

# Equality and Curriculum in Education

*A Collection Of Invited Essays*



Rose Dolan (Ed.)  
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# Introduction

*Rose Dolan*

The Department of Education in NUI Maynooth is pleased to publish the first of a series of publications that commemorates the work of our colleagues and our graduates. The series was conceived as a way to mark the contributions of two members of the department on the occasion of their retirement. This publication marks the work of Dr. Rose Malone. Colleagues and graduates were invited to contribute an article on a topic that related to the overall theme of the publication, a theme chosen to reflect the multifaceted work that Rose has engaged with over the course of her career in education, not just in our department but in the education system as a whole. This collection allows others to dip into this world and to experience it through the writings of practitioners in the field of education.

For our student teachers, the essays will serve as valuable introductions to some key ideas about teaching and learning but also ones that challenge their assumptions about schooling. For the more experienced teachers on our Postgraduate Diplomas, Masters and PhD programmes, the essays might inform and enthuse, nudge readers towards innovation and experimentation and emphasise that the *status quo* is not inevitable.

In the opening chapter, *Higher education policy in an economic recession and its impact on universities in the Republic of Ireland*, [Dr. Marie Clarke](#) examines the impact of economic recession on policy development in the Higher Education arena and considers how formulation and implementation tend to focus on structural reform in order to achieve economic efficiencies. The significance of this on the quality of experience for students and on the development opportunities for academic staff is also highlighted. Marie is a senior lecturer in the School of Education in University College Dublin and preceded Rose as president of the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT).

This is followed by [Dr. Grace O Grady's](#) thought-provoking chapter on *Constructing Identities with Young People: Rethinking Educational Practice*. Through her work with a group of Transition Year students, Grace invites us to consider the role of the Trickster in the educational situation and how this role challenges us to see things differently. Finn's musings on streaming and intelligence, combined with the pragmatic response of the principal, allows us to see the Trickster in action. Grace is a lecturer in the Education Department, NUI Maynooth and has been Rose's colleague since 2003.

As a second level teacher, Rose taught both science and mathematics. The third chapter, written by [Maeve Daly](#), links to that role. In *Accessing the maths curriculum; applying psychological theory to help students with specific learning difficulties and with benefits for all*, Maeve draws on the work of Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky to show how the teaching of mathematics can be based in

concrete operations, thus making mathematics accessible to all learners, including those with specific learning difficulties. Maeve is a lecturer in the Education Department of NUI Maynooth and is also a clinical psychologist.

In 2003, the research and development project *Teaching and Learning for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* began in the Education Department. From the outset, Rose was involved both as a member of the project team and as a contributor to the workshops, especially in the area of assessment. This chapter, written by [Dr. Pádraig Hogan and Anthony Malone](#), draws on the continuing insights arising from ongoing work in this area. *Cultivating Transformations through Learning Experiences: Priorities in Continuing Professional Development* revisits the final chapter of the project report and reviews the most recent developments in the TL21 professional development programme for teachers. Pádraig is a senior lecturer in the Education Department and was the project leader for TL21. Anthony is a lecturer in the Education Department and has worked with Rose since 2003.

The working lives of Rose Malone and [Professor Gary Granville](#) have intersected on many occasions. Both worked in the City of Dublin Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) and published together on Poverty Awareness in the Classroom. They have also worked in the National College of Art and Design (NCAD) and the Education Department in NUI Maynooth. Gary's beautifully illustrated article, *Tapestry*, considers the Dublin 1913 Lockout Tapestry Project and indicates how political, social, gender and educational issues were both experienced through and shaped by this three-year project.

The final chapter, *Junctions and Disjunction in the Aims of Irish Education Policy* by [Professor Tom Collins](#), is a wide-ranging discussion about the main aims that underpin the direction of Irish education policy. Using the twin concepts of junction and disjunction, it questions whether there is congruence or dissonance between the aims of the different sectors. It prompts us to think about the effect on the system as a whole when the parts are divided or fragmented. Both Tom and Rose worked together in the Education Department in NUI Maynooth and also served together on the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the meticulous work of Keith Young in preparing the text for publication. His capabilities in copy editing and e publication were of tremendous assistance in the completion of this manuscript.

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