Editorial

I am writing this editorial at a time when there is significant global uncertainty. Today the front pages of nearly every national or local newspaper have two sets of photographs: one set pictures sees columns of troops in desert camouflage preparing for war; the other has crowds of people of all ages and walks of life demonstrating against a war against Iran. Here the tensions of international global politics are being fully demonstrated. The key idea though is that of politics and political interest and debate.

In the seven papers that are presented in this first edition of CHANGE for 2003 the politics of education and the political project of education is a recurrent theme. Michael Apple sets the scene to demonstrate the all pervasiveness of politics in the discourses and processes of education. He argues that conservative modernisation has radically reshaped the common-sense of society, working in every sphere – the economic, the political and the cultural to alter the basis categories we use to evaluate our institutions and our public and private lives. Using the example of the successes of the Right in shaping common-sense, Apple indicates that much can be learned from the successes of politics of the Right and proposes a set of strategies that could be used to interrupt the Right’s educational agenda.

The politics of education is further taken up by Thompson and Reid in their paper on the dominant discourses of the state aid debate. In this paper Thompson and Reid suggest that recent decisions by the Commonwealth government to increase funding to private schools has reignited the debate on state aid. Their argument is twofold: first is that the traditional defences of public education have proved inadequate to the task of changing the course of current neo-liberal education policy trajectories and second the need to rethink Australian public education becomes a more urgent project.

Horsley and Thomas take the political project to the professions. In their paper they report on the relationships between professional regulation and professional autonomy by analysing the operation of professional disciplinary procedures and mechanisms in a range of professions. On the basis of their evidence they claim that many professions have maintained aspects of professional autonomy by developing peer review as the basis for professional disciplinary mechanisms.

The direction of politics, common sense and good sense takes on an historical perspective in the paper by Reid and Martin when they explore a range of representations of the experience of beginning teachers in New South Wales country towns during the Depression. In this piece where they juxtapose a piece of fictional work by Kylie Tennant against the responses of teachers in letters to the then Principal of Armidale Teachers College and an interview with a former teacher we read of the trials and tribulations of neophyte teachers as they negotiate learning how to teach with living in isolation in rural and remote areas.
The contribution by Lloyd and Yelland on teachers’ reactions to information and communications technology in the classroom indicates the impact of uncertainty on teachers’ practice and sense of themselves as competent practitioners. They tell of the complexities of change and the struggles faced by individuals coming to terms personally and professionally with externally imposed change.

The politics of assessment is taken up by Chitpin in her paper on authentic assessment of student work. She suggests that the use of student portfolios for student learning are becoming increasingly important as an alternative to traditional standardized assessment practices. For Chitpin portfolios provide teachers with a more diversified set of tools and practices for managing issues surrounding multi-culturalism, integration and student economic and ethnic diversity.

In the final paper in this edition, Coombes and Smith reconsider the interpretation of the Hawthorn effect upon applied research in the social sciences. As a form of the politics of knowledge they show how the Hawthorn effect validates the exclusion of the researcher within a social setting and justifies the use of artificial social laboratories.

Politics in various forms are now everyday occurrences. How people negotiate the politics of uncertainty and the ambiguities inherent in change is illustrated in the various papers presented in this volume. I imagine that these will not be the last we hear of politics and change.

PROFESSOR JUDYTH SACHS, EDITOR
NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The editors invite submission of paper related to the aim of Change: Transformations in Education. Papers will not be considered if they have been published previously or are being considered for publication elsewhere. All papers are fully refereed.

Manuscripts

1. Manuscripts should be typed double spaced on one side of the paper, with generous margins all around. Single spaced manuscripts will not be considered for publication. Three hard copies and a disk should be submitted (see below).

2. For anonymity in the reviewing process, authors' name, affiliations, postal addresses and telephone numbers should appear on a separate covering page.

3. Articles should be approximately 6,000 words in length.

4. An abstract of approximately 150 words should accompany each manuscript.

5. Manuscripts should conform to the style of papers published in Change: Transformations in Education.

6. References should be indicated in the manuscript by giving the author's name, with the year of publication in parentheses. If several papers by the same author and from the same year are cited, then a, b, etc, should be placed after the year of publication. References should be listed in full at the end of the paper in the following format:

   Urbane, I. M. (1995, June) 'Civilisation in the Holy Roman Empire'.
   Paper presented at the Annual conference of Medieval Scholars, Trier.

7. All figures must be in camera-ready form.

8. Once a manuscript has been accepted, after revision, it must be submitted on a microcomputer disk as well as in hard copy. The preferred format is a PC formatted 3.5 inch disk Double Sided high Density. The required data format is in Microsoft Word 98 or earlier.

9. Manuscripts not conforming to the above guidelines will not be considered for publication.

Book Reviews

1. Books relevant to education may be sent to the Book Review Editor, Dr. Nigel Bagnall,
   Change: Transformations in Education, Faculty of Education & Social Work, University of Sydney
   NSW, 2006, Australia, who will consider soliciting a review for inclusion in the journal.

2. Book reviews must be typed double-spaced, and should be prepared in the style of review published in the journal. One copy only of book reviews is required.

Proof

Proofs will be sent to the authors if there is sufficient time to do so. They should be corrected and returned to the editor within three days. Major alterations to the text cannot be accepted.

Offprints

Authors are entitled to two copies of the journal free.
Editorial

Interrupting the Right: On doing critical educational work in conservative times
*Michael W. Apple, University of Wisconsin-Madison*

Challenging the dominant discourses of the state aid debate
*Pat Thomas, University of South Australia*
*Alan Reid, University of South Australia*

Professional regulation & professional autonomy:
Benchmarks from across the professions – The New South Wales experience
*Mike Horsley, University of Sydney*
*David Thomas, University of Sydney*

“Speak softly, be tactful, and assist cheerfully…”
Women beginning teaching in 1930s NSW
*Jo-Anne Reid, Charles Sturt University*
*Sylvia Martin, University of New England*

Authentic assessment of student work: The use of portfolios
*Stephanie Chitpin, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of The University of Toronto*

Adaptation and avoidance: Observations of teachers’ reactions to information and communications technology in the classroom
*Margaret Lloyd, Queensland University of Technology*
*Nicola Yelland, RMIT University, Melbourne*

The Hawthorne effect:
Is it a help or a hindrance in social science research?
*Steven J. Coombs, Sonoma State University, California*
*Ian D. Smith, University of Sydney*