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Teaching in the Knowledge Society

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This paper is abridged and adapted from Prof. Hargreaves' soon-to-be released book, *Teaching in the Knowledge Society*. Details are provided at the end of this paper.

WE LIVE in a knowledge economy, a knowledge society. Knowledge economies are stimulated and driven by creativity and ingenuity. Knowledge society schools have to create these qualities, otherwise their people and their nations will be left behind. Like other kinds of capitalism, the knowledge economy is, in Joseph Schumpeter's terms, a force of creative destruction.

It stimulates growth and prosperity, but its relentless pursuit of profit and self-interest also strains and fragments the social order. Along with other public institutions, our schools must therefore also foster the compassion, community and cosmopolitan identity that will offset the knowledge economy's most destructive effects. The knowledge economy primarily serves the private good. The knowledge society also encompasses the public good. Our schools have to prepare young people for both of them.

Schools today serve and shape a world in which there can be great economic opportunity and improvement if people can learn to work more flexibly, invest in their future financial security, reskill or relocate themselves as the economy shifts around them, and value working creatively and collaboratively. The world that schools serve is also characterized by growing social instability. The bonds between citizens are increasingly strained by the fragmenting effects of economic flexibility.

People who spend most of their time producing and consuming find less and less time for family or community. There is a loss of trust in, and growing suspicion about, political and professional integrity. The widening gaps between rich and poor fan the flames of terrorism, crime and mounting insecurity.

Yet, instead of fostering creativity and ingenuity, more and more school systems have become obsessed with imposing and micromanaging curriculum uniformity. In place of ambitious missions of compassion and community, schools and teachers have been squeezed into the tunnel vision of test scores, achievement targets and league tables of accountability. And rather than cultivating cosmopolitan identity and the basic emotion of sympathy, which Adam Smith (1809) called the emotional foundation of democracy, too many educational systems promote exaggerated and self-absorbed senses of national identity.

In many parts of the world, the rightful quest for higher educational standards has degenerated into a compulsive obsession with standardization. By and large, our schools are preparing young people neither to work well in the knowledge economy nor to live well in a strong civil society. Instead of promoting economic invention and social integration, too many

schools are becoming mired in the regulations and routines of soulless standardization.

We are living in a defining moment of educational history, when the world in which teachers do their work is changing profoundly, and the demographic composition of teaching is turning over dramatically. The vast cohort of teachers who entered the profession in the expansionist decades of the 1960s and 1970s are retiring. Teaching is becoming a young person's profession again. Whoever enters teaching, and however they approach their work, will shape the profession and what it is able to achieve with our children for the next thirty years.

If we capitulate to the idea that state education can only be a low cost system running on low skilled, poorly paid and overloaded teachers, whose job is to maintain order, teach to the test and follow standardized curriculum scripts, then teachers for the next three decades will be neither capable of, nor committed to, teaching for and beyond the knowledge society. They will instead become the drones and clones of policy makers' anaemic ambitions for what underfunded systems can achieve.

Alternatively, we can promote a high investment, high capacity educational system in which highly skilled teachers are able to generate creativity and ingenuity among their pupils, by experiencing creativity and flexibility themselves in how they are treated and developed as knowledge society professionals. In this second scenario, teaching and teachers will reach far beyond the technical tasks of producing acceptable test results, to pursuing teaching as a life-shaping, world-changing social mission again.

In their preparation, their professional development, and their working lives, today's teachers must get a grasp of, and a grip on, the knowledge society in which their pupils live and will work. If teachers do not understand the knowledge society, they cannot prepare their pupils for it. As a traditional Irish saying proclaims: *'You have to listen to the river if you want to catch a trout'*.

Teachers must take their place again among society's most respected intellectuals - moving beyond the citadel of the classroom to being, and preparing their pupils to be, citizens of the world. They must do their best to ensure that their pupils promote and prosper from the private goods of the knowledge economy. They must also help their pupils commit to the vital public goods that cannot be taken care of by the corporate interests of the knowledge economy - a strong and vigorous civil society, developing the character that promotes involvement in the community, and cultivating the dispositions of sympathy and care for people in other nations and cultures that are at the heart of cosmopolitan identity.

These are the challenges facing teachers in the knowledge society today. They are also the focus of my new book on *Teaching in the Knowledge Society*, which deals with our changing world and its implications for the changing work of teaching.

The term 'knowledge society' is actually a misnomer. I use it because of its widespread and accepted currency. In truth, though, a knowledge society is really a learning society. In Chapter 1 of the book, I argue that knowledge societies process information and knowledge in ways that maximize learning, stimulate ingenuity and invention and develop the capacity to initiate and cope with change. In the knowledge economy, wealth and prosperity depend on people's capacity to out-invent and outwit their competitors, to tune in to the desires and demands of the consumer market, and to change jobs or develop new skills as economic fluctuations and downturns require. In the knowledge economy, these capacities are not just the property of individuals, but of organizations.

According to Robert Reich (2001), President Clinton's former Secretary of Labour, knowledge society organizations build their capacity to share, create and apply new knowledge continuously over time. They create *'mutual learning that leads to continuous innovation*

(which) tends to be informal, unplanned, serendipitous' (Reich, 2001). They depend on collective, as well as individual intelligence (Brown & Lauder, 2001). Knowledge society organizations develop these capacities by providing their members with extensive opportunities for upskilling and retraining; by breaking down barriers to learning and communication and getting people to work in overlapping, flexible teams; by looking at problems and mistakes as opportunities for learning more than occasions for blame; by involving everyone in the '*big picture*' of where the organization is going; and by developing the 'social capital' of networks and relationships that provide people with extra support and further learning.

For futurist and management guru, Peter Drucker, the basic economic resource of society is no longer capital or labour. Instead:

' ... it is and will be knowledge ... Value is now created by 'productivity' and 'innovation', both applications of knowledge to work. The leading groups of the knowledge society will be "knowledge workers" ... The economic challenge ... will therefore be the productivity of knowledge work and the knowledge worker.
(Drucker, 1993:8)

The key to a strong knowledge economy is not only whether people can access information. It is also how well they can process information. The OECD has been one of the prime movers behind new knowledge economy initiatives. In a significant position paper for OECD, Carnoy and Castells describe how the information is centrally concerned with knowledge and learning:

The distinguishing feature of work in the information age is the centrality of knowledge, especially "transportable" general knowledge that is not specific to a single job or firm. The best jobs are those that require high levels of education (high levels of general knowledge) and provide opportunities to accumulate more knowledge. The best firms are those that create the best environment for teaching, learning, and interchanging information. It is knowledge and information that creates flexibility in work - the capacity of firms to improve product lines, production processes, and marketing strategies, all with the same work force; and the capacity of workers to learn new processes as they change; to shift jobs several times in the course of a work life; to move geographically, and, if necessary, to learn entirely new vocations.
(Carnoy & Castells, 1999:33)

The knowledge society is a learning society. Economic success and a culture of continuous innovation depend on the capacity of workers to keep learning themselves and from each other. A knowledge economy runs on the power to think, learn and innovate. The OECD's influential report on *Knowledge Management in the Learning Society* links knowledge management to the challenges created by the acceleration of change. '*We are moving into a 'learning economy' where the success of individuals, firms, regions and countries will reflect, more than anything else, their ability to learn*' (OECD, 2000:29). These trends, OECD point out elsewhere, raise '*profound questions for the kinds of knowledge pupils are being equipped with and ought to be equipped with, by schools*' (OECD, 2001:29).

Teaching for the knowledge society involves cultivating special capacities, not just any kind of learning in young people. These include developing deep cognitive learning, creativity and ingenuity among pupils; drawing on research, working in networks and teams and pursuing continuous professional learning as teachers; and promoting problem-solving, risk-taking, trust in fellow professionals (whether they are close to you, or always agree with you or not), ability to cope with change and commitment to continuous improvement as organizations.

The knowledge economy also exerts costs - on a public good it has little capacity to care for. The knowledge economy drives people to put their self-interest before the social good, to indulge in consumption instead of involving themselves in community, to enjoy the buzz and

pizzazz of temporary teamwork more than developing the long-term emotions of loyalty and perseverance that sustain the enduring commitments of group life.

The knowledge economy is necessarily hungry for profit. Left to itself, it drains resources from the state, eroding the institutions of public life, including state schools themselves. In its most extreme forms of what I call market fundamentalism, the knowledge economy drives wedges between rich and poor, within nations and between them, creating anger and despair among the excluded. Exclusion exacerbates crime, as people steal what they cannot earn. It creates societies of suspicious minds - walled within their gated communities, watched by endless security cameras and protected in private schools that keep out the excluded (Reich, 2001; Handy, 2001).

The knowledge economy also sows the seeds of ethnic and religious fundamentalism as some people turn aside from the market to find other sources of hope, meaning and certainty in their lives (Barber, 1995; Castells, 1998). In rebuffing the market, they also reject democratic reason and cosmopolitan tolerance - persecuting outsiders and repressing their own women in their opposition to Western values (Giddens, 2000). Insecurity, crime and terrorism are the predictable (though never just) desserts of knowledge societies that have little desire to redistribute resources to improve the quality of life domestically, and that neglect their humanitarian and democratic responsibilities internationally (Vail, 1999; Bauman, 1998). One-sided globalization produces lop-sided societies. Alain Michel, the Inspector General of France's educational system puts it this way:

'Globalization, because of the risks it brings of soulless standardization, can lead to fragmentation and a reduced sense of belonging to a wider community. The excesses of unbridled markets, in which prices and the market are more important than social or cultural relationships, are being met with a reaction of narrow nationalism, regionalism and parochialism.'

(Michel, A., 2001:219)

International financier and philanthropist George Soros expresses similar sentiments:

'Globalization also has a negative side ... Many people, particularly in less developed countries have been hurt by globalization without being supported by a social safety net; many others have been marginalized by global markets ...' Globalization has [also] caused a misallocation of resources between private goods and public goods. Markets are good at creating wealth but are not designed to take care of other needs. The heedless pursuit of profit can hurt the environment and conflict with other social values.

(Soros, G., 2002)

The challenge, says Soros, is not to attack globalization or destroy the knowledge economy. Its economic benefits are too great for that. Instead, we have to commit more resources and pay better global attention to the other social needs. In preparing the generations of the future, state education is in pole position to teach a set of values, dispositions and senses of global responsibility that extend beyond the bounds of the knowledge economy; that shows people not only how to make a living, but also how to live a life (Reich, 2001).

Chapter 2 of *Teaching in the Knowledge Society* argues that teaching beyond the knowledge economy entails developing the values and emotions of young people's character; emphasizing emotional as well as cognitive learning; building commitments to group life and not just short-term teamwork; and cultivating a cosmopolitan identity which shows genuine curiosity towards and willingness to learn from other cultures, and develops responsibility towards excluded groups within and beyond one's own society. Among teachers, this means committing to personal development, as well as formal professional learning, working with colleagues in long-

term groups, as well as short-term teams, and having opportunities to teach (and therefore learn) in other contexts and countries.

For the organization, the challenge is to balance the chaotic forces of risk and change with a work culture that has elements of continuity, a foundation of trust and a capacity to create coherence among the many initiatives the school is pursuing. Most of all, in an educational world dominated by standards, test scores and achievement targets, teaching beyond the knowledge economy means retrieving and rehabilitating the idea of teaching being a sacred vocation that pursues a compelling social mission. The cliché of 'making a difference' isn't enough anymore as a moral purpose for teaching. What difference, in what kind of world and for what reasons? - these are the issues that count in today's high-stakes, high-risk knowledge society.

Community, not curriculum is where many of our improvement efforts now need to be focused. One of the most common causes of secondary school dropout is pupils' feelings that there is not one adult who really knows or cares for them (Hargreaves, Earl, & Ryan, 1996). England is trying to solve a massive block in performance as children move from primary school to secondary school, by making improvements to the curriculum (DfES, 2001). But the curriculum is not the main problem. Kathryn Riley and her colleagues' research shows that pupils who do badly in the early years of secondary school experience incredible fragmentation in their lives - between different parents and families, and constantly changing homes (Riley & Rustique-Forrester, in press). They are denied what is called social capital (Fukuyama, 2000; Coleman, 1988).

The school then compounds this fragmentation by subjecting pupils to a multitude of subject teachers, by repeatedly excluding them from class or school because of behaviour problems, and by exposing them to an endless parade of substitute teachers and 'casualized' teachers who make up the staff of many urban schools. Tragically, it is the pupils with the most fragmented lives who get the most fragmented experience of secondary schooling and who are prevented from developing social capital.

The educational answer to the angst of early adolescence is mainly to be found not in more curriculum, but in stronger community. Especially at this point in young people's education, improving achievement, especially among those most at risk, is not secured by concentrating on achievement alone. At a time when adolescents are assailed by so many other influences in their life, focusing their minds exclusively on achievement is futile. Achieving at learning also demands intellectual and emotional engagement with schooling and all the relationships it contains. Our secondary schools are undermining our capacity to hold the knowledge society together - and the excessive and exclusive emphasis on achievement alone is largely responsible.

Teaching in the knowledge society requires levels of skills and judgment far beyond those involved in merely delivering someone else's prescribed curriculum and standardized test scores. It requires qualities of personal and intellectual maturity that take years to develop. Teaching in the knowledge society cannot be a refuge for second-choice careers, a low level system of technical delivery or, as some policymakers are saying, an exhausting job that should be handled mainly by the young and energetic before they move on to something else. Teaching in the knowledge society, rather, should be a career of first choice, a job for grown-up intellectuals, a long-term commitment, a social mission, a job for life. Anything less leaves our sights far below the knowledge society horizon - and teaching should never be about settling for less.

The evidence that my colleagues and I have collected in New York State and Ontario, Canada, affirms what has already been widely established in England (Whitty, Power & Halpin, 1998;

Pollard, *et al.*, 1994; Gerwitz, *et al.*, 1995; Helsby, 1999; Webb & Vulliamy, 1999; Jeffrey & Woods, 1996; Menter, *et al.*, 1997); Australia (Dinham & Scott, 1997); New Zealand (Wylie, 1994); Texas (McNeil, 2000) and Alberta (Harrison & Kachur, 1999) in showing that many large-scale reform efforts in the last 15 years have neither prepared people for the knowledge economy nor for public life beyond it.

Chapters 3 and 4 of *Teaching in the Knowledge Society* present survey and interview data from a dozen secondary schools in Ontario and New York State to show that curriculum standards have largely degenerated into soulless standardization. The standards are irrelevant to the highest achieving schools that feel they are already meeting them. In the schools with high numbers of special education or vocational pupils, or those who are learning in their second language, the standards are depressingly unattainable.

These young people are denied graduation in exchange for degradation and their teachers are thrust into spectacles of failure and shame, building up dams of frustration that will surely burst when vast numbers of pupils fail to graduate. At best, the standards suit only those pupils in the middle, but they are applied insensitively to the rest.

Even in the middle, the regimes of teaching and learning that the standards have created are largely undesirable. Improving standards in the form of subject-based targets, or putting excessive emphases on literacy and numeracy, marginalizes the attention to personal and social development that is the foundation of community, and eliminates interdisciplinary attention to global education that is at the heart of cosmopolitan identity.

More than this, in standardized reform, teachers are treated and developed not as high skill, high capacity knowledge workers, but as compliant and closely monitored producers of standardized performances. Socrates said that the unexamined life is not worth living. For teachers, it's the over-examined life that is the problem. Teachers with over-examined professional lives complain of eroded autonomy, lost creativity, restricted flexibility and constrained capacity to exercise their professional judgment. They keep their heads down, struggle along alone and withdraw from work with their colleagues. Imposed reform can create temporary surges of teamwork under pressure, but the sheer weight of demands means that this soon dissipates once the pressure is off. Professional community collapses, time to reflect evaporates, and the love of learning disappears.

Teachers lose faith in their governments, grasp at opportunities for resignation and retirement, and even urge their own children not to follow in their footsteps. In our Ontario sample of 480 secondary school teachers, while only 28% of teachers were over 50-years-old, 73% of the total sample stated that the effects of legislated reform had motivated them to seek retirement early. It was not only ageing teachers who were becoming tired, cynical and resistant to change.

Young teachers as well as old ones in our survey were also declaring their sad intention to abandon their profession. After cataloguing the lack of funds, supplies, technology, professional development and time to participate in extra curricular activities, one teacher said that: *'as a young teacher I am disheartened by this environment and I will move on professionally to the private sector. There is no joy in teaching - only a paper trail of grief'*. Another indicated that *'as a young teacher'*, she would *'leave for a better work environment if the current situation does not end'*. A colleague at the same school similarly said, *'I am a relatively young teacher but am seriously considering another profession or part-time teaching. It's a shame because I love to teach'*. The saddest comment of all came from a relatively new teacher:

'As a relatively new teacher, I am seriously concerned about the future of education in this province, both for pupils and as a profession. I never thought that I would regret my current

career path but I do and wish I would have done something else with my three degrees (BA, B.Ed., MA). There is no joy in being told that you are a no good, freeloading fat cat for six years running. I surely wouldn't wish this profession on my children nor other family members. I love working with children but not with this government. How can you encourage and attract good (newcomers) in a time of shortage with a government like the one currently in power? I would retire tomorrow if I could but Hallowe'en 2026 will not be here soon enough! Eight years ago, I never thought that I would think that way. Unfortunately, I am jaded, tired and disillusioned with what this profession has to offer. I wish I had written the LSAT (Law Degree Qualifying Test) in '92 because it was easier to get into Law School than Teacher's College. This is a worst-case scenario that I had no vision of in 1992!!'

This was not the only teacher to say she would not counsel her own children to join the profession. Seventy-eight per cent of the sample overall indicated that, since the start of Secondary School Reform, they would be less likely to advise their own children to go into teaching, hinting at a more widespread crisis and challenge facing many state school systems and their teaching professions where there are signs of a mass exodus from teaching related to disillusionment, as well as demographic turnover of teachers in the profession.

Standardized educational reform is as valuable for a vigorous knowledge economy and a strong civil society as locusts are for a cornfield. Many governments, including those in England and Wales, many Australian States, Singapore and Japan are beginning to appreciate this, especially in the face of a teacher recruitment crisis and a need to attract able people back to, and retain them within, the profession. The closing chapters of *Teaching in the Knowledge Society* describe how some nations are trying to create more 'earned autonomy', flexibility and professional community for teachers who are doing well (DfES, 2001; Barber, 2001).

These governments are following the research and advice of some school improvement advocates who recommend that effective schools do, and should also operate, as strong professional learning communities (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Wineburg & Grossman, 2000; Hord, 1987; Louis & Kruse, 1995; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001).

Professional learning communities in schools emphasize three key components: collaborative work and discussion among the school's professionals; a strong and consistent focus on teaching and learning within that collaborative work; and gathering assessment and other data to inquire into and evaluate progress and problems over time (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; King & Newmann, 1999). Professional learning communities lead to strong and measurable improvements in pupils' learning (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Little, 2001). Instead of bringing about 'quick fixes' of superficial and evanescent change, they create and support sustainable improvements that last over time, because they build the professional skill and capacity to keep the school moving forward (Stoll, 1999; King & Newmann, 1999).

A strong professional learning community is a social process for turning information into knowledge. It brings together the knowledge, skills and dispositions of teachers in a school, or across schools, to promote shared learning and improvement. It is a piece of social ingenuity based on the principle that, in Fullan's words, '*new ideas, knowledge creation, inquiry and sharing are essential to solving learning problems in a rapidly changing society*' (Fullan, 2001).

Professional learning communities promote and presume key knowledge society attributes, such as teamwork, inquiry and continuous learning. They work best when they are combined with cultures of caring and are grounded in long-term relationships of trust, foundations of security and commitments to active care among teachers and others - as *Teaching in the Knowledge Society* illustrates in a case description of a school deliberately established as a learning community.

But professional learning communities are neither soppy nor sappy enclaves of easy agreement. They demand what I call a 'grown up' profession, with grown-up professional norms of teaching, where teachers are as much at ease with demanding adults as they are with problem children; where professional disagreement is embraced and enjoyed, rather than avoided; and where conflict is seen as a necessary part of professional learning, not a fatal act of betrayal (Hargreaves, 2002; forthcoming).

However, professional learning communities are not an attractive improvement strategy for policy makers and school leaders who face pressures and demands for quick results in raising achievement levels. They do not fit well with standardized testing regimes or highly prescriptive curriculum frameworks when teachers or leaders do not yet have the minimal levels of expertise on which a professional learning community might be built (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001).

In these conditions, policy makers and administrators have turned to another strategy of what I call performance training sects. Performance training sects are based on strongly asserted claims that particular teaching practices are highly effective for improving pupil learning, and that there are proven methods to manage the educational change process effectively. Thus, many recent large-scale reform strategies combine a strong insistence on performance standards and prescribed classroom techniques, with measures to reculture teachers' working relationships more collaboratively. Examples include Robert Slavin's high profile *Success For All* program, which involves more than 1,600 schools worldwide, and England's National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. The main components of these large-scale initiatives include:

- making pedagogy the central focus of improvement efforts;
- concentrating attention on high-profile areas, especially literacy and numeracy;
- setting ambitious targets for improved achievement results across the whole system that will produce large gains with rapid success;
- giving particular priority to low achieving pupils in order to narrow the achievement gap between pupils from advantaged and less advantaged homes;
- expecting all pupils to achieve higher standards (with greater support for those who need extra help) - no excuses, no delays;
- providing clearly defined, closely prescribed and sometimes tightly scripted programs for teachers to follow that ensure compliance and consistency;
- providing intensive training for teachers in workshops and summer institutes in the core priorities, to establish large-scale competence in them;
- creating a strong and generous support structure of trainers, co-ordinators and consultants to work with teachers on implementing the priorities within their schools;
- providing intensive one-to-one peer coaching support for teachers within the classroom, on the basis of the evidence that this is one of the key factors that gets more teachers to use and persist with the change over time;
- insisting that headteachers become directly involved in all relevant training activities within their school;
- having teachers examine achievement data together in order to make adjustments in their instruction where necessary;
- aligning the improvements in teaching and learning with the evaluation and testing system; and,
- involving parents and the community in supporting their children's learning within the selected initiative.

The emphasis is on providing the pressure and support to train teachers intensively in a limited number of priorities that will deliver rapid and significant increases in measured learning performances for all pupils.

Performance training sects have undoubtedly yielded key benefits for pupils and teachers. First, almost all the initiatives have shown significant early success in improving pupils' achievement results, including narrowing the achievement gap between pupils from different social backgrounds (Fullan, 2001). Second, the reforms have led teachers and schools to treat literacy and numeracy seriously, when this had not always been the case (Earl & Leithwood, 2002). Third, the achievement gains have challenged the views of some teachers that their poor or minority pupils could not learn to significantly higher standards and, for the first time, many teachers have started to believe that all their pupils have the capacity to learn (Datnow, Hubbard & Mehan, 2002), and have then become more receptive to further professional learning. Fourth, the scripted materials and strong support structures can benefit teachers beginning their careers, uncertified or under-qualified teachers who work in poorer districts, poorly paid and trained teachers in less developed countries, and other teachers whose knowledge, skills and overall expertise are weak or underdeveloped (Datnow, Hubbard & Mehan, 2002).

A tightly driven program of pedagogical change provides these teachers with a repertoire of strategies that is inalienably theirs for life, and that can provide a strong platform for further improvement.

However, while performance-training sects might get quick results, they are less successful in securing sustainable improvement. In December 2001, England's early gains in literacy scores as a result of its National Literacy project suddenly reached a plateau. Tightly regulated regimes of performance training also achieve less success at the secondary level, where pupils' learning is more complex, as is their school as an organization (Fullan, 2001). In England, improving secondary school literacy is more challenging than in the case of younger children. When literacy skills become more sophisticated, performance-training regimes seem to have less dramatic effects.

Second, the repeated stress on literacy and numeracy in these programmes draws attention and support away from other areas of the curriculum, such as social studies, arts or citizenship, where critical thinking, creating and applying knowledge and other core competencies of the knowledge society are typically given greater emphasis. Performance training sects may therefore imperil more complex knowledge society objectives in the long run.

Third, are the effects on teachers. Many teachers dislike teaching highly prescriptive programs (Datnow, Hubbard & Mehan, 2002). Even when they acknowledge the benefits for pupils, they dislike losing their classroom discretion by being locked into an instructional straitjacket. They feel less satisfied, less professional, less motivated to teach overall. Galton (2000) argues that even if it is effective for pupils, mandating pedagogical change by force is undesirable, since it can damage teachers' long-term commitments to their work. This is a key point in a period of recruitment and retention crises in teaching.

Though some teachers *do* like to have their teaching spelled out for them (Earl & Leithwood, 2002), pandering to this preference runs the risk of recycling professional dependency on the external authority of bureaucrats, on scripted texts, or on the 'incontrovertible' results of research. In performance training sects, there is little opportunity for promoting continuous professional learning among reflective teachers who can exercise discretionary judgment. The evangelical nature of performance training sects deprives teachers of the opportunity to participate in sophisticated professional communities of continuous learning. For all their technical complexity and their sophisticated systems of mentoring and support, performance-training sects make support look more like suffocation. They put the sin into synergy!

There is growing recognition in the field of school improvement that 'one size doesn't fit all'

(Hopkins, 2001). Different kinds of schools and systems need differing ways of tackling improvement. In this respect, Chapter 7 of *Teaching in the Knowledge Society* asks whether professional learning communities and performance training sects might offer complementary not competing approaches to change.

Sophisticated professional learning communities seem to work best with high capacity teachers in high capacity and often affluent systems, where teachers are highly skilled and qualified, the schools are at least already reasonably effective, leaders are capable of motivating and engaging their teachers, and there are sufficient resources to provide teachers and schools with the time and flexibility they need to work together professionally (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001).

By contrast, improvement through performance training seems to yield results in poor low, capacity systems, where large numbers of teachers are uncertified and under-skilled, where schools have a record of poor performance and many teachers have lost belief in their capacity to make a difference, where too many leaders see themselves as managers more than instructional leaders, and where resources have been scarce or spread too thinly across too many initiatives (Datnow, Hubbard & Mehan, 2002).

This flexible differentiation of approaches to school improvement and professional growth can easily turn into deep-seated divisiveness between rich and poor communities. Recent English educational policy proposes that schools which are performing well according to inspection evidence and test results, will enjoy 'earned autonomy' in terms of freedom to manoeuvre beyond prescribed curriculum programs (DfES, 2001; Barber, 2001). However, because the United Kingdom has one of the most stubborn ties between educational achievement and pupils' social background, and still operates a competitive market system of school choice that reinforces these ties (OECD, 2002), 'earned autonomy' will be enjoyed mainly by schools and teachers in middle class communities.

Meanwhile, schools and their teachers who are categorized as failing or close to failing remain tied to prescribed programs, endlessly intrusive monitoring and inspection, and performance training sects in mandated methods of teaching.

Separate communities, separate teachers, separate development - this is nothing less than an **apartheid of professional development and school improvement**. Schools and teachers in relatively affluent communities enjoy all the benefits of professional learning networks and communities. Their self-skilling teachers engage in professional learning teams to produce high-skill pupils, who create systems thinking and receive excellent preparation to work in the higher levels of 'weightless work' in the knowledge economy (Leadbeater, 2001).

Meanwhile, schools and teachers in poor communities, in the desolate sprawl of housing estates or the Fourth world of less developed nations, struggle in the shadow of impending failure - watchful of test scores, fearful of intervention and with a bellyful of imposed restrictions and requirements. These teachers and schools are thrown into performance training sects where their pedagogical options and professional learning choices are restricted. They teach the basic skills of maths and literacy that get their pupils to improve up to a point in primary school only to see their achievements plateau in the secondary school years. These schools prepare pupils to participate in very different sectors of the knowledge economy. Pupils learn not to create knowledge, develop ingenuity or solve unfamiliar problems in flexible formats. Their destiny is to be literate and numerate enough to serve and support the 'weightless work' of their affluent superiors in restaurants, tourist hotels, health spas, and other service work, where understanding instructions, communicating obsequiously and urging others to turn over or have a nice day, have far greater importance than inventiveness or ingenuity.

In the name of 'one size doesn't fit all', these separate systems and forms of separate development prepare pupils from more and less privileged backgrounds respectively for two very different sides of the knowledge economy: those who create the knowledge economy, and those who merely cater to it.

In Bauman's (1998) terms, pupils, teachers and parents in affluent, high achieving communities become the 'tourists' of knowledge society schools who enjoy flexibility, autonomy, freedom of movement, networking and mobility, as they are drawn towards magnets of excellence, opportunity and professional community. By contrast, pupils, teachers and parents in poorer, low-achieving communities become the 'vagabonds' and 'vagrants' of the knowledge society - immigrant or working class pupils and their casualized, uncertified or demoralized teachers, whose mobility must be monitored and movements must be watched through endless surveillance and evaluations; whose learning is ordered, restricted, and regulated as they are left behind in the 'enforced localization' of the system.

If we want to prepare **all** young people to have the chance to be among the most successful workers within the knowledge society, as well as decent citizens beyond it, this new social geography of divisive improvement that offers 'business class' forms of professional learning communities to the advantaged, and imposes 'economy class' performance training sects on the rest, is one of our most imminent and disturbing threats.

Teaching in the Knowledge Society closes by urging that it is time to consider more sophisticated strategies for improvement that combine elements of performance training and professional community in almost all schools - so that critical dialogue exists from the outset and prevents performance training from becoming a compliant sect. Some elements of training almost always need to be combined with those of learning community and *vice versa*. How this balance works, and in what proportion, depends on the type of school and its state of development. Critical dialogue is never something we should leave until later; it belongs at the beginning, too. Otherwise, performance training sects might mark the end of improvement in poor communities, rather than its beginning.

However, alongside all this attention to strategies of improvement in the context of a knowledge society, it's important to remember that many of the basic challenges of schools and teaching in poor communities are not due to lacking strategies of improvement, but of having to endure the scourge of impoverishment which undermines many nations' and communities' capacity to improve at all. As a matter of economic development and social justice and in order to avert the worst human consequences of the knowledge society, it is vital to begin redistributing economic and social resources across the society to those who have the greatest need. We will never have a fair nor fully effective knowledge society, and we will never draw on everyone's collective intelligence until the poor can enjoy generously equipped schools, highly qualified teachers and extensive outside support, just as much as their more comfortable neighbours.

The knowledge society is beckoning. It is time that everyone in education is granted their right to engage with it. Ingenuity, investment and integrity are required from all of us. Otherwise insecurity, and worse, will be all that we have, and no less than we deserve.

Note: This paper is abridged and adopted from Hargreaves, A. (in press). *Teaching in the Knowledge Society*. Buckingham: Open University Press and New York: Teachers College Press.

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