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THE 'CRISIS IN EDUCATION': CHILDREN AND COUNTER-MODERNITY IN HEGEL, BENJAMIN, ADORNO, AND ARENDT

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ABSTRACT

THE 'CRISIS IN EDUCATION': CHILDREN AND COUNTER-MODERNITY IN HEGEL, BENJAMIN, ADORNO AND ARENDT

The trajectory of contemporary policy mandates and pedagogical practice demonstrates a strong inclination toward instrumental thinking. Troubling developments have met criticism from a variety of perspectives: psychological, empirical, and political. These are important challenges but an understanding of these diverse policies and practices as manifestations of the ways of thinking and being that characterise modernity allows for a fundamentally different type of critique, one which has the potential to transform those prejudices which support the continuing ascendency of instrumental reason.

In the first half of the 20th Century German philosophers led the critique of modernity, which was rooted in the intellectual tradition of Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Heidegger. The Frankfurt School of Critical Theory and its associates were preeminent. The published work included in this submission explores aspects of the individual theorists related to this school and considers the ways in which they challenge or illuminate current issues concerning the way we think about children and their education.

The narrative is primarily a conceptual survey of the themes that connect these papers. It describes the salient features of modernity in relation to knowledge and subjectivity, and the counter-modern thinking that has existed concurrently with modern industrial capitalism. The aspect of counter-modernity that has particular potency for the various studies included in this submission is the notion of child as transgressive, avant-garde, irreverent, and enchanted. The idea of the enchanted child is neither romantic nor belittling, but instead allows for an understanding of childhood as a site of powerful oppositional enchantment that strikes at the modernist roots of instrumental thinking.

THE CONCEPTUAL CONTEXT: MODERNITY AND COUNTER-MODERNITY

This section is in fulfilment of the requirement to provide a contextualising critical appraisal of the published work presented.

THE 'CRISIS IN EDUCATION': CHILDREN, MODERNITY AND COUNTER-MODERNITY IN HEGEL, BENJAMIN, ADORNO, AND ARENDT

INTRODUCTION

> The general crisis that has overtaken the modern world everywhere and in almost every sphere of life manifests itself differently in each country, involving different areas and taking on different forms. (Arendt, 2006, p. 170)

As crises go, the one described here by Hannah Arendt in 1954 has unusual longevity. It is a characteristic of the educational predicament in which we find ourselves that it has been a long time in the making. Arendt points out that a crisis is also an opportunity, which 'tears away façades and obliterates prejudices – to explore and inquire into whatever has been laid bare of the essence of the matter' (Arendt, 2006, p. 171). For Arendt, the particularity of each historical or topical situation distracts from an underlying truth that extends beyond those boundaries. Arendt's contention is that two concomitant factors are distorting education to the point of destruction: the loss of authority and the impulse to control the future. Arendt was identifying a global phenomenon, a slow-moving leviathan with a reach that extends not only geographically but also temporally. These themes may both be traced backward and also projected forward in time: they have a long history and an apparently endless future, and their reach extends well beyond strictly educational matters. Her diagnosis is consonant with the work of a constellation of German thinkers around the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory writing in the first half of the Twentieth Century. Their critique of the time in which they lived has its roots in the German philosophical tradition of Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Heidegger. The premise of my work is that the conditions of modernity to which this tradition is a response still pertain and so it follows that their interpretation, their understanding and critique may still give us some traction on the crisis of our own time.

The sense of crisis has become increasingly acute in the decades since Arendt wrote these words. Martha Nussbaum (2009) has warned that the 'profound crisis in education' has now arrived at a point where we can see the 'imminent demise of liberal education, and with it those capacities of sympathy and critical thinking that support 'the very life of democracy itself' (Nussbaum, 2009, pp.52-53). Her warning is now eight years old and, since the election of Donald J. Trump as 45th president of the United States, many people would now agree that the American democratic system is under immediate threat.

Understanding the nature of this crisis is important: clearly a great deal is at stake, but the devil is, as usual, in the details. There is a danger of any attempt at identification being reductive, simplistic, or just wrong. Critical educational theory has conducted a meticulous forensic investigation into the current state of education. A search of the literature reveals hundreds upon thousands of publications examining the evidence for, and meaning of, diverse phenomena such as performativity, intensification and escalating workloads, surveillance, marketization, and commodification. Themes such as 'gap talk', 'outcomes', and regimes of standardized testing are the hallmarks of contemporary education policy across the globe, varying only a little in different political and cultural contexts.

These different practices may be understood under the rubric of modernity; the general crisis is a crisis of modernity. In this narrative I shall first outline the way in which the crisis shows itself in an educational context and then examine the precepts of modernity that underpin these manifestations. I shall then explore the notion of counter-modernity in relation to 'enchantment' as an oppositional mode, and in relation to the concept of child. Finally I will situate five published outputs in relation to the conditions of modernity as they are manifested in our understanding of childhood, child-rearing and education. The philosophical tradition from which these studies are drawn represents the most significant challenge to the axioms of modernity. What unites these separate inquiries is an endeavour to interpret apparently disparate phenomena in educational research, policy, and classroom practice, and to gain some understanding of them as a single 'crisis', a meaningful whole.

THE PROBLEM IN EDUCATION

The cluster of troubling aspects of contemporary education that I list above: performativity, intensification, surveillance, marketization, commodification, and so on, has been visible for some time. Richard Sennett relates developments in school education to changes in industrial processes from the end of the 19th Century when increasing desire for predictable outcomes (products and profits) led to ever more standardized processes. As the reach of this idea stretched into civil society, schools became increasingly standardized in operation and content (Sennett, 2007, p. 22). But we can go back further: mass, or universal, education, funded by the state with the open intention of achieving certain extrinsic political or social ends, began in Prussia during the early decades of the 19th Century. The idea that education might cement certain ideas of government, and secure or create a particular type of society, drove an extraordinary amount of international curiosity about Prussian education; by the 1830s, Prussian educational practice had begun to attract a great deal of interest and the ideas spread rapidly through Europe and the United States following the reports of investigative emissaries who were dispatched by their home countries. Three of the most influential of these reports (Cousin, 1834; Mann, 1868; Stowe, 1838) were directly responsible for a distinctive German influence on US education that would be hard to overestimate and, in relation to the maturation of democracy in the US, is a fascinating story in itself. Other American educators such as Henry Barnard (1835), and Alexander Dallas Bache (1836-1838) travelled through England, Scotland, Holland, Prussia, Bavaria, France, and Switzerland and submitted reports on European educational reform (Jeismann, 1995, pp. 23-24). The contradictory principles and divergent aims embodied in the Prussian system in relation to duty and obedience, on the one hand, and enlightenment, revolution and the condemnation of 'mechanical' learning, on the other, continue to drive the dynamic of pedagogical debate nearly two centuries later.

However, with only a few small, though significant, exceptions, the systematic pursuance of social ends by means of state-funded mass

education did not start till the beginnings of the next century. The rapidly changing social and political situation of the US in the late 19th Century, with its population movements, high immigration levels and lack of state infrastructure, constrained the possible directions the development of the education system could take. Robert Weibe has argued that Americans adopted a 'quantitative ethic' as a way of regaining a sense of control when everything felt as though it was spiralling out of control: ' they tried, in other words, to impose the known upon the unknown, to master an impersonal world' (Wiebe, 1967, p.12). This quantitative ethic – weighing, counting, and measuring – appeared in the industrial context as Taylorism, a managerial theory known through its apogee, the Ford car factory assembly line. E. L. Thorndike and Joseph Mayer Rice translated Taylor's method for educational theory and practice (Stoller, 2015; Au, 2011), their core contention being that schooling ought to be governed by: 'a scientific system of pedagogical management [that] would demand fundamentally the measurement of results in the light of fixed standards' (Joseph Mayer Rice (1912) *Scientific Management in Education*, cited Kliebard, 1995). This 'Model T approach to educational management' (Hartley, 1990) took curricular form through the work of such characters as John Franklin Bobbitt, a lecturer at Chicago University's Department of Education shortly after John Dewey's departure. Bobbitt was a prime mover in the production of a pre-packaged and scripted curriculum, whose sole purpose was to increase test scores (Au, 2011). This way of conceiving of the purpose of education became hegemonic in the US, starting in 1900 and reaching a peak by 1930 (Apple, 2004; Au, 2011; Callahan, 1962).

The picture between 1930 and the present is muddy. My own experience of elementary schooling in the 1970s in the US was active, collaborative, fun – and I was never tested. This may have been highly localized, but it serves to illustrate that Taylorism seems to have loosened its grip on policy imperatives in the intervening years. However, the resurgence of the Taylorist approach is unmistakable from the 1980s onward (Au, 2011; Beyer, 1985). No Child Left Behind (2001) in the US, and the introduction of the National Curriculum, following the Education Reform Act (1988) in England, saw the introduction of increasingly detailed prescribed curricula

and a strong emphasis on standardized testing. This same tendency was replicated to some degree in many other countries, though particular national combinations of neo-liberal and neo-conservative ideologies gave each jurisdiction its particular emphases and character. The problems caused for pupils and teachers by these emphases are significant. In terms of curriculum, there is a strong tendency to teach those things and only those things that can be tested. As Au (2011) summarizes the situation: 'Knowledge learned for US high-stakes tests is thus transformed into a collection of disconnected facts, operations, procedures, or data mainly needed for rote memorization in preparation for the tests.' (p.31). Pedagogical approaches are similarly impoverished by the exclusion of less 'efficient' and less transmissive modes: open-ended, constructivist, and student-led practices (Au, 2011, p.31).

The critical attention given to this closely inter-related set of trends in education has been intense. A number of themes dominate. There are those that determine contemporary conceptions of professionalism: intensification, instructional efficiency, accountability, and performativity (Ball, 2003; Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Ballet, Kelchtermans, & Loughran, 2006; Barrett, 2009; Bullough, Hall-Kenyon, MacKay, & Marshall, 2014; Lingard, Martino, & Rezai-Rashti, 2013; Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2013; Perryman, 2006; Suspitsyna, 2010). Some have an economic emphasis in terms of the market rhetoric of competition and choice, marketization, and neoliberal values in structural reform of school systems (Allais, 2011; Arthur, 2015; Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Connell, 2013; Gamble, 2009; Gorur, 2013; Jankowski & Provezis, 2014; Laitsch, 2013; Rowlands & Rawolle, 2013). The tools of standardisation and measurement, the 'datafication' of education, have received particular attention: in relation to international attainment comparisons such as PISA, benchmarks, and learning outcomes (Biesta, 2009; Gibbons, 2013; Lingard & Sellar, 2013; Stone-Johnson, 2014).

Questions of education are questions about being human, about the good, what it is to know and to understand, and how to act in the world, and these human-centred questions are alien to this clamjamfrie of control strategies. Educational theory, then, though always an expression of practical interest, is intimately related to ontological and epistemological

concerns rather than primarily to technical ones. The technical questions *are* important: how does this process work in the education system, how do I make such-and-such happen in my classroom, how do we prevent this happening in our school? But these questions are based on interpretations and understandings of each situation and reflect the values and commitments of the questioner. A measure of consensus on the values-based ends of education lends coherence to the technical-pedagogical decisions made. The diverse themes mentioned above all have something in common, in that they are aspects of a technical-instrumental approach to education. And what are in fact merely means to ends are elevated to the status of ends in themselves. What Charles Taylor calls the 'brute datum', that is, 'units of information … [that are] not the fruit of judgement or interpretation' (Taylor, 1985, p. 19), is revered in all contexts not simply as simulacra, but as reality itself. On the modern hegemony of technical-instrumental he says:

> There is thus nothing wrong with the life of instrumental reason, dedicated to rational control. … The error of Enlightenment naturalism is to have misunderstood the spirit in which life is to be lived, the basic end which should preside over it all. (Taylor, 1992, p.365)

This is a repeatedly expressed concern: that instrumental thinking has over-reached its proper place. Here is Hannah Arendt:

> The issue at stake is, of course, not instrumentality, the use of means to achieve an end, as such, but rather the generalization of the fabrication experience in which usefulness and utility are established as the ultimate standards for life and the world of men. (Arendt, 1958, p. 157)

From Heidegger's analysis of modern technology to Habermas's theory of the rationalisation of the lifeworld, the over-reach of instrumental reasoning has been understood to be a defining feature of modernity (Habermas, 1987; Heidegger, 1993). The elevation of instrumentalism to a general purposive principle squeezes out consideration of competing diverse ends and it is this evacuation of purpose, as an expression of what

is valued, that is the problem (Fitzsimons, 2002, p. 179; Higgins, 2011, p. 463). This is consistent with Arendt's suggestion that the crisis in education has to do with the desire to control the future. The corollary of this is what she saw as the loss of authority. Together these constitute a relationship to the past and the future that is highly distinctive of modernity.

MODERNITY

The notion of modernity is highly resistant to circumscription, let alone definition. 'Modernity' is not synonymous with 'contemporary' and should not be understood as what happens to be now; rather, it is a set of epistemological and ontological concepts, postulates and theories that makes up a distinctive paradigm characteristic of a particular geo-temporal location. The period of modernity gradually emerged from the Renaissance and reached its high point, in philosophical terms, during the latter part of the 18th Century, in the European Enlightenment. Robert Pippen makes the point that modernity is not simply a continuing chronological category but signifies an important (and irrevocable) break with past assumptions and ways of thinking (Pippin, 1999, p.17). Foucault similarly describes modernity as not a period of history so much as an attitude, a way of thinking and feeling, acting and behaving, a task, even (Foucault, 1984, p.39). This is an important point but nonetheless these ways of thinking and being can be traced over time as a rolling and developing 'unfinished project' (Passerin d'Entrèves & Benhabib, 1997, ch.1) .

There are many different focal points in the development of modernity and also a number of emergent threads that can be followed: political, religious, economic, technological, artistic, and creative. Significantly, it is not particularly easy to find philosophical accounts of modernity written by people who approve of it without reservation. It is probably fair to say that modernity as a construct has principally been made visible by its critics, perhaps especially in the field of educational studies. One rare sympathetic treatment of modernity in relation to education was written by the economist Dennis O'Keeffe in 2003 for the Institute for Economic Affairs. In this article he describes modernity as a combination of private enterprise and lawful government, which, he believes, has resulted in legitimating

majority affluence. O'Keeffe's account equates modernity with capitalism, specifically with free-market economics. His contention is that education remained strangely outwith the reach of Margaret Thatcher's 'revolution', as a centralised command outlier in an increasingly privatised economy: 'a deplorable socialist oddity [that] needs excision' (O'Keeffe, 2003, p. 137). And indeed, education has become one of the most important sites of neoliberal marketization and austerity in recent years, particularly in England and the US.

O'Keeffe's account is simplistic but not wrong. The primacy of the individual, which he figures purely in terms of private property and the expression of individual goals and desires at the ballot box, is indeed at the core of modernity, and the account accords with certain distinctively bourgeois experiences that define modernity as an epoch dominated by the middle class, with its private property, market economy, and liberal democratic institutions (Pippin, 1999, p. 9). The period of modernity is characteristically enthralled to the foundational dogma of progress, the 'animating and controlling idea of western civilisation' (Bury, 1920, p.vii), the notion that by means of science and technology our lives will be better: liberated from labour, materially better off, and full of exciting new possibilities.

This is not blind faith in science; after all, in the modern era information, transport, medicine, and entertainment are all developed to an extraordinary degree, with no sign of slowing down. The doctrine of progress is the more visible manifestation of modernity's understanding of knowledge. People will readily talk in an everyday way about progress, and what they expect it will do for them: new cures for everything from diseases to ageing, driverless cars, faster broadband, ever more immediate personal access to information - you name it, we wish for it. Utopian thinking is an intrinsic aspect of modernity though utopianism is not modernity's preserve. Christian millennialism, the belief in a golden age preceding the apocalypse and redemption of humanity, provided a conceptual framework for secular utopianism as early as the 17th Century (Tuveson, 1949). It seems more accurate to say that utopian thinking in its secular form is one of the hallmarks of modernity. The aim of transforming

society is to be realised by the apparently limitless possibilities of science and technology.

Following Baudelaire's description of modernity as 'the transient, the fleeting, the contingent', Foucault observes that 'Modernity is often characterized in terms of consciousness of the discontinuity of time' (Foucault, 1984). Modernity is a break from the past and this is true in two senses. The first sense can be seen in the linear understanding of time implicit in the notion of progress. Calinescu identifies the 'main constitutive element' of modernity as 'simply a sense of unrepeatable time' (Calinescu, 1987, p. 13). Modernity is in this sense a perpetual breaking with the past; it is crucially forward-gazing.

The second sense of rupture is epistemological. Under the epistemological conditions of modernity, what had been for most of our intellectual history highest on the hierarchy of being – the universal, God, the cosmos – is relegated to the subjective, ephemeral, unstable and arbitrary, and what is material, observable, is elevated to the most real, the most permanent. Milne describes this as the 'ontological inversion … the attribution of what is most real to that which is last in the hierarchy of being – the material world, the realm of inert objects' (Milne, 2002). Scientific reason pursued a standard for knowledge based only on logic and direct experience. No knowledge could be derived from authority or tradition, and validation comes only from empirical experience. The past has no claim on us and its fixed norms can give us no guidance to follow. The Cartesian experiment with scepticism, forswearing appeal to trust, tradition, authority, or common sense in the quest for a pure and certain knowledge, is a crucial moment in the development of this idea. Kant's description of the enlightened mind, as one that is free from heteronymous ideas, became the manifesto for high modernity. The enlightened person would think for herself and not be bound by received ideas and in this sense the enlightened person is free: enlightenment and emancipation are for some modern humans the same thing. Empiricism is, of course, foundational to scientific knowledge, though the relationship is more complex. The positivist turn in science is a later arrival and so the two are not coextensive. Early scientists, notably Galileo, were theoretical in the sense

of being contemplative. Observational method, 'the humble method of experiment and induction', followed on from Bacon's approach (Dupre, 1993, p.70). Nonetheless, these philosophical positions gave a secure foundation to modern science and technology, which took the restrictions on what counts as knowledge as given and proceeded in their project of understanding, predicting and controlling the natural world. The only authority was to be the independent mind; the only knowledge, that which could be verified empirically. The postulate of scientific rationality is the individual: the independent and self-determining subject, and what is real is the object of the individual's empirical experience. Tradition and all that it entails: community, shared habits and inherited beliefs, is that from which the modern mind disembeds and disencumbers itself.

Modern subjectivity is based first of all on the primacy of the rational individual. You are yourself as a mature adult, not as a domestic animal or a child who is dependent on others (Kant, 1996). The autonomous, unfettered intellect – the most profound assertion of modernity's self-understanding – is the ultimate realisation of the biblical injunction to have 'dominion over all the earth'. The human subject relates to the natural world as knower to known, subject to object, the active agent in world, invariant, and unitary. In combination with the doctrine of progress and the utopian aspirations of modernity, this modern subjectivity configures the natural world as raw material. Speaking of Bacon's approach to inquiry, Louis Dupre's (1993), description is apt: 'Bacon tends to transfer the theoretical question: In what does a thing's nature consist? to the functional one: How does it work? and ultimately to the one: What human purpose does it serve?' (p.72). In other words, the transformation of human subjectivity changes the nature of reality itself, since what is real has been redefined as what is objectifiable. This is the interpretation of modern subjectivity, which they called a 'reifying rationality' that launches the critique formulated by Adorno and Horkheimer in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

COUNTER-MODERNITIES AND OPPOSITIONAL ENCHANTMENTS

Modernity was born conjoined with its critics and, as suggested above, modernity is principally known through critique, which intensified considerably at the beginning of the 20th Century. Pippen (1999) describes how in contemporary criticism, 'everywhere the figures and images had been and are again the images of death and loss and failure, and the language of anxiety, unease, and mourning' (Pippin, 1999, p.xii). At best, philosophy's relationship with modernity has been ambivalent, arising from what Charles Taylor (1989) has called 'the unique combination of greatness and danger, of grandeur and misère, which characterises the modern age' (Taylor, 1989, p. x). In the same way, the relationship between modernity and the arts has often been one of hostility; Stephen Spender describes how 'the moderns, on the whole, distrust, or even detest, the idea of progress, and view the results of science as a catastrophe' (Spender, 1963, p.x). Charles Taylor similarly says this:

> The modernists found themselves in opposition to their world for reasons which were continuous with those of the Romantics. The world seen just as mechanism, as a field of instrumental reason, seemed to the latter shallow and debased. By the twentieth century the encroachments of instrumental reason were incomparably greater (1989, p.456)

Perhaps the most significant artistic opposition mounted to modernity is found in the work of the Surrealists. The Surrealist Manifesto (Breton, 1924/1970) laid out a number of now familiar themes: the rejection of the dogma of progress, a dialectical notion of time, and a concern for what is lost, ruined or abandoned. Like other artistic movements, its members shared a deep suspicion of the cult of progress, but they went further than most in disparaging the 'absolute rationalism that is still in vogue' and, in what is likely a reference to Weber's 'iron cage' they described how [experience] paces back and forth in a cage from which it is more and more difficult to make it emerge' (Breton, 1924/1970, p. 12).

The connections between the surrealist movement and figures such as Walter Benjamin are not well known. Surrealism also presents an exceptional treatment of childhood in relation to counter-modernity,

which has similarly been so far overlooked in the emerging field of childhood studies. Much more than an artistic movement, 'surrealism at its inception was intended to be a way of thinking, a way of feeling, and a way of life' (Strom, 2002; Waldberg, 1965, p.12).

The politics of Surrealism are complex; this was an unusually long-lived movement that manifested differently in different places. The original French group were Communist Party members in France but they were an uneasy fit: too bourgeois, too independent and individualist, and, ultimately, too absent during the Occupation (David Hopkins, 2004, pp. 141-144). Walter Benjamin recognised its significance as 'the first to perceive the revolutionary energies that appear in the 'outmoded'' (Benjamin, 1999, p. 210). Both the Frankfurt School and the Surrealists were strongly influenced by Freud's theory of the subconscious, the importance of dreams (Jay, 1973, pp. 86-112), memory, the idea of the recovery of what is lost or extinct in a dialectic with the present: the 'strategic re-valorization of the things that had been marginalized or repressed' (Hopkins, 2016, p. 1043).

The Surrealist 'cult of the child', in particular, the 'woman-child' (femme-enfant) was a major theme in the 1930s and 40s (Hopkins, 2014; McAra, 2011, p. 3). Childhood is a time when we access states of mind that become increasingly elusive as we enter adulthood, a time of 'excursions in the world of marvels, chimeras, phantoms, poets… magi' (Max Ernst, 1948, cited Hopkins, 2016, p. 1039). This is connected to the notion of 'child-time', a 'transfigured conception of time and space' in which "the self is 'unintegrated', and therefore open to all possibilities" (Breton, 1970; Leppanen-Guerra, 2011, p. 6). The contribution of Surrealism is absent from childhood studies literature though it has been explored in more recent studies in art history, notably by David Hopkins (Hopkins, 2014, 2016). Just as Benjamin speaks of the child's preoccupied 'pure receptivity' alongside her voracious and irreverent consumption to the point of destruction, the Surrealists found in the figure of the child a locus for the anarchic and oneiric, a lost self that was closer to subconscious desires, and subject to irrational terrors.

The revolution in subjectivity under modernity is described by Max Weber as 'disenchantment', a term which describes the process of the reification of the world resulting from the advent of modern science. This rests on a fundamental proposition of the knowability of the world, the belief that 'one can, in principle, master all things by calculation'. There are no unknowables only unknowns and these are only temporarily so because in principle, all things are knowable, everything can be mastered:

> This means that the world is disenchanted. One need no longer have recourse to magical means in order to master or implore the spirits, as did the savage, for whom such mysterious powers existed. Technical means and calculations perform the service. This above all is what intellectualisation means. (Weber, 1989, p. 139)

Adorno and Horkheimer followed Weber in understanding disenchantment as a totalising process; nothing whatsoever is left that is hidden from the human intellect, and this means nothing escapes the utilitarian designation of 'object as instrument' to fulfil the ends of an anthropological universe: 'The program of the Enlightenment was the disenchantment of the world; the dissolution of myths and the substitution of knowledge for fancy' (DE p.3). This reified consciousness extends to the human subject herself, since the person is subject to the same principle of knowablity as a tangled knot of 'events and conditions, unconscious motives and biological processes …. just another effect along with the objective world' (Milne, 2002). Disenchantment may lay claim to totality as a necessary adjunct of progress, but it meets with the significant objection, ironically an empirical one, that not only have magical, supernatural, and non scientific-empirical beliefs persisted in the century since Weber and the Frankfurt School, but many forms are currently recovering from a period of dormancy, bearing witness to a rift between 'the prevalent conceptions of the world and our actual sense of being present, which is grounded in the cosmic sense' (Milne, 2002).

What Richard Jenkins (2000) calls the 'diverse array of oppositional enchantments': belief in luck and fate, recent arrivals from Asia (Buddhism, Hinduism and Taoism), New Age and neo-pagan spiritualities, meditation

and yoga, holistic, non-conventional healing, are widespread, mainstream, and growing in Western countries (Landy & Saler, 2009; Lee & Ackerman, 2002). These are mostly 'distinctly modern forms of enchantment' (Landy & Saler, 2009, p. 713) that permit the coexistence of the secular and religious in different contexts (Heelas, 2005, p. 307), a process that Partridge describes as the 'confluence of secularization and sacralisation' ((2004, p.4).

Though Protestantism is implicated in the creation of the modernist attitude (Thomas, 1971, pp. 50-74), it should be remembered that less than half the number of Christians in the world are in fact Protestant. This is significant in considering the scope of disenchantment because Catholic spirituality, along with that of Eastern Orthodoxy, retains a strong sense of the sacramental, that is, the secular as a revelation of the presence of God. It is this that leads Andrew Greeley (2000) to assert that 'Catholics live in an enchanted world', a sensibility that tends to see 'the Holy lurking in creation' (p.1).

Lee and Ackerman (2002) propose that the process of world mastery itself created a problem of meaning and purpose, which led to the development of new spiritualities (p. 6). They go further and suggest that there is an 'immanent power' in the world, a 'powerful irrational force for change' that stands opposed to rationalization, or at least to its universal application. This is an unfortunate example of question begging, but the observation that the modern mind is not fully on board with modern secularism seems well-founded. As Christopher Partridge says:

> The late modern mind is, if not post-secular, certainly haunted by the feeling the reality is not quite as stable as privileged discourses in the West have taught us to think. There is a feeling, not far from the surface, that the rejected discourses of folklore contain more than a nugget of truth. (Partridge, 2016, p. 40)

Whether we want to go quite as far as some writers who have excitedly declared 'a rising tide of spirituality' (Partridge, 2004, p.38) or simply remember that the sacramental never actually went away (Greeley, 2000, p. 1), the claim that modernity, rationalization, or disenchantment itself, is

universal or totalizing may have been exaggerated. Even the tendency toward disenchantment is questionable.

All of this points to something beyond Charles Taylor's helpful distinction between cultural and acultural theories of modernity (1995). Taylor argues that the dominant explanations of modernity rely on the idea that its processes do not belong to a particular culture or habitus, but rather that they can be applied to any particular culture. Whatever the cultural input, the output will always be modernity. Contrary to this, he proposes that modernity is, in fact, sustained by its own 'spiritual vision' and the acultural explanation ignores the ways in which different culturally specific understandings of the world deeply affect the way in which key notions of modernity such as secularism or individualism impact upon each group. Taylor points to the existence of 'modernities' rather than a monolithic 'modernity'. This stops short of acknowledging the true extent of the opposition to modernity's harsh discipline. What Taylor calls 'ethnocentric projection' which corrals the reader into this hegemonic group with the pronouns' 'we' and 'our', is arguably the domain of a rather smaller clique rather than a whole culture or era. It is the case that, from its beginnings, the 'attitude of modernity has found itself struggling with attitudes of 'counter-modernity' (Foucault, 1984). If we prefer Taylor's cultural theory of modernity - the idea that Western modernity 'might be sustained by its own original spiritual vision' (Taylor, p.26) - then understanding its contemporary scope raises the question of the means by which modernity was spread. This suggests a very different story of cultural conquest, both through the violence of colonialism and, internally, through the suppression and eradication of diverse spiritualities and traditional practices. The disenchantment of the Western world did not happen by peaceful, intellectual dissemination alone. From the Hammer of the Witches to the Highland clearances and suppression of the Gaelic language, old spiritualities were sometimes the collateral casualties of other battles for land and political domination. It is also possible that 'oppositional enchantments' are just that – a form of opposition to modernity's reductive and powerful claim to dominance. It is not a coincidence that the modern environmental movement has strong links to nature-orientated

belief systems such as paganism. Rational self-interest has not thus far been successful in turning the tide of environmental disaster; what is needed may be an alternative spiritual vision that can sustain resistance and subversion.

What bearing do these ideas have for our understanding of childhood? Children are clearly recognisably human and equally obviously alien to the adult world and its concerns. The conflict involved in our understanding of the child is teased out in a variety of ways in the form of belief about children's potentials and capabilities, rationality and unreasonableness, romantic ideas of their innocence and wisdom, and supernatural or paranormal beliefs about their spiritual status and receptivity to magic or 'other worlds'. We can see this in the notion of Limbo, the mediaeval church's solution to children's liminal relationship to sin and salvation, in the literary trope of the child with access to magical worlds, which ends with the onset of puberty, and in supernatural horror films like The Exorcist or The Omen, in which a child becomes a vehicle for paranormal evil.

Consider how we interpret the actions of the infant in the photograph below. Most people seem to see it as a funny and sweet mistake made by a child too young to know the difference between a bronze and a living breast. An alternative is to see a child engaged in an act of pure self-absorbed sensuality even though he recognised that the breast was substantively different. These two ways of understanding rest on different 'spiritual visions' and represent a choice between modernity and

Courtesy of Imgur, 2012

resistance, allowing something to be retained as open, uncertain, imaginative, and enchanted.

The child of the Enlightenment is comprehended as incomplete, unfinished, defective in knowledge and reasoning because she lacks what Honneth calls 'purposive consciousness', the state of mind of instrumental reason (Honneth, 1993). Childhood is the period of recapitulation of modernity: through persuasion, mockery or violence, the child is incrementally relieved of her 'facility to believe, impatience to doubt, temerity to answer, glory to know, doubt to contradict, end to gain, sloth to search, seeking things in words, resting in part of nature' (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1972, p. 3). The child in this photograph is laughed at, albeit with affection, but the course of modern childhood is marked by episodes of a sterner discipline; and the end is enlightenment.

The idea of recapitulation is evident in the way in which non-Europeans, that is, non-enlightened humans, were, in the 19th Century, compared to children (Gagen, 2007; Noon, 2005) This is a common idea in the writings of early ethnographers like Sir John Lubbock (1834-1913):

> SAVAGES may be likened to children; and the comparison is not only correct, but also highly instructive. Many naturalists consider that the early condition of the individual indicates that of the race,—that the best test of the affinities of a species are the stages through which it passes. So also it is in the case of man: the life of each individual is an epitome of the history of the race, and the gradual development of the child illustrates that of the species. Hence the importance of the similarity between savages and children. (Sir John Lubbock (1834-1913), 1917)

This idea persists and is arguably evident in the language of developed, developing and under-developed nations that has replaced the previous terminology of 1st and 3rd world. Early interest in child developmental theory ran concurrently with the emergence of anthropology as a distinct discipline. And the idea that the child's development mirrored the evolution of the human species was a natural supposition. It seems indisputable that, as Gagen (2007) puts the case: 'the construct does

violence to children's competence and their right to be valued on their own terms' (p. 17). But also, included in the idea that children are somehow like our pre-modern selves, is the possibility that we can learn something about the way in which people came to leave the enchanted world and assimilate to modernity by observing the processes of disenchantment in modern childhood.

The idea that culture is learned is commonplace but the processes of enculturation have received little attention. The dominant idea is one of transmission: 'children as vehicles into which culture is poured', and there has been some recent criticism of this in terms of an appeal to acknowledge children's agency and children's culture (Hirschfeld, 2002). This is quite right and benign, but the process of enculturation in relation to modernity is one of discipline, sometimes even violence. Children are the strangers within, our own *barbaroi*. Their transition to adulthood is achieved, at least in part, by damping down their proclivity toward the fantastical, sacramental, sensual, and hedonistic, directing their attention away from 'self-forgetful engrossment' to the purposeful and instrumental, and by designating their ways of thinking as 'error'.

An objection to this proposed understanding of children is that it might converge with ideas that dehumanise them (Gagen, 2007). The deeply embedded anthropological assumption of 'the Original child' or the savage child - 'automatic, instinctive and irrational' - carries a history of marginalisation and othering, in the same way that these ideas served racialized imperialism and colonialism, as Kromidas says, a way of 'keeping children outside the gates' (Kromidas, 2014, p.426). The danger of dehumanising children is a real one, but the theory of recapitulation I am endorsing is not one of evolutionary progress but of the specific cultural history of modernity. This is an observation of a similarity between the way in which the central principles of modernity were propagated historically and the way in which this may be seen to be paralleled in modern child-rearing. The alternative, if there is one, is not some 'crazily nostalgic attempt to re-enchant the natural world' (McDowell, 1996, p. 72) though some recent curriculum innovations such as 'values education', mindfulness, or under-delineated concepts like 'well-being' can be

interpreted as attempts to fill the gaps left by a system fixated on data and performance. Paul Standish describes these efforts as a 'false re-enchantment' and a 'standing temptation': too often in schools these ideas are adopted without context or understanding, resulting in a thin graft of the 'touchy-feely', compartmentalised mysticism, a supposed antidote to the problems caused by the intensification of expectations (Standish, 2016, p. 110). A return to pre-modern principles is not an option; as Dupre states, 'history carries an ontic significance that excludes any reversal of the present' (Dupré, 1993, p.6). But the disenchantment of the world was never in fact total: there has always been resistance and, what is more, the process of modernisation has to be repeatedly re-enacted in the upbringing and education of each child.

A HERMENEUTIC PROJECT

The writers who are examined in these studies do not fall neatly into any philosophical category. On the one hand, their work is speculative rather than analytic. This means that they are concerned with synthesis rather than analysis: they construct new constellations of ideas rather than deconstruct existing ones. They are also not primarily focused upon the practical or founded upon the empirical. On the other hand, in different ways, each shares a deep commitment to the amelioration of the material conditions of human life, born out of their original involvement with Marxism and their later personal experiences of exile and statelessness. In the space between these two points of speculation and praxis they can all be said to share an aversion to the systematic, comprehensive, or totalising as expressions of totalitarian thinking.

As such there is no methodological foundation to their thought, or to my treatment of it. However, there are certain principles that have emerged in the course of this work. The best expression of these principles I have found is in the hermeneutic theory of Hans-Georg Gadamer. Hermeneutics is a theory of the nature of understanding and interpretation. Gadamer provides a theoretical framework for thinking about the problem of tradition and authority, and relates strongly to the work of the writers I

have considered. Not coincidentally, there are a number of intellectual and historical connections between Gadamer and the group around the Frankfurt School: they are very near contemporaries – all born between 1892 (Benjamin) and 1906 (Arendt); all worked within the German philosophical tradition and in the German language; and Gadamer studied under Heidegger at the same time as Hannah Arendt. The principal source for understanding his version of hermeneutic theory is *Truth and Method* (TM).

Gadamer's contribution is 'not to develop a procedure of understanding, but to clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place' (TM, p. 295). He explores the ways in which understanding has become problematic under modernity, focussing on the issue of prejudice. When knowledge is narrowly defined as empirically verifiable, transmissible, and inert, 'prejudice', meaning over-hastiness or acquiescence to heteronymous dogma, along with ambiguity, indeterminacy, and incompleteness, is treated as a flaw that should be eliminated. Gadamer's point is that as interpreters we do not come to the matter under inquiry free of pre-conceived notions. Rather, we come with a question and that question is framed in terms of what is already familiar to us. This is not simply what we have already experienced (which is the insight provided by cognitive psychology and closely associated with the 'science-based' understanding of experience (Saugstad, 2013), but also the tradition in which we live, because to imagine ourselves outside of our historical and cultural place is not really to imagine ourselves at all:

> We cannot extricate ourselves from the historical process, we cannot distance ourselves from it in such a way that the past becomes completely objective for us…. We are always situated in history…. I mean that our consciousness is determined by a real historical process, in such a way that we are not free to simply juxtapose ourselves to the past. (Gadamer 1967 cited Gallagher, 1992, p. 90)

Enlightenment's 'prejudice against prejudice' (TM, p. 283) is not rational, because, contrary to the modern technical-scientific notion of reason:

'Reason exists for us only in concrete historical terms – i.e., it is not its own master but remains constantly dependent on the given circumstances in which it operates.' (TM, p. 288). The problem of prejudice is not that it is less objective than would ideally be the case, but that it may be hidden. The 'hermeneutically trained consciousness' is aware of its own bias and sensitive to the alterity of the situation/text/person it is approaching for the first time in a desire to gain understanding (TM, p. 282). The prejudices, or preconceptions, which constitute our present understanding can be 'productive' or 'non-productive', that is, they can further understanding or misunderstanding. The rehabilitation of prejudice involves the acknowledgement that there are 'legitimate prejudices' (TM, p. 289). The illegitimate prejudices indicate where is the space for understanding to expand: 'The dialogue between tradition as well as the dialogue between our past and our tradition is expanding beyond any pregiven limitations' (Gadamer, 1979, p.85).

The implications of acknowledging the essentially prejudicial nature of understanding are that it becomes clear that the process of understanding is neither objective (scientific rationalism) nor subjective (not situated or historically effected). Rather it is dialogical, something that we take part in like a conversation. In consequence it entails the existence of the other since it is a process of moving back and forward between the familiar and the alien. This is a playful rather than end-orientated activity. The space between what is known, or taken for granted, and that which is unknown, new or strange is the 'hermeneutic environment' and the mode of being here is phronetic (Loewen, 2012, p. 2). We are neither completely constrained, and conditioned by history, nor can we completely transcend the history, traditions and norms that make us what we are.

Play is an important concept in Gadamer's aesthetics and hermeneutics (Gallagher, 1992, pp. 45-54). In all its myriad forms play is dialectical and non-instrumental: 'The movement of playing has no goal that brings it to an end; rather it renews itself in constant repetition.' For Gadamer the process of interpretation is open-ended and understanding is always incomplete, in contrast to the 'language of foreclosure' that we find in technical-scientific discourse such as 'one piece of the puzzle' (Jardine,

1992). More than a mere corrective to our understanding of prejudice, Gadamer's description of understanding is a refutation of the world as inert and controllable, and a challenge to the fundamental dogmas of modernity with its attendant bloodless and reified consciousness.

Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics dispels the illusion of control. He departs from conventionally philosophical language in describing the process of understanding. In relation to writing and reading he describes interpretation as a 'miracle', 'like a secret art, even a magic'. The world is animated, capable of speech, immanent:

> The best definition for hermeneutics is: to let what is alienated by the character of the written word or by the character of being distantiated by cultural or historical distances speak again. But in all the effort to bring the far near that we make by methodological investigation, in all that we learn and do in the humanities, we should never forget that the ultimate justification or end is to bring it near so that it speaks in a new voice. Moreover, it should speak not only in a new voice but in a clearer voice. (Gadamer, 1979, pp. 212-213)

My research is a hermeneutic project in two ways. Firstly, as an educator I am a participant in the structures and phenomena under investigation and so the research involved recognising and scrutinising my own preconceptions, and using the very concepts that form my current understandings and constitute my historical identity: there is no neutral, transcendent, or 'pure' epistemological stance. But a hermeneutic view is not based on a binary between objectivity and subjectivity, and does not entail epistemological relativism; it makes sense to inquire into the 'essence of the matter' but with all the intellectual humility entailed by the recognition of the self as situated. The inquiry should be transformational, and it was.

Secondly, what emerged in the course of writing these papers is a cluster of themes around the central concept of modernity, namely: history, authority, tradition, indeterminacy, freedom, and the dialectical which connect the Frankfurt School theorists and their associates with

Gadamerian hermeneutics. The resonance of their respective concerns and principles is striking.

The following sections summarise each published output in relation to these themes and to the underpinning concepts of modernity explored in this narrative.

Interest in the writings of Hannah Arendt has increased over the last two decades, not least in recent months because of her work on totalitarianism, which has taken on renewed significance in the current US political situation. However, attention to the educational import of her writings is a latecomer to Arendt scholarship. This paper explores the possible implications of her thought for children's participation and challenges the dominant contemporary view that supports increasing levels of children's autonomy and participation in public life.

Arendt saw herself as a political theorist rather than a philosopher and she believed there to be a 'vital tension between philosophy and politics …. between man as a thinking being and man as an acting being' (Arendt & Baehr, 2003, p. 4). Arendt's political activism was, indeed, unusual among the academic diaspora during the war years, but nonetheless her engagement with human activity, plurality and politics is primarily one of understanding. As she goes on to say in the same interview: 'When I am working, I am not interested in how my work might affect people…. What is important to me is to understand' (p. 5).

In her essay 'The Crisis in Education' Arendt observes that the irrevocable break with tradition centres around children because the post-authoritarian era has inappropriately affected the private, pre-political realm of the family. The role of the educator, whether parent or teacher, is to introduce the child to the world as it is, the 'old world'. Laissé faire, heuristic, child-led education is an abnegation of adult moral responsibility. For this reason Arendt, like Gadamer, has been called a conservative thinker but conservativism only becomes a pejorative when understood as a wrongful defence of the status quo, and this applies to neither Arendt nor Gadamer. Crucially it should be noted that Arendt configures tradition not as an inert object of our attention but as an act of remembrance, which is discovered and 'paved anew' by each newcomer. Both understood that human subjectivity is in fact conditioned or determined by historical

circumstance. Arendt's over-riding concern is the conservation of human freedom.

The retreat of authority and tradition from the private realm of the family, and by extension the school, severs children from the past. Paradoxically this results in less capacity to initiate because it reduces children to a state of movement without meaning or purpose, what Arendt describes as mere biological growth. The fruit of this ahistoricism is now highly visible in the current global political situation: both the minds of the electorate and those of many of our leaders appear to be wandering in obscurity.

Inevitably parents and teachers have an eye on what the child will become, and to this extent child-rearing is unavoidably future-orientated. The temptation to try to manage the future and to foreclose the possibility of something not anticipated, poses the second great danger to human freedom. Respecting both aspects of the child, its being and its becoming, requires that adults content themselves as far as possible with the task of induction and refrain from trying to control the future through the formation of children. This thought is anything but conservative: it is a radical departure from instrumental and mechanical tendencies in education. Though there is none of the magical anarchic irrationalism that we find in Benjamin or the Surrealists, Arendt's concept of natality has been described as 'one of her most numinous contributions to political philosophy' (Dolan, 2004) and is central to the idea of redemptive action.

JESSOP, S. (2012). EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP AND " ETHICAL LIFE ": AN EXPLORATION OF THE HEGELIAN CONCEPTS OF BILDUNG AND SITTLICHKEIT. *JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION*, *46*(2), 287–382.

The importance of Hegel in German philosophy would be hard to overstate. However the profound influence of Hegelian philosophy on America's pre-eminent educational thinker, John Dewey, illustrates the far wider reach of his thought. Despite his importance, Hegel is little studied in philosophy of education outside Germany. In part, this is because of the notorious difficulty he presents to readers, but it is also the result of a serious misrepresentation of his thought that took root in the 19th Century, and which persists to the present day. This characterisation of Hegel's thought as abstract, technical, absolute, and precluding immanent critique is perhaps a convenient excuse for his neglect. The connection between Hegel and Dewey, who is defined by a commitment to personal autonomy and democracy, should suggest that Hegel's reputation is undeserved. This paper opens up an exploration of a key concept in Hegel's thought, *Sittlichkeit*, in an educational context and considers how it illuminates our developing understanding of education for citizenship.

Sittlichkeit is the term coined by Hegel to denote the complex 'matrix of customs, rituals, rules, and practices that make up a society and make each one of us part of a society'. Each person has her life in a particular time and place, and moral reasoning does not happen in a neutral rational space outside of history and lived experience. This thought might lead to a form of historical/cultural determinism but in Hegel's formulation, the relationship between the individual and society is not one in which the notion of the individual becomes meaningless, but rather, it is one of involution: each person is at once constituted by and also constitutes *Sittlichkeit*. To imagine ethical life as completely stable or predictable is to imagine a dead thing rather than the ongoing process of individuals generating and maintaining the matrix of beliefs and practices that constitute ethical life: inevitably this process involves both stability (the transmission of language, belief, practices, etc.) and also change (through opposition, negation, critique). Hegel's conception of *Sittlichkeit* enables us

to think of society as a living thing, to accept unpredictability, instability and disruption as aspects of creative and dynamic life: 'the self-activity of taking hold of things'. For the education of children it mandates both cultural induction and individual critical independence. It necessitates that we avoid lazy attitudes of mere tolerance and instead value openness and difference, even when it leads to conflict and disruption.

The concept of *Sittlichkeit* describes the task of education, that of both cultural induction and personal emancipation. It is a hermeneutic principle that our understanding is always provisional, always being developed, demolished, and rebuilt as our prejudices are examined, modified or abandoned. The disruptive encounters that are important to the dynamic of *Sittlichkeit* can cause social wounds that are ultimately self-healing. But Hegel describes a state of rupture and fragmentation that goes beyond this. *Entzweiung* is a condition of fragmentation or dismemberment. It describes, for example, the situation where the institutions of government and the beliefs of some of the people, 'conscience and action, law and moral intention' are so alienated and have become so much at odds with one another that the dynamic exchange of ideas and experiences which transform and refine the participants can no longer take place. In the present political and social climate, the notion of a state of *Entzweiung* is a necessary adjunct to our thinking about how children grow into acting as citizens in increasingly polarized political situations.

The child is an important figure in Benjamin's writings but has received virtually no critical attention. 'Children, Redemption and Remembrance in Walter Benjamin' explores childhood and historical consciousness in relation to Benjamin's philosophy of history. This paper is therefore breaking new ground in Benjamin studies, and also makes an original contribution to the study of the concept of child.

Walter Benjamin has a highly distinctive response to the themes of loss of tradition and authority, an impoverished notion of history, and the instrumental bias in modern thinking. The eschatological tradition in Jewish Messianic theology gives Benjamin a rich language for describing those aspects of the past that are lost and forgotten, and this is where his work enters the flow of hermeneutic concerns. The conceptual frameworks of modernity are highly dependent on religious understandings of time as linear, progressive, and teleological. What is more, as Calinescu (1977) argues, 'the most prominent authors are almost incomprehensible outside the Judaic-Christian tradition'. Between the understanding of the past as the story of 'what actually happened', which Benjamin calls historicism, and a modernist subjectivity that is more about forgetting than remembering, Benjamin develops a way of thinking about history redemptively, what Gadamer might call letting 'what is alienated speak'. The alienated past has a claim on the living present as a matter of justice: remembering is a morally imperative political action. Historicism is the roll call of the victors, what counts as the authoritative story, but the dismissed-insignificant, the silences and omissions of the past are of much more interest than great events and famous individuals. Benjamin's historical remembrance is a dialogical relationship between past and present, an openness to new constellations between what has been, what failed to happen and what is now. Benjamin's concept of history and his critique of progress has been described as the 'guiding star' for *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Rabinbach, 1997, p.174).

Benjamin describes the state of 'self-forgetful engrossment', a 'pure receptivity', as the condition in which we recognise new constellations of ideas. This state is also that in which people perceive the magical or spiritual. Like Benjamin's layered, non-linear prose, with its unexpected juxtapositions of linguistic montage, the decoupage of children's collecting and rearranging reveals something new and beautiful. As Arendt describes his writing:

> The main work consisted of tearing fragments out of their context and arranging them afresh in such a way that they illustrated one another and were able to prove their *raison d'etre* in a free-floating state, as it were. It definitely was a sort of surrealistic montage. (Arendt, 1968, p. 51)

Benjamin's children are strikingly transgressive: they tear pages from books, they merge with the events in the books they read and scribble on the pages; as collectors they are irreverent, changing the objects, cutting and pasting them into new relationships with each other. Children do things differently and it is this that makes them potent for Benjamin's 'peculiar conception of history'.

Though critical theory and neo-Marxism have enjoyed spells of interest in the philosophy of education, particularly in the 1980s and 90s, Adorno's cultural theory has received very little in Anglophone educational research. Education for critical self-reflection has so far taken central place in discussion of Adorno's educational theory but the intention of this paper is to redirect attention onto his seminal theory of culture, and what it means to be a 'cultured person', in relation to education and the work of the teacher.

In introducing Adorno's theory, the differing approaches to culture under two UK administrations are used to exemplify contrasting approaches to the arts. It is argued that Scottish policy relegates the economic value of culture to second place, and instead acknowledges the intrinsic value, and the spiritual and affective importance of creative activity. This dual identity is illustrative of Adorno's call for art to be recalcitrant, resistant and critical.

Adorno explains 'reified culture' as represented perfectly in the work of art as pure commodity. All art is commodified to some extent, but Adorno accepts that there is still, in many cultural forms, an inner dynamic of opposition, which he calls the 'unity of opposites'. There could be no better example of this than what film director Ken Loach said in his recent Bafta acceptance speech (12th February 2017), in which he condemned the 'callous brutality' of the government and, referring to the lavish ceremony, said: 'despite the glitz and the glamour, we are with the people'. As Adorno says, 'no authentic work of art…has ever exhausted itself in itself alone, in its being-in-itself. They have always stood in relation to the actual life-process of society from which they distinguished themselves' (1967/1981b, p. 23). The emancipatory and socially transformative orientation of critical theory is visible here; capitalism is, as Loach says, callous, and since the 'actual life process' for so many is one of brutal material suffering. Uncritical art feeds what Aldous Huxley described as 'man's almost infinite appetite for distraction' but it only satisfies the goals of capital. Cultural education for critical self-reflection, what Adorno regards as the 'premier

demand' upon education, cannot be served by art forms that lack that inner dynamic of criticality.

The principal aspect of Adorno's theory of culture that is discussed in this paper addresses the less immediate but more fundamental question of modern subjectivity. He argues that the same tendency that reifies culture, reifies consciousness itself. This means the renunciation of 'spirit', those parts of human experience that are not systematic, controllable or predictable, that are indeterminate, sensual, or that are part of our experience because of their absence or silence. The reification that underpins instrumental thinking is reliant on objectifying thought, 'that relation to the world that is functional, aetiological and inverts the primacy of ends to means, and that requires the reductive categorization of mathematical–scientific thinking in order to predict, control and dominate the natural world, including our social relations' (p. 247). Art is not irrational but liminal; it exists between the 'magically animated pre-rational world and the totally administered world'. An 'education for protest and resistance' is not simply or even principally about political activism (Adorno & Becker, 1999). The development of a non-reified consciousness is about resistance to death, to the permeating coldness and indifference of instrumentalism.

JESSOP, S. (2014). CRITICAL THEORY. IN D. C. (DENIS C. PHILLIPS (ED.), *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF EDUCATIONAL THEORY AND PHILOSOPHY*. LONDON: SAGE PUBLICATIONS.

The entry on critical theory is designed to give an overview of first and second generation critical theorists to a general readership within education.

Emphasis is given to understanding the political and social milieu of the Institute for Social Research, known as the Frankfurt School, and its associates. This interbellum generation of assimilated German Jews brought together a constellation of elements: personal, political, cultural, theological, and intellectual, and this gave their work both its rich intellectual complexity, rooted as it is in Jewish and Christian theology and Hegelian Marxism, and also its tremendous urgency, its seriousness: engagement with contemporary political events was not something that could be avoided. What strikes me now is that I gave very little acknowledgement of the influence of the emerging discipline of psychology. In particular, I did not mention Freud, an omission that bears witness to a shift in my focus toward the significance of non logical-rational ways of thinking in these writers, and a growing interest in Walter Benjamin in particular.

These writers embody in their work the tension between philosophy and politics, between theory and lived experience: the need to act and the need to understand. Critical thinking when mentioned in education policy is most frequently used to mean a set of skills rather than the pursuit of understanding. As a direct result, itis also generally stripped of any sense of being a politically significant and potentially counter-cultural activity. Similarly, 'action research' has changed its signification in contemporary education to mean quasi-scientific investigation into the pursuit of more efficient means of imparting knowledge and skills. In the Habermasian or Freirian sense of the term it is about ideology critique: the exposure of injustice, and transformation of the individual and society by means of hermeneutical inquiry. Members of the Frankfurt school witnessed the way in which education, by means of schools that had long been prototypes for

fascism because of their authoritarian, hierarchical, and frequently violent operation, was quickly turned to serve the interests of a totalitarian regime. The recovery of a sense of the political import of education and recognition of the role of schools in fostering, or muting, resistant ways of thinking, is important to us now, perhaps even more than before.

CONCLUSION

Though it should be increasingly clear that the 'fundamental conditions' that crystalized into the events that led to Auschwitz have never gone away, nonetheless, like many people, I am startled by the pace of political change over the last few months. Gathering storms threatening human rights, human health, and the environment, should be anathema to the modern dogma of progress but, like most dogmas, it has proved remarkably resilient throughout the 20th Century and I do not see any reason to think this will change.

The ideal of academic research has long been to write *sine ira et studio* though educational researchers are more likely now to favour methods that take into account the presence and perspective of the researcher and which acknowledge the researchers' lack of detachment. But this is different from researching and writing from an explicit value-stance even though there is widespread endorsement of certain indeterminate goods: democracy and social justice would be examples. This kind of near unanimity points to lack of content; superficiality, as Hegel says, is very accommodating. It seems to me that the tenability, if it ever existed, of an academic stance that is 'detached from actual life-process of society' is rapidly fading (Adorno 1967/1981b, p. 23).

The danger inherent in what might be called, following Benjamin, a 'state of emergency' is that we are tempted to use education as means of rescue and an instrument to deliver the progress we still, despite everything, desire and believe in, and so to establish a *novus ordo seclorum*. The 'enticement to Messianic action' is another manifestation of the will to dominate and control, in this case of, and through, children. However benign the urge to act in this way is, the effect will always be to close down the possibility of change and to 'strike from the newcomers' hands their own chance of the new' (Arendt, 2006e, p. 174).

Hermeneutic enquiry exposes the prejudices of modernity and undercuts what appears to be self-evident and natural: dogmas of progress and triumphalist historicism, faith in technology and the reifying rationality of instrumental reason, hubristic modernism. These ways of thinking and

believing are what drive the 'crisis in education'. Recognising these distinctive hallmarks of modernity in our thinking about education opens up ways of critiquing what is, and imagining what could be.

Our understanding of society can include what is unstable and unpredictable, not by merely accommodating or domesticating disruption but by welcoming it as a vital sign. Conceptions of culture that are dialectical, in which children take their place as both inheritors of complex traditions and inventors of new ones are more robust than those that either imagine homeostatic transmission or neglect the induction of children into the cultures of their birth. The conflict that is immanent to art is an essential component of both the introduction of children to their world and to the possibilities for its critique.

Children are introduced to a world that already exists, that is, cultural induction is historical. Hegel gives us a notion of culture that is restless and vulnerable to rupture. The concept of history that recurs consistently in Adorno, Benjamin, and Arendt is that of fragmentation and loss, and infinite complexity. Any pretence that the past is a seamless and knowable story of inevitable causality is ultimately an act of coercion and domination. The 'victor's story' is destabilized by the idea that the past consists of ruins and remnants, a multiverse of different voices and silences. Children are 'humanity's little scrap dealers' (Agamben, 1993, p.70) and are perfectly at home with what has been deemed worthless cast off and forgotten. Their play can be seen as both epitomising and representing the redemptive activity of historical consciousness.

The philosophical study of childhood has not shown much interest so far in perspectives that recognise childhood's profanity. These can be found in psychiatry in the work of Melanie Klein, for example, and in anthropology in the notion of the changeling (Lancy, 2008) and yet even here the child's transgression is really pathological and an aberration. There are exceptions: Avitar Ronnell and Giorgio Agamben are two I am aware of, and yet this strand has not yet established itself in the weft of childhood studies.

The recovery of the transgressive, enchanted, anarchic, and irreverent in our concept of childhood adds an important dimension to childhood studies. If the crisis in education has its basis in modernity then technical solutions will not significantly alleviate or end the crisis. However, any effort to gain understanding of the crisis as a meaningful whole is a political act because it questions and destabilizes what happens to be the case. Educators need engage in hermeneutic inquiry in order to discover different ways of thinking that start to let go of our need to control and predict, a need that gives rise to uncritical utopian thinking that too frequently finds expression in education, and instead allow what Iris Murdoch described as 'an attentive patient delay of judgement, a kind of humble agnosticism, which lets the object be' (Murdoch 1992, p. 377). Openness to the playful, sacramental and enchanted is perhaps the most crucial form of resistance to the ways of thinking and being that have become axiomatic under the conditions of modernity.

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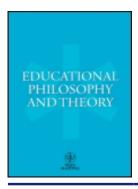
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Children's Participation: An Arendtian criticism

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Children's Participation: An Arendtian criticism

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Abstract

Hannah Arendt's critique of education in 1950s USA provides an important way of understanding the development of citizenship education. Her theory on the nature of childhood and her concepts of natality and authority give insight into both the directions of current policies and practices, and the possible future states into which these elements may crystallise. It is argued that education for citizenship is an expression of the hope that children will 'save' us from ourselves and that there are two distinct directions that this hope is taking, one representing an orientation to the past and the other to the future. Arendt's critique focuses on what she argues is the proper relationship to both past and future that the educator must maintain. The argument is contextualised through the Scottish approach to citizenship education.

Keywords: Arendt, citizenship, childhood, natality, authority, participation, Scotland

Introduction: Citizenship, Education, and Participation in Scotland

The focus of this paper is the way in which children's participation is being fostered and encouraged in schools through education for citizenship. The particular political, social and religious history of each nation has influenced the content and methodologies of this aspect of the school curriculum, though common themes and concerns have emerged (Torney-Purta _et al._, 2001, pp. 163–173). As one among many, the Scottish approach is worthy of comparative analysis. But there is also a factor in the provenance of Scottish Education for Citizenship that gives it wider significance and interest. It is known that the Scottish Enlightenment in the 18th century had a far-reaching impact in Europe and North America. The legacy of this era of Scottish history has currency in the popular imagination and calls for a 'New Scottish Enlightenment' and an affirmation of, albeit ill-defined, 'Enlightenment values' has provided a framework for political policy (see for example statements made by a succession of First Ministers since devolution in 1999: Dewar, 1999; McConnell, 2006, Salmond, 2008; Scottish Government, 2008, para. 1.3). In addition to the significant scientific advances and economic prosperity of the 18th century, the characteristics of intellectual independence, egalitarianism and the generalist tradition in education have continued to influence Scottish education and politics (Davie, 1961). Though this national self concept has been questioned, and dismissed by

some educationalists as propaganda (Davis, 2003), nonetheless the ideal of a fully participatory democracy constituted by the 'man o' independent mind' is one that influences political rhetoric and national self-concept giving the liberal and democratic tradition that characterises Scottish education a longer provenance than either the creation of the comprehensive system in the 1960s or the period of modernisation in the first half of the 20th century (Paterson, 2005, p. 143). Given the intellectual and political importance of the Scottish Enlightenment to countries well beyond the national borders, it may be of interest to those outside the Scottish education system to know how education for citizenship is taking shape.

The iterative process of critical examination by which fundamental values and assumptions in education are validated is informed by a variety of theoretical stances. This paper uses the ideas of Hannah Arendt to examine the current orthodoxy of children's participation, which is evident in policy and legislation affecting children and families, the methodologies used in much research concerning children, and also in the gradual move toward the increasing participation of children in public policy and decision-making (see, for example, *Children in Scotland*; Scottish Executive, 2006).

It seems that great political hopes and expectations are invested in children as an emerging citizenry. The aim of producing 'responsible citizens' is not a new or a particularly controversial one in education policy but what is important is that according to current policy, children are to be considered not citizens of the future but citizens now (SEED, 2002; Maitles, 2005). The effect of the notion that people are born citizens rather than gradually acquiring the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, or attaining this status at an age of majority, is that education for citizenship programmes tend toward the involvement of children in public and political life. Such moves are part of a worldwide realisation of article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989).

Principles and Aims

The Scottish curriculum (*The Curriculum for Excellence*, introduced in 2004) currently takes the form of a set of four purposes of education around which all curricular areas are organised. One of these purposes is that children should be enabled to become 'responsible citizens', meaning that children will develop a 'commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life' (SEED, 2004 p. 12). Citizenship is thus embedded in the curriculum as an organising principle, rather than as a discrete subject. Though the rationale for this structure is based on the importance of citizenship, the unintended effect may also be that its content is ill defined and may be swamped by other concerns.

Social justice, rights and responsibilities all feature prominently with an emphasis on civic and community participation. But emerging in tandem with this emphasis is a claim that a 'good' citizen will also have an awareness of global issues: the ethical aspect of trade and the impact of our consumption of resources on the global environment. As can be inferred from the regular association of education for citizenship with crime prevention, parenting skills, animal welfare, environmental issues, and so on, there is an apparent hope shared by educators, politicians and non-governmental organisations that through

the education of children great wrongs may be righted and that there will be a generation of civically-minded people, who can 'conceive of problems in global as well as local terms', and who will bring solutions and salvation (Smith, 2003, p. 30). Evidence of this hope is illustrated by Oxfam's answer to the question, 'Why is education for global citizenship essential in the 21st century?':

> Current use of the world's resources is inequitable and unsustainable. As the gap between rich and poor widens, poverty continues to deny millions of people around the world their basic rights. *Education is a powerful tool for changing the world* because tomorrow's adults are the children and young people we are educating today. (Oxfam, 2006, p. 1, my emphasis)

The instrumental importance of this aspect of schooling is one that is open to a powerful Arendtian critique, as will be argued later in this paper.

In this specific policy context autonomy is a central aim of education for citizenship. The link is explicitly made between increased national autonomy, in the form of the establishment of a devolved Scottish parliament, and the requirement that the people of Scotland need to develop an 'enhanced sense of social and political responsibility'. In order to realise this responsibility, the need for certain knowledge, skills and attitudes is asserted (SEED, 2002, p. 6). If responsibility and, by implication, autonomy are to be understood as intrinsic aspects citizenship then this creates a possible incoherence in the stance that children are to be regarded as 'citizens now'. Elsewhere there are indications that the curriculum aim of children being responsible citizens is one that gives due regard to the development of the capacities or capabilities of children (for example, SEED, 2002, pp. 6, 8, 9). This remains an unresolved contradiction: on the one hand the acknowledgement of development or of the incompleteness of children, and, on the other, the unqualified way in which citizenship is accorded to them.

It has been argued by Paterson (2008) that recent curricular reforms diminish the status of academic learning to that of preparation for vocational learning and signify the reversal of a tradition that is characterised by a dogged adherence to Enlightenment principles which emphasise the exercise of intellect rather than the training of character. However it is argued here that the importance that is accorded to the idea of autonomy, both national and personal, suggests that the liberal democratic principles that have distinguished Scottish education persist in this aspect of the school curriculum.

Disengagement from society and scepticism about traditional structures of representative government are acknowledged as growing concerns, and ones that this aspect of the curriculum is capable of addressing (SEED, 2002, p. 6). It is not clear, however, whether it is envisaged that education for citizenship is intended to re-engage young people and re-commit them to existing political institutions, or whether the development of skills associated with citizenship education will have a transformative effect on these institutions and create a new form of democracy in which people are happy to participate.

It is noteworthy that the combination of the focus on 'social and political responsibility' in the discussion on citizenship education with the distinctive political ethos at the time of the initiation of Scottish devolution, as evinced by the frequent explicit mention of 'Enlightenment values', warrants a rather more revolutionary than conservative notion

of citizenship (see, for example, Dewar, 1999). For, an autonomous person, self-liberated from tutelage, cannot be expected to assimilate and conform to existing norms or institutions, though they may in fact do so. Freedom brings with it the possibility of change, even the radical overthrow of what has gone before.

In this discussion it may be seen that the 'elephant in the room' is the question of whether *adult* participation is a reality in modern liberal democracies such as Scotland. In *On Revolution* (1963) Arendt argues that representative forms of government represent only the interest or welfare of the constituents but not their actions or opinions. The reason for this is straightforward:

> The opinions of the people are … unascertainable for the simple reason that they are non-existent. Opinions are formed in a process of open discussion and public debate, and where no opportunity for the forming of opinions exists, there may be moods … but no opinion. (Arendt, 1963, p. 268)

The ultimate failure of revolutions as they consolidate into constitutions and government, and the oligarchic nature of representative democracies both derive from the fact that only through the 'spontaneous organs of the people'—the 'township and townhall meetings', popular societies, soviets, and 'little republics'—is realised 'the potentialities of action and the proud privilege of being beginners of something altogether new' (Arendt, 1963, p. 232). What exactly this might mean is outside the scope of the present discussion but in order to give any coherence to the consideration of children's participation, clarity is needed on the idea of participatory democracy itself. It is an exciting thought that the context of post-devolution Scotland presents new possibilities for inclusive participatory government.

There is a dual orientation of education for citizenship, that is, toward the past represented by traditional institutions and religious or moral values, and toward the future, a desire for progress or liberation cutting free from the values and the beliefs of the past. In the middle of this apparent contradiction is the teacher whose role is defined by whichever orientation is to the fore; she is either, so it seems, inducting children into the old world or is midwife to the new. In the latter case, the kind of participation that is encouraged for children will be determined by the way in which the future is thought of or the past is valued. At this point I wish to turn to Hannah Arendt, whose critique of education is premised upon this very problem.

Arendt: The Crisis in Education

Arendt has been described as both a conservative and as a revolutionary though in fact her writing defies categorisation: she was a conservative who understood revolution as the paradigm of human freedom and an intellectual who eschewed the life of contemplation in favour of what has been called an 'attentive worldliness' (Young-Bruehl, 1982, p. 321, see also, *The Human Condition* (Arendt, 1958, pp. 16–17); O'Byrne, 2005). Her essay, 'The Crisis in Education', reflects this complex identity; it is politically ambiguous and both the traditionalist and the progressive educationalist find that their positions have been both problematised and plundered. This essay, which was first published in 1958 in *The Partisan Review* and then in the collection of essays, *Between Past and Future*

(1961) is simply written and polemical, almost journalistic, in style. It is here that Arendt makes her most explicit statements about the nature of the child, and of child rearing and education, drawing on the work for which she is best known, *The Human Condition* (1958).

Arendt's analysis of what she calls 'the crisis in education' centres upon a criticism of progressive educational theory that has placed at the helm in every classroom the ineffectual figure of the ' non-authoritarian teacher'. This may appear to align her with conservative critics who, now as then, blame low standards of attainment on liberal pedagogies. However, Arendt asserts that she does not have the specialist knowledge of the professional educator but that as a layperson she is nonetheless able to examine the 'essence of the matter' (p. 171). She does not suggest that the specifics of the contemporary debate at that time in the United States can be separated completely from the 'universal element' but Arendt maintains that the specific circumstances of this new country constituted by immigrants from many different traditions brings into sharp focus the issues raised in considering the relation of education to the past and to the future. At the centre of her critique are the concepts of authority, tradition, and responsibility.

Authority

Arendt's concept of authority is distinctive. In *Between Past and Present* she defines it thus: 'Against the egalitarian order of persuasion stands the authoritarian order, which is always hierarchical. If authority is to be defined at all, then, it must be in contradistinction to both coercion by force and persuasion through arguments' (Arendt, 2006d, pp. 92–93). Her thesis is that authority no longer exists in the political or public realm. However, she does not argue that we should will that authority return to its previously held place in the life of the community since the break with tradition that manifests itself politically as a loss of authority cannot be recalled (Arendt, 2006d, p. 91). The origins of this situation are coeval with modernity, arising as it does from the rejection of the notion that there is a transcendental truth, access to which confers validity on the system of government and provides both the measure against which government is judged and also the source of the laws that bind it (Arendt, 2006d, p. 97). This is 'the final, though decisive, phase of a development which for centuries undermined primarily religion and tradition' (Arendt, 2006d, p. 93). But Arendt is categorical in distinguishing between the authority in this political sense and authority as it appears in the private realm of the family:

> The necessity for 'authority' is more plausible and evident in child-rearing and education than anywhere else. That is why it is so characteristic of our own time to want to eradicate even this extremely limited and *politically irrelevant* form of authority. (Arendt, 2006d, p. 119, italics added)

The mistake that has been made, she argues, is to confuse the political realm with the pre-political, or domestic and intimate realm of the family. The education of children does not belong in the public realm (Arendt, 2006e, p. 192). The corollary of this also holds: the notion of education cannot be imported into the political without eradicating the equality between people that is essential to politics. Arendt clearly has in mind the

activities of totalitarian governments when she writes: 'the word "education" has an evil sound in politics; there is a pretence of education, when the real purpose is coercion without the use of force' (Arendt, 2006e, pp. 174–5).

So it seems at this point that Arendt is proposing that although persuasion among equals is desirable in the public sphere, the raising of children follows quite different standards in which hierarchy and coercion are necessary in which case the idea of children as active participants would be nonsensical. True, Arendt's stance is not far from this in the end. But the way in which she comes to this view is more complex and deeply respectful of children than might be expected from such a position. In order to understand this it is necessary to explore her conception of tradition, which is the pre-political or non-political manifestation of authority.

Tradition

Tradition, or what-is-remembered, is described as Ariadne's thread guiding people through the labyrinth of history or an anchor that provides stability and security. However, two dangers attend our relation to tradition. Adherence to tradition can be a chain 'fettering each successive generation to a predetermined aspect of the past'. Of equal importance is the danger of oblivion, the 'loss of worldly permanence and reliability … the restriction of human freedom' (Arendt, 2006d, p. 94). The loss of tradition threatens the proper functioning of the human mind:

> Without tradition—which selects and names, which hands down and preserves, which indicates where the treasures are and what their worth is—there seems to be no willed continuity in time and hence, humanly speaking, neither past nor future, only sempiternal change of the world and the biological cycle of living creatures in it. (Arendt 2006a, p. 5)

Despite the metaphor of 'handing down' that Arendt uses here, she does not mean that the past is a 'thing' that can be packaged and handed to each generation. For Arendt, defining tradition is a near impossibility:

> It is as though we were caught in a maze of abstractions, metaphors, and figures of speech in which everything can be taken and mistaken for something else, because we have no reality, either in history or in everyday experience, to which we can unanimously appeal. (Arendt 2006d, p. 136)

What causes this state of flux and unstable identity is rather that tradition is to be understood as an *act* which Arendt calls 'remembrance'; tradition is discovered and 'paved anew' by every new human being. What is distinctive about human action is that it is mortal, not the 'sempiternal change of the world and the biological cycle of living creatures'; mortality is 'to move along a rectilinear line in a universe where everything … moves in a cyclical order' (Arendt, 2006a, p. 5; 2006b, p. 42). The interruptions to the circular movement of biological life are 'the subject matter of history', 'the extraordinary'. But without what she calls 'remembrance', human words and deeds, 'the mind of man wanders in obscurity' (Arendt, 2006b, p. 43; Tocqueville, cited by Arendt, 2006a, p. 6).

The notion of tradition as an act of remembrance rather than an object of transmission has great utility in education. The view that learning is an event in which the learner is active is now firmly established; the question as to *what* the learner is learning about is sometimes left hanging. Arendt's account of our relation to tradition brings the two strands together: the capability to criticise and transform, to 'pave anew', and the subject matter of this activity, that is, the 'words and deeds' of the past. Educational programmes promoting so-called 'thinking skills' are sometimes so much vacuous activity but can be given content and a crucially important role by acknowledging the importance of tradition in this special Arendtian sense.

How, then, does this human orientation toward the past affect how we think of the education of children? Following an Aristotelian conception of childhood as a state of imperfection or immaturity, which requires paternal rule for the sake of the child (*Politics*, 1.12), Arendt explains that children have a double aspect: they are new human beings and also becoming human beings; they become human as their potentialities are realised. The aspect of becoming is something shared by all animal life and, like all animal life needs all those conditions which make life possible, including the protection necessary to the young of any species. Distinct from this is the relationship to the world implicit in the state of being new human beings. This relationship requires that parents assume responsibility for the introduction of their offspring to that world:

> Insofar as the child is not yet acquainted with the world, he must be gradually introduced to it; insofar as he is new, care must be taken that this new thing comes to fruition in relation to the world as it is. (Arendt, 2006e, p. 186)

Responsibility

The spread of the political crisis of authority to what Arendt sees as the pre-political areas of child rearing and education is not only a mistake but also a culpable abnegation of responsibility, which is at least on a par with the physical neglect of a child. This analysis of the responsibility that adults have to children is the broad sweep of Arendt's assessment of the nature of the crisis in education. Arendt identifies three fundamental and inter-related ideas in contemporary schooling, which correspond to the theory I have described. The first concerns children's autonomy and the construction of an artificial 'children's world'; the second and third ideas relate to the role of the teacher.

Firstly, there is the idea that children can and should be autonomous and as a group they can and should be self-governing (Arendt, 2006e, p. 177). She makes two objections to this idea: one relies on an appeal to the 'real and normal relations' between adults and children, the other on the assertion that children are insufficiently rational to be autonomous.

Arendt bases her assertion that that the severing of 'real and normal relations' between adults and children is false on the supposed fact that 'people of all ages are always simultaneously together in the world' (Arendt, 2006e, p. 178). Quite apart from that problem that this is not in fact the case (it was equally 'real and normal' for some people in some times and in certain places to be segregated by age), it is a weak argument to derive the 'ought' of educational practice from the 'is' of custom. If education is desired to be counter-cultural or revolutionary, perhaps 'normal' is what must be changed.

However, the importance of Arendt's position does not rely on this shaky foundation. Her critique of education is not principally descriptive but prescriptive; that is, the process of education involves recognition of adult moral responsibility. The importance of adults and children being together derives from her assertion at the beginning of her essay that: 'the essence of education is natality, the fact that human beings are born into the world' (Arendt, 2006e, p. 171). The concept of natality is important to many aspect of Arendt's thought. It is key to the distinctive way in which she conceives of human freedom, as is described below, but at this point the focus is on the significance of the fact that children are born into an old world.

The induction of children into the 'old world', the world that presently exists, is achieved by representatives of that old world. Described in this way, the idea that children could introduce themselves or each other to the world seems ridiculous, to the extent that one might wonder whether anyone has in fact ever tried this. An instance that readily springs to mind is Summerhill School, founded by A. S. Neill in England in 1923. Neill was hostile to the idea that adults should have charge of the induction of children into the world as the following quotation illustrates:

> No one is wise enough or good enough to mould the character of any child. What is wrong with our sick, neurotic world is that we have been moulded, and an adult generation that has seen two great wars and seems about to launch a third should not be trusted to mould the character of a rat. (Neill, 1962, p. 25)

In contrast is Arendt's statement:

> Educators here stand in relation to the young as representatives of a world for which they must assume responsibility although they themselves did not make it, and even though they may, secretly or openly, wish it other that it is. (Arendt, 2006e, p. 186)

It is not a question of worthiness for this great task of introducing the young into the world, rather it is an unavoidable responsibility which attaches to our being part of that world.

The second argument Arendt uses against children's autonomy focuses on the child's need to be protected from the tyranny of the majority. If children are permitted to govern themselves then the individual child has even less chance of freedom because he then is one child voice in the midst of many child voices: his position is 'hopeless by definition … a minority of one confronted by the absolute majority of all the others' (Arendt, 2006e, p. 178). Arendt's argument that numeric superiority entails the impossibility of rebellion is strongly reminiscent of Golding's iconic nightmare scenario of childish tyranny in his *Lord of the Flies,* published shortly before Arendt's essay, in 1954.

Both Golding and Arendt believe that children are generally and significantly incapable of reason. In Kantian terms, immaturity is not self-imposed in the case of children, but is a part of the fact of their physical immaturity, so their autonomy is not something that can be willed or dared (Kant, 1784/1996). A distinct 'children's world', as it were, is not only, as Arendt describes it, a fraud and not real; the attempt to create such a world puts children into danger by abandoning them to a sort of state of nature which is characterised by competition and coercion rather than reason and communication.

Following on from this argument concerning the autonomy of children are the second and third basic assumptions behind the crisis in education, which Arendt identifies as having to do with the role of the teacher and beliefs about the learning process. These two are linked in that the former emerges from the latter. Contemporary education in schools, she argues, involves a substitution of doing for learning and playing for working (Arendt, 2006e, p. 180). Although Arendt alludes to contemporary concern about levels of literacy in children, her own concern centres on the inadequacy of play-based learning theories to function as a medium for the induction of children into the world. If it is supposed that children will discover the world spontaneously, the role of the teacher seems not to require much, if any, actual knowledge of the world. As a result, she argues, the teacher is denied a part in the process of education and is denied any authority, in the sense that he or she does not in any way represent tradition (Arendt, 2006e, p. 181).

Protecting and Fostering Natality

Education and Politics

Arendt describes how the birth of the new nation of America in the 18th century, with its stated aim of being 'A New Order of the World', as the motto *Novus Ordo Seclorum* on each dollar bill declares, coincided with the development of an explicit conception of education as 'an instrument of politics' (Arendt, 2006e, pp. 172, 173). At the same time as education became an instrument of politics, politics itself became conceived of as having an educational aspect. Arendt sees this development as a very serious mistake. Politics is a conversation between equals, whereas the assumption that underlies the relationship between adults and children is that of the 'absolute superiority of the adult'. The relationships between people in the political realm cannot be educational in nature since politics is essentially 'the joining with one's equals in assuming the effort of persuasion' (Arendt, 2006e, p. 173). The use of the notion of education in the political realm has the sinister function of being an occult attempt to dominate and coerce.

Arendt argues that this is not the case in the education of the child: the idea that the adult is superior to the child should not be understood as entailing a relationship that involves indoctrination. Rather, she points out that this kind of relationship of adults to children belongs historically to tyrannical governments which separate children from their parents in order to produce a predetermined and unitary new world. The idea that a new world can be built through the education of children is illusory though the illusion can be powerful and pervasive in a new country. Arendt coins the phrase 'the pathos of the new' to refer to the strong attraction of this illusion (Arendt, 2006e, p. 174). Political utopias from Plato onwards have realised the logic of starting afresh with new people who are untainted with old ideas. Unlike God, who in the myth of the flood could determine to start again and correct what had gone wrong in human history with a post-diluvian world washed clean of vice, adults who attempt this are involved in a falsehood: 'the attempt to produce the new as a *fait accompli*, that is, as though the new already existed' (Arendt, 2006e, p. 173).

The person who is not yet part of the adult world is being prepared for the *polis*, 'the community of adults' (Arendt, 2006e, p.173). Importantly this does not happen by the

induction of children into a new world, as seen most conspicuously in utopian experi-
ments, but into an old world: 'to prepare a new generation for a new world can only mean
that one wishes to strike from the newcomers' hands their own chance of the new'
(Arendt, 2006e, p. 174). The Cultural Revolution in China provides one of the most
explicit articulations of this conviction that the old world may be disregarded or
destroyed in order to create an entirely new one, with its goal of destroying the 'four
olds': Old Custom, Old Culture, Old Habits, and Old Ideas. In contrast to this is the
position that what is new must originate from each new person and generation. Arendt's
concept of *natality*, a crucially important strand of her account of the human condition,
provides a distinctive approach to this belief. In order to understand the concept of
natality it is necessary first briefly to consider her broader account of the human
condition.

Natality and the Human Condition

Arendt describes the human condition in the three categories of human activity, namely,
labour, work, and action. Labour and work concern respectively those activities that are
necessary for our biological survival and those activities that make 'the sheer unending
variety of things whose sum total constitutes human artifice' (Arendt, 1958, p. 136). All
living things engage in labour in order that they can eat and reproduce. It is necessary
activity and its results are instantly consumed and must be endlessly repeated. Work is a
human activity and so it is unnatural or artificial. By means of work the natural world is
changed for human use. The categories of labour and work serve to delineate the more
amorphous third category of human activity: 'action', or *praxis*. It is in action that the
'paradoxical plurality of unique human beings' is revealed and it is in this account of
action that Arendt's ethical and political theory is grounded (Arendt, 1958, p. 176).

Margaret Canovan has written that it is hard to give precise answers to the question of
what kind of deeds Arendt intended might constitute 'action' (Canovan, 1974, p. 62).
Action can more easily be defined negatively as possessing the following characteristics:
firstly, it is not activity done of necessity, as is labour (Arendt, 1958, p. 83); nor, secondly,
can it be predicted from the conditioning of the agent (Arendt, 1958, p. 178). Neither the
merely animal nor the purely mechanical, in Arendt's estimation, give a satisfactory
account of the human condition. Rather, this condition is founded on the fact of
'natality'.

Natality is central to Arendt's account of the human condition, and in particular to her
understanding of the human relation to the future. Out of natality arises the distinctively
human capability to *act*, that is, to do something which could not have been predicted or
predetermined since 'each of us represents something new and unique in the world and
is capable of doing the unexpected and acting in ways that no role-prescriptions can
foresee' (Canovan, 1974, p. 59). When humans act they do so in relation to others as a
distinct and unique individual, and so contribute to the infinitely complex web of
relationships of human society, hence action is intrinsically individual in its origins and
plural in its manifestation.

These characteristics shape a definition of politics, or the public sphere as a 'space of
appearance', that is, where individuals disclose to others their individual identities by

making themselves known through their words and deeds. These constitute a beginning, something new that could not have been predicted:

> It is in the nature of beginning that something new is started which cannot be expected from whatever happened before. This character of startling unexpectedness is inherent in all beginnings and in all origins … . The fact that man is capable of action means that the unexpected can be expected from him, that he is able to perform what is infinitely improbable. And this again is possible only because each man is unique, so that with each birth something uniquely new comes into the world. (Arendt, 1958, pp. 177–8)

Arendt uses this quasi-mathematical metaphor of infinite improbability to give shape to a concept of human freedom that admits the conditioned nature of human existence. In her 1954 essay, 'The Gap Between Past and Future' (2006a), she employs another mathematical image, this time of intersecting vectors to describe human action. This other metaphor shares the characteristics of combining ideas of absolute uniqueness with awareness of our conditioned existence. In this case the conditioning focuses on the constraining influence of the old world, or the past. Human freedom is not compromised by the fact that any human action has a foundation in what has gone before; rather it is only in relation to what has already been that something new can take place. An orientation to the past and the protection of the new are inseparable in Arendt's account.

The past can fetter and constrain and yet the possibility of what is new and unexpected counters this potentially paralysing restraint on human freedom. Levinson (2001) explores this relation between the past and natality as an aspect of what she terms the 'paradox of natality'. An insight of postmodernity is that we are constituted by our particular past and yet, as Levinson observes, 'if our resulting sense of belatedness is not countered by natality—our capacity for action—it is potentially paralysing' (Levinson, 2001, p. 14). The conditions that are necessary for the protection and fostering of natality then become one strand of the dual focus of education, along with the initiation of children into their inherited past.

One might reasonably think that the use of the concept of natality as the foundation for an understanding of the public sphere leads toward the position that children are participants *par excellence* in this sphere, since natality is about newness and no one is more new than a child. Their very newness, argues Arendt, however, is the temporarily insurmountable barrier to their participation since they do not have, by virtue of their immaturity, the other essential characteristic for participation in the public sphere, which is equality. The inequality of children cannot be compared, she argues, to the situations of other groups defined by race, ethnicity or gender nor is there a need for political liberation for children, since this state of inequality is neither permanent nor restricted to particular groups. The exclusion of children from participation is for the protection of children and also for the protection of the world from children (Arendt, 2006e, p. 182).

Protection and Participation

In the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child the relation between protection and participation is one that is held in balance on the fulcrum of the best interests of the child

as formulated in article three, which states that 'the best interests of the child shall be of paramount consideration'. However, Kathleen Marshall, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People, in her exploration of the debates surrounding this article, has shown that it was not meant as an 'implicit qualifier' to article 12, which protects the child's right to participate (Marshall, 1997, pp. 8–16). Rather than diluting or abrogating the rights of the child, article 3 is meant to encapsulate the end of all other articles; in this case, the right of the child to express her views is a means of ascertaining what is in fact in her best interests.

But currently it seems that the envisaged participation of children is being extended beyond a relatively narrow interpretation of the phrase 'all matters affecting the child' in terms of issues of custody, health, bodily integrity, and aspects of education. James Conroy has recently voiced deep concern over the elimination of the notion that children should be afforded special protection from the concerns of the adult world, in particular, matters sexual, economic, and political (Conroy, 2007). It can appear that the onus is on anyone wishing to limit children's participation to demonstrate that their exclusion is warranted. This shift raises again the question of the relation between articles 3 and 12.

For Arendt, whereas the public sphere is a 'space of appearance', of self-revelation, for children the private sphere is a space of *protection*. Arendt vividly compares the need all things that grow to start off in the dark; the physical darkness necessary for germination figuratively stands for the need that children have for privacy and security: 'The responsibility for the development of the child turns in a certain sense against the world: the child requires special protection and care so that nothing destructive may happen to him from the world' (Arendt, 2006e, p. 182). The exposure of children to those things that characterise the adult world as though they were 'undersized grown-up(s)' is a failure to protect and nurture. This concern finds resonance in contemporary popular disquiet that children are somehow 'growing up too quickly' and entering the adult world 'before they are ready'. A growing body of evidence points to this concern being well founded as it seems that children are more anxious and less secure in the UK than in other developed nations (UNICEF, 2007; Layard & Dunn, 2008). However, it would be wrong to suggest in any way that Arendt's thesis may be reduced to a newspaper headline. Unlike much media discussion, she gives content to the questions of what *constitutes* readiness in her account of induction into tradition, and what it is readiness *for*, in her notion of natality.

If childhood is to take place in the private sphere, how then is school education placed with regard to the public and the private? Formal, state-run education has an oddly contradictory relationship to the private sphere under Arendt's description. The teacher stands in the place of the parent and also as an employee and representative of the state. School, like the family, can provide a highly protected environment and also a highly restrictive one, though, it is important to acknowledge that it certainly does not always do so, as the experiences of millions of children at home and worldwide can testify. Yet the commonly stated aim of education is to 'fully prepare today's children for life in the 21st century' (SEED, 2004). The issue then is how children can be prepared for the world and yet not entirely exposed to it. Echoing Arendt's denouncement of the exposure of the children of celebrities to publicity, Conroy has convincingly argued, the exposure of

children to the world engenders neither resilience nor an ability to renew the world, but rather the reverse (Conroy, 2007).

This uneasy relationship is due to the 'double aspect' of the child, as described above in relation to the introduction of children to the world: 'he is new in a world that is strange to him and he is in the process of becoming, he is a new human being and he is a becoming human being' (Arendt, 2006e, p. 182). There is a future orientation in children themselves and in the activity of educating them.

However, the whole explanation for the public/private paradox of school education is not to be found simply or even chiefly in the nature of the child. It is important to Arendt's thesis that the exposure of children to public life also arises out the relation between the public and private that is characteristic of modernity:

> It is the peculiarity of modern society, and by no means a matter of course, that it regards life, that is the earthly life of the individual as well as the family, as the highest good; and for this reason, in contrast to all previous centuries, emancipated this life and all the activities that have to do with its preservation and enrichment from the concealment of privacy and exposed them to the light of the public world. (Arendt, 2006e, p. 184)

What most concerns us here is the nature of the relation between education, by which I mean school education, and the family on the one hand and the state on the other. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas writes in a passage strongly reminiscent of Arendt's position:

> The family, increasingly disengaged from its direct connections with the reproduction of society, thus retained only the illusion of an inner space of intensified privacy. In truth it lost its protective function along with its economic tasks … . In our day this domain … has started to dissolve into a sphere of pseudo-privacy. (Habermas, 1989, p. 157)

For Habermas, the existence of the public sphere, the only mechanism by means of which the state is answerable to a citizenry, depends on there being a private sphere which supplies to the public sphere equal, free, independent, and reasoning individuals. Under advanced capitalism the state has compromised the privacy of the private, that is, intimate and domestic, through the tendency toward a 'mutual infiltration' of these two spheres. According to this understanding it is not simply that children are being wrongly exposed to public life, the actual distinction between the public and private is itself being eroded. The similarities with Habermas place Arendt's critique in a certain intellectual context. Both Arendt's description of children being 'forced to expose themselves to the light of a public existence' and Habermas's 'floodlit privacy' should be understood within a German tradition which also includes Heidegger's notion of *Dasien* and the critical theory of the Frankfurt School.

A distinction between public and private seems to mean the exclusion of children from political life. The exposure of 'becoming humans' to the light will only, to use Arendt's vegetable metaphor, stunt moral and intellectual growth and prevent the realisation of their potential to act.

Conclusion

Arendt's account of the 'crisis in education' provides a basis for a critique of contemporary developments, the centrepiece of which is 'responsible citizenship' as an educational aim. The prevailing character of official discourse on education for citizenship is the expression of hope that a more just, more peaceful, and more humane world can be achieved through the shaping of the characters or capacities of future adults. Using Arendt's framework we can identify two principal dangers: firstly, if educators, by rejecting the role of authority in the educational relationship, abnegate their responsibility to represent the world and introduce new humans to it, children are reduced to a state of biological growth, without meaning or purpose. This danger is accompanied by the temptation to expose children to the public sphere without regard to their best interests. Secondly, an attempt to anticipate and control the future and to mould children in such a way that their actions are made predictable, from whatever worthy, even desperate, motives is a denial of their natality, the capacity to initiate and do what is unexpected, which is central to their humanity.

The role of the educator, then is firstly to represent and thus take responsibility for the world as it is, handing on the particular history of that culture. Paterson (2008) has argued that the neglect or rejection of the idea of tradition in education perpetuates inequality because some parents are able to ensure that their children *do* experience and *are* introduced to a canon of 'words and deeds'. Economically and educationally privileged people have access to this outside school gates and those who are very wealthy are able to pay for private education that promotes a different type of learning and teaching.

Of course the idea that the task of the teacher is to represent a culture raises almost as many problems as it seems to solve when we consider what could be meant by the term 'culture': whose account of which culture? Yet to duck the issue by minimising the inescapable element of initiation in education is perhaps more likely to allow the unchallenged perpetuation of one world view to the exclusion of others, whereas open acceptance of the initiatory aspect of education can mean that process and content can be subject to scrutiny and debate. Tradition need not be conservative in the sense that it is unchanging. The content of a canon of knowledge can change in response to new understandings without altogether abandoning the idea of a canon, but also of great importance is the understanding of the process by which this canon is introduced to children. Arendt's idea of tradition as remembrance is valuable to educational theory as discussed above, and in the Scottish context, there is scope for further exploration of the way in which Scottish Enlightenment philosophy could inform our thinking on this. Robert Davis (2003) draws attention to the importance of socialisation and habit in the thought of figures such as David Hume and Adam Ferguson. Ferguson, for example, asserts that without the aspect of initiation, or socialisation, 'human life would be a scene of inextricable confusion and uncertainty' (Ferguson, 1792, cited by Davis, 2003, p. 572). Davis argues convincingly that the Scottish Enlightenment was essentially conservative in educational terms and yet, contrary to this, much Scottish Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment discourse was progressive in its emphasis on human agency; people are active participants in the making of meaning as, for example, Reid's distinction between sensation and perception illustrates (Jessop, 1997, p. 93). There is a deep

resonance between this and Arendt's idea of tradition as an act rather than as a dead hand determining the future.

The absence of authority, in the sense Arendt specifies, in politics challenges its continued existence in education. Meeting this challenge means that educators 'must take toward [children] an attitude radically different from the one we take toward one another' (Arendt, 2006e, p.192). This understanding of education may be characterised as conservative in this one respect: 'since the world is old, ... learning inevitably turns toward the past' (Arendt, 2006e, p.192). Education for citizenship aims to prepare children for adult life, and knowledge of history, of what people have done and thought before, paradoxically orientates children toward the future by providing 'guideposts' and a foothold from which to step off. Undoubtedly the way this is handled presents many problems; the induction of the child into the old world entails a dawning realisation that their belatedness is not an uncomplicated gift of all the achievements of the past but also a donning of a weight of responsibility positioning us, as it does, in relation to other people now. Levinson highlights the need to absorb this 'impact of "the shock of the old" ' in such a way that natality is preserved rather than stifled (Levinson, 2001, p. 16).

The pertinence of discussion on the role of adults in the raising of children is greatly in evidence in current popular debate: there has been a revival of interest in Summerhill School, with a recent BBC dramatisation of the threatened closure of the school following the 1999 Ofsted inspection; 'reality TV' has conducted a number of ethically dubious experiments on children by leaving them in adult-free groups for long periods of time; the findings of the Children's Society's report *A Good Childhood* (The Children's Society, 2008) based on The Good Childhood Enquiry (2006) suggest that children are being damaged by spending too little time with their working parents.

A concern that research takes cognisance of the child's 'voice' is increasing, though the status of this voice is a moot point: article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that the child's views should be given 'due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child'. More radical positions have been taken by some who want children to be accorded equal status in public discourse (Cassidy, 2006).

As explained above, responsible citizenship is one of the four core capacities in the new Scottish curriculum and education for citizenship is an embedded subject. Hence evidence for the presence of the view of children as capable of participation in the adult world will also be embedded in different aspects of what goes on in schools. More work would be needed to demonstrate whether such views and practices exist now. Much activity seems to involve 'mock' campaigns, trials or public debates rather than actual involvement in the public sphere though some schools have involved children in real campaigns involving demonstrations and debate with elected representatives in government and in local authorities (for example, the 2007 campaign against school closures in Edinburgh). Initiatives which are independent of schools, but nonetheless supported by them, include the Scottish Youth Parliament and the J8 Junior Summit which was formed to present the views of children at the G8 Summit in Gleneagles in 2005. There is also counter-evidence such as the negative response from schools to pupils who were involved in the mass protests surrounding G8. In addition, although there is as yet no systematic study on the effectiveness of pupil councils, there is some suspicion that even the limited participation afforded by this means is

tokenistic and sometimes even manipulative. These snapshots seem to indicate that there is no immediate danger that children are going to be propelled in an untimely way into the public sphere. Perhaps the inherent conservatism of the teaching profession is preventing this potential contained within the rhetoric of education for citizenship from being realised on a wide scale.

The use of citizenship education to manipulate the future, as illustrated by the statement from Oxfam cited at the beginning of this essay that education is a 'powerful tool for changing the world' is a temptation in view of the obvious and urgent need for change. And yet any efforts to do this could prove ineffectual or even counterproductive. Arendt observes that in America 'education plays a different and, politically, incomparably more important role than in other countries' and this is because of the political demands put on education by the level of immigration: 'the melting together of the most diverse ethnic groups ... can only be accomplished through the schooling, education, and Americanization of the immigrants' children' (Arendt, 2006e, p. 172). The UK may now be in the same situation that Arendt describes in the US almost half a century before. The appearance of citizenship as a new and important element of the curriculum in all four countries of the UK in the last decade coincides with societal changes arising from the steep rise in immigration. While there are a number of factors which might be seen as giving rise to this new element in the curriculum, it seems that what is obliquely referred to in, for example, the *Education for Citizenship: A paper for discussion and development* (LTS, 2002), as 'social pressures', 'the complexity of modern society' or 'social stress' includes difficulties arising from increasing cultural diversity. Similarly, there are references to 'identity and belonging' that indicate that this social phenomenon is at least part of the reason behind the emergence of the citizenship agenda in education.

If we understand the role of the educator as being that of developing an understanding of the conditions that 'preserve newness' or foster natality then this means there is a need to resist the temptation to predict or shape the direction that the future will take. In Arendtian terms this entails allowing a 'space of appearance' for children, making favourable conditions for children to take the initiative with what Levinson has called 'everyday miracles'. These events are the interruptions to seemingly inevitable social processes which mark them out as the actions of 'new humans'. Equipping children for this space of appearance is not a matter of license but of providing them with the opportunities to develop that capability to 'interrupt, critique, and transform the present' (Gordon, 2001, p. 50). However, following Arendt's position means that this provision stops short of actual political participation; the exercising of these skills in childhood takes place in the protective 'dark' of the intimate and private sphere. The danger inherent in thinking of children as 'citizens now' is that the safety provided by this privacy is violated. The risk of the revolutionary element in the curriculum is that it goes beyond fostering and protecting natality under the supervision of an authoritative world-representative in the person of the teacher. In over-prescribing the attitudes and actions of young people by telling them how the world is to be set to rights, there is a danger that all that is being done is that a veneer of what appears to be social change will be laid over an unstable and insufficiently grounded understanding of the world.

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Education for Citizenship and 'Ethical Life': An Exploration of the Hegelian Concepts of *Bildung* and *Sittlichkeit*

SHARON JESSOP

The significance of German Romantic and Hegelian philosophy for educational practice is not attended to as much as it deserves to be, both as a matter of historical interest and of current importance. In particular, its role in shaping the thought of John Dewey, whose educational philosophy is of seminal importance for discussions on education for citizenship, is of considerable interest, as recent work by Jim Garrison (2006) and James Good (2006; 2007) has shown. This article focuses on the Hegelian concepts of Bildung *and* Sittlichkeit *in order to consider how they may illuminate the purpose and practice of education for citizenship through a conceptualisation of the relationship of individual to society, and, specifically, through the idea of cultural induction. The discussion takes as its principal reference point the Scottish policy context.*

INTRODUCTION: THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT

The argument I wish to explore here concerns the idea that a conception of cultural induction which is compatible with a commitment to liberal pluralism is necessary for a robust approach to education for citizenship. The philosophical approach which I believe has great potential for facilitating the formation of this conception comes from Hegel.

Evidence of contemporary alienation, or disaffection, from the traditional social systems, structures and institutions has been well rehearsed and thoroughly interrogated. Some see catastrophic social decline—Prime Minister David Cameron's 'broken Britain'—others inevitable social change accompanied by moral panic which itself is fuelled by certain kinds of reporting in the media. Whichever interpretation is more correct, there are clear indications that confidence in, and commitment to traditional institutions is on the wane. This is a puzzling context in which teachers are expected to take on the task of preparing children for citizenship.

In Scotland, a new curriculum, known as *Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE), was fully implemented in August 2010, after almost eight years of

discussion, development and training. Following from the provisions of the 2000 Education Act which adopts the definition of education found in article 29 of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*, that 'education should be directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential', the CfE seeks to establish a single curriculum for all children aged from 3 to 18 and has the following characteristics: It emphasises experiential learning and acknowledges the learning that takes place in the family and wider community context. Schools are encouraged to take a cross-curricular or inter-disciplinary approach in recognition of the interconnectedness of knowledge and experience. Lastly, it explicitly addresses the relation of education to the needs of the national community as this statement from the first publication of the Curriculum Review Group in 2004 illustrates:

> The curriculum reflects what we value as a nation and what we seek for our young people. It is designed to convey knowledge which is considered to be important and to promote the development of values, understanding and capabilities. It is concerned both with what is to be learned and how it is taught. It should enable all of the young people of Scotland to flourish as individuals, reach high levels of achievement, and make valuable contributions to society (p. 9).

The CfE aspires to complement the contributions of families and communities by enabling children to develop four broad capacities which entail that they become: 'successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society and at work' (The Curriculum Review Group, 2004, p. 12). Education for citizenship has never been a discrete aspect of the curriculum in Scotland and now it is firmly embedded as a central purpose of education (LTS, 2002).

The transition to CfE is not complete and it does not enjoy universal approval among parents and teachers. Much is still to be decided, particularly in secondary education and national qualifications, and the current financial situation has dampened innovation. Having said that, there is also considerable enthusiasm in many quarters. Students on Bachelor of Education and Professional Graduate Diploma in Education programmes seem to find the fundamental ideas and understanding of the learning process stimulating, empowering and workable. Many primary schools have completed the transition, and first and second year pupils in secondary schools are receiving a noticeably altered educational experience. There is general agreement that the achievement of this substantial change will be a long and slow process. I shall be arguing that the CfE has a major virtue: it opens up new possibilities for those seeking an understanding of education as cultural induction and as preparation for community membership, which is essential if education for citizenship is to have a meaningful identity.

THE HEGELIAN DEPOSIT

From this brief description it should be obvious that CfE bears a Deweyan imprint. Although Darwinian evolutionary biology provided Dewey with a

set of concepts and a vocabulary for understanding change and growth enabling 'the injection of evolutionary ideas into the study of life and society', it is the 'permanent deposit' of Hegelian idealism that connects Dewey's philosophy with contemporary debate about the relation of the individual to society (Dewey, 1910, p. v; 1930, p. 21). In seeking to understand how we might approach education for citizenship, I propose to look at the Hegelian antecedents of Dewey's philosophy.

Hegel played a part in a period of educational reform in Germany that had international influence on the theory and practice of schooling. Education in German states was an object of great interest during this earlier part of the 19th century, which, in part, explains the prevalence of German educational ideas during Dewey's own education and also provides a context for his encounter with Hegelian philosophy.[1] Central to Hegel's educational thinking are two concepts: *Bildung* and *Sittlichkeit*, both of which have a significant bearing on Dewey's educational and democratic theory.

The historical sources for understanding Hegel's philosophy of education are from the period 1808–1816 during which he was rector of the *Gymnasium* in Nuremberg. The religious, political and philosophical fault-line that ran through Europe at this time erupted in a battle over what was perceived to be the end of education, with implications for curriculum, pedagogy and access. Crudely, this can be described as the division between the Catholic, conservative, former elite who drew upon romantic and utilitarian ideas to defend the status quo and to produce men educated to occupy their station in life, and the Protestant, revolutionary, *new* elite whose philosophical provenance can be traced to Kant, though it also drew upon romantic notions of education. Hegel opposed the idea of education as 'training for this or that type of usefulness'[2] and he held that 'talents and diligence' should open every career,[3] but he also believed that revolutionary reform must be accompanied by the transformation of the community. If the old ways of thinking were simply ignored or swept away then what would emerge would not be an enlightened social order but a reshuffling of the master/vassal relationship (Pinkard, 2000, p. 253).

Five of Hegel's rectorial addresses survive from this period and these explain what he understood the task of educators to be. His stance on education is formed around the relation of the old and the new, the familiar and the unfamiliar, custom and autonomy. Greek classical training featured prominently in the Gymnasium. Through this study, the past is 'renewed' and put into a 'new relationship to the whole' while, at the same time, it is sufficiently foreign and alien to allow us to adopt a new perspective on our own customs and mores. Awareness of old customs was also important and, to this end, religious education and participation in worship should be included in the curriculum, though he opposed the subordination of teachers to the clergy.[4] The place of discipline and moral education in Hegel's Gymnasium demonstrates his post-Kantian position: on the one hand there is the commitment to enable children to think for themselves and an opposition to training or 'mere reception' as having as much lasting impact as 'writing sentences on water';[5] and on the other hand he acknowledges

the crucial importance of socialization into a form of life in the family, what Pinkard describes as 'a socialization in which we can be at home' (2000, p. 290). The way in which Hegel envisages the relation of past and present, the status of custom and tradition, and the role of socialization, together constitute the elements of his concept of *Sittlichkeit*.

Hegel makes the distinction between the Kantian conception of moral reasoning, which he calls *Moralität*, and the historically and culturally situated mores that are evident in social customs, traditions and practices, for which he coins the term *Sittlichkeit*. For Hegel, Kant had failed to recognize sufficiently that there is no neutral context for moral reasoning. The idea of rational neutrality is a fiction, so the modern idea that independent moral reasoning—the unfettered conscience—is superior to that which grows out of the life of a particular community, is based upon a mistake. He rejects the polarity of the simple 'trustful conviction to what is publicly accepted as true' and the idea of freedom which requires that the individual subject distinguishes himself by diverging from recognised public opinion (Hegel, 1821, pp. 3–4). The subjectivity of individual opinion in its apparently endless variety seems warm and vital in contrast to the objectivity of duty and the law which 'feels as the letter, cold and dead, as a shackle' (ibid., p. 7). But when attention focuses on the particular rather than on the universal, one is engulfed by superficiality and ephemera, and, most dangerously, one loses the ability to discriminate between 'the maxims of the worst of criminals' and the 'interests of all thinking men' (ibid., p. 9) since, as Hegel puts it: 'superficiality seems to be extremely accommodating' (ibid., p. 8).

Each of these two ways of thinking and acting represent a caricature of the ways in which people in fact think and act. Beyond early childhood, in which one naturally accepts what others say about what is true, and after the throes of adolescence, when rebellion against received opinion is for many an important stage of developing selfhood and separation from the family, neither stance is one that can be sensibly maintained or defended. These straw men, however, provide a device to demonstrate the dilemma between the universal, as accessed through the free rational activity of the individual, and the particular, the actual historical practices of society.

For Hegel, these two apparent extremes are both moments in the idea of the good:

> The unity and truth of both these abstract moments—the idea of the good not only apprehended in thought but so realized both in the will reflected into itself and in the external world that freedom exists as substance, as actuality and necessity, no less than as subjective will; this is the Idea in its absolute universal existence—Ethical Life (Hegel, 1821, p. 36 §33).

At first sight Hegel's position might seem to prioritize the concept of the good—the universal—over its determined form—the particular: the ethical order is 'determined by the concept' which provides 'stable content' and is 'in exaltation above subjective opinion' (ibid., p. 105, §144), the concept

being the abstract Idea of the good apprehended in thought. In this respect Hegel seems to be drawing on the Platonic and Aristotelian view that gives priority to the state over individuals conflicting strongly with the Enlightenment valorisation of the individual's reasoning powers as the only possible way of discerning what is right. Alfredo Ferrarin (2001) describes this Aristotelian element, detectable in Philosophy of Right, as a device that enables Hegel to counter dominant contractarian understandings of the state (p. 349). The atomistic assumption of contractarian positions is seen by Hegel as a morally and socially dangerous understanding of the state which starts with 'needs, accidental caprices, and subjective desires', in other words 'particularity by itself'. These desires can never ultimately be satisfied as each gratification breeds new desires. Something deeper and more secure is needed as the conceptual basis of understanding the nature of ethical life.

Ethical life is not simply 'the good become alive', though it is that too, it is also the 'absolute foundation and end' of self-conscious activity. We do not merely reproduce and perpetuate a particular order of things but instead modify what is already actual, produce and originate something new. The institution of marriage provides Hegel with an illustration of the way in which the relationship between the individual and the state includes and transcends the merely contractual. Marriage is not understood by him to be essentially contractual, though it begins with a contract: 'precisely a contract to transcend the standpoint of contract, the standpoint from which persons are regarded in their individuality as self-subsistent units' (Hegel, 1821, p. 112, §163). In renouncing individuality and forming a unity with another person, one achieves liberation rather than self-restriction, and attains 'substantive self-consciousness' (ibid., p. 111, §162).

The concept of the good which is the fruit of individual reason is, in isolation from its determination in the world, an aborted form: incomplete and not embodied:

> . . . the shapes which the concept assumes in the course of its actualization are indispensible for the knowledge of the concept itself. They are the second essential moment of the Idea, in distinction from the first, i.e. from its form, from its mode of being as concept alone (ibid., p. 14, §1).

Moralitat and *Sittlichkeit* in this way are not opposing concepts but rather are concept and instantiation, locked in a mutually modifying, and mutually illuminating relationship. The notion of *Sittlichkeit*: 'the matrix of customs, rituals, rules, and practices that make up a society and make each one of us part of a society' enables Hegel to steer between the horns of radical scepticism and pre-critical, pre-Kantian metaphysics (Good, 2006, p. 31). The way we understand the relationship between the individual and *Sittlichkeit* determines the way in which it is appropriate to induct children into being a part of society, with implications for both schools and the family. For Hegel, the school itself occupies the liminal space between the dependency of the family and the independence of adulthood.[6] The family

is not, however, a place for authoritarian discipline and submission, because this would not pave the way for students to become self-directing and self-reflecting individuals. At the same time it is necessary for children to be inducted into the customs and mores of their own society. Children become themselves by their induction into the life of the community through language, ritual, and social practices. In the first place this is achieved in the life of the family, where the first training and discipline in the *Sitte* (social mores) take place. Schools continue the work that the family begins. Crucially, the end of this training and discipline is not compliance but 'the self-activity of taking hold of things'.[7]

The term that Hegel uses for this learning is *Bildung*, which can be translated as *education* or *education as growth through experience*. The term first appeared in the Pietistic theology of the German Reformation to denote the unfolding or revelation of God's image in man through the 'cultivation (Bildung) of one's talents and dispositions' (Schmidt, 1996, p. 630).

The idea reappears in the early German Romantics who regarded it as the highest good.[8] The failure of the French Revolution demanded explanation and the Romantics pointed to the unreadiness of the population. The people of a republic need to be 'responsible, enlightened and virtuous citizens' and the means to achieving this is education (Beiser, 1998, p. 285). Although there was this connection between *Bildung* and the viability and stability of the republic, still, for the early Romantics, *Bildung* remained a matter of personal growth and self-realisation (ibid., p. 294).

An early articulation of the association between enlightenment as freedom, and education is given by Moses Mendelssohn (1784) in which the concept of *Bildung* has central place.[9] Johann Gottfried von Herder (d. 1803) went on to develop the idea that *Bildung* is the development of the self understood within a particular social and cultural context, which itself develops in this process. *Bildung* and philosophy are one and the same: they are to be understood as the process of individual *and* social transformation. Herder's conception is evident in Hegel's understanding of *Bildung* as 'the self-development of the individual human spirit as well as the self-development of the human race' (Good, 2007, p. 5). Self-realization is not self-interest but the realization of social life in the individual so the diversity of individuals then becomes intrinsic to each individual and to each society. Each person must consciously, actively, and with great effort, seek truth and the fullest possible self-development through the broadest possible range of experiences, including experience of earlier 'culturally formative stages' of human history.[10] Importantly, this search after truth does not have a terminus in transcendent knowledge; it is instead an ongoing process of inquiry. *Bildung* is incompatible with dogma; Hegel thought that this is where the French revolutionaries had gone wrong, in imagining that they had discovered a truth that transcended experience, and to which experience should be made to conform. In this way he was true to the idea of the enlightened self as a 'man o' independent mind'[11] without casting that self adrift from lived experience. The knowledge that experience is important was hard won and not to be relinquished,

since: 'a long time was needed both to draw attention to the present as such, an attention that was called experience, and to make it matter' (PG: 8).

The conception of the individual as a 'culturally formed rationality' leads to the problem that there is apparently no possibility of social criticism since the person cannot have a perspective that in some way transcends the practices and traditions of her culture, in this way perpetually favouring the status quo. The interpretation of Hegel as a totalitarian and teleological philosopher contributed significantly to the neglect of this work. Bertrand Russell and Karl Popper damned the study of Hegel's philosophy to decades of obscurity by their accusations that Hegel 'dissolve[s] the individual' and promotes the 'worship [of] the state, history, and the nation' (Russell, 1946, p. 711; Popper, 1945, p. 34).

That Hegel's philosophy was inherently illiberal and tended to totalitarianism has a bearing also on our understanding of Dewey. What looks like the absence of a robust notion of the individual, and an emphasis on society or the state has also recently led to both being claimed as communitarian thinkers (for example, Callan and White, 2003, p. 103).

The idea that Hegel was a philosopher of unity rests upon persistent misinterpretation of Hegel's philosophical method and a focus on particular passages in his substantial and evolving body of writings which underpin the assessment of Hegel as the source of 'the repressive and absolutist moment of the dialectic' who posits a ' "final universal goal" unfolding in history, a comprehensive system which is closed and uncritical' (Held, 1980, p. 156). Hegel's philosophy is one of instability, uncertainty and continuing development, the very opposite of the teleological and totalitarian tendencies of which he is accused. In *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel speaks of *Bildung* as a kind of disintegration:

> The language expressing the condition of disintegration, wherein spiritual life is rent asunder, is, however, the perfect form of utterance for this entire realm of spiritual culture and development, of the formative process of moulding self-consciousness (*Bildung*), and is the spirit in which it most truly exists (PG: 521).

Disruptive encounters are part of lived experience. Good describes how Hegel believed that 'practical and moral dilemmas frequently arise because we hold one-sided, inadequate conceptions of our world and ourselves' (Good, 2006, p. 27). Conflict of opinion between people should not be understood as an 'antithesis of truth and falsity' or 'simple disagreements'. Using an organic metaphor of bud, blossom and flower he says:

> These forms are not just distinguished from one another, they also supplant one another as mutually incompatible. Yet at the same time their fluid nature makes them moments of an organic unity in which they not only do not conflict, but in which each is as necessary as the other; and this mutual necessity constitutes the life of the whole (PG: 2).

Hegel at one time describes reason as 'purposive activity' and through these 'moments' our conceptions become more adequate for the realisation of

our practical goals (PG: 22). This means that, for Hegel, contradictions or conflicting opinions are necessary to the process of development. Through experience the self becomes enlarged and enriched, more complex, not less. And important to this conception of experience is mutual acknowledgement and recognition (PG: 176). Communication (*Mitteilung*) as such is given little explicit mention in *Phenomenology* but, when it does appear, there is no mistaking its importance. In a passage concerning the absence of mutual recognition Hegel writes:

> He sees the judgmental consciousness as somebody who sets his own stiff-necked character in parity with itself in opposition to the confessing consciousness, and he sees the utter silence of someone who keeps himself locked up within himself, who refuses to be carried away in the face of an other (PG: 667).[12]

It is worth remembering here how *Bildung* relates to *Sittlichkeit*. The dynamic, communicative, and conflictual business of one person encountering another in dialogue is in fact the generation and maintenance of the matrix of beliefs and practices that characterise ethical life. Inevitably this process involves both stability (the transmission of language, belief, practices, etc.) and also change (through opposition, negation, critique). Recognition is necessary to this process, and refusal of recognition helps to explain social and political conflict, as has been argued, notably by Charles Taylor (1995), Axel Honneth (1995) and Nancy Fraser (1995). Although recognition is a necessary condition of communication, when it is conferred upon one individual by another the struggle is not cancelled or ended. Instead the struggle continues since movement and complexity are of the essence of this relationship of reciprocal recognition:

> . . . a multi-sided and multi-meaning intertwining, such that, on one hand, the moments within this intertwining must be strictly kept apart from each other, and on the other hand, they must also be taken and cognized at the same time as not distinguished, that is, they must be always taken and cognized in their opposed meanings (PG: 178).

Bildung is distinguished from some other conceptions of education by being relational, conflictual and developmental. We could say of the individual self-conscious being, like Jacob wrestling with the angel: 'this is how he grows: by being defeated, decisively/by constantly greater beings'.[13] It is important that inequality is openly acknowledged as an integral aspect of the relationship. Children, in particular, are not on an equal footing with adults and, although it makes sense to think in terms of parity of participation when social equality and justice are what are at issue, any denial of this fact of inequality is disingenuous and dangerous. When this happens, children's participation is unreal and forces them into a position of complicity with unequal, sometimes unjust, structures in order that adults can reassure themselves that they are open to the child's 'voice'.[14]

Turning back to Dewey, the importance of the concept of communication to Dewey's central concerns cannot be overstated.[15] He rejected all theories of the self that suggest that it is antecedently individuated, innately rational, or fixed in any way. What he clarified and emphasised is that the self must be understood as a communicative entity. He says that 'not only is social life identical with communication, but all communication (and hence all genuine social life) is educative. To be a recipient of a communication is to have an enlarged and changed experience' (Dewey, 1916, p. 8). He goes on to describe how the act of communicating also changes the giver of the communication since this involves formulating an experience in such a way that another person can understand it. This involves an exercise of the imagination in changing perspective, through, in part, the assimilation of someone else's experiences (Dewey, 1916, pp. 8–9).

The self is created in an ongoing social process of communication. In contrast to the notion of communication as a conduit of already formed ideas, communication means making something in common: 'something is literally made in common in at least two different centres of behavior' (Dewey, 1925, p. 178). It is 'a process of sharing experience till it becomes a common possession' a creative act in which the participants literally form a shared identity (Dewey, 1916, p. 12).

For Dewey, the self can only be understood as: growing rather than fixed, in communion with others, not isolated, active and yet open and adaptive. Inquiry is anti-reductionist; doubt, uncertainty and confusion are in the situation (Boisvert, 1998, p. 39). At the same time, it is true that the process of communication is in a sense harmonizing, and here is the connection to Dewey's democratic theory: since 'men live in a community in virtue of the things which they have in common; and communication is the way in which they come to possess things in common' (Dewey, 1916, p. 7). Communication to achieve 'like-mindedness' is essential to the formation of community in any society, whether that society is relatively homogeneous or vastly complex and plural. And yet it is also in the nature of the process that it is never complete, and never completely determining.

Both Hegel and Dewey can be defended against the charge that their respective philosophies must result in teleological and totalitarian societies. The way in which they base this upon an epistemology which rejects unity, transcendental ideas and closure, provides a way of understanding the ontology of a pluralistic society. We should not expect, or be disturbed by the lack of, consensus. Unlike MacIntyre's epistemological crisis, which is an event in time distinct from the normal life of the community, for Dewey, disequilibrium is a sign that a society is vital and evolving, engaged in the dialectical process of seeking harmony and coherence (MacIntyre, 1988, p. 361). Internal contradictions are the inevitable consequence of plurality, and this is a precondition of the communicative action that characterizes a living community.

There is an obvious connection between Hegel's *Sittlichkeit* and MacIntyre's position that: 'Morality which is no particular society's morality is to be found nowhere' (2007, p. 265). But the problems involved in MacIntyre's account—the lack of a robust notion of critique, underpinned by the

rejection of freedom as architectonic—are not present in Hegel's account of *Sittlichkeit*.[16] It is not an external imposition or restraint upon the individual since *Sittlichkeit*—ethical life—and the life of the individual are involutedly related. Although it is rooted in history, *Sittlichkeit* is not static, but is a changing and responsive expression of the will of the people. It is implicitly rational and must be actively accepted. *Sittlichkeit* is not a set of principles that is applied to situations. Pinkard (2002) describes it rather as: 'practical judgements that involve learning and being trained in practices such that we acquire a certain type of skill, a *virtue*, a way of orienting ourselves in social space' (p. 226). Crucially, this orientation, though achieved through training, is an orientation toward practices that are a recognition of Kant's kingdom of ends:

> . . . the institutions and practices that make up *Sittlichkeit* are themselves legitimate, actually ethical—*sittlich*—for 'we moderns' only when they are realizations of freedom, when they are ways in which the agent can fulfil his own projects and plans in a manner that harmonizes with what reason in general requires of him (Pinkard, 2002, p. 235, n. 38).

It has been argued that Hegel's criticism of Kant and the contingency of *Sittlichkeit* justify a neutral and purely procedural understanding of the state (for example, Engelhardt, 1994). But there is no suggestion that Hegel is committed to an attitude of tolerance or of moral neutrality at any level. Our recognition and acknowledgement of each other as rational moral agents is existential. Tolerance that neglects the work of philosophy is 'faux philosophy', and a kind of idleness:

> It is not pleasant to note how ignorance mixed with formless, tasteless crudity, which is itself incapable of concentrating its thoughts on an abstract proposition and even less so on the connections among many such propositions, assures itself at one time that it is itself freedom and is tolerance of thought, and at another time it even assures itself of its own genius (PG: 68).

He goes on to describe the results of this 'tolerance of thought' as 'loony chatter'. To disagree and to discuss is to be human: anyone who 'has nothing more to do with anyone who disagrees' is 'antihuman . . . merely animalistic':

> In other words, he tramples the roots of humanity underfoot. For the nature of humanity is to drive men to agreement with one another, and humanity's existence lies only in the commonality of consciousness that has been brought about (PG: 69).

'Commonality of consciousness' ought not to be understood here as meaning consensus or compromise. *Sittlichkeit* is not a notion of communal life that is stable or even self-contained. It is a way of understanding the

ethical life of a community that is dynamic and potentially self-healing when 'internal ruptures' appear (Good, 2007, p. 157). These ruptures occur when something occurs in a society that divorces the individual from the communal, when the individual can no longer give his assent to the state. For this state of separation Hegel uses the term *Entzweiung*, which carries the violent and traumatic implication of being torn apart or broken. Norbert Waszek has described this understanding of the human condition as one that 'paved Hegel's pathway to philosophy' (Waszek, 1988, p. 4), so central is it to his philosophical project of addressing 'the most elementary needs of man' (Hegel to Schelling, 2 November 1800, quoted in Good, 2006, p. 6).

Charles Taylor (1995) describes this condition as alienation, which arises when 'the goals, norms or ends which define the common practices or institutions begin to seem irrelevant or even monstrous' (p. 384). For Hegel, *Entzweiung* described the situation in Germany in which despotic government opposed growing demands for a more enlightened and representative state whose purpose should be the freedom of the people (Waszek, 1988, p. 5). In modern times, mistrust and disinterest in the institutions and practices of democracy indicate an acute condition of *Entzweiung*. As Taylor (1995) says, 'norms as expressed in public practices cease to hold our allegiance. They are either seen as irrelevant or are decried as usurpation. This is alienation' (p. 384). Similarly, Benhabib (1986) describes *Entzweiung*, which she translates as 'bifurcation', as when 'Conscience and action, law and moral intention' are in opposition to one another (p. 28). Thomas Mann, in his modern *Bildungsroman*, *The Magic Mountain* (1924) vividly describes this state of separation:

> All sorts of personal goals, purposes, hopes, prospects may float before the eyes of a given individual, from which he may then glean the impulse for exerting himself for great deeds; if the impersonal world around him, however, *if the times themselves*, despite all their hustle and bustle, provide him with evidence that things are in fact hopeless, without prospect or remedy, if the times respond with hollow silences to every conscious or subconscious question . . . about the ultimate, unequivocal meaning *of all exertions and deeds that are more than exclusively personal*—then it is almost inevitable . . . that the situation will have a crippling effect . . . (Mann, 1924/2005, p. 37, my emphasis).

Having identified and named the problem, how does Hegel proceed? In the first place, it should be reiterated here that Hegel accepted some degree of disruption, contradiction and conflict as an essential part of life. He wrote in 1801 that: 'Contradiction is the rule of what is true; non-contradiction, of what is false' (cited Waszek, 1988, p. 49). As Waszek (1988) goes on to say: 'Hegel conceived that tensions and conflicts belong to the essence of matter as well as of human life' (p. 49). Although this state is inevitable, it is only half of the story.[17] Hegel speaks of 'reason as the rose in the cross of the present' (PR: 14), meaning that within the evils and suffering of humanity there is a hope of salvation, or rather, of reconciliation. Reconciliation is

not part of a utopian vision because it is not an end point, a state that caps what has gone before, as Hardimon (1994) explains:

> To say that Hegel thinks that becoming reconciled is *compatible* with recognising that the social world contains problems is at best an understatement, for he thinks that recognizing and accepting this fact is integral to the process of reconciliation (p. 90).

Just as 'tolerance of thought' was dismissed by Hegel as 'antihuman', contrary to Benhabib's interpretation (1986, p. 29) this is not a counsel of resignation (Hardimon, 1994, p. 90). As discussed above, the self is enlarged and made more complex through encounter and communication, and this same understanding is also outstandingly clear in Dewey's thought. Furthermore, as Hardimon (1994) points out, the German word *Versöhnung* which is translated as 'reconciliation', unlike the English form, has a strong connotation of transformation. Nigel Tubbs similarly asserts the anti-dogmatic nature of Hegel's philosophy by rejecting any formulation of his philosophy that 'suppresses the fact that in Hegel any such movement changes the consciousness that experiences it' (2008, p. 7).

The notion that reconciliation is embedded within the state of *Entzweiung* or alienation, as expressed in the metaphor of the rose in the cross, means that through the use of reason people can handle the contradictions that arise in social life. This is the idea of immanent critique, which Smith (1989) defines as 'a form of theorizing that seeks standards of rationality within existing systems of thought and forms of life' (p. 10). If we were to stop at this point it would seem that we can only critique a practice by reference to the norms of the culture within which that practice takes place. Clearly this is no better than uncritical relativism. But this is not Hegel's proposal. Smith goes on to explain that, for Hegel, the use of reason is an exercise in scepticism in this sense: 'Because . . . everything is in motion, scepticism refuses to regard any description of the world as absolutely true. Truth is made relative to the enquirer' (p. 183). Hegel's immanent critique is anti-dogmatic; the norms of a particular society are open to rational critique by means of individuals giving consideration to the negations of these norms. The possibilities of thought are infinite, not constrained by past tradition:

> Skepticism is in no way directed against philosophy, but against ordinary common sense . . . against the ordinary consciousness, which holds fast to the given, the fact, the finite . . . and sticks to it as certain, as secure, as eternal: the sceptical tropes show common sense the instability of this kind of certainty (*Werke* 2: 240, cited in Smith, 1989, p. 182).

CONCLUSIONS

Education for citizenship is beset with problems: adult alienation from traditional social and political institutions, concerns about identifying shared values in a plural society or the impossibility of doing so, the worry

that children's freedom is compromised when the state or corporate enterprise uses education as an instrument of socialization and control, and how to act when there is conflict and disagreement. Hegel's education does not so much propose solutions to these problems but reconfigures the problems themselves. Education for citizenship is education for living in relation to others. For both Dewey and for Hegel it is a tautological phrase since education *is* communication or relation. To consider any other end of education apart from this creates a kind of distortion that the concepts of *Bildung* and *Sittlichkeit* can help us to understand.

Understanding personal and societal development as closely related is not too much of a stretch. Rather, any theory of education that seems to suggest that the two can in fact be separated should ring alarm bells. Society changes as the people who constitute it change. Hegel thought that the chaos that followed the French Revolution could be attributed to the neglect of education (*Bildung*). The imposition of a government that was not an expression of the ethical life of the community created a rupture that led to devastating social breakdown. Furthermore individual people develop as they enter into relation with each other and pursue experience in an ongoing process of inquiry. The conscientious induction of children into, 'the matrix of customs, rituals, rules, and practices that make up a society and make each one of us part of a society' is how we address the needs of the child (*Bildung*) and the development of society (*Sittlichkeit*) (Good, 2006, p. 31). This is achieved through a process of acknowledgement, recognition, and communication. If this is true then a great deal is at stake when education neglects to bring children into the *Sittlichkeit* of their society.

The Curriculum for Excellence is an opportunity to take hold of this idea. Teachers are encouraged to plan for wide ranging cross connections and interdisciplinary work without the relatively restrictive tramlines of some other curricula. The idea of introducing children into their culture is endorsed without embarrassment in government policy: 'Throughout this broad curriculum it is expected there will be an emphasis on Scottish contexts, Scottish cultures and Scotland's history and place in the world' (The Scottish Government, 2008, p. 5). Of course it will be objected that this is at best anachronistic in a plural society, and at worst it is an open invitation to dangerous nationalism. Quite obviously this is not the intention since the plurality of Scottish culture is repeatedly acknowledged and welcomed. Recently First Minister Alex Salmond used Hugh McDiarmid's description of Scotland as 'multiform, infinite', giving a commitment to the evolving diversity of those who 'belong here' and rejecting restrictive stereotypes in forming Scotland's self-consciousness (Salmond, 2011). That which the child is brought into relation *to* is itself contingent and what will happen next is unpredictable. This is not a question of imprinting an immutable or predetermined matrix of history, customs and values upon the child but of bringing the child into relationship with a body of thought at once formed and susceptible to studies, discourses, differences of opinion, and agreements. Hence, so long as Curriculum for Excellence is understood in this progressive way, it can be warmly welcomed for its potential to bring about something new.

No culture is without its conflicts and divisions. For both Hegel and Dewey, disruptive encounters are occasions for growth. Homogeneity gives equilibrium and stasis. *Entzweiung* has two levels: it can describe both a state of destructive breakdown, and also the essential human condition. Insofar as it describes the dynamism of encounter, conflict and relation it needs to be anticipated and managed in non-segregated schools. In other words the business of schools is to find 'the rose in the cross'.

There is a need for vigilance that free, open and inclusive communication is taking place for the school to be a community at all. What needs to be determined is the nature of the communication and the kind of educational practices that would support participation, and, importantly, how communicative action can also support critique and transformation. An emphasis on toleration rather than on respect, and on consensus over reconciliation (*Versöhnung*) would be counter-productive.

Education as *Bildung* makes a set of interesting demands on teachers. They need to be responsive to individual needs, intelligent and creative and, in my experience of student teachers, they mostly are. However, they are often hampered by their lack of knowledge about their own histories and cultures, and, as a result, opportunities for broad, deep, interconnected learning experiences are being missed. In order to plan for such experiences many teachers need to be more educated themselves. Indeed the recent review of teacher education that has been conducted in Scotland[18] highlights this very point, and universities are currently reviewing their initial teacher education programmes in the light of these recommendations.

It seems that Scotland is going through one of those not too common periods when major change is inevitable and that there is potential for something rather good to happen in education, despite the fearful predicament of the arts and humanities in many of our universities. The curriculum is undergoing a significant reform; initial teacher education is being reviewed; and all this in a context of national self- definition and reflection, with a referendum on Scottish independence planned for the autumn of 2014. Not quite a revolution. But nor is it a time of social and political stasis and indifference. For Dewey and for Hegel this is precisely when growth and progress occur.

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NOTES

1. Reports by, for example, Victor Cousin (1833), Horace Mann (1844), and Calvin Stowe (1837) were widely circulated.
2. Letter to Niethammer 1810, Briefe, I, #169, *Letters* p. 226, cited in Pinkard, 2000, p. 292.
3. Rede zum Schuljahrabschluβ am 29. September, 1809, *Werke*, 4, p. 323, cited in Pinkard, 2000, p. 285.
4. Briefe, I, #156; Letters, p. 210, cited in Pinkard, 2000, p. 291.
5. Rede zum Schuljahrabschluβ am 14. September, 1810, *Werke*, 4, pp. 329–330, cited in Pinkard, 2000, p. 289.

6. Rede zum Schuljahrabschluβ am 2. September, 1811, *Werke*, 4, pp. 350–351, cited in Pinkard, 2000, p. 307.
7. *Werk*e, 4, p. 332 cited in Pinkard, 2000, p. 289
8. For example, in 1800 Schlegel wrote 'The highest good, and [the source of] everything that is useful, is culture (Bildung)' (*Ideen* no 37, cited in Beiser, 1998, p. 284).
9. Kant uses the word '*Pädagogik*' in his lectures on education (published in 1803) (Kant, 1906).
10. *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (*Phenomenology of Spirit*) [PG]: 28. Trans. Pinkard 25. 'the cultural maturation of the individual regarded from his own point of view consists in his acquiring all of this which is available . . . and in his taking possession of it for himself'. All quotations from Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* are taken from Terry Pinkard's 2008 online translation (Hegel, 1807/2008) and are cited as 'PG' throughout.
11. The quotation is from Robert Burns' song, *A Man's a Man for A' That*, 1795.
12. See also PG section 667 p. 607 and section 667 pp. 608–609.
13. Rilke, *The Man Watching*, 1920.
14. Nigel Tubbs (2008) has explored the ways in which modernity veils the sovereignty of the master both by suppressing the truth of this inequality and by self-deceiving about our own vulnerability and the impact of veiled mastery on other people. This critique of the politics of recognition leads to a distinctive Hegelian philosophy of education in which 'education is the truth of unrest' (p. 4).
15. I am particularly indebted to Gert Biesta (2006) for his explication of Dewey's 'communicative turn'.
16. MacIntyre's treatment of this problem is quite different from Hegel's. In 'Overcoming a Conflict of Traditions' (in *Whose Justice, Which Rationality?*), he seems to move toward Hegel's position by introducing the idea of empathy. But he characterises this 'rare gift' as understanding the 'theses, arguments, and concepts' of the 'rival' or 'alien standpoint' (MacIntyre, 1988, p. 164). MacIntyre's orientation to the language of argumentation falls short of Hegel's description of communication as our being 'carried away in the face of an other'.
17. Hegel makes it technically difficult and theoretically impossible to tell the whole story. I am grateful to Nigel Tubbs for pointing out to me the limitations of an account that does not include the concept of the absolute, which is the recapitulation of Hegel's philosophy. But, at the same time, this present set of concepts I believe helps us to make some sense of our moment in history. Further work will be needed to explain how this moment is sublated in Hegel's philosophy.
18. Donaldson, 2011.

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Children, Redemption and Remembrance in Walter Benjamin

SHARON JESSOP

Walter Benjamin wrote extensively on children and childhood, though this aspect of his work has hitherto received scant attention despite continuing and growing interest in his thought. This article makes explicit the connection between his acute observations of childhood and his distinctive messianic philosophy. The twin aspects of redemption in Benjamin's writings: remembrance and now-time, as illustrated in Wim Wender's Wings of Desire, are explored in relation to the 'task of childhood'. Benjamin asserts the emancipatory potential held within the development of historical consciousness, and leads us to question how our understanding of childhood can foster this potential

BENJAMIN'S CHILDREN

Considering the central importance of the figure of the child in Benjamin's writings it is surprising that so little has been written on the subject. He makes frequent mention of children throughout his essays and in his *Arcades Project*; he also wrote about toys and play, children's perception of colour, an autobiographical collection of childhood fragments, *Berlin Childhood around 1900*, and a number of radio broadcasts for young audiences. Essays from around 1928 discuss the role of children's theatre in education and communist pedagogy. He was a collector of children's books, wrote about children's literature, and calls upon figures from traditional tales. Despite this, Benjamin has received little attention in works on the philosophy of childhood and, in broader studies of Benjamin, childhood receives only a passing glance[1].

This article explores some central ideas in Benjamin's writings, in particular the idea of the Messianic in his philosophy of history, and relates this to his conception of childhood. In doing so, certain difficult issues raised by the historical education of children may be enabled through a somewhat neglected critique in Benjamin studies. Although he cannot tell us how to teach children history, Benjamin's ideas assert the emancipatory potential held within the development of historical consciousness, and lead us to question how our understanding of childhood can foster this potential.

THESES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

Benjamin's *Theses on the Philosophy of History* (hereafter *Theses*), written in 1940 during the final months of his life, consists of twenty paragraphs outlining what he proposes as true historical consciousness. Quotations constantly interrupt the text and aphorisms abound. There are uncomfortable and disturbing metaphors drawn from the sideshow and the brothel in prose that Derrida describes as 'dense, enigmatic, [and] burning'.[2] Similarly, Jürgen Habermas speaks of 'veins of live ore' in Benjamin's writing.[3] Amongst all this, vivid strands of Jewish Messianic philosophy run through the hodden of contemporary political critique. Whereas Habermas describes the *Theses* as 'among the most moving testimonies of the Jewish spirit',[4] Pierre Missac has also described them as 'mainly, if not entirely, a testimony of despair'.[5] It is impossible to ignore what we know about the circumstances of their formulation during the darkest time in European history.[6]

The concept of the messiah is one that is shifting and indeterminate. It underwent a radical transformation in Christian theology, and it figures prominently in the 'messianic turn' of modern European philosophy, notably in the work of Heidegger, Levinas, and Derrida.[7] In political philosophy the concept of the messiah provides a trope for expressing a secular, utopian hope that nevertheless involves something of the burden of human history. For my present purpose, it unfolds a possibility of thinking differently about the ways in which the child claims and redeems what is past and lost.

BENJAMIN'S MESSIANISM

Benjamin's life-long friend Gershom Scholem, a preeminent scholar of Jewish mysticism, points to a crucial distinction between Christian and Jewish messianic ideas: whereas 'Judaism . . . has always maintained a concept of redemption as an event which takes place publicly, on the stage of history and within the community', for Christianity it is an event 'in the private world of each individual . . . which need not correspond to anything outside'.[8] It seems that Jewish messianism is inherently political, or secular in the sense of belonging to the world, and that it demands an understanding of history in relation to redemption. Christian messianic redemption, by contrast, privileges inner, spiritual concerns and tends to hold itself apart from political commitment or belief.[9]

But there is an important caveat to the exterior nature of this idea of redemption: it is an event in the community and may even be construed as a political event, but this does not mean that there is anything that can be done to bring about the messianic era,[10] meaning also that there is no sense in which history could be said causally to lead to the messianic. In contrast to the modern quasi-religious belief in progress, which posits redemption as 'the product of immanent developments', in Judaism there is no continuity between history and redemption: 'It is rather transcendence breaking in upon history, an intrusion in which history itself perishes, transformed in

its ruin because it is struck by a beam of light shining into it from an outside force'[11]. In the same way, Thesis 9 suggests that there is nothing that can be done to rescue us or redeem our past.[12]

Marx's account of history and revolution reflects certain messianic ideas, but Jewish messianism is not readily reconcilable with a Marxian understanding of history.[13] Marx's proposal, that the contradictions of advanced capitalism lead inevitably to 'explosions, crises . . . regularly recurring catastrophes' that will eventually culminate in its overthrow and destruction[14], has something in common with the central idea of catastrophe in Judaic messianic thinking: 'Jewish Messianism is in its origins and by its nature—this cannot be sufficiently emphasized—a theory of catastrophe'.[15] For Marx it is in the nature of capitalism to make the conditions in which the majority of people live steadily more intolerable; the apocalyptic conception of redemption in Judaism is that it 'cannot be realized without dread and ruin'.[16] Both theories have a similar utopian end, which involves a degree of restoration of an earlier, better way. Peter Osborne describes Marxism and Jewish messianism as making 'claims upon the same philosophical ground—the relationship of truth to history', a situation that 'forces them together into the same interpretive space'.[17] But for Marx this end is achieved through the revolutionary action of the 'propertyless' majority, whereas Judaism sees the messianic era as initiated by God alone.[18]

Benjamin meets this disjunctive relationship with what Habermas calls his 'peculiar conception of history'.[19] The relation between the two great thought systems is indicated in his first Thesis which figures historical materialism as a chess-playing automaton with unassailable ability.[20] In reality the automaton is a puppet that is controlled by a hidden man—an ancient and distorted figure, representing theology, who has to keep out of sight, presumably in order partly to continue the deception, partly because the appearance of the little hunchback is shameful. Though it would seem that Benjamin is saying that the explanatory claims of Historical Materialism are a deception and that the true understanding of events is theological, the other Theses make it hard to commit to this interpretation. Other considerations also caution us to interpret the first Thesis with care. Benjamin's renowned meticulous attention to exact arrangement in his writing signals that the placing of this allegory at the beginning of the *Theses* is an indication of covert intention. Furthermore, Benjamin's use of the term 'theology' may be carelessly read as a synonym for religion, but elsewhere he says that 'I have never been able to think and research otherwise than . . . in a theological sense—namely in accordance with the Talmudic theory of 49 levels of meaning of each passage of the Torah'.[21] Of this at least we can be sure: Benjamin thinks that historical materialism is deficient as a vatic approach to history. Scholem goes too far in asserting that in effect 'nothing remains of historical materialism except the term itself' in the *Theses*.[22] Benjamin's philosophy of history takes what it wants from both powerful systems, forging a connection between a distinctive understanding of history and morally imperative political action.

THE ANGEL OF HISTORY

Jewish angelology provides a rich and highly complex cast of 'superhuman beings dwelling in heaven, who . . . reveal to man God's will and execute His commands'.[23] The powers and roles of these entities in Biblical stories vary enormously. In the ninth Thesis, Benjamin's *Angel of History* is a witness, like Zechariah's angels who 'walk to and fro through the earth' (Zech. vi. 7) or Malachi's who record what is done in the 'book of remembrance' (Mal. iii.16). What is curious about Benjamin's metaphor is that although the New Angel *wants* to redeem, to 'awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed', he is powerless to do so, not because he is himself incapable or because he is not permitted to intervene, but because of the sheer force of the 'storm . . . blowing from Paradise'. The impotence of the angel seems not to be punitive but rather godless and impersonal; the 'chain of events' is mechanically forged. There is no appeal to divine mercy and no hope of redemption. The chain signifies human bondage; the links of the chain parody the idea of human historical progress—both grow longer but only through unchanging repetition, forming a 'single catastrophe'.

Despite the evident despair of this passage, Benjamin does not maintain throughout his *Theses* a nihilistic or hopeless conception of history as a story of inevitability. As mentioned previously, his method is not linear and meaning is not often left lying on the surface of his text. To be sure, the familiar dogmatic claim of modernity that mankind is being swept along in an irresistibly strong current of progress is summarily dismissed in Theses 9, 11, and 13 (and this becomes a distinctive and persistent theme in the work of the Frankfurt School with whom Benjamin had a long association, notably in Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*). But the second thesis contains this peculiar statement: 'Our coming was expected on earth. Like every generation that preceded us, we have been endowed with a *weak* Messianic power, a power to which the past has claim'. It is in the present—what Benjamin calls 'now-time' (*Jetztzeit*) that there is redemptive possibility, albeit a weak one. The Angel is propelled away from the wreckage and debris of history but there are two perspectives contained in the ninth Thesis—that of the angel and that of the human— 'he' and 'we'. The angel cannot wake the dead and redeem what is lost but it is not from the transcendent perspective that redemption is possible.

An acknowledged though little explored interpretation of Benjamin's thought is to be found in Wim Wenders' 1987 film *Wings of Desire* (*Der Himmel über Berlin*).[24] The film's central characters are angels who, like Benjamin's Angel of History 'have no kind of power and are only onlookers, watching what happens without the slightest possibility of taking a hand in any of it'.[25] *Wings of Desire* explores the redemptive possibility of past and present through the sometimes rambling monologue of an elderly poet as he struggles to recall a vanished townscape in post-war Berlin and by the life-and-sense-embracing decision of an angel to fall in love with a woman, immersing himself in the world of sensation, absorbing and being absorbed by the present moment. Like the Angel of History, he

has been a mere observer of human life, unable to have experiences and his first steps in the world after his 'fall' to earth are painful, fumbling, child-like and full of joyful amazement. Being in the present is possible because of the freshness of his gaze. The two aspects of Benjamin's theory of redemption, remembrance and now-time (*Jetztzeit*), are embodied in these two characters. Remembrance is the task of the chronicler, and children inhabit, par excellence, now-time but these two figures need to be considered together since they constitute two aspects of the whole in Benjamin's philosophy of history.

REMEMBRANCE

The notion of remembrance raises three interlinked sets of questions. The first is to do with the *justification* for remembering the past; the second concerns *what* should be remembered; the third asks what kind of existence the past has, and *how* it is that remembrance can take place.

1. Why Remember the Past? Should We? What Justification Is There for Remembrance?

Knowledge of the past has a utility, that of increasing the accuracy of our inferences, and thus our knowledge of the future. This underpins different justifications for remembering the past, and all involve the same supposition of continuity, which, when broken causes consternation:

> I go back from age to age up to the remotest antiquity but I find no parallel to what is occurring before my eyes; as the past has ceased to throw its light upon the future, the mind of man wanders in obscurity.[26]

Comparable points have been made by recent writers who have questioned the possibility of connecting past and present after the Holocaust—'the caesura of our times'.[27] But this is based upon a mistake according to Benjamin who says in Thesis 8:

> The current amazement that the things we are experiencing are still possible in the twentieth century is not philosophical. This amazement is not the beginning of knowledge—unless it is the knowledge that the view of history which gives rise to it is untenable.

Part of this mistake is the idea of historiography as progressive, exploiting the past as a raw material out of which the epic is crafted. For Benjamin, the past is not to be understood as an object to be known, but as a subject, an active partner in the construction of meaning. By way of reply to de Tocqueville he says:

> It's not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on what is past; rather, image is that wherein what has been comes together in a flash with the now to form a constellation. In other words, image is dialectics at a standstill. For while the relation of the present to the past is a purely temporal, continuous one, the relation of what-has-been to the now is dialectical: it is not progression but image, suddenly emergent.[28]

For Benjamin, history has 'enormous energies' which can be liberated like the energy released by splitting the atom.[29]

2. What Should be Remembered? Whose History?

When visiting a site of historical interest today, some will contemplate the 'anonymous toil' of the people who laid the stones, and wonder about the lives that were lived. Few if any modern cities should be viewed without some awareness of the barbarism they document. In contrast to the philosophy of history he is proposing, Benjamin uses the term 'historicism' to signify both objectivist and progressivist ideas about history. Historicism functions through the binding or suppression of aspects of the past that are not conducive to the notion of progress:

> Whoever has emerged victorious participates to this day in the triumphal procession in which the present rulers step over those who are lying prostrate. . . . The spoils are carried along in the procession. They are called cultural treasures, and a historical materialist views them with cautious detachment. For without exception the cultural treasures he surveys have an origin which he cannot contemplate without horror. . . . There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism (Thesis 7).

Similarly, in *The German Ideology* Marx excoriates the 'absurd conception of history which neglects the real relationships and confines itself to high-sounding dramas of princes and states'.[30] The virtue of the historical materialist's approach, in Benjamin's view, is that it 'cuts through historicism' to reveal the subcutaneous layers of labour and the manifestation of power in oppression and exploitation. In this way consciousness of past injustice fuels the flame of revolution; turning our gaze away from the oppression of 'enslaved ancestors' cuts off the gas. As Benjamin says in his 12th Thesis, the idea that one might redeem the future rather than the past 'made the working class forget both its hatred and its spirit of sacrifice, for both are nourished by the image of enslaved ancestors rather than that of liberated grandchildren'. The suppressed history of oppression and exploitation is a potentially powerful impetus to revolutionary action[31] since an unjust *damnatio memoriae* demands just restitution.

Benjamin is not simply arguing that an alternative data set about the past be known. There *is* a 'moral claim' which the past can make upon the

present, giving rise to what Axel Honneth describes as an 'objective debt'.[32] Although Benjamin's philosophy of history has implications for the oppressed, the point is also to challenge the linear historicism that denies the redemptive potential of remembrance and which thus gives rise to this oppressive situation in the first place. Benjamin exhorts us to seize hold of the energy that is pent up within the past to form a new and unexpected constellation with the present.

3. How Can the Past Be Remembered?

The past, for Benjamin, is something that through its own internal momentum flashes into the present in a fleeting afterlife. This is not resurrection—what Marx calls 'World-historical necromancy'.[33] The past cannot be known 'as it really was'; it does not exist in some inert state passively waiting to be uncovered. Rather, the past is both what did happen, told and untold, and the things that failed to happen—'people we could have talked to, women who could have given themselves to us' (Thesis 2)—the energy of the past comes from the negation of the events as they are currently known. This is both the unknown stories and the as yet unfulfilled hopes and desires; the underside of history is marked by loss, regret, passion, envy and hope of redemption. Such catastrophic debris endows its future, that is, our present, with what Benjamin calls a 'weak Messianic power', which is the 'secret agreement' between past generations and the present one.[34] The past is redeemed when it is recognised, grasped in the present, making a new connection—constellation—with a 'state of emergency' or 'moment of danger' now. The dead cannot be awakened and what has been smashed cannot be made whole, as the Angel of History desires, but there is feint redemption in new knowing that comes from the unexpected source.

   History may be conceived as flowing and continuous. Benjamin regards this as 'empty time'—'the sequence of events like the beads of a rosary'—growing longer as it amasses more and more data and void of redemptive potential. Empty time is interrupted the moment a new constellation is formed and something that was lost or hidden flares into sudden and fleeting existence. The philosophy of history which Benjamin is proposing is instead 'where thinking suddenly stops in a configuration pregnant with tensions'. It is 'a Messianic cessation of happening . . . a revolutionary chance in the fight for the oppressed past'. The idea of interrupted time is a special kind of present moment that Benjamin calls *Jetztzeit*.

JETZTZEIT—MESSIANIC TIME

   I'd like at each step, at each gust of wind, to be able to say 'Now', 'Now and Now' and no longer 'Forever' and 'for Eternity' (*Wings of Desire*).

Jetztzeit is frequently translated as 'now-time'. This should be distanced from any mystical notions, such as those suggested by Harry Zorn who translated the Theses in Arendt's collection of Benjamin's writings, *Illuminations*. He says in a footnote that Benjamin 'clearly is thinking of the mystical *nunc stans*', the eternal now of the divine perspective. Lindroos (2001) instead asserts: 'Jetztzeit is the concrete, the punctual and non-cumulative experience of time'.[35] Benjamin makes it clear: this is how the historical materialist approaches a historical subject.

The way in which Benjamin describes how the past is in the present emphasises the ephemeral nature of its appearance: the flash, the flare, the flitting image. Instead of the steady light illuminating our path, the past may give us instantaneous brilliance, but if it is not recognised, that is, if we do not relate it to the present, it may be irretrievably lost. In the final Thesis Benjamin describes a 'conception of the present as the "time of the now" which is shot through with chips of Messianic time'. Although Zorn's translation does not capture the disruptive and explosive violence of the original German, it is clear that Benjamin is indicating that, instead of a passive object of retrieval, there is an intrinsic power within the appearance of the past in the present.[36]

The moment in which the past makes itself known in the present is an interruption to time, a 'Messianic cessation of happening' in which the shards of the past are recognised as forming a *constellation* with the present. The idea of constellation is particularly apt for describing the relationship between past and present. It is most decidedly, for Benjamin, not a relationship of causality, but an intellectual construction, much as the figures in the sky are made up by points of light in apparent proximity yet actually separated by unimaginable distances. The act of construction pauses momentarily to reveal something new: 'Image is dialectics at a standstill. For while the relation of the present to the past is purely temporal, the relation of what-has-been to the now is dialectical: not temporal in nature but figural (*bildlich*)'.[37] What is recognised as part of any constellation or image is determined by the state of the present, the preoccupying interests caused by what Benjamin calls the 'state of emergency' (Thesis 8). Moments of the past 'attain to legibility only at a particular time.... Every present day is determined by the images that are synchronic with it: each "now" is the now of a particular recognisability'.[38]

Caygill (2004) traces the origins of Benjamin's dialectical approach to the thought of Jacob Burckhardt in the 1840s.[39] Burckhardt proposed, in opposition to Hegel, that the work of history was one of coordination rather than the sublation of events to an idea. As Caygill points out, this is not philosophically innocent because there have to be criteria to determine relevance before the choice can be made of what is to be coordinated. However, his application of this criticism to Benjamin's approach (that 'his concept of "constellation" locate[s] these decisions in the interests of the present') appears to underplay the conception of the past as actively interrupting the *Jetztzeit* through its own transformed energy.[40]

BENJAMIN'S CHILDREN: THE TASK OF CHILDHOOD

The child, along with the chronicler who 'recites events without distinguishing between major and minor ones', may be understood as the twin loci of (weak) messianic power. But this infant messianism is far removed from any romantic sugary notions of childish purity and goodness. Benjamin's children are sometimes cruel, grotesque, despotic and insolent; they are bent on destruction and alien to humanity, glorying in violent and murderous games.[41] Benjamin's acute observations of children at play challenge many of the ways in which they figure in philosophy. Children somehow refuse to cooperate with theoretical categories of reason and morality. As Avital Ronell observes: 'The child constitutes a security risk in the house of philosophy. It crawls in, setting off a lot of noise'.[42] Benjamin's children may be unreasonable and amoral but in their play lies something important relating to an understanding of historically orientated redemption. Three aspects of his treatment of childhood in relation to the messianic and historical are of significance: children's attraction to what is forgotten and discarded, their radical openness and their ability to be absorbed in an occupation, and their love of collecting and arranging.

CHILDREN AND DETRITUS

> Children are particularly fond of haunting any site where things are being visibly worked on. They are irresistibly drawn by the detritus generated by building, gardening, housework, tailoring, or carpentry.[43]

It is a moot point whether this is a defensible description or based on a particular milieu in which children were relegated to the margins of everyday adult life. Children today may rarely need to look to the detritus of the adult for their entertainment. Still, there may be something that continues to resonate with our experience: children, when they are permitted the right to be bored,[44] beg for off-cuts and packing materials; the questions: 'are you finished with this?' and 'can I have it?' are still sometimes asked, despite the near-ubiquitous TV, XBox and Wii. Moreover, items that enter children's play from the adult world of productive activity are transformed into unpredictable and unrelated props for the imagination. Potentially, nothing is rejected, everything can be imagined to be something else, or can be invested with powers and significance. The objects can also be brought into new juxtaposition, 'in a new, intuitive relationship'. What is rendered invisible in the busy adult world because it lacks immediate utility is present to the child at play.

CHILDREN AND ABSORPTION

Where Habermas developed the distinction between what he called communicative action and instrumental reason, Benjamin took a different turn.

In contrast to the latter, what Axel Honneth calls 'purposive consciousness', Benjamin turns to the experience of 'self-forgetful engrossment'. This could be seen as a third state of mind, typical of a child at play, and for adults accessible sometimes through reading, listening to music, intoxication, or states of half consciousness as when waking up or falling asleep. It is in these states that adults can see objects in new and surprising ways, make connections between ideas, or perceive the magical or spiritual.[45] For adults these are generally exceptional experiences; for children they may be the norm. Honneth explains this state of affairs as resulting from the fact that children are simply not very good at purposive consciousness because they lack ability to control their environment.[46] Though doubtless true, this also misleads in that it reduces childhood to a state that can be described simply in terms of lacking the capabilities of adulthood. But children have in play experience that may not be sublated into adult experience; rather it may be lost to us, except in those rare and accidental moments of detachment.

One way in which we might understand this difference is in terms of the ability to lose oneself and become absorbed in something else, the child's 'pure receptivity'.[47] There is a passage in *One-Way Street*, entitled 'Child Reading' in which Benjamin describes using vivid present tense the experience of reading when he was at school, a time when the child reader's 'breath is part of the air of the events narrated, and all the participants breathe with his life. He mingles with the characters far more closely than grown-ups do'.[48] Though not the exclusive province of children, this mingling of oneself with the characters of a book does seem to capture the early experiences of absorption, whether in an object, a project or a book. In 'Children's Literature' Benjamin describes how children almost literally digest books—gobble them up and take them apart, destroy them. They do not read books empathically but imbibe them, using reading as a means for growth and power.[49] The ability of the child to be entranced and be absorbed is, at the same time, the ability to absorb.

CHILDREN AS COLLECTORS

> I am not exaggerating when I say that to a true collector the acquisition of an old book is its rebirth. This is the childlike element which, in a collector, mingles with the element of old age. For children can accomplish the renewal of existence in a hundred unfailing ways. Among children, collecting is only one process of renewal; other processes are the painting of objects, the cutting out of figures, the application of decals—the whole range of childlike modes of acquisition, from touching things to giving them names. To renew the old world—that is the collector's deepest desire. . . .[50]

In his account of the collector in 'Unpacking my Library', Benjamin again brings together those two aspects of his redemptive philosophy of history:

remembrance and *Jetztzeit*, or the chronicler and the child; in *Wings of Desire*, the same pair appears in the characters of the aged poet, Homer, and the fallen angel, Damiel. In this passage he talks about collecting as a process of renewal and rebirth, both of which belong to the activity of the child: 'this is the child-like element which, in a collector, mingles with the element of old age'. But the child goes beyond collecting; he acquires objects by changing them. The post-lapsarian human child goes beyond Adamic touching and naming of things, to change the objects he encounters by decorating them or taking them out of their original context and pasting them into a new one. Again, in this description we find Benjamin's assessment of children as people who, with little or no respect for the idea of preservation, will bring old things into a renewed existence by ripping them out of their historical context and bringing them into a new set of relations. This is why children's preoccupied irreverence important to Benjamin's theory of experience, and by extension, to his philosophy of history: they do things differently.

'NOW WE CAN SAY WE'VE BEEN THERE'

In a letter to Adorno in 1940, Benjamin recounts how his parents would take him and his brother Georg on walks to 'places of interest' in the surrounding area: 'After we had visited one or other of the obligatory places of interest around Freudenstadt, Wengen or Schreiberhau, my brother used to say, "Now we can say we've been there". This remark imprinted itself unforgettably on my mind.'[51] It is not surprising that his brother's comment remained with Benjamin; the tenses of the sentence leave the reader reeling: in the present we know that in the future we will be able to say that we have been there in the past. Time seems to collapse and knot into itself as the present contemplates its existence as the past of the future. Georg's comment is typical of the collector's way of thinking; another place has come into his possession and will take its place alongside the other places. But recalling Benjamin's account of how children 'can accomplish the renewal of existence in a hundred unfailing ways',[52] it remains to be decided whether they are permitted the liberty and resources to do this, going beyond the collector's urge and performing the 'task of childhood'.

The significance of children's attraction to what is discarded is clear if one now considers the detritus of history, what is lost or forgotten. Like the undiscriminating chronicler, the child can pluck a piece of rubbish from obscurity, bring it into a new constellation with other things, and make something new and unexpected. Children's play is not merely an allegory for redemption but rather it is the epitome of it. What we need to consider then, is what happens when we take children to a historical monument or tell them about something that happened in the past when we want to impart some historical knowledge or sensibility. It is perhaps easier to say what Benjamin would object to than what he would advocate. What would not be acceptable to him is the rise of the 'interactive exhibit' which is now

the norm in any place where a family or class of school children might visit. Flaps to lift, levers to pull, lights that come on when you place the correct piece of a jigsaw. The mistake, according to Benjamin, is not that we are allowing children to 'do', instead of 'look but not touch'. Rather the problem is that we grossly underestimate the ability of children to 'produce their own small world of things within the greater one'. As he says at the beginning of 'Construction Site':

> Pedantic brooding over the production of objects—visual aids, toys, or books—that are supposed to be suitable for children is folly . . . the world is full of unrivalled objects for childish attention and use.[53]

Out of an obsession with a distorted understanding of 'active learning', that is, one that puts at the forefront mere physical activity, might adults be inadvertently preventing children from using their natural innovative and original ways of thinking and experiencing? This is the question that Benjamin provokes us to consider.

What can be extrapolated from the disparate and sometimes fragmentary passages in Benjamin's writings that concern childhood experience is that the elements of engrossment or absorption, of deconstruction and its concomitant irreverence are characteristic of what is distinctive in children's relationship to the objects of their attention. The engrossment is mutual between the child and object of his attention since both are made greater by the encounter. The object is deconstructed without reverence or understanding, though also, it should be said, without undirected violence, opening the way for a new thing to be made from the resulting debris. The insolence of the child works against the respectful preservation of the object or story which characterises the historicist's approach. Instead Benjamin calls for children to have the 'right of command' or sovereignty in their play.[54] Protection from unnecessary interference and direction has been advocated by educationalists such as A. S. Neil in the interests of individual psychological development. Here the reason lies in the preservation of a rare space in which redemptive recognition and innovative constellations can take shape.

Childhood is somehow in a parlous state. This concern takes various forms, identifies different symptoms, and emerges from widely divergent political agendas. Children's exclusion from adult affairs is changing in response to calls for participatory rights and exposure to a range of conventionally adult themes through the media. Contrariwise there is also anxious activity focused on creating a separate world for what must be 'esoteric and incommensurable beings'.[55] It would not be wise to generalise overmuch since the experience of childhood is variable. Still, it seems that children are sometimes caught between radical participatory inclusionism and an artificially constructed treasure island. The idea of the disappearance of childhood may be a justifiable concern but the redemption of childhood will not be achieved by means of these extremes. Benjamin points in a different direction; instead of an imperative to act, rather there is the suggestion that we *refrain from interfering*. The urge to press forward

and guide the present into a desired future is more than understandable, inevitable even. As Rosenzweig observes, 'Without the desire to make the Messiah arrive before his time, the future is not a future but only a past drawn out to an infinite length'.[56] What Benjamin suggests is that this 'enticement to Messianic action' should be resisted insofar as it leads adults to seek to control the ways in which children relate to the objects of their environment by thinking instrumentally about the process and anticipating the results. This is not counsel to abandon children to their own devices but rather, perhaps, to maintain a respectful distance from their play, in which the child already follows patterns of thinking and behaviour which prefigure the historical consciousness proposed by Benjamin as redemptive: this is a description of a constructivist theory of learning which demands as its context opportunities for absorption, rather than distraction, access to a broad range of materials, artefacts, stories and places, and permission to be irreverent, eclectic and creative.

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NOTES

1. Nicola Gess (2010) is one exception. This article focuses on Anglophone discussion, but the observation is true of German publications also.
2. Derrida, 1994, p. 181.
3. Habermas, 1979, p. 32.
4. Habermas, 1983, p. 34.
5. Missac, 1988, p. 213.
6. Benjamin wrote the Theses between his time in the French internment camp in Nevers and his final flight from Paris in reaction to the 'shock of the Hitler-Stalin pact' (Scholem, 1976, p. 231; Smith, 1988 p. 82). The manuscript was entrusted to Hannah Arendt in Marseilles who took it with her to New York. Elizabeth Young-Bruehl recounts how the Theses were read aloud and discussed by refugees waiting for a ship to take them from Europe (1982, p. 162).
7. See Bradley and Fletcher, 2001. A recent international conference identified messianism as a 'central theme' of current doctoral and postdoctoral research (Crombez and Vloeberghs, 2007).
8. Scholem, 1971, p. 1.
9. Christianity may be political but it is not normally part of its understanding of redemption. A fusion of Christian and Marxist ideas did emerge in Latin America in the 1950s and 60s. However, Liberation Theology, as it came to be known, is still a marginal tradition in the Christian Church and has been criticised as a distortion by Roman Catholic leaders, notably Pope emeritus, Benedict XVI who described it as a 'fundamental threat to the faith of the Church' (Ratzinger, 1984).
10. Scholem, 1971, p. 15.
11. Scholem, 1971, p. 10; Scholem goes on to detail how later rationalistic messianic thinking incorporated Enlightenment idea of progress.
12. See also Benjamin, 1979, p. 155.
13. Goldstein (2001) provides a succinct summary of the debate (pp. 246–247).
14. Marx, 1978c, p. 291–2.
15. Scholem, 1971, p. 7.
16. Marx, 1978b, p. 161; Scholem, 1971, p. 13.
17. Osborne, 1994, p. 70.

18. Benjamin was also influenced by Franz Rosenzweig. In *The Star of Redemption* (1922/2005) Rosenzwieg asserts both the traditional position that redemption is unpredictable and not causally connected to history, and also a variant which proposed that redemption is in fact a process, rather than simply an event, but that it is a process quite separate from the history of the world, neither inward and spiritual nor profane. Dubbels (2007) has described this alternative process as 'a disorder of singular discontinuous ethical acts' (p. 11).

19. Habermas, 1979, p. 38.

20. The figure of the automaton is laden with literary, political and philosophical meaning. Benjamin returns to this repeatedly in his writings, in describing the behaviour of the urban crowd, the mechanisation of human behaviour in industry, the repulsive falsity of high society (Benjamin, 1968, pp. 171–2; 1999a, Z1, 5, p. 694). Löwy (2005) describes how 'Benjamin brings out the decidedly religious dualism between life and the automaton . . . inspired by the sense of a secret identity between the automatic and the satanic . . .' (p. 12 n. 35).

21. Benjamin, 1994, pp. 372–373. Usually only the first half of this sentence is quoted, e.g. Goldstein, 2001, p. 269.

22. Scholem, 1976, p. 231

23. *The Jewish Encyclopaedia*, 1906, Angelology.

24. Bordo, 2009; Graf, 2002.

25. Wenders, 1991, p. 79.

26. de Tocqueville, 1863, vol. 2 bk. 4 ch. 8 p. 408.

27. Lindroos, 2001, p. 33.

28. Benjamin, 1999a, p. 462.

29. Benjamin, 1999a, p. 463; Benjamin repeatedly uses metaphors of unreleased chemical energy and explosion, e.g. Benjamin and Tarnowski, 1975, pp. 27–58, 29.

30. Marx, 1978b, p. 163.

31. Benjamin describes the failure of Social Democratic education programmes to bring about political change in terms of their mistaken belief that 'the same knowledge that secured the domination of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie would enable the proletariat to free itself from this domination. But in reality a form of knowledge without access to practice, and which could teach the proletariat nothing about its situation, was of no danger to its oppressors' (Benjamin and Tarnowski, 1975, p. 32).

32. Honneth, 1993, p. 91.

33. Marx, 1978a, p. 595.

34. '*Eine geheime Verabredung*' is more conspiracy or pact than covenant, emphasising the arcane nature of this relationship.

35. Lindroos, 2001, p. 39 fn7.

36. *Splitter* is closer to 'splinter' than 'chip'; *gesprengt* is more forceful and active than 'shot through'.

37. Benjamin, 1999a, N3,1, p. 463.

38. Ibid.

39. Caygill, 2004, pp. 74–77.

40. Ibid.

41. Benjamin, 'Altes Spielzeug' cited in Gess, 2010, p. 683.

42. Ronell, 2001, p. 102.

43. Benjamin, 1996, p. 449.

44. 'Boredom is the dream bird that hatches the egg of experience' (Benjamin, 1999a, p. 90). 'There is no longer any place for boredom in our lives. The activities that were covertly and inwardly bound up with it are dying out' (1999c, p. 658).

45. Benjamin, 1999b, p. 208; p. 329; 1999c, p. 673.

46. Honneth, 1993, p. 86.

47. Benjamin, 1996, p. 51.

48. Benjamin, 1996, p. 463. In 'Old Forgotten Children's Books' Benjamin describes how children both 'inhabit' and 'inscribe' woodcut illustrations, the latter expressed literally by scribbling on them (1996, p. 411).

49. Benjamin, Kinderliteratur, cited in Gess, 2010, p. 700; 1999b, pp. 250–256.

50. Benjamin, 1999c, p. 487.

51. Benjamin, 1994, p. 118.

52. Benjamin, 1999c, p. 487.

53. Benjamin, 1996, p. 449.
54. *Kommandogewalt* in *'Grunende Anfangsrunde'*, cited in Gess, 2010, p. 705.
55. Benjamin, 1996, p. 408.
56. Rosenzweig, 2005, p. 244.

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Adorno: Cultural Education and Resistance

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Abstract In recent years, culture has become significantly politicized, or conspicuously de-politicized, in different parts of the UK, making its appearance in education policy of pivotal interest and ripe for critical attention. From the vantage point of Theodor Adorno's work on the culture industry and his writings on the work of the teacher, I argue that cultural education is a site where something crucial and distinctive takes place. Within the Enlightenment tradition, critical self-reflection and resistance to heteronymous ways of thinking are core aims of education. Adorno's contribution to an understanding of these aims leads us to consider the importance of 'live contact with the warmth of things' as essential to ethical and intellectual life. The kindly tolerance of the pluralist ideal is now being teased and goaded by acts of terror and widespread concern about personal and social security. At such an unstable juncture, an understanding of cultural education as an experience of 'incorrigible plurality' enriches and informs the beleaguered ideal of pluralism and points a way forward in troubled times.

Keywords Adorno · Culture · Cultural education · Pluralism

> The room was suddenly rich and the great bay-window was
> Spawning snow and pink roses against it
> Soundlessly collateral and incompatible
> World is suddener than we fancy it
>
> World is crazier and more of it than we think,
> Incorrigibly plural. I peel and portion
> The tangerine and spit the pips and feel

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The drunkenness of things being various.

The fire flames with a bubbling sound for world
Is more spiteful and gay than one supposes –
On the tongue on the eyes on the ears in the palms of one's hands –
There is more than glass between the snow and the huge roses.

Louis MacNeice 'Snow' 1935

Introduction

This article offers a hermeneutical approach to education policy in relation to arts and culture, informed by the work of Theodore Adorno on the culture industry and in his aesthetic theory. I begin with a detailed account of recent policy trends in cultural education, using a comparison between two divergent contexts to illustrate where choices have been made that reflect differing political and social priorities. The aim is to provide an interpretation and understanding of the significance of these choices for the educational project and to point to the particular opportunities presented by cultural education.

UK Policy on the Arts and Education

None of the four countries of the UK is a state in its own right, but the separation of nationhood and statehood has had a different effect on the cultural self-understanding of each country because of the different ways in which each entered, or was brought, into the Union, their relative size and their relationships to the centres of power. The political import of culture policy has become increasingly evident in recent years as the underpinning principles of different devolved UK administrations diverge.

With no political locus until the establishment of the devolved parliament in 1999, Scotland has been anxious about identity and culture for a long time. One widely held opinion is that the cultural production of the people who live in Scotland has been systematically suppressed and ignored by successive UK institutions, leading to a marked lack of self-belief (Beveridge and Turnbull 1989; Craig 2003; Moffat and Riach 2014). This might be stony ground for a new curriculum that seeks to couple culture and history with a view to fostering exploration, reflection and the solving of problems (Education Scotland 2013, p. 2). However, culture features prominently in plans for the country's future. Successive Scottish administrations have seen cultural activity as a key concern as expressed in a quite phenomenal number of government strategies, reports and commissioned studies over the past few years. Public discussion has been vigorous and occasionally acrimonious, but a general approach is emerging which strongly suggests an understanding of the value of cultural activity that is highly distinctive in the UK context. Illustrative of this claim is the discourse surrounding the policies of certain government departments and agencies in the last couple of years.

At the end of 2013, the chief executive of Creative Scotland resigned after months of criticism from the arts community. The organization, which is the development agency with responsibility for the distribution of public funds for the arts, was accused of being infected with 'a kind of undead Thatcherism, a half-baked, hollowed-out, public sector version of market theory that reduces the language of creativity to a series of flat-footed business school slogans, and imposes a crude ethic of sado-competition' (McMillan 2012).

An open letter from 100 prominent artists and writers followed in October 2012 criticizing, amongst other things, the dominance of commercial values over those that are social and cultural in Creative Scotland's policies (Herald 2012). The idea of 'creative enterprise' was vigorously challenged by an artistic community that rejected its re-designation as a unit of economic production.

In June 2013, following this public embarrassment, the Scottish culture secretary gave a speech in which she strongly asserted the distinctive nature of her government's approach. In this, she says that 'culture and heritage have value in and of themselves…because they are our heart, our soul, our essence'. The economic value of culture 'is not its primary purpose but a secondary benefit' (Hyslop 2013). In quite startling contrast, the then English Culture Secretary described funding for the arts as 'venture capital' in a speech given in April 2013. The purpose of the speech, she said, was to 'hammer home the value of culture to our economy…. Our focus must be on culture's economic impact' (Miller 2013). In the face of this hard-faced neoliberalism, even the Chair of the Arts Council in England explicitly abandoned any attempt to communicate her belief that 'culture is a deep necessity to human beings' because 'politicians aren't interested in that' (Forgan 2013). In both nations, the arts are struggling with an economic agenda that threatens their existence; but, for the artistic community in Scotland there are stronger grounds for, very cautious, optimism.

The economic utility of culture complements its political utility. The current administration in Scotland is formed by the Scottish National Party in the most volatile UK political scene since Margaret Thatcher's era, a fact which might colour our understanding of the motivations behind some government backing for the arts, since: 'to conceive of Scotland as a globally networked population of 40 million people is arguably a more powerful way to think. It is clear that a strong cultural attachment to Scotland is a prerequisite for all other efforts to engage diasporic groups' (Ancien et al. 2009, p. 28). A question that needs to be asked is how an outward-facing cultural event will affect the way in which those on the inside, as it were, think about themselves in terms of their cultural identity or identities. In other words, what is the effect of commodification on 'intangible cultural heritage'? (McCleery et al. 2008, p. 10). One obvious effect might be a bias to the 'traditional' meaning a selection of indigenous art forms. This potentially distorts cultural activity in a plural society in a way that contradicts government pronouncements and presents the danger of a nostalgic cultural necromancy from which Scotland has only recently emerged.

Culture in Education Policy

The growing importance of cultural issues in the broader policy context is also reflected in educational discourse. Striking changes have taken place over the past two decades in terms of the frequency of use and also the context in which the term appears.

Education policy in Scotland is formed by means of a distinctive process of consultation, dispersal and consensus. The main programmatic statement for the school curriculum, 'The Structure and Balance of the Curriculum', in place between 1993 and 2010, lays out the foundational principles and aspirations of the curriculum as a whole. Between the 1993 and 2000 editions of this document, the number of times the term 'culture' appears in some form triples, partly due to the introduction of 'The culture of Scotland' as a cross-curricular aspect. In 2006, a new curriculum was proposed and the principles were laid out in A Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 3–18 (1), in which the number of

times 'culture' or 'cultural' appears almost triples again. Alongside this, there is, for the first time, mention of cultural identity and a very strong emphasis on Scotland. A subsequent guidance document: 'Building the Curriculum 3' advises: 'Children and young people are entitled to a broad general education…. Throughout this broad curriculum it is expected there will be an emphasis on Scottish contexts, Scottish cultures and Scotland's history and place in the world' (2008, p. 5). 'Learning about Scotland' lays out in more detail the ways in which the emphasis is to be achieved asserts the 'entitlement for children and young people to learn about Scotland's cultures, people, history, achievements and languages' (Education Scotland 2013).

Whilst the Scottish curriculum has rapidly been gaining confidence in using the idea of culture as a way of life and attempting to negotiate the difficulties involved in asserting Scottish history and culture in a plural society, two major documents that have been published south of the border indicate a strongly contrasting trend. The English National Curriculum (2013) contains curiously little reference to culture, except in the context of Design and Technology and in two instances where 'other/different cultures' are mentioned. There is a reference to 'cultural development' through the literature and a non-specific reference to cultural history. There is not a single reference to English culture or history, though there are numerous references to British history (DfE 2013, p. 165). The general picture is that the concept of culture features very little and English culture, history and identity are conspicuous only by their absence.

In 2012, a government commissioned review, 'Cultural Education in England' was published. Its author, Darren Henley, interprets the term 'culture' in the sense of creative endeavour: performance and expressive arts and design and the literature, thus apparently avoiding the difficulties of talking about culture as also a way of life in a plural society. However, the neutrality of culture as intellectual and artistic endeavour is deceptive. This detailed 84-page report at no stage acknowledges the existence of anything other than a unitary cultural heritage, though it does say in an oddly and somewhat anachronistically worded statement that:

> Children of all races and genders should be able to connect to the Cultural Education that they receive. It is important that no minority groups are forgotten in any strategy changes that take place as a result of this Review. (Henley 2012, p. 14)

Despite the lack of explicit 'Englishness' in this review of cultural education in England, it seems that 'minority groups' are something of an afterthought. The thinking behind this omission is a moot point. There are different ways of responding to the challenges of a plural society and, considering the cultural and linguistic commonalities in the UK, it might be surprising that the emphases in education policy are so markedly distinct.

The Scottish and English policy frameworks do not overlap in their application and are not directly in conversation with one another, but the language nonetheless is a site of struggle. The absence of markers of national identity from discussion in English education results in a simulated sameness, which hides certain historical hierarchical relations between the countries of the UK. Though the ideological projection of English identity as British, and therefore normal, may in some ways protect power interests, it is not obvious that this silence on English culture, history and identity will serve the individual or social development of the English people. Contemporary discourse on culture takes place in full view of politically and ethically contentious territory. It is imperative to distance policy on cultural education from narrowly nationalistic, exclusive, discriminatory or parochial associations, but complete silence on the topic dangerously and disingenuously creates a void, which will be filled by voices peddling precisely this ideology. Current difficulties

being experienced in parts of the English education system are the result of policies that have permitted monocultural schooling, given isolationist minority parental groups freedom to exert strong influence on teaching and the curriculum, and, by inevitable corollary, lessened local government supervision. A recent government commissioned investigation into Birmingham schools found that an unrepresentative group of parents were able to take key positions on school boards. Amongst their 'achievements' in certain schools were the elimination of arts and humanities from the curriculum and the promotion of intolerance of difference and diversity. This went unchallenged by the local council in order to protect 'community cohesion' (Clark 2014). Neoliberal governance without discussion of English identities is creating social and political divisions, which will be increasingly difficult to put right.

Despite their many similarities, Scotland and England are currently tracing very different paths in respect of their approaches to culture and to cultural education. Rejection by the creative community in Scotland of their designation as mere commodity suggests a self-conception that is strongly resonant with Adorno's theory of culture: the hope of a not completely reified culture which protects the possibility of social and political critique, aligned with the dialectical vigour of pluralism.

Adorno and Culture

Scrutiny of Theodor Adorno's concept of culture and his understanding of the role of the teacher yields important insights into how cultural education is at the core of educational practice. Adorno is one of the twentieth century's foremost critics of modernity and is

well known for his application of Marxism to the conditions of late capitalism, and in particular culture. He is not a writer whose work can be easily 'applied', nor did he wish it to be. His work is anti-systematic, often incomplete, and fragmentary: he would not give the reader the satisfaction of a completed argument because that is the very means by which we are dominated, an idea that is central to his critique of culture itself. The unity of form and content in Adorno's writing is similar to that of Walter Benjamin with whom he shared fundamental ethical, theological, political and philosophical commitments.[1] An utterly complete and consistent totality, or the aim to achieve one in argument, is what he regarded as a Nazi aesthetic. His writing is intentionally fragmented and empirically impressionistic. This is not the same as falling backwards into a mystical irrationalist world view; certainty can be a sign that you have, in fact, stopped thinking. According to Adorno: 'thought as such…is an act of negation, of resistance to that which is forced upon it' (1966/1981a, p. 19). More indirect communication, the use of montage, and the poetic all form literary conditions in which insights may be caught, as it were, 'out of the corner of [the] eye or even at the corner of the text' (Goehr 2005, p. xxxii). In the final aphorism of

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[1] In a letter to Benjamin, he says: 'You are only too well aware how intimately the significance of the work [Benjamin's essay on Kafka] is bound up with its fragmentary character' (Adorno and Benjamin 1999, p. 67). Adorno would have been no supporter of 'plain English'—or plain German—for that matter. In Minima Moralia, he writes: 'only the word coined by commerce, and really alienated, touches [people] as familiar. Few things contribute so much to the demoralization of intellectuals. Those who would escape it must recognize the advocates of communicability as traitors to what they communicate' (p. 101). Elsewhere in the same text, he says: 'dialectic advances by way of extremes, driving thoughts with the utmost consequentiality to the point where they turn back on themselves….' (p. 86). It is unfortunate that this is not widely acknowledged in cultural studies; it is easy to disagree with Adorno when isolated texts are taken as 'representative example[s]' of his thought (see, for example, Storey 2006, p. 66).

Minima Moralia (1951/2005), he describes this off-kilter view: 'Perspectives must be fashioned that displace and estrange the world, reveal it to be, with its rifts and crevices, as indigent and distorted as it will appear in the messianic light' (p. 247). Adorno's powerful and intriguing critique illuminates a way of comprehending what is happening now in cultural education, and perhaps venturing some thoughts on how we might proceed, but it is not a formula or system which can be adopted, as it were ready to wear.

Adorno's work on the 'culture industry' is relatively well known. Less well known are his works of public philosophy, which mainly take the form of radio broadcasts. These public lectures are often different in tone from his other writings and they focus strongly on the immediate lived experience of people who are puzzling how to make sense of the catastrophe that had befallen Germany and much of the rest of the world and also struggling to make a society in which life is worth living. One group to whom he repeatedly turns his attention is teachers and in this he draws on his experiences of interviewing and examining candidates for entry to the profession. At this time, a major concern amongst the Allies was the denazification of educators in Germany and Austria (Tent 1982). Adorno returned to Germany as a US citizen and the Institute for Social Research was re-established in Frankfurt with the support of the US government as part of a programme of national re-education. But, Adorno addresses bigger issues about the selection and education of teachers, their role in society and the purpose of education. Throughout, the concept of culture is central.

Culture Industry

The idea of the 'culture industry' is an analysis of culture that could be misunderstood and caricatured as somewhat hysterical elitism in which Hollywood is bad and Schoenberg is good. In this respect, Adorno sometimes did not help himself, with his bilious dismissals of jazz, the Beatles and 'protest music' of the 1960 s. A selective reading might indicate an attack primarily on popular culture since it presents more obviously as an industry, something that is produced and sold to a market, than does so-called high culture. But, Adorno explicitly denied this interpretation of his analysis (1963/1975, p. 98). The culture industry imposes 'the profit motive naked onto cultural forms' (1963/1975, p. 99). This applies to both 'light' and 'serious' art in equal measure: 'The differences in the reception of official 'classical' music and light music no longer have any real significance. They are still manipulated for reasons of marketability' (1938/1982, p. 35). Cultural events that have no cost have already been paid for by the working classes: 'all culture shares the guilt of society. It ekes out its existence only by virtue of injustice already perpetrated in the sphere of production' (1967/1981b, p. 26; see also 1944/1997, p. 159). For this reason, Adorno dismisses as superficial cultural criticism that merely bemoans the commodification of culture as though underneath the layer of capital there is a pure undamaged art form. Though he understands art as autonomous and as having critical purchase on society, including recalcitrant popular forms and the 'advanced product [that] has renounced consumption' (1938/1982, p. 35), he argues that the commodification of art causes it to be stripped of these qualities and to serve the goal of increasing capital both by the direct exchange of money and also by causing people to accept the tenets and processes of capitalism in exchange for transitory pleasure (1944/1997, p. 144).

At times, Adorno indicates that the possession of culture by the monopolistic, totalizing action of capitalism is complete—all autonomy, conflict and resistance are 'liquidated' or

'eliminated'; 'All difference degenerates to a nuance in the monotony of supply' (1947/1991, p. 74, 1963/1975, p. 99, 1967/1981b, p. 21). His most famous statement of despair about culture, his *Kulturpessimismus*, was this:

> Even the most extreme consciousness of doom threatens to degenerate into idle chatter. Cultural criticism finds itself faced with the final stage of the dialectic of culture and barbarism. To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric.… Absolute reification … is now preparing to absorb the mind entirely. (1967/1981b, p. 34)

Adorno's despair about culture remained unassuaged to the end: 'all post-Auschwitz culture, including its urgent critique, is garbage' (1966/1981a, p. 367). But, in other texts Adorno's exaggerated polemical style does give way to something more nuanced and he concedes the possibility of a not completely reified culture, one that does at least appear to challenge and resist.

Culture and the 'Unity of Opposites'

The 2009 Christmas number one in the UK music chart was a fairly amusing surprise. After an online campaign to ensure that the winner of the X-Factor did not achieve the near-guaranteed number one slot, the rock band, Rage Against the Machine outsold other contenders with a song that has the refrain: 'FUCK YOU I WON'T DO AS YOU TELL ME!'. The question is: should we believe its professed insubordination or should we dismiss it as self-deception 'in the service of success'? (1938/1982, p. 33). In this instance, one of the musicians ably fielded the question in an interview for the *Los Angeles Times*: 'When you live in a capitalistic society, the currency of the dissemination of information goes through capitalistic channels…. We're not interested in preaching to just the converted (Hilburn, 1996). Without doubt, the campaign was intended to be a rejection of the total commercialization the X-Factor represents.

Adorno admits that there was rarely, if ever, a 'pure' form of art, in which financial considerations played no part: 'Pure works of art, which deny the commodity society by the very fact that they obey their own law were always wares all the same' (1944/1997, p.157). But, the fact that something is paid for does not entail that it is exclusively a commodity— the commodification can be indirect and secondary. He cites the example of Beethoven as 'the most outstanding example of the unity of those opposites, market and independence' (1944/1997, p. 158). This idea of the 'unity of opposites' is key to understanding Adorno's position. The unity in question is not a 'liquidation of conflict' or a stable and motionless balanced difference but rather a vital movement of ideas in response and counter-response. Conflict within a work of art comes from its relation to practical lived experience: 'no authentic work of art…has ever exhausted itself in itself alone, in its being-in-itself. They have always stood in relation to the actual life-process of society from which they distinguished themselves' (1967/1981b, p. 23). In contrast, the elimination of conflict within the work of art indicates the sundering of this connection and the fetishization of culture, which becomes like predigested baby food (1947/1991, p. 67). Identitarian thinking is the collapse of the particular into the universal, resulting in a reified culture which feeds us an unvarying world of fungible individuals; it replicates faithfully the pre-existing standards, without startling or challenging or offering a stimulus to imagine something different or better. Laminated familiarity, hyper-reality, paper-thin variety, false immediacy—They are just like us! Only better! The presence of conflict leads

to immanent criticality and this is what Adorno holds to be 'true' culture: 'culture and criticism are intertwined. Culture is only true when implicitly critical…. Criticism is an indispensable element of culture which is itself contradictory' (1967/1981b, p. 22). Adorno's rejection of the notion that culture is a good per se is based on this distinction between reified (pseudo) culture and true culture, not on a hierarchy of high and low culture.

The notion of true culture as it has so far been described may seem to advocate some kind of social realism in art, but this is misleading. To understand its import better, we need to turn to Adorno's aesthetic theory and to the theme of mimesis. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment* Adorno and Max Horkheimer put forward the thesis that the instrumental reason so evident in late modernity is not a subspecies or distortion of formal reason, but rather its sublation: its unfolding or unveiling. This is how we can understand the *reach* of instrumental thinking as the dominance of objectifying thought, that relation to the world that is functional, aetiological and inverts the primacy of ends to means, and that requires the reductive categorization of mathematical–scientific thinking in order to predict, control and dominate the natural world, including our social relations. We feel safe in the world because we have conquered nature, or so we thought until we could no longer ignore the evidence of the destruction wrecked by our untrammelled supremacy, our 'open insanity' (1944/1997, p. 54). But, this is merely the somatic pathology of enlightenment. Adorno and Horkheimer point to the extension of this reifying tendency to subjectivity itself. This means the renunciation of what they call 'spirit', those parts of human experience that are not systematic, controllable or predictable, that are indeterminate, sensual, or that are part of our experience because of their absence or silence. This is the living mind and is easier to destroy than it is to describe in words: 'The subjective spirit which cancels the animation of nature can master a despiritualized nature only by imitating its rigidity and despiritu-alizing itself in turn' (1944/1997, p. 57). Reified consciousness, then, is the ultimate achievement of the over-administered world.

Even if it were possible, and it is not, this account does not advocate some kind of return to pre-enlightenment rationality, a re-enchanted, re-spiritualized world. And, it is not what Hegel describes as a 'pertulant zeal to save mankind from its absorption in the sensuous, the vulgar and the singular' (PG.8). What is it does do is set the scene for an enquiry as to the location of spirit in late modernity. Quite obviously, the very fact that we can speak of the totalizing tendency of reification, seen across all spheres of life, from our intimate family relations to the marketization of education, means that the process is not complete.

The term Adorno chooses to describe the locus and activity of this site of resistance is *mimesis*, a concept that is aptly resistant to efforts to comprehend it. It seems quite the wrong term from the start because it is this logical principle of identity/non-contradiction that itself lays down the identity thinking of exchangeability underpinning late modernity. Why does Adorno choose a term that signifies 'making like' to disrupt this reductive equivocation? In fact, he uses it in several quite distinct senses. Firstly, there is the mimesis of the natural world that is part of magical, pre-rational human activity: the prehistory of art. Then, there is also the mimesis that supplants this first kind with reason: 'It is itself mimesis: mimesis unto death. The subjective spirit which cancels the animation of nature can master a despiritualized nature only by imitating its rigidity and despiritualizing itself in turn' (Adorno 1997, p. 57) This can be related to what I have so far called reified or pseudo-culture.

The final usage is the mimetic moment that is in the dialectic between these first two uses:

> The survival of mimesis, the non-conceptual affinity of the subjectively produced with its unposited other, defines art as a form of knowledge and to that extent as 'rational'. For that to which the mimetic comportment responds is the telos of knowledge, which art simultaneously blocks with its own categories. Art completes knowledge with what is excluded from knowledge and thereby once again impairs its character as knowledge, its univocity. (1997, p. 74)

Even if we can accept the multivalency of this term, this last sense is surely still elusive. It places art in a space between the magically animated pre-rational world and the totally administered world, in a sense between life and death. Art bears witness to non-conceptual knowledge; correspondingly mimesis is what Wellmer (2012) summarizes as the 'designation for the sensually receptive, expressive, and communicative modes of behaviour of the living' (p. 51). Huyssen (2000) describes how the 'dimensions of mimesis lie outside linguistic communication—locked in silences, repressions, gestures and habits' (p. 72). Again, Sinha (2000) noting that 'the non-significative character of language is given precedence over the significative or communicative aspect of language' in Adorno's conceptualization of mimesis because the mimetic moment in art 'expresses expression itself and nothing else'. The elusive nature of this sense of mimesis is apt because it concerns elusive knowledge, and here Adorno turns to the theological trope of redemption, describing such a perspective as prefiguring the world as it will be revealed 'one day in the messianic light' (2000 p. 153). The mimetic aspect of art resists the 'destruction of the subject' under the conditions of modernity and redeems the living spirit: this is social emancipation.

Adorno and Education: The End of Education and Teachers' Work

For Adorno art and philosophy converge to occupy the same space: 'two spheres of the spirit' (Wellmer 2012, p. 51). The recent fate of philosophy can be compared to that of culture in that it has become separated from 'concrete societal goals' and has retreated instead to content-less specialisms. Adorno cites Hegel's proposition that 'philosophy is its own time comprehended in thought'. If contemporary culture embodies history, then philosophy relates to that culture as resistance, as critique of the present state of the world (1962/1998b, p. 14). So, when he proposes that criticism is intertwined with culture, he is describing the relationship of philosophy to culture. In making this connection, it becomes possible to think of culture in relation to what Adorno asserts to be the end of education and the role of the teacher.

One of Adorno's most well-known statements about education is from his essay 'Education After Auschwitz' which was first delivered as a radio broadcast in 1966, which he begins with these words:

> The premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again …. Every debate about the ideals of education is trivial and inconsequential compared to this single ideal: never again Auschwitz. It was the barbarism all education strives against…. and barbarism continues as long as the fundamental conditions that favoured that relapse continue largely unchanged. That is the whole horror. (1967/1998c, p. 191)

Elsewhere, in the same year, he describes this 'premier demand' as a 'new categorical imperative' on the whole of mankind (1966/1981a, p. 365). The education that Adorno means is specifically 'education toward critical self-reflection' (1967/1998c, p.193). He again returns to the idea that the prevailing civilization exerts pressure on the individual to conform, to identify blindly with the collective, so destroying any power of resistance (1967/1998c, p. 197). He makes some rather odd proposals in this essay and his analysis is conspicuously eclectic but the basic message is consonant with ideas he developed elsewhere, for example in the 1969 radio broadcast with Hellmut Becker, a prominent German educationalist, transcribed in 'Education for Maturity and Responsibility' (1997) where he speaks of 'an education for protest and resistance' (p. 31). *Nicht mitmachen* (do not join in/be out of step), a favourite slogan of Adorno and his colleagues in the Institute for Social Research from its early days (Jay, 1973, p. 321), could well be adopted as a catchphrase of Adorno's vision for education. But, he is by no means underestimating the task he is setting. To be out of step means being at odds with the dominant consciousness, which is fully equipped with an armoury of everything from sneering ridicule to judicial and military force. The forces that would make possible the 'relapse' are ascendant and hope is thin and fragile. The essay begins boldly but ends with a little shrug: 'against this, however, education and enlightenment can still manage a little something' (1967/1998c, p. 204).

So, what does Adorno say about teachers? Mass education is perhaps the most powerful institutional tool in shaping and changing how people think and behave. He was conscious of the role played by teachers in the Nazi era and was sensible of the importance of early childhood experiences. In his 1961 lecture, 'Philosophy and Teachers', he reflects on the experience of examining candidates for the profession on their chosen area of philosophy. Some of his descriptions of encounters with students in this context are frankly funny, though his intention is emphatically not to mock them or to be unkind. In reflecting on the students' ability to respond to questions he makes a distinction between the understanding of the teacher's role as that of 'specialized technician' and the notion of the teacher as an intellectual. He explains the identity of the intellectual in this way:

> Whether someone is an intellectual or not is manifested above all in his relationship to his own work and to the societal totality of which it is part. This relationship … is what constitutes the essence of philosophy in the first place. (1962/1998a, pp. 21–22)

The students who seem to have caused him the greatest vexation were not unintelligent or lazy. They read the requirements of the task and followed them with precision; they studied hard to acquire the information that they hoped would enable them to pass their examination. What they did not seem to be able to do was to *think*, to respond to what they had read and to care about its meaning. For a teacher to be an intellectual, she does not have to have a great mass of facts at her fingertips; Adorno is quite scathing about this kind of knowledge, describing it as a 'patchwork of acquired—which most often means memorized—facts' (1962/1998a, p. 27). Rather it is the connectivity between the subject matter—what is known—with 'the societal totality' that matters, and it is this that makes an individual cultured. The capacity to make such connections is one thing that makes it possible to cultivate others. Without the previous consideration of culture in terms of resistance and critique, it would be difficult to understand Adorno's intention here: a teacher should be someone who 'has culture' and this is indicated by his being able to demonstrate an interest in making connections and comparisons, in questioning what happens to be the case, and being personally entangled in the immanent criticality of the situation.

Adorno struggles to describe how such capabilities develop: he admits that there are no rules and no university courses that guarantee their acquisition. In a distinctively Hegelian series of expressions, he says that it is more to do with an open mind and an ability to engage and tarry with what is other and unfamiliar (1962/1998a, p. 28). He goes on, evidently with some hesitation, to venture that in fact 'culture requires love' but this uncharacteristically affirmative and simple suggestion is not explained here. What might he mean?

In a recent examination of the place of intimacy in Adorno's thought, Macdonald (2011) describes how Adorno rejects the Kantian definition of autonomy in terms of rational interiority, whilst accepting the idea that maturity is achieved by means of self-liberation from heteronomy. To insist on a self-legislating subject is to throw out the baby with the bath water. Thinking for oneself does not entail the abandonment of the context which has called forth the thinking in the first place, rather moral thinking is 'squeezed out of "matter" with which moral philosophy did not want to dirty its hands' (1966/1981a, p. 243). Intimacy is Adorno's corrective to Kant's concept of autonomy because there are 'irreplaceable faculties which cannot flourish in the isolated cell of pure inwardness, but only in live contact with the warmth of things' (1951/2005, p. 43; Macdonald, 2011). 'Live contact' is described as a non-coercive gaze and as 'differentiation without domination'; this is in stark contrast to the Enlightenment rationality which Adorno and Horkheimer condemn as having the sole aim of dominating nature and other human beings. What holds together this 'unity of opposites' is the ethical substance of Adorno's thought. There is no morality without the 'material'; it is the ordinary and messy reality of life that gives rise to the need for moral thinking. So, although Adorno emphatically endorses Kant's idea of autonomy as intellectual and moral maturity, his morality has to be to be mired in the particularity of the everyday, the sensual, communicative living experience of non-reified consciousness.

The suggestion that 'culture requires love' is comprehensible in the context of the activity of teaching. Teaching is a hopeful activity, which demands resilience in the face of setbacks and trust in the possibility of future maturation. To describe the values and commitments inherent in the role of the teacher as love goes beyond the knowledge, skills and processes involved in teaching, and it starts to illuminate what drives and maintains the relationship of teacher and pupil. Adorno quite rightly says that 'love cannot be summoned in professionally mediated relationships' (1967/1998c, p. 202), but this does not mean that love ought not to be present in these relationships. A good teacher warmly identifies with her pupils and is far from indifferent to what happens to them, and, by implication, what happens to the world they will occupy, make and inherit. The coldness that Adorno believes has infected everyone, more or less, through instrumental rationality—the very logic of capitalism—made Auschwitz possible. But, if the premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happens again, we have to trust that 'live contact with the warmth of things' can happen in the university, the school and the classroom. Cultural education has the potential to be where children can encounter the richness and variety of human experience through the arts and also through personal contact with the beliefs, values and traditions of different people. Crucially, it is also where children can generate culture, renew tradition and express their own experiences, thoughts and feelings.

Conclusion

Louis MacNeice's 'Snow', quoted at the beginning, explores the experience of sudden and unexpected juxtapositions. In this poem, a room is suddenly transformed when snow starts to fall, resulting in an unlikely, unseasonal meeting between the snow and the huge pink roses sitting in the bay window. The exhilaration of the experience of the 'collateral and incompatible' is tempered by a tension and a sober sense of foreboding—caused by the distance between the two elements, which at the end of the poem seems far greater, an unbridgeable gulf. But, the roses and snow do meet against the glass and in the poem itself. MacNeice calls the condition of plurality 'World', a proper noun that hypostasizes this condition as a personality—'gay' and 'spiteful' and capricious. These characteristics show World alive. It is the liveliness and ambivalence that we find also in Adorno's conception of culture and his requirement for 'live contact with the warmth of things' against permeating coldness and indifference. This one theme in MacNeice's poem is particularly apt for helping develop a conceptual landscape for the plural and various, and why they are troublesome and how they might be important for education and culture. Cultural education happens in a complex and contested space. Different understandings of culture, the artistic, the humanist and the anthropological, are all evident to different degrees in various policy contexts. The plurality of culture and of cultures is a problem but also a site where something distinctive and crucial happens: resistance or critical self-reflection as a core aim of education takes place in a context of rich experience of incorrigible plurality.

Adorno rejects the notion that culture is a good in itself. His proposal that 'true' culture is critical or philosophical departs from concern about whether a cultural practice is somehow worthwhile because of its intrinsic or instrumental value. Instead attention is on the way in which cultural participation becomes the site where we question what happens to be the case and resist heteronomous ways of thinking. Cultural education requires an environment in which both senses of culture converge as the objects of attention: as creative endeavour and as a distinctive way of life. The attention is not goal-directed, that is, merely instrumental in its intent, but rather it has what Iris Murdoch describes as a concern for the individual and this concern is expressed in 'an attentive patient delay of judgement, a kind of humble agnosticism, which lets the object be' (Murdoch 1992, p. 377). MacNeice's 'Snow' fixes a moment of transport that does not climax in possession or resolution, which would be quite right when thinking about cultural education because this is not an argument for cultural assimilation. Much as Adorno disliked the term 'encounter', because its use is so often hackneyed and vacuous, this does seem to be the appropriate word. Cultural education involves a meeting; it entails risk and openness; and it may not yield satisfaction. Like the snow and roses, it could be that we look but not touch. Henry Giroux challenges the doctrine of 'normative pluralism', which gives us the modern multicultural educational practice that aims to reduce intercultural tension, promote kindly tolerance and enhance mutual understanding (1988, pp. 94–97). These intentions are laudable at least in so far as to desire their opposites would be reprehensible. But, if it tends to make unimportant those deep differences that do exist, and to turn the gaze away from uncomfortable truths about relations of power and privilege, it will effectively close the critical space opened out in cultural education. In this respect, Adorno anticipates Giroux's point and help us to form an understanding of how culture and cultural education embody rather than resolve difference, tension and conflict.

The Scottish Curriculum seeks to couple culture and history with a view to fostering exploration, reflection and the solving of problems (Education Scotland 2013, p. 2). For

these things to happen what is needed is richness of experience: plurality and variety. A broad range of cultural experiences is good because it is harder for a person who is thus experienced to avoid the idea that things could be otherwise than how they are and to acquire 'the ability to see in this world the possibility of something different and better' (French and Thomas 1999, p. 3). On the other hand, the monochrome cultural experience of an unvaried diet of commercially conceived disposable dross does not provide the dynamic of the dialectical relationship with the societal totality of which it is part, nor is it possible to unveil any inner dynamic of market and independence. On its own it is rubbish. This is, in part, an argument for the inclusion of what Moffat and Riach have recently called the 'wayward artists and writers' in the school curriculum. These are the people who have pre-eminently rejected the 'mortmain of the uniform identity that insists on any single story dominating others' (2014, loc.93). Helmut Becker in discussion with Adorno in 1969 advocated the 'dissolution of an education system based on a fixed canon, and the replacement of this canon by a very varied curriculum' for precisely this reason (p. 30). But, the rejection of uniform identity does not entail that we need be embarrassed to have or seek an identity; as the same authors say elsewhere: 'We are committed to an openness of mind and the capacity for self-extension to which human nature is healthily prone…But we should never neglect or scorn the work of our own people' (2008, p. x). The idea that a nation can sidestep the idea of national identity in considering cultural education is dangerously mistaken. There is also a thin line between tolerance and indifference. Children require opportunities to connect, contrast and compare: a significant challenge in any content-orientated curriculum and a major challenge also to a profession already burdened with increasingly complex demands.

Cultural education is in this way not in the slightest to be regarded as a decorative add-on to the serious business of education but is at the heart of all worthwhile educational effort. Adorno rightly observes that there is no rule or recipe for 'achieving culture', and no course of study that ensures a person will become cultured in the sense he uses the word, since the quality of the experiences depend on the comportment of the individual: their curiosity and openness, and, most importantly, the 'live contact with the warmth of things' that can happen in the classroom community, where profound indifference to the fate of others is not regarded as normal or acceptable. Reasonably, cultural education may 'still manage a little something' by providing the objects of attention and expecting such things to happen in a context where love and resistance are the currency.

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The term 'Critical Theory' was coined by Max Horkheimer (1895-1973) in 1937 to describe a politically committed response – grounded in the German philosophical tradition of Kant, Hegel and Marx – to the problems of modernity, and in particular, to the catastrophic events and social changes of the first half of the 20th Century. Critical theory aims to achieve emancipation and transformation of individuals and society through human action. Theory and practice form a single process, and philosophy is put to work to provide analysis and critique of society, leading to social change. The political significance of the action of educating is brought to the fore and education takes a central place as a means of promoting individual autonomy and addressing issues of prejudice and authoritarianism. Critical Theory also has relevance to the nature of education research as it is an interdisciplinary intellectual enterprise that seeks to negotiate the relationship of theoretical research to empirical methodologies.

Critical Theory has shifted through a number of distinguishable phases since 1923 when the first generation of Marxist social theorists formed the Institute for Social Research affiliated with Frankfurt University. The principal members of what came to be known much later as the Frankfurt School were Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), Theodore Adorno (1903-1969), and Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979). Many others were associated with the School including the literary critic and philosopher Walter Benjamin (1892 -1940), the psychologist Erich Fromm (1900-1980), and the sociologist Fredrich Pollock (1894-1970). Most prominent among the second generation Critical Theorists is Jürgen Habermas (1929-) whose theory of communicative action attracts continuing interest in education theory seeking to understand the role of schools in developing democratic values and practice. Critical pedagogy, a term coined in 1983 by Henry Giroux (1943-), has its origins in Critical Theory and describes educational praxis (theoretically informed practice that has an emancipatory and egalitarian premise).

First Generation: The Frankfurt School

The Marxist orientation of the Frankfurt School theorists led them to expect the end of capitalism as its own internal logic unfolded. The Russian revolutions of 1917 had briefly seemed to confirm the correctness of this prediction but by the time of the founding of the Institute, Russia had undergone years of civil conflict with ruinous consequences, and the violent suppression of German communists under the non-revolutionary moderate socialism of the Weimar Republic confounded the revolutionary hopes of the political left there. Accepting neither Moscow nor Weimar, the Institute returned to the philosophical roots of Marxian theory. The members of the school were deeply affected by the rise of Nazism and spent much of the next two

decades in exile, mainly in the United States where they found sanctuary in American universities. Perhaps the greatest personal and intellectual tragedy for the School during this period was the death of Walter Benjamin in France in 1940.

Critical Theory defines itself in terms of liberation from circumstances that enslave. The purpose of philosophy is to make a significant difference to human life, including its material conditions. This transformation is achieved through analysis and critique which leads to a desire for change. However, what confidence the members of the School shared that human happiness and well-being might be increased was strictly circumscribed by what they believed to be ever tightening limitations on autonomous activity. Constraints on human freedom that were formerly theological and feudal seemed increasingly to shape intellectual activity by way of certain insidious social changes. Immediate historical circumstances also shaped Critical Theory: as the Great Depression was followed by sixteen years of increasing political and social chaos in Europe, feelings of absolute loss caused the members of the Frankfurt School to abandon, to a great extent, what had only ever been a cautious optimism about human happiness.

Against this background, nonetheless, the School never entirely lost its faith in the transformative power of education. In his lecture "Education after Auschwitz" (1966), Adorno argues that, in view of the monstrous events that took place, all education should have the end of fostering critical self-reflection and self-determination, and of countering the barbarous and violent tendencies of authoritarianism and the exaggerated attachment to technological thinking and to collective identity. In 'Taboos on the Teaching Vocation' (1969) he outlines how this ambition for education is in sharp contrast to the way in which schools can represent an authoritarian, hierarchical, and frequently violent, prototype for fascism. Education for autonomy, Adorno recognizes, is constantly at risk of misrepresentation and attack; children's capability for independent thinking may be damaged at a very early age, and yet democracy depends upon it.

The radical student movement of the 1960s turned to the Institute for inspiration and support, and pirated copies of their earlier works circulated widely. Marcuse willingly became the intellectual mentor of the student leaders with a number of articles that established his position as the voice of the new-left, and the relative newcomer to the Institute, Habermas, addressed student conferences and spoke to student leaders in Germany. However, with the exception of Marcuse, the relation of the members of the Institute to the student activists was rather fraught and complex. Aspects of their writings resonated strongly with the students' revolutionary aspirations and mood but in the end the students wanted something that Critical Theory could not give them – an uncritical endorsement of their actions and ambitions. It is important to understand that, in spite of its Marxist origins and its emphasis on praxis, Critical Theory is not an ideology but an open-ended methodology in which the contradictions and omissions of a particular social world are explored from within to reveal other

possibilities and new ways of being. This is *immanent criticism* which can be understood in contradistinction to an ideological critique based on fixed and transcendent principles.

The activity of exposing the omissions and contradictions between the principles and practice of a given society has meant that Critical Theory is frequently described as negative. The refusal to propose an alternative way of organising society should be understood not a result of a sour negativity or quietistic abnegation but, rather, it was the result of a steadfast commitment to human freedom. The abuse of ideologies during these decades adequately explains the Critical Theorists' cautious reticence about constructing the future; but it is also a result of a deeper understanding of the role of philosophy as interpretive and explanatory. Hegel's 'Owl of Minerva', that spreads its wings at dusk, signifies the task of philosophy which is the intellectual apprehension of mature reality – at the end of the day, as it were, rather than before it dawns. For the Critical Theorists, philosophy has a formative role in the maturation of reality but it is, and should be, backward-looking. An important strand of Critical Theory is the philosophy of history, particularly as it features in the work of Benjamin who combined an account of childish and of historical consciousness to formulate a distinctive, somewhat idiosyncratic, theory of hope and historical redemption.

The idea that critique must be grounded in, or immanent in, a particular system or society raises the spectre of relativism. Realization that societies are plural and complex means that appeal to the idea of community can result in an unnerving loss of certainty. Aversion to dogmatism and utopian theory seems to entail that we give up any objective or transcendent normative basis for critique, except for the rather second-rate version of normativity provided by each particular group or society. However, the caution exercised by the members of the Frankfurt School with regard to transcendent normativity – that is, to a standard for judgement that comes from a system or theory unrelated to the world as it is – reflects not only their historical context but also has its roots in the understanding they shared of the relation between the universal concept or theory and the particular circumstance or experience. Truth does not reside in one or other but in the dynamic relation of the two. The imposition of the universal over the particular denies the reality of experience or forces that reality to conform to an idea; the assertion of the particular over the universal, on the other hand, results in chaotic activity without direction or purpose. Critical Theory gives priority or finality to neither theory, nor lived experience. Truth is liable to change but this does not mean that it is an illusion. This is a distinctly Hegelian insight that truth is transitory and incomplete, that each concept is absorbed by a subsequent one. The result of this is caution and humility, rather than relativism or the abnegation of responsibility for present suffering.

This appeal to public discourse as a source of normativity can be interpreted as falling squarely within the Enlightenment tradition wherein truth flows out of the rational activity of autonomous individuals who are given free voice and where their opinions are open to public critique. The idea that reason needs the checks and balances of

public discussion in order to transcend the merely subjective is one way in which community may be understood as a source of normativity.

Interdisciplinary method

The immanent criticism favored by the Critical Theorists, then, situates critique within life as it is – within the practices, traditions, values and beliefs of a particular society; and though it is not constrained by these circumstances and can postulate ways in which things could be otherwise, it holds to the principle that critique ought not to be detached. However, Critical Theory also steadfastly rejects positivism in social research, because of the way in which it misrepresents social phenomena as 'givens', and sees theoretical research as pure, neutral, self-substantive, and ahistorical. Horkheimer describes this empirical bias as resulting in the *reification* of social facts, which is inherently conservative rather than transformative or revolutionary, and is the foundation of the view that the purpose of knowledge and inquiry is the domination of nature.

The tension between the empirical and theoretical approaches to social research became a very present reality to Critical Theorists working in the context of American universities, where social research was almost exclusively empirical and pragmatic. In addition to the desire to combine the two social research traditions on theoretical grounds, they faced a pressing practical necessity to work with their American colleagues. The most important piece of research to emerge from this exigency was *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950), an extensive study of prejudice which drew upon psycho-scientific methodologies to refine and support the formulation of ethical-political commitments.

Second Generation: Habermas and communicative action

Jürgen Habermas is one of the most important social theorists of the post-war era. His work is prolific and interdisciplinary, and owes much to his early participation in the Frankfurt School where he worked as research assistant to Adorno from 1956 (though the direct association was relatively short-lived). Habermas has written little that is explicitly on education but his ideas have been highly significant for educational discussions of democracy, participation and citizenship, and for the development of action research as an educational methodology.

Habermas' contention that knowledge is not neutral but socially constructed, and that what counts as worthwhile knowledge needs to be interrogated to discover the particular interests that are served by it—what he calls 'knowledge-constitutive interests'—has been particularly influential in critical pedagogy, and reflects the emancipatory commitments of Critical Theory. He takes a critical view of the hegemony of the empirical-scientific model of knowledge, for which he uses the term

cognitive-instrumental rationality and contrasts with another aspect of reason which he calls *communicative action/reason* – which is the mode that has often been used by people in everyday situations to reach understanding and agreement, and to coordinate their actions. This idea of communicative reason is given full articulation in *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1981). As with the approach of his Critical Theory predecessors, this was not an outright rejection of scientific methodology but a reconfiguration of it in the context of a broader, more comprehensive concept of reason. Habermas' argument is that the suppression of communicative reason in the modern era has allowed technocratic approaches to dominate all aspects of life without the rudder of political

and ethical deliberation, resulting in the technologically enabled atrocities of the Twentieth Century that have mortally wounded modern faith in progress.

Communicative action is the mode of the *public sphere*, a concept that Habermas derives from Hannah Arendt's *space of appearance*, and which he first develops in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962). The public sphere is envisioned as an inclusive space for rational-critical deliberation between free and equal individuals committed to reaching agreement on matters of common concern and common good. Habermas traces the genesis of the public sphere to Eighteenth Century Europe and the beginnings of Enlightenment thought, and argues that in the rediscovery of the norms of the public sphere can be found a defense of modernity's 'unfinished project' and a counter to the dystopian analysis of modernity found, for example, in Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944). In communicative action, in the structure of discourse itself, Habermas looked for the source of normativity that would give a positive impetus to critique. The evident fact that when we voluntarily enter into a discourse we do so on the assumption that agreement is possible, may be further interrogated to reveal the standards and rules inherent in communication itself.

Like John Dewey, Habermas focused on the essential importance of deliberative communication to healthy democracy. Democracy is not simply a matter of extending participation. The erosion of the function of the public sphere has come about in a number of ways, none of which necessarily entails reduced participation, for example, low levels of educational attainment, control of information by commercial interests, and the debasement of public opinion to an aggregation of preferences. Communicative action requires freedom from all such constraints and coercion which would compel participants to reach a false consensus. It is how decisions are arrived at and opinions formed that determines the validity of democratic decision-making. The idea of communicative reason has distinct implications for education since there is a need to develop in children the competencies that enable participation in a pluralist public sphere through a pedagogical emphasis on discussion, negotiation and collaboration. What this might mean for the development of deliberative democracy in an educational context has been further explored by writers such as Seyla Benhabib, Iris Marion Young, and Amy Gutman. One criticism of Habermas's theory

of democratic deliberation hangs on the suggestion that he fails sufficiently to recognize that asymmetric power is inscribed in the situation itself. This is an important consideration for children's participation in discourse where it seems that it is sometimes thought that inequality can be 'good-willed' away. Similarly, Habermas's apparent equation of discourse and argumentation might serve to exclude certain groups, notably young children, whose mode of communication is not rational-logical or even linguistic. The question generally remains as to how the gap between our ideal and actual situations may be bridged.

Action research and ideology critique

Action research plays an important role in teacher education but the term itself has a number of different meanings. In Habermasian thought it relates to the notion of *ideology critique*, an element in Marxist social theory which has as its aim the exposure of injustice. In *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1972) Habermas outlines a process of inquiry which entails the hermeneutic investigation of a situation, a critique of that interpretation in order to identify the blatant or covert knowledge-constitutive interests, followed by a decision about how the situation may be altered to achieve greater equality, and, finally, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the action taken. This four stage process may readily be applied to critical interventions in pedagogical situations, which reflect the teacher's commitment to education on the basis of equality and universal entitlement. Other forms of action research may be concerned solely with improving technical aspects of teaching without reference to ethical-political considerations, an interpretation which is at odds with the fundamental tenets of Critical Theory.

Conclusion

The continuing relevance of first generation Critical Theory in educational theory and practice lies in the recovery of utopianism to drive and direct what educators do, without anticipating a particular future state. This is a difficult and delicate, intellectually open, middle way between the twin horns of the 'efficiency agenda' which is shaped solely by a desire to measure and improve education as a process aimed at attaining a set of known goals (familiar to teachers in terms of talk of accountability and effectiveness), and the alternative, the imposition of an ideologically driven agenda for change. Such a conception of teaching as a politically significant, counter-cultural activity is consistent with constructivist theories of learning that give central importance to the fostering of critical self-reflection. Habermas's theory of communicative action focuses our attention on the way in which educational ends are determined, as well as on who participates in this discourse. His thinking also effectively mounts a direct challenge to the educational research community to engage in the immanent critique of its own privileges, knowledge-constitutive interests, and engagement with socio-political issues of pressing concern.

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See also: Action Research; Apple, Michael; Arendt, Hannah; Deliberative Democracy, Dewey, John; Marx, Karl.

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