

Syllabus for Educational Freedom

Session summary

The semester-long course will consist of 14 sessions, as follows:

- **Introductory: educational freedom and the global education industry**
- **Education, the state and liberty: historical perspectives (2 sessions)**
- **The ethics of markets in education: a debate**
- **Case studies of educational entrepreneurship – the experience in developing countries (3 sessions)**
- **Case studies of educational entrepreneurship – the experience from the USA and UK (3 sessions)**
- **Theoretical underpinnings of choice, competition and entrepreneurship in education (2 sessions)**
- **Empirical findings on educational freedom**
- **Student debate and conclusions**

In general, sessions will be scheduled on a weekly basis, usually from 5 – 7.30 pm in the evening, to allow part-time as well as full-time students to attend. However, Sessions 5-7 and 8-10 will be scheduled for a full weekend seminar, complete with critical commentary.

Session 1: Introductory: educational freedom and the global education industry
What is meant by “educational freedom”, and what is its relevance to current educational concerns? The first part of the session will ascertain students’ current understanding and knowledge about the issues and concepts to be covered throughout the course. In particular, the crucial concepts of choice, competition and entrepreneurship will be highlighted and discussed. Students’ perceptions of important issues in education policy will be explored in the context of their relevance for the course.

The second part of the session will give an overview of the debates to be covered, introducing leading figures on both sides of the debate (and those ‘in-between’) in terms of their biographies and positions. The evidence and arguments required to adjudicate between the various positions will be explored.

Finally, an overview of the findings of the IFC global private education study will be given, and its relevance for the wider course discussed.

Selected readings

- Friedman, Milton (1962) *Capitalism and Freedom*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press
- Friedman, Milton and Friedman, Rose (1980), *Free to Choose* New York, Harcourt, Brace Jovanoud.
- Gewirtz, Sharon, Ball, Stephen J., and Bowe, Richard (1995) *Markets, Choice and Equity in Education* Open University Press, Buckingham and Philadelphia
- Gutmann, Amy (1987), *Democratic Education*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Tooley, James (1999) *The Global Education Industry*, London, IEA in association with the IFC.

Sessions 2-3: Education, the state and liberty: historical perspectives

Visiting lecturers: Dr E.G. West, Carleton University and Dr Andy Green, University of London

Two issues of crucial importance raised in any discussion of educational liberty concern why the state got involved in education in the first place, and what was happening in education historically before governments intervened. The key economic historian working in this area is Dr E.G. West, Emeritus Professor at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. Dr West to return to Newcastle – where he actually wrote his seminal work *Education and the State* – to lecture and debate the issues. *Education and the State* brought to public notice the evidence of widespread schooling and literacy –90 per cent and more of the relevant population were in private and voluntary schools – before government intervention in England & Wales in 1870. Government only “jumped into the seat of a horse that was already galloping”, says West – and then succeeded in crowding out the private alternative. In a later edition of the work, Dr West explores similar evidence from the United States and elsewhere he has reviewed the evidence in Australia. Session 2 will give a platform to Dr West to outline and discuss his arguments and evidence.

E.G. West’s ideas have been fundamentally criticised in the academic journals – as well as in more popular writings. (Indeed, when *Education and the State* was first published by the Institute of Economic Affairs in 1965, there was even a libel trial when the editor of the *New Statesman* published a review suggesting that West had concocted his data. The case was won by the IEA, and, showing the touching greed-less innocence of the times, they settled for an apology). A key critic in the UK, Dr Andy Green, Professor of Education at the Institute of Education, University of London, will present in Session 3 an alternative viewpoint of the history of education, and debate with Dr West the finer points of the arguments.

Selected readings

- Coulson, Andrew (1999) *Market education: The unknown history*, New Brunswick and London, Transaction Publishers
- Gardner, Philip (1984), *The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England: The People's Education*, Croom Helm, London.
- Green, Andy (1990), *Education and State Formation*, Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Green, Andy (1991), 'The structure of the system: Proposals for Change', in Clyde Chitty (ed.), *Changing the future: Redprint for Education*, (The Hillcole Group), The Tufnell Press, London.
- High, Jack and Jerome Ellig (1992), 'The Private Supply of Education: Some Historical Evidence', in Tyler Cowen (ed.), *Public Goods & Market Failures: A Critical Examination*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick.
- Kiesling, Herbert J. (1983), 'Nineteenth-Century Education According to West: A Comment', *Economic History Review*, 36, 416-425.
- Mitch, David F. (1992) *The Rise of Popular Literacy in Victorian England: The Influence of Private Choice and Public Policy* Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press
- Stephens, W.B. (1987), *Education, Literacy and Society 1830-70: the Geography of Diversity in Provincial England*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.
- West, E.G. (1970) Resource allocation and growth in early-nineteenth century British education, *Economic History Review*, XXIII, 68-95.
- West, E.G. (1983), Nineteenth-Century Educational History: The Kiesling Critique *Economic History Review*, 36, 426-434.
- West, E.G., (1992) "The Benthamites as Educational Engineers: The Reputation and the Record", *History of Political Economy*, vol. 24, no. 3, Fall, 595-622.
- West, E. G. (1994), *Education and the State*, (3rd edition), Liberty Fund, Indianapolis
- West, E.G., (1994) The Political Economy of American Public School Legislation, ch. 17 of *Education and the State* (3rd edition only), based on 1967 *Journal of Law and Economics* article.

Session 4: The ethics of markets in education: a debate

Visiting lecturer: Professor Harry Brighouse, University of London

What do philosophers of education have to say about justifications for government intervention in education, and the ethics of moving towards the private alternative? The key philosophical critic of educational choice in the UK is Dr Harry Brighouse, who holds the prestigious Chair in Philosophy of Education at the Institute of Education, University of London. His recent works have criticised proponents of privatisation particularly in terms of their impact on equity and autonomy. Choice in education undermines equality of opportunity, and is likely to prevent the development of autonomous persons -

both key concerns for liberal philosophers. Although increasing educational freedom does not succumb to many of the “red herrings” put forward by some philosophers, including the concern for public and collective goods, nonetheless it also raises the issue of who should fund education. The conclusion for Brighouse is that increasing educational freedom is undesirable. Dr Brighouse and Dr Tooley have debated these issues in the academic journals, and are to debate at the Annual Conference of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain at the University of Oxford in April: this debate will be repeated for the course.

Selected readings

Brighouse, Harry (1998) Why should states fund schools? *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 46.2, 138-152.

Brighouse, Harry (2000a) *School Choice and Social Justice*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Brighouse, Harry (2000b) *Educational Equality and the New Selective Schooling*, PESGB, London

Brighouse, Harry (2000c) *A Level Playing Field: The reform of private schools*, Fabian Society, London.

Tooley, James (1995a) *Disestablishing the School*, Avebury, Aldershot.

Tooley, James (1995b) Markets or Democracy for Education? A Reply to Stewart Ranson, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 43, 1, 21-34.

Tooley, James (2000) *Reclaiming Education*, London, Cassell.

Sessions 5-7 (first all-day session): Case studies of educational entrepreneurship – the experience in developing countries

An important concept in the course is that of educational entrepreneurship. Who are exactly are these educational entrepreneurs, what inspired them into the field, what motivates them now and what difficulties and challenges do they face? Sessions 5-7 will introduce the students to case studies conducted by Dr Tooley’s team, including video presentations, providing practical examples of their work to integrate into the theoretical work of previous and ensuing sessions. The examples will include:

- The Federation of Private Schools’ Management, Hyderabad, India. The Federation has 500 schools in low income neighbourhoods and villages of Andhra Pradesh. Many of the schools serve the very poor in the slums, charging fees as low as 35 Rs per month (about 60c). The successes of the schools in the Federation, and discuss the difficulties they face meeting government regulation (only 40% of their schools are recognised by government) will be outlined, as well as the problems of illiterate parents. Reasons for setting up the Federation will be explored and the quest to

Sessions 8-10 (second all-day session) Case studies of educational entrepreneurship: the experience from the USA and UK;

Sessions 8-10 will introduce students to case studies of educational entrepreneurs from America and Britain, probing identical issues and questions. The case studies are likely to include:

- Nobel Learning Communities, USA. Nobel has 160 private schools across America. Since 1994, the company has been growing at a rate of 30% or more a year, and obtaining \$144 million in investment. Crucially, fees at Nobel schools are only 85% of the average state school funding in the US, and academic achievement significantly higher. Despite the relatively low fees, this for-profit chain can afford to keep average class size down to 17 pupils, and the central administrative office has only 32 staff, at most 40% of what a comparable state system would have. The company has recently created the Nobel International Network of Private Schools, which has signed its first protocol with a chain of schools in China, to open a private school in Beijing.
- Edison Schools, USA. Edison currently has 108 public schools, covering 57,000 students, under its private management, under contract with school districts or charter boards. Edison takes only 90% of per pupil funding currently absorbed by the state sector and it typically invests the equivalent of about \$1million in every school it takes over, in terms of a research-based academic curriculum, teacher education and technology. Famously, it puts a networked computer in the home of every child above 3rd grade, and offers stock options to all employees, from the janitor to principal. Schools use time more efficiently, adding the equivalent of more than six years of curriculum time for the typical American student. And although this disappoints its vociferous critics, 65 per cent of Edison students are eligible for free school meals, and the largest group of students is African-American. Despite serving a disadvantaged population, latest figures show that on standardised tests the great majority classes have made statistically significant gains, over and above what would be expected of the pupils.
- C&T. UK. This is one of the leading British education companies, with turnover of £120 million, and offices throughout the world, including in America, Malaysia and Malawi. Recently, the company has acquired its first 'budget' private school in England, with fees less than the average per

create a trusted brand-name of private schools for the poor will be outlined.

- NIIT, India. NIIT has about 35% of the IT education and training market in India, with 40 wholly owned centres and about 1,000 franchised centres across India. It also has a global reach, with centres in the USA, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Japan, Central Asia and Africa. In several ways, NIIT is concerned with reaching the poor in Indian society. One aspect of this is the recent project supplying student loans for their advanced iGNITT course, in conjunction with Citibank, which do not need collateral and which can be paid back in full during the first year of the student placement, which is guaranteed by NIIT. Another aspect is the R&D project which places Internet Kiosks in slums and villages, and illustrates a novel but successful method for allowing largely illiterate and unschooled children to learn through the Internet.
- Educar, Mexico. Educar opened its first schools in 1954 in Mexico, and currently has 56 schools and four universities. This includes a national network of schools in economically deprived parts of the country, the 'friendly hand' schools. The Educar school system has its own curriculum and textbooks, and a dedicated research centre for up-to-date developments in education, systems, curriculum, organization, software and IT. The company also has a teacher training centre. It is currently seeking to expand its range of schools through a \$46 million investment programme, to reach 100 schools by 2004.

In addition, students will be asked to use the work of two of the severest critics of the moves to 'commercialise' education to provide a critical commentary on the case studies:

- Alex Molnar (Professor of Education at Madison Wisconsin, USA), *Giving Kids the Business*
- Heather-Jane Robertson (Journalist, Canada), *No more teachers, no more schools*.

Selected readings

- IFC (1999) *Investment Opportunities in Private Education in Developing Countries*, Conference Proceedings, IFC, Washington
- Harty, Sheila (1994) *Pied Piper Revisited*, in David Bridges and Terry McLaughlin (Eds), *Education and the Market Place*, Falmer, London.
- Molnar, Alex (1996) *Giving Kids the Business: the commercialization of America's Schools*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado.
- Robertson, Heather-Jane (1998) *No more teachers, no more books: the commercialization of Canada's schools*, Toronto, McClelland & Stewart
- Tooley, James (1999) *The Global Education Industry*, London, IEA with IFC

capita state funding. It is investing in R&D to create a chain of budget private schools in England, as well as a similar model in India.

Selected readings - As above.

Sessions 11-12: Theoretical underpinnings of choice, competition and entrepreneurship in education

Having introduced the students to some of the practicalities of educational entrepreneurship from around the world, the students now explore some of the underlying theory which stresses the importance of choice, competition and entrepreneurs. As many of the students will not have knowledge of Austrian economics, the first session features a 'crash course' in the basics of the work of Von Mises and Hayek. For the Austrians, the market acts as a superior coordinating device. The true needs of the consumer, and how best to satisfy them, cannot be achieved through a central planning agency. Individuals know their own values and planning without this information is rendered pointless. By contrast government hierarchical control acting as a coordination device, stifles choice and innovative incentives, restricting the generation of new information.

Austrians argue that the market is in constant disequilibrium, continuously adjusting, continuously generating and transmitting *information*, providing incentives for exchange. Information is subjective; it is also limited. The fact that the market is a decentralised coordination mechanism enables it to handle information efficiently. *Competition* is seen by the Austrians as the attempt by individuals to achieve the most favourable position in the system of social co-operation. Competition then facilitates the continual search for mutually beneficial exchange, stimulating efficiency, and innovation. Finally, the market mechanism is set in motion by the actions of *entrepreneurs* in search of profit and the acquisition of wealth. Entrepreneurs will explore the market for opportunities allowing them to make gains, fulfilling consumer demand, developing innovative production methods and new products. However, to restate the analogy utilised by Mises in *Human Action*, it is the entrepreneur who steers the ship, but he obeys the captain's orders, the captain being the consumer. Entrepreneurs constantly search for opportunities, from which they will benefit, helping others in this process. The result is to increase the prosperity of society.

The second session will then put this debate in the context of education. Theoretical arguments for extending and encouraging choice, competition and entrepreneurship in education will be examined, along with the writings of leading critics. Judgements will be made about the efficacy of the arguments raised and evidence required to reach a conclusion assessed.

Selected readings

- Butler, E. (1983) *Hayek: His contribution to the political and economic thought of our time*. Temple Smith.
- Butler, E. (1988) *Ludwig von Mises: Fountainhead of the Modern Microeconomics Revolution*. Gower.
- Hargreaves, David H. (1996b) Diversity and Choice in School Education: a modified libertarian approach, *Oxford Review of Education*, 22(2), 131-141.
- Harmer, David (1994) *School Choice: Why you need it - how you get it*, Cato Institute, Washington DC.
- Hayek, F. A. (1960) *The Constitution of Liberty*. Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Littlechild, S. C. (1986) *The Fallacy of the Mixed Economy*. 2nd edn., Hobart Paper 80. IEA.
- Maidment, R., and Thompson, G. (eds) (1993) *Managing the United Kingdom: An Introduction to its Political Economy and Policy*. Sage.
- Mises, Ludwig von. (1996) *Human Action: A Treatise on Economics*. 4th edn., Fox & Wilkes.
- Smith, B. (1986) Austrian Economics and Austrian Philosophy. In Grassl, W., and Smith, B. (1986) (eds) *Austrian Economics*. Croom Helm Ltd.
- Tooley, James (1997) Choice and Diversity in Education: A defence, *Oxford Review of Education*, 23,1, 103-116.
- Tooley, James (2000) *Reclaiming Education*, (Session 4), London, Cassell.
- Tooley, James (2001) *The Enterprise of Education*, New Delhi, Liberty Institute

Session 13: Empirical findings on educational freedom

Visiting speaker: Professor Sally Power, University of London

Many of the earlier sessions will have raised the question of what do we know *empirically* about the impact of moves towards educational freedom? This session will review some of the key evidence from around the world. Partly this will review the evidence from moves towards models of choice in state education systems, although caveats will be given about the ways in which many of these systems compromise freedom. Other evidence will be reviewed that compares private and public schools in selected countries. A leading critic of choice who has conducted empirical research will be invited to contribute to this session.

Selected readings

- Ball, Stephen J. (1993) Education markets, choice and social class: the market as a class strategy in the UK and the USA, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 14, 1, 3-19.

- Ball, Stephen J., Bowe, Richard And Gewirtz, Sharon (1996) School choice, social class and distinction: the realization of social advantage in education, *Journal of Education Policy*, 11, 1, 89-112.
- Gewirtz, Sharon, Ball, Stephen J., And Bowe, Richard (1993a), Parents, privilege and the education market-place, *Research Papers in Education* 9,1, 3-29.
- Gewirtz, Sharon, Ball, Stephen J., and Bowe, Richard (1995) *Markets, Choice and Equity in Education* Open University Press, Buckingham and Philadelphia
- Jimenez, Emmanuel, Lockheed, Marlaine E., and Paqueo, Vicente, (1991) The Relative Efficiency of Private and Public Schools in Developing Countries, *World Bank Research Observer*, Vol. 6, no. 2 (July), pp. 205-218;
- Jimenez, Emmanuel,, Lockheed, Marlaine, Wattanawaha, Nongnuch, (1988) The Relative Efficiency of Private and Public Schools: the Case of Thailand, *The World Bank Economic Review*, Vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 139-164).
- Kingdon, Geeta (1996a) "The quality and efficiency of private and public education: a case study of urban India", *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics*, 58.1
- Kingdon, Geeta (1996b) "Private schooling in India: Size, Nature and Equity-effects", LSE, Development Economics Programme,
- Larrañaga, Oswaldo, (1997) Chile: A Hybrid Approach, in Zuckerman, Elaine and de Kadt, Emanuel (eds) *The Public-private Mix in Social Services: Health care and education in Chile, Costa Rica and Venezuela*, Washington DC: Inter-American Development Bank.
- The Probe Team, (1999) *Public Report on Basic Education in India*, Oxford, Oxford University Press
- Tooley, James (1997b) "On School Choice and Social Class: A Response to Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz", *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 18, 2, 217-230.
- Walford, Geoffrey (1994) *Choice and Equity in Education*, (London, Cassell).
- Whitty, Geoff, Power, Sally, Halpin, David, (1998) *Devolution & Choice in Education: The school, the state and the market*, Open University Press, Buckingham and Philadelphia

Session 14: Student debate and conclusions

The final session offers students the opportunity to take positions on the material that has been presented throughout the course, in the form of a formal debate. Two students will propose a motion supporting moves towards educational freedom and two will oppose it. (Students would be permitted to play devil's advocate to support a position which they do not agree with). Students and instructors alike will take part in the debate that will bring to bear all the issues raised during the course, acting as a summary and wrap-up session.