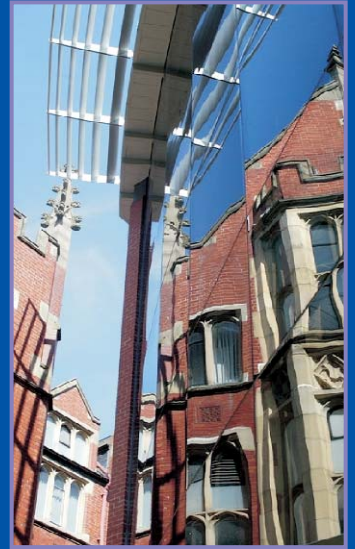


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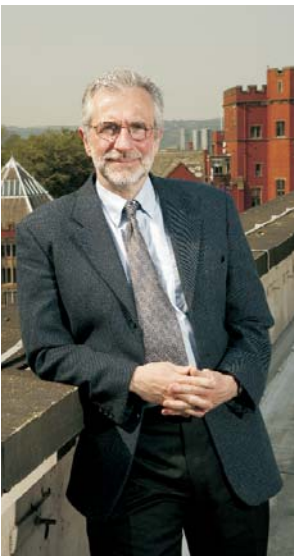


Alumni Newsletter 2008

We want to keep in touch with our alumni and so this newsletter has been produced in order to inform you about exciting new developments in the School and to feature updates about our past students.



Welcome to the School of Education Alumni Newsletter 2008



In this Alumni Newsletter, you will find updates from past students on their achievements since graduation. We are enormously proud of our graduates and we know that all of you make significant contributions to education in many countries and across many areas.

Much has happened this year in the School of Education. We have made some great new staff appointments and in this newsletter you will find brief biographies of our new colleagues. We are very excited to welcome them to the School and we look forward to working with them in the years ahead.

Staff in the School continue to produce excellent research that is at the forefront of national and international scholarship and in these pages we will share some of these achievements with you. Their research underpins our courses and programmes. However, first and foremost this newsletter is about alumni, for alumni. We would very much like to incorporate your news next year – please send it to us, along with photographs where possible.

In the meantime, I wish you a very pleasant and successful year ahead.

Professor Peter Hannon
Head of School



Achievements of our past students

Sheffield EdD: New Named Routes

Our ever-popular professional doctorate programme, the EdD, introduced new named routes in October 2007, which enable students to focus their studies on areas of their professional interest. The *EdD in Early Childhood Education*, *EdD in Higher Education* and *EdD in Literacy and Language in Education* all provide students with focused opportunities to study these areas in depth. Students attend weekend schools and are taught alongside other students on the EdD programme. We are very pleased to announce the introduction in October 2008 of a new named route, the *EdD in Language Learning and Teaching*. It is aimed at professionals working in a wide range of language education and training related areas in the UK and overseas. It aims to provide students with both a thorough grounding in the philosophy, principles and practice of educational research, and a critical understanding of key contemporary and global issues affecting all types and sectors of English Language and modern language teaching. If you are interested in our EdD programmes, please contact *Jacquie Gillott*: jacquie.gillott@sheffield.ac.uk

MA Applied Professional Studies in Education (APSE)

Building on our highly successful PGCE programme, which received the highest grade of '1' in an Ofsted inspection, the MA APSE programme enables teachers to undertake modules that build on their engagement in continuing professional development in schools and local authorities. The programme enables teachers to undertake the modules at a distance and we utilise e-learning pedagogies as well as offer face-to-face sessions. If you would like to find out more about the programme, contact *Sue Cramp*: s.cramp@sheffield.ac.uk

Please let us know about yours! Send stories and photographs to c.a.worboys@sheffield.ac.uk

Azian T. S. Abdullah, PhD – Director SEAMEO RECSAM
Pursuing a doctoral degree with three growing-up children was not an easy task since I had to juggle my time between my studies and taking care of my children's needs. I had a wonderful supervisor though who was very helpful and with his guidance, I managed to have a very enriching academic experience at Sheffield. Various other people were also ever ready to lend a helping hand. I still remember Mrs Renshaw from Housing who managed to find a university house for our family at short notice. The maintenance people too were very efficient and always came within 24 hours to fix or repair any problems with the house. The administrative secretary at the faculty was such a kind soul who took care of all the PhD students with motherly love. Sheffield must have left a big impact on my daughter because she is now in her final year at the law faculty of the university.

I realised then that getting a PhD was not just about writing and completing my thesis. I was glad that my supervisor asked me to spend time in school to observe the lessons and talk to the children. I have to thank Mrs Joyce Higton of Carterknowle Primary School for sharing her class with me. I was also glad that he encouraged me to write articles for international journals because that helped me secure the post of Senior Specialist and Head of the Science Division at SEAMEO RECSAM, a regional centre for science and mathematics education based in Penang, Malaysia. When I left for my studies in 1994,



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I was working at the Curriculum Development Centre, Ministry of Education, Malaysia. When I came back in 1997, I was posted to the Schools Division under the same Ministry. After 4 years at the Schools Division, I thought that I needed a change and an opportunity to disseminate my knowledge and skills in Science Education, and therefore I applied to be seconded to SEAMEO RECSAM. After two years as the Head of Science, I was appointed by the Ministry of Education as the Director of the centre in February 2004. It has been four years now since I took over the post and I found it to be the most challenging task of my career and the most enjoyable because I get to meet many people, especially science educators from all over the world.

The photos above:

- 1 With the Minister of Education, Malaysia when he officiated the commemoration ceremony of RECSAM's 40th anniversary on 4th September 2007
- 2 With the Minister of Education, Malaysia and high officials from the Ministry of Education and SEAMEO Secretariat during the SEAMEO Council Conference in March 2007 in Bali, Indonesia.



Bill Jones

Shortly after achieving the MEd in Literacy at Sheffield University I became Assistant Principal Curriculum at Rotherham College of Arts and Technology (having previously been Curriculum Development Manager at Burton College, Staffordshire).

The Masters degree gave me the confidence needed to secure this promotion, which, one and a half years on, I have found to be a challenging but very rewarding position. The course at Sheffield University helped give me the insight and skills to implement strategies that have improved retention and



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success rates at RCAT and which will hopefully lead to improved progression opportunities for students in Rotherham and South Yorkshire. The course allowed me to explore my own interests in terms of literacy and how it impacts on educational achievement while providing a supportive and stimulating environment within which to develop my academic skills.



Gill Britten

Family Learning Co-ordinator, Volunteer Co-ordinator and Basic Skills Teacher at Yale College in Wrexham, Wales.

In anyone's book I was a late developer. I put a tentative toe into the waters of academia at the age of 50. In 1998 I found myself trying to break through the 'glass ceiling' that effectively held every Welsh class assistant firmly in her/his place. I loved my job in literacy support, but needed a challenge. By chance, I came across the advertisement for the MEd in Literacy offered by Sheffield. University was always my dream for my children, never for me. My course was the best. It has opened doors I would never have thought possible. I now have an exciting and most rewarding career in adult basic skills.

I have always been attracted to working with marginalised learners. My learning at Sheffield introduced me to the challenges of action research and gave me the skills and confidence to carry out my own projects. These include:

Write to Read – explored a different way of working with low level adult readers based on group writing of their own material.

Talk for Talk – uses a multi-agency approach to supporting families caring for children and young adults with speech language and communication difficulties (SLCD). Through learner-led group work, involving listening, leisure, and information giving sessions, we help parents build confidence, self-esteem, and help develop coping strategies and personal basic skills.

Digital Story Telling – features in many of my projects to engage new learners. This is a flexible, exciting way of working, offering endless creative opportunities to capture learners' imaginations. That in itself of course brought a raft of new ICT skills for me to master.

Yale Profile of Adult Oracy Skills – this is without doubt the most significant, frustrating, challenging and hugely rewarding piece of work to date. Five years ago I had a growing awareness of a similarity between some of my literacy learners' difficulties and the difficulties many of the Talk for Talk parents shared with their children. A developing bank of evidence



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suggested the crucial oracy (speaking and listening) skills that underpin literacy learning were not being addressed effectively in the adult basic skills classroom. There was also a strong personal suspicion that this was the one area of adult literacy teaching that was given the least attention. Local research was to confirm this. Despite the inclusion of speaking and listening in the Adult Core Curriculum, it was the area of literacy teaching given the least attention. Universally colleagues admitted it was the area they knew least about and it was perceived as being difficult to give evidence to the satisfaction of institutional quality managers. Furthermore, an effective assessment and the strategies to help learners were difficult to come by. Therein lay the challenge! A colleague and I set out to produce both. Four years on and there is now a possibility the work will be published. None of this would have been possible without the skills, knowledge and confidence an MEd brings. I strongly suspect there's still a doctorate lurking within me, so the dream goes on. Maybe, when I hit six numbers who knows?

Kay Heslop

Early Years Educator magazine held their annual Special Awards ceremony at Roehampton University, London on September 15th, 2007.

There were ten special award nominations, which included Special Needs Professional of the Year, Lecturer of the Year and Nursery Nurse of the Year.

Kay Heslop, nursery officer at the Riverside Children's Centre was nominated by a colleague who works closely with her on the family fun project during holiday times to be a worthy candidate for the award of Nursery Nurse of the Year. Kay was shortlisted and invited to attend the 'Oscar style' ceremony in London and to everyone's delight was selected by a distinguished judging panel on behalf of the Early Years Educator magazine to be **Nursery Nurse of the Year**. Kay is a graduate of our MA Early Childhood Education course.



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The award acknowledged the hard work, commitment and loyalty Kay provided to the family fun project and also the twenty plus years dedication to working with children and young people in both work and voluntary capacities. Kay received a plaque and framed certificate.

The photos left and above:

3 Wynn (Kay's work colleague) and Kay

4 Kay (centre) with 2nd and 3rd prizewinners from the Nursery Nurse of the Year category

News from the Department of Educational Studies

We haven't the space to provide you with an exhaustive account of what staff have been doing recently, but here are a few snippets that will confirm that our staff continue to make the highest quality contributions to research, teaching and scholarly activity.

Dr Terry Lamb has been invited to lead the *Department for Schools, Children and Families (DCSF) Diploma Development Partnership in Languages*. As Chair of the Languages DDP, Terry will play a pivotal role in bringing together key stakeholders from a range of educational and business backgrounds, working together to develop a Diploma that will engage and stimulate young people and meet the needs of employers and HE. Terry will be working alongside Professor Hugh Lawlor (Professor of Education, Canterbury Christ Church University and Director of AstraZeneca Teaching Trust) who is Chairing the DDP in Science and Sir Keith Ajegbo (former Headteacher and Government Advisor), who is Chairing the DDP in Humanities. In the DCSF press release, Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, said "I am extremely pleased that Professor Hugh Lawlor, Sir Keith Ajegbo and Dr Terry Lamb have accepted the offer to lead our new Diploma Development Partnerships. I am confident that having such talented, experienced individuals at the helm will ensure these new Diplomas are exciting, wide ranging and of the highest quality and I look forward to their development."

Head of School Visits the Caribbean

Professor Peter Hannon, Head of School, visited the Caribbean in January 2008. Peter met with students, local tutors and various other members of the education sector in Trinidad, St Lucia and Jamaica. He also shared aspects of his research with Masters and EdD students in taught sessions and was well received by the Sheffield family in the three islands. Peter was particularly keen to hear about the student experience from the students themselves and was impressed by their level of enthusiasm for and commitment to the programme.

Working With Communities – A New Way!

For the University of Sheffield the *Working with Communities Foundation Degree* is unique among other degrees offered at the University in terms of its nature, content, students, teaching team and vision. It is the University's very first Foundation degree and as such combines academic and vocational elements within a new framework.

As a part of the School of Education, and based in *The Institute for Lifelong Learning (TILL)*, *Working with Communities* (WWC) is one of the few cross-departmental programmes between TILL and Educational Studies. Most other shared teaching is through distance education. The programme is distinguished from other Foundation Degrees in the region by having an accompanying MA with many joint sessions across the two named awards.

The programme was designed by **Dr Michele Moore** and **Dr Anita Franklin** between 2004 – 2005 and validated in time for a 2006 start. The WWC course was shaped by feedback from their outreach to community programmes and local authority contacts. The programme built upon Michele's work with Sure Start and Anita's work with women, black and minority communities. Initial tasters were held in communities throughout Sheffield; the concerns of local employers in the public and voluntary sector around regeneration and community development were considered in the design of the course.

WWC caters for mature students who work within either paid or voluntary community organizations; this is the criteria for entry onto the course. The students are funded either by their employers or through local authority bursaries. In line with an agenda of facilitating widening participation in higher education the cohorts are made up of students from groups traditionally under represented in the University of Sheffield. As such the students are predominantly mature female students who are parents from the inner cities, mining villages, the white working class and ethnic minority groups.

The course is taught by a vibrant and creative team with a wealth of experience in community work and research in the areas of women's studies, black and minority research, and research around identity, regeneration and change. **Dr Anita Franklin** is overall Programme Director and Course Leader for the Foundation Degree and the BA progression route. **Dr Kate Pahl** is course leader for the MA. Teaching on the programme is supported by **Dr Michele Moore**, **Dr Jennifer Lavia**, **Dr Tim Herrick** and **Dr Diane Burns**.

Laurette Bristol took this photo, below, of one of the WWC students, Liz Hill, (the woman in red) who has won the NIACE Adult Learner Award for this year. Congratulations to Liz, who is seen here talking to fellow student Michele Ward.



News From E-Lamp

As part of the monitoring and evaluation work the department undertakes for the DCSF-funded 'E-LAMP' project, this year the team, which includes **Ken Marks**, organized a competition for the 500 or so young Travellers involved with the project.

These youngsters are provided with laptops and internet access so that they can pursue their education whilst away from school. The competition asked young learners for creative entries about the impact of the project on their learning.

20 prizes were awarded at a special event hosted by Lord Avebury at the House of Lords early in March, with winners and their families representing the Gypsy, Irish Traveller, Fairground and Circus communities.

A unique event for the families and great to be able to link evaluation to celebration!

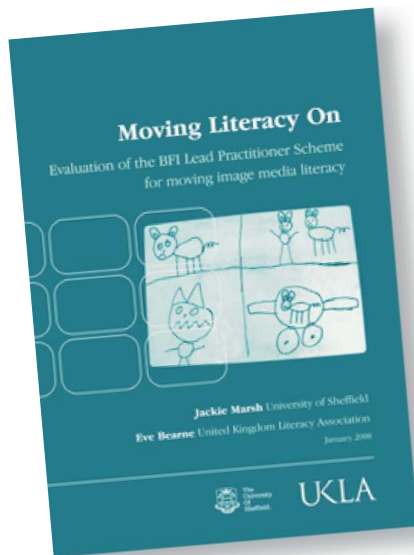
Latest NRDC Research News

Ever since the formation of the National Research and Development Centre for adult literacy and numeracy (NRDC) in 2002, people from the Department of Educational Studies here, and Greg Brooks in particular, have played a significant role in many of its projects. For the past year, **Dr Maxine Burton** has directed a project in the area of improving the quality of teaching and learning in adult literacy, with the help of three research associates from the department, **Judy Davey**, **Margaret Lewis** and **Louise Ritchie**, with **Shirley Riley-Lake** as project secretary and **Greg Brooks** as adviser.

The aim of the project was to investigate the effectiveness of three teaching strategies, namely phonics, oral reading fluency and sentence combining, which, prior to this work, had a strong research base at school level but not at adult level. As well as observing, supporting and evaluating the strategies in action in a total of 23 adult literacy classes throughout England during the autumn term of 2007, the team devised and delivered four preparatory in-service training days in phonics and one in each of the other two strategies for groups of adult literacy practitioners between June and September 2007. A report and practitioner guide are in press at present, provisionally entitled *Progress for adult literacy learners*, in view of the very positive findings from the research. Briefly:

- the learners made significant gains in a very short time in reading comprehension (phonics and reading fluency strands) spelling (phonics) and writing (sentence combining);
- wider benefits to the learners overall included increased confidence, particularly with oral skills, and improved peer support and 'gelling' within the classes;
- high quality of teaching was found to correlate with learners' progress, together with regular attendance by the learners.

The implications for policy and practice are significant and include the need for continuing investment in good quality, sharply focused initial teacher training and CPD; support and mentoring networks for practitioners; and accessible teaching schemes with good resources adapted for adults.



Moving Literacy On

The 'Reframing Literacy' project, developed and run by the British Film Institute (BFI), focused on enhancing lead practitioners' understanding of moving image media literacy. In total 70 Local Authorities across England were involved in the project. **Professor Jackie Marsh** and Dr Eve Bearne evaluated the project in 35 Local Authorities. The BFI had five key objectives for the scheme. They were to:

- build an infrastructure at local authority level that will help to ensure the long term sustainability of moving image media education from Early Years through to KS3;
- develop a cohort of lead practitioners who are confident in designing and disseminating curricula, resources, and training for other practitioners;
- identify and explore specific learning outcomes and pedagogies related to moving image work in classrooms across Early Years and KS 1-3;
- explore ways of integrating moving image media education into mainstream literacy practice;
- develop ways of integrating the three sometimes separate dimensions of moving image media education (that is the creative, the critical, and the cultural).

Jackie and Eve produced a report which evaluated the work against these key objectives. The report includes case study examples to illustrate the findings and an appendix which outlines ways in which Local Authorities might develop work in moving image education themselves. The report can be obtained from the website bookshop of the United Kingdom Literacy Association (www.ukla.org)

New books

We have a number of books written/edited by staff that are either recently published or in press:

Sikes, P. & Potts, A. (Eds) (2008) *Researching Education from the Inside: Investigating Institutions From Within*, London, Routledge/Falmer .

Some of you may be interested in the following new publication – Willig, C. and Stainton-Rogers, W. (Eds. 2007) *The Handbook of Qualitative Research in Psychology* published by Sage. **Dr Tom Billington** is joint author (with Andy Miller and Victoria Hobley) of the chapter relating to Educational Psychology.

'*Early Childhood Education: History, Philosophy and Experience*' was published on 18th April. This book by **Professor Cathy Nutbrown**, Peter Clough (Liverpool Hope University) and Philip Selbie (University of Plymouth) explores the history behind current policies and practices in Early Childhood Education.

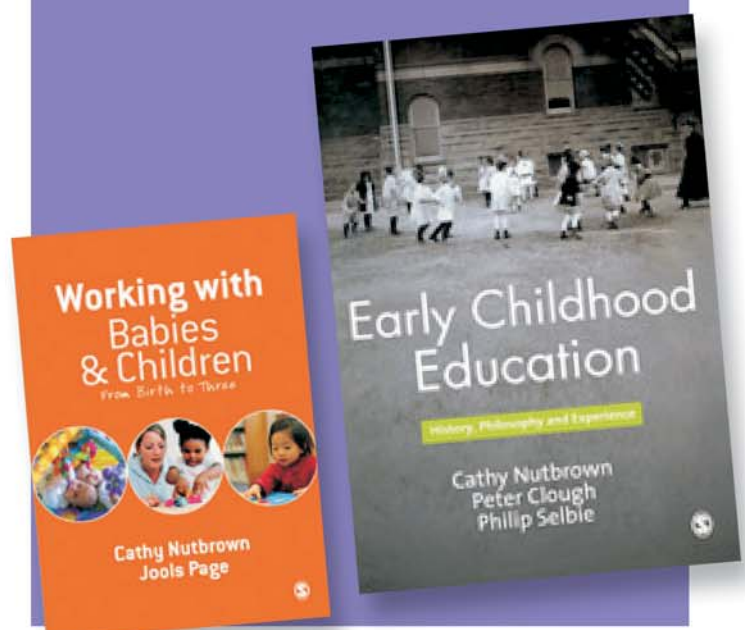
The work and writings of major historical figures who have significantly shaped Early Childhood Education current practices are crafted into a series of imagined conversations to bring alive the ideas of past pioneers.

Cathy has also been involved in writing the following book, along with **Jools Page**:

Working with Babies and Children

This book focuses on professional practice with under-threes in a range of early years settings.

A second edition of *Desirable Literacies: Approaches to Language and Literacy in the Early Years* is to be published in the Autumn. Edited by **Professor Jackie Marsh** and Elaine Hallet, it offers new chapters exploring contemporary aspects of early literacy such as multimodality and media literacy. **Dr Kate Pahl** has written a chapter for the book on creativity and literacy.



Final Words...

We hope that you have enjoyed reading this newsletter. We produce the newsletter on an annual basis, so please do let us have your news for the next one. If you have any contributions or questions for us, or wish to talk to us about further study in the School, please contact us using the details below.

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