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## EDITORIAL

### Hilary Cooper and Jon Nichol

The seminar was over. Peter Lee had discussed the lasting and major role of Peter Rogers upon History Education, with specific reference to his seminal Historical Association pamphlet *The New History: Theory into Practice* (1979). After the seminar we discussed the equally important, complementary but different impact that John Fines' and Jeanette Coltham's Historical Association pamphlet *Educational Objectives for the Study of History* (1971) had also made.

Peter supported the idea of using his seminar paper as the starting point for an edition of *The International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research* with Rogers' and Fines' pamphlets as the focus: a focus that examined their impact upon History Education and what role they might continue to have. The idea was reinforced through googling Peter Rogers: he had simply disappeared from the public arena, not a trace. It was only with the greatest difficulty that we were able to track down and buy a copy of his *The New History* pamphlet.

An immediate consequence was that the Historical Association agreed to make both the Rogers' and Fines' original pamphlets available online – [www.history.org.uk](http://www.history.org.uk): they were out of print and out of stock. Subsequently we took forward the idea of an IJHLTR edition dedicated to their pamphlets. The edition is organised into five sections, drawing upon the power of the digital era to make available materials that have long since been dead, buried and unavailable apart from academic libraries containing back copies of *Teaching History*. The five sections are:

1. **Editorial** that places this edition of IJHLTR in the context of Rogers' and Fines' pamphlets.
2. **Articles from current history educators** which discuss the significance of the two pamphlets. These articles are personal, suggesting how their ideas have both impacted and how they might play a role in the future. In England we have a new Minister for Education who, allegedly, wants to see history taught 'in order' and pupils to 'recite the names of kings and queens'. (Well that won't take long - Willie, Willie, Harry, Ste, Harry, Dick, John, Harry 3). He also wants to see history at the centre of the curriculum; we'll buy that one! But he was a child when these two pamphlets had just been written, (in response to a deadening approach to history teaching). We hope that this issue of *The International Journal of History Teaching Learning and Research* will raise the awareness both in him and in others born since 1970 of the huge impact these now almost forgotten papers have had on the development of history education both in Britain and internationally.

Nicola Sheldon, who is researching the history of history education since 1900 at the Institute of Historical Research, critically analyses ways in which the pamphlets drew on generic hypotheses about progression and presentation of material in different ways and gave rise to such concepts as differing viewpoints and the much debated concept of empathy in history education. Peter Lee considers the limitations of setting objectives

for teaching and learning history but the value of the attempt in beginning the complex task of analysing what is involved in learning history. He also considers the important claim that school history, at appropriate levels, can be linked to academic history when it is grounded in the philosophy of learning and of history – a claim which is not understood in all European education systems.

Sheldon and Lee signalled that these pamphlets drew on the work of Elton, Bruner and Bloom. Hilary Cooper traces very pragmatic links between the academics and the reflective practice of a Cambridgeshire primary school teacher in the 1950s, Sybil Marshall, and subsequent empirical research which explored the hypotheses of the pamphlets, linking learning theories to learning history in the primary school. Her conclusion that history teaching based on linking theory to practice, initiated by the pamphlets, has been high-jacked by a centralised curriculum, assessment and monitoring is taken up by Kate Hawkey in the following paper. She outlines the influence of the pamphlets, at a secondary level, on the Schools History Project, GCSE Courses, and research but concludes that centralisation, prescription, emphasis on skills and limited time have undermined the progress made and constrained further discourse about, for example, selection of significant questions, propositional knowledge and synoptic frameworks and the global dimension of education.

Lee speaks about the UK tradition of school history, 'which has begun to influence school history around the world' and Hawkey claims that the Schools History Project 'set Britain as a flagship for countries elsewhere'. Ertugrul Oral's and Kibar Aktin's paper provides evidence of the impact made by the pamphlet and of UK history education, on history education in Turkey, citing numerous related Turkish sources.

Grant Bage demonstrates how John Fines translated his own and Rogers' theories into passionate and deeply informed practice and looks beyond current constraints to a time when we may return to local, teacher controlled curricula, where debate is needed and ideology matters. And as Terry Haydn points out in his paper, debate is needed today, not so much about procedural objectives, but about the aims of history education, what students should know and why.

Jon Nichol, who was fortunate in knowing John Fines, reflects with passionate and appreciative analysis on the pervasive impact their pamphlets have had on his professional life. He reminds us that Shulman's 'discovery' of procedural knowledge which links academic and school history permeated Rogers' Pamphlet and that Wineburg's paper on students working on sources was preceded twenty five years earlier by the AEB 673/- syllabus, which was based directly on Coltham's and Fines' pamphlet and made a concrete connection between academic and school history. He reminds us too that this syllabus required students to undertake a dissertation on a subject of their own choice, which required a holistic, integration of procedural concepts, from asking questions, through framing an enquiry, the discovery and processing of sources to the construction of an interpretation in an appropriate genre, another reflection of the Educational Objectives pamphlet. Maybe we focus too much today on selected, isolated syntactic concepts.

In the final paper Arthur Chapman picks up this point, saying that Rogers' (1979) was opposed to decontextualised historical skills and focused on scaffolding students' extended enquiries, involving meaningful use of contemporary documents and extensive contextual knowledge, so that students are able, over time, to construct complex historical narratives. Chapman's argument is embedded in a robust evaluation of Rogers' wider published work, in the context of previous and subsequent philosophical, theoretical and empirical writing on history education and puts *The New History* into the broader context of his other published work.

### 3. Debate and Commentary from the 1970s and 1980s provide a backcloth to the current, contemporary discussion of Fines' and Rogers' pamphlets.

Jeanette Coltham (1972) discusses what lay behind *Educational Objectives*.

Gard's and Lee's (1978) chapter in *History Teaching and Historical Understanding* is a powerful critique of *Educational Objectives*. The assault Gard & Lee make upon *Educational Objectives* per se is highly persuasive and convincing – and directly relevant to the age of targets and performance indicators zeitgeist that has, in our view, largely ruined education in the 21st century. So, please read it for this purpose alone – it is coruscatingly brilliant and convincing.

Fines in his *Educational Objectives for History – Ten Years On* accepts the detailed critique but argues strongly that in its context *Educational Objectives* played a major role in defeating the enemies of **school history**. Its lasting role is twofold: making us focus on the skills & processes of pupils 'Doing History' as an educational discipline and in providing a checklist of elements in a framework of enquiry (1981).

The Rogers and Aston (1977) paper illuminates the thinking that lay behind the *New History – Theory into Practice*, specifically its emphasis upon Bruner's ideas of what play involved. How fresh, relevant and timely when the current early years curriculum is built around Bruner's rationalisation of the role of play!

### 4. Theory and Practice: Applied Ideas

We have selected from Teaching History articles that illuminate the impact and role of *Educational Objectives for the Study of History* and *The New History: Theory into Practice*. The articles are only a selection: the pamphlets are much more influential and pervasive (Standen 1991).

Martin Roberts (1972) outlines the immediate influence and impact of *Educational Objectives* upon a teacher of history while Gina Alexander (1977) reports on how *Educational Objectives* underpinned the work of a History department. The AEB's paper (1976) fully reports the radical, pioneering syllabus 673/- that *Educational Objectives* inspired. Ben Jones (1979) analyses how *Educational Objectives* influenced the creation of a Scheme of Work while Keith Hodgkinson and Long (1981) relate the teaching of a specific topic to its skills taxonomy. Marlyn Palmer explores the potential of *Educational Objectives* for teaching using source materials while Richard Brown and

Chris Daniels investigate how it can impact upon history education for 16–19 6-year olds. Chris Culpin's paper (1984) is a snapshot, a regional review of cases of cutting-edge teaching in 1982: it provides a useful indication of how far *Educational Objectives* and *The New History* had permeated the thinking of cutting-edge history teachers.

### 5. The pamphlets

The final section makes available the text of both *Educational Objectives* and *The New History* via the Historical Association's website: [www.history.org.uk](http://www.history.org.uk)

### Conclusion

History education has a past that has influenced and shaped the present. In presenting the pioneering, radical work of John Fines and Peter Rogers via their pamphlets *Educational Objectives for the Study of History* and *The New History: Theory into Practice* we hope to make their fresh, stimulating and highly relevant ideas available to a new generation of educators.

Fines and Rogers have much to offer in terms of inspiring and improving the quality of classroom teaching and in enriching and enhancing the lives of the young citizen through presenting history as a life-long inspirational friend, comforter and supporter of sceptical thinking grounded in logical, deductive, imaginative and empathetic thinking.

Hilary Cooper

Jon Nichol

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Standen, J. (1991) *Teaching History, A Cumulative, Thematic Index to the Journal: May 1969 to July 1990* The Historical Association.

John Standen gives a comprehensive breakdown of all articles published in Teaching History from its launch in 1969 to 1990 - an incredibly useful booklet that we hope the Historical Association will re-publish online.

## **Jeannette Coltham's, John Fines' and Peter Rogers' Historical Association pamphlets: their relevance to the development of ideas about History teaching today**

**Nicola Sheldon, History in Education Project, Institute of Historical Research, London**

**Abstract**—*What is the relevance of these two seminal thinkers to contemporary discourse on the theory and practice of History Education? Arguably Jeannette Coltham' and John Fines' pamphlet Educational Objectives for the Study of History inspired a revolution in history teaching in the United Kingdom. Fines & Coltham were responding to a perceived crisis, even terminal threat, to history teaching in schools. Their pamphlet retained the conventional goals of history education but took a different perspective grounded in Bloom's psychological oeuvre on developmental objectives. Because of its pioneering nature, their pamphlet was not grounded in research into the teaching and learning of history.*

*Peter Rogers pamphlet the New History acknowledged the significance of Coltham & Fines but took a contrasting approach – the grounding of history education in accepted common ground on what academic historians mean by 'doing history'. Rogers' stance was not abstract and theoretical – it was cultural, based upon the need to educate the pupils of Northern Ireland into an understanding of what the conflicting communitarian narratives that underpinned the post 1969 troubles were based on. Such understanding developed an understanding of interpretations, of different perspectives and a willingness to see and accept other viewpoints. At the heart of Rogers translation of his ideas into curricular practice were the twin ideas of Bruner – the teaching of concepts and that concepts can be taught to all pupils at every stage of their development – a spiral curriculum.*

*Both Fines and Rogers have a major impact on the creation of curricula and the training of teachers. Their ideas, now largely unacknowledged, can be seen to underpin the key elements of the National Curriculum for History in England and the GCSE and A/AS level syllabi on offer to pupils.*

**Keywords**—*successful learning in history, skills in history, objectives in learning history, cultural revolution in history teaching, spiral curriculum.*

**Educational Objectives for the Study of History** - by Jeanette Coltham and John Fines was published as a short pamphlet by the Historical Association in 1971. It could be argued that what it contains has provoked a revolution in the teaching of history in schools over the past 39 years.

Coltham and Fines were responding to a widespread desire amongst history teachers to revitalise a subject which was apparently dying on its feet. The alarm had been sounded by Mary Price in her 'History in Danger' article in 1968, followed by the evidence from Martin Booth's research that children rated history almost the lowest of all their school subjects in terms of interest and usefulness. Teachers responded with films and slides in the classroom, the use of document extracts and links with archive offices and the development of historical trips and fieldwork, mainly as a way of enlivening the learning of lots of factual information. New history courses were introduced – world history, social history and 'lines of development' – in an effort to match children's interests, engage the less able and prove the contemporary relevance of the subject. Coursework had also appeared – enabling teachers and students to create their own local studies and group projects. However, none of these changes represented a fundamental shift away from the traditional purpose of teaching history in school as a received narrative.

Coltham and Fines asked a fundamental question – what do we want (and can we reasonably expect) children to be able to do in history? Their ideas did not emerge from a blank canvas. In the USA work had been done to apply the ideas of psychologists Benjamin Bloom and Jerome Bruner to the social studies curriculum. Bloom attempted to classify progress in learning as a series of developmental steps which could be identified by specific behaviours. Coltham and Fines applied this to learning in history by compiling a list of behavioural objectives which put the focus on the learner not the teacher. They described what they would expect to see if learning in history were successful as a series of increasingly sophisticated steps evidenced by children's behaviour in the classroom. This is not to say that individual teachers from time immemorial had not observed and nurtured their students' developing understanding of history in the classroom and in their written work; Coltham and Fines were the first to attempt a full description of all the different ways in which that would become evident as the student became adept at the skills of the historian. For the first time, the term 'empathy' appeared (under the behaviour 'imagining') to describe identification with a character in history 'so as to be able to declare the view-point of this character on problems contemporary to him/her'. Analytical skills such as identifying bias and recognising gaps in evidence were included as well as the use of interpretations, all of which, they argued, should be practised in some form at all ages.

This is not to say that *Educational Objectives* was a fully worked-out manifesto for 'new history'. Some of the objectives, for instance 'attending' – 'the attitude ... of *being attracted by* any of the range of materials which can be called historical' - and 'responding' – 'a willingness to follow up, reinforce, repeat or extend ... an observation or experience' - relate more to child development generally than specifically to learning in history. Some were clearly study skills, such as 'vocabulary acquisition', 'reference skills' and 'memorisation' – though all vital for children who at that time would eventually be tested in exams which depended on memorised factual information. They had little empirical work to go on in putting forward the more novel aspects of their proposal. Thus, their approach was tentative and their text frequently recognised that other teachers might develop their work.

P.J. Rogers' *The New History: theory into practice* published by the Historical Association in 1980 was less tentative in its proposal for the future of history teaching. Although praising the work of Coltham and Fines, Rogers wanted a 'root and branch' appraisal of what history in the classroom was about, with a call for it to emulate the approach of professional historians. In his words, children needed to 'know how' as well as 'know what'. Thus giving them a packaged narrative was denying them the opportunity to understand how the narrative had been created from the evidence. Rogers was working in Northern Ireland and for him it was essential that children learned that there was more than one side to any story. Only by taking them back to the evidence and getting them to 'reconstruct' the events and situations they were learning about could they appreciate why people on different sides had acted as they had in the past. If Coltham and Fines were encouraging a thousand flowers to bloom, then Rogers was keen to initiate a cultural revolution in history teaching. He ruthlessly rejected the traditional chronological delivery common in most schools at the time but also threw out the more progressive ideas about teaching 'lines of development' – single themes through time - and the 'patch' approach involving an in-depth study of a historical question. None of these, he claimed, allowed children to build up enough knowledge and understanding of an issue from the past to enable them to 'reconstruct' it adequately or think about it as a historian would.

Jerome Bruner's ideas were fundamental to what Rogers was proposing. Bruner's 'spiral curriculum' was based on the proposition that children could understand and use the 'basic ideas' of a discipline like history at any age, as long as the learning was structured to enable them to move from the simplest understanding of these ideas to the more complex, but without losing the integrity of the concept. Using Bruner's ideas Rogers showed how all aspects of a lesson could be designed to promote understanding of a historical concept. He did not downgrade the learning of historical knowledge or factual information, (indeed he demanded children be given ample information on which to base their questioning) but its purpose was to enable children to 'reconstruct' past situations and understand them with sufficient background knowledge to develop their own 'history' rather than just accept a narrative as given to them by the teacher. In order to forestall any claims that his aspirations were simply unrealistic for most children, Rogers provided his own examples of work which had been done with pupils aged 10-13. He described their detailed study of (and visits to) castles built in Ireland in the sixteenth century which was then used in discussion and questioning to develop their understanding of the idea of 'strategic importance'. Clearly the structuring of learning tasks to develop conceptual understanding also fitted well with the Coltham and Fines' proposal for behavioural learning objectives (though Rogers was not entirely uncritical of their work).

The broad ideas in these two short but seminal works have become so much a part of the orthodoxy of teaching history in Britain today that they would not be seriously questioned within the profession (though perhaps outside it). The ideas of Coltham and Fines were particularly influential in teacher training institutions which had expanded considerably in the 1960s to provide for a burgeoning school population. New approaches to the teaching of history were introduced to thousands of young teachers by almost equally youthful trainers aiming to prepare them for the range of ability they were likely to meet in the new

comprehensive schools. The influence of these ideas can be seen in many of the innovative curriculum developments of the 1970s, the most significant of which was the Schools Council History Project. David Sylvester, the first Director of SCHP, acknowledged his debt to Coltham and Fines, though his approach was to 'slim down' their nearly 50 objectives to just five, listed as the 'needs of adolescents' in *A New Look at History* published in 1976.

*Educational Objectives for the Study of History* provided a way of thinking about children's development, which was systematic but also open to adaptation and extension. The development of GCSE in 1986 and the flawed attempt to assess empathy showed where the use of systematic categorisation could lead if it was too rigidly interpreted for the purpose of public examinations. The National Curriculum in 1989 fulfilled some of the aspirations of Coltham and Fines in giving priority to the thinking skills of history as the basis for learning yet arguably ossified them within an over-prescriptive framework of assessment. Coltham and Fines eschewed the rigidity of the attainment targets and level descriptions which characterised the National Curriculum in its early days but perhaps the recent 2008 revision to Key Stage 3 for 11-14 year olds comes closer to their aspirations with broader objectives which teachers can use formatively as the basis for encouraging children's development.

If Rogers' *The New History* has had less direct influence on the 'official' curriculum, it has inspired a new stream of research which today feeds in to an international debate on children's thinking skills in history. In taking forward Bruner's theory into practical teaching, Rogers advocated a curriculum built around fostering historical thinking and focused on the 'practices of the historian' using a variety of learning methods – 'enactive, iconic and symbolic' – i.e. practical, visual and written. It could be argued that Rogers was just supplying the cognitive theory to justify what many teachers already knew – trips, drama, artefacts, pictures and documents – can all enthuse children but this would be a travesty of his approach. For Rogers, the questions asked of the children were the crux of the matter – the responsibility of the teacher was to structure the learning so that children were able to 'move up' in their understanding as new experiences were added. To some extent, this was a counsel of perfection, as he was unable to overcome the problems he himself observed with in-depth studies which do not enable children to develop a broad chronological and developmental overview. However, he can be seen as an important progenitor of the 'new history' because of the boldness of this vision of children's capacities in history.

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#### **Reference**

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## **Reflections on Coltham's & Fines': Educational objectives for the study of History - a suggested framework and Peter Rogers': The New History, theory into practice**

**Peter Lee, Institute of Education, University of London**

**Abstract**—*Issues raised by these two papers when they were published and their implications for the present are discussed. Discussion of Coltham's and Fines' paper considers the limitations of objectives for teaching and learning, problems involved in identifying the nature of interpretation in history, the separation of the nature of the discipline from related skills and the limitations of behavioural objectives. Rogers' description of the place of evidence in historical enquiry, inspired by the work of Elton and the notion of history education grounded in both philosophy of learning and of history is claimed to underpin links between school history and academic history and to develop understanding of the basis for historical claims.*

**Keywords**—*Learning objectives in history, interpretation in history, basis for historical claims, academic and school history, behavioural objectives.*

Receiving a request to comment on history education publications from the 1970s which include something of your own is a bit like being invited to write your own obituary. It offers an irresistible temptation to pontificate on the current state of history under the guise of making an assessment of the past. I shall fail to resist, but try to temper the failure by sticking to broad principles.

I shall not attempt to evaluate the influence of the two Historical Association pamphlets reprinted here. This would require a substantial piece of historical research, which I have not undertaken. Instead I shall discuss some of the issues they raised when they were published, and consider those issues in the present world. A historical case could be made for viewing the pamphlets as products of the same broad changes in history education, but I shall treat them separately here, because I think they raise very different questions.

My reaction to the Coltham and Fines pamphlet was very different from my response to that of Peter Rogers and, perhaps surprisingly, many of the reasons for this difference persist today. Readers need hardly be warned that (with Tony Gard) I was a young (and perhaps over-zealous) participant in the reception of the work of Coltham and Fines, and that although I might now want to moderate the tone in which I comment on Educational Objectives, I am not an independent observer. Looking back, I would also want to stress the courage of the three authors in attempting to adapt the kind of approach pioneered by Bloom et al. It was a difficult enterprise, and in a real sense they were pioneers. Sadly, the Bloom taxonomy was not a good guide to the terrain they set out to explore.



Coltham and Fines attempted at least two important tasks in producing Educational Objectives. They tried to analyze what might be involved in learning history and they offered a categorization of what there is to learn in terms of observable objectives. The first task cried out for attention, but the second hampered a worthwhile endeavour by imposing upon it an unworkable framework.

An attempt to produce objectives framed in terms of observable behaviour seems at first sight something to be applauded. It appears to offer a kind of objectivity, or at least a way of avoiding self-delusion. If we can specify required changes in students' behaviour in advance, so that we can see whether that behaviour has changed in the way we intended, there can be no argument about the outcomes of teaching. Either it worked, or it didn't. The issue is the learning outcomes, and so long as they are observable and measurable, there can be no fudges. Even better, we can check at the end of each lesson whether we have achieved our targets.

Regrettably, few worthwhile achievements in learning history are like this, and even fewer of them can be attained after just one lesson. We can, of course, specify a piece of behaviour — for example, the use of certain key phrases in handling a source — and 'see' whether it occurs. But the question is whether what we have seen is one possible criterion of improved understanding of the nature of evidence, or that understanding itself. If our goals include the development of a more sophisticated conceptual grasp of evidence in history, we might suspect (from experience and research) that any claim that we have been successful involves much more than the production of any particular phrase, and we might think it should occur in the context of numerous different tasks (Lee, 2005).

Lists of tick boxes (can do x) are not valueless (they can have heuristic and organizational justification), but although they look very tidy and even precise, the question is always 'What justifies the tick?' That is a matter requiring the production of many (usually individually indecisive) pieces of evidence, and discursive judgement in assessing how compelling the evidence, taken together, actually is.

Moreover, there is always the little matter of what the box means. This, of course, is why Coltham and Fines engaged in an attempt to analyse what is involved in the discipline of history. As Peter Rogers pointed out, the unfortunate influence of Bloom and behavioural objectives led them into difficulties in trying to separate Section B (The Nature of the Discipline) and Section C (Skills and Abilities), so that right from the outset they ran into trouble with redundancies arising from the fact that most of C could only sensibly be specified by what was set out in B. The behavioural straightjacket encouraged listing objectives under notions like 'analysis' as if the items were somehow exercises of 'the same' skill.

Sorting out the key ideas about history (as a discipline) that are central to (but not exhaustive of) our aims in teaching history is more difficult than often appreciated.

It requires knowledge not just of what historians have said about such matters, but of the conceptual explorations undertaken by philosophers concerned to unravel the presuppositions of historians' practices and our claims to knowledge of the past. Coltham and Fines' treatment of interpretation, imagination, narrative and explanation can perhaps warn us of being too hasty in pronouncing on these matters. Curriculum quangos over the years have made the same kind of mistake. For example, the attempt to explicate interpretation in terms of lists of locations in which it might be found (films, portraits, and histories) is very close to the attempt by Coltham and Fines to clarify evidence by lists of objects. Evidence is not a category of special objects, and we learn little about the nature of historical interpretation by being able to list places where we might find one.

Behavioural objectives have very limited uses in history, and where they are inappropriately adopted we might expect to find algorithmic assessment, encouraged by a tendency to conflate simple criteria with complex achievements. Visible short 'activities' are likely to be substituted for harder to observe, long-term learning. (Hence discourse will be in terms of 'source work' rather than developing a concept of evidence.) Readers will decide for themselves whether or not these expectations are confirmed by current examination practices, the use of the history attainment targets by school managers, and injunctions to teach tri-partite lessons.

Peter Rogers' Historical Association pamphlet was also critical of the behavioural objectives agenda, but the primary purpose of his essay was the promulgation of a positive revision of history education, founded on an evidential basis. Gard and Lee (with Dickinson) also argued for positive changes, but in a separate chapter of the same book in which the critique of Coltham and Fines pamphlet appeared (Dickinson, Gard and Lee, 1978). But although Rogers' pamphlet bears the same date as Dickinson, Gard and Lee, he was in fact the first to produce a rigorous discussion on the nature and place of evidence in history education in the post-war period. When I wrote the central part of the Dickinson, Gard and Lee paper, I had already engaged in long discussions with Rogers about the account of history education given in his doctoral thesis, and had learned a great deal from them. There were important differences between us, but Peter Rogers led the way. Indeed the whole idea of using a professional historian's characterization of history as the peg on which to hang an argument about what school history should be was inspired by Rogers' use of Elton.

What relevance has something written 30 years ago, and before official intervention in history education, today? Rogers' New History is a landmark in the development of a UK tradition of history education, a tradition which has now begun to influence school history around the world<sup>1</sup>. Rogers' great strength was that he argued from first

<sup>1</sup> Examples may be found in many different parts of the world. Examples might include: Peter Seixas Benchmarks project, reforming Canadian history education; Isabel Barca's courses at the University of Minho, Portugal and their influence among Portuguese teachers; the work of Dolhinha Schmidt and Tania Braga in Brazil; and the CHIN project and the How Students Learn History Conference in Taiwan.

principles: he asked what could genuinely count as historical knowledge, and paid attention to the empirical research then available on children's understanding of history. Moreover, behind the references to historians, even if it does not surface in a direct way in the pamphlet, lay a grounding in analytical philosophy of history and philosophy of education. Unsurprisingly, therefore, most of what Rogers said is still central to any discussion of history education in which understanding history as a form of knowledge plays a role. It is couched at a level that puts to shame much current discussion framed in terms of 'source work': Rogers was concerned with students' understanding evidence, not learning algorithmic 'skills' or engaging in 'activities'.

Is nothing in New History open to question? Rogers' use of Bruner to argue for a spiralling of key ideas allowed him to escape the scepticism about what children could achieve that seemed to be sanctioned by Piagetian-based research<sup>2</sup>. Although it now looks dated, this was an important move when there was almost no published research outside the Piagetian framework, and does not undermine his basic argument.

A more potentially controversial matter is the extent to which Rogers wanted students' work in schools to mirror that of historians. He insisted that if history was to be part of the curriculum, it should indeed be history, recognizing the characteristic propositions, procedures and concepts of the discipline. This, together with the insistence that claims to knowledge require good grounds, led him to assert that children should follow historical procedures in ways that were true to history. His practical suggestions for spiralling understanding of evidence must be seen in the context of classroom practice which was only just beginning to move away from using sources as illustration. In emphasising Elton's description of historical practice, and in particular the suggestion that questions must arise from the sources and not simply be provided by the teacher, Rogers was trying to show that, at appropriate levels, school history could be 'true to history'. This remains a powerful argument, but a possible danger is that it can easily appear to support the view that history education should aim to create miniature historians, rather than to enable students to understand the kind of basis historical claims about the past must have.

<sup>2</sup> There are many examples of this. A pioneering study was Charlton, K (1952), 'Comprehension of Historical Terms', unpublished B.Ed. thesis, University of Glasgow. Coltham's own work was also Piagetian: Coltham, J. (1960), 'Junior School Children's understanding of Historical Terms', unpublished PhD. thesis, University of Manchester. More influential than either was Hallam, R. N. (1975), 'A Study of the Effect of Teaching Method on the Growth of Logical Thought, with special reference to the teaching of history using criteria from Piaget's theory of cognitive development', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds.

For an early non-Piagetian study of children's second-order understanding see Dickinson A.K. and Lee P.J., (1978) 'Understanding and Research', in A.K. Dickinson and P.J. Lee (eds). *History Teaching and Historical Understanding*. London: Heinemann Educational Books, pp.94-120. This included a specific critique of Piagetian assumptions as applied to history. A later and fuller critique of Piagetian work is in Booth, M.B. (1987) 'Ages and Concepts: A Critique of the Piagetian Approach to History Teaching', in C. Portal (ed.), *The History Curriculum for Teachers* Lewes: Falmer Press (pp. 22-38).

I cannot unequivocally say what Peter Rogers' precise stance would now be, despite lengthy discussions with him about this issue in the mid 1970s. But from all his work (as well as from everything I remember) it is clear to me that understanding was central to his conception of history education. History had to provide frameworks of knowledge for making sense of the world, and understanding evidence was necessary if the frameworks were indeed to be knowledge, rather than simply received information. Of course he knew that it would be absurd to claim that students could research for themselves everything that they needed to know about the past. Hence I think he would have been contemptuous of any argument asserting that schools should be turning out mini-historians. What he wanted was for students to be able to see the world historically, and, as a consequence, to function more effectively in it. To do that, they needed to understand the basis of historical knowledge in evidence, not as sets of 'source work' algorithms, but as a key concept in history as a form of knowledge.

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## **‘History is like a coral reef’: A personal reflection** (Marshall 1963)

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**Abstract**—*The idea that Coltham’s and Fines’ and Rogers’ pamphlets appeared out of a vacuum is challenged in the context of primary education. Sybil Marshall’s description of teaching history in a village primary school in the 1950s is analysed and many links with these pamphlets are identified: defining the objectives of history education and the processes of historical enquiry based on pupils’ questioning of a variety of sources. Coltham’s and Fines’ and Rogers’ work is seen as part of a continuum in which their hypotheses had roots in practice and were followed by empirical studies which explore their hypotheses.*

**Keywords**—*Primary school history, historical sources, questioning in history, constructivist learning theories.*

### **Sybil Marshall 1963: precursor of Coltham and Fines and Rogers?**

‘The coral reef of history’, Marshall wrote (1963) is ‘composed of things that are dead but in itself is still living’. The vibrant approach which Sybil Marshall evolved to teach history in her village school in Cambridgeshire precedes the pamphlets of both Coltham and Fines (1971) and Rogers (1978). Yet her work seems to provide confident and poetic, if not explicitly articulated answers to the key questions they ponder: the relationship between the content and processes of historical enquiry, how children might engage in this and what the objectives are in doing so.

For Marshall the overarching objective in teaching history gradually emerged. ‘As the village got used to me, and I to it, I recognised the presence. It was the past; not the glorious and epic past, nor the grievous and oppressed past of an agricultural community, such as one might have expected; nor was it the dead-and-gone-for-ever past, not even the loved and regretted past. The past I felt was a ghost with the spirit and soul of some mischievous child, which hid somewhere along my way, and popped out suddenly to tickle my consciousness and tap on my memory and be gone again before I had time to put a name to it. It crept up slyly and pretended to be the present, and then nipped away again leaving me wondering if there really were any way of telling one from the other.’

She later finds, ‘with a sense of skin prickling’ that her own experience is echoed in Eliot’s *The Four Quartets* (1943):

Time present and time past  
Are both perhaps contained in time future,  
And time future contained in time past.

She reviewed, in the light of her new awareness, ‘my previous mistaken attempts to teach history, and for the first time I saw... what the teacher’s function with regard to history really is. Once a child has understood that ‘history is now and always’ the details of the story of the past are his for the taking. Her methods of achieving this poetic objective involved the processes of historical enquiry which Coltham and Fines and Rogers were seeking to identify.

Coltham and Fines emphasise the importance of the affective, of enthusiasm and motivation. Marshall’s children were enthusiastic because they started with the local and familiar, then made links with similar communities elsewhere and national events, because they became confident and independent in their enquiries, used a variety of sources, asking questions about them and reconstructing their interpretations through book – making, art, models and role play.

Coltham and Fines and Rogers stress the importance of primary sources. Marshall’s children used artifacts and oral sources. When an old lady discovered that Sybil Marshall liked ‘old things’ ‘she took me inside her cottage and showed me the shawl in which her great-grandmother had been married. ‘They were married at the church here in the morning’ she said,’ but after that they didn’t know how to spend the rest of the day. So they walked into Cambridge to see a man hung’.

They used visual sources, (the murals in the church), buildings (cottages, including one with a beam where the medieval mural painter tried out his colours) and written sources (an account of an Elizabethan Mayday). Continually, the children asked questions, researched and speculated. Who was Dowsing? (Reformation Iconoclast). Why did he want to cover up our pictures? Could we find bits of all the statues that were smashed if we dug in the churchyard, or discover the stained glass windows that were taken out and hidden, according to village rumour. What were the seven acts of mercy portrayed between the spokes of the Wheel of Mercy on the west wall? Who was St George? St Christopher? Which way did Robert Day’s murderer take to ‘ye porte of Bristowe’, when he left Chesterton Church ‘clad only in his shirt, and with a cross of wood in his hand’, as ‘a felon of his lord, the King’? How far did the monks of the Synod of Ely walk in procession to the field of Lolworth, where Thurkill, swearing falsely upon his beautiful beard that his wife was innocent of the murder of her English son, ‘drew back his hand, and with it came off the whole of his beard, drawn out by the roots from his face’?

One girl’s question about a document describing an Elizabethan May Day celebration, which the children were interpreting in detail as a mural, was, ‘Mrs. Marshall, what are courtpies?’ This led to research with the university librarian.

### **Sybil Marshall, Coltham and Fines (1971) and Rogers (1978)**

Rogers asks, 'Can pupils become mini historians? At what age? What does this involve? 'What counts as evidence? Why should they?' To know how to ask questions about the past does not involve stereotyped routines but internalising principles and procedures', he states. The historian's work is explanatory, connecting facts and consequences. How can children with limited knowledge empathise with past times?' See Sybil Marshall.

What is needed, say Coltham and Fines, is a framework for creating objectives; for describing what a learner can do, what activities are required to meet the objective, what an observer can see a learner doing in order to know that the objectives have been met. They emphasise the importance of 'emotional involvement', motivation and imagination and list a number of primary sources pupils might use, questions that might be asked of sources and how might be explored and interpreted. See Sybil Marshall.

So the zeitgeist was ready for these pamphlets. Rereading them recently was, for me, like coming across old photographs, and as it turned out, a pivotal point in my life. I remember exactly where I was when I first read each of them. I read Coltham and Fines on a train in Surrey, returning from a visit to a Steiner School. I had been teaching for ten years, mostly part time, in primary schools. Research and theory related to teaching young children had seemed much more exciting and intellectually challenging than anything I had read about teaching history. I had been seconded to take a course in Child Development at the Institute of Education. This pamphlet seemed to be formalising Sybil Marshall's intuitions. It was talking about history education in a way which was thought-provoking: 'a framework for creating history objectives', distinguishing between 'knowledge, skills and concepts', 'procedures and products of a discipline'.

On further investigation, I discovered *The New History*, in the Institute Library. This was talking about 'the symbiosis of 'knowing what' and knowing how', the way in which concepts are learned, about 'internalising the principles of procedures' and their 'embodiment in an infinite number of enquiries'. Rogers, it seemed, was critical of Coltham and Fines, of their definition of 'empathy' and of their separation of the discipline of history and skills and abilities. Maybe the pedagogy of history could be as intellectually challenging as the pedagogy of early years education. Or could there be a continuum between the two?

### **Disciple of Coltham and Fines and Rogers?**

In the Child Development Course literature I was reading Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky. I decided to research links between learning theory and history education for my dissertation (Cooper 1982). I also read Jeannette Coltham's doctoral research applying a Piagetian approach to young children's understanding of history (1960). Here was a challenge. Could the questions raised by Coltham and Fines (1971) and Rogers (1987) be explored in the context of social constructivist learning theories?

I reread Coltham and Fines. What IS History? Is there a link with cognitive development? I reread Rogers. What is 'a weaker definition of necessarily true? How are hypotheses to be tested? How do children learn abstract concepts? How can children learn to understand the past with its different knowledge bases, values and economic and political systems? How can children learn to 'dispute and discuss, which is the mainspring of historical knowledge'? I would explore some of these questions with my class when I returned to school.

Over the next five years I systematically explored the questions in the pamphlets. I investigated the processes of historical enquiry which historians use, drawing on and critiquing the work of Collingwood (1939, 1946) and other historians: selecting and interpreting sources and recognising issues of probability and validity; combining sources to create explanations of time and change in order to create interpretations of the past and recognising the reasons why these may be valid but different and are dynamic. I read the work of key constructivist learning theorists and tried to link this to the processes of historical enquiry. For example Piaget (1926) posited a progression in understanding, and applied this to the development of causal language and of probabilistic thinking. Bruner had identified the nature of a discipline as based on key concepts, key questions and methods of answering them (1963) and claimed that if this were appropriately structured and represented using 'enactive, iconic or symbolic' means, any child of any age could actively engage with the processes of enquiry of a discipline, could learn these processes and apply them in new contexts (1966). Vygotsky (1962) showed how concepts are acquired through use in a variety of contexts and through trial and error in discussion with others, as Rogers had suggested.

The empirical study I carried out with three successive classes of nine-year olds investigated their ability to make deductions and inferences about different kinds of sources, develop reasoned arguments, recognise probability and initiate the use of key concepts, in increasingly successful ways and the ways in which they could contest opinions through group discussions, as a result of class lessons which taught them the strategies for doing this over a period of twenty weeks (Cooper 1992; 2006).

### **National Impact of Rogers, Coltham and Fines**

During the 1980s, in a series of heated, nationwide debates, many of the questions raised by Rogers, Coltham and Fines were discussed. The definition of 'historical empathy' described by Coltham and Fines as 'putting yourself in the shoes of others', which Rogers regarded as impossible for children because of their inadequate frame of reference, was fiercely debated. The integration of content and process, described by Rogers as 'knowing what' and 'knowing how' and by Coltham and Fines as, 'the overlapping information, procedures and products of a discipline', was finally agreed by the Historical Association and embedded in the National Curriculum. Coltham's and Fines' conclusion that this involves collecting, exploring and evaluating a range and variety of sources, recognising gaps in the evidence, framing questions to ask of the

evidence and creating 'reproductions' of what happened in different forms became the basis of the National Curriculum for History (Dfes 1992). This assumes spiralling of concepts, skills and knowledge from the beginning, which both pamphlets endorse.

Many of the skills and abilities which Coltham and Fines identified as necessary to 'doing history' have become recognised in the National Curriculum as generic key skills: memorising, comprehension, analysis, synthesis, making connections, extrapolating, evaluating, communicating (DfES: 1999 ).

However, lesson objectives and related assessment of 'what a learner can do' in relation to them and Ofsted's assessment of lessons based on this gradually became straight jackets for teachers and learners, in a way that the pamphlet authors can never have imagined. And this is why we need to step back and take inspiration from Sybil Marshall. 'History is composed of things that are dead but in itself is still living'. Children should have a greater voice in formulating their own questions and enquiries. The learning involved will surely be assessed at a higher level and as more complex than a previously specified objective.

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## Response to Coltham & Fines (1971) Educational objectives for the study of History: a suggested framework; and Rogers (1979) The New History: theory into practice

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**Abstract**—It is argued that a history curriculum based on chronology, rote learning and note-taking, during most of the twentieth century was changed significantly by Coltham's and Fines' attempt to identify the theoretical underpinnings of history education. It is suggested that this agenda has now been high-jacked by a centralised curriculum and that teachers' lack of understanding theory-practice links still threatening good history education.

**Keywords**—Learning objectives, school history, theory of history education, historical evidence, historical enquiry, spiral curriculum, synoptic frameworks, Schools Council History Project.

### Introduction

It's hard to imagine a lesson today without explicit learning objectives, a curriculum focused 'obstinately' (Price, 1968) on the chronology of British history, a pedagogy based largely on rote learning and note taking. For much of the 20th century this was the prevailing Great Tradition (Sylvester, 1994) of history education in Britain, a discipline unencumbered by theoretical underpinnings. Coltham and Fines' paper changed all that and it is not an exaggeration to regard their work as instigating and shaping the pedagogic discourse of school history (Phillips, 1998: 12) from 1970s through to the 21st century not only in Britain but internationally too.

### Coltham and Fines and The Schools Council History Project (aka Schools History Project)

Coltham's 'suggested' framework sets out what's involved in learning history, the disciplinary foundations or 'basic ideas' of the subject, ideas which were further developed in Rogers' paper which called for greater prescription, 'a careful analysis of what historical knowledge is and then to derive all 'behavioural objectives' from this so that they become mandatory, not optional' (p. 35). Such theoretical ideas were developed further through Schools Council History Project [aka Schools History Project] courses in classrooms. Thanks to this work, it is now impossible to think of the study of history in classrooms without reference given to concepts such as evidence and processes such as source-based enquiry. The thinking of the Schools Council History Project became the prevailing and dominant, though always contested (see Phillips, 1998 for a discussion of these issues) culture in school history education, even amongst teachers who didn't follow these history GCSE courses (Patrick, 1988).

The influence of the work remains evident in Britain in the core compulsory elements which have structured each of the history national curricula since 1990s. The influence of the Schools Council History Project set Britain as a flagship for countries elsewhere trying to move from a traditional to a disciplinary-based curriculum. There will be no history teachers leaving their initial training and entering the profession without an understanding of the disciplinary underpinnings to their subject. Triumph indeed and a mark of the continuing significance of the work started by Coltham and Fines.

With history's disciplinary elements thus defined, and in a world increasingly influenced by Bruner's spiral curriculum, academic and classroom concern was directed towards considering the question of how do children get better at the different elements, how do they make progress in their understanding. Influential publications were the result of important research (Portal, 1987; Dickinson, Lee, & Rogers, 1984) and the Concepts in History and Teaching Approaches [CHATA] project continued to develop this work through in-depth empirical classroom research (see, for example, Lee & Ashby, 2000). The theory-practice disjuncture, however, has always been tricky. Though recognised by Rogers with attempts to demonstrate what practice can look like, the disjuncture remains one of the key factors why a stronger disciplinary focus doesn't permeate teachers' thinking more in classrooms today. It remains a challenge to tackle the difficult area of how theory might translate into practice and inform planning.

#### **Current Issue and Concerns: Learning Objectives, Pragmatism and Time**

In recent years, competing priorities have arrived on the scene to make the challenge even greater. Firstly, the culture of schooling and education in Britain has shifted since the 1970s. Ironically, the helpful sharpening of educational practice in the 1970s to identify objectives has come full circle. Today, the focus on learning objectives (or more pertinently assessing against objectives) has developed, some would say been hi-jacked, into a centralised, targets and results driven stranglehold. The subtleties and insights required in understanding a model of progression to be like sheep-paths on the hillsides (Lee, Ashby & Dickinson, 1995) have been usurped into a concern with the reporting of ever improving atomised levels and sub-levels. When it comes to enquiry work Rogers' 'internalising of principles of procedure' has been replaced by formulaic responses to filleted documentary goblets.

Secondly, other agendas have come into play and considerations of access and engagement have been addressed alongside, sometimes perhaps prioritised over, disciplinary purity within the subject. This is reflected in the wider educational policy context, in classrooms, and within the academic world of school history education (see, for example, articles by Counsell, Riley, Phillips, in *Teaching History*). While these academic practitioners have certainly drawn from the disciplinary foundations of the subject, and have done much to improve classroom practice so that children have access, and are engaged and interested in their classroom history, the relationship between these areas of scholarship and those arising from the disciplinary foundations to the subject would benefit from being strengthened.

Thirdly, curricular challenges have changed since the 1970s. I'm struck by the tone of Rogers when advocating the benefits of the 'patch' approach. He writes, 'the leisurely pace permitted by the limited time span makes the extended use of sources more likely' (p. 21) and Lamont who talks about 'time to soak themselves in one small area ... and acquire mastery of this small field' (Lamont, 1972, p.179). The luxury of time has certainly been squeezed with the many competing demands made on the curriculum today. There is little surprise that 'many pupils are failing to gain a good overview of history or an understanding of the significance of some key events and individuals' (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2005, p. 10). These dangers were recognised by Rogers even in the less crowded and pressured curriculum of the 1970s; how much greater a challenge they are today and one where the community of history education needs to focus its attention.

#### **The Impact of the Revolution in History Education and the History and Identity Agenda**

The revolution in history education which began in 1970s has had particular impact on our understanding of the procedural knowledge of how we do history in classrooms. What has been less theorised is a consideration of the place of propositional knowledge and the substantive concepts encountered in historical discourse. Perhaps this is unsurprising since to shift from an unproblematised content-driven curriculum necessitated an emphasis being given to the skills operating within the discipline perhaps to the neglect of other questions. Decisions about selections to be made in history are always contentious but never more so than today where national identities rest on increasingly shaky ground in our post-modern, multi-ethnic, globalising world. The challenge, as Rogers noted in the 1970s, is to provide children with narratives which are 'explanatory of change' (Rogers, p. 21). This is the agenda which needs to be addressed today to ensure there are sound theoretical underpinnings to the selection of propositional knowledge in the subject to sit alongside what has already been achieved in terms of procedural knowledge. Important work has been started in this area with Lee and Howson's (2006) and Shemilt's (2006) work on synoptic usable historical frameworks offering promise but there is much more to be done, not least in the ways in which the processes of enquiry might operate within these synoptic frameworks.

Necessity has always been the mother of invention, acknowledged or otherwise. Three years before Coltham and Fines published their pamphlet, Mary Price (1968) warned that history was 'in danger' of disappearing from the timetable 'losing the battle' to other subjects, regarded by students as useless, difficult and boring. The Schools Council History Project (aka Schools History Project) was something of a saviour and the resulting disciplinary foundations for the subject remain at the heart of the subject in schools. Forty years on, however, and the headlines about the threat of history disappearing, however, are looking remarkably similar (Historical Association, 2010).

History is indeed once more in danger and we need to move forward with one eye on the past and what we have learnt and secured for the subject, and one eye to the future, ensuring a curriculum fit for an emerging and changing world.

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## Coltham & Fines and P. J. Rogers: their contributions to History Education – a Turkish perspective

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**Abstract**—Since the beginning of the 19th century history teaching was considered as a field of study that transfers a body of knowledge about the past to students. Affected by this approach, students found history lessons extremely boring. In the ensuing debate that this provoked, Coltham's and Fines' pamphlet made the most significant contribution to History Education's development as a separate field of study. They highlighted the purposes of History Education, i.e. what children gain from history teaching. Their now accepted approach prioritised 'historical skills' and defined the nature of a history curriculum that also might interest adolescent children.

P. J. Rogers (1978) gave an important acceleration to the development of History Education through accepting an understanding that History Education should be grounded in history as an academic discipline that involved the construction of 'historical facts' rather than it being seen as a body of received information. Rogers identified the structure of history for History Education and how to make it educationally effective.

Fines' and Rogers' work on children's thinking abilities and historical research skills developed through them processing historical evidence has enabled children now to be educated as junior historians.

**Keywords**—Bruner, historical evidence, historical thinking abilities, spiral learning.

### Introduction

Studies related to History Education are mostly centred upon England. By the end of the 1960s, a crisis in History Education came to a climax in English schools as a result of History Education reflecting a positivist approach to history. The problem was that history was a highly unpopular subject with pupils. This led to a debate on the nature of History Education in schools with reviews of the theory of History Education and its application in schools (Karapınar, n.d.). In England an article 'History in Danger', published in 1968 by Mary Price, was accepted as an important landmark in history teaching. The article declared that history's place in the secondary school curriculum was in danger from questioning of its value and the place of history (Fitzgerald, 1983, p. 92). An increasingly heated discussion centred on what should be done for history teaching, which focused primarily on political history taught chronologically. History teachers objected to one solution: treating history as a social science. They wanted to teach history as an independent discipline (Ata, n.d.).

## History Education

In the 1960s studies of the method, technique and educational purpose of history teaching directed history educationalists to Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives defined the purposes of education (Bloom, 1956). Bruner (1960) related the Bloom taxonomy to the purposes of education and determined basic principles that met the desires of both teachers of history and their pupils (Booth, 1994, p. 61; Demircioğlu, 2006; Fitzgerald, 1983, p. 93). In addition, Paul Hirst made a great theoretical contribution to History Education through identifying History as a unique data structure with its discrete identity that arose from a combination of its logic, methodology and mindset (Fitzgerald, 1983, p. 95). In 1971, Jeannette Coltham and John Fines wrote their pamphlet 'Educational Objectives for the Study of History' based on the conceptions of Bloom. The Coltham & Fines model of History Education defined the key abilities that studying history developed, built around educational objectives and their purposes. They identified four main purposes of an historical education.

**Table 1: Educational purposes of History Teaching**

A. History Teaching Attitudes	Joining, reacting, imagination
B. The Nature of the Discipline	The quality of knowledge, organization of the methods, products
C. Skills and Talents	Learning vocabulary, referencing ability, memorisation, understanding, translation, analysis, shift, synthesis, judgement, evaluation, communication skills
D. Educational Results of Teaching	Perceiving, values knowledge, reasonable judgment

(Coltham, J. B. and J. Fines, 1971, p. 4-5; quoted by Safran, 2006, pp. 129-130).

Coltham & Fines objectives provide teachers with a rationale for setting goals, planning lessons and evaluating learning outcomes appropriate to the purposes of history education (Fitzgerald, 1983, p. 83; Medlycott, n.d.). Rogers argued that the pamphlet provides a defined organisational procedure that can help teachers (Rogers, 1978, p. 34). Using the Coltham & Fines structure it is possible, theoretically, to decide whether or not the target objective(s) and related educational experiences have been achieved.

Coltham & Fines detail how to handle historical resources in the context of history education. They address the educational purposes of different aspects of history education. Primary sources, secondary sources and historical methodology are important elements in different stages of study. The source evaluation stage is important in defining scientifically 'reality, appropriateness, consistency, authenticity, reliability, entirety, coherence with other

materials in itself, appropriateness of the evidence with the culture, political thinking, appropriateness of the material with the personal knowledge and experience of human nature and behaviour'.

The stage of making inferences from available sources involves consideration of data lacking in the sources. The basic stage in the analysis of primary and secondary sources is when preconceived ideas, reality, general aptitudes, insinuation and assumptions are discovered and the complex connections are made between the materials (time, reason, behaviour). Synthesis is the concluding stage where the materials, depending on the evidence, are mixed with the previous data and the materials chosen from various resources (Coltham J. B. and J. Fines, 1971, p. 12-13).

Coltham and Fines insist on pupils using primary sources. They:

- Suggest that students should work according to their abilities and engage with historical sources.
- Adduce that children can use either concrete and formal thinking by using evidence in their explanations (1971, p. 41-42).
- Highlight that children should know that preconceived ideas and deficiencies in evidence can be due to the abstract language of history (p. 31).

They promote a spiral curriculum based upon concepts grounded in the discipline of history that will promote positive pupil attitudes towards learning history (Vass, 2003).

Rogers criticises Coltham's and Fines' work as too general when formally applied to lessons as it does not match the accepted sequence of historical enquiry as academic historians understand it. However, he emphasises that criteria from their pamphlet can help overcome some history departments problems and provide conceptual insights to support their planning (Rogers, 1978, pp. 30, 32-34).

## The 'New History'

Coltham's & Fines' pamphlet when combined with Hirst's thinking on the curriculum's disciplinary underpinnings affected subsequent developments that influenced British government thinking (Siebörger, 2006). The Coltham and Fines pamphlet had a particular impact upon the government financed Schools Council History Project, 1972 (Fitzgerald, 1983, p. 95). The School Council History Project approach to history education is called the 'New History'. Historical sources are presented to pupils in an active learning environment. The content and teaching methodology are aimed to interest children. They are asked to 'build' and 'discover' the facts by themselves in the creative history that the 'New History' makes possible (Vella 2001). Developmental psychology that is Piagetian-based, influenced ideas on how pupil thinking in history developed (Booth, 1994, p. 61; Dilek, 2002, p. 68, Varış, 1998, p. 111).



Dilek (2001) cites the Schools Council History Project as being specifically designed to teach the nature of history as a discipline, its basic, second order concepts, while emphasising the use of sources in the classroom and the development of 'historical skills' involving decision making, empathy and analysis, as well as finding knowledge, remembering knowledge, understanding evidence, evaluating evidence, interpreting, hypothesis and synthesis (Sieborger, 2006).

P. J. Rogers' (1978) premise is that history is a knowledge form/structure. Rogers presented the structure in a highly detailed and structured form for use in History Education. Rogers draws on the view points of Hirst and Peters and applies their contributions that highlight the value of History Education (Fitzgerald, 1983, s. 98). Peters criticises Piagetian theory as being restrictive and alternatively draws upon Bruner's theory of learning highlighting enactive, iconic and symbolic models. Peters agrees with Bruner in 'the person represents the truth in the sentences he made using his creativity through action and vision' (Gürkan, 1980, p. 209). Following Bruner, Rogers (1978) finds contextually connected activities are most valuable. He argues that the visual can relate to the iconic and symbolic through transformation from one state to another. Rogers also highlights the role of supportive teaching (p. 49).

Rogers reinterprets Bruner's spiral curriculum model as an approach to historical learning. He discusses how history concepts can be spiralled drawing upon their contextualised evidence and according to the students' levels in secondary and senior school (Rogers, 1978, pp. 48, 50.) He affirms that students can define the truth by using historical sources, questioning them, making assumptions according to the materials and data. He argues that that the interrogative approach to evidence increases students' critical awareness of the sources (Ashby, 2004). Rogers' analysis of the nature of historical knowledge forms a structure related to the methodological assumptions of the New History. In evidence-based history teaching the historical research methodology is very important in pupils critically engaging with sources, framing and testing hypotheses and in reconstructing narrative. (Fitzgerald, 1983, s. 98).

While Fines' and Rogers' work has been criticised, this has been due to a misunderstanding that they argued that historical skills were more significant than historical knowledge (Fitzgerald, 1983, p. 99, Sieborger, 2006). Conversely, it has been argued that students who learn history based on the 'New History' are more successful than those who learn traditionally. 'New History' students can apply abstract thinking and reasoning to solving historical problems and grasping the subject more deeply (Vella, 2001). It has been said that it will create a sensitivity in our lives and apply philosophical ideas that will help us practically to solve our daily problems (Fitzgerald, 1983, p. 100).

In 1998/99 the British government introduced a National Curriculum. With the centralisation of education, history began to be seen as a socialisation tool that reflected common values of English culture and society (Dilek, 2001, p. 46). As a result, the content of the

national curriculum for History emphasises significant information about English history. This situation was widely criticised in the English press with headlines such as of 'Thatcher's Conquest of School History' (Vella, 2001; Sieborger, 2006). In 1995 the the English National Curriculum for History was revised – in this version, we can see reflections of both Piaget's developmental table and Rogers' ideas about grouping students according to their levels in activities based upon historical sources. De facto, such a spiral curricular programme has been legitimised that can involve sources such objects and topics as the family and the environment.

The failure to highlight the role of historical concepts, a criticism of the previous programme, was remedied in the revised 1995 National Curriculum for History. The new programme includes the iconic learning perspective with pictures and photographs, enactive learning based on dramatization and simulation, symbolic learning with telling stories and using written evidence in the classroom (Ata, n.d.). Historical skills aimed at in the programme can be classified as developing historical understanding, understanding historical viewpoint and interpretation, achieving historical knowledge, evaluating, relating the results of historical studies with one another and organising and communicating results of enquiries. The skills are transferable, they contribute to other learning areas and break down interdisciplinary borders. A strategic thinking framework, contributing to problem-solving, is defined.

Research and scholarship have given thinking skills and cognitive strategies a central role in secondary education. Philosophical thinking models and cognitive skills are directly related to the learning of pupils. Key themes such as citizenship, culture and the national programmes of the 21st century are mixed with history. Consequently, history can be studied with disciplines like geography and citizenship. Cross-curricular transferable skills are paramount. Coltham, Fines and Rogers laid the foundation of evidence-based inquiry in history education that has influenced and shaped current History Education. Pupils can work on historical sources as historians do, using historical thinking skills and basic concepts.

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## Rogers and Fines revisited

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**Abstract**—In 1979 Rogers with passion, precision and theoretical integrity examined the nature of knowledge that underpins the teaching of history, focussing upon the procedural (know how) knowledge that underpins the propositional (know that) knowledge. Rogers provides the solid foundations for the creation of a 'New History' curriculum that meets the demands of both political parties.

Rogers contrasts markedly with the Fines prescription of 1971. This is represented starkly as a behaviourist nostrum full of checklists and targets. Yet the reality was that it represented a break with conventional thinking about History Education and forced us to consider, albeit in a totally impractical way, what history teaching was for and about. As such, it was a powerful catalyst – indeed, its liberating energy is perhaps reflected in the other John Fines, the great teacher, story teller and dramatist who brought the past to life through teaching with passion rooted in a deep, practical knowledge of both history and teaching.

Fines, with Rogers, can provide us with insights for the generation of the local, teacher controlled and directed curriculum that is now under consideration. As such, they need serious consideration, and even more important, assimilation into the thinking and orientation of those who will control the History Education of the next generation of children.

**Keywords**—Alexander, History Teaching, Local curricula, New history, Pedagogy, Politically shaped History curriculum, Procedural, Propositional.

### Introduction

It is quite a while since I read 'the 'New History'. In nostalgic mood, I was looking forward to revisiting that text, which I had found so inspirational whilst in mid-1990s and PhD mode. What would still stand out for me in 2010, and what might I recall of my mid 1990s response?

### Peter Rogers – The New History: theory into practice

What first materialised as I read was neither 2010, nor circa 1995, but pure 1979. Re-reading Rogers evoked a world in which ideology mattered. Ideas were worthy of public posturing and when necessary, a theoretical fight. Rogers underscored that stance, at every available opportunity: often with seven or eight underlinings per page. Rogers shouted, in text. Rogers condemned, proposed and theorised. Rogers gave me a slight headache. Rogers made me realise a chronological truth: it is 2010, and I am now middle-aged.

Not content with this, Rogers elegantly dictated not only the details of his own (1979) theory but the practice of how this (2010) and the former (circa 1995) reader should respond to it.

*The mere communication of the fruit of scholarship in the absence of any acquaintance with its procedures is quite inadequate. Nor is any 'solution to this difficulty ... to be found in the facile practice of merely presenting more than one account of a controversial event or period.*

(Rogers 1979 p. 18)

So, down the shoot went this article's potential Callaghan-Thatcher binary interpretations, jokes and rhetorical devices. Up in a mushroom cloud floated all my possible (educationally historical) cold war analogies. Rogers tells me that learning history is about more than handling different accounts. I had to look past the date, the style, the shouting and the sharp critique. What was Rogers trying to say?

With passion, precision and theoretical integrity, Rogers argues that history curricula should be procedural, and knowledge propositional. Insufficient for Rogers were the sloppy, rose-tinted assumptions regurgitated in my teacher training (1981-2) that rote learning of fixed, inert facts was repressive of children's natural interests and instinctive creativity. Rogers' approach was more surgical. He honed in, unapologetically, on the philosophical jugular. If as a profession we were to stand any chance of improving history teaching and learning.

*The epistemological question is fundamental, in the sense of being the first to be answered.*

(Rogers p. 4)

As I read Rogers now in the present, just as I read in the 1990s, his arguments stir my blood. This subject, this discipline and our pedagogy can be fought for. We can fight firstly, through provoking professional and intellectual debate: and secondly, by producing practical curricula which remain true to the underlying principles of historical knowledge.

*To know something on good authority means that the proposition which one knows is the outcome of an enquiry which satisfies the appropriate procedural criteria – which criteria are identified by the nature of the evidence available.*

(Rogers p. 7)

Those two messages are particularly apposite, in the England of spring 2010. The nature of the 'evidence available' concerning history's place in the curriculum, suggests a debate is desperately needed. Retrospectively and educationally, the thirteen years of Labour government since 1997 and the twenty-two years since the 1988 introduction of the National Curriculum, have relentlessly simplified and over-centralised curricula in general and history in particular. This has happened in ways that were anathema to Rogers, and

are sharply criticised by knowledgeable others (e.g. Alexander 2010). Prospectively, a Conservative government may shortly be in place, apparently ambitious to legislate for children to acquire 'historical knowledge'. Its prospective Education Secretary spoke on 6 November 2009 of the failure of the current history national curriculum: 'In History students are left with a disconnected and fragmentary sense of our national story.' (Gove 2009). The Conservative draft schools manifesto (Conservative Party 2010 p. 6) promises that the national curriculum will be reformed and that 'the primary curriculum is organized around subjects like Maths, Science and History'.

Might there be, in Rogers, a principled approach for a history curriculum that sidesteps the dangers of both simplistic targets and national narratives? A history curriculum based for instance, upon evidential stories? For Rogers, the making of distinctive and evidential narratives was fundamental to history's nature:

*The propositional character of History is more distinctive than the conceptual. Its essence is narrative. History tells stories – but stories which seek to make intelligible the truth about events which have actually occurred ... Whereas the novelist is constrained by nothing except the requirements of internal consistency and a general sense of what is probable, the historian must work with the ambiguous records of a mass of events intractably given by a past which has irretrievably taken place.*

(Rogers p. 10)

I have spent a fair amount of my teaching time grappling with how to achieve the above (Bage 1999, 2000). To far better effect, John Fines did the same: so it is to John Fines and the early 1970s that I now briefly return.

### **Coltham and Fines**

In 1971 Coltham and Fines sketched their ground-breaking 'framework'. By 1979 Rogers was severely critical of such efforts.

*This formulation seems seriously inadequate for the prescription of a specific course... Only the fact that its content is a framework containing many specific components ... makes it appear more practically helpful...*

(Rogers p. 32)

It is difficult to reconstruct 'where exactly I was' when I first read Coltham and Fines. I believe it was the mid 1980s. As a newly-appointed co-ordinator of humanities in a pre-national curriculum middle school, I was searching for tools to help us invent a curriculum. The Coltham and Fines framework was interesting, encouraging and utterly impractical: but it liberated something within my thinking. Young children not only could engage in evidence-based history: they should.

Equally I recall a growing awareness in the 1990s, that the 'Coltham and Fines' of 1971 spoke from a different tradition, to the John Fines whom I was increasingly reading, observing, and to my latter good fortune, teaching with. Rogers similarly identified some tensions and incongruities.

*Dr. Coltham and Dr. Fines (1971) perhaps come nearer to useful prescription than Dr. Coltham herself. They identify nineteen sorts of behaviour or objectives ... which sound history teaching will seek to promote.*

(Rogers p. 31)

Retrospectively, aspects of Coltham and Fines (1971) framework accord with the technicist optimism of certain 1960s policy-makers. As Harold Wilson's 1963 Labour Party conference speech famously claimed 'The Britain that is going to be forged in the white heat of this revolution will be no place for restrictive practices or for outdated methods on either side of industry' (Walden 2006). Stir in Bloom's taxonomy, some psychological empiricism from 1960s experiments in applied classroom research and a heady growing belief in the power of teaching and the result is: Coltham and Fines.

The authors offer 'educational objectives for history' in a framework misleadingly labelled 'behaviourist'. In reality, the framework seemed to me then (and now) a strange mix of psychological theorising, curriculum development, pedagogic strictures and as Rogers picked up – wishful thinking. The John Fines who later so inspired me also later eschewed rigid theoretical frameworks, in favour of those developed by practitioners. Behaviourist objectives for children or teachers, were for Fines less trustworthy as a mainstay for teacher development than closely observing how children actually learnt history as they interacted with evidence, with teachers and with each other.

You would never guess this, from reading Rogers. In his eagerness to close in on a theoretical kill, for instance, Rogers was particularly critical of a recommendation by Coltham and Fines for younger children to 'enter imaginatively into the situation of being a slave and being a slave owner' (Coltham and Fines 1971 p. 9 as quoted in Rogers 1979 p. 32). This was, he claimed, illustration that:

*Again a general recommendation lacks prescriptive force in that it fails to link up with the specific practical proposal made – which turns out indeed to be inconsistent with it. Specifically, the particular manifestation of the desired behaviour (imagining oneself a slave owner) fails to connect with the level of evidence ... which it presupposes. The task prescribed is thus beyond the younger child...*

(Rogers 1979 p. 33)

In making this criticism, Rogers seems to me unfair. He consciously chose to ignore Coltham and Fines' broader argument, a few words later and on the very same page: 'The main point is that the promotion and maintenance of the affective behaviours under consideration are objectives for every age and every stage in the learning of history.' (Coltham and Fines 1971 p. 9)

### **Fines and Practice: Pedagogy**

To me in the 1980s, such an argument was liberating. Here were respected theoreticians, forwarding a structured case for the relevance of history to all children, of whatever age. As a teacher, my task was 'simply' to develop curricula to achieve that. Fines' later work (e.g. the Nuffield History Project) was actually to prove far more useful in practically making that happen, with children from five years old and upwards: but it was the rather sprawling, strange and sometimes contradictory framework of 1971 which suggested such feats as even possible.

I hope to have acknowledged above, some of the debts I owe these two texts: but why should anyone still read them now, three decades later?

### **Conclusion**

The origin and direction of England's national curriculum history has been a source of continuous debate (e.g. Bage 2003, Guyver and Nichol 2006, Phillips 1998). My 2010 analysis is uncontroversial: throughout the nineties and noughties, national curriculum histories attempted to impose frameworks (à la Coltham and Fines). These mixed behaviourist learning objectives, through various attainment targets and level descriptors, with apparently vast swathes of curricular content through study units and other devices.

What has not yet been achieved, particularly though not exclusively in the primary sector, has been the national development of rigorous and consistent local curricula (à la Rogers). These would need to conform to the 'propositional, procedural and conceptual' nature of historical knowledge outlined by Rogers (1979 p. 58). Such an ideal is practically achievable, he argued: '...provided suitable materials and presentation are employed, there is no reason to assume that children cannot work in the suggested manner.' (ibid)

Were the forthcoming UK election of 2010 to result in a government committed to the somewhat conflicting policies of increased professional autonomy for teachers on one side, and the national imposition of 'narrative history teaching' on the other, then Rogers' arguments for a spiral history curriculum based upon rich and locally relevant evidential stories, may yet have their day. And if indeed that came to pass, I can think of nobody who would have been more pleased than a certain Professor Fines...

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## Coltham and Fines' - 'Educational Objectives for the study of history': what use or relevance does this paper have for history education in the 21st Century?

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**Abstract**—*Historical Association pamphlet number 35, Educational Objectives for the study of history, by Jeanette Coltham and John Fines was first published in 1971. It has been cited as a major influence on history education, in the UK and beyond (Lee 2009). What questions are worth asking about this pamphlet? Several questions may be asked of the pamphlet; how influential was it; why was it so influential? However, I have chosen to focus on the question of the extent to which the paper still has relevant and useful things to say to history educators today.*

**Keywords**—*History education, objectives, aims and purposes, school history, curriculum.*

### Introduction

The Historical Association pamphlet *Educational Objectives for the study of history*, by Jeanette Coltham and John Fines was first published in 1971, and reprinted in 1976, 1980 and 1984 (Coltham and Fines 1971). At a recent History Education Special Interest Group seminar at the Institute of Education, University of London, it was argued that the pamphlet was of seminal importance in the development of history education in the UK and beyond (Lee, 2009).

What questions are worth asking about this pamphlet? Given the difficulties involved in accurately estimating the influence of a publication over a period of decades, I have chosen to focus on a different question; of what use or relevance is the pamphlet to history education today? Is it now past its 'sell-by' date? Does it still have pertinent things to say to teachers and student teachers? Should it be on the reading list for student teachers of history? Should some curriculum time be devoted to consideration and discussion of the pamphlet or would this seem a quaint irrelevance given the changes that have taken place in history education since the pamphlet was written?

### The rise of 'objectives led' teaching in UK schools

It could be argued that the battle to get history teachers to think about their aims and objectives for teaching about aspects of the past has long since been won. In most countries, student teachers are usually obliged to draw up a lesson plan for each lesson they teach, which generally starts with the learning objectives which have been identified for the lesson. Moreover, in many schools in the United Kingdom, it is now a whole school policy in many secondary schools that all teachers write up the learning objectives up on the board for each lesson so that the desired learning outcomes for the lesson are transparent and clearly communicated to the pupils – so that the pupils are clearly aware of what they are supposed to learn in each lesson, right from the start of

the lesson. The idea that history teachers should think about what learners would 'get out of' their history lessons may have been bold and innovative in the 1970s (see Slater, 1989: 1 for justification of this assertion), but it is now 'the new orthodoxy'.

Some of the learning objectives suggested by the pamphlet are now clearly outdated, or seem banal: for instance, in the section on reference skills, it would probably not be deemed appropriate for teachers to have as a learning objective that pupils should learn to operate a tape recorder or film strip projector, or learn to use grid references (Coltham and Fines 1971: 16).

Research into pupils' understanding of second order concepts and curriculum development initiatives in history over the past decades has also probably overtaken much of what Coltham and Fines had to say. The current National Curriculum for History in the UK, with its 'importance' statement, statements of general aims, contribution to pupils' personal development, identification of 'levels of attainment', contribution to pupils' personal, learning and thinking skills, delineation of programmes of study, identification of 'range and content' and 'curriculum opportunities', and emphasis on the development of pupils' understanding of key concepts and processes (QCA, 2007) would seem to demonstrate that the work of Coltham and Fines has been taken on and developed to much more sophisticated levels, in a way that would have pleased the authors of the original pamphlet. It is now commonly accepted (and acknowledged in government education policy and current curriculum specifications – see DfES, 2003, QCA, 2007) that teachers should address what Coltham and Fines (1971: 6-7) describe as the conative dimensions of aims and objectives for the study of history, and that teachers should work to ensure that pupils are engaged and responsive in their study of the past. It is also generally accepted by all but the most reactionary of elements that at least part of the aim of school history is to develop pupils' understanding of history as a form of knowledge, with rules, conventions and procedures which are helpful to young people in their lives outside and beyond school (see, for example, Husbands, 1996, QCA, 2007).

### **Limitations and problems with current objectives models**

In spite of these developments, problems remain in terms of the extent to which there is a shared understanding of the full range of potential benefits which the study of the past can bestow on young people, amongst all those involved in the process of education (including student teachers, pupils, parents, school management teams and politicians).

As Coltham and Fines (1971: 4) pointed out, 'the framing of educational objectives is not an easy task and, usually, much refinement of language and argument about clarity is required before satisfactory objectives are produced.' In spite of the increasingly sophisticated frameworks and guidance aimed at supporting teachers and student teachers in this task (see for example, the online schemes of work at DfES, n/d), and the pressures on them (in the UK at least) to write learning objectives on the board at the start of each lesson, this remains a problem. As I have argued elsewhere (Haydn, 2008), one of the most common

causes of poor lessons which I observe being given by history student teachers is that they have not given sufficient thought to what benefits pupils will derive from the particular morsel of the past which they are teaching, or from the study of history more generally.

There are still many pupils who do not understand why they have to do history at school and who consider the subject to be boring and 'useless' (QCA, 2005, Harris and Haydn, 2006, Haydn and Harris, 2010). This lack of understanding is not limited to pupils. Many parents are also unconvinced about the usefulness of the study of history for their children (QCA, 2005), and this scepticism even extends to some head teachers and curriculum managers in UK schools (Ofsted, 2007).

Recent research in the UK has also suggested that in spite of the best efforts of history teachers to render the subject meaningful and useful to their pupils, many pupils leave school without possessing a coherent 'big picture' or usable mental framework of the past, and that their historical consciousness is limited to a patchwork of random and eclectic people and events with very little connection between them (Howson, 2007, Ofsted, 2007).

The views of many UK politicians about the purposes of school history, clinging tenaciously to what might be termed 'Victorian' models and rationales for the teaching of history in schools, are also a concern. Just to provide three examples of this thinking: Conservative Member of Parliament John Stokes (1990) asked in the House of Commons, 'Why cannot we go back to the good old days when we learnt by heart the names of the kings and queens of England, the feats of our warriors and our battles and the glorious deeds of our past?' Secretary of State for Education John Patten (1994) argued that 'All children must understand such key concepts as empire, monarch, crown, church, nobility, peasantry...'. More recently, Shadow Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove (2010) argued for 'a traditional education with children sitting in rows, learning the kings and queens of England...'. There is a real danger that if such a model of school history were to be re-imposed in UK schools, and have little or nothing to say about the issues and concerns which preoccupy young people living in the 21st century, they may well feel that history is not particularly useful in their lives outside and after school.

Having been granted status at a 'foundation subject' compulsory to the age of 16 for all pupils in the original National Curriculum by the Education Reform Act of 1988, the position of history on the school curriculum in the UK has slipped in recent years. Pupils can now stop studying history at the age of 13, and 70% of pupils choose to drop the subject as soon as they are able to do so (Ofsted, 2007). There are now schools in the UK where history does not exist as an examination subject (Harris and Haydn, 2009), and a recent Historical Association survey suggested that history may be becoming a 'niche' subject for more academic pupils, with less able pupils either prevented or discouraged from taking history beyond the age of 13 or 14 (Historical Association, 2009). There is once again a degree of concern about the health and vitality of history as a school subject (Ofsted, 2007).

## Conclusions

Of what relevance is Coltham's and Fines' paper to the current state of history teaching in UK schools, and what lessons might there be for history education in countries outside the UK?

The most striking characteristic of the Coltham and Fines paper is the breadth of possible objectives, encompassing pupil attitudes and responses to the subject, their grasp of history as a discipline, the skills and abilities which study of the subject might hope to develop, and the more general 'educational outcomes of study', defined as 'insight, knowledge of values, and reasoned judgement' (Coltham and Fines, 1971: 4-5).

The paper starts by explicitly attempting to explain the difference between aims and objectives (Coltham and Fines, 1971: 3). It might be interesting to ask student teachers what their ideas about these distinctions are. In the UK, it is generally the case that students' lesson plans specify the learning objectives for the lesson; it is less common for the more general and overarching aims about learning a topic, and learning about history as a discipline to be stipulated. It is possible that 'aims' are being neglected at the expense of objectives.

This tendency may be exacerbated by the influence or orthodoxy of 'SMART' targets in the educational culture of UK schools, with the insistence that all targets or objectives should be 'specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time limited' (see for instance, Scottish Executive, 2009). Clearly, the general 'educational outcomes of study' suggested by Coltham and Fines (insight, knowledge of values and reasoned judgement) are not susceptible to 'SMART' target formulation and assessment, and might therefore be marginalised or neglected in a culture where it is ordained that aims and objectives have to be measurable.

Hackman (2007) points to the danger of teachers identifying aims and objectives at the 'micro-level', whilst neglecting to address more holistic and 'macro-level' reasons for studying particular morsels of the past, and history in general. The following extract from her interview with a Key Stage 3 pupil supports this point:

SH: 'Don't the teachers put the lesson objectives on the board, I thought everyone put the lesson objectives on the board now?

Pupil: 'Oh yes... they do that.'

SH: 'Well what do you mean then "You don't get it"?'

Pupil: 'Well, I don't get the whole of it.'

SH: 'Well, give me an example.....'

Pupil: 'Well, what's the point of doing The Stuarts?'

(Hackman, 2007)

Coltham and Fines' pamphlet is still relevant in terms of reminding history educators of the central importance of thinking carefully about why it is helpful to pupils to learn about the past and about particular aspects of the past. Some of the objectives for the study of history may have changed in terms of their appropriateness since the publication of the pamphlet, but the process of thinking in both broad and precise terms about aims and objectives is as important and relevant as ever.

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## **John Fines' Educational Objectives for the study of History (Educational Objectives), Peter Rogers' New History: Theory into practice (New History): their contribution to curriculum development and research, 1973-2010: A personal view**

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**Abstract**—From 1973/74 and 1980 respectively John Fines' *Educational Objectives* (Coltham and Fines, 1971) and Peter Rogers' *New History* (Rogers, 1979) pamphlets played a seminal role in my work as a history educator. For me the significance of *Educational Objectives* was its analysis of what History as an academic discipline involved for the teaching and learning of history in schools. Its immediate personal impact was through the revolutionary AEB/673- examination syllabus for 16–19-year old students that my school adopted from 1973/74. AEB 673/- was based on *Educational Objectives for the Study of History* – the syllabus required students to study historians' writings; to work in depth upon historical sources and to write a history dissertation on a subject of their own choice. AEB 673/- fully involved students in 'Doing History' as apprentice academic historians.

*Peter Rogers' New History* complemented *Educational Objectives* because its interface between academic history and school history was to show how history's substantive historical knowledge its 'facts', narratives/accounts and substantive-concepts – **know that** knowledge - was based upon history's procedural knowledge, i.e. its skills, structural-concepts, protocols & processes – **know how** knowledge [*Doing History* – *The Historian's Craft* (Bloch, 1954; Burke, P 'Preface' in Bloch, 1954 <http://books.google.co.uk/>; Wikipedia ).] Peter Rogers also illuminated how Bruner's ideas on conceptual understanding and the transformation of knowledge between iconic (visual), abstract (symbolic) and concrete/physical (enactive) forms could enable pupils to develop their historical knowledge and understanding.

**Keywords**—Enactive; Fines, John; Iconic; Procedural' Rogers, Peter; Substantive; Symbolic; Syntactic

### **Introduction**

In this paper I will reflect as analytically as I can the impact upon my own career as a history educator of Rogers' and Fines' two pamphlets - *Educational Objectives for the Study of History* (Coltham & Fines, 1971) and Peter Rogers' *The New History - Theory into Practice* (Rogers, 1979).

From 1973 and 1980 respectively *Educational Objectives* and *The New History* played a central role in my work as a history educator: they still permeate and influence everything that I do in the field of History Education.



## John Fines and Educational Objectives for the Study of History

### John Fines' career: *Educational Objectives* in context:

There were many John Fines: muse and inspiration for history teachers, academic historian, curriculum innovator through his pioneering work on Drama in Education, Museum Education and Story Telling and his theoretical, philosophical role via, among numerous articles, books and pamphlets, *Educational Objectives*. This journal has already published John's own selection of papers, *Let The Past Speak* (Fines, 2002) that illuminate his multi-faceted career: John's continuing influence is mirrored in *Primary History*, the Historical Association's professional journal for the primary sector. Since 2007 almost every edition contains an article or case-study that he produced for the Nuffield Primary History Project he co-directed. (Historical Association, 2007-2010)

In this paper I will focus upon the major role that John (and Jeanette Coltham) played through their seminal, epochal pamphlet *Educational Objectives*.

**The significance of *Educational Objectives*:** Why was *Educational Objectives* epochal? Its significance lay in two distinct areas: history's overall curricular role and in the influence it had upon curriculum development and research, in particular as mediated through the Associated Examining Board's paper 673/-. *Educational Objectives* gave history teachers a clear, detailed rationale for teaching history grounded in academic history as a discipline.

The context for *Educational Objectives* was simple, even simplistic. The barbarian was hammering on the gate of **school history**, threatening to replace it with sociology as a bright, relevant, shiny, (pseudo-) scientific new Humanities subject. Mary Price's paper *History in Danger* (1968) had been a call to arms against the threat from sociology. John Fines and Jeanette Coltham responded with *Educational Objectives*: It was the white knight in shining armour riding to the rescue of Clio, the muse of history.

*Educational Objectives* provided a taxonomy of skills based upon Bloom: a hierarchy that details the skills, processes and concepts of history as a discipline, from the first step of asking questions, through the framing of an enquiry, the discovery and processing of sources to the construction of historical interpretations in an appropriate mode or genre. The creation of a taxonomic, progressive framework of skills, processes & concepts was a crucial weapon in **school history's struggle for survival** against sociology.

The beauty of *Educational Objectives* was the apparent clarity, rigour and objectivity of its analysis of history as an **academic discipline** grounded in the queen of subjects long and distinguished role whose processes: the skills, protocols and concept could be applied to **school history**.

The fact that subsequently *Educational Objectives* was subject to rigorous appraisal and criticism about its shortcomings simply misses the point (Gard & Lee, 1978). When

*Educational Objectives* was published it forced history education to focus upon the **skills, second-order concepts and processes of pupils learning history in schools**, a dimension that traditional school history education had almost totally ignored with its focus upon the grand nationalistic master narrative of 'Our Island Story'. The master narrative is a central element in the political education of pupils: while essential it does little or nothing for developing the sophisticated thinking skills that pupils 'Doing History' 5-19 develop: i.e. procedural history, holistically as a **cognitive toolkit**.

**Educational Objectives and AEB 673-:** In 1973/74 I was head of history in an English school when a letter arrived from the Associated Examining Board introducing a new, experimental 'A' Level Syllabus, AEB 673/-. The AEB's documentation explained that the catalyst, the inspiration for this syllabus arose from the Coltham & Fines pamphlet *Educational Objectives*. The AEB's outline of Syllabus 673/- was a Damascene, epiphanic moment. A mental flash of light and a clap of thunder rolled around my mind.

AEB 673/- made the concrete connection between *academic* and *school history* in terms of an examination syllabus that would shape two years of history education for 16–19-year olds. No posturing, no proselytising but a real, live taught syllabus that for our 16–19-year olds. Pioneering, revolutionary, **awe inspiring**.

I immediately went to see the head teacher: he supported my request to switch our syllabus for the 16–19 age range to 673/-. AEB 673/- inducts pupils into history as an academic discipline grounded. Its three main elements were:

- A study of historians and their oeuvres, i.e., individual historians and schools of historians, for example the Marxist, Whig or the Annales
- An examination of historical sources through the eyes of academic historians
- Theory into practice: 16–18-year olds 'Doing History' through writing their own dissertations of up to 5000 words on a subject of their own choice.

The nature and role of AEB 673/ is addressed in the Associated Examining Board's (1976) paper included in this volume. Here, twenty five years before Sam Wineburg's paper on students working on sources was a fully fledged syllabus that included this as major element in the education of 16–19-year olds.

### Peter Rogers and The 'New History'

**Background:** Peter Rogers played a dual role in my career through:

1. Illuminating clearly and concisely with full scholarly underpinnings the link between the procedural knowledge of academic history as a discipline and school history
2. In linking this in an applied sense – professional knowledge – to two of Jerome Bruner's theories of learning to enable history teachers to:

- a. base their school history upon the history as an academic discipline both in terms of skills & processes and the framework of conceptual knowledge it provided – concepts that could be taught at all ages in an appropriate form, i.e. a spiral curriculum and
- b. through enabling pupils to engage with history through transforming knowledge from one mode to another: the visual/pictorial (iconic); the physical [enactive] and the abstract (symbolic). All pupils can engage in one or more of these modes: transformation makes all modes available.

**Academic and school history:** What was Peter Rogers' message about academic history for the teaching of school history? In *The New History* he went to the heart of the matter. Peter took Ryle's distinction between **know that** (substantive) and **know how** (procedural) knowledge. In *The New History* he demonstrated that **school history** had to be grounded in a theory that would empirically demonstrate that the provenance of claims made about the past – its facts, accounts, narratives – could be verified, i.e. that there was a **truth test**, i.e. how can you prove what you claim, which could be applied through following the evidence trail upon which claims were based. That evidence trail was grounded in procedural knowledge, or its lack of it – the skills, processes, procedures and protocols that had been used to produce the substantive knowledge.

Incidentally, Peter blazed a trail in terms of syntactic (procedural) knowledge that was subsequently re-discovered in the United States and proselytised through the writings of Shulman and his disciples.

**Academic history: a process of enquiry:** To me Rogers showed that among historians there is a *meta-level* of agreement on what history as an academic discipline involves. It has a set of procedures, protocols and skills and processes that draw upon a framework of intermeshed, mutually supporting and reinforcing second order procedural concepts (e.g. causation, consequence, chronology, evidence). This procedural knowledge is fundamental to the creation of 'history' – the narratives/story of the past. However, while we can focus on discrete, individual second order concepts 'Doing History' drawing upon history as an academic discipline that is holistic: an idea that permeates Rogers' pamphlet and related writings.

The appeal of Rogers to a History Educator was that he explicitly articulated **for the teaching of school history** what I already implicitly knew from my training as an academic historian: before and as an undergraduate I was a keen local historian. After my first degree I studied for a history doctorate on a topic arising from my interest in Shropshire local history and imperial history: Clive of India and the conquest of India – Clive was a Shropshire lad.

### A theory of learning

**Bruner – Abstract Academic and Applied Professional Knowledge:** The beauty of Peter Rogers' role as a history educator was to link theoretical abstract academic knowledge with concrete applied professional knowledge – theory into practice.

In addition, Peter demonstrated the role of history educators as academics engaged in scholarship and research through action research that resulted in 'cases' that would illuminate and provide evidence to support claims about the learning outcomes of a particular instance of a particular pedagogy. In this instance the 'case', based upon action-research, was his work with pupils in Northern Ireland.

**Bruner and the Northern Ireland case-study:** The 'case' was illuminated through a video that Peter presented at the annual British meeting of history educators in 1980. In the video Peter showed how he would take a concept and turn it into high-level, sophisticated and demanding pedagogic activities that fully engaged pupils through posing a problem, working on sources, supporting them in finding a solution and developing understanding of the underlying concepts in different transformative modes – moving between the iconic, enactive and symbolic. The meeting remained a central, influential element in all of the history education work that I have done subsequently – I still draw upon it.

### Conclusion

Rogers and Fines have had a massive and lasting influence – both direct and indirect – upon my career as a History Educator. For that I am eternally in their debt.

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## Reading P.J. Rogers' *The New History* 30 years on.

Arthur Chapman

**Abstract**—This paper reviews P.J. Rogers' *The New History* (1979), in the broader context of Rogers' oeuvre. The *New History's* central arguments are outlined and a preliminary evaluation of these arguments is offered in the light of subsequent developments in theory, practice and research.

**Keywords**—History education – History pedagogy - History of history education.

### Introduction

P.J. Rogers' *The New History: Theory into Practice* (1979(a)) was part of a larger project that set out to articulate and to demonstrate the power and effectiveness of an epistemological model of historical teaching and learning. Rogers' work, and *The New History* in particular, aims to demonstrate the necessity, the possibility and the benefits of an epistemologically grounded history pedagogy (Rogers 1972, 1976, 1978 and 1984(b); Rogers and Aston, 1977) and also to theorise the nature and to demonstrate the value of the contextual and conceptual understandings that, Rogers argued, were enabled by this model of historical learning (Rogers 1984(a), 1987(a) and 1987(b)). In addition to engaging theoretically with historiography, the philosophy of education and practical pedagogy, Rogers developed robust comparative empirical assessments of the effectiveness of epistemologically grounded enquiry strategies and both teacher-centred transmission (Rogers, 1978) and 'discovery' learning or 'free enquiry' (Rogers, 1976). Rogers also empirically investigated the broader outcomes of historical education (Rogers, 1979(b)).

The *New History* is unconvincing in at least one important respect and frustratingly brief in its handling of some key issues, and it has clearly been overtaken by theory, research and practice in a number of important ways. The *New History's* central arguments, against a model of history pedagogy that understands history as 'a fixed body of information' about the past and that understands history teaching as the transmission and historical learning as the assimilation of that information, are, however, well made. Rogers' project also has a very great deal to teach contemporary theory and practice not least in its theoretical and empirical rigour and ambition, in its close articulation of theory and practice and in the clarity with which it focuses on scaffolding the development of historical understanding over time. The *New History* is also critical new history (Rogers, 1987(a), pp.3-5) and anticipates and thus problematises many of the criticisms leveled, with whatever justice or injustice, at the 'new history' tradition (McAleavy, 1998; Phillips, 2001).

There is not scope, in a paper of this kind, to adequately discuss Rogers' project in its entirety and this paper focuses on Rogers' arguments about the nature of historical learning with which *The New History* is centrally concerned. It is to be hoped that the re-publication of *The New History* online by the Historical Association will result in a renewal of discussion of Rogers' project in general and also that its example will raise the ambition of contemporary theory and practice.

It is also to be hoped that renewed discussion of Rogers' work will do something to destabilize the binary oppositions that structure much contemporary thinking about the history of history education in England. Rogers' *The New History* is 'new history' that:

- does not set out to turn pupils into 'mini-historians' (Rogers, 1979(a) pp.24-25 and p.40);
- is opposed to decontextualised empathy exercises (Rogers, 1979(a) pp.20-21 and 32-33);
- is opposed to the rehearsal of decontextualised historical 'skills' (Rogers, 1979, p.34);
- is focused on the development of substantive understandings as much as procedural understandings (Rogers, 1979(a) p.12);<sup>1</sup>
- is focused around extended enquiry involving the meaningful use of historical documents and the development of contextual knowledge (Rogers, 1979(a) pp.40-57); and that
- argues that history education must enable pupils, from its earliest stages, to engage in representations of the past and, in time, to construct complex historical narratives (Rogers, 1979 (a) p.10 and pp.48-50).

In other words, consideration of Rogers' work suggests that many of the advances beyond 'new history' that accounts of contemporary practice in the England argue for and celebrate (for example, Phillips, 2001, pp.73-79) were themselves clearly anticipated in the 'new history' tradition, which was more complex and diverse than these accounts suggest. Consideration of Rogers' oeuvre also suggests that theoretical, pedagogic and empirical work in the 'new history' tradition merits greater attention than it has characteristically received.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rogers evaluates teaching approaches against two criteria, the quality of the 'know that' (knowledge about the past) and the quality of the 'know how' (or understanding of the discipline of history) that they develop clearly indicating that both are necessary to adequate history education (Rogers, 1979(a), pp. 18-26).

<sup>2</sup> Phillips (2001) references *The New History* alone amongst Rogers' works and does not discuss it and McAleavy (1998) makes no reference to Rogers' work. Rogers work is referenced in many discussions of the development of history education (for example, Sylvester, 1994 and Lévesque, 2008) although not in all (it does not figure, for example, in Wineburg's account of the history of the psychology of teaching and learning in history (Wineburg, 2001, pp. 28-60).

## **The New History: a summary**

### **'Know how' and 'know that': history as a form of knowledge**

Rogers's account of the nature and purpose of history is clearly articulated into a 'form of knowledge' rationale for the curriculum, closely modeled on the curriculum philosophy developed by Hirst and others in the 1960s (Rogers, 1979 (a), pp.5-16; Hirst, 1965) and on Bruner's conceptualization of the identity of a curriculum subject (Rogers, 1979(a), pp.17-18; Bruner, 1960).

For Rogers, the purpose of education is not to turn out 'mini-historians', 'mini-scientists', and so on, who operate at the level and in the exact manner of professionals in these respective domains: the purpose of education is to develop authentic pupil understandings, at an appropriate level and over time, of distinct domains of human experience, of what we can rationally claim to know about these domains through disciplined 'open enquiry' (Rogers, 1979(a), p.13) and of how such knowledge can be constructed, validated and evaluated (Rogers, 1979, pp.24-6).<sup>3</sup>

Rogers distinguishes between 'know that' or propositional knowledge (the claims that are the outcomes of forms of knowledge construction) and 'know how' or procedural knowledge (knowledge of the procedures through which knowledge claims are constructed and of the criteria in terms of which knowledge claims can be evaluated). Rogers argues that different forms of knowledge are characterized by:

- differences in the domain of experience about which their knowledge claims are constructed;
- differences in the types of proposition that are articulated in their knowledge claims;
- differences in the procedures through which their knowledge claims are constructed and in the procedural criteria in terms of which their knowledge construction should be judged;
- differences in the concepts that are used to make sense of a particular domain of experience in the articulation of propositional knowledge claims about it and also in processes of knowledge construction in that domain (1979(a), pp.5-9).

Rogers contends that education must involve 'know how' as well as 'know that' for normative and for pragmatic reasons. Knowledge of history, or science or any other form of knowledge must involve knowing what history, science, and so on, are, if it is to involve anything more than the simple recall of the propositions articulated by these disciplines:

<sup>3</sup> Thus, for example, whilst Rogers acknowledges that it is impossible for children to 'use sources as a professional historian does' he contends that 'it is difficult to credit that any thoughtful person ever entertained that as a feasible objective' and argues that 'there are other levels of activity at which valid, though incomplete and provisional, experience of source-based work can be had' (Rogers, 1979(a), p. 40).

*no adequate teaching can be purely (or perhaps even mainly) 'know that' in character... 'know how' [is] a distinctive feature of a form of knowledge; since it is the means by which... propositions of that form are generated and is the only thing that gives a right to be sure about them it must... be accorded at least equal importance in the educational process.*

(Rogers, 1979(a), p.8).

Furthermore, if 'know how' is to be grasped, learners needs must have frequent opportunities to engage in practices of knowledge construction:

*[w]hen what is understood in mastering a concept is grasped the inadequacy of mere 'know that' becomes clear. If mere arid verbalism is to be avoided the concept must not only be variously (and by inference frequently) encountered in different contexts... it must be used by the learner.*

(Rogers, 1979(a) p.8).

### **Scaffolding and spiraling: developing of authentic historical understanding**

Historical understanding, as has frequently been noted, involves a hermeneutic circle (Megill, 2007): we cannot understand historical particulars (particular events, particular documents) without understanding their historical context, since it is context that enables the situated interpretation of particulars; and yet there is no knowledge of context apart from knowledge of particulars, since contextual understanding is built up through the interpretation of particulars. Rogers is aware of this fact and of its pedagogic implications. Rather than embracing either pole – either knowledge of context or knowledge of particulars - Rogers argues that historical education involves the simultaneous development of both knowledge of context and knowledge of particulars — Rogers argues that historical education involves the simultaneous development of both knowledge of context and knowledge of particulars: there is 'a necessary interplay between particulars, evidence and contextual frame' (1979(a), pp.55/56) and:

*[w]hile sources are rightly to be used in the light of the [contextual] frame [of reference], the frame is gradually developed from and through the use of sources.*

(Rogers, 1979(a), p. 40)

In Rogers' work the hermeneutic circle becomes a spiral, through an appropriation of the work of Jerome Bruner.<sup>4</sup>

Rogers' develops Bruner's anti-Piagetian argument that the fundamental structures of disciplines can be communicated to learners at young ages in authentic and simplified form and that these fundamental structures can be sophisticated over time at increasing levels of abstraction that progressively enable sense to be made of increasingly complex and detailed problems:

<sup>4</sup> Although Rogers depends heavily in Bruner in The New History and elsewhere (such as Rogers, 1984(b) and Rogers and Aston, 1977), he is by no means uncritical of Bruner (see Rogers, 1972, pp. 128-129).

*Once established... basic ideas are to be progressively communicated to pupils by means of the 'spiral' curriculum, which turns back on itself at higher levels and by which 'any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development' (Bruner, 1960, p.13...). A key idea can be encountered in examples of greatly varying difficulty, and education is a matter of arranging a graded sequence of representations such that, by moving from the simplest and most concrete representations of a key idea to the more and more complex, comprehensive, and abstract, the pupil may eventually acquire a comprehensive understanding of the idea itself.*

(Rogers, 1979(a), p. 17)

A great proportion of The New History is devoted to showing that the fundamental structures of the discipline of history can be presented authentically and meaningfully to pupils from a young age, to indicating how these ideas might be presented at increasing levels of abstraction and complexity over time and to illustrating the spiraling of the history curriculum through the discussion of practical pedagogic examples.

As will be discussed further below, aspects of Rogers' construction of historical procedure are questionable and Rogers sets himself some false problems for which he devises implausible solutions.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, Rogers' detailed descriptions of practical pedagogy are very effective in illustrating how historical learning can be spiraled and in illustrating the simultaneous development of 'know how' and 'know that'. Rogers' account of how a teaching sequence that aimed to develop 10-13 year old students contextual and conceptual knowledge and procedural understanding during a study of the Nine Years War (Rogers, 1979(a), pp.40-48) includes detailed discussion of the spiraling of the concept of 'strategic importance' in which understandings of the concept are set up, through the exploration of concrete examples (particular castles) and then revised and extended through the exploration of further examples in ways that reformulate the concept at increasing levels of abstraction (Rogers, 1979(a), pp.44-46). Rogers' account of the sequence also illustrates how simple notions of 'bias' might be developed into empathetic understandings of the predicaments of the authors of documents through the careful development, supported by documentary materials presented in a range of forms, of contextual understanding. The New History ends with two further illustrations of spiraling that add further weight to Rogers' claim that historical understanding can be effectively developed at increasing levels of complexity and abstraction over time by the systematic use of sources of historical evidence to build up contextual understanding and by the systematic use of emerging contextual understanding to interpret sources of historical evidence.

At the centre of *The New History* and at the centre of Rogers' wider project is an endeavour to assess alternative teaching approaches to the development of historical understanding in both theoretical (Rogers, 1979, pp. 18-35) and empirical terms (Rogers, 1976 and 1978).

<sup>5</sup> Rogers, 1979(a), pp. 37-38 and pp.15-16.

Rogers' theoretical appraisal anticipates much subsequent debate and evaluates broad teaching approaches (the relative merits of 'patch' and 'line of development' approaches, for example (Rogers, 1979(a), pp.19-21) and specific tasks (Rogers, 1979(a), pp.22-24). Rogers' assessment of 'free enquiry' approaches is particularly pertinent. Firstly, it is apparent that many of the flaws frequently associated with 'new history' are actually antithetical to it, at least on Rogers' construction, and are the flaws of 'free enquiry' rather than disciplined enquiry:

*Frequently the new 'activity' approach is not practiced upon, nor disciplined by, genuine evidence, and, consequentially, is not shaped by its proper use. All too often, little genuine evidence is presented (in which case reconstruction becomes mere imaginative composition, or art, or handiwork, without any basis in fact) or it is presented uncritically, not as something out of which a narrative or picture or model can be constructed by inference, cross-referencing and so on, but as a substitute for any such operations.*

(Rogers, 1979(a), p. 20)

Secondly, Rogers juxtaposes the claim that enquiries 'must proceed according to the various sets of criteria which constitute the procedural structures of the various forms of knowledge' (Rogers, 1976, p. 25) to the:

*assumption... that knowledge is an indivisible whole, that distinctions made between different school 'subjects' are thus arbitrary, and that one learning strategy – 'discovery' – exists, trainable upon any enquiries and universally applicable once learned.*

(Rogers, 1976, p. 24)

Rogers argues against this second assumption on theoretical grounds (Rogers, 1979(a), p.20) and also on empirical grounds, through a number of suggestive pedagogic experiments that provide at least tentative support for the contention that teaching focused through disciplined enquiry is more effective, in terms of statistical measures of historical learning outcomes, than both free enquiry and didactic 'transmission' approaches to teaching and learning (Rogers, 1976 and 1978). The assumptions that Rogers argues underlie the 'free enquiry' or 'discovery' method are very much with us, for example the antipathy to 'subjects' that underlies many arguments for a 'competency' based curriculum (RSA, 2005), and Rogers arguments have clear contemporary relevance.

### ***The New History: an evaluation***

As has been noted already, Rogers' project, of which The New History is merely one expression, is a highly sophisticated and impressive one and a proper evaluation of it requires more space than is available here and, at the least, entails consideration of Rogers' work on four levels:

- in terms of its engagement with historiography and the philosophy of history;
- in terms of its engagement with and understanding of educational psychology and pedagogy;

- in practical terms through an assessment of the examples of pedagogic practice that Rogers reports and describes; and
- empirically and methodologically, through an appraisal of the evaluative case studies through which Rogers sought to evaluate the pedagogic models that he described and theorized.

The evaluation that follows here is necessarily limited in scope and cannot therefore do justice to its object.

In the thirty years since the publication of *The New History*, epistemological thinking, presupposed by the notion of distinct disciplines, has been subjected to sustained critique in philosophy (Rorty, 1982) and in the philosophy of history (Jenkins, 1991 and 1999) and 'form of knowledge' curriculum models have been reappraised in the philosophy of education (White (Ed.) 2003) not least by Hirst (for example, Hirst, 1998, pp.18-20). It is commonplace, also, to find the identity of academic history as a distinct form of knowledge questioned and its continuity with the human sciences in general asserted (Giddens, 1984), to find historians' claims to objectivity and their claims about the boundaries between academic and non-academic engagements with the past questioned (Megill, 2007; Jenkins, et al, 2007) and to find it argued that history simply does not have the coherent or distinctive formal properties that would merit describing it as a discipline (Barton and Levstick, 2008, pp.111-112). In at nutshell, we might say that the 'forms of knowledge' model of the curriculum has been characterized as Cartesian and rationalist, as ignoring the situated and interpersonally constructed nature of knowledge claims, as privileging particular forms of engaging with the world, as prone to abstraction, unsustainable universalism, and so on. Rogers' 'form of knowledge' arguments are likely to seem particularly vulnerable, therefore, in present contexts.

Postmodern and relativist critiques of historical knowing have themselves been problematized, however (for example by Fulbrook, 2002 and Lorenz, 1998), and it is possible to defend historical practice as a 'cognitive strategy for getting knowledge about the past' whilst acknowledging the ways in which 'the work of historians is influenced by and related to practical life' (Rüsen, 2005, p.135) and shaped by normative and practical contexts (Rüsen, 2001; Lorenz, 1994). It is also possible to make a post-positivist case for history as a coherent form of knowledge construction characterized by interpersonal procedures and robust evaluative criteria and 'rules of thumb' (Bevir, 1994 and 1999; Megill, 2007; Grafton, 2003; Goldstein, 1976 and 1996). In addition, there are good empirical grounds, as work on the psychology of expert and novice engagements in historical reconstruction have shown (Wineburg, 1991, 2000 and 2007), for positing historical thinking as an identifiable and distinct form of cognition. Powerful psychological and curriculum theoretic arguments have also been made, notably by Howard Gardner (1993 and 2000) against generic curriculum models and in defense of disciplines as organizing curricular principles, and the power of historical thinking

and its broad benefits have recently been restated cogently, in terms that echo Rogers' characteristic claims (Tosh, 2008).

Rogers' strategy, of defending history as a form of knowledge is, then, at the very least, defensible, despite changes in the intellectual climate since the 1960s. The emphasis that Rogers' places on procedure in historical knowing is, however, questionable and for two reasons.

Firstly, Rogers' account of history as a set of procedures depends centrally, in *The New History* at least, on the account of historical practice advanced by G.R.Elton in *The Practice of History*.<sup>6</sup> Elton is a strange choice of ally, given Elton's view that school history should focus on knowledge transmission (Elton, 1970), Elton's view that 'a philosophic concern with the nature of historical thought only hinders the practice of history' (Elton, 1969 cited in Skinner, 1997, p.302) and Elton's opposition to the defense of history education in terms of the substantive understandings that it might help students develop (Skinner, 1997, pp.311-316). Elton's view of the ways in which historians relate to their sources, and, in particular, his insistence that historians are primarily passive enquirers whose questions are, as it were, immanent in their materials, is certainly hard to defend coherently and very easy to take apart, as Quentin Skinner has done magisterially by probing the senses in which an historical object (in this case, Chatsworth House) might suggest its own questions to the historian and by showing that the notion is nonsensical (Skinner, 1997, pp.306-311).<sup>7</sup>

Secondly, Rogers' account of history as procedure focuses on spiraling learners' mastery of procedures rather than on the tacit epistemologies that learners may hold and which are likely to have implications for the sense that they make of historical procedures.<sup>8</sup> Rogers pays a good deal of attention to concepts in *The New History* and elsewhere, through his cogent demonstration of the importance of 'conceptual' and 'contextual' frameworks in historical understanding: for Rogers, history inevitably involves 'the interplay of the conceptual and the particular' (1972, p.123).<sup>9</sup> However, the concepts that Rogers discusses, when defining history as procedure in *The New History*, are substantive concepts, relating to the conceptualization of the 'stuff' of history, rather than meta-historical or second order concepts, relating to understandings

<sup>6</sup> Rogers' description of Elton's account of historical practice as 'authoritative' (1979(a), p. 36) is a lapse of judgment: *The Practice of History* was a defensive intervention on behalf of conventional historical practice in a context where it was both out of fashion and under attack (Stedman Jones, 1972; Skinner, 1997, pp. 313-314).

<sup>7</sup> Skinner's critique of Elton's arguments about how evidence is to be interpreted explores precisely the passages in *The Practice of History* that Rogers' depends upon in *The New History* (compare Skinner, 1997, pp. 306-311 and Rogers, 1976, pp. 14-16).

<sup>8</sup> Students' tacit epistemologies have been explored in work arising from both the Schools Council History Project evaluation and the CHATA project (Shemilt, 1980 and 1987; Lee, 2004; Lee and Ashby, 2000, Lee and Shemilt, 2003) and by Wineburg (2001 and 2007) and the development of evidential understanding is explored in Ashby (forthcoming).

<sup>9</sup> Rogers' 'conceptual frameworks' include concepts such as 'strategic importance' (1979(a), pp. 44-46) that allow sense to be made of historical particulars and Rogers' 'contextual frameworks' are understandings of particular periods in the past that enable rational understandings of past actors' actions in terms of contemporary circumstances, beliefs and understandings (1979(a), pp. 12-13).

of the business of historical knowing itself.<sup>10</sup> In *The New History* historical concepts are understood as continuous with concepts 'encountered in general experience' and as identical to 'the concepts of politics, or art, or science, or economics, according to what one is studying' (Rogers, 1979(a), pp.9-10).

The first of these two problems is readily solved: Lorenz (2001), for example, provides a clear characterization of historical procedure and practice that does not rely on untenable assumptions about the passivity and quietism of historians in the face of their sources; the ways in which assumption and evidence interact hermeneutically in historical research are well understood (Gardner, 2010; Megill, 2007); and post-analytic and post-positivist criteria for evaluating historical practice have been developed that enable judgments of validity to be made, in relation to historical accounts, on procedural grounds of the kind that Rogers refers to (Bevir, 1994 and 1999; Megill, 2007). The second problem requires a broadening of Rogers' project and its revision in the light of the considerable body of international research and theorizing on progression in historical understanding that has developed since the 1970s.<sup>11</sup>

Although, as has been noted above, Rogers draws attention to the role of concepts in the development of historical understanding, Rogers' explicit focus is on substantive, or first order, historical concepts only and Rogers tends, at times, to talk as if student mind was a tabula rasa (for example, at Rogers, 1979(a), p.16) and thus to underestimate the barriers to learning that students' everyday epistemologies and preconceptions can present (Lee and Shemilt, 2003).<sup>12</sup> Clearly procedures are central to historical practice and mastering procedures and developing procedural or second order understandings are likely to go hand in hand. However, it is critical to separate them analytically not least because they can become decoupled in practice such that students can be successfully schooled in the mastery of procedure, for examination purposes for example, and yet fail to develop the epistemological understandings that the historical procedures presuppose. Furthermore, as Lee and Ashby have argued (2000), and as has been shown in the context of research in a number of areas of learning (Donovan, et al (Eds.), 1999), students tend, unless challenged to develop powerful subject specific conceptual understandings, to assimilate what that they learn to their existing epistemologies in ways that can cement misconceptions rather than progress understandings: doing history does not necessarily lead to understanding history and attention to preconceptions is as essential as attention to procedures.

As has already been noted, Rogers develops his spiraling proposition in depth and in detail through concrete discussions of practice that demonstrate how complex historical understandings can be built up over time (for example, Rogers, 1979(a), pp.44-48). The

<sup>10</sup>The distinction between substantive or first order concepts and procedural or second order concepts is developed in, for example, Lee, 2004.

<sup>11</sup>See note 8 and also Lévesque (2008).

<sup>12</sup>Whilst Rogers is right to claim that many concepts encountered in history are continuous with general human experience historical epistemology is discontinuous with everyday experience and counter-intuitive (Lee and Shemilt, 2003; Wineburg, 2007).

*New History* pays more attention to the scaffolding of evidential thinking than to the scaffolding of narrative competence, however, and some aspects of Rogers' treatment are highly schematic and in need of further development and illustration.<sup>13</sup>

## Conclusion

As has been noted, there is much in *The New History* that anticipates and speaks very clearly to current concerns. Thus, as we have seen, Rogers' 'new history' argues learning history involves learning to produce sophisticated and cohesive historical narratives and aims to scaffold the development of narrative competence over time and therefore addresses ambitions for history and dissatisfactions with current practice such as those articulated by Lang (Lang, 2003) and by critiques of anti-narrativism in historical thinking (Megill, 2007, pp.78-106). Thus, again, and as has also been noted, Rogers' work is concerned to ensure that historical teaching and learning is structured around meaningful enquiries that enable pupils to develop their historical knowledge (their 'contextual frame of reference') and that will also scaffold pupils developing understanding of historical thinking and his work is therefore highly relevant to contemporary pedagogic efforts to develop disciplined historical enquiry (for example, Riley 1997; 2000). Rogers' work also provides a robust rationale for disciplinary historical education and compelling arguments for the value of historical learning that prefigure powerful contemporary arguments (such as Tosh 2008). Furthermore Rogers' arguments were developed in a context where generic, integrationist and anti-disciplinary curriculum proposals had currency and Rogers' theoretical and empirical arguments have particular salience in the present where similar curriculum proposals are again being canvassed. In themselves, these are good grounds for re-engaging with Rogers work. In addition, and as the discussion above has indicated, Rogers' oeuvre addresses these questions with a sophistication and a theoretical, practical and empirical rigour that has seldom been matched and that has a great deal to teach contemporary theory, practice and research.

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<sup>13</sup>Contrast Rogers' treatment of how pupils' narrative competence might be scaffolded over time (Rogers, 1979(a), pp. 48-50) and the detailed explorations of how students might be taught to write history in Lang (2003) and Counsell (2004). Of the three pages of *The New History* that explore how historical composition might be spiraled, one paragraph is devoted to the composition of sustained historical narrative (Rogers, 1979(a), p. 50).

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