

<p><b>Institution: University of Derby</b></p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment: 25 'Education'</b></p>
<p><b>Title of case study: Defending the Subject</b></p>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>A unique insight in <i>The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education</i> (2008), and developed through an ESRC Seminar Series, is that a therapeutic ethos in education is creating a diminished human subject through a 'dual attack' on the human subject as a knowing subject and the subject-based curriculum.</p> <p>A conscious public defence of the subject-based curriculum was then undertaken through seminars, debates and conferences involving think tanks, charities and union organisations. The appointment of Professor Dennis Hayes to the London Mayoral <i>Education Inquiry</i> (2012) was one consequence. The Inquiry resulted in funding of £24.5 million for the <i>London Schools Excellence Fund</i>.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The University of Derby has a recognised research tradition in the application of therapeutic methods in educational, artistic and domestic settings. In education Dr Chris Wakeman, Dr Chris Howard, Dr Peter Wood and Rose Schofield have researched and written on emotional intelligence in Higher Education, student-centred learning and emotions, teachers' attitudes to SEAL, and the institutional construction of the diminished student self. Along with Professor Dennis Hayes, the co-author of <i>The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education</i> (2008), they form part of an active Changing Higher Education research cluster.</p> <p>In his research Hayes adopted a distinct methodology which employed a multitude of examples from all sectors of education to establish the existence of a tendency toward 'therapeutic education', that is, an education that values feelings and emotion over knowledge. The consequence of this disenchantment with knowledge and a subject-based curriculum, together with an intensifying belief that children and young people are both disaffected and distressed by traditional education, was a hollowed-out school curriculum into which a plethora of instrumental personal and social attributes, values and dispositions could be inserted.</p> <p>Academics from the University and local teachers took part in a successful ESRC Seminar series: <i>Changing the subject: inter-disciplinary perspectives on emotional well-being and social justice. ESRC Seminar Series</i> (9 December 2008 – 20 November 2009) making a notable contribution to the 6<sup>th</sup> and final two day conference which discussed 'Implications for education policy and practice'.</p> <p>This series brought together academics, teachers, politicians, journalists and trade unionists. The <i>Royal Society of Arts (RSA)</i> sponsored the series and its director took an active part. Other sponsors were the <i>Times Higher Education</i> magazine, the <i>Institute of Ideas</i> and the review web site <i>Culture Wars</i>, which reported on the seminars.</p> <p>Other research exposed artificial limits being set to academic freedom and to freedom of speech because of the misanthropic idea of a diminished self which existed in the therapeutic culture of universities and wider society. This thesis was advanced in a paper in a special edition of the <i>British Journal of Educational Studies</i> on 'Academic Freedom' edited by Hayes in 2009 and developed in an inaugural lecture on 30 March 2011 on 'The "limits" of academic freedom'.</p> <p>The research into restrictions on academic freedom and free speech led Hayes to challenge the education research establishment to engage with the wider public in an article published in the <i>Times Higher Education</i> magazine: 'Forget the Evidence a real debate with the public is what we</p>

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need', *THE*. 18 September 2008: <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/forget-the-evidence-a-real-debate-with-the-public-is-what-we-need/403609.article>

As a consequence of his work, Hayes was the only academic appointed to the *London Mayoral Education Inquiry* panel, Hayes oversaw and participated in eight months of extensive research between January and August 2012 into all aspects of education in London. The research included a major consultation, stakeholder focus groups, themed workshops, literature and data analysis and a survey of teachers. An important recommendation from the research was the need for better teaching though improved subject knowledge and subject focussed learning.

### 3. References to the research

Ecclestone, K. and Hayes, D. (2008) *The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education*, London: Routledge. ISBN: 978 0 415 39701 8

Ecclestone, K. and Hayes, D. (2008) *AFFECT: Knowledge, Communication, Creativity and Emotion. Beyond Current Horizons*. December 2008: <http://www.beyondcurrenthorizons.org.uk/affect-knowledge-communication-creativity-and-emotion/>

Hayes, D. (2009) Academic freedom and the diminished subject, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, (57) 2: 127-145.

Ecclestone, K., and Hayes, D. (2009) Changing the subject: the educational implications of developing emotional well-being, *Oxford Review of Education*, (35) 3: 371–389.

Ecclestone, K., Hayes, D., Pupavac, V. and Clack, B. (2008-2009) ESRC Seminar series: *Changing the subject: inter-disciplinary perspectives on emotional well-being and social justice. ESRC Seminar Series, 7 December 2008 – 20 November 2009*. Supported by the Royal Society of Arts and Manufactures (RSA): £15,000.

*The Mayor's Education Inquiry: Final Report* (October 2012): <http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/The%20Mayor%27s%20Education%20Inquiry%20Final%20Report.pdf>

### 4. Details of the impact

This controversial research elicited numerous responses in the media, for example, in the *Times Higher Education*; the *Daily Mail*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Independent*, *The Guardian*, *The Times* and there was a short summary on BBC Radio 4's *The News Quiz*!

Impact was there but a more serious challenge was to gain sufficient impact to reverse the therapeutic turn and defend subject-based education. The problem was that this defence was proposed at a time when education was characterised by a debate deficit caused by a diminished concept of human being. Therefore, the impact measure set as a result of this perspective was to engage in *public debate* through conferences, salons, seminars and workshops.

Support came from a small research grant of £2000 in 2010-11 by the Standing Committee for the Education and Training of Teachers (SCETT) to promote debate between academics, teachers and trade unionists about the current state of education.

The recognition of the 'debate deficit' was also the focus of a National Teaching Award made to Professor Hayes in 2010 (£10,000).

One aspect of broader engagement was extensive public speaking, journalism, and blogging by Professor Hayes in *City AM*, local papers, the *Independent*, *spiked* and the *Huffington Post*. A highlight of this activity was an invitation to speak at the 50<sup>th</sup> Doha Debate on the 6 December 2010 to defend the proposition 'Education is worthless without freedom of speech' to a potential

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audience of 400 million homes.

Examples are given below of the success of conscious, direct intervention in defence of subject-based education.

(1) Work with the leading think tank, the Institute of Ideas (Iol), which involved the national co-ordination of the Education Forum, organising its monthly debates and the production of sessions at the Iol's flagship annual festival the *Battle of Ideas*. The Education Forum is an influential project bringing together teachers, parents, policy makers, journalists, writers and consultants to debate educational issues. Members contributed to two pamphlets edited by Hayes: *A defence of subject-based education* (November 2010) and *Towards a subject-based curriculum* (May 2012). Three members also sat on Department for Education working parties on the subject curriculum during 2011-2013 (Modern Foreign Languages, Geography and Science).

(2) Close involvement with SCETT (a charity established in 1981). SCETT is *the* forum for debate about teacher education for the major school teacher unions. Through its constituent members SCETT represents the interest of 750,000 teachers in supporting initial teacher training and professional development. As well as many seminars SCETT holds annual conferences, of relevance are, the SCETT Annual Conference on 24 November 2010 'In Defence of Teacher Education' and the SCETT Annual Conference on 25 November 2012 'The Knowledge Summit'.

In March 2011 SCETT published a pamphlet with contributions from all constituent member unions and academics, edited by Hayes, *In Defence of Teacher Education*. The pamphlet defended education as a subject.

As a consequence of the Education Forum activities and the SCETT seminars and publications, meetings were held with the Minister of State for Schools in October 2011 (with the Deputy Mayor of London for Education and Culture and civil servants) and December 2011 specifically to discuss therapeutic education, the defence of a subject-based curriculum and teacher education. Separate meetings were held with the Deputy Mayor of London, leading London educationalists and consultants.

(3) The appointment of Hayes to London Mayoral Education Inquiry (December 2011 – October 2012). The report was published in October 2012 gaining £20 million pounds of government funding and £4.25 of GLA funding towards meeting its objectives. Full details and all documentation are available on the GLA web site: <http://www.london.gov.uk/strategy-policy/mayors-education-inquiry>

The funding enabled the London Schools Excellence Fund (2013) to be created to help implement the recommendations of the report. The aim of the fund is 'to help students achieve better results through expert teaching, improved subject knowledge and subject specific learning methods'. It will also sponsor an annual conference at which teachers can debate education.

(4) Discussions with the education charity *Real Action* in June 2013 developed a plan for the establishment of a national 'Free Curriculum Association' to promote subject-based teaching and learning.

Another element of the defence of the human subject was a focus on proving that children can easily be taught to read. The Director of *Real Action* (an honorary research fellow of the University), with Professor Hayes and others, made a successful bid to take the Butterfly phonics scheme into secondary schools and was awarded a £458,000 grant by the Education Endowment Foundation.

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

A short sample of the many reviews and newspaper articles relating to the critique of the therapeutic turn in education is available in this summary of the 26 June 2008:

<http://educationopinion.blogspot.co.uk/2008/06/reviews-of-dangerous-rise-of.html>

A full list of seminars and discussions organised by the Institute of Ideas' Education Forum can be accessed here: <http://www.instituteofideas.com/events/educationforum.html>

The Culture Wars website has several reports on the ESRC Seminar Series '*Changing the subject: inter-disciplinary perspectives on emotional well-being and social justice*'. This is the first by the Editor who was a participant in the series:

[http://www.culturewars.org.uk/index.php/site/article/knowning\\_me\\_knowing\\_you/](http://www.culturewars.org.uk/index.php/site/article/knowning_me_knowing_you/)

Information about SCETT, its membership, publications and details of the major seminars and conferences organised over the last five years are on the charity's website: [www.scett.org.uk](http://www.scett.org.uk)

Information about the 50<sup>th</sup> Doha Debate 'Education is worthless without freedom of speech' and details of the potential broadcast audience of 400 million homes around the world are here:

<http://www.thedohadebates.com/debates/item/?d=88&s=7&mode=details>

Papers related to the London Mayoral Education Inquiry and the associated research can be found here: <http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/young-people/education-and-training/mayors-education-inquiry>

The report for the DfE *Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) in Secondary Schools: national evaluation* responds to what it calls the 'radical views' expressed in *The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education* that SEAL is 'at best ill-conceived and at worst potentially damaging to children and young people' (p.102):

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/181718/DFE-RR049.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/181718/DFE-RR049.pdf)

Details of the London Schools Excellence Fund (£24.25 million) are here:

<http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/young-people/education-and-training/gla-education-programme/london-schools-excellence-fund>

The announcement of £458,000 of funding from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) for the charity *Real Action's* Secondary School Butterfly Initiative, and further updates are on the charity's web site: <http://www.realaction.org.uk/butterfly-reading-to-the-rescue-in-secondary-schools/>

A confidential file of personal emails relating to meeting private meetings with policy makers, charities and think tanks along with some notes on meetings is available as evidence to supplement the above.