

## Norfolk Headteacher Conference

### Citizenship for the future: what does it mean?

Prof. David Hicks  
Norwich - September 2004

## The early 21<sup>st</sup> century

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us..."

- Dickens (1859) *A Tale of Two Cities*

## Thinking globally



"I think we should learn about this planet because we live on it and if we don't learn about it we won't know how to look after it."  
Zara (age 8)

## Global trends



- Higher global temperatures will lead to a greater number of extreme weather events in the C21st
- Between 1990-95 the disparity in per capita income between the 20 richest and 20 poorest nations rose from 18:1 to 37:1
- The number of wars worldwide has dropped from 31 to 28
- Wind power is the fastest growing energy source in the world

**How do we help children and young people understand the global context in which they are growing up?**



## Global citizenship

### THE STATE OF THE WORLD ATLAS



Pupils learn about the wider world and the interdependence of communities within it. They develop their sense of social justice and moral responsibility and begin to understand that their own choices and behaviour can affect local, national or global issues...

(Key stage 2)

Developing a global dimension in the school curriculum




**Key concepts**

- Interdependence
- Social justice
- Human rights
- Conflict resolution
- Cultural diversity
- Values and perceptions
- Citizenship
- Sustainable development


**Two traditions**

**Daring to be a Teacher**

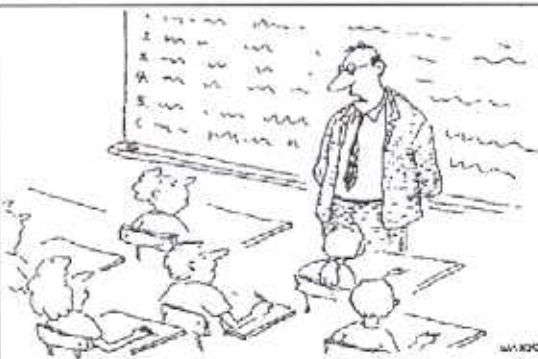


- Personal: the search for wholeness and integration in individuals
- Political: the struggle to create wholeness - equality & justice - in society itself
- Both are doomed to no more than partial success without the other
- The need for education to be about changing both *self* & *society*

**Characteristics of effective citizens**



- See problems in global context
- Work co-operatively & responsibly
- Accept cultural differences
- Critical and systemic thinking
- Solve problems non-violently
- Follow environmental lifestyle
- Defend human rights
- Participate in politics



**'I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say'**

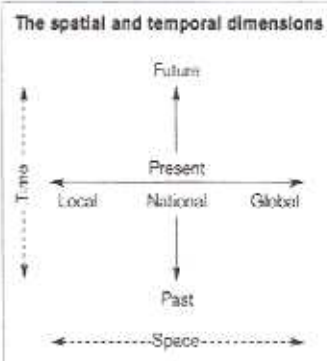
**The wider world at 4-7**

Nursery and infant children regularly:

- Call each other names (prejudice)
- Arbitrarily exclude others from play (discrimination)
- Argue over materials (resource distribution)
- Protest that rules are not fair (human rights)
- Quarrel and fight (peace and conflict)
- Waste consumable materials (environmental awareness)
- Find that more can be accomplished by working together (Interdependence)

Fountain, S. (1990) *Learning Together*, Stanley Thornes

**The spatial and temporal dimensions**



## Western images of the future



## Children's images of the future



## A futures perspective

1. Anticipating the future
  - the value of hindsight
  - the need for foresight
  - rapidly changing world
2. Accepting consequences
  - self, environment, others
  - in the present
  - place
  - elsewhere in time/space
3. Envisioning alternatives
  - a range of scenarios
  - personal, local, global
  - identify preferable futures
4. Making wiser choices
  - choosing from alternatives
  - weighing dis/benefits
  - to make present choices
5. Taking responsible action
  - in one's personal life
  - in the community
  - as a local/global citizen

## Early years education



- Thinking about future involves imaginative fantasy; past and future often mixed together; great sense of control and freedom over the future
- Developing positive feelings about their place in the future and their role in its creation
- Idiosyncratic and unrealistic from adult viewpoint but important developmental stage; more positive than older children about the future

## The future: 7-8 year olds

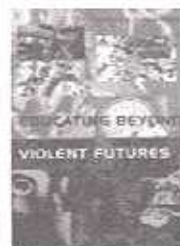
Visions of the future



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- Initial manifestation of an 'adult' understanding of time begins to appear from about 6
- Different levels of ability in conceptualising the future found at this age
- Emergence of ability to think ahead; realisation that the future may be something to work towards as well as something to be concerned about

## The future: secondary level



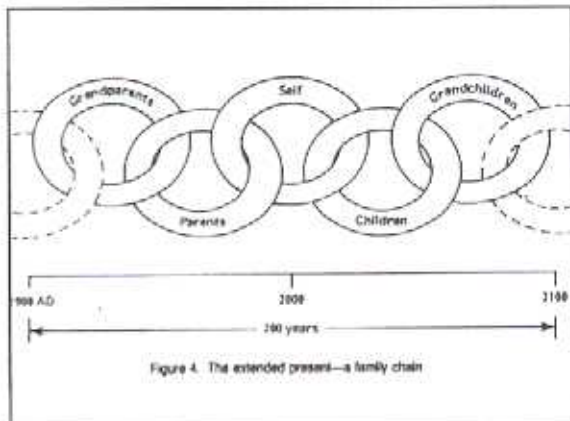
"If there are strongly selective traditions that condone or legitimate certain behaviours as 'normal' or 'inevitable' and marginalise others, then taken for granted 'truths' about the future are likely to be powerfully propagated ..."

Whether in relation to our schools, our societies or our species, when taken-for-granted ways of thinking about the future are left unexamined, a closure of horizons occurs - futures are foreclosed and 'inevitabilities' are confirmed as 'realism'.



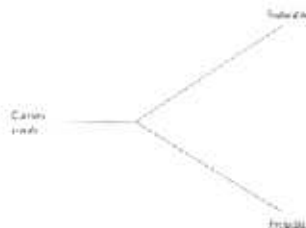
## Children's questions about the future

- Will we find out about Pluto?
- What will our mums and dads look like?
- Will there be a war soon?
- How many more animals will be extinct?
- Will the jungles be destroyed?
- Will we have the mafia in our town?
- Is there life after death?
- Will schools be better organised?
- Will there be equal opportunity in the world?
- Will I still be laughing when I'm 50?



## A futures perspective

- **Probable futures:** all those futures which seem most likely to occur
- **Preferable futures:** all those futures we most deeply wish to come about



## Australian teenagers' probable/preferable futures

### Probable futures

- Uncompassionate world
- Physically violent world
- Divided world
- Mechanised world
- Unsustainable environment
- Politically corrupt world

### Preferable futures

- ✓ Technocratic dreaming
- ✓ Demilitarized & green
- ✓ Intergenerational equity
- ✓ Making peace with people and planet

Hatchinson, F. (1986) *Educating Beyond Violent Futures*, Routledge

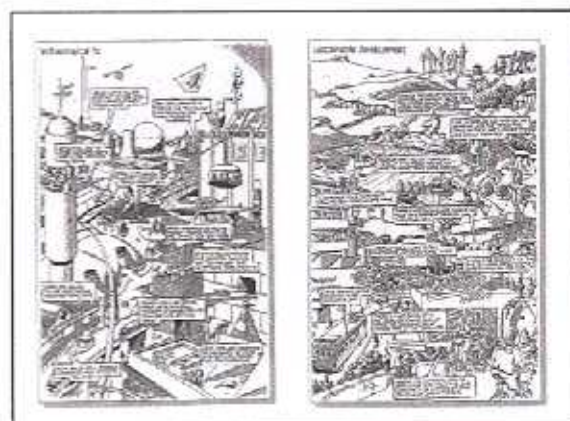
## Future generations

### The rights of future generations

The argument is that to be fair each generation should inherit no less 'wealth', natural and person-made, than its (the present generation) have inherited. So the next generation has a right to expect to inherit at least as much 'wealth' as we did. As long as each generation does this, no single generation has to worry about generations far into the future. Each generation 'looks after' the one that follows.

### A Charter for Future Generations

The right to a good education  
The right to a clean, safe life flow  
The right to healthy food  
The right to free and calm  
The right to recreation  
The right to care for the environment  
The right to medical attention  
The right to be heard and to have a say  
The right to have friends  
The right to a secure and warm home



## Useful resources



## Opportunities for hope

**'One of the tasks of the progressive educator ... is to unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles might be.'**

Paulo Freire (1994) *A Pedagogy of Hope*, Continuum