STREetwork
The exploding school

The explosion of the school into the urban environment is the primary concern of this book. It views the town as the educational resource in a new approach to environmental education, and shows how this ‘streetwork’ can be put into practice by means of fresh educational techniques: perception studies, town trails, environmental games and simulations, and streetwork centres. This valuable study includes much practical classroom advice, and will be of interest to those who are concerned about the pupil’s involvement, particularly the non-academic secondary-school pupil, with the world outside the school. Streetwork has a message, too, for everyone who wonders how public participation in environmental decision-making is ever to become a reality.
The exploding school

Colin Ward
Education Officer
Town and Country Planning Association

Anthony Fyson
Deputy Education Officer
Town and Country Planning Association

Routledge & Kegan Paul
London and Boston
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Early in 1971 we were appointed straight from the classroom to initiate the Town and Country Planning Association's education service and its teachers' *Bulletin of Environmental Education (BEE)*. The Association is an all-party, non-sectarian voluntary organisation, founded in 1899, which concerns itself with every aspect of town and country planning. The recent and welcome upsurge of public interest in the physical environment had been reflected in the increasing volume of enquiries and requests for assistance which it received from teachers and students in schools and colleges. This, and the specific educational recommendations of the Skeffington Committee's report on public participation in planning, led the Association to appoint us, with our experience in architecture and planning as well as of teaching, as environmental education officers, with the aid of grants from the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust and the Elmigrant Trust.

They assumed that most of our attention would be devoted to the urban environment, not because of any wish to perpetuate unreal distinctions between town and country (the environment *is* one) but simply because there were many existing services and resources for teachers concerned with the natural environment and the countryside, while there was a relative neglect of the town. Beyond this urban emphasis, they paid us the compliment of leaving us to develop the service as we thought best, and provided the facilities for us to do so. This book is one of the fruits of this experience.

It is mainly concerned with the environmental education of the non-academic urban child—in other words with the vast majority of the population. It is a polemical book, not a source book—though copious reference is made to the resources available to the teacher. Nor is it just about techniques, though ample reference is made to methods teachers have found successful. It is a book about *ideas*: ideas of the environment as the educational resource, ideas of the enquiring school, the school without walls, the school as a vehicle of citizen participation in environmental decision, ideas above all about a 'problem-orientated' approach to environmental education.

Over the past two years we have met hundreds of teachers and taken part in innumerable conferences, seminars and meetings of teachers, children,
students, voluntary organisations and professional associations. Everywhere we have been met with kindness and informativeness, and we have an obvious debt to all our colleagues in the world of environmental education, as well as to all those people who have shared their experience with the readers of *BEE*. We would especially thank those professional teachers of teachers who are trying to bring more imagination and more social awareness into environmental education; and who have been unstinting in the help they have given us: Michael Storm of Berkshire College of Education, Rex Walford of Maria Grey College, Keith Wheeler and Bryan Waites of Leicester College of Education, Gordon Boon of Wolverhampton Teachers' College, Sean Carson and Paul Topham of Hertfordshire County Council, Brian Goodey of the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, Birmingham University, and Leslie Clark, HMI of the Scottish Education Department. We are also indebted to our employers, and especially to Maurice Ash and David Hall; to our sponsors, the Rowntree and Elmgrant trustees, and to Rose Tanner, the third member of the TCPA's Education Unit staff.

None of these people is responsible for the opinions expressed here, neither do these opinions represent the policy of the TCPA, but all are thanked for their generous contribution to our work. Our acknowledgments are also due to the editors of the TCPA journal *Town and Country Planning* and of *Environmental Education* (journal of the National Association for Environmental Education) in which portions of the text were originally published.

To avoid the magisterial 'we', the book is written in the first person. Chapters 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 13 and 15 were written by Colin Ward, Chapters 2, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12 and 14 by Anthony Fyson and Chapters 10 and 16 by both of us.  

C. W. and A. F.
I must content myself by concluding in suitably old-fashioned terms with my view that environmental education is dynamite.

Maurice Ash, *addressing the conference of the International Housing and Town Planning Federation, Liverpool, May 1972*
I do not know whether all my readers will see whither this suggested inquiry will lead us; but this I do know, if Émile returns from his travels begun and continued with this end in view, without a full knowledge of questions of government, public morality, and political philosophy of every kind, we are greatly lacking, he in intelligence and I in judgement.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau  Émile

There is no school subject known as ‘environmental education’ in the sense that there is a subject called ‘physical education’ and one called ‘religious education’. There is in some schools a subject called environmental studies, heavily biased in most instances to what used to be called rural studies. A variety of examination syllabuses are in use or in prospect, all with an emphasis on the ‘bio-physical’ as opposed to the ‘socio-industrial’ aspects of the environment. The widening scope of the subject involves taking elements from several existing subject areas, and drawing on the services of several specialist teachers, when they are available.

But environmental education has a much wider connotation and the truth is that any school subject can be taught in an academic way, without reference to the human habitat, or it can be taught in a way which seeks to enhance the pupils’ understanding of, and concern for, their environment: geography, history, chemistry, physics, biology, art, music, English, maths, religious education; all can contribute. Whether they do or not depends on the personal priorities, understanding and ingenuity of the teacher. Like most observers of the English educational scene I am convinced that the best environmental work is being done in the primary schools, mercifully free from the vested interests of subject sub-division. I am delighted when one of my children brings home from the local primary school evidence of its environmentally-based work. I am appalled when another brings from his secondary school (one of the famous London comprehensives) R.E. homework based on Old Testament mumbo-jumbo (what do the Hindu and Muslim children get, I wonder?) when I would expect that at this stage of educational sophistication, that period would be used to explore the principle of Reverence for Life, the basis of environmental education, however it is defined.
What you expect a school to be able to provide in the way of environmental education depends on the nature of your own concern with the environment. If you are a supporter of the Society for the Preservation of Rural England, you will want people to be educated to regard as their highest priority the visual aspects of the countryside. If you are a supporter of the Civic Trust you will want them to be taught to cherish the visual aspects of the urban scene. If you are a member of the Conservation Society you will want them to learn to oppose tin-mining in Cornwall, reservoirs on Dartmoor, and to remember that Overpopulation is YOUR Baby. If you are one of the Friends of the Earth you will want to persuade them that an ecological catastrophe is round the corner unless we change our habits and cease to exploit and pollute our planet. If you are a bird lover you will want them to protect birds. If you belong to Keep Britain Tidy you will want them to learn to do just that.

Whatever emphasis is given to environmental education, some of us are going to be disappointed. Perhaps, to get our aims in perspective, we should see the situation in historical terms. It is a hundred years and more since elementary education became free, compulsory and universal—and we celebrated the anniversary by inventing a new word: de-schooling. A hundred years ago we made none of these inflated demands on education. It was a matter of teaching them to read, write and figure, and to praise God. Government was in the hands of the governing classes, land-use was a matter for landlords, local administration was in the hands of local bigwigs and their subservient officers. There was no question of public participation in planning—market forces were regarded as the ultimate arbiter. There was no question of the over-use of the national parks. The great unwashed did not drive out in their motor cars to picnic in beauty spots—a rather vulgar concept which had only recently been invented by Wordsworth and had not yet filtered down to the wrong people. Only people of approved sensibility went there (usually to slaughter the birds) apart from the local peasants, who were itching to move to an industrial slum and earn a living wage. Neither did their beastly bungalows disfigure the sea-coast, nor were their dustbins filled forty per cent with discarded packaging material. People stayed at home in their overcrowded rookeries, walked to work, and made few demands on their environment.

A hundred years later, everything is different. We have a mass society where everyone has the expectation of going everywhere and doing everything. (The expectation is unfulfilled of course; and is unfulfillable on this planet, but it is there).

But the old paternalistic attitudes are there too. The aristocrats have interbred with the technocrats, and we are still in a world where one lot of people make the decisions and another lot abide by them, or sabotage them. What should our aim be in environmental education? To educate for mastery of the environment: nothing less than that. We are in the early
stages of moving from a formal democracy to a participatory democracy, in which people cherish their environment because it is theirs.

The organisations of teachers concerned with environmental education are inevitably preoccupied with the definition of their subject-matter. One widely-accepted definition (the ‘Nevada declaration’) is that: 1

Environmental Education is the process of recognising values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the interrelatedness among man, his culture and his biophysical surroundings. Environmental Education also entails practice in decision-making, and self-formulation of a code of behaviour about issues concerning environmental quality.

This is a good definition, even though it may seem a little remote from the daily concerns of the urban teacher or pupil. There is one basic distinction of course between those who see the environment as an object of study in its own right, and those who see it as a medium for the study of the standard subjects of the school curriculum. At a more analytical level, D. G. Watts, in his valuable survey of the claims made for environmental studies, distinguishes at least five overlapping but different possible definitions, ‘the whole experience of the child; the character of the school features of the classroom and the school used in active learning; the physical and social characteristics of the child’s home, neighbourhood, and wider world; and features of the neighbourhood and natural surroundings used in teaching.’ 2

This book is concerned with the last two of Mr Watts’s definitions, but as the title implies, it confines itself to the urban environment. No apology is needed for this. Well over eighty per cent of our children live in urban surroundings and well over ninety per cent are taught in urban schools. And yet most environmental teaching ignores the built environment. There is a perfectly reasonable argument of course that education on rural matters is doubly important for the town child. As Rousseau (who expressed most of our educational thoughts two hundred years ago) remarked, ‘Two schoolboys from the town will do more damage in the country than all the children of the village.’ But we are concerned here with the education of active citizens, and where can this be undertaken if not in the city?

Formulators of ideal environments, from Thomas More to Paul Goodman, have been quite specific about the rural education of the urban child: they saw the town children spending the summer months working on the farm—the educative effect was an incidental accompaniment. The nearest thing in real life when I was a boy was the annual migration of families from East and South-East London to the hop fields of Kent: three weeks of sun and air and merriment in a holiday which paid for itself and ‘set you up for the winter.’ Mechanisation and affluence have put an end to that, but what is the rural education of the hoppers’ grandchildren? A trip to a ‘stately home’, to wander, like moujiks shuffling beneath the painted ceilings of the Winter Palace, through some fully certificated bit of ‘our architectural heritage',
followed by a fleeting glimpse of the lions in the paddock. It has as much to do with environmental education as a visit to Snow White’s palace in Disneyland. Fortunately the journey there and back might provide a few thrills.

Arthur Razzell, in his book *Juniors*, has caught beautifully in an urban context the difference between the environmental education that is intended, and the incidental education that actually happens. He is describing a visit to the Tower of London by a party of ten-year-olds from a ‘deprived’ area in London:

For the children it was quite clearly an ‘outing’, in all the wonderful cockney meanings of the word. Everyone, right back to grandmother, knew what an outing involved, and the children were ready to extract the maximum amount of pleasure from it. The teacher, on the other hand, had planned an ‘educational visit’ with great care, and it was to form part of the work that the class was doing on castles. She had carefully duplicated some excellent quiz sheets, on the lines of the ‘I-Spy’ books, and each child had a copy to complete on arrival at the Tower.

What the children enjoyed most was the Underground, with the thrill of the moving staircase. In their writing which followed the visit, they recorded at great length, the journey to and from the Tower, with every smallest detail described and dwelt upon—the warm rushing wind that preceded the arrival of the train, the automatic doors, the distinctive smell, the fear they felt at the rush of the train into the station, the smallness of the tube into which the train fitted, the signal cables that appeared to wobble up and down as the train sped past them, the automatic ticket machines, described as being ‘worth fourpence just to hear them whirr and the ticket poke out.’ This list could be continued, but I query whether any other age-group in the human race could observe so vividly or so passionately the variety of things which those children saw and recorded. ‘Cor, I’m going to save up a million pounds to buy one of them machines to have in my home!’

The teacher was mature enough not to feel despondent; the Bloody Tower would keep. The children had absorbed from the visit the things which were meaningful and had interest to them at that particular stage of their development. They were not inattentive during their time at the Tower, and they did all that was expected of them. However, when invited to write and talk about their experiences they selected those things which seemed significant to them, and they wrote with fluency, involvement and enthusiasm. However much the teacher may have desired them to attend to the details of Norman castle construction, she was wise enough to work ‘with eyes unclouded by longing’, and she took and built upon the interests of her children. The study of London’s Underground service lasted on and off for several weeks, and the teacher herself now claims to be something of an authority on the subject.
Mr Razzell’s little anecdote has all the profundity of Tolstoy’s educational fables from the school at Yasnaya Polyana.

The child is right. He extracts from the educational visit an education in city sense: the transport system and how to manipulate it, something more intrinsically interesting than the excesses of dead kings and castle builders.

The Council for Environmental Education in its report to the ‘Countryside in 1970’ Conference referred to schools ‘exploding into the environment’. In this book we explore some of the implications of this idea in an urban setting. There was never a more apposite moment for such an explosion. For there is not only a crisis of confidence in the school system; there is also a crisis of confidence in the wisdom of the decision-makers who shape our urban environment. Ideas are in the air today which could transform our whole conception of the school and of its place in the community.

I am referring of course to the de-schoolers, a catchword to describe a number of educational theorists who, thinking both locally and globally, have attacked the very idea of the school, some key works in this movement being those by Paul Goodman, Ivan Illich, Everett Reimer and Keith Paton. Nothing could be more mistaken than the tendency to dismiss the ideas they represent as a passing fad. They have raised questions which may change the whole course of the continuing debate on education. The de-schoolers make a number of radical criticisms of the school system which has evolved in all countries, rich and poor, seeing the institutionalisation of education as a means of preventing people from educating themselves. They decry schools as special and expensive structures for containing education, and teachers as special people licensed to accomplish this process. We have all met pretentious aldermen who announce at speech days that they were educated in the School of Life: they have now found unexpected allies who have turned their autobiography into ideology.

Our concern here is with their impact on environmental education, where they have already provided us with a fund of experiences and ideas. The Parkway Education Program in the city of Philadelphia has been in operation for three years, supported and funded by the local education authority. Students are not handpicked but are chosen by lottery from a waiting list of applicants from the eight geographically-determined school board districts of the city, who are in grades nine to twelve (i.e. ages 14-18) regardless of academic or behavioural background. There is no school building. Each of the eight units or ‘communities’ (which operate independently) has a headquarters with office space for staff and lockers for students. All teaching takes place within the community: the search for facilities is considered to be part of the process of education: ‘The city offers an incredible variety of learning labs: art students study at the Art Museum, biology students meet at the Zoo; business and vocational courses meet at on-the-job sites such as journalism at a newspaper, or mechanics at a garage. . . . The Program pays for none of its facilities, but instead looks for “wasted space”, space which
is maintained twenty-four hours a day, but is in use perhaps less than five or six of those hours. Students, then, in going from class to class, will travel around the city (normally on foot). There is a student-teacher ratio of 16:1 and for every teacher a “university intern” is added to the staff.’

The Parkway Program claims that:

Although schools are supposed to prepare students for a life in the community, most schools so isolate students from the community that a functional understanding of how it works is impossible. Few urban educators now deny that large numbers of students are graduating from our urban secondary schools unprepared for any kind of useful role in society. Since society suffers as much as the students from the failures of the educational system, it did not seem unreasonable to ask the community to assume some responsibility for the education of its children.

The Parkway Program, directed by John Bremer (formerly of Leicester University Department of Education), was followed a year later by Chicago’s Metro High School (Chicago Public High School for Metropolitan Study) which operates from:

Three leased floors of an old office building in a decayed commercial area on the south edge of ‘The Loop’, Chicago’s central business district. Metro also has been given the use of one or two rooms in each of several office buildings and two churches scattered around the Loop. Buses and trains (underground and elevated) provide good access between the Loop and most other parts of Chicago. . . . Metro’s students are selected from among applicants by a lottery, taking an equal number from each school district in Chicago and, overall, an equal number of boys and girls. The resulting student body is a cross-section of the city’s youth—from black slum and public housing residents to affluent whites—except that all are motivated to try this new school. For some the motivation is positive: they think Metro will be more fun, more interesting and rewarding than the conventional high schools they would otherwise attend. For many, the motivation is negative: to escape from bad schools, neighbourhoods dominated by violent gangs, personal problems etc. Metro offers a full-length (four-year) high school program and has the same requirements for graduation as any other Chicago high school. . . . but within each of these categories there is considerably more freedom of choice than in normal high schools.

A similar project, Métro Éducation Montréal, seeks to use that city’s underground railway as the central corridor for the same kind of activity—since it is not used to capacity and gives rapid access to a variety of under-used facilities throughout the city centre. People have been approached to give an hour a week to teaching the young about their work. All the necessary equipment for an education system already exists: cinemas are empty all morning, there is vacant office-space, under-used computer centres, restaurants, libraries, clinics and laboratories.
Lucky Montreal, to have an under-used Metro! One could hardly recommend the use of the London Underground for this purpose, in spite of Arthur Razzell’s story of its educative function, although he has reminded us in Teachers’ World that ‘when the London County Council was responsible for both education and the operation of the London tramways, schools were issued with books of vouchers enabling children and teachers to travel freely on the trams during the period of normal schooling.’ Well, although the trams have long since gone (and we are beginning on daring experiments with bus lanes) London Transport is now under the control, at last, of the Greater London Council, from which the Inner London Education Authority is not entirely divorced. Mr Razzell remarks that although the railways have been nationalised for almost three decades, we have still not learned to regard them as People’s Trains. ‘As a result, our railways have never been seriously considered as an available national resource capable of being more fully utilised in the cause of education, despite the fact that the taxpayer who pays for education is also the taxpayer who owns the railways.’ Just to indicate how narrow our definition is of educational resources, he remarks that a recent major research project on resources for learning thought almost exclusively in terms of resources which were capable of being introduced into the classroom! Ought we not, he asks, to be planning for a major proportion of every child’s education to take place beyond the confines of a school building?

These reflections lead us to another fruitful idea which is fashionable now: that of the community school. (None of these notions is new of course—the community school was the whole basis of Henry Morris’s educational philosophy, and was put into practice fifty years ago in the most unpromising of circumstances by the remarkable head of a Lancashire elementary school, Edward O’Neil of Prestolee). We talk a lot today of the idea that the school premises and facilities represent a community resource that should be available for other people besides those within the statutory age range, and that others besides teachers have an educative function in it. But there is an important corollary to this eminently sensible point of view. Just as the school should be open to the community, so should the community be open to the school. The argument is well put in the description I have quoted of the Parkway Project. All the resources of the community are educational resources. It ought to be taken for granted that the school has a claim on the factories, warehouses, offices, transport depots, municipal departments, supermarkets and sewage plants of the town. As it is of course, so hermetically sealed are our educational institutions that schools seldom have recourse to the specialist facilities of other schools controlled by the same authority. One primary school, embarking on an environmental project, a study of the effect of herbicides on roadside verges, was baulked by a lack of chemical expertise and apparatus—which it eventually found was readily available in the neighbouring secondary school. But how often does the secondary school have access to the facilities of the technical
college, the polytechnic or the university? Open schools in an open city is the logical slogan for the community school.

Another contemporary trend which leads us to consider the potentialities of the exploding school is the crisis of community consciousness. The last few years have seen a fantastic flowering of locally-based bodies, amenity societies, community action groups, tenants' and residents' associations. Their newspapers and newsletters proliferate, and their activism is in striking contrast to the general level of apathy towards and disillusionment with the 'official' structure of local politics. The school, apart from hiring out its hall for meetings, is aloof from these stirrings of citizenship, even though its catchment area often provides the physical delineation of the neighbourhood, and even though much of our contact with neighbours arises from our common situation of parenthood. Shouldn't the school become the Enquiring School, and its students the local researchers who service the community with information on rents, traffic densities, current planning proposals, employment prospects, and so on? One of the discussion panels at the York Conference on Social Deprivation and Change in Education recommended that 'pupils ought, through problem-oriented community projects, to become involved in the actual problems of the local community. The results could be passed on to adults for appropriate action.'

All these current tides of thought about the role of the school in its immediate neighbourhood are significant for the expectations we have of environmental education, its subject matter, its methods, and the kind of exploration which the school makes of the environment. They are important above all for what we have learned to call the affective domain of education—where we are concerned with the attitudes and values which our students adopt. What do we want them to discover, think and feel about the built environment? Why does it matter? 'Civic education' says Bernard Crick, in an important paper quoted in the next chapter, 'must be aimed at creating citizens. If we want a passive population, leave well alone.'

Notes


2 Streetwork

The mind which has been educated to understand the reasons for the honeycomb pattern of a beehive, the structural pattern of leaves and bones, will eventually begin to find meaning in man-made patterns inspired by similar needs.

Kurt Rowland Looking and Seeing Book 1 (Notes for Teachers)

There is no substitute for experiencing an environment at first hand. Recognising this, educationists have long argued for more learning outside the classroom, 'in the field'. It would be a brave geography or environmental studies teacher who would argue against fieldwork on principle. Yet in depressingly few schools does it have much application in practice.

Where it does appear, fieldwork takes many forms. At one extreme, 'field teaching' may mean simply an open-air lecture, with landscape as the real substitute for the slide or filmstrip. At the other, classes may spend hours on ‘field research’ collecting data on, say, traffic flows or housing types, or on sketching views and collecting samples. In any case, the environment may be near or far from the school itself, and the work carefully integrated with preparatory and follow-up activities in the classroom. Usually there is, in a class outing for younger secondary pupils, an element of both teaching and research, though older pupils may do unaccompanied research. The pupils learn to interpret as well as merely to observe, and the immediacy of the experience deepens the pupils' understanding.

Why, then, is there often such a marked divergence of theory and practice? Literally dozens of difficulties may arise when adventurous teachers decide to take their classes out in school time. The mountain of preparation needed is enough to send many scuttling back to classroom and textbook; the school timetable, or the headmaster, may be an obstacle to taking the time necessary for a successful trip; the results are difficult to assess in terms of success or failure of individual pupils; there may be no money available to hire a coach; form ‘X’ may be such an uncontrollable mob in the classroom that no teacher dare take them out (if he did, and interested them for a change, he might be pleasantly surprised—but they might also play truant, go shop-lifting etc.); there are questions of adequate supervision and legal responsibility of the school (see Chapter 3).
Yet, given good will on all sides, these problems can be overcome. There are deeper reasons why many children leave school having done little fieldwork. Most important is the fact that field studies have their origin in the rural, regional studies tradition. Relatively few schools, therefore, are situated in a suitable environment in this traditional sense. In fact roughly 80 per cent of schools are in urban areas, and infrequent major expeditions to the countryside are their sole gesture to the fieldwork ideal. Secondly, the examination classes, on whom the teacher feels obliged to spend a high proportion of his energy, are rarely working to syllabuses that require much, if any, fieldwork. Finally, there is a belief amongst many teachers that fieldwork concentrating on a small area may be too parochial, that this particular sample of reality may lack any general significance.

Parochialism can be countered by carefully balanced courses, and examination syllabuses, if we must have them, should follow the trends in education, not dictate them. But there must be an increase in urban studies, and therefore in urban fieldwork, in our schools in order that the actual environment of the schools may be used to the full and be better understood.

It is widely accepted that it is vital for the rising 'participatory' generation to gain insight into environmental problems while at school. There is also a growing number of teachers who feel that schools must become better integrated into the local community. Michael Storm, in his important article in TCPA's first Bulletin of Environmental Education,1 identified three major types of school-neighbourhood link. They are: the institutional links such as parent-teacher associations; community service links such as voluntary welfare work by pupils; and—with which we are mainly concerned—academic links whereby subject studies are pursued through the use of the local environment. It may be useful to remember here that subjects such as maths, botany, and English may use the local environment as illustrative and exercise material and may, indeed, be broadening the pupils' general environmental education in doing so. But this use of the school locality is not to be confused with environmental studies or geography, where the land and its people are the focus of the subject itself.

It is also usually agreed that we must aim in all fields of teaching to achieve a greater degree of 'relevance' in subject matter. However we define this goal, it does seem that local community-based environmental study goes further than many themes towards achieving apparent relevance in the eyes of secondary school students. I use the term 'apparent relevance' deliberately, for I believe that like justice, relevance has not only to be done, but be seen to be done. It is not enough for the teacher to be satisfied with the lasting value of what he is trying to inculcate into his pupils. If they are not likewise enthused then he is unlikely to succeed. This is especially true of the less academic classes. Perhaps sadly, the more able pupils are less concerned with 'relevance'; their concern is with the syllabus, and their test of relevance is 'will it help me pass the examination?'
I am not advocating, however, a simple increase in the amount of local study—that study will have to change its nature as well as its quantity to succeed. After all, urban study is already being initiated by competent geography teachers up and down the country, and all too often we hear reports of the same apathy and lack of co-operation that plague our more conventional classroom work. We must remember that there is a strong possibility that the urban pupil, by living in the school environment while many of his teachers commute from other districts, will have already learned far more about the locality than the teachers will ever know. What is more, he may not like what he knows, and may resent coming to school simply to be pushed out again into the street to ‘do fieldwork’—if by ‘doing fieldwork’ we merely mean in the words of one geographer ‘formalising what is already part of a child’s experience’. Apparently this aim is the justification for doing a Central Place study of the home district, or examining innocuous hypotheses such as ‘there is a ring pattern structure of pedestrian movement around the city centre.’ Little wonder our pupils become bored.

Bearing in mind that no one can claim to have found an infallible answer to the problem of class motivation, it does seem to me that an approach more likely to succeed with the average pupils is the problem-oriented one. This means taking a local issue, preferably one being aired in the local press, and attacking it from whatever angle strikes some response from the class. Controversy, and sometimes irreconcilable conflicts of interests are the stuff of which the interesting and useful course of study may be built. As Michael Storm wrote: ‘Despite a considerable experience of orthodox “local study”...[school leavers] are ill-equipped to understand the processes at work in their society.’ He suggests that the starting point should not be the question, ‘what should people know about their locality?’ but ‘what issues are currently alive in this area?’ Housing and motorway building come readily to mind. The approach is not ‘problem-solving’ in the old sense—that is the creation of an artificial brain-teaser for classroom use only. It is concerned with real issues currently occupying the community. Reference to a recent example will illustrate the point, and show how the output of local planning departments may provide the raw material for study.

During the first months of 1972 a school teacher in the Potteries (or any member of the public) could purchase for 10p the Newcastle under Lyme Borough Engineer’s strategy report discussing various possible solutions to the problems of east-west traffic in the centre of the town, which it expects to be critical by the late 1970s. The report was issued as a public consultation document in the light of the proposals of the Skeffington Report on People and Planning. (An increasing number of such publications may be expected in the future as pressure mounts for public participation in the planning process.) The report was prompted by the calculation that the Newcastle inner ring road, not yet completed, will in a very few years be insufficient to cope...
with expected increase in demand for east-west movement, in particular between residential suburbs to the west of the town, and the industrial areas of Stoke. The Department of the Environment was reported to be likely to make permission for the inner ring road conditional upon further provision for east-west traffic. It was argued that, short of compulsion, traffic would not be tempted to make a detour round Newcastle but would rather plough through the town, spilling over into residential street 'rat runs' when the inner ring conditions reached a certain level of congestion.

Nine possible courses of action were considered in the report, and although the borough engineer kept manfully to the letter of his brief only to report problems and possibilities to the council, and to make no recommendations at the moment, he was asked to make qualitative and quantitative comparisons. These inevitably revealed what his preference would be.

The solution which seemed to emerge was for another new highway passing south of the town centre, just touching the inner ring road. Hence it was known as a 'tangent' route, and was termed 'satisfactory' despite the fact that nearly two hundred homes were to be demolished.

Following publication, a three-month 'period of participation' was permitted for public debate (and later extended). Such attempts to bring the public into the planning process, modest though they may be in the eyes of community activists, provide a golden opportunity for teachers of environmental studies to involve their classes in reality.

The teacher in the area was able, first, to get his pupils to use a local situation to examine problems of traffic mobility, look at 'black spots' at first hand, and try to devise solutions. Second, they could consider whether sufficient weight was being given to interests that conflicted with the predominantly 'traffic efficiency' standpoint. Third, they could consider how they and the public at large should act in order that their views be noticed.

The report was an excellent aid to the first endeavour, primarily because it was based on that part of the process of participation which involves the passage of some kind of environmental understanding from the experts to the layman. It was in the traditional sense an 'educative' document, and very excellent too.

In the teacher’s second and third objectives, however, the report was of less value. For participation means more than simply finding out why something is being done. There is also an environmental understanding which should pass in the opposite direction, from layman to expert. Precisely what interests are served by all this highway building in our towns? Are there no other possibilities? What is it that forces a report such as this to state that the 'demands of cost effectiveness must be met' when urban motorway building costs us so much more than can be statistically assessed?

Of course most town traffic problems are so daunting that all of us, including
traffic engineers, approach them with little confidence of finding a successful solution. Somewhere along the path of calculation and compromise, however, the attitude of the experts seems to change to one of optimism and determination. Loss of housing? With ingenuity we can minimize it. Loss of amenity? We can put the road in a cutting. Noise? Plant the right vegetation, put up baffle fences. Thus the bounds of acceptability are pushed ever outwards with the support of supposed economic necessity, until one scheme emerges at the top of the pack as 'satisfactory'.

Yet many a class will want to know: satisfactory for whom? As public criticism mounted, classes were able to follow the arguments in the local newspaper—a mandatory resource for any environmental studies or geography department which needs constant information on the evolving local scene. For teenagers the local paper and the council offices are excellent sources which may shed light on an issue, and more especially on the ways in which decisions are reached. In Newcastle under Lyme, particular attention was drawn to delays that drivers might expect if the new road was not built. Was seven minutes' average delay at certain bottlenecks in peak periods in 1986 really unacceptable to drivers (not just to traffic engineers)? And what about an increased role for public transport? The issue formed a springboard for far-ranging study of modern transport policy in Britain. There must be few schools in Britain that are not within striking distance of a major problem of this kind, whether about urban motorways, comprehensive redevelopment, or high-rise flats.

There are difficulties of course. A teacher recently said to me, ‘Yes, but if I take the local redevelopment scheme to pieces with my class, aren’t I going to get involved in local politics to an unacceptable degree? Remember, my employers and the local planning authority are likely to be one and the same body.’ He had a point, but I believe that controversial issues can be tackled honestly in the classroom without the introduction by the teacher of any undue bias. Indeed to give the impression to a class that attitudes and opinions do not conflict over a new scheme is usually simply to teach an untruth. Whatever we do, we must avoid giving the impression that a little bit of goodwill always sees the emergence of a consensus view which all men of good sense are sure to hold. It can be a profoundly educative activity to search out the dissenting group even if, perhaps particularly if, they are a minority, and examine the validity of their attitude.

This view has recently gained support from Bernard Crick, writing on ‘Bias’ in *Teaching Politics.* He states the need to accept conflict over political issues and to avoid presenting the system and the consensus as some kind of universal truth. He argues that:

> If politics is the recognition and tolerance of diversity, so must be a political or civic education. . . . To stress deliberately ‘what we have in common’ and to underplay differences is both a false account of politics and a cripplingly dull basis for a political education. . . .
'Consensus' is not something to be invoked like spiritual cement to
stick something together that would otherwise be broken apart; it is,
on the contrary, a quality which arises to ease the continued co-exist-
ence of those who have been living together. It is not prior to the
experience of a political community, it is a product of that experience,
and therefore cannot meaningfully be taught until a person under-
stands however generally and simply, the actual political problems
and controversies of his community. We must start with the issues of
the moment. . . . Civic education . . . must be aimed at creating
citizens. If we want a passive population, leave well alone.

We should aim at the preparation of school children for their future roles
as participators in environmental decision-making. There are public argu-
ments in all our cities over planning issues; school is the right place to
rehearse the individual's role in such controversies. It follows from this
belief, that we should support an increase in the social content of environ-
mental courses. The functions of Nature in the environment, and the effects
of man's activities on the land, have long been considered proper material
for study of the human environment. But the activities of man as the creator
of other men's environments have been largely ignored. I quote Mr Tillott
of the Extra Mural Department of Sheffield University, who during a debate
on the construction of an A-Level syllabus in Environmental Studies said6 :
'If you are considering the relationship of man to his physical environment,
this includes housing: but housing depends on the relationship of man to
man. How can it be an affluent society which has three million houses with-
out lavatories? This is a man to man relationship, not a relationship between
man and his environment. Should our course bring this out?'

My answer to that question is a firm yes. In other words I am committed
to the kind of course which can be called Environmental Studies rather than
Environmental Science (though it may be taught under any label—usually
Geography). Of existing courses those with a 'studies' emphasis tend to
include social questions and problems of policy and planning, whereas the
science-based courses tend to be exclusively biological or ecological in their
approach. In contrast to much traditional fieldwork in rural areas, in the
towns man's activities are rightly the centre of attention. Inevitably pupils
working in this field will be as concerned with pressure groups and com-
community action, and the mechanisms of decision-making as with the mere
recording of land use. So fieldwork will be out of the school, but not always
in the open air. Resources as varied as libraries, offices, cinemas, and the
Town Hall will be used. People will be interviewed, and the varied life of
the town observed. For where there is a living community there the pupils
should be encouraged to identify their own interests and see adults as
representative of a group into which they are all too soon to be plunged.
The emotional contact with poverty, unhappiness and general dissatisfaction
with which urban studies pupils are inevitably confronted seems barely
represented by that bland and curious phrase 'urban fieldwork' and I propose
'streetwork' in its place—suggestive I hope of the kind of community involvement already aimed at in the avant-garde theatrical world through 'street theatre'.

But where the nature of the land use is the primary consideration, there are two pitfalls which should be avoided. First, in undertaking fieldwork at any level, a common exercise is to relate a map to the ground. The nature of this relationship is highly complex and cannot be dealt with lightly. I believe that much of the planned development of the past which has had such a disastrous effect on the environment is partly the result of a failure to relate aesthetic and social factors on the ground, to the two-dimensional simplicity of the land use plan map. Second, we should seek to avoid producing a generation of pupils who have no feeling for the value of diversity and disorder in the environment. The current trend towards quantification, and the search for scientific laws of general application in environmental work must not be allowed to lead to the false conclusion that only those factors tending towards a recognised pattern are in some sense 'valid'. Some planners have also been guilty on this count.

It will not be easy to establish 'streetwork' to the extent that (rural) fieldwork is already established. We can only hope that funds can be obtained to start streetwork centres on a scale to match field centres already founded in the countryside (some study of this problem is presently being undertaken by the TCPA in conjunction with other interested groups and individuals; see Chapter 10). Also, it is possible that urban environmental study might lose sight of its physical landscape/townscape emphasis in a welter of sociological surveys (though in these days of 'inter-disciplinary enquiry' this might be thought unimportant). Finally, the teacher's techniques suitable for a quiet hillside will need adaptation. The 'Town Trail' may prove to be one answer to this problem; others will doubtless evolve. In many schools at the moment, being taken out on the street is a novelty. When the newness wears off, pupils will need worthwhile streetwork to prevent boredom; a current controversy can usually provide it.

Notes
2 Ibid.
5 Professor Bernard Crick, in Teaching Politics (Journal of the Politics Association) No. 1 (Longmans, 1972).
7 See, for example, the environmental theatre of Interaction.
The freedom of the street

When Charles Dickens walked as a boy from Camden Town to work in a blacking factory behind Charing Cross, the walk was a continuous encounter with every variety of human being. The pavements were alive with people and he would get to know, and be known by, them all.

There were the old people sitting outside doors in St Martin’s Lane, stallholders shouting at him in Seven Dials, children, tramps and beggars recognising him as he passed, friends he came to know well, enemies he made detours to avoid. A huge range of activities went on before his eyes—buying, selling, exchanging, displaying, mending, cajoling, courting, procuring, bribing, and simply meeting people. All London was laid out on the pavement, and you didn’t have to be introduced to it first.

Simon Jenkins   Evening Standard

Everyone will agree that generations of urban children received an environmental education in the street. Bernard Rudofsky notes that there was a time when to the child the street was ‘an open book, superbly illustrated, thoroughly familiar, yet inexhaustible.’1 But most of our city children today live in what we might call an attenuated environment, an urban context in which the traditional attributes of the street culture are missing.

Simon Jenkins, who is one of our most acute observers of the urban scene, asks what kind of thematic material Dickens could have derived from a stroll along Victoria Street, or through the Barbican, or up the Finchley Road. He might well have asked what kind of stimulating experience a child would gain from any of the aridly rebuilt or run-down semi-derelict inner district main streets of our provincial cities and towns. The rebuilt city, as Jane Jacobs complains, has ‘junked the basic function of the city street, and with it, necessarily, the freedom of the city.’ For, she says, ‘Under the seeming disorder of the old city, wherever the old city is working successfully, is a marvellous order for maintaining the safety of the streets and the freedom of the city.’2 You can see the processes that Mrs Jacobs describes at work in any city district which has been fortunate enough to escape the attentions of the highway engineer or the speculative developer, or the sinister combination of the two, and where the street still functions as a street.
The essential attributes of the street are not taught to architects and planners, let alone to the citizens. They are not cherished by the city fathers, let alone by its children. Our efforts so far as they are concerned, are largely devoted to keeping them off the streets. Can we conceive of a conscious effort at educating a new generation in the functioning of the city, by way of the street? The ideology of streetwork, the use of the urban environment as an educational resource, was enunciated over thirty years ago by Paul Goodman, in this dialogue between a professor and a street urchin from his novel *The Grand Piano*. (The Empire City referred to is of course New York):³

‘On the one hand, this City is the only one you’ll ever have and you’ve got to make the best of it. On the other hand, if you want to make the best of it, you’ve got to be able to criticize it and change it and circumvent it . . . . It seems to me *prima facie* to use the Empire City itself as our school. Instead of bringing imitation bits of the City into a school building, let’s go at our own pace and get out among the real things. What I envisage is gangs of half a dozen, starting at nine or ten years old, roving the Empire City with a shepherd empowered to protect them, and accumulating experiences tempered to their powers.’

‘Holy cats!’ cried Horace, goggle-eyed to think of others carrying on the way he did. ‘Would they ever make trouble and stop traffic!’

‘So much the worse for the traffic,’ said the professor flatly. ‘I’m talking about the primary function of social life, to educate a better generation, and people tell me that tradesmen mustn’t be inconvenienced. I proceed. Fundamentally our kids must learn two things: Skills and Sabotage. Let me explain.

‘We have here a great City and a vast culture. It must be maintained as a whole; it can and must be improved piecemeal. It is relatively permanent. At the same time it is a vast corporate organization; its enterprise is bureaucratised, its arts are institutionalised, its mores are far from spontaneity: therefore, in order to prevent being swallowed up by it, or stamped on by it, in order to acquire and preserve a habit of freedom, a kid must learn to circumvent it and sabotage it at any needful point as occasion arises.’

‘Wait up! Wait up!’ said Horace. ‘Ain’t this a contradiction? You say we got to learn to be easy at home here, then you say we got to sabotage at every point. On the one hand, you gotta love and serve ’em; on the other hand you gotta kick ’em in the shins. Does it make sense to you?’

‘There’s nothing in what you say, young man. In the Empire City these two attitudes come to the same thing; if you persist in honest service, you will soon be engaging in sabotage. Do you follow that?’

All the characteristics of the ideal pattern of streetwork emerge from this
passage, as well as all the dilemmas of putting it into practice: the questions
of the dangers of the street, the size of the group, the role of the shepherd
or teacher, and the fact that if we teach the skills to manipulate the environ-
ment we are also teaching the skills to sabotage the activities of its destroyers.
Let us move from Goodman’s vision of an education in the street to its
actual application in schools as we know them. He wrote much more recently
that the model for the kind of incidental education that he recommended
was the Athenian pedagoge touring the city with his charges, ‘but for this
the streets and working places of the city must be made safer and more
available. The idea of city planning is for the children to be able to use the
city, for no city is governable if it does not grow citizens who feel it is
theirs.’

Now why don’t we act like Athenian pedagogues? The primary obstacles to
our roving the streets with our charges are the legal responsibilities of the
teacher. I once knew a marvellous girl—she wasn’t a professional teacher—
who amongst other things used to ‘help’ at the Lollard adventure play-
ground. Here is a vignette of her teaching style by H. S. Turner:

The little children follow her about as if she were the Pied Piper. She
suggests all sorts of unusual ideas—making wire figures, dyeing cloth,
marbled paper—and she treats the usual occupations in unusual ways—
a drawing session, for instance, may be accompanied by a running
commentary on ‘lines, curves and shapes,’ or suddenly acquire the
glorious title ‘Life Class,’ which immediately frees her students from
the normal embarrassment associated with drawing each other. Then
she suddenly decides on an outing, a walk round the streets, a visit to
a museum or to Westminster Abbey. She slings a rucksack on her back,
with food for the journey, and leads off her covey.

One’s first impression is that she is following a series of random impulses.
Actually, she has a consummate sense of timing. The drawing session is
packed up before enthusiasm abates, and when she suddenly decides she
is in the mood for cooking hotdogs, it always turns out that there are
several children around who have not had any dinner.

Dear Sheila! Mr Turner calls her ‘a wild success’. But how long would she last
in a school? The Schools Council guide Out and About sternly warns us
about people like her: ‘For many children—and some adults—the best visit
is the spontaneous one, the excursion devised on impulse, according to whim
or weather, in a spirit of adventure, ending at any place, any time. But the
teacher in his professional capacity cannot undertake such excursions: the
safety of the pupils in his charge depends on meticulous planning of every
stage and aspect of the visit.’

There are very many reasons for the slow development of out-of-school
education, the question of upsetting time-tables, the requirement of many
authorities that not more than twenty pupils should be allowed out with
a teacher (this is certainly too high a figure if there are no other helpers),
function and purpose of education. Their large, low windows looking out on
the world symbolize a philosophy that views education and life as inseparable.
In both the new and the old buildings, teachers are now working towards a
closer relationship between school, environment, and community’ (p.11).

The streetwork-minded teacher should certainly study Out and About to
learn just what his legal position is, and for its advice on organisation and
supervision, and he should also find out the insurance coverage under which
he is expected to work with his particular authority. But if ever there was a
letter calculated to kill the spirit of the enterprise, it is written here. Study
the diagram on page twenty-nine of the pamphlet showing you how to con­
duct your crocodile across the road ‘in file’ with an alternative ‘in line’
method. ‘Crocodile formation, two abreast, although sometimes unpopular
with children, is probably the safest and most effective way of organizing
their movement in urban areas’ say the authors, and they are right. The
tragedy is that it is also the most effective way to prevent the journey from
having any educational utility.

The truth is that our streets are not safe. And the danger to life and limb is
not the mugger but the motorist. Does this mean that we have to wait until
society has asserted finally that the street belongs to the people and not to
the motorist before we can safely undertake unregimented education in the
streets? No, but it does mean that the size of the group should be con­
siderably less than twenty. It should be about six children to every
shepherd or cicerone. I use these words to indicate that the guiding
elder doesn’t have to be a B.Ed. This doesn’t get over the insurance
hurdle of course—does the school’s policy cover ‘helpers’, students,
parents, etc., undertaking this function? But it does avoid the indignity
of crocodiles, and it does enable discussion to happen en route.

But what about sending members of the class out in twos and threes on
their own, with cameras, tape-recorders or notebooks? I know schools
where this is regarded as normal with twelve-year-olds, and I know a
technical college where it is forbidden with eighteen-year olds. The custo­
dial tradition dies hard, and the ending of it will claim its sacrificial victims,
as every educational innovation does.

The other practical restraint on the teacher concerns the question of involv­
ing his pupils in ‘controversial’ issues. We insist throughout this book that
involvement in controversy is necessary and desirable, and it is certainly
hard to think of any issues concerned with the urban environment which
are not controversial. But not many teachers are going to plunge in unless
they are assured of some kind of support from above. The education
 correspondent of the Guardian, writing about the Scotland Road Free
School towards the end of its first year, refers to John Ord ‘trailing his kids
from the half-cleared townscape of Everton on daily expeditions to see
things in and around the city... The kids were taken on an unemployed march
and visited the Fisher Bendix factory when it was occupied by the workers.’
The Free School's forty-six eleven- to fourteen-year-olds 'are achieving a consistently higher attendance now than they did before at orthodox schools.' Apart from the generous ratio of adults to children (at that time five teachers and five education students on teaching practice), enabling groups to be small enough for every pupil to be involved, there is a point of crucial importance about this story from Liverpool. Mr Ord's poverty is his freedom. His independence from the official system enabled him to take his class where the action was: the march of the unemployed and the workers' occupation of the factory. The facts of industrial life could in no other way be learned so rapidly, cheaply or compellingly. But suppose Mr Ord had been a teacher in a Liverpool Corporation secondary school. The visit would instantly have become one of those causes célèbres like the case of Mr John Hoyland, who a few years ago took his class of day-release apprentices to hear the speeches at a students' demonstration at the University of London, or that of Christopher Searle, who published his pupils' poems about their locality in the volume Stepney Words. When Mr Searle was originally dismissed by the governors of his school (a decision later set aside by the I LEA) one of them remarked to the press that the point at issue was not his publishing the children's work without permission, but that the poems gave 'a one-sided picture of Stepney'.

Here is the environmental teacher's dilemma. His work can be purely descriptive and quantitative: and he will meet with the same boredom and indifference that he had hoped to overcome. Or he can get his class really involved in problems and conflicts, and risk criticism, censure and suspension, according to the enormity of his foolhardiness and the liberality of his employers. Attention is drawn in Chapter 2 to the likelihood of the planning authority (who might very likely be 'the enemy' in the conflict under investigation) being also the education authority to whom the teacher is responsible. This could certainly be an inhibiting factor in some localities. The best way around it would be to get the convention accepted that the Enquiring School is a privileged institution, licensed to probe and criticise in the name of the next generation.

A further development of the idea of the Enquiring School is that proposed by Danny McDowell and Derek Robinson of the Nuffield Teacher Enquiry: the school as a centre for community representation and planning:

The failure of our representative institutions to reflect on and act on the interests of all groups is not simply a consequence of faults inherent in mass representative democracy, it has also to do with the nature and extent of the decisions to be made... Firstly there are more and more decisions being taken out of public and political debate because of the development of new systems of evaluation and decision making which 'reduce' issues to largely technical and scientific forms, cost-benefit analysis might be such an example. Secondly and most obviously the number and complexity of decisions to be taken increases every
year with the result that less is open to public and political examination and more and more is subject to the selection by administrators for examination. Thirdly there are large areas of decision which have never been open to public scrutiny for the apparently simple reason that the elected representatives and the system of which they are part has evolved to deal with only a certain range of question and a certain public, in large part because the ‘constituencies’ they serve do not feature in the decision or its consequences.

There is then a need for new and alternative processes for the representation of interests at a number of levels but particularly at a neighbourhood level; policies and planning ought ideally to be subject to ideas and scrutiny from many levels and most importantly from the level at which all people think and live and interact, that is the street and the neighbourhood. The school provides the ideal base for the development of these new processes and relationships.

As it is of course, the school’s only contribution to the processes of public decision-making occurs every few years when the premises are used as polling stations. The children get a day’s holiday. The rites of citizenship may not be performed before their curious or derisive eyes.

Notes

7 Guardian, 21 March 1972.
8 Report of the *Conference on Social Deprivation and Change in Education* (University of York, April 1972).
The ground a child walks on is near to his eyes, and I came to realize that quite different materials were used indoors from those outside. It may have been about this time that I observed how greatly the weather affected the paving. The rain gave the London pavements of York stone a very special kind of beauty in addition to washing them clean... Then there was the infinite variety of size among these natural stones. I remember the excitement of finding occasional ones which spanned the full width of the pavement and gave a special quality to the whole street.

Gordon Russell  Designer's Trade: an autobiography

If Sir Gordon Russell were to revisit his childhood home in Tooting Bec Road today, he would find it paved with British Standard concrete slabs of uniform dimensions, like everybody else’s street. But he makes the point, important for the teacher, that a child’s experience of the environment, and the uses he makes of it, are quite different from those of his elders. Watch Tom going to school. His is not the purposeful walk of the solid citizen. He meanders, swinging round a lamp-post, writing his name in the dust on the door of a car, dodging behind the privet in someone’s front garden, balancing on the wall of another, picking up a bus ticket here, kicking a beer can there, and unravelling a bit of post-office string dropped in the gutter.

In rural surroundings, taken for what we used to call a nature ramble, he *may*, with an innocent eye, absorb flora, fauna, and seasonal variations, but his teacher undoubtedly knows more, and has a constant urge to give order and structure to the experience, and to develop the identifying and cataloguing passion of the naturalist, while Tom is more interested in slashing at the nettles with a stick ripped from a bush he cannot identify. In town, teacher does not usually know more than his charges about the contents of the urban hedgerow at ground level, and what he knows, he dislikes. He, as well as parents and neighbours, deprecates the use that Tom makes of his environment.

There is in fact a land-use conflict between adult and child. It happens in the country, with the hostility between the farmer and the kids, marauding in ignorance or defiance of the country code, and in the rural recreational sphere
too. Michael Storm remarked on the difference in the approaches of a teacher and his class to an area of rolling downland in Sussex.¹ 'Our national heritage', thinks Sir, contemplatively puffing at his pipe like G. K. Chesterton. 'Smashing place for a pop festival', says his class. It happens in the new towns too. The Welwyn Times, under the headline 'We will find new pitches for boys', reports a local football v. golf controversy. But it happens in its most irreconcilable form in the redeveloped areas of big cities. And the child is invariably the loser.

The environmental deprivation of the flat-dwelling child has been illustrated by Pearl Jephcott in her study of high flat living in Glasgow. She notes that:²

Today's children are taller, heavier and more robust than those of earlier generations, which may well mean they are harder in terms of wear and tear on the environment and the amount of noise they are likely to make. . . . Urbanisation is continually restricting the areas available for their play and limiting what they may legitimately do. In multi-storey housing their play is hedged in by negatives—you mustn't play in the hall, chalk on the pavement, make a see-saw on that wall, cycle on this path. Moreover, the places where the child plays are becoming more exposed to public view. Parents contrast the relative privacy of their old back-courts and 'our street' with the openness of the estate which has few defined spots to which their child has his own right.

The multi-storey estate, she says, 'makes a most inferior setting for play compared with the variety of the street, its passages, old walls, derelict buildings, culs-de-sac, stairways, unexpected corners. Children are natural foragers, but where, on a multi-storey estate, is the flotsam and jetsam which is treasure-trove to the child—an old door, a cardboard carton, a plank, a bucket, a length of rope?'

Miss Jephcott sums up sensitively the arguments for some consideration for the environmental needs of children which we all know—and ignore. High flats are just another example of environmental deprivation from the point of view of the young, and it is possible to interpret juvenile vandalism and hooliganism as a bargaining counter in this conflict.³ The proportion of the population under twenty-one is highest in new housing estate areas—47.5 per cent at Partington outside Manchester, nearly 50 per cent at Easterhouse, Glasgow. The national average is 31 per cent. Is it surprising that these districts are considered to have problems?

The evening paper reports that 'unruly and abusive children are wrecking the travelator system which leads to a pedestrian bridge across Uxbridge Road to the tube station—and which is permanently out of action.' Here again, for the adult, the travelator is a means of going to work. For the child it is a fare-free sideshow. Walking up the down escalator, playing dodgems with the wire trolleys outside the supermarket, pushing all the buttons round the glass case in the museum, he is using the mechanical toys of the urban environment in a
way that makes sense to him, even though it is an infernal nuisance to his elders. Everything that we know about the processes of education indicates that the child learns when he is involved, and the whole difficulty about the child in the town is that his involvement gets in the hair of the adults. They are usually environmentally indifferent, because they are involved far less than the child, with his urge to touch and handle and manipulate things. For neither young nor old is there anything, outside the owner-occupied home, which he can legitimately shape and reshape for himself: no loose ends, no loose parts, no options, no areas of what architects sometimes call ‘unmake’.

This brings up important issues for us as citizens, and dilemmas for us as environmental educators. We may, as befits any right-thinking adult, cherish order, clarity and harmony in our surroundings, and deplore untidiness, shabbiness and squalor. Should we seek to inculcate these values, or is such an activity a waste of time because it is irrelevant to the needs of our juniors, but also because it is an intrusion on the environmental sensibility of the next generation, which already inhabits our towns, and which, we may hope, will reshape them to suit its own demands on the living space?

Teachers who are eager to set about a local study project on the area where their pupils (but usually not themselves) live, often say, ‘But the place is a desert—there is nothing that could possibly be studied.’ But it could equally well be argued that the more dreary, or soulless, or featureless a district is, the more important it is for your pupils to study it, investigate its origins, take it apart (they will probably try to do that anyway in a more literal sense) and ask them vital questions as to how it got that way.

Take Easterhouse, Glasgow, a community of over 40,000 people living in almost identical houses about five miles from the city centre, and which until very recently had one public house, and no banks or public offices. Not the most promising district for a local study project. Ruth Smith of Lockend School, faced with the task of finding a ‘local study’ which would really engage the interest of her third-year girls, decided on a ‘human’ approach to map the answers to such questions as, ‘Where do we live?’, ‘What used it to be like?’, ‘Where did we live before we came here?’, ‘Where did our grandparents live?’ and to gather statistical information on jobs, leisure, family size, shopping habits, which shops are cheapest, and so on; also, to gather from the architects information on the long-awaited township centre, which they built in model form before the rest of the inhabitants had seen it. ‘Perhaps the most important thing this project did for them,’ writes Miss Smith, ‘was to make them, the non-academic pupils, feel they had done something important that no one else had done before.’

Gordon Boon has given a case history of one particular enquiry conducted with young school leavers, following his aim that ‘they will be able to speak out intelligently against the sort of “progress” that lowers the quality of life in our far too depressing urban areas.’

The work was based on the problem of street parking in some local
shopping streets. The idea evolved from a report in the local press that said traders were going to protest about the possible enforcement of parking regulations.

Session 1. Typed copies of the newspaper report were given to the class and discussed. How real was the problem and how could one gain evidence to support the arguments for parking restrictions? Suggestions guided by the teacher resulted in groups preparing simplified outlines from the local 50 inch Ordnance Survey plan. These were to be used to plot the position of parked vehicles along different sections of road at two specific times during a morning. Full details of the survey were explained in preparation for the outline investigation.

Session 2. Observing and recording took place at the prearranged locations. During the observations each group had to consider the following questions.

(i) Did the parked vehicles cause any traffic congestion along the street?
(ii) Did cars park mainly in front of shops?
(iii) How many cars were in the local car park?
(iv) Was there any evidence of cars causing a pedestrian hazard?

Session 3. Groups analysed their findings and a report was presented by one member from each group. The teacher guided the discussion on parking problems and listed the main points for and against restrictions. A vote was taken which resulted in the need to recommend parking regulations.

Session 4. How will the regulations come into force and in what way should the restrictions be operated? Students now worked on maps to show how they would plan the ‘no waiting’ or devise a system to avoid congestion. Suggestions and ideas from the groups were discussed and the following questions evolved. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the new regulations? Who will gain and who will lose? What visual impact will the required lines, posts and notices have on the street? At this point a set of slides showing cars in local streets was shown and the session concluded with some passionate views on whether cars should even be allowed in towns.

Session 5. Facts and figures were presented to show the anticipated number of cars that would be on our roads in twenty years’ time. This developed into a forceful argument on the importance of the car to modern society and the problems it has created.

Though this enquiry had an element of spontaneity because of the local press report, it was in fact part of a planned course which was dealing with problems of urban living. As it was topical, the programme of work was slightly re-arranged so that the ‘problem of the motor car’ could follow a parking enquiry as a natural development. Fortunately, late in the term the students were able to sit with local traders in the
public gallery of the local council house to hear the official arguments to support parking restrictions. In many ways the students’ answers to the problems were more imaginative and aesthetically more pleasing than those proposed by the ‘experts’!

The work described by Mr Boon indicates how the resourceful teacher can successfully combine the course he is pursuing, the techniques of investigation (observation, recording and mapwork), with the topical local issue capable of illustrating general themes, and can follow it up over a period in a way which transcends the gap between citizens and scholars. Notice how his early leavers were steered towards an examination of the facts and not to an acceptance of received opinion.

In a school, or a factory, or a prison, there is an official culture, which has to do with what ought to be happening and what we ought to think, or what top people think, and at the same time an unofficial culture concerned with what really happens, and what people really do or enjoy doing. This is true about the environment as well. There is an official culture represented by Our Cultural Heritage and so on, and the official aims of housing, planning and education. And there is an unofficial culture, which has to do with local characters, traditions and events, popular songs and children’s games: the worm’s eye view of the official culture. And the tragedy of much that passes for environmental education is that despite the best of intentions it flows like water off a duck’s back from the ordinary pupil because it doesn’t belong to his world or to the way he perceives and appreciates his environment. Environmental education is suspect unless it is linked, not with the official culture—for which the majority of our pupils do not give a fig—but with the unofficial culture—irreverent, boisterous and subversive as it usually is—because it is this culture which binds us to a place, which gives us those subtle ties of concern for the genius loci which I take to be what environmental education is for: the neglected affective domain of educational objectives.

Get them analysing the real neighbourhood as Miss Smith did, or applying their wits to a real problem as Mr Boon did. Let them, if Glasgow is their city, follow Miss Jephcott recording the waiting times for lifts in high flats. Let them collect, street by street, or estate by estate, the games and songs of the city, and then print and publish and sell the results. What about their preparing an anthology of the songs of the city—from what their grandparents recall of Tommy Morgan at the Empire Theatre in the old days to Matt McGinn in the folk clubs today? And what a repertoire of contemporary environmental songs there is for them to collect: from They’re tearing down the building next tae ours to the Jeely piece song. They tell you more about the consumer’s view of housing than most sociological studies.

Stanley King is an English architect who emigrated to Canada in the late nineteen-fifties and got involved in a school board programme intended to stimulate an interest in the urban environment. He was dismayed by the reactions in the classes he visited. ‘The atmosphere was anxious, hostile, full
of gloom. In short, the students weren’t talking. And inevitably, they weren’t listening.’ When they did talk and listen, he discerned in them a combination of apathy and fear. Apathy because his students had concluded that the city was ‘too big to fight’ and fear because they felt the city to be ‘like an evil presence creeping up on its people.’ Many teachers will recognise this defensively cynical stance.

The experience upset Mr King and led him to think about the alienation of the young from the city and of reconciling the generations in a common approach to environmental participation. His particular approach was determined by his architectural background and his aptitude for rapid sketching. Eventually he gave up the practice of architecture and with the aid of a grant from the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and, more recently, a federal government grant, he set up a ‘participation centre’ at the University of British Columbia to train teachers in the methods he has developed, and to produce visual aids to stimulate ‘participation design’ which he is now marketing in Canada. He calls the method he evolved the ‘design-in’ and sees it as the first stage of a four-part process:

1. The design-in, which collects from the people who will use the development their ideas and experiences and preferred qualities of life and environment.
2. The sketch designs, made in the architect’s office, to include these ideas and arrange them with alternative priorities and with costs.
3. The presentation of the alternative possibilities to the people who vote on the sketch designs to indicate their choice of priorities.
4. The directive by the elected representatives to the architect for final design.

Mr King quotes a remark by the historian, G. M. Trevelyan, that ‘ugliness remains a quality of the modern city, rendered acceptable by custom to a public that can only imagine what it has seen.’ The essence of the procedure he has been using is that it not only awakens the participants to alternative possibilities, but enables them to communicate these alternatives. To remain inarticulate, he says, ‘ensures a continuation of the present scene. The designing of any development intended for public use will eventually comply with the developer’s estimate of public opinion. Architects at the design-in can offer visions of the future that the developer-client could never permit to appear. I hope that this will build up a reversal to the present city trends.’ Current planning controversies in Britain which illustrate the relative weight attached to developers’ expectations and expressed community preferences may make us sceptical about this hope; but let us watch a ‘design-in’.

At Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia, Mr King was invited to conduct a design-in with a large group of local people in connection with the planning of a community school (a community centre containing school facilities). This is how he describes the session:

Fifty children sit before the adults of the community, facing a drawing
board thirty feet long. I invite the children to be the architects and to
design a city called ‘Some City’, and help us see what might later sur­
round the community school. They are asked first to look at the past to
see what made the city into its present shape, and what might shape its
future. A small trading community drawn on a shoreline grows larger
to include stores and houses. The children suggest solutions to the prob­
lems that arise in the community and draw a prosperous town that
includes all that comes to mind as belonging to towns and cities. Soon
the board is crammed with the buildings and structures of a monstrous
modern city. The children dislike the city they have drawn. ‘No! I
wouldn’t want to live there. It’s a mess.’ They argue over the remedies
for the design of the future.

Then Mr King outlines the stages of the design process and invites the partici­
pation of the adults and children in indicating what they expect to find in the
new community school. The suggestions are written as headings along draw­
ing boards on either side of the hall:6

I write a series of questions around a figure called PEP (Personal Exper­
ience and Perception) and explain that the answers will guide the
designers. The people answer from their own personal experience and
perception and in doing so observe three rules: 1. Avoid criticism of
other people’s ideas. Ideas must flow in. 2. Make no decisions about
fitting the ideas together in a structure. 3. Do not try to speak for
others. Speak only for oneself.

The teenagers come forward to act as architects. Groups of people
form at each named activity. The teenagers question them and note
their replies on the drawing board. Soon all the people are engrossed
in discussion and the boards are covered with notes and sketches. The
adults show surprise at the mature expressions of the young and they
in turn show surprise at the perception of the adults. Each listens to
the other with respect. Politics and rhetoric are avoided by the rule
that each must speak only for himself; argument is avoided by the
rule that no decisions are to be attempted at this stage. The absence
of criticism fosters an atmosphere of creativity and an air of unity
pervades. The design-in, recorded on video-tape, will be played back
at a future meeting to collect second thoughts. Already there is
ample information for the architects to commence the alternative
sketch designs.

The description has a beautiful appropriateness about it: a community,
young and old together, preparing the architect’s brief for a community
facility. It would be nice to know how much attention was paid to their
deliberations. The Canadian press describes Mr King’s use of the technique
for both educational and participatory purposes. Here at Halifax, he is teach­
ing the process of city development to primary school children:7

Across the large blank space, he drew the outline of a long point of
land, jutting out into the sea. Each child was asked to imagine himself or herself as fond of going alone to this uninhabited shore by canoe. After a while the child decided to build a house. King sketched in a beached canoe and the rough outline of a house, just as a young child would draw it, without any details. Then he suggested that friends might like to live there too, and added several other houses. As a village began to form, the architect asked the children what the people would need. A store, said one. A church, said another. A horse, said a third. As the answers came, the child who made the suggestion was given a piece of charcoal and told to draw it in. If a particular child was too timid, another did the drawing. The place began to grow as the children became bolder. By the end of twenty minutes, the whole of that huge section of paper was entirely covered by an enormous modern city, swarming with people, high rise apartments, hotels, hospitals, neon signs, even night clubs. The sky, at first decorated with fluffy clouds, the sun, the moon, and stars, was filled with aeroplanes dragging advertising signs and smoke from factory chimneys. The word ‘pollution’ was written across the scene in large letters. When no more space remained, paper towels were handed out so the boys and girls could remove the charcoal from their faces and hands. They all sat down on the carpet and Stan King asked if they liked the city they had drawn. Not one of them did. What was wrong? Too much pollution, too many cars, not enough playgrounds and parks and interesting things to do.

One obvious advantage of using this method is that the rise and decline of the city happens before the eyes of the class. As Stanley King says, ‘The changing town at this rapid pace comes over very clearly and an understanding that all the changes took place in one area of ground is a telling point to make. It is a time-space exercise.’ He doesn’t say so, but a lot must depend on the self-effacing skill of the choreographer. Adults, embarrassed at having to make crude sketches in public, are willing to make suggestions and provide ideas, and are stimulated at seeing them given visual expression by a high school student drawing on the wall. At the same time, I imagine that an able instant draughtsman can pull the whole thing together in the way that Mr King obviously does. Yet another of his modes of approach is through open-line television. ‘Sketching a city outline in front of the camera, he adds details in response to phone calls.’

Stanley King’s method sounds like something we could usefully borrow in this country. We are short of imaginative ideas both for involving the public in environmental decision-making, and in really engaging the interest of classes in school. Imagine, for example, the Covent Garden Community or the Piccadilly protesters mounting great rolls of newsprint on hoardings in a hollow square in the open and replanning the area on paper in a great communal exercise, where both plan and counter-plan are displayed and compared. Or imagine a school hall where a synoptic panorama of the
town's rise and decline and prospective rebirth is enacted before the eyes of the students as the finale of a local survey.

A planning simulation in which the young presented their findings to the community was mounted by the environmental studies advisers for Hertfordshire in September 1972 with a group of sixth-formers. A brief was prepared for the expansion of the village of Pirton from a population of 1,000 to one of 4,000. Members of the group adopted the roles of planners, developers, architects and representatives of other interests. Specialists, like a member of the county planning department, were on hand for consultation. Every household in the village was invited to a meeting in the village hall, with a careful explanation that this was simply a simulation and that there were no real proposals for expanding their green-belt village. A low attendance was expected, but in fact the hall was crowded, and the young people with immense confidence and aplomb presented their plan, answered criticism and explained alternatives. (The proceedings were videotaped and the tape and the brief are available for other schools in the county).

All these techniques for involvement—and we need to be continuously devising more—are devices for developing the habit of observation, the habit of evaluating, and the habit of questioning decisions in the environment. We published a photograph of a street where all the shops, though open, are permanently shuttered, except for the café on the corner. People reacted differently to the picture. One response is to ask, 'Have we really come to such a state where these hooligans assume that they have some right to destroy everything except the place where they happen to congregate in the evenings?' Another is to reflect that part of the social malaise of the city is that an increasing number of young people feel themselves to be at war with the environment, and have felt this from infancy.

Big social issues, as well as purely environmental ones, are raised by these uncomfortable thoughts. But an environment which does not cater for the known needs of children and adolescents is not a tolerable one and should not be tolerated. One task of environmental education is to draw out enough awareness to enable the next generation to reshape its surroundings, rather than to follow an apprenticeship of guerrilla warfare with a lifetime of resigned indifference.

Notes

2 Pearl Jephcott, Homes in High Flats (Oliver and Boyd, 1971).

6 Stanley King, *A Design-In for a Community School* (King Graphics Ltd, 6462 Station 'G', Vancouver B.C., Canada).

7 *Ottawa Citizen*, 31 December 1971.

The final objective of such a plan is not the physical shape itself but the quality of an image in the mind. Thus it will be helpful to improve this image by training the observer by teaching him to look at his city, to observe its manifold forms and how they mesh with one another. Citizens could be taken into the street, classes could be held in the schools and universities, the city could be made an animated museum of our society and its hopes. Such education might be used not only to develop the city image, but to reorient after some disturbing change. An art of city design will wait upon an informed and critical audience. Education and physical reform are parts of a continuous process.

Kevin Lynch  The Image of the City

It is thirteen years since the publication of Kevin Lynch’s book quoted above,¹ a pioneer work that considered the interrelations between urban forms and human objectives and evaluations. There has followed a mushrooming of ‘perception studies’ from institutions of higher education, particularly in the USA; a recognition that analysis of the city by its physical and social groupings must be accompanied by examination of the various perceptions that social groups hold of their physical environment. Put simply, reality is what seems real; our perceptions of reality vary according to a complex set of factors including our social position, the use we make of the environment, aesthetic preconceptions etc. The corollary of this is that for all of us there are other unknown perceptions which by reason of the exclusive nature of social groups, the routine of our own activities, and the security of that which is familiar, will always remain outside our experience.

Lynch was aiming to understand how the town or city is ‘read’ by the resident or visitor, and various experimental tests enabled him to identify the characteristic images held by the public of any particular urban area. These tended to concentrate in five basic element types—paths, edges (boundaries and barriers), district (or territories), nodes and landmarks. Lynch’s study, writes Brian Goodey in his invaluable introduction to the main themes of perception study,² is a piece of research with clear implications for the practising planner. One can only speculate on the nature of a city development plan which as well as detailing the conventional categories of employment, trans-
port, housing etc., gave due emphasis to how the people were likely to react to the boundaries, nodes and so on, which the provision of these facilities would create.

The implications are equally relevant to the school teacher engaged in 'street-work' with his pupils. There is a whole range of sensory reactions to the visual and social stimuli presented to a pupil on a city street which at the moment teachers fail to capitalise on in their teaching—even those who attempt to relate their classes to their surroundings in a direct way (rather than through slides, maps etc.). How often one hears of an urban teacher fearful of a trip beyond the school gate because of the distractions of the city. A course focused on these very distractions can in itself be 'educative'.

It is regrettable that these two groups—planners and teachers—have almost totally failed to reflect the new work in their professional practice. The reasons are not hard to find, and lie in the two related beliefs about their roles that planners and teachers have held in common for many years; that their specialist knowledge represents an objective consensus view to which all in the community should subscribe, and that dissent generally falls into the category of subjective viewpoints which are not susceptible to generalisation and therefore not proper to deal with. Hence the planner sticks to his concept of the built environment as 'townscape' —the physical form and arrangement of space and buildings—and the teacher to his belief that he functions, in R.S. Peters's analogy, like a priest with his initiates. The initiative, one is led to believe, lies with the planner not the planned: truth resides in the head of the teacher, but not in that of his pupil.

To be sure, the planner is concerned with 'functional relationships', but in a limited sense which only too often excludes the relationship (which might also be called 'functional') between man and the built environment. The public's chief complaint is against the dehumanisation of our urban areas and the planner who dismisses the criticism as subjective, or one for which he has no solution, does not lessen the sense of grievance which has built up in the public mind. Perception study may well take urban humanism out of the realm of utopian idealism and into the terms of reference to be encompassed by plan-makers of the future.

It can of course be argued that the interest and excitement of the urban scene derives from factors other than the physical layout of its parts. For example, the Kings Road, Chelsea, is an architectural shambles, but a living street. But such excitement is too often stifled by the creation of a planned environment directly in conflict with the layman's values. Perception study can reveal the real nature of those values, and at least enable the planner to avoid overriding them, even if he decides they cannot be positively satisfied by any action he might take. It is true of course that the planner will frequently justify his schemes on the grounds that planned action on the community's behalf is better than behaviour on the part of individuals which may itself contradict the values
of nearly everyone else. However, perception studies undertaken so far indicate that one is not justified in dismissing subjective reactions because ‘everyone has a different view, we might as well ignore them all or plump arbitrarily for one’ (usually that of the planners, or of some group of local councillors). The burden of Lynch’s argument is that many of these subjective reactions are susceptible to generalisation, and when measured in relation to social group etc. can indicate general preferences in the population which should be planned for not against.

F. Graeme Chalmers has noted how a simple class exercise can illustrate the nature of an ‘imposed environment’ in the classroom, and how parallels can be drawn with the inconveniences of the environment outside the school. It is a lesson to which the urban child may all too readily respond for, as Paul Goodman wrote in Growing Up Absurd, ‘concealed technology, family mobility, loss of the country, loss of neighbourhood tradition, and eating up of the play space have taken away the real environment. The city, under inevitable modern conditions, can no longer be dealt with practically by children.’

How then are we to succeed in involving the urban young in the creation of their own environment? It is an almost universal perception in today’s society that ‘they’ who have power are inaccessibly distant. Well-intentioned local authority officials will argue that it is a false perception, but whether ‘objectively accurate’ or not, it is commonly held. It should hardly be necessary to remind anyone that:  

zoning, master plans, surveys—these are instruments, not ends. The end is a livable city, suited to modern technologies of living. Until the planners know by what methods the ends are to be achieved, what the purpose of the city is, what those who live in it (not just those who own it) want it to be, planning will continue to be merely a means of livelihood for planners. A city plan is the expression of the collective purpose of the people who live in it or it is nothing.

Size, both in terms of the inhuman scale of buildings and the impersonal grandeur of social administrative units, seems to be of key importance. Perception studies suggest that most people identify as their ‘home’ territory a very much smaller area than is administratively recognised. The establishment of neighbourhood-sized administrative units in our large urban areas, analagous to rural parish councils, might be able to bring some validity to the ‘neighbourhood’ goal often aimed at by planners.

Territorial identity must be borne in mind when organising ‘streetwork’ from a school with a large catchment area— the home district of one pupil will be ‘foreign’ territory to another.

Goodey regrets that the planning literature still seems unable to relate man intimately to the townscape. It uses terms such as ‘visually agreeable’ and ‘unified whole’ without suggesting to the reader any of the environmental
perceptions which the residents have of their communities. Man is unavoidably involved in an ‘image system’ in which he reacts to, and therefore modifies, an environment according to how he perceives it. Some studies have demonstrated a very real problem for the planner trying to divine his public’s viewpoint, even though he may take a great deal of notice of those pressing for ‘participation’. Planners themselves often have viewpoints which coincide with those of the participation-oriented members of the public—in other words with the views of a well-educated and articulate group. Sensitive attitude surveys of cross-sections of the public might reveal widespread opinions more accurately than time spent listening to pressure groups. On the other hand pressure groups do emerge on particular issues which genuinely represent a groundswell of opinion. Certainly in the current virtually complete absence of perception studies organised by plan makers, the pressure group, or the employment of an ‘advocate planner’, is often the only way of making one’s views count. And of course it would be naive to suppose that perception surveys in the present state of the art would succeed in reflecting a perfect balance between the short and long term needs of those questioned. People interviewed as part of a representative sample may well make perceptual assumptions about their environment which would fail to be reflected in their answers. So more sophisticated survey techniques coupled with a more critically aware public (brought about by better environmental education at all levels) will be needed before perception study can become one of the main techniques for ensuring public participation in the planning process.

Schoolteachers of geography concerned to maintain and improve the academic standing of their subject have recently pursued the so-called ‘quantitative’ approach. This has tended to strengthen their belief in the objective truth of their subject matter. At first sight this new ‘objective’ geography might appear to be in conflict with the introduction of ‘subjective’ perception studies into the classroom; in fact its statistical techniques should prove helpful in analysing the results of such work. The American geographer David Lowenthal has been prominent in showing that although perception study deals with ‘subjective’ material, it does so in an ‘objective’ way using statistical techniques where applicable with as much confidence as the network analyst. And those who feel that the best application of the new methods lies in the study of abstract theories of urban growth (central place study etc.) should note that Haggett himself has called for more examination of the internal functions of the individual settlement—in contrast to study of networks of settlements. At a more experimental level, it is possible to reawaken sensory awareness of the environment amongst pupils by exercises in ‘free-form’ activity, often based on ‘sensitivity group’ ideas emanating from the USA, and involving various kinds of decision-making. Emphasis can be laid on the full range of sense perception; the sounds of an environment can be isolated by experiencing a place with the eyes closed and recording one’s impressions. Real experience in an actual environment is a very different process from the two-dimensional visual presentation of maps and pictures which are the pupils’
A trail for every town?

the best way to enjoy the city is directly through the senses of sight, smell and hearing; but it is through the eye that the town’s environment makes the greatest impact . . . the city is one huge visual device which we have to learn to read.

Keith Wheeler and Brian Wates ‘How to make a Town Trail’

The 1969 report People and Planning (the Skeffington Report)1 contained a number of recommendations and observations which have been largely ignored. One which seems to have fallen on particularly unresponsive ears was the following, in paragraph 244 under the heading of ‘The Role of the Local Authority’:

The same authority will often be both local planning authority and local education authority, responsible for providing the whole range of education, except at university level, and for controlling the curricula of most of the schools. We recommend that where the authorities are the same, the closest possible liaison should be kept between these two departments in order that knowledge about the physical planning of the community may be made available as part of the outward-looking curriculum which has been recommended in several reports on education; where the authorities are different, liaison is even more important. Lessons on such subjects will come to life most vividly where children feel involved.

While head teachers will wince at the thought that education authorities ‘control the curricula’ of schools, and exponents of problem-orientated teaching at the apparent belief (which emerges later in the report) that attending exhibitions and entering essay competitions constitutes ‘involvement’ for the pupil, there is nevertheless the germ of an idea here which could bear fruit with some inter-departmental co-operation in the local authority offices.

Not that the teachers themselves are unaware of the possible advantages. Since the Report was published one of the recurring themes of discussion wherever environmental educators gather has been the need for positive co-operation between schools and local authority planning departments. Unfortunately Chief Planning Officers are not accustomed to taking educational
initiatives and school teachers rarely do more than extend an annual invitation to the one or two willing planners to address a class on local development proposals. On such occasions the gulf of environmental perception between the planner and the planned is usually only too obvious. And of course Education Officers are reluctant to appear to be foisting curriculum change on their schools.

Many Planning Departments are taking steps to improve the flow of information to the public. All too often the lack of professional educational advice and involvement renders their efforts less effective than might be hoped. The methods usually employed are news media publicity, printed material, exhibits, explanatory public meetings and direct personal contact. Anyone can buy a planning report for his area, and if the technicalities are too difficult for him to understand, perhaps an increase in ‘participation’ documents, specially drawn up for public consumption, will put matters more clearly to him. (They may even help the Planning Committee understand what their officers are talking about.)

The London Borough of Camden has gone a step further with its attractive and cheap book *Camden Scene—A Planning Survey 1971* which, in conjunction with an exhibition on the same theme, attempts an overall informative picture of the problems and possibilities of the area, without reference to a specific scheme or proposal. No local school should fail to obtain such publications. One of their virtues is of course their comprehensive coverage of all the major themes, but a similar goal can be obtained over a period by ‘fake’ local newspapers produced and distributed free by the authority. *Liverpool Challenge*, for example, is produced twice a year. Big photos and a snappy ‘pop-journalism’ style can reach a wide public and provide digestible information for the non-academic school pupil. Class sets of such papers should go as a matter of course to all schools—only too often they do not.

Yet such laudable efforts do not necessarily amount to involvement with the environment and participation in the planning process, either for adults or teenagers. William Helsel commented as follows:

> The *Camden Scene* exhibit precedes any firm plans. It is intended to inform residents of the overall situation in the borough, something of its history, its relation to the rest of London, its problems and the conflicts of interest contributing to them, and some possible solutions with their costs. Citizens need this sort of understanding at this early stage of the planning process if they are to stand a chance of affecting planning decisions. But because there is no immediate threat, few come. Most who see the exhibit will find some of the displays beautifully clear and direct, some (diagrammatic maps) nearly meaningless . . . People are invited to ‘register their views’ at the end by playing an experimental resource allocation priorities game. There are no plans to make
any use of the collected 'views', but the planners who put the exhibition together consider the game is a good thinking exercise (therapy?) for the public.

Just as conventional information distribution fails in my view to elevate the public to a genuinely participatory status in environmental decision making, so conventional pedagogy does not necessarily 'involve' the pupils in the learning process.

An American planner, Sherry Arnstein, devised a 'Ladder of Participation' as a means of evaluating the level of schemes for community participation in planning. The rungs of her ladder are shown in Figure 1. Arnstein's ladder is a
very useful device for cutting our ideas about participation down to size. The Skeffington Report, especially as translated into practice, is only up to rung three or four of the ladder. It is instructive to examine Sherry Arnstein's ladder and to reflect that if it is our intention to produce a generation of environment-conscious students properly prepared to participate in the planning process, then the techniques we employ will have to relate to that rung of the ladder which supports our particular definition of 'participation'. The exciting pioneering work of the Wiltshire schools M4 Project, in which schools over a period of some years recorded the impact of the building of a new motorway through their county, might have benefited from a little more reflection about long-term objectives in the attitudes and values the future young adults would bring to similar planning developments which may affect them. It is fundamental that one aim of any course in local environmental study should be the encouragement of a belief in the pupil that his personal judgments and those of his fellow citizens should be reflected in the decisions that are taken. The generation of pupils now at school are going in their adult life to be involved in debating the thorny question of how we can shift the emphasis away from decision-making on behalf of the community and towards decision-making by the community.

Thanks to the hard work of Keith Wheeler and Bryan Waites, of the City of Leicester College of Education, and Gerald Mitchell of Leicester City Planning Department, the TCPA Education Unit has recently been able to show that co-operation between planners and educators can be instrumental in developing a practical teaching tool enabling the pupil to take some first steps on the road towards confident participant citizenship in a particular urban area. In a special edition of BEE the two college lecturers developed a theory and methodology for the use of town trails.

Nature and conservation trails in rural areas are not new. The British Tourist Authority booklet Nature Trails in Britain lists 232 trails open to the public developed by such organisations as the Nature Conservancy, the National Trust, the Forestry Commission, and various National Park committees and County Naturalists' Trusts. There is some evidence that schools are taking an increasing interest in nature trails, and worksheets have been published by the Council for Nature on trail planning, and teachers groups have developed the idea of nature trailing in urban parks. The town trail is the urban equivalent of the nature trail, giving the trail-follower or 'tracker' an understanding of the structure and character of a built environment. The authors' aim is to make the student visually inquisitive about the town scene and to lead him to form discerning judgments 'not as a passive recipient of other men's ideas, but as an informed critic who demands the best for his urban environment.'

The essence of the town trail is sensory experience. Perhaps because many features of an urban area are in some way threatening or unpleasant, or perhaps simply through the contempt bred of familiarity, most of us pass along the streets of our home town with our perceptive mechanisms only
half active; this applies to children as much as to adults. Here are Wheeler and Waites writing (in ‘How to make a Town Trail’) of the great variety of material available to the town tracker who sets out to really ‘see’ the urban environment, and not just look at it in passing.

Develop your Town Trail so as to study the floorscape; the street furniture; house facades; the plaques on walls. Search out the names of architects inscribed in half-hidden places; ascertain dates of buildings, collect strange patterns in brick or stone. Evaluate different ways of building houses, shops, and offices; compare and contrast one group of buildings with another. Look for distant and unexpected views in the urban landscape. Only enter buildings to sample the contents: not to stay long but to find one or two things which are relevant to the Town Trail: a picture, map, and so on. This will whet the tracker’s appetite. Include within your Trail the chance of experiencing a wide range of environmental ‘stimuli’. For instance, listen for characteristic street noises; take part in open-air activities like a market or procession; breathe in the air and take note of the variety of smells that can be experienced.

The trail should pass along a carefully planned itinerary depicted on a clear map, that the individual pupil can follow alone or in a group. The route will include focus points of special interest, linked by relatively less significant stretches. It is useful for the trail to have at least one high ‘outlook point’—the top of a hill or high building—and ‘viewpoints’ where special study of the middle distance and of the relationship of buildings to each other is rewarding. ‘Internal viewpoints’ may be designated in the interiors of some buildings. Of special significance is the process of environmental appraisal, and a form (Table 1) may be provided for this purpose allowing some evaluation and comparison to be made of subjective judgments of the quality of the urban scene at any particular point.

A trail should not pass only through attractive areas of a city; squalid or ‘negative’ environments should also be appraised. Various trails may be devised for the same urban complex—night trails, industrial trails, trails of horrors (e.g. the Stockholm anti-trail organised by the eco-fringe at the recent UN conference to contrast with the official sight-seeing tours). In this connection, Wally Evans’s remarks concerning conservation trails in the middle years of schooling7 could be equally well applied to town trails:

If schools are to develop their own trails, it is important that they consider not only the present concept of a nature trail, as a carefully planned route through an area of interest, but also the idea of a trail as a means of demonstrating the concrete expressions of problems and management techniques . . . The use of conservation trails to demonstrate concrete examples of environmental issues, enables children in the middle years to appreciate the problems involved despite the fact that most of them have not attained Piaget’s stage of ‘formal
By Keith Wheeler and Brian Waites in *Bulletin of Environmental Education*, Nos. 16-17, August-September 1972 (based on a diagram in *Chichester: a study in conservation, HMSO, 1968*).

Environmental appraisal sheet no. \[\text{Name}\]
Location of viewing area \[\text{Date}\]
Description of area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>+5</th>
<th>+4</th>
<th>+3</th>
<th>+2</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>-2</th>
<th>-3</th>
<th>-4</th>
<th>-5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. Visual aspects
   (a) Appearance
   (b) Condition
   (c) Relationship to surroundings
   (d) Scale of buildings
   (e) Trees and shrubs
   (f) Street furniture
   (g) Tidiness
   (h) Surprises

2. Traffic
   (a) Moving
      (i) Danger to people
      (ii) Noise
      (iii) Smell
      (iv) Damage to property
      (v) Ugliness
   (b) Parked
      (i) Danger to people
      (ii) Parking space available
      (iii) Delivery access

3. People popularity
   Do people seem to enjoy the area?
   Can they walk freely?

Tracker's likes and dislikes:

(Based on a diagram in *Chichester: A Study in Conservation, HMSO 1968*)
propositional thought.’ In fact, it is possible to re-use the same trail in successive years to teach basic conservation principles in more sophisticated forms.

Wheeler and Waites, while pioneering the town trail in the British educational context, are anxious not to dogmatise about the form a trail should take. There may be as many different trail forms as there are towns. But in order to demonstrate how a teacher—or his pupils themselves—may develop his own trail in his own locality they provide a fully worked out example based on Leicester.

Here official assistance was forthcoming from Konrad Smigielski, at that time Leicester’s City Planning Officer, who was prepared to allow Mr Mitchell to spend a considerable amount of time mapping the route and preparing illustrative material. It should be emphasised that every trail does not need to involve elaborate mapping and production techniques but the teacher’s efforts can gain enormously from the expertise of someone in the planning department. Parsimonious councillors need not fear that resources are being misused. A more aware public is an absolute prerequisite for proper participation in the plan-making process (though any teacher approaching his authority for assistance in trail-making should remember that not all councillors are enthusiastic about the citizenry having more control over their own environment).

An alternative point of recommendation is that the trail can easily be designed (as in the Leicester example) to be of value to the visitor to the city as well as to school pupils. There is evidence that tourists are getting tired of the endless diet of monumental masonry and public buildings which the traditional guide feeds them and can use a document which encourages them to look below the superficialities of a city. Perhaps the city public and tourist information budget can be tapped to help with production costs.

Town trails for tourists do exist of course. In Dublin for example I have followed one marked by special signposts. And if yet more clutter in our streets does not appeal to some planning officers, they could try marking the pavements with a continuous red line as in the Boston (Mass. ‘Freedom Trail’ (which is complete with red footprints let into the tarmac where you cross the road). The truly educational trail, however, does not just lead one to stand and stare as tourists habitually do, but to think critically and deeply. Background information and sources, and suggestions for things to do, make town tracking an open ended enterprise. No one will be able to claim, on walking the Leicester trail, that he has ‘done’ Leicester. More questions should have arisen in his mind than when he started.

In particular, questions about the kind of society represented by the townscape will be sure to figure in their considerations. The three-mile Leicester trail concentrated upon the visual scene but, say Wheeler and Waites, ‘people as much as things are part of the pattern being explored.’
This awareness of the importance of the city as a functioning, social entity as well as a physical architectural creation, was the mainspring of Maurice Ash's recent book on London. He suggests some wider-ranging trails to be undertaken by vehicle as well as on foot, taking one many miles (even outside the city limits as conventionally defined) to demonstrate the reality of the city region. Travel outside the city limits gives the opportunity, referred to in the Leicester town trail, to assess the distant skyline of the settlement from various vantage points along 'visual corridors'. Here, perhaps, the interests of the rural and urban trail begin to merge.

No one trail can do justice to the variety of city life, and neither can a single trip round the major features of a trail. In the Leicester town trail, the teacher is constantly reminded that the city is the richest source for environmental education that we have. A trail can be the basis for a term or a year's work. It can stimulate a class to discover the problems of its home town at first hand, and then to begin to suggest solutions.

Visual education is a sadly neglected aspect of modern schooling, perhaps because it has long been associated with 'the Arts'. Perception studies (see Chapter 5) are already demonstrating to us that individuals perceive the same streets in different ways. Town trails can encourage the tracker to extend his perceptive experience, and evaluate his personal reactions in the light of both carefully chosen questions and of other people's perceptions. For while the town trail is admirably designed as a streetwork tool used by individuals, it is significant that the authors of the Leicester trail consistently return in their practical advice for teachers to the desirability of collating results by class displays and discussion. By avoiding the need for concerted group activity in the noise and bustle of the town, and yet giving scope for coordinated work back in the classroom, the trail is a superb teaching aid.

Environmental teachers and town planners have more interests in common than they usually realise. The town trail provides an ideal co-operative enterprise. Every town should have one.

Notes
5 P. A. Coggin (ed.), *The Birth of a Road* (Rupert Hart-Davis, 1974).
6 'How to make a Town Trail', *BEE*, Nos. 16–17. August–September 1972; also available as a pamphlet.
7 Wally Evans, 'The Use of Conservation Trails in the Middle Years of Schooling', *BEE*, No. 11, March 1972.
The streetwork teacher

We then visited the keep, which Keith knew. He was able to show me the way up to it and to demonstrate the impressive view from the top. During the afternoon we discussed a wide variety of topics, such as ancient history, education, his science lessons, parents and space travel, world poverty and politics. Most of these discussions consisted of me giving my opinions and Keith either agreeing or disagreeing, together with a short comment from him. He appeared to be interested in all this and seems to have a wide range of sympathies, but is constantly held back by his chronic inability to form articulate sentences or a succession of remarks.

An education student’s journal quoted in Young Teachers and Reluctant Learners

You do not automatically provide an educative experience just by getting the class out of the classroom. For some it may be an ‘outing’ like the one with a class of juniors mentioned in Chapter 1, but some students may actively dislike being away from the warmth and privacy of the familiar room, especially if it delays the four o’clock getaway. Look at the parties of glum-faced tourists doing the rounds of Our Cultural Heritage, and actually paying for the experience, but wishing they were back in the coach or sitting in a café. The pupil may feel acutely self-conscious at being out in the street with notebook and biro, particularly if the numbers are large. The indignity of being herded along in a crocodile drives some to active rebellion so that the excursion becomes a contest of wills between them and an equally embarrassed teacher. Many young people are not proud of being ‘school-children’: they are ashamed of it, and feel it as degrading to be escorted through the streets as would a prisoner in handcuffs.

D. G. Watts notes acutely that:1

Within the formal structure of education they develop a rich pattern of informal social life—eating snacks, gossiping, fighting, flirting, showing off—which for most of the time is more important than the public functions of the school. Occasional environmental work is welcomed as giving opportunities for the satisfying extension of such activities; but frequent and lengthy trips outside the school may be
felt to interfere with this routine, and provoke somewhat unexpected objections to field-work.

I would draw the conclusion that streetwork ought to be as much an extension of the informal as of the formal structure; that it should include sitting around gossiping—which graduates always tell us was the most valuable part of their education.

The objections to the guided tour aspect of streetwork are met in part by the practice of sending students out in twos and threes to gather information and impressions and report back to the whole group. This is normal in many schools, but others put an absolute embargo on it, except in the case of a few trusties, seeing it as an invitation to truancy or a breach of the *in loco parentis* role of the school. But in any case there are vital areas of streetwork where the teacher or his equivalent has an important and active role to play on the spot. Somebody (was it Ruskin?) wrote a fable about Eyes and No-Eyes on a country walk. No-Eyes looked everywhere but saw nothing and spent a boring, fruitless afternoon. Eyes, on the other hand, being not only virtuous, but having practised the art of intelligent observation, had an afternoon of continuous wonder and delight. Nature revealed her secrets to the seeing eye. Poor old No-Eyes would have had his vision enlarged and his understanding deepened if he had been accompanied by an inspiring teacher. It is exactly the same in town.

There are pitfalls here of course. Some students dislike fieldwork just because teacher has all the answers. The dice are loaded against No-Eyes from the start. At another level of urban studies, as we point out elsewhere, the teacher is at a disadvantage. He may know that the bank on the corner was built by a pupil of Norman Shaw in 1898, but his pupil knows that the newsvendor is a coppers' nark. The teacher may know that the supermarket with its spurious cut-price offers is killing the High Street, but his pupil knows that you can get good money there on a Saturday.

The little book *Young Teachers and Reluctant Learners* is a masterpiece of sensitive observation. It describes an arrangement by which twelve college of education students each year attach themselves to two or three children from a class of early leavers in a comprehensive school on a working class estate just outside a large city, every Wednesday afternoon for the final year of school. They are free to use the afternoon how they wish, and most of them choose to meet the children outside the school. It proves to be a valuable experience, not only for the children who seldom have an older friend with a quite different perspective on life, but for a similar reason for the teaching students who get to know adolescents whose experience and background is very unlike their own, but who learn also to examine themselves and their own assumptions. The absence of forward planning in the early leavers' lives, for example; is this an indication of fecklessness or immaturity? Most middle-class fifteen-year-old boys would have had ample opportunities for making fairly complex social arrangements, living as they
do in circumstances where making plans is common and is often engaged in by the whole family together. It is difficult for students and teachers who have coped successfully with organized living to understand the genuine problems of people who tend to live from moment to moment. Some of the student teachers saw little but listless apathy in their charges, but take the case of Brenda, who, whatever troubles she had in her personal life, overflowed with positive enjoyment when away from school. She:

 dashed home from school every Wednesday dinner hour to change into her miniskirt and high heels, assuring Miss Turpin that she ‘wouldn’t be seen dead walking round town in school uniform.’ She took a delight in rummaging around antique shops in town. She enjoyed walking on a misty, blustery day despite brief showers of rain. At the swimming pool she forced herself to swim a width in order to gain the approbation of two of the boys in her class—she told Miss Turpin later she had not realized before that they were quite so dishy. She impressed Miss Turpin with the quality of her imagination as she looked at paintings and sculptures in the art gallery, and with her readiness to offer opinions and interpretations. At the same time she hated school and described most of the teachers as ‘horrible.’ The ideal companion, you might conclude, for savouring the pleasures of the urban scene. But Wednesdays with Brenda had their embarrassing side. She proudly guided Miss Turpin round the zoo, whose layout she knew by heart, and ‘The highlight of her afternoon was the sight of two rhinos copulating in the middle of their yard. She stood gazing in great fascination for over twenty minutes, occasionally murmuring under her breath in an awed undertone, “Cor—e’s a dirty bugger—just look at the filthy sod!”’

The authors remind us that the teacher should be wary of resorting to outraged oppression when faced with ‘inappropriate’ behaviour, should understand its causes, and should treat its occurrence in a professional, rather than a moral way. They remind us that conflict is ‘likely to arise between the middle-class teacher and the working-class child as a consequence of their differing views about appropriate social behaviour.’ Their observations certainly reinforce the view that, for the sake of the teacher as well as the child, the group involved in streetwork should be small and informal.

Quite apart from questions of what, in school, would be called ‘class control’, the teacher is walking on a tightrope between loading the expedition with factual information in order to justify it educationally, and relying on the sights and sounds of the city to impart their own message, which they very frequently will not. The quotation from the student teacher’s logbook at the head of this chapter exemplifies the teacher’s dilemma. The authors of Young Teachers and Reluctant Learners contrast the concrete and immediate things which interested the boy (farming tools, instruments of torture, the view from the keep) with the flood of abstract topics which the young
teacher felt obliged to throw in, one after the other, to keep the conversation going:³

Mr G. does not seem able to share Keith’s enthusiasm at the boy’s level, nor can he allow himself simply to enjoy Keith’s individuality. It is as though, in his role of teacher, he regards ordinary conversation as trivial and of no consequence, yet it is only through the exchange of immediate and personal expressions of feeling and opinion that the ground for discussion can be laid. Keith needs to feel that Mr G. appreciates what he says for the light it shows on who he is.

The root of the difficulty is not, as Mr G. diagnosed it, in the boy’s inability to form sentences, but in his inability to respond to what the boy could tell him. The point is made beautifully in the film Kes, in the scene where the good English teacher releases from the boy his account of the training of the kestrel.

There is a kind of person who has such an enthusiasm for places and so well-developed a feeling for the factors which differentiate one place from another, that we say of them, ‘To walk down the street with him is an education in itself.’ They are able to generate in us their own sense of wonder and excitement about the town and the townscape, and they include a variety of people with no other common factor than this. To mention some with whom we are familiar through television, there is Sir John Betjeman, with his marvellous feeling for the genius loci, there is Ian Nairn, with his knack of annoying the city fathers by admiring the wrong things, and there is Ray Gosling, with what Colin MacInnes called his extraordinary gift for ‘giving glamour and interest to English provincial cities. For him Leicester becomes a sort of Marrakesh or Baghdad.’⁴ These people may have a great deal of architectural erudition, but their sense of places has nothing to do with the conventional canons of architectural appreciation. (Betjeman’s first book was in fact an attack on Ghastly Good Taste). Indeed, as Ivor de Wolfe puts it, good townscape is frequently composed of bad architecture, while good architecture often makes bad townscape.⁵

George Orwell wrote of himself that as long as he remained alive and well he would continue ‘to love the surface of the earth, and to take a pleasure in solid objects and scraps of useless information.’ Years earlier he had been employed one summer as a private tutor by a Mrs Peters, to keep her sons occupied during the holidays. One of them grew up to be the educational pundit Richard Peters, and he recalls:⁶

He infused interest and adventure into everything we did with him just because of his own interest in it. Walking of course can be just a means of getting from A to B; but with him it was like a voyage with Jules Verne beneath the ocean. He had, of course, nothing of the hearty technique of the adolescent scoutmaster or the burning mission of the enthusiast. Neither had he the attitude of the guide on a conducted tour. A walk with him was a mixture of energy,
adventure, and matter of fact. The world, we felt, was just like this. And it would have been absurd not to notice all there was to see.

Isn’t it asking a bit much that the streetwork teacher should not only have the imperturbability to contain the gaucheries of his pupils, the insight to listen to them, but should also have the qualities of both a Betjeman and an Orwell? Where is this educational paragon to be found? Put yourself in the shoes of our potential streetwork teacher. He (and of course I also mean she) is young, anxious to do his job effectively, but is low in the school’s hierarchy, just as are the fifth-year leavers he is given, needless to say, to sharpen his wits upon. If he is a graduate, it is likely that he never thought of becoming a teacher until some moment of decision led him to temporise by taking the post-graduate course. If he has come from the standard college of education course, this is often because he was not considered to be first-class material by his GCE examiners or by the university entrance authorities. Anyway he was desperate for a reason for leaving home. He is not likely to be much of a subject specialist—if he is a geographer he is dissatisfied with traditional geography, if he is a biologist he is dissatisfied with traditional biology,—but he is more likely to be involved in a less specific ‘humanities’ area, trying to come to terms with ideas on curriculum development which in turn have arisen from efforts to come to terms with this generation of secondary school pupils.

He is, in fact, as typical of his year at the college of education as they are of their year in school. They are deprived pupils: he is a deprived teacher. They are in the bottom stream and so in a way is he. In our huge urban comprehensive schools, where so much time is spent on administration and so little on the working relationship between teacher and pupil, very few of the things that the school offers in the way of sophisticated equipment actually comes his way. They didn’t ask him when they decided how to spend this year’s allocation of cash. He finds when he wants to use the school’s reprographic facilities that they have run out of paper and the office staff are too busy to make him a stencil. Although the advance details of radio and television programmes are pinned on the Head of Department’s wall, by the time he has had a chance to note their contents, he finds that room thirty-four is overbooked. He, like his pupils, is in danger of becoming cynical and resigned.

Has he the equipment, either in the school, or in himself, to become a successful streetworker? He probably has not, but what helpful hints can we give him? I believe that the best advice we can give him is:

1 Do not work in isolation. You cannot be the only member of staff who sees the environment as the teaching resource. Who else is involved in off-the-premises activities? Is anyone hooked on to the Community Service network? What sort of local studies have been done, and under what subject-heading in the earlier years of the school? Find allies among your colleagues.
2 Educate yourself. What do you feel about the neighbourhood? If you feel that it is the back of beyond, don’t worry, you may be right. But read the book *The Concise Townscape* and the two books of the *Townlook* series (see Chapter 16). Try on your class a book such as Keith Waterhouse’s *There is a Happy Land* (Michael Joseph, 1956) and see if it brings that shock of recognition. Put a colour film in your camera and walk through every street (so as to get instant slides). Project them on the wall. Ask yourself, and ask your students later, what were the economic, social, political and aesthetic assumptions which shaped this particular bit of our green and pleasant land?

3 Educate yourself further. If you accept our premise that *issues* form the best teaching topic, read the local papers (both of them). This will quickly reveal what the most obvious current controversies are. Go along to their office, buy or beg six months of back issues. Find out what they would charge for sending two dozen copies a week to the school. Who else is publicising local issues? Is there a neighbourhood action journal or organisation? Get to know the people involved.

4 Make contact with the public library. Do they have a local collection, with historical, geological, geographical and industrial allusions? Any publications, any collections of slides on loan? Any local historians or industrial archaeologists to approach?

5 Get in touch with the council offices. Which and where is the planning authority and what are the plans? Any published sources, any spokesmen, and maps of the district going spare? What about housing, roads, open spaces?

6 Where are the transport authorities? Railways, roads, buses? What about the inadequacies, closures, extensions, proposals?

7 What are the resources of the school and the authority? Local ordnance maps? Aerial photographs? Will they arrange a showing of *Enquiry Work in an Urban Setting* (see Chapter 16)?

8 Find out the school’s and the authority’s attitude to work outside the premises. What vehicles can you use? Will the insurance policy cover the education students on teaching practice, or the architectural students doing their thesis, and anyone else you can enlist to reduce the size of the groups involved in streetwork?

9 Start lobbying for spending money for the classroom back-up material. Shouldn’t the school subscribe to *Sack, Shelter* and (if we may say so) *BEE*? Which of the materials described in Chapter 16 is essential for your project?

10 Prepare a scheme of work and wave it at the Head, but be prepared to abandon it if it doesn’t work, and to try a different approach. You, by now, are an authority on the background to streetwork. All that is needed is an opportunity to practise it.

All the emphasis in these suggestions is on preparation. There are some
immensely versatile and ingenious teachers who can effortlessly produce an educational experience under any circumstances. They are their own resource centres. Their whole lives have, in a sense, been devoted to effortless lesson preparation. But most of us are not like that, yet. Effective teaching partly depends on mastery of the material. But it also depends on their own enthusiasm for it, as you will agree when you think of the most successful teachers of your acquaintance. The Betjemans, Nairns and Goslings, that I have held up as examples for emulation, are all passionately involved in the environment. It is one of the deepest sources of interest and pleasure in their own lives. The teacher who has no capacity for this kind of involvement had better not try streetwork.

And yet we all have some special interest which the environment serves or can be made to serve, and which, just because of our involvement, we can ignite in others. The railway enthusiast or the industrial archaeologist are obvious examples. I know one teacher who inspired the whole class into becoming photographers and it would be hard to say whether the environment served the needs of the craft, or whether the craft was pressed into the service of environmental education. Stepney Words, in spite of the ridiculous fuss it evoked, was a magnificent example of using the environment in the service of creative writing. At North London College of Further Education, W. R. Page, faced with day-release classes of teenage girls who declared themselves to be interested in nothing at all, decided that he’d had enough of weeks when he finished his class ‘with a wet shirt and frayed nerves’, and took the girls out into the neighbourhood to investigate problems and interview people and bring back stories for a magazine.

Kindling and exploiting the interest of the learner is the hardest thing of all. We insist in this book that the likeliest approach is through seizing the opportunity provided by some current local controversy. But even here, when the town is seething over some issue of traffic congestion, road-building proposals and so on, you have got to be prepared to change tracks to avoid what Gordon Boon calls the fatal overdose:

Consider the child who at seven is taken to the local road junction to count cars: two years later he makes a histogram of traffic in the High Street. In the Secondary school his study group then takes a local traffic census for a Transport topic and at 16 he leads an enquiry on the danger of traffic near a roundabout. If later success takes him to a College or University Social Science course, he may well be caught up in more traffic flows as he delves into urban networks and town centre congestion. Exaggerated as this may appear, with environmental studies taught in nearby Junior and Secondary schools, some duplication of activity is inevitable. No matter how fascinating the street, station or polluted river may seem, the third time round can produce a very limited response.

He is right of course, but short of a centrally regulated system there is
really no way of avoiding this duplication. ‘Oh, Sir, not pollution again’ is a cry which must have been heard in many schools, but this is a reaction to classroom preaching, rather than to practical work in the environment. For it is also possible to see the example that Mr Boon gives as one of graded levels of sophistication in the enquiry, leading to the status of citizenship which is able to argue on equal terms with the highway engineer, whose techniques are no different. Education for participation in fact.

Notes

3 Ibid.
The environment gang

He leaves school as soon as he can but is often among the last to land a job, and when he does land one, it doesn’t carry the distinction of day release or an apprenticeship; and as he’s virtually discarded by his school, he avoids the youth club and further education, both of which remind him of it. He knows the misery of unimportance; and as no teacher has ever been a John Robinson, no teacher knows the depth of his resentment.

Sir Alec Clegg Address on the hundredth anniversary of the Education Act of 1870

The early leavers—the ‘lower ability group’ to some, the ‘under-achievers’ to others who point out that children tend to live up to our expectations of them—are those to whom the Newsom committee gave the collective name John Robinson, and Sir Alec Clegg has been reminding us for years of the injustices and indignities that John Robinson suffers at the hands of the education system which owes him most and offers him least. Geared as it is to academic proficiency, it is an obstacle race in which he is hobbled from the start, with the consequence that he has decided that it is not worth while to compete. The extra year of compulsory education is now with us, and the closer you get to the classroom, the less the enthusiasm that you find for it, on either side of the desk.

I questioned a well-known educator about the effect of the extra year of educational conscription. ‘A disaster,’ he said. ‘The degree of involvement of these pupils in what the school can offer is too low even to be called negative. The effect of this totally alienated element on the school as a whole doesn’t bear thinking about.’ But, I asked him, isn’t that just what was said when the minimum leaving age was raised from fourteen to fifteen in 1947-8? ‘Things were different then,’ he replied:

I was teaching rural studies, and I had the leavers’ class, as we called it, to myself. I used to give them man-sized jobs. We were lucky of course; the school had a lot of ground and some livestock, and we had arrangements with farmers nearby. I would give one boy complete responsibility for a sow and her litter. We had a badge for pupils who successfully reared a calf. It just couldn’t happen nowadays. The authority wouldn’t
allow it, and farming has changed so much that farmers couldn’t collaborate either. Why, sometimes the whole class and I would go off for the day on bicycles. Would we dare do that today? By the end of the year every boy and girl in the class had learned to drive a tractor. Would they let me do that today?

As he spoke, I began to think of that period as a kind of golden age. But it wasn’t of course. It was the time of whale meat and Herbert Morrison, make-shift and shortages, just after the war. ‘You know,’ my informant went on, ‘some of those people who were in my class then still write to me, and it is obvious that the last year was a year of growth and achievement for them. Would it be for their equivalent today? Those were certainly the happiest years of my teaching life, but how would I feel nowadays with the sullen and resentful crew which face the teacher in the final year now? I go into schools today and meet teachers who are already at breaking point.’

I asked him if he couldn’t think of a contemporary urban equivalent to that kind of experience for today’s John Robinson. But he shook his head. In the first place, he said, there are too many constrictions and restrictions on what a teacher can do, and in the second, a radically different programme or a separate institutional base would be regarded as something which differentiated the early leavers from the rest of a 1970s comprehensive school, while the policy is to absorb them and avoid labelling them, in the hope that they will somehow melt into the body of the school and disappear as a special or separate entity.

Some of the problems can be seen from Jane Thompson’s account of the course for fourth-year leavers at the Lister High School, Hull, before ROSLA. Half the timetable was run by subject teachers and half was taken up by a ‘Core course’ run on a thematic basis of social studies, with visits, social service, discussions, art, music, technical studies, and games. She reports that the subject teachers taught in a way ‘which fitted in with their normally successful approach in the general school, but in this situation, they have tended to experience the familiar problems of disruption, lack of interest, and poor attendance associated with leavers’ groups. The four of us who taught them for the rest of the time—and who because of this probably knew the children better—evolved a different technique.’ And she describes the way in which, with projects, local surveys, individual assignments, an attempt was made to build up an atmosphere of trust and friendship, ‘the chance to be out of the classroom giving, we think, more reason for coming back and helping to break down the frequently felt hostility to being confined.’ She points out that there are obvious limits to this sort of flexibility in the traditional school situation:

Children wandering about on individual and unrelated missions may seem to conventional teachers bound to their classrooms, like truancy or chaos. Children interested in a project and staying over a lesson change will be sought out by teachers whose lessons they are
supposed to be attending. The kids themselves will break off for a
sly smoke, forget to excuse themselves from classes, mislay or damage
equipment, pester teachers who have the information they need and
unless the value of what they are doing is generally accepted, all this
will be an anathema to the patience and organisation of the school.

No wonder those teachers who have been seeking a constructive use for the
extra year have looked for solutions, just as they have been doing in the
past for the 'early leavers', in schemes which involve getting their classes
out of the school for much of the time, and see the school as a base for
activities rather than an enclosure for them. One approach is that which
sends the young leaver out to 'put a toe into the sea of working life.' If
industry were more ready to accept educational responsibilities, outside
of apprenticeship, we could feel more optimistic about the prospects of
'work experience.' One comprehensive head, Dr Bryan Allen, warns us
that it is not an answer 'to keep fifteen year olds at school for an entire
year to give them a tape recorder to find out "how the world works"'.
Many pupils from working-class homes know that only too well.' One
unforeseen result of raising the statutory minimum leaving age from
fifteen to sixteen is that work experience in the form of sending a pupil
to an employer for an experimental period, which was possible last year
for the fifteen-year-olds who stayed voluntarily, is illegal for this year's
fifteen-year-olds. The Department of Education and Science's latest answer
to this irony at the time of writing is that it 'is aware of the problem, and
has the matter under active consideration.'

Another hopeful field is in social service. Since the publication in 1968 of
the Schools Council Working Paper No 17 on *Community Service and the
Curriculum*, many more teachers have become involved with Community
Service Volunteers (CSV) and similar bodies. Often, notes the education
 correspondent of the *Guardian*, 'the less successful pupils in the classroom,
the supposedly inarticulate and backward and unenterprising, turn out to
be the most effective and responsible in community service work.' It
would, however, be cynical in the extreme to serve up community service as
a diet for the early leavers while the clever kids are back in the classroom
clocking up their O-levels for a successful career. Alec Dickson, the founder
of CSV, remarked that 'the practical projects carried out by pupils almost
totally lack intellectual content or the opportunity for intellectual growth.'

Community Service Volunteers, as an organisation, has tried, in the ideas
and activity material it provides for schools,² to avoid the implication that
practical work in the environment and in community service is something
to keep the bottom streams occupied while the privileged can safely ignore
the environment and the community, and to avoid the situation where
child labour is used as a substitute for paid labour. It tries to make the
work a genuinely educational experience. But if these aims are achieved, if
the extra year is transmuted from a prison sentence to a period of achieve-
ment and personal growth, rich in life-enhancing experiences (like the year when the secondary modern schools were young that the rural studies teacher described to me)—if all this happened, then what a betrayal when it is followed by the fruitless queue at the youth employment office!

You would really have to be an optimist to assume that large-scale juvenile unemployment is just a temporary little local difficulty. Society is telling the unskilled young, in a brutally direct way, that it does not need them, that it has no use for them. They are superfluous. A number of people have grasped how utterly intolerable this is, especially since, as a nation, we automatically invest large sums in every man and woman whose formal education goes on to the age of twenty-one or later rather than to sixteen, and have proposed environmental work schemes for the young unemployed. One such suggestion led to an editorial comment in the NUT journal Teacher (17 September 1971) remarking that:

there are middle-aged men who will tell you with pride how in the 'thirties they worked for a halfpenny a week. They mean, of course, that that was the difference between what they were paid in wages and what they would have got on the dole. Yet they had the dignity of a job and the physical and mental well-being this promotes compared with the demoralizing result of enforced idleness. This, presumably, is what prompted the suggestion welcomed by Durham County Council that out-of-work school-leavers should be set to tidying up towns and villages; plus the practical benefits to the community, of course. The best that can be said about the idea is that it is better than nothing... It would not avoid the humiliation, however slight, of being provided for. It would contain no useful preparation for the career the young person might have envisaged. It is certainly no substitute for creating jobs and training schemes such as the one launched by the Engineering Industry Training Board. Admirable as that is, for every school-leaver it includes, twenty or thirty will be left standing about.

This cool attitude is justified when you think of the unfortunate history of such schemes in this country. Put 'em on public works is, of course, a hoary remedy for unemployment, dating from the Elizabethan Poor Law, and later sanctified by Keynes, Hitler and Roosevelt. A sense of outrage leaps from the page when you read the testimony of Wal Hannington. He tells of the junior instructional centres set up under the Special (Depressed) Areas Act of 1934, on the principle of no attendance, no benefit. Two boys who failed to attend because they were looking after the family while their father was seeking work, were fined by the magistrate, and warned that if absence continued they would be 'sent away to an industrial school'. He tells of the 'slave camps' for training and reconditioning run by the Ministry of Labour, and of the report of the commissioner, Sir Malcolm Stewart, that 'under the schemes now in operation insufficient employment is found for those who have been trained. The majority drift back home.
after training, and feel that the effort made has been wasted. If there is to be any hope for these youths, then training must definitely lead to work.' Sir Malcolm proposed one imaginative project after another—the Severn road bridge, the reclamation of the Wash, a Welsh national park—only to have them turned down out of hand by the government of the day. Mr Hannington wrote at the time that to claim 'that this outdoor manual work in the main is work which beautifies the town and village, and if not done by them would probably not be done at all, is quite beside the point. If they are socially necessary schemes of work, then they ought to be done, done by the proper authorities, and paid at the normal rates.' I believe that any proposals in the 1970s for this kind of scheme should start from Mr Hannington’s premises.

Michael Thomas produced a report for PEP on the camps organised each summer by voluntary groups. He found that the young people attending these camps were, on the average, ‘left of centre, moderate, humanitarian, liberal, largely middle-class young people most of whom are undergoing higher education’. Wondering whether these people were really in as much need of this kind of experience as their counterparts twenty-five years ago, Mr Thomas noted that few of those who went to the camps would have engaged in voluntary work of another kind. ‘The attraction of the work camp for the participants is clearly very strong, and the group aspect of the camp valued by them.’ He recommended that young workers, too, should be able to take a two-week break each year, without loss of holidays, for community service. Now couldn’t the scope be extended further than his suggestion, to include properly paid work of genuine social utility for young people who haven’t got jobs?

A decade ago, in the light of similar suggestions put forward in an American context, Paul Goodman made some valuable comments on the work camp idea. He recalled the experience of the civilian conservation corps in the New Deal period, and he remarked that the kind of job that non-college youth can expect to get today in the ordinary labour market is frequently socially useless: far from promoting personal growth, it usually stunts it. ‘Why,’ he asked, ‘is the under-privileged or the non-bookish boy not given vocational scholarships for exploration and training, if the college boy is given such aid?’ The ordinary job, he declared, ‘is not presented to youth as a worthwhile occupation with useful products to be proud of; often in our society the enterprise is not worthwhile, and the products are useless.’ Contrast with this the ethos attached both by informed opinion and popular sentiment to work camps: The product must be publicly useful, manly, and admirable; conservation, planting trees, stocking ponds, etc. have this popular image. To say wryly, the CCC jobs were not allowed to compete with private enterprise, that is, the boys could not work for profit and be useless, but had to fall back on the worth of the products. One hears touching
tales of the CCC boy returning twenty-five years later with his own son to point with pride to the park pavilion he helped build. And indeed, in some cases, like the Red Rocks amphitheatre in the Denver Rockies, he might well be proud, for it is a lovely thing.

Further, the notion that work is an ‘experience’ and that skills should be tried out as part of education, is considered an advantage. Variety of work, such as domestic work and field work, is considered an advantage. The work is done co-operatively or in a division of labour arranged by the community; this helps make it one’s own work. . . How strange it is that the excellent thing that the public insists on for work camps seems to be irrelevant to the ordinary jobs in society!

Goodman saw the work camp as an equivalent of the youth house of some primitive cultures; there was psychological wisdom in young people leaving the parental nest in middle adolescence. He thought numbers should be limited to about sixty because he wanted a face-to-face community without the semi-military atmosphere of the pre-war CCC camps. He didn’t restrict the idea to the conventional rural setting: ‘many youth-valuable and socially-valuable work projects require being in or near town, and therefore every effort should be made to devise an urban residential camp.’ Finally, he sees all this not as a response to an employment emergency, but as an essential institution of normal society.

We can already identify the essential criteria. The work should be voluntary: the whiff of conscription would kill the idea. There should be pay comparable with that in other occupations. There should be a flavour attractive to the young: a flavour of communes and pop festivals, rather than of award-winning and patronage. It should be intrinsically worth while, and explicitly educative: linked, just as apprenticeship is, with further education. It should not be seen as a rescue operation, but as an initiation into a new skill or trade with a growing importance: for want of a better phrase, let us call it environmental care, to cover everything from tree-surgery to sign-writing. It should be labour-intensive rather than capital-intensive, for it should utilize our most scandalously wasted asset.

Far and away the most important development in this direction has been the idea of the Community Industry, which grew out of a paper prepared by the Working Party on Youth Unemployment of the National Association of Youth Clubs, under the chairmanship of John Ewen. This far-sighted paper avoided any easy optimism on employment prospects in the traditional industries, and saw no solution in a prolongation of schooling ‘unless the most radical changes take place in the attitudes of schools to this group,’ for whom ‘whether it appears rational to policy-makers and educationalists or not, if the choice is between staying in education and being unemployed, they will choose unemployment.’ The alternative choice they propose, is not the creation of ‘non-jobs’ but the development on a large scale of a Community Industry.
The answer we offer and believe to be appropriate is a real answer. It is not based on short-term planning in terms of social educational programmes as an alternative to work, but a true answer in that it would provide these young people with genuine and valuable work, which could, if mounted with an appropriate educational programme, provide high status opportunities never previously offered. It is not the offer of a charitable hand-out, but the opportunity of a valuable role in society, and this is the only reasonable answer for society to provide.

We do not believe the scheme should be exclusively within the environmental improvement field, but should include an increase in the ancillary help available in the social services, both statutory and voluntary, in housing renovation schemes, in hospitals and other parts of the health service, and in a variety of other outlets.

We are anxious to underline that this proposal should be in no way confused with schemes of voluntary community service, or of the sometimes mooted compulsory community service schemes. We are advocating the recognition of a new 'industry of community work', which, like any other industry would pay appropriate rates and in which would emerge a careers structure.

We believe it is important that the growth of such a new 'industry' should be accompanied by relevant new structures of management which would seem appropriate in such a field, and that these structures should enable the maximum participation of young workers. Indeed, it could well be that in some experiments, young people could be allocated schemes to control for themselves, employing external skilled people at their own decision; and that enabling agents ('animateurs') should be available to such schemes to facilitate self-direction. For we believe it important that the status of the less academically able needs to be enhanced, both in their own self-esteem and in the esteem of others, for the alternative is an ever increasing estrangement of this group from the rest of society. Those lacking in academic abilities are not always lacking in other aptitudes (for example innate leadership qualities and peer group loyalties) and these need to be given constructive and positive outlets in society, mainly because our traditional belief in the value of human dignity requires such opportunities to be offered, but also because if such opportunities are not offered these qualities are likely to be channelled into negative attitudes and actions which are already and will increasingly cost society dear.

In response to this report, the Department of Employment made half a million pounds available for eight pilot schemes (in Teesside, Newcastle, Sunderland, Liverpool, South Yorkshire, South-West Monmouthshire, Glasgow and Dundee) for one year. Each of these schemes has given work to up to sixty young people. The link with the further education system and consequently with a 'career structure' which the Durham proposals
of Ian Ogilvie and Brian Clouston regarded as essential have not been made (and of course could not be if the finance comes on a yearly basis). On the other hand their ideas of utilising grant mechanisms to finance the work have not proved feasible, since many local authorities would not move unless they received a hundred per cent grant.

At the time of writing—the end of the first year—reports from several of the pilot schemes are reasonably favourable (this kind of project is more easily conceived than operated), and we are waiting to learn whether they will be expanded to a scale more commensurate with the need. The Community Industry is asking for £20 million over three years, to enable 7,000 jobs to be created. As always, it has proved necessary to trim aspirations to fit the system. Ernest Balmer, deputy national co-ordinator of the Community Industry said on 21 October 1972, ‘We are not competing with commercial contractors and attempting to create permanent jobs. The type of work undertaken involves community projects that councils would not normally have the funds to carry out.’

If only there were a community industry emerging from below, as a permanent feature of the landscape, blurring the distinctions between school and work, blending social needs with our unfulfilled obligations to the John Robinsons of our secondary schools! John Ewen insists that the running costs of a genuine Community Industry would be millions of pounds every year, invested not in advanced technology, but in people. Could we afford it? ‘There is no wealth but life.’

This blurring of the distinction between education and working life is one likely outcome of the valuable experiment which Royston Lambert of Dartington Hall is setting in motion at Conisbrough, near Doncaster. Thanks to the presence of a chief education officer as aware as Sir Alec Clegg, and a school principal as concerned as A. G. G. Young of the Northcliffe High School, Conisbrough, there has for some time been a two-way exchange between that school and Dartington (which is an independent progressive school), and this interchange is blossoming into the attempt to provide an ‘alternative to school’, initially for about thirty young people in the 14–16 age range ‘who have hitherto been indifferent or antagonistic to their schooling’. From the principles and approaches which it is intended to apply there, I have extracted (and renumbered) those which are important in our present context:

1. Children need a base other than home from which to operate but this base need not be a special institution designed, equipped and removed, as are most schools. In this case the base will be a house near the centre of a town with space for private reading, some indoor recreation, beds, and some outdoor and workshop space. . . .

2. For their fullest development young people should have a real and not sham share in decisions which affect them, should be able to interact openly and fearlessly with adults who guide them on terms...
of equality, should be free in matters of personal self expression and taste and be subject to democratic procedures where their freedom impinges on that of others. In other words the progressive ethic will be thoroughly applied and all issues, plans and progress will be regularly discussed and decisions, including financial ones be taken by the group. . . .

3 The division of time into fragmented, sequential programmes and the distinction between school and ordinary life are arbitrary, dictated by the needs of organisations not of the people within them. There will be in this group no compulsory hours of attendance, not 9 a.m.—4 p.m., no set holidays and no set terms and individuals or groups may be active at any time of the day, evening or weekend. . . .

4 Subject to the further ideas and the agreement of the group, activity with them would be based round the following:
(a) The group would have a float of money, quite a considerable sum, for which it would be responsible.
(b) It would look after the house and buy, organise and prepare communal meals when it was agreed that they would be held.
(c) Economic activity, such as part-time jobs would be permitted and watched and evaluated by the group. Many children have part-time jobs at present which schools ignore. Everyone would participate in some economic activity to raise money for individuals and for the group’s own activity. Such activities might include (according to the youngsters with whom I have already discussed it) window cleaning syndicates, a baby sitting service, running an allotment and a henhouse and selling the produce at a local market weekly, car washing, produce and craft making and selling, folk singing groups, decorating and the like. The group would decide what ventures to back, how much to invest, what wages to pay its members and what to do with the excess proceeds.

5 The whole group would explore the culture of its area and then evaluate it, the commercial culture of youth, the more indigenous culture such as working men’s clubs, trades unions, the numerous voluntary and religious bodies and attention would be paid to informal cultural groups and rituals. Using the immensely rich resources of the nearby cities, universities, galleries, country houses and events, the group would have to encounter cultural styles other than that so uniform and so inward-looking as that of the particular community. Full use will be made of the Dartington connection in this respect by visits there and by involving Dartington pupils in the experiment itself.

6 A wide range of facilities would be used. Of these the school itself might be one conceived as a resource centre and indeed some students might well subscribe to an actual course at the school using facilities otherwise not available, as for example a course in languages or metal-
work. But other resources would also be used such as public libraries, factories, commercial enterprises and a wide variety of voluntary organisations, so little used at the moment by schools, and staffed by adults who are often eager and able to offer help and practical first hand experience. Among these there will also be the many working men's clubs in the area in question, a source of funds, adult help and experience not hitherto tapped by the conventional educational set-up but at the heart of the local culture.

7 No distinction would be made between those leaving and those not yet legally able to take a full-time job. If, when the law allows, members leave for full-time work, they can still remain part of and involved with the group as long as they wish, bringing back to it their own brand of experience. One of the most absurd and cruel aspects of school is the way on leaving the young person walks out of the formal educational process as though at sixteen society has nothing more formally to offer its young. Ultimately the group might contain quite a proportion of younger wage earners.

8 We expect the Local Authority to provide a sum equalling the per capita cost of each pupil as if he was in full time schooling and no more. The capital cost, if the approach were to be extended, would be infinitely less than the cost of providing schools for everyone.

I have, by selection, given a slightly one-sided picture of Dr Lambert's alternative to school, but you can see from the extracts I have made from his proposals, that of all the many suggestions for providing new educational experiences for the unmotivated fourth- and fifth-year students, this is by far the boldest to appear so far. And it has actually begun.

Notes

2 For details of SACK (School and Community Kits) write to Community Service Volunteers, 237 Pentonville Road, London N1 9NJ
3 *Teacher*, 26 August 1971.

(Part of the text of the third W. B. Curry lecture given at the University of Exeter.)

N.B. Since this chapter was written, the Education (Work Experience) Act 1973 has been passed, removing the anomaly referred to on p. 58.
Classroom games

If it's for real, there must be a game in it.

Guardian, 11 April 1972

Rex Walford remarked recently¹ that academic games and simulations are entering a post-euphoric age of assessment. He cited the instance of a head teacher asking the applicant for a post whether he was experienced in games ('and I don't mean on the playing field') as evidence of how the news is percolating through. He went on to suggest that games, by their emphasis on processes and decision-making, help to answer the question 'So what?' which nowadays has to be added to the geographer's traditional queries 'where?' and 'why there?'

So for the teacher concerned to raise the level of motivation amongst his pupils, gaming techniques appear to offer cause for hope.² For one whose search for relevance in environmental studies includes a high level of involvement in real issues and problems as they capture public attention, they can be especially useful. This is primarily because they can introduce the subjective human values, often so influential in controlling the evolution of our land and townscapes, into a programme of study in a realistic way. For example, Lynn Waters³ has shown how, with only a very small amount of 'real' information concerning the siting of a new steel works on Teesside (mainly culled from replies to letters of enquiry sent to interested parties and from newspaper clippings) it is possible to create a simulation of a pollution controversy currently preoccupying a community. What is more they can demonstrate how a conflict of attitudes and values may have a profound effect both on the environmental outcome and on individual perceptions of the developing scene.

This is not to say that all games and simulations give equal emphasis to the same aspects of decision-making. At one extreme the game can take the form of a mere mathematical model, concerned with the assessment of probabilities, and excluding any personal element. At the other role play (the assumption by each player, or group of players, of a particular character of vested interest in the real situation) may dominate to the extent that the game becomes an exercise in imagination rather than an attempt to recreate in class some features of a real life situation. Competition between players
(representing conflicting interests in the real situation) and chance or luck (representing normal life chances in the real situation) may also be present to a greater or lesser extent.

In recent years academic gaming has gained widespread theoretical acceptance, and the elements of gaming technique have been widely recognised. They have not however been so widely used, due largely to the scarcity of published games (though some big companies have published business games). Environmental games are perhaps particularly difficult to publish commercially, since many teachers prefer a gaming or simulation exercise adapted or specially created to suit the locality of their own school or special interest. There is a need for theoretical gaming frameworks which are adaptable to particular places or to specific themes. In the United States a number of games have been published based on generalised models of 'pollution', 'town growth', 'route development' etc., but games making use of real locations do not seem to find ready sponsors, though they undoubtedly exist and are in use in various schools up and down the country.

The controlling fact is of course financial, and sales expectations have presumably dissuaded many companies, otherwise firmly committed on the audio-visual aids front, from launching concerted attempts to exploit the market. The conclusion inevitably must be drawn that teachers themselves have yet to prove willing to use school funds on this form of teaching aid, at least where the game is specific to an area other than their own. A courageous game-publishing programme might give a totally new dimension to 'sample studies' courses which are helping to transform the old regional approach to teaching the geography of Britain. Perhaps there is still a lingering suspicion that games are frivolous, wet Friday afternoon activities, rather than vital to the new emphasis on decision-making processes in environmental education.

Despite these difficulties published games are appearing in the catalogues albeit often on a heavily subsidised financial basis. Four recent publications with environmental themes are worth examining since together they demonstrate many of the strengths and weaknesses of gaming in the classroom.

All have a strong problem-solving orientation. A game from Jackdaw Publications,¹ playable by only one person at a time, requires the redevelopment of a town centre with various new buildings and a ring road. A game from the Coca-Cola Export Corporation⁵ has participants taking on vested interests in a community and deciding whether to accept certain proposed new developments—for example an airport—in their area. Similarly, a game from Community Service Volunteers⁶ gives players specific named roles in an English village considering whether to support or oppose the proposal to build a motorway nearby. A game from the Liverpool Educational Priority Area Project⁷ involves teams of pupils in deciding how to develop their particular street on the board with new shops, houses, or garage, etc. With such issues at stake children of any age over nine years can immediately see
how their classroom activity relates to problems currently occupying the attention of the ‘real’ world of the community whether it be their own or somewhere else.

The games have a well-developed role-playing element. In the CSV game each player is given a card saying what his attitude to the proposal is and some details of his personal circumstances. He is expected to represent his own self-interest at the village meeting. Altruism and unselfishness might upset this game, which educationally would be an odd state of affairs. In fact experience shows that younger pupils assume an attitude more readily than older ones who are inclined to judge and reinterpret their roles rather than simply play them exactly according to the brief. Walford records a pupil playing the role of ‘Lord of the Manor’ who became concerned at the guileless way in which a local (female) landowner was selling land to property developers and proposed ‘marriage’ in order to take over her assets.

Such impromptu re-interpretations of, or additions to, the rules raise the important question of whether there should be a ‘control’ group or a ‘controlling teacher’ in the game to ‘play God’. Some theorists say no—this interferes with a free flow of communication and competition between groups, inhibits outlandish and unexpected solutions, and imposes a single interpretation of plausibility on the proceedings. Others argue that there are always external constraints of some kind in reality. One can only sympathise with the liberal teacher who after attempting to set up the maximum creative potential in her game was confronted by one group of recalcitrant school leavers who dropped out ‘en bloc’, declared they had formed a commune, and spent their time discussing how they would divide up the women.

Over-zealous commitment amongst games players can, on the other hand, lead to equally unreal situations. Generally the aim must be to preserve reality at the expense of excitement. However, if excitement overtakes the class, a post-mortem led by the teacher can usually help identify what went wrong. Pre- and post-play briefing sessions are of course standard practice for the game-organiser who wants his class to get most from the exercise, but we should be wary of placing too much reliance on them. Post-play discussion can seem very anti-climactic after the sometimes hectic activity of the final stages of a game, and interest tends to wane. The conclusion to be drawn is that the best academic games do not boil up into a dramatic finish with clearly distinguished victors and vanquished, but rather merge into the next stage of classwork by gradually building up the participants’ interest in what is happening to them all, rather than in who is winning. The teacher can deliberately discuss successes and failures with the class as they occur, thus tilting the balance of interest still further towards process and away from outcome. Another useful ploy is to ask for class suggestions on ways to improve the game.

Where some kind of ‘result’ is unavoidable, the problem of the ‘bad loser’
can usually be overcome by playing where possible in groups, and this also helps understanding of co-operative decision-making. Yet here again, experience urges caution, for there are aspects of group decision-making which can only be recognised by contrast with individual behaviour—notably that groups have a tendency to take ‘riskier’ decisions than individuals. Individual responsibility can be submerged in the group decision, and one member with a dominant character and reckless streak can take control. It would be wrong to suggest that this is in any sense unrepresentative of reality, but it can diminish the motivation of those players who feel dominated.

Teachers, of course, are not just teaching subjects but instilling attitudes. Compilers of games would do well to note this. While in three of the games mentioned the basic concept of spatial variation comes over well by the use of maps on game boards, other concepts of less value appear to intrude. In the Jackdaw game the buildings of the town centre have all been given a price and the player has to decide on his redevelopment scheme with speed and cheapness as the criteria of success—‘see who can work out a solution in the shortest possible time and who can spend the fewest units.’ The town is seen only through the eyes of the developer with land use and not people as the main focus. In the Coca-Cola game participants vote after each proposal has been discussed, and the inference might be drawn that the ballot box has a direct bearing on control of planning developments, a proposition which has yet to be proved.

Chance is usually represented in games by the turn of a ‘chance-card’ or the fall of a die. In the Liverpool game each player draws a card to determine to what use his street should be put, and as in the case of role-play, the player’s options are considerably limited from the start. All too often the chance element has an immediately quantifiable result (Go back three spaces, lose 100 points etc). The best games incorporate some element of the subjective, non-quantifiable, aspects of decision-making, plus exposure of the players to the consequences of irrational action. The latter is usually of the players’ own making, and can be identified afterwards. Alternatively the chance cards can supply certain inputs with far-reaching consequences (e.g. The City Engineer decides to build urban motorways whatever the evidence. . .). Clearly with younger pupils the amount of intervention of this kind has to be limited to avoid passionate protests and the complete breakdown of the game.

The inculcation of factual knowledge is not one of the main aims of games, but there is evidence to suggest that they can achieve this end at least as easily as traditional methods. Facts used in a game have been brought alive and therefore it may be hoped made more memorable than those learnt by traditional methods, but controlled experimental research into this aspect of gaming has so far been minimal. Links with a factual reality can be achieved by the use of a real location for the game, and by associated project work during or after the game. The brilliant Liverpool game has
built-in projects and may take a term to play. The projects, all involving
the details of street development schemes, are marked not by the teacher
but by other groups; thus each group is first a street developer and then a
street user, and pupils quickly perceive the conflict of interests that may be
involved.

Teachers use gaming techniques for many reasons and often just to make
factual material less boring. But their greatest impact is in the field of pro­
cess—of learning about certain decision-making systems and skills which
can then be transferred to other real-life situations. ‘Direct learning’ or
‘skill transfer’ is of course a familiar argument amongst educational
theorists. Gaming appears to be capable of achieving both ends, and cannot
therefore be claimed exclusively for one side. On the other hand so few
methods aspire to the second objective that proponents of academic gaming
quite justifiably emphasise this aspect of the technique.

It seems that gaming and simulation techniques have a greater significance
than perhaps has been assigned to them in the past in their function as a
learning technique in which the future citizen can practice his role in a
participatory democracy. That is to say, the emphasis is on the responsi­
bility and initiative of the participants in contrast to previously accepted
secondary school teaching techniques where the pupils are the recipients
of accepted wisdoms. Personal perception of a problem takes on a new
validity, and of course any attempted solutions may be worked out in a
risk-free environment without the inhibiting fear of being insufficiently
informed or too ‘inexpert’. Particularly in the context of participation in
environmental decision-making, this is a vital lesson to apply in the real-life
town and country planning situations which many of our pupils will face
after they leave school—no-one is too inexpert to have a say.

The use of games in class has as profound implications for the teacher-pupil
relationship as for that between the planner and the planned. The worth­
while game usually demonstrates something about how authority makes
decisions and what the results of those decisions can be for other people.
The lesson is likely to be quickly applied by pupils in the classroom con­
text, and may be given immediate expression in their own modifications
of the game.

The conservative teacher of course may regard the noise and bustle of a
game in progress as somehow undermining his authority. The perceptive
teacher may see it as redefining his own role, and all the pupil activity as
evidence of genuine motivation to become involved in a learning experience.
The lessons of advanced primary teaching techniques are finding one equiva­
lent in older classes through gaming methods; one wonders how long it
will be before the organisation of the secondary timetable will take account
of this fact, for the short period consistently interrupts high interest and
motivation.9 The primary school example of flexible timetabling recom­
monds itself. Given the present situation however, there is good reason to
avoid games which take too long to play or which cannot be easily stopped and started.

To the cautious teacher it should be said that in one respect games are not quite such a revolutionary technique as they might appear. Teachers of geography have used models of one kind or another for years—three-dimensional ones like plaster mountain ranges or theoretical ones like urban hierarchy diagrams. To put it simply, games are merely models that can be operated in some way—either by one individual or by a number of people. If they are used in conjunction with other methods and are well integrated into a course of study they can provide an invaluable aid to learning about how our environment evolves, as well as a lot of enjoyment for pupils and teachers alike.

Notes

1 Rex Walford at a Leicester University conference 1971.
6 *The Spring Green Motorway* (Community Service Volunteers, 1971). Available from 237 Pentonville Road, London N1 9NJ.
Streetwork centres

...a rough model for an 'Outlook Tower'—as incipient civic observer and laboratory together—a type of institution needed (indeed incipient in every city, with its effort towards correlation of thought and action, science and practice, sociology and morals, with its watchword and endeavour of 'Civic Survey for Civic Service.'

Patrick Geddes  Cities in Evolution (1915)

Streetwork, like anything else, begins at home, but it should not end there. Other forms of educational work in the environment, whether geographical, geological or biological, are undertaken on the assumption that a variety of habitats should be experienced, explored and studied, and since schools are exploding into the environment, there has been an enormous growth in the number of residential study centres (See Figure 2). There is, of course, the long-established and expanding network of Youth Hostels. There are many country houses or camp schools owned by local education authorities to serve the needs of their own schools, and there are some run by enterprising or fortunate urban schools for their own exclusive use, and there are the residential field centres with their own facilities for work at all levels and with their own academic staff, like those run by the Field Studies Council.¹

The Council for Environmental Education publishes a Directory of Centres for Outdoor Studies in England and Wales,² and the Central Council for Physical Recreation produced a report on Outdoor Pursuits Centres in Great Britain.³ (The CEE notes with satisfaction that there is a growing trend for field studies to be included in the programme of outdoor pursuits centres so that many serve a dual purpose.) There is also a great variety of holiday centres, hostels and guest houses which cater for school parties, but which do not specifically provide facilities for outdoor studies. These have been listed by the Geographical Association.⁴

The number of such centres is growing continually, but so is the demand, and there are quite serious problems of over-use in rural fieldwork locations. Thus J. D. Golicher of the National Association of Field Studies Officers writes:⁵

On the geographical and social side, we are worried by the tendency of many groups to use well-known areas, often with an established field
centre, for the kind of study involving questionnaires, farm studies etc.
which might be quite acceptable as an occasional event in the neighbour-
hood of the school or college, but which are quite intolerable when

Figure 2  The explosion of field centres
(From A. T. Herbert, P. H. Oswald and C. A. Sinker: 'Centres for Field
Studies in England and Wales', Field Studies, Vol. 3, No. 4, 1972; reproduced
by kind permission of the Field Studies Council.)
done day after day by different groups from all parts of the country and without any consultation with people on the spot. In general we recommend that this type of study should not be carried out from field centres or in areas which are popular for field studies unless it is planned by local staff who know the people of the area and can receive and deal with any complaints which might arise.

But the most striking thing about the great flowering of residential study centres is the virtual absence of any provision for the study of characteristic urban environments. Certainly the list of urban youth hostels includes such towns and cities as Bangor, Bath, Cambridge, Canterbury, Carlisle, Chester, Exeter, Hastings, Harwich, Great Yarmouth, Kings Lynn, Norwich, Oxford, Portsmouth, Salisbury, Shrewsbury, Stratford on Avon, Winchester Windsor, and York. Plenty of historic towns and cathedral cities, but rather thin on the great conurbations and industrial centres.

The absence of residential facilities for urban field-work characterises some well-known English attitudes: that ordinary town environments are places to get away from rather than to study, that our building inheritance is exemplified by the set-pieces of ecclesiastical architecture, and that the geography, topography or geology of the industrial settlements which have determined our economic history are not proper objects for first-hand investigation. Some English children are probably more familiar with the Costa Brava than with the cities of the North. A reader of the Daily Mail, commenting on newspaper articles about school cruises and floating classrooms, remarked that:

As a Londoner who knows the industrial north well, I am astounded that the average middle-class southerner has simply no conception as to how the wealth of this country is earned. All schoolchildren should not only go on cultural and travel tours, but on visits to the pit face, the iron foundries, the great mills and factories, the districts in which the workers in these industries live. By all means take the kids to Stratford and the Parthenon—but take them to look at the mucky places where the brass is made as well, and then perhaps they will grow up with a sense of responsibility to the WHOLE of their country and get their priorities right.

It would be wrong to suggest that there are not plenty of teachers who are aware of the need to conduct urban environmental studies in districts other than the familiar ones. We met the other day a landrover packed with students from the Thomas Bennett School, Crawley, who, after making a study of the new town environment, were concentrating on the Covent Garden district in London, and having collected the propaganda of both sides in the dispute (the GLC and the Covent Garden Community), were making their own survey of the present ground-floor and first-floor uses of the affected buildings in the area. But such work is almost inevitably confined to places within day trip distance.
The obvious need is to provide equality of opportunity for urban fieldwork, by making it as physically possible as fieldwork in rural or ‘natural’ environments. Several years ago the TCPA Director, David Hall, called for the setting up of urban study centres for use by schools. There are several possible models that these could follow. There could be a centre without residential accommodation, or there could be residential accommodation without a study centre, or there could be the complete urban study centre, with residential accommodation and educational facilities, including an academic staff.

An analogous model for the first kind of centre would be the non-residential day centre like the one in Epping Forest maintained by the Field Studies Council, with its laboratories, library and lecture theatre. Another is the splendidly imaginative Landmark Centre at Carrbridge in Scotland (described in Chapter 12) which aims to give the visitor to the Highlands an instant education to prepare him to comprehend what he is shortly to see. An example of the second kind of centre is the Youth Hotel with accommodation for forty primary or secondary school children maintained by the School Journey Association in London. Or there is of course the Youth Hostel pattern: simple residential accommodation with catering facilities. The Youth Hostels Association has in fact been adding facilities for field study work in some of its rural hostels and is anxious to develop this side of its work.

At the level of teacher-training, one such centre exists in London, the Community and Education Centre run by the Student Christian Movement. This provides simple accommodation for twenty to thirty people who do their own cooking and cleaning. The resident staff are experienced in conducting community education courses in colleges of education, and tailor their courses to suit the needs of students. They seek to help the student find answers to the questions, How does a community function? How do we learn about it?

People congregate in shops, pubs, on street corners; they may be working, looking for accommodation, seeking advice on a problem, or enjoying themselves. In all these situations we can meet them and learn directly about their concerns. The courses will help the students to experience for themselves what life in an urban community means, with its inevitable problems and the different ways of tackling them. This will mean a lot of looking and listening and learning to ask the pertinent questions.

These activities must be backed up with constant and careful assessment in groups throughout the course, so that the students are helped to understand how people react to the structures that constrain and free them, and to see how they themselves react to people and their concerns.

But the closest analogy for the ‘complete’ centre can be found in the nine
residential centres in rural locations in England and Wales run by the Field Studies Council, which the Council describes in general terms thus:

Each centre is directed by a Warden qualified in an appropriate academic subject and having a wide experience of field investigation and teaching; his local knowledge and contacts are a valuable part of the service which the Centre offers. He has the help not only of his administrative and domestic staff, but also of a number of teaching assistants qualified in a complementary range of field subjects. Whether individual visitors and parties of students wish to follow a course run by the Centre staff or to work independently, they will find ample facilities available: lecture rooms and laboratory bench space, apparatus, books, maps and local records, together with access arrangements to suitable working ground in the neighbourhood.

Translate this to an urban setting and it describes exactly what is wanted.

The problem of over-use, already noted in some rural centres, would be bound to arise. Certainly it would arise in a far less destructive way, because of the infinitely greater durability of the built environment, but there would be an increasing unwillingness of, for example, householders to be surveyed, or industrial firms to be visited. A teacher at Boreham Wood, Hertfordshire, told us how, in discussing inner city housing problems with a fourth-year class, he impressed on them that the only way to grasp the significance of bad housing in the lives of the inhabitants was to go and find out. With no other prompting from him, five girls took the train to St Pancras one week-end, and conducted a door to door survey with a questionnaire they had devised for themselves, in the first appropriate looking street in the London Borough of Camden. He was delighted and touched when the presented him with the results. But what impressed them most was what they took to be the surliness or irritation with which people answered their questions. They were not to know that the self-same street, quite apart, no doubt from various official and semi-official enquiries, had been intensively surveyed by a local College of Further Education.

One of the things which it had been thought that our education unit might undertake was the compilation of a list of industrial firms with which arrangements could be made for visits by parties from schools. But it soon became obvious that this would be in nobody’s real interests as it was the surest way of guaranteeing that many firms would withdraw these facilities because of the amount of their time that such visits would consume. Apart from a few giant firms who regard it as part of their publicity and have a staff devoted to it, the attitude of most is, ‘We will do our best to give facilities for an occasional visit, but a continuous stream—no!’ At our local brewery, a delightful place to visit because of the horses and the early nineteenth-century beam engines in immaculate working order, the head brewer told me that he was regretfully refusing to entertain further parties of visitors for this very reason.
Now an Urban Studies Centre would not, of course, dictate to local schools the nature of their environmental work (though many teachers would be only too glad to have some guidance), but it could suggest less immediately obvious sources for first-hand investigation, both for them and for visiting parties. It could attempt, as Patrick Geddes did from his Outlook Tower in Edinburgh before the First World War, to build up a survey over the years of the whole city. It could keep a record of the findings of the school parties using the centre, and could gradually extend the scope of the work. Furthermore, as the notion of the educative community grows, more and more industrial and commercial enterprises will find it feasible to maintain facilities for educational visits as a matter of course. (Tax deductions for this purpose would no doubt be an incentive).

The function of the urban centre is exactly the same as that of the rural centre, to provide ever more imaginative facilities for direct learning in the environment. We all pay lip-service to the educational truism that there is no substitute for first-hand experience and first-hand investigation. The Urban Studies Centre is a device for putting this into effect.

One engaging idea which is in the air is that of the mobile urban studies centre in the form of a second-hand bus. A number of people in the education world have grasped the fact that if a school, or a parents' association, is buying a vehicle, an old bus is the best buy. The EPA project in Liverpool demonstrated the usefulness of the 'playmobile', and the School Without Walls working party of the World Education Fellowship has an experimental bus with which it is following up the ideas of one of its members, Robin Webster of the School of Environmental Studies at University College, for using the bus as a mobile learning centre. 'The bus allows the use of scattered resources, such as parks, museums, industry etc. It can establish a short term base at these which allows a relaxed and varied use of the situation, and makes the duplication of the resources of the school unnecessary.'

The mobile centre in the big city presents the additional attraction of economy; the acquisition of permanent premises in a central position will certainly prove enormously expensive. In contrast to the advantage enjoyed by rural centres, it will not be possible to purchase relatively cheap many-roomed mansions built by the gentry of the past (and maintained as often as not from the profits of the burgeoning nineteenth-century industrialisation which lies behind many of our current big city problems). Instead, costs will be dictated by the absurdly inflated land values of the city, chiefly controlled by massive demand for office accommodation.

There is, however, a potential source of premises which might yet be tapped, and which offers the useful feature of buildings already enjoying an educational use; we are thinking of school buildings—particularly obsolescent primary schools in local authority ownership. Many of these have already been converted and modernised as Further and Adult Education establishments and as teacher centres, but many more should be freed as the programme of primary school renewal continues.
Local authority support in the development of streetwork centres would be of enormous benefit, and while the function of the urban centre is similar to that of the existing rural field centres, there is a good case for more administrative and financial involvement of the education authority than is normally available in rural districts. The urban centres would, for one thing, have a much greater importance as community centres. Anyone who has been to a rural field centre will know that as often as not its contact with local people is limited to slightly suspicious encounters between villagers and parties of students from the ‘big house/the castle/the old mill’, plus of course increased sales for a few local traders. And where energetic warden attempt to attract local interest for example by public lectures and excursions, those attending only too often turn out to be visitors to the region or a few regular local naturalists and school teachers living nearby.

In the town, there are a number of further functions the centre could serve: an up to date permanent exhibition of planning proposals for the area, a setting for the ‘community forums’ which the Skeffington Report envisaged, a local topographical archive, a planning aid centre for the district, and a centre for short courses for teachers on urban environmental work. There would be advantages in co-ordination of the centre’s work with local libraries and museums, and even with laboratory facilities made available in the evenings in local schools. It might well be possible for schools and the centre to share staff as well as facilities. An associated teachers’ centre could devote part of its activities to helping the centre, particularly in disseminating teaching techniques used in the centre through duplicated work plans, town trails and so on. Primary courses for teachers could be set up, either in the streetwork centre itself or in the teachers’ centre. In suitable premises it might even be possible to house both centres together—circumstances will vary. A community college, as pioneered by Cambridgeshire and Leicestershire, could become a focus for streetwork activities and develop residential facilities to fulfill the equivalent function of the rural field centre. Whatever the particular situation the streetwork centre will certainly be heavily used in a non-residential way by the local pupils, so local as well as out of town teachers will be in constant contact with it.

It will, no doubt, take private initiatives to convince local authorities of the desirability of supporting residential urban streetwork centres. But any pioneering centre might reasonably expect financial help from the outset in the form of subsidies to help pay students’ course fees, an advantage enjoyed by most existing rural centres. Ultimately financial backing may come from an independent Urban Studies Council, analogous to the Field Studies Council, but as we have said there is a case for a greater degree of local authority involvement in urban areas.

It seems to us that it is more than time that local education authorities in urban areas appointed advisers in environmental studies who would match the advisers already employed by a number of rural counties. Their enthusiasm and expertise is already elevating rural environmental work to a positior
of great importance in local schools, and the same impact could be felt with the appointment of streetwork advisers.

Local authorities will have differing attitudes to such appointments. A few forward-looking ones have already set up offices to deal with community development and consultation. It could be that the function of such officers will be closely linked with educational work: to be effective it will certainly have to be. There can be no participation without education. But neither can there be education without participation—participation which for the local pupil could well be based on his own streetwork centre. Hence this new ‘urban education officer’ whether he is employed by the social welfare, education or planning department of the authority, will have a vital interest in establishing a centre of the kind we are describing, embracing a concern with both the school and adult population of the area as well as helping outsiders to understand what life in a particular city is all about.

We hope that the streetwork centres, in whatever towns they may be established, can be instrumental in helping to re-emphasise the uniqueness and individuality of their own urban areas. The nine Field Studies Council residential centres are sited in distinctive rural environments, and give the opportunity to visit a particular part of the country as well as learn general principles of biology, geology and so on. So too must the urban centre relate directly to its own locality. It may be true that urban study ‘is undergoing a radical change in outlook and techniques; morphology is of less interest than process; description is giving way to analysis as quantification aids the construction of models and theory from which predictions can be made. A town is no longer viewed as a unique phenomenon, but as a source of patterns and trends\(^\text{13}\), but it is doubtful whether an inhabitant sees his town in this way. It is only too obvious that planners often do, however, and it is the universal prescription of urban motorways, comprehensive redevelopment and tower blocks of flats and offices that the public so often has to fight against. While study at streetwork centres should clearly have an eye to the widest implications of its findings, it would be a pity if the valuable new tools (statistical methods and so on) becoming available to urban research were to be employed exclusively on the common denominators of urban existence. Some concentration on local community issues should avoid this problem.

Notes

4 *Centres for Field Study* (Geographical Association, June 1969).
6 Mary Howard, letter in Daily Mail, 2 February 1972.
8 Youth Hostels for School Journey Parties (Youth Hostels Association, St Albans 1970).
9 Details from Bob and Maggi Whyte, Community and Education Centre, 13 Northbrook Road, London SE13.
11 Convenor: Mary Stapleton, Gipsy Hill College, Kenry House, Kingston Hill, Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey. See Robin Webster, Classroom on Wheels: an extension of the living-learning environment, May 1970. For practical details see Robin Webster, 'Buy a Bus for your School' Where, No. 60, August 1971, and No. 75, December 1972 (Advisory Centre for Education).

N.B. Since this chapter was written, a Council for Urban Studies Centres has been formed (17 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AS) and there are active preparations for several centres.
We have to substitute for the worship of capitals and the State a revived city and regional life, rejoicing in variety, unashamed of provincialism, co-operating in friendly rivalry towards a rich growth of national life. . .the true city, which reconciles all the elements of a rich and genuinely human existence.

Patrick Geddes  
*Cities in Evolution* (1915)

Amongst the many letters of enquiry the TCPA Education Unit receives from teachers and pupils, are a large number on the subject of the new towns. Typically, an enquirer declares that a ‘project on new towns’ is in the offing and that a dearth of information is the problem. At one time the new towns themselves produced quantities of literature for free distribution, but for financial reasons this is no longer so, though some Development Corporations can still help.¹

But unless the school is located in the new town in question, this is probably just as well. For a mass of information about an unknown town does not usually lend itself at once to a lively course of study. Our initial advice, therefore, is to make sure a class has had a firm grounding in environmental work in a local urban area. Just as new towns themselves were conceived in the context of urban conditions prevailing elsewhere, so they should be studied. The new towns’ functions are threefold: as a rational answer to the discomforts of megalopolitan urban areas; as a way of channelling development which is inevitable if a growing population is to be properly housed; as an attempt to create balanced communities properly endowed with the services which everyone has the right to enjoy in modern Britain².

Our second injunction is likely to be, to decide exactly what it is about new towns that a course or project is to concentrate upon. Rather than start with a look at the master plan, item by item study of various facilities—housing, transport, and so on—will assist the emergence of the complete picture of how a particular new town functions. If study to date has been of the problem-orientated kind (which we advocate), then it is a new town’s problems which strike us as the most profitable course to pursue. There are of course dangers that accompany this approach. The teacher must avoid giving credence to the myths and untruths which are often levelled at the new
tissue; some controlled streetwork by the pupils may help to nail a few old lies. Let them discover by survey the facilities available, or the satisfaction of many residents. Any difficulties that do become apparent should be laid alongside the many which afflict other urban areas. A new town does not fail simply because, like any Utopian dream made real, it is less than perfect. With some classes it is worth trying to discover why the new towns have often suffered such an unfavourable public image—usually quite unjustly. Right from their inception they have been unpopular in many quarters. When rehousing the homeless of the London blitz was a high priority in the 1940s, many city authorities disliked the idea of rateable value going outside their areas. The rural authorities had no welcome for the ‘invasion’ of city dwellers, and the agricultural lobby resented loss of farming land. Industrialists wanted to continue the profitable ribbon development of before the war, and resented public enterprise. In their public image the new towns have often been attacked as glorified council housing estates—acres of single-style semis (nothing could be further from the truth). And of course their amenity provisions have taken time to develop—no complete town can be established overnight, and the earliest ones to be started are only now reaching their target populations.

There is a good case, of course, for studying a new town not because it happens to be part of a massive national strategy of new town development, but because it is an individual settlement with its own unique characteristics and problems, its own site and design, and its own shortcomings. This applies especially to schools in new towns, where for the young generation the district is not ‘new’ town but ‘home’ town.

However, the modern new town movement has been a major agent of transformation in the landscape and Britain’s main contribution to town planning theory this century, so study of their evolution is indispensable. Ebenezer Howard’s famous ‘Three Magnets’ diagram (Figure 3) is still an excellent teaching aid, printed again in the recent Faber edition of his book. An interesting exercise is to attempt a modern revision of the sketch with a class noting how attitudes to town and country have evolved since the beginning of the century. Teachers uncertain of the difference between garde cities and low density suburbs would do well to go back to Howard’s original writings or later authoritative sources.

Garden cities, two of which (Letchworth and Welwyn) Howard and his followers managed to establish long before the theory was officially accepted at government level, were conceived as the antidote to the overcrowded and unhealthy conditions of the industrial towns of the nineteenth century. During that century the proportion of the population living in large towns rose from 20 to 80 per cent. Howard’s aim was to return the advantages of rural life to the people, while providing also the benefits of employment and material wealth which the industrial revolution would be able to supply. He saw a town as complete in itself, of no more than 32,000 people, with sufficient jobs to make it self-supporting. The layout would be spacious, th
houses enjoying light and fresh air away from the pollution of factories. Each town would have a 'green belt' for farming production and recreation. Above all the benefits of development would accrue to the community and not to the individual through the public ownership of the land.

Howard of course was concerned with both the internal structure and plan for a new town and for its regional setting within a complex of settlements or 'social city'. He saw the cluster city as the next stage after the initial development of the garden city idea. His diagram (Figure 4) showing how this might be planned was omitted from the 1902 edition of his book as being too utopian, but now bears re-examination in the light of evolving ideas
of the 'city region'. In the 1902 text, despite the absence of the diagram, wrote that once the garden city target population is reached, it would grow by establishing . . . another city some little distance beyond its own zone of 'country' . . . till we should have a cluster of cities so grouped around a central city that each inhabitant of the whole group, though in one sense living in a town of small size would in reality be living in a great and most beautiful city . . . yet all the fresh delights of the country would be within a very few minutes’ walk or ride.

In the academic context, these theories provide a useful starting point for
study of settlement hierarchies and the work of Christaller and central place theorists—though Howard of course pre-dated most of the work in this field. The optimum size for a town is an interesting problem too—early new towns had target populations of under 100,000, but Milton Keynes aims at 250,000 and Peterborough the first ‘expanded’ town to be designated is being planned for 188,000. New towns also have a significant role to play in regional development, and may be able to help renew the economic base of an area of industrial decline. This has led to the siting of some large new towns well away from the existing conurbations, and there changes in employment patterns brought about by the new town are worth studying—particularly in relation to the job opportunities open to the early school leaver.

Besides network studies, new towns lead one to an examination of the internal organisation of settlements both in the social and architectural sense. If teachers are ever justified in asking their classes to involve themselves in a full-scale planning exercise, it is almost certainly when the study of new towns is attempted. The class can plan a town; draw it, model it, show how it functions. The results can be compared with the reality of a chosen new town, which should be visited. The majority of our schools are now within coach trip distance of at least one new town. For the others, a variety of films are available.7

It may be a criticism of modern architecture, or of modern visual education, that so often visual and functional assessment of an environment can be separated. The fact remains that it happens commonly and pupils should be aware of the two major criteria of judgment available to them. The critical question of housing densities is a useful illustration of this problem. Pupils from high- or low-density home areas are likely to make facile judgments upon the relative merits of the two extremes, and to confuse building heights with density. Once the groundwork has been done, I suggest by comparing the home conditions with a contrasting area, the pupils can progress to an assessment of just why the low-density solution has been the accepted new town norm. They can also examine new town high-density experiments, not forgetting unbuilt fantasies like Civilia and Plug-in City. It does not seem profitable, however, that too much effort should be expended on the more exotic dreams of the future; teachers who bend to the will of the class and spend a term modelling cities under the sea/in the sky/on the moon not surprisingly find little is learnt about the practicalities of modern town planning or, more important, about how the future citizen can control his own environment.

For those living in new towns the planning exercise can still be valuable, though the teacher has to combat, at least in secondary schools, the quite normal impatience with the home town that afflicts nearly all adolescents whether they live in a new town or not. In new towns the sense of involvement in the environment is especially hard to foster; the master plan hangs like a dark cloud above the head of the potential participator. Teaching in
Harlow, I found few in the class who knew what was being erected on the major building site which had disturbed us for nearly a year. The site and its building had of course been designated when only a very few inhabitant were present in the area. The master plan had been drawn up before most of the class were born; the distribution of land for housing, employment, schools, open space and the provision of roads, services, etc., was all decide With real power over the town vested in the Development Corporation and not in the elected local authority, there is perhaps even more reason why many new towners see little possibility of taking the initiative in physical planning issues.

One might discuss with some classes whether there are alternative ways of developing new settlements by adding a genuine decentralisation of power to the physical dispersal of settlements; whether in fact it is possible to combine the same self-help initiative that the early pioneers displayed in the cases of Letchworth and Welwyn to the grand schemes of government-sponsored town building that we have today. Massive permanent settlements can be established through individual initiative as the squatters of Third World city fringes show. Nearer home, the early seeds of Basildon New Town were sown between the wars when cheap, often occupier-built bungalows sprang up in a virtually unplanned way, taking advantage of the low price of land.

A profitable approach in the new town school is to compare the relative merits of new towns in order to avoid conclusions about all new towns from experience of one. Mr David Wright, then teaching in Stevenage, found a letter from Crawley postmarked 'Crawley—Best of the New Town: The indignation of his class led, via the local paper and the BBC, to a controversy which reached the pages of the journal of the Town and Country Planning Association. 'As to which is really the second best new town, that is after Welwyn Garden City, I wouldn’t have the nerve to pronounce' wrote Sir Frederic Osborn—new town pioneer and propagandist—(but he had earlier expressed some preferences to Lewis Mumford). Mr Wright’s pupils were less reticent, and a lively course developed out of the involvement which they felt; different new towns were evaluated, and attempts were made to explain differences.

New town work, perhaps better than any other school environmental study, can identify prejudices the pupils have already absorbed. The private car versus public transport debate gets a more rational treatment if it is divorced from an existing environment and argued over for the class’s own new town proposal. On the other hand, the teacher will constantly have to watch for signs of the kind of double-think (which affects planner too) whereby a class of children living happily in single family dwelling houses advocate high rise flats for an overspill new town on the grounds that sprawl is undesirable. The old complaint about ‘using up’ land also warrants detailed study. Naturally every new town uses land, and in the past many new towns have been designated on valuable farming acres. But
we are not in immediate danger of running out of land to build on. Loss of farm output is of course a serious matter, and urbanisation if allowed to continue unchecked indefinitely could have serious consequences for food production, but annual losses are now lower than between the wars and must be assessed alongside the social costs of overcrowding. There have been recent criticisms that the new town programme is siphoning skilled workers and investment out of the inner city areas, which are developing the crisis characteristics of American cities. It is worth considering whether massive government investment schemes organised in a similar way to the new town programme could solve the problem. If the class has clear ideas about the new town it would like, does it see the same aims as equally valid for inner city areas? How would it set about improving them?

In any context there is no case for encouraging the pupils’ own planning team-cum-development corporation to adopt the more extreme postures of paternalistic control which encourage popular indifference and acquiescence. Can they be sure that what they plan will satisfy the new towners? When they realise that they can’t, they may have learnt the most important planning lesson of all, and will have gained an understanding of one of the problems of participation.

Notes

1 Central Office of Information pamphlet The New Towns of Britain gives a list of the Development Corporation addresses, as well as a short reading list and an interesting factual account of the administration and characteristics of the new towns.

2 See Peter Self’s introduction to New Towns—the British Experience (Charles Knight for the TCPA, 1972).

3 Ebenezer Howard, Garden Cities of Tomorrow, with a preface by Frederic J. Osborn and introductory essay by Lewis Mumford (Faber & Faber, 1970).


7 See film list in Bulletin of Environmental Education, Nos. 16-17, August-September 1971.

8 Town and Country Planning, April 1966.


Émile's museum is richer than that of kings; it is the whole world.
     Jean-Jacques Rousseau   Émile

My concept of Environmental Education revolves around community contact, community problems, and the notion that the pupil must leave school not only knowing 'how things are' in his environment, but also what he as a citizen can do about them. If streetwork outside the school is undertaken where I would argue it most often should be—that is in the district and community in which the pupil lives and learns—then it can form the very bridge between 'school life' and 'real life' for which teachers and parents alike are constantly searching. Fieldwork will no longer mean an occasional visit to the countryside, but constant involvement in the problems of the locality.

In this context the museum is in a unique position to help—there are quantities of material collected from the social and physical environment lying under-used, possibly even forgotten, in all our museums. As a Department of Education and Science pamphlet put it:

    We are overwhelmed with the quantity of exhibits which our museums possess—on display and in extensive reserve collections—and to which museums are constantly adding. To conserve is the museum's first priority; to educate and entertain is a close second. To conserve for future generations whilst ignoring the present generation would be absurd. However, the use made of these enormous resources is uneven and though admirable in some museums, in others it is less well organised to meet the demands of today.

Despite the considerable museum education services which exist in Britain, I frequently meet a generally cynical attitude towards them among teachers. I cannot help feeling that the museums are themselves to blame for this state of affairs, and it seems that some within the museum service are of this opinion too. Here is what Mr J. Jenkins, keeper of material culture at the Welsh Folk Museum in Cardiff has written:

    Too often today a museum is classed as a social amenity rather than an educational institution. It comes well down the list of a local authority's priorities. Perhaps the fault lies in the museum itself, for
many in the museum profession are far too concerned with presentation and display, and techniques of exhibition. To many, museums have become synonymous not with reasoned and objective enquiry but with the unearthing of the curious. As we mount our exhibitions we ask no questions of the material we unearth but are content far too often to hold it up for display and nothing more. This is undoubtedly a remnant of the nineteenth century when a museum was nothing but a cabinet of curiosities.

As a conservationist I am forced to the conclusion that museums are very much a second best to the conservation of objects in their real environment. This is not always possible, though it should be one of the main themes of museum work. But only too often a preservationist philosophy prevails—rather than fighting for the retention of an item in situ, the museum director is satisfied only when it has been added to his collection.

It is fundamentally important that the museum sees its educational role in a different light, at least as far as ‘environmental’ objects are concerned. This can be achieved either by emphasising the context from which an item is taken for museum display, or by taking the museum itself out into the environment. It is the latter approach which I want to dwell upon; recognition of this goal is just beginning to emerge in museological theory. In streetwork the ‘museum without walls’ can meet the ‘school without walls’ in most fruitful co-operation.

A first step in the right direction is represented by the site museum—the display of materials in a specially built museum on the site where they were discovered. The period house, too, can provide a fine contemporary setting for display. But the most significant recent development, stemming originally from the USA, has been the field museum and interpretive centre—sometimes referred to as a ‘visitor centre’. In this case a museum building will be erected at a site of special interest, but not with the intention of housing a comprehensive collection of objects, but rather of interpreting to the visitor the environment which he can explore outside. In order to enhance the value of a visitor centre it may be associated with a trail (see Chapter 6) that is a path along which visitors may walk, their attention being drawn to points of interest by a printed guide, discreet notice boards, or perhaps a taped commentary.

The Landmark Centre at Carrbridge in the Highlands of Scotland was, when it opened in June 1970, the first of its kind in Europe. The brain-child of David Hayes (a man with forthright views about the dreary dust-laden show-cases of the conventional museum) it contains many features which help the visitor build a real understanding of the environment in which he finds himself. It includes an exhibition area, auditorium, information desk and bookshop, restaurant, and a combined car park and picnic area.

The theme of the centre is ‘Man in the Highlands’ and the forty-section display contains many reconstructed interiors. Labelling of items is kept to a
minimum to avoid eroding the sense of reality, and much attention has been paid to design and lighting. The early part of the display relates to the evolution of the Highlands, and the later sections to unresolved conflicts in land use which are likely to dominate future considerations of how the area should develop. These topics are covered again in the permanent twenty-minute programme of some 480 colour slides shown on three screens simultaneously in the circular auditorium. The auditorium can also be used for lectures and film shows.

A nature trail passes into undisturbed natural pine forest behind the centre. The visitor may walk only on the wooden pathway provided. The trail starts and ends at the centre and the visitor is guided by signboards. 100,000 people used the trail in 1971, and clearly more museums will establish trail centres in the future. ‘A trail’, says a 1972 Schools Council report on Museums:

suggests an adventure, a series of discoveries, encounters with the unexpected. Children one hopes, will be mentally on their toes, all senses alert. Overstructuring this experience, telling them what to see, where and when and how, takes away a great deal of the tension and the effort. The adventure trail becomes a tram line with the halts clearly defined. There may well be stopping places as there are halts on a safari where game is likely, and the stopping places may be geared for observation and stocked with specimens and information in the manner of a museum, but when the children set off on their trail, they must know that they have a sporting chance of spotting something which nobody has discovered before. . . At the end of the trail they should be able to check their personal discoveries with some of those that others have found before them.

Now I would suggest that it is necessary to develop this kind of trailside museum in an urban setting. Town trails have already been developed in the USA and we ourselves have published one for Leicester, which actually includes a stop at the city museum. I look forward to the time when at least one trail begins and ends at the museum, and to the co-ordination of museum displays with the local trail. (Mr Hayes has established an urban equivalent of his Carrbridge visitor centre at Stirling.)

The environmental psychologist, A. E. Parr, of the American Museum of Natural History, has underlined the need for the environmental work of museums to tackle the man-made as well as natural environment. Just as the city child is growing up in ignorance of the functioning and variety of nature, so too he is becoming increasingly alienated from the city environment. Parr observes that city children of a generation or two ago spent much of their time exploring and participating in the activities of the city while today children seem to be confined to school, home, and possibly the local park. The reasons for this are complex, and the phenomenon may be more advanced in American cities than elsewhere. Increased danger, for example,
from traffic is certainly one factor; another, ironically, may be the increased
difficulty and expense confronting the non-car driving members of the com-

Yet if we look below the surface of modern city life, as Mr Jenkins has
gain argued, into the houses of its poor, into its markets and cheap eating

We can never ignore the present day in searching for the history of man
and his environment. For a true picture, neither can we ignore the squalid,

To achieve this their collection will have to include more modern material
than many do at present. Flora and fauna displayed in the museum or
examined on the nature trail involve current material—or at least we hope

The contemporary scene is at its liveliest where there is a problem or
conflict of interest. Take, for example, a common town planning situation—
a public disagreement over where a new housing estate should be develop-
ed. Let the museum be the venue for the displays of rival pressure groups.
Let the council put their grand models and plans here (and not in the town
hall), let the local conservation society or citizens action group or school
geography class show their evidence. Display the newspaper cuttings on the
subject as they appear. The list of possibilities is endless. Combine it with
historical material on the relevant areas which the museum may already
possess and there are the makings of a successful and lively exhibition. And
when the controversy dies away, the decisions are made and the building
work completed, the display material may be kept together in some form
to demonstrate in a wonderfully contemporary manner to future visitors
what the fuss was all about.

The concept of problem-orientated museum displays relates very closely
to the question of whether a museum should be a cultural centre, that is
involved in, and the base for, cultural and folk activities not strictly related
to the objects in the museum’s possession. I am aware that there are differences of opinion about this in museological circles, but I am certain this kind of community involvement is good for a museum, as well as being good for the community itself. The current issue of purely local importance can be featured in the ‘neighbourhood museum’ another extension of the museum into its environment here described by Dillon Ripley from an experiment at Anacosta, Washington D.C.8

To a large extent people from run-down neighbourhoods tend to stay there, not to be mobile or move out of their district except in the transient sense of from slum to slum. Such people referred to by a slogan phrase like ‘disadvantaged’ are likely never to go into any museum at all. If this is true then the only solution is to bring the museum to them. This is what we attempted to do. An unoccupied theatre was rented which by chance was in the same street as a local school...

He goes on to describe how old objects were displayed in conjunction with other events such as temporary art shows and voluntary instruction classes on silk screen printing, casting, modelling etc. Since school pupils’ environmental understanding, and for that matter adults’ participation in the planning process, is most likely to bear fruit at a neighbourhood level, the importance of the potential of this new museum form cannot be overrated.

There are other developments of the museum form which are proving popular with schools, notably museums of buildings, and a development from this concept, the museum of rural life (developed in France as the ‘ecumuseum’). The first museum of buildings in Britain was established outside Cardiff in 1947 and subsequently museums have been developed at Avoncroft and Chichester. These museums sprang from a desire to save doomed structures and have provided people with a chance to see buildings restored to their original condition at the time they were built, and to familiarise themselves with the evolution of vernacular architecture. Most important they have, in the words of John Lowe, director of the Chichester museum, ‘alerted everyone to fight for the preservation of these buildings in their own towns and villages. . . In an ideal world there would be no need for open air museums.’ The recreation of a functioning village which is being attempted in France is more difficult of course, involving the employment of a large number of people to grow and harvest crops etc. in the traditional manner. The idea, as far as it has yet been worked out, is an interesting one in that it is intended to demonstrate certain simple truths about human dependency on the environment which cannot be so easily shown in the modern city. But the fact is that for the majority of urban children these museums will inevitably figure as curiosities rather than as integral parts of their living world.

Much of what can be said about the relationship of museums to environmental education lies in the realm of their potential—it would be wrong to
give the impression that many museums are geared to cope satisfactorily with constant school contact—they are usually hopelessly underfunded and understaffed for one thing, and there are of course valid museum functions such as the preservation of threatened items as the need arises, and the accumulation of massive comprehensive collections for purposes of scholarship and research, which are not educational in the sense that I have been using the term. Many museums seem to have realised the importance of their educational role, but few seem to be aware of how modern teaching theory might affect them. For example, there is little recognition of the value of the child-centred approach. Direct experience and critical evaluation are not helped by lectures and simple inspection of endless show cases of curios. Museums need more emphasis in their collection policies on the typical and less on the unusual. They also need more duplicated exhibits to allow for handling, drawing and testing. These invaluable learning activities can take place in the museum itself or in the schools through loan services, which many museums in Britain operate with great success and little loss through breakage etc.

Museums are not, as some would argue, resource centres in the same way that libraries are. Methods of presentation, and direct object-visitor contact can help children to acquire effective habits of recording, investigation and evaluation and to use expert evidence. Out of doors these skills can be developed in fieldwork related to the museum items.

Two points should be made with reference to the visitor-object relationship in museums, on which museologists have written much recently, which have implications for environmental study whether related to museums or not. R. Singleton in a Museums Association lecture9 has emphasised that ‘reality’ is what visitors expect to find in a museum; not a drawing or a reproduction but the real thing. Touch is important in assessing the reality of an object; so too is operation. Practising teachers know only too well the importance to a child of making something happen. Working machines and specially devised experiments and exercises (such as those in the Cranbrook Museum in Detroit) can be juxtaposed with ‘real’ exhibits to demonstrate their importance. In the environment itself pupils need a similar sense of involvement with reality. If a way can be found, however modest, to give expression to their ideas then the opportunity should not be missed; school amenity projects and community service can fill the bill.

The success of a museum’s educational effort may be judged by the amount of interest in its activities shown by young people out of school hours. The dedicated school teacher is prepared to put up with inconvenience and the loss of his free time and so on in response to school children’s enthusiasms. So too must the museum and its staff, if it is to convince us all that its interest in the education of young people extends beyond the share of a big education authority budget which it might be able to get hold of. This means involvement in the whole paraphernalia of museum clubs; allowing young people to make their own exhibitions, advice on running school museums
and possibly a ‘surgery’ for identification of objects collected by young enthusiasts. Education is always an open-ended commitment. The museum which runs its surgery only with an eye to acquiring new items, or rejects its own Junior Naturalists Club because its activities are not in accord with museum policy (as one large London Museum treated a pioneering club in 1955) would be counterproductive.

There are, then, two main conditions to be fulfilled for the museum to succeed in furthering the cause of an environmental education suited to the majority of school pupils; its collections should relate to the locality in which it is sited, and its special displays and museum-based activities should relate to the current preoccupations of the local community. There is little evidence yet that anyone has come to grips with the museological implications of a genuinely community-problem-conscious museum. I suggest that the museum’s educational methods, the collecting policy, the design of its buildings (and layout for open air museums of various kinds) will all be affected. The next few years could see a dramatic change in the role of museums in society as a whole and in education in particular.

Notes

4 See, for example, D. Hayes, ‘Stop Stuffing Birds’, Scottish Field, November 1969.
5 Pterodactyls and Old Lace (Schools Council, 1972).
7 J. G. Jenkins, op. cit.
In Shelter’s *Policy for the Homeless* we said: ‘In order that everyone knows their housing rights and the basic facts about the housing situation every opportunity must be taken to introduce housing into the school curriculum.’ We called for Colleges of Education to include housing as a compulsory subject for teachers, and to encourage future teachers to relate their particular specialist subjects more closely to problems of everyday life. And we said that housing should be introduced into relevant syllabi by all examination boards.

Eileen Ware (Youth Director of Shelter), introducing the Shelter teaching pack *Housing and You*

Given the structure of the system, and the dominance of the traditional subject areas, Miss Ware’s hopes are not likely to come true. Plenty of other special-interest groups are queueing up to demand that room be made for the introduction of their theme into the timetable and into teacher-training. But I think that teachers who share Shelter’s priorities will make it their business to include housing among their topics whether they have been trained to or told to or not, just because they see it as vitally important for their classes. Miss Ware is absolutely correct when she says that ‘many families become homeless or have housing difficulties simply because they know little about their housing rights.’ And Shelter’s Youth Education Programme provides not only valuable lesson materials but a fund of ideas for active education in the urban habitat. Here is how it worked in an Oxford Secondary School, with a group of fourteen-year-olds:  

Christopher, Jimmy, Robert and Charlie spent the morning recently exploring some of Oxford’s least attractive areas. They were producing an ‘Anti-Guide Book’ to the city. They toured the canals taking photographs and making drawings . . . Charlie thought that the old houses weren’t bad—‘When they’re nicely painted they wouldn’t be too bad to live in. They’re much bigger than those old blocks near Oxpens anyway.’ David and Lorraine were exploring Jericho. They spent a morning with an architect responsible for planning improvements in the area and he explained how a survey was carried out which resulted in the area being made a General Improvement Area. He showed them
plans to add baths, protect houses against damp, provide playspace. The young couple had plans to interview builders and workmen improving houses and they were planning a photographic study of the area.

After considerable testing and modification of their pilot materials, Shelter’s teaching pack *Housing and You*, a complete kit of information for the teacher and of work for the pupil is now on the market (and is described in Chapter 16). And as a lead-in to the topic for the 14-16 age range and above, there is an ideal book by the late Nan Fairbrother, also called *Shelter* (no connection with the organisation) which treats the theme in terms of the needs it serves: the need for privacy, company, security and growth. Its specific concern for the aspirations of the adolescent is bound to engage the reader.

There comes a stage of course, where the student’s concern is direct and personal. I gave hundreds of lessons during the nineteen-sixties on the facts about housing, mostly for day-release students whose interest was far from academic. They wanted the facts because they saw themselves very shortly becoming not merely householders but house-owners. But as the figures piled up on the blackboard, the gap between the credit-worthiness of a young man with a craftsman’s wage, and the price of the kind of house he imagined himself buying, became depressingly obvious.

My method was first to elicit from the class the ways in which a couple could get themselves a home. Ignoring, for the time being, the contribution of the housing society movement, it boiled down to three modes of tenancy only: council tenancy, owner occupation and private tenancy. (Lewis Waddilove, in *Housing Associations, PEP*, 1962, discovered that the choice in this country was smaller than in any other European country except Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Roumania). We would then investigate the relative proportions of the three, and the contrast with the proportions at the turn of the century: the rise of owner-occupancy and publicly provided housing and the continuous decline of the private landlord. (Until the First World War 90 per cent of all households were private tenants). We sought explanations for the dramatic change in the proportions.

I would try to draw from the class the characteristics of each category in turn: the maze of legislation which has attempted, over the years, to regulate the relations between landlord and tenant; the pros and cons of municipal tenancies and the mythology about who subsidises whom; and finally the reasons for the growth and popularity of owner occupation. This last was what they had come to hear—they were impatient with the exposition of the other two categories which may have been the lot of their parents but was not going to be their destination.

But faces grew longer as we calculated the incomes my students would have to earn to make the typical mortgage repayments for a house in our not-very-fashionable South London borough. There would be hollow laughs when I pointed out that building societies were not profit-making bodies, but an
exploration of the council loans and other possible sources of finance showed them to be no cheaper, and an examination of housing society procedures indicated that they had little to offer to my students. Self-build? Not a feasible proposition in our part of the world, they thought. So we would turn back with grudging interest to look at the council’s waiting list and the jungle of the Rent Acts. What was I to say to these apprentices? Get yourself the kind of job that would make you better mortgage-fodder? Save and save at a rate that keeps pace with the inflation, not only of currency, but of house prices? Move to some part of the country where it is easier to buy or rent a house?

My students were mostly destined, not for the property-owning democracy, but—after the rites de passage of furnished rooms—for a municipal tenancy, with its accompanying syndrome of dependency and resentment. It’s the usual paradox down our way: the publicly-owned housing is better-built, better-equipped and better-looking than most of the elderly privately-owned speculative building, but the latter is cherished and improved by its owner-occupiers, while the former is unloved by its tenants. We would discuss this paradox, and always, quite apart from mentioning the fact that home ownership is an investment and that the council tenant is helpless in the face of steep rent rises (and steeper ones to come) the students would bring up the old truism that ‘a house is not a home.’

This in turn would lead us back to general issues. Why as a nation do we not devote more of our resources to housing? Why would most of us prefer to be owner-occupiers? Is it for security of tenure, is it because it is the best financial investment most people are ever likely to make? Or is it because they yearn for a place which they can improve or modify? Why do most of us prefer houses to flats? Could we alter the status of the municipal tenant by turning the estate over to a tenants’ co-operative? Why has the housing society movement failed to develop here on the scale of its equivalents in many European countries? Should there be special low interest rates for housing loans, as in several other countries? Could repayment periods on house purchase be spread over even longer periods so that the costs of owner-occupation could be met over two generations? Is there a ‘final solution’ to the problem of the private landlord?

Teaching about housing at this level is as much a matter of dispelling misconceptions—about all three sectors of the housing market—as of imparting information. Eileen Ware is right about the vulnerability of the young couple in this respect. On the other hand, the students want the facts, and it is worthwhile to duplicate a table showing monthly repayments on various mortgage loans at varying interest rates, so that they can take it away and do their own calculations. A role-playing exercise is probably the best way of reinforcing facts about rents in private tenancies, and if you make overtures to the housing department in the Town Hall, you may get someone to come in and enact the housing manager’s role interviewing your students as applicants for a council tenancy. (Get the students to note down for
future use the information they get on typical rents for a variety of housing types in the district—flats and houses, old and new—as the official will have an overall view of rent patterns which is hard to acquire otherwise.) It is worthwhile begging from your friendly neighbourhood house agent some used photographs from his display window of different types of housing. Then get your class to guess at a current price, or get members of the class to make a photographic survey of typical housing from all sectors of the market as the raw material for discussion of rents and prices and relative advantages of each. After a few years in the locality you will acquire a valuable collection of material and considerable expertise. Never throw away those duplicated descriptions of desirable residences that house agents distribute to potential customers.

The class itself is an enormous repository of experience and folklore about housing, which should certainly be tapped. Some students will come forward with a great fund of family housing sagas which will be far more compelling than your theoretical presentation of the facts behind the experience. But be wary of conducting a survey in the class itself. Because of the class/status/income background to housing, it may be a source of embarrassment for members of the class to be asked to say where or under what circumstances they live.

The emphasis of your teaching on housing is bound to be influenced by local circumstances. The national breakdown of modes of tenure is roughly 50 per cent owner occupation, 30 per cent public tenants and 20 per cent private tenants, but the local proportions may be totally different. In London, Kensington has 5 per cent council tenants, and Dagenham 67 per cent. In Newcastle the Corporation controls two out of five of the city’s houses; in Greenock half the population live in council houses. There must be many schools in which, because of the nature of the catchment area, almost all pupils come from only one of the three categories.

There are plenty of applications of streetwork to the study of housing. Door to door surveys, if attempted, need to be handled with great discretion. Affluent householders don’t like to give this kind of information to inquiring school children; poor ones have enough people pestering them already. Of course, if you see the school as the community’s licensed enquirers, as envisaged in Chapter 3, you can see a detailed survey of housing conditions, conducted by the school, as the desirable prelude to informed action by the community. An East Yorkshire school made this kind of survey in 1972, and on the basis of its findings, criticised the public statements of the council’s housing director. Purely visual housing surveys, conducted from the street, avoid the charge of invading people’s privacy, and are valuable in developing habits of observation, assessment and recording. But they are certainly inadequate as a basis for policy. It is not infrequent for local authorities to make decisions on redevelopment, compulsory purchase and so on, on the basis of visual surveys by relatively untrained observers, made from the passenger seat of a moving car, and students ought to be made aware of this.
A visit to the kind of 'before and after' exhibition that is often staged to publicise improvement grants is a good corrective to the point of view which suggests that the only thing to do with old houses is to pull them down, but at the same time our students should be aware that the improvement mechanism has been exploited by landlords who want to be rid of the tenants who would most benefit by its application. Some of them will know this by first-hand experience.

Housing education is inextricably linked with consumer education. Many teachers, like me, belong to what might be called the *lumpen*-intelligentsia: we have our aspirations to the good life, and fulfil them according to our means. Living near at hand, I used to bring my students home to discuss what you actually get, in relation to your expenditure, for your investment in housing. I would explain what our house cost and how we paid for it, and how my wife had accumulated the furniture and crockery from second-hand shops. Quite often my students, in the politest way possible, indicated that they pitied us for the absence of the three-piece suits and the matching dinnerware which they regarded as the proper accompaniment to married life. The fact that the children's playthings were all over the place even scandalised some. Now, making every allowance for cultural snobbery, the fact is that our students, like most of us, have been conned by the consumer-durables industry into quite unnecessary expenditure at the home-making stage of life. The same applies to the rituals of getting married. In discussing in class the cost of weddings, enormous sums were mentioned as the cost to our students' parents of the nuptual beanfeast. Obviously this had been the subject of discussion with older brothers and sisters. 'Wouldn't you like it better if they just gave you the money?' I asked in my obtuse way. ‘Oh, they’d never do that’, came the reply. It is perfectly possible to see all this, like the traditional expensive funeral, as compensation for the dreariness of most jobs and the slights and injustices of the day-to-day world, or as the equivalent of the superior teacher's uneconomic investment in books, theatre and concert tickets. But it is much more plausible to see it as the ruthless exploitation of the young by the advertising industry, and there is no-one but the teacher who will try to make them conscious of this.

The teacher who as an article of faith avoids controversy, should avoid housing—to the detriment of the priorities and the interests of his pupils. What, non-controversially, should he say about the Housing Finance Act, or about the exploitation by landlords of house improvement grants, or about the legal profession's expensive monopoly of the process of conveyancing? The whole subject bristles with controversy, and he does no justice to his students by presenting it in any other way.

Quite apart from the most obvious controversies, they should be aware that there are people whose highest priority is *not* housing. They seek other satisfactions. We are more concerned, perhaps, with the results for their children than for them, but a classroom study of the systematic persecution...
of gypsies and other travellers will reveal some rather chilling social assump-
tions.

Again, the teacher who is concerned with the Third World can bring up for
examination a whole range of preconceptions. The squatter settlements on
the fringe of every city in South America, Africa or Asia can be seen as a
social problem, a breeding-ground for disease and delinquency, or they can
be seen as the staging-post through which the new urban dweller acquires a
stake in his own future, and can, by devoting his own precarious surplus in-
come to his investment in his family’s home, become in a decade or so just
as much of an owner-occupier as the houseproud British suburbanite. The
poor inhabitants of the exploding cities of the developing world frequently
have a freedom to house themselves which is denied to the poor inhabitants
of the rich world, even though, through chronic unemployment, they may
have time on their hands. Unless you are an owner-occupier, it is easier to
acquire all kinds of consumer durables (or expendables) than to invest your
energies and your income in your own environment.

‘Man no longer houses himself: he is housed’, says Professor N. J. Habraken
in a book (now available in English) which is a sustained attack on what
he calls MH (mass housing) for its failure to satisfy human needs, in particu-
lar peoples’ need to shape their own environment. He distinguishes between
property and possession: ‘We may possess something which is not our
property, and conversely something may be our property which we do not
possess . . . In the light of our subject, it is therefore important to realise
that possession is inextricably connected with action. To possess something
we have to take possession. We have to make it part of ourselves.’ It is
through our concern, he suggests, with what touches us daily, that it
begins to belong to us, and becomes part of our lives.

There is therefore nothing worse than to have to live among what is
indifferent to our actions . . . to what receives no imprint from our
hands. Above all we want to comprehend our environment. It is
known that if this urge for possession has no other means of expression
it would rather become destructive than look on passively. A child will
destroy a toy with which he can do nothing, and content himself with
playing with the pieces. A good educator therefore does not tell a
child not to touch anything, but teaches it activities such as constructing,
building, or maintenance and care. He gives a box of building blocks
rather than a finished doll’s house.

Habraken notes how each generation of occupants has left its mark on old
houses which survive from the past and that it is only very recently that
we have felt the need to ‘restore’ such buildings to their original condition.
And he goes on: ‘We cannot, moreover, draw the conclusion that the initiative
to construct, improve or change is to be found only among the more
affluent members of our society. One has only to look at the backs of the
poorer housing districts of some 40 years ago. The quantity of extensions,
balconies, pigeon lofts, sheds, conservatories and roof houses come, in their chaotic character, as a relief to the observer who would rather see people than stones.’

Brian Goodey develops the same idea, in writing of the environments of ‘Us’ and ‘Them’:5

The ‘active’/‘Us’ environment is that which the individual can change, the ‘passive’/‘Them’ environment is that which is changed (allegedly on the individual’s behalf) by an authority. Most of what we look at in environmental studies is the ‘Them’ environment, but it is where people are allowed (repressive concept!) to express themselves that the real interest occurs. How do people organise their gardens, what do they include and why, how have gardens changed over the lifetime of people in the neighbourhood? What about graffiti, house names, games chalked on the pavements, notices in windows, items sold in the corner shops that survive? What sort of messages do these things carry about ‘Us’ and the area in which we live?

These notions may seen far removed from the questions about the nuts and bolts of housing that our students want to know. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The inability to ‘possess’ the dwelling is one of the components of the tenant syndrome we discussed in class. The exploration of the subtle relationship between the individual and his intimate environment is one of the most important aspects of housing education.

Notes

5 Brian Goodey, ‘The Environments of “Us” and “Them”’, BEE, No. 18, October 1972.
If geography is to make a real contribution to society it must attend
to real problems rather than academic exercises.

DES pamphlet  *New Thinking in School Geography* (1972)

There is a group of environmental teachers who believe that environmental
studies, however defined, will never become established in the schools without
the leadership of an academic vanguard brandishing the sword of intellectual rigour. Geographers who have long thought of the environment as their preserve, argue in reply that the leadership is there for the asking in their subject. In another context, Professor Peter Hall has claimed that the subject also provides the essential grounding for all future environmental professionals—particularly architects and planners—whose work so often suffers from lack of common points of reference, and rigid barriers between their respective areas of interest. At a less specialised level, geographical study is often cited as the absolute prerequisite for the citizen to achieve informed participation in matters of concern to society.

All high claims, which if true certainly help establish geography’s credentials in the jealous world of academic respectability. They are however not easily proved, and debate on the topic (which is as old as geography itself, such has been the opposition of some academics) is not helped by the appalling caricature of the subject most of us were offered at school.

We all have a fairly clear idea of the skills an architect-planner brings to a town planning office (even if they are not used there or, worse, are misused) and a sociologist-planner has some distinctive techniques to contribute. But what does the geographer-planner have to offer, and how would it benefit the architect to have read more geography? In the school context it is the same question that is often thrown at the careers’ master advocating the affluent security of a life in planning: What use would a qualification in geography be to me? More pertinently the question is put to geography teachers themselves: does the geographical fare they serve to the urban early school leaver really help him to fend for himself in the environment that is most real to him? Inevitably the pages of the *Bulletin of Environmental Education* have carried articles reflecting the different attitudes towards this and other questions relating to subject teaching and the environment.
Can geography ever succeed in compressing all of the various levels of spatial concern into one programme? Is there not a danger that the small, personal spaces will be squeezed out at one end, or the larger world regional concerns omitted at the other? Does geography really have within its ranks teachers and techniques adequate to an innovative task which may involve an avowedly 'unprofessional' view in a day when academic professionalism is still rampant? Is geography, in any of its manifestations, sensitive enough to the human environment, to man's relationships with the built, as well as the 'natural' environment?

At the professional level the geographer-planner traditionally justifies himself on his familiarity with mapping techniques, and map interpretation, and on the grounds that only he has been trained in the skill of synthesising widely disparate factors which is necessary to all good planning work. In the schools field, the arguments seem to centre upon whether the geographical synthesis is broad enough, whether the introduction of new fields of interest is possible in the context of the present academic structure of the subject, and whether anything of significance can be achieved without a fundamental restructuring of educational programmes, including either the establishment of a new academic discipline called 'environmental studies' or the infiltration of more environmental objectives into future curricula.

Goodey thought geography could provide one foundation for a broad environmental education programme, but called for a radically new framework for presentation involving 'the future planner, architect, conservationist, civil engineer, social worker, etc. in common, problem-encountering, and problem-solving experiences.' The reference point for such a programme would be 'the environment itself rather than the future profession, the process of activity in the environment rather than the shape or new model of any discipline.'

This emphasis is of course what many of us concerned with the development of environmental study have attempted to promulgate. In the end it does not really matter by what fashionable label we identify our area of concern; it is often a lot easier to decide what we want to teach than to know into which subject category our material falls.

Why then do we bother to discuss the matter? The answer is simply that at secondary-school level teaching is still strongly subject-orientated, and that the themes that we write of and the methods we discuss in this book are by no means yet centrally placed in environmental work. We have to decide whether it is better to try to wean geography for the non-academic majority of pupils on to a somewhat new diet, thereby risking the dilution of our particular aims, or to carve out a new academic niche, thereby creating yet another defensive interest group and contradicting everything we may say in support of moves towards an integrated curriculum and fewer discrete disciplines. And while I certainly hold there is a sense in which all education...
can be 'environmental', our emphases on the themes of awareness of urban problems and preparation for participation in environmental decision-making are I hope concrete enough to require positive responses from a particular teacher. To judge simply from those most interested in our Bulletin, at secondary level that teacher seems most likely to be a geographer.

An article in BEE by Thomas Merriam, subsequently reprinted in The Times Educational Supplement, restated some fundamental objections to geography as he saw the subject, and suffered a swingeing onslaught in the correspondence columns as a result. His main argument was that geography is unprepared to handle human causation, and either simply adopts a crudely deterministic view of physical causes leading (albeit in a complex manner) to certain human responses, or abandons analysis and simply describes what humans do in certain places. The primary reasons why man responds to a particular situation in a particular way may be historical, psychological, sociological—anything but geographical, he argued. 'The average adolescent', he wrote, 'can hardly be unaware today that man's technology is now a greater force, a greater “natural” force than the environment in the traditional sense. The conservation movement is witness to the fact that man is concerned with preserving climate, relief, geology and the rest against the increasingly powerful force of man himself.'

As a study of modern trends in geography, Mr Merriam's paper does seem, in the words of the caustic don, to have subtracted somewhat from the sum total of human knowledge. But as a reiteration of a familiar caveat about determinism (what O.H.K. Spate called the Dodo that will not die) it bears consideration, and as a call for less concern with factual learning and more with social significance and controversy it ends on a promising note.

Mr Merriam is not the only recent commentator to display impatience with the subject. David Wright recently opened an article thus:

'Describe the manufacturing industries of Basle,' demands the GCE Ordinary Level examination. Thousands of pens obediently reply: 'Basle has grown rapidly, since it is an important route centre, and a centre for the food processing, textile, engineering, and chemical industries.' During the preceding year's work, sentences have been copied from text books to exercise book with the omission of the definite and indefinite articles; in the examination they reappear with the articles restored, except for occasional hapless candidates who offer descriptions of Berne, Brussels, or Bremen by mistake. The pupils are too busy making notes to imagine what such a town might look like, or what the phrase 'engineering industries' might mean. They have no time to notice that all large towns are 'important route centres', with 'important engineering industries'. And the problems of cities are, apparently, irrelevant: 'rapid growth' and 'route centres' are 'Geography'; the resultant slums, over-crowding and traffic congestion are not. Together with note-taking
goes sketch map copying and learning. Some are simple: ‘Moscow—a railway centre in the heart of Russia’ (sic) consists merely of an eight pointed star. Others are much more complex, with alarming numbers of capes, bays, towns, and products. The canals and railways, though often now disused, are carefully delineated; roads are apparently not relevant. The inscriptions ‘BROCCOLI’ across northern Brittany and ‘HORSES’ across the Vale of York indicate that we have moved from the ‘bad old days’ of cape-and-bay geography, but one wonders whether the learning of such ‘facts’ is really progress at all.

We can compare this depressing picture with Rex Walford’s contribution to the debate. He suggested that the shifts in subject matter seem to operate best from existing subject bases and cited the ‘new’ maths and ‘Nuffield’ science to support the claim. He went on: ‘in at least a creative minority of classrooms there is a ‘shift’ in geography. The man-man relationships and the built environment are being studied with sensitivity and relevance; the interest in conservation, resource management, and under-development is orienting man-land studies to more fruitful problem-based approaches.’

Techniques for developing the trends he refers to are being adopted with remarkable rapidity in a few schools. Perception studies, statistical methods, simulations, and a conceptual rather than factual approach to urban and third-world development issues, frequently emanating in the first instance from university departments, are enabling geography teachers to remodel certain courses out of all recognition. However, the major brake on further developments in this field is the failure of the all-important GCE syllabuses to keep pace. Paradoxically, the mainstream of academic school geography is heavily influenced by the universities through examination syllabuses, though not by the current preoccupations of the dons, but rather by the orthodoxy that was new perhaps ten or more years ago.

The exams, then, are the villains of the piece. As David Wright says, teachers cannot escape the system, for their own careers as well as those of the pupils may depend upon success in the GCE. In so far as all the academic work in secondary schools relates to the GCE syllabuses, it does seem important that the problem should be tackled.

One solution is obviously to develop new geography syllabuses which genuinely reflect modern thinking in the subject. The cumbersome machinery of examination administration hardly facilitates this, but there are hopeful signs. The Southern Universities Joint Board has abolished its ‘regional geography’ paper at O-level and its Alternative O-Level is specifically designed to incorporate study of social organisation, current problems, and decision-making processes. At A-Level, too, things are changing in a minority of cases. But it would be wrong to suggest that the old encyclopaedic regional studies are now rare—many papers, especially at O-Level, have remained virtually unchanged for twenty years. One way in which syllabuses
might change is in the adoption of a CSE Mode III approach, allowing more opportunity for the teacher to develop a course related to his own area and interests.

Another possibility is the development of totally new syllabuses incorporating new thinking about environmental studies and going under some name other than geography. In this case the administrative difficulties centre on the Schools Council, which must approve such ventures. The experience of the two groups based in Wiltshire and Hertfordshire which have been pressing to have A-Level environmental studies syllabuses adopted is not encouraging, though they have both now been accepted for trials in a handful of schools. The emphasis in these (and other environmental studies syllabuses newly available at O Level) is on ecology and man’s interaction with the natural environment. Their proponents have made a good case that ecology is inadequately covered at A-Level, and their aim has been to supply a new subject which is complementary to geography rather than a replacement for it. Yet as B.B. Hartop of Durham Education Department commented, during deliberations over the form the Hertfordshire A-Level should take, ‘It is difficult to see biology, geography and environmental studies as three reasonably unrelated A-Level subjects, because the way in which geography is developing includes almost everything now suggested in the environmental studies syllabus. Parts of geography could be expanded to consume almost everything.’

The new A-Level syllabuses, as they stand at the moment, do not of course place the degree of emphasis on socio/political issues and the urban environment that I would like to see. (And they certainly do not meet Merriam’s stricture that man not nature is now in command—an exaggerated claim that is of course totally opposed to what some ecologists have emphasised recently in a blaze of publicity.)

On a pragmatic level a new subject dealing with the environment is still going to leave a lot of geography teachers claiming that their traditional fare is the true way to approach the topic; on an academic level it is possible to argue that geography, as Hartop was suggesting, can develop to include the aims of the environmental studies lobby. As Keith Wheeler puts it, ‘Geographers familiar with the development of their own subject may be permitted a sense of déjà vu when reading the urgent (and vitally necessary) pleas by contemporary environmentalists, like Professor Paul Ehrlich, for an application of ecological understanding to the human environment.’

Some of the crucial ecological themes such as energy flows and food webs could give significance to factual material at present treated in an unsatisfactory regional framework. A comparison of the contents of the A-Level syllabuses proposed for environmental studies and existing geography syllabuses shows much common ground if little common method. If the environmental studies proponents produce or accelerate a change of attitude amongst the geography mandarins who control exam syllabuses, then all to
the good, regardless of whether they succeed in establishing their own subject.

Plant and 'bio'-geography have of course been studied for many years but it must be said that this fact has had little 'ecological' effect on conventional school geography. In the field of particular concern to us—the built environment and its problems—it is equally clear that much work has been done which has yet to make its mark on those all-important examination syllabuses.

It is important to emphasise that the problems of the urban scene can be dealt with legitimately by geography teachers, that they have been the concern of geographers in recent times, and that it is not necessary to invent a new subject in order to justify their inclusion under the geography umbrella. To illustrate this it is only necessary to refer to a few observations made by geographers about their own subject in the last ten years, during which period we might be forgiven for concluding that a large number of GCE examiners and, most regrettably, not a few school geography teachers themselves appear to have largely ignored the literature.

Martin Simons's article, 'What is a Geographical Factor?\textsuperscript{13}' argues convincingly that 'The words geographical factor (or geographical position, influence, condition, etc.) either reveal a crude deterministic view of geography, in which case the phrase should be dropped, or they mean any factor at all, in which case the word "geographical" should be dropped, or they mean nothing at all.' Much of his paper is at pains to show that the geography teacher's training would have in all probability emphasised the importance of historical, social, political and cultural as well as 'physical' factors in explaining the areal variations of human activity on the earth's surface. He cites authorities as diverse as Hettner, the Department of Education and Science, Vidal de la Blache and Hartshorne to support this view. But he concedes that in school examinations the concept of specifically 'geographical' factors constantly occurs—the candidate would write of 'non-geographical' matters at his peril! He illustrates what geographers are often in fact studying, as opposed to what examiners think they ought to be studying, by quoting from a BBC broadcast for schools about the factors leading to the growth of the electronics industry in Japan.

In the words of a Japanese business man, who undoubtedly knew a great deal about the matter, the Japanese 'are curious people, always interested in new things. If a new product appears in the shops, everyone buys it. Our industrialists, too, are interested in new inventions so it is not surprising that the television and electronics industry developed. Also, Japanese girls are small and have neat fingers; there is a tradition of embroidery and fine painting. Perhaps they have more patience than girls elsewhere. The Japanese are a highly educated nation, we have a literacy rate of 99.8%, and it is possible to recruit senior staff from a well educated labour market.' The factors mentioned might be categorized as psychological, sociological,
economic, anthropological, historical and educational. To a determinist, none of these are geographical, but to the great majority of modern geographers, all of them are, since all of them help to account for areal differentiation.

As long ago as 1963 W. Kirk declared that the deterministic confusions that have long plagued geography stem from a false division between man and the environment:14

The true division of geographical labour is not between man and environment but between Phenomenal Environment (including the works of man) and Behavioural Environment. The concept of Phenomenal Environment is an expansion of the normal concept of environment to include not only natural phenomena but environments altered and in some cases almost entirely created by man. Since so great a proportion of the earth’s population now live in environments largely of their own creation—many on great refuse heaps of past human action—and since man is both a product of and force in natural processes, it is surely illogical to reserve the term environment in the geographical sense to non-human phenomena.

The concept of the behavioural environment, on the other hand, he went on to show, has the perceptual context (see Chapter 5) at its core.

At one level physical man is in direct contact with Phenomenal Environment, and physical action will lead to changes on both sides of the relationship. At a second, equally important, level however the facts of the Phenomenal Environment will enter the Behavioural Environment of man, but only in so far as they are perceived by human beings with motives, preferences, modes of thinking, and traditions drawn from their social, cultural context. The same empirical data may arrange itself into different patterns and have different meanings to people of different cultures, or at different stages in the history of a particular culture, just as a landscape may differ in the eyes of different observers. The Behavioural Environment is thus a psychophysical field in which phenomenal facts are arranged into patterns or structures and acquire values in cultural contexts. It is the environment in which rational human behaviour begins and decisions are taken which may or may not be translated into overt action in the Phenomenal Environment.

Kirk’s important conclusion is that facts which exist in the phenomenal environment but do not enter the behavioural environment have no relevance to rational behaviour or to geography. To take the argument a stage further, it is fundamental to a belief in problem-orientated environmental study that the more emphatically an issue impinges on a society’s behavioural environment, the more relevant it will appear in the eyes of our pupils, and the more valuable its study will be in helping them face life as school leavers.

Again this view has found expression in the geographical literature, even to
the extent that pupils may participate directly in the processes of Town and Country Planning as part of their geographical studies. Grimshaw and Briggs take the Skeffington Report\textsuperscript{15} as their starting point and warn that it is possible for people to be involved in changes in their environment without in any way influencing the decisions taken. In the same way they think that pupils can be involved in studying a local problem, and yet still be dissociated from effective decision-making about that problem—for example in a tree-planting programme or studying the impact of a new motorway. They argue that:\textsuperscript{16}

In general, although there are notable exceptions, these exercises are ones where issues are already decided and ideas preconceived. The trees are planted in a designated area, the line of the motorway is already fixed; only indirectly, and with no certainty, will the lessons of research and experience be applied to practical ends—the siting of new plantations or the lines of new motorways. How easy it could be to adapt this sort of work so that real participation was present; there would then be no possibility of confusion arising and, as sometimes happens, involvement being considered as ‘brainwashing’ and school survey work as ‘cheap labour’.

The kind of involvement they have in mind is not making the decisions so much as providing and publicising a rational basis of facts and ideas on which the right decision can subsequently be made. ‘A count of traffic flow on a major road could be little more than a mathematical exercise, but it could also lead to a new pedestrian crossing or the planting of sound deadening trees or influence the construction of a by-pass.’ Here is real scope for serious co-operation between planners and teachers, and the sceptical are referred to examples quoted by the authors. One secondary school in Atherton supplied data on population mobility and commuting which the local authority used in its successful fight against closure of the only railway station in the town. Bolton school pupils undertook useful surveys of the town’s central redevelopment area under the guidance of a joint steering committee consisting of representatives both of the teachers and the consultant planners to the scheme (Shankland Cox and Associates).

Now it is interesting that these new developments—in the fields of the behavioural and perceptual environment and problem-oriented, participatory learning— are under attack from both inside and outside the ranks of geography. From those who wish to defend the subject’s autonomy comes the call to resist superficiality and the tendency to water geography down to some ill-defined course in ‘current affairs’ or ‘social studies’. Here is E. C. Marchant reflecting on the post-war experience common to many schools:\textsuperscript{17}

It was claimed that history and geography had become stereotyped and unreal. Instead, there was invented a combination which included also civics, ethics, current affairs and sundry other branches of knowledge. I can still recall my first impressions. In a class of 15 year olds I found
quite able pupils copying from a textbook drawings of water taps and street lamps to fix in their minds certain departments of local government—and hence make them better citizens. And from those who believe the subject has no genuine independent academic existence comes the argument for abandoning it altogether and letting the new fields of interest be dealt with under some other label.

It seems to me that both these critical standpoints stem from over-emphasis on the need for a clearly defined discipline of geography, complete with its own unique methods and conceptual schemes. The long history of the subject’s so-called identity crisis has led to this preoccupation with definition which has inevitably been reflected most sharply where examination syllabuses are compiled—what should go in, and what be left out?

Norman Graves and Terence Moore18 have recently performed an invaluable service in elucidating the question of definition. They refer to P. H. Hirst’s analysis of ‘forms’ and ‘fields’ of knowledge and while acknowledging the limitations of his theory write the following: ‘A form of knowledge is one which has its own distinct concepts and characteristic tests for truth. Now it is doubtful whether geography can be said to have any concepts peculiar to it. The authors conclude that geography derives in fact from three ‘forms’ of knowledge (the physical sciences, history, and the social sciences). They continue:

It could then be described according to Hirst as a ‘field’ of knowledge, in which various forms of knowledge are brought together to tackle certain problems which cannot be solved by one form of knowledge alone. For example, it could be argued that town planning problems are of this nature, since the planner must know not only something of the physical characteristics of the area to be planned, but something of the economic and social relationships between the town and its hinterland and within the town itself.

This theory of geography’s place in the organisation of knowledge has an interesting parallel in discussions of the nature of planning. We read, for example, that it is: ‘not agreed whether planning [is] a field of activity or a distinct professional skill.’19

Now a few years ago the recognition that one’s subject was a mere ‘field’ of knowledge would have been regarded as an admission of academic weakness and lack of rigour. In these days of problem-oriented teaching and an ecological approach to the environment (both natural and human), the opposite would seem to be the case. To be involved in a ‘field’ of knowledge rather than a more academically defined ‘form’ is a strength which allows the development of courses which appear relevant to the student’s experience. It also gives the flexibility necessary to introduce new concerns into the subject.

There is no suggestion that a field of knowledge is unworthy of study, and if
it seems that geography is likely to take on a more topic-based and interdisciplinary role, then geographers may feel pleased that they are able to achieve a goal sought initially in our primary schools but which now permeates every academic level even to the universities, where courses of ‘combined studies’ are proliferating.

Graves and Moore go further in their conclusions. Not only do they reflect that if geographical knowledge is drawn from many different forms of knowledge, then we may expect it to embrace some very diverse patterns of learning; they also observe that some of the developing specialisms which geographers pursue may split permanently from the mainstream of the subject—‘physical’ geography, for example, might be absorbed by physical science. The old alliance between ‘physical’ and ‘human’ specialisms is dying, they suggest (echoing a long-held belief of Russian geography). While much of what geographers actually do, especially at university level, is essentially bound up with one specialism or another, what seems to me to remain as the core of the subject at school level is a concern with multi-disciplinary environmental problems.

Now it is of course true that a degree of knowledge of the various specialisms involved in the consideration of a multi-disciplinary problem is necessary for its successful solution. But studies of these specialisms at school level should result from involvement with a topic or problem rather than be pursued for their own sake. For the average and the non-academic pupils, teaching which is primarily concerned to remain faithful to a quite possibly spurious definition of a ‘discipline’, is inevitably less concerned to interest and involve them. By abandoning a subject-centred approach, geographers can, in Rex Walford’s words, ‘shed a lot of surplus armour’ and pay more attention to new ideas currently circulating in the subject, which in my view make it potentially both exciting to study and an invaluable way to develop skills and attitudes of use to the student.

If we are looking for ‘society-centred’ aims too, it is easier to concern ourselves with specific human problems than to justify the vague generalisations about educating for world citizenship by which school geography teachers have traditionally explained their work. But as I have argued in Chapter 2, concern for the well-being of society does not necessarily mean searching for consensus (as Trevor Bennetts appears to believe,21) and weakening rather than strengthening the ‘Them-and-Us’ view of society which many of our pupils hold. As Brian Goodey has pointed out,22 too much of our attention is taken by the study of the environments of ‘Them’—the great and exceptional issues—while the commonplace and real, the environments of ‘Us’, tend to be ignored. A concern with human problems leads geography to identify more honestly with those issues which appear ‘real’ to people.

I do not believe that such an approach leads us into a backwater of purely ad hoc local studies, with insufficient coherence to allow for an examination
syllabus to be devised. General themes do emerge from local study—for example planning issues find their counterparts in all areas of the country. And to refer to the wider world concerns, which school geography should undoubtedly keep sight of, these too may be studied for their own particular problems, rather than simply as a series of ‘national regions’ whose geography is to be encapsulated in a few generalised paragraphs about climate, terrain, economy and so on.

If geography needs a credo by which it is to exist in schools today, I can think of none better than that promulgated in ‘A Blueprint for Survival’—‘We emphasise that our goal should be to create community feeling and global awareness’. For the authors of the Blueprint, this excludes ‘that dangerous and sterile compromise which is nationalism.’ For too long, geography has, by the way it has organised its information, lent support to a nationalist way of looking at the world. Politically this is probably undesirable, and educationally it is certainly a tedious disaster for most pupils, squeezing out the personal spaces at one extreme and the ‘one world’ themes at the other, just as Goodey suggests.

Despite most examination syllabuses, it is no longer necessary or desirable that geography continue to approach the environment in this way. There are signs that a new emphasis in the examinations is on the way. The Southern Universities Joint Board Alternative O-Level, already referred to, is divided into two parts, ‘Britain’ and ‘Underdevelopment and the Developing Countries’, coming close, I believe, to two focal themes for school geography in the seventies which for want of a better shorthand we might call ‘Streets for People’ and ‘Development’. When non-local and non-British environments are given detailed attention it would, I suggest, be most profitable to think in terms of ‘Other People’s Streets’. Likewise development problems are not confined to the third world, the presently terms ‘underdeveloped or developing countries.’ Consideration of the goals of development and its problems will inevitably lead to study of the relationship between the rich countries and the poor countries, and of the social goals and economic and cultural organisation characteristic of various societies; issues of the widest global significance.

This dual focus for school geography is eminently compatible with a continuation of the research already undertaken by academic geography into human problems. Trevor Bennetts describes the research themes under six general headings: the well-being of the human population; the quality of the environment; the environment interpreted in resource terms; alternative ways of using and organising space; technology and man’s ability to improve or damage the environment; change and the problems associated with it. If this is what geography is really all about, then it can cheerfully become involved with the environmental concerns expressed in this book. But it will have to stop using its examination syllabuses as a means of defining itself to the outside world. As I wrote in Chapter 2, if we must have examinations they should follow the trends in a subject, not dictate them.
Notes


2 Ibid.

3 Thomas Merriam, 'Geography or not—Continuing the Debate', *BEE*, No. 14, June 1972.

4 Thomas Merriam, 'Geography is Bunk', *The Times Educational Supplement*, 6 October 1972.

5 *The Times Educational Supplement*, 20 October 1972.

6 *The Times Educational Supplement* version.

7 David R. Wright, 'The Geography of Nowhere', *Guardian*, 16 May 1972

8 Rex Walford, letter in *BEE*, No. 20, December 1972.


10 Sean Carson (ed.), *Environmental Studies—the making of an A Level Syllabus* (NFER, 1971).


20 Rex Walford, letter in *BEE*, December 1971.

21 As Trevor Bennetts appears to believe—see his 'Objectives for the Teacher' in Graves (ed.), *New Movements in the Study and Teaching of Geography*.


24 Trevor Bennetts, op. cit.
Get into the habit of seeing things as they are, with the dirt, strewn paper, and orange peel thrown in; don’t acquiesce, don’t be content . . . It is the deadness of our town life which produces the deadness of our architecture: the unutterable deadness which has come over English cities and villages in the last forty years, the stagnation and daily dying of the towns up and down the country . . . For the earlier part of my life I was quieted by being told that ours was the richest country in the world, until I woke up to know that what I meant by riches was learning and beauty, and music and art, coffee and omelettes. Perhaps in the coming days of poverty we may get more of these.

W. R. Lethaby  *Form in Civilisation* (1922)

In Market Street, Deadsville, the market has gone. The new shopping centre has drained away the multiple groceries, although some of the shops there are still unlet. (Two of them are held rent-free by the Deadsville Pre-school Playgroup Association.) But so are the old shops in Market Street too, and this was probably why the Education Committee was able to secure a lease on the old Co-op premises in that street to turn the building into their Streetwork Centre. It was cheaper than the proposed Sixth Form Centre at Deadsville County Secondary School, which had been pushed back, year after year, in the Department of Education and Science’s building programme. It is a deep, double-fronted shop with two storeys above and an extension behind, and the decision to take the lease was based on the square-footage available for a relatively low outlay.

On the left of the main entrance, in what used to be the home furnishings department, is now the Omelette House, run by the Community Industry, which couldn’t help being a success as it is the only place for decent food in Deadsville. People enjoy the continually changing mural on the wall, the decor of old griddles and grids (cast 120 years ago in this very street at the foundry down by the bridge), as well as the menu with its twenty-five different egg dishes. You will recognise the waiters and the cooks: last year’s—or is it this year’s?—fifth form. You will recognise the group too, playing in the evening. Wasn’t that boy, singing the songs that Cecil Sharp noted
down in this area sixty years ago, in your English class two years ago? Did he learn them from you? Did you know he played the guitar? Where did he learn those tough American railroad songs, at the very time when they are proposing to close down Deadsville Central? Does he see the irony? Did this enter into you scheme of work?

But our interest is on the other side of the main entrance, in what used to be the grocery department. Today it houses the Egg Head, which involves not only the sixth form centre, but is also the ROSLA headquarters, for it had been decided that there was no reason why the two should be separate. The Egg Head is becoming more and more the focus of upper school work in Deadsville, and various groups can be seen there in the morning, discussing their assignments with their tutors over coffee.

The English group are preparing a feature 'What's Under Your Back Garden' for next week's *Bugle*. Their task is to put into layman's language the findings of a number of Mode Three projects in history, commerce, geology and geography which related to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century coal workings around the town, using the evidence from the sites and from the maps in the county library and the National Coal Board archives. Another group—the cartographers—is preparing the map which will illustrate the feature article, superimposing a street map of Deadsville onto the geological survey.

*Bugle* was started by the Neighbourhood Council which had been set up a few years earlier, when people in the town realised that the changes in the structure of local government in 1974 had made government even less local than it had been before.¹ *Bugle* is printed on the offset litho printing machine operated by the Community Industry in what used to be the gents working footwear department at the back of the Egg Head. A lot of printing is done there for a variety of local enterprises including the school, which uses the same premises for its art department, whose output of silk-screen posters has become famous. Some of their collectors' items are sold by post from the Community Shop, further down Market Street. Children from the lower school sell *Bugle* from door to door every Friday, on a commission basis.² The result is that everybody in Deadsville, including the kids, reads *Bugle*.

The history group, upstairs in the Egg Head, are working through the papers of the old Urban District Council under the direction of the County Archivist, this being thought better than burying them in the vaults of the new District Council. They are preparing a monograph on public health in Deadsville 1888-1973. The work is sometimes tedious, but the students are conscious that they are handling materials which no historian has touched before.

But for us as visitors, the most stimulating of the projects going on at the Egg Head is the one everyone calls futurology, although it is officially known as the planning group. They are engaged in long-term strategic planning. The
futurology project mushroomed from the preoccupations of two members of staff. One of them, who was charged with the task of giving careers advice, was continuously perplexed and depressed by the lack of useful answers to the question constantly put to him, ‘Well Sir, is there any future for this part of the world?’ He and another teacher had been up to the Newcastle-Upon-Tyne Festival in 1972 and attended the conference on ‘Planning for People’, where they heard a talk by Robert Allen of the Ecologist magazine on the subject ‘Has the North-East a Future?’ Allen was appealing for people and organisations in the region to form committees to set out their plans for the development of the North-East, looking ahead to 2073. He got a cool reception from his audience in Newcastle, it seemed to them at the time, but the implications struck a responsive chord in those teachers from Deadsville. The problems which they tried to cope with, and to find an answer for, were very similar to those of the North-East, and they went back home excited by Mr Allen’s propositions, so it is worth quoting them at length: 3

The problems of the North-East are well known: unemployment, declining heavy industry, the abandonment of long-established mining communities, pollution and dereliction.

Are they being tackled properly?

Will the solutions to one problem make any of the others worse? Take unemployment. In the period 1960-1970, the percentage of unemployed went up from 2.9 to 4.8, as against the national average which went up from 1.7 to 2.7. The North of England has a higher percentage of unemployed than any other region of the UK except Northern Ireland.

What is the conventional solution to this and related problems? It was expressed succinctly enough six years ago in the foreword to the Northern Economic Planning Council’s publication, Challenge of the Changing North: ‘it is immediately clear that success in meeting the challenge that faces the region will come only by the continued expansion of its industry and commerce’.

When these words were published, unemployment stood at 35,100. By 1970, it had risen to 63,300, an increase of 80.3 per cent. During the same period, public investment in new construction (the most readily available index of economic expansion) rose from £107.6 million to £181.2 million, an increase of 68.4 per cent. This increase was unable to prevent a worsening of the situation, let alone bring about an improvement.

It is not difficult to understand why. A major key to economic expansion is the maximisation of labour productivity, so that a given investment will provide fewer and fewer jobs. The proposed new steel complex for Teesside is a typical example of this. As BSC’s deputy chairman, Dr. M. Finniston, has pointed out: ‘We produce 120 tons for every man-year in the corporation. But the Japanese
are producing nearly four times that, and any single plant of modern design will produce 750 tons per man, or six times as much, so to produce the required tonnage of steel, you need one sixth of the manpower. You are investing only to reduce the manpower. BSC is not the way out for this area.'

He is quite right. The relationship between industrial expansion and social betterment is unproven to say the least. Worse, expansion of any kind is not a process which can continue for very long. Sooner or later we will run out of the raw materials required to sustain such expansion, and the best available evidence indicates that it will be sooner. Also, the increasing consumption of raw materials and energy leads inevitably to greater pollution, which not only damages human health but also jeopardises those ecological networks on which we all depend for life.

As long as growth come-what-may is seen as the answer to the ills of the North-East, the region will continue to suffer from heavy unemployment and pollution, and any solution to either problem is likely to fail, or to aggravate the other problem, or both. Indeed, within today’s social and economic context the 'jobs versus beauty and health' dichotomy is an irrelevant diversion. Industrial expansion can give us none of these.

This is not to say that the problems of the North-East are insoluble. Quite the contrary. But the solutions must reflect basic social needs and recognise real bio-physical limitations. More important than industrial expansion is a sustainable society . . .

It is very difficult for people to envisage what such a society might be like or how it might be achieved. What is needed, therefore, is an exercise in popular planning and public imagination. All sections of the community must look at the problems of this region in a new light, and together work out the kind of society they would like their children to be able to enjoy.

This is the object of 'NE 2073—A Future for the North-East'. Farmers, housewives, industrialists, trades unionists, planners, lawyers, scientists, miners, factory-workers—anybody and everybody, professionally or privately—in Northumberland, Durham and the North Riding of Yorkshire, are invited to form committees to develop a 'Blueprint' for the North-East. They will imagine that the North-East is a semi-independent region, with sufficient self-government to formulate its own agricultural, educational, development, employment, housing, transport and urban renewal policies—in other words free to do what it likes in all those areas that would not have direct effect on other regions. The committees will discuss how the region could meet 'basic' demands—for food, shelter, health, etc., and how to stabilise and contain 'surplus' demands—more and bigger roads, reservoirs and so on. They
will try to decide the optimum population for the North-East, how satisfying employment can be given to its citizens without causing ugliness and ill-health, and what social reforms are necessary—what is the best social structure for the North-East.

It will be an exciting exercise, but above all it will be a useful one, for three reasons.

(1) Everyday decisions by local government are taken with a number of limited futures in mind, and sometimes none at all. This is why they betray so little imagination or insight. If you want to change the decisions, big or small, you’ve got to change the framework in which they’re taken. Show the local authorities you have a different future in mind. This is the way to do it.

(2) Many politicians, national and local, including a high proportion of those in Government, are well aware that the serious social and environmental problems we face today can’t be solved without radical change. The trouble is that they are afraid to initiate it, because they know the public are behind them. This is the way to show them.

(3) If you want a decent future for you and your children, we must begin to plan with a difference. This will only happen by public demand. This means that people must know about the problems and the solutions.

You can see, can’t you, why this proposal so excited those teachers from Deadsville? It spoke to their condition. They spent a week-end feverishly re-writing it in terms of their own region and their own town. Then they discussed their version with their colleagues at Deadsville County Secondary School, and evolved a plan for building a great deal of the school’s work around a strategic plan for Deadsville 2073. By the time the futurology project members were meeting this morning, several reports on alternative strategies had already been produced and published, and had been, and still are, the subject of acrimonious disputes in the correspondence columns of the Deadshire Echo, and of course in Bugle. One group is making a journey to London tomorrow, as it is involved in conducting a feasibility study for Deadsville Carbon Fibres, a prospective firm in the district. It is going (staying at the London Environmental Studies Centre at Clapham, of course) to gather information from the managers and employees of the Morganite Carbon Company. On the following day, following the traditional split between the sciences and the humanities, one segment will conduct a statistical survey of waiting times for lifts in high flat blocks in Southwark, while the other conducts a graffiti survey in Battersea.

The other group from the futurology project have a more home-spun mission. They are concerned with the long-term productivity study of Goods Yard Holdings Ltd, another joint, mutually supportive venture of the Education Department and the Community Industry. When British Rail shut down the
goods yard, and the branch line to Dedington (unwisely in the view of the futurology project), the Education Department stepped in, and acquired not only the site of the branch line, but the goods yard too. The disused railway land on the way to Dedington has become one of the first urban nature trails, and the school’s part in Tree-Planting Year, 1973, was not only to plant in Market Square and on the Jack Lawson Estate in Deadsville itself, but to plant forest trees, and protect them, along the Dedington linear nature reserve.

This is not the only trail in Deadsville of course. After the school had perfected its town trail, it developed the Industrial Museum which really is a museum without walls, unless you count the Visitor’s Centre housed in the pit-head baths, (‘a little gem of art deco’, as the guide says) built by the Miners’ Welfare Commission in 1936, and lovingly restored to house an introduction to the rise and decline of Britain’s basic industries in the form of a dramatic ‘photo-play’ of slides and tapes made in the school, followed by a guided itinerary showing how water, coal and iron shaped the town.

But on the way, what is this alien corn blowing in the wind in the front yard of Arnold Weinstock Close? It’s part of the project’s experiment in the horticultural treatment of cereals. Each of those transplanted wheat plants is expected to produce between 600 and 1000 grains of wheat, and the project has set itself the onerous task of counting each over a period of years. You can tell that Mr Compost, of the School’s rural science course, is gathering material for his paper, Intensive Agriculture: A Horticultural Approach (Community Publications, Deadsville, 1977). When we arrive at the goods yard—what a spectacle! There are roosters on the roof of the station. It is like one of those old Ealing comedies, except that the station is glistening with newly applied paint, and so are the chicken houses. For much of the goods yard has become a free-range chicken run, and there they are, scratching around in the ballast and dog-daisy, supplying the needs of the Omelette House and the Egg Head. They even produce a surplus which is sold at the first stall in the market place since—after such a battle—it was closed to traffic. Pretty soon their productivity will meet the whole town’s needs. But what will the supermarket in the shopping centre say about that?

The school’s involvement in food production goes further. The train shed has become a piggery. Swill collection, something which the older generation recalls from the past, is suddenly relevant again. Just lately they have got a couple of cows, and are talking of making Deadsville cheese. They already have a firm bid from the Omelette House for everything they can produce.

All this has been a delight to Mr Compost, who always maintained that urban and rural studies were one, but even he has been surprised at the latest turn of urban study work in the sixth form. Inquiring into housing, landownership, industry, jobs and incomes in Deadsville, they found that the
majority shareholders in all these respects are public authorities. The state, or a government department, or a public corporation, or a nationalised industry, or the local authority, control just about everything in Deadsville. Now, since this is so, say the sixth form, why hasn’t recent development here been in the interests of the inhabitants, instead of working against them? The issue came to a head over the Coal Board houses. The Board found them an embarrassment and decided to sell them off—but to a private bidder, to the local authority, to the sitting tenants, or to a housing association? This practical issue, which vitally affected many of the town’s inhabitants, was debated in Bugle and in the sixth form forum. The way in which these political issues were traditionally presented seemed irrelevant to them. The polarisation of private and public enterprise was unreal: they saw it as a matter of the politics of dependence or of community action.

At the mucky end of the goods yard, known as the dump, students from the technical department of the school are busy experimenting in car recycling. They had seen the days when old cars stood around in the streets because it was worth nobody’s while to haul them away, and they had seen on television the giant machine which compresses all that delicate mechanism into a few cubic feet of old metal for the melting pot. Surely, they thought, all this gadgetry could be used for something? So they tried stripping down the useful ends of the old cars into their components. They found that they could link the dynamo with a propeller (rather beautifully carved from an old pit prop) and, by mounting the assembly in a place which caught the wind, generate electricity. This explains those windmills scattered around Deadsville, and the more sophisticated structures they are now building for this purpose. They also found that the delicate filigree of the radiators could be used as a ready-made component in a heat pump. This is the basis of some of the house heating devices which they have developed with the support of the Schools Council Project Technology, and of the experimental ‘eco-houses’ which the Community Industry is building in Deadsville.7

Environmental studies in Deadsville have taken some paths which were scarcely imagined when their programme began, but which led to a deeper and deeper involvement in the community’s future, and which obliterated the differences between urban and rural studies, and between the study of what is and what might be. The head of the County Secondary School is delighted. In the past his best students automatically left Deadsville just as soon as they could, while the ordinary ones joined the ranks of the permanently unemployed. Now he finds them involved in one way or another, thanks to the direction taken by the school’s concern with a whole spectrum of environmental issues, and to the continuity provided by the growth of the Community Industry, in the whole future of the town. They and the school have been thrust into the centre of a campaign to make Deadsville habitable. Could he ask for more than that?
Notes

1 They got the idea of the Neighbourhood Council because a member of the Deadsville Tenants and Residents Association went to a conference and picked up a copy of The Hornsey Plan: A Role for Neighbourhood Councils in the new Local Government by John Baker and Michael Young (50p from Association for Neighbourhood Councils 18 Victoria Park Square London E2).

2 They got this idea from the Tuebrook Bugle in Liverpool.

3 Robert Allen: ‘NE 2073, A Future for the North-East’ at the Planning for People Conference of Tyneside Environmental Concern 21 October 1972. For follow-up details read the Ecologist.

4 For the methodology, they consulted Pearl Jephcott, Homes in High Flats (Oliver & Boyd, 1971).

5 They consulted DOE circular 72/71 (Welsh Office circular 156/71).

6 They were inspired by an old book: A. C. Hilton and J. E. Audric, The School Farm (Harrap, 1945), which Mr Compost got from the county education library, and a new one: The Backyard Dairy Book (Whole Earth Tools, Mill Cottage, Swaffham Road, Bottisham, Cambridgeshire 1972, 40p) which his pupils got through the underground network.

7 They consulted Andrew McKillop of the Department of Environmental Studies, University College, London, as well as a fascinating book, Survival Scrapbook 1: Shelter (Unicorn Books, 50 Gloucester Road, Brighton, Sussex, 1972), which discusses, among other aspects of house-building, materials and techniques for do-it-yourself housing. (Has your class yet built a geodesic dome in the playground?) Needless to say, The Last Whole Earth Catalogue (Penguin, 1972) is another of their bibles.
The streetwork teacher’s textbook is the town, but his principal teaching resource is himself. This chapter lists the teaching and informational materials which we think will make for better teaching and better learning in and about the urban environment. It is our personal selection and is not an exhaustive list. Other resource material is discussed in the course of the preceding chapters. We take it for granted that the history teacher is aware of the copious literature on techniques for local history, that the science teacher knows about the potentialities of the environment and is aware of the possibilities of active experimentation by his class in the measurement of water and air pollution, and in noise surveys, that the English teacher has a feeling for local literature, dialect, folksong and streetlore.

We also assume that all urban teachers have made it their business to read Eric Midwinter’s *Social Environment and the Urban School* (Ward Lock Educational, 1972), and that every school concerned with community service subscribes to SACK (School and Community Kits), the budget of ideas from Community Service Volunteers (237 Pentonville Road, London N1 9NJ) and takes care to get hold of Colin and Mog Ball’s *Education for a Change* (Penguin, 1973).

We think that the teacher who is new to streetwork should press the local teachers’ centre to arrange a showing of the discussion kit *Enquiry Work in an Urban Setting*. This consists of a set of slides, a taped commentary and a pamphlet by Gordon Boon. It is on hire at £2 a fortnight from the Schools Council, 160 Great Portland Street, London W1N 6LL. The pamphlet can be bought separately for 10p. In this kit, two teachers describe and illustrate two examples of work in unpromising urban environments. They are not by any means models of how to do it; they are simply demonstrations of ‘how I tried it’, and this is their value. But they do take the audience, step by step, through the preparation, organisation, methods and techniques employed.

The streetwork teacher should not work in isolation. We urge him to join the associations and read the journals which represent his professional concerns. Someone, somewhere, has encountered the same obstacles and has found a way of overcoming them. The resources listed below are not cheap.
They all, or almost all, cost money. It is for the teachers and their professional organisations to press for the money to be made available. It is for the community as a whole to change its social priorities and to make the physical resources of the environment available too.

Journals and organisations for teachers

It would be disingenuous of us not to recommend our own publication to the reader who is concerned with the themes discussed in this book. *BEE (Bulletin of Environmental Education)* is intended to be of immediate use to the teacher who uses the environment and who is concerned with urban environmental education, and we know, from the reception that it has had from teachers as well as from the educational press, that it 'speaks to their condition'. It costs £2 a year (eleven issues). Schools or teachers who join the Association as education members also receive the monthly journal *Town and Country Planning* which has a unique function in bridging the gap between professional and lay opinion (and carries a regular environmental education article). For details write to Town and Country Planning Association, 17 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AS.

The Council for Environmental Education (CEE) is an organisation of organisations—set up at the time of the Countryside in 1970 Conference. The main bodies concerned with the environment belong to it, as do the various organisations of teachers. Its publications include *DELTA*—the Directory of Environmental Literature and Teaching Aids (which was serialised in *BEE*), a *Directory of Field Centres*, etc. Address: School of Education, University of Reading, 24 London Road, Reading RG1 5AQ.

The National Association for Environmental Education (NAEE) holds conferences and publishes an annual Journal, *Environmental Education*. Secretary: David Alexander, Environmental Education Adviser, County Hall, Bedford.

The Society for Environmental Education (SEE) holds conferences and publishes a journal (SEE) as well as occasional papers and teaching notes. Secretary: Brian Barrett, 33 Mallory Crescent, Fareham, Hants; Publications Manager: Paul Whiteman, 12 West Walk, Leicester.

The Geographical Association publishes the quarterly journal *Geography* and other publications. Its annual conference at the London School of Economics is accompanied by a comprehensive publishers' exhibition of books and teaching aids. Administrative Secretary: A. C. Smith, 343 Fulwood Road, Sheffield S10 3BP.

The Historical Association holds conferences and publishes a journal, *History*, and a bulletin, *Teaching History*, as well as a long series of pamphlets, including G. A. Chinnery's *Studying Urban History in Schools*. Secretary: E. D. Hunt, 59a Kennington Park Road, London SE11.
The Association for Science Education holds conferences and publishes a journal, *Science Education*. Secretary: E. W. Tapper, College Lane, Hatfield, Herts.

The Politics Association holds conferences and publishes the journal, *Teaching Politics*. Information from Miss A. Jungmann, Dept of Politics, Birkbeck College, 7/15 Gresse Street, London W1P 1PA.

There are also, of course, specialist organisations and journals for the various other subject teachers whose work has environmental potentialities: teachers of English, art, home economics, sociology and so on. There are the General Studies and Liberal Studies Associations, with their journals. These are all important as repositories for other teachers' ideas and experiences.

**Using the local paper**

For a long time it has seemed obvious to many teachers that the most useful printed matter for the classroom is not the text-book, very expensive in class sets and rapidly out of date. It is still possible to produce first-rate text books but in the field of urban environmental work, particularly in courses for the non-academic pupil, the textbook is by no means the first priority in selecting useful teaching aids. (Paradoxically the teacher may often find that it is easier for him to order without raising any eyebrows, a set of expensive books, than to win a much more modest sum to spend on more useful but less orthodox printed matter.) We need material which is local and topical in its reference, and the best source of this is the local press. We usually illustrate this, when we go to meetings of teachers, by buying, literally at random, the current issue of the newspaper circulating in the district, following Michael Storm's precept that the enquiry should be 'What issues are currently alive in this area?' Here is an example:

When I came off the train at Hitchin yesterday I purposely bought the first local paper I saw. It was the *Welwyn Times and Hatfield Herald* for Friday 26 November, and the whole paper was oozing with the raw material for a conflict-centre curriculum for environmental studies. Look at the headlines:

*Front page*

'We will find New Pitches for Boys'  

'Turned down—application to build 5 poultry houses'  

'New Roundabout experiment starts on Monday—approved by Road Research Lab. team'  

(Football or golf—a recreational land-use controversy)  

(Should it have been?)  

(Traffic planning—how do you set about it? What is Road Research and what can it tell us?)
‘Commission rents to go up from
April 1’
(What is the New Town Commis-

sion and why are the rents going
up?)

Back page
‘Hatfield Council Tenants to be
told how to apply for rent
rebates’
(How does the Housing Finance
Act affect the families of the
class?)

‘Angry leaseholders’
‘Site for School’
(What about?)
(Planning for future needs—how
do we assess them?)

Inside
‘They will have to find their own
cash for a community centre’
(What is the idea behind such a
centre?)

‘Throwing book over fence cost
him £13.70’
(Fair? reasonable? does litter
matter?)

‘Views differ on new crossing’
‘Welwyn Council refuses permis-
sion for houses in green belt’
(Is the Green Belt policy wise or
not? The experts differ, how
about us?)

‘Unemployment figures up—and
so are vacancies’
(Vital concern for our early
leavers—why this paradox about
jobs?)

‘Traffic census plan for Welwyn
Garden City’
(Council is going to spend £200 on
this. Should the class put in an
offer to do it for less?)

You will agree, I’m sure, that the paper is dripping with environmental
issues, and maybe the best teaching aid would be to buy copies of the
local paper each week.

Apart from the local press, and of course the national newspapers, there are
other current local sources: the minutes and reports of council meetings, the
reports of chief officers of the council, the documents and maps which
teachers should pester the planning authority to supply. The teacher ought
to establish personal contact with the council’s officers and he ought too, to
establish contact with the newspaper staff and get them interested in his
streetwork programme.
Another local source of growing importance is to be found in the periodicals, broadsheets and newsletters of special interest groups in the locality, a mine of information from that minority of citizens who have that concern with the immediate environment that we would like our students to develop. The growth of 'grass roots' non-commercial community papers in the last few years has been an immensely heartening sign of popular concern about environmental controversies. There is bound to be one in your district, whether it is the Gutter Press, Rochdale's Alternative Paper, The Tuebrook Bugle or Brixton's Own Boss. If there isn't one, maybe you and you class should start one. An important independent linking journal in this field, with an emphasis on housing and planning is Community Action (7a Frederick Mews, Kennerton Street, London SW1)

The technical press

Many teachers are completely unaware of the wealth of authoritative and up to date teaching material to be found in the technical press. If you feel that nothing would induce you to subscribe to yet another journal, you should still try to siphon off some back numbers of the trade papers in your direction. Marry an architect or surveyor or municipal engineer, or at least establish contact with someone in these fields. If you don't believe how useful their journals can be for your teaching, look at a copy of any one of the following: Architects Journal (weekly), Architectural Review (Monthly), Architectural Design (monthly), Built Environment (monthly), RIBA Journal (monthly), Surveyor (weekly). All these journals are much more exciting than you might suppose. There are also a number of journals which are not on sale but are sent free to people in these professions for the sake of the advertising revenue they bring in. Beg back numbers from your friends in local government.

The hand-out revolution

The ideal printed matter for the classroom is the hand-out—a loose sheet of paper which should either be so cheaply produced that each student could have one to clip into his folder, or should be available for individual or group work and for subsequent return. In theory, and if we disregard his obligations under the Copyright Act, the teacher in the well-equipped school with modern reprographic equipment should be able to produce what he wants when he wants it and in the desirable quantities. In practice it is otherwise: his best hand-out material comes from outside the school in some pre-selected form, to swell the bank of resources available to him in the school's resource centre. However, educational publishers are not attracted by handouts as such, for sound economic reasons. If the unit costs are to be kept low enough to attract buyers, the work of processing orders make the overheads excessive, and most orders are just uneconomical. This problem can
be overcome if you work for an authority which has enough in the way of resources or initiative to produce its own local teaching materials (we are thinking of the materials produced by the Media Resources Centre of the ILEA or the back-up pupil packs available for ILEA television). In ordinary publishing the break-through came with the marketing by Heinemann of the materials in the Nuffield/Schools Council Humanities Curriculum Project, which, after the original testing of the items in trial schools, were made available in ‘packs’ consisting of twenty copies each of about 200 hand-out items together with two teachers’ sets, handbooks and tape recordings, selling at about £37. When you deduct something for the non-handout materials, it looks as though you pay less than 1p for each individual sheet. This is of course because you can only buy the materials in complete packs or teachers’ sets. No-one could do it for less. The pack of HCP materials of the greatest interest for the urban environmental teacher is the one on ‘Living in Cities’ published in Summer 1973 by Heinemann Educational with its vast repertoire of hand-out material on the urban environment.

Another Schools Council project—aiming at improving the quality of general or liberal education for the 15-18 age group in secondary schools and in further education—is the General Studies project. This approaches the handout problem in a different way. It is run by Longmans/Penguin Education as a subscription scheme by which schools can select from a thematic catalogue the units they require up to the value of their subscriptions. Project materials have been edited for publication in the form of units. A unit is a group of documents on a topic put together in a pad of from five to fifteen A4 sheets printed by offset litho. There are three types of unit: Study Units contain source materials, with a study guide to help the student work on them effectively, a Note addressed to the teacher; Reference Units discuss books, audio-visual materials and resource services relating to the topic; Teacher’s Units contain materials on teaching styles, course planning, the use of study units and their relation to the materials and activities. For a £40 subscription, the subscriber receives a single copy of all units published in the current year grouped in twelve thematic catalogues, together with vouchers for a further 350 units. Additional vouchers may be obtained at £5 for 50 or £9 for 100. Because of the individual nature of the service offered, all subscriptions should be opened with the Publishing Manager, General Studies Project, King’s Manor, York. The important thing, from our point of view is that, from 1973, the built environment is included in the General Studies Project catalogue.

Yet another Schools Council project worth watching from our point of view is Geography for the Young School Leaver, conducted from Avery Hill College of Education, London. The materials published by this project will probably be available by the time you read this book.

All the more praiseworthy, since it is unsponsored by the Schools Council, or anyone else, is the Lifescape series from the Architectural Press, a
publishing house which has been publicising environmental issues for longer than most of us can remember. Lifescape 1: *The Way Things Are* by Pat Haikin, consists of a plastic bag containing twenty-four leaflets or broadsheets, A4 or multiples of A4 in size, and twenty-four question or work cards, the suggestion being that middle ability students of 13-16 should work on them in groups of three or four. This pack is intended as an introduction to environmental themes for an urban secondary school. Lifescape 1 (Architectural Press, 9 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1, 1972) costs £1.50 (or £1.20 each for class sets of six or more). The teachers' handbook costs 25p. The second pack in the Lifescape series, *Home, Neighbourhood and Community* by Anthea Holme, costs £1.75 (teachers' book 30p).

The pioneer hand-out publishers were, of course, Jackdaws, and they have issued one on *Man and Towns* by Ron Pepper and Albert Calland (Jackdaw Publications No. 80, 1971).

The Shelter kit Housing and You (£7.50 from Shelter, 86 Strand, London WC2R 0EQ) items from which may be bought separately, includes: three looseleaf folders: 'Home, Sweet Home?' 'Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow', 'A Home of Your Own'; set of five picture posters with teacher's notes; film and slide list; reading list; one-year subscription to up-dating service and to bulletin. Simulation: 'Tenement' with controller's notes. This presents the problems of families living in a multi-occupied house in a large city.

A further source of handouts is the material issued in conjunction with radio and television programmes for schools: not only from the BBC and IBA, but in conjunction with local radio and with the programmes of those authorities which run their own ETV service. The ILEA's educational television service, for example, issues some excellent and cheap pupil packs in conjunction with some of its programmes, e.g. 'You in the Seventies'. Watch out too for materials issued by your own authority's media resources centre or teachers' centre.

**Films**

There are a number of useful films on the urban environment: the real question is whether the streetwork teacher has access to the hire fee and can get the film at the right time in his course, rather than as a haphazard time-filler. For current lists see the film pages of BEE and DELTA. The most useful films in this field, including the television documentaries you wish your kids had seen, turn up sooner or later in the hire catalogue of Concord Film Council, Nacton, Ipswich, Suffolk IP10 0JZ.

**Filmstrips and slides**

Filmstrip users are of two kinds: those who want a ready-made instant illustrated lecture and peer over the notes in the darkness reading them out to the class, and those who itch to cut the strip into slides to illustrate their
own lessons. Most of us start by being the first kind, and as confidence and familiarity with the material grows, become the second kind. Filmstrips are really the cheapest way of buying slides, even allowing for the cost of the mounts when you cut them up and mount them yourself. And you should because the thirty or more images you get in a filmstrip are too much for your class to absorb in one session. The ideal thing is to assemble a collection of cut-up filmstrips and make your own programmes by mixing the pictures with the local transparencies from photos you or your class have made. This can have wonderful potential for the technique known as ‘photo-play’.

We were privileged to see a dazzling display of photo-play given by a teacher, Tony Francombe, at a SEE conference. Non-academic pupils shot a sequence of slides, concocted a commentary with sound effects on tape, and presented it through two projectors, using a simple home-made dissolve attachment to help continuity. The results were superb, and doubting teachers were assured that their classes could reach similar heights. ‘Take the worst members of the class’, advised Mr Francombe, ‘give them the least appropriate jobs—and then congratulate them.’ (Kodak Ltd, Kingsway, London WC1 publish a booklet on photo-play techniques.)

Where you have a choice of size in filmstrips (single-frame 24mm x 18mm picture, double-frame 35mm x 24mm picture) always buy the slightly dearer double-frame versions, with a view to making slides.

There are several excellent series of filmstrips on the urban environment:


Other firms with some valuable filmstrips for the streetwork teacher whose catalogues should be consulted are Common Ground, 44 Fulham Road, London SW3, and Educational Productions, Bradford Road, East Ardsley, Wakefield, Yorks WF3 2JN.

The ready-made slides produced for the tourist trade show the urban environment with all the ugly bits left out, but some are worth having, if only for contrast. Those made from the air are always useful. Shelter has a series of slides for sale or hire discussing the problems of two young couples looking for a home, but the individual pictures are also useful as illustrations of different housing types.
Games and simulations

We regard academic gaming and simulation as of the very greatest importance in environmental work, for the emphasis that is laid on pupil involvement and on processes of choice and change in the environment. We devoted a special issue of the *Bulletin of Environmental Education* (No. 13, May 1972) to the theme, and a bibliography and list of relevant games were included, while there was an article by Rex Walford on ‘Games and the Environment.’ He of course has made a major contribution to the development of games in this country, and his *Games in Geography* (Longmans, 1969) is still a good starting point, while *Simulation in the Classroom* (Penguin, 1972), which he wrote with John Taylor, gives a useful and lucid discussion of the theory of simulations with the benefit of great experience in their use. (The book includes a description of an urban growth model and of Sean Carson’s conservation game based on the siting of London’s third airport.) His contribution to *Games and Simulations* (BBC, 1972) edited by Chris Longley gave valuable advice on using, adapting and building games. *Simulation Games in Geography* (Macmillan, 1972) edited by R. Dalton, describes games dealing with mining, village settlement, farm growth, service centres, steelworks, and industrial town growth amongst other topics, though some are little more than decision-making exercises rather than simulations of reality.

The best in-depth discussion of gaming methods is to be found in *Educational Aspects of Simulation* (MacGraw-Hill, 1971) edited by Pat Tansey. For an attack on the technique read ‘Games Models and Reality in the Teaching of Geography in School’ by N. Scarfe in *Geography* July 1971. There are also a number of American texts discussing games (see list in *BEE* 13).

For the games themselves, making up your own is probably the most educationally worth-while, especially if the pupils are involved in the process, and it is certainly the cheapest method—copy from a game framework already published to feel your way. *Man in his Environment* (Coca Cola Ltd), *Redevelop your own Town Centre* (Jackdaw), *Streets Ahead* (Liverpool EPA Project) and *The Spring Green Motorway* (Community Service Volunteers) are all available cheaply (see Chapter 10) and a number of others are described in the Geographical Association’s *Geography in Secondary Schools*. Some, particularly those from America, are very expensive. *Decisions* (Shell) concerns the siting of an oil terminal and comes complete in a plastic brief case for £10. *Partsville* (how a town grows) is part of unit 1 of the American High School Geography Project. But for a mere 50p comes *Tenement*, Shelter’s simulation of multi-occupation problems (see under ‘Handouts’ above). Cost bears no relationship to the game’s likely success.

Those wishing to develop gaming ideas in collaboration with other teachers and to receive a newsletter outlining advances in gaming techniques and forthcoming events, etc., should join the *Society for Academic Gaming and*
Books

One of the first, and still one of the best school texts to concentrate on the real issues of the modern urban environment and the problems confronting those trying to improve our towns and cities, was Michael Storm’s *Urban Growth in Britain* (Oxford University Press Changing Scene series 1965, revised 1970). Other books in this series for secondary pupils are *Industry in Britain* (1968), *Transport in Modern Britain* (1971) and *Britain’s Changing Countryside* (1971). Jenny Bradley’s two *Places for People* books, *Book 1: Where You Live and Where You Work* (1968) and *Book 2: Cities and Regions* (1970), both from the International Textbook Co., are ‘work schemes for young people who wish to explore and think about the buildings and surroundings in which they live and work.’ They are interesting as they are intended as the springboard for research projects and contain little instructional material. Many suggestions for involvement in local issues make these ideal ROSLA books.

P. M. Turner’s *Towns* (Macmillan 1970) also brings originality to the textbook scene: ‘The method of this book differs considerably from that of a conventional textbook, in that in this case the pictures, maps and diagrams form the actual ‘text’ rather than illustrations of it. The contention is that the best way of learning is by doing and that the best way of doing in geography is by fieldwork . . . it is hoped to present the pupils with the raw material of geography in the most direct way possible apart from first-hand field study.’ It is the ideal book to plan an active town study course around.

Expense allowing, a form of text book which particularly appeals to us is the use-once-only work book. *Urban Studies* by John Walsh (Schofield and Sims, 1970) is geared to the non-academic secondary pupil in the 13-16 age group. Designed for local survey work into house types, industries, and streets, it was used with great success by St Roche’s School, Glasgow, in their programme of local study. That city’s house types differ from the standard English ones in the book, so the architecture department of Strathclyde University helped by providing additional illustration sheets to suit local building styles. For the 9-13 age range, Collins’s *Environmental Studies Worksheets* (1972) by Bernard Jolly and Peter Goodsell, perform a similar function with topics like shops and shopping, houses and building, recreation, etc.

Three well-established primary and middle school series illustrate the way in which primary environmental study has pioneered methods which are desirable for older age groups. On The Spot Geographies (Longmans) edited by Greta James and Rex Walford, take a specific type of settlement for each title—A *New Town* (Hemel Hempstead), A *Suburb* (Northenden), A *Changing Village* (Kingsclere). The Changing Scene series (Burke), all written
by R. P. A. Edwards, concentrates mainly on individual phenomena—for example *The Estate, The Tower Block, The Airport*, etc., though each theme is set in a regional setting. The issues are placed in the social structure of contemporary society, with its commercial pressures and conflicting economic priorities clearly indicated. The reader is reminded of the difficulty of reconciling interests, and is not presented with a take-it-or-leave-it establishment point of view. The same is true of the What Happens When series (Oliver & Boyd) written by Gerald Bell, which again concentrates on issues—*A By-pass is Built, A Valley is Drowned, A District is Reborn* and so on. Such are the imaginative possibilities when textbook writing is not tied to examination syllabuses. We look forward to the increasing availability of such exciting material for older students.

One recent encouraging volume is Norman Graves and John White, *Geography of the British Isles* (Heinemann, 1971). While using a fairly conventional text-book format—text, photographs and diagrams, with questions directed at the pupil—this book identifies the real issues of the British environment, puts urban areas squarely at the centre of the stage and is not restricted to quaintly termed ‘geographical factors’ when considering how an area evolves and may be developed. Policy-making and planning get due attention.

This book has deliberately excluded discussion of ‘nature’ in towns, but this has not been through any desire to minimize the importance of trees and foliage to the citizen and the city scene. Happily many teachers are beginning to realise that you don’t have to travel a hundred miles to follow a nature trail. From Croydon to Glasgow there are nature trails in urban parks, and there is a growing literature on the uses of the park. (See Graham Carter, ‘Urban nature trails: pupils and parks’ in *Your Environment*, Summer 1971.) A superlatively good polemical book on parks for the teacher and older student is *Parks for People* by Ben Whitaker and Kenneth Browne (Seeley Service, 1971). A pupil’s book with numerous suggestions for project work is Herbert Edlin’s *The Public Park* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), and for primary and middle schools there are *In the Park* by H. Wigley (Ginn, 1972) and *Exploring the Park* by Leslie Jackman (Evans, 1971). There is also a useful kit *Nature in Your Town* for the 9-13 age range. (Humane Education Centre, Avenue Lodge, Bounds Green Rd, London N22.)

We hope that Tree Planting Year 1973 has succeeded in stirring up in your school an active concern about trees in town. If it hasn’t, no amount of literature will.

A magnificent book which links the urban and rural scene, now available in paperback, is Nan Fairbrother’s *New Lives, New Landscapes* (Penguin, 1972).

There are a number of books available which are invaluable in helping the teacher develop the techniques of streetwork, and, where local study is concerned, are perhaps better used by him than by the pupils to whom they are often directed—though once a project is under way they are undoubtedly useful class reference books too. *Fieldwork in Urban Geography* (Oliver &
Boyd 1970) by K. Briggs, outlines general principles and suggested methods for study of such features as suburban service centres, fields of influence and central areas. G. B. G. Bull's *A Town Study Companion* (Hulton, 1969) takes a more evolutionary view of the town, and suggests ways of recording building styles, a fractional notation scheme for codifying information on land use, and so on. Both these books are helpful practical guides for the teacher. John Haddon, *Local Geography in Towns* (Philip, 1971) is similarly useful, particularly for the recognition of domestic architectural features and building materials, and the scope of the book extends to the explanation of some modern techniques of statistical analysis and the definition of regions and hierarchies of settlements. For those teaching, or learning, about the subject, Everson and Fitzgerald's *Settlement Patterns* (Longmans, 1968) is a prime requisite. Their forthcoming title *Inside the City* should be equally useful on intra-urban functions.

Teaching about architecture in schools, when it happens at all, tends to be historical and elevational and to be concerned with the development of architectural styles. This (apart from often boring our students to distraction) does nothing to help them *experience* buildings. It certainly has its uses as an aid to tracing the growth of the town through the age of its buildings and in reading the visual clues. Building recognition and dating is as fascinating a hobby as bird-watching or aircraft recognition, and there are plenty of useful books on the subject.

The teacher whose own architectural education has been through the study of gothic cathedrals or Georgian houses, may actually be at a disadvantage when exploring the townscape because his eye is only receptive to 'architecture.' He can de-mystify himself with two excellent books. The first (not about the English scene at all) is *Architecture Without Architects: a short introduction to non-pedigreed architecture*, by Bernard Rudofsky (Academy Editions, 1972). The second is *The Concise Townscape* by Gordon Cullen (Architectural Press, 1971). Both these picture books, the first on the marvels of vernacular building, and the second on 'the art of giving visual coherence and organisation to the jumble of buildings, streets and spaces that make up the urban environment', should be as absorbing for the members of your class as for you.

Fortunately, there are also two good books intended for your class, which you will also enjoy. These are *Townlook Book 1*, by Gordon S. Boon, and *Townlook Book 2: What it Looks Like*, by Kenneth Lindley (both Pergamon Press, 1969). Mr Boon's book has two separate sub-titles, 'Observing and recording by maps in urban areas' and 'A critical look and discussion of towns, people and problems'. Both are accurate, for the author seeks to develop in pupils using the book the techniques of local study and mapping, and to this end he provides generalised material capable of local application. He reminds us that 'The teacher's job in this kind of work is to help with exploration rather than give instruction. The observational work should be arranged through groups, with individual pupils made
responsible for organising it. With this type of study, attitudes and personal points of view are as important as factual content. Mr Lindley’s book is about the whole assemblage of floorscape, sticks, stones, wires, doorknobs and skyscape which makes up the built environment of the street. It is meant to stimulate interest and promote enquiry, with an ingenious range of ‘things to do’.

For the teacher who wants to use the environment as a resource for his whole programme of education for visual awareness there is the justly famous series of books by Kurt Rowland, Looking and Seeing (Ginn). The four magnificent volumes, with teachers’ pamphlets, are entitled *Pattern and Shape, The Development of Shape, The Shapes We Need, and The Shape of Towns*.

Though not limited to the urban environment, Peter Toyne and Peter Newby’s *Techniques in Human Geography* (Macmillan, 1971) has sections on data collection, the statistical manipulation of data, its visual presentation, and locational studies, which make it required reading for teachers and their sixth-formers. For a general discussion of methods of teaching relating specifically to the local community see *The Local Community: A Handbook for Teachers* (Crowell-Collier-Macmillan, 1971) which forms part of the American High School Geography Project package.

With regard to books which discuss the theoretical background to, and techniques for, environmental teaching, we would suggest that the teacher who relies on the conventional thinking represented by Long and Robertson’s *Teaching Geography* and the Association of Assistant Masters’ *The Teaching of Geography in Secondary Schools* will not make much headway with his ROSLA pupils. The Geographical Association’s *Geography in the Secondary School* gives more worthwhile discussion—similarly *Geography in the Primary School* from the same source. The Department of Education and Science’s Pamphlet 59, *New Thinking in School Geography* (1972), feels its way with characteristic official caution towards some new views, and contains interesting, if brief, discussions of field work methods and geography and society.

All teachers, whatever their subject background should read D. G. Watts, *Environmental Studies* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969) if they are venturing into environmental work. It provides an interesting survey of the educational basis upon which curriculum development in this field can rest. His discussion of the special relationship between environment and education might be accepted as easily within the scope of the activities we hope geography will emphasise in the future as within the field of knowledge which he refers to as environmental studies.

The *Teachers’ Handbook for Environmental Studies* by Perry, Jones and Hammersley (Blandford Press, 1968) produced for use in association with the Nuffield Resources for Learning Project, gives a great deal of information in encyclopaedic way about ‘environments available’ for study and
techniques for fieldwork, with a heavily rural emphasis. Alan Hammersley’s Pupil Book in the Blandford series, *Towns and Town Life* (1969) mixes some original emphasis on the street scene with some rather solidly conventional geography. Additional help for the teacher is available in special teachers’ guides which make this an extremely thorough series.

The report of the Schools Council *Environmental Studies (5-13)* Project is published by Rupert Hart-Davis (1972). The *Teachers’ Guide* in this series regards environmental studies for the 5-13 age group as an approach to a curriculum field rather than a specific ‘subject’, and lays valid emphasis on the potential of the immediate surroundings of the school. The teachers’ handbook *Environmental Studies* (Blond Educational, 1972) edited by George Martin and Edward Turner, likewise takes an interdisciplinary view, arguing that environmental work has ramifications in all categories of secondary school work.

We would not encourage anyone to teach their school pupils ‘town and country planning’ as a formal subject. But at every turn in environmental work in this densely populated country problems relating to man’s use of the cities and the countryside are bound to arise. Planning is (or should be) about a rational and socially just use of our environment, about the solution of present problems, and about the preparations we make for new uses. So problem-oriented teaching inevitably confronts planning issues and the teacher will need planning reference texts to hand, particularly when his pupils reach the stage of formulating solutions to the problems they are studying.

There are numerous intimidating tomes on planning techniques on which the teacher can draw. Here we would merely call attention to two reference books written especially for the layman. *Citizen’s Guide to Town and Country Planning* by John Ardill (published by Charles Knight & Co for the TCPA, 1973) gives a splendidly comprehensive and up to date picture of the planning system in Britain. ‘This guide appears’, writes the author, ‘at a period of far-reaching changes in British planning. One system of local government is about to take over from another. One system of planning is gradually giving way to another in a process which will entail their co-existence for many years.’ The book is the only one which explains and describes the transition to the general public. Every secondary school which looks at the world outside should have a copy. *Environment: an Alphabetical Handbook* by Peter Gresswell (John Murray, 1971) is just the kind of quick reference book a harassed teacher needs. There are nearly 200 entries, mostly of a few paragraphs, ranging from action and amenity societies, through planning control and public participation to townscape and traffic. Many end with notes on further reading, legislation and sources of advice. In the struggle to control our own environments, ‘we need to be forewarned and forearmed’, Mr Gresswell says. ‘This means building up a store of knowledge on town and country planning . . . Whether we like it or not, we all take part in the environmental game. It is a continuing series of encounters and we cannot expect to win
every time. But knowing how to play makes the game easier and more enjoyable.

If we, as citizens, are to ‘win’ more often; that is, if we are to enjoy real as opposed to sham participation in environmental decision-making, then we must learn from the experience of others—and particularly from the struggles of minorities to make their voices heard. (There are hundreds of protest societies in the country but many fewer genuinely participatory groups). Books like that by Tony Aldous, *Battle for the Environment* (Fontana, 1972) can give us tactical awareness. Both John Ardill and Tony Aldous are journalists, and we must again emphasise that the press is often the primary source of information for the teacher concerned with issues. Mr Aldous’s book was criticised on its publication as being simply the written-up notebook of an environmental correspondent. For us that is its strength. We look forward to the day when secondary schools, as a matter of course, maintain a case-book on their own changing local scene, with the same critical, questioning style. Such journals, had they been kept over the last twenty years, would be sorry records of neglect, inhumanity and destruction. A more appropriately educated public might yet change the street scene to one of care and creative activity.

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The authors

Colin Ward and Anthony Fyson are the education officers of the Town and Country Planning Association and editors of the *Bulletin of Environmental Education* (*BEE*).


Anthony Fyson read Geography at Oxford and became a town planner with Westminster City Council for two years before training as a teacher. He has taught in the Fiji Islands (under the Voluntary Service Overseas scheme), in Harlow New Town and in Central London.
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