

# Editorial

Melanie  
Norman,  
Editor

The new academic year has brought changes for the *Teaching Geography* Editorial Board and I'd like to open by saying farewell and thanks to Dr Rosie Gillman who has made a strong and committed contribution to the work of the Board. Rosie's new job means she won't have time to continue with her peer review work for *Teaching Geography*.

We now welcome Emma Rawlings Smith to our Editorial Board. Emma has just started as Lecturer in Education at the University of Leicester and has recently submitted her doctoral thesis. She has also contributed articles to *Teaching Geography* in the past.

The subject of the striking cover photograph is taken from Christopher Hoare's article, where he proposes Kelham Island in Sheffield as a model case study. Hopefully readers will be able to use and adapt this case study to suit their own needs.

Charles Rawding's 'Raising Issues' article, 'Putting Burgess in the bin', highlights his experience of the shortcomings of the Burgess model, still evident in geography classrooms in spite of being contested for many years. I too have had the misfortune of observing trainee teachers misusing the Burgess model in my various external examiner roles, perpetuating myths and misconceptions regarding urban structure. The most recent incident arose only last year when I observed students being instructed by their teacher to make the whole of London, where one single CBD was identified, 'fit' the Burgess model. If this model of urban structure is still being taught in your department, I urge you to re-think your curriculum content in light of Charles' analysis of Brighton. The cover photograph emphasises the dynamic nature of urban environments reflecting aspects of historic development, while acknowledging change in relation to current social, economic and environmental needs.

Readers expecting a visit from OFSTED during this academic year will find the article by Alan Kinder and Paula Owens to be a clear outline of expectations. The article should help readers to understand the implications of the new framework for their geography curriculum work.

A number of articles reflect the development of critical thinking, a crucial aspect of public examinations as well as preparation for lifelong learning. Gemma Mawdsley describes the GA's 'Critical Thinking for achievement CPD' training, a two-day course for teachers. She provides two case studies which could be adapted by readers to trial with students in class.

Ian Selmes discusses the lack of focus on sustainable development in comparison to previous National Curriculum programmes of study and examination specifications. Ian states, 'For students to be able to properly achieve the professed aims of their geography curriculum ... they need a thoughtful understanding of sustainability and a critical approach to studying it'. The article's supporting resources will assist the development of a reflective approach to sustainability.

Hannah Finch Noyes outlines a departmental homework strategy enabling students to develop geographical skills, including creativity and independence of thought, which better prepares them for success in AO3 at A level and beyond. 'Beyond' might well be an undergraduate degree and Kenny Lynch outlines some thoughts regarding note taking during lectures. This piece is not specifically related to geography, so students may find it helpful for many subjects.

Brexit has not been finalised as I write, although the situation may have changed by the time you read this editorial! Jo Usher's scheme of work 'Brexit and Borders' looks at the issue from the perspective of students in Ireland. I found this an inspiring approach and an excellent way for young people to engage with the issue and develop their critical thinking.

Peter Vujakovic celebrates key tools to develop critical thinking – maps and related information graphics – but he warns that their form and function need to be taught and understood because maps can also mislead. For example, the Mercator map projection (1569) overemphasises the dimensions of the northern hemisphere, but the map projection was originally drawn to aid navigation and is still employed today in nautical charts. Our thinking about map projections has moved on in the 450 years since the Mercator map was first published.

David Alcock's article encourages us to recognise the positives of progression. Yes a gamut of issues still need addressing but as David observes, put in a temporal context many things have improved. It is important to let our students know the positives and show that progress is evident in many areas without detracting from the necessity to strive for continued improvement and progression.

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to the wide range of well-informed content and opinion contained within this issue.

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*The Editor introduces  
this issue of Teaching  
Geography.*

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Editor Dr Mel Norman on the South Downs near Beachy Head. **Photo:** Tony Norman.