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AUTHOR Haynes, Bruce
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ABSTRACT

A description is given of an exemplary program, developed by Claremont Teachers College in West Australia, that involved on-site teacher development to help introduce children in grades 1-4 to historical thinking. The College provided academic staff for the project and assisted teachers by providing advice and materials. The long term objectives of this project were not only to raise the standard of primary school history teaching by concentrating on teacher development and production of materials for specific purposes, but also to provide a model of regionalized curriculum development. In view of the success of this project, the question of whether other teacher education institutions can build such activities into its normal program and offer them to many schools over the range of the whole curriculum is considered. (JD)

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ON-SITE INSERVICE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT : CLAREMONT HISTORY INVESTIGATIONS PROJECT

Claremont History Investigations Project is a form of curriculum development by way of on-site teacher development to help initiate primary school children into historical thinking. Part of the object of CHIP is to explore an alternative means by which teacher education institutions can contribute to teacher development. In addition to accredited full and part-time award courses, inservice courses and conferences on specific topics, public lectures, seminars, annual conferences, publications and the like, teacher education institutions should consider the desirability and feasibility of on-site inservice teacher development.

CHIP ACTIVITIES 1979-80

CHIP was the first research project to be funded by Claremont Teachers College through its Research and Development Committee. The College provided academic staff for the project to the extent of a Director (1 day per week), Participants (2) (liaison with schools 1 day per week), and Consultants (4) (attend meetings 1 hour per week). During the first half of 1979 contacts were established with education authorities and some schools in Western Australia and with curriculum centres in Australia. A literature search on aspects of history teaching was carried out.

The following project objectives were formulated.

In the context of the existing primary school social studies programme and within the limitations of the resources of the project,

the immediate objectives are:

1. To initiate some primary school children into historical thinking via dynamic historical investigations.
2. To assist teachers in their efforts with regard to (1) by providing advice and materials.
3. To stimulate some teachers and Claremont Teachers College lecturers in their approach to teaching children and engender enthusiasm for teaching history.

The long term objectives are:

4. To raise the standard of primary school history teaching by concentrating on teacher development and production of materials for specific purposes.
5. To refine a theory of rationality to inform further improvement of the education of children.
6. To provide a model of regionalised curriculum development.
7. To stimulate teacher education institutions to become directly involved with schools through regionalised curriculum innovation and teacher development in the classroom.

In third term 1979, two forms of intervention were used in different primary schools. At one school, CHIP implemented history based social studies entitled "My Parent's Time" in Year 5 and "Personal Time Line" in Year 7. The initial suggestion for these activities came from the CHIP team and a member of the College staff was actively engaged in teaching in these classes. At the other school, CHIP responded to the requests from the staff for assistance in planning and providing resources for local history studies in Year 4, timelines in Year 5, Australian explorers in Year 6, and excursion to the eastern goldfields

of Western Australia for Year 7. In 1980 CHIP will be involved in three primary schools assisting teachers with a wide range of history based social studies.

The activities of CHIP to date have achieved the immediate objectives to varying degrees. Consideration is given in the remainder of this paper to some aspects of the project's seventh objective.

TEACHER EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS

A somewhat gross, but not entirely unfair, characterisation of the relation between teacher education institutions and schools would be that the wide gulf between them is bridged only (a) when the institutions need to disperse pre-service students among schools for relatively unplanned and uncontrolled teaching experience, and (b) when teachers in the schools need to attend formal courses for salary or promotional qualifications. It seems that many teachers and teacher educators see no reason why there should be any significant change in this relation. In particular, they do not see why there should be a concerted effort on the part of teacher education institutions to improve the working of schools or why there should be an exploitation, by the schools, of the resources of teacher education institutions. In this section of the paper a case is made for a change in the relation between teacher education institutions and schools and the final section of the paper consists of some observations about how that change might be attempted in the light of the CHIP experience.

Two forms of argument are advanced here. The first is that significant change in teaching behaviour is more likely to be achieved using means other than formal study for B.Ed. degrees and other qualifications, and the second argument is that teacher educators should seek to make significant changes in the thinking and behaviour of teachers and, through them, improve the influence of schools upon children.

If a change in teacher thinking and its attendant behaviour is desired then teachers can be told about it in a lecture (much as I am doing here). Such a lecture may convince them that such a change should be made and provide some advice and information about how to go about it. However, only some of those so convinced are likely to try to make the change and many of those who try will fail through lack of information, advice, and support. More information and advice about the change can be made available if, in addition to lectures, demonstrations are given (such as is available if you observe CHIP in action at Claremont and in the schools). It is preferable that the demonstration take place in the context where the change is desired (perhaps a CHIP type project could be mounted in your teacher education institution or school). Such demonstrations are likely to increase the conviction of teachers that the change should be attempted and also provide them with a richer source from which to sustain their own attempts at making the change. However, it seems that change in teacher thinking and behaviour is most likely to occur if on-site support is given while the teachers concerned struggle to make the desired changes. On-site support may be either an addition to the above mentioned means or instead of them, depending upon the circumstances or kind of changes sought. In short, teacher educators would be more effective if they worked in schools as

[illegible] of their in-service activities.[1] In addition to the support provided for daily teaching activity, the teacher educators are in a position to point to larger issues arising from this activity. These issues may include aspects of what is being taught, features of the processes and context of schooling, and elements of the teacher's capacity to make justifiable decisions. Such issues warrant study and reflection away from the pressures of classroom decisions. Formal courses similar to those now presented could then be seen to have a point in the professional development of the teachers concerned and this would be the focus for the presentation of those courses. A combination of on-site and more formal campus-based inservice activities would seem to be more likely to bring about desired changes in teacher thinking and behaviour than either of these approaches in isolation.

The second argument put here is that teacher educators should be active and effective in changing teachers for the better. To be an educator implies commitment to a view of what is desirable and an effort to bring about appropriate changes in one's charges by ethical means. To be a teacher educator implies commitment to a view of what is desirable in teachers, what is taught, schools, society, and a range of other matters. Clearly, such a commitment does not mean that all questions of values have been positively resolved but that the teacher educator acts in accordance with the value judgements that have been made. On reflection it can be seen that teacher educators have made many value judgements and been committed to a

1 See Mann, D. (1978, p.214) or Cruickshank, D.R. et al. (1979, p.28) for some characteristics of successful inservice programmes.

view of what is desirable for the teaching profession. But to have views on what is desirable is not all that is required. The teacher educator must also understand the teaching/learning/schooling processes. Without such an understanding it will not be likely that appropriate changes can be selected as goals for teacher development.[2] Further, it is unlikely that teacher education would be successful without such an understanding. Again, such understanding does not mean that all questions of fact about teaching/learning/schooling processes have been positively resolved but that the teacher educator acts within the limits of what is known. What is claimed here is that teacher educators do not have a responsibility to make the present teacher education institutions function smoothly (or in a politically acceptable fashion) but, rather, to educate teachers in the most effective fashion subject to ethical and economic constraints.

If it can be shown that important aspects of teaching can be improved then teacher educators have an obligation in that regard. If the means by which teacher education is carried on are demonstrably inadequate then other means should be tried, even at the cost of institutional change. In short, the question of paramount importance is what kinds of change are teacher educators to bring about and, in the light of answers to that, to consider the appropriate delivery structures. The feature of the delivery structure, of concern in this paper, is the relation between teacher education institutions and schools. For the kinds of changes desired by CHIP the relation, characterised at the beginning of this section of the paper, is inadequate.

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2. Note that not all changes are developments. To be a development is to be related to a specified end-state or goal. Without knowledge of the goal or understanding of the processes involved, no change can be identified as a development.

CHANGING THE RELATION BY CURRICULUM INNOVATION[3]

CHIP embodies a change of attitude by a teacher education institution towards schools. From small beginnings, it seeks to change teachers and the schools they work in by responding to the teachers' requests for assistance in carrying out their daily tasks. The strategy for such access to teachers is to be involved in curriculum innovation at the school level.

CHIP offers the resources of time, expertise in research and planning, materials for lessons, comfort and advice to teachers and to teachers working as a school staff. CHIP supports and assists the teachers in their endeavours in history based social studies in the primary schools. In so doing there is the opportunity to direct or challenge the teacher or staff into areas that would otherwise not be considered. There is also the opportunity to improve the teaching in the school either by demonstration or by support. The teacher education staff benefit by being challenged to make their ideas work in classroom situations and by having the conviction that what they can do can also be done by others. This close, detailed contact between CHIP staff and teachers[4] typifies the caring commitment of the educator responsible for the development of others. The traditional gulf between school and teacher education institution reflects the distance proper between educator and student. A problem, as always, is to maintain the balance between these two aspects of educating.

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3. I presume that all at this conference have heard, understood and accepted what was said by Professor Eric Hoyle in his address "Innovation and Teacher Education".

4. In order to complete this paper I am now foregoing a meeting over coffee between a CHIP participant, CHIP research assistant and a teacher who is giving up an afternoon of her holidays to plan her second term programme.

For CHIP to go into a few schools and cater for the development of a few teachers in history based social studies over a limited time is feasible as a research project. The question remains as to whether a teacher education institution can build such activities into its normal programme and offer them to many schools over the range of the whole curriculum. In a limited way CHIP has managed to institutionalise some features in its Social Studies 110 course and by use of students on teaching practice. To make a significant change in the relation between teacher education institution and schools will require answers and action on at least three main issues, viz., conviction, resources, and expertise.

Conviction is required on the part of the teacher education staff and administration that on-site teacher development is an integral part of teacher education and is properly provided by teacher education institutions. Conviction is also required on the part of school teachers and administration that teacher educators have something to offer towards their professional development and that it should take place on-site as well as at the teacher education institution. The CHIP experience indicates that enough teachers are already convinced, at least sufficiently so that a more general programme could be undertaken.

Resources are required to make curriculum innovation and professional development of teachers work at the school level. In times of reduced student intakes into teacher education at the pre-service level it is possible to redirect manpower to inservice work. While the present Australian funding arrangements are maintained it will be very difficult to mount a useful on-site teacher development

programme. By increasing the 0.5% of expenditure that may be spent on programmes like CHIP the Commonwealth could facilitate teacher development without increased expenditure. Many teacher education institutions are locked into situations where they have the resources but are prevented from using them effectively by financial arrangements that are no longer relevant.

Expertise is required by teacher educators if they are to be effective in a new role. Skills in lecturing, tutoring, researching, or surviving on committees may not be of use in managing on-site teacher development. The political skills of bringing about desirable change in an environment where those who are to make the efforts and change have the power,which goes with playing on their home ground, are somewhat different from those required of a lecturer confronting pre-service students. These and other skills involved in curriculum innovation would also have to be developed before a CHIP programme could be effectively institutionalised and become part of the teacher education offering.

The relation between teacher education institutions and schools is generally unsatisfactory from the proint of view of promoting professional development of teachers. The relation would be better if there was a closer and continuing contact between institution and teachers but there are practical limits to what contacts can be maintained. It seems unlikely that contact and commitment to the professional development of all its graduates is something that a teacher education institution could hope to sustain. A teacher education institution could make a continuing commitment to the professional development of teachers in schools in a convenient

region. In this way the resources of the institution are not intolerably stretched and use can be made of the expertise of the teachers in the schools. CHIP has plans to provide conferences for teachers involved in the project to establish networks for mutual assistance independent of CHIP. It should be stressed that the relation between teacher education institution and schools in the region would not be as a place for pre-service education (as is evidenced by the names of the schools near Claremont Teachers College, viz., East Claremont Practising School and Claremont Demonstration School).The point of commitment to these regional schools' curriculum innovation is to promote the development of the teachers who are currently working there. It may be that pre-service teachers observe and teach in these schools or that interns are supervised by [illegible] teachers in these schools, but the relation which is argued for in this paper, based on CHIP experience, is a commitment by teacher education institutions to on-site teacher development through curriculum innovation.

In summary, it is contended that

1. Teacher education institutions, in order to educate or develop teachers, must have a view of what is desirable and work towards achieving it;
2. Commitment is required of teacher education institutions and staff to improving the education of children by providing on-site inservice teacher development;
3. Teacher education institutions can make a significant impact on schools through desirable curriculum innovation;

4. Curriculum innovation is dependent upon teacher development;
5. Schools in a convenient region to be the continuing responsibility of a teacher education institution for curriculum innovation;
6. Both teachers and teacher educators benefit from attempting manageable curriculum innovations;
7. Teacher educators must learn skills, including political skills, required to change teachers and schools while they work;
8. Formal courses at teacher education institutions are to be seen by teachers as contributing to aspects of their professional development arising from their school activities;
9. The 0.5% of funding available for activities such as is proposed here be liberalised;
10. Declining pre-service intakes allow improvement in the quality of teachers without increasing expenditure by teacher education institutions.

BRUCE HAYNES

(DIRECTOR: CLAREMONT HISTORY INVESTIGATIONS PROJECT)

CLAREMONT TEACHERS COLLEGE

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