Citizenship and economics: the limitations of current theory in explaining the nexus of educational theory and educational practice

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The debates on the relationships between educational philosophy, educational psychology, educational sociology, curriculum development and the provision of education have, like so many current social debates, been hindered by the rigidity of the premises on which these ideologies are based. This paper challenges both the philosophy and the pragmatism of relying on assumptions that maintain entrenched private fears in the name of the 'public' good. It argues that the failure to forge connections across the territories in education is the result of discourses which depend for their survival on the maintenance of difference. It explores the implications of a model that depends on interconnections between the systems for its survival. Thus it argues against the postmodernist analysis that is so intent on dis-aggregating educational theory that reaching agreement on social significances becomes unlikely.

It is proposed that a social psychological model of explanation encourages a logical coherent and morally defensible exploration of the connections between students, teachers and curriculum delivery at the same time recognising the influence of vested interests such as employers, parents and the government. It argues that such an approach, far from being ideologically tentative, is in fact the only means by which the validity of educational theory and practice concerned with both citizenship and economics, can be assessed.