

Editorial: Pushing at the Walls; Building for the Future

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I write this fresh back from attending the public day at the European Union Democratic Education Community conference (EUDEC www.eudec.org), this year in Soest, near Utrecht (see Moravec's *Other Contribution* conference report). A great conference, it has huge potential to develop volume of scholarly contributions. To do this it would need the committee of EUDEC to decide to offer a conference format including parallel paper sessions, as well as keynotes and workshops (thus allowing academics in departments to be funded to attend). That could be a valuable addition to building practice and research about thorough-going democratic alternatives to hierarchical and authoritarianly inclined education, given the community of interest EUDEC and its supporters has already developed and the wide range of practitioners attending.

Hopefully next year there will be *at least* one woman in the line up of four keynotes—the only disappointing aspect—as the talks on the public day were stimulating: the only brilliant research about other ways and other perspectives is being done and attending this year was an exercise in discovering new scholarship and democratic activity. Sending a tacit message “out” that only men have something public to say about alternative education, whilst the women do the visible organising, is not the best message from democratic education for any of us to note. Mainstream education and other disciplinary conferences have worked out this is unacceptable so I assume this was an error or circumstance, rather than an implicit bias manifesting. Overall attending EUDEC was a very friendly, critically open, cutting edge research and practitioner focused experience. I hope to make it on further occasions and would recommend this event widely to researchers, teachers, parents and any others with an interest.

We publish this July issue in the midst of interesting times: 1) Educational alternatives are finding their place more and more in capitalist oriented remodelling of state school systems (think UK free schools and wasted opportunities slowly being understood for alternative modality, or private low fee models in developing countries). The rising impact of technology on pedagogical delivery also offers new relevancies; 2) Educational alternatives are, globally, finding an urgent need for research. More research is needed to underpin their success as a “what works” story,

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in the face of frightening bureaucratic power “dissembling” their practices by combining prejudice and the ignorance of authorities with lack of educational understanding or appreciation of the value these initiatives of difference show at a local level; 3) International journal publishing just changed the game and/or finds the game changed - gold, green, platinum colours all waving their flags.

Other Education is currently a platinum online open access journal. However, since the UK Finch Report and changes to UK funding council publishing requirements demanding immediate open access—via “gold route” (pay to say) for its funded research—there is potential for our (international) future as a journal to be with a “minor contributions” gold model. This would only be applicable for and applied to employed, affiliated scholars (from developed countries) who would get this gold fee from their finance departments—used to paying much more—with platinum (free) waivers for all others. Our monetary ask would be £100 per article compared to circa £1700 from major houses, but I have lots to look into first regarding structures before we head down that route. Advice taken so far indicates this may be viable. With such an income model we could pay our editorial assistance a wage and cover basic running costs. I also wonder about the viability of looking to crowd funding, so watch this space...

Whatever is decided over the course of the next year the priority is on our scholarly content. To facilitate transparency of any useful income model *Other Education* is now working under the accountancy umbrella of trading entities in the company Other Business Ltd (Registered in England: 08567212). *OE* will remain totally platinum (no gold fees, never green waits) until it makes contextualised academic and publishing sense to make a change.

Our editorial board has seen some recent changes since the January 1/2 issue. We welcome Barry Percy Smith who has joined the advisory board and Joanna Haynes and Julian Stern who have joined the editorial board. Gert Biesta is no longer a part of the *Other Education* team, being busy with other commitments. I thank him for the part he played in setting up *OE* and wish him well in his new academic post.

Other Education is joining the social media world with some enthusiasm for its potential. The benefit of tweeting has recently shown itself with “followers” of *OE* hitching up to us: @oejournal. Find us and follow to get updates: The tweeting will develop as time goes on. Also remember and spread the word that if you have an announcement (e.g. seminar, conference, book launch) of bearing to the *OE* remit, get in touch and we will publicise this for you on the site.

A key issue now is ensuring that our systems function in the best way possible for all articles and contributions to be professional and permanently available. We work with APA 6th (and 5th), striving (and learning) to ensure our expertise with formatting and editing your articles is optimal and at a high publishing standard. To ensure issues never go off-line or are lost we are registered with EDINA—the “Jisc-

designated national data centre at the University of Edinburgh”—an online library storage facility serving open access journal content (www.edina.ac.uk). Moving forward, *OE* is also looking at exciting Scalar style formats and how to offer authors options for opportunities (if chosen) to deconstruct established concepts of the page as well as build new ways to publish (www.scalar.usc.edu).

I think it is important to stress to researchers interested in other education and publishing with *OE* that this is a journal that does not actively encourage affiliation to a university (although often the case). We work both within and outside the fashion and necessity of affiliation. We welcome suitable articles for peer review and other contributions from all over the world, independent of institutional status; dependent on quality of understanding! Also worth stressing is that *OE* is not a “white” space dominated by white scholars. However it is disappointing how little we know about educational alternatives in Asia and Africa, for instance, as written by indigenous scholars. I hope to broaden my awareness and raise the profile of *OE* in such communities. If you have links there or read this being from there, please spread the word that we care very much about what happens in these regions and feel free to get in touch if you would like to discuss inclusion on our editorial team. If the WISE initiatives’ work is anything to go by (www.wise-qatar.org) there is plenty that is extremely exciting occurring in developing countries, so let’s start new conversations?—in a dedicated space for presentations with an audience to hand who aren’t at zero regarding discussion of alternatives.

To comment on broadening and deepening networks, I’d like to set up an affiliate member section on the site. Colleagues listed in this section would be there by agreement, for their offer of publicising and networking on behalf of developing *Other Education*. There are benefits and also dangers in such a move: We need and rely on our network; we are a community and the stronger our links the better in terms of submissions and research development—but we want inclusivity for all. Thus affiliates will be some well known, respected researchers and thus already have established networks to serve wider unlisted affiliates, who can see sense in such a list for the building of communication bridges.

Lastly, and most importantly, I draw your attention to the peer-reviewed articles and other contributions being published in this issue. They do what we say we want to do with *Other Education* as a body of scholars: challenge the epistemology, ontology and assumptions of “established” educational research, thought, knowledge and practice. Keep your articles flowing to us. We can push at the walls; *together* we can build a new understanding of education.

Helen



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