

Editorial: Documenting the Work of the Invisible Sector

Firstly, I'd like to introduce myself as the new editor of the Teaching in Lifelong Learning journal. I took over from Dr Denise Robinson as Director of the Education and Training Consortium and HUDCETT in September 2014 and have been working since then with Dr Lisa Russell, the Deputy Editor, on this new edition of TILL.

On Radio 4's Points of View (2015), AL Kennedy recently said of education: "*It's a mess, but in many ways a quiet mess*". We need people to document this mess and make a noise about what is going on in the sector; both the bad and the good. Professor Alison Wolf's *Heading for the Precipice* (2015) does this. She highlights the inequity in funding between colleges, schools and universities and warns that Further Education colleges could disappear if changes are not made soon to the way they are funded. Tellingly, she writes of the 'invisibility of FE' (p. 72) compared with Higher Education and how this affects the way politicians perceive the sector. Although the policy context for the sector is extremely worrying, there is much good work going on too.

For instance, The Association of Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training, in conjunction with the regional CETTs, has managed an expanded version of the Education and Training Foundation Workforce's development programme. This work has included delivering additional Maths Enhancement Programmes in each region, with almost 3,000 teachers now trained; supporting the much anticipated English Enhancement Programme and the appointment of regional Professional Development Leads in Maths, English and Special Educational Needs and Disability to support the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) needs of teachers and trainers in the Education and Training sector. It is hoped that the CETTs will get an opportunity to build on this work in 2015–16.

This edition has three papers and a book review of *Further Education and the Twelve Dancing Princesses*. The three papers focus on managing behaviour and the role of the student-teacher relationship in the process. They contribute to the ongoing discussion of how to create '*...positive and collaborative relationships with... learners*' and so '*...manage and promote positive learner behaviour*', which is articulated in the Education and Training Foundation's 2014 Professional Standards. Merv Lebor, who has previously written about disruptive students and classroom management, contributes two papers, and Sandra Rennie has written the third. Lebor's first paper surveyed 60 students identified as 'disruptive' by their teachers and used the findings from his research to put together training to support teachers who were finding it hard to manage and teach disruptive students. The findings highlighted that students identified as disruptive said they wanted to be taught by teachers who showed them respect, used active learning strategies and provided one-to-one support. His second paper is an auto-ethnography of strategies he used to engage an Access student who was seemingly aggressive and resistant to learning. The findings remind us of the centrality of the ability of the teacher to firstly establish a positive relationship with their students (Hattie, 2003) and then to use student-centred teaching strategies to engage their interest. Rennie's paper is a response to having read Lebor's article in *Teaching in Lifelong Learning* in which he metaphorised classrooms as 'battlefields' (Lebor, 2014: p. 14). She expresses concerns about the use of such language and, drawing on some of her own experiences and teaching strategies, articulates a way of using Brookfield's (1995) reflective lenses and a four-dimensional model of learning based on time, space, place and narrative to help us reframe our thinking, behaviour and practice. Rennie sent Lebor a copy of her paper prior to its publication and subsequently they have begun a dialogue about classroom management and disruptive behaviour. One of the fruits of this dialogue is that Lebor and Rennie have

co-written an article called 'Dialogue on Disruption' for the *Post-16 Educator* and it has been published in the latest issue (80; 2015; www.post16educator.org.uk). These three articles make an important contribution to documenting the work of practitioners and experiences of learners from the 'invisible' sector. The book review of *Further Education and the Twelve Dancing Princesses* looks at a new text that seeks to document the experiences of teachers in the sector.

References

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We welcome any comments about the work of the journal; please email them to d.powell@hud.ac.uk. Please note that this edition is available in e-version only at: http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/journal_till.



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