
Reclaiming work: education and work in Scotland

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Abstract

A prominent feature of education policy in the United Kingdom in the 1980s and 1990s has been an emphasis on 'enterprise education' in response to Jim Callaghan's challenge to a 'Great Debate'. This has taken many different forms. Most commonly it has involved the promotion of work-based learning and work-related learning in terms of what have been called 'education-industry links' (EIL). In England and Wales this has involved specific curriculum guidelines and directives. In Scotland, by comparison, the focus has been much softer in that the pragmatic emphasis on employability, lifelong learning and the promotion of EIL is located within a wider context. In November 1997, Brian Wilson, the Minister for Education and Industry at the time, indicated that Scottish schools had a responsibility to help young people make the transition from school to work. Her Majesty's (HM) Inspectors followed up on this directive with a report titled: *Education for work in schools* (1999). The report, while evidence-based in the sense that it is based on inspections of 'best practice' in 28 schools, is not research-based or related to relevant bodies of literature on the changing nature of work in advanced societies.

In this paper, I make the plea for policy makers to begin to recognise philosophical, historical and sociological perspectives on the changing nature of work. First, I briefly examine the immediate background of the *Education for work in schools* report; second, I provide a brief synopsis of the policy; and third, I review the policy in terms of the work of Andre Gorz, Jeremy Rifkin and Anthony Giddens.

Introduction

Education for work is currently built into the curriculum for many young people in Scotland's schools and is recommended as a major priority to interested parties; namely, all sectors of education and industry, and parents and the wider

community. Following the publication of a national framework *Education for work. Education industry links in Scotland* (Scottish Consultative on the Curriculum 1999) and *How good is our school at education industry links?* (Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum & Scottish Office Education and Industry Department 1997), HM Inspectors of Schools produced *Education for work in schools* (Scottish Executive Education Department 2000), a report aimed at describing good practice, evaluating key features and making recommendations to improve the quality of education for work across Scotland. The report is evidence-based in terms of observation and discussion rather than research into any conceptual background necessary to understanding this area of the curriculum. With this paper, I argue that the involvement of teachers and policy makers in education for work should be underpinned by an informed recognition of philosophical, historical and sociological perspectives on the changing nature of work.

There is currently input in teacher education courses and staff development opportunities for teachers regarding aspects of education for work, but these are generally curriculum-based and fail to address the development of teachers' understanding of the changing nature of work in a global society.² Further, in acquiring this wider context, teachers are not supported by the available resources or the curriculum documentation they receive. There is a narrow focus on employability, acquiring 'enterprise skills' and suggestions that lifelong learning is desirable, without encouragement to become familiar with the conditions that affect how the changing nature of work and its place in society is understood.

There is a wealth of reading available on the views of contemporary sociologists, political economists, philosophers and indeed educators on the ways in which societies are developing, the impact of globalisation and the growth in importance of knowledge capital, all of which have implications for understanding the nature of work and questions of who or what controls work in a given society. Policy makers and teachers need to be informed by this background - whether they agree with the analyses or not - to then engage young people in schools in programs relevant to their needs. It is also important for young people to engage in the arguments and debate about the social context they will inherit.

Education for work in Scottish schools

Background to the Education for work in schools report

In Scotland, enterprise education has traditionally referred to education-industry linked activity, which in secondary schools has relied on business and education working in partnership to provide young adults with awareness and some experience of the world of work. In primary schools, although there are links to business partners, the experiences available are often built around classroom-based marketing and production activities such as mini-enterprise projects. Visits

to and from business partners in the local area are often used to support such projects. These activities are now more often described by the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) as 'education for work', although the term 'enterprise education' persists, particularly when business partners refer to their contribution to the development of activities and resources. Some of the education partnerships with business in Scotland have tended to concentrate on the development of entrepreneurial skills, while policy for teachers puts more stress on wider aspects of raising skill levels in areas that could enhance employability.

Enterprise education is currently a feature of the curriculum in almost all schools. In the secondary sector there are initiatives that link specific subjects and personal skills to career pathways for pupils, and which provide work experience and knowledge through a variety of links with business and industry. In many cases this important aspect of learning is given the dedicated support of a senior post with particular responsibility for developing education-industry links.

In the secondary sector, where a move from the school system to adult participation in society is rather imminent, it is valuable for pupils to be aware of the options open to them, and to have an understanding of how society in general, and the economy in particular, operate in relation to business and industry. In Scotland there are opportunities for pupils studying Business Education, Economics and Modern Studies to explore wider social, economic and political contexts in order to understand work in their society, and Religious and Moral Education and Personal and Social Education can offer contexts for ethical considerations of the ways in which work, or the lack of it, is treated in Scottish society. There is a need, however, for more focused attempts to raise awareness and encourage debate amongst all pupils on the changing nature of work in their society, as currently there is a rather non-critical acceptance of both the role of education for work in secondary schools and of the various ways in which it is delivered.

The secondary stage seems appropriate for the sort of practical engagement with the world of work practiced, but as attitudes and dispositions are being formed and affected much earlier, these require addressing in primary school. There are indeed resources and suggestions for practice as early as the pre-school stage. In primary schools, however, the focus and purpose of education for work is currently less clear than in secondary schools. Most primary schools now include their own version of enterprise education in the curriculum. This is mainly in the form of an enterprise topic or project that is built in at some stage. There is welcome support in terms of resources and staff development on offer; often from business and industry sources, but also through the Schools' Enterprise Programme, Education/Business Partnerships and through the National Centre for Education and Work.

Research (Fagan 1998) indicates that primary teachers in Scotland recognise the value of enterprise education across all aspects of the curriculum, particularly in support of social and personal skills that benefit all learning. There is evidence, however, that in most cases enterprise education is carried out by means of a manufacturing and selling activity (Fagan 1998) that allows a range of associated activities based on management of production and retail. There have been attempts in some primary schools to organise different kinds of projects, eg environmental activities or service activities, but these are less common, perhaps because the product-based activities are relatively easy to set up and can be well resourced. There is some resource support for variety in styles of project, but in practice, manufacturing enterprise is the predominant choice.

There are two main drawbacks inherent in the fact that enterprise education has evolved in this way in the primary sector. The first is that current economic factors in Scotland, and beyond, dictate that only a small proportion of current school leavers find employment in an unpredictable manufacturing sector, or are able to start up viable manufacturing enterprises of their own. Even less predictable are the prospects for current primary pupils expecting to find employment in the manufacturing sector in six or seven years from now. There is a danger that young people will emerge with a narrow view of the possibilities awaiting them, which will restrict their options and their personal flexibility in the future.

The second drawback is dependence upon a topic approach. Topics generally run for limited periods of time and are located in one-off slots at particular stages within the curriculum. Schools vary greatly in their choice of stage and timing for their enterprise topics. Sound justifications are offered by teachers who have located their projects at particular places to suit programs of study within whole school plans.³

In contrast to the approach in England and Wales, where for many years there have been curriculum directives for schools to engage in education-industry links, the approach in Scotland has allowed teachers to opt for involvement in enterprise education in all sectors. A set of detailed guidelines to support initiatives in schools has only been available in more recent times. The Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (SCCC) provided schools with a framework for action in 1995, followed by a new edition in 1999, and these are recommended to teachers, and their partners in education for work, as a means of making provision more coherent. Both of these documents offer a rationale for education for work, with the latter document putting more emphasis on education for work as an 'essential part of lifelong learning for living' (SCCC 1999, p 2). The 1995 document claims to meet 'needs identified in national research' without indicating to which research it refers, and neither document directs readers to any wider reading or research to provide an informed context for teaching and learning under the heading of education for work.

In preparing the *Education for work in schools* report (2000), SEED have attempted to discover how schools are dealing with issues linked to education/industry, and offer teachers guidance on good practice in teaching and learning that links education and work. A useful way forward, particularly for primary teachers and teachers of early secondary, is in the creative use of a document referred to in *Education for work in schools*, titled: *Education for work. Education industry links - a national framework* (SCCC 1999). In providing indicators for education/industry in the document, SCCC link activity at different stages and give schools a framework to evaluate the ways in which enterprise knowledge, skills and attitudes are already addressed in all areas of the curriculum. If opportunities for addressing education-industry links are present across the curricular areas and at every stage, then although there is a place for particular topics or projects whenever appropriate, an enterprise culture is established, so that issues are addressed and revisited using a spiral approach that allows for a development of understanding and expertise.

Report synopsis

In the foreword of *Education for work in schools: a report by HM Inspectors of Schools* (SEED 2000), Douglas Osler, HM Senior Chief Inspector of Schools, stresses the increased emphasis on work-related learning in Scottish schools. He states that the notion of education for work is about 'preparing pupils for the world of work in the widest sense', and cites the importance of this approach for Scottish society as a whole. Education for work is promoted as a major priority for schools that 'needs to be central to the curriculum'.

The report is based on information gathered from inspections of 28 schools, supplemented by other evidence collected from general inspections. The evaluations were undertaken with reference to *Education for work. Education industry links in Scotland: a national framework* (SCCC 1999) and *How good is our school at education industry links? Self evaluation using performance indicators* (SCCC & SOEID 1997). The schools were asked to describe their education-for-work arrangements against the following terms used in the report:

- aims
- policy
- coordination
- defined program
- curriculum content
- enterprise
- staff development
- school development planning
- policy and support of education authorities
- policy and support of education business partnerships.

The report includes an examination of the evidence available from specially selected schools in the primary and secondary sectors and special schools, covering such topics as:

- aims and objectives of the curriculum
- learning, teaching and attainment
- resources
- management and quality assurance
- wider issues of education for work
- recommendations.

The curriculum: aims and objectives of the programs

It was reported that that schools were getting better at setting aims for education for work, but that objectives need to be more specific. The goals they set, however, were now broader than those of traditional notions of vocational preparation. The report suggests that education for work should aim to help all pupils make a successful transition to the world of work, and establish the basis of a successful career, by enabling them to:

- see clear purposes in school as a relevant preparation for their future lives as citizens and workers, and as early steps in the process of lifelong learning;
- understand the relationships between their learning experiences and attainments, and activities that link education and industry;
- maximise their employability by developing their motivation, experience, knowledge, understanding, attitudes and core skills, to reach the highest possible levels of attainment; and
- develop their confidence and skills, including those of enterprise and entrepreneurship, to contribute effectively in the changing economic circumstances of the future.

(para 2.4)

Although the selected primary schools displayed many strengths in their programs, ‘only about one primary school in six in the general inspection programme indicated that it offered clearly defined activities in education for work’ (para 2.11).

Programs in the secondary schools were much better developed, had a significant place in the curriculum, and were supported by ‘extended teams of staff’ and ‘management time’. Like the primary schools, examples of well-defined programs of education for work were less in evidence in the general inspection program. Special schools had many common features to those for comparable stages found in the primary and secondary schools.

Learning, teaching and attainment

It was reported that ‘a range of effective approaches to learning and teaching in education for work’ was in use in the inspected schools. Benefits to pupils’ motivation and attainment were noted at all stages. Many staff helped pupils to reflect upon their work in education for work activities ‘to ensure pupils recognised and consolidated what they had learned’, but few schools engaged in formal assessment or recording of achievement in education for work.

Resources

An extensive range of resources was available to schools, as was support from local Education Business Partnerships (EBPs), although the range and quality of support was reported as varied. Secondary schools made more use of EBP support than primary schools.

National resources included:

- clear national guidelines;
- performance indicators supplied by HM Inspectors of Schools; and
- materials for guidance and support provided by the SCCC.

(para 4.1)

Inspected schools had made good use of this support, but the wider group made too little use of the support available to them.

Management and quality assurance

The report states that high quality of pupils’ experience in education for work could be directly related to the priority it was given by headteachers, in the case of primary schools; and by senior management teams in secondary schools. Secondary schools often managed their programs through principal teachers or coordinators of education-industry links. Recommendations are made to primary schools that, if they have no designated coordinator for education for work, it ‘is appropriately reflected in management remits’ (para 5.6).

Education for work: the wider issues

The report indicated a need in primary schools to ensure that all pupils had access to: the core skills of the curriculum; aspects of environmental education that develop relevant skills for education for work; enterprise activities related to business and careers; and opportunities for personal and social development ‘relevant to their future place in the world of work’ (para 6.1).

The secondary schools that were inspected showed evidence of addressing the same core skills, but a lack of coherent and progressive programs to deliver an education for work entitlement for all secondary pupils. The results in the special schools were similar, but the education-for-work programs here

were given larger amounts of time and afforded useful opportunities for pupils to show their developed skills and ‘demonstrate their positive capabilities to employers’ (para 6.3). It was suggested that all schools should recognise the contribution of education-for-work programs in increasing appreciation of the value of lifelong learning, and provide contexts for raising achievement. The importance of working with parents, employers and the wider community is emphasised, as is the contribution to the development of young people as capable citizens.

Recommendations

The report contains separate sets of recommendations for schools, SCCC (now Learning and Teaching Scotland), education authorities, careers service companies, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, EBPs and the National Centre: Education for Work and Enterprise. The main recommendations for schools were to:

- use national guidelines and resources supplied by the SCCC and self-evaluation tools provided by HM Inspectors of Schools;
- implement policies on education for work that are based on national advice and the policies of local authority;
- provide appropriate resources to assist staff in delivering education for work;
- make use of the support and goodwill of employers and the wider community as resources for education for work;
- take account of the motivating effects of education for work for all pupils, including those who are disaffected;
- ensure that pupils’ achievements and experience in education for work are appropriately assessed, recorded and recognised;
- ensure education for work is appropriately managed and coordinated at a senior level;
- put in place appropriate quality assurance procedures; and
- use school development planning to identify school aims for education for work, carry out audits of current provision and set targets for improvement.

(para 7.2)

Comment

The schools selected for inspection for this report were already identified as having some track record in the area of education for work as described in national frameworks, with comparisons made to a wider group of schools that had already undergone general inspections. Several of the selected schools are

noted for receiving positive reports on inspection - and in some cases, press coverage - for their excellence in a range of aspects of provision; their commitment to education for work could thus be considered part of their overall ethos and effectiveness. It is no surprise, therefore, that the select group was generally exhibiting the kind of practice that the inspectors were expecting to find. In some aspects, however, results were less convincing, and in many cases the general inspections gave no indication of any wholesale movement to fit education for work programs into the recommended formats or to explore the educational issues that might drive teachers' aspirations when engaging in such programs.

The information gathered is evidence-based in relation to preset frameworks, and the issues explored are not wide enough to allow consideration of the response of education to shifting understandings of the meaning of work in Scottish society. The information gathered from the schools was based on how the schools were attempting to follow national and local guidelines, without exploring the purposes and aspirations of the teachers and school policy makers in being involved in education for work.

There is some recognition of a society dealing with a changing world of work and flexible labor markets of the future, but no advice for teachers in becoming familiar with current thoughts and ideas about the ways in which work might be changing or how to help young people to be flexible enough to cope. The extent of the changes facing Scottish society is such that teachers and policy makers urgently need to increase their awareness of issues that will have a huge impact on the future lives of today's school pupils, their likely roles in society and on the nature of society itself.

The *Education for work in schools* report was produced and presented to schools at a time when there was enormous interest in, and extensive writing on, the ways in which societies can survive huge changes in economic and social conditions on local, national and global levels. All learning should be relevant to a learner's individual needs, to the needs of the 'common good' and to the combination of these two. There is therefore an onus on policy makers to do more than outline what appears to be best current practice; they should also analyse and accommodate the indicators provided by contemporary writers on economy and society. Teachers need time to reflect upon, and develop an understanding of, the wider implications of the curriculum for their pupils. Policy makers and teachers need to consider whether education for work should be central to the curriculum, or if a curriculum that addresses the range of needs of young people in being self-motivated and self-evaluative in modern society encompasses education for work as part of education for life in a broader sense. In either case, both policy writers and teachers should consider the current views on work, and its relationship with education, to inform their own perspectives and practice.

Education and work in contemporary society

The changing role of work

All who make a contribution to school education operate within a context of accelerating change in our social world. Changes in the nature of work and its position in relation to our economic condition are large factors in this scenario. Consideration should be given as to how we have arrived at our contemporary understandings of work, the relationship between paid and unpaid work, and the range of factors - global and local - that shape the very nature of work. Educational policy makers need to address global issues as well as local or national imperatives before providing guidelines to teachers, and should make their considerations clear when transmitting policy, by explaining what underpins and informs their recommendations. To set appropriate contexts for their pupils' learning about the world of work, teachers - and their partners in engaging young people in education-for-work activities - should have opportunities to prepare themselves with sufficient knowledge and understanding of current issues. It is crucial that these contexts are informed, realistic and focused on the future.

It is not difficult to find evidence of changes in society that will have a profound effect on the type of work available for current and future generations of school pupils. The influences are clear: from the practical impact of globalisation on the organisation of production, to the growing recognition of the value of knowledge and human capital. The signs are present, but ways to move forward in terms of providing the best support and preparation for young people is not so easy to determine. There are different interpretations of the ways in which change is affecting society and the nature of work, and there are different views on the types of education and training that might best equip members of society to cope - and hopefully to flourish.

The following is a consideration of the works of three influential writers on contemporary social, economic and political issues. I have selected Jeremy Rifkin, Andre Gorz and Anthony Giddens because they have commented on the ways in which society, and in particular the concept of work in society, is changing, and offer ways forward for organising the future condition of society.

One writer suggests the need to totally shift away from previous notions of 'job' because 'job' will no longer exist in the form that has long been familiar; he predicts an end to work as we know it. Another suggests that we should reorganise our thinking about work and find new ways of defining and sharing work to the benefit of all; we should reclaim work in a more socially acceptable way. The third writer accepts that there are changes occurring in the nature of work and suggests that individuals should acquire a portfolio of skills that can be used as needed, and that workers should be helped to prepare for the impact of globalisation; he encourages us to strive for social inclusion. All three envisage, in their distinctive ways, that the way forward demands a shift to a new kind of

society - a 'civil society' that can embrace the virtues hitherto suppressed by state power and self-interest.

Jeremy Rifkin: the end of work

An American writer on the changing nature of work and the possible scenarios for dealing with its evolution is Jeremy Rifkin, a political economist who specialises in urban and environmental issues. He writes extensively on the condition of society from the perspective of the United States (US). Rifkin's work is therefore a view of the world through the lens of US political, economic and social conditions, but it is worth attention, since the factors shaping US society tend to influence the United Kingdom and other European societies soon after.

In his book *The end of work: the decline of the global labor force and the dawn of the post-market era*, Rifkin (1995) illustrates the ways in which economic transformations in the US have been devastating to familiar work practices across a wide range of employment activities for the working population. He provides a summary of the impact of the new technological revolution and explains how the mechanisms intended to improve efficiency and provide opportunities for more leisure have also had the effect of reducing wages and making livelihoods uncertain, although he does predict that new types of employment can be created. Rifkin also predicts a 'near-workerless information society' as a final stage of a 'great shift in economic paradigms'. Utopians have argued that science and technology could ultimately free everyone from work and open up new leisure opportunities, but in reality, sharing of resources and the financial freedom to enjoy leisure time are difficult to achieve.

With near workerless factories and virtual companies already looming on the horizon, every nation will have to grapple with the question of what to do with the millions of young people whose labor will be needed less, or not at all, in an ever more automated global economy. (Rifkin 1997, p 31)

Rifkin suggests empowerment for those whose expected realms of employment no longer exist, both through government help and by organisation into communities of self-interest. Voluntary work and community work would have to be given more recognition.

The opportunity now exists to create millions of new jobs in the Third Sector - the civil society. (Rifkin 1995, p 294)

Two specific courses of action are offered: firstly that the gains from productivity, brought about by the improved efficiencies of new technology, should be dispersed throughout the economy, to shorten the working week and allow steady increases in remuneration; and secondly, non-market or service economy activity should receive greater emphasis, with new roles and responsibilities for workers outside the traditional labour market.

Andre Gorz: reclaiming work

Another leading social and political thinker, who has contributed to debates about the future of work and writes from a European perspective, is French social critic Andre Gorz. He has written imaginatively and from a far-left perspective on society's relationship with work, and has a utopian view of a possible alternative society. In his book *Reclaiming work: beyond the wage-based society* (1999), Gorz argues that 'work-based society', depending on the popular understandings of what work means to a society, no longer exists. We should accept this shift and move on:

'Work' must lose its centrality in the minds, thoughts and imaginations of everyone. We must learn to see it differently: no longer as something we have - or do not have - but as what we do. We must be bold enough to regain control of the work we do. (Gorz 1999, p 1)

Gorz offers possible alternative scenarios: either the work that we do as wage earning activity can be integrated into the wider range of activities in which we engage; or the wider range of our leisure, voluntary or creative activities can become part of a wider definition of work. One or other of these shifts in our accepted understanding of work will be necessary if we are to move beyond a wage-based society, which is no longer sustainable - and is in any case a social construct built up within an industrial age, which itself has moved on. Western societies, and others that have developed following the influence of Fordism, are disintegrating without managing to reinvent themselves in any meaningful form. Meanwhile, the extra wealth that has been created has been appropriated by a small, but dominant, group of successful multinational entrepreneurs.

Gorz suggests that creating new work is not the answer; we should distribute socially necessary work more equitably, and therefore distribute socially produced wealth. This, he argues, could be the basis of a new, more civilised society to replace a faltering wage-based society. He outlines goals as exemplars, which I have abbreviated as the following:

- People's minds and imaginations need to be freed up to cast off assumptions tied to the dominant social discourses and thus to explore other forms of productive cooperation, exchange, solidarity and living.
- Society and economy need to be viewed in a radically different way, in response to the visible changes looming over the horizon and to the destiny of a disintegrating society.
- We have to widen the spaces and resources within which alternative socialities may be produced, allowing for modes of life, cooperation and activities to emerge beyond the power apparatuses of capital and state.

Through these, Gorz is advocating a revolution based on evolution;

It is important to show that the possibility of transcending capitalist society is inherent in the evolution of capitalist society itself. (Gorz 1999, p 80)

Gorz (1999, p 80) proceeds to list a set of suggested policies for political parties to adopt;

1. guaranteeing a sufficient income for all;
2. combining the redistribution of work with the individual and collective control over time;
3. encouraging new socialities to blossom, and new modes of cooperation and exchange, through which social bonds and social cohesion will be created beyond the wage-relation.

Gorz believes that we must all move on from notions of work and work-based society to activities for self-fulfilment that have different characteristics. At the same time, there must be an interim political shift, to set strategic objectives for meeting the urgent needs of society, while looking ahead to an alternative society whose time has come.

Anthony Giddens: a third way

There is currently a great deal of interest in the work of British social theorist Anthony Giddens. This writer has established himself as an influential analyst of modernity and of the human condition in the present day. He is the Director of the London School of Economics and Political Science and is best known for his exposition of a political 'Third Way' (Giddens 1998) that has influenced politics in Britain, especially in relation to Prime Minister Blair and his New Labour government. Gauntlett has noted that Giddens:

combines an old-school, 'classical' sociological style with a very contemporary awareness of changes in society, and ... is happy to mix new theories with more established theoretical perspectives. (Gauntlett 2001)

Giddens has long called for a move away from the politics of left and right to a new way that would bring about a shift from class, and class politics, to concerns of self-identity and self-actualisation. He theorises about the effects of globalisation on society and the impact that institutional globalisation has on the social lives of individuals, but has no crystal ball for the future.

Giddens always stresses the contingency of globalisation. There will be opportunities to actively shape the transformation of the global order but no guarantees about the outcome. (Bryant 2001, p 25)

Giddens sees globalisation as bringing about a fundamental shift in our institutions, which in turn will impact on aspects of everyday lives, including the place and nature of work in those lives. He advocates a third way for the politics of the modernising left, which calls for a response to changes in society through

an overhaul of preexisting policies, in order to tackle the rising inequalities forced by globalisation.

Contesting inequality should remain a fundamental imperative of left-of-centre politics, and government must play an active role in achieving this aim. We should look to create a society that is inclusive and cares for the weak or vulnerable. My argument is that to sustain those values in a changing world, we must have an innovative approach to politics; one that is informed by social science findings rather than dogmatic assertions, and that seeks to grasp the dynamics underlying observable patterns of inequality. Third way politics is not an attempt to find a way between free market political philosophy and traditional socialism. It is an endeavour to find a way beyond both of them and to create a decent society in a world where the old policies have lapsed or proved inadequate. (Giddens 2000a)

Giddens envisages reforms of government and the state in relation to economic changes that are inevitable with the rising imperative of a knowledge economy. Giddens is also an advocate of a 'civil society'. He envisages a new social contract that is appropriate for both globalisation and individualism, and that stresses the rights and responsibilities of individual citizens - both to take from society, and to give back for the common good. In this scenario, government would have to regulate in some contexts, but should mainly facilitate through supporting citizens in assuming responsibilities and, as far as possible, investing in human capital.

Government is not there only to constrain markets and technological change - it has just as significant a role in helping them work for the social good. (Giddens 2000b, p 84)

Implications for educational policy making

These writers are using the evidence of huge changes in modes of operation within global economies, in attempting to find new understandings and ways forward for societies. Despite those who resist notions of globalisation, it is nevertheless clear that economic changes in parts of the world geographically remote to Scotland can have a profound effect on its national - and indeed, local - interests. Considerations of the possible end of work as we know it and the implications for education are explored by John White of the London Institute of Education (White 1997). White challenges the centrality of work in our lives. He claims that schools, and those who are responsible for designing curricula, traditionally have work aims at the forefront of their thinking. Even the organisation of school days, and the emphasis on hard work being a 'good thing', contribute to a deeply ingrained work culture in society. He does not deny the social necessity of work, in order to get things done and to provide for the needs of society, but regrets the emphasis on finding better and better jobs, to provide more and varied acquisitions - at the expense of those who have less, or even insufficient means for living, and have 'low-grade' jobs or none at all. The high status and cultural value attached to 'having a job' makes unemployment an intolerable stigma.

... the assumption that (heteronomous) work should have a central, extensive place in human life has been embedded in British culture as well as in the modern world more generally. The shadows of the Puritan work-ethic are cast on our secular age, affecting the way individuals think of their lives, employment policy, the shape of the educational system. (White 1997, p 40)

Parents, teachers and educational policy makers have to look to the future to consider what the relationship between education and work might be. It is not yet known, and we can only guess at how societies may be affected by technological change or different understandings of the notion of what work is.

White suggests two possible scenarios and what they would imply for the relationship between education and work. The first option is to continue as we are doing at the moment; where dealings with education and work reinforce current notions of employment, and for most people the ideal is a secure full-time job, despite the fact that we are moving towards new divisions in society in terms of employment. White describes these divisions as follows:

We are witnessing a new three-way social division of the working population, mirrored in institution after institution across public, private and voluntary sectors, into [a] a growing number of unemployed or otherwise economically inactive people; [b] a periphery of workers, often casual, on short term contracts or part-time, who can be hired and fired flexibly as employment demands dictate; and [c] a core of better paid full-time and long-serving part-time staff. (White 1997, p 70)

If we continue with current approaches to education, we will continue to urge young people towards ideals of employment and career choices that will exist in reality for a very small proportion of school leavers. Earlier choices may have to be made about pathways in liberal or vocational education, and society would become more divided on issues of well-being, prosperity, security of employment and quality of work. Many teachers who have higher aspirations for their pupils will find themselves in a minority, although they could still help their pupils to question the ethics of the emphases of education, particularly now, through education for citizenship.

White's alternative scenario depends on society developing a 'more liberal view of human well-being' (p 74). He argues that there are already those who would prefer a bigger proportion of their time and energy to be spent on leisure or creative activity away from paid employment, and that the type of fulfilment to be derived from this more flexible application of personal activity is becoming more attractive to many. White does not suggest that young people should be pushed to view their futures in this way, but rather that teachers could begin to offer this perspective as part of their approach - and if society moves in a direction where this kind of lifestyle becomes more widely embraced, then pupils could be assisted in acquiring the wherewithal to make choices for themselves on whether to proceed this way or not. Children will have all sorts of goals to pursue, including non-work activities and relationships, but historically,

children have been urged towards a single pattern for work. We could change this.

Increasingly, work-related aims should find their place within a larger framework of well-being aims. Work goals are a sub-set of activity goals. (White 1997, p 92)

Teachers and policy makers must also be aware that the greatest growth area in modern societies is that of a knowledge economy. Rifkin (1995, p 174) refers to 'knowledge workers' in a 'knowledge sector'; a new class of society that is still small in number, but commands the highest rewards in income. Gorz (1999, p 6) refers to a knowledge capital:

The most important form of fixed capital is now the knowledge stored in, and instantly available from, information technologies, and the most important form of labour power is brainpower.

Giddens claims that increasing globalisation has been influenced by information technology, and in turn, the knowledge economy is becoming globalised. It will be the role of teachers and policy makers to recognise this and to respond accordingly, to make education relevant for young people.

The key force in human capital development obviously has to be education. It is the main public investment that can foster both economic efficiency and civic cohesion. Education isn't a static input into the knowledge economy, but is itself becoming transformed by it ... Education needs to be redefined to focus on capabilities that individuals will be able to develop through life. (Giddens 2000b, p 73)

Conclusions

There is currently significant interest in Scottish schools in building aspects of education for work into the curriculum, but offering examples of good practice to schools, based on a narrow definition of what this can be, will be insufficient to make a difference to the majority of pupils. Five million pounds has recently been pledged to Scottish primary schools from a joint fund between business and the Scottish Executive. This money is intended to encourage entrepreneurial activity and a 'can-do' mentality in the country (Williamson 2001). Ensuring that all children have at least two hands-on business experiences while in primary school, as this initiative proposes, will be difficult to achieve unless teachers and policy makers have sufficient awareness of the factors affecting young peoples futures, and the economic future of their society in general, to put these experiences into relevant contexts. A portion of this money could be usefully spent on allowing teachers to develop this kind of awareness through personal and professional development.

The Scottish Executive has already engaged in a study of how the development of a knowledge economy can be addressed in higher education. If similar such opportunities could be afforded to those who teach and learn in the school sector, five main areas of study and research would benefit both teachers

and policy makers in preparing the way for supporting young people, and investing in the development of a knowledge culture in Scotland.

First, in examining the theoretical contexts of the changing nature of work in post-industrial societies, we need to look at the views of sociologists, economists, philosophers and contemporary management theorists in order to make informed choices about the contributions of school education to our future societies. What is the future of work and how must we change our current understandings to allow for future relevance?

Second in exploring the changing patterns of work through empirical analysis of emerging conditions especially in the UK, we should ask how the expansion of new technology is affecting our traditional occupations and encouraging new ones. What is the extent of the shift from the role of industrial workers to that of knowledge workers? (Drucker 1994)

Third, in looking at wider patterns influencing the nature of work, particularly the effects of globalisation on the development of a knowledge economy, we in the UK need to address the question of how to develop local economies in relation to international factors beyond the UK economy.

Fourth, policy makers need to look at work in relation to cultural issues and to self-definition. How do we deal with new classifications of work and activity? How do shifting patterns of age and gender of employees affect the working population? How do we support each other to engage in useful and fulfilling activities? This implies links with current research into the role of citizenship education.

Fifth, we need to consider questions of responsibility that would derive from developments leading towards a 'civil society' and the role of education in the process. Is it possible to share knowledge and work opportunities for the common good? How do we deal with knowledge management in order to promote a learning society?

If we truly wish to do the best for our young people, and by implication for the society in which they live, then teachers have a duty to widen their views and find the best understanding they can of the likely scenarios of their students' futures.

Education without openness to innovation and knowledge will not lead to economic development. (World Bank 1999)

Notes

1. A version of this paper was presented at the Scottish Educational Research Association Conference, West Park Centre, Dundee, 27-29 September 2001.
2. There is a module on Decision Making in the BEd (Hons) course run by the Faculty of Education at the University of Glasgow, which addresses issues of learning and teaching, policy study and continuous development within the context of the philosophical, political, economic and moral aspects of society.
3. The question is: does covering one enterprise topic in, for example, term two of the 6th year of Primary School, adequately set a learning context for the desired knowledge, skills and attitudes to be acquired? If such a project is offered in the 2nd year of Primary School - to develop, for example, knowledge and awareness of people in society and skills for sharing and cooperation - is that the last opportunity for pupils to experience an enterprise context?
4. The views discussed in this paper derive from my current research in connection with a PhD study entitled 'Discourses of education and work'.
5. I would like to thank Professor Michael Peters of the University of Glasgow for his advice and sharing of ideas.

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