

name:
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Textbook



TEXTBOOK 3

H/V 4



TEXT SHEET 13

Text 1 – When is a truant not a truant?

Shelagh Webb, an officer at the Education Welfare Service, describes the kind of cases they come up against.

That modest agency of the welfare state known as the Education Welfare Service found itself thrust briefly into the limelight in the recent general election by a sentence in the Conservative Manifesto: 'We shall switch the emphasis of the Education Welfare Service (EWS) back to school attendance, so as to reduce truancy.

5 Clearly, the assumptions were that truancy figures are on the increase, and that there is a worrying correlation between truancy and delinquency. In fact, the statistics are not so dramatic. Take the summer term survey of non-attendance in ILEA (Inner London Education Authority) secondary schools (only some of these are truants, of course). In 2003 it was 13 per cent: the most recent figure is 14.1 per cent. Too high, certainly, but up only slightly after a decade of increasing
10 unemployment and decreasing motivation to attend school among this 'no future' generation.

Perhaps even more de-mystifying are the juvenile crime statistics for Inner London, which show that less than 4 per cent of offenders were truanting at the time of their crime. Still, the argument is about whether or to what extent the service ought to be concerned about the causes of truancy and their amelioration.

15 What is truanting? For example, is Jimmy a truant? Jimmy, who lives alone with his mother, is brighter than most of his classmates, but pale, shy, a bit weedy, not well equipped for the competitive hurly-burly of a city comprehensive. The day the PE teacher humiliated him once more when he said he'd like to play tennis in the summer ('Only girls play tennis.') happened to be the last straw. Jimmy retired to his bedroom and didn't come out again for six months.

20 What about Karen? At 13 she's the eldest in a family (mother and six children) who have shifted back and forth across the country, skipping unpayable rent arrears or getting out when they sense authority is about to move in. Karen wants to go to 'her school' — the first time, perhaps, that she has been in any school long enough to feel possessive about it. 'I'm not a truant,' she says. 'I go to school when I can.' But most days she can't: while her mother is out on
25 the game or ill, as she frequently is, Karen looks after the two youngest children, helping them up and down the dark, rickety stairs to their wretched flat.

These are only two cases. But anyone working for the EWS in an inner city area will have a headful of such stories, most of them with few ready solutions. But surprisingly enough, the service, in its down-to-earth way, often does manage to reach the real difficulties of these
30 children's lives, and even produce some lasting solutions.

Sometimes, as in Jimmy's case, it's a long arduous business: going back again and again to talk to him through a crack in that bedroom door, gradually winning enough confidence to entice him into short visits to the outside world. The boy is a history freak, his bedroom walls covered with pictures of medieval kings and castles. You find yourself going for the first time to the Tower
35 of London, to the royal chapels in Westminster Abbey. And in the end, Jimmy accepts some home tutoring and does his O levels at a local college. With Karen, it was a question of persuading the local social services offices to provide day care for the two younger children, thus releasing Karen to attend 'her' school.

40 If these are cases of truancy, then what's clear is the futility of trying to pretend that the world of school somehow exists in a social vacuum, quite separate from the world of home and the street. Teachers in the schools of Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, and Hackney know that they can no longer afford the luxury of ivory tower pedagogy. Like it or not, schools must address more directly that environment out there which claims the other half of their pupils' lives and attention.

TEXT SHEET 14

Minority report

Integration has a long way to go

1 **W**hen the 17-year-old British boxer
Amir Khan won a silver medal at
the 2004 Olympics, the
5 celebrations went far into the night in two
places. In the Pakistani village where his
6 bride-to-be currently lives, his in-laws could
boast that they had made a great deal. But
this celebration was a tea party by
comparison with the media circus in Britain.
10 The fuss had less to do with Mr Khan's
boxing than with his father's dress sense – in
particular his British flag waistcoat. The
message was that the Khans were winning it
for Britain. Yet the family was still hedging
15 its bets. Alongside Mr Khan, Amir's uncle
sporting a T-shirt carrying the national flag
of Pakistan.

2 The Khans' uneasiness symbolises a
dilemma faced across Europe. Can migrant
20 families assume that even if they want to be
British (or French or Spanish) they will be
accepted as such? How to reconcile the
economic integration of people bringing new
skills and labour with the social integration
25 that makes societies work?

3 In the past, most migration into Britain
was post-colonial – the descendants of
African slaves from the Caribbean, textile
workers and farmers from the Indian sub-
30 continent. Today the flows are from the
states around the edges of Europe's rich
heartland: Turkey, Iraq, Somalia and of
course eastern Europe. Yesterday's West
Indian nurses and Sikh bus drivers are being
35 followed by today's Czech carpenters and
Polish nannies.

4 The 4.5m migrants who came to Britain
since 1945 will be surpassed by the numbers
who arrive in the next quarter century to do
40 hard-to-fill jobs (and pay our pensions).
These migrants will be lighter-skinned,
which may make them stand out less. But,
not being from our former colonies, they

won't speak English and they are more
45 likely to be Muslims than Christians.

5 The lessons of the past aren't
encouraging for their integration.
Integration has been patchy at best. Though
students of Chinese and Indian origin are
50 outperforming the national average by the
time they leave school, black, Pakistani and
gypsy children fall far below. The police
remains a largely white force patrolling
increasingly diverse communities.

55 According to a YouGuv poll, more than half
of the white Britons do not have a single
non-white person in their circle of friends.
Even more astonishing, young people from
ethnic minorities are twice as likely as their
60 parents to have a circle of friends which
includes no whites.

6 Today immigration regularly turns up in
the top five concerns for British voters. The
Tory leader, son of a Jewish immigrant from
65 Romania, has cleverly positioned his party
to take advantage of public anxiety without
opening himself to charges of "playing the
race card", proposing a sensible Australian-
style system to regulate the flow of
70 migrants.

7 The Labour home secretary plans to
launch a strategy for "race equality and
community cohesion". This will involve
more citizenship teaching, more support for
75 summer camps to bring young people
together, more insistence on everybody
speaking English.

8 Above all, the government will need to
send some signals to the Khans – both at
home and abroad – that Britain respects
80 Muslims. One way would be a law to protect
Muslims from discrimination based on
religion. Today it remains perfectly legal to
post a "No Muslims Allowed" sign outside a
hotel, restaurant or pub; British laws
85 prohibit this kind of discrimination on the
ground of race but not of religion. Fulfilling
his promise to make Muslims equal should
be the Prime Minister's first step.
90 *Trevor Phillips: chair, Commission for Racial
Equality*

TEXT SHEET 15

Text 1 - Susan Hill about children and television

When I was a child it was Enid Blyton's books that met with strong moral objections from parents and other opinionated adults. For the past 20 years or so, it has been television. By the time I came to have a child myself- my daughter Jessica is now five - I had become familiar with the whole range of critical comment, though I was not personally involved in the debate.

5 It did not take me very long to sort out where I stood, and for the present I feel entirely relaxed about it, though I suspect that I may have to look at the situation again when Jessica reaches adolescence.

We are extremely fortunate in that she is by nature a physically energetic child, with an inquiring mind, who usually has a good many other things she wants to do during out-of-school time. But she does enjoy, and get a great deal out of, her viewing, and she also, like me, has her lazy side. And, just because she is articulate and bright, and reads well, it is easy to forget that she is very young and impressionable, and easily frightened. So there do have to be a few rules.

10 In general, she may not watch more than an hour and a half of television on any one day, though I rarely have to enforce this, because she rarely *wants* to watch for longer. She is not allowed to watch programmes intended only for adults, the news and also *Newsround*; the latter is aimed at children but seems to me to include more than its fair share of the world's wars and woes.

15 However, parenthood means compromise. And if my daughter is watching a programme that is not specifically aimed at young children but which is very suitable for family viewing - like a naturalist series - I watch with her, so that I can try to explain any difficulties over vocabulary, answer simple questions, and be on hand to punch the Off button at any particularly red-in-tooth-and-claw moments.

20 What I have come to appreciate very much over the past three years or so of being exposed to a good deal of the television output for small children from most channels is that the sort of programmes I would choose to have are precisely those that are available, and that the ones I am uneasy about are few and far between.

I recently met a father of three children who said that the only television they might watch was 'educational'. But his attitude omitted to take notice of something very important: sometimes children simply need to relax, and they also need television which stimulates nothing other than laughter. When my daughter comes home from school at four o'clock after a day during which she has been physically and mentally active, she needs to have a story told to her, as in *Jack-anory*, or to see other children letting off steam running obstacle races or playing silly watergames in *We Are the Champions*. These programmes do not come under my heading of rubbish; in fact all children need some of that, too. Peter Dickinson's famous essay 'On Rubbish' applies to children's television as much as to children's books, its main point being that if they are ever to learn discrimination, they must have access to the banal and the trivial, as well as to the good.

25 An academic friend for whose good sense I usually have much respect would not let his children have a television set until they had learnt to read, on the grounds that if they did, they wouldn't. But my daughter learned to read at four with great ease, and will now, from time to time, choose a book rather than a television programme. To make reading the pill and television the jam is likely to lead to resistance to the former and addiction to the latter.

30 The main anxiety I do have about television is that it trivializes, reduces all experience, all news, all human achievement to the lowest common denominator. That is why control needs to be exercised over the number of hours a young child watches, why the quality and suitability to its age and stage of development must be supervised. And why, if the child is to become a fully rounded person, it needs many other things besides television in its world.

The following is from a letter to the Editor which appeared in the next issue of THE LISTENER.

Sir: I very much enjoyed the articles in THE LISTENER for 4 November, on children and television. That is, apart from the one by Susan Hill, which really annoyed me.

35 At the age of five I was probably very like her daughter Jessica. I, too, was fairly bright and found reading very easy, but I cannot pretend to believe that Jessica will be as 'grown-up' as I am at the ripe old age of 13. I do not watch a great deal of television now, but I watched children's programmes for an average of an hour and a half a day when her age. Mum sometimes watched with me, but never stopped me watching anything that was designed for children. Certainly never *Newsround*, which I vaguely remember starting - I was three at the time - and which I watched enthusiastically until I was about ten years old. What harm did it do me? 55 The news given was simple, interesting and gave an awareness, however slight, of what was going on outside my cosy middle-class home. Jessica, and all the other children like her, will never have this until their 'caring' parents stop treating them as lumps of nervous fragile jelly, and start thinking of them as future adults.

Ruth Keily, Bristol

TEXT SHEET 16

Text 1 - Children and reading

No one knows how children learn to read: how they master the mammoth code-breaking task of matching spoken language to a series of small black marks on a page.

Until now, teaching children to read has been a very hit and miss affair. More than any other area of the school curriculum, reading has attracted a mass of schemes and gimmicks designed to get children painlessly over the hurdles which bar their way to school learning and professional success. Like freely available medicines, some of the goods are sounder than others; they work for some children and teachers, earning their promoters a fortune, while others sink without trace. Each new broadening of education, from the arrival of printing and of Bibles in the mother tongue in the 15th century to the introduction of universal, compulsory education in the 19th, has boosted the market.

Some children scarcely seem to need all these paraphernalia, learning to read almost imperceptibly. Others defy for years all the efforts of teachers armed with reading schemes and flashcards, plastic letters and coloured bricks. Most manage to crack the basic code by about seven or eight, but too many, perhaps as many as 20 per cent, fall at the next hurdle: the ability to use their skill as a means of gaining knowledge and enjoyment. In the last year new light has been shed on this old mystery. Like pieces of a jigsaw, research studies set up several years ago - because of national anxiety at levels of illiteracy - have been brought together to yield a picture that has revolutionary implications both for parents and primary school teachers.

Extending Beginning Reading by Vera Southgate, Helen Arnold and Sandra Johnson confounds many dearly-held beliefs. In particular, the authors found that teachers who try to hear all children read aloud frequently, hinder their progress. Children learn best if left in peace to read the books they choose for themselves. Learning to read is so highly personal a business, it depends so much on groundwork before the age of five and the opportunity to practise at home and in private, that much of the work must be done by parents.

Such a message, while it may seem a welcome dawn of common sense to many parents, is deeply threatening to many teachers. They are being asked to change from pedagogues to managers and counsellors, advising parents and children, diagnosing weaknesses, sorting out appropriate remedies, organising teaching materials, stimulating and encouraging.

It is when this study is set alongside another carried out under the guidance of the late Professor Jack Tizard in Haringey that the full nature of the revolution becomes apparent. Still not published in full, the Haringey study of children aged between six and nine showed that they made most progress in reading when their parents heard them read at home at least three or four times a week. The effects were dramatically better than if parents simply read to their children or played with and talked to them. By contrast, providing extra reading help in school with a specialist teacher four afternoons a week was found to be almost totally ineffective.

There is, of course, nothing new about parents helping children at home. What is new is the official blessing for such activities. The Bullock report (1975) specifically warned against parents giving formal help at home. The education world is beginning to realise that parents must be taken into partnership in a much more thorough way than anything envisaged by the average parent/teacher association. The days are over when teachers could say to parents, 'you teach them to tie their laces and go to the toilet on their own and we will do the rest.'

TEXT SHEET 17

Text 1 – Good for a giggle

Brenda Polan talks to three young designers.

Internationally, British fashion designers are currently centre-stage. And although the older, established names are by no means in decline, the fuss and furore is all about the newly successful 'young' designers. Among them are the three women who make up Swanky Modes. As its name implies, Swanky Modes has always been a label identified with a sense of humour. Many people have found the clothes designed by Esme Young, Willie Walters and Judy Dewsbury too outrageous, too sexy, even too vulgar. Terrible, say the designers, to be that dour, that insecure, to take clothes that seriously.

If there is one theme that runs through all Swanky Modes collections, it is body-consciousness combined with wit. 'But apart from that,' says Willie, 'I think we do not really have a "handwriting" in the way that so many designers do. Because there are three of us, we spark ideas off each other and can change our look radically from one season to the next. Over a period of weeks we discuss themes, which may develop out of fabrics we have seen, or out of a film or a book or just a feeling. Once we have settled on the theme, we start to design individually but it is rare that a garment ends up in the collection which is wholly one person's. We adapt, add to and generally meddle with each other's work until it is hard to see where credit or blame can be apportioned.'

Naming each individual garment obviously provides hours of fun. Last winter's collection was called British Intelligence Service — daywear prim and understated, eveningwear glamorous, a touch vampy. The clothes bore names like Double Agent, the Arresting Dress, the Cover-up Top, and the Expose Dress. The Arresting Dress won a Woman Fashion Award. Suitably, the category, a new one, was Twilight Zone.

The respectability imparted by a Woman Award was of great significance to the designers. Having swum against it for so long, they are relieved and pleased that the tide of fashion has turned in their direction enabling them to expand their wholesale operation substantially. The new spring collection has sold exceptionally well into shops in this country and in France, the United States and Italy. 'The Italians are so open and enthusiastic,' says Esme. 'They exclaim: "Fabuloso!" Then they go ahead and place good orders without messing about.'

Buyers who mess about preoccupy most designers. 'Timid buyers are not good for the designer, their stores or the customer,' says Willie. 'A designer needs to be able to show her "look" in a convincing way and that means that the buyer has to be bold and buy in quantity. Lots of bits from lots of different collections merely confuses the customer who is likely to leave the shop without buying anything at all.'

In spite of protestations that their clothes were never that punky or that outrageous, Esme does remember that, in the early days, the three of them would have to get slightly drunk in order to summon up the courage to take themselves off to a party in the clothes they made. But the Swanky Modes line has certainly mellowed over the last few seasons, displaying less extravagance. 'We do not,' says Judy, 'really like to think of our clothes as the height of fashion because we like things which do not go out of fashion. It may sound immodest, but I think they are really classics of their own time. You can put them away for two years, then take them out and feel fine wearing them. I could see us as little old ladies wearing clothes we made last winter.'

The Guardian

TEXT SHEET 18

Text 1 – Women into science and engineering

With the approach of a new academic year, many schoolgirls will be anxiously surveying their career options. One thing is certain: very few of them will choose to become physicists. In spite of heroic campaigns such as the recently-launched WISE (Women Into Science and Engineering), the number of girls taking up university or polytechnic places in physics remains pitifully small. Female membership of the Institute of Physics is only four per cent, a figure which is similar to that for such notorious bastions of male supremacy as the stock market.

The paradox here is that, unlike many male-dominated institutions, women are positively welcomed into the physics profession. The problem seems to be that women themselves decline the invitation. Why?

There is considerable folklore about why science in general, and physics in particular, appears so unpalatable to women. Undoubtedly the existing stereotype of the scientist as an absent-minded white-coated man reinforces the prejudice. More seriously, very few physics school-teachers are women, so from the outset a sex bias is established.

Sometimes blatantly sexist reasons are advanced for the lack of women physicists such as the much-discussed alleged differences between the sexes in spatial ability and visualization skills, or the claim that substantially more men enjoy high IQs. In short, girls aren't much good at physics, it is said, because their brains are wired the wrong way. In 1982, a joint committee of the Institute of Physics and the Royal Society investigated these claims and found them either without scientific foundation or in any case irrelevant to proficiency in physics.

The committee's report laid a large portion of the blame for the lack of female physicists at the feet of school-teachers. Clearly teachers are chiefly responsible for their pupils' perception of the subject. Even where no explicit sex bias is exercised in schools, the organization of physics lessons and the mode of teaching often proves intimidating to girls. For instance, emphasis is generally put on the competitive, individualistic aspect of science, to the neglect of teamwork and the social context. Often, physics is presented in a 'right or wrong' fashion like mathematics, allowing no room for leaps of imagination. But both these biases seriously misrepresent the nature of physics as it is practised by the profession. In reality, physics is nearly always a cooperative enterprise, while the floating of imaginative ideas is the very life-blood of research.

Teachers should endeavour to adjust the style of teaching to accommodate the attitudes and aspirations of both sexes. The media can also help by projecting physical science in less sexually slanted form. So often the end product of physics is presented through male-orientated images such as weapons systems or technological gadgetry. The subject could be made much more 'girl-friendly', both in and out of the classroom, by laying more emphasis on the 'unlocking the secrets of nature' aspect. After all, this is what inspires many professional physicists in their research.

In the end, however, it may well be that crude economic pressures will exert the greatest force for change. In spite of the recession, the employment prospects for physicists remain buoyant. So some schoolgirls may start to reconsider the traditional female career strategy.

Then, with luck, we males in the physics profession will find our subject, and our working lives, greatly enriched as a consequence.