SOMETHING HAPPENED!

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Preface

“Naïve Possibiltarianism”
Act 1  “Teaching as a subversive activity”

1969

“A conceptual revolution

(Chorley, R.J. and Haggett, P., 1967)

1974

1969

“New Professionalism”
“The Process of Education”

Avery Hill (GYSL)
Bristol (14-16)
US HSGP
MACOS
Games and simulations

Positivist science
Quantitative methods
Generalisations and ‘laws’
Models
The ‘new model army’ goes to school

This was a vibrant time.
Optimistic/idealistic young graduates could wield influence on what was taught in schools.
The idea was to revise school geography – to become a ‘light in the mind’ rather than a ‘burden on the memory’.

*Human Geography: theories and their applications*
For A level Geography

Cole, J. and Beynon, N. 1969
*New Ways in Geography: Book 2*
For primary-age students
Educational change: The ‘curriculum’ revolution

Brief historical note:

- Ordinary and Advanced level examinations introduced 1951 (for selective grammar schools)
- Comprehensive schools introduced in 1965
- ROSLA – to 15 in 1947; to 16 in 1972
- The idea of ‘curriculum’ is established. The Schools Council in 1968. A ‘golden age’ of curriculum development in the 1970s
  - GYSL
  - Geography 14-18
  - Geography 16-19
- The Great Debate from 1976
- GCSE examinations introduced in 1986 (for ‘all-ability’ comprehensive schools)
Act 2 “Thinking through geography”
Theoretical expansion of ‘the discipline’

This period (1970s to the present) led to a ‘chasm’ opening up between school and university geography.

What is the relationship between the subject and the discipline?
School geography cast adrift?

Perhaps ‘rational curriculum planning’ was no longer feasible?

But in any case, the state began to take control

Secretary of State for Education, Keith Joseph, addressed the GA in 1985. He asked: What is the purpose of geography in schools?

The national curriculum was introduced in the 1988 Education Reform Act. Geography had its ‘place in the sun’
Geography, lost in plain sight? An uneasy relationship between ‘geography’ and ‘education’ intensifies:

- The growth of progressive ‘child centredness’

- The advent of the ‘curriculum arbitrary’: subjects get in the way of
  - Problem solving
  - Competences
  - Twenty-first century skills
  - Learning to learn

- The re-assertion of ‘good causes’
  - Citizenship
  - Sustainability
  - Health and well being

But note:
Marsden, B. (1997)
‘On Taking the Geography Out of Geographical Education’
*Geography, 82, 3,* pp. 241–52
Geographical Association ‘Manifesto’ [2009]

Reasons
Growing ‘genericism’ in the curriculum
- Skills rather than knowledge
- Learning rather than teaching
- Themes/issues rather than subjects

Political influences on the curriculum
- Citizenship?
- Sustainability?

Contents
The subject resource
Thinking geographically
Living geography
Exploration and enquiry
Real world fieldwork
Young people’s geographies
Curriculum Making
Act 4 “Bringing Knowledge Back In”

The ‘knowledge turn’ ... back to the future?

NC revised: focus on the ‘core knowledge’ of academic subjects

Less concern with skills and competences; more concern with ‘academic rigour’

English Baccalaureate introduced: Eng, Ma, Sc, Lang and either history or geography

State funded academies (and ‘free schools’) no longer have to follow the NC

Reformed GCSE and A level (from 2016)
The ‘Three Futures’ heuristic

A simplified normative model of ‘alternative curriculum scenarios’* to aid curriculum leadership.

Three Futures asks: what form of curriculum do we seek?

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**Future 2** is a “progressive” alternative. Content is arbitrary and fluid. It is a ‘knowledge-blind’ curriculum which appears to stress ‘learning’ as an end in itself. Over-socialized knowledge. *In extremis* could be a betrayal.

**Future 3** is a curriculum of engagement with powerful knowledge. Content not ‘given’ (as in F1) nor ‘arbitrary’ (as in F2). Knowledge development influenced by epistemic quality principles derived from specialist communities.
Towards Future 3 Curriculum Thinking

• Knowledge engaged curriculum (cf ‘knowledge led’) (incorporating ‘skills’ and ‘competences’)
• Based on ‘powerful knowledge’ (‘epistemic quality’)
• Progressive – motivated by social justice (‘pedagogic rights’)
• Distinguishes curriculum from pedagogy (the what and the how)
• Pedagogic selections need to be fit for purpose (asking what comes before asking how)
Future 3 and Curriculum Making

The focus is on the ‘didactic triangle’ of student-teacher-subject relations.

Understanding the relationships and the processes of *enacting* the curriculum.

The teacher has responsibility for the epistemic quality of the enacted curriculum:

*For example:*
- Is this ‘good’ geography?
- Have the students grasped its significance, its systematicity … its power?

Curriculum making therefore requires ‘curriculum leadership’ - focused on quality.
Curriculum Leadership (and a research agenda)

Focus on epistemic quality of the enacted curriculum:

*In what ways is geography powerful knowledge?*

Focus on epistemic access:

*What are appropriate pedagogies (at different ages and stages)?*

Focus on sequencing and ‘progression’:

*The development of understanding/thinking in geography (epistemic ascent?)*
And Research?

“Ways forward ...” (p15)

In future, geog ed research needs to be:

- Relevant to the stakeholders
- Good enough
- Communicated effectively
Coda “EPoCH”

Engagement with Knowledge Power in Schools and the Development of Capabilities for the Human Epoch [EPoCH]

EPoCH responds to the rhetoric of the knowledge society which eschews knowledge in favour of so-called generic competences for the twenty-first century. EPoCH tackles this dangerous educational blind-spot through the collaboration of 5 European and one South African university plus 16 partners involving the world’s largest educational publisher, the leading provider of geographical information services, schools, NGOs and learned societies. Plus ‘global academic partners in USA and Japan.

Overarching RQ:

“How can Future 3 curricula be envisioned, developed and enacted in practice?”
Try Beekeeping