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Re-imagining affective learning in and for a fragmented future

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Introduction

I work with experienced teachers, mainly in the London region, on courses and projects regarding tutoring, personal-social education, mentoring, and school behaviour. In the last eight years, the UK school system has been the focus of many changes in legislation covering the funding, curriculum, assessment, inspection and governing of schools. Throughout these years there has been strong emotion expressed by many teachers and others committed to affective education: this emotion is often anger, or its less expressive alternative, depression. This has occurred, for example, when some schools give less time or attention to their programmes of personal-social education because of perceived pressures in implementing the National Curriculum, or when teachers say that they cannot adopt active approaches to learning because a school inspector announced that they were now out of fashion, or when professional learning opportunities are withdrawn because overall system stress has reduced the time and inclination to make use of them. Demoralisation is high amongst teachers.

Teachers and academics who respond actively to this situation do so in a range of ways. A number argue that we should be doing more of what we were doing in earlier years. I recognise the point and agree with it to some extent. As a response to legislation which promotes a nostalgic image of education from the 1960s or earlier, it may be progressive to be nostalgic for the 1970s! But I do not think it is enough.

I want to consider a wider context and a wider time-frame, in order to recognise important changes in our futures and how they might affect adolescents. And then draw some implications for how we might conceive affective education in a future context. I hope to organise my re-imagining through the experience of young people rather than through the experience of their teachers. In the process I aim to affirm the best of the present and to extend it. I intend that this contributes to a real issue in my work with teachers: how to cope with their disillusionment and provide a vision for the future.

Present Trends in UK

This will be a brief and partial picture of some broad trends in UK society and school system, mainly selected because they impact on adolescents and their opportunities. I hope to hear about similarities and differences in other EU countries.

Competition and collaboration

There has been a shift of emphasis in the balance between these two, an increased public promotion of competition in commerce, education and so on.

The post-war sense of collaborative reconstruction has influenced decades, but the world has now changed. As a post-imperial post-industrial society, Britain has a less secure world position: other economies are rising in important markets as they become more international or global. The response in recent years is that "Free market" rhetoric has been stronger, and UK Government has included in

its legislative agenda a "White Paper" framework for legislation explicitly entitled *Competitiveness.*

The school system has clearly been affected. A post-war consensus amongst political party leaders not to exploit education as a party political matter was broken in 1985. Education is now clearly a political matter, and parties compete to create proposals which are attractive to voters.

In many parts of the country, schools now compete with each other for pupils to attend them, because funding of the school is directly related to the number of pupils who choose to join. A simple language of the market place has been applied to schooling in many ways. Crude approaches to marketing the school have been adopted, crude because they try to describe features of school in glossy literature without the basic market research to identify what benefits are being sought and what perceptions parents and pupils hold.

Schools' achievements are judged in crude competitive terms by publication of "league tables" of examination results, locally and nationally. A greater emphasis is given to pupils' performance in these outputs: pupils whose examination performance may be improved to make a difference to the school's position in the league tables are selected for extra attention.

Within schools there is more evidence of pressure and competition, both between and within class groups, and a general trend towards a performance orientation rather than a learning orientation. Adolescents report pressure and stress in school[1]. Concerns about disaffection and truancy are heightened, and the numbers of pupils suspended from school has increased greatly.

A harsher value climate, with a higher emphasis on public judgement and recrimination

In times of economic ills, the question is "who is to blame?" Regularly the answer seems to be that schools and teachers are to blame - for economic ills, for antisocial behaviour and so on. As happened in US, schools are treated as both the saviour and the scapegoat on a wide range of matters[2].

Government wishes to say that the schools have "failed industry" by not producing a sufficiently trained workforce, despite the fact that the central curriculum was not designed to achieve this in the first place. International comparisons are made which attempt to link the performance of the education system to the international performance of the economic system, despite a widespread recognition of the limitations of nations in matters of international finance and an increasing recognition of the limitations of these comparisons[3].

One impact of this climate is a greater sense of disempowerment and de-professionalisation of teachers. Government conducted intense public criticism of teachers and of "the educational establishment" in a way which one commentator described as the "discourse of derision"[4].

Adolescents have not escaped this climate, as was recently reflected in the decision of a major charitable foundation in the field of mental health when they prioritised adolescents as a focus for work in an attempt to combat negative public images. There seems more of a sense of treating young people as the objects to satisfy the goals of others.

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[1] Rudduck J (1996), "Getting serious: the demands of coursework, revision and examinations" in Rudduck J, Chaplain R and Wallace G (Ed.), *School Improvement: what can pupils tell us?,* London, David Fulton. 1-85346-393-0

[2] Sarason SB (1983), *Schooling in America: scapegoat and salvation*, New York, Free Press.

[3] MacLean M (1992), *The Promise and Perils of Educational Comparison*, London, Tufnell Press. 1-872767-31-1

[4] (Stephen Ball Tufnell Press)

A restructuring of employment

For those who are in employment, there has been a general intensification of work and an associated dehumanisation of the workplace. This is explained by changes in the labour market.

In the Britain of the 1990s, there is now no regulation of working time, no legally-protected conditions for labour, no minimum wage legislation, minimal employment protection and no legal right to employee representation in the workplace. Britain is the lowest European country on an index of these measures[5].This has not led to a reduction in unemployment, but to casualisation in many industries especially service industries such as catering, hotels and retailing, where female employment has increased along with such practices as "zero hours contracts" in which the employee signs a contract with no specified hours of work, but with the possibility of calling the worker in at any time.

The changed structure of British society is now[6]:
  30% disadvantaged: including the unemployed (4 million) and economically inactive
  30% marginalised and insecure: part-time and casual workers (5 million, of whom over 80% are women) on low pay, the newly self-employed (who have doubled in the 1980s), and those who may be full-time workers but who are now on fixed term contracts (ranging from university lecturers to television journalists) or still on low pay.
  40% privileged: full-time tenured employees (who fell from 55% of adult population in 1975 to 35% in 1993), the longer self employed and part-timers who have had their job for more than five years.

Employers with a paternalistic approach have declined. The relationship between company and individual has changed to become:
  - we will contract for your services and you will give your best
  - we will have a mutually beneficial arrangement
  - it is not enough to do what is required: must find ways to add value and be a contributor, not a mere player
  - we will provide opportunities but you are in charge of your own learning and development
  - you are paid for performance, not for being here

The social and cohesive function of work and the workplace has been played down in the mind of government and those committed to "Fast Capitalism"[7], but not in the mind of the worker - and in the minds of numbers of employers who recognise that an encapsulated workplace with no community connections can become a focus for resentment by that community.

The work opportunity structure for young people has changed. Career paths have become less clear[8], graduate unemployment is accepted, the combining of a number of part-time and casual employments is increasingly common ("portfolio" jobs), and the informal economy is the key resource for many. Entry into work has less clear routes. Participation in further and higher education is relatively low, so that UK has the both highest level of youth unemployment in OECD countries, and the highest level of economic activity in the 15-24 age range.

Changes in family housing

The late 1980s were a period when the idea of home-ownership was promoted. However it was also the time when the housing prices fell from an inflated position. As a result, numerous middle class owners have houses they can

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[5] OECD (1994) *Employment Outlook*, July 1994, pages 137-64
[6] Hutton W (1996), *The State We're In*, London, Vintage. 0-09-936681-9. pages 105-110
[7] Gee JP (1994), *New Alignments and Old Literacies: critical literacy, post-modernism and fast capitalism,* Worcester MA, Hiatt Centre.
[8] Hirsh W (1995), *Careers of the Future*, Brighton, Institute for Employment Studies, University of Sussex.

neither afford nor sell, and many other families have been unable to repay mortgages (often the first in their family's history) and are now in accommodation for the homeless.

The result for adolescents is that many more of them now live in their parents' home for a longer period than in previous decades. Those who go on to further and higher education are now more likely to do so near the parental home. An increased number become homeless following difficulties within the family. The important developmental dynamic of leaving home may have altered.

A continued urbanisation.

World-wide the move to cities is an accelerating trend. In the year 2000 the balance of world population will shift to the majority in cities. While nine tenths of this growth is in developing countries, the rich countries such as Europe still display the same but slower trend.

Without being romantic about rural life, and pessimistic about conurbation, it may be accurate to describe city lifestyles as handled at a faster pace, and with greater anonymity. These are the conditions which, if widespread and accompanied by lack of community intervention, lead to increasingly public polarisation and destitution.

Perhaps of greater impact is the way in which an urban culture now can be seen more clearly and more widespread in rural settings in UK. Such settings are now more clearly the points of sale for the same fashion trends, are the sites of work for urban organisations through tele-cottages, and are the sites of production for rural artefacts to sell to city-dwellers who idealise "country living".

For adolescents the active marketing of an increasingly differentiated youth culture is now clearly spanning the rural-urban divide.

Future trends and the possibility of alternatives

Trends are things one is always in the middle of. It is a difficult task to separate those changes which may be reversed or modified, and those which will form a longer-term pattern. Many see a trend towards increased fragmentation in UK schools and society. It seems a logical outcome of government policy, and seems evidenced in the trends above, but is it inevitable? And will it necessarily have the damaging impact which we often predict?

Competition itself is not a problem; a human way of finding challenges is to enter competitive situations. "But when beating the opponent takes precedence in the mind over performing as well as possible, enjoyment tends to disappear"[9]. Enjoyment can disappear on a large scale. In UK, much attention is presently given to explaining the lack of the "feel good factor". It reflects a situation in which competition has been portrayed as a "zero sum" situation where one party or one country can only win at the expense of another.

A key issue for avoiding a fragmented future is to find the combination of a productive style of competition together with the necessary degree of collaboration. Analyses of cooperation in the most difficult case, that is of individuals pursuing their own self-interest without a central authority to force them to cooperate[10], may be useful here. These studies indicate that if there is no view that current action will have future consequences for other participants and, eventually oneself in the future, then aggression and destructive competition will pay off. However if there are future consequences to current actions of other players, then the future casts a "shadow" backwards to our current situation and suggests that co-operative behaviour will be beneficial.

[9]   Csikszentmihalyi M (1990), *Flow: the psychology of optimal experience*, New York, Harper & Row. 0-06-016253-8
[10] Axelrod R (1990), *The Evolution of Cooperation*, London, Penguin.

Axelrod's term "shadow of the future" reminds us that our conception of our future is active in our present, and may need to be increasingly so.

Changes in work patterns will doubtless continue, as they have before. Since the periods when youth unemployment and graduate unemployment were first recognised, educators and employers have talked about changing conceptions of employment, and a changed role for work in our lives. Beyond the talk, however, our conceptions of ourselves seem to have moved little in this transition. The necessary skills and qualities have not been clarified.

Global marketisation is made possible not only by evolving technology but also by four key human skills that drive high-value enterprises and will become more in demand in the future. Reich[11] says these are the skills of "symbolic analysis":
- abstraction - the capacity to order and make meaning of the massive flow of information, to shape raw data into workable patterns
- system thinking - the capacity to see the parts in relation to the whole, to see why problems arise
- experimental enquiry - the capacity to set up procedures to test and evaluate alternative ideas
- collaboration - the capacity to engage in active communication and dialogue to get a variety of perspectives and to create consensus when that is necessary.

The qualities that used to be associated with women's work - flexibility, adaptability, service and teamwork - are now being demanded of men. Discontinuous and uncertain work is becoming far more widespread. Moreover as security increasingly comes from employability in a fluid labour market rather than from having a permanent job, women appear to be better prepared, culturally and psychologically.[12]

Changed patterns in the means of production are likely to continue. New forms of production for new forms of product will explicitly create new forms of partnership and new senses of communities, less parochial than those before. This trend is already occurring in all sorts of production, towards organisations based on responsiveness and customisation[13]. Niche marketing mirrors the increasing heterogeneity of society. Communications systems now in use create a psychological sense of community which transcends immediacy of place. Perhaps the one trend which is assured is that technology will continue to reduce the relative cost of widespread communication, that key activity in life which in the narrow spread has the least direct material cost. The extension of our boundaries is thereby potentially enhanced.

Kress[14] suggests that "The world of tomorrow may offer its inhabitants a lesser level of material well-being, and yet an at least equal and perhaps greater level of satisfaction". This certainly provides a more attractive vision than the scenario of future disintegration, but how could it be?

It could be the case because the human being as a self-defining, self-constructing living system can and does cope with very significant change, and another change in the criteria for evaluating quality of life may be imminent. Perhaps people will be able to accept the necessity which a sustainable future demands in terms of material matters. But there are other things than the material which are the key elements to satisfaction. Studies of optimal experience[15] identify them as a sense of completion, concentration, clear goals and immediate feedback, involvement, a sense of control, stronger sense of self, and sense of

[11] Reich RB (1991), *The Work of Nations: preparing ourselves for 21st century capitalism*, New York, Knopf

[12] Wilkinson H (1994), *No Turning Back: generations and the genderquake*, London, DEMOS. 1-898309-75-2

[13] Hayes C, Fonda N and Hillman J (1995), *Learning in the new millennium*, National Commission on Education. NCE Briefing New Series 5

[14] Kress G (1995), *Writing the Future: English and the making of a culture of innovation*, Sheffield, National Association for the Teaching of English. 0-901291-43-9

[15] Csikszentmihalyi M (1990), op. cit.

extended time. The person who can set goals, become involved, and direct their attention gains most from immediate experience, and in the context of others is open to enhancing those gains with others.

If core satisfaction is of this type, there are implications for self-identity and development. "Harmony is usually achieved by evolutionary changes involving an increase in an organism's complexity, that is an increase in both differentiation and integration. Differentiation refers to the degree to which a system (i.e. an organ such as the brain, or an individual, a family, a corporation, a culture, or humanity as a whole) is composed of parts that differ in structure and function from one another. Integration refers to the extent to which the different parts communicate and enhance one another's goals. A system that is more differentiated and integrated than another is said to be more complex. Complexity is not necessarily the direction in which evolution inevitably progresses, but it is the direction in which it must move to secure us a liveable future"[16]

The view of the evolving self which achieves such harmony bears some similarity to the earlier notion of process identity[17], based on self-understanding, and contrasted with belongingness identity, based on what one owns and what one belongs to. However, it goes further and requires that we reconsider the sort of commitment will be available for the achievement of identity in the Eriksonian sense[18].

The way that we conceive our futures is a key yet under-recognised aspect of ourselves. Beyond the easy polarisation of optimism and pessimism, there is great diversity in our conceptions of our future selves, and in the complexity of these conceptions. They inform our responses to the messages about the future which surround us every day.

Dominant modes of individual psychology have encouraged us to understand ourselves and others in terms of our "insides" and our pasts. This has never been adequate, a fact which will become increasingly clear. We need to add to our understanding of ourselves our "outsides" and our futures. By outsides I mean an understanding of self as we relate to different contexts. At the broadest level this may include our cultural and historical context, but there is a more immediate level which permeates everyday life - the understanding of ourselves in relation to the varying social situations which we meet, the profile of those amongst a full range of situations, and our view of ourselves in relation to social situations which we do not regularly meet. This is a necessary self-reflexivity for a changing world, and is in contrast to views of self-awareness[19] propounded in liberal eras such as the 1970s. The contrast is one of the self as emerging in social interaction, through participation in constructing episodes of interaction, versus the self as an "object" to be discovered through becoming more aware of oneself and one's responses. Understanding ourselves in relation to our futures also operates to differing extents, and here again an immediate level permeates everyday life - goal-directedness, an interest in social goals, and ideas about improvement. These have been identified as key elements in social competence for some time[20]

Family processes have coped with such changes in earlier generations. However, when the rate of change increases, so does inter-generational difference.

[16] Csikszentmihalyi M (1993), *The Evolving Self: a psychology for the third millennium*, New York, Harper Collins. 0-06-016677-0

[17] Curle A (1972), *Mystics and Militants: a study of awareness, identity and social action*, London, Tavistock. 0-422-73900-6

[18] Archer SL (1994), *Interventions for Adolescent Identity Development*, London, Sage. 0-8039-4189-7

[19] Hedges F and Lang S (1993), "Mapping personal and professional stories", *Human Systems: the Journal of Systemic Consultation and Management*, 4: 277-298.

[20] Ford ME (1982), "Social cognition and social competence in adolescence", *Developmental Psychology*, 18: 323-340.

Parents may take an out-dated view on the pattern of life which their young people are developing, for instance I see current examples of parents regarding as "drift" what may be a balanced response to the changed context. On some occasions parents feel their children have failed. Sadly, those feelings are likely to be conveyed in some form, but an alternative view is possible. Much depends on whether adults can embrace the future.

It is difficult to make viable predictions with any degree of certainty. There is no escaping this difficulty. Old certainties have disappeared: in their place we need to embrace the notion of "safe uncertainties", and identify what are reasonably likely emergences over the next period. These will not have the same sureness of prediction as we may have believed in the past[21]. We need to put aside the identification of (and with) unsafe certainties. Fundamentalism, whether religious, commercial or other, offers people an opportunity for greater integration through self-transcendence but not for greater differentiation through self-development.

Implications for schools

In considering the role of school in adapting to change, in promoting positive change, and in helping young people prepare for a changed and changing world, it is important not to treat schools as an isolated agency, or independent from their context. Their role in social change can be relatively weak, especially when compared with economic, familial and cultural processes: typically the impact of school is additive to the impact of the primary socialising agency of the family, and both are intensely subject to economic and cultural forces. Elkind[22] argues that both family and school have developed new forms in a post-modern era.

The contribution we imagine for schools depends much on how we view them. Dalin[23] has predicted that the years of compulsory schooling will be significantly reduced in the next three decades. This prediction seems based on a view that our present schools, which are organised on a model from the industrial age, will not be able to adapt to a more flexible mode of working. Most schools are not presently constituted as intelligent organisations, they change more slowly than commercial organisations, but perhaps their choice is similar: customise or be left behind. This demands they develop their own strategic goals and thinking, and convey this with pupils. In many school the message to pupils is still that of the industrial society: "work hard", and has yet to be replaced by the more appropriate message for a learning society: "work smart"[24] - a message which many successful and strategic young people have doubtless been adopting privately for some time. Alongside a change in culture, writers such as Hargreaves[25] propose a change in approach to structure, curriculum, assessment and systems of care and support

Future pressures toward fragmentation will doubtless remain strong: a school system which explicitly and deliberately promotes young people's growth in terms of enhancing complexity and increasing sociality is likely to contribute most to the preparation for their future worlds.

Schools will need to pay much greater attention to the affiliation mechanisms which both maintain it as an important community and help it make an important contribution to social cohesion. This will entail a much more explicit

[21] McMaster M (1996), *Foresight: exploring the structure of the future*, Knowledge Based Development Co Ltd.

[22] Elkind D (1993), "School and family in the post-modern world", *Phi Delta Kappan*, 77(1): 8-14.

[23] Dalin P and Rust VD (1996), *Towards Schooling for the Twenty-First Century*, London, Cassell. 0-304-33448-0

[24] Abbott J (1994), *Learning makes sense : re-creating education for a changing future*, Letchworth, Education 2000. 0-9524443-0-5

[25] Hargreaves A, Earl L and Ryan J (1996), *Schooling for Change: reinventing education for early adolescents*, London, Falmer Press. 0-7507-0490-X

focus on the interpersonal culture and dynamics which maintain the internal cohesion and forms of cooperation of the institution. But the range of ways through which young people affiliate to any school will need to be recognisably greater.

The school itself will have to embrace increasing complexity, and give attention to both integration and differentiation of individuals and groups. As a result the present model of organising classes for "batch processing", generally ignoring "batch variability"[26] is likely to change. More customised approaches to groups of learners will develop.

Affective education will need to be informed by revised views about the growth of persons: in the future there may be a different balance in the three elements which make up development: maintenance, incremental change and transformational change[27], in that what we now regard as transformational changes may occur more frequently. Two decades ago we predicted transformational change in the job market, with the end of "a job for life". That situation has come and gone without major change in the views held: the next prediction is that someone may cope with changes at a level which heretofore we might have seen as more fundamental to their personhood.

Positive signs are to be found in the present: some schools already recognise these concerns, and that increased complexity and sociality are vital. Those which have coped best with a period when government intervention seemed to want to take all ambiguity and risk out of learning and education are those who have a mature attitude to the ambiguities and paradoxes of their role. They maintain a proactive view of their own goals while recognising that some changes in the context are real and must be accommodated. Whatever form of "output" is required from schools by others, the overarching social goals of the school are crucial: already the evidence is that on knowledge-based assessments, collaborative schools get better results[28].

Positive signs are also to be found in the emerging values of the generation beyond school. Extensive research suggests that the value map of 1990s British society has changed since the 1970s and 1980s when outer-directed values concerned with status, image and consumption dominated. A substantial group has moved beyond such values towards inner-directed ones such as empathy, connected-ness, emotion, autonomy, ease and green concerns. These values have become mainstream in the 1990s. The leading edge values, especially in the 18 - 34 age group, now include androgyny, internationalism, balance, complexity and excitement[29].

In general the long-term shifts can best be understood in terms of a deepening attachment to autonomy. But over time the meaning of autonomy has changed. As people gain more freedom over their lives few remain satisfied with a narrowly selfish view of autonomy. Instead people also seek new forms of belonging, experience or attachment as the corollary of their enhanced freedom.

Implications for affective education

In the changing context, some things may stay the same. Today's basic notions about the broad elements and processes in young people's development may still have some application. For example the model of content which I have

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[26] Huberman AM (1983), "Recipes for busy kitchens: a situational analysis of routine knowledge use in schools", *Knowledge: Creation, Diffusion, Utilization*, 4(4): 478-510.

[27] Ford DH and Lerner RM (1992), *Developmental Systems Theory: an integrative approach*, London, Sage. 0-8039-4661-9

[28] Rosenholtz SJ (1991), *Teachers' Workplace: the social organization of schools*, New York, Teachers College Press. 0-8077-3149-8

[29] Wilkinson, op cit.

encouraged for many years[30] may have sufficient breadth to identify themes for the near future:
- bodily self: understanding changes and their variety; reflecting on the impact of these; addressing the use and misuse of the body, including through substance abuse
- sexual self: understanding sexual development; the role of sexuality in relationships
- social self: understanding others' perspectives and their role in relationships; making sense of others and their judgements; coping with conflicts; presenting oneself in a range of situations; working with others
- vocational self: developing awareness of adult roles, lifestyles and preferences; taking a wider look at what sort of contributing adult to become; valuing a range of contributions; transition to adult roles
- moral /political self: the making of judgements; resolving moral dilemmas; taking action on issues
- self as a learner: understanding strengths and competences; reflecting on approaches to learning
- self in the organisation: becoming an active member of a school; making sense of the organisation and getting the most from it.

And a model of the *process* of personal-social learning may be broadly the same: active and experimental. Perhaps it will even become more widespread in schools, with wider recognition that problem-centred learning makes a greater contribution to the lifelong profile, and more adequately mirrors the quality of learning out of school[31]. It is also fundamental to promoting autonomy in self and learning, and thus is likely to remain attractive to adolescents.

In order to make a sensible contribution to preparing young people for the sort of futures they may meet, we must bring *additional emphasis* to some aspects of both content and process.

Some key content areas which are indicated by our best guesses from the present include:

Practising cooperation and connectedness
- recognising and imagining connections which stimulate a need for cooperation for pragmatic purposes
  we may enhance cooperation, not through moralising or cajoling but through teaching reciprocity and connectedness. This can involve activities which increase the identification of connections in current everyday examples.
- practising and enlarging the shadow of the future [32]
  imagining connections in the future is a key to cooperation in the present. This needs practice and development, through activities which address small and large examples, and which emphasise a range of possible futures

Coping with the negative aspects of fragmentation
- actively recognising polarisation and conflict
  identifying and naming conflict is a first step in resolving it where possible, as it contrasts with the common response of avoiding and fearing conflict
- identifying the long-term disadvantages of short-termism and long term advantages of co-operation
  future society will contain just as many if not more inducements to short term gain with all the possible consequences of fragmentation. We may need to help young people identify consequences over the longer term
- handling conflict skilfully
  the skills of conflict resolution are of value to all and may become increasingly so. They can be taught, although (as with all skills) no absolute certainty of success.

Coping with and embracing personal change and uncertainty
- cope with disruptions and transitions in personal, work and social life

[30] Watkins C (1985), "Does Pastoral Care = Personal and Social Education?", *Pastoral Care in Education*, 3(3): 179-183.
Watkins C (1995), "Personal-social education and the whole curriculum" in Best R, Lang P, Lodge C and Watkins C (Ed.), *Pastoral Care and Personal-Social Education: entitlement and provision*, London, Cassell. 0-304-32780-8
[31] Resnick LB (1987), "Learning in school and out", *Educational Researcher*, 16(9): 13-40.
[32] Axelrod R (1990), op. cit.

young people will know of examples and see ways of coping with change. They may be helped to identify positive ways of coping
- proactively cope with rapid change and different sense of predictability experiencing and learning from people who have given up the attachments of the industrial age and who compose a life which explicitly embraces uncertainty

Choosing the option which enhances complexity
- understand principles of one's own growth and development teach people to recognise complexity in everyday life and to choose complexity when faced with choice
- plan to learn in a wider range of contexts, as part of understanding how best to maximise own learning
- embrace diversity and develop enhanced inter-cultural competence

Will affective education meet the challenge? The most encapsulated forms of provision, which are over-programmed and in which the content is dominated by adult anxieties ("sex and drugs and litter") are unlikely to make a significant contribution. They increasingly under-estimate the sophistication of many modern adolescents, and consequently degenerate into moralising about a way of life which young people have left behind. But the alternative is that school becomes increasingly irrelevant to the modern lives of young people in future contexts. This is not an alternative I would welcome or support.