



## AELE Research Network Symposium 2008

# A National Curriculum in English: Perspectives, Principles, Possibilities

Saturday 7 June 2008, Eastern Avenue Auditorium, The University of Sydney

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



**MR TOM ALEGOUNARIAS**  
**NSW Institute of Teachers; National Curriculum Board**

Tom Alegounarias is the Chief Executive of the NSW Institute of Teachers, and is the NSW representative on the National Curriculum Board. The Institute is responsible for the establishment and implementation of professional teaching standards. This includes endorsement of providers of professional development for teachers and approval of teacher education courses as well as professional accreditation of teachers at the levels of Competence, Accomplishment and Leadership.

Previous to this Tom held the position of General Manager External Relations Policy with the NSW Department of Education and Training. In this role he was responsible for Commonwealth, State, higher education and non-government school relations, including national funding and accountability.

Tom has worked as a curriculum officer and has been responsible for equity programs and policy for NSW education. In particular, he has worked closely with schools and regions on socio-economic disadvantage and its relationship to curriculum, teaching and school leadership. Tom's work has included developing national policy frameworks for teaching standards, school funding and national reporting. Recently he has overseen the strengthening of content and syllabus requirements for teacher training and accreditation in NSW.



**MS LUCY ANDRESEN**

Born in Sydney, I left Australia at the tender age of 5 to live in the small town of Granville, Ohio. Before embarking upon my primary education in this new country, I finally learnt to read, a skill I had deviously avoided until that time. Have mastered the art, I soon became a voracious reader and writer, with English as my favourite subject at school. After I turned 11, we moved on to Stavanger, Norway, and here I was able to learn fluent Norwegian, and topped the class in English ... well, ESL. Moving back to Australia in time for year 9 (where I was utterly befuddled by the convoluted educational system), I soon became interested in this very new kind of English, namely essay-writing, and found my niche in this subject.

Currently I am undertaking the HSC (predictably, with 4 units of English) at Cherrybrook Technology High School. In my spare time I work at a local deli, saving money for travelling post-SC.



**DR JOHN BENNETT**  
**Board of Studies NSW**

John Bennett is General Manager and Chief Executive Officer of the Office of the Board of Studies, NSW. He holds a Bachelor of Mathematics, Bachelor of Educational Studies, Master of Education and a PhD in Educational Measurement. Previously he was the Director for Information Services with the responsibility of planning, managing and operating information and key measurement systems and services in relation to the Higher School Certificate and School Certificate in NSW. His PhD thesis is the basis of the standards-based approach to assessing and reporting student achievement in the NSW Higher School Certificate and School Certificate.

Dr Bennett has been actively involved in interstate and national forums, in particular in his capacity as the NSW Chief Executive member of the Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA). Dr Bennett has also furthered the Office's international links by meeting with a providing advice to personnel from overseas curriculum and assessment authorities, highlighting major initiatives implemented in NSW in relation to the assessment of student achievement, and being part of an evaluation of the implementation of the Qatar Senior Secondary Certificate.



**DR PAUL BROCK**  
**NSW Department of Education and Training; Faculty of Education and Social Work,  
The University of Sydney**

Dr Paul Brock AM, Director of Learning and Development Research, NSW Department of Education and Training, and Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Education and Social Work, the University of Sydney, has researched and published extensively in English literature, language and literacy education. His most recent book is *A Passion for Life* (ABC Books).

Paul has been heavily involved in the development of English curricula at both state and national levels, and was a Director on the Board of the Australian Children's Television Foundation from 1993 to 1997. He is a former Vice-President and now a life member of the English Teachers' Association, NSW.

In 2006 Paul was made a General Member of the Order of Australia for service to public education, particularly as an adviser and author in the areas of strategic policy development, to maintaining high standards of teaching and professionalism, and to people with Motor Neurone Disease.



**DR BRIAN CROKE**  
**Catholic Education Commission; Board of Studies NSW**

Brian Croke describes himself as an educator by day and an historian by night. Since 1994 he has been Executive Director of the Catholic Education Commission, NSW and Adjunct Professor of History at Macquarie University. He is also currently a member of various national and state advisory councils including the National Catholic Education Commission and the NSW Board of Studies, as well as being a Board director of the Australian Council for Educational Research, and the Australian Curriculum Corporation.

As an historian he is the author or co-author of eight books on Roman and Byzantine history and historiography. He was educated at Macquarie, Oxford and Harvard universities, elected a Fellow of the Australian Humanities Academy in 1995 and was awarded the Australian Centenary Medal in 2002 for service to the humanities.



**PROFESSOR ROBERT DIXON**  
**Faculty of Arts, The University of Sydney**

Robert Dixon is Professor of Australian Literature in the Faculty of Arts and the University of Sydney. is a past-President of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature (ASAL) and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities.



**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR ROBYN EWING**  
**Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Sydney**

In the areas of English and the Arts Robyn's research has particularly focused on the use of drama as quality pedagogy with authentic texts to develop students' critical literacies. Her research has included working as an academic mentor in a range of Sydney schools alongside classroom teachers. She was recently the Lansdowne scholar at the University of Victoria, British Columbia where she lectured on the imperative of an Arts-led curriculum.

Teacher education, especially the experiences of early career teachers and the role of mentoring, sustaining curriculum innovation and evaluation, inquiry and case based learning and the use of arts informed inquiry in educational research are also current research interests. Robyn was President of the Primary English Teachers Association from 2001-2006.

She has co-authored two books: *Teaching, Challenges and Dilemmas* with Susan Groundwater-Smith and Rosie Le Cornu and *Beyond the script Take 2: Drama in the classroom* with Jennifer Simons. Recently she edited *Beyond the Reading Wars: Towards a balanced approach to helping children learn to read*.



**MR TREVOR FLETCHER**  
**NSW Department of Education and Training**

Trevor Fletcher has held a number of high level positions in the educational system in Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales. He is now in his fourth year as Deputy Director-General, Schools in New South Wales.

His career in education began in 1975 when he was appointed as a classroom teacher. In 1991, he became principal of one of the largest primary schools in Victoria. Trevor gained valuable insights into education on a global scale as an International Teaching Fellow in the United Kingdom during 1988 and in 1999 he was selected to attend the prestigious *Senior Managers in Government* program at Harvard University.

Trevor places great value on the status and quality of teachers and the promotion of teaching as a career. He has demonstrated his commitment to leadership development through building capacity among our teachers and education leaders across the school education system.

Of particular note is Trevor's attention to tri-level reform which is now embedded in the policies and practices across the system. He has ensured that there is a climate of partnership and interdependence with schools, regions and the centre, each having a clear sense of participation and an emphasis on continuous improvement. Trevor is committed to experiencing at first hand what goes on in schools in New South Wales. He is continuing his program of visiting each year a large number of schools in each region and to speak with as many teachers, parents and students as possible.

As part of Trevor's commitment to improved educational outcomes, he has focussed on building a culture of high expectations based on a clear framework for school development and enhanced accountability coupled with targeted support. With clear attention to the particular needs of students, Trevor is leading the move towards learning communities and focussing on student learning, staff capacity and morale and on building the support of the community for public education.



**MS JOWEN HILLYER**  
**Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Sydney**

Jowen Hillyer is a Lecturer in English Curriculum in the Faculty of Education and Social Work. Prior to her appointment, she was a Head Teacher of English/HSIE and a class room teacher in NSW government schools. Jowen has worked in disadvantaged areas of south-western Sydney and in rural NSW. Her doctorate research focuses on the engagement of boys in disadvantaged schools with an emphasis on middle years' writing.




**MR ANTHONY MACKAY**  
**National Curriculum Board; Centre for Strategic Education, Australia**

Tony Mackay is Executive Director of the Melbourne based Centre for Strategic Education, Australia, a Centre focused on leading educational thinking and practice at state, national and international levels. Tony is also an Honorary Fellow in the Faculty of Education at The University of Melbourne. Tony specialises in the areas of school and system leadership, improvement and innovation.

Tony's work at state, national and international levels focuses on strategic thinking and facilitation for Government bodies, education agencies, think tanks, school boards and leadership teams. It encompasses the areas of school and system leadership, improvement and innovation, teacher professionalism and curriculum and assessment policy and includes the design and implementation of Research and Development Programs and Leadership Development Programs.

Tony is a founding member of the Governing Council of the National College for School Leadership in England and is a Visiting Fellow at the London Leadership Centre. He is Chair of the Board of Directors of the Innovation Unit Ltd. England; an OECD Senior Consultant for the Schooling For Tomorrow Project, Improving School Leadership Project, and Alternative Models of Learning Project and a DEMOS International Associate. He is currently working on a number of 'Next Practice Projects' on School Leadership and School Improvement and Reform in Australia, UK, Europe, Canada, New Zealand and Hong Kong. Tony is President-elect of the International Congress for School Effectiveness and School Improvement (ICSEI).

Tony has a Bachelor of Economics and a Bachelor of Education from Monash University and a MA in the Economics of Education from the University of London. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER); a Board Member of The University of Melbourne, Faculty of Education; a member of the



Advisory Board of the Asia Education Foundation (AEF); a Patron of the Education Foundation (Australia); a Committee Member of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA), and a Governing Body member of a Prep to Year 12 Melbourne school. He is President of the Australian Curriculum Studies Association.

Tony is a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators (ACE) and the College's 2006 Medallist; a Fellow of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) and a Fellow of the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) (V).

At the AELE Symposium Tony will be delivering the opening Keynote Address and conducting the final Plenary Session in his capacity as Deputy Chair of the Australian Government's new National Curriculum Board.



**DR JACQUELINE MANUEL**  
**Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Sydney**

Jackie Manuel is a Senior Lecturer in Secondary English Education in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Sydney. She is Co-convenor of the Arts, English and Literacy Education (AELE) Research Network and coordinator of Secondary Curriculum Methodology in the Faculty. She has a Bachelor of Arts with Honours Class I in English, a Diploma in Education and a PhD in English Literature from the University of New England (1991).

Her research, teaching and scholarship are in the field of secondary English education. She has co-authored/edited five books in the field of secondary English, the most recent being *Drama and English Teaching: Action, Imagination, Engagement*, with Dr Michael Anderson and Dr John Hughes, published by Oxford University Press in 2008. Her publishing and research also includes secondary English curriculum history, theory and pedagogy; early career experience of English teachers; adolescent reading and literature; and teacher motivation and expectations.

Her current research includes an international collaborative project with English educators from King's College, London and The University of Cambridge, on progression in subject English; a joint project with the Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE) on the experiences of early career teachers of English in Australia; and the Australian Teenagers' Reading Choices Project. Jackie is on the international editorial advisory boards of five scholarly research journals.

She is a member of the English Teachers' Association, NSW and is a former member of the executive of the ACT Association for the Teaching of English. She is currently a Member of the NSW Board of Studies, has been a member of the NSW Higher School Certificate English (Standard and Advanced) and in 2007 was Chief Examiner of these English courses.

Jackie and Paul's daughters, Sophia, 16, and Amelia, 13, are completing Year 12 and Year 8, respectively, at Cherrybrook Technology High School.



**DR TIMOTHY WRIGHT**  
**Shore School**

Tim Wright is currently Headmaster of Shore School in North Sydney and prior to that was Headmaster of All Saints' College Bathurst. He is the Chairman of the GPS Headmasters' Standing Committee.

He started his secondary teaching at Trinity Grammar School Summer Hill where he served for a period of time as Second Master of the School. Before that he was a Research Organic Chemist at the University of New South Wales.

Dr Wright has been involved as a practicing Anglican all his life and is currently a lay preacher of the Diocese of Sydney. He was a delegate from the Bathurst Diocese to the General Synod of 1998. He is married to Susan and is the father of three children.