Teaching: Professionalization, Development and Leadership
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Festschrift for Professor Eric Hoyle

Springer
This volume comprises original contributions to the field of teacher professionalization, development and leadership written by leading international scholars in the field. Each contributor has in some way been professionally associated with Eric Hoyle during the past four decades and has influenced, or been influenced by, his work.

We dedicate this Festschrift to Professor Hoyle in celebration of his continuing contribution to this vitally important field in education.

David Johnson and Rupert Maclean
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Foreword

Harry Judge

It is doubly fortunate that a foreword is not an introduction. Since it is mercifully brief, it should not be expected to mention respectfully each of the distinguished contributions which constitute “the word” before which it modestly stands as herald. For the same reason it cannot be expected to constrain within one overarching framework contributions which are essentially varied in subject matter and method. The brief of a foreword-writer might indeed be compared to that of a musician commissioned to write an overture to an opera which he had not written. To write such a piece for a volume devoted to Eric Hoyle is nevertheless a privilege as well as a pleasure. Partly, of course, because this volume celebrates a long and distinguished career devoted to the application of intelligence and (less assertively) theory to the improvement of practice. And partly because this abbreviated overture is privileged by being placed before a set of virtuoso performances throughout which consistent and coherent themes do insistently resonate.

Those themes are the very same that distinguish Eric Hoyle’s own work. Running through them, of course, is a preoccupation with the development of teaching as a profession (and an exploration of what exactly that means), and a focus upon a deeper understanding of schools as organisations. They have been audible since his first major contribution to the literature in 1969. But it is the modesty of his presentations, even more than the persuasiveness of his argument, that gives his work its permanent value. If he had, like too many others, fallen into the prophetic trap of proposing monistic theories to encompass all that is known and not yet known about teachers and organisations, he would soon have been forgotten as his disillusioned disciples wandered off into the desert in search of yet another guru. This volume now proves decisively that they have not. His steady devotion to the utility of ‘theories of the middle range’ has ensured that his insights have abiding value not only across societies and cultures, but equally across time. Those insights remain pragmatic without ever degenerating into the technicist, and underpinning all his work is a commitment to the improvement of practice.

The key facts of his biography illustrate such simple truths. Born in the North of England, where neither pretentiousness nor nonsense is appreciated, and educated in the kind of school for which his later work has most relevance, he taught for a decent number of years in secondary schools. Have many sociologists become heads of English departments in such places? That experience, I allow myself to
believe, helped to root his work in the rich but messy world inhabited by teachers. He then followed what was for a while the royal road for teacher educators and educational researchers, with a spell in a College of Education before joining the more refined world of the University and then being translated to Bristol, where (happily for so many) he remained, and indeed remains. As the following pages exemplify more than once, that path was kept open in part by the particular circumstances of the day. Men and women like him were needed to produce—through the Universities in which they taught—the college lecturers (in the fundamental disciplines of education) who would in turn elevate the quality of the preparation given to all teachers. Many recent developments, by no means all of them regrettable, do now raise in an acute form such questions as: “How is this endangered heritage to be preserved? How are the Universities to develop the distinctive role proper to them in the education and professional development of teachers?”.

For a number of years in the early 1980s Eric Hoyle edited, in partnership with others, The World Yearbook of Education. The first of the sequence bearing his name was launched under the banner “Professional Development of Teachers”. Even Eric is not infallible, for he asked me to contribute a piece entitled “Teaching and professionalization: an essay in ambiguity” which worried away at the tensions between the academic and the practical overtones of that slippery word. Professor Hoyle enjoys irony, and his keen eye will certainly alight upon the title of the Introduction on which the opera house curtain now rises.

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