

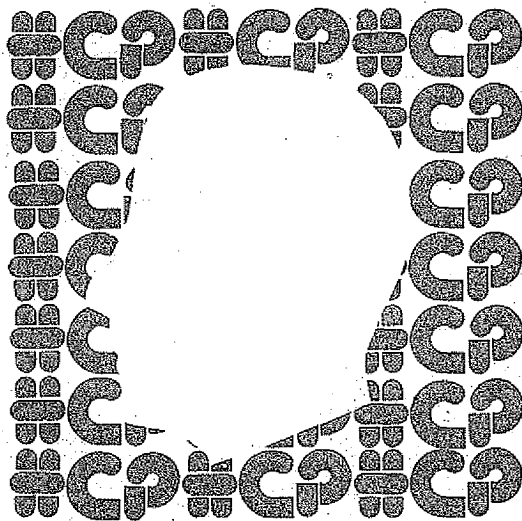
# SHORT PROFILES

INSTRUCTION IN  
OBEDIENCE?

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Row over race pack  
*Can't teachers be  
trusted any more?*

HCP - A QUIET  
EDUCATIONAL  
REVOLUTION



## Thumbnail Social History of Humanities Curriculum Project

The team saw themselves as a 'research' group offering schools new knowledge and hypotheses about enquiry teaching, rather than prescribing a curriculum. "We have nothing to recommend", said Stenhouse. But teacher 'neutrality' was a provocative concept, and they were soon caught in an inflationary spiral of rhetorical debate, at its most public when their collection of materials on Race was suppressed by Schools Council in a blaze of publicity. Condemned by BT and NAS spokesmen, cut adrift by Council (though not by Nuffield), and assailed viciously from the Left - "bourgeois indoctrination", from the Right - "dangerous revolution", academics - "ethical relativism", and by activists - "substituting social action with a parlour game", the project was vigorously defended by an equally diverse range of allies, and acquired something of a 'cult' reputation while continuing to compete successfully in the market place. A recent survey of project adoption by the Chelsea Centre for Science Education has placed HCP ahead of the field.

Though HCP was by no means an 'auteur project' (the team was large and unusually powerful), Stenhouse was a strong leader and remains an enigmatic figure. To admirers, the most imaginative curriculum developer of them all ("a chess player in a world of draughts"), to detractors an over-intellectual entrepreneur. Welcomed with open jaws by the philosophers of education (he engaged in their discourse and invited curriculum analysis), disliked by the policy-makers (he wouldn't simplify and cultivated paradox), he is, unlike most project directors, still active in the curriculum research field.

### Project description

A five-year research, development, evaluation and dissemination programme concerned with the discussion by adolescent pupils of controversial social and moral issues.

### Time Scale

1967-70 (the initial period of funding by Schools Council and Nuffield)

1970-72 (the extension, by Schools Council, mainly for further evaluation and dissemination)

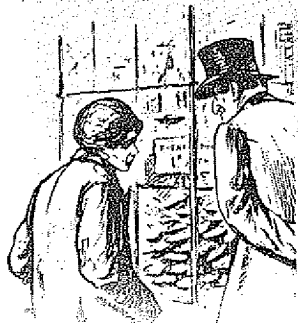
### The Location

1967-70 Philippa Fawcett College, London

1970-72 Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE), University of East Anglia  
(initiative by Schools Council out of its growing concern for continuity and aftercare)

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## POOR AND RICH



Poverty



### Published Collections (by Heinemann Educational Books)

	Sales (to January 1975)
The Family (1970)	1442
War and Society (1970)	1238
Education (1970)	976
Relations Between the Sexes (1970)	898
People and Work (1971)	894
Poverty (1971)	606
Law and Order (1972)	570
Living in Cities (1973)	465

Complete packs £36 + VAT

Main Project Team	Came From	Stayed	Responsible For	Went To
Lawrence Stenhouse	College of Ed.	from 1967	Ref. bet. Sexes	University (CARE)
Gillian Box	Careers Centre	67-70	Production	Schools Council
John Elliott	School	from 1967	War/People & Work	University (CARE)
Maurice Plaskow	BBC	67-70	Family	Schools Council
Jean Rudduck	College of Ed.	from 1967	Dissemination	University (CARE)
John Hipkin	Research Unit	68-70	Education/Race	Schools Council
Pat Haikin	College of FE	68-70	Poverty	College of FE
Jim Hillier	College of FE	68-69	Film Research	BFI

(Also involved for shorter periods were: A. Cook, D. Vignafi, A. McTaggart, R. Bland, A. Dale).

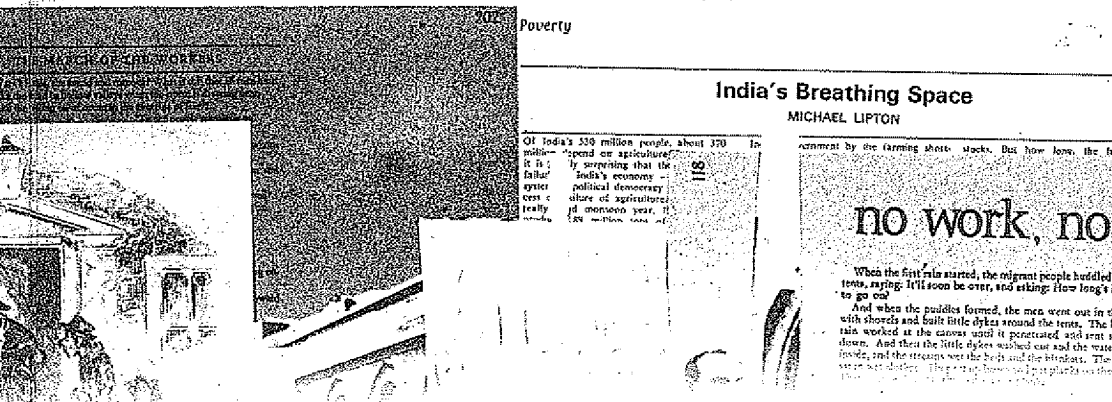
Approximately £250000 (including evaluation)

### Development Trials

1968-70 36 schools from 29 Local Educational Authorities in England and Wales. Urban and rural schools, secondary modern and comprehensives.

### Background to the Project

1. Raising of the School Leaving Age (expected in 1970, implemented in 1972).
2. Newsome Report (1963) HCP team did not like its acceptance of a special curriculum for the non-academic and rarely quoted it.



### 3. Working Paper No. 11

(Schools Council 1967). This was the Feasibility Study for HCP, but they did not like it either, and only used it to support the idea of 'areas of enquiry'.

### 4. Working Paper No. 2

(Schools Council 1965). This paper, with its high aspirations for 'everyman', its assertion that the limitations of the pupil had to be identified and not assumed, and its emphasis on the pursuit of understanding, came closest to the values of the team and was liberally quoted by them.

### Interpreting the Remit

The team defined humanities as "the study of important human issues", the aim of the project as "to develop an understanding of human acts, of social situations, and of the problems of value which arise from them" and the curriculum problem as "how is a teacher in a democracy to handle controversial value issues?"

### Premises

The work of the project was based upon five major premises:

1. that controversial issues should be handled in the classroom with adolescents.
2. that the teacher accepts the need to submit his teaching in controversial areas to the criterion of **neutrality** at this stage of education i.e. that he regards it as part of his responsibility not to promote his own view.
3. that the mode of enquiry in controversial areas should have discussion, rather than instruction as its core.
4. that the discussion should protect divergence of view among participants, rather than attempt to achieve consensus.
5. that the teacher as chairman of the discussion should have responsibility for quality and standards in learning.

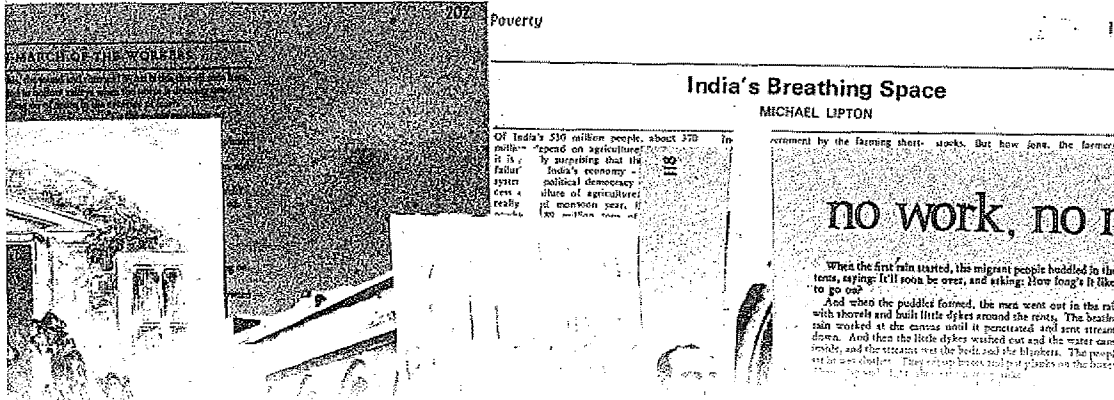
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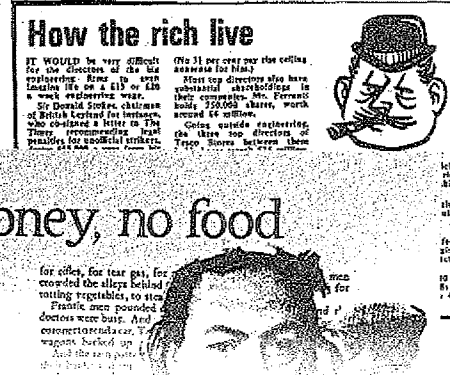
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### Strategy

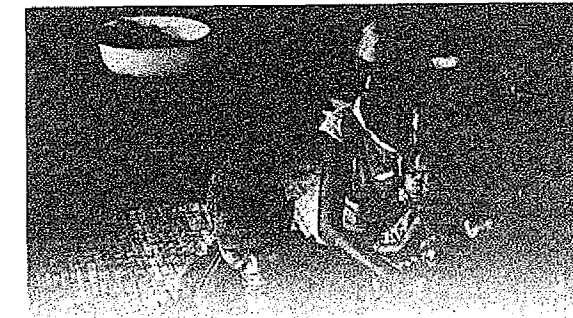
- a) Materials: Nine themes were chosen as areas of enquiry for experimental development. The team produced multi-media collections of study materials and teacher guides in each theme area and in cooperation with the British Film Institute a film-hire service.
- b) Pedagogy: Basically enquiry through classroom discussion, with the teacher, in the role of 'neutral chairman', attempting to promote reflective interpretation of 'evidence' drawn from the theme collections.

### Dissemination

*Aim.* "to establish by 1972 sufficient people throughout the country with understanding and energy enough to ensure that the experiment could be sustained, that new people could be



Poverty



effectively brought in, that experience could be shared and learned from and that standards could be effectively re-thought."

*Main Strategy:* Training through centrally-held courses, teams of people from LEAs who then (at least theoretically) take responsibility locally for teacher training and support. Such courses, initiated in 1970, are still going on under the aegis of CARE, which maintains contact with a network of local contacts throughout the country.

The project's ideas and principles are difficult to grasp or have been poorly communicated, or both. **Exception** — the central courses which seem very effective and produce understanding and enthusiasm.

## A Guide to the Observer of HCP

### 1. At the LEA level.

HCP can be a risky enterprise for the teacher, both in career and political terms. Legitimation and informed external support are therefore important, especially when not provided by the school. Some LEAs will back teachers who fear adverse community reaction, others firmly decline.

Training provision for new HCP teachers essential.

Hire of films for use in HCP schools often depends on financial support from LEA.

### 2. At the school level.

Time allocation less important than viable group size, physical conditions (private and quiet) and access to materials (storage and retrieval are problems). Support of headmaster more important than that of colleagues. Danger of project being perceived as "softsell" if confined to low status pupils and teachers. In schools with exam emphasis, some teachers say HCP must be examined to gain commitment of staff and pupils. Others disagree, some hotly. Project Team stayed neutral on this issue.

### 3. At the classroom level.

*Organisation:* HCP discussion difficult to realise with groups of more than 15-mixed ability - best, but not 'ad hoc' mixtures. Circular seating but semi-formal (i.e. with desks) best bet. Single sex groups disadvantaged with most themes. Experienced teachers more likely to succeed, even though more ingrained in previous practice.

*Teacher Role Characteristics:* does not express views, listens, summarises, controls interruptions, introduces new evidence, encourages pupils to concentrate on interpreting the materials, forestalls premature or social consensus on issues, tolerates silence, invites comment on his role performance.

*Pupil Role Characteristics:* addresses group rather than teacher, listens to views of others; refrains from personalised criticism, calls for new evidence, takes responsibility for maintaining the enquiry and for new initiatives.

#### Additional Note.

Adversaries of HCP are critical of the difficulty level of the materials: advocates respond that the HCP discussion process enables pupils to tackle successfully as a group materials they could not cope with as individuals. Adversaries claim that pupils must be able to understand the material *before* they can discuss it: advocates claim that understanding is the *product* not the *prerequisite* of discussion — "You discuss because you do not understand".

#### The process of conventional discussion

1. READ (pupils read the material)
2. UNDERSTAND (teacher tests individual comprehension)
3. DISCUSS (pupils exchange opinions)

#### The HCP process

1. READ (pupils read the materials)
2. DISCUSS (pupils help each other interpret the materials)
3. UNDERSTAND (pupils explore their differing interpretations and reactions to the materials)

### HCP EVALUATION

Time Scale: 1968-70 Philippa Fawcett College, London.  
1970-73 CARE, University of East Anglia

Personnel: 1968-73 Barry MacDonald (now SAFARI director)  
1970-72 G K Verma, S Humble, H Simons

**Design** Combination of clinical, psychometric and sociometric studies.

**Phase One** (1968-70) Formative evaluation for central team, narrative chronicle of Project history, case studies of trial schools.

**Phase Two** (1970-73) Measurement of pupil change, case studies of schools and LEAs, surveys of adoption, studies of dissemination. Extensive publication, mainly to participants, during this period.

#### Results

**Case Study** HCP difficult to assimilate — schools much more authoritarian than they realise — HCP creates dissonance at all levels of impact: persistence needed to achieve satisfaction and stability of process. Institutional context important but unpredictable. Individual pupil, teacher and school reactions range from dismal failure to spectacular success.

**Measurement** Test programme over-ambitious and seriously flawed in execution — nevertheless suggests that in the hands of trained teachers pupils gain in language skills and self-esteem.

**Survey** Adoption comparatively widespread — mainly by English and History teachers in mid-career — FAMILY and WAR the favourite topics.

## OVERVIEW OF PROJECT IMPACT

Considerable impact on professional debate about the role of the teacher and the responsibility of schools for moral education — some impact on curriculum and innovation theory — national impact on school practice largely unknown although commercially successful. The persistence of interest in HCP may be a testimony to the importance of the problem or the remedy — or both.

### The HCP 'Race' Experiment

A cautious approach confined to six schools, designed primarily to test Miller's conclusion that teaching about race per se increases prejudice. Heavily evaluated, results did not confirm Miller. Schools and team wanted to go on, but were blocked by the Schools Council after consultations with the Race Relations Board, who were hostile to the project. Eventually, the SSRC sponsored further work in Race by the HCP team. This work will continue to 1977.

### HCP in Approved Schools

Although a 'progressive elite' of four schools successfully took part in the trial phase, (negotiated by the Home Office soon after the Court Lees scandal), subsequent dissemination efforts were ineptly coordinated and abortive.

### The Catholic Schools Sub-Project

Set up by the Catholic Education Board after Stenhouse "converted" Derek Morell (Schools Council; joint author of Working Paper 2) it was run from Strawberry Hill College by Tony Higgins (see 'Towards Judgement' for details). Some Catholic schools saw no need for a separate project. The Sub-Project reinterpreted 'neutrality' theory theologically in terms of "primacy of conscience" and tried to produce materials which strengthened Catholic sources across the range of themes. Materials not approved by the Board for publication.

### The Project Abroad

HCP has attracted its share of interest, particularly in USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia, West Germany, Ireland and Scotland. Reactions worth noting:

*USA* — apparent conflict with educational drive for social consensus through values curriculum.

*West Germany* — big impact on national debate about 'open curricula'. Criticised by radical reformists as 'bourgeois'.

*N. Ireland* — toyed with as a possible instrument of reconciliation, but too 'risky'.

*Eire* — Materials and method embodied in Dublin Vocational Schools Humanities Project.

Implementation in other countries inhibited by the need to regenerate the materials, which are not only language-bound but culture-bound too.

## SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

Centre for Applied Research in Education, University of East Anglia. Available books, "Towards Judgement" and "People in Classrooms". Further volumes anticipated.

SAFARI is a follow-up study of four completed curriculum projects. Information about SAFARI, and profiles of Project Technology, Geography for the Young School Leaver, and Nuffield Secondary Science, are obtainable from the Centre for Applied Research in Education, University of East Anglia, NR2 7JT. SAFARI staff: B. MacDonald, R. Walker.