

English Teaching and Media Education: The (Lost) Legacies of Cultural Studies

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Introduction

In 1987 the English Association – that venerable institution so heavily invested in the English project more generally – published a book entitled *English and Cultural Studies: Broadening the Context*, edited by Michael Green (1987a), one of the original members of the Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies. Handel Kashope Wright (2001a, 2001b) subsequently referred to this as among a small set of publications specifically addressing cultural studies and education. The others were *Unpopular Education* (1981) and *Education Limited* (1991). Related works, addressing other significant socio-political themes, included *Policing the Crisis* (1978), *Resistance through Rituals* (1976), and *Learning to Labour* (1977), but also *Culture, Media, Language* (1980/1991).¹ While Green himself might not have connected the former three books in the same way that Wright did, his introductory essay nonetheless reviews the possibilities then emerging on the scene, in both universities and schools – “new points of departure” – and ends on a positive note: “It is possible to be very optimistic about the changes to come” (Green, 1987b, p. 17). The following year saw the introduction of the National Curriculum in England and Wales, and a new educational order of things entirely. Over a decade later, Green was curiously reticent in his comments on the book: “As far as my book *English and Cultural Studies: Broadening the Context* ... is concerned, this spoke to a moment which I think is not the current moment: [i]t doesn't represent what things are like right now...” (Wright, 2001b, p. 239). He explained that “[t]here was a period in which there was cultural studies work in the English syllabus and in the media syllabus of schools. In terms of the recently drawn up National Curriculum, that has been completely ruled out” (Wright, 2001b, p. 343). We suspect that not much has changed in the intervening period, at least in much of the Anglophone world – more specifically for our purposes here, England, and also Australia. Green’s book remains a powerful testament to a certain project, however, and worth revisiting and re-assessing accordingly.

In this paper, we seek to explore the relationship between English teaching and media education, with specific reference to Cultural Studies. Our focus is more particularly on English teaching, as a longstanding secondary school-subject in England and Australia.² We ask: What are the legacies of Cultural Studies in this regard? In particular, we consider the *lost* legacies of Cultural Studies: those insights and orientations that don’t seem to have been taken up, or perhaps have withered, or fallen away. What remains of Cultural Studies today, with specific regard to English teaching and media education? Moreover: what are the possibilities and prospects for curriculum renewal in the current conjecture, in the third decade of the 21st century?

The long and somewhat vexed relationship between English and media education in schools, can be traced back to the heyday of the influence of F. R. Leavis, and particularly the book he edited with Denys Thompson, *Culture and Environment* (1933). More recently, from the 1960s onwards, media studies has emerged in its own right, as subject Media. This has been

¹ An especially relevant text, although curiously overlooked in these interviews, and well worth revisiting (Baron et al, 1980/2005).

² The case of Media Studies in schools is a separate matter, and dealt with extensively elsewhere (e.g. Sefton-Green, 2011; Connolly, 2021).

alongside the longer and ongoing trajectory of subject English, as an already established curriculum area. Indeed, these two subject-areas are often seen in association, within the always constrained symbolic economy of the school curriculum. Hence their relationship has often been a matter of competition and ongoing debate, especially in the context of an already crowded curriculum and an entrenched and enduring curriculum hierarchy (Burn & Connolly, 2020). This needs to be borne in mind in what follows, which is addressed more specifically to subject English and its developments over recent decades.

Setting the Scene; or, What Was/Is Cultural Studies, Anyway?

Our primary reference-point is the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in the UK, although we acknowledge that there is now considerable debate as to the validity of seeing this as some kind of ‘origin’. David Buckingham, for example, has recently argued that the work of the CCCS was less about (school) education and more about the establishment of a kind of theoretical stronghold in the academy (Buckingham, 2020).³ Nonetheless the Centre’s influence and significance for both English teaching and media education is indisputable, and widely acknowledged. This is clearly the case in higher education, but it applies to school education as well, albeit somewhat differently. Indeed there appears to be a general consensus that secondary English teaching has been a significant site of application and impact, among Cultural Studies scholars at least. Turner (2012, p. 82) writes: “[C]ultural studies has achieved extraordinary success in infiltrating secondary school curricula in the UK and Australia – in English, media studies, and film and television studies”. In the Australian context, Turner (2007) points to the institutional success of Cultural Studies in challenging and changing English teaching – “an objective that cultural and media studies has pursued for the last 20 years” (p. 107) – even while going on to deliver a somewhat skewed account of how this has been realised. Moreover, it has been the ‘British’ model – the so-called ‘Birmingham model’ – that has been most relevant here, as perhaps might be expected. Hence it is reasonable to see Michael Green’s edited book as confirming the relevance and significance of Birmingham and what Turner has labelled British Cultural Studies. It is worth looking more closely, then, at the book itself.

Opening as it does with Green’s essay, the book concludes with David Lusted’s “English Teaching and Media Education: Culture and the Curriculum” (Lusted, 2007). Context is important, as always. This was the period of the New Accents publications, of Eagleton’s *Literary Theory* (1983), which infamously compared Shakespeare and bus tickets, and otherwise of the apparent triumph of Cultural Studies worldwide. So between the Green and Lusted essays, there are accounts of popular literary forms (masculinity and the Romance, ‘The Color Purple’), new cultural readings of Dickens, experiments and initiatives in higher and further education, and so on. There is little reference to school education, certainly in any explicit, elaborated way. Lusted’s essay is extremely interesting, nonetheless, and directly relevant to ongoing and ensuing debates with regard to English teaching. Among other things, Lusted (1987) points to the emergence of ‘media’ as a key reference-point, and refers to “the promise of ‘media education’”, which he sees residing in “a renewed impetus for claims to notions of culture and language to reappear, regenerated[,] and with new powers of explanation, in a reorganized curriculum” (p. 127). From another angle, Green himself refers in his introductory essay to “the real gains of ‘progressive’ teaching methods”, noting that this is something “recently discussed in far too simple and caricatured a way as though pupil- or teacher-oriented pedagogies were some straightforward binary choice” (p. 15) – thereby

³ It should be noted however that CCCS did have a pedagogical emphasis, especially early on, even if focused more specifically on postgraduate study (Johnson, 2013).

acknowledging, it seems to us, the post-Dartmouth work of the New English and the so-called ‘London School’.⁴ It all seemed a propitious moment. This sense of something new and significant emerging on the scene was evident in David Buckingham and Julian Sefton-Green’s *Cultural Studies Goes to School* (1994), undoubtedly a key text in media education, English teaching and cultural politics, and also Bill Green (1995) account of “post-curriculum possibilities” in and for English teaching, explicitly naming ‘Birmingham’ as a distinctive ‘school’ within the field.

Cultural Analysis: Promising Little, Delivering Less?

However, in the near thirty years since *Cultural Studies Goes to School* was published, the re-envisioning of subject English as a version of Cultural Studies which might create a more meaningful dialogue between young people and the cultures they inhabit has very much been an incomplete project. At the end of the book, Buckingham and Sefton-Green (1994, p. 214) remark that “the days of English as an academic discipline are surely numbered”. Even though, in the decades directly succeeding the book, *some* of the desire for the assimilation of cultural analysis into the school subject was indeed realised (see Connolly, 2021a [Ch4] for a fuller account of this), the forces of populism, the use of internet technologies to support that populism, and the connection of these things to a kind of rejuvenated educational conservatism were all factors that were probably unforeseeable. In England, the most recent version of the National Curriculum (c2014) reinforces traditional models of English as a subject and contains no mention of popular culture or media texts – indicating an apparent failure of these predictions. Some of this incomplete project is not to do with these larger external forces, however, but rather with the characterisation of ‘culture’ in various versions of the Curriculum in England from 1988 right up to 2014. We would argue that this characterisation (along with some observations about the nature of English teaching and English teachers) means that the promise of *Cultural Studies Goes to School* has never really been fulfilled.

In order to support this view, we might pursue two lines of argument here: firstly, that what the National Curriculum of England⁵ characterises as culture is often woefully limited and limiting; and secondly, that for English teachers, there is a tendency to see the study of culture as a kind of template for other, more ‘literary’ activities in the English classroom – in effect, using popular culture to ‘practise’ working on material perceived as being more ‘difficult’ or ‘worthy’ – namely, the study of literary texts. Similarly, we would suggest that there is always an apparent limit to the places that English teachers are prepared to take students in their study of culture, and that this comes from both the prescribed Curriculum itself and the way that English teachers are educated. In what follows, we explore and challenge these views and try to address where they come from and why they contribute to a situation, in both England and Australia, in which many ‘cultural studies’, unfortunately, never ‘came to school’.

Before pursuing these lines of inquiry, however, it is worth considering the history of the two dominant views of culture in English teaching since the late 1980s. These two positions – *cultural analysis* and *cultural heritage*, respectively – have come to underpin approaches to teaching English at various points in the recent history of the subject. Additionally, in England these notions have been further problematized by the government’s somewhat

⁴ See Goodwyn et al. [Eds.] (2019) for an overview of this version of English teaching, fifty years after the event itself (‘Dartmouth’), in 1966.

⁵ The situation is somewhat different in Australia, as elaborated below.

idiosyncratic focus on ‘cultural capital’ (see below) – a term that comes originally from the work of Pierre Bourdieu, but arguably is being misused by policymakers – and its role in schooling. Andrew Goodwyn (2018) gives a very lucid account of how the Cox Report (1989)⁶ into the teaching of primary and secondary school English (1989) came to characterise the two approaches, and also how they have at least some of their origins in the Dartmouth Seminar held in the late 1960s, where American and English academics got together to set a new agenda for the teaching of English (Goodwyn et al. [Eds.], 2018). As Goodwyn points out, Cox’s report, which formed the basis of the first iteration of the National Curriculum, was a significant milestone in acknowledging that Cultural Analysis was one of five potential models for English (alongside John Dixon’s “personal growth” model and the more traditional “cultural heritage” model)⁷ and, as such, formalised the view that it was important to both teachers and students. Since Goodwyn’s account, however, the schools’ regulator in England has publicly stated that it sees one of the purposes of schooling to be the accumulation of a particular version of ‘cultural capital’, and this has without doubt re-emphasised a focus on cultural heritage versions of English. For the current political administration in England, cultural capital is defined in terms of Matthew Arnold’s “the best that has been thought and said” (Ofsted, 2019), rather than Bourdieu’s own sense of how society becomes stratified in accordance with the fundamental connection between the cultural and the economic (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 12). It is in this subversion of Bourdieu’s term that we can see the origins of some of the reluctance to see subject English as a vehicle for cultural analysis – more of which below.

To briefly re-visit these terms, and what we mean when we talk about Cultural Analysis (CA) and Cultural Heritage (CH) models of teaching English, it is helpful to look at the work of Brian Cox in the period immediately after the publication of the first National Curriculum for English in 1990. In his reflection on the establishment of that Curriculum, Cox (1995) describes some of the reaction to his original proposals, and the way that educational traditionalists, most notably John Marks, responded to ideas about culture. For Cox, cultural heritage emphasised “the responsibility of schools to lead children to an appreciation of those works of literature that had been widely regarded as amongst the finest in the language”, while cultural analysis saw the “role of English in helping children towards a critical understanding of the world and cultural environment in which they lived” (Cox, 1995, p. 33). For Marks (1992), this latter view seemed to be about limiting access to the content entailed in the former view, whereas Cox was clear that the two were completely compatible with each other, noting, as an example, that the serial form was common to both the work of Charles Dickens and the soap opera. For many teachers and other educators, Cox’s defence of the cultural analysis model seemed to give it parity with the cultural heritage model (although in reality this was never the case, as indicated below) and it was in this spirit that *Cultural Studies Goes to School* and its associated project was born.

The reasons for the promise of the book never being fully realised are both complex and nuanced, and political as well as cultural, and they are indicative of a wider suspicion of the term ‘culture’ and what it might come to mean in the hands of teachers. As we have noted, this was heralded in Lusted (1987), and indeed in the *Broadening the Context* book more generally (Green, 1987a), although Lusted’s explicit linkage of culture and language with

⁶ <<http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/cox1989/cox89.html>>

⁷ The others being ‘Adult Needs’ (AN) and ‘Cross-Curricular’ (CC) – however, both of these so-called ‘models’ are widely seen as pertaining less immediately to English teaching as a distinctive subject-area in its own right.

media is especially relevant and noteworthy here. Goodwyn (2020) describes CA as the “most important new model”, and “an expansive ontological shift” in subject English, signalling “a paradigm shift towards accepting the study of media [and] popular culture and to developing a critical approach to all texts” (p. 9). Acknowledging the importance of earlier work such as *Culture and Environment* (Leavis & Thompson, 1933), he sees as “an unintended consequence” of such work, in taking “the effects of popular media so seriously”, the ‘unwitting’ invention of “‘Media Studies’, a discipline that emerged powerfully in the 1960s, sometimes called ‘Cultural Studies’” (Goodwyn, 2016, p. 7). This was eminently a matter of cultural politics, then and subsequently, and even now. It is worth noting here that Turner (2012) sees “the core territory of cultural studies” as compromising “the media, popular culture and everyday life” (p. 43) – all of what which are contested cultural fields, and traditionally marginalised. This is what was being introduced into the normative scene of English teaching, then, and indeed that of schooling more generally. It was a *cultural* invention, but also, at least potentially, a *political* challenge, albeit a somewhat ambivalent and contradictory one.

At this point it is worth asking why ‘cultural analysis’ – what was the rationality behind choosing this term, and just as importantly, what were the effects and consequences of doing so? One thing to observe in this regard is that it would appear to privilege ‘reception’ over ‘production, ‘reading’ (and ‘viewing’) over ‘writing’ (or ‘making’).⁸ This is in fact consistent with (English) curriculum history and policy. There is, further, an intriguing link here with the Australian work on ‘critical literacy’, often more or less emphatically related to a cultural studies perspective (e.g., Turner, 2007), which is similarly oriented more to reading and critique. Indeed, Goodwyn (2016, p. 19) suggests that “[t]he emergence of critical literacy may be conceptualised as a ‘model’ that has much in common with CA, although whether that is conceptually accurate is an argument deserving much more detail”. Linking ‘cultural analysis’ and ‘critical literacy’ in this way illuminates the undoubtedly uneven development of English teaching and media education in different national jurisdictions – in this case, England and Australia. CA is geared more towards media culture and information technology, whereas critical literacy is more oriented to engaging with ‘texts’, across the spectrum ranging from print to digital-electronics. The focus in either case is on analysis and (critical) reception, rather than on production, let alone appreciation and pleasure. This is Turner’s (2007) concern regarding developments in Australia, notwithstanding his caricature of ‘critical literacy’. Nonetheless, for a certain period in Australian history, as he writes, “the critical literacies approach has been placed at the centre of every senior English syllabus in the country” (p. 106). Wendy Morgan (1997) had earlier pointed to “the official endorsement or at least tolerance of critical literacy at state and federal levels of educational policy” (p. 22) at the time.⁹ Such success was short-lived, however. The election of a new conservative federal government in 2003 meant profound shifts in what was permissible and possible in this regard (Morgan, 1997), ushering in a (party-)political regime that was, in fact, much more ideologically congruent with that of England and the UK.

The point to highlight, in summary, is that ‘Cultural Analysis’ was first and foremost a policy construction, and hence an explicit object of policy, serving certain political and rhetorical ends. While work closer to the original project of Cultural Studies clearly continued on other

⁸ This was most certainly not the case for *Cultural Studies Goes to School*, however – quite the opposite, in fact.

⁹ She also points specifically to the influence of ‘cultural studies’ (Morgan, 1997, p. 23). It is interesting that Turner makes no reference to Morgan’s work or that of others influenced by Cultural Studies in similar ways (e.g., Ray Misson). In this regard, see Misson and Morgan (2011).

levels, including its more radical practices, this meant considerable restraint in terms of educational discourse, and the need (in the British context at least) to find another, perhaps more neutral label – hence ‘cultural analysis’. That was never an option for ‘critical literacy’, which has always worn its political allegiance like a badge.¹⁰ Whether there were indeed affinities between Cultural Studies and critical literacy is still a matter for debate, making the somewhat different case for linking ‘cultural analysis’ organically with ‘critical literacy’ all the more tenuous.

The Rise and Fall of Cultural Studies: The National Curriculum for English (1988-2014)¹¹

So what of the influence of Cultural Studies on English and Media Studies in England, then, and what has this meant for teachers and classrooms? It is important to see the National Curriculum for English, from its inception in the late 1980s as a kind of playing-field in which, through terms like ‘cultural analysis’ and ‘cultural heritage’, there was ongoing struggle to gain territorial advantage in school English between those who saw the influence of Cultural Studies as an opportunity or a threat.

While the Cox Report was clear on the need for, and the value of, providing for students’ engagement with media, there was still a sense of dissatisfaction with the scope of the 1989 National Curriculum for such work in the classroom, and these dissatisfactions came in a number of forms – educational, technological, political, etc. The Report itself devoted an entire chapter to it, albeit linked with information technology, and there are various references to media and popular culture throughout. Media education is presented as “part of the exploration of contemporary culture, alongside more traditional literary texts” (Cox, 1989, p. 103) and it is emphasised that “the concepts of text and genre should be broadly interpreted in English” (p. 103). As Goodwyn (2016, p. 16) writes: “The inclusion of cultural analysis can be interpreted as essentially a recognition of an emerging multimedia and technology saturated society that could not be ignored”. As noted, he explicitly links the post-Dartmouth formulation of ‘personal growth’ with ‘cultural analysis’, although the linkage is insufficiently developed. The focus is on ‘experience’ – that is, children’s experience – and this is important, and appropriate, but there is little acknowledgement of power and pleasure, which are more properly associated with the project of Cultural Studies, separately and together. These were two of a range of problems which early critics of Cox and the National Curriculum pointed out (e.g., Jones, 1992; Richards, 1992) and which form part of the more general educational dissatisfaction with what was proposed. They are unpacked in more detail below. However, the ideological and political landscape of the twenty-five years after the 1988 National Curriculum were perhaps even more significant for the way that Cultural Studies was, and was not, able to shape subject English.

For commentators like Ken Jones and Chris Richards, both writing in the years immediately following the Cox Report, the problems with the new English curriculum could be summed up in two ways. Firstly, for Jones (1992), it did not reflect the explosion in the creative industries which was contemporaneous with the work on curriculum reform – effectively, maintaining literature as the dominant form of communication in English struck Jones as deeply anachronistic (Jones, 1992, p. 22). For Richards (1992), the problem was more student-centred: Cox’s curriculum did not acknowledge the prevailing class differences that were often present in the reception and analysis of all kinds of texts in classroom English. For

¹⁰ All this further indicates, moreover, the need to be sensitive to national-cultural differences in discussions such as the present one.

¹¹ It needs to be noted here that this applied to England and Wales, and not to the United Kingdom more generally – something which has been maintained since then.

him, the strength of CA models of English was that they involved the teacher's complete submission to the pupil's view of the text in order to understand what he calls the "disjunction" (Richards, 1992, p. 82) between teacher and pupil. This view is worth noting here, as it is in complete opposition to influential views of English teaching which have since come to the fore in England's schools (Sehgal-Cuthbert, 2021; Gibb, 2017), wherein the teacher's knowledge of a text is the only one that matters.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, such views did not see wide acceptance amongst politicians and policymakers in the years following 1992, as the tug of war between 'cultural heritage' and 'cultural analysis' continued¹². However, as time progressed, and a change of government saw Tony Blair's 'New' Labour party come to power, certain elements of the CA model of English outlined in texts like *Cultural Studies Goes to School* gained a foothold in English classrooms. The advent of specific reading and writing assignments requiring a media focus meant that many students in GCSE English courses did engage in the kind of critical engagement with culture that Buckingham and Sefton-Green write about (1994, pp. 166-183). However, the kind of crossover between English and Media courses involved in making this work in the cultural-analytic way that they envisaged only happened in quite isolated locations and in particular scholastic or curricular environments (Connolly, 2013).

Later iterations of the Curriculum, under New Labour, did at least try to acknowledge that technology was changing cultural communication in the early 21st century. The 2007 programmes of study for English required that secondary school students "understand how meaning is created through the combination of words, images and sounds in multimodal text" (QCA, 2007). The use of 'multimodal' hints at the influence of scholars like Gunther Kress (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001), and recognition that digital technology was changing how young people became literate – and the concomitant effects of this on youth culture and beyond. It is important to acknowledge, as both Simon Gibbons (2017) and David Buckingham (2019) have done, that this was not some kind of halcyon period, in which media studies and cultural analysis were synonymous with English; but rather, that these changes to the Curriculum suited New Labour's wider policy objectives around pupil attainment and the de-regulation of the media industries. However, there was an emerging sense that CA had a legitimate role to play in the school English curriculum because of the need to acknowledge the fact that technology was revolutionising the cultural industries.

With the arrival of a new political administration in 2010, however, and the expressed intention of returning to more traditional ideas about schooling (DFE, 2010), even this partial acknowledgement of a place for cultural analysis was swept away. The desire to re-shape English into a subject that often looked more pre-20th century than 21st century (DFE, 2014; Yandell, 2016), given its privileging of 'cultural heritage' over 'cultural analysis', was accompanied by some very specific and very narrow views of the subject-area becoming increasingly influential amongst policymakers and politicians.¹³ Most notable among these was E. D. Hirsch (1987) and his ideas about "cultural literacy", which became the basis for a 'knowledge-rich' curriculum with little time or space for either youth cultures or popular culture. These ideas, accompanied by a view of learning defined solely in terms drawn from cognitive science (Sweller et al., 2011), along with the neo-Arnoldian view of cultural capital mentioned above, meant that the vision for subject English expressed in *Cultural Studies*

¹² Again, for a more detailed account of this period, see Connolly (2021a [Ch4]).

¹³ These influences are discussed in more detail elsewhere (see Connolly, 2021b).

Goes to School had become all but impossible to realise. By and large, this remains the case today.

Cultural Studies, English Teaching, Australian Curriculum

What about Australia? As we have noted already, the installation of a national curriculum happened much later in Australia, coming into effect in 2011, more than twenty years later than in England and Wales. A common feature however was the increasing significance of neoliberalism as a governing frame of reference, whereby education was reshaped in accordance with new imperatives of economic rationality and regulative accountability, within a now overarching globalised perspective. The Australian Curriculum was, and is, a different beast from that of England (and Wales), however. It is less prescriptive, and less punitive, and it also allows for an explicit and expanded sense of cultural diversity, although still insistently monolingual (Reid & Price [Eds.], 2018). This has immediate implications and challenges for subject English and English teaching. One of these is the tension between the school-subject ('English') and the English language, and the way in which nation (and national identity) is being re-negotiated in a changing world, and a new and increasingly volatile geo-political order.¹⁴ Australia is described as "a linguistically and culturally diverse country, with participation in many aspects of Australian life dependent on communication in Standard Australian English", something which is also "invaluable globally" (ACARA, 2016, p. 2). Notwithstanding cultural and linguistic diversity, then, 'English' is still Australia's national official language. This raises the issue of whether or not subject English can be reinvented as a 'multilingual' subject, and if so, how might difference and heteroglossia be properly acknowledged and accommodated, foregrounding politics. There is certainly much opportunity here to develop a rich multi-cultural studies emphasis in English teaching and beyond.

Furthermore, an expanded textual repertoire is endorsed in the Australian Curriculum, "embracing classic and contemporary world literature", and explicitly referencing in this context Australian literature, "including the oral narrative traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander [p]eople as well as the contemporary literature of these two cultural groups". Further reference is also made to "texts from and about Asia" (ACARA, 2016, p. 5). Moreover, texts are to be drawn from across the spectrum, from print to digital-electronics ("written, spoken, visual, multimodal and in print or digital/online forms"). This is consistent with the increasing engagement of subject English with media, on the one hand, and information technology, on the other, supplementing its historical commitment to (print-based) literary culture. This is usefully described as techno-cultural studies. Yet there is also continuing investment on the part of mainstream Australian English teaching in the *literary*, although arguably influenced more now by Cultural Studies, especially as that is normalised, than by literary study *per se*. An important aspect of this is a greater acceptance of interdisciplinarity, with sociology and history both increasingly seen as resources and reference-points. There is still considerable interest in the aesthetic, however, with Ray Misson and Wendy Morgan's important book *Critical Literacy and the Aesthetic* (2006) explicitly pointing to the links between English teaching, 'critical literacy' and Cultural Studies, and actively embracing popular media culture alongside so-called 'high' culture. All this suggests the need to distinguish between the Australian Curriculum, as policy context, and curriculum and schooling more generally in Australia, as applied to subject English. English teachers continue to build on history and recent developments in the field at the same

¹⁴ This is partly recognised elsewhere in the Australian Curriculum's Cross-Curriculum Priorities, making explicit reference to Asia and to Australian indigenous cultures and histories (and also to 'sustainability').

time as they accept the now established national curriculum as a significant reference-point. Alongside this, there has been some official as well as professional endorsement of cultural studies perspectives in Australian English teaching over the past two decades (Peel, 1998; Sawyer, 2007; Macken-Horarik, 2014), although not without debate (Green, 2003, 2018).¹⁵

Again, a number of problems can be identified. One is certainly to do with *institutionalisation*, an issue that Turner (2012) acknowledges for Cultural Studies more generally. This can be seen as a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it is a register of acceptance and consolidation, while on the other it involves working within institutional(ised) boundaries and constraints. Green (2018) provides an account of what this has involved for Senior English, with reference specifically to high-stakes final examinations and hence the formal interface between schooling and the university. A further problem is the relatively recent focus on ‘texts’ and textuality as the putative centre of a reconceptualised English teaching. While in many ways a strategic and significant gain, it is by no means wholly positive. This is because, as the Canadian scholar Robert Morgan (1996) has argued, the turn to texts is still located *within* the discourse of English teaching, and indicates how much more complicated the relationship between English teaching and media education is than sometimes appreciated. “Why ... has English been so hospitable to Media Education”, he asks, “if it is not precisely because it has turned everything into texts?” (p. 18).¹⁶ This is to work against “the [processual] nature of media experience” (p. 15): “Messy everyday media flows are turned into manageable ‘media texts’ for pastoral recycling” (p. 18), via textual analysis and critique. So while there is indeed an expansion in terms of study-objects when media is drawn into English teaching, this may be at the expense of media culture as lived experience. Is Harry Potter to be understood as ‘text’ or ‘context’,¹⁷ or as the interplay between the two? How is each of the terms to be understood?¹⁸ At this point, it is worth asking why ‘media’ and ‘popular culture’ have figured increasingly in the English curriculum and not ‘everyday life’. Could it be that everyday life is less amenable to textualisation, and perhaps more conducive to ethnographic exploration and engagement?¹⁹ – something that English teachers may be less inclined to take on board, perhaps understandably. This tension between textual analysis and ethnography is of course important in Cultural Studies itself, considered methodologically as well as historically.

¹⁵ Sawyer (2007) points to the 2000 senior secondary English Syllabus in New South Wales as an important register of English curriculum change in this regard, stating that “it was this Syllabus which helped broaden the model of English to include cultural studies with an accompanying critical literacy pedagogy, while still retaining the traditional emphasis on close textual study” (p. 77).

¹⁶ As Buckingham and Sefton-Sefton-Green (1994) similarly concluded, regarding media education: “It will need to move beyond its traditional focus on texts and pay closer attention to the ways in which texts are socially circulated and used”. They continued thus: “In this context, the specialist study of particular *media* will need to be located within the broader studies of cultural processes: Media Studies (like English) will need to become part of a broader discipline, one which might be called *Cultural Studies*” (p. 215).

¹⁷ Or perhaps as ‘intertext’...

¹⁸ It is worth noting here the early CCCS position on literary studies: “while drawing on the analysis of texts, [it] breaks with the literary-critical tradition of a too text-bound practice, as well as with the text-context framework of the so-called ‘sociology of literature’, and relocates both in the analysis of literary formations and in literature as an institutional practice” (Baron et al., 1980/2005, p. viii).

¹⁹ As ‘field-work’, for instance – although it is worth recalling the pedagogical significance of excursions and the like in work such as *Reflections*, often seen as evincing an early form of cultural studies in English teaching. On *Reflections*, a celebrated English coursebook, see Gibbons (2019, pp. 21-22).

Conclusion

Cultural Studies has had a productive influence on English teaching, across the Anglophone countries. Yet this still needs to be seen as “at best, a qualified success” (Green, 2018, p. 13), and as “a legacy that has been unevenly taken up in high school and college classrooms in the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, and elsewhere” (Misson & Morgan, 2006, p. 12). Clearly, there have been losses as well as gains. At the outset, we posed several questions about the legacy of Cultural Studies and its ongoing relationship with subject English. What has been lost and what remains in the English curriculum, and what might be renewed? The preceding discussion has highlighted that while the last three decades or so have seen some small victories for those who see the relationship between subject English, media, and culture as symbiotic and interdependent (Burn & Connolly, 2020), there has also been some frustration at the way that English teaching returned to both the ‘traditional’, in England, and the ‘textual’, in Australia. In each case, the question of ‘media’ (itself mutating) and its associated cultures and constituencies looms large. A measure of possibility opens up, more generally, with the prospect of bringing together in English curriculum discourse so-called ‘Personal Growth’ and ‘Cultural Analysis’ perspectives, perhaps via a renewed, reconstructed sense of (post-humanist?) agency. Broadly, there does indeed seem to have been a shift to Cultural Studies as the governing frame for school-based English teaching, although the nature and extent of this remains contested and somewhat problematical. The ongoing challenge lies partly in negotiating the problems and promises of institutionalisation, including those associated with current regimes of assessment and examination – something that may well need to be differently managed, in and for different jurisdictions and circumstances. But it also involves revisiting and reclaiming important historical resources, and this certainly *includes* the interdisciplinary, praxis-oriented project of Cultural Studies. In this regard, rethinking the ever-evolving relationship between English teaching and media education is clearly central.

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