Engaging with Educational Space

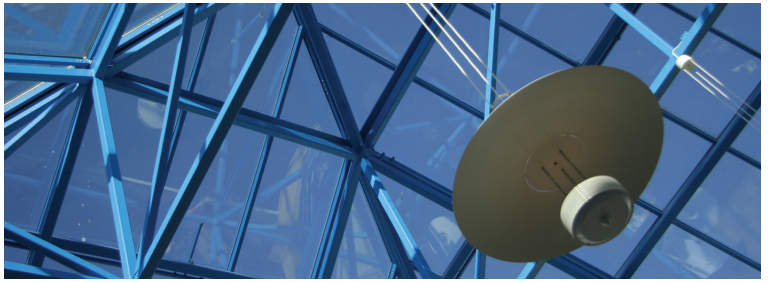
This book weaves together two central dimensions of contemporary educational research, namely the attention to school spaces and the use of visual sources. Its sixteen brief case studies deal with both contemporary and historical settings, topics including teachers' perception of educational change, their working places and daily tasks, the interlacing of social, spatial and knowledge differentiation in schools, discrepancies between students' and teachers' ways of visualizing school life, commercial representations of the school environment and the spatial fluidity between indoor and outdoor. The ongoing technology shift and its impact on schooling is an undercurrent running through the entire volume.

The authors – the majority of whom are practicing teachers – are Ulrika Boström, Maria Deldén, Carl Emanuelsson, Catharina Hultkrantz, Aleksandra Indzic Dujso, Cecilia Johansson, Kristina Ledman, Synne Myreböe, Lena Almqvist Nielsen, Peter Norlander, Annie Olsson, Karin Sandberg, Lina Spjut, Robert Thorp, Åsa Wendin and Andreas Westerberg. The book is edited and introduced by Catherine Burke, Ian Grosvenor and Björn Norlin.

Engaging with Educational Space is suitable to both academic courses focusing on methodological issues associated with the study of school spaces and to the use of visual sources in educational research, and for the in-service training of teachers and other individuals involved in education.

Engaging with Educational Space: Visualizing Spaces of Teaching and Learning

Burke/Grosvenor/Norlin (eds.)



Engaging with Educational Space

Visualizing Spaces of Teaching and Learning

Eds.

Catherine Burke, Ian Grosvenor and Björn Norlin

Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies
Umeå 2014

Engaging with Educational Space

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Preface

The present volume contains sixteen case studies stemming from a postgraduate course in educational history called "Engaging with Educational Space: Histories of the School Classroom," which was held at Umeå University in the autumn of 2012. The module was arranged within the framework of Historical Media: Postgraduate School in History Education and taught by two of the books' editors, Doctor Catherine Burke (University of Cambridge) and Professor Ian Grosvenor (University of Birmingham).[1] During the course the students – a vast majority of them working part-time as teachers parallel to their postgraduate studies – were asked to undertake an explorative assignment, investigating the value of visual source material as means for understanding aspects of educational environments both past and present. The visual data for the studies was produced by the participants themselves by doing their own documentation of selected features of their work places, by collecting data from local school or public archives, or by involving designated teachers and pupils in visually recording school settings.

The result, after being duly processed to meet the demands of scholarly enquiry, is a set of particularly interesting scenarios collected from elementary and secondary schools all across Sweden. The cases address a range of topics connected to specific aspects of local school environments, while embedding general implications both for the understanding of educative spaces as such, and for raising the awareness of the significance of visual means in untangling these spaces. They also stand as documentation of the numerous, intertwined processes of change occurring in Swedish schools at the time of the assignment.

1 Historical Media: Postgraduate School in History Education was managed by Umeå University and Dalarna University between 2011 and 2014. From various perspectives, fifteen history teachers carried out research on media used in the teaching and learning of history. Funded by the Committee for Educational Sciences of the Swedish Research Council, this postgraduate school was part of the Swedish government's investment in the continuing education of teachers. This book has been published with financial support from the same agencies.

It is the editors' belief that this book is suitable to both academic courses focusing on methodological issues associated with the study of school spaces and the use of visual sources in educational research, and for the in-service training of teachers and other individuals involved in education. In the latter instance, it can function as a generator of reflection and discussion on the significance and meaning of teaching and learning spaces, on the conditions in which teachers and pupils work, on currents of educational change and its impact on the educational environment.

Finally, the editors want to acknowledge Doctor Stephen Fruitman for proofreading as well as giving valuable comments on the manuscript.

Umeå, December 2014

Björn Norlin (on behalf of the editors)

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Figure 1. *Shifting away: Recess at an upper secondary school in Västerås.*
Photo: José Blanco-Martin (2012).

Entwining Visuality and Spatiality in Educational Research

Catherine Burke, Ian Grosvenor and Björn Norlin

Knowledge how time-bound ideas about education, childhood and youth have helped to shape and reshape physical and social environments for teaching and learning is essential for our understanding of schooling as a societal phenomenon. Something similar can be said about knowledge regarding the visual culture of schooling and about how visual representations of past and present school life can be used as sources for exploring and understanding these same educational environments. Especially today, when advancing commercial interests and accelerating technological innovation in education engender changes both in the construction and reconstruction of school buildings

and in thinking about how to create favourable learning conditions for children and teens, such knowledge is indispensable.

In particular, the ongoing introduction of new information and communication technologies in schools – in the pedagogical practice of the classroom as well as in the extracurricular day-to-day activities of teachers and pupils – seems to have a marked impact on the educational sphere, not only transforming customary working routines along with traditional classroom teaching and learning methods, but also providing new means for a renegotiation of the spatial and temporal conditions of school life itself. The entry of the new media in schools – smartphones, computers, cameras, a variety of school-related Internet fora, etc. – is also, it seems, altering the visual culture of schooling and the ways and means of visually representing life at school.

The present volume links together these central dimensions in contemporary educational research, namely the concern for planned, physical and social dimensions as regards to environments of schooling, as well as the use of visual sources and representations, in an attempt to understand them. Uniquely, the book presents visual knowledge of school from the point of view of practicing teachers who so often are too deeply engrossed in their work to see the evolution of their overly familiar surroundings.

From this starting point, sixteen case studies introduce the reader to and investigate a wide range of topics, including teachers' representations of educational change, their work places and daily tasks, the interlacement of social, spatial and knowledge differentiation in schools, discrepancies between students' and teachers' ways of visualizing school life, the school environment and learning situations from the pupil's emotional and sensory perspective, commercial representations of schooling, pupils' reflections on the advent of new technology in the classroom, the spatial fluidity between indoor, outdoor and in-between educative spaces, and so on. An undercurrent running through the book is the ongoing technology shift and its impact on the media landscape of schooling. Each study is presented in brief, freestanding chapters.

For scholars in the field of educational research, the present volume provides an opportunity to reflect on the follo-

wing questions: How can practicing teachers/teacher educators better join forces with scholars and become part of a research network exploring historical and contemporary dimensions of educational space across Europe? What are the barriers and what are the potential channels of opportunity? Finally, the case studies allow us to recognize the value of supporting teachers in becoming more spacious in their thinking and more visual in practice.

Authors and Contents

Ulrika Boström is an upper secondary school teacher of History and Swedish, at Midsommarkransens gymnasium in Stockholm. Her chapter, "Seeing is Knowing, or The Creation of a New Real," examines the subjectivity of the visual as a source for common knowledge. Her aim is to discover what kind of knowledge is perceivable in visual form and the meta-reflexive notion of what knowledge looks like.

Maria Deldén is an upper secondary school teacher of History, Swedish and Spanish. She is also a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies, Umeå University. In her chapter, "The Teacher and Educational Spaces: The Photograph as a Tool for Teacher Reflection," she addresses how teachers think and feel about the spaces of everyday school activity using photographs as memory triggers and tools for reflection.

Aleksandra Indzic Dujso is an upper secondary school teacher of History and Social Science at Brinellskolan in Fagersta. In her chapter, "Rebuild and Remodel: An Example of Cooperation between Teachers and Architects," she examines an example of cooperation between educators and architects in the refurbishing of a school, based on blueprint proposals and minutes of meetings.

Carl Emanuelsson is a lower secondary school teacher of History and Social Science in Nacka. In his chapter, "Space and Photographs: How to Use Photography as an Evaluator in School," he describes how students can use photos to contribute new knowledge to school evaluation.

Catharina Hultkrantz is an upper secondary school teacher of History, Swedish and Art at Gymnasieskolan Knut Hahn in Ronneby. In her chapter, "Beneath the Great Dome: Photographs as Means in the Study of the Senses and Emotions of Day-to-Day School Life," she argues that visual studies and photographs can reveal interesting new aspects in the meaning of the senses to everyday school life.

Cecilia Johansson is a secondary school teacher of Swedish and Social Science at Helenelundsskolan in Sollentuna. In her chapter "The Dream of a Perfect Lunch: Helenelund School Canteen in 1968 and 2012," she illustrates how ideas about the organisation of space, control and food are made visible in a source material that consists of photographs.

Kristina Ledman is a Ph.D. candidate in History and Education at the Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies, Umeå University. In her Chapter "Lockers and Hangers: Defining Space and Interaction between Vocational and Academic Students," she analyses consistencies in the classification of spaces for vocational and academic students in a large upper secondary school unit over a period of nearly four decades.

Lena Almqvist Nielsen is a secondary school teacher at Ramnerödsskolan in Uddevalla. In her chapter, "School as Museum: Using Contemporary Archaeology to Understand Past School Environments," she elucidate hidden stories entangled in leftover objects in educational spaces.

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opens up for photography as an approach to the ”the cultivating of sensible perception” through thinking about our own perspectives of thought.

Peter Norlander is an upper secondary school teacher of History, Philosophy, Religious and Social studies at Umeå Internationella Gymnasium in Umeå. In his chapter, “Spaces and Places for School-Related Learning: Challenges to the Classroom,” he studies the way in which the “digital revolution” has changed the conditions of teaching and school-related learning. By using traditional text based methods and methods from the field of visual studies, he discusses the value of the visual and highlights the fact that schools, teachers and students need to discuss and decide strategies of how the classroom of today and tomorrow should be designed and used.

Annie Olsson is an upper secondary school teacher of Swedish and History at Östra gymnasiet in Huddinge. In her chapter “To Smile or Not to Smile: Differing Views of Educational Situations Compared,” she highlights differences between outsider an insider views when it comes to describing positive educational situations in upper secondary school.

Karin Sandberg is a Ph.D. candidate in History didactics at Mälardalens University. Between 2006 and 2014 she was an upper secondary teacher in Swedish and History at Carlforsska gymnasiet in Västerås. In her chapter, ”The Computerised Classroom: Didactic Tool or Distraction?,” former students respond to the digitalisation of the classroom. They believe that while computers can indeed be a source of distraction, they are also valuable educational aids.

Lina Spjut has been teaching History, Social Science, Geography, Religion, and Arts and Crafts for ten years at Carlshöjdsskolan, a compulsory and lower secondary school in Umeå. The essence of her chapter is to visualise the tasks of teachers and investigate whether the working spaces they are assigned are adequate for the proper performance of these tasks.

Robert Thorp is a Ph.D. candidate at Dalarna University and the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in Germany. He has worked as an upper secondary teacher of History, Philosophy, and English for ten years. In his chapter, "Contextualising and Representing School: To Contextualise a Contextualisation, or the Importance of the Historiographic Gaze," he highlights the need for contextualization and historiographical insight, while understanding how educational spaces are visually represented.

Åsa Wendin is an upper secondary teacher of History and Religion, currently working with younger children in upper primary school Alfredshällskolan in Bjärred. In her chapter, "'All kids are monkeys at heart': Nature as the Child's Natural Habitat in a Southern Swedish Outdoor Preschool," she highlights the importance of the outdoor environment as natural space in Swedish educational history.

Andreas Westerberg is an upper secondary school teacher of History, Religion and Political Science at Kaplanskolan in Skellefteå. In his chapter, "Leaving, Changing, Managing: Visions of a School on the Move," he highlights how interest in teachers' perceptions of the physical circumstances of a school can make visible deeper pedagogical and didactical notions of desirable future developments.

Editors

Catherine Burke is Reader in History of Childhood and Education at the University of Cambridge. She is presently engaged in studies on cultural and material aspects of educational contexts and of histories of childhood from the 19th century and up until the present. She has published a number of books and articles on this area.

Ian Grosvenor is a Professor of Urban Educational History at the University of Birmingham. He has published numerous studies on topics such as racism, education and identity, the material culture of schooling and the visual in educational research.

Björn Norlin is a Doctor in History and Researcher in History and Education at Umeå University. His research currently involves the study of space and materiality in pre-modern school contexts. Between 2012 and 2014 he was deputy director of the postgraduate school "Historical Media: Postgraduate School in History Education".

Lockers and Hangers: Defining Space and Interaction between Vocational and Academic Students

Kristina Ledman

Where is home in a large building in which you spend your days, week after week, year after year? Who do you interact with out of all these hundreds, even thousands of people, who like you spend their days as students, teachers, principals, school nurses, counsellors, food service or maintenance staff in a typical school? I decided to revisit the upper secondary school I attended from 1988 to 1991 and look at the processes of change of spaces that forwent and surpassed my own experience of being a student in the building. The overarching question I posed was how the spatial construction of the school allows for and limits interaction between students in vocational and academic education. This question was brought to three different time sets – the early 1970s, late 1980s and the present day. My everyday interaction with the school did not stop with graduation in 1991. Thirteen years later, in 2004, I returned for in-service training and after finishing my degree, I ended up working as a history and civics teacher for four years.

The school – Dragonskolan – is one of the largest contiguous upper secondary units in Sweden and is the everyday environment of nearly two thousand 16 to 19-year-olds attending tracks of great variety, e.g. programmes for training to become hairdresser, construction worker, welding operator, electrician, as well as academic tracks for the equivalence of A-levels in a wide variety of subjects such as chemistry, biology, math, English, history, and Swedish. The school and building that was substantially refurbished between 2008 and 2011 was planned for and built in connection with a reform unifying vocational education and training (VET) and academic tracks in the

Swedish upper secondary school in 1971, with VET organised in two-year long tracks and academic education as three-year long tracks.

Between first entering the school as a pupil and leaving to become a Ph.D. candidate in history and education, the school was rebuilt and transformed. The premises for vocational training were, and still are, situated in the northern part of the school. I experience very little interaction with the students in VET, who mostly spent their days in the areas in conjunction with the vocational education premises, when I attended an academic track at the school in the late 80s and early 90s. One of the motives behind refurbishing the school 2008 was to try to create smaller units within the school. The three units, called "houses", would include academic and vocational tracks as well as an equal representation of boys and girls.

In the process of the present study, I have explored three sets of data. First, the school plan from 1974 together with photographs found in a pamphlet presenting the new school. Secondly, my own memories of the experience of attending the school between 1988 and 1991. And finally, the school plan from 2008 together with a photograph of a locker. The locker has been kept to allow for the storage of sports equipment and is very similar, if not exactly the same, to the ones that were in the school in 1988 to 1991. The three sets of data provided the basis for the overarching question of how the spatial construction of the school allows for and limits interaction between pupils in vocational and preparatory education. Since the visual data only represent the distribution of different functions in the school (classrooms, corridors etc.), there are no ethical issues of privacy. I am no longer an employee of the municipality and the visit I made was in my role as a researcher and had been authorised by the principal, who also provided me with the pamphlet from 1974. The reliability and validity of the investigation in the use of my own experiences from school as a set of data is a more relevant matter that will be addressed below. The question concerning spatial obstacles and allowance for interaction between pupils in vocational and preparatory education is an interest evolved from an on-going project concerning general knowledge and history in the curriculum of upper secondary VET. Interest in reading the spaces of Dragonskolan from the

perspective of division/integration of VET and academic students was also generated by my own experience of school.

Considering the value of visual research has made me realise that through visual representation, we can access information about the past that is not visible in written text. The familiarity of school environments helps us interpret past experiences of schooling, at the same time as the unfamiliarity of the past can make us pay attention to details and ideas that become visible in the history of education, and this "seeing" can enhance the understanding of, and help us formulate questions concerning, contemporary education. The problems I have experienced in the process are linked to my own process of formulating the value of visual research. Faced with visual data, I found it hard to analyse the material, where to start, and to assess my interpretation and conclusion as valid. A set of questions about how to read images in educational research posed by Ian Grosvenor served as a point of departure and my "seeing" was enhanced in the weeks that followed.[1] Eventually, I experienced the process of inquiry as liberating and eye opening. It has also made me aware of how deceptive the conviction that texts are more interpretable than images can be. Photography, as text, "constitutes a site of production and representation, and […] a photograph must be read not as an image, but as a text, and as with any text it is open to a diversity of reading".[2]

Set of Data I: Images from 1974

The booklet from 1974 contains information on the background of the decision to build a large school unit that offered vocational as well as preparatory education, technical and construction data of the building, some of the ideas behind the organisation of the school, full page pictures of the exterior and interior of the school and schematics of each of the three

1 Ian Grosvenor, "Visualising Past Classrooms," in Ian Grosvenor, Martin Lawn and Kate Rousmaniere (eds.), *Silences & Images: The Social History of the Classroom* (New York 1999), 91–97.

2 Ian Grosvenor, Martin Lawn, Antóonio Nóovoa, Kate Rousmaniere and Harry Smaller, "Reading Educational Spaces: The Photographs of Paulo Catrica," *Pedagogica Historica: International Journal of the History of Education,* 40 (3), 2004, 318.

floors. In my reading, I closely studied the plan of the school and the location of different educational areas, as well as the location of administration, leisure areas, library and departments. The type of school built reveals the ideology of upper secondary schooling.[3] Interpreting what the school plan tells us about ideas and ideals of education at the time, words that come to mind are *large scale*, *centralised*, *functionalist*, *modern*, *optimism*, *expansionism*, and *mass education*.

Shop facilities are positioned in the north and more general classrooms in the south, as is the library. Administration, school health and counsellors are centralised in specific areas. The southern corridor (the cloakroom corridor) is equipped to provide the entire school population with hangers and lockers according to defined knowledge areas, e.g. general theoretical, general technical, etc. (Figure 1 and 2 on page 22/23). This finding, when contrasted to my memories, surprised me and made me realise the importance of the location of your locker for who you interact with in school.

Set of Data II: School Memories 1988–91

Reading the booklet from 1974 could be described as a photo elucidation process. It not only brought back memories of my own schooling, but also memories of the experience of *the school* I was trying to "read". On the one hand, one can claim that these memories only represent "a particular and individual knowledge".[4] On the other hand, not making use of my experience would have deprived me of a tool that served to direct attention to how the function of spaces had evolved from their original intention.

I attended the school between the fall of 1988 and spring of 1991. For three years, the building was my everyday life. That my body and my senses contained the memories of the space became clear to me when I returned to the school twelve

3 Thomas A. Markus, "Early Nineteenth Century School Space and Ideology," *Pedagogica Historica: International Journal of the History of Education,* 32 (1), 1996, 9-11; Catherine Burke and Ian Grosvenor, School (London 2008).

4 Catherine Burke, "*Hands-on-History: Towards a Critique of the 'Everyday'*," *History of Education: Journal of the History Education Society*, 30 (2), 2001, 201.

Figure 1. *1974 schematic of Dragonskolan: Ground floor.*
Source: "Dragonskolan i Umeå: Allmän gymnasieskola planerad och byggd åren 1964–1974," Umeå 1974.

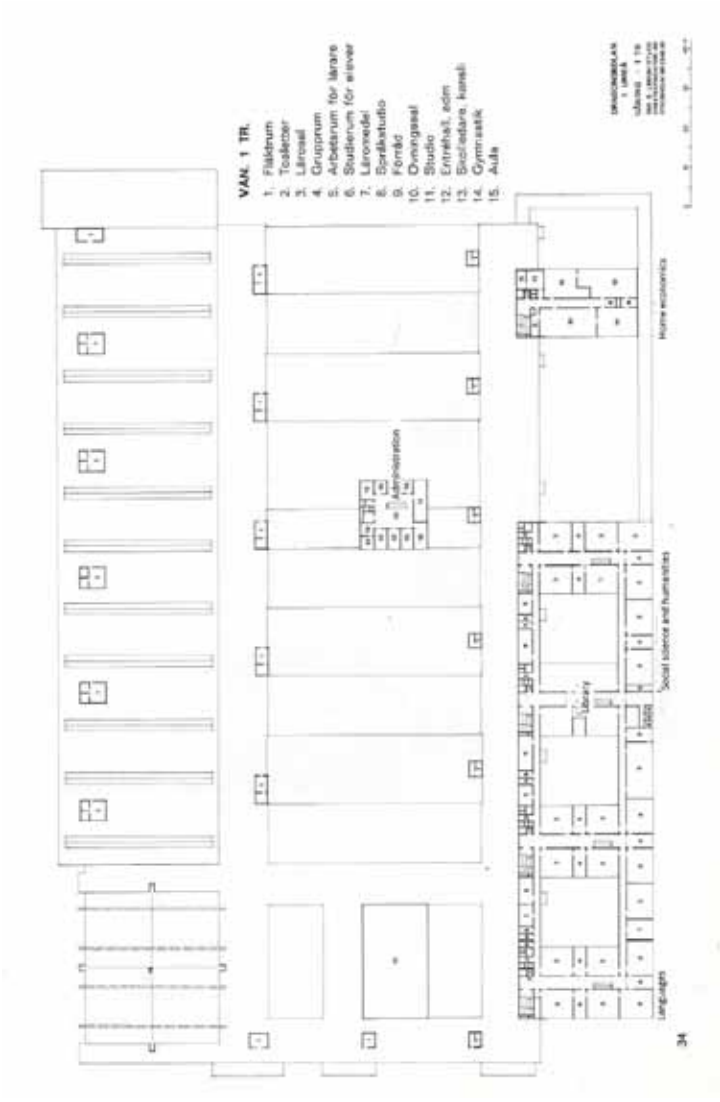

Figure 2. *1974 schematic of Dragonskolan: First floor.*
Source: "Dragonskolan i Umeå: Allmän gymnasieskola planerad och byggd åren 1964–1974," Umeå 1974.

years later for in-service training. Leaping the stairs, rushing along the corridors, cutting corners in a hurry were familiar and natural patterns of movement in the spaces of the school. Memories rose to the surface when viewing the original school blueprint. I found myself comparing and contrasting in my reading of the photographs in the pamphlet. I looked for the recognisable. Seeing the piece of art on the wall in the administrative corridor in black and white, I added the colours to the picture. I could hear the silence of the empty auditorium. I felt the hard stone floors of the cloakroom corridor. I looked for the unfamiliar and found unknown features. The lockers and hangers were different from the ones I remembered. The canteen was not the same, nor was the cafeteria, that had glass windows showing the outer corridor by 1988.

I attended an academic track and all my classes except physical education took place in the south section of the school. My friends and I had little or no excuse to enter the north side of the school. My memories of the northern part of the school and of the workshop corridor are memories of a poorly lit space – and very much a male-dominated environment – where I felt unfamiliar and uneasy.

The close reading of the original blueprint and the explanations of how the cloakroom corridor was designed to serve all the students in the school, and organised according to a classification of knowledge areas (Figure 1), rather than of vocational and theoretical knowledge, made me realise that the school had undergone a change by 1988. The original idea of the cloakroom had been transformed.

By 1988, the original lockers and hangers – seen in the background in Figure 3 – had been replaced by tall steel lockers – seen in Figure 4 – with room for books and clothes. I had my locker together with the rest of my class, which in turn had its lockers nearby the other first years in the same track.

Apart from the cloakroom corridor, there were lockers in the vertical corridors and part of the workshop corridor. In my memory, the lockers were distributed according to the geographical position of primary teaching localities. As a consequence, the vocational and academic students were neatly separated into different spaces. The practical reason for changing the initial idea might be the need to provide lockers spacious enough

Figure 3. *View of section of the cloak room corridor 1974.*
Source: "Dragonskolan i Umeå: Allmän gymnasieskola planerad och byggd åren 1964–1974," Umeå 1974.

for clothing, probably to prevent theft of the pupils' personal belongings. Larger lockers meant there was no room for all of them in one area. An additional plausible explanation is the inconvenience caused the vocational pupils, who needed to walk across the school to get to the workshops, and back again to access their lockers. Either way, the original idea for a central cloakroom corridor had been abandoned by 1988.

Figure 4. *Steel lockers similar to lockers in 1988/1991.*
Photo: Erik Forssell (2013).

Set of Data III: Contemporary Images

Tired and run-down, the Dragonskolan was substantially refurbished between 2008 and 2011. The idea was to reorganise the school into three sections, each a combination of programmes dominated by girls and boys, respectively, as well as a blend of academic and vocational programmes. The aim was to create a limited space were the pupils would feel at home. The lockers were located in spaces inside the sections, rather than in public corridors. One obstacle in the process of integration was the position of the shop facilities, which were too costly to be relocated. The new school makes visible new ideals concerning upper secondary schooling. The reorganisation of administration, teacher workplaces, school health and counsellors reveals a more "adolescent-centred" perception of education.[5]

5 This could partly be explained by the fact that non-compulsory 16 to 19–year-old education in practice is compulsory and there is a larger proportion of pupils that would rather do something else than continue attending upper secondary school. In 1976, 66 percent of the graduates from compulsory school continued directly to gymnasium, in the nineties the figure rose to 98 percent (Skolverket). The new structure of the school represents a different approach to making a home in the school for the adolescent. This is related to a changing perception of youngsters in the age group 16 to 19. They were to a larger extent viewed as adults in the early 70s, whereas today they are viewed as more in need of supportive socio-structures.

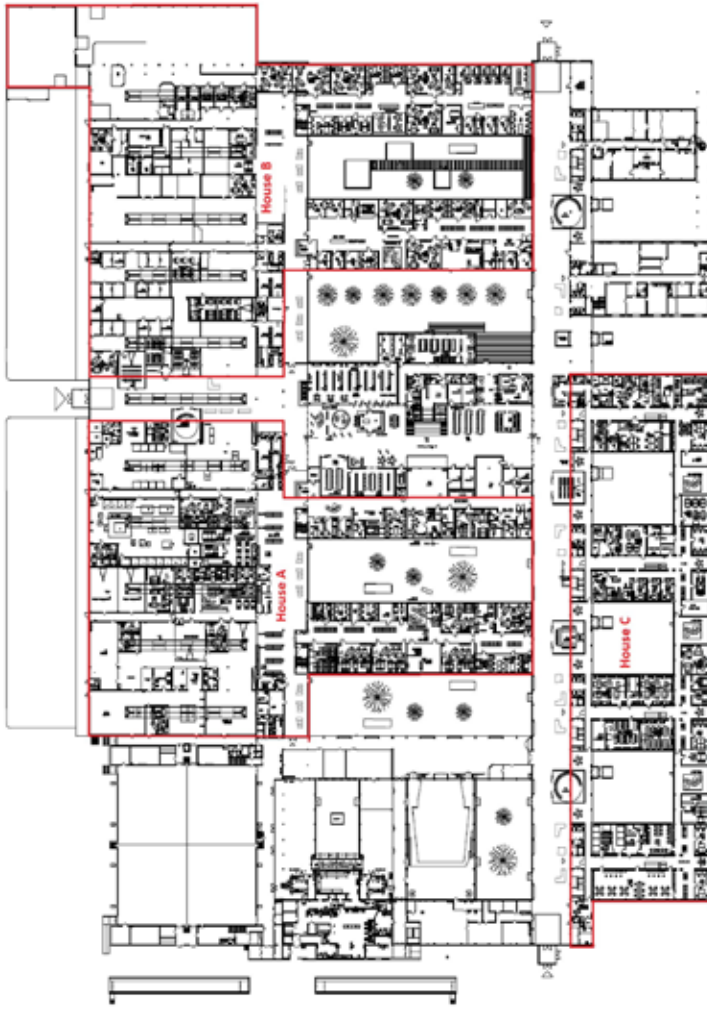

Figure 5. *School schematic 2008: Ground floor.*

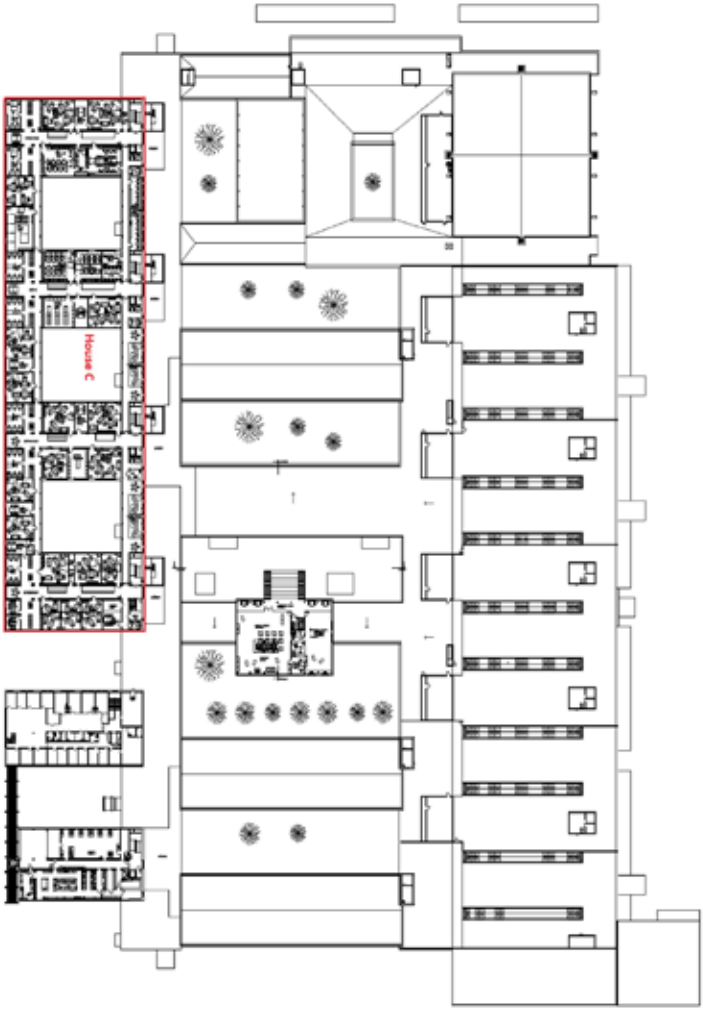

Figure 6. *School schematic 2008: First floor.*

Conclusion

The idea of integrating VET and academic tracks was present in the 1974 material as well as in the school schematic of today. In the original school, the very idea of vocational and academic education side by side in the same building, with shared facilities such as the cloakroom corridor, canteen, café, library, auditorium and sports hall, was an integrative act. In my memories from late the 1980s, integration was limited, despite common facilities. No VET students went to sit in the library, located on the first floor in the south part of the school. Most academic students chose the south entrance to the canteen. I was at unease whenever I walked the northern corridor. In the refurbishing of the school, integration of the student body was a priority, since division was seen as a problem. Here I have proposed the positioning of the lockers as a decisive variable for how students define their space in school and how different groups take on different spaces. The lockers are the private space of each pupil. In my years as a student, it was the place where I started my day, returned between classes to change books, where I hung out with friends during breaks, where my day ended and where I made plans for the rest of the evening. The lockers, in my memories, defined the space where I belonged in this vast building.

Leaving, Changing, Managing: Visions of a School on the Move

Andreas Westerberg

This chapter documents and analyses the feelings teachers have about ongoing developments at their school. Photographs taken in the fall of 2012 by seven teachers at Kaplanskolan, an upper secondary school in Skellefteå, serve as the starting point. The study also includes short interviews with each photographer.[6]

Kaplanskolan is currently undergoing a period of major change. At the time of the study, the teachers were aware that the school would likely be closed within three years and shift operations, roughly seventy teachers and 750 students, to two other schools, a plan that was finally confirmed by the municipal council in the spring of 2013. When challenged to consider and express themselves about the dramatic changes ahead, the author hoped to unravel how the teachers felt about the impact this process would have on their own work and where they thought the future would ultimately lead. Each teacher involved was tasked with taking photographs on school premises that directly or indirectly represented their respective responses to following questions:

- What should the teachers leave behind when they begin work at their next school?
- What should the teachers bring with them to their new workplace?

6 The study includes the following interviews and photographs: Informant A, interview 2012-10-25; informant B, interview 2012-10-26 (Figure 5); informant C, interview 2012-10-30; informant D, interview 2012-10-31 (Figure 1); informant E, interview 2012-10-31 (Figure 4); informant F, interview 2012-11-09 (Figure 2) and informant G, interview 2012-10-25 (Figure 3).

The Value of the Visual

The question of whether there is any specific point in using visual material to document and analyse change in the manner undertaken herein has several answers. First of all, it is a straightforward method of documentation – photography is "information intensive." A picture is taken in a moment, but can be discussed and interpreted for hours. This can also be a weakness in the material. It is wide open to interpretation and there is no guarantee that you will see the same thing the photographer did. Secondly, the material is used as a memory trigger. In the short interviews, the informants used the pictures to formulate what they wanted to say. The interviewer can also ask questions about what he sees and find out whether this is relevant from the point of view of the informant. This makes the pictures a research tool. Thirdly, the pictures are a form of presentation. The whole study included fifty-eight pictures, five of which are featured in this paper. Others are mentioned in the text, but all of them are included in the analysis. To make an intelligible presentation of this corpus, the picture act as enlightening examples of what is typical or particularly interesting in the material.

Figure 1. *The language studio*.
Photo: Informant D (2012).

In Figure 1, you see the language studio at Kaplanskolan. What do you find in this picture? Sparse furnishing? Discipline? Structured test situations? The photographer was thinking about how technological equipment can help the students overcome their shyness in speaking a new language.[7] This in turn begs an intriguing question. Is a true or correct interpretation of a photograph possible? Does Figure 1 represent what I see, what the photographer intended, or something else altogether?

Of course we can believe the photographer. The teacher wants to make functioning technology available to support the learning experience, no matter the disciplinary stance of the picture. On the other hand, one could argue that the structured arrangement of this classroom signals values that are present though not actively supported by the teacher. One critical interpretation of Figure 1 might be that teachers are willing to ignore ideas about discipline and order that nevertheless are in certain situations necessary to achieving their classroom goals.

This analysis of Figure 1 proves that photographs could serve as source material. To an ethnographer or a historian, source material is there to be interpreted. In the article "On Visualising Past Classrooms," Ian Grosvenor presents some fundamental elements in interpreting pictures. First of all, you should bear in mind that photos are constructions and not objective representations of reality. Secondly, when the picture is taken out of its context, much information is lost. You cannot see what happened just before or right after the snapshot. It is a frozen sliver of time, and you cannot see which conditions are persistent and which are not. Finally, interpretation depends on theoretical models. You need a theory in order to make an analysis. Grosvenor concludes that this means that a picture could have value to historical or ethnographic research, but not in any unproblematic sense. Like any source material, it has to be analysed and criticised.[8]

In this essay, the pictures are interpreted in two ways, in comparison with the interviews, making the material classifiable according to theme, and in discussing the emergent themes in accordance with relevant research.

7 Informant D, interview 2012-10-31.

8 Grosvenor (1999), 86–88.

Ethics

Using visual material from a school environment in research calls for certain ethical considerations, starting with the content. No individual identities should be recognisable in the photos. One could argue that a school is the kind of space where there is no harm done if associated with research. But since the material is collected in order to represent values and ideals, bringing individuals into the pictures risks associating them with the valuation. To be frank, it cannot be helped if this happens regardless, when a picture shows a place or an artefact powerfully associated with a specific person in the local context.

The material is presented in a contextualised manner, without personal references. This means that the picture is presented within the context of local school practice, as articulated by the informants and scientific literature. This means that the focus is on what is universal and theoretically interesting, not the personal and particular. It also means that all individual information on the informants is removed from the presentation.

Finally, the material is collected in a structured manner and under informed consent. It is made clear before the beginning of the survey how the material will be used, what the purpose of the use is and that confidentiality and anonymity will be respected.

Results: Artefacts Representing Attitudes

> Technology in education appears as an artefact and a discourse around it. Cuisenaire rods are simple marked pieces of wood but the discourse which surrounds them, and organizes their use, places them within the category of a `mathematical learning tool'.[9]

Most of the pictures in this study are fully intelligible in their own right. They show doors, rooms, stuffed birds or musical instruments. But their concrete content does not really reflect the intention of the photographers. The vast majority of pictures taken represent something else or something more than what is shown. The quote above by Martin Lawn and Gros-

9 Martin Lawn and Ian Grosvenor, *Materialities of Schooling: Design, Technology, Objects, Routines* (Oxford 2005), 8.

venor stands as a diagnostic mirror of these pictures. When it comes to technology, they say that the surrounding discourse organises their use. The pictures from Kaplanskolan widen that statement to including inventory, too.

Figure 2. *The glass door cupboards.*
Photo: Informant F (2012).

In Figure 2, you can see a long row of cupboards with glass doors. The photographer has taken this picture as *an example of what to leave behind*. The glass door cupboard could be a way of displaying important material in a safe manner. But the photographer denies that interpretation by saying that this is a picture of seeing but not touching. The photographer also says:

> Our school is filled with stuff. Old, odd or just misplaced stuff. This often gives an impression of school living in the past. I want us to leave this behind. We shouldn't keep things on shelves and in cupboards that just stand there.[10]

10 Informant F, interview 2012-11-09.

Teacher-Centric Practice Dreams

Debate on how schools should be organised and where schooling should lead to includes numerous, disparate perspectives. If you isolate just one, school turns out to be something very different than if you maintain a multi-perspective approach. This becomes clear when reading *The School I'd Like* by Catherine Burke and Ian Grosvenor.[11] Here, for example, the reader becomes familiar with many child- and pupil-centric ideals. Asked what he wanted his school to be like, nine-year-old Joe from Clacton-on-Sea answered:

> I would like my school to be a giant toblerone shape building with two huge 5 storey cylinders stuck to it…The classrooms will be circular (so there won't be a naughty corner!) with desks that sit next to each other…There will be hundreds and thousands of books on the wooden bookcase. There will be two doors, one leading to the playground.[12]

Figure 3. *The good office.*
Photo: Informant G (2012).

When teachers photograph their school, a similar phenomenon occurs. Their pictures show what the teachers hope will be a

11 Catherine Burke and Ian Grosvenor, *The School I'd Like: Children and Young People's Reflections on an Education for the 21st Century* (London 2003).

12 Ibid., 23.

future narrative, in which their workroom becomes their home base, from which they can sit at a common table to meet colleagues, then shift to library, pupils at work in halls and corridors, and the world outside the school. In Figure 3, informant G points out that it is the atmosphere among colleagues that makes this a good office. The room in itself could be designed in a more adequate manner, but its role as social and practical anchor is distinct.[13] It is interesting to see that this school narrative ignores elements like classrooms, tests and lectures, motifs that from the students' point of view lie in the hands of the teacher.

Certain critical perspectives surface in this teacher-centric view of school. Structural defects of the organisation, like unrealistic scheduling, inadequate booking systems and lack of technical equipment are mentioned. Another critique concerns teachers' professionalism. On one hand, school management is criticised for not listening to arguments and ideas from the professionals. On the other, one of the informants aims criticism at the teachers. This informant sheds light on cracks in the professional face of collegial discourse. The relaxed atmosphere round the coffee or lunch table engenders the risk of personalising professional matters.

Basic Conditions of Pedagogical Work

Figure 4 shows a door with a code lock. The photographer says that:

> [each] class has a key code to their classroom, making it possible to use the classroom whenever they want. The intention of this system is good, but the practice is bad and should be abandoned. Classrooms have turned into cafeterias or computer gaming halls.[14]

Figure 4. *Code locked door.* Photo: Informant E (2012).

This system of home classrooms touches on some inner features of schooling. As mentioned above, when the teachers at this school present what they

13 Informant G, interview 2012-10-25.

14 Informant E, interview 2012-10-31.

would like, they fail to mention the classrooms. While we cannot determine why, one reason may be that teachers cannot dispose of the classrooms on their own. They tend to be either in the hands of the pupils or in a diffuse no man's land.

An architectural perspective can add some constructive input. In their article, "An Architectural View of the Classroom," Alexander Koutamatis and Yolanda Majewski-Steijns introduce the term *spatial affordance* to discuss some basic conditions of pedagogical work.[15] They indicate that every space has its implicit potential. If a classroom is intended for instruction, it is easily designed and furnished to serve that purpose. The problem arises when adding new functions to a space. If a classroom is intended for individual study, instruction and leisure, the question arises as to which purpose should inform its design. Since the spatial affordance of an empty square room is immense, the teacher must make a greater effort in communicating the intention of a specific lesson to his or her students. Koutamatis and Majewskij-Steijn are not attempting to preserve traditional classroom environments, but rather emphasise the necessity to make practical adjustments with open eyes and take questions of spatial affordance seriously.

The informants in the study clearly show an appreciation of spaces and places with well-defined uses. While not desiring places with very specific affordances, they surely appreciate places like the library and the school cafeteria, where the users all agree that some activities are appropriate and others are not. In the case of the classrooms, they can be understood as constructed with an overload of purpose and diffuse distribution of power. The rectangular shape of the classroom signals instruction and the windows to the corridor say that it is reasonable to shift focus from time to time. Contemporary ideas on pedagogy emphasise dialogue and individual study, and code locks on doors implies both that this could be an exclusive place for those who intend to learn, but also a place governed by any student for any reason.

15 Alexander Koutamatis and Yolanda Majewskii-Steijns, "An Architectural View of the Classroom," in Sjaak Braster, Ian Grosvenor and Maria del Mar del Pozo Andrés (eds.), *The Black Box of Schooling: A Cultural History of the Classroom* (Brussels 2011), 215.

Figure 5. *Worn-down classroom.*
Photo: Informant B (2012).

Topologies of Place and Teaching

> Sure you can say that this is a completely casual approach… Why do we teach in such a way that some students choose to sit at the back and destroy, in order to endure? …A school that neglects its premises in this way tells its students: -We don't care! Your work is not important to us…[16]

This comment on Figure 5 from informant B emphasises why some places and spaces are used in a particular way. Many informants have taken pictures of littering, traces of vandalism or just worn-down environments. What informant B says is that there is a connection between how spaces and places are valued and how the *activities* performed in these environments are valued. B also implies that both insiders and outsiders create and are affected by these values.

This reasoning can be related to Jane McGregor's reflections on *place topologies*.[17] Her article focuses on teachers' workplaces, but the same analytical model could be used for studying other connections between the social and the mate-

16 Informant B, interview 2012-10-26.

17 Jane McGregor, "Making Spaces: Teacher Workplace Topologies," *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 11 (3), 2003, 353–377.

rial. McGregor suggests that we should regard places and spaces in school as procedural entities that become what they are through continuous, ongoing practice. For her, places are space-time processes, not enclosed geographical units.[18]

One possible interpretation of the photos in this survey is that the informants want to show topologies that function in a constructive manner and ignore those that do not. Two clear examples are several photos of casual but adequate group-study environments in the library, and the unofficial smoking zone, to which students flock on a daily basis, even though it is forbidden to smoke on the school premises. None of these places "work" in their own right. What matters is that their function persists.

Conclusion

The purpose of this essay has been to give an idea of the direction in which teachers at Kaplanskolan hope the prevalent process of change will lead. We can conclude that the answer goes back to the school as workplace. They want the school to be designed as a workplace, which while fulfilling the needs of the students supports the teachers' ability to properly carry out their work. The term *place topology* is used to describe the kind of place teachers like to work in with their students. In these places, architecture, furnishings and practice together define what is proper behaviour and relevant work. The teachers want to bring places that work in a constructive manner like that with them to their next school. On the other hand, the classroom is a problem. It is not that teachers do not want classrooms in the future, but they want to have a greater influence on why, how and when classrooms should be used. This is an example of how basic pedagogical issues form a fundamental condition of how teachers reason about what should be included and what should be left behind.

The teachers are not exclusively teaching-oriented in their thoughts. The study shows how teachers appreciate the school as a workplace. Many photos and interviews reveal both positive and negative thoughts on the present environment. Much of what is raised is connected to colleagues' behaviour toward

18 Ibid., 368–370.

each other. Friendship, collegiality and professional collaboration should be preserved in the future, too. What should be left behind is coffee break gossip about individual students.

The material in this study is very concrete. One might have thought that the task would lead to detailed wish lists about what ought to be taken to the next school and what should be abandoned. This did not happen. The pictures are very distinct, but the photographers' own comments indicate that they stand for something more than what they show. In this way, it was very useful to start with visual material in this investigation. The approach links the bookshelves in the hallway to the teachers' thoughts on teaching and learning. Finally, we note that our initial expectations were indeed confirmed. The teachers' ideas about how the school should develop were evident in this work. When they were challenged to think about what should be preserved and what should be left behind, they also indicated the direction they hoped the future would take.

An Adequate Workplace: Visualizing the Daily Tasks of Teaching

Lina Spjut

The aim of this chapter is to visualise the tasks of teachers and investigate whether the working spaces they are given are adequate for the proper performance of these tasks. Approximately 450 pupils aged six to sixteen attend the school under study. The workweek is 45.5 hours long, thirty-five of which are scheduled in school classes and while the remaining 10.5 are planned and carried out in optional locations. A discussion to reduce the hours to forty, all scheduled, has been initiated by the local board of education, and some schools have already started effected this change. Questions can therefore also be raised about if there is something that has to change in teachers' tasks and working space if 40 school-scheduled hours a week becomes reality. Teachers are in general against this change, claiming that they will not be able to get their work done in 40 hours, unless they are relieved of certain tasks.

Teachers today have many workplaces. In a study by Jane McGregor, teachers were asked to take pictures of their workplaces. The photos showed for example desks, homes and cars. McGregor notes that teachers identified the workplaces as "their" classroom and the department office.[19] Since few of the teachers in the studied unit have personal classrooms, this study intends to define the teacher's office from the perspective of the many and varied tasks teachers perform, including those done at home. A teacher's office reveals much about his or her work, though it is not the actual focus of their work. Teachers feel that the office is beyond the spotlight, and might even be seen as their private refuge at the school.[20] The school in this

19 McGregor (2003), 356–365.

20 Cf. Jon Prosser, "Visual Methods and the Visual Culture of Schools," *Visual Studies,* 22 (1), 2007, 16–17.

study is one I have worked at, and I wondered if it is possible to visualise tasks with the use of images. Catherine Burke has written that examining photographs can make us see things that we often miss, because there are so familiar to us in our daily routine.[21]

Method and Aim of the Study

In preparing the present study, a request was sent to the three headmasters of the school in question. Upon obtaining their consent, an e-mail with information was sent to the teachers who worked in the room to be studied. Receiving no objections, I went to the school and took pictures of the room and desks. My intent was to see if all the teachers' various tasks could be visualised. I removed all names of teachers and pupils from any documents that were captured in the images in order to preserve anonymity. While reading the photos my focus shifted and the question as to whether these working space were adequate enough took precedence. Questions raised include: Can the work done by teachers be visualised in photos of their working spaces? Is the space and time adequate to their needs? Does something have to change spatially if a forty-hour workweek is introduced?

The School Context and the Office

The school was originally built in 1979 to house approximately 300 pupils, aged seven to twelve. Today there are about 450 pupils, aged six to sixteen, and the teachers upon whom this study focuses are fifteen in number, teaching grades seven, eight and nine. Thirteen of them each had their own desk in a shared, 53 square meter office. In 2010, all teachers were given personal computers and two years later all pupils in grades six to nine each received a personal computer. Most of the teachers have no homeroom, so their work-related possessions are kept in this office. Each teacher has approximately 2 to 3 square meters of individual workspace, into which all material (books, papers, documentation, etc.), technical equipment (computers

21 Burke (2001), 191–201.

and electrical cords), and they themselves (from time to time with a colleague or pupil) has to fit. The office is also used for discussions with pupils, planning with colleagues, job-related and personal telephone calls and copying. There is a common table for meetings, a washbasin and hooks for outdoor clothes and shoes in the room.

Originally the room was 57 square meters, but since there was nowhere for teachers to make phone calls (to pupil's parents, social services, etc.) or conduct one-on-one conversations with students requiring privacy, a corner of the room was converted into a small separate room with a door. Last year, a much-needed copy machine was acquired. Very loud in operation, it was installed in this room. So now the teachers have a copier, but even less privacy. The office has windows facing in two directions, one overlooking the younger pupils' playground and the other facing the older pupils' main corridor. The room lies between a classroom and a corridor with lockers for two classes. This all contributes to recurrent increases in noise and distracting movement. Teachers complain that opportunities to relax during breaks is few and far between, many of them using headphones to block out conversation, colleagues, pupils and so forth. The crowded feeling has occasionally been a source of irritation between colleagues.

Reading the Images: Establishing a Workload Typology

To be able to determine whether a room is adequate to its task, it must be seen. Of course you can visit or even describe the room, but visualising is necessary in order to gain different perspectives. The images should be read as text, as Ian Grosvenor argues.[22] It is important to read the images, to really see what is there, what is seen and what is left out, what is included and what is not. Since the images in this study have been taken recently and by the present author, their context is well known and the gap between image-producing context and reading context is avoided.[23]

22 Grosvenor (1999).

23 Fay Gasparini and Malcolm Vick, "Picturing the History of Teacher Education: Photographs and Methodology," *History of Education Review,* 35 (2), 2006, 23–24; Paul Duncum, "The Theories and Practices of Visual Culture in Art Education," *Arts Education Policy Review,* 105 (2), 2003, 20.

Figure 1. *The teacher's office.*
Photo: Lina Spjut (2012).

Figure 2. *The teacher's office*.
Photo: Lina Spjut (2012).

Figure 3. *The teacher's office.*
Photo: Lina Spjut (2012).

Figure 4. *The teacher's office.*
Photo: Lina Spjut (2012).

Figure 5. *The teacher's office.*
Photo: Lina Spjut (2012).

While reading the images and searching for the tasks in a teacher's daily routine, I discovered that they perform many formal and informal tasks in the course of a day. The formal tasks are those included in their respective job descriptions, including actual teaching and lesson preparation. Informal tasks are everything else that gets done because pupils, colleagues or they themselves expect it to get done. There are also things that are hard to categorise, because they are informal tasks that are consequences of formal tasks, some environmental and situational, others of a more personal nature. After discovering the formal and informal tasks represented in the images, I sorted and categorised them according to the patterns that emerged and what I perceived to be the essence of the workplace: (a) *private things that make work more pleasant*, (b) *things visualising formal tasks*, and (c) *things visualising informal tasks that are consequences of the office environment as such or directly linked to the consequences of formal tasks*. The final category emphasises problems in the teachers' working conditions.

Private things that make work more pleasant are things brought from home, visualised with private photos,[24] cups[25]

24 Figure 5.

25 Figure 2, 4 and 5.

and children's artwork.[26] *Things visualising formal tasks* such as teaching, planning, reading assignments, correcting and documenting are visualised with computers,[27] curricula,[28] schedules,[29] standardised national tests,[30] pupils' work,[31] grade document,[32] absence forms[33] and a camera.[34] *Things visualising informal tasks that are consequences of the office environment as such or directly linked to the consequences of formal tasks* include tasks teachers carry out in order to *make teaching work* without being formal responsibilities. These include handing out lemonade and cookies to pupils when everyone passes a test or before Christmas, Easter or summer break; handing out fruit to pupils that are so tired and hungry they cannot concentrate; making, painting or repairing furniture for pupils' areas during "Pupil's Choice" class. These informal tasks are visualised with a pitcher of lemonade,[35] fruit baskets,[36] lampshade[37] and headsets.[38] This final category also includes all the things that teachers bring to work just to be able to do their job properly under the prevailing conditions. Many teachers are probably not aware of why they bring different things, or how many of them they actually are. It is therefore important to visualise them through photography. This is the most important category in this study, because not really knowing why things are being done makes it hard to discuss working hours and tasks.

26 Figure 2.
27 Figure 1.
28 Figure 4.
29 Figure 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.
30 Figure 4.
31 Figure 2, 3, 4 and 5.
32 Figure 4 and 5.
33 Figure 5.
34 Figure 5.
35 Figure 3.
36 Figure 1 and 4.
37 Figure 1 and 3.
38 Figure 1 and 4.

Working Conditions in the Actual Workroom

Reading the images from the workroom, the first impression is one of clutter and congestion. It is a cramped and crowded, quite dark room, despite the fluorescent ceiling light. The blinds are down[39] (to shut out distractions from the younger pupils' schoolyard) and headsets are visible.[40] Coffee cups[41] litter the place because of the shortness of breaks and because it is too far to the staff room. Teachers have time in their schedule to plan the weekly Pupil's Choice class, but planning and organising them requires so much extra time that it becomes one more informal task.[42] You take the paperwork home with you because you cannot find the time at work. Sometimes conflict arises between colleagues about who should do this "homework". A school health services survey[43] is conducted every semester and distributed by teachers. Current events competitions and likewise[44] are entered by schools almost every year. They are time demanding but also interesting and fun, at least for some of the teachers and pupils. The standardised test from the Swedish National Agency for Education[45] is of course a formal task, but correcting the results is not.[46]

Results and Discussion

After reading these photos and seeing them in the context of the knowledge I possess of the actual school and its teachers and their tasks, the primary conclusions are that there are many different tasks that can be read from the pictures and a kind of a structural problem as regards work. Considering that all teachers and pupils in this unit carry their own personal

39 Figure 1.

40 Figure 1, 4.

41 Figure 2, 4, 5.

42 Figure 3.

43 Figure 3.

44 Figure 4.

45 Figure 4.

46 Correcting is not part of the formal job description but the schools correct the tests by themselves, according to the directives of the Agency for Education. It takes a lot of time, and there is always a negotiation between headmasters and teachers about the time teachers spend correcting them.

computer, there is a remarkable amount of paper strewn about the workroom. Despite having entered the self-proclaimed "paperless" era of teaching, the copier is obviously still in steady use. The pupils' computers having just recently arrived, perhaps that is the reason for parallel work on both computer and paper, or perhaps it has to do with time and computer training for teachers and pupils? To find a private space close by where teachers can talk to pupils or make phone calls without being interrupted seems impossible, since the noisy copier now occupies the "telephone room". These things are now done at home, or when the other teachers have left for the day. Maybe they will take place via computer in the future.

The windows let in sound from the playground and corridor and it is sometime hard for teachers to concentrate, which is why many of them resort to headphones. But the question remains, is it actually possible for teachers to actually do their work in this office? Since there are 10.5 extra hours that can be done at home, in school when co-workers have left, or in another place, then yes, teachers somehow make it work. The reason is that teachers seem to be clever innovators when it comes to finding space and time that is actually not there. This, in turn, makes it possible to ignore space-and-time issues at work, and tasks that require privacy or concentration can continue to be done at another place at teacher's expense. The responsibility felt by teachers for their pupils seems to compel them to accept working conditions that other professionals would object to. As a consequence, teachers are stressed and dissatisfied.

Things related to the daily routine of teaching that are invisible to the "daily" eye seem to appear more clearly in photographic images. It is obvious that visualising is an effective method for highlighting working conditions. The present study suggests that the acute lack of space and time is getting out of hand and can only be remedied by making alterations to both tasks and office space. It would be interesting to come back in ten years and study what has happened in the interim. Are the problems the same? Are teachers working a forty-hour workweek? How was the space problem resolved? How much paper is lying around? Comparisons with other office spaces in other schools would also provide beneficial insight.

Conclusions

The purpose of the present essay was to see what images could visualise about teacher's daily tasks, if their working space is adequate and if the tasks have to change if the hours do. The resulting images showed clutter and overcrowding and revealed a slew of formal and informal tasks. Despite their many tasks, teachers seem to find the time and space for them because of the responsibility they feel toward their pupils. If Swedish schools switch to a forty-hour workweek, working conditions, already inadequate, will have to change, too. School boards have to recognise the difference between formal and informal tasks, sort them out, and adjust the space accordingly. But most important, they must prioritise quality. Education is the future, and a good education requires satisfactory working conditions for teachers and pupils alike.

The Teacher and Educational Spaces: The Photograph as a Tool for Teacher Reflection

Maria Deldén

This chapter addresses the relationship between work and educational spaces. An empirical study was conducted in an attempt to make visible the spaces in which teachers move during the day to see the impact – or non-impact – of the spaces on the teacher and his or her work. How does the teacher physically move around the school building during the day? How does the teacher reflect on its spaces? Additionally, this chapter addresses what the teacher might discover about her working place and pedagogical work using photographs as memory triggers and tools for reflection.

The Visual as a Tool for Understanding the School Environment

As shown by Schratz and Steiner-Löffler in *Pupils Using Photographs in School Self-evaluation*, photography can be beneficial in evaluation processes.[47] The authors let pupils take photographs of places in school that they liked or disliked and then used the images to evaluate and discuss their choices and what improvements could be made. Schratz and Steiner-Löffler address the domination of methods in school research based on the spoken or written word. By using photographs, they wanted to explore the value of the visual in educational research. They found that by using images they could expose new layers of reality and by freezing moments isolated from their context

47 Michael Schratz and Ulrike Steiner-Löffler, "Pupils Using Photographs in School Self-evaluation," in Jon Prosser (ed.), *Image-Based Research: A Sourcebook for Qualitative Researchers* (London 1998).

discover new perspectives.[48] Their work inspired me to use photographs as a tool to reflect on the everyday activities of the average teacher.

Using photographs in educational research requires us to reflect upon the essence of the photograph and how it can be interpreted. In *On Visualising Past Classrooms*, Ian Grosvenor focuses on photographs as historical evidence. He argues that it is essential to see the photograph not as an objective mediator of the past but rather as a subject taken out of its content. A way to interpret and understand it could be as a text read with conceptual tools borrowed from other disciplines. With a more critical reading, the photograph can become a valuable part of historical and educational research.[49]

Using a visual source to trigger memory highlights the role the body plays in perceiving, interpreting and understanding lived experience. We interact with spaces both physically and mentally, making them what they become.[50] To be able to really see the workplace implies a need for distance. Catherine Burke writes about alienation versus familiarity in relation to everyday life and how by looking at photographs, we can alienate ourselves from the familiarity of the "everyday" in order to really see it.[51]

The Place and the Task

The study took place at Bobergsgymnasiet, an upper secondary school in a small community in the north of Sweden. The school has been my workplace for sixteen years. It was built in the 1930s and has since been expanded and renovated to in response to changing needs, demands and pedagogical ideas. Once inside the school you become aware of the thick walls, the long corridors and the traditional classrooms with windows that let in plenty of daylight. At the centre of the school (built in part in the 1960s) lies a newly renovated learning centre, situated next to the school library. In a separate building some 100 meters from the main building, you can find the sports hall.

48 Ibid., 246.

49 Grosvenor (1999).

50 McGregor (2003), 353–377.

51 Burke (2001), 191–201.

I wanted to find out what impact the school spaces have on the teachers and if it would be possible to reflect on everyday activities using photographs. Earlier research has found a relationship between how pupils involve in a task and how the seating is arranged in a classroom.[52] So we know that space matters. But how does space make a difference for the teacher?

I asked one male and one female teacher to document all the spaces a teacher uses or simply passes through over the course of an ordinary workday. They teach different programmes and only occasionally cross paths. After the day was done, they sent me the photographs and I printed them out. Then I sat down with each of the teachers on their own and we studied the photographs and reflected on the spaces. I was curious to see if the visual sources that they themselves had produced would lead them to discover things in their working place and in their pedagogical work that had not been visible before. I had prepared some questions for the interview inspired by Grosvenor's text on the critical reading of photographs.[53] The questions stimulated the teacher to reflect on what was seen in the photographs and what thoughts and feelings this evinced.

For ethical reasons, I asked the teachers to document empty spaces or just the backs of the students, so that no one could be identified. As to the teachers I informed them about the task and its purpose and obtained their consent before embarking on the task. The teachers also had the opportunity to read the final manuscript and make comments.

The Teachers Document and Reflect

Teachers Siw Frisk and Anders Pettersson agreed upon a day to take their photographs. Anders decided to document two days because he thought that would result in a more accurate image of his work. After they were done, I met with Siw and Anders individually. I interviewed them for about an hour in semi-structured interviews.[54] The photographs were spread out

52 Chris Comber and Debbie Wall, "The Classroom Environment: A Framework for Learning," in Carrie Paechter, Richard Edwards, Roger Harrison and Peter Twining (eds.), *Learning, Space and Identity* (London 2001), 88.

53 Grosvenor (1999).

54 Both interviews took place 2012-10-26.

on the table so we could see them all at once. Clearly, the photographs had been taken out of their original context and put into another. I also tried to maintain a critical approach to the respective conversations. We began by talking about the spontaneous reaction they felt when they saw the photographs in their new context. The conversations proceeded according to the experiences of the teachers and to the interview questions.

"Different Places Awaken Different Feelings"

Siw took 19 photos during one day. Her first impulse was to tell me about her workday illustrated by the photographs. She used words expressing movement: "First I came here", "then I went there", "then I walked". She told me about her activities. She used the word speed (sometimes stress), but mostly speed to express what creates energy for her. I asked Siw to pick four of the images and tell me something about them. While telling me about these places, she discovered that each one had a feeling connected to it. One example of this is a photograph of the library. The feeling connected with this image was happiness, because she appreciates the support she gets from the librarian. She told me how they collaborate and how she can rely on the skills of the librarian. When she plans her classes, she talks to the librarian in advance so that she can organise literature for the students corresponding to the specific subject. Other feelings roused by looking at the photographs were frustration, interrupted rest and pride.

One thing we talked a lot about were the feelings Siw experienced while looking at two different classrooms where she often teaches (Figure 1 and 2). She started out by describing the two spaces and while talking, came to the conclusion that because of how the classrooms are furnished, she feels and teaches somewhat differently in each.

So how did she describe herself in relation to these two spaces? Classroom 1 is bigger and the teacher is in front of the class. This puts the teacher in control. Classroom 2 is a smaller room and the desks are arranged in a group. When teaching in this room, Siw sits among the group and she feels more relaxed and secure. When I asked her in which classroom she considers herself a better teacher, she didn't hesitate to say Classroom 2.

Figure 1. *Classroom 1.*
Photo: Siw Frisk (2012).

Figure 2. *Classroom 2.*
Photo: Siw Frisk (2012).

Anders took 39 photos in two days. He put a lot of effort into the shoot. When we met and he saw all the photographs, he was a little frustrated about the disorder I had created. He tried to put them back in order and little by little succeeded in reassembling it and recalling the order of his working day. He often said, "Now I remember!"

Anders teaches physical education. He described the two offices he has, one next to the sports hall and the other in the main building (Figure 3 and 4). He often moves between these two places. Seeing the difference between the two sites, he started to talk about the development of his subject, physical training and health. The site close to the sports hall is very small (Figure 3) and Anders told me that thirty years ago, there was no need for more space because the subject did not consist of much theoretical content. Nowadays a physical education teacher needs to do much more lesson planning and, as shown in Figure 4, Anders needs more space for to work. After talking about these two work sites, Anders suddenly said that he had forgotten to take a photograph of his third workplace – a desk at home.

Figure 3. *Working desk 1.*
Photo: Anders Pettersson (2012).

Figure 4. *Working desk 2.*
Photo: Anders Pettersson (2012).

Anders has a broad understanding of what a classroom is. He considers different spaces as classrooms. In the photograph below, we can see Anders projecting an image on the wall of a small building near the forest. He transformed this little house into a classroom because he wanted to be close to the very essence of the lesson – how to orientate in the forest. After the session in the little house, he and the pupils went out into the forest to continue the lesson. Anders transforms not only this building but all kinds of other spaces into classrooms: the forest, the lake, the mountains, the ice rink, the ski tracks, the football pitch, the local gym and so on.

Figure 5. *Alternative classroom.* Photo: Anders Pettersson (2012).

He thinks that he teaches in a different way when he uses spaces outside school and feels it promotes a more relaxed atmosphere and closer relationship with the students. He mentioned that the limited amount of time he has to teach so much content makes him feel frustrated and criticised the difficulties the school has incorporating adequate technology in teaching.

Discussion

The teachers participating in this study expressed different opinions on the benefit of using photographs to provide new perspectives. The female teacher was very positive and through the photographs discovered things she had not seen before. The photographs and the conversation led to a feeling of having the energy and inspiration to change things. Among other things, she felt encouraged to try and involve her pupils in painting their classrooms. The male teacher had his doubts. He did not think looking at the photographs would bring new insight. For some, images can immediately trigger a deeper understanding of their workplace, but not for everyone. Nevertheless the photographs were an inspiring source of conversation, conversation that led to a somewhat new understanding and broader perspective.

This empirical study highlights the different approach to the photographs on an emotional level. The female teacher often referred to her feelings and during the interview the feelings she felt about the school spaces were awakened and present. The male teacher had a more rational approach toward the photographs and his narrative was less emotional and more focused on the actual details. In both cases the conversations lead to reflections on 'everyday' working experience as well as on teaching and the curriculum. By seeing photographs in a new context, the teachers could alienate themselves from the teaching situation and reflect from some remove.[55]

Burke describes the school as an emotionally charged space.[56] One reflection generated by this study concerns the body. Listening to the interviews, I became aware of how much our experience of "everyday" is lived through the body. What we see and how we see it, the feelings evoked and how teaching involves not just cognitive thinking but also bodily experience, are aspects that came to the fore in the interviews. In the interview with the male teacher, it was interesting to note his "making of educational spaces".[57] He is concerned about the students' bodily experience of his teaching and organises educational spaces in different places according to the content of his teaching.

The teachers did not document all spaces, for which they had different explanations – they did not have their camera with them or they simply forgot to take pictures. So there are of course things not seen in their photographs that would have provided further information about an average working day and school spaces. Important to remember is also the fact that the photographs do not show everything; they are small fragments of reality captured in a moment that has passed and it is these pieces that talk to us through our eyes. As Grosvenor points out we need to be critical about that.[58]

The study sheds light on all the little tasks teachers perform but that are quickly forgotten. With some pictures, both of the teachers had difficulty remembering what they had been

55 Burke (2001).

56 Ibid.

57 McGregor (2003).

58 Grosvenor (1999).

doing in that particular space. And both were surprised upon realizing that they moved around so much and did so many different things in the course of an average day.

Concluding Remarks

I consider talking about work with teachers with the aid of photographs as memory triggers and tools for reflection to be a sound method. Conversation becomes lively and more anchored in lived experience. As a colleague, I learned a lot about the work situation of my fellow teachers.

Talking about spaces also leads to talk about pedagogy. It is clear that when placed in a new context, the photographs, though rooted in their original context, can elicit new, sometime unexpected perspectives. It would be interesting to study how pedagogy might evolve if teachers used photographs to initiate a dialogue between themselves and their students about the everyday activities of teaching in relation to curriculum and learning.

Space and Photographs: How to Use Photography as an Evaluator in School

Carl Emanuelsson

In this research project, students in the Swedish compulsory school were asked to photograph spaces in their own school building that they associated with security, insecurity and learning. The purpose was to identify critical areas in the school building, so teachers and school management could get a better understanding of how to stop and take preventive action against bullying and ill treatment. Which areas of the school building or its proximity do the pupils consider secure/safe or insecure/unsafe? Which area provides them with a sense of learning? The project shows the value of the visual for both research and developmental projects in school. The study's methods can be used to explore other research themes in order to gain a deeper understanding or identify problem areas in a school context from the student's perspective.

The Value of the Visual

The Swedish school system is under scrutiny and has been assessed continuously in recent years. Research reports and inquiries revealing shortcomings have succeeded one another and the politicians struggle to find with solutions. The school where this study was conducted was built in 1917 and is in great need of modernisation. Redevelopment and remodelling projects, aiming to make the school better both physically and organisationally, have been proposed in a continuous stream. But have they taken the students' thoughts and ideas into consideration? Despite the focus on quality and evaluation, many schools lack a student's perspective when working on improv-

ing both teaching and school facilities.[59] The adults who work at the school completely forget to involve the pupils.[60] Despite the goal in the Swedish national curriculum of implementing student participation in decision-making, it is rarely applied in practice, other than in the direct teaching situations of the classroom.[61] The primary focus on questionnaires and written reports in evaluations can become a major obstacle for some students participating in the processes. By using photographs and images, we lower the threshold and invite pupils of different ages and educational backgrounds to participate on equal terms in describing the school from a child's perspective.[62] By removing linguistic obstacles, the students' photographs become a tool to gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of how they themselves perceive their school. The value of the visual can make the school better for students, teachers and administrators alike.

The Student Perspective on the School: Three Themes

This study is based on three different themes. These themes were chosen to provide an overview and serve as a support for improving the school's equal treatment plan and gain knowledge in efforts to prevent bullying and ill treatment. By examining the places at school in which students feel both secure and insecure, the school staff gains a greater understanding of the preventive measures required to enhance a general sense of security. This can help teachers and staff to become a presence in the right locations, where students feel insecure. But it also maps the positive locations in which they already feel safe and sound. And by learning from them, staff can develop the school building in the direction of security and according to the core values of the curriculum. The physical environment can transmit a hidden curriculum to social relations and affect behaviour

59 Catherine Burke, "The View of the Child: Explorations of the Visual Culture of the Made Environment," Paper presented at the National Research Conference Pupil Voice and Participation: Pleasures, Promises and Pitfalls (2006), 10.

60 Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998), 236–237.

61 Maria Rönnlund, *Demokrati och deltagande: Elevinflytande i grundskolans årskurs 7–9 ur ett könsperspektiv* (Umeå 2011).

62 Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998), 237.

among students.[63] The school building is an active agent in the perception of educational and social experience.[64] It is therefore important to visualise and identify critical locations that have either a negative or positive effect on the students' sense of security. Since the school's task is not only to provide pupils with a sense of security but also a sense of learning, I felt that it was an important theme to include. Perhaps it might show a link between safety and learning? It might prove beneficial for teachers to see the school's various learning environments through the students' eyes in order to evolve as educators.

Research Approach

The present study was conducted in two classes, one class from the seventh grade and one from the ninth grade. A total of 52 students were asked to photograph places that they associate with the three themes of security, insecurity and learning. All of the students had their own cameras, most of them cell phones but some in the computers the school provides for them. Of the 52 students, 22 shared their photographs and those images are the foundation of this study. The students wrote a short comment for each explaining what the photograph depicted and why they associated the place with security, insecurity, or learning. The two classes were picked because they had been at the school various lengths of time. The students who attend the seventh grade had been at the school for two months when the photographs were taken while students in the ninth grade had attended for over two years. I wanted to compare them depending on how at home they felt in the school building.[65]

Ethical Dilemmas and Problems

In the case of photographs, there are numerous ethical considerations to keep in mind. The pupils were instructed not to shoot any people or personal belongings that could be identified. One major problem I encountered in the course of this

63 McGregor (2003), 358.

64 Catherine Burke and Ian Grosvenor, *School* (London 2008), 10.

65 Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998), 241.

study was that many students did not want to share their photographs. To gain free access to the photos, I asked them to turn over the copyright to me. This made many students suspicious, thinking I intended to earn money selling the pictures. There was also a problem with how the pictures would be digitally transferred from their camera to my computer. Many students took pictures but forgot to share them, which contributed to the low number of final participants. I could have avoided these issues by being clearer in explaining how the pictures would be used. I also could have organised the project in a more structured way so that everyone had the opportunity to submit the results during a single lesson. This might have reduced the loss of pictures among those who forgot to share.

Results

The results are categorised according to the three main themes of security, insecurity and learning.

Figure 1. *A secure place: The school cafeteria.*
Photo by student (2012).

Figure 2. *The clocks.*
Photo by student (2012).

Security

Views on security were quite varied. A common secure place for students regardless of grade was the school cafeteria (Figure 1). A vast majority of pupils felt secure there because of its proximity to staff and friends. They described the atmosphere as pleasant, happy and social. This was of great importance for many students' positive comments about the site. But there were also clear differences in the two grades' views on security. In seventh grade, security was perceived to be more formal and physical than in ninth grade. For example, they took pictures of the exit signs or the school nurse facilities. This shows that fear of emergency and injury is on the minds of the younger pupils. Another difference between the seventh and ninth grades was the image of the wall clocks as symbols of security. The younger students thought that the clocks were secure because they felt a fear of not making it to class on time (Figure 2). I believe they feel this way due to the fact that in the lower grades, these younger students remained in one classroom throughout the day. Having now graduated to seventh grade, they moved between different teachers in different classrooms and the clock became an important new tool for being on schedule. This is an experience left unmentioned by the ninth grade pupils. Instead, the older students associated security with social relationships both inside and outside the classroom.

One classroom that symbolised security for the ninth graders was home economics. Some said that it made them feel like themselves for a while. The social norms and hierarchies constructed in other classes and maintained by both teachers and students disappeared for many students during home economics lessons. They described the lessons as gratifying and the atmosphere as positive and safe. It is difficult to draw any certain conclusions on this, because it may not be the room itself but the teacher's ability to create these conditions. Unfortunately, the seventh grade does not take home economics, so no significant comparison between the two grades can be made.

Insecurity

The students were fairly consistent across ages on this theme, and no major differences were detected except in certain specific cases. A clear majority felt unsafe in the school bathrooms (Figure 3). Many students experienced the space as uncomfortable and dirty. It smelled bad and the colour scheme was cold and hard. As one student said, "fast in and fast out". Most of the restrooms are located in a row in the cafeteria and despite its otherwise secure atmosphere, the students experienced discomfort going to the toilet in front of their peers. They also reported that bullying had occurred in these areas.

Figure 3. *An insecure place: The school bathrooms.*
Photo by student (2012).

Remote and secluded spots were also deemed insecure (Figure 4). Students in both grades photographed several secluded places and specific corridors where they felt that staff and teachers never were to be found. The students feared that anything could happen there without anyone intervening.

Some spaces were associated with accident and injury, symbolised by shots of stairwells and the school nurse's waiting room. The school elevator was associated with the fear of getting stuck in that confined space. In a few cases however the seventh and the ninth grade expressed very different fears. In the seventh grade, it was about the locks on their lockers that they felt were unsafe and easy to break up. In the ninth grade, there were photos of the gym changing room, where pupils a year earlier had discovered a hidden webcam, an event reported to the local police.

Figure 4. *Secluded places.*
Photo by student (2012).

Learning

The photos that the students associated with learning were similar in both grades. Many featured classrooms and the teachers' chair or the lectern. Some photographed maps and the whiteboard. The school library was popular and even textbooks were seen as symbols of learning. It is difficult to systematise the students' images of learning. I interpret many of the pictures as very formal symbols of the school as an institution. The task can be seen as arbitrarily limited since we know that students learn in many other places, not just in school. But the theme forced them to provide some image of learning in school regardless of their own views on learning. One image was particularly interesting, a photo of the schools' basketball nets (Figure 5). He said that this is where he learns new things every time he plays with his buddies, who teach him new tricks. He was

Figure 5. *A place for learning: The schools' basketball nets.*
Photo by student (2012).

the only participant who saw learning in interaction with others, not just with the teacher.

Conclusions

The present study provides significant views of how children interpret and feel about different spaces in school. It shows how student perceive their school differently depending on how many years they have spent there. But it also reveals a variety of individual thoughts and feelings about its main themes. I therefore argue in affirmation of previous studies for the importance of children's participation in developmental projects.[66] Students need to be an active part in the evaluation stage and be allowed to make suggestions for improvement. Using photographs as a method of gathering empirical data from students to learn more about the school site is an effective way of including them in the development process. Expressed visually, their thoughts and perspectives can unveil solutions that we adults have not seen or fully understood.[67]

66 Burke (2006), 10.
67 Ibid., 12.

Seeing is Knowing, or The Creation of a "New Real"

Ulrika Boström

In addressing the value of the visual in educational research, the present project has been greatly influenced by articles in the anthology *Visual History*, featuring papers from the EERA conference in Edinburgh in 2000, and the art of Darcy Lang.[68] The specific question the present essay intends to examine is the subjectivity of the visual as a source of common knowledge. The aim of the documents examined is to find out what kind of knowledge is perceivable in its visual form.

Teachers and pupils were asked to photograph what they commonly saw in everyday school situations. Their photos were then examined in accordance with the notion of the visual as central to how we perceive the world, a notion that has evolved with the discovery of technical devises like the camera obscura, the microscope and the camera. The philosophical issues of the real, the perception of the real and whether or not we can trust our senses to perceive the real remain unresolved.

The subjective understanding of the real is conspicuous when dealing with the subjectivity of the visual. While the photographer constructs what we see as real by choosing what to show through framing, lightning, sharpness, and technical aids, the results are nevertheless powerful arguments in the language of the visual. Two epistemological questions emerge: How is knowledge acquired? To what extent is it possible for a given subject or entity to be known? My original intent was to discover whether or not it was possible to capture the *look of understanding*. I believed that I had a clear idea of what my

68 Ulrike Mietzner, Kevin Myers, Nick Peim (eds.),*Visual History: Images of Education*, Bern 2005; The Ikon Gallery, an exhibition guide about Darcy Lange: *Work Studies in Schools*, Filmed across a total of seven different schools in two cities, firstly in Birmingham during 1976 and later in Oxford in 1977.

pupils look like in the classroom, how they look at me distractedly or stare out the window, or move around, tired, trying to stay awake. But I also had a vague sense that, once in a while, caught a glimpse of clarity in their eyes. I wanted to see if it was possible to capture that look visually. I wanted to capture the moment that knowledge is acquired while at the same time determining whether that kind of visual knowledge, as described above, was even possible. Thus in this project, the signs of learning or the signified becomes the signifier.

A third perspective is the historical perspective. In *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*, Jonathan Crary writes: "the problem of the observer is the field on which vision in history can be said to materialise, to become itself visible".[69] He concludes that vision is (of course) inseparable from the observing subject, who is both a historical product and the creator of historical products. There is also the problem of how to categorise the visual knowledge attained from this examination as well as the discourses that shape the respective pupils' views of their school environment. For there is always a discourse of knowledge behind each perception and understanding, vision and interpretation, or as William Blake puts it: "Every Eye sees differently as the Eye — such the object".[70] Since there is no true *natural* there is no real reality. Rousseau also describes the social impact of human understanding as "the senses 'have been taught'".[71]

Representation

As argued above, the notion of reality is something more conventional and artificial. In *Picture Theory*, W.J.T. Mitchell states: "What is at issue in realism is how things appear, not how they are. So realism is more a style of representation." Mitchell argues further that style is "functionally related to

69 Jonathan Crary, *Technicques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992), 5.

70 Willim Blake quoted in Crary (1992), 70.

71 Ian Grosvenor, "Back to the Future or Towards a Sensory History of Schooling," *History of Education: Journal of the History of Education Society*, 41 (5), 2012, 675–687.

a goal".[72] Photographs are often treated as facts, objective sources of information.[73] But pictures do not offer a "transparent window" into the past. Pictures need to be read as texts and they are created within certain cultural discourses. Recent research deals with the way in which space is affects the pupils and teachers in respective environments.[74]

A single photograph contains many layers of understanding. One can choose to understand them as signs, in accordance with Saussure. Concepts of interest include what he terms the signifier, the material, and the signified.[75] As historians, we can view them as "transparent reflections of the past".[76] But photographs have the ability to stop time, which raises a problematic issue; "the photograph takes its subject out of history: every photograph 'has no before or after: it represents only the moment of its own making'".[77] Susan Sontag broaches the same issue in *On Photography*: "After the event has ended, the picture will still exist, conferring to the event a kind of immortality (and importance) it would never otherwise have enjoyed".[78] These pictorial theories lead my study to clash with reality. How true is an image? Is a photograph a reliable historical source at all? Is there something missing? What kind of truth did the pupils' documents reveal?

Method

My original plan was to involve two pupils who are relatively close to take photos of each other over the course of a school day, documenting their *everyday*, trying to catch the little things. By giving the pupils control, I hoped to attain a more objective and honest documentary material compared to what one might achieve by having an outside photographer take pictures of what he or she thought was going on in school at that particular time and place. Having the pupils perform the task would also avoid leaving holes in the documentation, since

72 W.J.T Mitchell, *Picture Theory* (Chicago 1994), 330.

73 Grosvenor, Lawn, Nóovoa, Rousmaniere and Smaller (2004), 318.

74 Ibid.

75 Mietzner, Myers and Peim (2005), 13.

76 Grosvenor (1999), 86.

77 Quote of G. Clarke in Grosvenor (1999), 87.

78 Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London 1979), 11.

they live the life being documented and therefore lend the project continuity. We discussed their assignment and the problem of taking the most natural looking pictures. They started out by taking turns trying to catch each other listening to the teacher, taking notes and working. After a while, a third girl was invited to take part in the project. She became the photographer, documenting the other two. It was made clear that she should be thorough; each and every class was to be documented. I also filmed two of my lessons, in order to have a neutral template with which to compare my view of the classroom with their pictures. Influenced by the work of Darcy Lang, an artist from New Zealand who filmed pupils watching themselves on film, I wanted to see how his method would work in my specific context.[79] I showed my film to three pupils and then filmed their spontaneous reactions, which would have been far more difficult and time-consuming to capture in words.

Figure 1. Photo by students (2012). This is what they saw as the most representative of their pictures. This image captured what it *looks* like going to school in 2012 in Stockholm.

Figure 2. Photo by students (2012). This is more the *feeling* they captured, what it *feels* like going to school. It is a look of indifference.

79 The Ikon Gallery, an exhibition guide about Darcy Lange: *Work Studies in Schools*, Filmed across a total of seven different schools in two cities, firstly in Birmingham during 1976 and later in Oxford in 1977. "By showing the classroom footage to his subjects, and then recording interviews with them on their reactions to seeing themselves on video, the artist formalised a process of looking, thinking and responding that was intended to empower those he filmed. He believed this would produce a study that was as objective as possible, because it embodied different points of view". Ibid.

In the final stage, I discussed the pictures with the pupils. I documented their reflections on learning and what they had captured, what they saw.

Results

Did they value their classroom environments differently? Were they of the opinion that some classrooms were more advantageous to learning than others? Should their answers and documentation be evaluated in light of what the environment does to their learning?

Comparing my film with their photos, they thought the former revealed more. There were three things that really caught their attention and surprised them — that they sat quite still, that they looked somewhat indifferent, and that they looked tired. Their surprise *surprised* me. The "look of understanding" seemed nowhere to be found. Documentation in hand, I wondered if this look could only to be found in my imagination, a teacher's wishful thinking.

What I saw was this (Figure 3): see page 74 and 75.

Freezing motion and time might well show you things that you did not hitherto realise were there. In a sense, it is more real than the real. The effect was reminiscent of Muybridge's 1872 attempt to settle the debate over whether or not a galloping horse, at any given moment, left the ground completely, or if it always kept one hoof on the ground. Taken out of context, these images lose their history but attain some kind of immortality *as photographs*.

Figure 4 was taken in the Darcy Lang tradition, to investigate the historical view of perception, the reaction of seeing oneself in the footage, as seen in the pictures above. The historical perspective consists only of the facts that these images were taken in 2012 and the pupils' reactions were, at first, overwhelming. The pupils become both a historical product and the creator of historical products.

Figure 4. *Their first impression seeing themselves on film.*
Photo: Ulrika Boström (2012).

Did visual documentation clarify what is more real? What do we see? Are we dependent on the context, as mentioned in the introduction?

"The reading of a photograph is always historical"[80]

To make them aware of the somewhat challenging perspective of photography, and how their pictures are now part of history as visual documents of their school at a specific time, as well as what we read into them, I showed them some old school photographs. The old photographs also problematised the context issue. Since my project focuses on the visual as a way of rethinking knowledge and reality, it also affects the pictorial concept of photographs stopping time or at least becoming part of a historical narrative. In discussion, the pupils' conclusion was that although the historical context was readily apparent, they seemed able to see beyond that and saw the similarities they shared with the historical pupils.

80 Roland Barthes quoted in Grosvenor (1999), 93.

Figure 3. *A.*
Photo: Ulrika Boström (2012).

Figure 3. *B.*
Photo: Ulrika Boström (2012).

Figure 3. *C.*
Photo: Ulrika Boström (2012).

Figure 3. *D.*
Photo: Ulrika Boström (2012).

Figure 5. *Carlssons skola 1960.*
Photo: Lennart af Petersens.[81]

This picture provoked heated debate. It was completely spontaneous and showed how clearly we view based on our own experience when we have lost the "whole" picture, so to speak, that is, its context. We do not know the purpose of this picture. Perhaps it was meant to document the work of this specific teacher, since the pupils appear from behind. Two of the girls argued over whether the boy indicated by the circle was cheating or just leaning forward to better see what was written on the blackboard. Obviously both girls read the photograph from their own perspective, with their own eyes. They easily identified themselves with these historical boys and forgot about the context, revealing one way of responding to photographs with an open ending.

Discussion

The objectivity of stopping time evolved and the fact that photographs become autonomous entities withdrawn from history, more exactly the original history of which is was a part, became perceived more clearly. In my case, the problem of perception

81 Source: Stockholmskällan: http://www.stockholmskallan.se/Soksida/Post/?nid=25732 (accessed 2014-12-01).

became evident. Screening the film for my pupils, they realised things about themselves that were not altogether unproblematic. It made me think of how brutal the moving image remains by showing every perspective of classroom behaviour. Despite all the contemporary technology with which these youngsters are so familiar, they still worry about how their own image is perceived.

In their own documents, where the signifier became the signified, representation was turned around. Rather than the fact that *the gaze has the power*, or that *seeing is knowing*, the clash concerned the fact that an image is not easy to place within the framework of reality when it is all a matter of personal interpretation. The observational mode of the film camera brought a more brutal reality into "real educational space". In "Making Spaces…," Jane McGregor writes that space is seen as relational both in producing and as a product of interconnecting social practices: "Space is literally made through our interactions".[82] So is the virtual space or the mental gap in our perception. When it comes to film as a documentary medium, *mind the gap*: the gap between what one perceives as real and the *actual* real.

Conclusion

Three levels of representation were examined in this essay – pupils watching themselves on film, being documented by film, and turned into moments frozen in time. Though the technology is hardly new to them, being documented made visible things they had no idea where there. When comparing my documentation with that of the pupils, a discussion arose about the *look of indifference*, not the *look of understanding*. Their most representative picture of what going to school is like features an active pupil, which leads to a clash over the perception of reality. As the most typical image of what going to school *feels* like shows a disinterested, indifferent pupil, none of us managed to find a single instance of the true look of understanding. Perhaps this means that the reality of the gaze cannot be ascertained at all. Judging from the pupil's astonishment, perhaps the images instead helped create something one might call a "new real."

82 McGregor (2003), 354.

Contextualising and Representing School: To Contextualise a Contextualisation, or the Importance of the Historiographic Gaze

Robert Thorp

The main purpose of this text is to present an argument for the importance of contextualising both the visual material and the researcher or narrator in historical research that uses visual media as a primary source of information. To achieve this end, I will begin by briefly presenting an example of how visual material can be used to derive information in research.[83] The following section will then problematise this example from the viewpoint that it is essential to critically assess not only the media presented, but also the presenter of the media in question to gain an acceptably accurate account of the validity of the presentation. The final section will discuss the pictorial analysis in relation to the theoretical discussion presented in the preceding section.

Visual History in Practice

The presentation below attempts to show that spatial segregation of pupils constructs and maintains social segregation. This will be done by analysing a picture, and by presenting a historical contextualisation of the same picture. We will begin with the historical contextualisation.

The school in question is an upper secondary school located in a town in central Sweden.[84] The town is of average size by Swedish standards, and it has a long history as a town with

83 In the present case, a photograph taken by the author of this text (Figure 1).
84 Both the town and school have been anonymised due to ethical considerations.

both a large industry and an important seaport, thus giving the town a large working class and a wealthy class of merchants. The merchants generally lived in the northern and southwestern parts of the city, and the industrial workers lived in the eastern, southeastern and southern parts of the town. There was, in other words, a spatial segregation between the two social groups in question. Since it can be argued that this spatial segregation hindered social integration, it is assumed that the social groups were also socially segregated.

Today the social configuration of the town is partly different due to the economic changes that have occurred in the latter parts of the 20th century: the town no longer has a wealthy merchant class (although it is still an important seaport) and there remain few industries. There are also relatively large immigrant or ex-immigrant populations in the city. However, and most importantly for the argument presented below, the habitations and inhabitants of the city are still spatially segregated, with social segregation as a result.

According to the curriculum in Swedish upper secondary schools, education should promote values such as tolerance and respect for basic human rights.[85] If one believes that social interaction is a factor in promoting interaction between individuals belonging to different social groups and that this interaction is a prerequisite for the promotion of tolerance and respect, it should be important to organise schools in such a way that interaction between different groups of pupils is facilitated. The school I have studied offers both preparatory and vocational educational programmes, hence the pupil population is rather heterogenous: in the preparatory programmes, the overwhelming majority of the pupils have what could be called a non-immigrant middle class background, whereas the pupils in the vocational programmes have mixed ethnic backgrounds and come from working class or lower middle-class backgrounds.[86] Thus, you could argue that the school's head-

85 *Läroplan, examensmål och gymnasiegemensamma ämnen för gymnasieskola 2011* (Stockholm 2011), 11–12.

86 I would like to state for the record that I consider the terms "immigrant" and "non-immgrant" to be misleading. In one sense all Swedish citizens are immigrants, it is only a matter of historical perspective. The terms are, however, generally accepted and used and that is why I have chosen to include them here.

master faces an important task in encouraging pupils of different backgrounds to interact.

Ian Grosvenor states that images can be used as evidence in historical research, if they are treated as documents.[87] Few historians would use a historical document as evidence with no information about when it was written and by whom. Photographs should be treated equally, according to Grosvenor. Historians need to critically engage with the context in which the photograph was taken in order to be able to use it as historical evidence. If treated in such manner, photographs can give the historian valuable information about the past that texts cannot.[88] In the following section I will try to illustrate what it could mean to critically engage with a picture and use it as a primary source of investigation.

Spatial and Social Barriers

Featured below is a schematic of the school I have chosen to study. Its purpose is to inform pupils and visitors where to find the different school buildings. The picture has been anonymised

Figure 1. *Spatial segregation: Schematic of an upper secondary school in central Sweden.* Photo: Robert Thorp (2012).

87 Grosvenor (1999), 86–90.
88 Ibid., 91–95.

in order to not convey information that could reveal the identity of the school. Given the information I have presented above, the reader will already be aware of the fact that the school offers a wide range of study and that it has a relatively heterogenous pupil population. Furthermore, the school consists of six separate buildings. There is a canteen (*skolrestaurang*), an auditorium (*aula*), and a gymnasium (*gymnastiksalar*) that are common for all pupils. We also have the main building (*huvudbyggnad*) that hosts the school administration and the *Economy* (preparatory) and *Trade and Administration* (vocational) programmes, the "Fordon/Media" building hosting the *Mechanics* and *Media* programmes (both vocational) and, finally, the "Västertull" building hosting the *Civic Science* programme (preparatory).

Consequently, pupils are spatially segregated according to the programme they attend. This has practical reasons: the *Mechanics* and *Media* core subjects require a lot of equipment that is not easily moved from one building to another. This does, however, cause significant social reverberations. Pupils are consigned to their "home buildings" for most of the school day, with the result that interaction between the different pupil populations is limited. Considering the social background of the pupils, this is regrettable since the opportunity to afford social interaction between groups that do not normally interact is lost along with, it seems, a chance to further promote the educational objective of increased tolerance and respect for basic human rights among the pupils. Hence, one can argue that school organisation, in this case, hinders social interaction between pupils because of the spatial barriers it erects. A contextualisation of the image allows us to conduct a rather far-reaching analysis of what at first glimpse seems to be nothing more than an ordinary schematic.

To Contextualise the Contextualisation

The presentation above will hopefully have illustrated how images can convey information that may be difficult to disseminate in written form. I also think it illustrates that a historian or researcher requires quite a lot of information about the image to be able to derive rich information from it. This points

us towards two problems; the first is the need for knowledge to "decode" a picture, and the second is the positionality of the observer/historian/researcher.

Regarding the knowledge needed to understand what the image conveys, you could argue that it would render the image superfluous: you still need a lot of written information to understand what the picture is about, and then the picture becomes at best an illustration of what is already shown in text. One needs, however, to remember that an image can be *used* in a number of ways when doing research, and the argument above highlights the *illustrative* use of images. The use I am concerned with is the use of a picture as a *primary source* of information, and in the present case the image is in fact the only source used.[89] While I possess what might be called a "knowing gaze" when observing the picture, the same reservation would in fact be true had my source been a written document: I would still have to know something about the document, the context in which it was written, and the "truth" to which it refers, in order to be able to understand it.

This leaves us with the second problem: the positionality of the observer or researcher. To what extent is the "knowing gaze" a methodological problem in historical research? This is, in fact, not a problem unique in using visual material as historical evidence, but visual material highlights the problem, since the amount of information in a picture is quite limited compared to the amount of information in most texts. Or, rather, the text in a written document itself says something, or has a message, even though that something is of second-order importance in historical research. It is only less conspicuous in texts than in images, so to speak.

Consequently, the person I am, the knowledge I possess and the views I hold influence my assessment and analysis of the historical source, and to some this might present a problem: are not historical investigations and artefacts of historical knowledge supposed to be objective? If my personal characteristics shape what I present, does that not render everything I say scientifically worthless since it is biased? Firstly, this argument rests on the assumption that there is an "objective reality" that

89 Cf. Gasparini and Vick (2006), 17–19.

we can observe regardless of who we are. One can argue that such a position is difficult to defend, since all meaning we have is created by who we are and how we perceive things.[90]

Secondly, an alternative way of looking at this problem is to regard matters of objectivity and subjectivity not as absolute opposites, but rather as two ends of a continuum. As researchers and human beings, we find ourselves in different positions on this continuum, according to the circumstances. We simply need to know what requirements science forces upon us to become good scientists. In history, one way to avoid being debunked as biased is to have a solid and transparent method of research. As long as you are open with the material you have used in your research, how you used it and for what reason, all is well. You could in fact argue that to ignore this "subjective" or "postmodern" perspective on science constitutes a failure to fully realise how historical knowledge is constructed.[91]

On a similar note, Australian historian Robert Parkes argues that history should be seen as a representational practice, and for this reason we need to engage with *how* it is represented. Parkes presents what he calls the "historiographic gaze" that will allow us to scrutinise not only historical representations as such, but also the historian that creates them. He insists on the importance of meta-theoretical analysis of how history is created, thus extending the "gaze of the historian to everything, even [him- or herself], revealing the specificity of historical knowledge and practice".[92] Without the historiographic gaze, pieces of historical knowledge take on the appearance of being objective and factual, when they are in fact the result of a particular historian's conscious choice and interpretation. Through the historiographic gaze, we get the full picture of how history is created and gain a richer appreciation for the importance of sound methodology in historical research.[93]

I want to use an example to illustrate my point further. Michael Schratz and Ulrike Steiner-Löffler argue that letting pupils take photographs of their school environment enables them to

90 Cf. Markus (1996), 10–13.

91 Cf. David Carr, *Time, Narrative, and History* (Bloomington 1986), 2–4.

92 Robert J. Parkes, *Interrupting History: Rethinking History Curriculum after 'The End of History'* (New York 2011), 102.

93 Ibid., 119–120.

show what they really think of school. They assume that the limitations of language have allowed adults to control them, since adults have more highly developed language skills.[94] It is further assumed that schools are generally regarded with mistrust, since they are institutions that control and punish.[95] It is then shown through photographs that children are indeed able to express themselves through the use of images.

In my opinion, this is an example of biased science, since the authors' presumptions about schools and the ability to express oneself are left without discussion. Thus, the result of the study becomes circular, since the researchers find out what they already knew: children communicate better through the use of images. Given the theoretical assumptions of Schratz and Steiner-Löffler, it is doubtful whether their research could have reached any other conclusion than it did. Furthermore, to be able to state that pictures are a better way for children to communicate, we need to know something about how they communicate in writing. How do the same children communicate when asked to write a story instead of taking pictures? Finally, the pictures that the children have taken also need to be decoded using language, and if one assumes that language hinders children from communicating what they really want to say, then we are back at square one; the adults will "control" the analysis of the pictures. The problem is contextualisation, not of the pictures used in the research, but rather of the researchers using the pictures. What values do they have and how do they influence their choice of field, design of research method, and results?

Visual History in Practice: Revisited

Canadian historian Stéphane Lévesque writes that "contextualisation [...] may thus push historians to self-examination of their own projections, beliefs, and frameworks of meaning," which seems to be in full accordance with the argument presented in the present text.[96] He also stresses the fact that histo-

94 Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998), 237.

95 Ibid., 247.

96 Stéphane Lévesque, *Thinking Historically: Educating Students for the Twenty-first Century* (Toronto, Buffalo 2008), 152.

rians' "value judgments" influence the conclusions they draw from their research to a very high degree: two different historians can reach completely different conclusions even though they use the same empirical data and research methods.[97] This is neither surprising nor controversial, considering that in qualitative research, the interpretation of empirical data is an essential, if not *the* essential, component, and what a researcher thinks significant thus influences her interpretation: she chooses to focus on certain aspects because she thinks they are important, and *vice-versa*. Hence, the historian's interpretation is contingent on how she views the world and creates meaning, or as Lévesque puts it, "contingency, as opposed to certainty, appears to be the rule in [the historical research community]".[98]

Donald Warren, an American historian, urges historians to engage with their personal inclinations in their research instead of denying them: a historian's personal or private knowledge as well as oral sources can lend new perspectives to research, and fill gaps left by the written documents. To gain a scientifically acceptable distance from the research material, Warren suggests that the text should be written as a third-person narrative, to put focus on the material instead of the interpretation, and that statements made in the text or non-written material should be verified by external sources, i.e. they should be corroborated, which of course is a fundamental requirement in "traditional" historical research as well.[99]

Returning to the pictorial analysis above, we see that it has certainly been written in the third person, and my personal opinions are seemingly not in focus; the presentation and the conclusions drawn are done in a matter-of-fact manner. The analysis does, however, lack information about the person performing the analysis, i.e. me. Essential to the analysis is the fact that I have been a practicing teacher at the school in question and that I have been witness to the organisational changes made in the school. When I began working there, pupil populations shared the spaces a lot more than they do now, and my personal conviction is that this is a change for the worse. I do

97 Ibid., 94.

98 Ibid., 101.

99 Donald Warren, "Looking for a Teacher, Finding Her Workplaces," *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision,* 19 (2), 2004, 152–154.

however know that there are other perspectives that can be applied to my analysis: pupils from different educational programmes did not interact more before than they do now and furthermore, when they did, the interaction was frequently of a negative nature: there were conflicts between groups of pupils *because* they shared the same space. Some might think that the school works better now, since conflict has become rare.

Moreover, the contextualisation of the image lacks reference to external sources. What I write about the history of the town, its contemporary situation and the school in question is not corroborated at all, and this is a severe flaw in the analysis. I would need to refer to external documents or studies to be able to verify my assertions. This is crucial, since these assertions are central to the conclusions I draw, and, you could also argue, for my choice of research topic.

But even if I were to verify the claims I make about the city and school, I would still be left with the far more subtle and complex questions of how I construct meaning and how this has influenced the entire undertaking, i.e. the contingency, positionality and historiographic gaze referred to above. It could be argued that what I write sounds "leftist"; focusing on the town's history as one of segregation between merchants and workers and extending this to the city's contemporary configuration by claiming that there is segregation between "Swedes" and "immigrants" is a classic left-wing approach. Instead, I could have focused on the individual and how she perceives her school and city environment. All these objections are valid, but one must remember that these objections are also based on a personal preference. The question of how candid a researcher should be with her political convictions is simply a matter of how essential they are for the conclusions she draws from her research. If the conclusions are founded in corroborated sources and if the researcher's method of investigation is solid, transparent, and relevant to the research, then, as I have written above, all is well.

Concluding Remarks

The present text has argued for two things: the potential of images as primary sources in historical investigations and the need not only to contextualise the *images*, but also the user of the images. A researcher that does not treat herself as a person possessing knowledge, presuppositions and values about the world runs the risk of letting these personal characteristics determine the scientific value of her research. Hence the importance of a historiographic gaze.

To Smile or Not to Smile: Differing Views of Educational Situations Compared

Annie Olsson

This present essay is a study of an advertising leaflet from Östra gymnasiet, an upper secondary school in the municipality of Huddinge, south of Stockholm. The increasing competition between upper secondary schools in the region, due to the free-school reform, has contributed to the rapidly increasing use of advertising and publicity. Studying advertising material is therefore a new, important task in educational history in Sweden. The present study will focus on photos depicting educational situations in an advertising leaflet issued by Östra gymnasiet. They will be compared to photos taken by third grade students, also featuring educational situations. The question is whether these views will coincide or differ and what conclusions can be drawn from that comparison. The theoretical approach is based on an article by Ian Grosvenor, in which he provides six criteria for addressing photography with a critical eye.

Local School Context

In 2004, a brand-new upper secondary school opened in Skogås in the municipality of Huddinge, south of Stockholm. The reason for building the school was partly to raise the status of the area and it became the largest single investment ever made in Huddinge. The school was called Östra gymnasiet and in the years that have passed since opening in 2004, it has become one of the most popular schools in the entire greater Stockholm region. It is also the school in which the present study takes place.

There has been an over-establishment of upper secondary schools in the region during the past 10 to 15 years, due to the private school reform. The competition turned increasingly fierce in 2010, since the number of teenagers reaching upper secondary age decreased due to a decrease in births in the late 1990s. Advertising and public relations has therefore become an important feature in the everyday life of these schools, Östra gymnasiet included.

As a way of attracting new students, Östra gymnasiet produces a pamphlet, updated every year, in which you can read about the school and about the different educational programs it offers. The pamphlet contains pictures intended to make the school seem more attractive. In this report, I am going to study this pamphlet and the way in which it portrays educational situations.[100]

Aim

The aim of this study is to compare the positive educational situations in Östra gymnasiet as presented in the pamphlet with pictures of positive educational situations produced by third grade students. My goal is to answer the following questions:

- How are positive educational situations featured in photos in the pamphlet (outsider view)?
- How do the students of Östra gymnasiet portray positive educational situations (insider view)?
- What conclusions can be drawn when comparing the outsider view with the insider view?

Method

I asked ten students from year three of the NV-program (i.e., the science programme) to take pictures of what they considered to be positive educational situations. I also interviewed

100 "Östra gymnasiet 13/14 Trångsund/Skogås," (information pamphlet from Östra gymnasiet, Huddinge kommun) Södertälje 2012. [http://www.ostragymnasiet.se/sidadmin/bildbanken/File/Ostra_katalog_1314_slutversion.pdf, accessed 2014-11-30].

them to find out why they liked the situations in the pictures.[101] Due to technical problems with the cameras, only one girl actually took the photos, but the others told her when to press the button. When the photos were shot, I sat down with the students and discussed which of them they considered to be representative and why they thought so. The students who participated are highly motivated in their schoolwork and another selection of students might have resulted in a different image of positive educational situations.

Ethical Issues

First I had to find out if the photographs in the pamphlet were copyrighted and if so by whom. I found out that Östra gymnasiet owned the copyright to the pictures for three years, and I acquired permission from principal Stefan Vilkman to use them.

Secondly, I had to attain permission from the students. Since they were all over 15 years old and nothing private or obviously sensitive was to be portrayed, I did not need to attain permission from their parents. The students who wanted to take an active part in the study signed an informed consent in which they agreed that I have the right to use their pictures for research purposes. The students who did not take an active part in the study also signed an informed consent saying that they agreed to allow their classmates to take pictures in class. There was also a paragraph stipulating that no pictures in which they were featured would be used without their permission. The teachers also gave their consent to be photographed during class.

Theoretical Approach

The use of visual media as a historical source is a much-debated issue. Some point out the uncertainty of using photographs, since they can be arranged or lead to the wrong conclusions. There is an obvious need for source criticism when using ima-

101 The student photographs displayed in the text are taken by Rebecca Stockgard in November 2012. The interview with students from Östra gymnasiet was conducted 2012-11-27.

ges as well as texts. In an article from 1999, Ian Grosvenor formulated a "contribution to the development of an agreed critical practice among historians in using photographs as historical evidence".[102] He sets up six issues to address when casting a critical eye on photography.[103] In discussing the material used in the present essay, I will focus on analysing four of these issues:

1 *The Photographer's Gaze*: Where, when and by whom was the photograph taken? What is shown and what is not? How has the framing been chosen?
2 *Purpose*: The old, historical question of why the picture was taken. What purpose might the photographer have had and how has that affected the result?
3 *Audience and meanings*: For what audience was this picture produced? How has that affected it? What can be derived from this picture?
4 *Presentation*: How is the picture presented and how can it affect our reading of it?

Figure 1. *The lab: Picture from the pamphlet.* Photographer: Ingemar Lindewall (2012).

102 Grosvenor (1999), 91.
103 Ibid., 91–95, 96pp.

Purpose, Audience, Meaning and Presentation

The purposes of the two sets of photos are of course quite dissimilar. In the pamphlet, the purpose is to "sell", to persuade sixteen-year-olds to choose Östra gymnasiet. In the photographs shot by the students, the purpose is partly to help their head teacher (me) with her research project, but at the same time these highly motivated students probably want to make a good impression by showing themselves as serious, hardworking students. During the interview they said that they did not think that their own pictures would be suitable for PR purposes, especially not if the audience consisted primarily of younger students. They thought they would look too serious.

No real studies have been conducted on who holds the greatest influence on the student's choice of upper secondary school in Sweden. In Britain, there is a study by Alan Thomas and Bill Dennison about who has the final say in the choice of secondary school. This study shows that in almost every case, the individual student decides.[104] Looking at the pamphlet from Östra gymnasiet, you find indications suggesting that the admakers who designed it primarily have the students in mind, too. There are no pictures set in classrooms, the students are constantly communicating, no one is ever alone and they show more chatting with the teachers than actual teaching. Some of the pictures have speech balloons with comments that take the edge of any serious or academic associations. For example, there is a picture of a biology teacher standing with a student looking at a skull. The text says, "Well, at least it has nice teeth". A similar joke appears in a pamphlet from another year, where one teacher is standing in front of a plastic skeleton, having a chat with two students. Here, the text reads, "Isn't he awfully skinny?". The purpose of this seems to be to make the school seem less "school-like". This is probably thought to be attractive to secondary school students, and one might speculate that the creator of the pamphlet assumes that they do not really appreciate traditional schools.

104 Alan Thomas and Bill Dennison, "Parental or Pupil Choice: Who Really Decides in Urban Schools?," *Educational Management Administration & Leadership* 19, 1991, 243.

Figure 2. *The computer room (Cafeteria): Picture from the pamphlet.* Photographer: Ingemar Lindewall (2012).

The Photographers Gaze

Environment

The students' photos are set in a classroom and in a corridor. You can see obvious signs of school activity around them. They are surrounded by classic items like textbooks, calculators, pencils, notes on the whiteboard, and work by previous students on the bulletin board. In the "corridor picture," you can also see traces of a student photo exhibit.

In the pamphlet, it is obvious that the photographer is desperately avoiding classrooms. Two of the pictures might well be set in a classroom or a chemistry laboratory (Figure 1), but have been touched up so that the background is a neutral white. One picture has been taken in the computer room, but it actually resembles a cafeteria (Figure 2). Another picture featuring students working together could be set in a classroom, but the lamps give away that they are actually in the library, indicating that they are not forced to be there, but are there on their own account. The final photo was taken in the sports arena, which is the only realistic "classroom" setting, albeit sports might not be considered a traditional academic subject in the view of many young students. There are some traces of learning in these pic-

tures, too, in shape of a skeleton, lab equipment, textbooks, pencils and papers, but as stated, no traditional teaching.

Interaction/Communication

In the pamphlet, every picture shows people communicating. "Communication" is one of the three mottos of Östra gymnasiet, along with "results" and "individual" [Sw. *Resultat, Individ, Kommunikation*]. This is clearly indicated in the pictures. No one is ever alone but always has someone with whom to interact. Communication between teacher and students always take place in small groups and they seem to be involved in a friendly chat, rather than a lecture or examination.

In the students' pictures, the only interaction you see is the teacher talking to a large group of students. The students seem not to talk at all, neither among themselves nor to the teacher. They are listening to the teacher or working individually. The girl in one picture (Figure 3) is wearing earbuds, listening to music, as if to really make sure that she will not *have* to communicate.

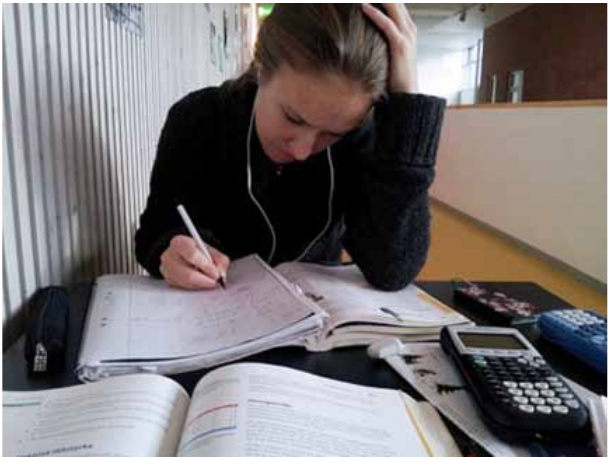

Figure 3. *Shutting out the world.*
Photographer: Rebecca Stockgard (2012).

Body Language

In the pamphlet, one of the most striking features is that almost everyone is smiling. Another thing that strikes you is that teachers and students are always on the same level physically.

If the teacher is standing up, the students are standing up, too. At the arena, two students are bending down, getting ready to run a race. Surprisingly, the teacher is doing the same thing, as if he was going to participate in the same race. This is probably intended to give the impression of equality, that students and teachers are equals and on friendly terms.

Figure 4. *Teaching teacher.*
Photographer: Rebecca Stockgard (2012).

In the student photos, you see the teachers standing up while the students sit (Figure 4 and 5). In Figure 4, you cannot really see the students, but from the teachers gesture you realise that this must be the case. The teacher in the photo is known for extensive, animated body language. When I interviewed the students they commented on this and said that they appreciated it because it expressed that the teacher was really involved in what he was doing. They all agreed that the lessons being portrayed were highly appreciated, though looking at the eyes of the students in the photos there is no way to tell. There are no smiles anywhere. The lack of smiling faces and communication are noteworthy. The picture of the lone girl in the corridor stands out as a striking contrast to the pictures in the pamphlet. She is definitely not smiling or communicating. Instead she is working hard, in a barren environment, shutting the world out as much as she can with heaps of books around her. Still, this is a photo of a positive educational situation. It is a picture of intense concentration and efficiency, of "getting things done".

Figure 5. *Getting things done.*
Photographer: Rebecca Stockgard (2012).

Summarising Remarks

From the present study, you could conclude that the students' photos display a more positive view of traditional classroom teaching than the pamphlet produced by an ad agency. Instead of communication, we see concentration and hard work, which is precisely what the agency struggled to avoid. The purported equality between teachers and students is another distinguishing contrast. The students obviously do not mind the teacher standing in front of them while they sit. It is their reality and they appreciate it.

At this stage, it might be tempting to draw the conclusion that the advertising agency is "wrong". But then we have to remember that these photographs reflect, or are supposed to reflect, the thoughts of two different groups in different situations in life. The secondary school students are about to make a choice that will affect their lives in many ways. Smiling faces and open communication might assure them of safety and friendliness. However, just because it is a PR trick does not mean it is entirely false. Surveys indicate that Östra gymnasiet is a school in which almost everyone feels safe and secure and in which they feel they can communicate with their teachers. The number of applications to attend Östra in 2013 and 2014 surpassed previous years, and it is natural to assume that the pamphlet played some part in this. We should also remember that the third grade students themselves did not believe their photos to be attractive to secondary school students.

One might also be tempted to draw the conclusion that the ad agency underestimates the students' desire to do any actual work. But keep in mind that these students no longer have to worry about the social aspect of school. The people and the environment are already familiar to them and they can therefore concentrate on the educational aspects of school. They are also rapidly approaching graduation, which might explain the serious looks on their faces and appreciation of situations in which they "get things done".

One advantage of using visuals in research that I discovered by observing my students take part in this study and by reading the suggested texts, is that it gives the participants a chance to capture things about which they were otherwise unaware. Instead of starting off by enunciating their opinions in words, which is time-consuming and difficult, they can take a photograph or draw a picture. Afterwards, when looking at the pictures, they can explain more explicitly in words what they felt when they produced the picture. As shown in "Pupils Using Photographs in School Self-evaluation" by Michael Schratz and Ulrike Steiner-Löffler, "The View of the Child" by Catherine Burke and "The School I'd Like" by Catherine Burke and Ian Grosvenor, the use of visual tools instead of verbal ones opens up new opportunities for children and youths to participate in developing their own environments.[105]

Conclusion

The present study has compared representations of educational situations as presented in photos featured in an advertising pamphlet and photos taken by third grade students at Östra gymnasiet in Huddinge, Sweden. The pamphlet shows frequent communication between students and between students and teachers as equals. Traditional environments like classrooms and authentic educational situations are avoided. The students' photos focus on work, both in and out of classrooms, and traditional teaching situations in which the teacher lectures the students.

Different goals influence the photos. The purpose of the pamphlet is to "sell" Östra gymnasiet to secondary school students anxious to find a friendly school. The purpose of the student's photos is to provide an account of their everyday life, and to make a good impression in doing so. Their photos indicate that students appreciate traditional school to a higher degree than the professional PR consultants presume.

105 Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998), 235–52; Burke (2006); Burke and Grosvenor (2003), Chapter 1.

Finally, to interpret these findings in an extremely positive way, you could say that the secondary school students are attracted and apply to Östra gymnasiet because they appreciate communication and equality, but by the time they graduate, they have also learned to appreciate hard work and concentration. This interpretation might be all but too positive but at least it would make a nice new PR slogan for the school.

Figure 1. *Knut Hahn Upper Secondary School.*
Photo: Used by courtesy of the Inquiry Office, Ronneby Municipality.

Beneath the Great Dome: Photographs as Means in the Study of the Senses and Emotions of Day-to-Day School Life

Catharina Hultkrantz

> The roof of this whole building is a glass dome with parts which can be opened on hotter days.[106]

Hearing, smelling, seeing and touching have been essential to mankind from time immemorial. In the same way as the taste of Marcel Proust's madeleine cake conjured new memories, the smell and sound of school might act as the catalyst for former students' reminiscences about their school days. But what memories of today's school will be carried into the future? The present essay highlights the importance of the senses and our relationships to enjoyment and learning in an everyday school environment. Through visual studies, new and interesting ap-

106 On "the school I'd like," through the eyes of 12-year-old Rowan from Hope Valley in Burke and Grosvenor (2003), 24.

proaches become visible. What follows is a qualitative, visual study inspired by the work of Michael Schratz and Ulrike Steiner-Löffler, as well as by Ian Grosvenor's articles about the impact of school environments and the importance of the senses for the experience. In this study, pupils and teachers were asked to take photographs and comment on their workplaces, places they like to take their breaks, and places they do not like to be in at all.

The School

Parallel to my postgraduate studies at Umeå University, I have spent several years working at the Knut Hahn Upper Secondary School in Ronneby, a small town on the coast of southern Sweden.

Built in 1969, the school was cast in the same mould as so many other new school buildings at that time.[107] The desire to renew and reconstruct schools was above all prompted by the high nativity rate, but also by a perceived opportunity for improving pedagogy and democratic training in a modern setting. The Ronneby initiative resulted in a two-storey school building with big windows, a flat roof, red brick and stained wood features. The style was characterised by a bid to amalgamate architecture and nature. But all things new grow old as time passes, and by the beginning of the 21st century the ravages of time had left their mark and technical advances brought fresh needs, and so the municipality decided on a complete renovation. The job took two years, and in 2004 a refurbished and brighter upper secondary school building with geometric glass domes was ready for use.[108]

Entering the school, one is struck by the light reflected from the glass roof of the atrium and study hall, and by the open-plan layout. The classrooms have panes of glass facing inner balcony corridors also serving as light sources, in harmony with rows of windows overlooking the schoolyard. At the time of writing, Knut Hahn with its twelve study programmes is the

107 Cf. Burke and Grosvenor (2008), 119.

108 http://www.ronneby.se/sidowebbplatser/gymnasieskolan-knut-hahn/ (accessed 2014-11-13).

workplace for some seventy teachers and approximately 700 students.[109] Beneath everything new, however, lie the foundations of the school built in 1969. Memories of classrooms and corridors linger in the mind of everyone who passed through the premises during those important years, when school contributes to so much more than basic education. Often, in a small town like Ronneby, with 28,000 residents, several generations of one and the same family have attended the same school. After a few decades, former pupils return as parents, bringing with them their own internal images of the school.

Figure 2. *Inside Knut Hahn.*
Photo: Used by courtesy of the Inquiry Office, Ronneby Municipality.

In "Reading Educational Spaces: The Photographs of Paulo Catrica," Grosvenor et al. write that "schools are more than physical structures, in part because of the emotional depth of the experiences that take place in them".[110] In this text, a woman poignantly describes how obscure memories come back to her on a return visit to her old school:

> I notice how my physical body remembers these spaces. Some changes disarmed me more than others and I find myself disoriented, as if just yesterday I was walking this path, and suddenly a new science building was plopped in my way. In the library, the old smoking room where I spent hours over my books is now a computer lab, and I walk into that room expecting to smell smoke, even though I have been told that smoking has been banned from the room for over ten years. One classroom building looks much taller than it should… Another still smells like it did 25 years ago. I see myself walking in a state of 'two-ness', with a double identity that is composed of past and present intertwined.[111]

109 Including headmasters, administration and janitorial staff, the number rises to 120 employees. Another few hundred adult students and immigrants take classes in Swedish.

110 "The interpretation of educational spaces is never 'pure', because it is always read through the eyes of people with connected histories: past students and teachers who remember their experiences; future students and teachers who wonder what their experiences will be like; managers and policy-makers who evaluate the effectiveness or usability of facilities; historians who decipher meaning from each name carved on wooden desk, frayed textbook, or own school map". Grosvenor, Lawn, Nóovoa, Rousmaniere and Smaller (2004), 327.

111 Ibid.

From the window by my desk on the upper storey, I can look out over the study hall beneath one of the glass domes. The headroom and the large amount of floor space inspire a stately, almost sacred ambience. The place is full of life and movement, with students working, either in groups or individually, on various tasks. They sit round tables and computers forming islands in the middle of the concourse. The quotation above made me wonder how present-day students and teachers experience our common workplace and what memories will accompany them into the future. But how do you gain access to the inner worlds of individuals?

Arno Schmidt posed the question: "Why not think of life as a chain of photographs and reading its text as if turning over the pages in a photo album?". He claims that visual studies could provide new answers to the question of how people perceive their surroundings.[112] Other scholars too have written about the potential for using images to articulate experiences of school. Photographs can elicit things words cannot, especially if age or language level makes it hard for the communicator to express himself. In his article "Finding a Silent Voice for the Researcher: Using Photographs in Evaluation and Research," Rob Walker mentioned the importance of not shutting our eyes to visual studies as fruitful and viable in our quest for answers.[113]

Traditionally, though, the emphasis of academic research has been on the written word.[114] Schratz and Steiner-Löffler acted on these thoughts in their study of younger children's experience of school, asking them to use photographs and verbal remarks to answer the question: "Where in school do you feel good, where not and why (not)?". Their study presupposed that pupils regarded the feel-good factor as an important criterion of a good school.[115] They soon became aware of the power of visual studies when they set about analysing the pictures the

112 Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998), 236.

113 Ibid., 237 and Rob Walker, "Finding a Silent Voice for Research: Using Photographs in Evaluation and Research," in Michael Schratz (ed.), *Qualitative Voices in Educational Research* (London 1993), 72–92; Michael Schratz and Rob Walker, *Research as Social Change: New Possibilities for Qualitative Research* (London 1995), 72.

114 Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998), 237; Schratz (1993), 72–92; Schratz and Walker (1995), 72.

115 Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998), 237.

pupils had taken, and their findings were presented in a guide for the benefit of other teachers and researchers.[116]

I wanted to try the method out in my own study, and since I wanted to find answers to the same questions, I chose to *almost* follow in their footsteps, with the additional intent of studying the most popular workstations. I also included teachers in my study, to see whether their answers had anything in common with those given by the pupils. Obviously, workstations are perceived differently from the respective points of view, since teachers are allotted a desk in a workroom, whereas pupils are free to find their own, informal arenas in school. I began by asking eight pupils and two teachers to photograph three places each with their mobile phones and to comment on their selections. After a few days, it became clear that a number of the pupils would not have time to participate in my study, due to homework demands, and so in the end my study came to include five pupils and four teachers. I asked my informants to photograph:

1 Their most common workplace.
2 The nicest place for taking a short break.
3 A place where, for some reason, they disliked being.

All participants in the study are anonymous, and all but two were over 18 at the time of the study. Those under 18 obtained parental permission to take part.[117] As in the above mentioned article "Photographs of Paulo Catrica", all the pictures are devoid of people, so that the beholder can fill them with their own experiences and think themselves into the pictures, which I imagine is made easier by avoiding an over-emphatic date stamp.[118] Another motivation for using unpopulated ima-

116 Ibid.

117 Rose Wiles, Jon Prosser, Anna Bagnoli, Andrew Clark, Katherine Davies, Sally Holland and Emma Renold, "*Visual Ethics: Ethical Issues in Visual Research,*" NCRM Working Paper. n/a., 2008, 4 [Unpublished].

118 "[The] photographs drew attention to themselves straightaway, they did not include people, either looking at the camera or being observed. They appeared to be calm…reflections on the spaces of the school which observed everything – the floor, the ceilings, the way that paper lies everywhere, the cupboard, the arrangement of the rooms, display and notices, and surfaces. Their tranquil reflection allowed the viewer to see the spaces of schooling […]".

Figure 3. *Students' workstation.*
Photo: by informants (2012).

ges was purely practical, in that I could then use the pictures without having to ask the people in them for permission.[119]

When the pictures started coming in, I felt at first that I was only seeing close-ups of tables and chairs. Additionally, the pupils tended to comment their pictures in very few words, and I began to wonder whether the study could yield any relevant information. But when I assembled the pictures in various combinations, patterns began to emerge. I discovered that it wasn't classrooms that the students regarded as their most common workstations but rather the benches in corridors and study hall to which they returned as soon as lessons were over. This implied that the students were constantly in a place where they had a great deal of sound and movement around them. These are central spaces that everyone has to pass through several times over the course of a school day. The high sound level was in fact a recurrent theme of their descriptions.[120]

Figure 4. *Teachers' workstation.*
Photo: by informants (2012).

The teachers' workstations looked more personal and appealing. As a rule, the teachers shared workstations with several others. All but one reported a great deal of rushing in and out of the workrooms and an intermittently high sound level. The exception may be due to the fact that respondent shared a workroom with only two other colleagues. Two of the respondents described how they

Grosvenor, Lawn, Nóovoa, Rousmaniere and Smaller (2004).

119 Wiles et al. (2008), 41.

120 For more about the history of (listening and) sound in school, cf. Burke and Grosvenor (2011).

tried to shut themselves off by putting on headphones and turning their backs to the rest of the room. Being able to look out the window from one's workstation was another means of increasing concentration. The same stratagems were mentioned by a couple of the students as a recourse for working undisturbed, but the effect must have been harder to achieve in their case, given that they were sitting in communal spaces. "Sound" is a word which, one way or another, is mentioned by all the participants in this study. The teachers wrote that they would rather sit by a window in the corner commanding a view of the room and its entrance. Several of them referred to the importance of feeling secure in their workplace. One lit a small candle to make the place cosy, and others wanted their books and material within easy reach. Teachers and students alike described the importance of a comfortable chair, a good desk, benches, books and computers at the workstation. The teachers, as a rule, were satisfied with the material, whereas the students often stated that their chairs were hard or uncomfortable and that there was too much distance between different types of work material.[121]

Unpopular places were invariably described and explained in terms of subjective sensory impressions and feelings, something Grosvenor previously observed, showing that their roots extended far back in time and varied according to purpose.[122] One girl described the science department as chilly and wrote that she always felt cold there, which made it hard for her to concentrate. A boy described the same area as cold and boring. All this surprised me, for I had believed it to be a popular spot. There are always students sitting there working when you pass by. It should be added that the area's heating system had been playing up for some weeks preceding the study, which may have influenced the answers given. A recurring problem in studies like this is that seemingly insignificant, momentary details can bulk large in the mind of the informant. Another explanation may be that these two students are taking the social science programme and are thus casual visitors who perhaps do not feel at home on the premises. The answers may also

121 Cf. McGregor (2003), 360.

122 Grosvenor (2012), 675–687.

betoken an element of rivalry between study programmes. One of the girls, taking the science programme, referred to the same department as a place where she gladly took short breaks, because her classmates were there.

Two students who did not know each other photographed the same furniture arrangement in one of the corridors as an uninviting place. Both of them described a high sound level and general hustle and bustle as their reason for not liking the spot. A female teacher mentioned the toilets as malodorous and inhospitable. A male teacher disliked the teachers' corner in the school cafeteria because it was difficult to eat there in peace and quiet. The corner is located at one end of the students' dining hall, a large room with tubular steel furniture producing scraping noises whenever a chair is moved. An older female teacher disliked the computer rooms, which she associated with computer glitches and lessons getting derailed. A male teacher disliked being in a certain classroom because it felt darker and colder than the others, which tended to make the students feel sleepy. That teacher, incidentally, was the only one to refer to classrooms as unpopular places (if computer rooms are to be counted as classrooms). One boy disliked being in the cafeteria, because it was crowded and noisy, at the same time as two other students and a teacher referred to the cafeteria as a favourite haunt for the very same reason, i.e. because it was full of people and movement. Could it be inferred that those who feel shy or vulnerable deem such spaces discomfiting? None of the participants, however, complained of being unhappy at the school; they accepted the situation and in all other respects appeared to like it there.[123]

As mentioned earlier, the cafeteria and the science department were also popular with those who felt secure there and had their friends there. The two female teachers referred to the library as a comfortable place. They read periodicals and browsed through newly acquired books, but they liked it above all because it was one of the few quiet spots the school had to offer. A boy taking the technology programme was happiest in the computer room, where he had access to IT and the company of friends. A boy taking the music and performing

123 Ibid., 675–687.

arts programme preferred being in the music room, to write music or practice different instruments together with classmates. The two male teachers preferred taking their breaks in the workroom. Breaks rarely coincide, and all the teachers expressed a wish for change, so they could spend them together with their colleagues.[124]

Figure 5. *The library.*
Photo by female teacher (2012).

Concluding Remarks

The aim of the present study has been to identify what pupils and teachers think and feel about everyday school life by testing a visual method. All the participants used words expressing sensory experiences and the high sound level was a common recurrent theme. Cold places and dark rooms were also mentioned as significant factors in how they felt in specific situations. This could of course be easily remedied by rearranging the furniture, putting socks on chairs and opening up more small group rooms. More relevant is to not ignore the power of the senses in school.

124 "Staffrooms are also distinctive spaces where professional culture and (gender) power relations are played out… 'Here you tend to come across any remember of staff and the conversations tend to either a common "moan" about a topic of general concern…or a joke' (Head teacher of expressive art, Kingbourn)". In McGregor (2003), 361.

According to their submissions, the majority of pupils attending Knut Hahn feel content at school. But in this study we can see new things that are essential to note. Two of the teachers taking part were so inspired by the method that they will replicate it in their classes as part of a workplace health and safety course.

Visual studies can thus undoubtedly reveal interesting new angles of approach to day-to-day school life. If we act on students' and teachers' sensory experiences, the feeling of at-homeness may be enhanced and the learning environment made more efficient. In the long term, this kind of responsiveness can make our school careers a positive experience and a memory to be cherished. The visual method is a key granting access to inner spaces, an effective and viable manner of sharing in other people's actual experience of school. Finally, I take the liberty of borrowing a quote with which Grosvenor begins one of his articles.[125] A quote that surfaced in my consciousness with increasing intensity while conducting this study:

> 'Open it and sniff it. What do you smell?' Morandi inhaled deeply…'This would seem to be the smell of a barracks.' Montesanto in his turn sniffed. 'Not exactly,' he answered. 'Or at least not so for me. It is the odour of elementary school rooms; in fact, of my room in my school… I understand that for you it's nothing: for me it's my childhood'.[126]

125 Grosvenor (2012).

126 Ibid, and Primo Levi, "The Mnemogogues", *The Sixth Day* (London 1991), 14.

Rebuild and Remodel: An Example of Cooperation between Teachers and Architects

Aleksandra Indzic Dujso

The primary purpose of this research project is to investigate if, and how, schools (especially school buildings and classrooms) are influenced and changed by new ideas about education. To achieve this end I will study the rebuilding and modernisation of a secondary school, namely Risbroskolan, in my hometown Fagersta during 1980s. The material that I will be working with consists of photographs and schematics of the school together with the minutes of meetings where city politicians, architects and teachers discuss reorganising and rebuilding of school. The discussion was based on curriculum changes in the Swedish school system in the 1970s.

Background

Schooling has always been – and still is, of course – a very important societal institution. Formal and structured education is a significant resource for states and politicians that want to disseminate values and behaviours, traditions and skills to future generations. That means that educational systems, school and even school buildings are influenced and changed by contemporary cultural, political and economic values. Consequently, as research in the history of education has shown, new ideas about education, pedagogy and teaching methods often result in architectural changes in school design. In *School*, their book about history of the school buildings and their changes, Catherine Burke and Ian Grosvenor write:

> As historians of education we recognize that we are equally open to the charge leveled at an earlier account of school architecture –

> of being 'outsiders to the sub- culture which architects inhabit' and being prone as 'professional educational pundits' to believe that 'Form follows Curriculum'; that it is educational innovation that generates architectural progress in school building.[127]

In 1969 and 1970, new curricula for both compulsory and upper secondary schools were introduced in Sweden.[128] The new objectives resulted in some significant changes in the former that, among other things, meant new subjects were to be taught in Swedish schools using new teaching methods. In Risbroskolan, in a small town in central Sweden, politicians and teachers discussed these changes.

Figure 1. *Risbro School: Main building and the "yellow annex" linked with an intermediate building.*
Source: http://www.risbroskolan.fagersta.se.

Rebuilding, Modifying and Changing?

Risbroskolan is the only secondary school in Fagersta, with about 550 pupils between 12 and 16 years of age. Today the school consists of several different buildings but the first school building was completed in 1922. In 1958, when nine-year schooling became mandatory in Sweden, an additional build-

127 Burke and Grosvenor (2008), 24.

128 Lgr 69, Läroplan för grundskolan 1969 and Lgy 70, Läroplan för gymnasieskolan 1970.

ing, the so-called "yellow annex", was built. The reason was that the number of pupils was increasing due to the postwar baby boom and heavy migration to the city, primarily from Finland. In 1980, the school was modernised and rebuilt once again when the main building and yellow annex were connected by an intermediate building which today is home to the chemistry, biology and physics labs and administrative facilities (see Figure 1).[129]

The Swedish compulsory school reform of the late 1960s caused heated debate and discussion among politicians and teachers in Fagersta though they mainly dealt with the reorganisation and rebuilding of the school. One of the main reasons for these changes, according to the minutes of a meeting between politicians and school personnel in Fagersta, was however innovation in the new curriculum. It was noted that new subjects were to be introduced (namely art, technology and economics). The new curriculum would also require changes in teachers' working methods, which would require closer collaboration between pupils and teachers, who were expected to begin working in so-called "teaching teams".[130]

Many meetings about school reorganisation were held during the 1970s in Fagersta. The National School Board, the County School Board, the governing politicians in Fagersta and, last but not least, teachers and the teachers' union at Risbroskolan discussed and made plans for reorganisation and rebuilding. The minutes of these various meetings reveal that there were other significant motives behind the decision to reorganise and rebuild, such as profitability and the increasing number of pupils expected to arrive in the 1980s. It would be much more financially profitable, according to the politicians, to rebuild and renovate an already existing school building than to build a brand-new one.[131]

An additional and very interesting perspective that clearly emerges from various minutes is that all parties in this "process

129 School website: http://www.risbroskolan.fagersta.se (accessed 2014-11-20).

130 Fagersta stad arkiv, Skolstyrelsen, Handlingar rörande skolbyggnader (1962–1970), F 2:1.

131 Risbroskolans arkiv, Skolbygge om och tillbyggnad I (planering, lokalbehov), Sammanträdesprotokoll, Fagersta kommun: Skolstyrelsen, Skolstyrelsens beredningsavdelning, blad 7, 1976-01-26, 1976-01-20.

Figure 2. *Risbro School, floor 1 (yellow): Part of the intermediate building, after rebuilding.*
Source: Risbroskolans arkiv.

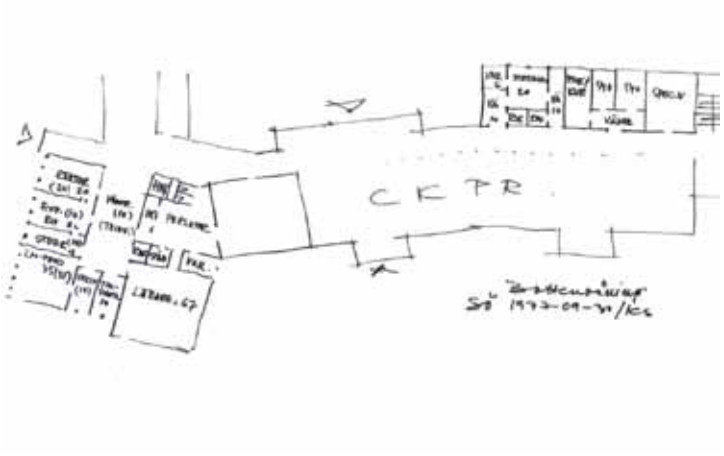

Figure 3. *Risbro School, floor 1: Teachers' proposals before rebuilding and renovation.*
Source: Risbroskolans arkiv.[1]

1 The teachers wrote "ground floor," but the drawing proposal depicts what is called floor 1 on the schematic.

Figure 4. *Risbro School: floor 2 (red): Part of the intermediate building, after rebuilding.*
Source: Risbroskolans arkiv

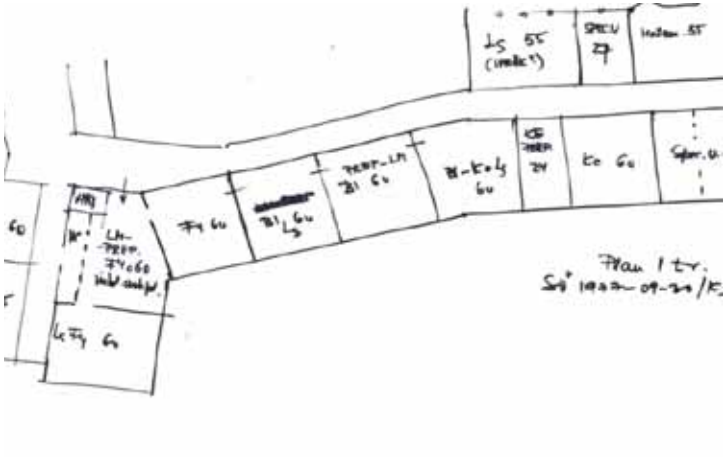

Figure 5. *Risbro School: floor 2: Teachers' proposals before rebuilding and renovation.*
Source: Risbroskolans arkiv.[2]

2 The teachers wrote "floor 1" but the proposal depicts what is called floor 2 on the schematic.

of change" were allowed to express their opinion about the upcoming modification and rebuilding of Risbroskolan (with the exception of the pupils themselves, whose opinions are not at all illuminated in the available documents). The documents show that teachers and their unions were asked to present practical suggestions. Proposals by other school personnel were also submitted. As we can read in the minutes, personnel stated that there was a need for a new staff room and a new nursery room, while the long-term planning of the teachers themselves first and foremost concerned the lack of adequate classrooms for future needs.[132] The minutes show that the teachers drew up proposals for dealing with the organisation, dimensions and design of the classrooms. Although the final decision was not in the hands of school personal and teachers, the teachers seem to have been deeply involved in the decision-making process.[133]

It is interesting to discover that in comparing all the questions, suggestions and strategies noted in the minutes, the schematics submitted by the teachers and the actual final results are strikingly similar. It seems that the teachers' proposals acted as both an inspiration and a starting point for the architects' conceptions and final plans (cf. Figure 2 and 3, as well as Figure 4 and 5).

It seems that here, the teachers were anything but silent partners in educational design.[134] It seems as though architects actually listened and deferred to the needs, if not of those who were to be taught, than of those who were to teach at the school. It may seem problematic to try to draw any definite conclusions about teachers' participation in the rebuilding and adaptation process, given that the source material was not as extensive and rich as one would wish, but despite these limitations I would argue that one possible interpretation of the material could be that teachers' involvement in architectural design and performance was both encouraged and absorbed.

Cooperation between architects and educators in designing and constructing school spaces and other learning environ-

132 Risbroskolans arkiv, Skolbygge om och tillbyggnad I (planering, lokalbehov), Risbroskolan, Konferens angående Risbroskolans om- och tillbyggnad, 76-02-17.

133 Risbroskolans arkiv, Skolbygge om och tillbyggnad I (planering, lokalbehov), Risbroskolan, Högstadiets utbyggnad, Konferensdag 76-02-18.

134 Burke and Grosvenor (2008), 116.

ments has, as previous research shows, never been a matter of course. Communication problems and lack of collaborative spirit is discussed in Alexander Koutamanis and Yolanda Majewski-Steijns' article "An Architectural View of the Classroom". Even if most of the architects are, as the authors argue, "well-intentioned professionals," it is also true that:

> On the other hand, architects can often be accused of playing to the gallery, i.e. primarily focusing on and serving architectural debates such as superiority of modernism over historicism or the design and construction of form such as blobs, so as to impress their peers and improve their standing. In such debates architects may use client requirements and ambitions as justification of their choices […].[135]

But it is also true that, "At different times, teachers, advisers, architects and designers have realized their unity of purpose in designing schools to fit needs of children and the wider society".[136]

The school in this study was renovated and rebuilt during the 1980s, partly as a result of changes in both educational environment and pedagogical and didactic thinking that occurred during the 1970s. The 1970s was a decade when experimentation with new teaching methods and innovation within the so-called "progressive teaching" ideology was dominant[137] and this progressive thinking is, to some extent, noticeable even in the material that I have analysed. Both teachers and politicians discussed educational and pedagogical changes with an eye to a future that should be met with adequate changes in the design of the school building.

But progressive teaching ideology and changes in pedagogical and didactic thinking do not seem to have played a role in the final classroom design in the case of Risbroskolan, which turned out rather classical in the end, with rectangular rooms and benches arranged in straight rows. While it is difficult to draw any definitive conclusions, previous research has argued

135 Koutamanis and Majewski-Steijns (2011), 216.

136 Koutamanis and Majewski-Steijns (2011), 10.

137 See Burke and Grosvenor (2008), 22, 152; Chris Comber and Debbie Wall, "The Classroom Environment: A Framework for Learning," in Carrie Paecheter, Richard Edwards, Roger Harrison and Peter Twining (eds.), *Learning, Space and Identity* (London 2001), 89.

that teachers can be quite conservative when it comes to adapting new teaching strategies.[138] Burke and Grosvenor write:

> Schools, however they are designed, are inhabited spaces, and although there were exceptions, most teachers were ill-prepared for working in radically changed environments and their initial training and preparation for a lifetime of professional service did not seriously consider the matter of material conditions of the spaces they would occupy.[139]

Conclusion

In "Educational Change and Dutch Classroom Photographs: A Qualitative Analysis," Sjaak Braster writes: "Images can support stories that are told by written documents, but can they be used as primary sources that tell us things that written or oral testimonies cannot? We think they can".[140] Working with visual material is a research process that might not always result in a new and radically different perspective, but consistent methodologically and analytically appropriate use can certainly generate new and important meanings and highlight new approaches. In my analysis, the use of an image combined with other material has created a new understanding and representation of knowledge that, I would argue, would not otherwise be possible.

The written documents in the form of minutes of meetings, which outlined the numerous discussions and debates among politicians and pedagogues about rebuilding Risbroskolan, provided important insight into how ideas were formed and developed. The visual material – photographs and schematics – proved to contain not only different aspects and new forms of knowledge about classroom organisation, but also new analytical perspectives regarding the issue of learning spaces. A comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the refurbishment of Risbroskolan in the 1970s and 1980s would be quite different

138 Comber and Wall (2001), 100.

139 Burke and Grosvenor (2008), 152.

140 Sjaak Braster, "Educational Change and Dutch Classroom Photographs: A Qualitative Analysis," in Sjaak Braster, Ian Grosvenor and Maria del Mar del Pozo Andres (eds.), *The Black Box of Schooling: A Cultural History of the Classroom* (Brussels 2011), 21.

(and sorely deficient) without the "visual dimension". Only by viewing and comparing the suggestions and schematics made by teachers with those of the architects was it possible to illustrate how visions and policy goals were transformed into concrete plans. Only this particular material made it possible to see and draw conclusions about possible cooperation and communication between the teachers at the Risbroskolan and the architects who turned the blueprints into buildings.

The Dream of a Perfect Lunch: Helenelund School Canteen in 1968 and 2012

Cecilia Johansson

Everyone that has attended compulsory school in Sweden has spent a lot of time in the school canteen and most of them have opinions about the food served there. Although school meals and the rituals surrounding them have been a part of schooling since the early 1900s, it has not received much attention in educational research. This paper explores how various strategies to get children to eat school meals are visualised in photographs from a school canteen taken in 1968 and 2012, respectively.

The School Canteen

"I hid the disgusting, hairy bacon rinds in my pocket," remembers an elder colleague when I told her about my project to examine the history of our school canteen. It was strictly forbidden to throw away food, another colleague adds. Since the beginning of the 20th century, school lunch has been served in Sweden. At first there was a small charge for it, though children from poverty-stricken homes often received it for free. During the 1940s, the government introduced free school lunch for all children. At that time there was a great interest in investing in the health and well-being of the upcoming generation. On the other hand, it was a very authoritarian system that often created a lifelong malaise among school children. During the 1960s, Sweden underwent tremendous modernisation, which brought on rapidly increasing economic growth. Hence this new modern society demanded a higher educational level of the entire population. In 1962, the nine-year comprehensive school was introduced, which also had an affect on school meals.

I compare a series of photos from 1968 taken at Helenelund School with photographs that I have taken in the school canteen in 2012. The main purpose is to illustrate how ideas about organisation of space, control and food are made visible in a source material that consists of photographs. To analyse the pictures I applied four different perspectives: 1) the organisation of space, 2) hygiene, 3) conduct and expectations of pupils and staff and 4) how the food was cooked and presented. The theoretical framework of the study resembles the one outlined by Catherine Burke in her paper "Contested Desirers: The Edible Landscape of School".[141] She suggests that consistencies and significant change of the edible landscape becomes visible by studying the relationship between architecture and the culture of a school. Burke uses the concepts *authoritarian model* and *delivery model* to describe how adults look upon children in the school canteen. In the present study, I have also added the *professional model* to the discussion, since I needed a concept explaining the Swedish system shown in the photographs from the 1960s.

Helenelund School was built in 1927 as one of three new schools in the municipality of Sollentuna, situated just north of Stockholm. At the time the government encouraged working class families to leave the overcrowded and unhealthy city by handing out small patches of land in the surrounding areas of Stockholm. The school added new buildings as the municipality became more densely populated. In 1965, the school received its present-day look when a new building was erected to house the secondary school together with a new school canteen. The canteen is located in a separate building; very functional with large windows on the top floor to let the fumes escape. The school had been serving hot school lunches since 1943, initially for a small fee but from 1946 free of charge. Until 1937, the children ate their lunch in a corridor, but by 1937 the school had a small dining room.[142] In 2002, the buildings were refurbished. Then the dining room was moved to another smaller building, where it remains today.

141 Burke (2005), 571–587.

142 "Glimtar ur Helenelundsskolans historia: Häfte sammanställt till skolans 70-årsjubileum 2007".

The Value of the Visual

In 1968, the National Board of Education produced a series of photos with an accompanying guide, an audio-visual tape entitled "Eating at School" and addressed to staff at the school canteens. The aim was to highlight the importance of school lunches by offering practical advice to staff on how to organise the canteen.[143] The guide was produced at Helenelund in its new, modern dining room. The analysis of the photographs is based on thirty-nine images from the audiovisual tape found in a digital archive and ten photos that I took in the canteen in 2012. Four of the photographs from 1968 and two of the photographs of 2012 school canteen are included in this chapter.

Ian Grosvenor discusses the difficulties of using photos as historical sources.[144] For instance, photographs often lack a sufficient context. However in this case, the purpose and context of the photographs from 1968 is very clear and moreover comprise a didactic tool. In a way, these pictures can be seen as fiction. They represent an idea of the "perfect lunch". Bearing that in mind, I consider the photos to be an important historical source revealing the ideals promoted by the National School board at that time. The board probably chose to use photographs in their production, because they say so much more than mere text.

The organisation of space, for example, is difficult to express in words alone. It is also difficult to capture the relationship between pupils and staff without images. Canteen staff always smiles when serving food, but display a disapproving expression when a pupil is about to throw food away (Figure 4 and 5). In this case, the pictures provide information that would otherwise have been lost. A comparative study between now and then thus requires that I use photographs from today as a source as well.

143 The audiovisual tape *Att äta I skolan*. Skolöverstyrelsen, SÖ-förlaget 1968 and its manual are available at Sollentuna municipality archive http://sollentunabilder.se (accessed 2014-11-20).

144 Grosvenor (1999), 86–90.

Ethical Considerations

The pictures from 1968 are filed in the municipal archives and they have been published on the Internet.[145] Pupils and staff from Helenelund pose in the pictures. The municipal archivist has approved the use of the pictures but the identity of the photographer is unknown. I took the present-day photos during a few days in October 2012. I received permission to take pictures from the school principal and the dining room's private contractor ISS, provided that no pupils are identifiable. Adults in the photos have given me permission to use and publish the photos. I have also photographed a child in close-up with permission from both parent and child. These photographs will be added to the Sollentuna municipal archives.

Analysis of the Photographs

It is important to note that the photographs do not represent the reality of Swedish school canteens in the 1960s. This was the National Board's ideal, which municipalities should strive to meet. The pictures show how the premises should be disposed, how hygiene issues should be handled and what the relationship between staff and pupils should be like. In addition, they also offered advice on suitable dishes. The pictures are clearly arranged. Both staff and pupils are posed in the photographs. The audio-visual tape has a very clear pedagogical approach. Photographs showing desirable behaviour alternate with images displaying the opposite. Staff posing in everyday outfits from home is contrasted with photos of staff dressed in crisp, clean uniforms. My analysis is based on the four different themes mentioned above, namely the organisation of space, hygiene, conduct and expectations and finally the food itself.

145 At http://sollentunabilder.se (accessed 2014-11-20).

Organization of Space

In numerous instances, the images from 1968 highlight the importance of school meals being served in a spacious dining room. The children were able to queue up without crowding among outerwear. Next to the school canteen, there is a large space with a row of sinks and hooks for outdoor clothing. The actual dining room consisted of one large room with large windows and rows of tables.

Figure 1. *A spacious cloakroom equipped with washbasins was important in 1968.*
Photo from the audiovisual tape: "Att äta i skolan", SÖ-förlaget, Skolöverstyrelsen (1968).

In 2012, the hall is much smaller, only 20 square meters, with two sinks. The children serve themselves. This system has minimised the length of queues and thus the need for corridors in which to line up. The actual dining room is organised into three smaller rooms. It is still dominated by rows of tables but there are also a few round ones. It is nicer to sit at a round table and while they are very popular among pupils, they take up more space in the dining room. The images from 2012 tell us that it is important the premises are no larger than required.

Figure 2. *Today the cloakroom is much smaller and there are only two sinks for 800 pupils.*
Photo: Cecilia Johansson (2012).

Figure 3. *Edvin serves himself black pudding.*
Photo: Cecilia Johansson (2012).

Hygiene

The photos from 1968 show the onus on hygiene at the time. Sinks and clothes hangers have already been mentioned, but there are also several pictures of how the staff wash their hands and dress appropriately. The women who worked in school canteens in the sixties were often housewives possibly working outside the home for the first time. For this reason, it was important for the board of education to emphasise that this was a profession different from cooking for the family. Today there are only two sinks left in the cloakroom and nobody checks that the children wash their hands. Although sometimes are supervised by a teacher when they serve themselves lunch, there are many opportunities for pupils to mess around with the food. One manifestation of this is the pupils' habit of never taking the top plate in the pile of plates. You never know what has been on that plate. If all the children decided to wash their hands in the two sinks, chaos would result. The value of proper hygiene is no longer taught either by teachers or canteen staff.

Conduct and Expectations for Pupils and Staff

Figure 4. *Proper staff conduct: The staff of 1968 was required to offer the pupils the portion size that they wanted.*
Photo from the audiovisual tape: "Att äta i skolan", SÖ-förlaget, Skolöverstyrelsen (1968).

Several photos from 1968 show that the school board wants to create a friendly and respectful relationship between canteen staff and pupils. Pupils should listen attentively, but the staff should also pay attention to the pupils' wishes. They were expected to serve lunch and clean up but also to help pupils and make sure that they learned the rituals of mealtime.[146] In the photos that show undesirable behaviour, staff displays a disapproving expression or ignores the pupil when asked for something. This shows that the board wanted to replace the *authoritarian model* that previously ruled in Swedish canteens. However it was still important to teach children how to behave. For instance, they were expected not to waste food.

Figure 5. *A meal hostess prevents food waste. She points out the inappropriateness of throwing away food and tells the pupil to finish his portion.*
Photo from the audiovisual tape: "Att äta i skolan", SÖ-förlaget, Skolöverstyrelsen (1968).

Today's staff are employees of ISS, a private catering firm. The municipality renegotiates canteen services on a regular basis and the supplier is often replaced. ISS has no educational mission at all. Instead, teachers are expected to keep the canteen tidy and ensure that pupils follow the rules of the dining room.

146 Burke (2005), 571–572.

Several of the photographs from 1968 show industrial-scale cooking taking place in a well-organised and perfectly spotless kitchen. But there is nothing in the pictures that suggests the possibility of choosing from different dishes, nor a variety of beverages. Milk was the only option. The photographs from 1968 show five recommended dishes. All served with milk, crisp bread and fruit. The dishes consist of traditional Swedish fare that the children would be familiar with from home, like meat or fish with potatoes and steamed vegetables.

Figure 6. *The modern, hygienic kitchen of 1968. Potato containers are taken directly from steam cabinets and put in isolation boxes.*
Photo from the audiovisual tape: "Att äta i skolan", SÖ-förlaget, Skolöverstyrelsen (1968).

The dishes presented in the photos suggest that food was important to the National School Board. It should be nutritious and fulfil the needs of growing children, but should also be tasty.

Today parents want food to be organic and homemade, not industrially produced. The kitchen is not as clean and shiny as it once was. Milk is still served, but you can choose water instead. Salads of all kinds are now an important part of the lunch buffet. There is also more attention to pupils' individual choices. Vegetarian and pork-free meals are served every day.

Children have a say in what dishes are served through their food council. Yet most of the dishes are still based on traditional, everyday menus. The municipality still checks the quality of food through its contract with the caterer.

Discussion

Society's fundamental mission as far as school meals are concerned has remained the same for 100 years. School children are served a nutritious meal during the day to give them the necessary energy and facilitate learning. But this mission has always been hampered by demands to save money and tight schedules. In the first half of the 20th century, getting the children to eat food they found disgusting was resolved with an authoritarian model that simply forced them to eat their lunch.[147] Meals were eaten wherever there was room, usually in the corridor or in the classroom. In the 1960s, canteens were modernised along with the rest of the school system. The school board produced an audio-visual tape to highlight the importance of organising school meals. However the photographs from 1968 show that there was still concern about correct modes of mealtime behaviour. Canteen staff became part of the pedagogical activity at school. In contrast with the authoritarian model, pupils were encouraged, not forced, to do the right thing. In 1968, lunchrooms were to be purpose built with plenty of pleasant, open space. The food would be cooked in a professional manner and was not only nutritious but tasty, too. The National School Board wanted to improve food quality and the environment in which it was served in order to avoid the kind of conflict caused by the authoritarian model. Efficient organisation, agreement rather than force, and functional premises characterised the *professional model*.

Today, a private company runs the canteen like a restaurant. It has become much more important to use space efficiently. There is no room for queuing and staff no longer interacts with the children to correct their behaviour. The dining room is designed to reduce noise and catering services are regulated and controlled by the municipality. The children have a voice

147 Burke (2005), 574.

now, seen as consumers or customers with purchasing power. But this also means that they have to take responsibility for what they eat and how they behave, just like an adult in the same situation. Values, hygiene and conduct are less important. Eight-year-old Edwin handles the edible landscape more or less all by himself (Figure 3). The *professional model* of 1968 has been replaced by something that resembles a *model of delivery*, as Burke discusses, where school children are more like customers at a restaurant and therefore in control of their eating and behaviour.[148]

This state of affairs has actually greatly reduced lunch-related conflict. Terrified children no longer hide bacon rinds and other disgusting food in their pockets. At the same time, other questions about how we see children in our society are raised. Perhaps childhood as a social construction is about to disappear. According to Ellen Key, the twentieth century belonged to the child.[149] Perhaps the twenty-first will belong to the consumer, regardless of age. This is already a fact when it comes to other aspects of education in Sweden.

In this light, it would be interesting to continue studying the school canteen today from the perspective of the children. What would their perfect school lunch look like?

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have compared photographs of the Helenelund school canteen in 1968 with photos taken in 2012. The analysis is based on four different perspectives: organisation of space, hygiene, conduct of pupils and staff, and food. The analysis shows that in the 1960s, the National Board wanted to abandon an older, *authoritarian model* for a modern, *professional* one. Canteen staff, often consisting of former housewives, would behave in a correct but friendly manner toward pupils. Good hygiene, nutritious food and sound organisation were key. The dining room was another arena for the school's pedagogical efforts. A private catering company runs the school canteen today and the photographs reveal that its staff is only

148 Burke (2005), 587.

149 Ellen Key, *Barnets århundrade* 1900, http://runeberg.org/barnets/ (accessed 2013-05-30).

responsible for the food, not the pupils' behaviour. The latter are treated like customers in a restaurant. They can choose between two dishes and they serve themselves. Responsibility for their behaviour lays now entirely with the teachers. The professional model has been replaced by the *delivery model*. While this has reduced conflict, the children are left to their own devices and must take responsibility for eating enough to get them through the school day.

The Computerised Classroom: Didactic Tool or Distraction?

Karin Sandberg

Computers and smartphones have irrevocably changed Swedish schools. Computers have been brought into the classrooms on a large scale and many schools are now considered so-called "one-to-one" schools, with a personal computer for each and every pupil and teacher. This case study aims to provide insight into how the comings of computers have altered the function and environment of the classroom. I have shown pictures of their former school to seven students who left school a few years ago. They were asked to reflect upon how the computers have changed their old classrooms as educational spaces. My instructions however must have been unclear, or simply overlooked, since they all responded in an unforeseen manner, discussing the role of computers in school in general. Even so, their remarks are interesting and contain many perspectives not commonly expressed in the debate about computerisation.

Figure 1. *The physical alteration of the classroom.*
Photo: Karin Sandberg (2012).

Educational Spaces

Space is more than a backdrop for our daily comings and goings, it is something we create both in social interaction and in interaction with the space itself. Space both forms us and is formed by us. Therefore space is always in an ongoing state of

flux.[150] We who spend so many of our waking hours in the classroom are ultimately the ones who decide how computers affect the classroom environment.[151] But what happens in the classroom does not remain uninfluenced by what happens outside the classroom. Educational space is affected both directly by political decisions and indirectly by social, financial and other miscellaneous events.[152] The walls are not the boundaries of the classroom, even less so with access to Internet, which contains learning environments customised to meet student needs and other websites that contain heaps and heaps of information, for better or for worse. The educational space has expanded to include the entire Internet. This brief text is an attempt to address the still unanswered question of how computers have altered the classroom.

Figure 2. *Class with computers: One computer each for the students and one for the teacher.* Photo: Karin Sandberg (2012).

Computers in the Classroom

In recent years, Swedish schools underwent a swift, more or less wholesale computerisation. Today almost all students attending

150 McGregor (2003), 354.

151 Martin Lawn, "Designing Teaching: The Classroom as a Technology," Grosvenor, Lawn and Rousmaniere (1999), 66.

152 McGregor (2003), 355.

upper secondary schools are provided with their own computer.[153] So what are the supposed advantages of this development?

In his book *Oversold and Underused*, Larry Cuban writes that computers in the classroom are believed to have a three-step impact on teaching and learning and on society. More computers in the classroom would mean an increased use of computers; increased use of computers would lead to better and more efficient teaching and learning (exactly how is not specified); and better teaching and learning would lead to better and more skilled workers, tailor-made for computer-based society.[154] Another benefit bestowed by computers would be that teaching and learning would become more engaging and more in contact with real life, since traditional forms of teaching were not believed to be in touch with the information age. Pupils must be prepared for a future filled with computers and information technologies.[155] So the argument in favour of computers is there, but how have they actually affected classrooms?

In this case study, former students were asked to reflect upon how their old school has changed. I have shown them pictures of their old classroom and the main hall. The furnishings and the curtains are the same. The only thing that has changed is the addition of computers. How do they think this has affected their old school?

The Photographs

The photos have been taken at the school where I work and my informants formerly attended. The pupils in the pictures are current members of the student body. Three pictures attempt to capture the use of computers and smartphones in the classroom during a history class, another shows a detail of the classroom and a third the main hall of the school. By showing them to former students, I hoped to access their immediate response to the pictures. I also hoped that showing them pictures of

153 Mattias Davidson, 'En till en kartan' Blog entry on *Datorn i skolan, pryl eller verktyg* http://skoldator.blogspot.se/p/entillenkartan.html (accessed 2013-06-12).

154 Larry Cuban, *Oversold and Underused: Computers in the Classroom* (Harvard 2003), 18, 34.

155 Cuban (2003), 14–15

their old school (rather than an anonymous one) would elicit a more direct, visceral reaction to how their school had changed.[156]

Figure 3. *Working with computers in the classroom.*
Photo: Karin Sandberg (2012).

The pupils in the pictures are sixteen years old and have been attending upper secondary school for three months. They all have laptops provided by the school and this is their first year with individual computers. The pupils have consented to being photographed and I have tried to avoid showing their faces.

The Informants

A number of former students were chosen at random and asked to participate in the study. Seven agreed. Six were born in 1990, one in 1989 and all left school four years ago, before the school began providing every pupil with his or her own computer. All were interviewed by e-mail, since they now live spread across the country and abroad. In the material, they will be referred to by pseudonyms beginning with the letters A to G.

Two of the students had had their own private laptop while attending upper secondary school, while the rest had access to computer labs. The informants were asked to give their first, spontaneous response to the images. I also asked them to compare what they saw in the pictures with their own time in upper secondary school. My instructions were to provide one response for each individual picture but my instructions must have been unclear because all of them provided a single response to all five pictures together. As mentioned above, the respondents did not respond as I expected either, mainly discussing computers in school in general rather than the classroom environment *per se*. Nevertheless, it is possible to glean quite a bit of information about the role of the computer in the classroom and how educational space has been affected by their ar-

156 Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998), 236.

rival from their responses. The informant's answers varied greatly, both in length and in content. I have divided the answers into four themes; since some answers were much shorter than others, not all responders are represented in all categories.

Theme One: Old and New Technology

On the whole, the former students were mostly negative, not to computers in school as such, but to the one-to-one system in general. However, their answers were far from unambiguous. One of the informants, Dahlia, has grave dyslexia and she states that she would simply not have made it through upper secondary school without a computer of her own, especially the spelling check programmes. She was positive to computers in school, especially for pupils with some form of learning disability. Another student, George, emphasised the ability to write faster as a positive aspect of computers in classrooms. Frank says that when he writes on a computer, the information doesn't stick in his mind as well as when he writes by hand. He also thinks that kids in today's society are not as good at writing as they used to be. Beatrice says that when she went to school, pupils wrote by hand and talked a lot with each other about their assignments, which she thought was good for their learning.

The positive comments concern the technological side of computers; computers support the learning process, especially for students with learning disabilities, and help the students to write faster. However there is a fear that they will never acquire adequate handwriting skills and that they will not discuss and solve assignments together when they have access to the Internet.

Another informant, Cecilia, had just one comment on the pictures; she was unequivocally positive to computers in school. She said that she is positive to computers in general, since her father is a computer engineer and she grew up around computers. Cecilia's reflection was that computers in school are a source of relaxation and easy to use. Cecilia's comment that computers are relaxing is more about the social side of computers; they provide a way of escaping the classroom.

Figure 4. *The atrium of the school: Students gathering around a computer.*
Photo: Karin Sandberg (2012).

Theme two: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Other Distractions

One informant, Anne, stood out in the responses since she was clearly against the one-to-one system in schools, while the others were more or less positive with certain reservations. All the informants now took computers in school for granted, the issue was whether each pupil should have his or her own computer or not. Anne argued that computers were a distraction, since pupils should listen to the teachers and not be absorbed by their computers during lessons. She thinks it is better for them to use the computer lab, where they will be more focused, instead of having full-time access. She had heard from younger friends that pupils visit Facebook and play games during lessons. George thinks the whole idea of giving pupils computers is misguided. He says they will get stuck surfing and not do their schoolwork. Beatrice says, referring to the former students, that they did what they were instructed to do and did not waste their time surfing for amusement. Facebook did not exist when they attended school and little time was spent surfing the net. George thinks pupils will socialise via computers, not with

each other. He takes Figure 4 as a proof of his argument.

Anne takes up the social change computers wrought, a shift in the teacher-pupil relationship. A possible threat to their authority, the teacher-textbook monopoly on knowledge can be broken. Former students often referred to the texts selected by their teachers. Moreover, the teacher now needs to constantly compete for the students' attention. John K. Lee points out that the Internet represents a new opportunity for students to access source material, find books and create their own historical view of different events, instead of having to rely on teachers and textbooks.[157] Digitised archives available on the Internet means that they do not have to be visited physically, which saves students and researchers time and effort and protects the documents from wear.[158] With the Internet, students can benefit from other people's research and disseminate their own.[159]

Anne also questioned the rationale of giving computers to pupils at a huge cost while the school needs renovation and teachers earn so little. She says she has heard from younger friends that computers are mistreated (by "spoiled children," as she puts it), since they are on loan (the computers reverting to the school after graduation). If one broke, it had to immediately be replaced, at a significant cost to the school.

Anne sees no benefit whatsoever in computers in the classroom. She believes we are heading for a future where pupils don't have to attend school at all; they will sit at home and study via the Internet instead. Cecilia says that it is impossible to say if the one-to-one system is good or bad. As society on the whole becomes more and more computer-centric, we cannot yet say what the outcome will be.

157 John K Lee, "Digital history in the history/social studies classroom," *The History Teacher*, 35 (4), 2002.
See also Bing Pan, Helene Hembrooke, Thorsten Joachims, Lori Lorgo, Geri Gay and Laura Granka, "In Google We Trust: Users' Decisions on Rank, Position, and Relevance," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12 (3), 2007.

158 Lee (2002).

159 Stéphane Lévesque, "Discovering the Past: Engaging Canadian Students in Digital History," *Canadian Social Studies* 40 (1), Summer 2006.

Theme Three: Information Overload

In their responses, the informants tend to conflate the terms "Internet" and "computers". When they speak of computers, they are speaking about the Internet. The same can be said for the schools themselves. Wireless Internet is standard in one-to-one schools. One informant says that she and her classmates were unskilled at searching for information on the Internet; they just used Wikipedia and looked up web sites at random. On the positive side, George concedes that computers made it fast and easy to find information and cause less paper consumption. Roy Rosenzweig argues that if we take Internet as a whole, the information that is found there is correct and accurate.[160] Since the number of websites is so enormous, there will of course be sites that are terribly wrong and some that are as good as or better than most encyclopedias and other scholarly works.[161] We also have the opportunity to partake of new academic results and debates, an opportunity we did not have before.

Beatrice thinks that computers served as a good complement when she was at school, but now they have a much bigger role in society as a whole. Dahlia says the same thing and concludes that it remains to be seen if our increasing dependency on computers will have a negative or positive effect.

Theme Four: Information and Technology Stress

Five out of seven responders mention "information stress" as one of the downsides of computers in classrooms. Cecilia wonders if school should perhaps be a sanctuary from the flood of information with which we are confronted every day. Ellinore thinks the students' ability to concentrate and focus on one thing is lessened if they use computers all the time. She also brings up bullying and social isolation as phenomena that will only increase when all pupils have their own computer and constant Internet access. As Martin Lawn writes, computers are part of both the pedagogical and the social side of school, since

160 Roy Rosenzweig, *Clio Wired: The Future of the Past in the Digital Age* (Colombia University Press 2011), 31.

161 Cuban (2003), 30.

Figure 5. *Many of the informants mention "information stress".* Photo: Karin Sandberg (2012).

pupils spend much of the latter on the web. How computers are used is also a social process, carried out between teacher and pupils and between the pupils themselves.[162]

Final Comments: Computers and the Grammar of Schooling

Computers have only very recently made their entry into the classroom; so far, classrooms have not been significantly altered to accommodate them. But a change in the classroom environment has certainly occurred. Pupils still sit in rows facing the teacher and the whiteboard, classrooms still look exactly like they are "suppose" to look.[163] But now a computer screen is placed between the student and the teacher. The fears that my informants list are mainly that pupils will suffer stress caused by all the information on Facebook, Twitter etc., and that they will lose valuable learning time when they get stuck surfing or playing games. Only Beatrice brings up the concern expressed by most scholars about pupils' lack of source criticism.

To summarise, the greatest change mentioned by my informants is thus social. Computers have altered traditional classroom routine as regards to its social facets and also how pupils interact with each other and people outside the school on the Internet. However, when it comes to teaching and learning techniques, this is still perceived to be conducted in the traditional way and none of my informants even as much as suggested that computers could be used for something other than reading, writing and gathering information. My informants were mostly negative to the one-to-one system in schools, fearing pupils would waste time amusement surfing, having a hard time concentrating on their lessons when the net was only a

162 Lawn (1999), 68.

163 Grosvenor, Lawn, Nóovoa, Rousmaniere and Smaller (2004), 320.

mouse click away. But no one wanted to remove computers from school. They are now so fully integrated in schools we cannot imagine school without them.

The School as Museum: Using Contemporary Archaeology to Understand Past School Environments

Lena Almqvist Nielsen

In accordance with Ian Hodder's thoughts of entanglement, I want to approach school environment research from the angle of contemporary archaeology. Can an interdisciplinary approach like this advance the ongoing research about educational spaces? What stories are hidden behind the objects in school and can these stories be made visible if we look more closely at the entanglement of people and objects?

Since the modern world and the material things around us are familiar, we tend to take them for granted, accepting them unquestioned.[164] But by asking different questions and using an interdisciplinary approach we might uncover the secrets and hidden stories of the artefacts that surround us. By using contemporary archaeology, the aim of this article is to make a contribution to the understanding of objects "left behind" in the school environment.

An Interdisciplinary Study

The study of material things is a central element of archaeology. Traditionally, archaeology has been used to understand past ages and cultures, rarely our own time or the future. Contemporary archaeology is perceived as slightly controversial at times due to the objects investigated.[165] Yet there are several

164 Paul M. Graves-Brown, *Matter, Materiality and Modern Culture* (New York 2000), 1.

165 Adrian T. Myers, "Contemporary Archaeology in Transit: The Artifacts of a 1991 Van," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 15, 2011, 139.

interesting research areas of material culture where contemporary archaeology can contribute to a fuller understanding of the objects and their context. Applying archaeological methods and theoretical perspectives, the study of modern materials can uncover new themes and raise new questions.[166] The combination of archaeology and the history of education can visualise previously unseen aspects of school history and by asking the right questions, the layers of sedimentation in the school environment can be removed and the hidden stories of the objects and their life cycles be told.[167] "The archaeology of us" was a concept first broached in the 1970s and William Rathje's "garbology" is one of the earliest archaeological projects to visualise how recently abandoned contemporary materials can be a valuable source for understanding social trends and values.[168] The aim of contemporary archaeology is to contribute to a better comprehension of the present day[169] and offer possible understanding of future society.[170] Archaeology brings three specific perspectives to the study of material culture: *archaeological investigation*, which focuses on material culture and the things people leave behind; recognition of and interest in *long-term processes*; and an interest in *change*.[171]

By using an archaeological approach in line with Hodder's previously mentioned thoughts of entanglement, I want to visualise the importance of the forgotten things tucked away in the school environment as clues to understanding very recent and present-day material culture.

Understanding Objects as Entangled Things

As humans, we are connected to things and objects in many different ways. They are important to us every day, at home,

166 Victor Buchli and Gavin Lucas, *Archaeologies of the Contemporary Past* (New York 2001), 8.

167 Martin Lawn, "A Pedagogy for the Public: The Place of Objects, Observation, Mechanical Production and Cupboards," in Grosvenor and Lawn (2005), 145.

168 Myers (2011), 140; Rathje and Murphy (2001).

169 Myers (2011), 140.

170 John Schofield, "Archaeology and Contemporary Society", *World Archaeology* 42 (3), 2010, 325.

171 Rodney Harrison and John Schofield, *After Modernity: Archaeological Approaches to the Past* (Oxford 2010), 6.

in our free time and at work. They are closely linked to human identity, even though these connections are often hidden. Hodder points out that things often bring people and other things together and that the objects subsequently become entangled with humans and other things.[172] The artefact is activated by organisational, social or cultural relationships, without which it has very little use value.[173] In *Entangled*, Hodder explores what things can do for humans. In my study, I intend to explore what things can do for teachers, students and other individuals working in a school environment. The objects constitute society, what it means to be human or in this specific case, what it means to be a teacher or a student.[174]

Our interest in objects is often directly connected to the beneficial effect they have for us. We actually rarely look at the objects themselves. Hodder states that in order to really understand them, we need to look deeper and more fully.[175] Not only do things entangle with other things and humans, things and humans are also co-dependent on each other in the sense of mind, body and the world.[176]

I took photos at the school where I have worked for the past ten years with children aged 13 to 15. The school was built in the 1960s and is located in the northern part of a medium-sized town on the west coast of Sweden. The school is now undergoing what can be called a "technical transformation," as older technology is replaced by new, so for the moment, there is a mix of all different kinds of equipment, some of which, though never used during the duration of my employment, is still there. I use three of these photos as documentation, in order to visualise my points and in an attempt to place them on the map of contemporary archaeology and the history of education.

172 Ian Hodder, *Entangled: An Archaeology of the Relationships between Humans and Things* (Malden 2012), 8–12.

173 Grosvenor and Lawn (2005), 7–17.

174 Hodder (2012), 1, 64.

175 Ibid., 2.

176 Carl Knappett, "Photographs, Skeuomorphs and Marionettes: Some Thoughts on Mind, Agency and Object," *Journal of Material Culture 7* (2002), 100.

School Props and Their Hidden Stories

The objects around us function as a backdrop; they are props for a way of life, which means that the objects in the classroom are props for a way of teaching and working in school. They make a particular method of teaching possible.[177] Artefacts, rules, teachers and students integrate with one another, and all these things together function as *a network constituting the classroom*. Martin Lawn speaks of social technology as a way of distinguishing between the tools and the context in which they operate. This way of thinking can enable technology to be seen and studied in a wider sense and the activities going on in the classroom to be comprehended in a new light.[178]

Figure 1. *Technological change visualised by the mix of objects in the classroom.* Photo: Lena Almqvist Nielsen (2012).

In Figure 1, technological change is visualised by the mix of different objects in the same classroom. The smartboard alone can replace the television and the overhead. Using people's stories as a complement to visualisation can provide an even fuller picture. In this instance, I will use my own voice and my own experience as a teacher along with the knowledge gained from the experiences of other teachers and staff at the school. Looking at the props in this classroom, we can see that they make

177 Hodder (2012), 2, 6.

178 Lawn (1999), 77–78.

two different ways of teaching possible. The overhead squeezed into the corner of the room and the television turned away from the students, staring at the wall, belong to an older way of teaching. Still, they are kept as a possible solution for teachers less comfortable with the new technology offered by the smartboard. The grey speaker next to the smartboard is disconnected and has not been used for several years. It is still attached to the wall and since it is still in good condition it might be used again. No particular discussion about these objects has taken place, but a couple of teachers with a broken television in their rooms have had it removed. Some teachers use older teaching materials that can only be viewed on the overhead or the television. Lack of time can also be an issue, explaining why broken and unused objects remain gathering dust in the classrooms. If no uniform decision is made, it is up to the individual teacher to decide whether to have superannuated technology removed from their classrooms.

Figure 2. *The telephone: A connection to hidden and forgotten stories from the past.*
Photo: Lena Almqvist Nielsen (2012).

In Figure 2, you can see part of the whiteboard, a telephone, a list of telephone numbers and, again, a disconnected speaker. There is a whole story of entanglement associated with the telephone. Even though it appears to be connected, it does not work. Every classroom has one of these telephones. For years, they were tested each August, after the summer break. Beside the telephone, there is a list of the short numbers to the other classrooms, the teachers' room and the school nurse. The phones were used to convey brief messages, call a student to the office or the nurse, or when a teacher needed some kind of help.

The telephones were important work tools that all of a sudden lost their importance. As stated, this particular telephone is out of order and no one has referred to the list for years – but they are still there, attached to the wall, props from an older way of working. No discussion about their removal has occur-

red and in theory they may be used again. Teachers used to use them when conflict arose and they quickly needed assistance, but the school climate is now much more peaceful. Non-use has also changed the routine of the school nurse and the guidance counselor, who used to call the classroom, asking to see students. They now write notes to the teacher, asking them to pass them on to the student in question. It happens that the teacher forgets or that the student is not in school that day, which wastes the time of the nurse or counselor. Students also used the phones to call other classrooms, playing pranks on other teachers if their own had to leave the classroom for a few minutes.

Figure 3. *The overhead is in the end of its life cycle but the telephone might be used again.*
Photo: Lena Almqvist Nielsen (2012).

When we use an artefact, it comes alive and entangles with humans and other objects in various networks. The electric light is not a teaching tool but can be used to illustrate how technology in the classroom, through entanglement with other objects, can *become* one in a movie projector or an overhead projector.[179] Any given artefact can move in and out of different networks, depending on the stage in its life cycle an artefact is in. To fully understand an object, we need to consider its complex web of entwining users.[180] A technological artefact may function as an extension of the mind; an idea of the mind is rarely fully understood without some form of tangible expression. Lawn defines technology as a *tool*, the *thinking* the tool represents, and the *social processes* that come with it.[181] I believe that the telephones in this school can function as an example of how idea, behaviour and artefact co-depend.[182]

179 Lawn (1999), 63–82.
180 Knappett (2002), 100–101.
181 Lawn (1999), 68.
182 Knappett (2002), 98–99.

Snapshots of a Way of Teaching

In archaeology, documentation and interpretation are two major tasks. When excavating an ancient monument, it is essential to document every little step of the procedure. Doing so makes it possible to go back and revalue the conclusions. While excavating, you destroy important layers of clues and when the layers are gone the only thing left is documentation. The value of the visual is clear when studying objects in any environment. When looking at and visualising the objects left in school, we see snapshots of a way of working and teaching. One day soon these objects might be put away or replaced by newer ones and if the image is not captured, it will be hard to explain its content and context with words alone. An image also makes memories come alive and discussion taking an image as its starting point can provide much information. The old equipment in school, the television (as well as the VCR and DVD) and the overhead projector are at the end of their respective life cycles, while the telephones are more difficult to comment on since we do not know their possible future relevance. They might be used again if the school considers it necessary.

In this text, I have emphasised archaeology by focusing on material culture — the things teachers have left behind — and the recognition of and interest in long-term processes, change, and notions of entanglement and co-dependency. I believe that contemporary archaeology in school environments can offer many possibilities worth exploring. In his article, "A Pedagogy for the Public: The Place of Objects, Observation, Mechanical Production and Cupboards," Lawn describes the need for object studies in the material context of school.[183] This area has hitherto been ignored but can answer questions about how objects give meaning to everyday life in school, how they are linked to active networks and connect people and routines.[184] Contemporary archaeology is innovative and controversial in itself, which makes it even more exiting since this means that it is possible to try new approaches.

In "Contemporary Archaeology in Transit: The Artifacts of

183 Lawn (2005).

184 Ibid., 145.

a 1991 Van," Adrian T. Myers suggests that the archaeology of contemporary material culture needs to be innovative, that the discovery and exploration of new materials and situations will increase, which in turn will lead to the development of new methodologies and theoretical perspectives.[185] I would like to think that this research project has been conducted in line with his thoughts and shows how closely connected school routines, objects, and people really are.[186] A deeper study could reveal how the choices were made prior to investment in these objects and what changes they brought to the classroom.

185 Myers (2011).
186 Lawn (2005), 145, 160.

Spaces and Places for School-Related Learning: Challenges to the Classroom

Peter Norlander

Where does most of your school-related learning take place? I asked this question to students, aged 17 to 18 to find out how they experience the significance of space in relation to learning. They were also informed that they themselves would define the range or extension of this place. The place could be a specific chair in the classroom, a certain room, the school as a whole, in the library, at home, in their own room at home or cyberspace. It was up to the students to decide the place.

The reason for examining this field is due to the changed conditions of teaching and learning during the last five to ten years. Traditionally, the physical classroom has been considered the place where school-related learning takes place. My presumption is that the "digital revolution" has changed the conditions for teaching and school-related learning. At the school where I conducted this study, an upper secondary school, every student and teacher since 2006 has had their own laptop and with that tool, new patterns and methods of teaching and learning have emerged, patterns and methods more based on individual initiative and performance than on social and collective activity.

The Visual Turn

The project has been constructed within the field of the "visual turn". Roughly, as I see it, this field has two ways of dealing with the value of the visual (photos, film, images and pictures) as far as education and the history of education is concerned. One perspective is occupied with the issue of tracing the past

and understanding the present by asking if and how photographs and images can help us better understand a variety of phenomena. The other perspective deals with questions related to teacher and student opinion concerning the educational environment of today and what impact this environment has on education and learning. In this study, I deal with both aspects. First, I am interested in how the students experience the significance of spaces and places in relation to school-related learning and secondly, I want to know what kind of information can be gleaned by letting the students answer the question with a photograph they have taken themselves.

Aim and Study Questions

Though the concept "school-related learning" is quite complex and my instructions were not that specific, my intention was to be able to discuss the main question from the following concretising perspectives:

- Does student learning take place in the physical classroom? If not, then where? Their most common workplace.
- What spatial dimension is comprised by the expression the "digital classroom"? Cyberspace, "new media", the home environment? The nicest place for taking a short break.
- Who does the learning process involve? The teacher, classmates or just the individual students themselves? A place where, for some reason, they disliked being.
- Has the teacher been replaced by Google?

Theoretical Starting Points and Relevant Literature

The literature on the visual turn is extensive and versatile. In this section I will outline some of the themes, trends and theoretical positions relevant to my study and in the discussion to follow, I will relate my results to some of this literature.

From the material in *The School I'd Like…*, Catherine Burke and Ian Grosvenor show in a very concrete way that

pupils, if given the opportunity and responsibility, have a lot to contribute concerning the function and architecture of schools. The pupil's opinions are not restricted to choices of colours and criticism of smelly toilets. What appears in their reflections is that they do have the capacity to critically examine aspects of democracy, authority and effective learning environments.[187] In a sense, Burke touches upon the same issues when she describes how a research cluster from different disciplines was created to work with questions of visual culture in relation to learning contexts. The project covered areas and questions like how children read their environment visually, how designers, teachers, children and parents can optimise the visual environment in learning contexts and whether visual methodologies and tools such as photography, drawing and art can help in achieving this.[188] To me, this kind of practical visual work seems to have the potential for developing reflective insight among the pupils.

The problem with reading pictures and using photographs as images of "reality" is a central theme in literature about the visual turn. This aspect is equally important when photography is put to contemporary use or when old photographs are used to write the history of education. Grosvenor conducts a thorough inquiry of this issue by creating a long list of question concerning the photographer's gaze, technology, purpose, audience and meaning(s) that must be dealt with when using photographs as "reality". The central theme is what photographs actually say and how they should be read.[189] Despite the difficulties, he is positive to their use. Burke and Peter Cunningham are of the same opinion, though they draw their conclusions from analysing the video documentary "Ten Years On," which was produced in 1976 for professional use. This documentary focuses on the role of one classroom teacher. It shows that a lot of things go on in the classroom, but their final words also reveal the difficulties of the visual perspective: "Ten Years On thus becomes in our eyes a kind of palimpsest, where multiple readings and references enrich our visual experience but intriguingly complicate our work as historians".[190] Antóonio Nóovoa discusses these delicate is-

187 Burke and Grosvenor (2003), 17–22.

188 Burke (2006).

189 Grosvenor (1999), 85–96.

190 Catherine Burke and Peter Cunningham, "Ten Years On: Making Chil-

sues of reading and interpreting images in similar manners in respect to Paulo Catrica's photographs of school spaces:

> Paulo Catrica's photographs are a strong invitation to see what we already know, but adopting a different way of looking at it. He is aware that the familiarity of visual experience is an obstacle to the exercise of seeing. Each one of his photographs is a provocation that compels on to ask 'And if…'. Hence, he gives us the possibility of telling new stories, and of imagining new histories.[191]

Focusing on the design of classrooms, Chris Comber and Debbie Wall discuss how the shape of classrooms, interior design and information technology affect patterns of teaching and communication in the classroom. In their opinion, the environment/room/space always matters and teachers and pupils always have to relate to the environment.[192] A more specific opinion is expressed by Alexander Koutamanis and Yolanda Majewski-Steijns. Among other things, they focus on the concept "affordance" and discuss this concept in relation to classrooms. What I find interesting here is that, according to the concepts, there are different *action possibilities* latent in the environment. These action possibilities are objectively measurable and, if correct, would have a huge impact on how pupils and teachers experience and perceive the design and architecture of educational spaces.[193]

In the text "Pupils Using Photographs in School Self-Evaluation," Michael Schratz and Ulrike Steiner-Löffler grapple with the issue described in the title. Quoting Rob Walker, the major advantage of using photographs as they see it is that: "[i]n using photographs the potential exists […] to find ways of thinking about social life that escape the traps set by language" and that "it touches on the limitations of language, especially language used for descriptive purposes".[194] The conclusion is that pupils, when using photographs for this purpose, start to talk about their individual experience of school life.[195]

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dren Visible in Teacher Education and Ways of Reading Video," in *Education in Motion: Producing Methodologies for Researching Documentary Film on Education* (special issue of *Paedagogica Historica: International Journal of the History of Education*), 47 (4), 2011, 525, 540.

191 Grosvenor, Lawn, Nóovoa, Rousmaniere and Smaller (2004), 325–326.

192 Comber and Wall (2001), 87–100.

193 Koutamanis and Majewski-Steijns (2011), 212–222.

194 Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998), 237.

195 Ibid.

Figure 1. *The School: Umeå Internationella Gymnasium.*
Photo: Peter Norlander (2012).

Local School Context

Figure 2. *The typical classroom.*
Photo: Peter Norlander (2012).

The school (Figure 1) is an upper secondary school, built in the late fifties and originally intended for educating teachers in home economics. The classrooms are quite traditional (Figure 2). It is a small school with no more than 120 to 130 students in attendance and studies focus on language and social studies. For seven years, since 2006, both teachers and students each have had their own laptop, with the effect that pedagogy in the classroom is far more based on individual information searching, reading and writing than social activities like group discussion.

Ethical Issues

I would not say that there are any specific ethical issues involved in my study. In one way you can always argue that when dealing with people and their lives you are automatically dealing with ethical issues, but I would not say that my question in general is ethically delicate. The students participating in this study do not appear by name and they have all been informed that the results of the study may be used for research purpose. The school is mentioned by name but the students' contributions cannot be traced to individuals and they all participated on a voluntarily basis. The students picked for this study are aged 17 to 18 and in the third and final year of upper secondary school. They were chosen because they have studied in this school context for two and a half years and therefore familiar with it and probably also influenced by it.

Methodological Considerations

In order to discover what kind of information I could acquire by letting the students answer the study question with a photograph they had taken themselves, and thereby discuss the relative value of the visual, the students were divided in two groups, where one would answer with a photograph and the other with a short text no longer than five sentences. In response to the visual turn, my first idea was that images could and should replace the written or spoken word. After receiving the photos, I added an extra step to the study, discussing the photos taken by the students as a group, to see how they were interpreted and if the interpretations corresponded to the intentions of the photographer. Well aware of the limited number of answers, I will not draw any further conclusions beyond this specific empirical material.

Result and Discussion

Only one of the five pictures I received was taken in a classroom. Three others were taken in home environments and one outdoors (Figure 3, 4 and 5). After attempting to read and interpret these pictures, I decided to see them as, at least in my project, complementary to text. I decided to have a discussion with the

Figure 3. *In school.*
Photo by student (2012).

Figure 4. *At home.*
Photo by student (2012).

Figure 5. *The Outdoors.*
Photo by student (2012).

student photographers about their intentions and how they thought that their pictures should be read.

What became apparent was that the pictures, if they had a descriptive purpose, could stand alone. Numerous other issues related to education came up during our discussion, like individual preferences in relation to specific qualities of the educational space. This was obvious when the students tried to read each other's photos. Different interpretations were made. A picture may be worth a thousand words, and if the intention is to describe something specific, my conclusion is that photographs really can work as a trigger and initiate a fruitful discussion by clearly focusing on certain aspects of educational space. My conclusion however is that photos should be seen as complementary to discussion. Seeing the same picture, the students have to relate to the same "object" and even if their readings and interpretations do not necessary correlate, they at least have to relate to each other's photos.

Of the thirteen students who responded to the question about where student learning takes place in text, seven answered "at home." Five of those seven answers included "a computer/the Internet". Two students said "in the classroom". One

of those two mentioned the "importance of the teacher". One student tried to give a balanced view and said "at home and in school". That student also stressed the "importance of the teacher". Three students said "no specific place", but two of the three mentioned the "computer/Internet". None of the students mentioned their classmates.

Evaluating the Visual Approach

Using photos in my study established a very clear focus and that is a major advantage of the visual. This conclusion is similar to the one reached by Schratz and Steiner-Löffler even though my students are older and should be more readily capable of using language for informative and analytical purposes.[196]

Furthermore, I would like to stress the complexity inherent in the sentence "most of your school-related learning" (as posed in the initiating question), which can be understood in both a qualitative and quantitative way. If your intention is to follow up the photographs with a discussion, this vagueness may work to your advantage. If you ask for written answers, it is easier for the students to respond more exactly. My general conclusion is that text is easier to interpret for informative purposes, because when reading a photograph, as already discussed, you have to consider a much broader range of questions.[197] But if you use the photographs as a starting point for discussion, you will achieve a clear focus that allows the students to start talking about their individual experiences. This can in turn be informative for visual research while providing the pupils with reflective insights into their own learning process.[198]

Spaces and Places for School-Related Learning?

Finally, I will comment on the questions asked at the beginning of this study, using both the photographs and subsequent discussion, including the written answers, as empirical material. The questions asked were:

196 Schratz and Steiner Löffler (1998), 249–250.

197 Cf. Grosvenor (1999), 91–97.

198 This conclusion relates to and matches the conclusion in Burke and Grosvenor (2003), 20–22 and Burke (2006).

- Does student learning take place in the physical classroom? If not, then where?
- What spatial dimension is comprised by the expression the "digital classroom"? Cyberspace, "new media", the home environment?
- Who does the learning process involve? The teacher, classmates or just the individual students themselves?
- Has the teacher been replaced by Google?

More than two-thirds of the students claim their home environment as the most important educational space, and just as many name the computer/Internet. None of the students mention their classmates. As previously mentioned Koutamanis and Majewski-Steijns uses the concept *affordance*.[199] The concept is understood to be that there are different action possibilities latent in an environment, which allows individuals to perform certain actions. If the students describe their homes as quiet places for focused, individual study, this gives us an idea of the kind of task they are performing. And this might tell that the "ordinary" classroom (Figure 2) is not the optimal space for studying in the "digital era". This may be jumping to conclusions, but students and teachers should be asked how classrooms could be designed to better accommodate the new, digital didactical orientation.

Only two students discussed the importance of the teacher. This could be interpreted as though Google has effectively replaced the teacher, though in discussion, none of the students believed that could ever happen. The teacher and the search engine have different advantages and both are very useful. This brings me back to the question of the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the phrase "most of your school-related learning," and raises the all-important question: What should be done in school and what should be done at home? I have no clear answer to that question, but I think that the visual as a method make meaningful contributions.

199 Koutamanis and Majewski-Steijns (2011), 214–215.

Conclusion

By asking students at an upper secondary school where most of their school-related learning takes place, I have found that more than two-thirds of the students consider their home environment to be that place. New digital conditions have engendered new patterns of teaching and learning, and I believe that schools, teachers and students need to discuss and compose strategies as to how the classroom of today and tomorrow should be designed and used. In this process, my study indicates that methods from the field of the "visual turn," such as using photos for evaluating spaces and places of learning, can be extremely helpful.

Figure 1. *Montage by Synne Myreböe (2012).*

Searching for Educational Space In-Between: Following the Traces of Walter Benjamin's Thought-Images in Reflecting on Spatiality

Synne Myreböe

Encountering the realm of sensuous history has been a new and stimulating experience. Coming from the discipline of intellectual history, my focus had primary been on conceptual history with philosophical texts as source material. Grappling with educational space as a topology of sensuous perceptions has certainly challenged my way of thinking and opened up for further explorations of the educational space in-between.

The German writer and thinker Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) moved like a nomad or flaneur between different humanistic disciplines. As his friend Hannah Arendt describes him in the introduction to *Illuminations*, he was not to be cap-

tured within a certain denomination.[200] As Arendt explains, "[t]he trouble with everything Benjamin wrote was that it always turned out to be *sui generis*".[201] Most of all, his writings are characterised by a fusion of form and content where he often used literary montages to create what he defined as thought-images (*Bilddenken*).[202]

According to Benjamin, history can only be seen as a surrealistic collage of ruins.[203] His thought-images intend to arouse a broad, sensuous perception. They were also meant to resist reproduction and misuse, as he saw fascism using and distorting art to strengthen its political agenda. In "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," he urges that politics should not be aestheticized and stresses the importance of politicising art.[204] Following Benjamin's ideas, contemporary theories of aesthetics also politicise the beholder. This prompts interest as to what can be uncovered in the interpreter's gaze. In this essay, I want to direct this interest into a reflection on educational space.[205] My aim is to explore how the concept of

200 Hannah Arendt," Introduction," in Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections* (New York 2007), 3.

201 Ibid.

202 An example of this can be found in the passage "The Sock" in his book *Berlin Childhood Around 1900* (Cambridge 2006). Walter Benjamin recalls the pleasure of unfolding the secret treasure inside a rolled-up sock. As he unfolds it, he miraculously discovers that content and form are inseparable. In Sigrid Weigel's book *Body- and Image-Space: Re-Reading Walter Benjamin* (New York 1996), 3, the images are explained as "the third," where form and content come together.

203 The nihilistic image of history articulated via the thought-image of the angel of history is a part of his "Theses on the Philosophy of History": "A Klee painting named 'Angelus Novus' shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned towards the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees only one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress". Benjamin (2007), 257.

204 Benjamin (2007), 241.

205 I am in the early stages of my Ph.D. project "Re-Thinking Humanity in the Humanities: Martha Nussbaum's Actualizing of Aristotle. Concepts of Hu-

space can be interpreted as a methodological approach in the history of education as the topology of a reflective, relational *in-between*. I wish to probe how this perspective can be applied by analysing visual material. Relevant questions include:

- How can we visualise the non-visible?
- What are the value and conditions of the in-between educational space?
- What does bodily presence imply in higher education?

Along with its exterior, interior and features, I claim that there is an obvious but invisible space in school that is most relevant to the discussion of educational spaces. The in-between I am looking for is characterised as an open space for reflection, questions, confusion, invention, imagination and critical thinking. Moreover, it is a sensorial space connected to emotion, which I believe is also highly relevant for rational thinking in higher education. I will touch on some of the characteristics of this space as it appears in between texts, in between bodies and between texts and bodies, as a correlation between what has been and what is yet to come. Educational historian Ian Grosvenor stresses that photography should "be read not as an image, but as a text […] open to a diversity of interpretations".[206] The texts treated in the present essay appear both in photographs and in literature.[207] Educational researcher Jane McGregor explains that, "[s]patiality (or space/time) is more than physical or social space. It is the recursive interplay between the spatial and the social, the product of complex on-going relations".[208] I will focus on the understanding of educational spaces as "intersections in space/time", where space is mediated by our interaction.[209]

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manity and Man in Contemporary Defense of the Humanities". One of my main concerns is to encourage reflection on the way contemporary historians and philosophers use history and philosophy in relation to educational, epistemological theory.

206 Grosvenor et al. (2004), 319.

207 Benjamin's thought-image blurs the demarcation line between text and image, in which text also can be read as image.

208 McGregor (2003), 263.

209 Ibid.

In her book *Between East and West*, Belgian philosopher and psychoanalyst Luce Irigaray searches for new approaches to knowledge and science, arguing that a contemporary humanities preoccupied with the past is incapable of transforming knowledge into ways of formulating the future.[210] Like Benjamin, she compares history to ruins. Irigaray explains how the humanities are in danger of becoming "dedicated to the description of what already exists". As for Benjamin, who wrote between the world wars, he warns that any attempt to pin history down is ultimately shallow and untrue.[211] Benjamin and Irigaray both emphasise the importance of re-thinking science and history, which I believe is a crucial task for the humanities today.

Fieldwork: Trying to Visualise the Non-Visible

Participating a course on the uses of history in Berlin gave me the opportunity to attempt to capture a visualisation of the in-between. As partners in dialogue, I brought Irigaray and Benjamin with me. During our week in Berlin, we followed the footsteps of war. The city's narrative of the past runs as a parallel time in contrast to the temporality and movement of here and now. This narrative appeared to me as a compact mausoleum of the dead, an on-going attempt to recognise injustice. The museum stories (texts, images, videos, etc., and all the little explanatory plaques at memorials and monuments) together with the teachers' lectures explained how history has been used by different parties, from World War II until the collapse of the wall. We heard examples of how identities were created through propaganda; we heard the story of the victorious right and the errors of the fallen. Above all, we heard the story presented in a manner that reflected not only prevailing political circumstances but also the political will of people to live and organise their lives. What were the hopes, desires, fears behind

210 Irigaray (2002).

211 In a letter to Gershom Scholem, Benjamin writes: "[t]ruth is not so much *thought*, rather it thinks". Bram Mertens, "The Concept of Art Criticism in German Romanticism: Walter Benjamin's Epistemological Exercise Book," in Carroll, Giles and Oergel (ed), *Aesthetics and Modernity: From Shiller to the Frankfurt School* (Bern 2012), 269.

all the -isms? How did they cope with their crushed or unfulfilled dreams? What did their experience leave for the future?

These overarching questions expose attention to how we can respond to monuments that manifest memories of a time that no longer exists. In this context, Benjamin's description of the past as relational and in a state of becoming can help us to illuminate how we approach history and the stories we construct to describe the Other's use of history. Further questions will then be brought up: What do we do to the Other, as well as to ourselves when we accept ourselves as interpreters of collective grief and individual memories? How can history be solidarity with a pluralistic, complex and contradictory world of experience? What happens when we turn our gaze from the story being told to the storyteller?

The photographs I have taken have been assembled as a montage to visualise the relational, dialectical topography appearing in educational space as a tentative thought-image.[212] My intention has been to visualise how fragmentary, often unnoticed aspects emerge and dialogue with one another.[213] The educational space *between* is interactivity, which is constantly open to the creation of thought-images.

Thought-Images as Visualising Space/Time

Educational historian Catherine Burke emphasises that "emotions can challenge the grand narrative of school".[214] She highlights the hermeneutic understanding that appears in interpreting photographs of schooling as a relationship between "fa-

212 I have made a collage out of pictures taken in Berlin. One of them shows the faces of the students and teachers. However, I have manipulated the images by cutting and pasting in order to visualise a tentative thought-image, thereby constructing a fragmentary context. Consent was obtained by written confirmation of the participants. The ethical guidelines are taken from Wiles et al. (2008), 8.

213 I spent the last day at the Jewish Museum on my own, attempting to summarise my impressions. This turned out to be an unexpected valuable experience as I was able to attend R.B. Kitaj's exhibition "Obsessionen" featuring work clearly inspired by Walter Benjamin's thoughts. Kitaj addresses Benjamin and how his thoughts have affected his art. In fact, the canvas "The Autumn of Central Paris" actually features Benjamin.

214 Burke (2001).

miliarity and alienation".[215] This opens up for autobiographical reflections of schooling that include emotional experiences, a complementary path running alongside the one-way street of the grand narrative of education. Burke further warns of the implications of the regeneration of the idea of education as "progression and improvement that disallows or renders problematic any radical critique".[216]

The familiarity of educational space as common ground brings the recognisable to the fore. The challenge, however, is to understand the unrecognized, the unknown. Benjamin's thought-image can rouse sensitivity to the contextualised conditions of perception and receptivity to divergent interpretations and perceptual experiences. It also implies a critique of modernity and its depreciation of sensuous experience. In the Enlightenment view, history has moved in a linear direction toward the future. In respect to human differences and changing global conditions, it is necessary to illuminate the complexity of history construction and the historicity of its very own narrative.

Grosvenor argues that the senses are a product of space and time, which affects our perception and memory.[217] This resonates with Benjamin's writings, where he seems to believe in truth, but truth as becoming. Benjamin describes how the optical view lends attention to blind spots not recognised by the "naked eye" and that "the camera introduces us to unconscious optics as does psychoanalysis to unconscious impulses".[218] Photography provides an opportunity to dwell upon the unrecognised, to focus on details overlooked as inconsequent. Benjamin sees this opportunity as a chance to break with the distorted, stereotypical reproductions of valuable originals.[219] Looking through the eyes of the Other, we identity our own view of the Other, power relationships and ourselves.[220] To become receptive to the awareness of our own construction of history, it is

215 Burke (2001), 194.

216 Ibid., 195.

217 Grosvenor (2012), 676.

218 Benjamin (2007), 236.

219 Ibid.

220 Catherine Burke has described this by highlighting the view of the child in educational history and spatiality. Burke (2006).

necessary to alienate oneself from the familiar and integrate emotion as *experienced knowledge*.

Benjamin's ideas are valuable in the analysis of educational space. Photography can visualise that which is easily missed both in theory and practice. Moreover, Benjamin stresses that truth only appears in short glimpses, as experience meets perception. In other words, truth is multifarious and situated. As a result, exploring educational space as it appears in thought-images of the past, present and future opens up for a wider political discussion of the mission and condition of education. In Benjamin's thought-image, history appears as heterogeneous and fragmentary. It reveals contradictions between form and content, which relationship might be one of the great political challenges to the future of education and its impact on the lives of individuals and their shared society.

Toward the Future: The Value of Visualising Educational Space

Visual material adds a sensory perspective to research. By paying attention to a variety of perceptual sources of experience, and thereby knowledge, educational history can provide a deeper understanding of the past and present alike.[221] Interpretation will result in pluralistic fragments of reception that are valuable in highlighting the factual existence of sensory knowledge and its impact on knowledge in general. Reflecting on this enables us to grasp ideas about the future in all its complexity.

Postcolonial and feminist critics have argued against Western epistemology, its concept of the rational man and ontological assumptions, which have been constructed on a fundament of dichotomies including man/woman, mind/body and rationality/emotion. When unheard voices in history have been raised to redress this imbalance, it has often been within a scientific frame set by this idea of rationality. As feminist philosopher Sara Ahmed argues, the acceptance of difference is only adequate as long as the Others assimilate the given conception of what this difference implies.[222] This requirement for conforma-

221 Grosvenor (2012).

222 Sara Ahmed [lecture at Södra Teatern in Stockholm on her book *Willful*

tion corresponds to Irigaray's argument of stagnation, that the humanities seem "past". Irigaray argues that we must re-think the relationship between nature and culture.[223] For education, this involves "the cultivation of sensible perception".[224] Irigaray insists that, "political agendas, like educational ones, need new formations, perspectives, words, and logics in order not to take the ideals of the past for progressive generosity".[225] This implies expanding the borders of scientific acceptance, questioning the "epistemological presuppositions" that might limit the value of the senses, emotions and fragmentary narratives for research.[226]

The concept of space as *space/time* is valuable for visualising the invisible, volatile aspects of education as a process, how time and space structure early childhood and later educational environments on all levels. As well as intellectual growth, time and space shapes "bodily experience and identity".[227] This requires a critique of an educational discourse based on the idea of education as intellectual growth and cultivated or suppressed emotion.

Searching for the educational space *in between* foregrounds thoughts about the potential in activating other research methods, like an optical view via photography. Investigating photography as a research object suddenly turns the lens back on me as a researcher. Object and subject are thereby located in an educational space in- between, a space of becoming. I believe that educational history together with philosophy has great potential for "the cultivation of sensible perception" by thinking about the way we think, even though balancing on the very borders of science means putting you at risk.[228]

Subjects: On the Experience of Social Dissent, http://vimeo.com/35876245, accessed 2014-11-11].

223 Irigaray (2002), 17.

224 Ibid., 56.

225 Ibid., 145.

226 Mertens (2012), 264.

227 James, Jenks and Prout (1998), 39.

228 Irigaray (2002), 56.

Post Comments

Almost a year after this text was written, I read Grosvenor's text "Imaging Past Schooling: The Necessity for Montage".[229] He develops his argument through an interpretation of Benjamin's work, not far from my own tentative attempt to investigate the sensuous history of education, although my focus has been more directed towards a meta-perspective. Trying to recall the writing process, I wonder if I had read about Benjamin's emphasis on montage in relation to educational history. I don't think I had. However, I do remember sitting with a pile of pictures, trying to work out which ones to use for the article. Should I choose the monument to persecuted homosexuals, manifested in the stone-cube with motion picture scenes of kissing couples? Or the elderly woman in front of a Nazi torture chamber? Would the picture of my colleague taking photos of the Soviet monuments add understanding to the text? And should I arrange the pictures chronologically or thematically? Such categorization would certainly be contradictive to the text presented. Hence in the work of Walter Benjamin, the concept of time as progress or space as determinable is dissolved. Benjamin's emphasis on the fragmentary thought-image functioned as an implicit guide to my ultimate choice — cutting up the squares, letting the pictures work in relation with each other. Montage visualises discontinuity, which is essential to our understanding of life and the world, displaying discontinuity as a visible object of research and a tool for research as well.

This perspective opened the door onto my interest in concepts of aesthetic education. The montage acts as a reminder of our own role in constructing tentative interpretations of meaning; in Grosvenor's words "[m]ontage enables the historian [...] to reveal the complex interrelations between old and new".[230] My emphasis on the space between has turned my gaze from the pictures *per se* to the cracks between the shards. What is discovered in this relational area opens up for reflection on our own historicity in the practice of interpretation.

229 Grosvenor, Lawn and Rousmaniere (2006).
230 Ibid.

"All kids are monkeys at heart": Nature as the Child's Natural Habitat in a Southern Swedish Outdoor Preschool

Åsa Wendin

What constitutes an educational space? In other words, what are the criteria? Of course one could always argue that learning is an ongoing process that takes place all the time and everywhere. However, society has decided to build specific buildings for the specific purpose of learning, namely schools. These buildings are often considered bastions of learning, as if something automatically happens upon entering. And they are often imbued with some kind of school spirit. I asked myself, what would happen if we removed the walls? And this is where my project took a somewhat different turn and the perspective shifted to nature as a symbol of the learning child. This turn was perhaps not entirely unexpected since my research took place at Stock & Sten, Malmö's oldest and biggest outdoor preschool. This change of perspective gave me the answer to my initial question.

The school is situated in one of the town's largest parks and it was founded thirteen years ago in 2000. The initiative came from two teachers, who had a vision and ironically a community with a poor budget. Today it is divided in to four divisions and has approximately 100 children attending, ages 1 to 5. Two of the divisions have a small building with heat, water and bathrooms; however these buildings are not suitable for any indoor activities due to their size and are merely used as storage rooms. All activities still take place outside.

The other two divisions consist of no more than a shelter and an open space in front of it. The open space is surrounded by branches laid on the ground, which form a barrier without

actually being one. The children refer to the branches as "the border". They are all very aware of the fact that they are not allowed to cross the border.

Practical issues, like using the bathroom, are either solved by using a potty or visiting their own toilet situated at a public restroom nearby. The food is fetched by the teachers at a traditional preschool kitchen and transported back in little carts. Eating takes place sitting on the ground, since there are no tables or chairs.

I did my research at the division without a building. Prior to my visit, the teachers had made the decisions to remove all man-made equipment and create their space with what nature could provide. Due to the teachers' decision, the open space in front of the shelter changed from day to day. And everyone was involved in transforming the space.

Figure 1. *"The border".*
Photo: Åsa Wendin (2012).

Figure 2. *The open space.*
Photo: Åsa Wendin (2012).

The Natural Child

The outdoor environment is often described as a space where children are more independent and free to create their own spatial and social contexts.[231] The concept of the "natural child" seen in a Western historical context goes back to Rousseau

231 Fredrika Mårtensson et al., *Den nyttiga utevistelsen? Forskningsperspektiv på naturkontaktens betydelse för barns hälsa och miljöengagemang*, Rapport 6407 (Bromma 2011), 19.

and Darwin. Children are seen as "wild and uncontrollable," since they have not yet been civilised into adults. In the late 19th century, the city was considered unhealthy for children and middle-class families fled to the country in the summer in order for the children to get fresh air and play in the grass. The children were, by definition, untamed, however this was also the foundation for their relation and engagement with nature. Nature was the child's natural biotope.[232]

In the 1900s, the idea of the child's need for proximity to nature influenced the educational system. Between 1918 and 1953, E. F. (Teddy) O'Neil was the headmaster of Prestolee primary school. At the age of 28, he was the youngest head ever appointed in Lancashire, England. On arriving Mr. O'Neil introduced progressive methods strongly influenced by Dewey. He encouraged children to learn by experience, in other words "learn by doing".[233] Prestolee became known as "the do-as-you-please" school.[234]

O'Neil believed that the function of a teacher "should be to release the life force which is latent in every child".[235] He also was convinced that the role of the teacher was to do things together with the children rather than for them, and that children should be allowed to work and discuss their work with one another in order to learn from each other.[236]

The classroom and class lessons represented a major barrier to learning; he felt that confinement to a building only formed passive learners who were there to be disciplined. Movement was restricted and teaching and learning was undertaken in an atmosphere of fear.[237] "Let teachers be spacious", he said. By this O'Neil meant that teachers needed to recognise the opportunities and the diversity presented within a room. In practice this meant that he created different learning areas in the open assembly hall, rather than using closed rooms. He encouraged the older children to build jungle gyms in the schoolyard. He

232 Mårtensson et al. (2011), 32–34.

233 Burke (2006), 263–265.

234 http://www.prestolee.bolton.sch.uk/Our-School/History/ (accessed 2013-08-20).

235 Gerard Holmes, *The Idiot Teacher* (London 1977), 28.

236 Ibid.

237 Burke (2006), 266–267.

turned the blackboards over to create more surfaces to work on. All in accordance to the principle of learning "in an atmosphere congenial to the natural growth of the mental, moral and physical qualities of children".[238] It is fair to conclude that O'Neil's child-centered methods were quite uncommon at the time, and the school garnered national attention during his headship.[239]

Traces of O'Neill's pedagogy and view of the child can undoubtedly be found at Stock & Sten in Sweden even today.

Nature as a Learning Space

Outdoorsmanship has a long tradition in Sweden. *Friluftsfrämjandet* (the Swedish Outdoor Association) was founded more than 100 years ago. The organisation started out as a movement aimed to get people to ski more. Eventually the focus changed, and in 1908 the Swedish Ski Association was formed and the real development of *Friluftsfrämjandet* as a less competitive and more educational organisation begun. Alongside *Friluftsfrämjandet*, Sweden also had the Scout movement.

In 1957, *Friluftsfrämjandet* formed its teaching agenda by introducing the character "Skogsmulle" – a fictional, troll-like character living in the forest. Skogsmulle's role was to inform and teach younger children the importance of nature and benefits of an outdoor lifestyle. *Friluftsfrämjandet* had its real breakthrough in the sixties and seventies, when more suburbs were built and cities throughout the country grew. The need for nature was now becoming crucial. In a wider perspective, the outdoor lifestyle became a social movement.[240]

The idea that the urban environment hampered the child was now a fairly common notion. It was also an idea that the Swedish author Astrid Lindgren eagerly portrayed in her extremely popular books. In the early 1970s, many of them were transformed into feature films and TV series, and a whole generation grew up with the impression that nature was the best

238 Burke (2006), 270.

239 http://www.prestolee.bolton.sch.uk/Our-School/History/ (accessed 2013-08-20).

240 Gunilla Halldén, *Naturen som symbol för den goda bardomen* (Stockholm 2009), 84.

place to be. It was obvious that the child's natural habitat was the great outdoors.[241]

Today, *Friluftsfrämjandet* estimates that over 1.5 million Swedish children have participated in their Skogsmulle programme. The pedagogy is still the same as it was thirty-five years ago; exploring and investigating, children learning by doing. A tendency appears in this structure, where nature is regarded as something more authentic than the average classroom. This authenticity is what legitimates the outdoor preschools of today. In order for the child to really learn and develop, learning must take place in what is considered the child's natural environment.[242]

According to Dewey, one the problems of teaching was that it did not evolve from natural processes. Instead, it was broken into fragments that led to little or no appreciation for context. Dewey's pedagogy with its emphasis on the outdoors can be found both at Prestolee and at Stock & Sten. And yet both schools are in fact man-made. Prestolee was housed in a physical building made out of bricks and mortar and Stock & Sten is suited in a park in the third largest city in Sweden. Neither of them have anything to do with "wilderness"; they are both to some extent *impersonator*s of nature. This is not necessarily an issue though, since the pedagogy itself exists even without spectacular scenery.

The Importance of the Visual Source

Figure 3 is an image from Prestolee taken in 1937, and Figure 4 a picture taken at Stock & Sten in 2012. More than 50 years have passed between them. Two images with no connection, and yet they have common denominators.

In order to capture this specific view of the child in an outdoor learning space, photographs are of great use. However the picture itself requires a context. Ian Grosvenor et al. argue that photographs exist both as history and in history, and that the image must be read as a text. The photographs are products of a culture discourse, and they do not offer an "open window" either to the past or the present. As with any text, they can also

241 Mårtensson et al. (2011), 20.

242 Halldén (2009), 100.

Figure 3. *Prestolee primary school (1937).*
Source: http://www.prestolee.bolton.sch.uk/Our-School/History/ (accessed 2013-08-20).

Figure 4. *Stock & Sten.*
Photo: Åsa Wendin (2012).

be read differently, there is no given experience beyond the letters or the things we actually see in a picture.[243] By reading the picture as a text, a narrative emerges and different stories can be told, stories that link different images together. These narratives are like bridges connecting the past to the present.

The images I have chosen build that bridge and common denominators regarding the children and the space become visible. The narrative is about the pedagogical approach in an outdoor environment, an approach formed by a specific idea of what constitutes both learning and a happy, learning child. They are both unusual images in that way that they do not portray the ordinary classroom. They are not taken in a physical building. It is the outdoors that holds the secret. It is the jungle gym that is the storehouse of memories and interpretations about experiences and learning.

Photographs are useful because they contextualise text-based information about schooling, offering details and context to other sources. They also provide information which could not been gleaned in other way, allowing "hypotheses to be generated and further undertaken on aspects of overlooked schooling".[244] Grosvenor and Martin Lawn argue that photographs should be valued as unique record of a school, since they allow historians to become eyewitnesses to historical events;

243 Grosvenor, Lawn, Nóovoa, Rousmaniere and Smaller (2004), 318.
244 Grosvenor and Lawn (2005), 88.

the viewer is confronted by the appearance of history itself.[245]

While the photograph itself may portray the truth of a specific moment, the process behind its taking is never innocent in terms of representation. The image is selective insofar as the photographer controlled the construction of the picture. One way to approach the image from the "photographer's gaze"[246] is by asking yourself, what was excluded, and what was not? What was the photographer's intent? By asking these questions, the narration of the images becomes even more complex.

In this case, we know when and where these photographs were taken. We also know took one of the photos and since that was me, I can only reflect over my own intention. I wanted to capture a visual image of pedagogy as well as the conception of the natural child. The construction in both pictures symbolises Dewey's learning by doing. This is something that becomes obvious only after the picture is contextualised and you know the story behind the jungle gym. Both images portray children playing as a natural part of their daily learning. Both images contain a story of teachers with a vision, a vision they fought for. When I took my picture, I had not yet read or seen anything from Prestolee. I did not know who Teddy O'Neil was. Today it is clear to me, when viewing these images, that there is a narrative bridge between the past and present captured in these images. O'Neil says that "All kids are monkeys at heart," and that captures this narrative bridge in a beautiful way.

245 Ibid..

246 Grosvenor (1999), 91.

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