

BOOK REVIEWS

Teaching The Global Dimension. Edited by David Hicks and Cathie Holden. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2007, 212 pp. ISBN: 10: 0-415-40448-7 (hbk); ISBN: 10: 0-415-40449-5 (pbk); ISBN: 10: 0-203-96277-X (ebk).

The significance of global education has been internationally recognised for some time and one of the editors of this book, David Hicks, has played an important role in providing conceptual clarity and rigour to this field. Hicks's work has consistently emphasised the need for a global and futures dimensions in the curriculum. In particular, Hicks advocates the ways in which critical approaches can engage teachers and students to think more creatively about these dimensions.

However, as many of us know from our teaching experience, it can be very challenging to implement global issues in the classroom and university tutorial. Students are not always interested in the local manifestations of global issues; sometimes particular approaches to controversial issues fail to challenge long-held assumptions; or it can be almost overwhelming to consider how we can make a difference when confronted with the scale of global issues such as poverty, injustice and environmental degradation.

Teaching The Global Dimension (2007), takes up this challenge, and contributes to the debates about what teaching a global dimension in the curriculum might involve.

This book draws upon an initiative of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England and Wales and its effort to articulate new aims for a national curriculum that encourages active and responsible citizenship. Significantly, in seeking to inspire learners and prepare them for the future, the QCA, in consultation with schools, decided to emphasise the importance of global dimensions. Following the QCA initiative, a guidance paper was published by the Department for Education and Skills which articulated eight important concepts of the global dimension that support understanding of local-global interdependence. This booklet, *Developing the Global Dimension in the School Curriculum* (2005), prompted Hicks and his co-editor, Cathie Holden, to develop these dimensions further and, in doing so, contribute to the debate about the ways in which this vision might be realised.

Teaching The Global Dimension (2007) is intended for primary and secondary teachers, pre-service teachers and educators interested in fostering global concerns in the education system. It aims at linking theory and practice and is structured as follows. Part 1, the global dimension, proposes an educational framework for understanding global concerns. Individual chapters in this section deal with some educational responses to global issues and the ways in which young people might become, in Hicks's terms, more "world-minded". In the first two chapters, Hicks presents first, some educational responses to global issues that have emerged in recent decades, and second, an outline of the evolution of global education as a specific field. As with all the chapters in this book, most of the examples are drawn from the United Kingdom. Young people's concerns, student teachers' views and the teaching of controversial issues, comprise the other chapters in this section.

Taken collectively, the chapters in Part 2 articulate the conceptual framework for developing, teaching and evaluating a global dimension across the curriculum. Individual chapters in this section, written by a range of authors, explore eight key concepts considered necessary to underpin appropriate learning experiences in the classroom. These are conflict, social justice, values and perceptions, sustainability, interdependence, human rights, diversity and citizenship. These chapters are engaging and well structured. Their common format consists of a succinct introduction, reference to positive action for change, and examples of recent effective classroom practice. Two chapters comprise the final section of this book and suggest different ways in which the global dimension can be achieved in the primary and the secondary classroom.

The combination of theory and practice in this book makes it very useful. For example, Cathie Holden's chapter on Teaching Controversial Issues (Part 1, The Global Dimension), draws on the seminal work of the same title by Stradling, Noctor and Baines (1984). Holden takes this work further by articulating some strategies for teaching knowledge, critical thinking skills and emotional literacy through specific learning opportunities. As she notes, teaching controversial issues involves more than a way into teaching politics or global issues. It also provides opportunities for involving both "head and heart" – something that can be incredibly engaging for students and rewarding for teachers. In the last section of this chapter, Holden provides some specific examples of opportunities for teaching about controversial issues across the curriculum, with examples ranging from Geography and History to Physical Education and Mathematics.

Similarly, Margot Brown's chapter on Human Rights (Part 2, Key Concepts), extrapolates some theoretical and practical aspects of reciprocity in human rights education and the ways in which taking action, in a range of contexts, contributes to change. In the section on "Good Practice", Brown provides some worthwhile insights into critiquing media coverage of human rights and makes reference to an interesting project linking primary teachers, students teachers and teacher educators in Morocco and England. Through this reciprocal exchange project participants from both countries found their cultural perceptions challenged. Perhaps most significantly, this project contributed to ongoing curriculum work in the participant schools and teacher education institutions from both countries. I found Brown's list of recommended resources at the conclusion of the chapter as starting points for further work to be very useful, and all the chapters in Part 2 utilised this helpful strategy.

Readers of this journal will be particularly interested in the chapter on Sustainable Development (Part 2, Key Concepts). Ros Wade commences this chapter with reference to the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development and the derivation of "sustainable development" as a term which encompasses both the welfare of the planet and the welfare of people. The dilemma of how to reconcile the development needs of the disadvantaged and poor and simultaneously address the environmental needs of the planet and the needs of future generations is clearly enunciated under the chapter section "Understanding the issue". In the Chapter's "Action for Change" segment, Wade emphasises the crucial role that education plays in challenging unsustainable practices and provides some fascinating examples of the ways in which Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) can be implemented in the classroom.

This book is highly recommended for its succinct overview of both theoretical insights and examples of best practice in global education. Each chapter is clearly written and the examples of classroom practice are inspiring. Moreover, its clear, insightful prose makes it accessible, inspiring and useful for teachers, pre-service teachers and teacher educators.

References

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