Teaching for social justice and sustainable development across the primary curriculum
An introduction

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Introduction

While the mobilisation of youth-led movements is not a new phenomenon, we are currently experiencing a resurgence in young people agitating for social change. Much of this is driven by the social conscience of Millennials (Chong, 2017) and, arguably, based on recent protests, of Post-Millennials too. We are, for example, increasingly seeing young people's street protests agitating for social and political change, from the March for Our Lives protests in the United States to the global School Strike for Climate Action protests which took place in countries all over the world in March and September 2019. Inspired by Swedish teenager, Greta Thunberg, the September School Strike for Climate Action was the largest environmental protest in history. An estimated six million people in over 150 countries took to the streets over a period of a week to demand action on climate change (Taylor, Watts & Bartlett, 2019). Greta's initial protest clearly demonstrates the power of youth voice but also how action at local level can effect global change.

The motivations for these protest movements are grounded in social or environmental injustices, highlighting the importance of exploring social and environmental justice issues in contemporary classrooms. While adults must bear significant responsibility for taking action to combat social and environmental degradation, children and young people are not powerless witnesses. Rather, they are active agents of social change, capable of exercising agency and envisioning more socially and environmentally just futures. It is essential to provide them with opportunities to critically engage in informed discussion and debate on the issues and problems facing society locally and globally and to provide opportunities for them to take action to challenge inequality and promote human rights, solidarity and justice.

This edited volume supports educators in thinking about the meaning of justice and how just practices can be enacted inside and outside the classroom so that children have access to fair outcomes and new ways of thinking critically about and acting in the world. It specifically focuses on integrating social and environmental justice issues into pedagogical approaches and curricular subjects or areas of knowledge in a sensitive, informed, deliberative and critical way. Grounded in theories of social justice education (SJE) and education for sustainable development (ESD) and acknowledging the transformative power of human agency, this book provides guidance for teachers and student teachers on how to enable children to connect with, and engage critically and

meaningfully with, the key social and environmental issues of our time. Recognising the imperative of avoiding superficial or unidimensional approaches, it focuses on education about, through and for social justice and sustainability. More broadly, for teachers who are new to these areas but want to infuse a justice dimension into their practice, the book provides an accessible entry point and a multiplicity of pedagogical approaches suitable for classroom use. It also supports the development of teachers' professional identities and practices (planning and teaching) as they negotiate the challenges associated with the practical, ethical and political dimensions of this type of education. For school leaders, it provides a case study example of a real school's approach to SJE. Drawing on this framework, it provides guidance on how to adapt and mediate school structures, policies, practices and interactions so that schools promote equitable recognition of and outcomes for all children and young people.

This chapter commences by considering education as a purposeful endeavour. It then offers a critical perspective on how systemic, institutional and individual forms of oppression reproduce and perpetuate injustice and inequity and examines how issues of justice intersect with environmental degradation, climate change and species loss, presenting an existential threat to humanity's future. This is followed by delineations of SJE and ESD and a critical exploration of how they relate to each other. Acknowledging the constraints imposed by systemic and institutional factors, it then explores teachers and children's capacities to effect social change through critique and action. Finally, the chapter presents an overview of the book's aims, structure and chapter content.

The purpose of education

The idea that education provides a neutral or disinterested space in which children develop skills, gain knowledge and learn to be creative, productive members of society is challenged by theorists that highlight the extent to which schooling acts to reproduce existing unequal relations (see, for example, Luke, 2010; Lynch, 1989). Historically, education served to provide a skilled workforce, and to socialise children into expected and required behaviours as members of society. Depending on class, it may have aimed to instil the capacity for leadership, or a sense of duty and responsibility towards others. Rather than providing a neutral or disinterested space in which all children had equal opportunities to develop, its role was to support the status quo and reproduce existing social and economic relations. This traditional conception of schooling was challenged somewhat by more progressive educational philosophies, such as those associated with child-centred education. From the perspective of this book, however, perhaps the first meaningful challenge came in the form of Dewey's education for democracy (Dewey, 1916). Here ideas about critical questioning, democratic participation and prosocial intentions in education went beyond issues of wellbeing and development. More recently, radical educational philosophies of social transformation, such as those associated with the work of Paulo Freire, have revolutionised how we think about the nature of education and its role in challenging inequality (see, for example, Freire, 1972). Neither education for the status quo or education for democracy could be considered neutral. They are both purposeful and intentional. Accepting that education is always education for or education towards a purpose, the question is, what should that purpose be? Should it be to support existing structures and relations, regardless of injustices and inequities, or should it be questioning and critical of those structures, supporting children and young

people to challenge systems of inequality, racism, global injustice and to fight for a more just and sustainable world? This publication is premised on the view that education is inherently political and that choosing not to engage with these issues is still a choice; it is not neutrality.

Systemic, institutional and individual oppression

Paradoxically, then, education can act simultaneously as a great liberator and a pernicious oppressor. Which role it plays is contingent upon a range of factors. One of the most significant is the socially constructed group to which people are allocated or "belong". These groupings include categories such as "race", social class, gender, sexuality, native language, ability and so on. While these categories of perceived difference are artificial human constructs, Bell (2016) argues that they become real in practice through people's beliefs and social practices and are used to justify "differential treatment or allocation of resources and to explain social reality in ways that make inequitable outcomes seem inevitable" (p. 7). Real or not, they have significant implications for how people experience the world. How the group you belong to fares and whether you experience advantage and privilege, or disadvantage, marginalisation and exclusion depends upon the group's hierarchical positioning. Again, this is socially constructed and constantly enacted and made real by people's beliefs and social practices. These hierarchies "privilege Euro-western knowledges, languages, and values and justify the exploitation and impoverishment of indigenous and racially minoritized peoples" (Sprecher, 2013, p. 33). Those in the advantaged categories tend to be white, male, middle class, heterosexual, cisgender, able-bodied and to speak English as their first language; those in the disadvantaged categories tend to be people of colour, female, working class, LGBTQ+, to have some form of disability and not to speak English as a first language. The latter are portrayed as inferior to and of less value than the former but often also as untrustworthy, deficient and even deviant. Because groups are hierarchically ranked, it creates inequities and injustices as groups have differential access to power, resources, status and so on. According to Bell (2016), "Dominant groups hold the power and authority to control, in their own interests, the important institutions in society, determine how resources are allocated, and define what is natural, good, and true" (p. 9). This system of oppression is maintained through the normalisation of the dominant group's elevated positioning and the belief that it is deserved rather than something that has been bestowed upon them through systems of inequality and oppression (Bell, 2016). Such is its power that even those oppressed by it accept it as normal and are complicit in its reproduction. Both dominant and subordinated groups reinforce it by simply acting as usual and going about their everyday lives (Bell, 2016). This form of oppression is subtle and covert and usually unconscious.

Manifestations of oppression are generally conceptualised on three levels, structural, institutional and individual. These levels interact to maintain the hierarchical social order. Individual levels refer to the oppressive attitudes, dispositions and behaviours of individuals and can be conscious or unconscious, overt or covert. Similarly, institutional oppression can be conscious or unconscious, overt or covert and is generally manifested through institutional policies and practices which privilege dominant social groups and disadvantage marginalised groups. Structural oppression is when the underpinning societal principles are inherently oppressive, for example, society's economic, cultural and political institutions. These structures in turn justify and legitimise the inequitable treatment of non–dominant

groups through various mutable forms, including, racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, linguistic imperialism and so on. The assumptions, beliefs and practices which underpin these systems make oppression an everyday reality for non-dominant groups and require an educational response.

Baker, Lynch, Cantillon and Walsh (2009) argue that within the context of education, there are four major equality problems. These are equality of (1) resources, (2) respect and recognition, (3) power and (4) love, care and solidarity. Equality of resources is concerned with the fair distribution of social, political and economic assets. Equality of recognition and respect relates to recognition of diversity, including marginalised groups' historical experiences, language, cultural practices, traditions, and ways of making meaning and knowing. Equality of power requires access and opportunities to exercise power, including full inclusion and participation in decision-making and the power to shape the institutions, policies and processes that affect our lives. Equality of love, care and solidarity relates to relationships of mutual concern and support, collectively working together and taking action to eliminate injustice. The chapters in this book are collectively underpinned by these concepts. Furthermore, this book recognises that whilst the questions of resources, distribution, traditions and power are pivotal in the pursuit of justice between humans, these issues can also be viewed within wider frameworks of justice, such as climate and environmental justice (Mohai, Pellow & Roberts, 2009; Schlosberg & Collins, 2014). Human activities have exacerbated climate change, leading to significant environmental impacts which will increase threats to health and wellbeing, disproportionately affecting the most poor and vulnerable (Philipsborn & Chan, 2018). Intertwined with the impacts of climate breakdown is the significant loss of biodiversity, and subsequent damage to ecosystems, caused by human actions (Cardinale et al., 2012).

Historically, industrialisation itself is premised on extractive, socially unjust and racist systems. The concomitant systems of oppression and injustice built up over time have developed as mutually dependent and reinforced each other. Our response needs to also tie them together. If we want to have a future that is sustainable and a future that is environmentally and socially just then they need to be addressed together ensuring from the outset that systems are built on both socially just and sustainable practices and processes.

What is social justice education (SJE)?

SJE is diversely conceptualised as being an educational reform movement, a goal, a process and a set of practices (Bell, 2016; Adams, 2016; Storms, 2012). The task of defining SJE is far from straightforward. However, most conceptualisations share common principles, including the pillars of equity, activism and social literacy (Ayers, Quinn & Stovall, 2009).

Equity is based on the principle of fairness and refers to the equitable distribution of access to high-quality educational resources and academic outcomes for all children (Ayers et al., 2009, Bell, 2016; Storms, 2012). It involves restructuring society so that all groups have equal and authentic opportunities to be self-determining and to have their daily needs met (Dixson & Smith, 2010; Storms, 2012).

Activism is based on the principle of agency, which can be defined as "our ability to act with intent and awareness" (Robinson & Jones Díaz, 2009, p. 38). Activism involves full participation and requires the provision of learning opportunities for children to develop certain knowledge, skills and dispositions. These include, for example, a sense of

empathy, a sense of social responsibility towards and with others, a proclivity to become an ally to the marginalised, and an informed desire to take collective action to challenge inequities in their classrooms, schools, communities and wider society (Ayers et al., 2009; Bell, 2016; Storms, 2012). The cultivation of empathy is essential both in the process of becoming allies for their peers and in learning why and how to take collective action to bring about change (Storms, 2012). It is participative in this sense but also in pedagogical terms. SJE pedagogy supports teachers in creating democratic, participatory, action-oriented educational environments which enable active and critical engagement with social justice issues (Hackman, 2005).

Social literacy is concerned with the relational, content mastery, critical analysis and personal reflection aspects of SJE (Hackman, 2005). It involves children and young people learning how to recognise, analyse and resist institutionalised forms of oppression, the "isms" (e.g. racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism) both in their own lives and in their classmates' and communities' lives. It entails developing a deeper understanding of their own identities, their relationships and connections with others and how they may be complicit (often inadvertently through the socialisation process) in the oppression of others (Ayers et al., 2009). It also involves engaging critically with taken-for-granted assumptions about how society is structured and how it operates to privilege some and disadvantage others.

For teachers to engage children in this critical work and to enact the broader institutional reforms required by SJE more generally, they too need to understand the role that structures play in reproducing and perpetuating inequities, particularly through school structures, policies and practices which fail to take account of systemic and institutional oppression. It is essential that they are cognisant of how their own identities and positionality and wider discourses around social structure neutrality, meritocracy, objectivity and colour-blindness shape their interactions with and expectations of children. Hope is also required, however, as is teachers' belief in their capacity as agents of change to challenge these unjust structures and improve the life chances of the children in their care.

What is education for sustainable development (ESD)?

In the midst of climate breakdown and large-scale biodiversity loss, there is renewed acceptance that it is not possible for human actions to continue on the same trajectory without catastrophic consequences. There is an imperative for vastly more sustainable modes of living, in ways which meet "the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). The achievement of sustainability requires action across multiple interconnected dimensions (e.g. social, economic, cultural and political); however, there is increasing recognition that education may play a significant role in the pursuit of sustainability and tackling the significant environmental issues with which we are faced.

ESD aims to empower learners to respond to sustainability challenges, such as those associated with climate change, human rights and sustainable livelihoods, in ways that take account of issues of global and intergenerational justice and address social, economic, political and environmental perspectives. Internationally, ESD has increasingly been promoted as a key response to the significant issues with which we are faced. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) adopted ESD as an educational framework in 1997, and the United Nations Decade of ESD was

launched in 2005, seeking to embed "principles, values and practices" of ESD across the education continuum (UNESCO, n.d.). More recently, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015, included Goal 4 relating to quality education and target 4.7 relating to ESD:

> By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.
>
> (UNESCO, 2015, p. 19)

There is recognition that schools, including primary schools, can play a significant role in supporting children and young people to "develop knowledge, skills, values and behaviours needed for sustainable development" (UNESCO, 2018). However, there is also recognition of the need to build teachers' capacities in relation to pedagogical and content knowledge (e.g. Murphy, Smith, Mallon & Redman, 2020).

Characteristically, and similar to SJE, ESD is viewed as a holistic, participatory and learner-centred approach and is generally defined as action-oriented and transformative (Waldron, Ruane, Oberman & Morris, 2016). Critical educators need to be aware, however, that ESD is open to a form of neoliberal co-option which can neutralise or compromise its capacity to effect change. Criticism of ESD has centred on uncritical engagement with key concepts such as growth, development, consumerism and neoliberalism which are connected to unsustainable structures and practices. Selby (2006) argues, for example, that the concept of sustainable development itself is so deeply connected to the principle of unfettered growth, that it contradicts and potentially disavows educational approaches which seek to challenge unsustainable systems and practices. More recently, Selby and Kagawa (2010) argue that forms of ESD entangled with neoliberal ideology present a clear danger to the radical approaches required to address climate breakdown. Kopnina (2012) argues that environmental ethics must remain at the core of ESD, particularly in light of the severity of environmental issues, and the problematic modes of development and growth at the core of these problems. With these critiques in mind, it is important that more critical forms of ESD that challenge dominant discourses are embedded in classroom practice.

Identity, positionality and reflexivity

Both ESD and SJE require us to examine critically our identities and beliefs as our identity positions and ideological assumptions have pedagogical implications. Our identities are neither fixed nor biologically determined. They are dynamic, fluid, multiple, relational and sometimes even contradictory (Robinson & Jones Díaz, 2009). Our sense of ourselves, who we are and how we relate to the world does not solely come from within us. Rather, it is socially constructed, shaped by power relations and constituted in and through our daily interactions with others and the discourses in which we locate ourselves (Robinson & Jones Díaz, 2009). These factors interact to help us make sense of the world and socialise us into particular understandings of ourselves as individuals, of others, and of the concepts of diversity and difference more generally. This of course has a significant impact on how we view the children in our classroom, particularly children who are different from ourselves.

Our ideologies, which are often grounded in inaccurate assumptions about reality, myths and stereotypes, can lead us to treat certain groups of children less favourably than others. This means that as educators we can unwittingly maintain and reproduce inequities, which are rooted in hierarchies of race, ethnicity, social class, gender, religious affiliation, language and so on. For example, many teachers believe that they do not see colour and other identity markers and believe in a meritocratic society (Vass, 2016). This is problematic as if we do not see colour or social class, we are unlikely to take the inequities experienced by children of colour and children from working-class or min-oritised backgrounds (such as Irish Travellers, or Roma) into account in our planning and teaching. We therefore do not take the extra steps necessary to redress them. Believing that education is a level playing field means that if children of colour or children from working-class or minoritised backgrounds struggle, for example, blame is attributed to them as individuals (e.g. lack of effort) or to their group affiliations. Educational under-attainment is therefore viewed as being a consequence of group deficiencies or accepted as a normal outcome for certain minoritised groups rather than to systemic factors which make their success extremely difficult.

As educators, adopting a reflexive stance is considered very beneficial. Reflexivity is "individual awareness of one's own biases and prejudices that underpin the way that one operates in the world" (Robinson & Jones Díaz, 2009, p. 184). In other words, reflexivity encompasses a critical awareness of our own perspectives, values and beliefs and how these values and beliefs shape how we view, treat and relate to marginalised groups. It is also a critical awareness of how we are, consciously or unconsciously, complicit in the perpe-tuation of these inequities. For example, we can be complicit through our failure to tackle inequitable institutional practices and barriers such as streaming or rigid ability-grouping. We can be complicit through our acceptance of inadequate supports for children who do not speak English as a first language or through our failure to provide access for all to an academically rigorous curriculum (Nieto, 2008). Such complicity extends also to how we act to sustain or challenge current ideologies, structures and practices that underpin climate breakdown and biodiversity loss. Our own embeddedness in discourses of consumerism and growth, alongside our responses to issues of global justice, such as migration, needs to be made visible to ourselves in the first instance.

Another important part of the process is to seek to understand the identities, positionality and lived realities of the children in our classrooms. Research tells us that tea-chers are predominantly white and middle class (Forrest, Lean & Dunn, 2016; Heinz & Keane, 2018). They therefore experience what Sprecher (2013) calls "intersecting identity privileges" (p. 35). This places them a long distance from many of their children's lived realities and the intersecting identity markers which disadvantage them. For example, in the UK, research repeatedly shows that black children from working-class backgrounds under-achieve academically (Tizard, Blatchford, Burke, Farquhar & Plewis, 2017; Wright, Standen & Patel, 2010). Similarly, research in the Irish context indicates that when compared to the general settled population, Travellers are significantly more likely to leave school early, to be illiterate, to experience lower levels of belonging and higher levels of exclusion and to attain lower grades in mathematics and reading assessments (Biggart, O'Hare & Connolly, 2013; Watson, Kenny & McGinnity, 2017; Weir, Archer, O'Flaherty & Gilleece, 2011). While a range of factors contribute to these pattern of underachievement and exclusion, children's and young people's experiences of personal and institutional racism at school through school structures and teachers' attitudes, assumptions and lower expectations are significant factors

(Boyle, Hanafin & Flynn, 2018; Byrne & Smyth, 2010; Doharty, 2019; Watson et al., 2017). In the United States, research shows that black children and young people are significantly more likely to be suspended, expelled, arrested in school and referred to the police when compared to their white counterparts (Riddle & Sinclair, 2019; Wegmann & Smith, 2019). Given the dire and life-changing consequences for children and young people of these forms of institutional oppression (e.g. school drop–out, unemployment, incarceration), it is imperative that we as educators do everything possible to ensure that we are not exacerbating this injustice but rather are actively working to challenge it.

Reflective of Boler's (1999) Pedagogy of Discomfort approach, critical inquiry into our personal biographies, positionality and actions may elicit a range of uncomfortable emotions for us, which we may otherwise distance ourselves from, including shame, guilt, anxiety, defensiveness and anger. The cognitive and emotional dissonance which this type of work can engender is a normal part of the process as this type of work is unsettling, challenging and requires us to critically engage with our personal histories and life experiences. In getting to know ourselves and the children in our classrooms better, we are in a much stronger position to meet their needs and to try to break the cycle of inequity which generations of minoritised children have experienced.

Social action

Jemal (2017) defines social action as "the overt engagement in individual or collective action taken to produce sociopolitical change of the unjust aspects (e.g., institutional policies and practices) of society that cause unhealthy conditions" (p. 608). This type of action can take place on an individual level (self-oriented – critically reflecting on one's own prejudices and actions), interpersonal level (other-directed – challenging the prejudices and discriminatory actions of others) or a collective level (collaborative – taking collective action to challenge injustice) (Storms, 2012). As this suggests, the action can take place at micro (individual and interpersonal) or macro (institutional and systemic) levels (Hackman, 2005). It can refer to both the capacity to act (in the future) and the taking of overt action in the now (both through critique and other actions taken inside and outside the classroom). However, action "does not always need to be physical" (Bondy, Rock, Curcio & Schroeder, 2017, p. 2). It can be a change in beliefs or perspective and therefore a mental process. While softer approaches tend to focus on individual action and behavioural changes, SJE and critical forms of ESD place greater emphasis on collective action and children using their voices to engage politically, that is to lobby/force governments and other political and corporate actors to take action. Writing in the context of the climate justice strikes, Bryan (2019) argued that a "multi-pronged approach, involving behavioural, institutional and system-level changes in how societies are organised is … essential" (Bryan, 2019, para. 7). Perhaps unsurprisingly, research shows that action tends to remain at the self-oriented, micro and individual level (Storms, 2012).

Teachers as agents of change

As both ESD and SJE seek to promote change in the form of taking action to challenge environmental degradation, social and environmental injustice and inequity, the principle of agency is a critical component. Enacting a pedagogy conceptualised as transformative requires that teachers conceptualise themselves as agents of change

in the first instance, embracing a practice that is defined by reflection and action. In addition to reflecting on their own beliefs, assumptions and positionalities, teachers can focus on using justice-oriented pedagogical approaches which enable children and young people to develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to act for social and environmental justice. This is a very good starting point, particularly for early career teachers. However, as teachers become more confident in these areas (and have spent time engaging in reflexive work on their own positionality and complicity in the perpetuation of injustice through their own practices and the policies and practices of the school), consideration can be given to the macro-level outside the classroom. While it is challenging and sometimes risky work depending on the context in which teachers are working, reaching out to colleagues and developing a network of allies provides essential emotional support and can have a greater impact in challenging the reproduction of inequality and improving children's life chances (Bell, 2016; Picower, 2012). It will provide a stronger platform for change in the fight for social and environmental justice beyond the individual classroom.

Children as agents of change

Conceptualising children as present citizens and active agents rather than passive, powerless future citizens are essential components of SJE and ESD, as is understanding that children are active in the construction of their own multiple identities and in regulating and policing the identities of other children (Robinson & Jones Díaz, 2009). Children also need to be given the space to imagine other possibilities, to think about what justice looks and feels like, to think about how they would like the world to be and to consider what actions they can take to change the world to realise their vision (Picower, 2012). In order to do this, we need to foster children's confidence in themselves through building caring, trusting, supportive and affirming relationships with them (Picower, 2012). We also need to be vulnerable ourselves, open to sharing our own biographies and acknowledging our own uncertainties and struggles with certain social and environmental issues. The environment that we create and the relationships that we nurture in our classrooms are as important as the justice-related content we teach (Bondy et al., 2017).

One of the common arguments made against children exploring issues related to social and environmental justice centres around the discourse of childhood innocence (Robinson & Jones Díaz, 2009), i.e. the belief that it is our role as educators to protect children from controversial issues in order to preserve their perceived naivety and innocence. However, children are active agents who live in the same world as adults. They see and hear all that we see and hear. Moreover, Robinson and Jones Díaz (2009) argue that as technologies become more sophisticated and mainstreamed, the lines between adults' and children's worlds becomes increasingly nebulous. It is far more useful to help children to try to understand what is going on around them, in age-appropriate ways, rather than silencing their questions and pretending that social injustices or climate change do not exist. They need, in Robinson and Jones Díaz's words, to be able "to deal with the complexities and contradictions" which are part of everyday life in our globalised world (p. 171).

As is discussed in other chapters throughout this book, creating a safe, supportive and democratic space for children to discuss these issues is key. Their emotional wellbeing is of paramount importance. As a consequence, it is considered good practice to develop a

set of rules or a charter with children delineating how they would like to be treated. Another consideration in this context is the tension that exists between children's equal right to voice and the social justice principles that SJE and ESD should challenge existing powers relations. Challenging the status quo in this context involves ensuring that marginalised voices are heard and not drowned out by the voices of the dominant privileged group. While Sensoy and DiAngelo (2014) have argued for the "silencing" of the voices of the privileged, others such as Applebaum (2014) and Peterson (2014) have argued that dominant perspectives should be critically analysed rather than foreclosed. Moreover, Applebaum contends that foreclosing the views of the privileged protects rather than challenges this privilege as it enables privileged children to avoid confronting their biases and complicity in perpetuating injustice. Similarly, Peterson argues that it places the teacher in the undemocratic and powerful position of deciding which children's voices will be heard and which will be silenced.

Aims, overview and structure of book

This book is premised on the view that for education to promote social justice and sustainability it must be purposeful and intentional in its approach across all aspects of school life (policy, structures, processes and relationships) and all areas of learning. The book, therefore, aims to provide a framework for understanding contemporary social justice and sustainable development concepts and issues across a range of areas of knowledge commonly found in school curricula and to present practical models which support teachers and student teachers to develop their practice. In doing this, it does not offer or privilege a single approach to teaching for social justice and sustainability; rather, it presents a variety of approaches which can inform teaching in primary schools. Given the multiplicity of ways in which curricula are structured internationally, we have taken the view that the most adaptable way to present these ideas is through subject disciplines, rather than broader areas of learning. While we believe that holistic approaches to education which promote the integration of knowledge and the transferability of skills enhance children's school experiences, it is important also for teachers and student teachers to understand and engage with the disciplinary thinking that underpin learning in those broader areas and offer children a range of lenses through which to see the world. Being able to think historically, or mathematically, or scientifically, for example, about social justice and sustainability enhances our capacity to understand and act and makes integrated approaches more robust. It is our contention, then, that the approaches and exemplars offered here are flexible and adaptable to most primary curricular contexts. We also believe that SJE and ESD thrive best in environments where such approaches inform policy and practice beyond individual classrooms. This is addressed specifically in the penultimate chapter of the book.

Seeking to offer the reader a diverse range of approaches, then, each chapter takes its own perspective on the relationship between its area of focus and social justice and/or sustainability education and explores the practical implementation of teaching approaches which are premised on social and environmental justice perspectives. Authors have chosen, in some cases, to focus exclusively or mainly on either social justice or sustainability; others have included a focus on both. While sharing many common elements, exemplars are offered in a variety of formats. We believe that this diversity will offer educators the best possible range of entry points into an educational practice that is

informed by social and environmental justice. It is worth noting here that not all equality issues relevant to social and environmental justice are directly named or addressed in the publication; however, we hope that the ideas and approaches outlined here are capable of reinvention in a range of contexts.

This first chapter is intended as a general introduction to the key issues and theories that inform the publication across all chapters; it also presents a broad outline of the four sections of the book to guide the reader, before offering a brief summary of each chapter. While all chapters share a range of ideas related to critical pedagogy, enquiry, democratic educational approaches and related areas, each section highlights particular perspectives strongly rooted in the theory and practice of those areas of learning or disciplines which constitute the section. In Part I, the idea of a critical and reflective enquiry approach to teaching for social justice and sustainability is foregrounded in Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5, which draw on the theory and practice of history, geography, science and climate change education respectively to challenge how we think about the world and to support engagement with key social and environmental justice and sustainability issues. Part II highlights creative and relational approaches to SJE and ESD, through the disciplinary lenses of music, drama and visual arts education in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, addressing the potential of arts-based practices in primary schools to challenge injustice, act for social change and connect with the natural world. In Part III, Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 demonstrate how critical practice in global citizenship education, mathematics education, language teaching, critical literacy and ethical education can challenge dominant frameworks and ideologies that sustain current structures of oppression and environmental degradation, empowering children to think differently about the word and the world and their capacity for action. In the final section, Part IV, Chapter 14 addresses key questions relating to how SJE can be embedded in real contexts, in terms of whole school approaches and across curricula through reimagining structures, policy, processes, practices and relationships from the ground up. Finally, the concluding chapter (Chapter 15) discusses principles and key themes that emerge across the volume. Each chapter, then, while building on shared ideas and pedagogies, offers a unique perspective on SJE and/or ESD to extend and support classroom practice.

In Chapter 2, Fionnuala Waldron, Caitríona Ní Cassaithe, Maria Barry and Peter Whelan examine the intersection of history education, SJE and ESD and argue for a practice which is grounded in critical enquiry approaches, empowering children to ask questions such as whose history counts, to challenge dominant narratives and critically explore human interaction with and impact on the environment over time. They consider the contribution which the historical concepts of empathy, causation, change and agency can make to SJE and ESD and present pedagogical orientations which teachers can draw on to support their practice. The authors then outline a framework for critical historical enquiry premised on the ideas discussed in the chapter and exemplars of practice which illustrate the practical implementation of the framework.

Grounding the potential of geography education as a context for SJE and ESD in the academic traditions of the discipline, Susan Pike (Chapter 3) argues for a geography education practice which is characterised by critical, justice-oriented enquiry. Concerned with promoting children's engagement with their localities and communities, Pike examines a number of key areas within geography and geography education which support this focus, such as children's geographies, which give insight into how children negotiate and construct their worlds. Drawing on the work of Hopkin (2018) the

chapter then examines how teachers can promote geographical learning through building on children's ethno-geographies, progressively developing their conceptual understanding and focusing on values. Pike then examines the idea of children's engagement in critical enquiry, outlining a process which supports children's agentic participation and presenting two exemplars illustrating the ideas outlined in the chapter.

Sandra Austin's examination of the relationship between science education and ESD, in Chapter 4, is premised on the power of scientific enquiry as a signature pedagogy of science education. Recognising the role which socio-scientific issues play in science education, she argues that ESD, as a multidisciplinary, holistic and participatory approach to education, can act as a counterpoint to scientific approaches that foreground technicist scientific solutions to problems such as climate change. The chapter argues strongly for direct experience of the local environment as a site for powerful learning and outlines the importance of children connecting with the natural world. This local learning is framed by an overarching inquiry-based approach that promotes critical thinking and deep analysis, leading to new understandings and transformative action. Drawing on the ideas discussed, the exemplars present two lessons which are locally based but connect to wider global issues.

In Chapter 5, Rowan Oberman and Gabriela Martinez Sainz also argue for an approach to climate change education (CCE) which recognises its complexity, eschewing a narrow knowledge-based approach to include a focus on social, cultural, ethical, economic, political and affective dimensions of learning. The authors propose a form of critical thinking which, drawing on critical pedagogy and the Freirean concepts of praxis and critical consciousness, goes beyond more traditional conceptions of critical thinking as critical analysis and argumentation to interrogate issues of power, interest, culpability and justice. Drawing on this radical tradition of critical thinking, the authors present inquiry-based and dialogical approaches to CCE which are critically framed. Finally, drawing on the theory and discussion outlined in the chapter, Oberman and Martinez Sainz offer two planning exemplars for student teachers and teachers to support classroom practice.

The power of art as social and environmental critique and of artists as activists with socially engaged and ecological identities is argued by Máire Ní Bhroin and Andrea Cleary in Chapter 6. The authors define their perspective as rooted in critical pedagogy and call on teachers to develop a justice-oriented practice and reconceptualise themselves as social and environmental actors. Using a frame which privileges critical thinking, creativity and transformative action, Ní Bhroin and Cleary unpick the synergies and interconnections between SJE, ESD and visual art education. Premised on a view of children as artists and competent social actors, they identify the key theoretical ideas that underpin their exemplars, one of which focuses on ecological art and the second of which uses the idea of "fast fashion" to interrogate issues of social justice and sustainability in the clothing industry.

Developing the theme of art as activism, Regina Murphy and Francis Ward also consider music and teachers of music to be powerful catalysts for social change in Chapter 7. The chapter is premised on a view of music education as fundamental to children's holistic development, and on the conceptualisation of all children as makers of music. Drawing on philosophies of relationships and care, the authors situate the teaching of music within a justice-oriented multicultural frame. Murphy and Ward focus on singing as a point of entry for teachers interested in developing a multicultural and socially just practice. Characterising singing as inclusive, accessible, relational and agentic, they present a series of exemplars to support teachers to introduce multicultural music-making into their practice.

In Chapter 8, Annie Ó Breacháin and Ciara Fagan present drama education as a potential counter-narrative to the dominant neoliberal paradigm characteristic of global education policy. The chapter draws on conceptions of drama as a critical, relational pedagogy to explore issues of interdependence and interconnectedness, providing spaces for children to question, reflect and imagine alternative futures. Positioning children as co-creators and collaborators, Ó Breacháin and Fagan offer a pedagogy that challenges traditional orthodoxies of power and individualism, supporting teachers and children to imagine, share and feel as they engage with SJE and ESD issues. The chapter concludes with two exemplars which provide important ideas of how teachers could explore transformative models of drama education to support a deepening of human relationships and the pursuit of social justice.

Locating issues of justice and sustainability clearly within a global framework, Benjamin Mallon (Chapter 9) considers the ways in which teachers might engage with transformative citizenship education in the pursuit of a more just and equitable world. Drawing on a number of theoretical models, the chapter problematises the concept of the "good citizen" and individualised notions of responsibility. Mallon explores how, through critical global citizenship education, teachers could provide learning experiences which develop children's power and agency, allowing them to transcend the boundaries of personally responsible forms of citizenship into a practice of citizenship that is grounded in participation and attuned to the need for collective action for justice and sustainability. The chapter concludes with two exemplars which critically explore global interconnectedness and support children to reflect on issues of fairness and justice in a global context.

In Chapter 10, Aisling Ní Dhiorbháin examines how plurilingual pedagogies, which recognise the multiplicity of languages, can promote socially just outcomes in education. She argues that monolingual education systems exercise a form of coercive power and practise subtractive education, in that children whose home language is non-dominant lose skills, leading to lower levels of achievement and mental harm. Plurilingual approaches, on the other hand, are premised on the idea that learning in one language contributes to learning in another and that metalinguistic knowledge is transferable across languages. Such approaches allow children to draw on pre-existing language skills to acquire new ones and to deepen their learning across the curriculum, while valuing diverse identities. Finally, the chapter presents two exemplars of practice; the first focuses on the creation of plurilingual texts while the second presents a guided discovery approach to grammar teaching.

Niamh Watkins positions critical literacy as a key social justice pedagogy across reading, writing and language practices in Chapter 11. Watkins begins by defining critical literacy and discussing its connection to SJE. She then draws on the literature of critical literacy to outline key strategies and conceptualisations of practice. Similar to Ní Dhiorbháin (Chapter 10), Watkins highlights the importance of non-hierarchical approaches to language learning which recognise the value of all languages. Having considered a number of frameworks, she presents key instructional strategies to support novice and student teachers in taking the first steps towards a critical literacy practice. Addressing the idea of authentic and meaningful contexts for critical literacy, Watkins then discusses what could be considered as meaningful action in children's critical engagement with text. Finally, the chapter concludes with two exemplars of practice which are premised on the theories and frameworks presented.

In Chapter 12, Aisling Twohill and Labhaoise Ní Shúilleabháin contend that critical mathematical literacy offers children a critical lens through which to understand and interrogate dominant ideologies that underpin economic structures and relations, and, importantly, the critical tools needed for action. Identifying key frameworks to support teachers in implementing a critical practice, they argue the need for teachers to reflect critically on their own positionalities and be conscious of the dominant narratives that underpin traditional practice and curricula, such as consumerism, individualism and the pursuit of profit. They question, also, the hegemonic status given to western-centric knowledge in mathematics, which renders invisible the historical role of different cultures in mathematical thinking. Finally, the critical practices presented in the chapter are demonstrated in two exemplars, one which uses story to examine the issue of fairness and one which critically examines the idea of profit.

In the following chapter (Chapter 13), Anne Marie Kavanagh and Niamh McGuirk argue that teachers need to address issues of racism directly in their teaching and propose ethical education (EE) as a site where positive conversations about race and ethnicity can begin. Having examined what is meant by EE and how it connects with social justice, the authors then discuss issues of racism and the need for teachers to critically engage with their own assumptions and biases about race and ethnicity. The chapter identifies key entry points into discussions about race, ethnicity and racism in ways that are accessible to children, through pedagogies such as story, philosophy for children and ethical dilemmas. It then examines wider issues relating to whole school environments and issues of recognition and representation and concludes with two exemplars which provide practical examples of how complex conversations about race, ethnicity, racism and marginalisation can begin.

In Chapter 14, Anne Marie Kavanagh presents a critical case study of a whole school approach to SJE. She begins with a clear explication of the theories of critical multiculturalism and transformative leadership which inform her study. Kavanagh's analysis is also underpinned by the social justice concepts of relationality, participation and distribution. Drawing on interviews and extended periods of observation in the case study school, she identifies key features of whole school practice and flags potential areas for development and growth, thus highlighting the idea that SJE is a living praxis rather than a finished formula. Finally, the chapter presents a framework for implementing a whole school approach to SJE and indicates the range of actions needed to progress that implementation.

In the final chapter (Chapter 15), Fionnuala Waldron, Benjamin Mallon and Anne Marie Kavanagh revisit overarching principles and themes which underpin the volume as a whole and address key pedagogical approaches that provide accessible starting points for teachers committed to developing a practice grounded in SJE and ESD.

Conclusion

Collectively, we believe that the chapters present comprehensive, useful and insightful perspectives on the integration of SJE and ESD into classroom practice in pursuit of a better world. While SJE and ESD foreground a particular focus which should not be diluted or lost sight of, we are aided in our project by the many attributes which both educations share, such as common pedagogical orientations and a focus on challenging and disrupting dominant narratives; both allow learners to encounter difficult and troublesome knowledge, to confront questions of culpability in global inequalities and to locate justice-oriented actions in the collective, public and political spaces associated with

democratic citizenship. In conclusion, in bringing together two powerful educations in the pursuit of transformative practice, this volume seeks to provide starting points for teachers and student teachers that are meaningful, theoretically grounded and accessible. We hope that this volume will offer its readers the inspiration and the motivation to incorporate SJE and ESD into their classroom practice and the means to do so.

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