

COLIN BROCK - A TRIBUTE

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of Professor Colin Brock on 30th December 2016 following a short battle with his illness. Colin was a key figure in helping to establish the Centre for Research in International and Comparative Education (CRICE) at the University of Malaya and this journal, the *Journal of International and Comparative Education* (JICE). From the outset he was the Chair of the International Advisory Board and his wise counsel will be sorely missed.

In many ways Colin Brock was a larger than life figure both physically, as well as professionally in the field of Comparative and International Education, simply because of his prodigious output of papers, books, monographs and reports and his impact on so many students over 40 years. During his academic career he supervised 72 doctoral theses, 250 Masters Dissertations and examined over 60 Masters and Doctoral students in different universities. He was still writing until a few weeks before his death.

In some ways it is impossible to place Colin Brock in any particular genre of Comparative and International Education apart from the Geography of Education which was his first love. He did his Masters degree by research at the University of Durham between 1962 and 1965 in the field of urban geography and his PhD on the impact of geography on education at the University of Hull between 1986 and 1992. He was not associated with any particular geographical region such as Africa or Southeast Asia, though his short period in the Caribbean led him to develop an interest in Small States, and he was willing to undertake almost any task or subject. As a result he was at home writing about teacher education in Sub-Saharan Africa as he was about Education in the Muslim World of the Middle East and North Africa or Education in Europe. His edited works covered just about every part of the world and on a very wide range of subjects.

Colin was born in London in September 1939, soon after the outbreak of the Second World War. He was educated at Rutlish School in Merton, South West London between 1950 and 1958. He proved his academic ability by gaining both a State Scholarship [1957] and a John Innes Scholarship [1958] both of which enabled him to go to University College at Durham University [1958-61] where he read Geography and Anthropology for his BA degree [1961]. He later took a Masters degree there [1962-65] and after his retirement he was given an Honorary Professorship in Education in 2014.

On leaving university he went into teaching at three highly regarded grammar schools in the south of England - Alleyns in Dulwich, Windsor Grammar School and Henley-on-Thames Grammar School - from 1961 to 1969 during which time he took an MEd part-time in Comparative Education at the University of Reading [1970]. He decided to move on from school teaching and go into teacher training. Between 1969 and 1974 he was first a Lecturer and then a Senior Lecturer in Geography at Bulmershe College of Higher Education, Reading. [This was later absorbed into the Faculty of Education and Community Studies in the University of Reading.]

For two of these years he was seconded as an Education Adviser to the Caribbean Development Division of the then United Kingdom's Overseas Development Agency (ODA), now the Department for International Development (DFID), based in St. Lucia. It was his experience in that post that was to lead to a change of career. Thereafter he was to devote his career to Education in Developing Countries.

His first post was as a Lecturer in Education (Overseas Education) at the University of Leeds [1974-77]. He then moved on to become Head of International Education at the University of Hull [1979-92]. He left Hull to take up an appointment as Chief Education Adviser to the Universities of England Consortium for International Activities (UNECIA), which was based at the University of Sheffield. He held this position until 1995. At the same time, from 1992-94 he was appointed a Farmington Fellow/ Senior Research Associate in the Department of Education, University of Oxford. He decided that this was his real interest and he spent the rest of his academic career at Oxford, first as a Lecturer in Comparative and International Education [1994-2005]; then as a holder of a UNESCO Chair in Education as a Humanitarian Response [2005-12]; finally as a Senior Research

Fellow [2012-14]. His main work at Oxford was to make Education and Development a crucial part of the Comparative Education courses that had been taught there over many years.

During his career Colin Brock undertook assignments with different bilateral and multinational agencies in West Africa and the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Eastern Europe. For example with Nadine Cammish he wrote a study of *'Factors Affecting Female Participation in Education in Seven Developing Countries'* (1997) for the UK Department for International Development. More recently he wrote a study on Education in Small States for the Commonwealth Secretariat. He wrote about *'The Place of Education in a United Europe'* with Witold Tulasiewicz (2000) and *'Challenges of Education in Brazil'* (2004) with Simon Schwartzman. More recently, he has edited different series of books on *'Education Around the World'*, *'Education as a Humanitarian Response'*, *'Monographs in International Education'* and *'The Routledge Encyclopaedia of Modern Asian Educators'*. He would perhaps like his lasting legacy to be two books on education and geography- *'Space, Place and Scale in the Study of Education'* with Lorraine Symaco (Routledge, 2015) and *'The Geography of Education'* (Bloomsbury, 2016) which was published just a few weeks before his death. He was Chair of the British Comparative Education Society [1984-86] and Editor of 'Compare' the journal of the BCES [now BAICE] the British Association of International and Comparative Education] from 1988-98. His writings are so prolific that the above account hardly does justice to Colin Brock as an author or as an editor.

As a man he had many facets. It was while at school that his love of, and prowess at, cricket was manifested. He left Rutlish School as Captain of the 1st Cricket XI, while at Durham University he played for the University 1st XI for all his three years as an undergraduate. He never lost his love for cricket and as a form of relaxation he always followed the Yorkshire County Cricket team. He had a fund of humorous stories and he always managed to see the funny side of situations that he observed during his many forays overseas. These often came out during *viva voce* examinations. Based on his early experiences at Bulmershe College of Higher Education he used to claim that 'Sociology was the study of people who did not need looking at by people who did!' As a convivial raconteur he was second to none. His many students not only valued his help and guidance but he encouraged many of them to publish their work jointly with him. The testimonies that were given by former students after his death was announced spoke volumes about the affection in which he was held. He was kind, compassionate and a real encourager as well as a man of many interests. He will be a very hard act to follow.

Keith Watson

*Emeritus Professor of Comparative and International Education
University of Reading*