



Leadership, Ideology, War and Peace

Speaker: Prof. Lynn Davies

Chair: Dr. H.M. Ng

Abstract:

This presentation starts with the contention that there can be few universal ‘principles’ of effective leadership that would fit any educational situation. The goals of an organisation or system will drive what is effective in that context: a terrorist training camp will be most effective with authoritarian, militaristic leadership; a non-formal catch up school for a range of out of school youth will probably function best with a more democratic, flexible, risk-taking leadership. This leads to dilemmas: if everything is contextual, then is any style of leadership acceptable? Who is to judge? From work in various conflict and post-conflict parts of the world (as well as on extremism in UK), this paper argues firstly for an honest focus on ideology, that is, that all education is politically and ideologically driven; secondly it argues for coherence between espoused values and the running of a school; thirdly, it argues that if the goals of a country or system revolve around peace and security, then there will in fact be some basic threads running through educational leadership. These relate to rights, participation and something which I term ‘critical idealism’. The paper draws on examples ranging from UNICEF UK’s Rights Respecting Schools to school heads negotiating with the Taliban in Afghanistan to attempts in Nepal and Angola to make their schools less violent.

About the Speaker:

Lynn Davies is Emeritus Professor of International Education in the Centre for International Education and Research of the School of Education.

Her central interests are in the fields of education and conflict, education and extremism and education in fragile states. She has published major books and reports in these areas, for example Education and Conflict: Complexity and Chaos (which won the Society of Education Studies prize for the best book of 2004); Educating Against Extremism (2008); and Capacity Development for Education Systems in Fragile Contexts(2009: ETF/GTZ/INEE). Interlocking interests are in children’s rights and the impact of student voice. Research grants have included awards for work in education and vulnerabilities in emergencies in South Asia (UNICEF); the impact of school councils (Esmee Fairburn/Deutsche Bank); education for peace and social cohesion in Sri Lanka (GIZ); primary education in post-conflict Angola (cfBT); democratic education in the Gambia (Cfbt); and global citizenship education (DFID).

Date: 24 October 2011 (Monday)

Time: 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Venue: Room 205, Runme Shaw Building, HKU

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~~ALL ARE WELCOME~~