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People should be free to be who they are. But, can people only be free because of institutions like schools that shape who they are?

2

A HISTORY OF SCHOOLING AND THE MAKING OF CHILDREN

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Introduction

We often confuse education with schooling. Put simply, schooling is a formal way of educating children and young people in pre-schools and schools. Schooling usually involves teachers instructing students in a formal curriculum or syllabus comprised of distinct subjects. But, one can be educated without formal arrangements by reading books and learning from experience, sometimes referred to as *autodidact* or self-education (i.e. without formal education). In fact, we must remember that going to school and pre-school is a modern idea; 200 years ago, just a select few had this opportunity. It is only more recently that schooling became an almost natural part of children's lives. This chapter explores the history of schooling and how schools and pre-schools work as **institutions** that powerfully shape learning and young people.

Institutions: Organisations or structures that regulate the behaviour of individuals according to specific purposes. Examples include 'school' and 'the family'.

This chapter invites readers to think critically about how the history of mass schooling shapes what it means to be educated, to educate and how to educate.

Mass schooling: The emergence of schooling as a means to educate the general population.

It attends to the important fact that power infuses schools, and by looking to history we can better grasp how it operates today.

Commented [ZM(1]: This is a major concept and I think we need to introduce it.

Power: the capacity to shape the behaviour of another or a course of events.

The chapter describes several perspectives on the historical development of mass schooling and its relationship to childhood. It then proceeds to examples of specific practices through which schools and pre-schools regulate people's lives according to socially and politically desirable skills, knowledge, attributes and values. Why is this important to know about for pre-service educators? Because the educator is a 'vehicle' of power that shapes how schooling is experienced by children and young people. We invite readers to ask themselves: What kind of education do I see as worthwhile to provide and have? What kind of education do I aspire to offer? How do I want children and young people to experience their own schooling? How will I regulate or shape learners, or in other words, what kind of power will I exercise over my learners and with what effect? What kind of educator is it possible for me to become?

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KEY TERMS

childhood

class or social class

critical

dividing practices

embodiment

government

institutions

liberal democratic

mass schooling

normalisation

politics

power

practices

state

subjectivation

Western, the West

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SCHOOLING: THREE PERSPECTIVES

There is no simple way to understand mass schooling because there is no single interpretation of its history, purpose and **practices**. The fact that there are different, and often competing, interpretations of **mass schooling** indicates that there is no common agreement about why education exists in the form it does. To develop your historical knowledge of the context of pre-schooling and schooling (where you will enter as professionals), we sketch three interpretations made of the history and purpose of schooling. These are:

- the *liberal democratic*, which views schooling as a tool for individual self-development and democratic participation;
- the *critical*, which believes that schools reflect and reproduce the economic and social systems and inequalities of society; and
- the *governmental*, which views schooling as the regulation and shaping of the individuals

according to prevailing social *norms* and political objectives.

Practices: What is said, done and thought in schools. A regime of practices is the generally accepted ways in which we speak about and do things such as 'teaching' and 'caring'.

Liberal democratic interpretation of schooling

A *liberal democratic* interpretation of schooling views schools as key institutions that progress individuals toward a freer and more democratic, caring and humane society. Born out of the democratic way of life of Western European and north American societies, schools are places for children to develop to their full potential so that they can fully, with all their competencies, participate in their democracies. Liberal philosophers such as John Dewey (1916/1966) and Amy Gutmann (1987/1999) critique the view that schooling should merely be a tool to achieve specified goals; for example, to produce skilled individuals ready for the job market. In this view, education is a preparation for future living, rather than being part of the process of living. Writing in the early twentieth century, Dewey argued that formal education has an important social role. Believing democratic societies must realise the potential of their members, education is a principal tool for accomplishing this by equipping children with the knowledge and attributes for their meaningful participation in social life. In Dewey's estimation, schools do not do this successfully. He became a leading figure in the progressive education movement that promoted experiential learning, a focus on the whole child, and self-development and expression. Gutmann goes further than Dewey by arguing that schools should be organised around the principles of democracy. Gutmann writes that:

> a democratic state recognizes the value of political education in predisposing children

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> to accept those ways of life that are consistent with sharing the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society. A democratic state is therefore committed to allocating educational authority in such a way as to provide its members with an education adequate to participating in democratic politics, to choosing among (a limited range of) good lives, and to sharing in the several sub-communities, such as families, that impart identity to the lives of its citizens. (1987/1999, p. 42)

In this vein of thought, the 'true' purpose of mass schooling is to progress our society's principles of democracy, individualism and individual freedom. This requires that we seize education from the clutches of those who seek to use it for other purposes.

Theory in action

In 2008, Parramatta Marist High, in Sydney, Australia, introduced project-based learning (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project-based_learning) into Years 9 and 10 to cater for a new technology-rich modern learning environment. Look at the school's website to learn more about this *progressive pedagogy* and how it manifests in practical terms: https://www.parramarist.catholic.edu.au/Learning/Project-Based-Learning

Progressive educators rail against students' inactivity in environments where the purpose of education is to pass down knowledge to learners. Child-centred learning turns this model upside down, so to speak. Dewey (1916/1966) warned that this approach might minimise the focus on the content of teaching and the role of the teacher. He argued for a balance between delivering knowledge and engaging with learners' interests and their initiatives.

1 Discuss in what ways the Paramatta model achieves this balance.

2 In this model, who do you think has autonomy over learning? How do you know?

3 What is the role of the teacher in this form of teaching and learning?

Critical interpretation of schooling

Class or social class: The systematic and dynamic grouping of people with similar financial, social and cultural resources, status and power. Class positions resulting from the unequal distribution of wealth and power shape lifestyles, identities and chances.

A *critical* interpretation of schooling takes a somewhat different perspective to the liberal democratic view. Like the liberal goals of using education to foster individual freedom and democracy, the critical interpretation of education begins with the notion that schools are designed to reproduce the interests, ideologies and worldviews of the most economically and politically powerful. Influenced by the writings of Marx and neo-Marxist philosophy, theorists such as Apple (1979/1990), Bowles and Gintis (1976), Connell (1982, 1993), Freire (1970/2007) and Giroux (1983) treat education systems in late capitalism as institutions of the middle **classes**, professionals and the wealthy. While often viewed as value-neutral, the official curriculum, teacher pedagogies and other educational practices assume the knowledge, experiences, expectations, aspirations and outlooks of the dominant culture and dominant groups, such as the privileged elite and middle classes who have always gained the most from schooling. Because those who belong to the lower economic strata (e.g. the lowest paid; those with the least secure work) do not have the social, economic or political resources of the typically white middle and upper classes, nor share their culture, knowledge or interests, schooling is often experienced as alienating. They are forced to *fit to* the system.

That school systems serve the interests of society's privileged and most powerful is confirmed by the statistics of educational attainment and future occupations. As discussed by Joel Windle in his chapter, those with the most economic resources are more likely than those with the least to

complete high school, obtain a university degree, and occupy occupations with higher-than-average incomes. Schools therefore reproduce economic and social privilege and inequality. So, while many assume that schooling success is based on individual merit and personal factors, a critical perspective attributes one's educational experience and levels of attainment to the wider unequal economic and social relations through which schooling is organised. As schooling works for the already powerful, *critical pedagogues* work to empower those who are marginalised and oppressed by the system, such as migrants, non–native-language speakers, Indigenous students and those living in poverty. By exposing and challenging the oppressive effects of power, schools can become places of emancipation and empowerment rather than institutions of control.

In many ways, the critical and liberal democratic interpretations of schooling chime together in their shared belief that the rightful purpose of education is to educate and empower individuals and communities. Schooling is therefore construed as pivotal to our progression toward a freer and more caring, just and humane society.

In the next section we examine another perspective, which we call the *governmental* interpretation of schooling. This perspective sees mass schooling as vested with power, from which individuals cannot be freed.

Theory in action

Recent studies, partly due to the availability of large-scale international achievement comparisons, offer a more complex picture of the influence of social and economic relations than we could present in this limited space. Perry and McConney (2013) examine the relationships between school socio-economic status and achievement in mathematics and reading in Canada and Australia. They argue that the overall socio-economic composition of a school (i.e. of all their peers) is also related to individual students' achievements. Moreover, the more socially

mixed the school, the better the outcomes for all students. Perry and McConney conclude that since there are no qualitative differences between students or practitioners in the countries, then 'it is more likely that our findings are reflective of differences in the ways in which students are sorted across schools, and the resources that are available to students across different school contexts' (2013, p. 137). They note that the segregation of students based on their socio-economic backgrounds is less pronounced in Canada than in Australia. In Canada, 60 per cent of students attend a socially mixed school (second only to Finland and Norway), while in Australia only 35 per cent of students attend a socially mixed school—a quite small proportion in comparison to other OECD countries. Moreover, around 55 per cent of students from advantaged socio-economic backgrounds attend a 'socially advantaged school' in Australia, while in Canada the figure is 40 per cent. The authors continue: 'This higher level of Australian school segregation is accompanied by PISA [Programme for International Student Assessment] analyses that show that advantaged schools in Australia are more likely to have better educational resources than other schools' (2013, p. 137). The relationship between socially advantaged schools and superior resources is uncommon among the 34 OECD countries that participated in the PISA analyses, with only three countries (Australia, Chile and Mexico) having such a relationship.

1 What are your thoughts about Perry and McConney's conclusions?
2 Why is there a high degree of segregation in Australian schools between the economically and socially advantaged and disadvantaged?
3 How might the concentration of these groups in particular schools contribute to educational disadvantage?
4 Do these statistics confirm the critical interpretation of schooling that it reproduces the status

quo by serving the interests of the most powerful?

Governmental interpretation of schooling

Below are definitions of some terms used in this next section.

- A *state* is a political community based around a common political system or government; a self-governing political entity. Australia is a state, as are Indonesia and New Zealand. Each one of these states has a defined territory, with borders, over which a government exercises power and influence. A state can also be composed of smaller states and territories under a federal government. It is in the name of 'the state' that politicians and governments make decisions. For example, 'building a smarter Australia' through education policy is an agenda of the state delivered by different arms of the government, such as the Department of Education and Training. The term 'nation state' is often used interchangeably with 'state'; however they are not always the same. A nation is a group of people who share the same culture but do not always have sovereignty as a state. The state is a codification of relationships of power across the whole society, to use Foucault's (2008) understanding.
- *Government* is different from 'the state'. It has at least two meanings. When used as a noun, referring to a concrete body, it means 'the government', a temporal element of the state that may change with elections and is composed of a few selected citizens. Another meaning of government is its verb form: 'to govern' or 'to be governed'. This refers to all attempts to govern, regulate or shape the behaviour, interests and aspirations of citizens to specific ends. For example, the laws of Australia govern how we behave in public (when driving our cars) and private (when interacting with our children). In short, governments govern to achieve government (the regulation of citizens). Government can, however, happen indirectly through people, organisations or things that are not 'the government'. A person can govern another

person's acts by enforcing norms. Or documents can govern behaviour by mandating people's actions.

- *Power:* to exercise power is to affect someone or something, or to create an effect, a change. Power is related to government (in both meanings) and the state. States, however, are not the primary source of power, only an effect of it. Foucault's (2008) understanding of power is that power is not something held by a person, organisation or social body (people do not 'have' power, according to Foucault); it exists in relationships and is exercised through the social body at the micro-level; that is, in the networks of mundane everyday relations. Power exists or is present in the relationships between people, and it is dynamic, reversible or unstable, depending on context. Power is not purely repressive. It is also a productive force; it makes things happen and brings things into existence, such as new ideas, concepts and actions. Power produces norms, expectations, forms of knowledge and beings (e.g. how to be a teacher), and so on. The application of power is always strategic in order to produce certain effects—for example, to make a person act in certain way—so power does not paralyse people; rather it incites people to act. Foucault wrote about 'power/knowledge' because he believed that modern societies exercise power over people through creating and using knowledge and truths (e.g. the disciplines of psychology, medical sciences and social work create knowledge (concepts, truths, explanations) which is then used to regulate how people think and behave (i.e. knowledge guides what people think is truthful, normal, moral, healthy).

The *governmental* view of schooling begins with a specific interpretation of its historical developments. Hunter (1994) argues that mass schooling did not emerge with the second phase

of industrialisation (in the mid-nineteenth century), but from northern European (Prussian) religious schools in the early 1700s. Hunter displaces the notion that the birth of mass schooling lies in the principles or philosophies of freedom, democracy and equality, as the previously discussed perspectives do. Rather, he identifies important historical conditions since the mid-1600s that enabled the emergence of *mass* schooling, or schooling for the masses. First, the birth of today's modern states establishing mass schooling coincided with the *Enlightenment*, also known as the *Age of Reason*, when the absolute rule of European states by monarchies and religious institutions began to wane. Second, the once accepted power of and rule by churches, religious doctrine and the sovereign monarch (king or queen and aristocracy) became increasingly questioned. From the eighteenth century, with the dissolution of *absolutism* in Europe, the priorities of the state shifted to the mundane (earthly) and *secular* issues related to the health, wealth, peace and wellbeing of the populations within state territories. These extraordinary and important changes over a couple of centuries led to the formation of *republics*, new democratic forms of rule and institutions, and 'free' citizens.

To govern free people and a territory required another kind of power to replace subservience to the monarch. This form of power emerged in the developing sciences that helped states to better understand and manage their population. Over the past 300 years, this plethora of non-religious experts, philanthropists, disciplines and bodies of knowledge appeared (such as social medicine, statistics, public hygiene and, more recently, economics, educational science, psychology and social work) (Rose, 1999; Rose & Miller, 2010). The state uses these bodies of knowledge to improve and optimise the life, prosperity, peace and welfare of people and the state generally. For example, innovations such as public health and sewerage systems provided the sanitation that would allow large groups of people to live safely and healthily in population-

dense cities. Mass immunisation helped to eradicate contagious diseases. Mass education is a part of this social and political transformation that has helped to create a citizenry able to participate in a democratic society (Donald, 1992).

Religious organisations were the first providers of schooling (individualised home tuition was popular too, especially among the aristocracy), but it was when states became involved in schooling that it expanded to the general population. Historical texts of the 1800s reveal that education was to be employed by the state to manage the moral and social development of its citizens, using the pastoral practices of the religious schools. Interestingly, many did not have 'much interest or faith in schooling as a form of educational provision—attitudes … changed very slowly and only once schools had begun to demonstrate their mastery of disciplinary techniques of managing people' (Deacon, 2006, p. 123). In the mid-1800s in England, Inspector of Schools Joseph Fletcher spoke of the need for a schooling system to develop 'physical strength, intellectual vigour and passions and affections' in the young, and to make them 'good and wise' (Fletcher cited in Silver, 1994, p. 23). The mass schools of the 1800s had the goal of taming 'wild human beings' (Hunter, 1994, p. 11). Mass schooling became 'a pedagogical machine capable of enclosing the wretched children of Britain's industrial citizens in morally formative environments' (Hunter, 1994, p. 78). Thus, the beginning of mass schooling is strongly connected to creating moral and productive citizens, as defined by the state.

The first pre-schools emerged as a reaction to industrialisation, to save children from the corrupting effects of polluted and overpopulated cities. Froebel, the German Romantic philosopher who was greatly influenced by Enlightenment ideas (especially Rousseau's), stood behind the establishment of the first kindergarten in Germany in 1837 (meaning 'children's garden', to contrast with the dirty cities). The idea quickly gained popularity and spread over

Europe. Froebelien kindergartens aimed to educate free individuals, putting faith in children's ability to learn through play and activities that they initiated and directed themselves. By the early twentieth century, kindergartens were established around the globe. While kindergartens aimed to get working mothers' children off the streets and help destitution in slum areas by providing welfare, they also set out to moralise young citizens through the development of habits of cleanliness and duty. Kindergartens were, however, provided by philanthropic persons and organisations, mostly women, and the state gained an interest only later in their funding, management and regulation. Being independently organised from governments, they still operated to enforce the morals and discipline necessary for the functioning of strong and productive states. Only later did they gain governmental ties. For example, the first major investment into pre-schools in Australia happened during the 1970s as a result of the feminist movement that sought to enable women's workforce participation (Brennan, 1994).

School systems and kindergartens addressed delinquency and idleness by countering dangerous and corrupting influences and vices resulting from industrialisation and urbanisation. To teach children responsibility, kindergartens and schools used teachers, timetables, routines, classroom layout, examinations and playtime, and provided moral guidance and skills such as literacy, numeracy and self-reflection. In order to facilitate self-reflection, which is useful in the regulation of one's own actions, schools borrowed the already available pastoral techniques of the Christian churches. Pastoral techniques, expertise and knowledge of child development monitored and corrected the moral, physical and social growth of children. Hence, churches 'contributed the organising routines, pedagogical practices, personal disciplines, and interpersonal relationships that came to form the core of the modern school' (Hunter, 1994, p. 56).

According to this history, mass schooling is to a great extent the product of the attempts of **Western** social and political authorities to govern and discipline citizens (to make them moral and responsible). This is done with a view to strengthening and securing the state. It is not surprising therefore that comparisons are routinely made between schools and other institutions that order, confine, control and correct people, such as prisons. While perhaps this comparison sounds too harsh at first reading, when institutions of this kind are 'thought together', we can better understand why schools and pre-schools fail to accomplish the *emancipation* (i.e. freedom) and social change that liberal and critical intellectuals expect of it. That is, schools for the masses cannot be readily turned into tools of emancipation and empowerment of the marginalised because today's schooling practices (e.g. observation, examination, ranking) are based on discipline, self-discipline, ordering, correcting, regulation, and *normalisation* (Foucault, 1977). Of course, schools do inspire creativity, inventiveness, critical thought and resistance, and they even enable many individuals to overcome their inherited disadvantage. However, as Nikolas Rose explains:

> alongside education as an equalizing apparatus runs another conception of schooling as a socializing and moralizing enterprise. For if education was to be a vital apparatus of citizenship, it was never simply because of the intellectual capacities and qualifications conferred. Egalitarianism also encompassed a hope that the educational apparatus would be the means of inculcating the aspirations of citizenship in children—the will, as well as the means, to organize their lives within a project of self-betterment through diligence, application, and commitment to work, family, and society. (1999, p. 192)

Western: the West or Western world refers to the location, idea and shared culture (e.g. philosophical, political, economic) of Europe and colonised countries with large European ancestral populations.

So, while schools can contribute to greater social and economic equality, such goals have been historically constrained by mass schooling's history as a *technology of power* that subordinates the interests of learners to the needs of the education system and the state. The practices of schools in our education system overwhelmingly engender compliance, conformity and homogeneity in accordance with the goals of citizen-formation and nation building. In the next section, we explore the principal target of the power and practices of schooling: children and young people.

Theory in action

To better understand the role of mass schooling in shaping the knowledge, abilities, personalities, morals, beliefs, values and dispositions of citizens, read the excerpts below from two documents originating from different historical eras in Australia. These documents supply reform agendas for schooling and pre-schools. In Australia, education departments and compulsory primary education (6–13 years) were established across the states and territories from the late 1800s to the early 1900s.

The first kindergarten opened in 1896 in Sydney and quickly grew in numbers. Lilian de Lissa, a pedagogue from Britain, addressed the opening of the Kindergarten Union in Western Australia in 1911, expressing her views on women's service and contribution to society, along with demonstrating a maternalist idea of citizenship:

> [D]are not let the slum child grow up without care and help. The contagion of disease was not limited to the physical plane, and whenever there was disease, either mental

> or moral, there must be contagious germs in the community. There was no other way to help but for women to try to clean up the world, as they had for ages to clean their homes. And there was no surer way than to get the children and let them learn right habits and right attitudes. Those ladies present as a national council stood for nationhood. They must not forget that the wealth of the nation was the little children. (Cited in Millei, 2008)

In comparison, the *Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration* (Education Council, 2019), which replaces the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young People* (MCEETYA, 2008), outlines the current reform agenda for schools and pre-schools in Australia. The Declaration begins as follows:

> Education has the power to transform lives. It supports young people to realise their potential by providing skills they need to participate in the economy and in society, and contributing to every aspect of their wellbeing... Education plays a vital role in promoting the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development and wellbeing of young Australians and in ensuring the nation's ongoing economic prosperity and social cohesion. (p. 2)

These excerpts show that schooling and pre-schooling are closely related to the welfare and futures of states. It is implied that a strong state depends on the welfare, responsibility and education levels of its people. These in turn improve each individual's position in society.

1 What similarities are there between the ideas about schooling and pre-schooling contained in these extracts? What purposes of education and care do they express, and how are these related to the state?

2 What are the interests of the state made into the interests of the individual? How?

3 Do you think the democratic school movement in Australia breaks these ties? Read about the Australasian Democratic Education Community (ADEC) and its aims and objectives here: http://adec.edu.au/.

MODERN CONCEPTION OF CHILDHOOD AND ITS REGULATION THROUGH SCHOOLING

ASK YOURSELF

What are your views of childhood? Where do these ideas come from? How do your views differ from past ideas of children and childhood?

Mass schooling enabled many more children than before to attend school and contributed to the *institutionalisation* of children and childhood. Indeed, the expansion of schools and pre-schools reflects the increased importance of childhood to states. For the state, schools became the main institution for the socialisation of children through discipline and character formation. Schools and pre-schools helped to keep children out of work and off the streets. The responsibility for raising morally and physically healthy children could no longer be left to parents and their communities, but shifted to experts (teachers!). In short, the state made its involvement a necessity. These developments were coupled with the emergence of a modern conception of what 'childhood' should be about.

The West's modern conception of childhood, free from work and adult responsibilities, emerged during the Enlightenment period in Western Europe (1630s–1790s). This is important because it illustrates that our understanding of childhood is not fixed in time across all cultures. Philippe Ariès, a famous French historian, was the first researcher to point to the difference in

Western concepts of childhood between earlier and modern societies. The roots of more recent ideas about childhood go back to the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Against the religious notion of 'inborn sin', Rousseau described childhood as a period of innocence and naturalness. He argued that it is society that corrupts children and that they should be valued for themselves. His ideas inspired Froebel and Dewey greatly. During the Industrial Revolution, many working-class children in urban settings worked long hours in factories. They were malnourished and died young. The *protectionist* and welfare movement at the end of the nineteenth century reinvigorated Rousseau's ideas, with children's work becoming legally controlled (e.g. by the Factory Acts in Victoria). Young children's place became the school.

The campaigns to establish mass, state-funded schooling formed in response to the creation of a particular notion of the child. Writing of the United States context, Baker (2004) argues that for mass schooling to be widely accepted, our notions of childhood had to change in very specific ways. Childhood had to become a distinct stage of life (different from adulthood), attributed with certain 'natural' characteristics that needed schooling:

> segregation of the young from those older and from the family had to seem appropriate, extreme dependence of the younger had to be assumed and enforced, accompanied by an idea of vulnerability, and this had to suggest as a 'moral necessity' delay from participation in 'adult' life … The very suggestion of such institutions as compulsory day schools required a convenient target called children, who could be seen as empty, only to be filled with attributes that were then argued as natural features in need of organization, administration and surveillance in institutionalized forms. (2004, pp. 11–12)

This image of the socially, emotionally and economically dependent and undeveloped child

changed the world, especially the West. Professional expertise regarding the child and childhood were born and proliferated, with nurses, teachers, psychologists, guidance officers and counsellors and their expert know-how being brought into the realm of children's lives. Using their knowledge and 'truths' of childhood, these experts monitored, judged, guided and cared for children, advising parents of preferred child-rearing techniques. Schools and educators were entrusted with the authority to fill up the minds of children (with 'school knowledge'), secure their natural development, and ensure their moral development.

In debates today about the kind of society we intend to create and live in—or, as others would say, in debates about the future—childhood is located at the cross-section of various competing cultural and political projects (Stephens, 1995). School and kindergarten are institutions to perform roles; for example, to cultivate love for one's nation or to learn to live in a multicultural and democratic society. Not only are children representatives of the future, but also the state's interest in children has always historically been about a nation's future. For the state, children represent 'investments in future parenthood, economic competitiveness, and a stable democratic order' (Hendrick, 1997, p. 46). In this way, schools teach children to build a better society of some kind (note, however, that it is hard to agree on what a better society should look like; is it about economic prosperity or is it about happiness?), to be creative, and to help the economy and save the warming planet with technological innovations when they grow up. We entrust the future to our children, and we have great expectations for them. In the present, we regulate their lives so they are prepared for this future: at home we prepare them for pre-school, in pre-school we prepare them for school and so on. We usually forget to think about what this kind of practice means for children, while they are children. What is their value as children? Are they a part of society now or will they only become members of society and nations when they grow up and

become citizens with voting rights? Should they have a say in how society is organised and run today, or should we just put responsibility on them for the future?

During the 1970s, a *liberationist* movement for childhood began which emphasised and argued against the 'oppressed' nature of childhood and children. People demanded to provide not only welfare and protection rights to children, but also *agency* rights. In 1989, the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (the Convention) was released and almost all countries became signatories. The Convention grants participatory rights to children that have started to question the conservative system of authority in children's spaces. The Convention emphasises that children need to be listened to and that action must follow their views. Today, especially in the *Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (DEEWR, 2009), children are considered as rights-bearing and competent individuals. They are knowledgeable about their life and able to make decisions in matters that affect them. In many schools, you can see avenues for children's participation in decision-making, such as children's councils or consultation with children; for example, about how to develop the school sites or, in pre-schools, what toys to purchase. These are typically tokenistic, but they do represent a move in a direction to empower children in matters relating to their lives.

While in theory the principles of the Convention are easy to understand and make sense, unfortunately putting them into practice requires the unmaking of old authority structures and reflective work on the part of educators and school administrators. Being raised in pre-schools and schools that maintain conservative structures and practices makes it difficult to think about and act otherwise with children.

Theory in action

In Finland, there are many established ways for children to take part in the management and

everyday running of schools and municipalities (councils). Municipalities are responsible for the provision of schools and pre-schools and the management of cities. Children in Finland have Children's Parliaments, where they select representatives. All schools have Children School Councils that give advice to the School Councils.

Read the case studies from pp. 41–47 in *Child and youth participation in Finland: A Council of Europe policy review* (Council of Europe, 2011) and can us ethe Child Participation Assessment Tool that has been developed by the Council of Europe (https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/participation) .

1 How are children viewed differently in Finland to how they are viewed in Australia?
2 How is children's democratic participation facilitated in Finland? How successful might these practices be in Australia?

THE PRACTICES OF REGULATING AND FORMING YOUNG CITIZENS

After thinking through different perspectives of schooling, pre-schooling and childhood, we can conclude that pre-schools and schools shape children's actions and everyday lives. In this section we focus on how children's lives are regulated by schooling. There are certain forces and power relations in operation in schools, such as those between educators and students, that not only make it impossible to act as we wish but also incite us to acquire new habits, beliefs and values, and to accommodate to certain norms. Schools are powerful institutions and its relations draw us into situations when we might sometimes feel empowered and ready to change into a better person, but might at other times feel powerless, coerced or manipulated. Or we might feel that we act freely, only to find out later that we really had no choice.

So, how do schools do this? For these effects, *power* is central. Power is exercised through the practices (e.g. ideas and ideals, expressions and acts) of educators, material objects such as

buildings, technology, the organisation of space-time, and policy and curriculum documents.

Curriculum documents

Subjectivation: The fashioning of humans into specific kinds of human subjects (subjectivity) through bodily, cultural and social practices and relations. Subjectivation is related to how humans are understood and how they understand themselves; for example, how various discourses (e.g. psychology, economics) understand the nature and qualities of humans, and therefore how individuals should be acted upon and act upon their self.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Foucault (2008) calls the fashioning or construction of the individual body into a subject or person **subjectivation**; for example, becoming a 'university student' or a 'teacher'. Formal education is one tool that shapes our *subjecthood*, or personhood; it makes us into certain kinds of human, like our family does. Formal education does this by cultivating in children and young people the knowledge, skills, attributes, morals and dispositions for living in our kind of society. Of course, this process is not simply a matter of 'giving' children these things, or being shaped by our environment where the individual is a passive receiver of messages and effects. Rather, individuals also actively fashion themselves into recognisable persons, such as the 'good student' or 'effective teacher'. McCuaig (2012, p. 865) describes this process of subjectivation in schools as a process of cultivating and creating 'apprentice citizens'. Danaher, Webb and Schirato (2000) provide an example of how this happens:

> To be a student at a school or university we must enter into different academic disciplines, and gain certificates and degrees that provide credentials which will help to make us suitable for various jobs. But to be a student is also to make ourselves known to the school system, so it can monitor our progress, pass judgement upon us,

> and mould our attitudes and behaviours in various ways. In these ways, discipline and knowledge 'make' us certain kinds of people. (p. 50)

Curriculum documents and their enactment in learning settings is an example of the moulding of children and young people explored by McCuaig (2012). She investigated how the Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum and the Teacher Education curriculum of Queensland changed over time. In the late 1940s, germs and defective genes were a concern of the HPE syllabus and teachers directed their focus on achieving healthy bodies and good health in their students. McCuaig describes how the 'teachers' eyes were to be ever attuned to defects of character, posture and habits emerging within the context of exercises and game play' (2012, p. 867). In the 1950s and 1960s, the focus and ideas underpinning the syllabus changed. Curriculum documents began to express concern for the immaturity of adolescents in their apparently challenging and 'dangerous years', with attention given to 'matters concerning a healthy personality, diminishing physical fitness and the rising incidence of drug abuse' (2012, p. 868). As a result, a concern for students' physical capacities was extended to an 'intensifying imperative for HPE teachers to subjectively measure students' attitudes, values and beliefs regarding healthy living' (2012, p. 868). The view of young people shifted again in the 1990s as the language of 'risk' became more prevalent in society. Young people were construed as 'vulnerable social actors' who are both '"at-risk" and "risky" in terms of their threat to the social order and others' wellbeing' (2012, p. 869). What is the relevance to educators of McCuaig's analysis of the HPE curriculum?

On the one hand, McCuaig's analysis illustrates that official curriculum documents are artifacts of their times, windows into their worlds. Curriculum documents reflect certain ways of knowing and seeing the world, children, learning and schooling. The shifting ideas and priorities

about the problems to be corrected result in changes to the priorities and desirable actions of educators. Consequently, curriculum documents reflect how schools and other education institutions attempt to address social and political issues by targeting children and young people. On the other hand, curriculum documents do more than simply 'represent' the world. These documents change the world because they create new realities—new ways of perceiving the world and acting in it. For example, educators create the worlds of these documents by enacting in learning settings the knowledge, ideas, values and strategies found in them. Curriculum documents are powerful. Educators become the vehicle through which the power of political and social authorities submit children and young people to the curriculum's knowledge, ideas and values. Through this process, children's knowledge, habits, values and forms of personal reflection are shaped around the changing priorities of authorities, including the changing criteria of the 'normal' child and young person.

The practices of surveillance and examining young minds and bodies

Teaching inherently involves surveillance, where surveillance is defined as 'supervising, closely observing, watching, threatening to watch or expecting to be watched' (Gore, 1995, p. 169). The different types of surveillance include taking the student roll (register), walking around the classroom observing children, supervising the playground and assessing student work. Hunter (1994) argues that such practices of the school owe much to the invention of the 'gallery classroom', which used the technique of surveillance to train children. He writes:

> The gallery—a raised stepped platform on which students were seated in rows of desks—is one of those unremarkable improvisations that remain unnoticed in histories of educational ideas … Yet, in permitting for the first time constant eye contact between an entire class and the teacher who stood before it, the gallery was

> the prototype of the single most important mechanism of the modern school system: the teacher-centred classroom. (1994, p. 72)

The teacher supervises and makes judgments about children and young people: about their level of attendance, their behaviour, their achievement of developmental milestones, and what they might and might not know. This is the panopticon at work, as Michel Foucault (1977) put it. Surveillance encourages children and young people to regulate their own behaviour, sometimes in anticipation of being watched by the educator. In these situations, the student may find themselves actively constructing 'themselves and each other as "conscientious" or "slack" or any number of other student types' (Gore, 1995, p. 170). When people regulate their own behaviour, the power of surveillance has done its work.

ASK YOURSELF

Can you give an example of where you have *internalised* the rules or norms of your culture, such that these manifest 'naturally' in your thoughts, speech and behaviour?

The *examination* or test is a form of supervision that educators, school systems and governments exercise over children and young people (Meadmore, 2000). Not unlike the systematic medical examinations that entered Europe through the institution of the hospital in the seventeenth century, the practices of examination have *co-evolved* with the practices of school and pre-school (Deacon, 2006). A key part of the educator's work is to observe, test, assess, document and report. Academic, health and psychological examinations extract information from children/young people and their bodies—to measure and establish what they know and what they lack, and what they can and cannot do. Educators make judgments about the minute details of children and young people, such as how they hold their pen to write and their eating habits at school. Educators cross, tick and number students' work, and record numbers and comments in

school databases for the education system. This routine supervision, examination, documentation and reporting to authorities involves the educator in the practices of comparing, ranking and judging not only what children and young people know and can do, but also what kind of persons they are and should become.

Much of what the educator does enables them to make *normalising judgments*, or to judge children and young people according to a standard: 'the norm'. Gore observes: 'Whether in relation to participants in these pedagogical settings, or in relation to other people or views, invoking standards appears to be a common feature of pedagogy' (1995, p. 172). Foucault (1977) makes the following observation about the role of the educator—as the judge of standards or 'normality':

> The judges of normality are present everywhere. We are in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge, the 'social worker'-judge; it is on them that the universal reign of the normative is based; and each individual, wherever he may find himself, subjects to it his body, his gestures, his behavior, his aptitudes, his achievements. (p. 304)

In this process, a group of children/young people is compared, ranked and known. In this process, their individuality is made for them. This individuality is defined according to norms of behaviour and aptitude, standardised test benchmarks (e.g. NAPLAN) and expected developmental milestones. Students are divided, sorted into groups, categorised and subjected to correction and special treatments, all with the goal of making them better, smarter, healthier—to make them 'normal', or tolerable to society. Usually, this process ascribes labels to students. They may be *classified* or *categorised* as the good student, the poor student, the gifted and talented, the distracted, the lazy, the unmotivated, the literate, the illiterate, the A student, the

underachiever, the failure and the troublesome—what Foucault called **dividing practices**. In time, the child or young person may resist such labels, or come to describe themselves using similar terms. In the latter case, the student accepts the possibility that these categories are relevant or meaningful to make sense of themselves among all the other possibilities that might describe who they are. In so doing, they judge and shape themselves (their individuality) according to the standards set by others (i.e. educators, experts, the education system).

Dividing practices: Where individuals are divided and labelled from each other and/or within themselves.

Theory in action

Today it is taken for granted that children go through a phase of what we call 'teenage-hood', associated with exuberance, being out of bounds and so on. Before the 1920s there was no category or a description as 'teenagers' for a person who is neither a child nor an adult. Read the following:

- the historical note: 'The invention of the teenager': www.ushistory.org/us/46c.asp ; and
- 'A brief history of teenagers': https://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/2018/02/brief-history-teenagers/
- how *LIFE* magazine introduced this 'mysterious' phase in life: https://time.com/3639041/the-invention-of-teenagers-life-and-the-triumph-of-youth-culture/

1 To what extent is being and acting as a teenager biologically and culturally determined?
2 Do you think being labelled as 'a teenager' gives a young person certain freedom to act?
3 How does the category of 'teenager' legitimate certain avenues to regulate young people's lives?
4 How are young people in Australia today different from young people 100-200 years ago?

Managing bodies and behaviour

Our discussion thus far has concerned practices, and these involve human bodies. It is the body that performs practices in classrooms. Teachers' bodies are formed through various practices, and students learn to read bodies. We often think of the body as being separate from the mind, a way of thinking we have adopted from René Descartes and his concept of *Cartesian dualism*, or mind/body (see Descartes' maxim 'I think therefore I am', asking where is the body's role in being?). The classical Greek philosopher Plato believed that soul/intellect/mind is different to the body, where the mind and rationality are privileged. Being shaped by these long-standing ways of thinking, we generally think that learning happens in our mind. This explains the emphasis on teaching children and young people to 'render their bodies immobile so that the mind can be freed to go about its business' (MacClure, 2016, p. 180).

However, this perspective underestimates the centrality of the body. We learn through our bodies, our thoughts are bodily, and the body facilitates learning. Watkins' (2011) study shows how children learn bodily practices at home and in school, and how these are productive for their learning. She concludes that we incorporate in our bodies a certain posture that either facilitates or hinders learning. Think about learning to be able to sit at a desk and focus on reading. Is it difficult to stop fidgeting or thinking of other things? If it is, Watkins might argue that your body might not be well trained for conventional forms of learning. While of course different cultures have different practices around learning, it still seems that in Australia, sitting at a desk is how we go about it. Educators must therefore be mindful of how managing the bodies of learners (i.e. constraining and enabling bodies) influences their learning.

These issues are pertinent when considering behaviour management. An array of practices is performed as part of behaviour management in schools and pre-schools. Discipline is often

ranked by teachers as the most serious problem confronting schools, and the one that teachers have the most difficulties with over the course of their careers. Further, teachers put great emphasis on keeping control over their classroom, as if behaviour management is one of the most important tasks of teachers—even a sign of a good teacher. Think of the commonly used command, 'Hands on heads', and the practices of lining students up before entering the classroom, or sitting still quietly before being released at the end of the day. It is as if learning is synonymous with the strict control of the bodies of learners. Although the authors do not necessarily object to these practices, we do believe that we need to reflect on their use rather than accept them as standard.

In the past, for example, physical punishment was a common practice for those who did not meet a school's standard of behaviour. Students were caned, pushed and prodded. Today, control and power are still central issues in behaviour management, but educators no longer beat their students. The underlying principle of contemporary classroom discipline approaches (covering the whole spectrum from physical punishment to behaviour management and guidance) produces a continuum that ranges from maximum control to maximum freedom. This model also includes some theorisation of power that likens behaviour management in education to something of a tug of war (Millei, 2005). Porter (2003) argues that in the *laissez-faire* style of management (where students can do whatever they please), the student has the greatest personal power and the teacher has relatively low personal power. In the autocratic discipline style, power is located on the teacher's side and students are relatively powerless. This way of thinking about classroom discipline, as a zero-sum power play between the teacher and students, constructs a particular perspective on classroom discipline and disruption. Ford (2003) explains:

> We talk of avoiding 'power plays' with students, and we wonder what has happened

> to the respect that used to be afforded to people in our positions. Generally, we talk about power that establishes the means of controlling the behaviour of others, the 'right' to exert such control, and the nature and limit of that 'right'. Questions of students' power and their 'right to exert control', over themselves and others, have also been given increasing weight in contemporary educational discourses. (p. 8)

However, if we agree that power does not reside within or on behalf of people, and accept that it operates in a network-like form *between* people, we can understand that no matter what happens—no matter who has 'more' or 'less' power on their 'behalf', or how we try to diminish this power—we cannot have a situation in which behaviour management is power free. Ford (2003) suggests that it is important for teachers to question disciplinary practices (we would add other practices too) from the perspective of students' rights and what those practices mean for children and young people's citizenship in classrooms, not to mention their learning.

A good way to put this questioning into practice is to imagine whether you would act this way with another adult, or how you would feel if another adult acted this way towards you. You will see that many practices we perform with children and young people, thinking that they are completely justified, suddenly become unacceptable. For example, would you sit your friend on the 'naughty chair' if they interrupted your talk or did not stop talking when you told them to? Would you punish your friend for misbehaviour or send them to the boss without explaining and giving them appropriate time to learn the rules first, as teachers often do with first graders? Would you hold and direct and friend's body to sit in a particular way or to stop fidgeting? Would you take your friend's work and show it to others without your friend's permission? If we look at children and young people from the same perspective as adults, it also becomes more visible that they are not passive in the construction of order in the classroom. They actively

cooperate in establishing and maintaining order (Davies, 1983). How we think about managing behaviour is important.

Practices, while often performed without deliberation, are always informed by different philosophical and societal expectations. That is to say, your practices draw on particular bodies of knowledge that inform how to be and act in schools and pre-schools, for both teachers and learners (e.g. psychology and public healthcare). When you learn as part of your pre-service teacher curriculum about how to teach mathematics, evaluate students' work, and manage student behaviour, you are learning about established practices that you might perform in school, but they are never neutral or value free. These practices are always an act of power performed over others. They are informed by certain views of the world, learning and learners, and what is good and beneficial for children and young people. For example, the toilet routine in a pre-school utilises knowledge about our bodies, health and hygiene, but also embeds expectations on how to perform these acts in a civilised way fitted to society's norms. Some educators might let children go to the toilet when they feel like it or need to go. These educators believe that children are competent and free actors, who feel when they need to go and can do so alone. Other educators take children to the toilet in groups because they think that children need guidance or need to learn routine; moreover, that they need adult supervision because they might engage in immoral or other acts that threaten others. Such educators potentially view children as incompetent, naturally corrupt and unable to act on their own, and believe it is the teachers' role to teach them to behave and learn to make 'good' decisions.

As you develop your personal philosophy as an educator, you will see how much your experiences, the institutions you will work in, and your culturally informed beliefs about children, young people and the world shape your practices. Therefore, it is important to reflect on

these, especially if you aspire to practise change.

Theory in action

Bush schooling is an alternative to traditional classroom learning. Bush schools share similarities with the Forest Schools movement of northern Europe. Investigate bush and forest schools, beginning with the following resources:

- Siossian, E. (2019, February 2). *Unique nature primary school 'pioneers' new way forward for outdoor education*. ABC News. https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-02/the-nature-school-primary-pioneers-outdoor-bush-education/10697332
- Forest School Association. (2020, June). *What is a forest school?* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/8b2vC-ecUuU
- Roberts, A. (Writer) & De Jong, A. (2016, February 23): *Kids gone wild* [Video]. SBS On Demand. https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/video/628862019760/dateline-23216-kids-gone-wild

1. How might the views of the child and childhood that underpin bush and forest schools be different from those found in traditional schools?
2. How do the priorities of bush and forest schools differ from traditional schools?
3. What benefits do bush and forest schools have over the traditional model of schooling?
4. How is risk understood and approached in bush and forest schools? What are your thoughts about this?
5. Could educators successfully adopt and use the ideas and approaches of bush and forest schools in traditional school education? Explain why/why not.

Conclusion

The philosopher Ivan Illich was one of the most famous critics of modern institutions, including the school. He argued that we often mix up education with schooling and learning with receiving information. As a result, the school stands between knowledge and the learner. For Illich, schools corrupt people instead of facilitating their learning:

> Many students, especially those who are poor, intuitively know what the schools do for them. They school them to confuse process and substance. Once these become blurred, a new logic is assumed: the more treatment there is, the better are the results; or, escalation leads to success. The pupil is thereby 'schooled' to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new. His imagination is 'schooled' to accept service in place of value … Health, learning, dignity, independence, and creative endeavour are defined as little more than the performance of the institutions which claim to serve these ends, and their improvement is made to depend on allocating more resources to the management of hospitals, schools, and other agencies in question. (1973, p. 9)

By levelling a powerful *critique* of schooling, Illich promotes a different way of thinking about education. He incites us to question the naturalness of going to school, its organisation and operation, and its effects. This chapter has sought to do a similar thing. Our exploration of the history of pre-schooling and schooling offers insights into why schools might operate in the way Illich describes, and the challenges involved in transforming schooling. Of significance is that mass schooling is involved in the process of forming individuals through practices that educate and train minds and bodies.

As a future educator, you will take your place in an institution where traditions, regulations, norms and practices are being formed by historical forces and agendas larger than the school itself. You will therefore be working in a context where the needs of the education system, and not the learning of the students, are often viewed as paramount. In our view, this is unfortunate and needs resisting. Educators should not be thought of as technicians for implementing others' ideas, managing students and filling their minds with information. Educating is not and never has been a neutral or isolated process—it has always been a question of power and its exercise over others. We suggest that the responsible exercise of power requires educators to be *transformative intellectuals*, the kind Illich was. A transformative intellectual takes nothing for granted, challenges evidence and norms, and discovers, reveals and opens new lines of thought and action. You can begin this journey toward being a transformative intellectual by thinking about the following questions: What is the purpose of education and schooling? How should we educate? Who should children and young people become through education? What is your role in this? How will you exercise your power?

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1 Investigate 'the history of childhood'. What interesting information can you find?
2 Conduct an internet search using the term 'pedagogy of the oppressed'. To what extent is it possible for formal education to 'empower' individuals and groups? Is the goal of empowerment a hopeless cause?
3 Do you think an individual's ideas and beliefs about the world are set by the time they hit adolescence? Were yours? What role (if any) can educators have in upper primary and secondary schools in shaping the values and beliefs of young people?

4 John Dewey once remarked:

> I believe that much of present education fails because it neglects [the] fundamental principle of the school as a form of community life. It conceives the school as a place where certain information is to be given, where certain lessons are to be learned, or where certain habits are to be formed. (1897, p. 9)

What is the meaning and relevance of Dewey's quote?

5 Describe your ideal 'school'. How is it an improvement on our current schools?

KEY FURTHER READINGS AND RESOURCES

These internet search terms may assist you in sourcing further information on ideas presented in this chapter: Critical theory & Giroux, Dividing practices, Embodiment, Foucault & government, History of childhood, Liberal democracy, Mass schooling & Ian Hunter, Normalisation, Regimes of practices, Social democracy, State, Subjectivation.

Danaher, G., Webb, J. & Schirato, T. (2000). *Understanding Foucault*. St Leonards: Allen & Unwin.

This book provides an accessible introduction to the ideas of Michel Foucault, a prominent intellectual associated with post-structuralist thinking.

Analysing knowledge and power in the classroom - https://socialtheoryapplied.com/2017/03/29/analysing-knowledge-power-classrooms/

This webpage provides an example of how everyday classroom interactions between teachers and students are embedded in relations of power.

Meredyth, D. & Tyler, D. (1993). *Child and citizen: Genealogies of schooling and subjectivity*. Queensland: Griffith Institute for Cultural Policy Studies.

This book examines different aspects of the relationship between education, schooling and its role in the cultivation of citizenship.

Vander Schee, C. (2009). Fruit, vegetables, fatness, and Foucault: Governing students and their families though school health policy. *Journal of Education Policy, 24*(5), 557–574.

This article provides a powerful analysis of how the notion of 'good health' is used in a school healthy eating program to redefine normality and regulate behaviour.

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