Payne and Hall (pending)

The NSEAD Survey Report 2015-16: Political Reflections from Two Art and Design Educators

Abstract

In 2015 the (UK) National Society for Education in Art and Design [NSEAD] conducted their biggest and most comprehensive survey to date with art and design educators. 1191 teachers and lecturers employed in early years to further education settings across England and Wales responded to the survey, which aimed to capture how government policy since 2010 has affected art and design education. Four key areas were examined: curriculum provision; value given to the subject within the school community; professional development opportunities; and well-being and workload. The results are troubling, indicating a systemic marginalisation of art and design across all sectors, evident in a reduction in choice, provision and curriculum time, and evidence of falling standards in student attainment at primary to secondary transfer. We supported the NSEAD with constructing the survey and writing the report and in this paper we utilise the *Survey Report* to fuel a broader discussion about our concerns regarding the demise of art and design education. *Value* is identified as an essential theme and we posit that our subject, largely due to neoliberalist policy agendas, is currently perceived as a 'bimbo': attractive, but unintelligent and frivolous. In this article we pay particular attention to the value of art and design education from a political perspective, challenging narrow government agendas.

Key words

NSEAD, survey report, value/s; policy, neoliberalism.

Introduction

Despite the rhetoric of promoting arts and culture for all (DCMS 2016a), the current British government's perceived value of art and design in schools is at an all-time low. We would

like to remind readers of Lady Bridget Plowden's (1967, para 676) argument that a society

which disregards art is 'dangerously sick'. This warning from nearly half a century ago is as

true today as it was back then. We are well aware that much excellent practice in art and

design education exists across the country, but it is becoming increasingly challenging for

teachers to sustain confidence and commitment when the government consistently advocates

a restricted agenda for art and design education (DfE 2016a, NSEAD 2016).

At first glance the nation's cultural and creative health appears buoyant. Figures published in

January 2016 tell us that the creative industries earn the UK approximately £10 million an

hour, and have been growing at a faster rate than the whole of the UK economy (DCMS

2016b). However, this is an incomplete picture. Far from the cultural wealth apparent on the

surface of British society, growing inequality is evident in creative sector employment,

cultural participation, and educational opportunities in the visual arts (ACE 2014, DCMS

2016a). In particular, we question the sense of the government promoting the economic

value of the arts and culture whilst neglecting the educational benefits of art and design for

children and young people. Indeed, as Adams (2013, 3) states:

> The problem with the economic argument in defence of the arts is that it gives
> away the moral ground to our opponents in a fundamental way. It assumes that
> the market-led, economic base of society is also the prima-facie case for
> education, and in doing so inadvertently reinforces the philistinism inherent in
> that argument; yet it is this dogma that has done so much to damage the civic,
> social justice case for education.

These concerns are echoed in the Warwick Commission's Report (Neelands *et al.* 2015, 49),

Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth, which called for 'a national vision for

England's cultural and creative education'. Subsequently, the publication of the Department

for Culture Media and Sport's [DCMS] *The Culture White Paper*[1] in March 2016 provided

some hope for the future of art and design education in England. But whilst the DCMS

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[1] A 'white paper' summarises the government's planned future legislation.

focuses on access to culture through education into employment, an acknowledgment of

concerns about widening participation and learners' engagement with the arts, the parameters

outlined to achieve this appear uneven at best. Among other omissions, there is little

coherence regarding equal access to the national curriculum based on school type and, despite

a recruitment crisis, there is no mention of training bursaries for art and design teachers (CLA

2016). Moreover, it sits at odds with the Department for Education's [DfE] (2016a) white

paper, *Educational Excellence Everywhere,* released in the same month, where there are just a

couple of references to 'the arts' (DfE 2016, 23) and these are in regard to extra-curricular

activities in secondary schools. These observations plainly demonstrate that a common

discourse between government departments is lacking.

Our critique will look at the following: the value of art and design education; neoliberalism;

the national curriculum; the impact of testing; and challenging institutional inequalities. To

begin, we now share our starting point and key source of research evidence.

The NSEAD Survey Report 2015-16

Our inspiration for this paper is the (UK) National Society for Education in Art and Design's

[NSEAD] *Survey Report 2015-16* (NSEAD 2016) - hereafter referred to as 'the *Survey*

Report' - which enquired: *In the last five years how has government policy impacted on art,*

craft and design education? Informed by previous NSEAD educator surveys (2011-14), four

art and design-centred themes were examined: curriculum provision; the value given to the

subject in schools and colleges; professional development opportunities; and wellbeing and

workload. The survey was completed between June and July 2015 by 1191 art educators

working with young children to post 16 students in a range of settings. As the NSEAD's

largest and most comprehensive survey to date, it contributes to the Society's aims to:

'continue to be the principal organisation promoting and representing art and design in all

phases of education throughout the United Kingdom'. The 2015-16 findings are similar to those from 2013-14, with clear disparities not only between the state and independent sectors but also between different types of state schools. Issues arose stemming from a culture of testing to curriculum reform to restructuring school timetables and limited opportunity to engage with subject-specific professional development, resulting in the erosion of teachers' well-being. For example, 55 per cent of respondents indicated they had contemplated leaving the profession in the last five years and 56 per cent specify the desire to leave - or actually leaving education - was stimulated by 'the reduced profile and value of the subject' (NSEAD 2016, 40). From this evidence, we have a clearer picture of the extent to which recent government policy has negatively impacted upon art and design education.

The NSEAD is using the *Survey Report*, with its 30 recommendations targeted at a diverse stakeholder group, to affect change in our schools and colleges, raising the value and status of the subject. Our article is aimed at contributing to this aspiration. We were both involved in refining the NSEAD (2016) survey design and commenting on draft reports of its findings. Also, as Senior Lecturers in Art and Design Education in two different higher education institutions, we have both been affected by the negative impact of government policies on art and design in initial teacher education in primary and secondary phases over the last decade (for example, Payne 2014). We have faced changes in our teaching roles and have to advocate for our subject, where previously its role and value would have gone unquestioned. Thus, this policy critique is informed by personal experience as well as research evidence.

Valuing Art and Design Education

Although value given to the subject was just one area addressed in the *Survey Report* we identify 'value' to be of central relevance. The Oxford English Dictionary [OED] defines the word 'value' thus: 'The regard that something is held to deserve; the importance, worth, or

usefulness of something'. We suggest that art and design, as a subject, is undervalued

because it is *fundamentally misunderstood*. For example, in terms of definition, we talk

about 'art, craft and design education' in an attempt to summarise the diversity of the visual

arts, but even the term 'visual' can be limiting, as there are also tactile and auditory qualities,

in addition to performance aspects of the field of practice. As Herbert Read (1943) tells us,

art, as an experience, is a way of learning. Therefore the commonly-seen reductionist

approach to the subject in schools is problematic because the emphasis tends to be placed on

the tangible outcome (i.e., the 'product') rather than the thinking and, crucially, the learning

during the making process and the related critical and cultural dimensions (Eisner 1972).

Further reflections on the *Survey Report* findings lead us to suggest that art and design is

frequently positioned as a 'bimbo' (OED definition: 'An attractive

but unintelligent or frivolous young woman'). We make the original observation that this

disregard would not be permitted if we were to think of art and design as a person. In

summary we reduce this analogy to three components. The first, ***stereotyping****,* indicates the

misconception that art and design is merely *attractive;* it is a nice subject resulting in pretty

pictures, which are good for displays to decorate the school. The second, ***prejudice****,* positions

the subject as *unintelligent*; the misconception being that art and design is not an academic

subject. This is substantiated by the following evidence:

> Teachers across all sectors indicated that their schools were more likely to enable
> lower ability students to take art and design qualifications than higher ability
> students (NSEAD 2016, 29).

It is also reiterated by the comment from one teacher that: '*The 'less rigorous' art and design*

has been dropped in favour of 'more rigorous' lessons such as additional maths …' (NSEAD

2016, 39). The final category is ***discrimination****,* where art and design is considered *frivolous*.

We stress that it is a misconception to regard it as an add-on subject that can be covered in

extra-curricular time; the view taken in *Educational Excellence Everywhere* (DfE, 2016a).

Again, this is substantiated by the *Survey Report* where a teacher indicated: *'Art and design is often the first choice for revision slots in other subjects* [so students are removed from classes]' (NSEAD 2016, 22)*.* A further finding is that whilst 82 per cent of independent school teachers agreed that senior staff supported gallery visits, this compares to just 48 per cent in state schools (NSEAD 2016, 29); this is despite opportunities to visit galleries or work with visual practitioners being recommended by examination awarding organisations and the national schools' inspectorate, The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills [Ofsted].

We argue that our bimbo analogy succinctly illustrates the perhaps unanticipated effects of government agendas. For example, the DfE is currently encouraging schools to practise evidence-based teaching and it is working in close partnership with the Educational Endowment Foundation [EEF][2] to achieve this aim. However, a recent research review on arts education and cognition for the EEF states that: 'There is little evidence that visual art (painting, drawing, sculpture) had any positive effect on academic outcomes' (See and Kokotsaki 2016, 3), thus perpetuating the myth that learning in art is practical rather than intellectual and its intrinsic qualities are insignificant. Indeed, entire chains of schools - known as 'multi-academy trusts' - have elected to opt-out of teaching art and design to their students (for example, Whittaker 2016), as they do not see any worth in the subject beyond the description given above. That is to say, if art and design does not raise attainment in core subjects then it is superfluous.

A further concern arises when we recognise that teachers' identities are shaped by their experiences in school and the subjects that they teach (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009). Thus, by association with a low-status subject, teachers of art and design are increasingly being made to feel insignificant and this sense of disempowerment was apparent in many of

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[2] The EEF seeks to raise educational achievement by engaging schools with research

the comments about wellbeing and workload in the *Survey Report*. For example, teachers used phrases such as: 'exhaustion and disillusionment', 'staff morale was low', 'constant accountability', 'a constant battle', 'too depressing', 'de-skilled and undervalued' (NSEAD 2016, 38-39). This situation undoubtedly has ramifications for the future, not least for art and design teachers' health. We now turn to examine the contributing ideological factors underpinning our state-regulated education system which provoke such disenfranchisement.

Neoliberalism

For the last three decades we have been in the grip of neoliberalism operating at the heart of our education sector (Slater 2015). We see this as a pervasive global ideology, positioned centre-stage politically, and engendering market-driven forces within institutions previously founded on egalitarian practices. Socialist narratives championed in post-war Europe are eroded by a belief that well-being is best served within a political economic system which exploits capitalist endeavours and individual 'liberty' (Harvey 2007, 22). This model integrates financial sector management approaches into schools, which 'have the consequence of economizing the [school] culture' (Bernstein 2001, 31). This leads to the marketisation of school leaders and managers, and changes control and power central to teachers' practices. In education reform this has become a 'policy epidemic' (Levin 1998 cited in Ball 2003, 215) which operates in an insidious manner not just changing how professionals function, but more fundamentally, who they are and how they feel.

Slater (2015) argues that current education reform is based on both perceived and actual crises. The agenda here is to implement policy which is presented as a means of recovery, but in reality is a mechanism which capitalises on crisis through privatisation. As a result government ideology becomes more firmly entrenched. At the centre of reform in English education is performativity, which Ball (2003, 216) defines as:

> […] a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change – based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic).

Performance against a subject's production or outcomes is the currency with which the subject's value is measured within a given arena (such as curriculum or league tables). Ball (2003, 216) argues that whosoever owns the 'field of judgement' dictates the perceived value of that subject. Teachers are placed at the centre of this struggle for control resulting in their professional values being continually challenged 'or displaced by the terrors of performativity' (Lyotard 1984 cited in Ball 2003, 216). Under this system a subject such as art and design, which refuses to conform to dominant performative constructs, is therefore considered less valuable. Instead it is tarnished as 'excessive and […] excluded' (Penketh 2016, 439) from the curriculum. This view point is encapsulated in our bimbo analogy. As mentioned above, the *Survey Report* findings articulate English art and design teachers' experiences of the terrors of performativity. Further, 79 per cent of respondents indicated that their workload had increased over the last five years where:

> Reasons for the reported workload increase included: paperwork, monitoring, loss of specialist staff and technicians, 'constant improvement plans for everything', and accountability (NSEAD 2016, 40).

The (not so) National Curriculum

The education agenda we are concerned with in relation to the *Survey Report* was initiated by the then Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove, who hailed the need for far reaching reform from his inception. Part of this package included the restructuring of the national curriculum, which Gove (2013, para 20) argued would redress the crisis of schools' underperformance; he stated the then national curriculum was built on progressive education practices, the cause of 'low expectations and narrow horizons'. A new curriculum would

raise expectations for all learners, acting as the panacea for reform in education standards. However, the construction of a national curriculum exposes the ideological position of those designing it, and the situation of subjects within it serves to communicate their perceived value (Allison 1982).

Reiss and White (2014) argue for an aims-based curriculum which places learners centrally within the education system predicated on two long-term aims: individual wellbeing and autonomy, and to support individuals to contribute to the collective good. It is immediately apparent that current English education policy is at odds with these values (Adams 2014). Whilst neoliberalists argue for human well-being it is grounded in economic drivers not humanist values (Harvey 2007). A good citizen is a productive citizen (Ball 2013). And so it is not unexpected that the DfE, when reforming the national curriculum, 'tacked [aims] on to a structure already in place' (Reiss and White 2014, 77). In so doing they failed to generate a considered and equitable curriculum. Subjects are placed hierarchically and considered more important than core aims, where instead the supposed productivity of a subject is the primary argument for its position. Hence, the high status of English and mathematics in order to ensure the production of literate, numerate, productive citizens.

It is perhaps no surprise then that the art and design national curriculum (DfE 2013) is a half-hearted document limited in both ambition and pedagogic understanding (Steers 2014). It outlines content to be taught to learners in key stage one (KS1: five to seven years), key stage two (KS2: seven to 11 years) and key stage three (KS3: 11 to 13 or 14 years, depending on the school). As the NSEAD (n.d.) notes, it 'does not describe the unique nature, depth, breadth and future of the subject, nor fully meet the needs of children and young people living and engaging in the 21st century'. The thin curriculum content - just 12 bullet points over the full KS1 to KS3 - lends itself to superficial coverage by less confident or willing teachers. For example, a KS1 learning intention is that pupils be taught: 'to develop a wide

range of art and design techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space' and at KS3 this becomes: 'to use a range of techniques and media, including painting' (DfE, 2013). This clearly highlights a lack of continuity and progression.

The issues described above are compounded by another education reform policy: the on-going privatisation of schools. The national curriculum, established in 1988, aims to encapsulate a common educational entitlement for all children aged five to 14, but currently this is dependent on the school that learners attend. Under current policy the English education system comprises an increasingly elaborate array of schools. For example, community and foundation schools are state-funded and run by local authorities, although foundation schools have increased governor autonomy. Academies and free schools are 'public-funded, independent schools' (New Schools Network 2015, 3), unconnected to local authorities and instead accountable directly to the government. Traditional or sponsored academies are usually underperforming schools that have an external partner. In contrast, academy converters are high performing schools who have chosen to opt out of local authority provision. Worryingly, the national curriculum, conceived as basic, is non-statutory in academies (in March 2016, approximately a fifth of primary schools and well over half of secondary schools) and free schools (in June 2016, approximately 300 across England). The DfE (2016a, 5) indicates a credible justification for curriculum choice related to the removal of 'unnecessary red tape' by increasing leadership autonomy in academies and free schools. Steers (2014, 7) reiterates the assertion that the DfE agenda, in privileging schools directly accountable to the government, is releasing education professionals from the confines of responding to 'top-down initiatives'. This is presented as an incentive to encourage more schools to convert to academy status (Cameron 2015).

The notion of choice in education is directly linked to competition within a free-market. Schools are expected 'to adopt an enterprising approach by anticipating and satisfying the

expectations of education consumers' (Angus 2013, 396). By providing some schools with curriculum choice, the government (House of Commons 2016) contends school leaders will implement an approach that gratifies the needs of their stakeholders. However, in practice educational choice is problematic as it impacts learners' basic democratic freedoms (Karaba 2016). The *Survey Report* findings show that a reduced opportunity to study a broad and balanced curriculum is widespread, with:

> At least a third and up to 44 per cent of teacher responses over all key stages report that time allocated for the subject had decreased in the last five years (NSEAD 2016, 5).

Moreover, school type had a distinct bearing on levels of the subject's marginalisation expressed by survey respondents. In general, independent schools offered the best provision and academy sponsors the worst, where time to study the subject in the past five years has significantly reduced at KS3 (by 55 per cent) and KS4 (by 42 per cent) (NSEAD 2016). We argue that school structures championed by our government provide the illusion of choice for stakeholders by perpetuating the perception that art and design education is peripheral.

The Impact of Testing Regimes

Considering the dominance of performativity, the direct link between testing pressures and curriculum provision for art and design in English primary schools is an expected finding of the *Survey Report*. This is no doubt due to the fact that what is measured by statutory testing at KS1 and KS2 reflects a narrow definition of children's learning, focusing exclusively on grammar, punctuation, spelling, reading and mathematics. Of note here is Eisner's (2002, 71) proclamation that 'The arts make vivid the fact that neither words in their literal form nor numbers exhaust what we can know. The limits of our language do not define the limits of our cognition.' Meaning-making, ergo learning, in art and design can defy spoken and

written language extending into a (sometimes ineffable) visual language. Hence there is a
need for a more inclusive understanding of what it means to be 'literate', i.e., valuing visual
communication, alongside recognition that qualitative aspects of learning are no less
important than quantitative data generated via tests.

The *Survey Report* found strong evidence of the impact of testing at KS2 and this was notably
worse in state schools than independent schools where 89 per cent of primary state school
teachers indicated a reduction in curriculum time for art and design in year 6, in comparison
to 54 per cent in the independent sector (NSEAD 2016, 12). It could well be that these
independent schools choose not to administer the tests, which are only statutory in the state
sector. This disparity is another area that needs attention, especially when it should be
recognised that disadvantaged pupils need schools to expand their creative and cultural
learning opportunities (Neeland et *al.* 2015). One might assume that the situation at KS1 is
better, as the national curriculum tests at this point in children's schooling are less high-
stakes. However, the *Survey Report* found that the biggest decrease in time for art and design
in primary schools over the last five years affects the youngest children. This seems to
indicate that the emphasis on core learning, such as input on phonics and early maths at KS1,
is monopolising curriculum time and side-lining learning opportunities in art and design.

Increasing marginalisation is also apparent across the secondary phase. *Survey Report*
findings show evidence of falling standards in student attainment at primary to secondary
transfer reported by between 50-61 per cent of state school respondents, reduced curriculum
time in KS3 (44 per cent of all secondary respondents) and downsizing of art and design
departments (NSEAD 2016, 17). As one respondent described: '*Pupils can no longer cover
the basics* [at KS3] *and so enter GCSE[3] unprepared for the rigour, independence and skill
required ...*' (NSEAD 2016, 16)*.* These realities stand in direct opposition to Gove's (2013)

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[3] The General Certificate of Secondary Education [GCSE] is a qualification for students typically aged 15-16

proclaimed desire to raise educational expectations for all learners. The government's

reforms, whilst presented as a remedy to crisis, actually stimulate crisis (Slater 2015).

The most obvious example of the government's limited value for the subject is the exclusion

of the arts and design from the 'English Baccalaureate' [EBacc], 'a school performance

measure…[allowing] people to see how many pupils get a grade C or above in the core

academic subjects at KS4 in any government-funded school' (DfE 2016b). The government

defines core academic subjects as English, mathematics, history or geography, the sciences,

and a language. Arts subjects and design technology are a significant omission.

When the DfE first introduced the EBacc in 2010 it was a non-compulsory performance

measure linked to the league tables. But the very mention of performativity immediately

impacted how some schools organised General Certificate of Secondary Education [GCSE]

options (Adams 2013). For example, research conducted by Ipso MORI indicates that in

2013-14 twenty seven per cent of schools withdrew non-EBacc subjects from their

curriculum including the removal of seventeen per cent of art subjects (Adams 2013). This

context is exacerbated by the compulsory implementation of the EBacc for 90 per cent of

learners in state maintained schools since 2015 (Morgan 2015). Schools Minister Nick Gibb

(House of Commons, 2016) maintains there is still opportunity to study additional subjects

beyond the EBacc, including the visual arts. However, the *Survey Report* findings (NSEAD

2016, 5) contradict this message:

> In state schools where respondents identified that there had been a reduction of
> time allocated for art and design, 93 per cent of these teachers agreed/strongly
> agreed that the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) had reduced opportunities for
> students to select the subject.

As we witness a substantial decrease in art and design subjects taken at KS4 and Post 16

(Ofqual 2016) the negative impact of the EBacc on secondary art and design education, as

evidenced by the NSEAD (2016) survey findings, looks set to increase.

Challenging Institutional Inequalities

The *Survey Report* findings are a strong indicator of how English school leaders are responding to increasing government regulation of the state sector (Bernstein 2001). How state schools are structured relates to how the government exerts power and control, or an indication of how communication is regulated between people and contexts (Bernstein 2000). What is salient is how these structures become legitimate discourses and practices. Where they operate on a societal level they are experienced 'as *conditions* for the existence of an institution', whereas on a local institutional level they are experienced as 'informal conventional traditions and demands' (Hedegaard 2012, 129, authors' emphasis). This is never straightforward as individuals' development in communities is influenced by motives shaped culturally (Edwards and Daniels 2012). However, the codes and practices the government distribute at both societal and institutional levels are perceived as legitimate by school leaders and directly influence 'ways of thinking, ways of relating, ways of feeling, forms of innovation and so specialize and distribute forms of consciousness, dispositions and desires' (Bernstein 2001, 24). As Ball (2003, 215) stipulates: 'The novelty of this epidemic of reform is that it does not simply change what people, as educators, scholars and researchers do, it changes who they are'. This reinforces our previous observations about teacher identity.

The findings we discuss here make explicit the tightening of state control in our English education system, despite politicians' insistence of increasing school autonomy (House of Commons 2016) and choice through policy (Angus 2013). It indicates a clash of ideologies being negotiated by art educators, where the government introduces economic drivers as a way of influencing 'new discourses and […] the dominance of new actors with new motivations' (Bernstein 2000, 61). Choice in neoliberal education is symptomatic of its market-driven commodification, which proves problematic for educators and learners alike

(Karaba 2016). However, schools experience government regulation differently. For example, it stands to reason that an underperforming sponsored academy that is under pressure to increase results will adhere more closely to government ideology, and in the process side-line non-EBacc subjects. This epitomises how institutions distribute knowledge and resources hierarchically, and so unevenly (Bernstein 2000). Where a subject – such as art and design – carries less value it receives fewer resources, such as budgets, technicians, curriculum time and teacher professional development opportunities. As the *Survey Report* findings demonstrate, this directly impacts learner opportunity and results in falling standards. Ultimately it perpetuates inequality. These teachers are defending their professional ideologies in the face of increasing performativity enacted daily in their classrooms (Ball 2003). The imposition of stringent state directive indicates that educational practices shaped by policymakers and enforced by external regulators controls how school institutions operate, and educators and learners perform. Therefore, it is no surprise that art educators represented in the *Survey Report* are demoralised.

Any attempt to promote the social, cultural and democratic benefits of art and design education is in danger of being consumed by financial discourse. As Adams (2014, 2-3) asserts: 'If market economics sets the debate, the economic hoops through which we have to jump, we may find that we are diminished – and demeaned – by jumping through them'. Indeed, our conversations are shifting. We used to debate issues of diversity in the art and design curriculum (for example, Downing and Watson 2004) but the *Survey Report* findings transfer our attention to the fundamental issue of curriculum access. Those who have voiced concern (for example, Adams 2013, 2014, Butterworth 2013, Steers 2014) are fully vindicated by this research evidence.

Cultural and arts-related participation remain a human right for all learners (UNESCO 2007) and so we, the education community, must find a way to challenge marginalisation. One

antidote involves communicating the value of our subject to broad audiences through multimodal discourses which promote understanding through the visual as well as spoken and written language. However, we also need to perform these values. Art and design education is important at both the personal and societal levels. By fostering positive outlooks, the kind that come from provoking learner agency and efficacy, art and design education can support an alternative to our current deficit model of the curriculum (Alexander 2008). Learning with and through diverse visual art forms opens up democratic debates and supports learners to examine the world and their place in it (Addison 2010). This approach to pedagogy facilitates learners' autonomous, self-regulated and imaginative behaviours. These human characteristics, which can have their genesis in art and design education, can also contribute positively to building future societies. By working collaboratively to promote these values we may begin to alter the way the subject is perceived.

Final thoughts

It is very wrong that children and young people are being denied access to a subject 'which ought to permeate the whole curriculum and the whole life of the school' (Plowden 1967, para 676). We are both proud to be members of a very large, knowledgeable and passionate community of art and design educators, which can be extended to include art and design practitioners and others from the creative, cultural, digital, and heritage field. Our work on and with the *Survey Report* has given rise to dialogues that go beyond the scope of this paper, but we hope that the spotlight we shine on government agendas here can begin to redress the current stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination of our subject. We recognise this will not solve the immediate challenges facing teachers and students, but by bearing witness to art and design educators' 'terrors of performativity' (Lyotard 1984 cited in Ball 2003, 216) we seek communities of practice to subvert and fracture dominant rhetoric. In the process we too perform the values inherent in art and design education.

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