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Unfolding Creativity

British Pioneers in Arts Education from 1890 to 1950

Edited by
John Howlett · Amy Palmer

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Editors

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Editors
John Howlett
School of Social, Political and Global Studies
Keele University
Keele, Staffordshire, UK

Amy Palmer
School of Education
University of Roehampton
London, UK

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Notes on Contributors

Deborah Albon is Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies at the University of Roehampton, UK. She has written extensively on various early childhood-related topics such as children's play, food and mealtimes, and research methods, and is co-editing a special issue of *Ethnography and Education*. Albon has worked with the All Party Parliamentary Group 'Fit and Healthy Childhood' for four years, contributing to a number of its reports. Outside of work commitments, she sings in a number of Surrey choirs and has a long-standing interest in the Folklore Society and the arts.

Gordon Cox was Senior Lecturer in Music Education at the University of Reading, UK, until his retirement. He has published extensively on the history of music education, including *A History of Music Education in England 1872–1928* (1993), *Living Music in Schools 1923–1999* (2002) and *The Origins and Foundations of Music Education* (co-edited with Robin Stevens, 2010, 2017). A past co-editor of *British Journal of Music Education*, he also served as chair of the History Standing Committee of the International Society for Music Education (ISME). He is working on a social history of music making in nineteenth-century Reading.

Lottie Hoare has worked as a teaching associate at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, UK, and lectured on Creativity and Primary Curriculum modules at Middlesex University, London. Her

PhD (completed 2018) and peer-reviewed publications have focussed on broadcast representations of post-war education by the BBC and documentary film-makers and how those representations contrasted with actual experiences of pupils and teachers in Local Education Authority schools. With Catherine Burke and Peter Cunningham, she co-edited the Routledge Progressive Education Series book, *Education Through the Arts for Well-Being and Community: The Vision and Legacy of Sir Alec Clegg* (2021)

John Howlett is a lecturer at Keele University, UK, where he is a programme director for undergraduate education in the School of Social, Political and Global Studies. He has written books on progressive education, a biography of the school inspector and philosopher Edmond Holmes as well as a number of related articles. He is working on a book exploring the origins of progressivism in the UK as well as a project looking into university student societies and the shaping of youth identity.

Amy Palmer is Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies at the University of Roehampton, London, UK. In 2013, she completed her PhD on the history of nursery education in England from 1918 to 1972, and has since written articles related to a variety of research interests, including plays written for child performers and arts and crafts education in schools and the community. She has recently co-edited, with Jane Read, *British Froebelian Women from the Mid-Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century: A Community of Progressive Educators*. She previously held the position of Books Editor at the journal *History of Education*.

Katie Palmer Heathman is an independent scholar interested in the relationships between cultural movements and social change, particularly around ideas of revival and the uses of the past. In 2016, she completed her PhD at the University of Leicester on the links between the English folk revival and progressive movements such as Christian socialism, settlement work and rural regeneration. She has written articles and chapters on a variety of topics, including the socialistic use of folk song tunes in *The English Hymnal*, and nineteenth-century village folk plays in rural Somerset.

Siân Roberts is Lecturer in Education and Social Justice at the School of Education, University of Birmingham, UK. Her research interests include British Quaker women active in progressive education and humanitarian issues, refugee educationalists who arrived in the UK in the first half of the twentieth century and the use of art and creativity in educational interventions with children and young people in contexts of war or displacement. Roberts is a member of the Executive Committee of the History of Education Society, UK, and a co-convenor of the History of Education Doctoral Summer School.

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Introduction: Themes in Arts Education, 1890–1950

John Howlett and Amy Palmer

This is a book about arts education in England from 1890 to 1950 and nine individuals who made significant contributions in the subject areas of drama, music and the visual arts. The use of 'creativity' in our book title thus refers, as would be expected for this period, to expressive practices and cultural learning embedded in the teaching of these arts subjects, rather than to the more expansive ideas of creative teaching and creative learning that became fashionable under the New Labour government from 1997 to 2010 (Cottle, 2019). We have used the word British in our title to describe the pioneers themselves, as we have included Seonaid Robertson, who was Scottish, but it is in all cases primarily the contribution to the arts in England which is under examination. The

J. Howlett (✉)
Keele University, Keele, UK
e-mail: j.howlett@keele.ac.uk

A. Palmer
University of Roehampton, London, UK
e-mail: Amy.Palmer@roehampton.ac.uk

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time period straddles the late Victorian era to the founding of the welfare state, via two world wars. It saw not just an expansion of the formal system of state-funded schooling, established in 1870, but also significant paradigmatic changes pertaining to how the child was viewed. This changed perspective was strongly affected by concurrent scientific developments such as the rise of psychology, which offered new understandings regarding how children learnt and made sense of the world around them. The people who are the focus of the book both contributed to and were influenced by these wider developments.

The book is written in the belief that the study of history of education can give us insight into the issues affecting education today. Its discussion of arts education intersects with a number of current concerns about the state of the modern curriculum and the 'creative subjects' in particular. Many of these concerns have centred upon the increasing marginalisation and demotion of music, drama and art within schools. This change in status is associated with policies such as the English Baccalaureate, or EBacc, (introduced in 2010) and Progress 8 (introduced in 2016), which have been seen as undermining creative subjects. The EBacc is a measure of how many pupils achieve good passes across five core subject areas whilst Progress 8 is a measure of the progress made by pupils between the end of primary school and the end of secondary school. Significantly, no creative subjects are currently included in the EBacc whilst Progress 8 carries double weighting for English and mathematics. The Cultural Learning Alliance reported in 2018 a 35% decline in pupils being entered for arts subjects at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) since 2010 (Cultural Learning Alliance, 2018). An investigation into the development of these curriculum areas would therefore appear to be timely. Understanding their origins and what helped and hindered their growth in the past might help us understand the current malaise and point some ways forward.

The book is part of Palgrave's series of studies into alternative education. The term 'alternative' is a broad one and recent large edited collections by Helen Lees and Nel Noddings (2016) and Mustafa Yunus Eryaman and Bertram Bruce (2015) have suggested something of this breadth through the range of topics and areas they cover. These editors and their contributors demonstrate that alternative education can encompass a range of facets including experiential learning; learning through

discovery; the project method and social reconstructionism. Within this broad understanding, a discussion of the pioneers of arts education in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century can fit snugly. Arts education in and of itself offered an alternative to the staid, utilitarian education of nineteenth-century elementary schools. It was by its nature participatory and based on first-hand experience. For this reason, the majority of its proponents were strongly interested in or indeed identified with the new, or progressive, education movements which were challenging current mainstream practice with innovative pedagogies and a strong focus on the needs of children and how these connected with the wider community.

This introduction considers the history of arts education in England during the period under investigation. It then justifies our biographical approach with reference to the work of other scholars in the field of history of education. The themes which have underpinned our thinking are then presented and discussed. Finally, we offer a summary of each of our chapters.

A History of Arts Education, 1890–1950

In order to put the lives and achievements of our nine chosen pioneers in context, it will be helpful to first give a brief introduction to the history of arts education in schools during the period covered in the book, focusing on visual arts (and crafts), music (with some reference to dance) and drama. This overview draws on existing literature, which is very rich for music, with Gordon Cox's work being key (e.g., Cox, 1993); indebted to a few seminal texts in drama (Bolton, 1998; Hornbrook, 1998) and surprisingly elusive in relation to the visual arts, where many of the most frequently cited titles are mainly about art schools (Carline, 1968; Macdonald, 2005). The work of Mike Fleming (2010) stands as a rare attempt at producing a combined arts history. We agree with Fleming that attempting to unify the branches is worthwhile: whilst there are significant differences in the directions taken in different subject areas, there are nonetheless 'common threads [that] can be discerned' (Fleming, 2010: 11). All areas, for example, have seen debate between those

educators who gave priority to self-expression and those who instead emphasised the development of skills and/or cultural appreciation (ibid.).

The underlying trajectory of all the arts subjects in this period was of a growing enthusiasm for their inclusion in schools. This resulted partly from changes in thinking about the purposes of education (particularly that of working-class children) which moved from a focus on basic and technical skills to a more liberal arts perspective. One key inspiration for the change was the school inspector and poet Matthew Arnold (1822–1888), who argued that 'each generation should be inducted into "the best that has been thought and said in the world"' (Finney, 2011: 45). The Board of Education in the early twentieth century was however reluctant to be prescriptive about teaching methods and curriculum content, choosing instead to express its views through various Handbooks of Suggestions which teachers could use or not use as they saw fit (Yeandle, 2015). Official encouragement did not therefore necessarily result in tangible action in the classroom. Books and articles produced by early twentieth-century enthusiasts frequently claimed that whilst their subject areas had been widely acknowledged as worthwhile and were developing well, they were not yet fully established as a regular part of the curriculum (cf. in relation to craft activities Neal, 1914; Elcombe, [1923]; Berry, 1930). This allowed space for pioneers to emerge, experiment and disseminate ideas (Fleming, 2010).

The history of (visual) art (and crafts) education demonstrates the continuing debates between utilitarian and aesthetic approaches very clearly. In the mid-nineteenth century, there were sharp distinctions between the subject as taught to middle-class and working-class children (when these had access to education at all). Middle-class children were taught art for the purposes of 'cultural enrichment'; by contrast, the working classes were taught drawing and 'mechanical design' for the purposes of enhancing their productivity as adults (Addison, 2010: 13). Nineteenth-century drawing lessons for most children consisted of drawing 'lines of varying proportions' which were then 'developed into cubes, pyramids and prisms' while curved lines were 'developed into spheres, cylinders and cones' (Tomlinson, 1934: 13). Copying drawings and diagrams was commonplace (ibid.). Such practice was questioned by thinkers such as the art critic John Ruskin (1819–1900), who believed a liberal education was

essential for the nation's moral development (Field, 1970). In the late nineteenth century, educators such as Ebenezer Cooke and T.R. Ablett became interested in the role that art could play in supporting children's broader education and began experimenting with less rigid approaches (ibid.). They drew on the ideas of the German pedagogue Friedrich Froebel (1782–1852) who had seen art as an important medium through which the child could express his or her inner being (Sutton, 1967).

An interest in 'child art', where children express their ideas freely, developed further in the early twentieth century. The Austrian educator Franz Cižek (1865–1946) is usually cited as the key figure in this movement. His first British exhibition of children's art was in 1908 but it was a 1920 event that really captured the interest of many educators (Roberts, 2009). Marion Richardson (Chap. 8) played an important role in translating these ideas into changes in classroom practice (Holdsworth, 2005). The fact that this child-centred movement was so well-established in the early twentieth century meant that 'art education could claim to be progressive and in the forefront of educational development' (Field, 1970: 72).

Another prominent feature of art education in this period was its entangled relationship with craft education. The division between art on the one side and craft on the other came increasingly to be seen as artificial. The Board of Education's 1927 Handbook of Suggestions, for instance, emphasised the 'intimate relationship' between art and craft (Board of Education, 1927: 330) and by 1937, the two subjects were covered together in one section (Board of Education, 1937). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, handicrafts, such as paper cutting and weaving, were taught to younger children as sanctioned Froebelian occupations and to the oldest children as manual training to support transition into work. This left a gap in the junior school age range that many were keen to breach (Sutton, 1967). The justifications for craft education were many and various. Enthusiasts argued that craft was of value because 'the hand and mind should work together' in the ideal learner (Neal, 1914: 11) but also, echoing arguments for art education more generally, because it was spiritually enriching (Turner, 1922). The idea that craft education was essential training for work remained important to some educators (Tomlinson, 1935). The industrialist and

businessman Harry Peach (Chap. 7) is an example of a campaigner for craft education on grounds both of its cultural importance and its necessity for the economic wellbeing of the country. Seonaid Robertson (Chap. 9) is strongly associated with encouraging creativity through craft because of its therapeutic value.

For most of the nineteenth century, the purpose of music education was also different for middle-class and working-class children. Whereas music was seen as an important 'cultural pursuit' for the former, particularly for girls, music lessons for working-class children focused on improving their ability to sing in church, which was seen as likely to be of benefit for their morals (Plummeridge, 2013: 157). Children were taught sight singing using the tonic solfa method, a written system which was effective in quickly enabling children to sing songs from printed pages but which denied them access to the wider world of music which learning standard stave notation could offer (Whittaker, 1922).

As with art education, a shift occurred in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries from this 'utilitarian' model to a 'broader, more liberal aesthetic tradition' (Cox, 1991: 1). Attention was paid to the cultural heritage which could be imparted through song. In the early twentieth century, teachers were encouraged by the Board of Education to teach both 'national' songs (popular composed songs, often with patriotic sentiments) and folk songs (Cox, 1993). Cecil Sharp (Chap. 1) was a significant promoter of the latter. Another development in this period was the musical appreciation movement, associated above all with Stewart Macpherson (Chap. 2), where children were introduced to and taught about 'great' music, sometimes with the aid of gramophones or the wireless. Clearly, the choice of the songs and the music that children were taught to appreciate reflected a particular class-based view of what culture was and, crucially, was not.

The number of musical pursuits promoted by enthusiasts grew considerably—so much so that concern was expressed in the 1937 Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers that 'teachers generally find it impossible to include in the Music syllabus all the new branches of the subject that may be recommended as educationally sound' (Board of Education, 1937: 175). In addition to the listening activities discussed above, the handbook extolled the benefits of rhythmic activities, percussion bands, and

pipe making and playing. Dancing, 'especially folk dancing' (ibid.: 205), was also seen as part of the subject. Stephanie Pitts has argued that the state of music education in the 1930s was 'confused … with so much of its character dependent on the beliefs and interests of individual teachers and the often isolated contexts in which they worked' (2000: 38). This meant that local figures, such as the Manchester musical adviser Walter Carroll (Chap. 3), had an important role to play in shaping practice in the field.

Music differed from art education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in one key respect: progressivism and the promotion of children's creativity manifested themselves in different and perhaps less obvious forms. Despite Froebel's interest in engaging children with music, for example in his 'mother songs', it was not clear to educators in the period exactly how music could be made child-centred and creative, although many aspired to make it so. It generally remained an activity where classes of children took instruction from the teacher and it was not until after World War II that more recognisably child-centred practice emerged (Pitts, 2000).

The story of drama does not match the pattern from utilitarian to liberal education quite so neatly, although some of the same tensions can be observed. The first dramatic activity in the elementary schools for poorer children was the use of Froebelian action rhymes (Bolton, 1998). Alice Gomme (Chap. 4) and others were interested in this practice, and encouraged receptive educators to also use traditional folk rhymes, thus employing drama for the purposes of preserving national culture. As child-centred educators, Froebelians were deeply interested in the question of whether asking children to perform rhymes and playlets written by adults was good pedagogical practice, and they experimented with ways in which children's creativity and individuality could be brought into the process (Palmer, 2017). Other progressive educators in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also became interested in allowing children to create their own dramas for educational purposes, most notably Harriet Finlay-Johnson (Chap. 5) and Henry Caldwell Cook (Chap. 6).

The Board of Education gave official sanction to drama in the early twentieth century, but saw it as subsumed largely under the English curriculum. The 1937 Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers suggested that

infants should be encouraged to express their own ideas through 'miming and dramatic action' (p. 357) and that there was a place for doing this with older children too. However, the main purpose of dramatic activities was to develop children's appreciation of the classics of English literature and also to 'improve the clarity and fluency' of their speech (ibid.: 375). In the inter-war period, 'play productions became the teacher's goal; the subject of speech and drama became a vehicle for training children to act' (Bolton, 1985: 153).

Exploring History Through Biography

The use of biography and the biographical method has long been an integral part of the discipline of history and a key mechanism for exploring the relationship between the individual and wider societal movements. Its application to the particular context of history of education has been justified by writers such as Michael Erben (1998) and Craig Kridel (1998). These authors have seen educational biography as a productive way to re-consider many aspects of the past, allowing for 'new ways to examine how one describes the behaviour of others, new ways to appraise the impact of the pedagogical process on students and teachers [and] new ways to explain how educational policy manifests itself in the lives of individuals' (Kridel, 1998: 4). Important scholarship, such as that produced by Jonathan Croall (1983), Gary McCulloch (2007), Jane Martin (2010) and R.J.W. Selleck (1995), has served to validate the centrality of biography to the field, with educational philosophies and theories often seen as connected to aspects and events of an individual's life. Croall's (1983) discussion of the Summerhill founder A.S. Neill provides a case in point, with Neill's lifelong opposition to oppression stemming from his formative experiences as both a pupil and student-teacher in an environment where forms of vigorous child punishment were commonplace.

Collective biography, or prosopography, has also established itself as a useful approach within history of education. Examples of key publications which employ this method include *Women and Education, 1800–1980* by Jane Martin and Joyce Goodman (2004) and *Practical Visionaries: Women, Education and Social Progress 1790–1930*, edited by

Mary Hilton and Pam Hirsch (2000). This method allows for the resurrection of a greater range of historical actors, many of whom have been largely forgotten. As history traditionally commemorated the 'great man', this type of collective biography often acts as a corrective, uncovering the stories of oppressed groups, most notably women, for whose lives relatively little evidence survives. Collective biography has also allowed for a greater understanding of the connections which have often formed between individuals, and the influence of such connections and networks in both public and private realms. Peter Cunningham has suggested that the approach has particular benefits for histories of progressive education, arguing that it allows more focus on the '"anonymous" practitioners, on the everyday work of teachers as distinct from … policy makers' (Cunningham, 2001: 436). In addition, collective biography places an emphasis on the need to 'account for human intercourse and activity in the promotion of educational reform' (ibid.: 450). This aspect is pertinent in our volume, given the direct interactions between a number of our subjects. Many of them were alive to the schemes, ideas and possibilities inherent in each other's work and some worked together directly (e.g., Carroll and Macpherson, and Sharp and Gomme).

Our choice of biographical subjects calls for some justification. There is no point in denying that we have of course been led by our personal interests and enthusiasms and there were many alternative figures who could equally well have featured. We have, however, chosen people who are pertinent to an exploration of our key themes, as set out below. We have striven to achieve a degree of balance in the choices. The subjects vary in the extent to which they are familiar names: some are very well known to educational historians and to some extent to the public at large (e.g., Cecil Sharp); some are reasonably well known to educational historians of the specific period or the subject area (e.g., Henry Caldwell Cook) and some we deem to be considerably less familiar to everyone (e.g., Seonaid Robertson). We aimed for a roughly equal split between men and women. We chose three pioneers to represent each of three creative areas—drama, music and art. Dance has not been included as a separate subject, but nonetheless features heavily in the work of Cecil Sharp.

We have concentrated exclusively on British pioneers working in England. This narrow focus seemed to us the most meaningful way to explore how individuals could influence their own particular education system and shape how the subject areas progressed. However, we believe that the book remains important for scholars, students and interested readers elsewhere. Indeed, one of the values of the case-study approach lies in its ability to 'allow generalisations either about an instance or from an instance to a class' (Adelman et al., 1980: 59). In seeking to interrogate not just the lives of specific individuals but also the varying ways that they have contributed to the development of arts education in England, the book will provide an example of a historical narrative which can be potentially compared with national contexts elsewhere.

Underpinning Themes: Progressive Education

One pervading theme in the book is progressive education and its relationship to arts education. There is no clear consensus about the term 'progressive education' either in relation to its specific meaning or its origin. David McNear (1978), writing over forty years ago, made the point that, 'In a survey of definitions of progressive education, many problems become apparent. … Although varied constructs are emphasized, the definition appears to be primarily purposive or contingent in nature' (p. 37). Progressivism thus was understood as either something giving particular benefits to children—for example, the development of imaginative creativity ('purposive')—or else as occurring only when particular sets of conditions were in place such as a free and democratic classroom environment ('contingent'). This problem of characterisation has persisted with the noted American educator Alfie Kohn (2015) stating that, '[a]ny two educators who describe themselves as sympathetic to this tradition may well see it differently, or at least disagree about which features are the most important' (p. 2). Laura Tisdall has recently made a distinction between 'utopian and non-utopian progressivism' (2019: 29) and argued that in the inter-war period, these two groups were often in intellectual conflict with one another. For her, non-utopian, child-centred education was as '"traditional" as it was "progressive"' (ibid.: 45).

There is nevertheless a core set of principles and ideas which underscore progressivism both in theory and in practice. Notwithstanding Nikolas Rose's warning over the 'myth of origins' (Rose, 1999: 183), many writers in the field such as Robin Barrow (1978) and Geva Blenkin and Albert Kelly (1981) have argued that these ideas originated in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's seminal novel *Emile* (1979, first published 1762). He placed emphasis on a raft of concepts, later identified as progressive, which included learning in the outdoors, the importance of self-discovery and the role of play in learning. John Darling (1994) perhaps puts it best in arguing that 'modern [progressive] educational theory [is] a series of footnotes to Rousseau' (p. 17).

Although in Rousseau's novel the role of the arts was understood somewhat negatively as being simply a source of entertainment for the wealthy, they nevertheless enable Emile to gain 'an exquisite sensibility and a delicacy of taste' (Bloom, 1979: 23). This principle that the arts could be important for developing wider characteristics and virtues, and were thus central to a child's learning, became integral to Romantic ideas about education. Arthur Efland (1983) (albeit discussing the American context) and Clive Ashwin (1981) have identified the work of Johann Pestalozzi as being especially important in this regard. Pestalozzi actively encouraged the creative arts, especially drawing and singing, which remained key planks of his popular teaching method. Similarly, the novelist Maria Edgeworth (Edgeworth & Edgeworth, 1798) suggested that creative and playful activity should be a direct replacement for book-learning amongst the young.

Creative activities became however more widely established with the spread of the ideas of Friedrich Froebel, founder of the kindergarten movement. Froebel connected educational ideas grounded in the work of Rousseau and Pestalozzi more explicitly to notions of creative activity and strove to embed such activity within an education system that was suitable for all young children and not just those from the leisured classes. His 'gifts' (solid objects) and 'occupations' (activities, often involving changeable materials) enabled children to develop fine motor skills and an understanding of three-dimensional shapes and intricate patterns. Norman Brosterman (1997) has pointed out Froebelian echoes in the work of the artist Paul Klee and the architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Towards the end of his life, Froebel became interested in the beneficial influence of the Altenstein Festival which was a back-to-the-land celebration of music, dance and folk song (Liebschner, 1991). Froebel's ideas were spread by his disciples within Prussia/Germany but also further afield, including to England, where the Manchester Kindergarten Society was established in 1873, with the London Froebel Society following two years later (Nawrotzki, 2006).

This overlap between progressive education and the arts was furthered by a number of peripatetic groups established to bring together educators, teachers and politicians, such as the New Education Fellowship (NEF) and the New Ideals in Education group. The 1919 New Ideals conference for example had creativity as its theme, whilst the 1922 conference was entitled 'Drama in Education' and involved two of this book's biographical subjects, Henry Caldwell Cook and Harriet Finlay-Johnson, the former contributing via a written statement and the latter delivering a paper (Finlay-Johnson, 1922). Creative arts were understood by progressive educators as having psychological and cognitive benefits for the individual and as being important for the wider wellbeing of society.

It should also be remembered that much progressive and creative practice in the period in question took place in private schools, either those like Bertrand Russell's Beacon Hill, created deliberately as an educational experimental laboratory (Hustak, 2013) or else those like the Perse School (where Henry Caldwell Cook was a teacher) that were already established but which were highly receptive to these new ideas. Driven by their charismatic headteachers, such schools were beacons for the creative arts: 'They emphasized creativity and fulfilment at the expense of intellectual discipline, an emphasis heightened by the very "romantic" interpretation they gave to the New Psychology' (Skidelsky, 1969: 151). Often, such pursuits were explicitly connected to anti-industrial feelings, as well as the democratic structures many of these schools were vigorous in promoting.

The volume aims to further explore the relationship between progressive education and arts education in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century through the work of specific pioneers, considering how strong underpinning educational principles were used to support and nurture the creative arts. Such a project seems very relevant for the situation today, where arts education is under renewed pressure, threatened once again by utilitarian views of what schools are for.

Underpinning Themes: Ideology

A second theme which underpins the book is ideology and how this relates to arts education. An ideology is a nexus of 'assumptions, principles and beliefs about what it means to be a good person' (Haynes, 2006: 769) and thus includes both conscious opinions and unconscious biases. The term is associated with the collective belief of a group (from a nation or class to a small self-defined interest group or other organisation), although individuals within the group may form modified or deviant versions of the dominant ideology (Van Dijk, 1998). An education system is necessarily founded on the ideology of the social and/or political group that designed/designs and delivered/delivers it. Decisions about which knowledge and which skills should be embedded in the curriculum and which should not—in Michael Apple's terms which 'cultural capital' should be accessed by which pupils (2004: 2)—are therefore ideologically driven. Arts education is perhaps one of the sites in which ideological choices are most evident. In some of the most extreme examples, it has been linked to the worst propaganda campaigns of the twentieth century: François Matarasso (1997) for instance cites its use in the USSR and in Maoist China to support state positions. Nazi Germany used much the same tactics. In a particularly striking piece of research, Noriko Manabe (2013) has analysed Japanese children's song books during World War II and concludes that, 'they assert the superiority of Japan over other nations, the glory of dying for one's country, the romantic imagery of conquered territories and the joys of toiling in weapons factories' (p. 96).

Felicity Haynes (2006) has argued that 'what we include as *content* in the curriculum will depend on how we think we know the world' (p. 769, emphasis in the original). Although progressive educators in the early twentieth century concerned themselves more with method than content (Apple, 2004), content is always present, as teaching cannot occur in a vacuum. Explicitly or implicitly, some art (visual art, music, drama, dance) is held up as worthy of study and emulation and some is not. The choices here relate strongly and obviously to beliefs about what cultural capital is worth having and reproducing across the generations. Ideology also reveals itself in educators' beliefs about what arts education can and

should achieve. These beliefs have been many and various. Matarasso (1997), drawing upon a research project into community arts, has a particularly long list, which includes: 'personal growth'; 'social cohesion'; 'benefits in other areas such as environmental renewal and health promotion' and strengthening 'Britain's cultural life' (p. vi). In the face of increasing international concern about climate change, the idea that arts can educate children and others to care about the environment is particularly prominent at the moment. Jennifer Publicover and colleagues, for example, claim that the arts 'can help provide some of the affective components of environmental education—emotions, values and motivations driving pro-environmental behaviour' (Publicover et al., 2018: 925). Another contemporary concern is arts education's ability and responsibility to reflect an inclusive society by giving curricular prominence to the work of female artists as well as artists with disabilities or from marginalised communities. Roger Clark and Ashley Folgo's survey of American art history textbooks, undertaken in 2006, revealed an increase in the number of female artists included over the preceding 15 years. They noted that this increase was more significant in high school rather than college textbooks, which they ascribed to a greater degree of pressure from the relevant school boards (Clark & Folgo, 2006).

There are ideological positions that have particularly strong relevance for the late nineteenth/early twentieth century. One of these was the belief that creativity and the appreciation of beauty are essential for moral development, an idea associated with John Ruskin (Atwood, 2016). Implicated in such a view is a conviction that children should be continually developing powers of discrimination or, more simply, good taste in order to become better human beings. There are many examples throughout our period of educators trying to elevate, as they saw it, the artistic preferences of the young, through introducing children to Shakespeare or the great composers. Gordon Cox (2010) has argued, for example, that a perceived need to battle the 'pernicious effects of popular culture' was universal among the music education élite in the early twentieth century (p. 22). As has been frequently noted, the choice of what is good and what is bad culture can never be objective—indeed, it has been described as 'culturally arbitrary' (Goodman & Jacobs, 2008: 686). Arts education could therefore be seen as the attempts of the upper and middle classes to

impose their tastes on those they regard as their social (and cultural) inferiors.

The role that arts education can play in understanding national identity was particularly important in this period. Questions of nationality and what it meant to be British or English or Irish or Scottish or Welsh were prominent in public discourse and those involved with schooling were keen to foster national identity through the process (Heathorn, 2000). Stephen Heathorn (2000: 3) notes a strong stream of 'bellicose, self-aggrandizing, militarist and overt forms of nationalism' at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but points out that the idea of developing a sense of national culture was also part of liberal and left-wing discourse. There are plenty of examples of pro-Empire propaganda in schools at this time, although some commentators, such as Paul Readman (2008), have argued that the importance of Empire for the devolved (rather than British) identities has been over-emphasised. A sense of Englishness was being forged by looking inwards and backwards often to a rural, pre-industrialised period (Dodd, 2014).

The implication of this is that there was at this time a significant interest in folk music and traditional arts and crafts. The German philosopher J.G. Herder (1744–1803) had argued that the *volksgeist*, or spirit of the nation, resided in the music of the folk or working-class people (Cox, 1992) and this belief inspired folk revivals throughout Europe. These ideas permeated what was taught in schools. A key interest for us in this volume is digging deeper into the ideologies that underpinned this use of folk culture in education. As has been frequently noted, folk arts advocates could take both conservative and radical standpoints and indeed occasionally embodied complex and apparently contradictory amalgams of both (Boyes, 2010; Kaplan, 2004). In England, the dominant position tended towards the radical and the left-wing (Palmer Heathman, 2017). Adding another layer of ideological complexity, the nationalism promoted by folk culture enthusiasts was one which could simultaneously be international in outlook. As the composer (and folk song collector) Ralph Vaughan Williams argued, 'Aesthetic Nationalism goes hand in hand with international unity … where every nation and every community will bring to the common fund that which they, and they only, can create' (Palmer Heathman, 2017: 189).

Folk arts and music may be less dominant today in the curriculum than they were in our period, yet it is our contention that arts education remains concerned with using art to understand cultural identity, a part of which is surely national identity. In Britain and elsewhere, the 1970s and 1980s saw the rise of multicultural education, which aimed to redefine the nation by celebrating the varied cultural heritage of minority groups found within it (Race, 2015). This was often through the medium of (visual) art, dance and music. Scholars have since developed a taxonomy of multiculturalisms with some forms seen as liberating and empowering and others criticised for tokenism, superficiality and for ultimately continuing a legacy of repression (Race, 2015; Stuhr, 1994). There is evidence to suggest that many educators have struggled to employ the sort of critically engaged teaching that these experts are advocating and the less fashionable forms of multicultural arts education are very much still alive. Peter Baldock (2010) in his guide for early years practitioners found it necessary to remind his readers that they should 'be careful not to give the children a picture of other societies that is based entirely on traditional life and, in particular traditional crafts' (p. 62). Similarly, Christina D. Chin (2011) and Joni Boyd Acuff (2014) have produced analyses of commonly available and well-used multicultural art resources in the USA and found much to criticise in the ways that minority cultures are represented.

A final piece of evidence that British society is not yet done with these matters is the controversy over the production of a national song book, an updated version of the extremely successful 1906 national songbook produced by Charles Villiers Stanford (Cox, 1992). This was suggested by Alan Johnson, the then Education Secretary, in 2007, but the project collapsed amid controversy about what to include, with the then Shadow Education Secretary, Michael Gove, being particularly scathing about the government's political correctness (Hastings & Henry 2008). National song books were nevertheless later published by Novello in 2008 and 2016 and these included traditional English folk songs and songs from other cultures and had covers showing children from different ethnic backgrounds. Using arts subjects to promote specific ideological positions, and particularly ideas about what the nation is, was and should be, remains a contemporary concern and we hope that our investigation into the history of arts education will enable further reflection about this.

Underpinning Themes: Influence

Our third underpinning theme is the question of influence in arts education and how an individual or group of individuals might bring about a change in policy and/or practice. This is not an easy task, as others have acknowledged. Jane Read (2011), for example, in her work on the Froebel movement, draws on Quentin Skinner to claim that 'measuring "influence" is a chimera' (Read, 2011: 18) and, with many actors advocating similar ideas, it can be difficult to be certain who or what it was that actually made a crucial difference at any given point. Nonetheless, we are determined that we should investigate this as far as is possible as it seems to us of crucial importance in understanding the history of arts education in our period and the implications our study might have for the future.

One obvious starting point is the policy decisions made by government in this area. It is important to point out that very little that the government produced in terms of recommendations in relation to the school curriculum in our period had the force of law. Nonetheless, the Board of Education did take a stance on good practice, which was expressed through mechanisms such as the Handbooks of Suggestions for Teachers and periodic circulars. It also established a consultative committee in 1899 whose role was to investigate educational issues (Brehony, 1994). Committee reports, such as the Hadow Reports, shaped the educational debate both inside and outside government. It is therefore surely valid to ask how decisions in relation to all of these different documents were made, whose voices were heard and, more pertinently perhaps, whose were not.

In relation to decisions taken by the Board, different categories of actors were involved in the processes. One of these was the elected politicians, of course, with whom power ultimately lay. Gail Savage (1996) has however argued, in relation particularly to the inter-war period, that civil servants also played a crucial decision-making role. Peter Kellner and Norman Crowther-Hunt (1980), albeit with reference to a broader period of time, make the point that politicians often have a very short lifespan within a department and do not necessarily have the expertise to fully understand issues. With the 'killing and intolerable burden of work' that

ministers may have, they often need to take the decisions of their civil servants on trust (p. 216). Another significant group embedded within government in our period was the inspectorate who, since they were first appointed in the nineteenth century, were 'influential figures' particularly in relation to the schools they worked with directly (Goodman & Harrop, 2000: 137). Chief inspectors had access to the ears of politicians and civil servants and were thus 'in a position to bring pressure to bear for alterations in the administration of education' (ibid.: 137).

It is also important to ask who outside the Board was able to influence decisions. The period after World War II until the late 1970s is frequently seen by scholars as a time of 'tripartite partnership', when policy was negotiated between central government, Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and the teaching profession, sometimes in the form of organised unions (Dale, 1989: 97). Representatives of both the LEAs and the teaching groups also had opportunities to access central decision-making bodies in earlier periods, through mechanisms such as deputations and by providing expert witness statements to the consultative committees. The appendices of committee documents are thus good starting points for considering who was included and who was excluded from any debate. Organisations in which education experts combined in communities or networks were frequently among those included. Peter Cunningham (2001), in his aforementioned discussion of prosopography, points to the importance of networks such as the Froebelians and the Montessorians and their role in developing policy through interactions of this nature.

For most of the twentieth century, LEAs were also powerful in that they had considerable autonomy to create education policy for themselves (Regan, 1979). Even after the 1944 Education Act gave the Minister of Education considerable power, this was rarely exercised until at least the 1970s (Chitty, 2009). Therefore, looking at approaches to arts education within LEAs provides an essential 'correctional coda' to the story told in national policy documents (Morris, 1972: 153). We should ask, therefore, who was and who was not able to wield influence within these organisations.

It is also necessary to consider whether other groups or individuals were as influential, or perhaps even more influential, than either local or national government with regard to specific areas of the curriculum. An

individual teacher trying out ideas in his or her own school might well be in a position to disseminate those ideas to others and thus inspire interest and imitation. Means for doing this included networking with like-minded professionals in established groups such as those discussed above (Cunningham, 2001). Some of these networks organised conferences at which practitioners might speak or published journals in which they might write articles. A few practitioners found advocates with existing credibility in educational circles who played a part in publicising their work (ibid.).

It is of course worth reflecting that simply putting ideas out into the public domain does not always achieve the desired effect. Concepts and schemes that teachers tried to disseminate were not always received as they were intended. Stephanie Pitts (1998) has researched the work of music educators John Curwen (1816–1880) and T.H. Yorke Trotter (1854–1934) and concluded that the former was more influential because he offered more practical, easily implemented ideas. This serves as a reminder of the role all teachers, not just the renowned innovators, play in determining actual practice in the classroom. As Jennifer Ozga (2000) has argued, 'apparently simple transmission processes become complex, as teachers and pupils modify policy intentions, taking advantage of the spaces between planning and outcomes, as well as the contradictions and competition between purposes' (p. 10).

Educational policy and practice are also influenced by people and companies whose interest in the area is largely or even wholly motivated by commercial considerations. There are and have been many opportunities for publishers and companies creating educational materials to make money. These firms sit in a symbiotic relationship with schools and teachers: in order to survive they must produce what educationalists want but they also play their part in shaping what it is that is wanted in the first place. The effects of this are various and have at times been seen as negative. Music historian Bernarr Rainbow (1984) has, for example, highlighted the contribution of publishers and their products to the popularity of poorly misunderstood and misapplied versions of the work of the German composer and pedagogue Carl Orff in the post-war period. The material resources that are available to schools and the affordances of these objects have an influence on curriculum possibilities. Christian

Lundahl and Martin Lawn (2015) offer a case study of the Swedish schoolhouse which was exhibited internationally in the late nineteenth century and which presented educationalists with 'a whole new pedagogic technology' (p. 321).

An investigation into influence in education thus remains important, even though the context has changed since the 1890–1950 period. Stephen Ball (2013) has argued that today, 'the places that matter for [education] policy are both more focused and more dispersed' (p. 222). The role of LEAs has been significantly diminished and the power of the central government is now exercised to a higher degree than ever before. Similarly, teaching unions have become relatively toothless organisations (Wiborg, 2017). However, 'new places and different people' (Ball, 2013: 222), notably academy chains, have been given a loose leash in relation to the schools they run and are also in a position to affect decision-making by government and by others. Publishers and manufacturers continue to play an important but often unconsidered role. In this constantly changing landscape, we need to be aware of who is making the decisions that affect arts education and a firm understanding of the mechanisms operational in the past will surely aid us in doing so.

Chapter Summaries

The book is divided into three sections each relating to a particular branch of the creative arts—music, drama and visual art. Each section presents three pioneers and these are in chronological order according to the individual's date of birth.

In Chap. 1, Amy Palmer and Katie Palmer Heathman discuss Cecil Sharp (1859–1924). Sharp was a folk song and folk dance collector with a background in teaching, many connections with prominent educationalists and a good grounding in the tenets of progressive education. He was a Romantic nationalist, who believed English folk culture was vital to the wellbeing of the English people. His advocacy had some impact on the song repertoire suggested to children by the Board of Education, shifting it away from composed 'national' songs with imperialist overtones, and he had a considerable influence on the nature of folk dance

education. Above all, it was through the production of large quantities of cheap and useful publications for schools and through the training he offered to teachers that he was able to shape practice on the ground.

Chapter 2, written by Gordon Cox, focuses on Stewart Macpherson (1865–1941) who was known as the father of the musical appreciation movement in Britain. To further the cause, he founded the Music Teachers' Association in 1908 and wrote key articles and books on appreciation principally between 1907 and the outbreak of World War I. It was Macpherson's colleague, Percy A. Scholes, who from 1919 energetically promoted the cause of the gramophone as a vehicle for propagating musical appreciation. The two men held opposing views on this development, and on the vexed issue of whether or not only teachers with specialist knowledge should teach music. In spite of these disagreements, Macpherson continued to lead the musical appreciation movement which helped to shift music education away from the acquirement of a technical proficiency towards instead the cultivation of taste.

Amy Palmer writes in Chap. 3 about Walter Carroll (1869–1955), who was the musical adviser for the Manchester Education Committee from 1918 to 1934. He was at the cutting edge of a new wave of progressive music teaching, as indicated by his introduction of a systematic music appreciation scheme, inspired by the work of Macpherson. He was particularly passionate about the need for properly trained teachers and focused much of his energies in this direction. His impact on practice in his home city was considerable as he could support educators in making changes through personal contact. His publications and his lectures also inspired others further afield to adopt his approach. The chapter thus demonstrates that influence in education does not just travel from top to bottom, but spreads in many directions from a variety of sources.

Chapter 4, by Deborah Albon, explores Alice Gomme (1853–1938) who was a prominent folklorist in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although her work was primarily outside the parameters of formal education in schools, Albon argues that she nevertheless made a valuable contribution to arts education in the period. In championing children's games and dramatic activity, Gomme stressed the sense of

community that participation in such pursuits engenders and over time came to articulate their importance for learning. A key focus in the chapter is assessing the 'reach' of Gomme's work and the chapter highlights her employment of a wide range of dissemination strategies in order to engage with different audiences.

In Chap. 5, John Howlett looks at the innovative practices of Henry Caldwell Cook (1886–1939) whose teaching at the Perse School in Cambridge sought to harness and develop children's innate impulses towards creativity within both English and drama. Much of this was done by encouraging the creation of poetry, story and stage-play. Cook also anthologised his pupils' efforts as well as constructing a purpose-built theatre for the staging of their work. This space also allowed for the performance of Shakespearean plays, which Cook believed were best understood through acting rather than studying. The chapter also explores *The Play Way* (1917), Cook's best-selling account of his work, and the influence it was to have on his successors.

The focus of Chap. 6 also by John Howlett, is Harriet Finlay-Johnson (1871–1956) whose work in Sompting School in Sussex was recounted in her book *The Dramatic Method of Teaching* (1911). The chapter explores her teaching methods which sought to incorporate drama and dramatisation into a range of other curriculum subjects such as geography, history and mathematics. Drama and the child's instinct to be dramatic was the driving force of much of her practice. The chapter concludes by exploring the influence Finlay-Johnson exerted, with a particular focus given to the impact her work had on the progressive thinker Edmond Holmes as well as later writers such as Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote.

In Chap. 7, Amy Palmer discusses Harry Peach (1874–1936) who was a manufacturer of cane furniture and metal work, the owner of Dryad Handicrafts, which sold arts and crafts resources, and a founder member of the Design and Industries Association (DIA). He believed that arts and crafts should be taught in schools for their intrinsic educational value, their importance in preserving national heritage and the potential benefits to industry in developing skills in future workers and 'good taste' in future consumers. Through the DIA, he attempted to influence national and local policy in the area and this did indeed shift in the directions he

desired. The chapter argues, however, that the influence he wielded on the lived experiences of children in schools through the provision of quality materials is ultimately more tangible.

Siân Roberts writes about Marion Richardson (1892–1946) in Chap. 8. Richardson was heralded as one of the most influential art educators of the twentieth century. Drawing both on Richardson's writings in her published works as well as unpublished lectures, notes and correspondence, this chapter analyses this reputation and evaluates to what extent her approach and practice were distinctive. It maps the evolution of her pedagogical approaches, with a particular focus on her encouragement of visualisation and self-expression in the young, and explores how she was influenced by the transnational progressive educational ideas of the period. It assesses her ideas in practice in the various settings and spheres of influence in which she was active—as a teacher, lecturer and art inspector for the London County Council.

In Chap. 9, Lottie Hoare explores the life and work of Seonaid Robertson (1912–2008) who was a school teacher, arts adviser, lecturer and author writing about arts education. Her lifelong focus was on how arts education supported young people's transition from childhood to adolescence. She studied at Edinburgh Art School and by the early 1940s, under the influence of Herbert Read, had developed a strong interest in ceramics and the therapeutic aspects of arts education and psychoanalysis. She studied psychology at the University of London after World War II but reacted against much of the mainstream thinking of the period, preferring to focus on the ways children could make a connection with their own cultural heritage and heal themselves after traumatic experiences. This chapter has a strong focus on Robertson's early career, which took place within our 1890–1950 period, but nonetheless, as she was younger than our other subjects, it allows us a glimpse of future developments.

Finally, in our conclusion, we trace the development of arts education from the 1950s onwards, consider what our journey through the lives of these nine pioneers has taught us, particularly about our underpinning themes, and consider the implications for arts education today.

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Part I

Music

Chapter 1: Cecil Sharp (1859–1924): Advocate for Folk Song and Folk Dance Education in Schools and the Community

Amy Palmer and Katie Palmer Heathman

Introduction

Cecil Sharp was a towering figure in the revival of English folk culture that occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He was a prolific collector of folk song, gathering around 4500 in total (Boyes, 2010), although a generation of enthusiasts was already active in the field before his work commenced in 1903 (Gammon, 1980). He also collected folk dances and can perhaps be considered the original instigator of the folk dance revival, although the pioneering work of Mary Neal should also be acknowledged (Roud, 2017).

The literature concerning Sharp emanating from the field of folklore studies is extensive and full of passion and controversy. Much of it

A. Palmer (✉)
University of Roehampton, London, UK
e-mail: Amy.Palmer@roehampton.ac.uk

K. Palmer Heathman
University of Durham, Durham, UK

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concerns the entwined issues of his political orientation; his understanding of who the 'folk' were and what elements of their culture should be valued and preserved; and the implications of his stance for the authenticity and representativeness of what he did and did not collect. David Harker is perhaps the key scholar in the Sharp-bashing tradition which emerged in the late twentieth century. He sees Sharp as a middle-class busybody who misrepresented the people he collected from as uneducated peasants, who made decisions about what to collect based on his own fanciful preconceived ideas about what the 'folk' ought to be singing and who bowdlerised the material he did manage to gather (Harker, 1972). A spirited defence of Sharp was mounted, notably by C.J. Bearman (2002). Academics today continue to address these questions, usually taking a moderate and nuanced stance which acknowledges the difficulty

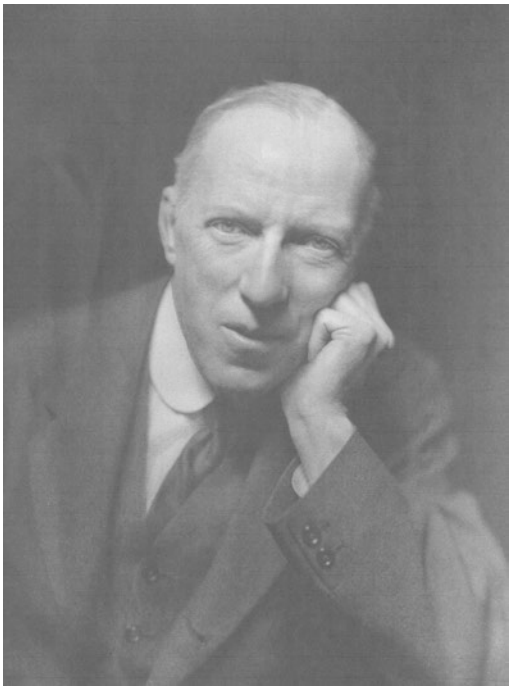

Photo 1 Cecil Sharp. Reproduced with permission from the English Folk Song and Dance Society

of publishing unexpurgated material in Sharp's own time (and it is worth noting that Sharp did retain all original words in his field notes, depositing them at Clare College, Cambridge, in the hope that they could one day be of use) (Peters, 2018; Reeves, 1958; Roud, 2017).

This chapter concerns Sharp as an educator—a teacher and someone with a profound interest in folk song and dance in educational contexts. Early in his professional life, he spent time in Australia and became a director of the Adelaide College of Music (*The Musical Times*, 1912). It was in Adelaide that he met his earliest collaborator in folk song collecting, Charles Marson, in whose vicarage garden he later collected his first folk song. It is notable that both men were working on material relating to children at the time they met in July 1889: Sharp on nursery rhymes and Marson on fairy tales, showing an early link in Sharp's work between folk songs and children. Marson was already interested in ballads at this point, and quite possibly discussed this interest with Sharp (Sutcliffe, 2010). On returning to England, Sharp took up roles including music-master at Ludgrove, a prestigious preparatory school (1893–1910), and principal of the Hampstead Conservatoire of Music (1896–1910) (*The Musical Times*, 1912). He also taught music to the 'royal children' from 1904 to 1907 (Fox-Strangways with Karpeles, 1933: 52). From 1910, he spent much of his time promoting folk song and dance in educational and community settings and was supported in this work by a Civil List pension from 1911 to 1922 (ibid.). Towards the end of his life, he held a position with the Board of Education as an inspector for folk song and dancing in teacher training colleges (1919–1923) (ibid.).

Great claims have been made for Sharp's importance in embedding folk traditions in English schools. Sharp's friend and early biographer, A.H. Fox-Strangways, noted in particular the very high regard in which he was held by significant figures at the Board of Education in the latter part of his career and following his death. One President of the Board, Edward Wood, said that Sharp was one 'to whose work in this field British education owes an almost irredeemable debt of gratitude' and another, Charles Trevelyan, called him 'one of the greatest educational influences of the time' (Fox-Strangways with Karpeles, 1933: 180). Scholars who have examined Sharp in the context of history of education have generally also accorded him great significance, albeit with a little more

moderation and more emphasis on the type of folk music and dance which was introduced (Bloomfield, 2001; Bloomfield, 2007; Cox, 1990; Gammon, 2008).

This chapter aims for a fresh assessment of Sharp's career as an educationalist, structured according to the themes which underpin the volume as a whole. We offer our own perspective on his beliefs about folk music and dance where these are relevant to his work in education. This provides some very necessary context to his interactions with education policy makers. We also consider the extent to which his educational approach resonated with the progressive education movement and re-examine the nature of his influence on education policy and practice.

Sharp's Beliefs About the Nature of Folk Song and Dance

The question of the ideologies associated with the first folk revival in England is something which we have both explored in previous work (Palmer, 2018; Palmer Heathman, 2017). An interest in folk traditions is in itself ideologically neutral and the subject has attracted enthusiasts from across the entire political spectrum, but the first English revival was dominated by those on the left. The celebration of the English national spirit associated with this movement was consistent with a desire to celebrate and preserve folk traditions round the world and stood in contrast to a British imperialism concerned with the domination of others through the mechanisms of Empire. Sharp sits within this broadly left-wing tradition. He was a member of the socialist Fabian Society and a supporter of the Liberal and then the Labour party (Fox-Strangways with Karpeles, 1933). He was, however, 'at no time a keen party man' and described himself with the ambiguous term 'Conservative Socialist' (ibid.: 23). The most relevant aspect of his beliefs to his educational work was his view on the nationalism/internationalism axis and how this connected to imperialism.

As is the case for the vast majority of his contemporaries, Sharp held views about race which are deeply offensive to modern sensibilities. To

give one unpleasant example, he considered that indigenous Australians were 'the most debased type of humanity now existing' and of 'a different order of humanity' to the English (Sharp, 1921). His frequent calls to preserve the distinctiveness of 'blood' and 'race', terms so associated now with Fascism, seem alarming today—although Sharp did in fact make it clear (despite his use of 'blood' in this way) that belonging to the English nation came down to cultural and not ethnic ties (*The Musical Times*, 1912). We argue that Sharp's nationalism was the romantic English nationalism common to most other folklorists rather than imperialist jingoism, or something aligned to the 'blood and soil' calls for racial regeneration present in the writing of some later revivalists such as Rolf Gardiner (Jefferies & Tyldesley, 2011). We take this position in opposition to a number of recent scholars working in this area (Cole, 2019; Gammon, 2008; Knevett, 2018).

Sharp recognised kinship between the folk music of all nations. All of it 'had its roots deep down in human nature' (Sharp, 1903: 5). However, the differences between these traditions expressed essential differences between peoples, so that English dances, for example, were peculiarly suited to the expressive needs of the English. It was therefore important that children (and adults) should first be taught these in preference to dances from other countries (Sharp, 1912). In his well-known polemic *English Folk Song: Some Conclusions*, he complained that 'our system of education is at present too cosmopolitan … calculated to produce citizens of the world rather than Englishmen' (Sharp, 1907: 135), which may sound rather insular. He later clarified, however, that he believed that world citizens could only be produced through first creating 'citizens distinctively national in type' (Sharp, [1923]: 13). For Sharp, nationalism was an integral part of internationalism.

Folk song and dance were intimately bound up with the essence of the nation and would 'stimulate the growth of the feeling of patriotism' and Sharp believed this was unambiguously a good thing (Sharp, 1907: 135). He made it clear, however, that the sort of deep love for the country which he wished to promote was not 'bellicose' (Sharp, 1906a: 81), was not the 'frothy civilian bombast which so often nowadays passes for patriotism' (Sharp, [1906b]: 8) and he absolutely condemned those who were cultivating the child who 'brags about Empire, which he measures by

square mileage' (1906c: 1). Sharp and his fellow folk revivalists hoped to foster a romantic national musical identity in which all could take part, deepening their love for the country. Whereas Welsh, Scottish and Irish identities were founded in and expressed by the 'music of the people' in ballads and at festivals, such as the Welsh Eisteddfodau, the English had until now to make do with standing silently through music played by distant others in the pomp and circumstance of state ceremonials (Colls & Palmer Heathman, 2017: 760).

The reason that folk song was ideal for promoting patriotism was the fact that it sprang from 'those who are unlettered and untravelled' (Sharp [1923]: 3)—the folk, or the peasants, who, romantic nationalists believed, carried the essence of the national spirit (Howkins, 1996). Sharp believed that folk song 'evolved' within the community through a process of oral transmission, whereas 'ordinary or Art' songs were 'composed' (Sharp, 1904). A belief that folk song rested on a purely oral culture is challenged by the existence of cheap printed broadsides ballads, some dating from as early as the sixteenth century (Atkinson, 2004). Sharp was aware of the existence of these and initially argued that poor people in rural communities would have learnt songs from them but his later writing seems to dismiss the importance of this mode of transmission (Schofield, 2004). His disregard may be justified by the fact that his primary interest was the tune (not usually printed on the broadsides) rather than the words (Bearman, 2002). Nonetheless, recent experts in the field suggest a much more complex relationship between the oral and written cultures than Sharp acknowledged (Atkinson, 2004; Roud, 2017). As will be seen below, both Sharp's ideas about what it meant to promote patriotic feelings and his ideas about what properly constituted a folk song were points of friction between himself and education policy makers.

With regard to folk dance, Sharp had similarly strong and controversial views about authenticity and what should and should not be seen as acceptable in terms of performance. He first encountered morris dances in 1899 through a meeting with William Kimber of the Headington Quarry Morris Men but did not really develop this interest until he began working with Mary Neal in 1906 (Judge, 2002). Neal was the founder of the Espérance Girls Club, a philanthropically-orientated organisation with

roots in the settlement movement (Judge, 1989). After Neal had introduced folk songs to the girls, she was keen to teach them dances of similar provenance and Sharp put her in touch with Kimber (ibid.). Sharp and Neal worked successfully together for a few years, promoting morris dancing with the Espérance girls (Roud, 2017). However, they had differing ideas about the concepts of authenticity and purity. Sharp believed that the Headington Quarry Morris was 'the exemplar' of how this sort of dance should be performed and that any alterations by subsequent performers were 'degenerate and inauthentic' (Simons, 2019: 32). Neal took a much more relaxed approach and was happy to let the dances evolve (ibid.). The dispute became bitter and personal: in 1909, Sharp wrote to Neal, implying that her approach was leading to a view that morris was 'graceless, undignified and uncouth' and that he was not going 'to stand idly by' any more (Judge, 1989: 557). This emphasis on purity and high standards became a hallmark of Sharp's approach to the promotion of folk dance: he wrote that 'it is … of the first importance that the dances should be transferred from the folk as accurately as possible in their true traditional forms … indeed, rather than introduce a debased art into the School, it would be wiser to exclude it altogether' (Sharp, 1912: 3).

Sharp's Beliefs About Folk Song and Dance Education

Despite the fact that most of his early teaching experience took place in very privileged settings, Sharp was acquainted with many key figures in the world of state education. People prominent in the decision-making process of the Board of Education were early members of the Folk-Song Society, which was established in 1898 and which Sharp joined in 1901 (Keel, 1948; Vaughan Williams, 1958). Sharp knew C.W. Kimmins, Chief Inspector of Education at the London County Council from 1904 to 1921: at the 1906 Bermondsey May Festival, Kimmins was the main speaker and Sharp wrote the programme notes and they later corresponded about the benefits of folk dance for children (Judge, 2002). He came into contact with other local inspectors in the course of his lecture tours promoting folk song and dance, notably Edward Burrows from

West Sussex and Portsmouth who introduced him to Edmond Holmes, Chief Inspector to the Board (Fox-Strangways with Karpeles, 1933). He lectured for educational organisations such as the Froebel Society (Sharp, 1906a) and at an event at the University of Manchester, chaired by J.J. Findlay, an important progressive educator with an interest in Montessori (*The Manchester Guardian*, 1912). In short, he had plenty of opportunities to encounter and absorb the latest ideas in education. Gordon Cox has recognised a progressive strand in Sharp's ideas about how folk song and dance should be taught but argues that this was 'naïve and not really thought through' (1990: 94). We believe that this is somewhat unfair.

A principle of progressive, most notably Froebelian, education was that the child should not be seen and taught in isolation but should be understood as connected with adults and the rest of society (Wasmuth, 2020). Sharp was an educator of the whole community: the child in school was just one focus of his advocacy. The Folk-Song Society, of which Sharp was a member from 1901, and the English Folk Dance Society (EFDS), which Sharp founded in 1911, were concerned with encouraging these traditions in all contexts among adults and children (Vaughan Williams, 1958). Sharp urged the EFDS executive 'to provide demonstrations whenever and wherever they are wanted' (ibid.: 109). Their efforts resulted in dances becoming popular with 'girl guides, boy scouts, girls' clubs, women's institutes and other social organizations' (*The Musical Times*, 1920: 82). Sharp's measure of success for introducing folk songs into schools was that the child would bring the music back into the community and sing the songs outside in public spaces (Sharp, 1921: 11).

Another key concept for progressive educators was a holistic approach to learning, where connections between experiences were purposively built and nurtured (Read, 2013). Sharp argued that folk song and dance enabled children to acquire a range of interconnected skills: dance brought 'into play all the faculties, mental and physical' (Sharp, 1906d). Children's singing games, which he wrote about with Alice Gomme, (Chap. 4) stimulated 'dramatic and mimetic faculties', developed the 'voice and limbs', taught 'discipline and restraint' and could 'feed the imagination' (Gomme & Sharp, 1909: 1). Folk music was something

which would build 'the emotional and imaginative side' of the child's nature (Sharp [1919]: 2) and give him or her 'the capacity to dream dreams' (Sharp, [1923]: 8).

Progressive educators believed in experiential learning, with the teacher providing access to activities that were sensitive to a child's current needs (Christou, 2012). Sharp believed children should learn singing and dancing though experiencing the songs and dances. He argued that children should be taught dance technique, for example, not through theoretical instruction but 'as far as possible *in the course of the dance*' (Sharp, 1922, emphasis in the original). His advice regarding singing in the elementary school was for teachers not to 'waste time … by teaching the craft of music' but just to teach children large numbers of songs: 'there is virtue in quantity as well as in quality' (Sharp [1919]: 9). Gordon Cox's claim regarding Sharp's naivety about progressive teaching concerns this process of teaching by 'osmosis' (Cox, 1990: 94). Sharp did, however, have a sense of progression and of how learning needed to be scaffolded: he suggested, for example, different songs as suitable for different ages (Sharp, 1906c). For dancing, he had a clear educational rationale as to why country dancing was suitable for the under-twelves and morris dance should be reserved for the older children: young children would find the latter too challenging to learn quickly 'and it would be some weeks before children were able to dance it well enough to get much enjoyment out of it' (*The Manchester Guardian*, 1912: 8).

Teaching music and dance is a challenge for any progressive educator, as these are group activities and thus necessitate a degree of direct instruction and control (see Chap. 3), but Sharp's ideas aligned with progressivism in a variety of meaningful ways. He used these ideas effectively in building his case for folk song and dance and had a sense of how theory could be brought into practice with children and adults of different ages.

Sharp and His Influence on Education Policy: Folk Songs

The claims, noted above, about Sharp's profound influence on education rest on his interactions with policy makers, particularly at the Board of Education, and whether he was able, though his advocacy, to generate

change. It should be pointed out that national education policy in the years when Sharp was active was advisory rather than prescriptive. It was expressed through editions of a Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers (Board of Education, first edition 1905) and through circulars about good practice rather than through a national curriculum. Local authorities were responsible for advising about suitable curricula which matched the needs of their own areas (see Chap. 3). Teachers were supposed to retain autonomy but they may well have felt that the 'recommendations of those in authority [were] more or less commands' and their jobs were at risk if they did not comply (*School Music Review*, 1916: 202).

As mentioned above, in the final years of his life, Sharp held a formal position with the Board of Education. In 1919, H.A.L. Fisher, President of the Board, invited Sharp to a meeting to discuss how best to impart 'a love of our old English national songs and dances into the minds of children in elementary schools' (Fisher, 1924: 15). Fisher was so impressed that he offered him a role inspecting folk song and dance in teacher training colleges, a post he held until 1923 (Karpeles, 1967). Thus, Sharp was able to advocate for folk song and dance within these institutions and had a regular channel of communication upwards. However, in the period when folk song and dance were first being introduced, he was not ensconced with the policy makers and could only effect change through offering advice, privately or in the public domain.

The enthusiasm of the Board of Education (and its predecssor the Education Department) for promoting folk song in schools was established before Sharp rose to prominence. The late 1880s and the 1890s saw increasing concern about the quantity of 'trash'—or composed songs for children with 'namby pamby words' that were sung in schools (*School Music Review*, 1892: 36). One solution to this perceived problem, as the composer C.V. Stanford argued in an 1889 lecture to the managers of the London School Board, was to encourage 'national music, folk music—the music which from the earliest times has grown up amongst the people' (Stanford, 1908: 53). In 1897, W.G. McNaught, assistant to the Inspector of Music in Schools and Training Colleges, John Stainer, suggested to London headteachers that school music should 'assist the purpose of conserving the memory of national and local folk-songs' and pointed out that Stainer gave approval for the use of this material in

schools, with the qualification that not all songs were suitable (*School Music Review*, 1897: 152). In September 1901, shortly after the death of Stainer but just before the appointment of his successor Arthur Somervell, a report on singing was issued to inspectors suggesting that children's memories should be filled with 'patriotic, national and folk songs, the words of which are suitable for school use', emphasising that other songs might also be useful (*School Music Review*, 1901: 61). The emphasis on selecting for suitability and on not excluding other types of music suggest this might have been the work of McNaught, who argued strongly for both these points on numerous occasions in the pages of *The School Music Review*, of which he was editor. In any case, Somervell was himself a passionate folk song enthusiast, having co-produced a book of folk songs for school use in 1893 (Cox, 2003). In 1905, under his stewardship, the Handbook of Suggestions enjoined teachers to teach only music of high quality and argued that 'these conditions are satisfied in high degree by national and folk songs' (Board of Education, 1912, reprinted from 1905: 53). The handbook included a list of suggested songs which was dominated by songs of this type. The following year, Stanford produced *The National Song Book*, based on this list (Knevett, 2018).

It is clear that the introduction of folk songs in schools had very little to do with Cecil Sharp. His part in this story revolves around his passionate interrogation of the concept of 'national and folk song' and the disputes this generated. Although sometimes the two terms seemed to be interchangeable, 'national songs' also included songs with named composers which were widely sung and most particularly those of a strong patriotic bent of the imperialistic kind, including national anthems. In 1902, Sharp had produced *A Book of British Song for Home and School*, which contained much the same mix of material that was later evident in *The National Song Book*. It is worth noting that Somervell felt this book was damaging to the folk song cause owing to the inclusion of some slightly risqué subject matter (Cox, 2003). However, as Sharp's collecting activities developed, so did his ideas about what should and what should not be properly regarded as folk songs worthy of preservation and promotion, and he protested about the blurring of categories implied by 'national songs'. His attempts to persuade the Folk-Song Society to condemn the Board of Education's approach were not successful (Knevett,

2018). He nevertheless took his own public stand in opposition, most notably in his polemic *English Folk-song: Some Conclusions* (1907), where he set out his position, as described above, that true folk songs were those which sprang from the oral tradition of the 'unlettered' (p. 3) and these were the best tools for promoting true patriotism as he understood it.

The key question is, then, whether Sharp's stance influenced the thinking of the Board and caused a shift in policy. The common view is that it did: Gordon Cox (1990) credits Sharp with 'introducing the music of an oral tradition into schools' (p. 89) and Vic Gammon (2008) likewise claims, in relation to both music and dance, that he 'fundamentally' altered the 'performance repertory' (p. 75). Certainly it is possible to detect a change of emphasis in the Board's approach over the following decade. The Handbook of Suggestions issued in 1914 omits the controversial 'national' and instead recommends 'folk and traditional songs' (Board of Education, 1914: 94). The extant evidence does not prove definitively that this was due to Sharp's lobbying, although it seems a reasonable supposition. However, in the light of what we know about the shaky ground on which Sharp's theories rested and the impossibility of drawing a clear line between oral culture and printed broadside ballads, it seems a rather minor point and one that hardly justifies the claims about his profound influence. Yet Gammon claims this shift 'saved generations of children from the worst 'national songs' (1980: 4). Perhaps we can argue that Sharp helped pull music education away from the excesses of imperialist nationalism to his own romantic English nationalism. This would mean he was very far from the conservative influence he is sometimes claimed to be (see Cox, 1990, for one example).

Sharp and His Influence on Education Policy: Folk Dance

The interest of the Board of Education in folk dance, an area that straddled the domains of both music and physical instruction experts, came a little later than its interest in folk song. The 1905 Handbook of Suggestions did not refer to dance, although it did encourage graceful movements in

physical exercises. In 1906, however, *Music in Secondary Schools* stated that 'many purely peasant songs and dance measures … are admirably adapted for dancing, marching, musical drill and gymnastics' (Board of Education, 1906: 5), which perhaps softened the ground for dancing folk dances to folk music. By 1909, a memorandum to inspectors argued that dancing was 'justifiable and even desirable' although caution was urged with regard to inexperienced teachers and mixed-sex instruction. 'Morris dances, the old English country dances, the jig, reel, Welsh dance, Swedish dance' were particularly recommended as having qualities superior to those of 'modern ballroom' (Selby-Bigge & Holmes, 1909). The *Revised Syllabus of Physical Exercises for Elementary Schools* published in 1909 noted that morris was 'easily learned and very enjoyable' (Judge, 1989: 560). The 1914 Handbook recommended 'the use of such dances as the hornpipe, the jig, the reel and country dances' (Board of Education, 1914: 873). The 1919 Revised Syllabus of Physical Training for Schools stated that 'folk and national dances of various countries are clearly the type of dance best suited to the needs of school children' (Bloomfield, 2007: 692).

Maud Karpeles, Sharp's eventual executor and the champion of his legacy in folk song and dance, claimed that Sharp was 'partly instrumental' in bringing about the Board's initial tentative encouragement of folk dancing, through a meeting with Edmond Holmes, Chief Inspector of the Board (Karpeles, 1967: 75). Claims in the scholarly literature about his influence here may well be based on this assertion, as other evidence is not presented (see Boyes, 2010; Whisnant, 1983). Sharp certainly discussed the issue with people in high places: for example, as mentioned above, he exchanged letters with C.W. Kimmins about the benefits of folk dancing for children's physical development (Sharp, 1906d). Mary Neal, however, saw things somewhat differently: in a letter to *The Observer* she claimed that the inclusion of folk dance in the 1909 syllabus was due to the Board's recognition of the work of her Association for the Revival and Practice of Folk Music (Neal, 1909). It is true that the emphasis on enjoyment and ease of learning seems to owe more to her approach than Sharp's. Over the subsequent decades, however, as Neal's star faded and Sharp's continued to rise, there can be no doubt that his was the voice that was listened to. The 1919 Revised Syllabus quotes specifically from

Sharp's *The Country Dance Book* (Bloomfield, 2007). The 1927 Handbook of Suggestions, published three years after his death, seems to draw heavily on his 1912 publication *Folk Dancing in Schools*, with its categories of morris dance, sword dance and country dance and its emphasis on control and discipline and high standards (Board of Education, 1927: 417). In short, the case for Sharp's influence on folk dance policy is more decisive than that for his influence on folk song.

Sharp and His Influence on Practice in Schools

As Board of Education policy pronouncements were suggestive and not directive, they needed different forms of support in order to become realised in schools. Bloomfield has suggested that Sharp, and others who were not a part of the educational establishment, provided such 'support systems' (2001: 74). Enthusiasm in schools could only be maintained if there was continued public interest in folk culture (Bloomfield, 2007). Sharp's work in transplanting 'an art from the folk who created it to the rest of the nation' (Sharp, 1913: 108) was therefore significant. Much of this was effected through the English Folk Dance Society. This organisation was involved in many different activities which aimed to bring folk traditions before the public. One mechanism was through public displays and festivals: among numerous examples were a display at a Blackpool festival (*School Music Review*, 1912a), a performance at the Savoy Theatre in Westminster (Fox-Strangways with Karpeles, 1933) and a week-long festival of folk song and dance in the King's Theatre, Hammersmith (*School Music Review*, 1921). Lectures were another important dissemination tool. In 1912, *The Musical Times* claimed Sharp was giving about 70 of these a year (p. 640).

Sharp supported the work of schools in more direct ways. Some of the lectures he gave were specifically for teachers, such as the addresses for the Froebel Society and for J.J. Findlay discussed above. Sharp was also active in providing training courses for teachers in many contexts: these were particularly important for disseminating dance, which could not be easily learned from written material in the same way as song (*The Musical Times*, 1912). Sharp was involved with running numerous vacation

schools for teachers, most notably in connection with the Stratford Shakespeare Festival. In 1912, 'between one and two hundred student-teachers' attended (*School Music Review*, 1912b: 73). Perhaps most significantly of all, he produced large amounts of published material. Steve Roud notes that Sharp 'seems to have had a hand in nearly everything that was going on' in terms of folk song and folk dance publications (2017: 132). Many of his books were particularly useful for schools, such as 'folk-dance manuals with musical notation' (Bloomfield, 2001: 60) and cheap editions of folk songs with 'simple accompaniments' (Scholes, 1924: 10).

The fundamental question, notoriously difficult to answer, is what was actually going on in schools and whether the folk revival was really having an impact there. It seems that there was indeed a shift in practice towards the teaching of folk song and dance in the early years of the twentieth century. Despite the Board's enthusiasm for this material, Somervell reported in 1903 that he had heard nothing but 'twaddle' sung on his school inspections the previous year (*School Music Review*, 1903a: 177). By 1907, however, Sharp claimed that folk songs had been 'introduced into many elementary schools' (Sharp, 1907: 138). His perception was shared by the Folk-Song Society, who reported in 1908 that folk songs and dances were being 'enthusiastically carried out in school' (Keel, 1948: 119). In 1911, Mary Neal recounted having seen hundreds of children dancing for Coronation Day celebrations in Salford (Neal, 1911: 13). Impossible though it is to be confident about numbers, it would seem that the folk advocates were having some impact and their influence was growing. Scholars from the later twentieth century have drawn on personal memories for evidence that folk songs were a significant part of school music from the early decades until the 1950s (Ahier, 1988; Leach & Palmer, 1978).

There were, however, educators who raised concerns about the wave of 'folksongitis' in the early days of Somervell's reign as music inspector (Cox, 2003: 46). This was in almost every case not a complete rejection of the use of folk material, but as McNaught later wrote to Sharp, opposition to its 'exclusive use' and also to some particular songs on the grounds of their being in poor taste (McNaught, 1913). As one correspondent to the *School Music Review* rather amusingly put it, although many old songs

were 'eminently suitable', this was no justification for forcing on children 'any song, however, beery and leery, which has survived the shock of generations' (Rothery, 1904: 8). Other educators rejected the claim that all previous school music was 'twaddle': a letter from 'a well-known Training College Music Professor' argued that 'I should never dream of taking such a retrograde step as substituting "Sally in our Alley" or "The British Grenadiers" in unison for the fine part-music of Mendelssohn and Schumann' (*School Music Review*, 1903b: 199). Folk songs in schools found a place alongside rather than in replacement of all other material. This is amply demonstrated in this volume by the chapters on Stewart Macpherson (Chap. 2) and Walter Carroll (Chap. 3).

The question is, however, whether Sharp had an influence on precisely what material teachers used when they did turn to folk song and dance and whether his understandings of what these were and how they should be taught were widely shared. The dominance of his publishing output would ensure that his books would be a clear choice for many educators. John Ahier (1988) claims that Baring-Gould's and Sharp's *English Folk-Songs for Schools* [1906] was indeed the mainstay of many teachers for decades. Harvey Grace, a contributor to the *School Music Review*, claimed in 1921 that Sharp's *Folk-Songs from Somerset* had the 'popular vote' regarding the choice of materials for schools, clubs and festivals (p. 181). Stanford's *National Song Book* (1906) was also widely used and provided an alternative: Somervell suggested in 1917 that there was 'hardly a school where the book is not found' (Cox, 2003: 11). Nonetheless, Sharp's name became synonymous with the folk revival for many teachers and both contemporaries and later scholars felt that the sheer volume of his materials rather than the weight of his arguments meant that it was his vision and understanding of folk song and dance that ultimately became embedded as the norm (Cole, 2019; Grace, 1921; Judge, 1993).

Conclusion

Cecil Sharp is an important figure in the introduction of folk song and dance to schools in England in the early twentieth century, although some of the claims about him cited at the beginning of this chapter seem

excessive. He was knowledgeable about the process of education and his pedagogy dovetailed consistently with that of progressive educators of his period. His work had an influence on practice in schools and the lived experiences of teachers and children, but more through his tireless promotional work and the publication of materials than through the direct shaping of policy. This influence shaped children's experiences of folk music towards a romantic English nationalism and away from excesses of patriotic bluster.

This chapter has provided material for a deepening understanding of the process of 'influence' in schools. At a time when central government was chary of imposing rigid curricula on teachers, the importance of winning the hearts and minds of people working at the chalk-face came to the fore. Sharp persuaded significant numbers of teachers to teach folk songs and dance. A key element in his success was the fact that he sustained and nurtured interest in the wider community, making teaching folk culture in schools relevant and connected to life outside. Another important aspect was that he provided teachers with necessary training, and, above all, the materials they needed, in the form of cheap and convenient books. There are interesting parallels here with the impact of producers of arts and crafts materials and how they were able to shape practice by the provision of physical resources (see Chap. 7).

Cecil Sharp's name is still well-known to folk enthusiasts today, not least through the continued use of Cecil Sharp House as the headquarters of The English Folk Dance and Song Society, an amalgamation of the separate folk song and folk dance societies (EFDSS, 2020). Despite a continued interest in a section of the wider community, folk songs and dancing do not have the prominence in English schools today that they had in the first half of the twentieth century: the current primary curriculum requires that children experience 'music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions' but does not specifically require schools to engage with English folk material (Department of Education, 2013). It would seem, then, that Sharp's influence is a diminishing one. Nonetheless, his story is worth reflecting on, particularly in a time of tensions around national identities in the UK. For all that we have argued that Sharp's English Romanticism was more palatable than alternative forms of nationalism which were potentially penetrating English schools

in the early twentieth century, it is not an ideology that would find unqualified support today. This begs the question of what we, as a society, want from the music we choose for children's education: how should it connect to our communities and speak to our common values? The one certainty we have is that this continues to need careful consideration, because music in schools can never be free from the ideologies of those responsible for promoting and teaching it.

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Chapter 2: Stewart Macpherson (1865–1941): The Rise of the Musical Appreciation Movement in Britain

Gordon Cox

Introduction

The novelist H.G. Wells prophesied in 1903 that a different sort of music teaching 'aimed at intelligent appreciation, might find a place in a complete educational scheme' (Wells, 1903: 13). Five years later this challenge was taken up by Stewart Macpherson, a professor at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM), who was to become widely recognised as 'the Father of the Musical Appreciation movement in Britain' (Scholes, 1935: 18). Macpherson possessed an air of authority in the musical world. He was a fine teacher and a respected author of texts on musical theory who was to be appointed Dean of the Faculty of Music, University of London, and a director of the Royal Philharmonic Society. In addition, he possessed a natural charisma: 'The tall erect figure, the frosted hair and incisive speech seemed more typical of a Cabinet minister than a musician' (Forsyth, 1929: 11). His was clearly a voice to listen to.

G. Cox (✉)
University of Reading, Reading, UK

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Photo 1 Stewart Macpherson. Image reproduced with permission from the Royal Academy of Music, London

In order to press the claims of musical appreciation as an integral part of the school music curriculum, Macpherson used his base at the Royal Academy of Music as a means rather than an end. His friend and colleague Percy Scholes observed that Macpherson worked hard to ensure that 'the Academy became not the circumference of his activities, but merely the centre' (Scholes, 1941: 239). Thus, he founded the Music Teachers' Association and established a powerful network of allies amongst fellow musicians and educationists all united in the cause of musical appreciation. Stewart Macpherson retired from the Royal Academy of Music in 1931. His final years were spent in a remote family

house on the north coast of Cornwall. He died on 27 March 1941 (*RAM Club Magazine*, 1941).

Although his is not a name well known perhaps to the layman or casual music lover, there nevertheless exists a small amount of relevant scholarship. The most authoritative study of Macpherson is the exhaustive doctoral thesis by Anthony Walker (1994), whilst Percy Scholes (1935), John Moutrie (1976), Bernarr Rainbow (1984), Stephanie Pitts (2000) and Catherine Dale (2005) have also focused on aspects of Macpherson's approach to musical appreciation. This present chapter therefore builds upon these foundations.

Early Life and Career, 1865–1900

Charles Stewart Macpherson was born on 26 March, 1865 in the West Derby district of Liverpool. His parents were Henry Charles Macpherson, a master confectioner, and Elizabeth Macpherson née Welsh (Walker, 1994). They moved down to South London with their infant son a year later (*Musical Journal*, 1909). They eventually settled in Streatham, six or so miles from the centre of London. Stewart (as he later preferred to be known) lived in the family home until his marriage in 1895 to one of his former students, Leonora Frances Kemp (*Musical Herald*, 1898; *RAM Club Magazine*, 1911).

Details of Macpherson's early life are sketchy but we do know that he took to playing the piano when he was five or six years old and eventually became a pupil of a well-known teacher Thomas Fox (*Musical Journal*, 1909). After a period in a local private school, he entered the long-established City of London School in the autumn term of 1877, at the age of 12. The intention was that Macpherson should go eventually to Cambridge as a classical student (*RAM Club Magazine*, 1911). His parents, however, sent him as a 15-year-old to compete for an open scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music. They wanted to encourage their elder son to interest himself still more in music in spite of the fact that neither parent knew anything whatever about the subject but 'were in sympathy with it' (*Musical Herald*, 1898: 227). Macpherson subsequently

won the scholarship and entered the Academy in 1880 (*Musical Herald*, 1898).

With a propensity for winning prizes and medals for composition, as well as for piano performance, Macpherson was destined for a glittering musical career. He was described as 'a brilliant Pianist, a gifted Composer and a promising Conductor' (Read, 1941: 47). He became an assistant professor in 1887 and a professor of harmony and composition in 1889. Two years later he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music (FRAM) for his distinction in the musical profession (*Musical Journal*, 1909).

Towards a Rational System of Musical Appreciation, 1900–1918

On Saturday, 2 June 1900, Macpherson set out from Liverpool aboard the Cunard liner 'Campania', bound for New York. He had been appointed as an Examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM). In this capacity he was to visit Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Macpherson, 1901). Macpherson's co-examiner for part of the trip was Arthur Somervell, a composer who was to be appointed the following year as the new Inspector of Music on the Board of Education and the Scottish Education Department (Cox, 2003). Somervell was to be an important ally of Macpherson over the next 30 years. Crucially, he was to write the chapter on 'Singing' in the government's Blue Book, *Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers and Others Concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools* (Board of Education, 1905). It provides us with the context in which Macpherson was to work, as Somervell emphasised the merits of learning national songs, as well as recommending singing songs of the great masters which could encourage 'the cultivation of taste' (ibid.: 1). The teaching of singing was linked to an understanding of music theory with the intention that children should be able to read music by the end of their elementary schooling.

In the same year as the aforementioned chapter, Macpherson wrote an article entitled 'Listening to Music' (Macpherson, 1905), which shared

Somervell's preoccupation with the cultivation of musical taste. Macpherson had detected a lack of discrimination amongst audiences which made him wonder whether the training of intelligent listeners was not more important than turning out thousands of players and singers.

Three years later, Macpherson published a two-part article entitled 'Towards a Rational System of Training in Musical Appreciation' (Macpherson, 1908a; Macpherson, 1908b). It signalled the start of the musical appreciation movement in Britain. It was, in effect, a manifesto addressed to three constituencies: professional students, intending teachers of music, and musical amateurs. Essentially, Macpherson wished to free music students from undue specialisation by the cultivation of a healthy all-round musicianship that such musical appreciation could satisfy. He advised those who wished to teach that their priority should be to lay the foundation of a true and intelligent musical taste amongst their pupils. This would be far more beneficial than the prevalent emphasis, particularly in private schools, on the incessant grinding at scales and pieces on the piano. Macpherson's final point was that much work was needed to promote the understanding and appreciation of music not only amongst school pupils but also musically involved amateurs.

What Macpherson found lamentable was the neglect in cultivating the child's ear, based upon what he later described as 'the dreary, unmusical ear-tests … devoid of musical significance' (Macpherson, 1923a: 18). Future progress in musical appreciation would depend upon the development of skills amongst pupils such as attending to 'the principal cadence-forms and their mental effect, the simpler modulations, passages of imitation, sequences' (Macpherson, 1908b: 7). Accordingly, he set out a detailed scheme of work for pupils aged 6–16 in the second part of his manifesto. It was based upon three main factors: class-singing, systematic ear-training and opportunities for listening to music.

In a retrospective interview 21 years after the publication of his manifesto, Macpherson admitted that in the years leading up to 1908 he had gradually been re-thinking his purpose as a musician. He believed that his decision to focus on musical appreciation had 'enabled him to be of greater use to a greater number of people than if he had continued to compose symphonies, overtures and the like, which possibly nobody wanted' (Forsyth, 1929: 12).

Towards the end of his life Macpherson compiled some hand-written notes intended as the basis for a memoir (see Walker, 1994). They reveal how he was first led towards the 'Appreciation idea' (ibid.: 340). Two influences stand out. The first was the American movement. Undoubtedly the impulse towards introducing musical appreciation in schools percolated from the USA where it had been established as far back as the 1890s (see Scholes, 1935). Amongst the American writers that Macpherson cited were W.J. Henderson (*What is Good Music?* (1898)) and T.W. Surette and D.G. Mason (*The Appreciation of Music* (1907)). The second influence however was the more troubling: 'Miss M.A. Langdale and Mus: Apprec' (Walker, 1994: 380). Frustratingly, little is known about Mary Agnes Langdale (1877–1917). She was well-educated, had been a student at the Royal Academy, and gained her Licentiate diploma (LRAM) in piano teaching in 1907. She was one of Macpherson's students and had recently returned from the USA where she had acquainted herself with recent developments in the teaching of musical appreciation in schools and universities (Scholes, 1935).

It appears however that Langdale forestalled, or at least wrong-footed, Macpherson's plans to be the first to initiate a discussion on establishing musical appreciation in schools. Part 1 of her article 'A Plea for the Broader Treatment of Music in our Schools' (1908a) appeared in March, three months before Macpherson's manifesto. It was published in *The Crucible: A Catholic Magazine of Higher Education for Women*. The musical appreciation course advocated by Langdale was 'exactly similar to the methods of literature study, which are traditional in good school teaching' (Langdale, 1908b: 16). *The Crucible* published a list, in connection with the Catholic Women's League, of individuals willing to give outside lectures. The entry for 'Miss M.A. Langdale LRAM (London)' demonstrates the breadth of her interest and her ambition: '"How to Listen to Music"; "Studies of the Great Composers"; "The Great Schools of Composition"; "Modern Schools of Composition"; "Music and Literature" and "The Art of Teaching Music"' (*The Crucible*, 1908: 201). No record of these lectures having been delivered has been found so far.

What is apparent however is that although Macpherson borrowed heavily from Langdale's article he failed to mention her directly by name in his manifesto. Moreover, as discussed below in relation to the

beginnings of the Music Teachers' Association (MTA), she subsequently disappeared from view and made no more contribution to the musical appreciation movement. All this did not reflect well on Macpherson. There the matter rests, apart from observing that Langdale died of diabetes in a military hospital in 1917 whilst serving as a nurse in the Voluntary Aid Detachment (Dickinson, 2009).

In his 'Hand-written Notes' Macpherson pointed out that 'Official attitude towards the Apprec. Movement was one of caution and scepticism' (Walker, 1994: 340). Two examples here must suffice. First, Geoffrey Shaw HMI complained about teachers who 'ask them [children] what the music represents, and after several guesses one child may hit on a likely suggestion' (Scholes, 1935: 59). This 'poetising' was to dog the reputation of music appreciation. Second, Gustav Holst, then music master at St Paul's Girls' School, was one of those who viewed the new development with great distrust: 'the method which would teach the listener to understand music through the mind of someone else stands condemned' (Holst in Scholes, 1935: 35). Many years later Nicholas Cook agreed with the gist of Holst's view: 'Subjected to the authority of the music educator … the 'ordinary' listener is positioned firmly at the bottom of the musical hierarchy' (Cook, 2000: 27).

However, despite these sceptics, Macpherson set himself three goals in order to establish musical appreciation in schools. These were: to develop his own ideas and thinking in a school context; to found an association of music teachers to propagandise musical appreciation and, finally, to publish books and materials for teachers. The chapter now turns to considering these.

Streatham Hill High School

At the end of his manifesto, Macpherson intimated that he had been asked to take an active part in the reorganisation of a large and important educational establishment in London. This turned out to be the fee-paying Streatham Hill High School, which was part of the Girls' Public Day School Trust (GPDST) (see Streatham Hill and Clapham High School, 1997). The school had been founded in 1887, and in 1895

moved into a new and impressive four-storeyed building which today houses the preparatory department. As in most GPDST schools, Streatham Hill High School contained three departments: preparatory, junior and senior. It was an ideal 'laboratory' for Macpherson.

Macpherson had struck up a friendship with the school's remarkable headmistress Reta Oldham (1861–1933). The two already knew one another through Macpherson's position as organist of Immanuel Church, Streatham Hill, and as founder-conductor of the Streatham Hill Choral Society (Rainbow, 1984). One of Oldham's former students described her as 'a big-hearted woman. … She attended theatres, concerts, political gatherings, meetings on women's suffrage and social reform' (Hamilton, 1954: 88–89). Oldham went on to become president of the Association of Headmistresses (Goodman & Milsom, 2014). She worked hard to secure greater recognition for practical and aesthetic subjects in the examinations system.

Macpherson's reorganisation of the school's music curriculum impressed Oldham. She spoke about it at the school distribution of prizes: 'We have started a system of class music-teaching, the aim of which is to give all pupils a conscious appreciation of the elements of rhythm, melody, harmony and tonality which go to make up music, and to enable them to establish a clear mutual connection between the actual sound and the expression in writing: in fact to hear what they see, and to see what they hear' (*Norwood News*, 1909: 6). Two years later the *Streatham Hill High School Magazine* (1911) announced that the whole of the musical work of the school was now under Macpherson's direction. Hard on the heels of that development, the *Norwood News* reported that 'the headmistress has started a training department for music teachers' (*Norwood News*, 1912: 4). Macpherson was appointed as the department's Director. It catered for would-be teachers of music from the Royal Academy and elsewhere, who could practise teaching under his supervision. All this prompted the local paper to exclaim that 'at present Streatham is the centre of much musical activity on the most modern and up-to-date lines' (*Norwood News*, 1913: 3).

This highly effective partnership with Reta Oldham hugely influenced Macpherson's ability to work out his ideas in practice, and to promote musical appreciation within the school's teacher training department.

Oldham proved to be a critical friend and a firm ally. Macpherson continued his collaboration with GPDST schools after World War I, particularly with the experimental course in music at the Mary Datchelor Girls' School in Camberwell (Board of Education, 1923a) whose headmistress was Dorothy Brock.

The Music Teachers' Association

In 'A Plea for a Wide General Culture amongst Musicians' (Macpherson, 1906), Macpherson described a Reading Club that he had established amongst his students in order to counteract what he detected as their lack of a general cultural awareness. It met on a regular basis in Macpherson's rather grand house at 23, Chepstow Villas in Kensington. The task for club members was to undertake serious reading and engage in discussion and conversation. Macpherson also gave short talks to them on music and music teaching in which he advocated a wider view of the subject.

The idea of forming a collective group of forward-looking music teachers arose from discussions within this club. At a meeting in June 1908 in Macpherson's drawing room, eight individuals, including Mary Langdale, formed themselves into a provisional committee of what was to become 'The Music Teachers' Association' (MTA). Six of them were past or present pupils of Macpherson, who also acted as chairman. There was one outsider, the influential music educator Annie Curwen (Mrs J. Spencer Curwen) (Walker, 1994). The aims of the proposed new association were set out in a leaflet as follows:

> i. To promote progressive ideas upon the teaching of music
>
> ii. A recognition … that music is a literature and should be taught and studied from that point of view
>
> iii. To insist most strongly—as a preparation for the 'art of listening'—upon the necessity for systematic ear-training from early childhood
>
> iv. To promote class-singing, in which singing at sight should be the chief aim
>
> v. It is desirable to bring them [boys and girls] into touch with good music, well played and simply commented on by the teacher. (Scholes 1935: 17)

The document aroused considerable interest, so much so that the provisional committee extended an invitation to persons outside the Royal Academy of Music. The inaugural public meeting of the MTA was held on 20 October 1908 in the Broadwood Rooms in Conduit Street, in the heart of London's West End. Macpherson delivered the opening address as the association's founder and chairman. It was entitled appropriately 'The Training of the Young in Musical Appreciation' (*RAM Club Magazine*, 1909). In his conclusion, Macpherson urged all those younger teachers 'who had ideals in their work' (ibid.: 29) to join the association. At the first general meeting afterwards, the following officers were elected: President, Sir A.C. Mackenzie (Principal, Royal Academy of Music); Vice Presidents, Dr W.H. Cummings (Principal, Guildhall School of Music) and Mr W.H. Hadow (educationist and music historian) and Chairman, Stewart Macpherson. Included amongst the six Other Members was Miss M.A. Langdale. In a revealing interview mostly about the MTA in the *Musical Herald* (April 1910), Macpherson was asked how he was going to carry out his propaganda in conjunction with the association. His reply was succinct: 'By means of lecturing and meetings, and also by the circulation of literature' (ibid.). Membership was open to teachers in service, for those preparing to enter the profession, and to heads of schools and other interested parties. There was an annual subscription of 5 shillings and numerous provincial branches were set up across the country.

Macpherson expanded the scope and impact of the MTA by his support in 1912 for a scheme to financially rescue the monthly periodical *The Music Student*. This had been the brainchild of Percy A. Scholes (1877–1958), who had started it as the house magazine of his Home Musical Study Union which he had founded in 1907 (Morrish, 2003). Scholes is best known today as the compiler of *The Oxford Companion to Music* (Scholes, 1938), and author of the somewhat rambling but indispensable history of the appreciation movement (Scholes, 1935). He later played a key role in the movement through his embrace of the developing media of gramophone and radio (Jorgensen, 1987; Moutrie, 1976). As part of the rescue plan for *The Music Student*, Macpherson became a member of its management committee. Subsequently the Home Musical Study Union joined with the MTA. Both *The Music Student* and its successor *The Music Teacher* became recognised as the most active advocates of the musical appreciation movement.

The MTA went from strength to strength. By December 1930 the *Musical Times* estimated that the membership had reached upwards of 1500. The association operated effectively in at least three areas: provision for the ongoing training for music teachers through holiday courses (Zagni, 1989); the establishment of the independent Training School for Music Teachers in 1919 (Scholes, 1935), and the encouragement of new methods of teaching, particularly those of the Swiss composer-educator Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865–1950) and his system of 'Gymnastique Rythmique' better known as Eurhythmics. It also acted as a pressure group on the policies of the ABRSM and the Royal Academy of Music. Without doubt, the MTA served Macpherson's purposes well in its advocacy of music appreciation in schools. It continued its work for over 60 years before being incorporated into the British Federation of Festivals in 1974 (Walker, 1994).

Aural Culture

The third part of Macpherson's strategy comprised the writing and publication of three texts: *Music and its Appreciation or the Foundations of True Listening* (1910); *Aural Culture based upon Musical Appreciation* (with Ernest Read) (1912, 1913, 1918) and *The Musical Education of the Child: Some Thoughts and Suggestions for Teachers, Parents and Schools* (1915). *Music and its Appreciation* was primarily intended for the amateur music lover. Macpherson was repeatedly asked to write a class book or a teachers' guide as something of a follow-up. *Aural Culture* was the result, written with one of his former students Ernest Read (1879–1965), who became a close ally. It was published in three separate parts. Macpherson stated his position unequivocally: 'all Ear-training work must be based upon Musical Appreciation; the technical side must never be divorced from the aesthetic, and the whole aim of the study must be the fostering of *real musical perception* in the pupil' (Macpherson & Read, 1912: 2, italics in the original). Whilst the first part of the series was aimed at the first year of an average child's study, the subsequent parts progressed through the principles of musical structure to counterpoint

and harmony at the level of training for students in a music college. Each volume comprised an introduction followed by detailed exercises.

One of the influences on the writing of *Aural Culture* was Jaques-Dalcroze and his system of Eurhythmics. Langdale had already mentioned Dalcroze warmly (Langdale, 1908b), but in this case it was Ernest Read's advocacy that was paramount. It was he who became responsible for strengthening the connections between the methods of Dalcroze and the musical appreciation movement (Odom & Pope, 2013). In relation to this, a fascinating appendix is included in *Aural Culture* (1912) by Marie Salt which focuses upon 'The Realization and Expression of Music Through Movement', based upon her work at Streatham Hill High School with children aged between four and eight years old. It contains clear parallels with the work of Dalcroze and his emphasis upon musical movement. Salt also derived her ideas from the racial recapitulation theory which stated that 'Child Development is analogous to Race Development' (ibid.: ii). This had been championed in America by G. Stanley Hall (1844–1924) who propounded that young people pass through three distinct stages: the primitive, the barbaric and the civilised (Hall, 1911). Macpherson later expressed his agreement with the recapitulation idea as applied to musical appreciation (Macpherson, 1923a: 11). The theory has had a long-lasting influence on music education, but is now discredited (Cox, 2016).

Macpherson's next work was *The Musical Education of the Child* (1915), and one of its chapters was headed with a quotation from the earlier-cited prophetic words of H.G. Wells. The book was addressed to teachers, parents and schools. Macpherson proposed three parallel lines in order to engage the pupils: the imaginative, the constructional and the historical. He gave the most attention to the constructional: 'none is more important than the power to follow … the development of the composer's themes or ideas' (ibid.: 48) which will eventually lead to an 'appreciation of the masterpieces of such symphonists as Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms and … Wagner' (ibid.: 50).

Macpherson held conservative views about what kind of music should be presented to children. On the one hand he deplored 'the nauseous sentimentalities of the music-hall or the cinema' (Macpherson, 1923a: 9), and on the other hand had problems with the French modernists and

with composers such as Scriabin and Schoenberg. It was not the time 'for casting the whole of our existing machinery into the "scrap-heap"' (Macpherson 1915: 64).

Macpherson's approach to musical appreciation has resonances with that of Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904), author of the influential study, *On the Musically Beautiful* (1854/1891). Hanslick dismissed all meaning outside of the formal musical structure. This formalist view was upheld much later on by Peter Kivy (1991) who maintained that when unaccompanied by text, title, subject, programme or plot, 'the expressive properties of music are purely musical properties, to be understood in a purely musical way' (p. 195).

W.H. Hadow best described how this might work out in the classroom with the teacher illustrating musical features at the piano: 'The ideal way of presenting these [well-selected examples of the best music] is that a competent teacher should play them with a running commentary pointing out not some fantastic conjecture as to their poetic meaning but their felicities of phrase and melody and harmonic texture, of colour and surprise and climax, of coherent stanza and organic structural form' (Hadow, 1928: 278). However, as Philip Ball (2011) points out, such an approach results at worst in an arid brand of musical appreciation that banishes any emotion aside from a lofty sense of beauty. This chimes with Moutrie's observation that the narrowness of Macpherson's outlook was 'not without responsibility for the spread of what we now see to be a somewhat sterile approach' (Moutrie, 1976: 62).

The Musical Appreciation Movement, 1919–1933

The invention of sound recording opened new and exciting opportunities for musical appreciation. But whilst the phonograph had been invented in 1877 it was only in the 1920s that classical music's potential could be fully realised in recordings when electrification enabled the highest quality of reproduction (Symes, 2004). As far as musical appreciation and the gramophone were concerned, the key development was the formation of the Education Department of the Gramophone Company in 1919. It

was through the recommendation of Macpherson that a former student of his, Alec Robertson, joined the department as a lecturer. In a radio interview many years later, Robertson reflected on his experience: 'I stumped around England, Scotland and Wales, everywhere trying to propagate the use of the gramophone—to teach people about music. And the amount of snobbery there was, you wouldn't believe. You know, 'this toy' was the way they looked at it' (BBC Desert Island Discs, 1972).

In the same year as the foundation of the Education Department, Percy Scholes published his first book on musical appreciation, *The Listener's Guide to Music* (Scholes, 1919). He positively welcomed the gramophone as a means by which direct contacts with musical masterpieces could be multiplied. Scholes' model was the distinguished American pioneer of musical appreciation, Frances Elliott Clark (1860–1958), who had established the Education Department of the Victor Talking Machine Company in 1911 (Chybowski, 2017). According to Symes (2004), 'It was the combative Percy Scholes and his *aide-de-camp* W.R. Anderson who did the most to promote the cause of the gramophone as a vehicle for propagating musical appreciation' (p. 166). Scholes was aware of the shortages in both physical and human resources in British education at the time, and if 'Appreciation' was to be developed on a large popular scale, the gramophone would help in providing great music in schools, many of which lacked the use of a specialist teacher (Dale, 2005).

Macpherson however disagreed and linked his suspicion of the gramophone to his insistence that only specialist musicians should teach the subject. He railed against those who implied that all that was necessary to take an appreciation class was a gramophone, a blackboard and printed guide. Instead what was essential was the presence of a specialist music teacher who not only possessed a joy in music but also a growing interest in music of various kinds. Such a teacher needed the ability to play the piano 'that shall be not necessarily brilliant but *really good* so far as it goes. … A keen ear not only for pitch and time-relationships but for tone qualities and *nuances* of all kinds … [If possible] the power to improvise in a simple manner at the keyboard' (Macpherson, 1923a: 83–4, italics in original). He nevertheless admitted that the gramophone might become 'a most valuable auxiliary' (ibid.: 86).

Macpherson expanded on his views in an article entitled 'The Position of the Appreciation Movement' (Macpherson, 1923b). He welcomed the fact that musical appreciation had caught on, but noted that much of the teaching associated with it was profoundly bad. After all, its purpose was not to amuse or provide anecdotes. The only solution was to employ specialist teachers. Scholes did not agree. Although Macpherson was 'a kindly man of genuine social sympathies' (Scholes, 1935: 204), he had too low an estimate of the powers of elementary and secondary school teachers. Scholes believed that if teachers were properly prepared, they might well achieve efficient teaching of musical appreciation. Worryingly he foresaw that Macpherson's policy would automatically exclude musical appreciation from the schools that could not afford such specialist luxury and whose pupils came from 'every class of society except the upper class and the upper middle class' (ibid.: 204). In reply, Macpherson pinpointed his dilemma:

> It is with no desire to check the spread of musical knowledge in the most democratic way possible … but I consider that while there is a duty to the community to throw open as wide as possible the doors leading to the enjoyment and better understanding of music, there is also a no less exigent duty to the art itself. (Macpherson, 1933: 906)

Macpherson's insistence on specialist teaching was symptomatic of the apparent dichotomy between the views of the artist/musician and those of the educator/teacher. Magne Espeland (2010: 136) points out that although Macpherson was critical of the artist/musician's lack of educational skills he also valued their 'burning artistic impulse' which might compensate for such a lack. All this connected to Macpherson's concern about the need to bridge the distance between the true artist-musician and the rest of the community—what Dalcroze called 'le fossé infranchissable' (Trans: the impassable gulf) (Macpherson, 1923a: 3).

During the 1920s and 1930s, the progress of musical appreciation in schools can be charted through key educational reports published by the Board of Education. First, however, it is necessary to consider a memorandum on musical appreciation which was never published. It had been requested in order that some guidance might be provided to clarify the

Board's policy towards this new development. On 6 May 1920, Geoffrey Shaw, a colleague of Arthur Somervell in the music inspectorate, submitted a document entitled 'The Teaching of Appreciation of Music' (Shaw, 1920). It was read by four HMIs known to be interested in music. There were three bones of contention. First, there was disagreement with Shaw's definition of appreciation as Love plus Understanding, but with the assumption that only Understanding could be taught. The inspectors insisted that Shaw's analysis lacked emotional appeal, and that the subject should be treated so that it could be loved by every child. Second, the document neglected the fundamental importance of aural training; it placed last things first. Finally, Shaw was taken to task for daring to suggest that only teachers who possessed specialist knowledge should teach appreciation. Consequently it was agreed that the draft should not be published (Cox, 1993: 124–129). These misgivings prompted by the inspectors' reaction to Shaw's draft at least clarified the difficulties that might be encountered in establishing musical appreciation as an essential part of the music curriculum in schools.

The first official recognition of the work of Macpherson is contained in the *Report of the Consultative Committee on Differentiation of the Curriculum for Boys and Girls* (Board of Education, 1923b). At least six prominent individuals with a keen interest in music education contributed to the proceedings of the consultative committee. They included: Sir W.H. Hadow, chairman of the Committee; Miss M. Dorothy Brock, headmistress of the Mary Datchelor Girls' School, Camberwell; Mr Gustav Holst, Director of Music, St Paul's Girls' School; Mr Stewart Macpherson; Miss Reta Oldham, headmistress of the Streatham Hill High School for Girls, and Chairman of the Education Committee of the Association of Head Mistresses; and Mr A. Somervell, Principal Inspector under the Board of Education. The crucial section of the report was entitled 'Desirability of developing the Aesthetic side of Secondary Education for both sexes'. One of its recommendations was that 'a more prominent and established place in the ordinary curricula of schools … should be assigned to aesthetic subjects' (Board of Education, 1923b: 138). The main points it made in relation to musical appreciation will by now be familiar:

> [Music's] range is not less wide than that of literature … it appeals to the same faculties of emotion and judgement […] the mental training afforded by analytic study of its construction and texture is closely parallel to that afforded by the natural sciences […] all the arguments which can be used for the inclusion of Language and Literature in our ordinary scheme of education can be used with equal force in the case of Music. (Board of Education, 1923b: 68)

Mention was also briefly made about 'renderings of great musical compositions on the gramophone' (ibid.: 69).

Macpherson quoted extensively from this report in *The Appreciation Class* (1923a), implying that much of it stemmed from his own thinking and writing, together with the views of 'a remarkably clear-sighted headmistress' (ibid.: 19). This was of course Reta Oldham, to whom he dedicated the book. In the view of Andrea Jacobs and Joyce Goodman (2006), the report's discussion of aesthetic education and music education represented the resurgence of Matthew Arnold's view of culture, ideas which permeated the curriculum of schools like Mary Datchelor in Camberwell. Within the context of music education, this thinking led to an emphasis upon the discipline's civilising and humanising characteristics. These notions were close to the heart of Arthur Somervell. Certainly, the Hadow Report of 1923 established musical appreciation as a force to be reckoned with in curriculum thinking. Subsequent published reports also affirmed the progress of musical appreciation in secondary schools (Board of Education, 1926) and, then, in elementary and primary schools (Board of Education, 1927, 1931). Finally, in *Recent Developments in School Music* (Board of Education, 1933) the Appreciation of Music was included as one of an '*embarras de richesses*' (ibid.: 8, italics in original).

Musical Appreciation in the New Millennium

At this point it may be helpful to briefly compare and contrast Macpherson's ideas about musical appreciation with those of Lucy Green. In her book *Music, Informal Learning and the School* (2008), Green considers how pedagogy in the music classroom can draw upon the learning

practices of popular musicians outside the school, and a substantial chapter is devoted to 'Listening and Appreciation'.

The differences between the approaches of Macpherson and Green soon become apparent. On the one hand it was Macpherson's aim to improve musical understanding through exposure to the music of the 'great' classical composers. The assumption was that the education of the masses needed to fend off mass culture. As was the norm of the time, pupils were seated in formal classroom settings. On the other hand, Green's pupils listened *to their own choice of music* which was generally popular in style, in order to perform it themselves. They learnt informally, either alone, or in friendship groups: the potentially authoritarian mode of teaching musical appreciation was overthrown.

At heart, the fundamental difference between the two was that Green, unlike Macpherson, believed that 'All music can be listened to analytically' (ibid.: 84, underlining in original). Consequently, Green suggests that the term 'musical appreciation' should be replaced by 'critical musicality' as more appropriate to the twenty-first century. It would thus escape from any connotations of imposing a classical taste upon the 'masses'. Nevertheless, what Macpherson and Green did have in common was that they both encouraged *analytical listening*. They believed that aural musical understanding resulted from it. Whilst Macpherson emphasised the recognition of structural features such as cadences and modulations, Green observed her pupils noting such details as sound quality, texture, accompaniment, instrumental parts and structure. It is worth noting that Green's thinking underpinned a major national project from the new millennium entitled 'Musical Futures' (Musical Futures, 2019).

Green's all-embracing approach to musical styles and genres has been expanded upon by Ben Ratliff (2017) who observes that with the advent of the i-cloud 'we can hear nearly everything' (p. 30). As a consequence, music educators need to take a critical view of the assumptions of the early pioneers of appreciation who, according to Rebecca Rinsema (2018), '"sacralised" classical music as intellectually, morally and spiritually superior to other types of music' (p. 480). However, we also need to investigate the various sorts of musical listening that are both possible as well as valid. The position outlined by Estelle Jorgensen is helpful here. She suggests that teachers might combine various types of listening 'be

they intellectual, sensual, experiential, performative, contextual, technical, peripheral, or repetitive' (Jorgensen, 2008: 133). We now understand that there is no longer only one narrow path which will lead us to listen to and appreciate music. This insight could lead us to embrace 'a fresh kind of aural appreciation' (Ratliff, 2017: 6).

Conclusion

The shortcomings of Macpherson's overall contribution to musical appreciation are apparent: a single focus on 'intellectual listening'; a negative view of popular culture and of recent compositional experiments; a deep-rooted ambivalence about the new recording technology; outright opposition to anyone teaching musical appreciation other than music specialists, and a limited experience of schools other than those belonging to the Girls Public Day School Trust. This meant that the practical implementation of musical appreciation after World War I effectively came to lie in the hands of Percy Scholes, the Gramophone Company and the BBC.

However, more positively, Macpherson's strength unquestionably lay in his educational leadership. Like a conviction politician, he drew up a manifesto which was promoted through an association, and then through a powerful network of allies amongst fellow musicians and educationists. Macpherson's vision was ambitious: musical appreciation had to be seen within the wider context of establishing an aural culture in music education. He wanted to incorporate true listening as an essential element in the teaching of music. Undoubtedly Macpherson's development of a musical appreciation movement established music as a 'class' subject in schools throughout the country. He demonstrated that if music could be shown to have its own grammar, literature, analysis and history then it could be taught like any other subject. Consequently, the musical appreciation movement became one of the chief means by which the aim of teaching music in schools moved away from the acquisition of a technical proficiency on an instrument or the voice towards the cultivation of an appreciative aesthetic understanding of music.

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Chapter 3: Walter Carroll (1869–1955): Setting the Tone for Local Education Authority Advisers

Amy Palmer

Introduction

Walter Carroll was an accomplished musician, a composer of children's piano music, a church choir-master and a private music teacher. In the early 1890s, he became singing master at the Manchester Day Training College for Teachers at Owens College, part of Victoria University. He was appointed a lecturer in music at the university in 1904, remaining until 1909 (Howitt, 2006). Also in 1904, he became a professor at the Royal Manchester College of Music (RMCM) (ibid.). From 1918 to 1934, he held a position as Musical Adviser for Manchester Education Committee, focusing on this full time after resigning from the RMCM in 1920 (Kennedy, 1971). He was a committed Froebelian, enthusiastic about progressive education and an innovator, across many of the spheres in which he worked, in providing training for music teachers. Chapter 7 in this volume demonstrates that the availability of suitable physical

A. Palmer (✉)
University of Roehampton, London, UK
e-mail: Amy.Palmer@roehampton.ac.uk

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materials was a key factor in (visual) arts and crafts education in the early twentieth century: this chapter suggests that in music the crucial commodity was teaching expertise. Few curriculum subjects were more challenging for staff, particularly the generalist staff in elementary schools, and new ideas and expectations introduced in the period added to the challenge. The need to increase the numbers of primary teachers willing and able to teach music remains an ongoing problem for schools today (Hennessy, 2017). Carroll was at the forefront of both demanding action on this issue and in introducing strategies to deal with it.

It is largely his work as a local education authority (LEA) adviser that makes Carroll a person of interest for this book. From their formation in 1902 until at least the 1970s, LEAs had a great deal of autonomy. National policy in relation to curriculum and teaching methods was largely suggestive rather than directive in this period (Ball, 1990). John Vaizey and John

Sheehan (1968) claim that support for this independence was widespread owing, among other things, to a 'fear of national education policy without regard to local peculiarities' (p. 42). As Norman Morris (1972) suggests, central government relied on local authorities to generate and experiment with new ideas, seeing this as an effective way to trial schemes that would have been expensive and difficult to roll out nationally with any speed. It was frequently the large cities which took these initiatives: London (Maclure, 1990), Birmingham (Grosvenor & Myers, 2006) and Manchester (Simon, 1938) all played important roles here. Therefore, in order to understand the mechanisms of influence in arts education in England in this period, attention must be paid to LEAs. Carroll serves as an eminent example of a person whose influence on his own city was profound, and his approach and enthusiasms radiated out to other authorities, particularly in the north of England, demonstrating that ideas do not always travel straightforwardly from top to bottom (or from central to local; or indeed from a dominant south to a subservient north).

Carroll has been the subject of two exhaustive biographical studies by Basil Howitt (2006) and Anthony Walker (1989). Nonetheless, this chapter aims to bring a fresh perspective to his professional life with a new critical analysis of his ideas, how they related to those of others in this period, and the extent to which he was able to implement them. Key concerns are those which underpin the volume as a whole: the relationship between arts and progressive education more generally; the cultural assumptions and ideologies that are evident in arts education, and the influence of the individual on policy and practice. The chapter first sets out Carroll's beliefs about music and education. It then turns to consider how he put these into practice in the different fields in which he worked and how he disseminated his ideas, above all through innovative teacher training programmes. It concludes with an evaluation of his success in these endeavours and a consideration of his legacy.

Carroll's Beliefs: Froebelian Principles

Carroll encountered the ideas of the educator Friedrich Froebel (1782–1852) when the Manchester Day Training College set up a kindergarten in 1902. Froebel's child-centred philosophy, a key driver behind

the development of progressive education in England (Read, 2011), remained a key source of inspiration for him throughout his life. The question was, though, how Froebel's ideas could be translated to music education: although singing was seen as a fundamental part of Froebelian practice, as demonstrated by Froebel's songs and rhymes for young children, most music teaching, particularly in schools, was firmly directed by the teacher and was communal rather than individual (Cox, 1991). J.J. Findlay, who was a professor of education, suggested that teacher-led 'song, story and directed play' represented a 'well-established tradition, based more or less on Froebel's own practice' (1913: 44) but that nonetheless teachers were starting to question how child-centred this really was.

Carroll found ways of relating what he distinguished as key Froebelian principles to music lessons both in and out of school contexts. In relation to child-centredness, he believed that 'musical possessions, rhythm, melody and voice are all inborn; healthy buds ready to expand and mature in due season' (Carroll, [1948]: 16). In order to nurture this development, the private (individual) music teacher should 'begin by studying the *individual*, before proceeding the train the *musician*' (Carroll, 1906: 10—emphasis in the original), building the programme around the pupil's own needs. Finding ways to be sensitive to these needs in school teaching was more of a challenge. His *Handbook of Music* (City of Manchester Education Committee, 1927), a curriculum guide for teachers, demonstrated an awareness that children of different ages have different needs and made reasonable suggestions for appropriate lessons at different ages but relied heavily on a teacher-led model of instruction. There were, however, some occasional attempts at introducing opportunities for children to act a little more independently: for example, Carroll suggested that infants should be able to respond to music with 'self-expression by free rhythmic movements, *created by the children*, to illustrate an idea or story' (p. 9—emphasis in the original).

Another Froebelian principle adopted by Carroll was that of respecting and promoting the connectedness of all things: humans with the rest of nature and all branches of knowledge (and most particularly the arts) with each other. This is most clearly illustrated in his books of piano music: in describing the genesis of his seminal *Scenes at a Farm* [1912], he explained 'In line with Froebel's views upon the value of linking the

Arts with each other and with nature, it was found that not only the union of music and poetry but the addition of line and colour gave zest to the child's interest' (Carroll, 1951: 11). The pieces, which have romantic titles linking them to farm life, are headed by snippets of poetry and the cover was created by the leading art educator, Ebenezer Cooke. In schools, Carroll was an advocate of correlation, the interlinking of curriculum subjects, and suggested that poetry, painting, history and geography could all be cross-fertilised with music to mutual advantage (Carroll, 1921a).

However, as Howitt (2006) notes, there are times when Carroll's position seems to be the very opposite of progressive and Froebelian. The teacher was often presented as an authority figure who must be held in deep respect and not questioned. For example, in his writing for college students, Carroll argued that they must put up with 'hard words', and do what they are told whatever their own views: 'it must be done *because it was ordered*' (Carroll, 1904: 17—emphasis in the original). It is only fair to point out that he did not express himself in quite these terms in relation to very young children: for them, 'a good teacher is a guide rather than a dictator' (Carroll, [1948]: 21). Nonetheless, musical education in general was for him an austere affair, useful in enabling the child to 'realise the true value of discipline, efficiency and united effort', whereas 'the play-way of learning may become a source of danger to progress' (Carroll, 1931). Fads, such as toy bands, which may have been pleasing to parents, should be avoided because school was 'for work rather than entertainment' (Carroll, 1934). Carroll seemed unaware of these tensions in relation to his progressive credentials.

Carroll's Beliefs: The Music Curriculum

When he took up his LEA adviser's position, Carroll complained that 'in many schools the songs chosen are quite unworthy of the effort expended in learning them' (Carroll, 1918). He produced lists of recommendations and detailed advice to counteract this on many occasions. In *Music in Life and Education* (Carroll, [1948]: 32), he set out a scheme for the sort of music which should be introduced to children at different ages: 'old

nursery rhymes' were the most suitable fare for the youngest children; folk and national songs were particularly associated with 7–11-year olds and older children should experience classical and romantic songs (although his more specific lists in other places clearly indicated that a thread of folk songs should continue). He believed that a passion for singing was 'deeply rooted in the race' (Carroll, 1932b) and was certainly appreciative of those who were 'collecting and restoring our great heritage of song' (City of Manchester Education Committee, 1927: 47). However, the argument he put forward most consistently for the use of folk songs was that they were usually well suited to children's needs, being simple in words, rhythmic and 'healthy in sentiment' (*The School Music Review*, 1919: 158) and he saw them to a large extent as a stepping stone to more sophisticated fare. For him, the true value of music was 'a link between the nations; an international language with a common tongue and common script' (Carroll, 1927a) and he believed that children should move from the national to the international as they progressed. One consequence of this was his support for the use of standard stave notation in school music books as opposed to the sol-fa chart, associated with the form of singing instruction developed and popularised in the nineteenth century (City of Manchester Education Committee, 1930). The standard stave was, in his view, a necessary tool for pupils to access music beyond the confines of school.

What mattered to him above all was the development of good taste that would sustain children into adulthood and allow them to make 'wholesome use of leisure hours' (Carroll, 1921a). In addition to singing suitable songs themselves, he wished children to experience 'the continent of Music' which lay 'outside the domain of Song' (ibid.). For him, therefore, 'music appreciation', as developed by Stewart Macpherson (Chap. 2) was an important part of school music. Of course, his understanding of good taste and good music was deeply bound up with his own time, place and class. Joyce Goodman and Angela Jacobs (2008), in their discussion of music education in this period, have drawn on Bourdieu to describe such prescriptions as 'culturally arbitrary' (p. 686) and suggest that one class was imposing its taste on others. Carroll could of course be accused of this, although he himself believed that good taste, as understood by himself, could be found among all classes: he claimed

that children from very poor districts were 'peculiarly sensitive to music', being hungry for beauty denied them by their surroundings (Carroll, 1931).

In none of these respects was Carroll uniquely innovative in his beliefs and approach. He was very much in line with a new wave of music teaching that was in the ascendant at the time he was working. Gordon Cox (1991) has argued that the first few decades of the twentieth century saw a 'profound shift within music education away from utilitarian tradition towards an artistic and educational liberalism' (p. 96). As he points out, the Board of Education's 1905 Handbook of Suggestions advocated stimulating the imagination in music teaching (as Carroll aimed to do with his correlation with other subjects), developing taste, teaching national and folk songs and the reading of the stave. This approach was maintained in later editions, with the 1927 version having an expanded section on appreciation. Individuals involved in music education did have points of difference—for example about the exact definition of a folk song and whether the sol-fa system had some continuing relevance alongside teaching stave notation. Nevertheless, there was broad consensus among those with influence in government about what music teaching should be aiming towards.

This does not mean that Carroll was simply a passive recipient of these views, ready, whether he believed it himself or not, to promote the Board's position. It would be hard to reconcile this with his extensive production of articles, books and lectures which set out these views with enthusiasm and argued for them from first principles. He was himself deeply embedded in the policy network which was able to produce this largely agreed position and have it translated into action by the national decision-makers. He was, for example, a member of the Incorporated Society of Musicians from 1896 to 1911, lecturing to them on nine occasions (Howitt, 2006). He later became part of the General Council of its successor body, the Society of Musicians (*The School Music Review*, 1928). He was able to secure many musical experts to give lectures for him in his Manchester training classes, including Stewart Macpherson (Macpherson, 1916). He was, along with Macpherson, on the editorial board of the magazine *Music and Youth* when it was established in 1921 (*Music and Youth*, 1921: 1). His role as musical adviser for Manchester LEA gave him

further connections and prestige, as holders of this position met and consulted in conferences (Carroll, 1934). In 1928, Carroll was part of a 'small deputation of experts' brought by W.H. Hadow, chairman of the consultative committee, to the Board of Education to discuss music teaching (Hadow, 1928). In short, he was in a position to exert influence on policy and practice and, although the intricacies of the flow of ideas between persons cannot now be recovered, it is likely that he played his part in building and shaping the progressive consensus.

Putting Ideas into Practice: Carroll as LEA Adviser

Carroll's opportunity to influence music education in state elementary schools came in 1918, when he was offered the position of musical adviser to Manchester's education committee. By the end of the nineteenth century, it was clear that school boards were taking on responsibility for the quality of the curriculum in their schools and some were thus appointing advisers in subjects, including arts subjects, where generalists needed support. Some of these advisers retained positions in the LEAs after their creation in 1902 (Cunningham, 2002). In 1908, Dr John Borland was appointed musical adviser at London County Council, despite firm resistance from some council members concerned about the expense (*The Times*, 1908). Borland was credited in a 1912 report on singing in London schools with contributing significantly to a marked improvement in the subject (Bentley, 1989). The Board of Education's music inspector, Arthur Somervell, was keen that musical advisers, or 'supervisors', should be more appointed more widely. In 1918, arguing that the state of music education in the country was generally unsatisfactory, he tried to convince the Board to encourage these appointments by offering financial support and making sure the right sort of 'men' (sic) got the jobs (Somervell, 1918). Board officials did not endorse this position for a variety of reasons, one arguing strikingly that an expert in a permanent position becomes 'the chief centre of opposition to new

developments' (Board of Education, 1918). It was left to LEAs to continue to take the initiative here (or to decline to do so).

Manchester, often described in the north of England as 'the most musical town in England' (*The Times*, 1918: 7), decided to make such an appointment. Under the charismatic and energetic leadership of Spurley Hey, it was frequently in the vanguard of experimenting with new ideas (Simon, 1938). The credit for pushing this particular experiment through, however, lay with councillor Will Melland, chairman of the Music Sub-Committee (for the council as a whole), who initially part-funded Carroll's salary (*The Musical Herald*, 1918). For all that 'a few other cities' had advisers, Carroll's appointment was seen as 'unique in its scope' (*The Manchester Guardian*, 1934a: 12) and he himself believed he had been given 'unmatched opportunities of service in the cause of music' (*The Manchester Guardian*, 1920: 5). Carroll had a 'large measure of freedom' in the role, for which he was grateful to Spurley Hey and his successor (Carroll, 1934). Manchester Education Committee minutes and his own reports provide evidence for only the most minor quibbles and disagreements between himself and council members. It seems that he was allowed to fulfil his role as he felt was most appropriate, although he was always careful to credit the education committee for its wisdom and foresight in supporting any of his actions (e.g. Carroll, 1921b).

One of Carroll's first tasks in post was to inspect schools so as to determine the extent of the challenge that faced him (and to prove to the council that he was indeed needed). He reported in September of this first year that only three out of the 28 elementary schools he had seen were 'of good quality': the average school had 'serious deficiencies' (Carroll, 1918). Some of these had material causes, a particular concern being a lack of school pianos in good repair. Carroll was successful in persuading the committee to provide the necessary funds to remedy this situation: he claimed in his annual report for 1924 that every school now had a satisfactory instrument (Carroll, 1925a).

Carroll worked hard to ensure that children had opportunities to participate in a range of musical activities so as to enrich both their present and future lives. For example, he established a choir and an orchestra for local school children, ensuring that those from the poorer districts were made 'equally welcome' (City of Manchester Education Committee,

1930: 28). One area of his work of particular note was his introduction of music appreciation lessons. Manchester was not the first authority to offer this in some form: early experimenters included Liverpool (possibly as early as 1907), Bradford, Edinburgh and London (*Musical Herald,* 1920). Carroll, however, repeatedly claimed that his was pioneering work: 'the outcome of original thought and independent research' (Carroll, 1933). One reason for this was that his approach was 'systematic' with a well-planned developmental curriculum (City of Manchester Education Committee, 1930: 15). Another was the fact that trained specialists were used (Howitt, 2006). These teachers required 'broad musical training and experience' in addition to 'a knowledge of education and what it means' (*The Times Educational Supplement,* 1922: 77). The lessons took the form of lectures to large groups of children, the specialist teacher playing the music himself/herself (Carroll, 1920a). The first specialist, Emmie Allen, explained that the children were taught to appreciate some traditional songs but the emphasis was mostly on classical music, including work by Grieg, Schumann, Elgar and Bach (Allen, 1923). A very prominent technique was the linking of the elements of music to images from nature or fairy fancy. In other words, she took an approach that was consistent with Carroll's ideas of what good music was and of the importance of Froebelian correlation.

Disseminating Ideas Through Teacher Training

The significance of Carroll to this volume lies less in his influence upwards to national decision-makers and more in his influence downwards in enabling new ideas about music education to reach their ultimate intended destination: the pupils. He was well aware that the mechanism for achieving this was persuading teachers to adopt new approaches and by ensuring they had the skills which were needed for the job. This belief was first manifested in his college and university roles, where most of the students he encountered were likely to have future careers as music teachers in some capacity or another, probably working with private individual pupils (Kennedy, 1971). Their levels of musical skill and knowledge were high but, Carroll argued, '"knowledge" is not synonymous with "ability

to teach"': this ability could however, be developed through training (Carroll, 1904).

Carroll instigated two initiatives in teaching training in this period. From 1907 to 1918, he ran, in a private capacity, a training class for teachers, with an average of 100 students attending each class. He claimed that this was the first 'class of its kind' (Carroll, 1920b). Many of his lectures and class materials survive, and it is clear from these that it was the teachers of individual pupils that were the chief target audience. He impressed on them his Froebelian principles of 'studying the nature of the pupil' to devise individual programmes, and of developing a love of music by stimulating the imagination (Carroll, 1908). He also offered tips for building the music teacher's business (Carroll, 1907). In 1909, as a result of his lobbying, the RMCM opened a department of 'The Art and Practice of Teaching', and Carroll became its professor. Students followed a two-year course, with 'lectures, discussions and actual practice of teaching' (*The Manchester Guardian*, 1909: 4).

In relation to his LEA position, Carroll similarly believed that 'the starting-point for reform must be the Teacher' whose role was particularly 'vital' in music (Carroll, 1918). With an insight which suggests that despite his lack of teaching in elementary schools he had some knowledge of how they operated, he argued that teachers were generally 'ready to follow a clear and moderate policy of progress' but 'apt to resent sudden and drastic change' (ibid.). This belief resonates with, for example, David Tyack and Larry Cuban's research findings that change in schools is usually incremental, that schools are resilient institutions and teachers find ways of 'hybridizing reforms' to fit their own purposes (1995: 109). Jennifer Ozga has similarly argued that 'the transmission process is never simple' and the teachers' role in interpreting and implementing policy is so decisive that they should themselves be seen as 'policy-makers' (2000: 3).

Carroll believed, however, that ideas should flow from him to the teachers and thence to the children. He eventually published a scheme of work for teachers, giving details of aspects of music to be covered with children of different ages and explaining how this should be achieved. This was published as a handbook (City of Manchester Education Committee, 1927, first edition 1925). Spurley Hey, writing in a preface,

declared that following the scheme was not 'compulsory' and it should be seen 'as a guide' but this is somewhat undercut by his pointing out that it was necessary for teachers to apply for any 'modifications' (p. 5).

One key question regarding the implementation of these ideas was whether teachers had the necessary skills to put them in practice. In his initial survey of music education in the city, Carroll wrote that teachers 'naturally vary considerably in their knowledge and ability' and 'there are teachers in every school who should be relieved of teaching Music' (Carroll, 1918). The key difference between the problem here and the problem he was addressing in his previous roles was that these teachers were deficient not in teaching expertise but in musical skills and knowledge. Although he saw specialists on the school staff as a key solution, the immediate need was to improve the abilities of the existing teachers. Before the publication of the handbook, the main conduit for conveying new ideas was through lectures, including demonstrations with children (Carroll, 1925a). Carroll reported regularly to the council on the number of attendees, which he always found satisfactory. These lectures continued throughout his period of office. Progress in the schools was monitored through a continuing programme of inspections, for which the report of at least one is extant. This shows Carroll generous in praise where he felt it was deserved but also drilling down into the minutiae of lessons and offering detailed advice, such as suggesting that 'the inattentive child' should be in the front row (Carroll, 1932a). Schools were given grades, which was surely not appreciated by all.

In reports to the council throughout his period of office, Carroll was assiduous in praising teachers for their warm welcome and keen interest. He wrote frequently along the lines that teachers were 'able and willing to apply the knowledge they had gained at the lectures' (Carroll, 1922). It was, of course, in his interest to make such claims in order to retain his position and the support for it. There are nonetheless moments within the reports where a more nuanced picture of the teacher response emerges. In 1925, he wrote that teachers should make 'greater effort … in regard to Ear Training and Sight Singing. The Lectures and the Handbook have provided methods and materials and the children are keen to learn' and 'The Musical Adviser is constantly urging teachers to *prepare* their lessons and give due attention to each branch of the subject' (Carroll,

1925b—emphasis in the original). The following year, while commenting as usual on continued progress, he complained that some schools had let the handbook 'lie fallow' and had not yet 'taken full advantage of his guidance' (Carroll, 1926). In 1928, there were schools 'still clinging to worn-out methods and bygone standards' although there were signs that their 'conversion' was underway (Carroll, 1928).

An indication that Carroll felt some measure of ongoing frustration was his concern, expressed repeatedly, about teaching training colleges: for example, he complained that little was done 'to secure a reasonable standard of voice production and diction' (Carroll, 1925b). He was aggrieved when music was made an optional subject in these colleges, calling it a 'retrograde step' (Carroll, 1927b). The deputation to the Board of Education in which he took part (see above) was for the purpose of discussing teacher training in music which 'left much to be desired' (Board of Education, 1928). He continued to express his disappointment about a lack of progress here right until the end of his adviser's career (Carroll, 1933). He believed that Manchester teachers were doing their best (on the whole), but people without the right skills were entering the profession and his role involved what he essentially saw as remedial support.

Evaluating Carroll's Success

The reports in the latter stages of Carroll's career indicate that he had settled into a routine and had no new approaches to try: for example, he wrote, 'adventures into the unknown form no part of this Report, for the thirteenth year has not been one of exploration but rather of development' (Carroll, 1932b). No change had occurred in his fundamental beliefs and there is evidence that he was falling behind the times: in his 1933 report, he praised the teachers for refusing to pay heed to new fads such as the gramophone, the wireless and the 'competitive movement' (Carroll, 1933). It is only fair to point out that he himself was by no means implacably opposed to the first two of these: he had recommended listening to the gramophone as an occasional activity in his 12-year review of progress (City of Manchester Education Committee, 1930) and he

praised the wireless as a possible aid to spreading good taste in music in the nation at large (Carroll, 1932b). Nevertheless, the warning of the Board of Education official, cited above, that permanent advisers could become barriers to progress seems somewhat prescient.

By the time of his retirement in 1934, Carroll was satisfied with the changes that had been made and that 'consistent work continues along the lines indicated in the Handbook of Music' although of course 'in the field of Education, no task is ever finished' (Carroll, 1934). It is customary for employers to make generous comments about retiring employees but the thanks he received from the education committee when he was asked to appear before them in what seems to have been an unusual gesture were effusive. Alderman Woollam claimed that his services 'had been invaluable both to the scholars and to the teachers in Manchester and so far as music in schools was concerned, the city stood second to none' (*The Manchester Guardian*, 1934b: 9). Carroll's own hope was that his work would be continued and that Manchester Education Committee would 'in the future as in the past, be regarded as leader in the domain of musical education' (Carroll, 1934).

This was certainly their intention, as the Musical Adviser role continued with the appointments of first, somewhat briefly, Denis MacMahon and then, for several decades, William Griffiths. These successors were able to use Carroll's work as a base on which to build (Adams, 2013). They also continued to encounter similar difficulties with regard to the lack of teacher expertise. The Board of Education's, 1937 Handbook of Suggestions indicated one reason why such difficulties continued to occur: the expansion of music as a subject was such that 'teachers generally find it impossible to include in the Music syllabus all the new branches of the subject that may be recommended as educationally sound' (Board of Education, 1937: 175) and 'the more modern ideal makes greater demands on the musical abilities of the teacher than did the limited ideals of the past' (ibid.: 178). It would have been easy for teachers to take this as official sanction to hybridise reforms, as discussed above, and simplify their lot in life. There is some evidence that this occurred from the accounts of those who experienced music education in the mid-twentieth century: John Ahier (1988), for example, has claimed that certainly up

until the 1950s, 'much class teaching centred around the contents of Sharp and Baring-Gould's Folk Songs for Schools' (p. 93).

Carroll's success should not, however, be evaluated simply in terms of his work in Manchester. His reports also carefully document how his ideas were being disseminated more widely to other Local Authorities. This was achieved in part by his willingness to travel around the country to lecture on the work he was doing. For example, in 1921, he listed visits to Hull, Hanley, Todmorden, Burnley, Nelson and Wigan, pointing out that on some occasions the Director of Education or the Mayor had been present. Important officials from other LEAs also visited Manchester for the purpose of seeing what was being done there (Carroll, 1921b). The most frequent connections were forged, naturally enough, with other towns in the north of England, so that one might think of Manchester as a regional centre of influence, reaching the places that might not have come easily within the sphere of London. Another important tool for dissemination was the *Handbook of Music*. When it was first published, the *School Music Review* (1925) was fulsome in its praise: it was a 'scheme to be generally adopted throughout the service' (p. 13). Carroll frequently reported its success in terms of sales: by his retirement, over 10,000 copies had been sold (Carroll, 1934). In later life, Carroll continued to travel widely to lecture and to run training courses for a wide variety of educational clients (Howitt, 2006). New publications also revived his position in the public eye: when *Music in Life and Education*, a collection of his essays, appeared in 1948, a reviewer in *The Teacher's World* wrote that 'the author will long be remembered as a pioneering soul' (Joseph Williams Ltd, [1948]).

Conclusion

This chapter has made no claims for Walter Carroll as a particularly original thinker or generator of new ideas. His professional life story is of value because of the insight it offers into how progressive music teaching began to permeate a variety of contexts, including elementary schools, during a crucial period in the development of music education. Carroll was an important conduit for those shifts in Manchester. He was in a

favourable position to get things done, located as he was in a city proud of both its musical and its liberal educational traditions, and employed by a Director of Education who was prepared to offer him support and freedom. He was fortunate to be appointed Musical Adviser when the value of such a role was coming to be recognised and yet it was new enough for him to be able to put his own stamp on it. Nevertheless, his energy and commitment played a vital role in what he was able to accomplish. In his own eyes and in those of many of his contemporaries, he achieved great success. Limitations to that success were caused by national problems which he had no power to solve: the inherent challenges of teaching music and teachers' lack of skills in meeting those challenges, exacerbated by what he believed to be inadequacies in training colleges.

Carroll's work demonstrates the importance of the LEAs during the early twentieth century. They were the means by which the Board of Education could reach the teachers and thus bring about changes in practice. LEA advisers such as Carroll could take a lead role in thinking about how new ideas could actually be implemented in real situations with real people and could, through personal contact, support those people in a very direct way. Moreover, when a programme or approach proved successful in one LEA, others were able to copy it, so that policy initiatives spread sideways and did not just trickle down from top to bottom.

In a Ministry of Education report from 1960, the diversity of music provision across the country was noted. This was seen as a broadly positive, as it resulted in a 'richly variegated pattern that is in keeping with our education system as a whole, with its capacity for change and experiment' (p. 1). It was perhaps not so positive, however, for children in those LEAs distinguished by their lack of action and initiative. From the late 1960s on, central government became increasingly keen to impose its will in all areas, a trend which reached its apogee with initiatives in the 1980s and 1990s such as the National Curriculum and the numeracy and literacy strategies (Cunningham, 2002). Local Education Authorities have been side-lined in a variety of ways, not least through the creation of academies and free schools directly accountable only to central government (Kauko & Salokangas, 2015). Oddly, however, a common justification for this policy is that it allows individual schools to experiment with new ideas and thus increases diversity in the system (ibid.). As this is an

issue freighted with political ideology, it is not possible to give a definitive answer as to whether it is indeed single schools or local authorities which are best placed to do this experimentation. However, Walter Carroll's energy and skill in encouraging and supporting cutting edge thinking, and the success he had in using his own city as a testbed for ideas before sharing his findings more widely, make it hard not to feel something has been lost and we have not yet found a successful way to replace it.

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Part II

Drama

Chapter 4: Alice Gomme (1853–1938): Conserving a Nation Through Children's Games

Deborah Albon

Introduction

Alice Gomme was a prominent folklorist of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Despite having her achievements subsumed under those of her husband Laurence Gomme—one of the 'Great Team' of folklorists (Dorson, 1968)—in recent years Alice Gomme's work has undergone re-assessment. In several papers, Georgina Boyes (1990, 2000, 2001) celebrates her achievements, noting how she was a suffragist, as well as a founder member of the Folklore Society, Folk-Song Society, English Folk Dance Society and President of the English Folk Cookery Association. Alongside this she was a Founder member of the Association for the Revival and Practice of Folk Music as well as being prominent in the London Shakespeare League, campaigning for the 'authentic' staging of Medieval and Tudor drama. Gomme served on the Shakespeare Memorial/National Theatre Executive Committee, in which there were few women

D. Albon (✉)
University of Roehampton, London, UK
e-mail: Deborah.Albon@roehampton.ac.uk

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and this work eventually led to the formation of the National Theatre (Shakespeare Memorial/National Theatre Executive Committee, 1909).

The focus of this chapter will however be on her work on children's games, which could be regarded as an early form of drama in childhood (Bolton, 1998). They are also considered to be her most abiding legacy (Dorson, 1968). Seeing them as significant in the development of drama, Gomme described them as not really being 'games' as we generally know them. She argued instead for viewing each dramatic game in childhood as 'a play—a folk play—which takes us at once to the earliest stages of folk drama' (Gomme, 1913a: page unknown). Proposing that drama is important for engendering a sense of community, Gomme also advocated for a 'School Festival' and organised pageants.

Photo 1 Alice Gomme. T145/4 Box 120 in the Gomme Collection, Folklore Society Archive. Reproduced by kind permission of the Folklore Society

Thus far within the literature, examination of Gomme's work has generally centred on her contribution to the field of folklore, and scant attention has been paid to her impact on arts education. In evaluating the merit of her work for arts education, the position taken in this chapter is that Gomme's work should be assessed within a framing of 'public pedagogy'. The use of the term 'public pedagogy' is helpful here as it envisions pedagogical address and learning 'outside the contours of formal education and curriculum' (Savage, 2014: 88). Moreover, it foregrounds 'movements' from distant vantage points involved in educating the public, for example the media and museums (Hickey-Moody et al., 2010). Application of ideas derived from public pedagogy to the work of Gomme is constructive as, unlike educators such as Harriet Finlay-Johnson or Henry Caldwell Cook (see Chaps. 5 and 6), most of her work did not involve teaching children directly. Through examination of the dissemination strategies Gomme employed and the many 'publics' (Savage, 2014: 79) with whom she engaged, this chapter will demonstrate that as well as aiming to influence educationalists, her work had wide reach as she was canny in her use of a range of activities and media in advocating for the significance of games and dramatic activity.

Collecting Children's Games

Gomme's seminal work on children's games, *The Traditional Games of England, Scotland and Ireland*, was first published in 1894, with Volume 2 published in 1898 (Gomme, 1894a; Gomme, 1898a). In these volumes, she asserts the need for a 'scientific arrangement' of the large corpus of material collected in order to reveal 'the full truth which lies hidden in these remnants of the past' (Gomme, 1894a: vii). Initiated by a request for 'games known across England', which was advertised in the folklore periodical *Notes and Queries* (Gomme, 1891: 367), the games cited in the book were primarily collected via correspondence with 76 contributors from 112 locations. In total, the two volumes document about eight hundred games as well as their variants (Boyes, 1990). The Gomme collection, held in the Folklore Society archive, contains numerous letters from people eager to contribute games which they remembered being

played when they were younger, as well as games still in use, and their contributions highlight games played in distinct parts of the country.

In collecting and classifying children's games, Gomme elevated their importance as worthy of study, distinct from other aspects of folklore. But defining what constitutes a 'game' is not so easy and, arguably, is rarely afforded close examination. It may, for instance, constitute a dramatic narrative, it may involve movement and it may sometimes be accompanied by song (Cliff, 1992). The two volumes of *The Traditional Games of England, Scotland and Ireland* (Gomme, 1894a, 1898a), are arranged into sections with listings of games under these classifications appearing in alphabetical order. In Volume 1, Gomme examines 'descriptive' and 'singing or choral' games whilst in Volume 2 she classifies games according to two main types: 'dramatic games', which she asserts are primarily played by girls and 'games of skill and chance', primarily played by boys although she makes clear that girls do play games of skill and boys do also play dramatic games.

Taking the example of dramatic games, Gomme classified these as: 'A play or amusement which consists of words sung or said by the players, accompanied by certain pantomimic actions which accord with the words used, or, as I prefer to put it, of certain definite and settled actions performed by the players to indicate certain meanings of which the words are only further illustration' (Gomme, 1898a: 475). Following on from this, she documented a typology within dramatic games by looking at line forms, circle forms, individual forms, arch forms and winding up forms. Parallels might be drawn here with Froebelian 'movement games' (Liebschner, 1992) although they were arguably imbued with greater pedagogical intent—a point picked up in more detail in the next section.

Whether a 'game' needs an external audience is a vexed question and one which Janet Cliff (1992) would answer with a resounding 'no', arguing that for games, unlike dances, this is unnecessary as games are for the players only. Gomme, on the other hand, *explicitly* encouraged the performance of the games she collected for a range of audiences, believing that participation in such performances as player and audience engendered a sense of community and a connection with the past. Representing the everyday actions of adults in much earlier times but subsequently enacted in the play of children, Gomme saw the dramatic expression in

children's games as something 'natural' to be cultivated. Indeed, some writers on drama education have argued that in early childhood education, simple rhymes and games are the bedrock upon which later dramatic activity is built, perhaps initially involving a lot of repetition, then more spontaneity and later still more complexity (Bolton, 1998). Amy Palmer (2017) for example, observes that for Froebelians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, kindergarten games and rhymes morphed seamlessly into scripted plays for older children, the boundaries being porous.

Criticism of Alice Gomme's work has focused on its being prissy in bowdlerising the original words used in traditional singing games for proprieties sake (Douglas, 1916). However, far from this being the case, Alice Gomme aimed for authenticity in the games she documented and disliked the idea of them having words or actions changed. Her correspondence shows people informing her of games deemed 'very racy' (Osborne, 1898) for her classification and commentary on their possible meaning. In addition, correspondence between Alice Gomme and Charlotte Burne in 1891 in the run up to the Conversazione—an entertainment event at the 1891 International Folk-Lore Congress in which children's games were performed for delegates—shows that both were concerned about the authenticity of games and a desire to preserve and perform them as they were (Burne, 1891), irrespective of possible Victorian sensibilities as to their propriety.

Other criticism has come from Iona and Peter Opie (1959), who similarly documented children's games in great detail. They criticised the methodology Gomme employed in collecting the games, drawing attention to the fact that she rarely observed these games in action, unlike in their own ethnographic study. Insightful as the Opies' critique undoubtedly is, it is hard however to see how Alice Gomme could have conducted an ethnographic study such as theirs. There were various reasons for this: she had a number of children of her own at this time, it may not have been seemly for a middle-class woman to engage in such ethnographic work in working-class areas (Boyes, 1990), transportation was more limited when compared to the 1950s/1960s when the Opies were researching, and Gomme also served on numerous London-based committees which would have taken up much of her time. Moreover the

aforementioned correspondence with Charlotte Burne indicates that Gomme was keen to establish the provenance of the copious games she was sent and did not assume *all* her correspondents accurately represented the games they recalled children playing.

Games as Cultural Preservation

Underpinning Alice Gomme's work on children's games and her other folklore activities was a desire to preserve the folklore of Britain at precisely a point of turbulence in the period of late industrialisation. A thread amongst her myriad activities was a desire to preserve the past, but also to revive it and in so doing, bring to the fore that which had previously been sidelined as less worthy of note. Her work on children's games typifies this and draws on ideas put forward in *Primitive Culture*, the work of Edward Tylor (1920, first published in 1871), who was influential on the burgeoning field of anthropology and the folklore movement of the late nineteenth century. Tylor (1920: 32) proposed that every society goes through universal stages of development, from savagery, barbarism and then to civilisation. In what he describes as the 'savage state', Tylor saw the genesis of what would later evolve into a higher, 'more cultured' state of being. In terms of Empire, his view was that European involvement with what he described as 'lower races' in the world had elevated them as they had begun to assimilate European culture. As Laura Carter (2017: 553) observes, the Folklore Society (of which Tylor and Alice Gomme were a part) was formed in the 'high noon' of Empire in its assertion of a value free and scientific approach to studying 'Other' cultures. The 'Other' cultures, in the case of Gomme's work on children's games, were primarily those of people living in the rural regions of Britain (as opposed to urban/London) and the cultures of children as distinct from adults.

Drawing on the work of Tylor, Gomme proposed that children undergo an accelerated process of 'civilising' from their 'primitive' state before reaching adulthood, a view which parallels the recapitulation theories of prominent educationalists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and was underscored by racialised ideas about 'lower races'

(Fallace, 2012). Like Tylor, she proposed that what was once the 'serious' business of adults still lingered in nursery folklore, albeit in a new form, and the survival of processes and customs from much earlier times were regarded as clear 'proof' of cultural evolution. Evidence of such survivalist thinking is evident in a lecture Gomme gave to the Froebel Society in 1901 when she argued that 'in the children's games preserved by tradition we have in reality some of the most important historical documents' (Gomme, 1901: 72). Later still, she referred to the 'keepers of our national archives—our village children' (Gomme, 1913a: page unknown).

It would be wrong however to think Gomme's view was entirely synonymous with that of survivalist thinking. For example, she did not see children's games as static. In Volume 2 of her major work she argues: 'There is, probably, not one game in the same condition, especially as regards words, as it was fifty or a hundred years ago; but I consider the "form" or the "method" would remain practically the same even if the words get materially altered' (Gomme, 1898a: 460). Furthermore, like her husband Laurence, Alice Gomme reasoned that some games may well have a socio-cultural dimension to their development beyond having their origins in ancient beliefs and practices—a departure from the view promoted by Tylor. Both Alice and Laurence Gomme emphasised the way that games, and the ceremonies they were part of, fulfilled a role of social cohesion in local communities (Boyes, 1990). Thus, Alice Gomme's key contribution to the study of children's games was the significance she placed on the performance and dramatic element they generated. Indeed when considering why such games had survived, her view was that: 'There must be a force inherent in these games which has allowed them to be continued from one generation to another—a force that must have been as strong as or stronger than the customs which first bought the games into existence, and this force I consider to be the dramatic faculty inherent in mankind' (Gomme, 1901: 82).

Crucially, the value of drama and spectacle which Alice Gomme attributes as 'natural' to humankind here chimes with her other areas of interest such as her passionate advocacy of pageants and the development of what later became the National Theatre—her own interest being in the original Elizabethan staging of Shakespeare's plays. As noted earlier, perhaps keen to cement a link between games and the proliferation of work

on drama in the early twentieth century, she later linked the games children play to the early folk drama (Gomme, 1913a). Replete with meanings, the actions performed repeatedly in children's games were regarded as of key importance in complementing the words/songs that accompanied them to dramatic effect (Gomme, 1898a).

In emphasising the ceremonial significance of games in past times, Alice Gomme wished to rekindle what she saw as becoming lost in village life notably the sense of community and artistic expression, which could not otherwise be found in people's occupational lives (Boyes, 1990). The proliferation of pageants in the early twentieth century, to which Gomme contributed, suggests a desire to revive an imagined sense of belonging. Like the games preserved by children, but hitherto neglected as a serious area of publication, her work on pageants as well as folk dance, folk music, folk cookery and the London Shakespeare League was imbued with a sense of Empire, nationhood and desire to preserve as well as reinvigorate the past.

The Educational Value of Children's Games

Alice Gomme recognised that the games she documented in such detail during the late nineteenth century had potential educational import, but in her early writing she did not articulate this in much detail. In her 1898 publication *Parlour and Playground Games* she observed that some games could come under the umbrella term 'schoolroom games' because they lent themselves well to 'educational purposes' and 'with a little care on the part of the elders the educational element might be extended to a very considerable length' (Gomme, 1898b: 29). However, she gives no clear direction to the reader as to how the 'educational' element might be achieved or, indeed, what specifically the child might learn through playing such a game. Juxtaposed against the explicit and detailed learning intentions put forward at the time by educationalists such as the Froebelians in relation to games, this is quite a contrast. However, it is illuminating to see a clear linkage being made to education in her work at this time.

Gomme certainly had a desire to engage with educationalists about the value of children's games. She contributed to pamphlets and journals such as *Child Life*, the journal of the Froebel Society's British branch. In emphasising the folkloric as opposed to pedagogical significance of children's games, her work came in for critique from Froebelians and other educationalists at the time, who also promoted children's games and dramatic activity. Late nineteenth-/early twentieth-century editions of the journal *Child Life* include numerous articles about children's games and their pedagogic importance, in part building on the Froebelian movement games and also the Mother Songs which he devised (Liebschner, 1992). What comes through within these articles is a desire to elevate the learning to be had through playing games—not any game, and this is of key importance—but the games devised with pedagogical intent on the part of the educator.

On the face of it, there would appear to be some synergy between the motives of educators such as the Froebelian movement and the folklore revivalists of whom Alice Gomme was a prominent player. They did, after all, both promote children's games as worthwhile activity. But there were clear sources of tension. First, there were concerns that the games Alice Gomme collected were 'unsuitable' for children, particularly young children. This led to the view that it would be wrong for educators to teach such songs and games. An example of such critique can be seen in reviews of Alice Gomme's publications outlining singing games for their audiences. In the 'reviews and notices' section of *Child Life*, a review of her *Old English Singing Games* stated: 'Mrs. Gomme's books require little advertisement and this new collection is as charming as the older one. … As for the games themselves, opinions will differ as to whether or not they are the best play material for children, but there cannot be two opinions on the subject of their value historically, or as to the propriety of rescuing and preserving them' (*Child Life*, 1901: 49). The reviewer goes on to give an example of a game called 'Boorman' which introduces the idea of funeral ceremonies to children, insisting: 'we should never think of introducing such a game to children' (ibid.: 49). In contrast, other materials such as 'Oranges and Lemons' are described as 'old friends' (ibid.: 50). Ironically, the survivalist theory of the origin of this game was

rather lost on or unknown to this writer as 'Oranges and Lemons' is sometimes regarded as having its roots in sacrificial ceremonies.

A similar critique of the games championed by Gomme comes from Hetty Lee (1908) in which she highlights that some games deal with 'phases and events of life which are entirely beyond a child's range of experience and so on which is undesirable to focus his attention' (Lee, 1908: 206), citing games referring to 'lovers' and 'sweethearts'. She goes on to assert: 'words may be heard from the lips of an innocent child that are painfully startling in their bald significance' (ibid.: 207). Lee cites Froebel's *laissez-faire* view as to how adults should respond to children's reproduction of folk games, suggesting Froebel would have felt that to disturb children at play would be to disturb the 'innocence' of the games. Lee's disquiet, in the main, was with the idea that schools might teach children such games and the 'infection', as she calls it, would 'penetrate' the world beyond the school (ibid.: 27), which implies a far from 'innocent' view of such games.

A second source of tension between the Froebelian position and that of Gomme is the degree to which learning was foregrounded over amusement. Typifying the Froebelian position in the Froebel Society at this time which promoted the learning to be had through play carefully structured by educators, Esther Lawrence (1897) notes, 'Although they [*games devised by Froebelian educators*] may at first sight appear to be framed for pure amusement, for mere play, they have a distinct educational object' (Lawrence, 1897: 6) By way of contrast, Alice Gomme was keen to celebrate the sheer enjoyment to be had from participating in games. In *Parlour and Playground Games*, for instance, she suggested to her readers that not *all* her games should be considered 'educational', arguing that the game 'Fire on the Mountain' was more appropriate for a 'merry party' (Gomme, 1898b: 52). The fun to be had from playing games and engaging in dramatic activity, and the sense of community this could engender, held more powerful sway over her thinking. However, the fact she presented her arguments in an educational publication suggests she did see their value—educational and otherwise—for children and wished to promote this.

A third and linked source of tension lay in the performance aspect of games as put forward by many folklorists. For some educationalists, this

was pure pageantry, emphasising spectacle over the pedagogical value of the activity. Indeed, scathing articles on this topic appear in the *Child Life* journal in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries. Perhaps most scornful was Emily Lord's (1892) critique that: 'Kindergarten games which are nothing but pretty dramatic pageants are but the shell without the kernel: though they please the outside ignorant public, they not only have no educational value, but they do a positive harm; because the dramatic, superficial showy side is the only one which is brought forward, and that inharmoniously' (Lord, 1892: 61). This appears to be a direct challenge to the ideas promoted by the folklorists such as Gomme, although the 'pageantry' associated with performing children's games was certainly not confined to her work. By way of example, Florence Bell's (1911) book *The Singing Circle* encouraged mothers to widen their repertoire of singing games so their children could perform them and gives suggestions on how they might be 'staged' in front of others with children being encouraged to advance towards the performance area waving small flags. The linkage between games and dramatic activity is therefore explicit here. However, the concerns expressed by Froebelians about the 'showiness' of such activity can certainly be levelled at such performances.

Despite clear demarcation between their views, Alice Gomme did nevertheless publish in the Froebelian *Child Life* journal and there was certainly no unitary voice from the publication on the subject of games. In general, Froebelians advocated 'wholesome' games putting forward 'worthy' educational ideas, but some expressed disquiet that such games did not embrace the real lives of children, especially those living in urban or poorer areas, and that they dampened the children's spontaneous, playful expression (see, e.g., Mrs Polkington, 1901). Interestingly, a similar criticism was levelled at Gomme's work. For instance, Anna Allen wrote to Alice Gomme (Allen, 1891) concerned that children in her local school in Hersham got little play time and showed scant interest in games: 'The children are very poor and take no interest in games. I fear their lives are anything but happy: poor things.' The degree to which the games of the children from distinct and often rural areas 'spoke' to children—poor and otherwise—in other parts of Britain is questionable, but a close reading of Gomme's work surely suggests she would have advocated for locally

relevant material (including games) in order to revive interest in local history and associated customs (Gomme, 1908).

In Gomme's later writings she was far more explicit about the educational value of games, making links to specific curricular areas. In an article in the newspaper, *The Sphere*, in 1913, Gomme makes clear reference to the learning to be gained by children in playing games. She highlights physical activity in the dance movements, early music education and the learning of manners in working closely together to make the game 'work' (Gomme, 1913b: 98). Later still, when writing about Mummer's Plays (folk plays performed by amateur actors often on seasonal or celebration days), Gomme highlighted the value of making and decorating participants' costumes as well as performing the plays themselves (Gomme, 1930). Although we cannot be certain she included children in her thinking here, Gomme (1908) clearly saw the value in bringing together crafts such as cookery, sewing and carpentry to enhance performance and to promote a holistic arts-based curriculum, which resonates strongly with the views of other 'progressive' educators of the period (see Chap. 5). One might also speculate here that in debating with educators, such as those within the Froebelian movement, ideas about the educational value of children's games and dramatic activity might have permeated her thinking and provided new ways in which to articulate their significance.

Engagement with Audiences Beyond 'Education'

Although there is evidence of Alice Gomme teaching games to the children of Barnes Village School (in south-west London), much of her contribution to arts' education did not involve schools directly. Perhaps emboldened by the shift in the folklore movement more generally towards revivalism (Boyes, 1993), her work shifted from a preservationist approach to children's games and other folkloric activity to one of educating the public about the value of children's games in order to revive their popularity, and she was creative in her use of different media in order to do

this. Two main strands are evident in her dissemination of ideas: education via performance and educating the public via her lectures and publications. What is clear is that Alice Gomme was wily in educating the public and employed a range of strategies in doing so.

Performance as a means of educating the public was a key strategy adopted by Alice Gomme and the Folklore Society. One area in which there is much evidence of Alice Gomme attempting to educate the public is in the Conversazione of 1891, which was the entertainment element of the Folk-Lore Congress meeting of that year. The 'public' here was a very particular international group of folklorists. Alice Gomme and another folklorist, Charlotte Burne, corresponded for some time about the children's games which might be included in the Conversazione, as Gomme was a prominent member of the committee charged with organising this event. Gomme taught games to children in Barnes Village school, which was local to her place of residence at the time (Beverley Villas, Barnes Common) and it was children from this school who performed for the delegates. A selection of games was carefully chosen and performed and the notes on the Conversazione programme gave the provenance of the games, describing them as 'genuine folklore' and pointing to the 'artlessness' and 'unconsciousness' she wished to preserve in the children's interpretation of games such as 'Poor Mary Sits a Weeping' (International Folklore Congress, 1891). Gomme's emphasis on the spectacle of the children performing these games can be seen in her correspondence with J.M. Lyon (1891), who offered to sew pinafores and sashes, hoping that the leftover outfits could be given to an orphanage in Kilburn after the event.

Educating the public through performance was clearly a strategy adopted in two events in London in 1907. First, in a reception held by the chairman of London County Council in the Grafton Galleries (LCC, 1907), a programme of singing, morris dancing and children's games were performed for the audience by girls from the Esperance Working Girls Club (EWGC), a group who often performed under the direction of Mary Neal. The games performed were from those collected by Alice Gomme and the meanings she attributed to those games were outlined in the programme of events. Earlier, in the same year, at Mansion House in London on 22 April 1907 (London Shakespeare League, 1907), there

was a Shakespeare Commemoration Programme of events, which included performances of games, folk songs and morris dancing again performed by girls from the EWGC. Once more, the programme for this event was clearly intended to educate its readers about the provenance and value of such activity. Desirous to make the link between Shakespeare and folklore, the programme suggests that morris dancing, songs and games are evident in some of his plays. Moreover, it states: 'These all suggest "Merrie England" for dance, folk-song and game breathe open air life and movement, and they suggest intense enjoyment in their performance', later noting that such activity retained 'enough of their original purpose to indicate their message'. The programmes produced for such events were clearly designed to educate the public as to the hitherto esoteric meanings underscoring these games, dances and songs and were intended as accompaniment to the performance itself. Thus, they had an explicit pedagogical intent.

Skilful in utilising opportunities to educate a wider public and perhaps drawing on her extensive network of contacts, not least owing to her tireless work on numerous committees related to folklore and the arts, Alice Gomme educated audiences about children's games by taking children from Barnes Village School to the Vaudeville Theatre to perform in front of the crowd as a prelude to a performance of Philip Carr's *Shock-Headed Peter*. Linked to this, she took advantage of media opportunities to spread the word of such events. An example of this can be seen in the periodical *The Sphere* in which the headline proclaims that singing games are 'a revival that is exciting widespread interest' (Gomme, 1913b: 98). In the subsequent article, written by Gomme, she details the drama inherent in the singing games performed, asserting that each tells a story which can be traced back to earlier times.

Educating the public through performance can also be seen in Gomme's role in the burgeoning pageant movement of the early twentieth century. Pageants served to bolster local and national identities as 'imperial performances', historical inaccuracies notwithstanding (Bartie et al., 2019: 157) and Gomme played a prominent role in the 'Merrie England: May Day Revels' element of the historical pageant in Crystal Palace in 1911, which was linked to the Festival of Empire and was performed between 8 June and 16 September with a huge cast. To this end,

she worked alongside Cecil Sharp (see Chap. 1) and her son Allan and also sat on the Historical Committee (University College London (UCL), 2019). More than a million people are reported to have attended one of the 120 events the pageant encompassed. A further example of Gomme's influence on the pageant movement can be seen in the pageant performed in the Bermondsey Settlement under the leadership of Grace Kimmins, who was prominent in the field of arts education in the Guild of Play and the Guild of the Brave Poor Things. The eclectic amalgam of Shakespeare, Robin Hood and his Merry Men and the like, which made up enactments of 'Merrie England', were viewed as morally uplifting and an antidote to the harsh reality of urban life. The games Gomme collected played a prominent role in the festivities and are cited in the booklet produced for the festival (Guild of Brave Poor Things, 1900). Clearly, Gomme saw a value in children participating in games, but it can also be concluded that performing the games in public had the dual purpose of educating their audience as to their significance. In other words, in an era before television, *seeing* these games (and dances and songs) *in action* was far more compelling and persuasive than merely reading about them.

As well as educating the public about the value of games via performance, Alice Gomme was a prolific writer and also gave lectures around the country. A regular contributor to the journals *Folk-Lore* and *Notes and Queries*, she was highly regarded as an expert on all manner of folklore, co-authoring books on children's singing games with her friend Cecil Sharp for example. Her work extended well beyond writing for the Folklore Society and educational publications such as *Child Life*. Writing in an eclectic range of national and local magazines and newspapers, which proliferated at the turn of the twentieth century, Alice Gomme engaged with a range of different audiences, many of whom would have been middle-class. In 1913 for instance, she gave a lecture on children's singing games to the Cheltenham Child Study Association, which was subsequently written up and published in *The Cheltenham Examiner* newspaper (Gomme, 1913a).

Another way in which Gomme disseminated her ideas and educated the public is in writing accessible books about singing games. These books included *Children's Singing Games* (Gomme, 1894b) and *Parlour and Playground Games* (Gomme, 1898b), whose audience was most likely

middle-class mothers and educationalists. *Children's Singing Games* is especially noteworthy as it represents a collaboration with Cecil Sharp and is significant for including the music accompaniment as well as being beautifully illustrated in the arts and craft style by Winifred Smith. Gomme even presented a copy of her book on singing games to the infant HRH Duke of York in 1894 and received a telegram of thanks for the 'charming book' from Lady Greville for doing so (Greville, 1894)! A savviness is apparent here in ensuring Gomme's ideas were promoted well beyond academics and folklorists in the Folklore Society.

Conclusion: Evaluating the Impact of Alice Gomme's Work

Evidence that Alice Gomme had a direct influence on the practice in schools in her lifetime is sketchy and most likely intangible, but she certainly had dialogue with educationalists as can be seen in the earlier part of this chapter which looked at her writings in the Froebelian publication *Child Life*. Over time she increasingly articulated the importance of children's games in educational terms, noting, for example, the possibilities for cross-curricular learning (Gomme, 1908, 1913), which suggests, at the very least, a desire for her ideas to permeate the teaching in schools. In teaching traditional games to the children of Barnes Village School she was involved in educating children directly, and in producing accessible books on singing games, Gomme sought to encourage families to teach their children games in the home and supported educators in teaching such games in schools. Although it is hard to be precise about the popularity of her books or the extent to which they were used in schools, *Children's Singing Games*, first published in 1894, was re-published in 1967 which points to the book's enduring appeal.

This chapter has further highlighted the many different people with whom Gomme engaged well beyond the parameters of education. This, perhaps, was her major strength but makes evaluating her impact on arts education difficult to do with any degree of certainty. She disseminated her ideas through the performance of games to theatre audiences, to

Folklore Society delegates and at various events such as those celebrating the life of Shakespeare. Programme notes for such events can also be seen as pedagogic material, designed with a view to educate the reader. Through her lectures and publications for academic and lay audiences, she sought to promote the value of children's games and she made use of the newspapers and popular press, which began to flourish at the time, to put forward her ideas. Most likely this activity would have been for a middle-class public, but in advocating for and helping to organise pageants, Gomme's work would have had a far wider reach as working-class as well as middle-class people engaged in such activity as performers and as audience (Bartie et al., 2019). Extrapolating her impact as an *individual*, therefore, is problematic as she was part of a movement of folklorists, some of whom—Cecil Sharp especially—are far better known in the field of education, but she was certainly very highly regarded within and outside of the folklore movement. For example, Gomme worked with Cecil Sharp as an assessor in schools of children's folk dancing and is credited with igniting his passion in folk song as being worthy of study (Boyes, 2001).

Arguably one of Gomme's most powerful contributions to arts education lies outside the parameters of the classroom and adult-led education. In highlighting the way games are reproduced and re-invigorated by children, Gomme's work foreshadowed the research of the Opies (Opie & Opie, 1959) and Jackie Marsh (2012). These researchers accentuate how children's participation in playground games engenders a community of childhood and exemplifies children's self-generated creative activity (see, e.g., Marsh, 2012). To some degree, this is not far removed from Gomme's position. She too highlighted the way games and dramatic activity serve to promote cohesiveness, a sense of belonging and are a 'natural' activity for humankind. For Gomme, however, the preservation of such games was enmeshed with a harking back to a rural idyll of seemingly more cohesive and 'merrie' times: a view that is rarely foregrounded in contemporary scholarship. Moreover, more recent studies focus far more on children's creativity in developing new games (Marsh, 2012) than is evident in Gomme's original work. Nevertheless, the fact that Gomme is much cited by scholars in the field of playground research indicates the groundbreaking nature of her work over a century ago.

To conclude, exploring the achievements of Alice Gomme via a lens of public pedagogy has prompted examination of her impact on arts education within and beyond the confines of schools and schooling. Her work on numerous folklore and arts' committees, her publications of academic and more popularist work, her copious letter writing, her lecturing to different groups, and her utilisation of media opportunities to publicise ideas all point to someone with significant networking and leadership abilities. Inevitably, engaging with a wide range of people would present a significant challenge for anyone, and this chapter has highlighted areas of discord between her views on games and those of the Froebelians. Yet, Alice Gomme did not shy away from this. What can be said is that she was a key player, at the vanguard of collecting, promoting and reviving a wide range of arts-based activities such as games, drama, folk song and dance and in so doing, elevated their importance in the public imagination well beyond the field of education. In one of many obituaries to her which appeared in the journal *Folk-Lore* in 1938, Frederick Boas, President of the Elizabethan Literary Society eulogised that 'her wide culture and the charm of her personality made her a persuasive advocate of any cause that enlisted her sympathy' (Boas, 1938: 94). It is the energy and passion with which she devoted herself to this considerable range of activity that is to be hugely admired and is much needed today in ensuring arts education is not sidelined in schools and children's out-of-school activities. Furthermore, in documenting the games children play and disseminating her thinking about them, Alice Gomme highlighted an area which matters to *children* and we can see such games reproduced and created anew in playgrounds in and out of schools to this day.

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Chapter 5: Harriet Finlay-Johnson (1871–1956): The Drama of Education

John Howlett

Introduction

Harriet Finlay-Johnson (1871–1956) is unusual amongst the subjects considered in this volume in that her written output consisted solely of one book which was not only published following her retirement but also overshadowed by that of her better-known contemporary Henry Caldwell Cook and his approximately contemporaneous *The Play Way* of 1917 (see Chap. 6). However, in many respects, and as shall be made clear, she has been more significant to the long-term development of drama than her Cambridge-based counterpart. Her status is all the more extraordinary given that the classroom work upon which her subsequent fame was based was to last a mere 13 years with much of the remainder of her long life spent helping her husband in his wheelwright business.

J. Howlett (✉)
School of Social, Political and Global Studies, Keele University, Keele, UK
e-mail: j.howlett@keele.ac.uk

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This truncated career, and thus a fairly short time spent actively teaching, can be considered as a contributing factor to the comparative obscurity she still enjoys today. In addition, what renown she did acquire was, initially at least, to be anonymous, immortalised as she was only pseudonymously as 'Egeria' and her school as 'Utopia' in Edmond Holmes' classic progressive account *What Is and What Might Be* (1911). Despite her identity soon becoming known and Holmes continuing to be a champion of her work, this was a somewhat Pyrrhic victory as association with Holmes, who had recently retired amidst controversy over an infamous leaked memorandum, served to arouse hostility and resentment in the educational establishment including the teaching unions.

A search for Finlay-Johnson within the subject literature will reveal a comparative absence from the canon. Few publications in English have

Photo 1 Harriet Finlay-Johnson. Reproduced with permission from Lancing & Sompting Pastfinders and Sompting Old

her as the chief focus of their research endeavours and, even within wider academic works such as those of O'Toole and O'Mara (2007) and Robert Jeffcoate (2000), she appears often simply as a point of contrast or comparison with the aforementioned Cook. The exception to this is a short biography by Mary Bowmaker (2002), a book which anyone seeking information about Finlay-Johnson must inevitably defer. This work utilised the small number of primary sources available relating to Finlay-Johnson such as log-books and local newspaper cuttings to chart the history of her headship of Sompting School in Sussex. Despite these endeavours, Bowmaker did not seek to seriously locate Finlay-Johnson within either the progressive tradition or the wider development of arts education. Furthermore, it is suggestive of the point made above that the last 46 years of her life are covered by the author in less than five pages, testament to the fact that whilst Finlay-Johnson's flame was bright it burned but briefly.

That is not of course to suggest that within those pieces where her name does appear—some written by leading drama scholars such as David Hornbrook (1998)—that her achievement is in any way denigrated or diminished. This point is reinforced by Peter Cunningham (2001) in his account of educator networks in which he names Finlay-Johnson as an example of one whose ideas successfully enmeshed themselves within particular emergent webs of progressive thought and influence. In further referring to her ground-breaking status, Gavin Bolton has written that she, 'perhaps more than any other pioneer in classroom drama, can claim the right to that title, on the grounds that she appeared to have no model to follow or surpass, no tradition to keep or break' (Bolton, 1998: 5). Although therefore not enjoying the same level of renown as other progressives, it is clear that what little recognition she has garnered has sought to place her at the forefront of the development of arts education, her contributions being both practical and theoretical.

As Mary Bowmaker narrates, Finlay-Johnson did not come from a wealthy or privileged background. Her father was a master builder and it was his premature death which forced Harriet and her sister Emily into teaching. She qualified through private study and passed her certificate exams in 1892 meaning that two years later she received certification and was therefore qualified to teach. Following a period working in London

at St Mary's Church of England school at Willesden and then briefly for the Tottenham School Board she became headmistress of Sompting School, a primary school in the county of Sussex on 14 June 1897. Finlay-Johnson taught 50 of the 120 pupils housed within the school with much of her work focussed on those aged between the ages of 8 and 11.

In keeping with the anti-industrialism that was to be at the heart of many late nineteenth-/early twentieth-century progressive schools, Sompting itself was set in an area of calm rurality: 'It nestles at the foot of a long range of hills; and if you will climb the slope that rises at the back of the village, and look over the level country that you have left behind, you will see in the distance the gleaming waters of one of the many seas that wash our shores' (Holmes, 1911: 154). This proximity to nature was not coincidental and ran as a thread through many of the school's activities which drew heavily upon the outdoors and the natural world. Indeed, as M.H. Hyndman has emphasised, before her interest in drama it had been Nature Study (deliberately capitalised) which pre-occupied Finlay-Johnson with the pupils engaged in, 'cultivation of a school garden: lettuces, radishes and potatoes were planted in the autumn and winter' (Hyndman, 1980: 354). Following from that intimate relationship enjoyed between the school and the local surrounds, a particularly close association was formed too with the village and community. Aside from working with children in other nearby schools, Finlay-Johnson was also involved in a production of *Julius Caesar* through a 'sort of Dramatic Club for men' (1911: 253) which played at the nearby theatre in Worthing. Time was also spent with the mothers of the children in her school who not only formed their own musical band and put on plays but 'practised the Morris dance and dramatized folk-songs. … In the latter art they excelled, for they knew a good store of the Sussex folk-songs' (ibid.: 255). The school thus became, 'a centre of light and learning' (ibid.: 255) and this meant that Finlay-Johnson developed strong connections with local and regional educational groups and authorities, many of whom were curious as to her practices. On a personal note, Finlay-Johnson was also to wed a member of her adult Shakespeare group, an event that hastened her departure from the school, Edwardian social convention dictating that married women did not teach.

Immediately following her retirement, and encouraged by the ever-supportive Holmes, Finlay-Johnson published *The Dramatic Method of Teaching* (Finlay-Johnson, 1911) which was a rambunctiously written account of her practices within the school. The text was also to be supplemented by 32 images that not only illustrated in visual form the activities which took place in the school but which also, as Peter Cunningham again points out, 'draw the reader in, revealing intense engagement of pupils in their activity. Some images … [also] trigger an emotive response according to experiences, memories and curriculum interests of the spectator' (Cunningham, 2019: 121). It is therefore to addressing the substance of this book and the practices it so vividly and powerfully described which the chapter now turns.

The Dramatic Method in Sompting: 1897–1911

In considering Finlay-Johnson's pioneering status within the broad field of arts education, it is important to note that she can rightfully be considered the first educator, at least within the United Kingdom, to understand the centrality of drama as both a legitimate and formalised classroom activity and one which could inspire learning in other subject areas. In this her views went beyond the traditional understandings of school-based drama which was more attenuated to the formal production of plays. Even a document as progressive as the Board of Education's *Handbook of Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers* (1905) had written of, 'Simple rhymes and games of a dramatic cast' (Board of Education, 1905: 29) and of 'Stories told first *to* the class by the teacher, afterwards retold *by* individual children. … With the older infants attempts might be made to *dramatise* these' (ibid.: 29, emphasis added).

In many ways, Finlay-Johnson's work was more closely aligned to that of the Froebelian movement which—drawing its inspiration from the *Mutter und Kose Lieder* (1885) (Trans: *Mother's Songs*)—used imitative action song either in the context of the school or else in the home as a way of promoting the intimate bond between adult and child. Although such interactions had traditionally been portrayed simply as 'games' or 'activities', it was left to the educationalist J.J. Findlay (shortly to become

Professor of Education at what is now Manchester University) to point out that not only was, 'Delight in imitation [is] manifested at a very early age' (Findlay, 1902: 82) but also that, 'The Drama is the final outcome of this form of recreation. … This term has been carelessly translated as "Games" (*sic*) by English teachers, but the correct rendering is "Plays"' (ibid., emphasis in the original). By so doing, and pointedly in a book addressing principles of classroom teaching, Findlay was not only drawing the link between kindergarten activity and drama but also intimating that drama as an academic subject should occupy some sort of a place in schools.

Drawing upon her knowledge of those long-established kindergarten ideas, Finlay-Johnson's firm belief, like that of Froebel, was that young children have within them an innate desire to want to learn and that this is to be encouraged through dramatisation: 'When our scholars began to dramatize their lessons, they at once developed a keen desire to know many things which hitherto had been matters of pure indifference to them' (Finlay-Johnson, 1911: 36–37). Although Froebel's interest had been with the whole of education, his kindergartens were typically associated with the very young whereas Finlay-Johnson instead posed the simple question, 'Why not continue the principle of the Kindergarten game in the school for older scholars? … instead of letting the teacher originate or conduct the play, I demanded that the play … must be the child's own' (ibid.: 19) By so doing, not only was Finlay-Johnson extending the kindergarten activity from infant to junior schools but she was also placing greater demands on her pupils and allowing them increased licence to be creative and interpretative. This stood in contrast to the more static 'action-songs'.

The activities described in her book were, after that fashion, therefore extended to include the older children and this struck straight to the heart of her philosophy which was seen, at its most basic level, as a way of encouraging the growth of substantive knowledge in other school subjects through the medium of drama. It was through their study of Shakespeare and, more so, their own compositional efforts for example that Finlay-Johnson's pupils gained understanding both of more traditional curriculum areas such as geography, arithmetic and manual work

but also, and perhaps more unexpectedly, such practices as drawing, singing and costume design.

Geography for instance began with children making fictional model towns out of the most basic of materials before moving on to re-creating parts of the world with one part of the classroom representing the North Pole and children pretending to be icebergs and 'voyaging' in their ship which was 'the ever-useful soap-box on wheels' (ibid.: 183). As another example they would then dramatise elements of geography by picking out domestic towns known for their industrial outputs (iron and steel), creating name-cards to be distributed amongst the class, then acting out various roles such as office merchants making deliveries of products around the country or drivers of imaginary trains taking samples to potential customers. This creation of story and narrative through the development of invented characters was further developed when the pupils were inclined to study particular countries: Switzerland was imagined as a glacier into which the children fell and were rescued. Canada and Australia too inspired impromptu acted tales of lumberjacking and emigrants. Although at times betraying elements of national stereotyping—such as when the pupils 'attempt[ed] to show how natives were civilized' (ibid.: 218)—these events well illustrate how Finlay-Johnson's charges were often quite willing to spontaneously prepare, re-create and re-imagine the environments they had encountered in their readings.

Whilst acting out geography provided one instance whereby drama could facilitate wider learning so too were comparable methods utilised within history (the performing of historical scenes) and, perhaps less obviously, arithmetic. The latter in particular allowed for the children to develop their own games by pretending to be oak trees and having acorns fall off and be counted and divided up, or else by constructing a shop and 'selling' its goods to fellow pupils.

What marks these activities out in this context as distinctive is that they represented a form of *inter-disciplinarity* and subject *inter-connectedness*—comparable to the Herbartian concept of correlation. In one case, Finlay-Johnson describes the invention of the children's miniature post-office as giving rise to, 'another game, which combined the writing of letters (composition), directing of envelopes, a little geography in the correct placing of the various towns, and arithmetic' (ibid.: 232).

The acting of Shakespearian plays too was seen as a way to facilitate activities in handicrafts as the pupils began to make the artefacts and objects that would be needed for their performances. Drama therefore served as the catalyst for learning across a range of different subjects and which often then lead quite naturally from one area of investigation to another.

In that regard, Finlay-Johnson's work shared similarities with that of Henry Caldwell Cook (see Chap. 6) who also used dramatic performance as a way to involve pupils in a range of skills such as programme design and prop-making. However, whereas Cook's boys tended to undertake roles as they were allocated to them and drama and English were 'set' subjects in their school day, at Sompting such practices seemed more spontaneous and organic. Almost certainly we can see such developments as stemming from Finlay-Johnson's understanding of the ideas and practices of Froebel which were rooted in freer forms of play, the child's exploration of the self through pursuing their own interests and a Romantic sensibility afforded by interaction with the outdoors. It was, after all, nature study and not drama which had been the initial basis for many of her school's lessons. In her understanding of the role of the teacher Finlay-Johnson even moved beyond these ideas, with her pedagogue being akin to, 'an enthusiastic team-manager, coaching from the sidelines, as it were, as pupils engaged in their endeavours' (Bolton, 1998: 15). Such an approach can be seen as quite radically re-interpreting the traditional relationship between pupil and teacher which had before been both heavily didactic and, as a consequence, unequal.

There are also additional similarities to be drawn with the contemporary work being done by John Dewey in his famous Laboratory School in Chicago. Whilst more obviously concerned with constructing activities centred around basic human needs, such as the building of shelters and promoting American frontiersman values, there nevertheless existed in his experimental setting a 'deliberate attempt[s] to develop children's skills in a range of disciplines simultaneously' (Howlett, 2013: 198). The building of a model farm for instance was designed to encourage the learning of mathematics and engineering as much as it was mechanics and woodworking. In Sompting too Finlay-Johnson was not only aware of the value of drama as a way of stimulating all other forms of creativity

such as handicrafts—'dramatising lessons touched some human interest which must express itself in every possible form of art' (Finlay-Johnson, 1911: 120)—but also as a means to engaging with important aspects of later life. Many of the activities that developed within her classes, and which were conceived and originated dramatically, such as the writing of formal letters or the learning of mental arithmetic seemed attenuated to the particular needs of her pupils, a large number of whom came from rural working-class backgrounds in which such skills were largely absent.

Despite being clearly well-intentioned on the part of Finlay-Johnson, this last point nonetheless hints at a particular conservatism in both her thought and practice. In stating that, 'there is more need for inculcating [this] love of Nature and good literature in the mind of the Elementary School child than in that of the child of higher station' (ibid.: 170) she was clearly articulating a deficit model in relation to the culture of the children in her care. In that vein, it is possible to therefore argue that there was an instrumentalism to her use of drama in the classroom which was not simply about activity 'for its own sake'. Whilst Finlay-Johnson was clearly advocating powerfully for the use of dramatisation across the curriculum this was not a process designed to change the form of the knowledge her pupils acquired. Such knowledge for instance was not seen as being either open to contestation or problematic. Rather, the activities described in her book were intended instead to give children a greater depth of knowledge within the fields in which their activity happened to be based. The pupils knew more but did not necessarily think differently.

This view becomes reinforced when we consider some of the tools and structures of learning in the school. Finlay-Johnson may have been convinced that, 'It has always been an axiom of school method that one of the first essentials in teaching any subject should be "first arouse the *desire to know*"' (ibid., emphasis added). However, this knowledge was to be produced in quite traditional subject disciplines (geography, history, mathematics, etc.) and was as much discovered and found within existing materials as it was created afresh or made to be challenged. Nor were more long-standing methods of classroom practice to be abandoned, the Dramatic Method being pronounced as a way to lead to 'the *right way of using the text-book*' (ibid.: 111, emphasis in original) and whilst the

students may not have been committing its contents to memory they still used such text-books as frequent points of reference. Similarly, boys and girls kept to fixed gender-roles when performing their plays and improvised scenes and thus no attempts were made to think fluidly in relation to gender. Linked to this, one can also glean an element of patriotism within Finlay-Johnson: her biographer notes for example her sadness at the death of Queen Victoria as recorded in the school log-book whilst more significantly the press reported her school as involved in a range of jingoistic activity including making costumes for the celebrations around the lifting of the siege of Mafeking and raising money for the *Montreal Star's* Patriotic Fund. These latter efforts, which contributed to a benevolent fund for the families of soldiers killed in the Boer War, led one newspaper to refer to her as a, 'woman with a practical, original idea for encouraging patriotism among the rising generation which is as unique as it is successful' (*Daily Express*, 1900: 6).

Nevertheless, to critique her on these grounds overlooks the fact that nationalist sentiments which today would be considered, broadly speaking, as socially conservative were not then incommensurate with radical child-centred thinking. This volume has already considered the case of Cecil Sharp (see Chap. 1) whilst thinkers as diverse as Cook (see Chap. 6) and Margaret McMillan were to also reflect in varying ways an admiration for their nation. The latter in particular saw her advocacy of the creative imagination in children as a necessary pre-requisite for the United Kingdom to enhance its power in the global market-place, writing that, 'when they [the children] are out in the open of industrial life, competing with educated workmen of other lands, mechanical training and formal attainments will not carry them far. … A new order of workmen … who may possess … *imagination* is in demand' (McMillan, 1904: xi emphasis in original). Similarly, whilst it is important to note that Finlay-Johnson's children were acquiring knowledge for the relatively conventional reason of increasing their learning, it has conversely to also be recognised as part of a collective and shared classroom experience which was highly original in its form.

Although it is therefore possible after this fashion to once again invoke the spectre of Dewey—for whom such democracy and collectivism was a central tenet of his thinking—his understanding of the term was more explicitly political and symptomatic of American philosophical pragmatism. By contrast, at Sompting, any sense of democracy and collective spirit was rooted explicitly in the practices of drama and these emerged most strongly when considered relative to the role and purpose of the audience. While some of the children's plays were intended for formal productions—such as those given for school visitors—in many cases the spontaneous nature of the day-to-day dramatic play taking place meant that roles and casting became fluid and more often than not even those pupils who had simply fallen casually into watching a performance became involved. One case of this occurred during the building of a raft and bridges in response to a reading of Richard Jefferies' novel *Bevis* (1882) whereby, 'The raft went on voyage to all parts of places and the chorus sat along the banks to explain matters' (Finlay-Johnson, 1911: 175). This chorus, who served in effect as an interactive audience, had the function of not only announcing performers and describing the action but also filling up gaps with explanations, giving suggestions and it is telling that Finlay-Johnson wrote of them 'making [of] copious notes' (ibid.: 205).

Whilst then this was not Finlay-Johnson totally 'doing away' with an audience as later practitioners such as Brian Way (1967) were to favour, it was certainly a stage beyond even those as progressive as Cook whose famous Mummery theatre in his school was built to resemble a traditional Elizabethan stage and where roles and parts were often quite formally allocated (see Chap. 6). In the case of Finlay-Johnson however, the audience/class members were being re-oriented into the roles of commentator, scribe, watcher as well as co-constructors of both knowledge and story and these could be adopted at any particular point in time and for any emergent activity. These types of behaviour thus represented quite radical forms of collective, organic and democratic activity. This was both in relation to how fluid the roles in the classroom and the interactions between the children had become which enabled knowledge to evolve, but also as the knowledge created belonged very much *to the pupils*. This

was, after all, knowledge derived exclusively from their own endeavours and for their own purposes; even when it came to the more prosaic task of casting and rehearsing it was the children themselves who instigated it, one example being the case of Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1820) in which, 'It took but a few seconds for the boys to settle on a rosy, rotund boy for a jovial Friar Tuck' (Finlay-Johnson, 1911: 35). Once again, this suggests something of a re-imagining of traditional classroom practice which held that knowledge was expected to be imbibed passively by children as it was presented by the teacher.

The Legacy and Importance of Finlay-Johnson

As a result of the innovative methods being employed at Sompting, the school and its dynamic headmistress soon began to acquire both a regional and, latterly, a national reputation. In 1903 Finlay-Johnson was appointed as a member of the Education Advisory Committee for West Sussex County Council whilst a year later she was invited to speak at a conference of managers and certificated teachers on the importance of her first love—Nature Study. The local newspaper—*The Worthing Gazette*—was to give this coverage and it was not long afterwards that the national newspapers took a similar interest in the happenings on the south coast. A double-page photo-spread in *The Daily Mirror* talked of the 'ingenious method' (*Daily Mirror*, 1906: 8) being used to teach children their lessons whilst *The Daily Mail* similarly was effusive in its praise of a system which provided an 'entertaining and healthy education for the children' (*Daily Mail*, 1907: 7). Somewhat more incongruously, the women's domestic weekly magazine *Home Chat* also ran a more extended four-page feature, including photographs, and which was keen to emphasise not just the drama taking place in the school but also the good work Finlay-Johnson was doing with the local community: 'The mothers especially say they feel years younger since this new interest has come into their lives, and that they are happy no one looking into their faces can doubt' (*Home Chat*, 1908: 136).

Finlay-Johnson's book was to also receive good notices, with the influential *Spectator* magazine commenting that, 'what she has to say is so

deeply interesting, and of such far-reaching importance that a copy of her book … ought to be in the hands of, not only every teacher, but also of every non-teacher interested in education' (*The Spectator*, 1911: 461). Another contemporary reviewer was similarly moved to state that, 'One reads this book with a feeling of gladness for the children who had the good fortune to attend Sompting School' (*Review of Reviews*, 1911: 54).

Although this coverage allowed Finlay-Johnson to 'bask[ing] in the limelight and accolades such publicity would bring' (Bowmaker, 2002: 82) such publications were, however, only reporting on what they perceived as an educational novelty: her work was not at this stage recognised as part of a developing and profound pedagogic philosophy. It is telling for instance that the headline of the aforementioned *Home Chat* piece was, somewhat crudely, 'Lessons Made Easy' which, as we have seen, was most definitely *not* the intention behind the developing dramatic method which did not seek to simplify subject content. Given the novelty of Finlay-Johnson's practice and the fact that the many conferences and journals designed to disseminate information about such experiments had yet to be founded this was understandable. Nevertheless, this was to change dramatically in April 1904 following a visit by His Majesty's Inspector Edward Burrows. Although the school had been looked at by various Inspectors since her arrival, it was this particular inspection which was to be the catalyst for all of Finlay-Johnson's subsequent fame.

Burrows was clearly much taken with the activities he observed and, such was the success of his visit, 'Between March 1901 and March 1910 there was no less than forty-eight visits of Inspectors, most of them His Majesty's Inspectors and from places as far apart as Cumberland, Staffordshire and Norfolk' (Bowmaker, 2002: 92). By far the most important of these came from the new Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools, Edmond Holmes, accompanying the returning Burrows, in November 1907. Holmes was a remarkable man and John Howlett's biography (2016) attests to his mastery of a range of fields including being a poet, religious thinker, philosopher, pioneering Buddhist as well as a senior Inspector of over 30 years standing. By the time of his visit however not only had he published widely in a range of cognate fields (including various books of verse and a re-interpretation of the message of Christ) but

he was becoming increasingly convinced of the evils of many facets of the national education system which he had observed first-hand during his years of inspection.

These malign forces he was to represent as forms of 'mechanical obedience' (Holmes, 1911: 3) which, crudely speaking, was the laying down and obeyance of instruction by an authority figure. Although in many contexts, such as those instances pertaining to personal safety, this was necessary and sensible, in schools it had led to forms of rote-learning and unthinking action which was serving both to disengage children but, more seriously, to stunt their spiritual growth. It was this latter attribute which Holmes saw as the most important facet of human nature and which underpinned the development of innate instincts towards creativity, communication and enquiry. Furthermore, his own religious thinking had led Holmes to conclude that as the physical body grew over time so too could the soul, which had the comparable potential to develop in an infinite number of ways and configurations. The end point of this growth would be the stage of *self-realisation* whereby, 'Man recognized that his soul was one with the soul of the Universe' (Howlett, 2016: 73). As things stood however much of life had, by contrast, become externalised with even those actions traditionally associated with the inner soul being reduced to an outward form of materialism. Initially this was a theological argument with ritual and lip-service seen as replacing inner devotion. By the time of his visit to Sompting however, Holmes was beginning to apply his earlier thinking to encompass all facets of society including, inevitably, education: 'the *externalism* of the West, the prevalent tendency to pay undue regard to outward and visible "results" and to neglect what is inward and vital, is the source of most of the defects that vitiate Education in this country' (Holmes, 1911: v emphasis in original).

It was though Finlay-Johnson's school which served to render fully visible to Holmes that an alternative to this pessimistic model was possible. Indeed, it is impossible to overstate how important his visits were in reshaping his thinking particularly as it crystallised his theory of innate natural instincts that could only fully develop away from any suggestions of authority, dogma and mechanical obedience. Finlay-Johnson's activities were therefore seen as fostering, 'Nature's aims in the child's life' (ibid.: 170). Observing the Dramatic Method also led Holmes to

re-assess his assumptions around the nature and nurture debate; to that point, and influenced by the geneticist Gregor Mendel, he had a vague attachment to theories of genetic superiority of the upper orders with lower-class habits and pursuits seen as indicative of more base dispositions. Finlay-Johnson's children—mostly themselves from humble backgrounds—however exhibited none of the characteristics of idleness and vice associated with the working class; in referring to the children as plums Holmes was to write that, 'plums those children certainly were, and plums of a very high quality … the average Utopian child was in fact a better specimen of plumhood than the average product of what we call "good breeding" and "gentle birth"' (Holmes, 1917: 69–70). Holmes was now able to conclude that, '*all* children regardless of background were able to more fully express their latent potentials and grow and develop accordingly' (Howlett, 2016: 117, emphasis in original).

This appreciation was important as it was this idea which—deriving from his extensive observations in Sompting—became described and referenced within many of Holmes' later texts including the best-selling *What Is and What Might Be* (1911) which was itself to prove a huge influence on many subsequent progressives. These included J.H. Simpson (1954), E. Sharwood Smith (1935), Norman MacMunn and Edward O'Neill (see Burke, 2005) all of whom were to acknowledge an intellectual debt to the earlier example of the radical Chief Inspector. Finlay-Johnson's experiments thus percolated, albeit second-hand, to this younger, more effusive generation. Norman MacMunn as a case in point was moved to write that, 'Miss Johnson undoubtedly did wonders in her Sussex village. … I must here burn a little incense to what I consider to be one of the most interesting and convincing educational experiments ever carried out' (MacMunn, 1914: 45). Their various experiments were to prove seminal in constructing the progressive New School Movement of the 1920s and 1930s.

Finlay-Johnson's involvement in this milieu can be traced through her attendance at the 1922 New Ideals in Education conference, one of a series of gatherings of progressive practitioners and thinkers which Holmes had been instrumental in setting up eight years earlier. Appropriately, the theme of this particular conference was 'Drama in the Curriculum' and included a paper given by Finlay-Johnson (by this stage

Harriet Weller and her only other significant published work) in which she argued that whilst the aim of developing the educational basics—the 3Rs—was sensible, too often it had overlooked the main means of doing so which was through cultivating the instinct of 'dramatic play' (Finlay-Johnson, 1922: 181). This was clearly a direct reference to her champion Holmes and his Idealist-driven theory of innate dispositions within the child, one of which was the 'dramatic instinct' (Holmes, 1911: 166). Finlay-Johnson used this conference platform as an opportunity to reiterate some of her earlier beliefs and principles: 'We [Sompting school] have not turned out a single poet or actor of note; not a single operatic star; no "movie" actress … no dreamers—only idealists, ideally practical' (ibid.: 192). Such a statement attested to the relationship between the practical skills learned through drama that Finlay-Johnson saw her school as having provided but it also suggested something of the carefree way the students went about their learning, a point reiterated by Holmes who had earlier written of, 'the joy which the children wear in their faces and bear in their hearts' (Holmes, 1911: 193).

However, despite this late affirmation by Finlay-Johnson of her key principles, the New Ideals conferences did not themselves have an immediate impact on wider policy. As has been pointed out, 'these more abstruse notions were not borne out in the sense of forming part of a long-term ideological shift in education' (Howlett, 2017: 478) and, indeed, wholesale progressive philosophies particularly those driven by rhetoric of 'the spirit' often failed to move beyond individual experimental schools such as those run by the likes of Neill and MacMunn. This is not to suggest, of course, that the dramatic arts were completely overlooked within the context of mainstream education. The important 1921 Report entitled *The Teaching of English in England* explicitly addressed the subject of drama but did so in a way quite distinct from how it had been understood by Finlay-Johnson. In particular, in defining drama—which the Report equated with acting—as '(a) the performance of scenes or pieces in class, (b) the public performance of plays by pupils, (c) visits by pupils to professional performances of suitable plays' (Board of Education, 1921: 315) it was putting forth a definition of dramatic performance as a process by which formal productions were simply acted and then

presented to a rapt audience. Whilst this compared well with the proper staging of plays in Cook's Mummery theatre (see Chap. 6), it was a far cry from Finlay-Johnson's ideas around spontaneous performance and dramatic creation. Similarly, although the Report saw drama as instilling wider benefits of speech and elocution this too fell a long way short of the cross-curricular benefits which had constituted so much of the practice in Sompting.

To therefore understand the true importance of Finlay-Johnson one should seek instead to locate her thinking in relation to post-war experiments in drama of the sort carried out by Peter Slade, Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote notably in their creation of the 'drama-in-education' movement, which was also to be known as *process drama*. This was characterised by a belief that, 'the drama is always improvised, creating the learning context on the spot in the classroom, with the learners all involved as participants in making the drama and as characters within it—unfolding as it goes along, rarely complete, and never entirely preordained' (O'Toole & O'Mara, 2007: 211). Peter Slade for example in his key text *Child Drama* (1954) was to emphasise drama's role in facilitating personal expression whilst Brian Way's equally seminal *Development through Drama* (1967) focussed upon the benefits of drama for the individual, including such facets as concentration, self-awareness and sensitivity. These personal characteristics were much closer to Finlay-Johnson's desire to uncover the 'fitness of things' (Finlay-Johnson, 1911: 40) than from any previous understanding that drama should be concerned almost exclusively with formal production and recitation of lines.

Closer still was Dorothy Heathcote's concept of 'living through' (Heathcote, 1991: 81) drama in which any sense of external audience was dispensed with, participants were actively engaged in their own experiential learning and periods of reflection were built into the time allocated for action. In ensuring that, 'the drama thus always incorporates the students' ideas and suggestions, sometimes changing its original objectives and goals, if a productive idea is suggested' (O'Toole & O'Mara, 2007: 211), Heathcote's teaching principles were clearly echoing those of her illustrious forebear. How these ideas—and the core principle of pupil engagement—have influenced the school curriculum since have been the subject of much academic discussion although it is clear they were having

an impact towards the end of the twentieth century. Ken Byron, as a case in point, went as far as to suggest that Heathcote's ideas should be regarded as 'drama orthodoxy' (Byron, 1986: 2).

Of course, whilst both were charismatic and pioneering women there remained significant differences in their practice; Heathcote's teacher was one involved in the midst of the action as both director and participant, a far cry from Finlay-Johnson's encouraging coach on the sidelines. Likewise, under Heathcote's strictures children were expected to make problematic the material under study and interrogate its context and provenance in a way that Finlay-Johnson would not have countenanced. However, establishing such a link between the two women is important particularly as both were keen to stress the *educational* benefits that drama could have. It was unsurprising that Heathcote was to consider choosing Finlay-Johnson for a BBC broadcast in which the contributors were asked to identify a hero either past or present (see Heathcote, 1991: 7).

Conclusion

Making any sort of estimate of Finlay-Johnson's impact on arts education is problematic: her ideas were certainly regarded as innovative in her own time, particularly by her progressively minded contemporaries such as Edmond Holmes whose popular works meant that her ideas became disseminated to those within key radical networks. However, these ideas were not initially widely undertaken or practiced in schools. Unlike Cook who was summoned as an expert witness to the Hadow committees (see Chap. 6) and Alice Gomme who networked widely and had the advantage of a well-connected husband (see Chap. 4), Finlay-Johnson spent much of her life away from education and was seemingly reluctant to intervene in any public debates around the discipline of drama, her appearance at the 1922 New Ideals conference notwithstanding. It is maybe for these reasons that her name is less commonly cited in works pertaining to the development of the creative arts. Nevertheless, her

influence can—and should—be traced directly through the work of those practitioners such as Peter Slade and, particularly, Dorothy Heathcote who began thinking, practicing and writing around the time of her death.

However, the threats to drama as a school subject have meant that increasingly it has lost its own independent space in the curriculum thereby witnessing a decline in is importance. In some instances, as Anderson and Donelan (2009) point out, this has been the direct result of governmental policy which has served to privilege more 'core' subjects at the expense of drama. This has often meant that it has become subsumed within the subject of English. By so doing, and somewhat ironically, these moves echo what Finlay-Johnson had advocated nearly a century before which was the seamless permeating of drama into other areas of the curriculum. In the case of New Labour's creativity agenda which called for children's relationship to knowledge to be one of 'questioning, making connections, inventing and reinventing' (Creative Partnerships, 2007: 1) there were even more explicit illustrations of this inter-relationship between subject areas. It would therefore be more accurate to perhaps conclude that as one of the first to privilege process rather than product, and for drama to be a place for genuine youthful expression in the school curriculum, Finlay-Johnson should be regarded as a significant pioneer and foreteller of many future developments in the field.

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Chapter 6: Henry Caldwell Cook (1886–1939): Play, Performance and the Perse

John Howlett

Introduction

Like his better-known contemporaries, A.S. Neill of Summerhill and Susan Isaacs of the Malting House, Henry Caldwell Cook (1886–1939) is indelibly associated with one place—the Perse School in Cambridge. It was here, from 1911 to just before his death, that Cook served as a teacher of both English and drama and was where he was to develop a range of inventive and novel teaching methods and techniques that attracted international attention. These were described in detail in his most significant published work, *The Play Way, an Essay in Educational Method* (1917), which combined Cook's own richly illustrated descriptions of the activities in the classroom alongside explications of his idiosyncratic teaching philosophy. Widely read and reprinted, this book was to serve as

J. Howlett (✉)
School of Social, Political and Global Studies, Keele University, Keele, UK
e-mail: j.howlett@keele.ac.uk

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an important early twentieth-century progressive educational text and was to also act, as Manami Yoda (2012) has suggested, as a precursor to the post-Second World War Theatre in Education (TIE) movement. David Hornbrook has gone further still in claiming that Cook was the, 'first [person] to describe a comprehensive programme for what we now might recognise as drama-in-education' (Hornbrook, 1998: 7).

Whilst however his life may have been comparatively short and his written output relatively meagre, Cook can still be understood as being part of a much wider development in relation to the growth of progressive education and arts education in particular. As Peter Cunningham explains, this opposition to more didactic and orthodox teaching methods had been, 'sharpened by disillusionment with world war on his own part and on the part of his readers' (Cunningham, 2004). Cook's experiences in the

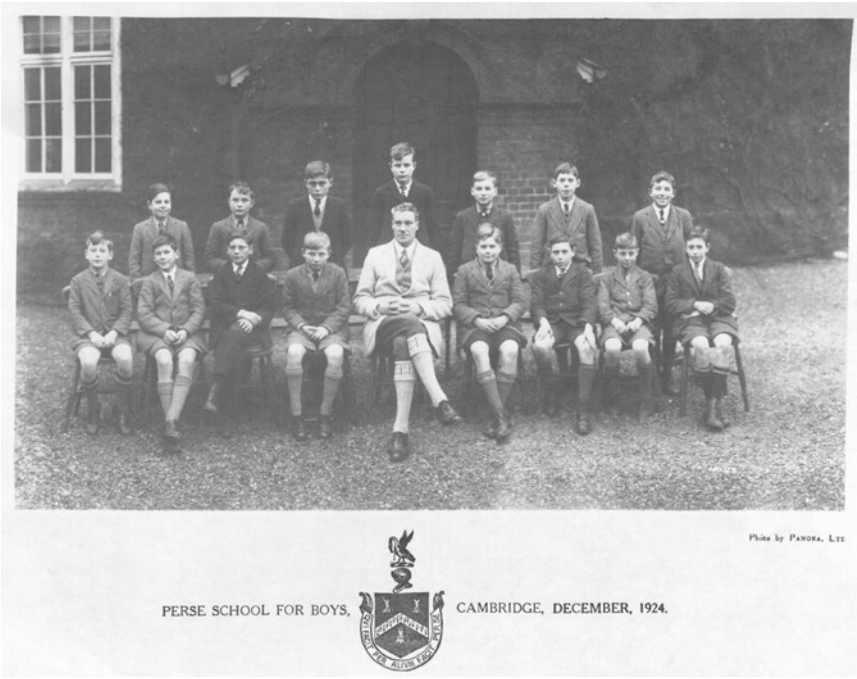

Photo 1 Henry Caldwell Cook with his form, 1924. Reproduced by kind permission of the Perse School. Ref. Albums/Cook, H.C./Panora Album 1924. Copyright: the Perse School, Cambridge

trenches had indeed been traumatic and the shell-shock he suffered may well have been a contributory factor in his early death. Perhaps in recognition of this, the Preface to *The Play Way* talked of the need for, 'A social revolution … after the declaration of peace on the Continent; for, even supporting some fair principle established by force of arms, it has still to be wrought into a living practice by right education' (Cook, 1917: vii–viii). This belief in the redemptive and healing power of education—prominent in Cook—was to be a theme found too in the writings of other inter-war progressives. As one noted example, the New Ideals in Education gatherings—a series of conferences which included policy-makers, teachers and writers—were committed to the principle of 'work[ing] [together] upon the basis of a common conviction that a new spirit, full of hope for the world, is stirring in education' (New Ideals, 1916: vi). Although 'they [the reformers] were often as eager to criticise each other as to condemn the traditional educationalists' (Selleck, 1972: 23) much of their determination stemmed nevertheless from a conviction that 'it was the "old" system of education which was seen as culpable for the sorts of events currently scarring the globe' (Howlett, 2017: 472). This 'belief in the value for civilization' (Cunningham, 2004) of new types of schooling was also to be found in varying forms in other progressive works of the time including those by A.S. Neill, Susan Isaacs and Margaret McMillan.

If Cook's educational thinking can then be understood as, in part, providing a critical response and commentary upon more global events, there remained still an element of insularity and parochialism to his practice. All of his teaching took place within the Perse School which was (and remains) an independent fee-paying institution catering for the aspirant middle-class, often children of the staff of the nearby university in Cambridge. Whilst it was hardly alone in that, and other schools within the New Education Fellowship were similarly elite in their intakes, this amenable demographic provided ideal conditions in which Cook could innovate in his practice and encourage imaginative activity in his pupils. Tellingly, an unpublished reminiscence from a former pupil spoke of Cook as the 'epitome of the gentleman we aspired to become' (Lacey, 1996: 5) and it is therefore necessary to bear in mind this specific context when considering his thinking and the apparent willingness of the children to engage in his inventive schemes. Stemming from that is the

contradiction within Cook which sought, on the one hand, to dynamically engage pupils in creative and experiential practice yet, on the other, betrayed a strong streak of social and intellectual conservatism. This latter factor was exemplified both through his staunch commitment to the works of Shakespeare as opposed to contemporary realist plays—'the deeds of detectives and bushrangers, and the goings-on of bullies and fags will not pass muster as material for drama' (Cook, 1917: 271)—but also by holding dear a particular form of rustic Englishness which drew heavily upon the idea of national tradition and the great outdoors. This was inspired by his friend Cecil Sharp (see Chap. 1) who served as an honorary member of the Perse Players (the school's theatre group).

Cook's Educational Philosophy and Practices

At its core, Cook's method, which he employed within both English and drama classes, involved the use of the imagination, a quality which he saw as best developed, cultivated and refreshed through engaging young boys constantly in original creative activity and methods. In this he was not of course alone: the dominant psychologist Percy Nunn in his seminal book *Education: Its Data and First Principles* was to similarly talk of the need to encourage individuality and of the growing child as being comparable to an artist when allowed to foster their imaginative faculties. In referring to the concept of play for example, Nunn wrote that, 'It is hardly extravagant to say that in the understanding of play lies the key to most of the practical problems of education, for play taken in the narrower sense as a phenomenon belonging especially to childhood, shows the creative impulses in their clearest, most vigorous and most typical form' (Nunn, 1920: 89). Nunn was one of the key protagonists in the development of the field coming to be known as 'educational psychology', a movement which, as Adrian Wooldrich (1994) and John Howlett (2013) have signposted, was beginning to have wider impacts on both policy-makers and, crucially, progressive educators. The latter group in particular was especially drawn to the concept of 'fantasy' (or 'phantasy') which in the works

of thinkers as diverse as Susan Isaacs and A.S. Neill, both writing in the 1930s, represented an externalising of the latent subconscious of the child through activity in the classroom and elsewhere in the school.

This wider framework is important to understand and Cook himself was likewise aware of psychologically driven experimental schools such as that of Homer Lane's Little Commonwealth in Dorset (see Cook, 1917: 58). Nevertheless, he had little time or interest for abstruse theorising or the finer points of psychological theory and what marks out his work as particularly distinctive from many of his contemporaries was his development of a practical, workable classroom method, descriptions of which form the bulk of *The Play Way*. At its heart lay the guiding principle that, 'with young boys *the method of study is quite as important as the matter studied*' (ibid.: 24, emphasis in the original) and this concern with process rather than some indistinct or esoteric end further emphasises his uniqueness. What mattered for Cook was, rather, the development of individual self-expression amongst what he termed his 'Littlemen'—a child-like word for his own pupils. A cornerstone of this strategy was the regular 'Lectures' which were given periodically by each boy in which they discussed and presented on a topic of their choosing and which included subjects as diverse as military tactics, different methods of fishing, musical instruments and foreign postage stamps. Such lectures and debates involved the whole group adopting particular roles such as timekeeper, discussant and chairman. Within this, the teacher's role was that of passive observer and he/she was advised to simply 'Let well alone' (ibid.: 108). These activities were significant in that they showed the creative potentials of the young when they were guided into researching topics of their own interest, often encouraged by impromptu discussions with their peers or the teacher. More importantly they emphasised Cook's disdain for the written word and a need for children to 'rid themselves of the classroom obsession with the tyranny of the book' (ibid.: 83).

Whilst this condemnation appears clear and its meaning unambiguous, one should nevertheless be wary of viewing Cook as straightforwardly anti-intellectual. Indeed, he had a deep appreciation of 'the Canon' and Elizabethan theatre in particular and was to pass on and foster this love amongst his pupils. Rather then, we should today read such a

critique as emphasising a contempt for what he viewed as the 'gigantic humbug' (ibid.: 55) of mainstream education and the rote and repetition—'Spoon feeding' (ibid.: 55)—which accompanied it. Although perhaps this is too simplistic a juxtaposition, few schools of the time would have placed such a considerable emphasis upon unfettered imaginative activity as was happening at the Perse. Even at the simplest level of architecture, there was a marked difference in the physical layout of the respective classroom spaces, with many state elementary and secondary institutions reflecting in their designs an implicit philosophy that sought to 'institutionalise[d] the separation of children from society. School was a universalised space specifically designed to hold children' (Burke & Grosvenor, 2008: 65). In contrast, Cook was to use his own term *ilond* in reference to that space which was designated for imaginative activity and that was reserved solely for each pupil's own personal expression and experimentation. Play, after all, 'require[d] no audience' (Cook, 1917: 69). These *ilonds* were seen as an embodiment of the child's natural desire to be creative, to want to draw, to be expressive and dramatic and thus they corresponded with comparable instincts delineated by another key contemporary: Edmond Holmes in *What Is and What Might Be* (1911). To emphasise this point, various illustrations in *The Play Way* show these *ilonds* and the way in which the classroom itself was turned into a physical, tactile and experimental space, with the teacher adopting the Cookian position of being present by appearing to be absent or 'an influence continuously operative, though not constantly asserted' (Cook, 1917: 31).

Nor were these *ilonds* merely physical areas in which children were given free rein to create stories, draw maps and fantasy images or even write poetry: it also referred to the mental spaces where these processes took place. Indeed, one of the drivers for Cook's own vibrant experimentation was the constant stimulation of this imaginative space. In referring, for example, to the case of poetry, he was to write that, 'it is the outcome of play and not of work. You cannot produce poetry by direct instruction, but only induce it by creating the conditions by which poetry is born' (Cook, 1921: vi). Such conditions were rooted in allowing the pupils free rein to devise their own imaginative world which was subsequently encouraged by the teacher to be extended in any direction which the child wished. In some cases, as in Cook's concept of Playtown

which was another of his made-up terms for a deliberately chosen piece of land to be worked and developed by the pupils, such fantasies became physical reality with places being recreated in sandpits with logs and earth mounds acting as the essential features of the imagined world. Even the very term *ilond* was itself suggestive of an 'island' or 'I land' which could be populated with the products of the individual imagination.

One of the other notable things about Cook's work, however, was that far from it being only confined to the classroom or other equivalent physical spaces, the results of his creative endeavours were frequently collected in *chap-books*, yet another of his inventions designed to showcase the efforts of the children. Particularly significant in this regard were the pamphlet series known as the *Perse Playbooks*—six editions of which appeared between 1912 and 1921—with each small book boasting a particular theme (plays, poems, essays and the like) and a characteristically rambunctious introduction by Cook. Whilst much of the work produced by the boys—who included the jazz musician Spike Hughes as well as the filmmaker Humphrey Jennings and critic F.R. Leavis—was highly formal in terms of metre and subject and peppered with anachronisms (O, Thou, wilt, doth) and therefore indicative of the juvenile pen, it nevertheless gave credence to Cook's own belief that 'Quite seventy per cent of our secondary schoolboys … can write credible poetry, and all you have to give them is permission' (Cook, 1912: 4). The same was true with prose or play composition. As well as being keen to promote the sorts of subjects young children would find stimulating such as shipwrecks, castles and general high adventure, ultimately Cook's interest was, once again, with the process of writing and how it was constitutive of a full and proper education. For him, real education, which included the shaping of the personality, 'demands freedom of expression and every opportunity for the exercise of originality' (ibid.: 3). Notwithstanding that the work of the boys was clearly indicative of an emphasis upon the classical aspects of literature with little recourse to modern or Modernist thinking, the *Playbooks* remain extraordinary testimonies to the success of Cook's faith in the youthful imagination and the ways in which it could be stimulated and developed.

Such a desire to publicise and showcase the work of his activities can be found too in Cook's other great lasting achievement—the Mummery

theatre. Plans for the design of this theatrical space within the Perse School archives (Perse School, n.d.) indicate that his original intentions had been somewhat lavish and he had hoped to include a large permanent theatre alongside a number of workshops which would allow for carpentry, metal-work and a printing press. These were to be used for the building of stage sets, the design of props and costumes as well as the production of playscripts and programmes. One of Cook's students, Christopher Parry, was to later speak fulsomely of a typical drama class as a, 'happening in which we were all involved. … Some of us acted, some stage-managed; some looked after the lighting, some provided music; some coped with costumes, and one boy in each group was elected leader' (Parry, 1972: 3). Limited finances were to ultimately reduce the scale of ambition. However a number of large productions put on by the boys towards the end of Cook's tenure at the school nevertheless indicate the success of his work and brought the Perse experiment to a more global audience. Characteristically, it was frequently Shakespeare as well as the plays devised by the students themselves which were to be featured most regularly in these performances. In encouraging such activity, Cook has thus been seen as seminal in introducing the theatrical method into English education with the entire production of the pupils being autotelic, that is to say being an end in and of itself.

The fullest understanding of Cook's approaches towards the dramatic can be best gleaned by reading a chapter in *The Play Way* entitled 'Acting Shakespeare in the classroom'. In it he offered a pointed attack on the status quo as represented by his fellow professionals. One key example saw him taking to task a master at the prestigious Rugby School whose teaching of Shakespeare involved an insistence on a dramatic reading of the play aloud as a class before any assigning of parts. Despite Cook's criticism betraying a desire to purposely shock his readers, it nevertheless served to render visible the contrast with his own approaches which were not solely methodological but which he saw too as a superior way towards understanding textual meaning. As he put it, '*a true feeling for art values may be expected to arise out of the trial practice of the arts*' (Cook, 1917: 197–198, emphasis in the original) and this dictum he was to apply to both Shakespeare and the more prosaic forms of ballads and romances. In either case, meaning could best be understood when a child was, literally,

inside the action and *performing* the text under scrutiny. Unlike however Harriet Finlay-Johnson (see Chap. 5), Cook did not see such performances as a way to simply apprehend curricular material but, rather, as artistic constructions in their own right. Quite aside from the unintended learning that often accompanied 'playmaking' there was also a strong emphasis upon stage-craft, developing an architectural as much as a literary understanding which involved consideration of how plays of the past had been staged, with what constraints and how this could aid in decoding authorial intention.

The Mummery theatre can therefore be seen as encapsulating many aspects of Cook's approach to creative learning: notably a desire to encourage active experience, to give free reign to the child's imagination and to understand that process as an end in itself. However, it also brings into sharp relief another key element to his thinking, namely that of the interaction of various forms of creativity, which he saw as serving the highest educational aims of play and self-expression. This interactivity can be seen when viewing the fully working theatre with attached workshops as a kind of Gesamtkunstwerk which in itself was suggestive of a total fusion of various artistic skills. Seeking to develop such a world, which could include as many pupils as possible, indicated therefore something more than just the interests of the individual child—rather, it postulated the need to more fully the classroom as a 'body of workers collaborating' (Cook, 1917: 37).

After that fashion, the work of the American educator John Dewey provides a clear point of ideological overlap with Cook and any understanding of his practices at the Perse has to be made with an acknowledgement of the effect that Dewey was beginning to have on English child-centredness in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Whilst we cannot know the extent to which Cook knew Dewey's work, his seminal and widely disseminated books such as *The School and Society* (1899) and *Democracy and Education* (1916) were starting to popularise the idea of the school as a democratic entity which was based upon the lived experiences of the students. According to Dewey, 'the school was not merely seen as preparation for life but … was a representation of life itself' (Howlett, 2013: 187). Coincidental or not, many

facets of the Perse seemed however well attenuated to that particular understanding of democracy and democratic living and whilst this was most obvious in the Mummery productions with all boys having roles to play (even down to being stage-hands), democratic sentiments were to percolate other school activity too. As Gavin Bolton states, 'Any classroom dramatization [of Cook's] had to submit to rules of procedure, election of officials, a system of rewards and punishments, and the right of free- speech' (1998: 32).

This important idea of school as a form of democracy was found too in Cook's emphasis upon the sorts of moral and personal values he sought to inculcate into his students through creative practice. In much the same way that Dewey was keen in his work to equate education with integration into a future society, so too was Cook's *The Play Way* (1917) to serve the twin aim of 'making pleasurable pursuits valuable' (Cook, 1917: 8) and 'endeavour[ing] to achieve *right conduct*' (ibid.: 15, emphasis added). This desire to pay heed to the personal attributes of the pupils can also be found in Cook's other full-length sole-authored publication, the *Littleman's Book of Courtesy* (1920) which consisted of a series of illustrated rhyming verses designed to promote to his boys, 'good grace in all manners becoming a demeanour of Civility, nice in the handsome fashion of his bearing, and perfect in all comely ways' (Cook, 1920: 7). Although an imitation of the genteel conduct-book, it is nevertheless worth considering as it once more reminds us that as much as Cook's educational progressivism and thinking around the creative arts was about the intrinsic process and not necessarily the outcome, it was never to be totally divorced from the wider world. Many schools under the umbrella of the New Education Fellowship, as Robert Skidelsky (1969) has mentioned, had, after all, a clear political purpose and a belief that their pupils should be actively influencing society for the better and there are clearly echoes of this in Cook's instructions to his Littlemen.

Cook's political views—stemming perhaps from his well-heeled social background—may well therefore have been those of the patrician conservative, a position he seemed happy to advocate: 'Your true revolutionary is only a conservative endowed with insight' (Cook, 1917: 12). Yet, it remains telling that he nevertheless saw the promotion of 'good virtue' as stemming from original and imaginative experiment in literature and,

more pertinently, drama. Fostered through the general principle of the classroom-as-community and drawing upon what he understood as the innate impulses of the child to be both an imaginative and performing being, Cook's Play Way was one fully appreciative of an 'aesthetically focussed approach to drama … [offering] … students plentiful opportunities for creativity by giving them problems of stage craft to solve' (McGuinn, 2014: 23). Such an approach was motivated by his belief in the essential wisdom of the child and so it became a point of honour for Cook to not in any way try and direct the creative activity of the students. As a scheme of education, Cook's was therefore not only highly original and innovative but also capable of being enacted in the classroom. Such practicality, an early example of what today is termed praxis, which is the application of theory to classroom practice, further acts as a justification for its importance in this discussion of the development of arts education.

The Influence of Cook

If the measure of an educator's influence and importance can be traced through the level of critical and scholarly debate they excite, then Cook's standing would have to be considered comparatively modest, certainly in his own time and even in the years immediately after his death. Since David Beacock's (1943) lively account, and aside from general official histories of the Perse School, there have been few major pieces of published recent scholarship explicitly addressing him and none of his ancillary writings (*The Play Way* being a notable exception) have been quoted in wider academic texts. Today, few extant copies of the complete *Playbooks* exist. Even those mainstream accounts detailing the history of drama and dramatic education and aimed broadly at practitioners—notably those of John Allen (1979) and Richard Courtney (1968)—give Cook only brief mention. His premature death aside, one reason for this neglect may have been the misunderstanding Cook's title created in prospective readers, with the Play Way method being seen as a simple avoidance of hard work and engendering a singular lack of engagement with the real world. A contemporary review for example wrote that, 'there is no guarantee that all play and no work is … a desirable formula' (*The*

Saturday Review, 1918: 33). Such accusations represented a grave misunderstanding of Cook's intentions: his aspirations for his boys were anything other than world-renouncing.

Even amongst those scholars who have been sympathetic to progressive methods and their practitioners, such as R.J.W. Selleck (1972) and W.A.C. Stewart and W.P. McCann (1967), their work was often predicated on the assumption that progressivism developed as an individualised form of education rather than as being about group collaboration. Seeing it as stemming from the explicit child-centredness of Froebel and Pestalozzi meant, as Gavin Bolton points out, that, 'the key notion of "collaboration within a group", of the class as a "body of workers collaborating" and of inter-dependence in learning has not … been given much practical attention' (Bolton, 1998: 31). Correspondingly, significant philosophical works in the field such as those by Peter Gordon and John White (1979) have had as their focus the importance of idealism upon the development of progressivism, an esoteric concern very distant from the 'hands-on' nature of a man such as Cook. Indeed, this cleavage between philosophy and practicality was apparent too in his own time with Cook's classroom attempts at creativity singularly distinct from those more mysterious flights of fancy such as Theosophy which, as Kevin Brehony (2004) amongst others has suggested, impelled the New Education Fellowship and their shamanic leader Beatrice Ensor. To further reinforce the point, it is worth noting that Cook did not publish in the influential *New Era* journal or attend any of the periodic conferences of the various progressive groups—his sole engagement was to communicate briefly to the New Ideals conferences in writing—so he remained by choice isolated from wider abstract networks of thought.

Perhaps for these reasons, to some of his contemporaries Cook's ideas seemed anathema. Responding to headmaster Rouse's request for government support for the Perse's innovative teaching methods, His Majesty's Inspector T.W. Phillips, in an unpublished note to the Board of Education, made it clear that, 'it would be very dangerous for teachers to be encouraged to visit the [Perse] School with the idea that they will find there something that they might and should imitate. That being so, it seems clear that if an application is ever made for an Art 39 grant for this experimental work, it would be well for the Board not to entertain it' (Phillips,

1913). This type of rhetoric was seemingly reflected in a more widespread reluctance amongst the profession at large to embrace Cook's ideas. As Gavin Bolton has pointed out, 'Using this [Cook's] approach remained isolated [with] many teachers experiencing failure' (Bolton, 2007: 48). Such professional scepticism may have been derived from reading the published opinions of those unconvinced contemporaries of Cook. W.S. Tomkinson for instance, himself a distinguished teacher of English, was equally critical of what was by now being called the 'Dramatic Method' of learning, being moved to lament that, 'It is probably true that a dramatic presentation does take strong hold of the memory. This, however, may be a matter for regret rather than congratulation' (Tomkinson, 1921: 46). This cynicism stemmed from what Tomkinson saw as the inadequacy of using drama as a medium by which to teach other subjects, a practice exemplified by Cook through the use of the Mummery as an outlet for exploring other forms of literature, design, art and so on. In citing his own attempts at trying to get his class to learn history through drama, Tomkinson referred cynically to the 'undisguised amusement' (ibid.: 46) of the pupils as imagination of the past was seen to be overtaken with crude and amateurish recreation to the extent that any form of intellectual substance was lost.

Yet it would be incorrect to suggest, following from the criticisms raised above, that Cook's work was universally overlooked. For one thing, the archive housed within the Perse School contains a number of newspaper reviews and cuttings indicating the interest that Cook's teaching and the Mummery theatre had begun to generate. These included the international media: the *San Francisco Chronicle* as one example remarked, 'Can you imagine the boys in the "1", "2" and "3" classes of an American secondary school … writing plays in blank verse, rehearsing them, making the costumes and finally acting their dramas with so much success so as to attract the attention of the whole country?' (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 1913: 10). Closer to home, *The Times* newspaper was similarly moved to comment on the, 'educative possibilities of the intelligent and human teaching of English composition' (*The Times*, 1912: 9). Quite aside from the striking productions being put on in both the Mummery and his own classes which were the focus of these particular reviews, Cook's writings too were beginning to generate good notice. Contemporary pieces spoke

positively of his small output as demonstrating 'an active hatred of the mechanical, deadening elements of modern existence' (*The Athenaeum*, 1912: 48) as well as having an 'appeal to all who care to look into the matter' (*The English Review*, 1913: 505). Perhaps therefore there was a tacit recognition amongst such critics of the opposition towards didactic learning which was emerging within groups such as the New Education Fellowship who were, as Kevin Brehony (2004) has indicated, attracting support from across the political spectrum and whose diktats were being echoed in Cook's practical work.

In addition—and notwithstanding the damning words of Inspector Phillips previously quoted—one can equally identify overlaps between the ideas of Cook and those found within official policy. Robert Jeffcoate (1992) and Louise Poulson (1998) are amongst the authors who have drawn particular attention to the 1921 Newbolt Report as an example of a government commissioned document which not only referenced the 'interesting experiments' (Board of Education, 1921: 103) of the sort taking place at the Perse but which also called upon Cook to be an expert witness. Although his exact testimony is not recorded, it was perhaps a result of his and others, such as E. Sharwood Smith's, enthusiasm which led to the report claiming effusively that, 'literature is not just a subject for academic study, but one of the chief temples of the human spirit, in which all should worship' (ibid.: 259). Similarly, in referring to the primacy of performance over mere study, the authors of the report were to write that, 'Class performances are joyous and instructive adventures. They may range from happy improvisation to a formal show on a special occasion. In their Elizabethan inadequacy of equipment they make an excellent introduction to the conditions of Shakespearian drama' (ibid.: 317). This latter point in particular relates demonstrably to Cook's own Mummery designs which, as has been explained, sought to replicate as far as possible the look and feel of an Elizabethan theatre. Shakespeare too was a prominent point of reference for both the authors of the report and Cook whilst the latter's appeals to a national spirit found echo in the stress placed on the relationship between the study of English and the acquisition of a sense of 'national heritage' (ibid.: 112), which would be both morally and aesthetically educational.

Whilst one may perhaps have expected a committee chaired by the poet Sir Henry Newbolt to be sensitive to the need for creative activity in the classroom, other publications also betrayed the influence of Cook. For example, the Hadow Reports—themselves early benchmarks of progressivism—advocated for, 'a position of seeing literature as having a wider role in developing creativity and self-expression' (Poulson, 1998: 28). By so doing, they were clearly equating language acquisition with the opportunity for personal expression as opposed to just being a means to learn the rules of grammar for more formal academic and examination purposes. The 1931 report was to state hopefully that, 'Dramatization of poetry and other forms of literature should have a prominent place in the primary school. Even among the younger children, simple play production … will develop the beginning of critical and interpretative power, and will provide a more complete and intensive experience than reading only' (Board of Education, 1931: 163). In making such bold claims, the reports were clearly providing encouragement for the creative arts but doing so by drawing upon the language and expertise of the psychologist and it is therefore possible to plot and intersect the ideas of Cook against developments in that wider field. The aforementioned Percy Nunn as a case in point has been seen by Richard Courtney (1968) as being an influential figure in legitimising classroom drama as a subject and, in calling play an 'intangible and elusive sprite, whose influence is to be found in corners of life where it might least be expected' (Nunn, 1920: 68), he can be seen to be imitating something of the ephemeral language of Cook. Indeed, Nunn was to publicly acknowledge Cook's 'clear appreciation' (ibid.: 92) of the psychological discipline, even titling one of the chapters in his seminal book 'the play way' in recognition of this fact.

Alongside Nunn, Susan Isaacs—whose Malting House school was located only a mile from the Perse—was likewise registering the value of imaginative play in lessening internal anxiety and developing hypothetical thinking amongst children. Isaacs was also called upon to write the introduction to a book published by the Drama and Theatre Sub-Committee of the Under-Fourteens Council in which she acknowledged drama and dramatic work for young children as something that, 'can and should be done' (Isaacs, 1948). It can therefore be argued that, despite his stated antipathy to scientific psychology, the ideas of Cook were being

not only acknowledged but also consciously channelled in new directions and filtered through the lens of this emerging discipline. As David Hornbrook puts it, 'By the outbreak of the Second World War all the guiding principles of drama-in-education were in circulation. Endorsed by the child-psychologists … drama was now in a position to make its mark on the school curriculum' (Hornbrook, 1998: 8). Such optimism was further aided by the creation of the Educational Drama Association in 1943 which meant that by the end of the Second World War, 'the historical climate was set fair for the ideas of … Henry Caldwell Cook to advance from the educational fringes into legitimacy' (ibid.: 9).

Following the Second World War and under the rigid tripartite system wrought by the 1944 Education Act, key figures like Peter Slade and his widely cited text *Child Drama* (1954) were to also prove powerful in giving primacy to children's dramatic activity as well as seeing it as a way to promote common social and moral values. Marjorie Hourd—another advocate of writing-centred approaches to learning literature—was moved to comment that, 'It would be difficult to overestimate the emancipating work which Mr. Cook did at the Perse School' (Hourd, 1949: 92). Even as late as the era of the Plowden Report—dubbed the 'semi-official ideology of primary education' (Bernstein & Davies, 1968: 56)—one can observe a healthy desire to promote play, creativity and self-expression within schools. Although the many teachers trained under its banner would perhaps have been unaware of the provenance of the ideas they were imbibing, it is surely possible to trace parallels with its liberating spirit and desire to do wider social good with those earlier ideas of Cook.

Why however does the former Cambridge schoolmaster not occupy a more prominent place in the progressive narrative? Notwithstanding the recent decline in the 'creative' subjects in a more marketised world, Cook's ideas and general philosophy can perhaps be seen as out of kilter in the modern educational climate. This chapter has noted for example his lack of tolerance towards any form of realism in the classroom and his belief that, 'the incidents of everyday life, before they can become fit stuff for drama, have to undergo a process of refinement or sifting' (Cook, 1917: 271) was increasingly challenged in the post-war years. It was during this time that thinking around drama begun to privilege forms of

unstructured play (particularly in nurseries) whilst more sympathetic attitudes towards both 'realism' and 'naturalism' became prevalent. As Gavin Bolton points out, although Cook '[was] not dismissing the dramatic potential of inferior material' (Bolton, 1998: 98) he was nevertheless 'placing it beyond the skill and maturity of his pupils' (ibid.: 98). The casual and unstructured approaches to drama so scorned by Cook had become almost de rigueur by the end of the century.

There is also an argument to suggest that Cook's approach represented a form of conservatism rather than innovation, hankering as it did after a form of Englishness embodying 'an organic community united by shared values and untainted by the Industrial Revolution' (McGuinn, 2014: 25). Part of this involved Cook shielding his boys from the more arduous and difficult elements of everyday life. McGuinn contrasts this view of seeing the child as in need of protection (as afforded partly by the Mummery) with the increasingly influential work of the psychologist Jean Piaget who saw playful activity as an important stage on the way to adulthood through its function of developing accommodation with new and challenging ideas. Cook's thinking therefore seemed redolent of an earlier age which, through his insistence on accuracy in relation to the Elizabethan theatre and his canonisation of all things traditional, meant that it came to be superseded by the ideas of those such as the aforementioned Marjorie Hourd. Whilst equally valuing the importance of the theatre, Hourd did not do so for the same reasons as Cook (appreciation of the aesthetic) but more as a way for children to understand their own place within the world at large. Such a world—even that of his own time—was one that Cook appeared, at best, ambivalent about engaging with.

Conclusion

It is possible to locate Cook on a continuum of drama education which begun at the start of the twentieth century with acting out playscripts to, later on and particularly after the Second World War, more improvised forms of activity. The extent to which Cook was influential in these changes has been explored above. It is not, of course, straightforward to chart his direct influence. In particular, his efforts seem a world away

from that of another later pioneer, Peter Slade, whose work had elements of the therapeutic and the physical about it as children were encouraged in his classes both to improvise actions to stories which the teacher read out as well as doing so in a space such as a school hall which was large enough to allow for free movement. As a result, 'Teachers of theatre, in particular, found themselves pushed aside. The school stage became virtually redundant' (Bolton, 2007: 50). Both the concept of the formal stage (a key part of the Mummery) and the content of the play were therefore in danger of becoming otiose. Nevertheless, whilst this would suggest a lessening of his importance, this is to ignore Cook's appeals to the childish imagination and the spaces—both literal and metaphorical—he created in his classes for that to be put to use. In heartily declaiming that children 'must themselves come forth as poets' (Cook, 1917: 16), Cook was pithily surmising his child-centred credentials which spoke to his faith in the innate creativity of the young. It was in this, as well as his less well charted focus on the personal and developmental aspects of the subject of drama, that has meant all subsequent practitioners and theorists in both drama and the creative arts more generally owe Cook a large intellectual debt.

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Part III

Visual Art

Chapter 7: Harry Peach (1874–1936): The Materiality of Arts and Crafts Education

Amy Palmer

Introduction

Harry Peach was a Leicester manufacturer. He worked as a bookseller before establishing his Dryad cane furniture firm in 1907 and Dryad Metal Works in 1912 (Kirkham, 1986). His claim to a place in a book about arts education is twofold. First, he was a founder and active member of the Design and Industries Association (DIA), whose inaugural meeting was held on 9 May 1915 (Peach, n.d.-a). This organisation aimed to improve Britain's industrial success by increasing public awareness about the importance of good design—something to be achieved through education in both schools and colleges but also in the wider community. Second, a further business concern of his was a company, Dryad Handicrafts, which sold art and craft materials, again both to educational establishments and to community groups. This began with the sale of cane and raffia to hospitals during World War I for use in

A. Palmer (✉)
University of Roehampton, London, UK
e-mail: Amy.Palmer@roehampton.ac.uk

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Photo 1 Harry Peach. Photograph provided by Leicester Museums Service

providing therapeutic craft activities for injured servicemen (McLeish, 1936). The business grew quickly in the early 1920s and published books, its own series of educational leaflets and an in-house journal, all with a view to increasing enthusiasm and know-how in craft subjects. When Peach died, Dryad 'was the world's largest supplier of handicraft materials' (Kirkham, 1986: 70). A history of arts education in Britain is incomplete without a consideration of crafts, as arts and crafts have throughout their history been intimately entwined (Sutton, 1967, see also the 'Introduction' to this volume).

An analysis of Peach's life and work forges a connection with the burgeoning scholarly interest in education and material culture. Ian Grosvenor argued in 2005 that 'Teachers and pupils, in classrooms and schools, work with and through objects and materials all the time. … Yet

this element of schooling remains a largely obscured or ignored area of study in histories of national schooling' (p. 532). Scholars such as Grosvenor himself, Catherine Burke (e.g., 2013) and Martin Lawn (e.g., 2009) have been engaged in trying to fill this gap. Arts and crafts education is perhaps more dependent on material provision than any other area of the school curriculum. A government handicraft inquiry of 1919 argued that in junior classes, the subject had 'languished owing to the dearth of materials' (Howard et al., 1919: 1). A 1914 report into handwork in London gives some indication of the nature of this problem: 'The range of materials used is limited as a rule to paper, cardboard, clay and "prepared wood" or "stripwood"' (Board of Education, 1914: 1). As was later claimed by R.R. Tomlinson, Inspector of Art for London County Council (1934), new materials could have 'a considerable influence upon new methods' (p. 30) and the ways in which children could express themselves. As interest in handicrafts gradually increased after World War I (Turner, 1922), the Dryad firm was able to shape what was available for teachers and children to use and what was therefore possible to achieve. This is an important element in understanding the nature of pupils' lived experiences in art and craft education.

Peach has been the subject of a 1986 biography by Pat Kirkham, which covers the full range of his activities, and he has also been discussed as an arts and crafts advocate in a small number of other sources (e.g., Haslam, 1995; Nash, 1992). More recently, his connection with the Bauhaus art school in Germany has received particular attention: Peach visited in 1927 and was the first British person to describe the experience (Powers, 2019). This chapter provides a fresh analysis of his ideas about arts and crafts education. At the heart of these lay some potential contradictions and tensions: he wanted to make money out of manufactured goods but he wished to preserve and promote craft techniques that were unlikely to be compatible with maximising profit. He wanted to encourage arts and crafts in schools and other settings for philanthropic and educational reasons but he also wanted to sell the resources for doing so on terms favourable to himself. The chapter also considers the influence he was able to wield on arts education, focusing on education in elementary schools for children, both as a member of the DIA and as a vendor of craft materials.

Harry Peach's Beliefs: The Value of Design, Art and Crafts

Harry Peach believed in the value of art, crafts and design. As a businessman, he believed that good modern design underpinned quality products and ultimately business success. He acknowledged the contribution made by his local art school to his own achievements: the classes provided there helped his workers to improve their skills, and products made to designs from the school had been successfully exported to Germany (Peach, n.d.-b). However, in general terms, he believed that a lack of connection between art and industry was a factor which limited the country's economic progress (Peach, 1916). Schools of Design had been established in the mid-nineteenth century whose purpose was training artisans as an aid to British manufacturing (Bell, 1963, but see Cunningham, 1979 for an alternative perspective on the underlying aims) but these had a troubled history and had made very little impact (Bell, 1963; Field, 1970). In the early twentieth century, Peach and other businessmen felt a continued frustration about the issue. They believed that education, at all levels in the system, should play a role both in producing skilled craftspeople and in leading public taste towards purchasing quality products (Peach, 1929).

Peach commented on the relationships between design, art and craft. For him, 'a work of art is firstly a well made thing': it was an object that was perfectly suited to its purpose (Peach, 1925a). He was, for example, profoundly annoyed by what was considered to be artistic cane (and therefore flammable) candlesticks made by some boy scouts (Peach, n.d.-c). Art should not just consist in decoration applied as a final process, it was fundamental to the form of the object. Thus art belonged to all skilful craftspeople not just 'the big-tied, long-haired gentry who talk art twaddle' (Peach, 1925a). It was also important that artists should experiment with new ideas and did not merely reproduce older styles. He was infuriated, for example, by an exhibition of pottery where all the exhibits were eighteenth-century reproductions and 'nothing belonged to our day' (*Journal of the Design and Industries Association*, 1917: 9).

Where his business was concerned, Peach argued that he lived 'in an age of machines' and these should be used 'intelligently' and 'honestly'—making the craftsperson's work easier (Peach, 1925a). This put him at

odds with some groups interested in arts and crafts, such as the Peasant Arts Movement, who believed it was possible to (re-)create a rural economy based on traditional handicrafts alone (Palmer, 2018). Nonetheless, Peach loved traditional objects and traditional craft skills. He had an extensive collection of folk art objects, which he began in 1907 with a collection of canework. This expanded in size and in range throughout his life (Leicestershire Museum Education Service, n.d.). His reason for building the collection was that he thought that craftspeople should connect with the 'wonderful work of the past' in order to build on (rather than slavishly copy) what had been achieved by their predecessors (Peach, 1926a: ix). The collection included objects from England but also from other parts of the world (Leicestershire Museum Education Service, n.d.). He took pride in a distinctively *English* tradition, claiming that 'we have prized the great art of England too lightly' (Peach, 1926a: 14) but also appreciated the traditions of other cultures and valued opportunities for craftspeople from different countries to learn from each other: 'Art should know no frontiers' (Peach, [1925b]). In this, there was a great deal of resonance between his position and that of the Peasant Arts Movement (Palmer, 2018) and it is noteworthy that Joseph King, one of its founders, wrote Peach's *Times* obituary, praising his work and achievements (King, 1936).

Despite his acceptance of the machine in the context of business, Peach believed it was important that traditional crafts should continue and that they had a value in the community. They offered a valuable way for people to spend the increased leisure time which many enjoyed after World War I, keeping them away from disreputable places such as the cinema or public houses (Nash, 1992). He argued that 'in all classes there is nothing more detrimental to character than badly spent leisure' (Peach & Pick, 1920: 3). He supported and encouraged groups such as the Women's Institute (WI) which promoted craft activities among members. Free from commercial imperative, such organisations could play a valuable role in preserving traditional techniques: an early Dryad catalogue, for example, included a passage expressing regret that country smocks with patterns indicating their county of origin had fallen out of fashion, and praised the WI for encouraging women to take up smocking as an activity (Dryad Handicrafts, [1925a]).

Peach was also committed to raising the profile of and effecting change in art (and crafts) education in schools, which he called 'too much the Cinderella of the educational world' (*The National Society of Art Masters*, 1928: 18). In the early decades of the twentieth century, many progressive educationalists were promoting handicraft as a valuable activity. Friedrich Froebel (1782–1852) himself had argued that the child's learning and development depended on interacting with objects and the material world and recommended occupations such as paper cutting, folding and weaving (Froebel, 1912). Froebelians continued to develop and promote such activities for their value as manual training but also as elements of a child-centred education, where individuality and creativity could be encouraged (e.g. Gawthorpe, [1914]). As Kirkham (1986) has noted, Peach's educational beliefs drew on Froebel and other progressive thinkers. He believed that education should be based on activity because 'we learn by doing' (Peach, n.d.-c) and he noted the positive influence of 'Madame Montessori's and kindergarten methods' (Peach & Pick, 1920: 2).

In addition to the general educational benefits, Peach also had more specific objectives in mind for arts and crafts education, such as the preservation of particular crafts. He was therefore keen that skills and materials linked to 'fundamental crafts' should be introduced, 'not invented methods and invented occupations' (Dryad Handicrafts, [1926]: 1). Crafts with 'definite cultural and educational value' (the examples given were bookbinding and weaving) were the priority for Dryad (*Dryad Quarterly*, 1932a: 23). A further benefit of craft education which tied very directly into Peach's business concerns was that it could foster a love of beauty (Peach, [1926b]). In other words, it could contribute to the good taste that would allow potential customers to appreciate high quality articles such as those that Dryad produced.

Peach's Work with the Design and Industries Association: Influencing Education Policy

The DIA's views about the relationship between art, industry and education were consistent with those of Peach, who was one of its founding members. The association aimed 'at the encouragement of good

workmanship based on excellence of design and soundness of material' which would be achieved 'through the intelligent cooperation of designers, workers, manufacturers, distributors and the general public' in the belief that this would improve British products and thus commercial success (Design and Industries Association, 1926: back cover). It believed that the use of machinery was important to industry (Design and Industries Association, 1924: 9) but handwork was a 'national asset', as it developed creative skills and 'an appreciation of fine workmanship' (Design and Industries Association, 1918). Therefore the association had 'the greatest possible belief in the value of handwork in elementary, adolescent and adult education' (ibid.). Promoting craft education in schools was at the heart of the DIA's mission: future consumers needed to develop good taste and the future workforce needed to develop skills and creativity. In addition, the association encouraged an ethos of mutual support and cooperation between business and local art schools (Design and Industries Association, 1915).

The DIA had many ways in which it tried to exert an influence on arts and crafts education in a wide variety of contexts. First, it built up connections with political decision-makers. Peach himself had a personal relationship with Ramsay MacDonald, the Labour leader (1922–1931) and Prime Minister (1924 and 1929–1935) because MacDonald had been the Member of Parliament for Leicester from 1906 to 1918 (Laybourn, 2002). Peach tried to use this to further the interests of the DIA—for example, inviting MacDonald to a sale of work in Leicester and sending him publications (Peach, 1925c; Peach, 1926c). The association also aimed to connect with local education authorities as 'this might yield good results which could be got in no other way' (Design and Industries Association, 1916). Second, the association aimed to educate the general public about good design. One method of doing this was through exhibitions: for example, Peach was involved in an exhibition about design in printing at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London, which then travelled around the country (Kirkham, 1986). Third, in the 1930s, the wireless was also used for propaganda: the DIA organised a series of broadcast discussions called 'Design in Modern Life' (*Manchester Guardian*, 1933a). These programmes were supported by an exhibition in the Art Gallery in Manchester (*Manchester Guardian*, 1933b). Fourth,

the association published a quarterly journal: according to Kirkham (1986), this was Peach's idea. Fifth, the DIA could be seen as a parent or sister organisation to bodies that were directly supported by the government: it played a part in the establishment of the British Institute of Industrial Art (BIIA) (*The Times*, 1918), which was a state-sponsored organisation for promoting modern design (Suga, 2003). Peach, together with other DIA members, was a council member of the BIIA and was also part of the committee whose role was to look for suitable artists for exhibitions (ibid.). The successor body to the BIIA, the Council for Art and Industry (CAI), founded in 1933, was led by Frank Pick, DIA president (Grosvenor, 2005).

Over the 1920s and 1930s, Board of Education views shifted very much in the directions advocated by the DIA and thus of Peach himself. The Consultative Committee (Hadow) reports of 1926, 1931 and 1933 all make claims for the important benefits of handicraft and encourage its further development as a subject (Board of Education, 1926, 1931, 1933). Some of the reasons given for this have strong resonances with arguments Peach had been making. The 1931 report on primary education, for example, argued that handwork was important because promoting creativity will allow the child to develop taste which will 'improve the quality of his adult leisure' and also 'tend to keep up the national level in craftsmanship and incidentally assist in the improvement of many products of industry' (p. 98). It also asserted that 'crafts taught should be genuine and representative of a great historic line' (pp. 98–99). The earlier 1926 report into the education of the adolescent posited that pupils should learn that 'articles in common use, such as household furniture, need not necessarily be ugly because they are designed for practical purposes' and argued for the importance for linking craft with 'drawing and applied art' (p. 233). The Handbook of Suggestions for teachers published by the Board in 1927 (sixth impression 1929) similarly argued that handwork had 'an intimate relationship to Art' and that a 'well-made object … may be in itself a thing of beauty' (p. 330).

As noted above, the DIA also attempted to influence local education authorities' approaches to handicraft. London's education authority (LCC) took an interest in promoting the subject which predated the formation of the DIA, as is evidenced by a 1912 conference, which

celebrated recent expansions in handicraft provision (London County Council, 1928). Nevertheless, the alignment between the LCC and the DIA in several LCC reports written in the inter-war period is striking enough to suggest some cross-fertilisation, as Kirkham (1986) has observed. The newspaper *The Teachers' World* (1930a) described one such report, claiming that it was 'likely to have a considerable influence'. This report emphasised that the crafts should be 'authentic'; objects should be fit for purpose and that 'the true kinship of handicraft is with art' (p. 798). It was authored by the Committee of Inspectors on Handicraft in Elementary Schools, whose chair was P.B. Ballard. Ballard's *The Cultural Value of Handicraft* was published by Peach in 1914, so he had a direct connection to him and through him to the DIA (Kirkham, 1986).

Although the similarities between the Board of Education, LCC documents and DIA propaganda are striking, it is of course important to reflect on the difficulty of being completely sure of who picked up ideas from where. Indeed, it is sometimes easier to pinpoint the failures of the DIA (and associated bodies) to convince authorities of their message. One such example is a negative response to the 1935 report, produced by the CAI, entitled *Education for the Consumer*, which does not appear to have found favour with the Board of Education, provoking an angry response from the chief inspector of schools, E.G. Savage (1935) who found himself 'in almost complete disagreement' with it. He objected on moral grounds to the idea of schools attempting to shape the taste of children in a way that would benefit particular manufacturers and their commercial interests, demonstrating a fundamental ideological difference with the aims of the CAI and thus the DIA. (London County Council however, believed that the report contained 'many valuable constructive criticisms and suggestions which merit the consideration of those engaged in craft teaching' (London County Council, 1938a: 5)). The most that can be said, perhaps, is that the DIA, in collaboration with like-minded others, was pumping ideas into the ether which were generally having an impact on the national conversation and national policy. Peach was one cog in the machine moving these priorities forward. Through his advocacy and his networking, it is likely that he played his part in bringing about shifts in the approach of the Board of Education, although it would be foolhardy to argue that these changes could not have happened without him.

Peach's Work with Dryad Handicrafts: Influence Through Material Provision

Peach's company, Dryad Handicrafts, sold craft materials to a variety of customers. The resources and materials produced by Dryad were often targeted both at educational settings for children and young people, and at adult community groups (such as the WI), which is evidence of the firm's commitment to life-long learning. Dryad became the official 'Handwork Contractors to many of the leading Education Committees' (Dryad Handicrafts, 1935a: 144). It also sold to directly to schools, encouraging craft teachers to order with them in this way if they wanted to be sure to get the genuine articles (Dryad Handicrafts, [1930]. Through this impact on the material culture of schools, Harry Peach shaped the learning experiences of many children in a significant way. These products filled gaps in provision in schools which, as argued above, were often starved of the necessary resources to meet the needs of arts and crafts education. Dryad also attempted to advocate for crafts (in schools and the wider community) and to influence the form they took and how they were taught. Clearly this was in its commercial interests and yet a genuine philanthropic and educational concern was evident too. Peach was proselytising for causes close to his heart as well as his pocket.

An analysis of advertisements placed in *The Teachers' World* newspaper confirms that Dryad was pioneering and prominent in the area of providing arts and crafts materials for schools. An examination of the first three months of sample years from 1918 to 1930 reveals a rapid growth in the number of firms offering craft materials to educationalists. In 1918, only four such firms were advertising: Higgins' vegetable glue; Venus pencils; Harbutt's plasticine and Dryad. In the same period in 1930, 22 different craft business were represented. Dryad's adverts demonstrated an increasing range of interests: in 1918, the products advertised were for raffia work and basket making and these were aimed most specifically at those working with convalescents. In 1930, the firm offered materials 'for every branch of school handicraft' (*The Teachers' World*, 1930b: 1002). There were specific Dryad advertisements for embroidery, book-binding, raffia and leatherwork.

Dryad also found other ways of promoting its products. One vehicle was through exhibitions. In 1933, for example, the company attended exhibitions organised by, among others, the Middlesex Schools Guild of Arts and Crafts; the National Association of Head Teachers and the Association of Education Committees, together with a publishers' exhibition at the Church of Scotland Assembly Hall in Edinburgh and the Annual Meeting of the Association of Clerks and Stewards at Mental Hospitals in St Albans (*Dryad Quarterly*, 1933a: 24). The company opened a London showroom in 1928 (Kirkham, 1986). This was later moved from Oxford Street to Bloomsbury Street because this was a 'district more amenable to educational pursuits' (*Dryad Quarterly*, 1933b: 24).

Another marketing tool was the production of written materials, most notably the catalogues themselves, which were full of advice and information which went beyond a description of the products. The company also published craft books, and a series of leaflets written by 'skilled workers' who in most cases also had teaching experience (Dryad Handicrafts, [1931a]:1). Dryad claimed that many of the publications had been adopted by local education authorities as approved reading (Dryad Handicrafts, 1935b). There are some examples of Dryad texts in a surviving LCC requisition list from 1938 (London County Council, 1938b). In addition, the firm responded to suggestions from customers that a magazine would be 'useful' (Dryad Handicrafts, [1930]: 214) and began publishing this in 1931. It was edited initially by Elsie Mochrie but Peach himself took over in April 1932 and continued until very nearly the end of his life. In the first edition, Mochrie made the point strongly that the journal should be of use to '*all* its readers as a practical guide to handwork and its application to everyday life' (Mochrie, 1931: 3, emphasis in the original). Thus the journal addressed itself to both the school and community groups and articles and news items reflected this.

Another way that Dryad disseminated information about craft was by the hiring out of collections of objects to provide educative examples. An advert/article (it is telling that the distinction is so blurred) in *Dryad Quarterly* in 1934 stated that by this time the firm had 19 collections which could 'be borrowed per week or fortnight on payment of a small fee' (*Dryad Quarterly*, 1934a: back cover). Similarly, sets of prints were created for purchase: one was bought by Leicester County Education

Authority (ibid.). Films of craftspeople at work were also produced, such as 'Weaving a Waste Paper Basket' featuring Dryad worker and author Charles Crampton, which teachers at the Summer School of the Educational Handwork Association deemed to be a great success (Kaufmann, 1936: 90). The firm also offered teaching sessions. Instructors could be sent to schools and Women's Institutes to give sessions on crafts including raffia, weaving, embroidery and leatherwork (Dryad Handicrafts, [1923]) and lessons were also organised on the company premises, where students could benefit from seeing the workshops and also the folk art collection (Ellis, [1925]). Informal advice was given for free (Dryad Handicrafts, 1934).

Dryad was not the first to use customer service techniques of this nature: Harbutt's Plasticine, for example, were already producing a monthly magazine and publishing books that encouraged educators to buy its products in 1919 (*The Teachers' World*, 1919). Nonetheless, Dryad's prominence and success meant that it surely was the model that at least some other businesses had in mind when they too adopted this approach. *The Teachers' World* provides evidence that other firms were indeed using these marketing techniques: to give just two examples, in 1927, the leatherwork company George and Co was promoting craft books alongside its material products (*The Teachers' World*, 1927) and in 1930, the pewter firm Calipe, Dettmer and Co claimed that it provided an expert who would 'be pleased to demonstrate the work to any Teacher' (*The Teachers' World*, 1930c: 740).

Dryad's product range and written materials reflected Harry Peach's beliefs about what craft education was and why it mattered. One touchstone was an emphasis on the importance of promoting crafts with a cultural value—crafts taught to children should have historical roots and a clear line of development to either leisure or a trade in adulthood (*Dryad Quarterly*, 1932a). The firm asserted, as did the DIA, that a crafted object should be valued for following 'the old tradition of fitness for its particular purpose' rather than 'arty-craftiness' (*Dryad Quarterly*, 1932b: 3). Dryad's approach to teaching methods sat broadly speaking in the progressive tradition. In a way that chimed closely with Froebelian teachers, the firm claimed that individual creativity rather than the ability to follow precise instructions was what was most valuable: 'in the

Dryad publications the policy has been to give examples of straightforward design and to encourage individual effort rather than merely provide examples to be copied' (Dryad Handicrafts, 1934: iii). Some of the various authors writing for the publications clearly followed this line. For example, Marion Blenkinsop (1933) said that with young children 'technical excellence… should not be stressed unduly or it may hamper their freedom of expression' and, although she gave specific details of how to make paper figures, she said that children should use them to create their own themes and stories (p. 4). Other writers did, however, simply provide patterns to be copied (e.g., Dryad Handicrafts, [1921]). It is only fair to point out, however, that many progressive educators, and indeed Froebel himself, likewise struggled over the correct balance between freedom and guidance (Liebschner, 2001).

Competitors emerged in time: as the foreword to the 1931 catalogue stated: 'imitators of Dryad are numerous … the pioneer and originator of new methods and new ways may be discouraged by copyists and imitators who live by exploiting the efforts of others' (Dryad Handicrafts, [1931b]: 2). Therefore Dryad needed to create new products and services with unique selling points and in this way it continued to shape what was available and what children (and others) could make and create. One example of an innovative product that had the potential to affect practice in schools was a 'hand pat', invented by Mr M.A. Kent of Leicester. This was an apparatus that combined woodwork tools and which could be used easily on schools desks: 'it is especially useful for schools where no special accommodation is made for the teaching of woodwork' (Dryad Handicrafts, 1925a: 111). Another feature which Dryad claimed as an important innovation was its use of the Ostwald Colour theory, described in a Dryad publication by J.A.V. Judson (1935). The use of this theory enabled the firm to produce standardised colours across a wide range of materials, including fabrics, papers and paints. It argued that this allowed for greater unity between art and craft: 'schemes which are planned with the aid of paper in the art class may be put into actual practice in the handwork lesson' (*Dryad Quarterly*, 1934b: 23). Gordon Sutton (1967) has claimed that Ostwald's colour scheme 'affected the character of art in schools to an astonishing degree' as it gave children the opportunity to

use colours of 'unknown brilliance' which became seen as a distinguishing feature of child art (p. 271).

Above all, though, Dryad saw its distinctive contribution in the fact that it was a supplier of good quality material. This was important for the standard of craft education in school: 'you must have good materials to do good work' (Dryad Handicrafts, [1925a]: 7). Elsie Mochrie argued in the Dryad book *Raffia Work* (1926) that working with 'harsh, stringy Raffia' was firstly wasteful and secondly led to a poor result: 'It is therefore essential that Raffia should be purchased from a reliable firm who not only supply the material but use it their own workshops' (p. 6).

What is evident here is some of the inherent tension between Dryad as a business needing to turn a profit and Dryad as an almost philanthropic organisation promoting crafts for the benefit for all. Throughout the publications, for example, there is a precarious balance between offering sound advice about what to buy and advertising specifically Dryad products. General articles about particular crafts led to particular suggestions about which Dryad materials might be needed. For example, an article in the magazine about the use of gummed shapes referred the reader to a corresponding leaflet available for purchase and explained that a sample of the shapes could be bought for 9d (pence) (*Dryad Quarterly*, 1931a). The firm's insistence that purchasers should always use high-quality materials was a particular source of blurring between promoting good practice and selling its own products. It is easy to see a dual motive in a claim, such as that made in Dryad Worker Charles Crampton's book, that 'there is always plenty of poor material offered at low prices to tempt the unwary. The good craftsman will gladly pay double the price for good quality cane' (1941: viii (first published in 1924)). Sometimes, Dryad did indeed make suggestions on how economies could be achieved: for example, a leaflet about rug-making recommends a needle rather than a hook because less wool is needed for the technique (Dryad Handicrafts, [1925b]) and the firm was prepared to quote for 'second quality' if necessary (Dryad Handicrafts, [1925a]: 16). Similarly, crafts such as making paper lampshades were recommended on the basis that they were cheap (Dryad Handicrafts, [1929]). However, in a climate where schools' budgets were severely limited, such suggestions could also make good business sense.

Peach wryly commented on the potential dilemma here when describing a visit he paid to a school in Birmingham which was beginning to teach weaving:

> It all has to be done on the minimum of expense, as beyond a few heddle stiles, reeds and bits of wood as rollers they are allowed no apparatus. There are more ways than one up the hill of truth and here we found there were more ways than wire heddles for getting good results with weaving (The Dryad Sales Department probably will not approve of this statement). (Peach, 1934: 21)

However, there is no evidence that this thought caused any long-lasting crisis of conscience or change in Peach's behaviour.

Conclusion

Harry Peach had no direct experience of working in schools or in educational administration and in that sense may be an unusual subject for a book about pioneers in arts education. He was chosen as a vehicle to explore two distinct modes of influence on policy and practice. First, he was a campaigner from the world of business who tried through political lobbying to effect changes in schools and colleges. His success is hard to capture with any certainty. In the period when he was active, Board of Education and LCC policy recommendations moved in directions which he approved, most particularly in the closer union of art, craft and design, but he was just one voice among many advocating for these shifts. Second, he was in the right place at the right time to exploit a growing market within educational settings for particular material products. The specific affordances of these materials shaped what children and teachers could achieve. His Dryad company claimed that it was a pioneer of new materials and that its products were widely imitated (thus forcing the business to continue to innovate) (Dryad Handicrafts [1931b]). It claimed that 'the rapid development of craftwork in schools is due in no small measure to our constant insistence upon quality and design and our effort to provide only first-rate goods' (Dryad Handicrafts, 1938: iii). Sources in the

educational press confirm the importance of the company: an article in *The Schoolmistress* described it as 'one of the pioneers of the recent Handicraft revival' (*Dryad Quarterly*, 1933c: 23). This form of influence feels comparatively concrete and graspable.

Peach's story raises questions about business and its role in education. It was to the advantage of his own manufacturing concerns (the furniture and metal work companies) to promote craft education, encouraging creativity, design skills and 'good' public taste in the workforce and the consumer. Chief Inspector Savage, as discussed above, had some concerns about allowing the school curriculum to be shaped by the needs of industrialists, and others may have shared these. David Thistlewood (1998: 148) has claimed that in the 1950s and 1960s, when child-centred, progressive values became dominant, 'industrial and commercial values' lost their influence in arts education. However, the perceived link between teaching the arts and potential financial benefits to the country has not disappeared in all forms: a recent UK government White Paper makes clear that a key justification for the promotion of cultural activities in school is the contribution the arts make to the economy and the opportunities they provide for young people to enter into 'careers in the cultural and creative sectors and elsewhere' (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2016: 21).

In relation to Dryad Handicrafts, Peach's commercial incentive to promote craft education in schools and the wider community is even clearer and more direct. Companies with products to sell to schools must argue that these are educationally beneficial. A modern day parallel to Peach is government literacy advisor Ruth Miskin who sells training packages which dovetail with her self-penned resources promoting a particular approach to teaching reading and writing (Ruth Miskin Ltd, 2019a). Miskin claims to be 'passionate' about teaching children to read and argues, naturally, that her approach and products are the best way to do it (Ruth Miskin Ltd, 2019b). As Catherine Gidney (2019) has argued, using an example of companies selling computers to schools in Canada in the 1980s, it is easy for teachers to be beguiled into automatically associating new products and technologies with progressive teaching, allowing companies to create, foster and commercially exploit a 'perceived need' (p. 63).

Harry Peach's business interests and his philanthropic interests fitted together extremely neatly. Although he stood to gain financially from an increased interest in craft education in schools and the wider community, there can be no doubting the sincerity of his belief that handicrafts were of genuine benefit to individuals and their promotion would preserve a valuable cultural heritage. His story demonstrates that it is possible for business people to be keen to sell their products without being cynical and exploitative, and that their interventions into education might yield positive results. Nonetheless, it seems reasonable to suggest that educationalists should keep their critical faculties alert and continue to interrogate the underpinning values of what is being advocated and sold, keeping the best interests of children in mind at all times.

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Chapter 8: Marion Richardson (1892–1946): When Idea and Expression are One

Siân Roberts

Introduction

Marion Richardson has been heralded as one of the most influential art educators of the twentieth century, variously described as reformer, revolutionary and even saint. Shortly after her death *Athene: the Journal of the Society for Education through Art* devoted an entire issue to her memory in which Herbert Read lauded her as the educator who 'did more than anyone else in Great Britain to demonstrate the general educational significance of the right method of teaching art' (Read, 1947: 2). The following year, in his introduction to Richardson's posthumously published *Art and the Child*, Sir Kenneth Clark wrote in hagiographically reverential tones of her saintly simplicity, drawing a direct comparison with St. Catherine of Sienna. Crediting her with a vision inspired by a 'pure revelation of the divine spirit', in Clark's view it was she alone who 'recognised that this

S. Roberts (✉)
University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK
e-mail: s.roberts.2@bham.ac.uk

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power of imaginative expression could be developed in almost every child' and who had the 'tenacity' to ensure the international dissemination and acceptance of these principles (Clark, 1948: 7, 10).

Women have received little attention in the historiography of progressive education until relatively recently (Hilton & Hirsch, 2000) and Richardson is no exception. She is named, for example, in R.J.W. Selleck's significant study of progressive interwar English primary education but there is no detailed consideration of her contribution (Selleck, 1972). Her work fared better in the historiography of art education, with Richard Carline and Stuart Macdonald providing assessments of her thought and

Photo 1 Sepia photograph of Marion Richardson, Birmingham City University Arts, Design and Media Archive, IMR/562

practice (Carline, 1968; Macdonald, 1970). Interest in her grew from the 1970s when A.D. Campbell published the results of his work on her extensive archive, evaluating her debt to Robert Catterson-Smith and providing the first detailed exploration of her ideas on inner vision and their application in her practice (Campbell, 1978). Subsequent work by John Swift and Bruce Holdsworth situated Richardson in her progressive context, illuminating her use of 'mind-pictures', her innovative use of a broad range of materials, her experiments in mixing colours, and drawing attention to misunderstandings or distortions of her methods particularly in relation to the extent of her pedagogic intervention in the classroom (Holdsworth, 1984, 2005; Swift, 1992). These studies explored her work in three distinct periods of her life and educational settings, namely her teaching at Dudley, her work at the London Day Training College (LDTC) and, finally, for the London County Council Inspectorate. It was left to Rosemary Sassoon to produce a detailed account of her contribution to the study of writing patterns and the teaching of handwriting (Sassoon, 2011).

Although Richardson herself left comparatively little published work, the rich manuscript archive that she preserved is vast. This chapter will draw on this primary source and the previous work cited above to present an overview of her ideas and practice in the context of transnational progressive educational ideas of the period. It will focus in particular on the evolution of key ideas and practice in relation to the significance of art as a conduit for self-expression and the development of aesthetic appreciation by children and young people. The final part of the chapter will focus on the strategies that she used to disseminate her methods and establish her authority, and the networks of connections that facilitated this process.

A New and Better Thing: Teaching for Vision and Self-Expression Through Partnership

Marion Elaine Richardson was born in Ashford, Kent, in 1892. Following her father's death, the family's economic circumstances declined and at the age of 16 she reluctantly accepted a scholarship to train as an art teacher at Birmingham Municipal School of Arts and Crafts. Here she came under the influence of the school's principal Robert Catterson-Smith, probably best remembered today for his development of memory drawing (Everitt, 2010) which Richardson would later adapt as part of her own teaching methods (Campbell, 1978). In 1912, on the completion of her training, Richardson was appointed to a teaching post at Dudley Girls' High School, the institution most closely associated with the development of her ideas. She began her teaching career at a foundational moment in the development of progressive education. Edmond Holmes had recently published his influential *What Is and What Might Be* in 1911, and this period was characterised by experimentation with new and progressive teaching practices. Richardson was undoubtedly influenced by this broader context, and her ideas reflect the principles of the 'New Education'. As Selleck and others have argued, this was not a unified, clearly defined programme, but rather a shared view of pedagogy that encompassed a variety of beliefs, and focused on the centrality of the child's experience, freedom and individuality, creativity and self-expression (Selleck, 1972). Despite being characterised as a provincial backwater (Smith, 1996), Dudley Girls' High School had a progressive ethos nurtured by its first two headmistresses, M.E. Burke (1891–1914) and Sybil Frood (1914–1941), and the support of the latter in particular was key in enabling Richardson to experiment (DuMont, 2002; Frood, 1947).

Richardson appears to have abandoned the traditional art curriculum by about 1917 (Holdsworth, 2005). The progressive pedagogy that she introduced in its place is described in a series of lectures preserved in her archive that articulate a remarkably consistent set of ideas and practices over the next two decades (ibid.). In common with other progressive practitioners, Richardson positioned her 'new' pedagogy in opposition to

the 'old' (Selleck, 1972; Hofstetter & Schneuwly, 2009), characterised by her future colleague at the London County Council inspectorate, R.R. Tomlinson, as a succession of 'soul-destroying and sterile methods' (Tomlinson, 1947: 10). Her opposition was embedded in her own experiences as both a pupil and a teacher of drawing, and in a lecture given to the Psychological Society in March 1925, she framed her disillusion with traditional methods as a journey of pedagogic discovery undertaken in cooperation with her pupils. Explaining that her original aim was to inspire a love of nature's beauty in her pupils, she gradually realised that their drawings were devoid of any original insight in their interpretation and owed more to the copying skill of the naturalist than the perception of an artist. Richardson's reflections mirrored the concern of other progressive educators that the conventional teaching of drawing overemphasised the development of technical skill through observation and copying, at the expense of creativity, imagination and spontaneity (Macdonald, 1970; Holdsworth, 1984). In Richardson's opinion this inhibited the child, and reduced artistic expression to 'a more or less mechanical trick' (Richardson, 1925: 15).

In Richardson's analysis, at the root of the problem was a misconceived standard of values by which adults attempted to judge a child's creative work. Reflecting the modernist interest in the 'primitive' art of earlier civilisations and indigenous peoples which emerged alongside the fascination with children's art in this period (Macdonald, 1970; Leeds, 1985, 1989), she bemoaned that the originality and expression esteemed in the work of 'primitive artists' was judged as a fault in the work of children (Richardson, 1919: 9). Adult imposition of literal correctness resulted in work that was 'divorced from all vision or idea' (ibid.: 7). Richardson therefore embarked on a search for 'a new and better thing' (Richardson, 1925: 8), in which 'the expression of an inward thought or vision' became the overriding aim (Richardson, 1920: 16). This vision could not be imposed or imitated as it relied on an 'essential sincerity' that originated within the child (Richardson, 1925: 8).

Richardson believed that the ability to visualise was innate to young children and that seeing images in the 'mind's eye' was 'the child's natural approach to art' (Richardson, 2015: 114). Very young children possessed an instinctive spontaneity and assurance that was gradually erased

through conventional teaching and the onset of adolescence when natural confidence was replaced by self-consciousness and fear. Like other progressive educators, Richardson was influenced by developments in psychological thinking and theories of developmental stages (Thomson, 2006; Tisdall, 2020). Similar beliefs were held by the best-known art educator of the period, Franz Cižek, who believed that young children possessed an innate ability that should be allowed to flourish uncorrupted by adult intervention or criticism, and that age-related developmental stages were highly significant in influencing the nature of a child's artistic work (Macdonald, 1970). For Cižek the child was at its most sincere between the ages of one and seven, motivated by the need to communicate and express inner feelings and ideas. From the age of 14, adult influences marred the originality of the work (Wilson, 1921). Although Cižek maintained that he did not teach, preferring to stimulate the child's imagination using verbal descriptions and stories (Malvern, 1995), the degree of artistic technique evident in his pupils' distinctive style has prompted much debate over the extent to which his pedagogic techniques really promoted self-expression and agency (Macdonald, 1970; Smith, 1985).

Like other progressive educators of the 1920s including Bertram Hawker and Beatrice Ensor, Richardson visited Cižek's class in Vienna in 1926 (Richardson, 1948), and similarities in their ideas and practices have resulted in comparisons between them. There are, however, significant differences in their approaches and Richardson's archive includes notes critiquing his methods. On reading descriptions of his methods, Richardson had 'mentally shaken hands' with Cižek, recognising much that agreed with her own practice (Richardson, n.d.-a: 1). On seeing the exhibited work, however, she was both surprised and disappointed, finding it to be 'conscious, mannered and sophisticated' rather than a 'spontaneous expression', and hoped that teachers would not take it as a model (ibid.: 2). Her greatest disappointment was reserved for Cižek's 'failure' to address the problem of adolescence when young artists perceived their own work as childish and instead sought inspiration in inferior commercial art and magazine illustration (ibid.: 7). In contrast, Richardson believed that an adolescent who had been nurtured in her methods of self-expression, founded in original vision, could be led to select a 'wisely chosen' realistic subject as their model (Richardson, 1948: 62–63). The

realisation that self-expression could only result from the child's innate and sincere vision led Richardson to frequently express the sentiment that, 'Art was a thing which, strictly speaking, could not be taught' (Richardson, 1925: 6). However, in contrast to the non-interventionist stance asserted by Cižek, Richardson was not advocating non-intervention or the removal of the teacher. Indeed, she argued to the contrary that in progressive schools, 'The teacher is far more needed than before and far more depends upon him [sic]' (Richardson, 1920: 19).

In common with other progressive educators, Richardson believed that what was required was a re-evaluation of the teacher's relationship with the child (Selleck, 1972). She conceptualised teaching as a partnership in which the teacher learned 'with and from the children' (Richardson, 1948: 13), and in which the teacher's role was to enable the child's ability to visualise, thereby bridging 'the gulf between vision and expression' (Richardson, 1925: 14–15). To facilitate this in practice Richardson adapted Catterson-Smith's 'shut-eye' memory drawing technique, developed as an alternative means of clarifying an image and impressing it on the memory, in preference to direct copying from objects (Richardson, 1948; Campbell, 1978; Macdonald, 2005). Catterson-Smith would show a lantern slide and students would then be instructed to visualise and draw the subject with their eyes closed. Richardson eschewed the lantern slides, preferring to stimulate the pupil with a 'word picture' in the form of a verbal description, story or poem, whilst the pupils sat around her, often on the floor (Richardson, 1948). Only when the child could see a clear mental image of their own idea would they go to their desk to begin drawing or painting (Dudley Girls' High School, 1926). The aim was not to imitate by producing a literal representation of the description, but to express their own sincere response to the stimulus. In turn Richardson would not criticise faults of technique or perspective, but would respect the child's interpretation even if it appeared strange to adult eyes (Richardson, 1919). Once the original idea was in place, the teacher should then provide 'indirect' technical instruction by ensuring the availability of a wide variety of materials that would encourage the child to discover different methods and experiment with techniques. As she argued, 'Idea and technique are not separate things, and drawing is only expression when idea and expression are one' (Richardson, 1920: 15).

The Therapeutic and Aesthetic Benefits of Self-Expression

For Richardson, the purpose of teaching was not to identify special 'talent' with the aim of producing future professional artists or designers, but to foster broader therapeutic benefits in terms of children's wellbeing. Promoting originality, perseverance and independence would not only improve the child's attainment in other school subjects but also support something more fundamental, contributing to his or her natural development, and nurturing 'that part of his spirit which is most usually thwarted and starved and supressed' (Richardson, 1925: 21). Reinforcing the child's confidence in his or her own 'power of mental imagery', and enabling him or her to express it sincerely, instilled 'a sense of success and happiness arrived at through art' (Richardson, 2015: 113–114). With appropriate teaching and encouragement even 'rebellious and frustrated children found peace when they painted' (Richardson, 1948: 18). Her belief in the therapeutic value of self-expression through art and creativity extended beyond the classroom. Whilst teaching at Dudley, Richardson and two colleagues also taught at Winson Green Prison in Birmingham. Richardson was originally encouraged in this initiative by the prison's medical officer, Hamblin Smith, and Margery Fry, warden of University House, the University of Birmingham's women's hostel where Richardson lived for two years when studying at Birmingham School of Art (Richardson, [1922]). She began teaching at the prison in late 1918 and continued for five years (Richardson, n.d.-b: 1; Prison Visiting Committee, 1921, 1924). Richardson's initiative was an early example of reformative voluntary education that began to be provided after the First World War (Fry, 1947; Forster, 1996). She began by teaching embroidery and craft work to women prisoners on remand or in the hospital, subsequently extending the work to include a broader range of women, the 'girls school' and boy prisoners who were taught reading and writing in addition to handcrafts (Richardson, [1922]). She described the intervention as a 'practical effort at re-education and reestablishment' that arose from her experience of the value of creative work, and her related belief that 'much of the so-called naughtiness of children' was due to a lack of a 'creative

outlet' (Richardson, n.d.-b: 2–3). The aim was to convert 'misdirected emotional force' into purposeful expression, thereby enabling personal discovery and self-realisation (Richardson, n.d.-b: 13–14). Although the prison work took place in a somewhat extreme context, it reflects Richardson's general belief in the centrality of creativity and self-expression as part of fully rounded development.

Enabling self-expression was the first of two inter-related aims in Richardson's curriculum statement for the Dudley Girls' School, and this document established the basis of fulfilling the second aim which was 'To build up, chiefly through creative work, a standard of taste' (Dudley Girls' High School, 1926). This interest in cultivating taste and aesthetic appreciation is another constant in her writing throughout her career from her earliest days teaching in Dudley. It was the teacher's role to guide the children's 'aesthetic judgements' (Richardson, 1920: 23) so that they were empowered to distinguish between true sincere beauty and original imagination on the one hand, and the 'pretty-pretty world' of inauthentic sentimentality and affectation on the other (Richardson, 2015: 115). True beauty was not to be found in 'fairy regions' or 'the cheap tricks of picture-book illustration and commercial drawing', but in ordinary and everyday scenes in the local environment (Richardson, 1925: 15–16). This involved reconceptualising what constituted 'beauty' with her pupils, and training their 'seeing eye' to recognise sincerity and originality (Richardson, 1948: 15). One way of doing this was through their regular 'beauty hunts' (ibid.) in which the girls were encouraged to look anew at the ordinary and the everyday and produce their own sincere and original interpretation of what they saw. As she wrote in an earlier lecture, 'Art' was 'the expression of an emotional reaction which itself is the effect of a personal discovery of beauty' (Richardson, 1925: 2). It was this sincerity and originality of expression that provided the vital quality that differentiated the work from imitation, and qualified the girls' drawings as 'little works of art' (Richardson, 2015: 113). This was the essential quality that she recognised as the 'common denominator' in the art of her pupils and that was exhibited in Roger Fry's first Post-Impressionist exhibition (ibid.: 14). It was also the quality that she encouraged her pupils to appreciate in the work of recognised artists from various periods with which she decorated her studio and other parts of

the school, including Botticelli, Da Vinci, Van Gogh, Degas, Laura Knight and Roger Fry. Surrounding the young with reproductions of 'great pictures' provided a defence against the attraction of insincere imitation (Richardson, 1948: 23) by establishing a benchmark of 'good work', and also cultivated the girls' powers of critical appreciation (Richardson, 1919: 25). This was reinforced through a dialogical process which became an 'essential part' of her teaching (Richardson, 1925: 7) in which she and her pupils discussed the nature of art, and reflected critically on the works of the artists on display. The girls were also trained to reflect critically on their own work, and each class would begin with a general discussion critiquing the previous week's artwork, and the girls were invited to vote on whether they agreed with her marking. It is clear that she was attempting to familiarise her pupils with elements of high culture, and she also introduced them to the Russian ballet with the assistance of Roger Fry who facilitated access to the company's rehearsals (Richardson, 1948: 33). However, Richardson saw no dissonance between valuing high art and encouraging her pupils' powers of self-expression as both shared an inherent sincerity and originality.

The inculcation of the principles of good taste in her pupils was also applied to the appreciation of good design in the elements of everyday life such as clothing, household furnishing and home decoration. In later recollections, several of her former pupils agreed that her teaching had influenced their taste in terms of furnishing and decorating their homes, and one pupil recalled that, after a lesson in which they painted a cupboard, she went home and redecorated her room (Morris, 1946). This work also extended beyond her classroom. It fed into a study by the psychological investigator Margaret Bulley who used Richardson's pupils as subjects in a test to study possible correlations between taste and intelligence in the 1920s (Bulley, 1937; Holdsworth, 1984; Grosvenor, 2005a). The same principles motivated Richardson's involvement in two national schemes to foster aesthetic appreciation in the following decade when working as a school inspector. In 1936–1937 she participated in *Contemporary Lithographs* which aimed to bring the work of living artists into schools (Grosvenor, 2018), and in the Council for Art and Industry exhibition which aimed explicitly to make a pedagogic intervention in the development of taste and aesthetic values in children as future

consumers (Grosvenor, 2005a). Both initiatives involved Richardson in influential networks of artists and progressive educators, and reflected her commitment to disseminating her ideas and practices beyond the school classroom. It is to the strategies that she deployed to accomplish this commitment that attention will now turn.

Networks, Expertise and the Making of Progressive Authority

Following her death in November 1946, a number of commentators drew attention to Richardson's complete dedication to her cause as the central focus of her life. The former school inspector and educational writer Philip Boswood Ballard, for example, concluded that Richardson 'had a mission; and a very noble one' (Ballard, 1947: 14). She certainly displayed a profound belief in her methods, and a commitment to disseminating her ideas and promoting her practice. Like other educators of the period, including progressive women, she benefited from the support of networks of like-minded individuals that informed her ideas and practices, and facilitated the dissemination of her methods and the development of her claims to authority (Grosvenor, 2005a; Fuchs, 2007; Fitzgerald & Smyth, 2014). Richardson's relationship with the Fry siblings, Margery and Roger, was a crucial factor in establishing her trajectory from a little-known teacher in a Black Country town to the 'pioneer' feted in *Athene*. They provided her with intellectual and creative stimulation and significant opportunities to disseminate her methods, build a reputation and advance her career. It was Margery who influenced her educational work in the Birmingham prison, and it is likely that she also assisted in securing Richardson's appointment at Dudley in her capacity as a member of Staffordshire Education Committee (Holdsworth, 2005). Given that Margery and Roger enjoyed a very close sibling relationship (Logan, 2018), Richardson would have been familiar with Roger's work, and she had visited his influential Post-Impressionist art exhibition at the Grafton Galleries in 1910 (Richardson, 1948). In February and March 1917, she visited an exhibition of children's art at Fry's Omega Workshops.

She was in London attending an unsuccessful interview for a post and had brought examples of her Dudley pupils' work with her which she showed to Fry. Fry was deeply antagonistic to traditional art teaching and shared Richardson's belief in children's natural artistic and expressive qualities (Shiff, 1998). He was deeply impressed with the work and concluded, in a somewhat simplistic interpretation of her practice, that her pupils were 'stimulated to create instead of being inhibited by instruction' (Fry, 1917: 231). Although he appears to have misunderstood the extent of Richardson's intervention, her work influenced his thinking (Shiff, 1998: 166), and he was clearly keen to promote her results, going as far as showing her pupils' work to the President of the Board of Education, H.A.L. Fisher, in an attempt to influence art teaching (Sutton, 1972: 410). He later recorded that Fisher was 'duly and most encouragingly impressed' with this teacher who had 'found out how to *educate* and not to teach', and promised to secure a London post for her (Sutton, 1972: 410, emphasis in original). Richardson later wrote that this encounter was 'an afternoon that altered everything for me' (Richardson, 1948: 30), and Fry's enthusiastic support for her work was undoubtedly significant in raising her profile and publicising her methods (Swift, 1992; Holdsworth, 2005).

The house that the Frys set up together in London from 1919 became a mecca for artists, writers and other cultural commentators (Logan, 2018), and it was to this home that Margery invited Richardson to stay for a term in 1923. Richardson described this interlude as giving her space and time to reflect on her future, and it is clear that she found the exquisite furnishings and art work, and the cultured visitors she met, not only intellectually stimulating but also useful (Richardson, 1948). It is presumably due to the extended Fry network, for example, that she came to the attention of Dorothy Todd, the editor of *Vogue* from 1922 to 1926, who had close connections to the Bloomsbury group (Pender, 2007) and featured Richardson in *Vogue's* 'Hall of Fame' in January 1924 (Everitt, 2010). She also used this period to further the promotion of her work by exhibiting the work of her pupils. Exhibitions were used extensively in the period as a technology for disseminating educational ideas and practices (Fuchs, 2004; Grosvenor, 2005b; Roberts, 2009) and Richardson employed a succession of exhibitions for this purpose throughout her

career. The Dudley pupils' work had been included by Fry in his 1917 exhibition and subsequently at the Omega Workshop in 1919. Whilst staying with the Frys in the winter of 1923–1924, Richardson organised an exhibition of the Dudley work at the Independent Gallery in London which attracted much attention in the press (Everitt, 2010), and was accompanied by another Fry article in *The Burlington Magazine* (Fry, 1924). Fry also wrote the catalogue to an exhibition at the Whitworth gallery in Manchester in 1928, organised at the instigation of Margaret Bulley (Smith, 1996). In addition to drawings and paintings, this exhibition also featured decorative art and pattern designs influenced by the artisanal principles and decorative work produced by Fry's Omega Workshops collective that reflected Richardson's attempts to influence the aesthetic taste of her pupils referred to earlier. As a result of the exhibition, some of the block pattern designs were bought by the Calico Printers Association and commercially printed and marketed as the 'Maid Marian Range' to be sold in London stores much to the joy of Richardson and her pupils (Holdsworth, 2005).

For Richardson, the term in London was an opportunity to see whether her 'Dudley dialect' would translate into different learning contexts and she began teaching at the private schools Benenden and Hayes Court alongside returning to Dudley two days a week from September 1924 (Everitt, 2010). It was also in 1924 that Richardson made the first of two significant career choices, accepting a post as a part time tutor at the London Day Training College (LDTC, later the Institute of Education) which was introducing a specialist course on teaching art (Aldrich, 2002). As the leading teacher training institution in England, LDTC was closely associated with progressive educational thought, not least through its director Percy Nunn, who appointed Richardson (Aldrich, 2009). By this point she was in demand as a lecturer, speaking to a broad range of local and national audiences and networks including the 1919 Cambridge *New Ideals in Education* conference (Richardson, 1919). Richardson was a charismatic lecturer, and Ballard described her imparting her 'vision' and 'convictions' with 'tact, charm and grit', displaying examples of 'bad art' on an easel and talking the audience through her rationale (Ballard, 1947: 14). Her lectures were often featured in local newspapers, thereby extending the audience for her ideas, and some were published. She had

a sufficiently high profile to have been invited to sit on the Examination Committee of the Teachers' Registration Council, and to report on art teaching to the 1922 Consultative Committee of the Board of Education on differentiation of the secondary school curriculum for boys and girls in which Nunn also participated (Holdsworth, 2005). The Committee's report that appeared the following year reflects aspects of Richardson's thinking in that it called for an increase in aesthetic training as a means of stimulating critical and creative faculties and appreciation of 'good Art' and music (Board of Education, 1923: 68). The report's use of the term 'vision' in relation to the role of imagination in the teaching of drawing, and its warning that if neglected young sensibilities could be 'perverted' into a taste for the garish and sensational, also echo her writings (ibid.: 68).

Once on the faculty of the LDTC, Richardson became part of a group of progressive teacher educators that Richard Aldrich maintained 'pioneered a curricular and pedagogical revolution' (Aldrich, 2002: 87). Her new role provided Richardson with an opportunity to directly influence practice in schools through the training of future art teachers. Tomlinson and Campbell both noted that teachers trained by Richardson spread her methods across the country (Tomlinson, 1947; Campbell, 1978), and Aldrich argued that whilst at LDTC Richardson 'personified the revolution in art teaching' (ibid.: 77). One of her former students, Clifford Ellis, went on to lead the Bath Academy of Art (Ellis, 1947) whilst another, Henry Clarence Whaite, became an art teacher at Alleyn's School and later succeeded Richardson at LDTC. He recalled her as a 'remarkable and compelling person' who inspired her student teachers with 'a crusading spirit' (Aldrich, 2002: 77). Whilst at LDTC she continued to utilise exhibitions as a strategy for promoting her work amongst teachers and broader audiences, and an exhibition of children's drawings held at LDTC in June 1927, for example, was described in *The Times* as relevant to everybody interested in artistic and general education (*The Times*, 1927). She also continued her participation in progressive networks. Her position at the LDTC increased her profile further, and moreover brought her into close proximity with colleagues who were active and influential supporters of the New Education Fellowship including Nunn and Susan Isaacs (Brehony, 2004). In 1925 she attended the International Federation of Art Teachers' meeting held in Paris as a representative of the Association

of Assistant Mistresses, and in 1929 she addressed both the Child Study Society and the *New Ideals* conference in Worcestershire (Holdsworth, 2005; Richardson, 1929).

Richardson's influence on teaching practice in schools in London increased when she accepted a post as a schools inspector for art with London County Council in 1930. Here, she worked closely with R.R. Tomlinson who she had first met at an exhibition of her pupils' work at the Grafton Gallery in 1920 (Carline, 1968), and Macdonald asserts that together they led a 'crusade' in schools (Macdonald, 2005: 220). Like training colleges, the inspectorate was closely associated with the advocacy of progressive methods (Tisdall, 2020). Richardson organised a series of in-service training courses in which she directly modelled her practice for teachers, teaching them as if they were children in a class. She recalled them having 'great fun together' exploring writing patterns, potato printing and developing their aesthetic appreciation by analysing the difference between 'good' and 'bad' pictures (Richardson, 1948: 68). Richardson argued that effective art teachers did not need to be artists, the key was to instil confidence and aesthetic taste. This again was an argument that she made consistently from the earliest years of her own teaching career (e.g., Richardson, 1919). Her courses were evidently popular, and her methods in demand; there were 1500 applications for the 150 available places in her first three classes on 'New Art Teaching' (Richardson, 1948), whilst her 1934–1935 course on art in infant schools attracted over 1000 applicants for 40 places (Holdsworth, 2005). In addition to running the short courses, she also modelled her practice through a series of longer-term partnerships in which she worked with teachers in elementary schools in poorer parts of London over a consistent period of time, disseminating the results though open days and visits. Exhibitions were also put to good use, providing 'inspiration and refreshment' for teachers (Richardson, 1948: 77). A display of 500 works by pupils of 50 London Schools was held in the corridors of County Hall in June 1933 (*The Times*, 1933), followed by a larger exhibition in July 1938 in which Richardson told 'the story of an ordinary child's natural artistic development' and 'the teacher's share in furthering it' (Richardson, 1948: 78). Opened by Sir Kenneth Clark, it drew an audience of 26,000 in eight weeks (Macdonald, 1970) including the Queen and

Princesses Margaret and Elizabeth. Part of this exhibition went on to tour Canada in 1939 (McCurry, 1939), a country that she had previously visited on a lecture tour in 1934 at the behest of the Director of the Canadian National Gallery and the Carnegie Trust, and some of her pupils' work was also included in exhibitions of children's art by the British Council that toured internationally in the 1940s (Everitt, 2010). It was also whilst working for the LCC inspectorate in 1935 that she published her influential series of booklets *Writing and Writing Patterns*, a further development of her *Dudley Writing Cards* originally issued in 1928. As with her theories of drawing and painting, the booklets emphasised the importance of working with what came naturally to the child when teaching handwriting, in this case the natural patterns created by the hand (Sassoon, 2011). This continued to be used in British schools until the 1980s and is arguably the intervention for which she is best remembered (Everitt, 2010).

Conclusion

Richardson's career came to an end during the Second World War, when she was forced to retire due to ill-health in 1942. She died in Dudley only four years later in November 1946 at the age of 54 and was perceived to have dedicated her life to the service of children's art (Everitt, 2010). Peter Smith has argued that she had possessed a 'fine (and justified) self-image' as a teacher, and that the accumulation of her considerable archive also testified to the fact that she 'knew she was a figure of historic importance' (Smith, 1996: 181). She made a conscious decision to ensure its preservation as a material witness to her work and a permanent monument to her pedagogic significance. In this she was aided by her sister Kathleen who, with her friend and former colleague Miss Plant, edited and posthumously published another tangible legacy, her book *Art and the Child*, which continued to influence critics and teachers long after her death. Written by Richardson shortly before she died, despite the uncertainties over the extent of her sister and Plant's editing, it represents an attempt to make coherent sense of her professional life and identity, and to narrate the story of her expertise. Although criticised as 'often

sentimental and inaccurate', it was a great popular success, reprinted several times in the 1950s and 1960s and even translated into Japanese in 1958 (Everitt, 2010).

In her thinking and practice, Richardson's child-centred approach exemplified many of the principles of the transnational progressive, or 'new', education movement. Together with Franz Cižek, to whom she was often compared, she succeeded in shifting public perceptions of children's art. This was due in part to her efforts to disseminate her ideas and teaching methods widely, through her tireless lecturing to audiences of teachers and the broader public, and the active programme of public exhibitions in which she displayed her pupils' work. She was also astute in her cultivation of influential networks that facilitated a high profile and lent authority to her claims to expertise. Although it is difficult to accurately measure the extent of her influence on educational policy, she certainly influenced the practice of teachers in schools by her advocacy of the importance of sincere self-expression and the development of aesthetic taste. The career choices she made, accepting posts at the LDTC and the LCC inspectorate, positioned her perfectly to directly influence the practice of both existing and future art teachers.

In contrast to Cižek, who taught outside the state system in small selective classes of talented pupils, or indeed many other progressive educators of the period who experimented in elite and independent progressive schools (Selleck, 1972), Richardson was interested in the relevance of art to improve the outlook and wellbeing of all children. In October 2019, the Durham Commission on Creativity and Education bemoaned the reduction of creativity and the arts in schools, and the inequalities in provision for pupils in the state sector in comparison to those in independent schools (Durham Commission, 2019). Its assertion of the value of creative activity and expression, not only in supporting economic success and social engagement, but in supporting wellbeing by enabling confidence, imagination and a sense of community, is testament to the continuing relevance of the ideas and practices that Richardson espoused throughout her life.

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Chapter 9: Seonaid Robertson (1912–2008): The Transformation of 'Chaotic Experience' Through Arts Education

Lottie Hoare

Introduction

Seonaid Robertson was a school teacher, arts advisor, lecturer and researcher. She wrote about a wide range of arts and crafts teaching but had a particular interest in analysing the experience of working with clay to facilitate self-knowledge and 'a sense of timelessness' (Robertson, 1951: 195). She cared that creative art and craft work helped children to cope with growing up and that in the process they became attuned to their relationship with their roots and their cultural history. Robertson believed that in education we need to take care of two processes simultaneously at work: the unfolding of the self and 'the adaptation of that unfolding self to outward conditions and its enrichment by its assimilation of the traditions and customs of society' (Robertson, 1961: 64). Her published writings do not actively identify themselves as part of a dialogue with the

L. Hoare (✉)
University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK
e-mail: chh11@cam.ac.uk

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mid-twentieth-century progressive movement nor do they build in any direct sense on 'child art' as identified by Franz Cižek (1865–1946). Instead, Robertson narrated her memories of lessons she taught and pupils' work she observed and asked the reader to dwell on the symbolic power of arts education for young people. She saw the therapeutic relationship between the teacher, the child and the materials as the focus of the educational experience and believed that the child's reflections and imagination must not be supplanted by any culture which the teacher chose to champion.

This chapter seeks to redress historians' neglect of Robertson's career by analysing the story of her consistent mission. She used arts education to

Photo 1 Printed Portrait of Seonaid Robertson by an unnamed student, undated. Detail from a poster created at the University of Alabama to mark her evening workshop at the university with arts educator Frank Wachowiak. Copyright National Arts Education Archive Collection

help young people transform the chaotic experiences that individuals face during the transition from childhood to adolescence: 'the experience of so selecting, focussing and transforming his own crowded and chaotic experience to present it to himself and others is one I wish all children to have continually' (Robertson, 1952: 13). She was fascinated by the way children use art to navigate their experience out of childhood and into adult life, rather than focussing on their potential professional identities as artists or crafts people as a result of their education. Her pioneering contribution to arts education in mid-twentieth-century England has been largely overlooked. This may be because her approach, which had strong ties to Jungian psychoanalysis, did not directly impact on educational policy. Perhaps also her work has not previously been critically discussed in histories of education because it cannot be pigeonholed as belonging to a type of school or a tradition of pedagogy. Her own teacher training and some of her secondary school teaching took place before the 1944 Education Act and the subsequent distinctions between primary and secondary education in the United Kingdom, so this is not relevant to her work. She was born in a later era than the other subjects of this book, so the focus of this chapter falls on the first 38 years of her life.

Born in Perth, Scotland, Robertson was educated at Edinburgh College of Art, Moray House Teacher Training College and later studied psychology at the University of London. She taught art in non-fee-paying secondary schools, mainly in Yorkshire, and by 1949 had taken up the post as the first senior lecturer in arts education at Bretton Hall. This new teacher training college, specialising in the arts, had opened that year in a former stately home set in the expansive rural landscape of the West Riding of Yorkshire. Her subsequent career from the 1950s onwards, at the University of Leeds; Goldsmiths, University of London and her connection with universities and schools in the USA and Brazil, will be considered as this chapter progresses, along with further scrutiny of the silences around her lasting legacy.

Significant Influences on Robertson's Outlook on Art Education: 1912–1950

Robertson's views on creativity were strongly shaped by certain authors writing during the mid-twentieth century, as well as her own direct experience of studying and teaching in different rural and urban communities at a similar time. To establish the sequence of those who influenced her, this chapter draws on archival sources, her own writings and her voice recordings held at the National Arts Education Archive (NAEA). Surviving sources suggest that her own childhood experiences, studying at Edinburgh College of Art, Herbert Read, Viktor Lowenfeld and her time at Moray House Teacher Training College all shaped her thinking on arts education. This section will address each of these subjects in turn.

Robertson was born into a relatively affluent middle-class Scottish family. Her father worked as an auctioneer. She had not started school herself until the age of eight and had been kept at home with her mother before that. Robertson's mother died when she was ten years old and Robertson subsequently suffered from polio. Her writings do not actively interpret the impact of her mother's death or her own illness on her making of art or record any memories of her creating art at home as a child. What she does recount is her love of the natural world as a key source of joy in her youth: running so fast into the sea when she first saw it as a three-year-old that her father did not have time to roll up his best trousers to retrieve her; being woken as a child by her mother to see the snow at night and creeping out of the house as a teenager with friends to witness the dawn on May Day (Robertson, 2003). In late childhood and her teens, she was educated at Perth Academy, which was then located in an imposing classical building on Rose Terrace in Perth (Smart, 1932). It was here that her artistic and literary skills were nurtured by both her male English teacher and female art teacher. Her art teacher was also her Girl Guide mistress and took a keen interest in her education after the death of her mother. However, by the time Robertson was 18, this relationship had become mired in misunderstandings and conflicts. In her unpublished memoirs written in old age, she recalled how her experience of being propositioned by this teacher led her to finish her school

education early without explaining the incident to anyone. She did not want her teacher to lose her job and reflected in old age: 'How could I possibly talk to my father when nothing in that sphere had ever been alluded to?' (Robertson, 2003: 51). She subsequently enrolled at Edinburgh University in 1931 without a complete experience of sixth form studies. She appears to have sublimated what could not be spoken of: 'I had to shut it out of my mind' (Robertson, 2003: 52). She developed a life-long interest in how young people use art to strengthen their own sense of belonging to a common humanity with or without spoken words.

Robertson initially studied both English literature at the University of Edinburgh and art at Edinburgh College of Art before choosing to focus on art. In her first year of study she had enjoyed attending lectures on metaphysical poetry by the Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature, Herbert Grierson (1866–1960). She reflected that she chose to study arts, crafts and design because: 'I could always read on my own but I could not do my art. I needed the studios. I needed the materials. I needed the instruction' (Robertson, 2003: 62). Throughout Robertson's later writings it is evident that she enjoyed instruction in terms of method but not content. She loved the energy and surprise of collaborative group work in an art classroom or seminar room and she valued an engaged but respectful relationship between instructor and participant. In October 1931, she was enrolled to study architecture, applied art and sculpture and by 1936 had specialised in design and crafts for her diploma (Edinburgh College of Art, 1931, 1936b). The landscape painter Hubert Wellington had succeeded mural painter Gerard Moira as principal of Edinburgh Art College in 1932. Wellington believed the art students needed increased intimacy with the cultural and historical values of art (Wellington, 1932: 17). Surviving prospectus material and exam papers dating from 1931 to 1936, now held in the Special Collections at Edinburgh University Library, suggest a very traditional curriculum with little anticipation of a professional focus for women. An article in the *Weekly Scotsman* quoted Wellington framing the woman's influence as being about choosing carpets and curtains for the home ('Cynthia', 1936). Female students were in the minority and although Edinburgh University had awarded degrees to women as far back as 1893 there is no evidence to suggest that women

working in the arts had an impact on Robertson's thinking in the 1930s. Ceramics and pottery classes did exist at Edinburgh College of Art when Robertson began her studies in 1931. Very popular classes had been run in 1929 by a local man, Robert McDaid, a kiln worker from a nearby porcelain factory, but he had left by the time Robertson started studying and the classes closed by 1933. Without McDaid's influence they were considered out of touch with contemporary needs (Lawrie, 1996: 69). No records survive suggesting Robertson was inspired by a particular pottery teacher or explaining when she first experienced working with clay.

Tasks assessed by Edinburgh Art College examinations in this period included drawing out inscriptions from Horace such as: 'Happy is he who is far from business, like the primitive race of mortals, cultivates with his own oxen the fields of his fathers, free from all anxieties of gain' (Edinburgh College of Art, 1935). Robertson's final diploma examinations necessitated her drawing and decorating passages from John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and taking assessments in nature studies, heraldry and historic ornament (Edinburgh College of Art, 1936a). On one level it could be argued that Robertson's art school education assimilated her into the traditions of European social history and roots which were familiar to her culture and upbringing. However, Robertson argued forcefully from the 1950s onwards for art schools which were located alongside other academic departments on a university campus and were not overshadowed by the study of subjects conventionally viewed as academic. She later witnessed arts departments in the United States within high profile universities such as Penn State. Robertson observed that these arts degrees led to subsequent research, which we might now call interdisciplinary, where the experience of learning from practical, tactile work was considered just as significant as verbal explanations (Robertson, [1970]). The immersion in the multiple layers of experience which she believed a convincing arts education entailed could not in her view be brought about by arts diplomas which were predominantly concerned with skilled mimicry.

Her attendance at an Edinburgh College of Art lecture given by Herbert Read in 1932 was life changing (Robertson, 2003). Read was Professor of Fine Art at the School of Art, Edinburgh University, from 1931 to 1933. Robertson's degree course may have been traditional in

terms of the skills she developed but listening to Read altered her outlook on art. She recalled that her own interpretation drawn from family life and school, before this pivotal moment, had suggested to her that art was only really concerned with physical depictions of the world. Although Read had published little on arts education at this point and she had not yet read his writings, Robertson remembered arriving in the middle of a lecture and in the darkness of the room being struck by an image of the fifteenth-century icon painting of Andrei Rublev's Trinity. This lecture marked the beginning of Robertson's conscious interest in symbolism and the recognition that education could involve an immersion in a kind of sensory memory, an intensely personal reaction to an image rather than a rational understanding (Robertson, 1966a). Read believed that the virtue of a symbol always lay in a relative degree of unintelligibility and that a symbol loses its grip once its significance has been rationalised. The effectiveness of symbols was seen to relate to their power on the collective unconscious (Read, 1953). Unlike Freud's interpretation of the unconscious as shaped by personal experience, Carl Jung (1875–1961) argued that the collective unconscious was inherited from the past collective experience of humanity. It was this collective experience which Robertson wanted her pupils to become attuned to when they developed an artistic connection with cultural history. Although Robertson did not make herself known to Read at this point, she was sustained by the memory of that first experience of a projected Byzantine picture and remembered in later life that Read had enabled her to understand that one did not need to be overtly religious to engage with symbolism (Robertson, 1966a).

During World War Two, Robertson introduced herself to Read at a conference for the Society of Education in Art when it was held in Cambridge. Robertson was to credit Read for the time and consideration he gave to the problems of any practising teachers who came to him. She was cheered by his conversation as she felt quite isolated in many ways in her working environment during the war years. Reading his analysis of arts education had also sustained her (Robertson, 1966a). Read's writings in this period reflect on his position as someone who never worked in schools. He acknowledged that he was neither a practising teacher nor a school inspector but nevertheless he urgently wanted to contribute to the debate. He believed that it was the duty of the teacher to watch over the

transformation of the child. He also argued that sometimes the best artwork came from schools with no trained art teachers. He suggested that the creation of a sympathetic atmosphere was paramount (Read, 1943). Read's *Education Through Art* (1943) may have been Robertson's first in-depth introduction to many of the ideas of Carl Jung and psychoanalysis.

However, Viktor Lowenfeld's *The Nature of Creative Activity* was published when Robertson was first working in schools (Lowenfeld, 1939). This work also remained a life-long influence on Robertson. Lowenfeld (1903–1960) was born and educated in Austria but fled to England in 1938. His work explored experimental visual and non-visual sources of drawing, painting and sculpture created by blind subjects and the art of different epochs. His first publications on the therapeutic use of creative work for the blind, inspired in part by his interactions with Freud, appeared in Germany in 1934 but were published only in the German language. Lowenfeld criticised Franz Cižek, an Austrian arts education reformer from the generation before him, for not putting into practice the philosophy of releasing children's imaginations and instead encouraging children to copy the teacher. He saw Cižek's work as failing to penetrate the authentic experiences of children (Saunders cited in Leshnoff, 2013). Robertson was also drawn to Lowenfeld's later arguments that schools introduce a loss of confidence and that we must try to recreate the natural base for free creation which civilisation had buried (Lowenfeld, 1947). To rediscover this base, Robertson favoured making contact with primordial experience. She had no particular interest in reconnecting pupils directly with their English or Scottish heritage. Her perspective on the history of humanity and the connections we might make with the past reached back endlessly to a time where there were no national borders. In old age she recalled rocks as the 'bones of the earth' which, battered over time, become clay: 'As potters we inherit nature's work of millions of years' (Robertson, 2003: 10).

Another significant influence on Robertson's view on arts education was her year spent studying to qualify as a teacher at Moray House Teacher Training College in 1936. The educational psychologist Godfrey Thomson had been the Bell Professor of Education and Director of Moray House since 1925. Moray House was best known for its work on

intelligence testing (Malcolm & Hunter, 1948). This should not however lead us to overlook Thomson's interest in the practice of the teacher, the creative elements of a teacher's communication and how his own influence may have filtered down to the practices of Moray House, and in turn provided a model for Robertson. Her surviving voice recordings of her own lectures mirror Thomson's approach in many ways. Thomson believed educators needed to use humour and engage curiosity; to talk and not read to the audience, and that teaching should be research based. Self-deprecating in his delivery, Thomson advocated Plato, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Dewey as more significant for students to know about than his own work (Inglis quoted in Lawn et al., 2009: 570). As early as 1926, Thomson also advocated group work and reading together and then reporting back to the whole group during scheduled lecture time, rather than lecturers reading prepared scripts and students taking notes (Lee, 1963: 69).

Robertson never took an active interest in intelligence testing. Perhaps as an art teacher she already saw herself as set apart from the testing culture within education and drawn to another way of becoming absorbed in learning, distinct from our 'pressure ridden schools' (Robertson, 1963: 133). She recalled: 'the study of literature and drama, of movement and dance, formed no part of my own art education nor my teacher training, and still have no accepted place in the majority of contemporary courses' (Robertson, 1963: xv). In this respect her interests aligned with a unified approach to the arts associated with progressivism. Group work, active learning and collaboration might have been high profile features of progressive teacher training at Moray House in the 1920s and 1930s but Robertson, in retrospect, wanted more emphasis on physical movement and fewer words.

A survey of her writings suggests that she did not directly align herself with the progressive education movement. She was loosely connected to the movement as someone attending arts education conferences from the late 1930s onwards and later publishing in *The New Era in Home and School*, but she did not use the adjective progressive to describe education in her own publications. Her restless search for a convincing and engaging experience of arts education was not something she linked to the work of Henry Caldwell Cook, Dewey, Friedrich Froebel, Johann

Pestalozzi or Rousseau beyond recognising that they had opened the door to a wider public recognition of what arts education might entail.

Robertson's Approach to Art Education During and After World War Two

Robertson's interest in adolescent art was well established before World War Two. In 1939 she was involved with organising an exhibition on this theme at Morley College in Lambeth, an adult education college established in 1889 that had pioneered equal access for female students (Robertson, [1972]). Wherever she was working, Robertson wanted to put pupils in touch with their inner lives and make them unafraid of feeling. She also observed that there had been a 'counter-revolution' in the mid-twentieth century where 'painterly' art educators wanted a turn away from imaginative art to observational studies of the environment (Robertson, 1963: xx–xxi). She did not reject mainstream provision of arts education in school in terms of where she worked and where she earned a living and she pointedly avoided working in independent fee-paying schools, although such schools often had the most widespread opportunities for developing experimental arts education in their curricula and identifying it at progressive (Ash, 1969). As an adolescent in Perth she had walked to school through a poor district of high, grey stone Scottish houses and she reflected in old age on why her own family looked down on this community when they did not interact with it enough to know it (Robertson, 2003). This formative memory may have shaped her determination to work in Local Education Authority schools.

Robertson recognised the work of those in the generation before her such as Marion Richardson (see Chap. 8) who had pioneered child-centred art teaching for children and adolescents who were not in privileged educational environments. However, Robertson warned against the 'teacher's artistry' in Richardson's approach. She identified what she called Richardson's 'seizure of viewpoint' in the place of honouring the child's expression of their own experience above all (Robertson, 1963: xix). She

argued in conversation with Nan Youngman and other former pupils of Richardson's that the teacher's imagination rather than the child's was being evoked by much of the educational practice they had witnessed. Youngman suggested that Richardson would describe children's art as 'sincere', 'insincere' or 'successful' but Robertson resisted this language of judgement and assessment (Robertson, [1972]). These reservations about Richardson's approach link to Lowenfeld's criticism of Cižek, discussed above, regarding the extent to which art teachers should recognise the child's authentic experience rather than choreographing it into something accessible and pleasing for the general onlooker.

Copies of Robertson's curriculum vitae, held at the NAEA, suggest she was exhibiting her own pottery at Edinburgh College of Art by 1943 (Robertson, 1983–1989). She had maintained strong links with Edinburgh, but her means of earning a living during World War Two came from school teaching in England. After a brief period teaching in Suffolk her next teaching job was in Yorkshire, and it was here that she was to stay for the duration of the war, teaching art at Keighley Girls' Grammar School. Robertson was shocked by the mill-town environment with its relentless dirt and cotton mills but loved the rural landscape of the Yorkshire Dales. In her writings she used the pseudonym 'Howarth' instead of Keighley to anonymise the city and school (Robertson, 1952). The school had evolved from what was originally Drake and Tonson School which opened in 1872. Art education had been encouraged in the forms of freehand and model drawing. One former pupil, Alice Wright, became a pupil teacher and married the watercolour artist Arthur Reginald Smith (1871–1934) thus providing strong links between the grammar school and Keighley College of Science and Art where Smith, who had trained at the Royal College of Art in London, was head of the art department (Baumber, 1998). The Keighley Girls' Grammar was housed in a new building and opened in 1934. Robertson admired the disciplined but maternal qualities of the headmistress (Robertson, 2003). She also worked alongside the English teacher Edna Edmunds (who later married the British Labour Party politician Denis Healey) and who remembered Robertson as a source of inspiration to the pupils (White, 2008).

When she was first writing up her war-time teaching experiences in the post-war years, Robertson wrote about these Keighley school pupils in a way that questioned the long-term impact of arts education. Robertson did not write about feminism or gender but had a resourceful and playful way of adapting the indignation that some grammar school teachers felt about fashion magazines. Some mathematics and French teachers had been confiscating American fashion magazines from the pupils because they considered their content trivial and unsuitable for them. Robertson adapted her own curriculum to capture the girls' enthusiasms during the 1940s and found ways to bring the 'subterranean energy above board' by setting up notice boards of the girls own fashion and make-up sketches and teaching the girls that make-up and what suited different eyes and clothes could be critiqued just as all other visual processes might be in an art lesson. She wanted the girls to see that 'choosing clothes' moved beyond the 'novelty' of fashion and entered into a realm of independent creative choices about images, pattern and visual preferences (Robertson, 1952: 226–227). Rather than seeing these fashion magazines as a negative American influence as her colleagues did, she saw them instead as a way of starting with something young people around her were excited by. She did not reject popular culture; instead she looked for some way to use it in teaching to deepen her pupils' understanding of the visual and tactile world.

As Robertson spent much of the 1940s based in the Keighley area, she watched the young women grow up through school and establish their adult lives. She regretted that the aesthetic education she had wished to offer them as a teacher had not been lasting. She wondered whether she had introduced them to the work of European Modernist architects such as Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius in vain. She also considered whether if they were to learn craft skills to make furniture and clothes and possessions for themselves that their confidence in what they could contribute to their environment might flourish (Robertson, 1952). It was not that Robertson advocated banishing modernist architects from her discussions with her pupils. However, she became more and more convinced that identifying certain well-known figures as those who should be applauded for their creative practice was less beneficial in education than helping young people to tap into their own creative confidence and in

turn encouraging them to make things that they might live with as ornaments or objects they could be proud and fond of.

Like Read, Robertson wrote during the 1950s with a marked condescension about the aesthetics of urban working-class life and a longing that art education should change them. Robertson's language never betrayed the level of contempt and disgust for the industrial landscape that Read articulated in *Poetry and Anarchism* (Read, 1938). When Robertson's former pupils invited her back into their homes in the later 1940s, she applauded their cooking but bemoaned 'a desolate wilderness of neutral coloured rooms' (Robertson, 1952: 3). In her writings she also criticised her former pupils' lack of delight in subtle combinations of colours and she wondered: 'why have the unfolding personalities of schooldays so often failed to ripen into the rich, warm, varied individual one envisaged?' (ibid.: 5). She began to also wonder about the spheres over which education has no control and how educators could lay the foundations of knowledge, character and sensibility. She sensed that many young people had come to assume that: 'folks like us cannot afford to have good things' (ibid.: 71). By the time she was working at Goldsmiths in the 1960s she made fewer judgements about the way people's belongings might look. In conversation with Nan Youngman in the early 1970s she remained silent when Youngman was scornful about the art teacher Sybil Marshall's 'taste'.

Robertson did not use the word 'anarchy' or seek to disrupt the status quo in terms of advocating alternative schools. Instead, hers was a kind of educational anarchism which, following on from Read, rejected political violence and was sceptical of conventional revolutionary tactics in favour of focussing on school teaching within the mainstream system for social revolution (Adams, 2013; Goodway, 2009). Such teaching was understood to develop a vital interplay of forces within each organic grouping of individuals. Read emphasised the burden of social responsibility placed on the art teacher because he believed the crafts could transform our social environment more than any other form of education (Read in Robertson, 1952: xiv). A subdued kind of anarchy was advocated where it was imagined that the mass-produced products would be largely rejected if people had the skills to make and use what they needed locally and on a small scale. Robertson was a practicing educator where Read

was thinking and writing theoretically. Where Robertson did follow Read closely however was in her psychoanalytic Jungian interest that arts education could help return an individual to connect with a collective unconscious through the making of objects by hand. Jung's notion of a collective unconscious held that pre-existing forms and archetypes were accessible to and inherited by all individuals and that processes could lead us back to these old pathways. She did not have an evidence-based way at looking at this experience. Her interests touched on the occult, on esoteric knowledge and the paranormal but she did not articulate this actively, probably because in the eyes of her employers it may have been understood as dangerous. Robertson was aware of the compromises teaching involved when working with the pupils' articulation of their interests and experiences. This developed from her work in classrooms watching children and later university students, day in day out. Robertson's interest in pupils working blindfold with clay sought to open the door to a trance-like state, almost as if participants were hypnotised by their own creative work. Her focus was also centred on a student tuning into the power of the material: 'the most fundamental aspect of pottery is its form and that form arises from the rhythm of movement, so the children should be helped to see their pot as a tangible trace of their movement, just as a painted pattern is a visible tracing of the movement of an arm' (Robertson, 1965: 5).

Read discouraged Robertson from attending the University of London to take a postgraduate diploma in psychology in 1946–1948 but she went against his advice and pursued this course. She made this choice to study further because she felt dissatisfied with her own teaching and wanted to understand how children connected with the art work of the past (Robertson, 1966a). She rarely referred to this psychology training in her writings other than alluding to watching experiments on rats running through mazes in the psychology laboratories and students running electric currents through their heads and then having to write five lines of introspection (Robertson, n.d.). The evidence of Robertson's published writing suggested that her pedagogy for the most part rejected the mainstream behaviourist psychology of her era and the dominant outlook of Cyril Burt within education. Burt promoted IQ tests and hereditary intelligence as a reliable means of predicting educational performance,

whereas Robertson favoured an actively mystical and spiritual interest in what was going on in classroom interactions which drew on Jungian psychoanalysis and related ideas about symbolism and archetypes. She believed such archetypes could be collectively understood and shared: 'people teach out of their own insides, in a style from their deepest self' (Robertson, 1980: 65). A review of Marjorie Hourd's book, *The Emotional Aspects of Learning*, written during the early 1950s commented that Hourd had felt herself to be in a 'No-man's Land' lying between literature and psychology (Philips, 1952). Perhaps Robertson sometimes felt herself to be in a 'no-man's land' between art and psychology. She narrated classroom practice, trying always to search for and share the child's authentic expression of his/her own experience. She made links with what children said in relation to symbols and archetypes, not through her formal psychological training but through watching art work being created by children in class rooms: 'Adolescents will use the form of age-old mysteries as a focus for contemplative thought, or for the explosion of an emotion which is not finding a steady outlet. Just as peasants sense the vitality of certain motifs whose meaning is lost to them, so adolescents may gain an extraordinary satisfaction in using archetypal themes which they do not recognise consciously' (Robertson, 1963: 133).

In her published writings, Robertson was sympathetic to the fact that adolescents were physically mature but did not have opportunities to be economically independent. She perceived them as longing to achieve things in their own right. She argued that if opportunities for creativity were not available to them they would become destructive. She also thought that adolescent pupils could favour craft over painting because craft could accommodate secretiveness and not involve 'giving oneself away' whereas expressive painting could instead bring self-consciousness (Robertson, 1952: 80–81). She warned against ignoring the tactile sensations of art in favour of visual and intellectual experiences: 'An earnest teacher who insisted on … drawing from observation … would have taken away what was perhaps [the pupil's] only protection in a harsh world through which … [the] physically delicate, emotionally vulnerable must move—[their] own transfigured version of it' (Robertson, 1963: 201). A wariness of placing too much emphasis on observational drawing was one of Robertson's misgivings about her times at Bretton Hall. She

saw the West Riding of Yorkshire senior arts advisor Basil Rocke as ultimately having a restrictive effect on children's art by expecting eight-year-olds to spend hours painting the wing of a bird when they could have been developing their own interconnected relationships between what they see and what they imagine. She also expressed dismay about Rocke's claim that a good art teacher 'would not let something happen in their class' (Robertson, [1972]). She hinted that Rocke's interest in children, focussing so much on drawing and painting from life, sought to quell the creative energy of the classroom to bring it in line with preconceived expectations of order and discipline. As Read had taught her back in Edinburgh in the 1930s, art was not only concerned with physical depictions of the world. Quietly, but not provocatively subversive, Robertson was not in favour of art teachers suppressing a child's imaginative or symbolic detail in a picture. She believed creative work was in its nature beyond the control of a teacher.

Perhaps one of Robertson's most vivid descriptions of recognising the agency of the child in initiating their own productive and therapeutic making came in her recollections of working once a week in a West Riding secondary modern boys' school in a mining area where 14 to 15-year-old boys were contemptuous of the education they received. With the boys' help, Robertson constructed a mock mine in the classroom using tables, waterproof table covers and coats and they crawled through it with mallets and broom handles in place of pick axes to 'give themselves up imaginatively to the experience' (Robertson, 1963: 10). After this re-enactment the 30 boys modelled what it felt like in clay. Robertson reprimanded herself when, years after the actual teaching experience, she came to publish her recollections of this lesson. She had criticised some of their depictions of the human form but realised in conversation at that time how wrong she had been. She had asked them to use clay to model what it felt like and not what it looked like. She came to realise the basis of all art lay in sensation. If sensations in the feet tapered away through crawling, the resulting forms of the legs and feet would also taper away. She described herself as 'shocked into being more patient and more cautious before I made a comment to any other boys' (Robertson, 1963: 13).

Working Life from 1950 Onwards

In the early 1950s, Robertson moved from Bretton Hall to the Institute of Education, Leeds University, where her research was encouraged by Professor W. R. Niblett. He saw the arts, music and literature as fields where experiment must be respected as much as it was in the sciences with 'their clean, passionate exactitude' (Niblett, n.d.). This support for her research helped Robertson to pursue a journey which in the later years of her career she would summarise as the quest to prove: 'a man can embody knowledge in what he does with his hands as much as what he does with his mouth' (Robertson, [1970]). She urgently wanted the process of making in arts education to not be pushed down the hierarchy of knowledges as something incidental and associated with leisure. She wanted universities to see arts education as an aspect of teacher training which was equal in significance to the scrutiny of verbal and scientific culture. Robertson visited Penn State University's education department in the USA and was inspired by the followers of Viktor Lowenfeld who advocated practical, creative study as part of a doctoral programme. She warned that England could not afford to 'sneer' at arts education research which kept the creative process central and that there were dangers in privileging the written word in research, over and above understanding the visual and tactile process of making (Robertson, [1970]).

Robertson saw roots and culture in communities as constantly evolving as refugees and other groups migrated. For example, when building a kiln one evening during the 1940s, in southern England, with visiting Dutch students who studied with Rudolph Laban (1879–1958), Robertson was amused by how impractical Laban was. He did not dig earth and build the kiln. He stood and watched, while Robertson and his students did the hard labour and Robertson taught them to speak English more fluently as the practical making unfolded. Despite her wry asides, she respected and embraced Laban's model making which she compared to cobwebs and crystals. She wanted all his work to be seen in future as part of our national heritage from one who adopted our country with love. Laban told her that teachers of art had to do for the children what religion used to do (Robertson, 1959), in other words offering the

possibilities of mystical experience and meditation in a similar vein to that found through prayer and faith.

In 1959 Robertson travelled to Brazil on the invitation of Augusto Rodrigues (1913–1993) who had pioneered children's art education at the Escolinha de Arte, Rio, Brazil. The trip was inspired in part by Robertson's interest in the work of the Russian psychologist Helena Antipoff (1892–1974) who had emigrated to Brazil and who defended intelligence as something more complex than was generally understood by English education systems in the 1950s. Antipoff saw IQ tests as a measure of 'civilised' intelligence and thought we should focus on natural intelligence which is acquired slowly over time through experience (Campos, 2012). Seven years later, when writing about own her work in teacher training at Goldsmiths, Robertson suggested arts teachers in training do field work that consisted of making tape recordings of young people talking in London pubs and dance hall cafes. Making a record of conversations about contraception and Carnaby Street with young people was considered by Robertson to be a useful part of a teacher's training and she also suggested teachers talk to adolescents about contemporary television such as *Z-Cars* (Robertson, 1966b).

Conclusion

By the 1960s Robertson's views on arts education implied that she saw the role of the art teacher as one that gave the opportunity for contemporary discussion about social and moral problems while children were absorbed in experiencing practical tactile making. She did not recommend that teachers put pupils in touch with their roots by reinforcing detailed knowledge about their past and their cultures relentlessly but that instead they talked of familiar things in the present and put young people at their ease. Building on decades of experience in arts education, she strengthened her belief in her later years that art teachers should, amongst their many responsibilities, learn from pupils' ordinary lives and recognise pupils' inner and transformative creative strength.

Robertson did not cultivate strong ties with the 'great and the good' of the educational establishment. She did not dine with policy makers or

politicians. She liked working with young people and cared that art helped them through the turmoil of adolescence. Her preference was for remembering and recording narratives of her classroom practice as an art teacher and of championing the insights and art work made by pupils. She did not relentlessly applaud teachers or self-consciously attach her reflections to the post-war progressive educational camp. These factors might be combined to suggest why her approach and her legacy have perhaps so rarely been written about. Robertson did not claim that art education would help social mobility or the economy, nor did she argue that cultural knowledge was a vital asset for young people. Instead she believed 'the function of art is to make life bearable by giving form to the overwhelming chaos' (Robertson, 1962).

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Conclusion: Arts Education Today

John Howlett and Amy Palmer

In this conclusion, we first continue the story of arts education in English schools, presenting an overview of the period from 1950 to the present day. We then turn to consider our biographical studies of nine early arts pioneers. These pioneers were chosen to represent a range of arts subjects, namely the visual arts, music and drama, although these categories have proved unstable—with visual arts expanding to incorporate craft; music incorporating dance; and drama sometimes being hidden from sight through being buried in English. Our project was predicated on the belief that it is worthwhile to look at these subjects together, examining the issues common to all of them and we have indeed found many connections. We explore how our pioneers' work relates to our underlying

J. Howlett (✉)
Keele University, Keele, UK
e-mail: j.howlett@keele.ac.uk

A. Palmer
University of Roehampton, London, UK
e-mail: Amy.Palmer@roehampton.ac.uk

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themes of progressive education, ideology and influence. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how this historical survey may contribute to thinking about the widely perceived crisis in arts education today.

The History of Arts Education in England from 1950

In the second half of the twentieth century, arts education continued to receive approval and encouragement from governmental bodies, although this does not necessarily indicate that all the subjects were given significant curriculum time in all schools. The 1943 Norwood Report, for instance, affirmed the importance of arts and crafts and music but expressed regret that such subjects had not yet had the 'attention in schools which is due to them' (Board of Education, 1943: 122). The 1944 McNair Report similarly argued that arts and crafts and music were important because they gave 'young people the opportunity to do, make and create' (Board of Education, 1944: 83). Within the teaching of arts subjects, the spread of progressive ideas led to an emphasis 'on creativity largely in terms of self-expression' (Fleming, 2010: 25) although dissenting voices argued that such child-centred pedagogies were leading to a neglect in the teaching of key practical skills. Cultural induction shifted its form, with 'multi-culturalism' and the promotion of community cohesion becoming important by the 1970s.

In (visual) art education, tensions between progressive educators and those advocating the teaching of traditional skills were apparent in the 1940s and the post-war period, with the Society for Education in Art (SEA) representing the first approach and the National Society for Art Education (NSAE) the second (Addison, 2010). Herbert Read was a key figure in the progressive camp and his views, expressed in *Education Through Art* (1943), were hugely influential on many art educators (Thistlewood, 1998). The NSAE, on the other hand, supported a form of art education called Basic Design, based on techniques used at the pre-war Bauhaus School in Germany. This was not however generally seen as a success (Field, 1970; Prentice & Dyson, 2000). An interest in teaching

appreciation of art 'from different cultures and different periods' gained significant support following the 1982 Gulbenkian Report (Prentice & Dyson, 2000: 221).

The pressure for music to become more child-centred grew in the 1950s (Pitts, 2000) and teachers sought ways for children to engage in self-expression through, for example, their own compositions. One approach that garnered attention was that associated with the German composer and pedagogue Carl Orff (1895–1982) and this was popularised in the UK by Margaret Murray (Plummeridge, 2013). This was a form of 'creative music-making' in which children were enabled to 'explore and experiment with the basic materials of music' (ibid.: 159). The technique was however widely misunderstood and misused, providing fuel for those who regretted the decline of more established pedagogies which trained children in basic skills. The historian Bernarr Rainbow (1984) was a particularly vociferous critic in this respect. As with (visual) art, ideas about the sort of music that children should encounter in their lessons began to shift. A Schools Council Enquiry in 1968, for example, recommended that teenage culture in the form of pop music should be taken seriously (Finney, 2011). The following decades saw many efforts to expand curriculum content beyond traditional and classical European music (Plummeridge, 2013).

Drama education in the post-war period similarly moved decisively away from the performance of plays (despite the continuing popularity of the school play as an extra-curricular activity) and also became more child-centred. A key figure in this was Peter Slade, the first drama adviser in the country, who believed in developing drama from children's own imaginative play and building up stories as a class (Bolton, 1985, 1989). Brian Way was another influential figure who used a similar approach, placing an emphasis on the idea of 'drama for personal development' (Bolton, 1989: 121). Dorothy Heathcote too promoted the idea of drama as a medium for awakening children's consciousness of 'issues, principles, implications, consequences and responsibilities' (Bolton, 1985: 154). As with the other arts subjects, counter-voices however were eventually raised which argued for a more skills-based approach, connected to adult understandings of theatre, with David Hornbrook in the 1990s being a notable example (Hornbrook, 1998).

The introduction of the National Curriculum through the Education Reform Act in 1988 was an important milestone for the arts subjects with music and art being given the status of required foundation subjects. As June Boyce-Tillman (1992) wrote in celebration: 'music can no longer be regarded as an optional extra. It is not a "frill"' (p. 134). Drama however was not so fortunate: it featured only as part of the speaking and listening strand in the English curriculum, which stipulated that children should be given 'opportunities … to engage in imaginative work, role-play and improvised drama' (Connell, 1992: 22). Both the art and music curricula required that children should actively generate their own (visual or aural) compositions but also emphasised the importance of children being taught to appreciate artistic and musical heritage around the world so as to give context to their own work (Boyce-Tillman, 1992; Prentice, 1992). To some extent, then, these documents represented a compromise between progressive voices and their critics. The New Labour government (1997–2010) subsequently revised the curriculum in 1999, introducing statements of attainment in arts subjects as well as specifying the standards expected of children at different ages so that teaching shifted to being 'outcomes-centred rather than child-centred' (Finney, 2011: 87).

Despite this increased shift towards performance measures, the New Labour government was nonetheless very concerned to promote what it understood as 'creativity'. At least one commentator has referred to the period under this government as the 'creative decade' (Craft et al., 2014: 17). One of the key drivers for this was undoubtedly the landmark report, *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education* (National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education, 1999). This defined creative education very broadly as pedagogies 'that develop young people's capacities for original ideas and action' (p. 5) and saw it as potentially located in all areas of school and home life. It emphatically stated that creative education encompassed far more than arts education but nevertheless a key aim of the report was 'to emphasise the importance of the arts and their essential place in creative development' (p. 28). One of the most significant government initiatives in the wake of *All Our Futures* was the Creative Partnerships scheme, which responded to the report's recommendation that 'all cultural organisations … should recognise the need to engage with the wider community as a core objective' (p. 202).

This was a huge programme which worked with a million young people in the course of its existence from 2002 to 2011 (Cottle, 2019) but which was hampered by having to address 'multiple agendas' (Thomson et al., 2014: 6). Despite one of the original aims being to enable young people 'to access a wide range of cultural and artistic experiences' (ibid.: 7), over the years the focus shifted to more general concepts of creativity in learning, and 'specific arts learning outcomes were rarely foregrounded' (ibid.: 20).

There were a number of tensions between the creative agenda and emergent neo-liberal ideologies (Cottle, 2019). Burdens of assessment and measurement served to render spontaneous and unhindered creativity almost impossible (Craft, 2003a, 2003b; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). Many of these constrictions were a result of an emphasis on national economic performance as well as the development of functional skills, in particular numeracy and literacy (Ball, 2017; Chitty, 2014). As Denis Hayes succinctly put it, 'There appears to be something of a hiatus between, on the one hand, the encouragement for teachers to be adventurous in their approach and, on the other hand, the use of an assessment system that relies on highly systematic forms of teaching and has highly serious implications for the reputation and future of schools' (Hayes, 2004: 280). This had a stifling effect upon the practices and mindsets of teachers. Fears around jeopardising inspection outcomes and test scores led to a tendency for practitioners to stick to the familiar in order to achieve desired results or, worse still, to be antithetical to creative experimentation within the curriculum for fear of failure and being reprimanded (Jones & Wyse, 2004; Tomlinson et al., 2000).

The Conservative-led governments from 2010 continued to use some of the rhetoric associated with creativity and creative learning, with an enhanced emphasis on the need for children to develop key skills, such as literacy, if their creativity was to find meaningful expression (Cottle, 2019) and ministers insisted that all children had a fundamental right to arts education (Ellis, 2018). However, as we explained in the 'Introduction', policies introduced by these governments, such as the EBacc and Progress 8, have been damaging to arts subjects, decreasing their status in schools. As Pat Thomson and colleagues have recently argued, the 'subordination' of arts subjects has meant that 'in the vast majority of schools … the arts

are increasingly a marginal curriculum offering', with fewer pupils taking the subjects, less time allocated to them and reductions in the number of teachers (Thomson et al., 2019: 242). Arts practitioners have also expressed concern. The composer Thomas Adès referred to the EBacc as 'the most dangerous … of the government's reforms' (*The Guardian*, 2012). Musician John Thirkell has recently argued that music education 'has been thrown to the wolves' (Todd, 2018) due to lack of investment from the centre. A recent piece in the flagship magazine of the Royal Academy of Arts carried an article with the headline: 'Art teaching in decline in our schools' (Sherlock, 2019).

An important consequence of all of this has been that the arts subjects have increasingly become the preserve of the middle-classes, as only more wealthy parents are able to support extra-curricular and out-of-school activities (Thomson et al., 2019). The Warwick Commission has warned that, 'Without educational intervention we are in danger of allowing a two-tier system in which the most advantaged in social and economic terms are also the most advantaged in benefitting economically, socially and personally from the full range of cultural and creative experiences' (The Warwick Commission, 2015: 46). Music has been especially badly affected in this regard, with research by the Musicians' Union suggesting that families with lower incomes are half as likely to have a child learning an instrument than those from higher incomes (Musicians' Union, 2018). Such concerns over accessibility and the potential wastage of young talent have likewise been voiced by a range of other media commentators (*The Guardian*, 2019a; *The Guardian*, 2019b; *Times Educational Supplement*, 2018).

Progressive Education and Arts Education

The link between arts education and progressive education in the period 1890–1950 was a strong one, resting primarily on the link between the progressive principle of the importance of self-expression and the arts' ability to facilitate this. Many of our pioneers emphasised how the arts subject could help children to develop this skill: this is evident, for example, in Henry Caldwell Cook's and Harriet Finlay-Johnson's

encouragement of children to create their own plays and in Seonaid Robertson's and Marion Richardson's interests in arts and crafts as a medium through which children could understand their own feelings. However, the facilitation of self-expression was more problematic in music which was in this period largely a teacher-directed activity, despite the efforts of those such as Walter Carroll to introduce individual and expressive elements into their practice. Among our pioneers, Stewart Macpherson was perhaps least concerned about self-expression and placed the most emphasis on children as consumers rather than producers of art.

Self-expression was sometimes considered in relation to the idea that key skills needed to be taught in order for children to be able to express themselves effectively. Like Friedrich Froebel himself (Liebschner, 2001), many of our pioneers struggled with determining the ideal balance between allowing the child freedom and offering adult guidance. This is demonstrated in Harry Peach's Dryad leaflets, which sometimes offered direct instructions for making specific objects and sometimes claimed their purpose was to function as a springboard for children's own ideas. Marion Richardson, prominent in advocating for children's own self-expression, still believed that the teacher's role was to support and guide development and to foster good taste. Seonaid Robertson, indeed, was critical of Richardson's approach and went further in attempts to facilitate self-expression without imposing her own values.

Other principles of progressive education were evident in the practice and philosophies of our pioneers. A key idea for many was correlation, that is to say the belief that learning flows naturally across perceived subject boundaries and children learn best when they make connections between all things (the guiding principle behind the concept of project work). Correlation was important to Walter Carroll, who advocated linking music with poetry and painting. Finlay-Johnson and Cook both believed in the power of drama to educate children across a range of subjects. Another principle of progressive education was the importance of providing children with opportunities for first-hand experiences and learning rooted in the physical as well as the intellectual world. Arts subjects were very well placed to offer opportunities for this and many of our pioneers pointed this out explicitly and used this as a justification for

what they were doing. Harry Peach for example, claimed that 'we learn by doing' (Peach, n.d.). Cecil Sharp made similar claims, arguing for the value of introducing a large quantity of songs to children rather than teaching them the formal principles of music. Another key progressive principle, prominent in the work of Friedrich Froebel, was the importance of linking the child with the wider community. Marion Richardson was largely focused on school children and their teachers but nonetheless she also worked for a time teaching in prisons and gave lectures to diverse audiences. Harry Peach, Cecil Sharp and Alice Gomme were all primarily interested in promoting arts to the population as a whole. They believed that arts in school and the arts elsewhere were in a mutually supportive symbiotic relationship: community enthusiasm was necessary to justify arts teaching in schools whilst this teaching would ultimately produce adults who enjoyed and propagated the arts in the wider community.

During this period, many progressive educators, keen to understand the child and place him/her at the centre of education, drew inspiration from the developing science of psychology (Wooldridge, 1994). This was true for some of our pioneers also. Henry Caldwell Cook had an expressed interest in the field. Seonaid Robertson's understandings of classroom interactions drew on Jungian psychoanalysis and related ideas about symbolism and archetypes whilst Marion Richardson was also interested in the therapeutic benefits of art.

In short, although these pioneers responded to the progressive movement in a variety of ways, it was a useful resource for all of them (with the possible exception of Macpherson). Even Seonaid Robertson, who did not seem to align herself explicitly with the movement, had beliefs and practices which mirrored the progressive approach, for example with regard to unifying arts subjects. Progressivism supplied inspiration and a bank of ideas on which our pioneers drew in order to develop their work and they in turn contributed to the development of the theory and practice of others. It helped them articulate the reasons for advocating for the arts subject they loved, connecting these with wider educational values and new understandings of how the needs of the child could be met. For some, particularly those such as Alice Gomme, Cecil Sharp and Harry Peach who stood largely outside the educational establishment, it

conferred a legitimacy and enabled them to network effectively to build support for their work.

Ideology and Arts Education

Our biographical portraits have demonstrated that most of our subjects were not overtly political figures and traditional divisions between right and left-wing have not been relevant to this investigation into the link between ideology and arts education. Those political declarations that do exist can be confusing, such as Cook's 'Your true revolutionary is only a conservative endowed with insight' (Cook, 1917: 12) or Sharp's description of himself as a 'Conservative Socialist' (Fox Strangways with Karpeles 1933: 23). As suggested in the introductory chapter, the two themes that have proved particularly relevant for arts education in this period are questions of national identity and the imposition of taste, with all that implies about power relationships between different social classes.

For many of our pioneers, there was a profound link between the arts and the nation. Cecil Sharp focused much of his energy on collecting English folk songs and dances; Harry Peach had a particular interest in collecting examples of English craftsmanship; whilst Alice Gomme, a sometime collaborator of Sharp, collected English (as well as Scottish and Irish) traditional games. This interest can be linked to Romantic views of a vanishing or perhaps already vanished rural past which somehow held the key to what the essence of Englishness was. There is no doubt that promoting these arts practices was associated with a wish to encourage patriotic sentiments. However, in common with the majority of English folk revivalists of this period, those of our pioneers interested in folk culture were absolutely not associated with imperialist pretentions or the sort of patriotism that Sharp characterised as 'frothy civilian bombast' (Sharp, [1906]: 8). Indeed, many of our pioneers also appreciated the products of other cultures: Cecil Sharp recognised that all folk music 'had its roots deep down in human nature' (Sharp, 1903: 5). Harry Peach was very interested in German traditions and in considering what the English could learn from these. Walter Carroll was a firm advocate of folk songs for the younger children but largely saw them as a stepping stone to the

international classical repertoire. Seonaid Robertson, in fact, moved wholly away from the idea of culture being a national phenomenon and was interested in the common, primeval culture of all humanity.

The question of educating children's artistic taste was an important one for all our pioneers in one way or another. For Cecil Sharp, this meant that children should enjoy folk music and dance whilst Walter Carroll and Stewart Macpherson were strongly interested in promoting appreciation of classical music. In drama, Henry Caldwell Cook and Alice Gomme were enthusiasts for Shakespeare as a representative of great literature. Marion Richardson aimed for her pupils to admire the work of artists ranging from Renaissance masters to contemporary figures such as Roger Fry and Laura Knight. Harry Peach was motivated in very large part by a desire that children should develop the sort of taste which would allow them to appreciate works of good design and craftsmanship. Marion Richardson was also interested in developing pupils' aesthetic appreciation of good quality home décor and furnishings, as was Seonaid Robertson, certainly early in her career.

The desire to educate children's taste—to move it away from some cultural products and towards others—was therefore fundamental to arts education in this period. Our pioneers were absolutely aware that they were doing this, but they did not often reflect deeply on the arbitrary nature of the concept of good taste and how bound up it was with their own class and educational experiences. As was particularly apparent in the chapter about Harriet Finlay-Johnson, they often inadvertently advocated a cultural deficit model in which the upbringing of local working-class children was seen as inadequate. The one exception here is Seonaid Robertson, our youngest pioneer and the one whose work stretched beyond the 1950s, who both experimented with using aspects of popular culture, such as fashion magazines, in her teaching and became more reluctant over time to pass judgement on children's taste. Our studies here demonstrate that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, middle-class ideologies of nation and class were imposed on children both very consciously and in unthinking ways but, by the second half of the twentieth century, some educators were beginning to question their right to do this.

Influence and Arts Education

Our investigations into the nature of influence in arts education has confirmed and exemplified the importance of all of the modes suggested in our introductory chapter. None of our pioneers were decision-makers at the national level, but some of them were able to make their voices heard in those circles. This was sometimes facilitated through personal connections. Harriet Finlay-Johnson benefited from the advocacy of the Chief Inspector for Elementary Schools, Edmond Holmes, and Marion Richardson caught the attention of the President of the Board of Education, H.A.L. Fisher, through the intervention of the art critic and painter, Roger Fry. Cecil Sharp was socially prominent enough to secure the ear of policy-makers and eventually had a formal position at the Board as an inspector. There were also opportunities for individuals to give evidence as part of deputations (Walter Carroll) or as part of Consultative Committee investigations (Henry Caldwell Cook and Marion Richardson). Others engaged in lobbying processes as part of organisations, such as Harry Peach with the Design and Industries Association and Stewart Macpherson with the Music Teachers' Association. However, it can be very difficult to be absolutely certain whether the individual in question actually caused a policy change to take place. Extant records rarely reveal the precise moment when a decision-maker had a change of heart and why that change that came about. It was often the case that multiple people and groups argued for similar shifts at a similar time. Sometimes we can say no more than that our individuals were making the same arguments as many others and the tide seemed to be flowing in their direction. Not all ideas find their audiences immediately however. Harriet Finlay-Johnson's approach to drama only really entered the mainstream when practitioners such as Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote developed the 'drama-in-education' movement much later.

In the early twentieth century, the Board of Education did not have the iron grip on school policy and practice which its successor bodies were later to exert. Local Education Authorities had a great deal of autonomy in matters of the curriculum. Walter Carroll, in his role as musical

adviser to the Manchester Education Authority, was able to have a very significant influence on music education in the city. Moreover, he was able to use this as a base to influence other geographical areas, particularly those also in the north of England. Individual schools could also become a site of experimentation from which ideas were diffused to others. The Perse (Cook), Sompting (Finlay-Johnson) and Streatham Hill High School (Macpherson) all functioned in this way.

Our pioneers used many different methods of dissemination. They delivered extensive lecture programmes to different audiences (e.g., Carroll, Sharp and Richardson) and published books setting out their ideas (all of our biographical subjects wrote books of some kind). Use was made of exhibitions (Harry Peach, Marion Richardson) and collections of objects and pictures for study in school (Peach and Richardson). Many of the pioneers recognised how important it was to convert and train individual teachers if policy and practice in schools was to change—this was a particular focus in the work of Walter Carroll and Cecil Sharp, and also of Marion Richardson during her time as a tutor at a training college and as a local inspector. Of course, assessing whether or not their ideas were actually implemented on the ground can be very challenging, but there is evidence, as presented in the relevant chapters, to suggest that they had some measure of success.

The work of our pioneers has demonstrated the importance of school resources in influencing children's lived experiences of arts education. In addition to more theoretical works, some of our pioneers produced resources such as leaflets explaining craft techniques (Harry Peach) and song, dance and dramatic games books which could be used with children (Cecil Sharp and Alice Gomme). Walter Carroll produced schemes of work for Manchester schools which were also used elsewhere. Harry Peach's work demonstrates the importance of physical arts resources: the materials he made available to schools and the affordances of these materials had a profound effect on practice. Indeed, it may be that this grassroots method of influence is more tangible than any other kind.

Conclusion: Ways Forward

It has been evident in the work of our pioneers that progressive education has been a valuable resource in creating and preserving a place for arts education in schools. It seems to us that it is still the case that strong theoretical arguments for an education programme that meets the holistic needs of children can be useful in combatting the heavy focus on utilitarian goals and measurable outcomes that has put such pressure on arts subjects. As a recent study of Froebelian identities has argued, encouraging teachers to develop a knowledge and understanding of the history of their profession and to develop principles grounded in child-centred theories can strengthen their ability to resist the demands of government to do what is not in the best interest of the child (Palmer & Read, 2020).

We believe also that there remains a need to forge links with the wider community in order to sustain interest and enthusiasm in the sort of mutually supportive relationship that we saw in our historical period. Opportunities for this are still rich and varied as many institutions continue to work extensively with schools and other organisations for young people in order to foster arts appreciation and experiences (cf. English Folk Dance and Song Society, 2020; Royal Shakespeare Company, 2020). The importance of such work is supported by Pat Thomson and colleagues, who researched the characteristics of schools and teachers who were successful in continuing to offer arts education of good quality. The teachers were 'deeply engaged' in the arts in their personal lives and were able to transfer this to the classroom. They also 'connected students to arts workplaces' and 'worked to enhance arts participation in their communities' (Thomson et al., 2019: 246–247).

Other aspects of what worked in the past need more thought. Our volume has indicated that schools which allowed teachers to experiment with new ideas were important in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century in nurturing innovative practice in the arts and in providing a base for this to spread. 'Free schools', state-funded schools with considerable autonomy, established by the Conservative-led government from 2010, are potentially in a position to take on this role, as they are required to develop their own unique visions for education. A stated aim for some

of these schools, particularly at the primary level, is a wish to develop 'democratic, play-based and/or child development philosophies': in other words, the progressive approach that might potentially be associated with the creative arts (Higham, 2014: 129). However, we certainly do not wish to offer unreserved endorsement to the free schools scheme, which, despite government assurances that it would contribute to greater social equality, has very much failed to deliver on this: free schools often have intakes 'more affluent than the neighbourhoods from which they recruit' (Allen & Higham, 2018). In any case, relying on centres of excellence to develop and disseminate good practice is a questionable strategy. A competitive, marketised environment is not conducive to co-operation between schools. Moreover, teachers today are subject to extremely heavy workloads, working on average eight hours more a week in England than in other industrialised nations (Weale, 2019) and it is not clear how much enthusiasm they would have for attendance at summer schools such as those organised by Cecil Sharp or lecture series such as those given by Walter Carroll.

Our volume has confirmed that ideological positions determine which cultural products are offered to children within arts education in schools. This is inescapable but needs careful consideration and we support calls for a constant process of re-examining the choices made and for the development of educational programmes that allow children to have a say in such choices. Thomson and colleagues note that successful schools and teachers in their study respected the child as an artist and 'sought out and used students' and communities' cultural resources', although the teachers' own tastes and cultural backgrounds necessarily continued to inform the curriculum offered (Thomson et al., 2019: 246). Our chapters have also demonstrated the importance of resources in supporting the arts curriculum and how these too need to be carefully considered. There is a complex relationship between what schools want and what publishers and manufacturers produce. Business people are trying to meet demands but are also encouraging the purchase of new products. Educators should at least be asking questions about what they buy, and, equally, what they may be able to successfully use again.

The societal and educational changes which have taken place from the late nineteenth-/early twentieth-century period to the current day have

been many and we cannot assume that policies and practices that were successful previously can automatically or easily be applied today. This volume has nonetheless demonstrated how a study of the past might cast some light on the current crisis in arts education and help us to begin to formulate ways forward. We wish to add our voices to those calling for further consideration, research and action.

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