# Ethics in Educational Practice, Policy and Research

By

**David Bridges**

Ethics in Educational Practice, Policy and Research

David Bridges

To my family, teachers, students, and colleagues,
who have been my companions in this story,
and to Louis, Lily, Albert and Raffy,
whose stories are just beginning

# Contents

**Higher education**

**Ethics in educational research**

**International education**

**Postscript**

# Acknowledgements

# The author

Professor David Bridges has worked in multiple roles in education for over half a century: as a teacher, teacher educator, researcher and in senior roles as Deputy Principal of Homerton College Cambridge, Dean of Education and Pro Vice chancellor of the University of East Anglia, Director of the Von Hügel Institute at St Edmund's College Cambridge and of the Association of Universities in the East of England, and most recently as Director of Research at the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education. He has been advisor at Ministerial level in countries, including Ethiopia, Vietnam. Iran and most recently Mongolia and Kazakhstan. Throughout this time, he has maintained his writing in philosophy of education, reflecting in particular on the ethical issues that this experience has raised. He is an Honorary Vice President of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain, a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences and was on the Councils of both the European Education Research Association and the British Education Research Association, for which he chaired a review of its ethical code. He was twice a member of the UK Research Assessment Panel for Education.

# Introduction

Education, and its institutionalized forms in schools, colleges, and universities, is a social practice deeply embedded in ethical principles and values. These shape its ends, its means and the relationships that are formed in its institutions whether at the level of individual classroom practice in schools, colleges, and higher education institutions or in national and international policy.

> Education is at least partly about the overall aims that society has for itself and how these aims are realised in practice. It cannot, therefore, be a neutral technical exercise, but is invariably a deeply ethical, political, and cultural one bound up with ideas about the good society and how life can be worthwhile. (Winch and Gingell 2004, Preface)

If, as Winch and Gingell suggest, notions of the *good society* provide one point of reference for educationalists, so also do notions of the *good person*: of the qualities, capabilities, virtues, and forms of human excellence that we wish to cultivate in a new generation. These might include respect and care for other people; honesty and integrity; intellectual agility; scholarship; breadth of understanding; athletic prowess; and artistic creativity.

In some influential accounts, too, 'education' is defined as implying that 'something worthwhile is being or has been intentionally transmitted in a morally acceptable manner' (Peters 1966: 25). Thus, requires consideration of what might count as worthwhile activities, as elements of a *good life* or what White (1973) refers to as 'ways of life' to which children should be introduced, at least to a sufficient level to allow them to choose to follow that path – or not. White argues (persuasively to my mind) that:

> Non-interference … may well harm the child by restricting his [*sic*] options. The least harmful course we can follow is to equip him, as far as possible for the for the ideal situation – to let him determine for himself what the Good shall be for him. To do this we must ensure that (a) that he knows about as many activities or ways of life as possible which he may want to choose for their own sake, and (b) that he is able to reflect on priorities among them from the point of view not only of the present moment but as far as possible of his life as a whole. (White 1973: 22).

Alongside conceptions of the *good*, education requires consideration of what is *right*, for example with respect to the forms of teaching and learning, the social organisation of the school and classroom, discipline and punishment, the exercise of power and authority, the distribution of educational opportunity and resources, to the relationship between teacher and taught, to the rights of children, students and parents, and to the role of the state.

One can, of course, discuss these values and principles at a very general level, and many philosophers of education do, as the pages of, for example, the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* illustrate. However, when it comes to applying them to policy and practice and to teasing out the tensions that inevitably arise between one principle and another, context is crucially important: the principles or values need to be situated, and different situations can demand different answers to how these higher-level principles should be applied. The rights of parents with respect to their children's education may well be set aside if the parents are shown to have neglected or abused the children in their care; the professional authority of the teacher may be challenged if he or she uses the position to indoctrinate children in racist doctrines; the autonomy of universities may be challenged if they themselves are found to have restricted freedom of expression. In real life, of course, the issues may present themselves with much more complexity and ambiguity than is reflected in these simple contrasts. Moreover, with a global perspective, the resolution of these ethical dilemmas may look very different in contrasting economic, social and cultural settings.

Most of the papers in this collection adopt an *analytic* approach to teasing out the arguments around educational policy or principle and its *application*. Some treat the issues they discuss through the lens of *situated ethics*. All the papers involve the application of ethical principles and considerations in the context of education.

Each section is introduced by a short introduction which places the subsequent papers in context, which in this collection is a context of the last fifty years of educational history. These fifty years have seen huge changes in education in the UK and across the world. Virtually every country has reviewed and revised ('reformed') its curriculum and its regime of testing; the latter partly driven by the development of globalised tests like PISA and TIMMS which have offered (or appeared to offer) a basis for international comparison of the performance of educational systems. Very different approaches to teaching and learning have come in and out of fashion. Teacher education has gone through massive changes across the world as teacher training colleges have been absorbed into universities with different cultures and expectations about the nature of teacher

education ('training') and about the role of staff including their role in research. Debates about the place of educational theory and practice in the preparation of teachers have resulted in radical revisions in both the teacher education curriculum and the location of responsibility for the training of teachers. The application of the principles and practices of a neo liberal market economy to all sectors of education across many parts of the globe has required more transparent accountability, performance measures, elaborated systems of assessment and the redesignation of students and parents as consumers exercising choice in the educational market place, and the ideology has shaped new relationships in the commissioning and ownership of research in higher education.

Reviewing work produced over a period of fifty years brings home the profound ideological shifts that have taken place over this time. The early papers were written when the second world war was still a vivid memory for many, and reflect an ethos of solidarity, of collaboration and community expressed for example in the ideal of the common or comprehensive school and, by extension in mixed-ability teaching. But then, as Bihr puts it, the social democracy of the middle years of the twentieth century 'sold its soul to the neoliberal devil' (Bihr 2008, 19). These social democratic values I tried to hang onto against the tide and in the face of a new politics of individualism, competition and the market, so that as late as 1996 I edited with Chris Husbands a collection of essays under the title *Consorting and collaborating in the education market place* (Bridges & Husbands 1996 – see also in the chapter on parent/ school relationships below). Some, perhaps of a similar generation, continued to assert these values. Roy Lowe, for example, wrote in 2002 that:

> The challenge ahead in the twenty-first century is to devise a system of higher education whose outcome will be social inclusion and social cohesion rather than the exclusivity and competitiveness that have marked much of the growth during the twentieth century (Lowe 2002: 90).

Waters and Brighouse also observe the ideological shift, though they describe it in slightly different terms, and give it a perhaps too precise date (1976) when Prime Minister Jim Callaghan made his famous Ruskin Speech and initiated a 'Great Debate' on education:

> Before 1976 was an age which might be dubbed one of optimism and trust (possibly misplaced) and afterwards one of market, centralisation and managerialism, while the speech itself was given during a period of

doubt and disillusion when the developments in schooling set up at the end of the Second World War were called into question. (Waters and Brighouse 2022, 5)

But they too look forward to 'a new age of hope, ambition, and *collaborative* partnerships' (Waters and Brighouse 2022, vii – my italics).

The ideology of the market had a way of corrupting the values it encountered and moulding them to its own character. One of my earliest pieces was on *cosmopolitanism* viewed as a moral principle which might underpin international understanding and peace. By the end of the period, we were more engaged with *globalisation* viewed as the triumph of global capitalism and an opportunity for universities and consulting agencies to make money.

There is a secondary context for the papers and the issues that they address, which is my own experience as an educator during this same period. The issues discussed in these papers have arisen not just because of changes in educational policy but because of my own engagement with them in different parts of the education system. They follow my professional life as a teacher, a parent, a school governor, a teacher educator, a researcher, a leader in a number of higher education institutions and an advisor to universities and government departments in many parts of the world. The researcher's subjectivity is, as Peshkin put it, 'a garment that cannot be removed …. The effacing of the narrative that lies behind the text with which it is inevitably entangled is, arguably, an artifice that is doomed to fail' (Peshkin 1988:17). What we have to say and how we say it does not after all come out of the blue: if it has any integrity it is rooted in our life histories, our values and our beliefs and in the social context of our writing. 'What a researcher is, is central to what a researcher does' (Bullough and Pinnegar 2001: 13). So, in the introductions to the papers I offer some brief explanation of what is called – and demanded by some educational writers – a 'biographical positioning' (see, for example, Atkinson 2000).

I have not tried to update the papers included here but have done only a light editing. All the papers are products of their age, and, from a historical perspective illuminate the preoccupations of educational policy and practice of their time. But the policies and practices discussed in this collection also underpin the present too, and ethical principles transcend historical time and geographical place, so I hope that the analysis and arguments in the papers included here have enduring relevance and stand up to contemporary critical scrutiny.

# References

Atkinson, E. (2000) Behind the inquiring mind: the transition from external to internal inquiry. *Reflective Practice*, 1(2), 149-164.

Bihr, A. (2008) Nowomowa neoliberalna. Retoryka kapitalistycznego fetyszyzmu. Warsaw: KIP.

Bridges, D. & Husbands, C. (eds.) (1996) *Consorting and collaborating in the educational marketplace*. London: Falmer Press.

Bullough, R.V. & Pinnegar, S. (2001) Guidelines for quality in autobiographical forms of self-study. *Educational Researcher* 31(3), 13-22.

Lowe, R. (2002) Higher education. In ed. Aldrich, R. *A century of education*. London: Routledge/Falmer.

Peshkin, A. (1988) In search of subjectivity – one's own. *Educational Researcher* 17:7, 17-21.

Peters, R.S. (1966) *Ethics and education*. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Waters, M. & Brighouse, T. (2022) *About our schools: improving on previous best*. Carmarthen: Crown House Publishing.

White, J.P. (1973) *Towards a compulsory curriculum*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Winch, P. & Gingell, J. (2004) *Philosophy and educational policy: A critical introduction*, London, Routledge.

# A historical reflection on academic production

The earliest paper included in this collection was first published in 1973 and the latest in 2015. This period saw some dramatic changes in educational and other academic writing and publishing, and since this book aspires to make a small contribution to the history of education as well as to considerations to do with the ethics of education it is perhaps worth noting some of the ways in which the texts that follow reflect those changes.

## Gender

The earliest papers were unselfconsciously gendered. This was most evident in the use of 'men', 'he' or him' to apply to all people. I felt I had to correct this in my own writing, but I have not changed the language in work that I have quoted directly. But it was not just a matter of sexist language. The people referred to and cited in these earlier papers were almost all men, too. Even if teaching and teacher training were predominantly female professions in the 1960s and into the 1970s, the academic production of the world of education was dominated by men. John Tibble's *The study of education*, published in 1966 defined the shape of such study for at least a generation. In it, leading educational thinkers of the day each described the contribution of what came to be referred to as the 'foundation disciplines' of education. And who were selected as these leading thinkers? Paul Hirst on educational theory; Richard Peters on the philosophy of education; Brian Simon on the history of education; Ben Morris on psychology of education and William Taylor on the sociology of education. And no one seemed to think there was anything unusual about this all male line-up.

I had occasion to recall this prevalent unselfconscious sexism when the *Cambridge Journal of Education* (established in 1971) was marking its fiftieth anniversary (Bridges 2022). The journal was established when second wave feminism defined in part by Carol Hanisch's *The personal is the political* (1966 but first published 1970) was being popularised by publications such as Germaine Greer's *The female eunuch* (1970). Nevertheless, the five-member Editorial Panel of the Journal were all men; and of the ten members of the Editorial Advisory Board just two were women, quaintly designated *Mrs* E.E. Morse and *Miss* I.H.J. Shaw (as contemporary courtesy required). Men were identified simply by their initials.

I think that the balance has shifted over the last half century, and I hope that this is reflected in my own referencing, though of course it is not always easy to know. The community of scholars was much, much smaller, and more local in the 1960s, and we tended to know them and to refer to them by their first names, so gender was easily identified. Half a century later our references are to a proliferation of international journals and to people identified only by initials in a global community, most of whom we have never met.

Thinking was beginning to change in the 1970s. In 1974 I edited a special issue of *New Era* (vol 55 no 6) on 'The making of the second sex'. This included a contribution by a former student, by then a London primary school teacher, under the title *'Ladies don't play football' – notes on sexism in the primary school*. Apparently (I write in the wake of jubilant national celebrations of the English women's football team victory in the European Cup!) ladies do play football today (and rather well) though this is still not an option for them in all schools.

## Internationalisation

This is another huge change the writers have had to respond to. Though my paper on 'cosmopolitanism' was intended for the international readership of the World Education Fellowship, this was exceptional at that time. The *Cambridge Journal of Education* was explicitly established in its early years as a regional forum for contributions and readers in the Area Training Organisation administered by the Cambridge Institute of Education. It only slowly gathered a national and international readership, authors, and Board. Philosophy of Education in the UK was in fairly close communication with practitioners in North America and Australasia in the 1970s, but only slowly grew to the truly international community that participates in the subject today. It is a struggle for many contributing to the subject to remember that they can no longer assume the shared reference to contemporary educational policy and practice in the UK or USA that they might have assumed in the past, though the homogenising influence of powerful global organisations like the World Bank and the OECD, not to mention the globalised testing regimes of TIMMS and PISA are doing their best to make this easier!

## The proliferation of publications and referencing

When the first papers in this collection were written it was possible to read everything that was published in philosophy of education as it came out. The main journal in the UK was still called the *Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain*, and this initially appeared only twice a year
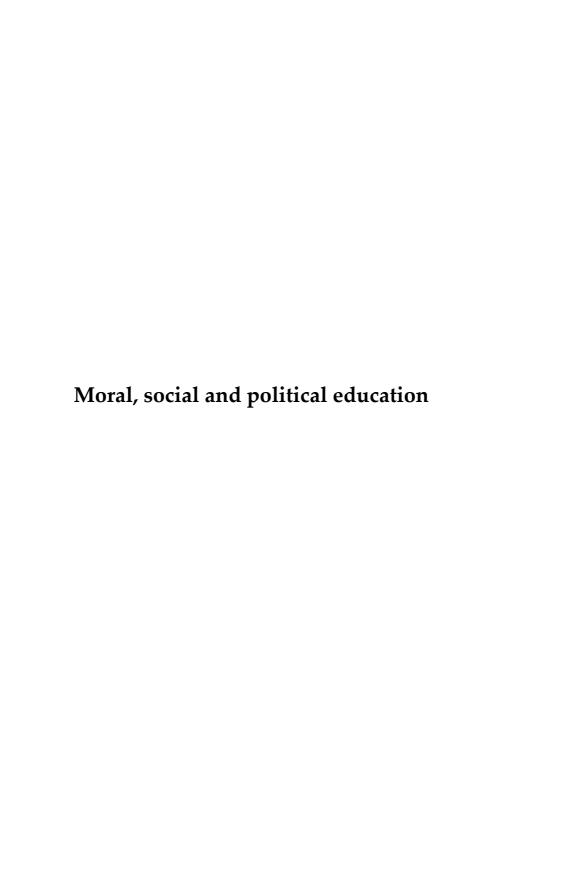
with perhaps half a dozen papers mostly derived, as its title suggests, from the annual conference. Books only slowly trickled out, each one a matter of some excitement. By contrast, the 2021 volume 55 of the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* (the Proceedings was thus renamed in 1977) contained eighty-five contributions totalling 1158 pages and it comes out four times a year. And that is just one journal; the last half century has seen hundreds of journals in the field of education alone join the international publishing community. And with this has come an expectation (in fact an unreal expectation) that an author has read everything that is relevant and is referring to it in their writing. My earliest contributions in this collection included as few as seven references; my later contributions three times that number, but today's research students seem required to provide a citation for almost every sentence they write.

The growth in the number of publications has been facilitated by the ambitions of major international publishing houses that have built up huge portfolios of publications, now of course accessible online, and their supply has been fed by the pressure on all academics to publish or perish. At the same time these publishers have established new regimes for submission, refereeing and style, including more rigorous requirements for referencing which I am afraid some of my earlier publications fail to meet. My best efforts at editing have not always been successful in recovering some missing page numbers from publications I can no longer access.

## The mechanics of writing

It is easy to forget how much simpler it is today to produce a decent piece of text. The earliest texts in this collection were first written out by hand. This would have been followed by some editing involving, literally, scissors and paste as I revised what I wanted to say, chopped bits out or inserted a new section in pages spread out across the kitchen table. I would then, with luck, pass the lot to a secretary to be typed up. Revising it at this stage was really painful and kept to an absolute minimum. A little later I did learn to type (slowly) on a very antiquated but rather splendid looking cast iron typewriter with a nice little bell that ding-ed when you got to the end of the carriage width, but, again, making corrections was not something one did with enthusiasm (less still if you were trying to produce carbon copies): you really had to get it as nearly right as possible first time round. Perhaps this was one reason papers were rather shorter in those days. I note that my early papers were under 5,000 words; later ones run to over 7,000 words, and a book I co-edited recently set a limit of 10,000 words per contribution.

The trouble with the facility of word processing is that it makes so easy to revise that it is difficult to know when to stop. But at least when you have produced it in this form you can go back and do some light editing to include it in a slightly different format in a collection like this. Most of my early work was only accessible as hard copy, which had to be scanned, converted to a word document and then extensively edited to iron out the typographical idiosyncrasies that crept into this process. Thank goodness for at least this area of progress in literary production!

# Moral, social and political education

# Moral, social and political education: Introduction

The 1960s and 1970s were a turbulent period for those engaged in education. Against a backdrop of rapid social and cultural change including greater prosperity, the pill and the sexual revolution, the cold war, Vietnam, and student protest, established values and moral principles were being re-assessed. Aspirations for a new and better world ran high in public consciousness and in government policy, and were formative for many young teachers entering the profession.

As a student teacher at the London Institute of Education (1963-4) I came under the influence of an original educational thinker, James Henderson, a Jungian who was a leading advocate of a more global approach to the teaching of history and indeed the placing of World Studies centrally in the curriculum (Henderson 1963, 1968). My own association with these causes is reflected in the first paper in this section on *Cosmopolitanism and Moral Education*. The appeal of cosmopolitan values transcending more narrowly conceived nationalistic interests and loyalties has a particular poignancy half a century on. Now the UK is systematically dismantling its own membership of institutions established in this earlier period to provide security and prosperity through a wider vision of international collaboration.

In 1972 the UK government had raised the school leaving age to 16. In advance of this change the Schools Council had been tasked with developing a wide range of projects across the curriculum in what Simons described as 'a decade [that] has marked innovation as a full-scale educational industry in this country'. (Simons 1971:118). A number of these were in the field of values education (or 'moral education' as it was most commonly referred to at this time). The Farmington Trust Moral Education Project, led by the Oxford philosopher, John Wilson, spelled out in rather cryptic form what it argued were the components of a morally educated person. The Schools Council Moral Education Project 8-13 (McPhail et al 1972) took a mainly social psychological approach with an emphasis on helping children to be sensitive to each other. The hugely influential Schools Council/ Nuffield Humanities Curriculum Project directed by Lawrence Stenhouse (1970) placed the teaching of controversial issues, including war, relations between the sexes and race

relations centre stage in educational debate. The project invited teachers to adopt a position of 'procedural neutrality' in relation to issues that were controversial socially. The fact that they were the subject of often heated public debate was, at least in part, because positions rested on fundamental values, the status of which was itself controversial philosophically. The World Studies Project brought major world issues to the classroom but was also distinctive in inviting teachers to draw students not just into an understanding of contemporary social issues but into democratic forms of action.

The paper, *Values education: a retrospective*, was originally presented to an invitation seminar arranged by the Gordon Cook Foundation in Edinburgh in 1996 i.e. some years after these projects were initiated. At the time I suggested that these projects from '25years ago' were still 25 years ahead of their time, and I believe that even after the passing of that further 25 years they still have much to contribute to our thinking today as well as to our understanding of the history of values education in the UK.

The political atmosphere of this period was heightened by protests from (in particular) higher education students in many parts of the world, climaxing perhaps in the anti-war protests in the US and in the Paris riots of 1968 as well as the somewhat more constrained student protests in universities across the UK. These protests sought not only social and political change but also participation in political processes themselves, especially those of their own universities. Via my doctoral work on discussion (Bridges 1979) I became especially interested in arguments for participation linked to political education itself, and this interest is reflected in my 1978 paper on *Participation and political education* as well as subsequent writing that argues, as did the World Studies project earlier, for political education that goes beyond the spectatorial into democratically framed action. In *Personal autonomy and practical competence,* a contribution to an international collaboration with colleagues in Taiwan, I suggest that such capability or competence is, or ought to be, an element of one of the central concepts in moral theory, personal autonomy. When I first looked back at this writing about young people's participation in democratic practices, I wondered whether this was an aspiration of a bygone age. It was therefore reassuring to read Waters and Brighouse writing in 2022 proposing as their very first aim for schools:

> We want our children to understand through their schooling that ... it will be their duty as adults to guard and participate in a representative democracy that values national and local government. To that end school will progressively involve students in many aspects of school life

and the community in which the school and the families are located (Waters and Brighouse 2022, 6).

Exactly!

## References

Bridges, D. (1979) *Education, democracy, and discussion*. Windsor: National Foundation for Educational Research.

Henderson, J.L.(Ed.) (1963) *World questions: A study guide*. London: Methuen

Henderson, J.L. ((1968) *Education for world understanding*. Oxford: Pergamon.

McPhail, P. Ungoed Thomas, J. & Chapman, H. (1972) *Schools Council Moral Education Project*. London: Longman.

Schools Council/Nuffield Humanities Curriculum Project (1970), *The Humanities Project: An introduction*. London: Heineman.

Simons, H. (1971). Innovation and the case study of schools. *Cambridge Journal of Education* 118-123.

Waters, M. & Brighouse, T. (2022) *About our schools: improving on previous best.* Carmarthen: Crown House Publishing.

# Cosmopolitanism and moral education[1]

*In the context of multiple calls for, for example, education for international understanding', 'education for world citizenship', and 'world studies' as part of the curriculum, this paper examines an ethical position that it suggests underpins many of these claims – cosmopolitanism. It unpicks three principles that it suggests are central to cosmopolitanism:*

- *that whatever rights or duties, respect, or freedom we owe to people we owe to people of all nations, of all societies (irrespective of race, colour, creed, sex, etc.);*
- *that in assessing the relative merits of different courses of action we should consider the good of the whole of humanity and not just one section of it;*
- *if we wish to meet wisdom, beauty, courage, kindness, or other excellences we should open our eyes to human achievement in all parts of the world and not just our own.*

*and it traces their historical/ philosophical roots. In the final section the paper considers what a cosmopolitan stance might mean for moral education in schools.*

## Introduction

The years following the second world war saw the establishment of a multitude of international organisations -ranging from the United Nations (1945) and its subsidiary organisations to the Council of Europe (1949) European Economic Community (1951) aimed at achieving international cooperation and, in some measure, the subordination of national to international jurisdictions. As early as 1941 Sir Fred Clarke was calling for:

> The progressive creation among the world's peoples of a texture of conventions, attitudes, and mutual tolerance comparable to those the operation of which ensures order, security, cohesion, and peaceful intercourse within a single national community (Clarke 1941).

International conflicts refused to submit to such regulation, however, though the major sites shifted to South East Asia and to struggles in many parts of the world aimed at casting off the colonial legacy. The East/West Cold War nearly took a disastrous turn with the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. A younger generation found, however, a new optimism and determination manifested in

---

[1] A version of this paper was first published in *New Era* 54(5) in 1973.

campus protests against, in particular, the Vietnam War but also in the celebration of 'Peace' and 'Love' in popular culture and political activism, they travelled the world in their gap years, and they embraced (selectively it should be said) elements of other people's culture.

But people did not need to travel abroad to encounter the culturally 'other'. The second world war had itself seen an influx of refugees from war torn Europe into the UK and then, after the war, the government encouraged inward migration aimed at rebuilding post war Britain. These came mainly from countries of the former empire in south Asia, Sub Saharan Africa and the West Indies. Between the 1951 and 1971 censuses, the number of 'foreign born' people in the UK rose from1.875 million to 3.100 million. In some parts of Britain especially, the 'international' were now neighbours, though, sadly, not always welcome ones.

There were some in this period who sought to develop a more positive role for education in developing 'international understanding', 'world studies', 'world citizenship' and 'education for peace and justice'. James Henderson was a leading figure in this field who brought an interesting Jungian perspective to the notion of a 'world perspective', which was to be found in our 'psychological and spiritual origins' (Henderson 1968: 63), in 'the collective memories of mankind' (ibid: 125) and in the 'consciousness of the universal in man' (ibid:13). In a preface to Lyall's *History syllabuses and a world perspective* published by the Parliamentary Group for World Government Sir Edward Boyle (Minister of Education 1962-64) and Joseph Lauwrys (Professor of Comparative Education at the University of London Institute of Education) wrote:

> In most parts of the world today, thinking men and women share the conviction that if the human species is to survive it will need to achieve a world perspective, that is to say an understanding and a tolerance, if not a sympathy, for the innumerable traditions and patterns of behaviour found throughout the world. Teachers at every level of education increasingly ought to view their profession in an international context; to strive to foster in their pupils an awareness of supranational loyalties as the necessary condition for the legitimate fulfilment of national ones. Such education for international understanding must concern itself, not only with man's political and economic activities but also with the basic beliefs he holds about his own nature (Lyall 1967).

Such aspirations are ambitious, and they lead in diverse directions when it comes to operationalising them in educational practice. I shall not try here to unpick all the claims that might be considered under the umbrella of these

slogans, but it seems to me that central among these objectives is the establishment of an order of interpersonal and intersocietal relationships marked most notably by qualities of peacefulness, tolerance and justice extended to all people. The main claim is that through our learning we should contribute to the development of this form of life among the future generations of world society. I suggest, however, that underlying these claims is, first, a particular philosophical, ethical, and social position which I shall label 'cosmopolitan' and, secondly, a conception of, among other things, moral and social education which would reflect this 'cosmopolitan' position.

This is in any case what I am going to assume as my starting point. What I want to do in this paper is to begin to explore a little more carefully the identity of 'cosmopolitanism' as a distinctive ethical standpoint and the possible implications of such a standpoint for a view of moral education.

## Cosmopolitanism

I am using the word as a label for a collection of opinions I am interested in rather than expounding or describing a clearly identified position held under the name of 'cosmopolitism'. However I prefer the label 'cosmopolitanism' to others I might have chosen because the views which I want to pick out do resemble in at least some respects those to which this name has occasionally been applied in a tradition traceable, though with some disjunctions, through international socialism and British Utilitarianism, through German Enlightenment and French *Encyclopaedéisme*, through Renaissance humanism and Medieval Christendom back to the fountain spring of Ancient Greece, the wisdom of Stoics and, it has been argued, the Imperial might of Alexander the Great. However, it may be that there is only the very faintest reflection in these sources of the ideas which I am going to attribute to 'the cosmopolitan'.

I suggest that the cosmopolitan's ethics can be summed up in three closely related principles:

- that whatever rights or duties, respect, or freedom we owe to people we owe to people of all nations, of all societies (irrespective of race, colour, creed, sex, etc.);

- that in assessing the relative merits of different courses of action we should consider the good of the whole of humanity and not just one section of it;

- if we wish to meet wisdom, beauty, courage, kindness, or other excellences we should open our eyes to human achievement in all parts of the world and not just one.

The emphasis running through each of these principles is on our need to free ourselves from national or sectional limitations and attachments, or, at least, to extend these. It is a reassertion of the necessity of a world perspective in our understanding judgement and civic identity.

Let us look a little more closely at the three principles:

*(i) that whatever rights or duties, respect, or freedom that we owe to people, we owe to people of all nations, of all societies.*

In this principle the cosmopolitan reasserts what inhabitants of a world divided up into nations are inclined to forget: that it is of the nature of moral principles that they should be applied universally i.e., and for example, if justice is owed to me then it is owed to all persons; if I claim it as a moral right that I can say what I think, then must acknowledge this as the moral right of all human agents.

The chauvinist has been inclined to take the view that moral obligations extend as far as our national frontiers: we owe the basic means of survival, a certain moral respect, justice and certain rights of freedom to our compatriots, but to those who are not our compatriots, we owe nothing; beyond the borders of our own country the moral law is replaced by the law of the jungle.

Against this the cosmopolitan reminds us that such moral obligations as we acknowledge to be owed to our compatriots, we must acknowledge in respect of humanity the world over. The differences which we can recognise between peoples, differences of race, colour, and creed for example, are not, on the cosmopolitan's view, differences of a kind relevant to making distinctions between what we owe at the level of fundamental moral obligation to all persons – because they are persons.

The Stoics gave the earliest and one of the most attractive portrayals of this point of view. Zeller gives this account of their teaching:

> What reason have we to feel ourselves more nearly related to some men than to others? All men, apart from what they have made themselves by their own exertions, are equally near, since all equally participate in reason. All are members of one body, for one and the same nature has fashioned them all from the same elements for the same destiny (Zeller 1870, 309-10).

Zeller describes how, using religious language, Epictetus calls all men brethren, since all have in the same degree God for their Father.

> Man, therefore, who and whatever else he may be, is the object of our solicitude, simply as being a man. No hostility and ill-treatment should quench our benevolence. No one is so low but that he has claims on the love and justice of his fellow men (ibid).

Now there may be difficulties in defending the Stoic or other accounts of what it is that characterises and unites all people as people. I am not sure what it is for all people to 'have in the same degree God for their Father' – nor is it so obvious that 'all equally participate in reason'. Since the Stoics distinguish between the wise and fools it looks as if what is meant here is 'potentiality for reason' or something like that. However, these are not problems which need lead us to reject the basic conclusion. For the formal principle of justice requires us to demonstrate relevant reasons for treating people differently not for treating them the same. (Of course, the invocation of this principle does not settle anything; it merely shifts the controversy over to what is to count as a 'relevant' reason: but I shall not pursue that problem now.) Let me return to my descriptive function and simply point out that the cosmopolitan will not accept information about people's nationality or ethnicity as a ground relevant to the determination of our moral obligations towards them. In the language of slightly more recent ethics, the cosmopolitan takes the moral imperative as brooking no exception, as, literally, 'universalisable'.

This then is the first principle: 'that whatever rights or duties, respect or freedom that we owe to people, we owe to people of all nations, of all societies'.

*(ii) that in assessing the relative merits of different courses of action we should consider the good of the whole of humanity and not just one section of it*

This is, perhaps, the same principle as the first couched in a form appropriate to a different ethical tradition. If the first principle may be interpreted as a reaffirmation of the formal principle of justice or the logic of the Kantian principle of universalizability, this second is a reassertion of what is already implied but often ignored in the Utilitarian principle of the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number'.

The chauvinist weighs in his scales what will contribute most to the happiness, good or interests of his or her owns country or compatriots. The cosmopolitan by contrast urges us to make our decisions on the basis of what is conducive to the happiness, good or interests of the whole world or failing that the largest part of it. Thus if it were demonstrably in the interests of the world as a whole,

but against the interests of one particular nation, that that nation should be deprived of its arms or obliged to share round its wealth, its skilled doctors or its supplies of medicine, the cosmopolitan would be inclined to support the action, even though it was to his or her own country's disadvantage. The chauvinist would bitterly oppose anything which was opposed to the interest (including the 'enlightened self-interest') of his or her own nation, whatever the gain to others.

This cosmopolitan view is in fact reflected in some of Bentham's writings. As C. J. Colombus explains in his introduction to *Project for Perpetual Peace*, for Bentham, 'public good had no limits other than those of the habitable globe Bentham invariably took as a basis for his reforms 'the common and equal utility of all nations' (Bentham 1927).

But Kant too, in his pre-critical essay on 'Education' expressed very much the same principle. His is a neat statement particularly appropriate to the context of this discussion:

> We must encourage youth in love towards others, and to feelings of cosmopolitanism. There exists something in our minds which causes us to take an interest (a) in ourselves, (b) in those with whom we have been brought up, and (c) there should also be an interest in the progress of the world. Children should be made acquainted with this interest, so that it may give warmth to their hearts. They should learn to rejoice at the world's progress, although it may not be to their advantage or to that of their country. (Kant, 1960, 120).

As with the first principle so with this second one, I think the cosmopolitan is entitled to ask the nationalist, chauvinist, tribalist or sectionalist to justify claims to a reduction of the bounds within which 'the public interest', 'the common good' or 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' should be adjudged rather than to feel that the obligation is upon the cosmopolitan to justify the assessment of these things in terms of an unlimited category of 'the public', 'the commonality' or 'the greatest number'. The cosmopolitan's *prima facie* assumption is the rational starting point: the onus is on others to restrict it if they can.

The third principle which I mentioned as characterising the cosmopolitan was this:

*(iii) if we wish to meet wisdom, beauty, courage, kindness, or other excellences we should open our eyes to human achievement in all parts of the world and not just one.*

This is a counsel of prudence to those in search of aesthetic, moral and other human excellences. It is a counsel which has led at various times in history to an exciting interchange, cross fertilisation, and expansion in scholarship and in artistic attainment. Renaissance Europe throve on it – and the French Encyclopaedists celebrated it. This was the sentiment expressed by Vauvenard in a letter of 1739 sent to Mirabeau:

> How agreeable to be able to live with men from all levels of society, from all provinces, from all nations and to bring together in one place all the separate insights of this multitude which contains within itself all the knowledge, all the imagination and all the talent of the world (cited in Hans 1961).

The cosmopolitan's argument, then, is something like this. If you wish to seek out the most beautiful achievements of human art, why stop short of your own shores? If you seek wisdom, why eschew the insight of any other than your compatriot? It is irrational thus to set limits on your enquiry.

Typically, then, the cosmopolitan emerges at a time when national or sectional interests and concerns are limiting the perspective which we bring to: our application of moral principles; our weighing of 'the public interest', 'the common good' or 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number'; and the pursuit of virtue and excellence.

The cosmopolitan reminds us that such limitations in our perspectives is contrary to reason and, by extension, to morality.

Now all sorts of further credos are sometimes attached to a cosmopolitan perspective or associated with it – most obviously perhaps the prizing of peace and a desire to establish some form of world government.

The establishment of peace would I think be a necessary condition for the ordering of intersocietal and interpersonal relationships according to the principles to which the cosmopolitan is attached. But let us be clear that the cosmopolitan wants a lot more than peace. A condition of peace would facilitate but would not automatically lead to the kind of moral order to which the cosmopolitan is aspires.

The establishment of some form of world government as advocated by, for example, the Parliamentary Group for World Government or the World Law Fund would be neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the fulfilment of the cosmopolitan's aspirations, though doubtless the attainment of these aspirations might alter radically the functions and character of the nation state

or at least subordinate the laws of the nation state and the judicial system designed to enforce them to international institutions

The quality of life that the cosmopolitan admires could be secured within a political structure of nation states; it might not obtain under a system of world government. Ethical considerations, in general and in this instance, might oblige us to rule out some forms of political and social order (as unacceptable) and might incline us to respect others. But they do not of themselves lead us conclusively to a representation of one particular order as the ideal.

Perhaps then cosmopolitanism is best characterised simply in terms of my three basic principles rather than by reference to institutional structures that may or may not support their realisation.

## Moral education

What of moral education? If the cosmopolitan's principles are valid ones (I am aware that I have done little more than show reason why we might look at them seriously – I have not, here, constructed a rigorous justification) does it make any difference to what might, or should, go on in moral education?

The answer to this question rather depends on the way one ordinarily conceives of moral education. For the cosmopolitan's purpose here as in a wider concern for moral conduct is not so much, as it were, to tack on any extra principles, but to draw out the implications of what already properly belongs there.

Thus, the cosmopolitan would want to make it clear in teaching something about the form of moral judgement that moral laws are by nature universalisable in some sense and that this means that such duties as we have are incumbent equally on each of us and such obligations are owed equally to all. In teaching the use and application of maxims like 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' and concepts like 'the public interest' or 'the common good' the cosmopolitan will be cautious lest pupil begins to make the unwarranted assumption that it is only their own kind to whom reference is being made. In developing in pupil an understanding and appreciation of human virtue and excellence the cosmopolitan may be concerned not to fall into the assumption that these are qualities or attainments having application only to the persons, deeds, or products of his or her own countrymen.

The cosmopolitan would also have something to say about the implications for other aspects of moral education. He or she might very well claim (and much of the literature on education and international understanding may be reduced

to this) that even where people are ready to grant his three principles as crucial to any proper conception of morality or moral education, these people often ignore or neglect what is required in terms of the kinds of knowledge and understanding which is necessary to their application. Let me offer two brief points by way of illustration of this argument. I will base these, for convenience on two of John Wilson's list of moral components, as they appear in his *Introduction to Moral Education* (Wilson et al 1967).

First, the cosmopolitan will want to broaden our perspective in what Wilson calls ALLEMP or our awareness or insight into other people's feelings. If the category of 'other people' is to include not merely our own compatriots or the broader community of English-speaking peoples but also people of quite different social and cultural traditions, then clearly, we require a much-elaborated framework of knowledge and understanding under this aspect of moral education. How much moral clumsiness has resulted from the insensitivity towards people of other cultural groups by people with perhaps a highly developed sensitivity to members of their own society.

The cosmopolitan therefore would urge us in our teaching to set out deliberately to develop children's sensitivity to and understanding of people of other cultures and societies and along with this to enlarge their conception of what it is to be a person, of the similarities and dissimilarities among the broad set 'humanity'.

Even more obviously, the cosmopolitan might have something to say about the component of morality and moral education which Wilson calls GIG, that is, mastery of relevant factual knowledge. If we wish to promote happiness, liberty, or freedom in or on behalf of societies other than our own and if we wish to act rightly towards them, then we need to have extensive understading of the political, economic, and social structure of those societies. History is strewn with cases of political and social blunders wrought by the tampering of benevolent, but culpably ignorant would-be international well-doers. Similarly, any sensible effort to bring moral improvement into international relations requires the agent to have a thorough grasp of the facts of the international situation and the way in which these relations work.

The constant pleas, in the literature on education and international understanding, for more teaching about other societies, about 'world history' and about international relations is partly connected with an interest in this knowledge 'for its own sake', but partly too it is connected with the belief that knowledge and understanding about other societies and international relations