals can view themselves with pride (MeeKosha 2000).

Their struggles include recognising such differences whilst simultaneously pursuing solidarity and community. Clearly this reinforces the perspective that the meaning of difference is a terrain of political struggle in the pursuit of a society in which, as Young indicates:

there is equality among socially and culturally differentiated groups, who mutually respect one another and affirm one another in their difference.

(Young 1990: 163)

Nor is the social model a fixed and unchangeable set of ideas. Various points of argument and critique exist between disabled analysts and activists about the adequacy or validity of particular interpretations. For example, there are those who locate the source of discriminatory and oppressive conditions and relations in the fundamental workings of the capitalist system. Thus, the emphasis is on a political economy of disablement.

Also, there are those who, whilst still committed to a materialist perspective, are influenced by feminist ideas and are concerned to emphasise the psycho-emotional dimension of disability. This includes, as Thomas maintains, 'social barriers which erect "restrictions" within ourselves, and thus place limits on our psycho-

emotional well-being' (1999: 47). The interest is thus focused on 'inside' experiences of oppression and discrimination in terms of 'being made to feel of lesser value, worthless, unattractive or disgusting' (Thomas 2002:7). These do have significant impacts on what people can be and possibly do.

Finally, there are those influenced by postmodernism who maintain that the social model cannot adequately deal with the complexities of the global experience of disabled people) or deal with the challenges which impairment presents to notions of embodiment or. the interconnection between disability and other aspects of inequality. Such a totalizing, unitary model needs to be revised, hence the importance of developing and reaping the benefits of what Corker and Shakespeare (2002) call a 'new theoretical toolbox' which is adequate, accessible and does not lose its radical edge.

These acknowledgements should not be seen as a desire to remove such debates but rather as illustrations of the healthy and exciting dialogue that is currently being expressed within the disability movement and disability studies. The conception that there is a lack of opportunity to discuss alternative perspectives does not accord with the account that is being offered in this paper. For example, articles in local coalition publications (Gibbs 2002; WECODP 2002; Rae 2003) testify to this exciting openness. Also, the existence of such tensions should not be the basis for claims made by some academics that there is no need for a social model (Mackay 2002).

Barnes, in attempting to address some of these issues, argues that the social model does not deny the significance of impairment related concerns, appropriate medical interventions, nor the significance of culture and, he continues, the model:

Is a concerted attempt to *politicize* disability in order to provide a clear and unambiguous focus on the real and multiple deprivations that are impressed on people whose biological conditions are deemed socially unacceptable in order to bring about radical structural and cultural change.

(Barnes 2003: 10)

The importance of the social model in the struggle for equity and a non-oppressive, non-discriminatory world, is that this goes beyond the issue of disablement and is about the establishment and maintenance of a social world in which *all* people experience the realities of inclusive values and relationships.

Inclusive education

The question of 'inclusive education, is both complex and contentious and is shaped by historical, cultural, global and contextual factors. In an important EPPI

Centre Review the question of definition is discussed. Whilst recognising the limitations of their position, inclusion for them is about three key perspectives. Firstly, it is about responding 'simultaneously to students who all differ from each other in important ways some of which pose particular challenges to the school'. Secondly, 'it is not just about maintaining the presence of students in school but also about maximising their participation'. Finally, 'inclusion' is a process which can be shaped by school-level action) (EPPI 2002: 7).

Significant ambiguities in the concept of inclusion have encouraged Dyson (1999) to maintain that it may be more appropriate to talk about different inclusions. He argues that these differences arise from alternative discourses at work in the field through which different theoretical definitions of inclusion are contested. A crucial reason for proposing such a position is that Dyson is concerned that particular conceptions may have an impact in terms of stifling debate and ossifying values and beliefs.

Whilst I do recognise the importance of the above approaches and concerns, I would want to argue that inclusive education is not an end in itself but a means to an end. It is about contributing to the realisation of an inclusive society with the demand for a rights approach as a central component of policy-making. This position has been informed by insights and ideas derived from disability studies. This perspective raises some important issues with regard to the question of inclusive education. First, it encourages the issue of change to be foregrounded. Unlike integration, the change process is not about assimilation but transformation of those deep structural barriers to change including the social base of dominant definitions of 'success', 'failure' and 'ability' within the academy, as well as schools (Whitty 2002; Gillborn and Youdell 2000). Nor should we under-estimate the difficulties of the task. Secondly, inclusive education is a 'distinctly political, "in your face": activity' (Corbett and Slee 2000: 136) and it involves a political critique of social values, priorities and the structures and institutions which they support. This is both a disturbing and challenging activity which is an essential feature of the struggle for change. Lastly, inclusive education is fundamentally about how we understand and engage with difference in constructive and valued ways. It is a public process of naming and celebrating differences and engaging with the identification of what it is we value about one another. To do justice to the difference between pupils, to utilise these differences and to approach such factors as a resource, an opportunity for learning and not a problem to be fixed or excluded, thus becomes a crucial dimension of an approach that is working towards inclusive education (Ainscow 1999).

So, inclusion is not about assimilation or accommodation of individuals into an essentially unchanged system of educational provision and practice. It is not fundamentally concerned with the inclusion of categorised pupils such as disabled

pupils. It is more than this. It is not about placement or the removal of an individual from one context into another. It is not about dumping children into what are essentially extensions of their former segregated experiences. Inclusive education is not about the reform of special education nor is it a sub-specialism of special education. Inclusive education is about why, how, when, where and the consequences of educating all learners. It involves the politics of recognition and is concerned with the serious issue of who is included and who is excluded within education and society generally.

A major motivation for the pursuit of inclusive education is an informed conviction of the irrelevance, discriminatory and exclusionary features of current policy, provision and practice in education. In the series of lectures presented during this centenary celebration significant examples of serious criticisms of barriers to more participatory, democratic inclusive approaches to education can be identified. For example, Halpin (2003) is particularly critical of forms of target setting and the further diversification of an already highly diversified and stratified system of schooling. Evans (2003) highlighted the failure of current educational provision and practice to find the right relationship between education and 'real life' and the necessity of inclusion and of viewing learning as a life-long process. MacGilchrist (2003) in a critical analysis of 'school improvement', maintains that an over-emphasis on performance is having a negative impact on the curriculum and the quality of learning for primary school children. The balance between pressure and support needs to change and there is an urgent need to shift the emphasis from performance to learning.

Alderson (2003) powerfully criticises the deficit views of 'childhood' and the position and function of compulsory schooling in maintaining a culture of docility and dependency with regard to pupils. Finally, Brennen (2003) argues that in the quest for change and attempts at living together, which is a fundamental value underpinning inclusive education, we need within our professional practice to think about how we can make time and give new value to time.

Being concerned with an agenda for working towards inclusive thinking and practice is not an optional or light-hearted activity. It is of fundamental importance demanding serious commitment to time, imaginative, creative thought, energy and the development of effective collegial relationships based on trust and respect.

The issue of the policy proposals relating to inclusive education needs to be understood within the more general educational policy context. This is characterised by ambivalence and contradiction. The important Green Paper (DfEE 1997) on *Excellence for all Children*, clearly illustrates that the Government's commitment to inclusion is qualified. In the Forward to the Paper, David Blunkett, the then Secretary of State for Education and Employment, maintains that in terms

of the school's task to prepare all children to be productive members of society, this provides 'a strong reason for educating children with SEN, as far as possible, with their peers (DfEE 1997: 4) and he continues:

whilst recognising the paramount importance of meeting the needs of individual children) and the necessity of specialist provision for some) we shall promote the inclusion of children with SEN within mainstream schooling wherever possible

and the government will

redefine the role of special schools to develop a specialist network of specialist support.

(DfEE 1997: 5)

This support for the existence of twin-track special needs provision is made more transparent in the recent government-sponsored *Report of the Special Schools Working Group*. In the Foreword by Baroness Ashton 'the future role of special schools within the overarching framework of inclusion, is strongly advocated, as the Baroness maintains, 'The special schools sector enjoys the Government's full support'' (DfEE 2003: 2). The powerful vested interests of proponents of segregated provision (especially residential) which are now viewed as contributing to inclusive values and relations are still a force to be recognised and challenged from within a human rights framework (Rustemier 2002).

Whilst the Green Paper states that the publication 'is the first step in a fundamental reappraisal of the way we meet special educational needs' (DfEE 2003: 6) there is no serious attempt or promise of such deliberations to question the problematic nature of such a category. I have argued that within the context of a systemic understanding of the dominant and normative assumptions informing the policies and practices within schooling, the language of 'special educational needs' supports deficit assumptions and is a euphemism for failure. Corbett (1996) in a powerful critique of such language as 'special needs' which she terms as 'Bad Mouting', highlights the patronizing, sentimentality and individuality of negative views of difference which such language supports.

In recognising the unacceptable nature of such language the authors of *The Index for Inclusion*, a document produced for the Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education, Bristol, by Booth and Ainscow and sponsored by DfES that was distributed to all schools in England and Wales and recently revised (2002), have replaced the term 'special educational needs' with that of 'barriers to learning and participation'. This is more than a mere semantic issue or a question of political correctness; from a socio-political perspective, as long as there is a form of

language that depicts some children or individuals as not 'normal' and thus 'special', exclusionary forms of provision and practice will continue to exist (Ballard 1996). It also supports Booth's (2003) contention, that inclusion involves decategorisation and a commitment to the recognition and appreciation of all aspects of diversity within education and the community.

Another significant aspect of the more general policy context is that of competing and contradictory proposals and intentions. This is vividly illustrated in the tensions between the standards and inclusion agendas and also highlights the importance of viewing policy documents and their implementation in terms of differential significance. In the relentless drive to improve standards and discipline we have witnessed the introduction of new funding systems, more accountability procedures through new forms of inspection, the creation of public league tables, priority being given to instrumental values in relation to teaching and learning, increasing forms of competition, selection and specialisation within and between schools, increasing emphasis on narrow conceptions of performance and new forms of management discourse and procedures and a culture of 'shame and blame'. In a discussion of the system of education in England and Wales, Quicke (1999) strongly contends that it is characterised by:

the selection and differentiation of pupils leading to the reproduction of inequalities; a form of teaching and learning which is competitive and hierarchical; and the embrace of instrumentalism which harnesses education to the economic goals of society.

(Quicke 1999: 3)

The regulatory and control functions of any of these factors militate against the development and maintenance of inclusive values and practices.

In the Green Paper Blunkett claims that: 'where all children are included as equal partners in the school community, the benefits are felt by all', and 'we shall remove barriers which get in the way of meeting the needs of all children (DfEE 1997: 4, 5). Whilst much of this as a statement of principle is positive and does represent a shift in tone and language in terms of previous Government discourse) it still needs to be understood and critically interrogated within the context of the socially divisive values and practices outlined above. As Benjamin so perceptively notes:

For students who are not going to succeed in dominant terms, the standards agenda is instrumental in *constructing* barriers to their participation. Herein lies one of the most fundamental contradictions at the heart of New Labour's educational policy. (Benjamin 2002: 56)

The pressure of enforcement means that the inclusive agenda will tend to be steam-rolled by the stronger standards agenda (Dyson and Slee 2001).

In 1982 Connell *et al.* published a book entitled *Making a Difference*, which was the outcome of an empirical study on class, inequalities and schooling in Australia. Reflecting on the book twenty years later Connell (2002) highlighted the very different social, political and educational contexts that currently exist and which would now make such a study difficult to undertake. He identifies several significant changes including: increased competitiveness in education; the marketisation of educational provision and practice; the privileging of 'training' over education; the adoption of business management practices in public education and the dismantling of the welfare state. These and other factors have resulted in the silencing of voices and interest in educational equity. He argues that consequently we need a new quality agenda.. Thus there is an urgent task to:

Focus on inclusiveness. We need to focus on educational thought, not on competition, selection and therefore exclusion, but on how the educational enterprise can be made more fully inclusive.

(Connell 2002: 325)

In advocating a new way of thinking of how curriculum and pedagogy can effectively meet the full range of learners) needs, he contends we must begin to think in terms of 'equality of service rather than equality of opportunity' (2002: 325). This, he believes, will encourage the generation of a common interest and commitment to a just educational system.

Teachers, Connell maintains, are faced with educating a diverse student population, and the mechanisms for working towards more inclusive thinking and practice include the following. First, there needs to be a charter of justice and rights in education in which the principles central to equality, and the reasons why they are valued, are clearly spelt out. Part of this process will include a public rejection of exclusionary forms of free-market agendas in education. Secondly, there need to be programmes of whole-school renewal based on community participation and curricular justice. This is a continual process of development by a commitment to inclusiveness. Finally, he argues, such a new way of thinking and practice will necessitate a serious critical revisit of teacher education and in-service provision, in terms of supporting a fully inclusive approach.

Teacher education

The question of the position and function of teacher education institutions is a central concern of Sachs (2003) in her argument for the development of an 'activist

teaching profession', one in which teachers can be viewed as change agents. Drawing on research findings from several societies as well as Australia she maintains, that teachers in the modern world will need to respond to and manage change in creative and responsible ways. If they are to be effective in this changing context teacher educators will need to reconceptualise their task and restructure how they undertake their work including the establishment of vibrant relationships with schools, trade unions and other interested groups. These tasks need to be the subject of debate focusing on a series of challenging questions including 'What is the place of teacher education facilities within universities and what is their core business?' (Sachs 2003:60). In this process teacher education needs to be predicted on a recognition that education is political and is concerned with the struggles for social justice; learning is fundamental to its agenda; that priority is given to the importance of teacher enquiry into their own practice and finally) that the establishment and maintenance of collaborative partnerships entailing high levels of trust and mutual respect will be essential features of future programmes.

This development will entail risk-taking and the making of mistakes. It involves what Sachs calls 'generative politics' that enables individuals and groups to take an active approach to the struggle for change. It is about being pro-active rather than reactive to demands both from within institutions and the wider society. In an endeavour to look behind taken-for-granted assumptions about teacher professionalism Sachs contends that challenging questions need to be raised, including: 'How is inclusiveness promoted so that a broad range of educational interests is represented and heard?' (2003: 145).

Engaging with these issues will necessitate collaborative efforts through the forging of new relationships with schools.

In England teacher education is a key aspect of the educational system that has been on the receiving end of a raft of government directives and interventions over the past two decades in particular. The major intention has been to redefine and reconstruct the purpose, process, content and outcome of all programmes and procedures. The changes have been supported by the introduction of new legislation, new funding arrangements, the closure and amalgamation of institutions and the development of new routes into teaching outside higher education. The motivation for such action includes a desire on the part of government for greater central control and the assumption that the most effective way of controlling schools and 'teachers in the long term is to control their professional preparation.

During 1991 to 1996 Sheila Miles, John Furlong, Geoff Whitty and myself undertook two national investigations, funded by the *ESRC*, into the changing nature of teacher education (Furlong *et al.* 2000).

We were interested in plotting the ways course providers responded to the range of rapid policy changes and, in a more limited way, to document the implications of the changes that were introduced for the student experience itself.

The most important and controversial development took place in 1994 with the appointment of a government quango, called the Teacher Training Agency (TTA). Several justifications have been identified for the introduction of this significant body, including: the necessity of maintaining an adequate supply of well qualified applicants for teaching; a means of bringing a much needed coherence into the system; a basis for engaging with the problem of quality control and a more effective means of dealing with funding arrangements and decisions (Mahony and Hextal 2000). Our evidence would suggest that an assumption that higher education did not have a necessary and distinctive contribution to make on such courses was also a reason why this new national body was needed. It was also part of a general concern to establish more effective means of accountability on the part of higher education. This involved an increasing effort to change the nature of professional knowledge, skills and values that student teachers are expected to have and which such courses needed to provide.

Over the years the remit of the TTA has steadily increased and the range of fundamentally important changes that have been established during its brief existence include:

- Privileging a discourse of training instead of education as best characterising the nature of these programmes of preparation.
- Supporting the introduction of new routes into teaching that excluded higher education.
- Defining competencies and later the transformation of competencies into more detailed 'standards' that contributed to determining the content of teacher training.
- The development of a National Curriculum for initial teacher training. (Responsibility for the development and implementation of new funding arrangements) which separated the traditional connection of this practice from higher education.
- Using new forms of OFSTED inspections as a means of quality assurance and control with its links to funding.

Overall, these changes contributed to an emphasis on professional competence, one in which the powers of central control are clearly evident, with higher education

possessing less and less autonomy over how to interpret their responsibilities. In seeking to establish greater control over the outcome of courses a new definition of teacher professionalism based on a restricted notion of *professionalism* was being established.

The questions which we asked in a book published in 2000 still seem to be of importance:

Who does have a legitimate right to be involved in defining teacher professionalism?

Can we develop new approaches to teacher professionalism based upon more participatory relationships with diverse communities.

(Furlong *et al.*: 175)

From a range of studies and analyses undertaken since our project the current situation is still viewed with great concern. For example, in a UCET (2001) publication it is argued that the nature of the regulations, the frequency and focus of OFSTED inspections, and the pressure of meeting standards in order to maintain TTA accreditation all combine to make innovation very difficult in teacher training. In the same publication Reid raises what he calls some 'salutary questions' including 'What is the effect of the bureaucratic treatment of reaching the standards?' 'Has teaching been over de-intellectualised?' (Reid 2001: 49). In their book aptly entitled *Rethinking Teacher Education*, Edwards *et al.* raise a series of criticisms in the light of the demands of an emerging knowledge-based economy and argue with regard to official current policy:

That an over bureaucratic, system serving and standardized prescription admits little diversity, a diversity which an educational system within a democracy should embrace and foster, not suppress.

(Edwards *et al.* 2002: 2)

Garner (2001) is particularly worried and angry over the ways in which ITT provision does little to promote inclusive thinking on the part of newly qualified teachers. It is the question of inclusivity in ITT that will be the subject of my concluding remarks.

Conclusion

The position of teacher training in relation to its contribution to the development of inclusive thinking and practice on the part of student teachers is of fundamental importance. In a forthcoming publication concerned with these issues and drawing on the experience of several societies Booth et al. (2003) examine some crucial questions including:

To what extent does the curriculum of teacher education encourage the development of inclusion in schools?

What preparation and support do teachers need to implement inclusion?

How are barriers to learning and participation overcome in teacher education?

The Institute of Education has a long and distinguished involvement in teacher education and has on several occasions been involved in critical and constructive analysis of various aspects of government policy. It is currently undertaking a further review of its provision and practice as part of a strategic review. I wish to offer the following suggestions concerning the Institute's future work.

Firstly, it is crucial that the issue of inclusivity is given key prominence in our programmes. Supporting this possibility would be an involvement in what Booth *et al.* (2003) are advocating: that of the production of an 'Index for Inclusion of Teacher Education'. This would draw on existing knowledge and experience of producing the *Index for Schools*. It would recognise the importance of a human rights perspective to education, emphasise the political nature of education, would advocate that inclusion is concerned with challenging and reducing inequalities and exclusionary values and practices and that it is very serious about enhancing the learning and participation of *all* students.

Secondly, involvement in the discussions, explorations and production of such an Index with its policy, theoretical and practical advantages, will provide an opportunity to seriously and collaboratively explore what Baroness Warnock (1999) advocated: that of questioning the validity and value of 'special needs' discourse. In initial teacher education the inclusive approach that is being presented in this lecture would support the necessity of providing good and not special teachers.

Thirdly, I have argued that inclusivity in education is concerned with the pursuit of equity, social justice and non-discrimination and thus the identification and removal of ignorance, fear, prejudice and all the associated assumptions,

relationships and practices. A valuable innovation in future courses which would be part of the intention to enhance inclusive thinking, values and practices, would be to include disability/equality awareness training as an essential part of course provision. This would be taught by qualified trainers.

Fourthly, part of an inclusive education approach will be to recognise what schools cannot do and thus encourage a multi-agency approach to this task. How far this is seriously engaged with on ITE courses needs to be a subject of careful consideration. Part of this examination should cover the question of the extent to which newly qualified teachers are willing and able to listen to the voices of pupils in terms of the possible contribution they can make to the development of more inclusive ideas, relationships and practices. In this I would apply to all pupils and students the demands of disabled people as expressed in their powerful words - 'Nothing About Us Without Us'. This would encourage a more active participatory involvement which, as Coffield (2002) contends, will help young people use their critical intelligence and develop into future citizens who will be able to detect the 'bullshit' that constantly surrounds them and the moral courage to expose it.

Finally, and very importantly, I wish to argue that any serious attempt to give prominence to issues of inclusivity will of necessity reconstitute hope at the centre of such struggles. This will be an informed, historical and, as Grace (1994) reminds *us*, a complex rather than simple hope. It involves deep convictions and passions as exemplified by Paulo Freire, who maintained that his book, *Pedagogy of Hope*, was 'written in rage and love, without which there is no hope' (1998: 10), or bell hooks, who argues that the rage of black activists must be linked 'to a passion for freedom and justice that illuminates, heals and makes redemptive struggles possible' (1996: 20). Hope involves an informed recognition of the offensive nature of current conditions and relations and a belief that the possibilities of change are not foreclosed. Listen to these voices of two disabled scholars Oliver and Barnes reflecting on issues entailed in the process from exclusion to inclusion:

It will be a very different world from the one in which we now live. It will be a world that is truly democratic, characterised by genuine and meaningful equality of opportunity, with far greater equity in terms of wealth and income, with enhanced choice and freedom and with a proper regard for environmental and social continuity.

And they continue:

We need a world where impairment is valued and celebrated and all disabling barriers are eradicated. Such a world will be inclusionary for all.
(Oliver and Barnes 1998: 102)

If there is to be, as the title of this lecture raises, a basis of hope, there will need to be some significant changes to the current position with regard to teacher education and education more generally. Some of these have been briefly outlined in this lecture. Establishing a basis of hope, therefore) is an urgent, difficult) exciting and necessary task. The well-being of *all* learners is at stake.

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