

## Editorial

As incoming editors of the *History of Education Researcher*, we first wish to state how proud we are to become custodians of the journal and how seriously we take this responsibility to serve all those engaged in studying and teaching the history of education and specifically the members of the History of Education Society. Second, we would like to thank the previous editorial team of Tom Woodin and Susannah Wright for their sterling work over the past six years and for their support during the period of transition from one editorial team to another. They have handed over a journal that has maintained a consistently high quality of articles and kept members up to date with the activities of the Society. We wish them both well in their new roles as joint editors, with Mark Freeman, of the *History of Education* journal, and we look forward to working with them to develop the relationship between the authorship and readership of the two journals.

The *History of Education Society Bulletin* (1968-2003) and the *History of Education Researcher* (2003-) provide a chronicle of the activities of the Society and detail the ways in which it has sought to fulfil its mission and aims. Most obviously, they have promoted the study and teaching of, and encouraged and supported research in, the history of education. Using the *Exe Libris* online bibliography (<http://elac.ex.ac.uk/hoebibliography/>), we know that there were 472 articles published in the *Bulletin* between 1968 and 2003 and 88 articles published in the *Researcher* between 2003 and 2011. They represent a considerable contribution to knowledge in the field of the history of education, and their authorship bears witness to the launching careers of many members of the academic community today, as well as the significant contribution made by long-standing members of the Society who are sadly no longer with us. In this regard, it is sad to have to report in our inaugural editorial the recent deaths of Kevin Brehony, Pamela Horn and Dennis Dean. Each made significant contributions to the study of the history of education which are apparent in the pages of the *Bulletin* and *Researcher* in the articles, citations and reports of the activities of the Society and its executive. Perhaps the only positive in the passing of valued members of our community is the opportunity for those of us remaining to pause, take stock and re-evaluate its future direction.

Under our editorship, the *Researcher* will continue to include short peer refereed articles of between 3,000 and 5,000 words on the history of education, be published in print twice a year (May and November), and be distributed to all members of the History of Education Society and a range of institutional libraries both in the UK and abroad. We hope to continue to publish articles encompassing formal and informal education and on a wide variety of methodological, theoretical and empirical themes. As well as seeking to publish articles by established scholars, perhaps who are beginning work on new material or presenting new ideas at an early stage of formation, we will uphold the longstanding commitment of editors of the *Researcher* to encourage first-time submissions from students and early career researchers. Thus, we will continue to promote a rigorous peer review process that manages at the same time to provide affirmative, positive and constructive feedback to authors to enable them to improve the quality of their submissions ready for publication in this journal or elsewhere. The *Researcher* will continue to offer reports of past events and notifications of future events in the 'Notes and News' section, and we will encourage members to inform the editors (one of whom is also the Society's website manager) of news about relevant conferences, projects, proposals, publications, acquisitions to archives, and so forth. By these means, we would like the *Researcher* to continue to be a conduit for communication, discussion and debate between members of the Society.

Like our predecessors, we are committed to providing an open and dynamic forum for scholarly dialogue and collaboration, and in this vein, alongside standard academic articles, we also invite less conventional submissions, perhaps in unorthodox formats, so long as they

are well-written, manifest the requisite critical qualities, stimulate curiosity and interest, and provoke serious thought. Thus, we encourage new researchers to publish ‘work in progress’ reports, along the lines of the material shared at the postgraduate panel sessions at the Annual Conference, and book reviews or essay reviews of recent literature in their areas of special interest. Another particular area we would like to explore is the potential for developing more features within the journal focused on supporting undergraduates, postgraduates and early career researchers in planning and carrying out their research projects. We are particularly concerned to promote the discussion of methodologies, hermeneutics and methods of data collection and analysis. We would welcome submissions that seek, on the one hand, to demystify the research process by concentrating on procedures, mechanics and technical tips, and on the other hand, to problematize it, identifying and suggesting solutions to philosophical and theoretical issues associated with historical approaches to the study of education. Therefore, whilst continuing to publish reports on research events, archives and projects, we will also encourage authors to submit contributions focusing on methodologies, conceptual and theoretical tools, and interpretative and analytical frameworks. We will explore the potential to develop a series of short articles, which could also be made available through the Society’s website, that function as introductions to methodological issues or step-by-step mini-guides to specific methods. So long as these introductions and mini-guides are framed appropriately - not as definitive statements, but informal descriptions of working assumptions and practices - then we hope to garner contributions not only from stalwarts among the scholarly community, based on their long-standing and wide-ranging research experiences, but also from new entrants into the field, based on the immediate practical hurdles they need to overcome. We also wonder whether undergraduate, postgraduate and early-career researchers might find it interesting to find out more about other historians of education, particularly with regard to their methodological orientations. For this, we are considering introducing a standard ‘Q&A’ feature in which the same generic questions, with a particular focus on methodological issues, would be answered briefly by both experienced and inexperienced historians of education from the UK and overseas. This might make some contribution to the development of a growing sense of community. Apart from any innate interest we might have in reading the responses from colleagues in our field, the answers might also provide some food for thought and set off a train of ideas that might influence how we each individually study or teach the history of education. These are just two ideas. We would welcome feedback as well as other suggestions as to how we might further develop an emphasis in these regards.

The first edition of the *History of Education Society Bulletin* was published following the formation of the Society at a conference in Liverpool in December 1967. Three major themes underlay much of the discussion at that conference, and formed the focus for the first issue of the journal: (i) what part should the study of the history of education play in general Education courses; (ii) should one teach the history of education through chronological periods, topics or contemporary problems; and (iii) should the history of education be taught by historians in history departments or historians of education in education departments? The questions of why, how, when and where we communicate our research to students, other academics and wider audiences remain pertinent today, not least because the opportunities to teach the history of education as a discrete (sub-)discipline or field in UK higher educational settings have diminished since the late 1960s. We believe that the Society, and specifically the *Researcher*, have key roles to play in furthering these discussions. We would like to see a widening of the availability of materials published in the *Researcher*, particularly, for example, by making selected articles and other features (with appropriate copyright agreement) available through the Society’s website. Indeed, we are very interested in facilitating greater links between the *Researcher*, the website (<http://www.historyofeducation.org.uk>), the postgraduate e-networks, the Facebook account ([www.facebook.com/historyofeducation](http://www.facebook.com/historyofeducation)), Twitter feed (@histedsocuk) and the Society’s

blog ([www.historyofeducationsociety.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.historyofeducationsociety.blogspot.co.uk)), and see plenty of scope for these media to work in more complementary ways, particularly with regard to news of the Society, notices of forthcoming events and reports on new research projects.

As new editors, we welcome comments and contributions to ensure that we can maintain and build upon the standards of our predecessors. We look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your support thus far. Correspondence should be sent in the first instance to Jonathan Doney via email at [J.Doney@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:J.Doney@exeter.ac.uk). Instructions for the submission of articles can be found on the inside back cover or on the publications page of the Society's website. We hope that all colleagues, young and old, inexperienced and experienced, will continue to support the journal.

Rob Freathy and Jonathan Doney.