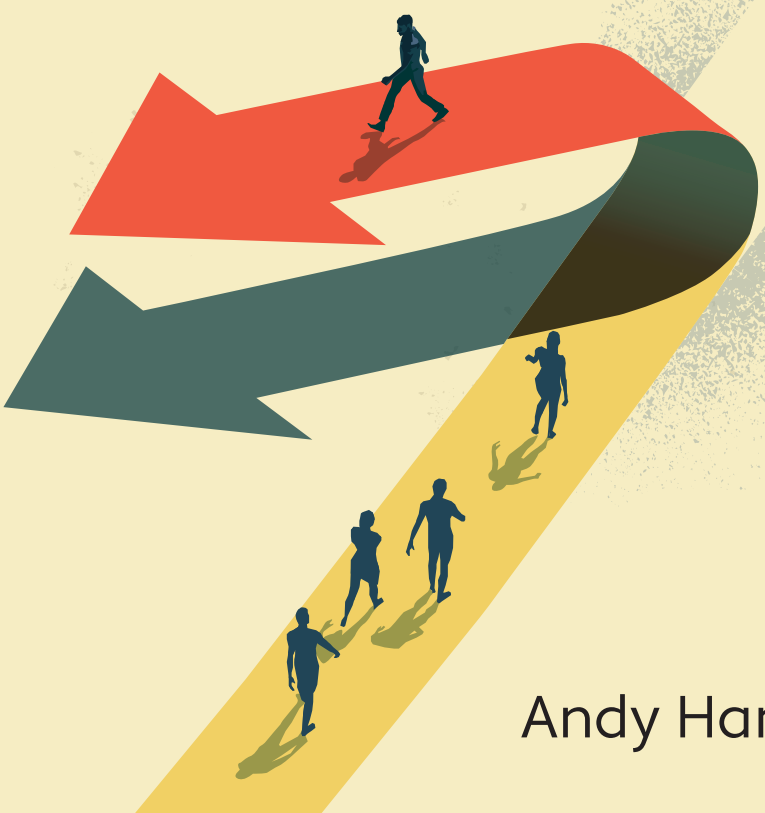
The Making of an Educator

Living Through and Learning from the Great Education Shift



Andy Hargreaves

Praise for *The Making of an Educator*

This is the story, both personal and professional, of a teacher and academic studying and reflecting throughout his educational career on key facets of professionalism and core purpose. Essentially this is about the essence of professionalism and the essential need to combine both practical classroom wisdom with theory.

Dame Alison Peacock, CEO, Chartered College of Teaching

As an educator who has relied on Dr Hargreaves' scholarship for almost 50 years, *The Making of an Educator* has given me a renewed sense of pride, optimism, and resolve to take our work to new heights.

Avis Glaze, International Education Advisor, former Ontario Education Commissioner

In this intriguing memoir, noted educator Andrew Hargreaves reflects on the experiences that led him to become a teacher, a scholar in education, and a leader of thoughtful educational innovation.

Howard Gardner, Hobbs Research Professor of Cognition and Education, Harvard University

In this very readable and accessible book, we discover some of the background to the events and experiences that shaped Andy's career and the evolution of his thinking on education.

Professor Steve Munby, CBE, former CEO of the National College for School Leadership, England

As an avid reader of Andy's books for the better part of two decades, I think this is the keystone upon which everything else should be placed.

David H. Edwards, General Secretary, Education International

Andy's book helps us understand how the personal and professional are deeply intertwined, mutually informing one another. Importantly, it generates critical insights into the rise of neo-liberalism in educational policy and practice and captures key insights for educational improvement in our current moment that speak to both the pursuit of educational quality and equity.

James Spillane, Spencer T. and Ann W. Olin
Professor in Learning and Organizational Change,
Northwestern University, Chicago

In *The Making an Educator* you see Andy in flesh, blood, and as he was up to the age of 37. You understand what makes him tick and be ticked off. You can't understand and get the full brunt of Andy's magnificent contribution to practice and theory without absorbing the making of the early man.

Professor Emeritus Michael Fullan,
OC, OISE/University of Toronto

Andy is keen to say that this is not a memoir and, in the sense that it isn't merely an account of the past, he is right. However, it is an invaluable 'bringing together' of the journey that school policy has taken over almost half a century and offers wise and rooted advice for the next generation of education professionals. As such, it provides us with a shared foundation for navigating the future.

Rt. Hon. Baroness Estelle Morris,
former Secretary of State for Education

The Making of an Educator is a delight from the first page to the last, with direct relevance for all of us today who are dedicated to improving teaching and learning, wherever we may be.

Dennis Shirley, author,
The New Imperatives of Educational Change

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Andy Hargreaves

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Foreword by Pasi Sahlberg

*'The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the coming of the dusk.'** So wrote Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, a German philosopher and one of the most influential thinkers of the 19th century.† In Roman mythology, Minerva is the goddess of wisdom, and her pet owl symbolises knowledge, culture, and discernment. A common interpretation of Hegel's wisdom is that any given era of history can only be understood in retrospect – after it's over.

If you take what Hegel wrote to heart, it has several interesting corollaries for educational literature and research. First, in education, our power to foresee the future is limited – as we've seen over decades, and even centuries, of efforts to try to predict how education will renew itself. Formal education systems and how they operate have remained largely unchanged despite revolutions and shifts in our societies, technologies, and the world. Second, Hegel's notion of Minerva's owl suggests that our power to understand the

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* https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100258860.

† To be precise, in the original German, he wrote: 'Die Eule der Minerva beginnt erst mit der einbrechenden Dämmerung ihren Flug', in his book *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts: Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaft im Grundrisse* (Nicolai'sche Buchhandlung, 1820) (known in English as *The Philosophy of Right*).

present and the shifts and underlying forces of any era is usually limited. To that end, Hegel's insight enables us to see that in education – as in other things – true understanding and wisdom about what we experience at any given moment often emerge only in hindsight, after a major shift has passed.

I've been a fan of Hegel and his idea about the owl of Minerva since high school. As a teenager living through the turmoil of the 1970s, I tried hard to understand the world around me – without much success at all. The nuclear arms race had pushed the world to the brink of another global war. The energy crisis and struggles for basic human rights made the world a complex and often confusing place. Hegel often came to my rescue. I would turn to history books and listen to philosophers to better understand the present. The more I read about the history of education and consulted the works of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, Jerome Bruner, and Maria Montessori, the better I could make sense of what was happening around me.

The next time I encountered the owl of Minerva was in the early 1990s, when I was offered a job at the newly established National Board of Education in Helsinki. That was a period of great educational change in Finland. Waves of neo-liberalism were shaking public-sector management thinking around the world, including in the Nordic countries. Corporate management models and business jargon were appearing in education policy documents and reform narratives. Political leaders embraced the principles of the Third Way, seeking to combine the best of the past with the most promising aspects of new corporate management thinking. Sweden, and other Nordic countries, was more eager to follow this trend than Finland – perhaps because Finns have always tended to be followers rather than leaders when it comes to significant social or economic shifts. That later turned out to be a blessing for the Finnish education system.

Dr Vilho Hirvi was the first Director General of the National Board of Education and my boss during the time I worked for that agency.

He was a teacher and education scholar with a genuine passion for history and philosophy. I remember how many politicians, academics, and business leaders in Finland urged Dr Hirvi to jump aboard the moving train of modern ideas, which promised efficiency and quick improvements through corporate-driven education administration and policy. When Dr Hirvi spoke to his staff about the future of Finnish education in the early 1990s, he said that we would only make sense of the real significance of that time once it was over. We understood the wisdom of Minerva's owl and decided to focus on building a stronger sense of purpose in education through shared values, collective responsibility, and mutual trust. That work went on as planned. The rest is history.

I was a young educator when the Finnish educational reforms ran against the global tide of neo-liberalism and pursued a path that was more professional, more collectively responsible, and more focused on the public good. In many ways, these early experiences have shaped my own path as an educator and have subsequently influenced how I, as a policy specialist, have been able to take these values and accomplishments – of professional trust, shared responsibility, and public good – to the World Bank, the OECD, and national governments across the world, most recently, in my adopted home of Australia.

During this formative period in Finnish education, in the 1990s, I spent some weeks as a post-doctoral research fellow at the International Centre for Educational Change, which Andy Hargreaves had established in Toronto. There, I met Andy, just a few years on in his own professional formation, whose ideas had started to take shape when neo-liberalism came across his bows during the onset of Thatcherism in England, a decade before it was popularised in Finland. I soon realised that, like me, Andy had already chosen his own alternate path that rejected standardised testing and the deprofessionalisation of teaching in favour of alternative assessments and collaborative professionalism.

What happened to both of us in the past, during the great shifts that we each experienced at different times when our respective world views were evolving, has stayed with us, and grown in strength, throughout our careers. Like two owls, we came together. With eye and claw, both of us have since swooped down upon the many enemies of equitable, inclusive, and humanistic purposes in education in our pursuit of wiser and more ethical answers to the never-ending challenges of educational change.

Andy Hargreaves' book reflects the spirit of the owl of Minerva. He surprises readers by revealing that this book is not a memoir. Rather, as he writes, 'It's not an intellectual biography either. It's between and beyond these things.' Anyone who reads this book will find that to be exactly so. It becomes clear, as you travel with Andy as a guide, from the early 1970s to the late 1980s, that the true meaning of the political and educational era that shaped him as an educator can only be understood in retrospect.

But it also works the other way around – awareness of key issues in the history of education can help us to make more sense of contemporary educational debates, as this book makes clear.

One such issue is the role of research and evidence in informing educational practice, especially teaching in schools. As part of post-COVID recovery, many education system leaders around the world now insist that teachers only use methods like explicit teaching and direct instruction, based on robust evidence. In some countries, like Finland, Singapore, and Canada, decisions about which teaching methods to use – and the evidence behind them – are left to schools and teachers. In other systems, though, education authorities select the evidence and determine which methods should be used. In Australia, some education ministers have gone even further by mandating which evidence-based teaching methods teachers are supposed to use in their classrooms and for how many minutes each day. These policy decisions are often made without looking to the past and considering what happened when such initiatives have been tried before.

What makes Andy's book different from other 'memoirs' is the way in which he reflects on contemporary issues and debates through the lens of history and his own experience. For example, when he writes about research and experience in education (especially in teaching), he explains how, in the dominant culture of teaching in the 1970s, the only thing that counted when teachers made judgements was their own experience in their schools and classrooms. It was rare for teachers to refer to educational theories, research, or conditions from other fields when designing their work. Andy reminds us that research on teaching and the teaching profession has significantly contributed to improved practice in schools, but the pendulum then swung too far – he shows – and now, the role of evidence is often misunderstood and overstated. Evidence-based practice, if not exercised thoughtfully, has led – and is leading again – to governing by numbers, top-down accountability, narrowing curricula, and chasing data and performance targets – all of which undermines the soul of teachers' professional autonomy and erodes societal trust in schools.

I've taught graduate students in education policy and teacher education at five universities over the past 25 years. It's surprising – and disappointing – how little students pursuing a master's degree in education are expected to read from the past. It's rare to find a recent graduate who has read John Dewey or classics like Willard Waller's *The Sociology of Teaching,** Dan Lortie's *Schoolteacher,*† or Andy Hargreaves' *Changing Teachers, Changing Times.*‡ The book you are reading now makes it clear that becoming an educator is a long process – not simply the result of earning a university degree. Sometimes, as Andy shows here, it takes an entire career.

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* W. Waller, *The Sociology of Teaching* (Wiley, 1932).

† D. Lortie, *Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study* (University of Chicago Press, 1975).

‡ A. Hargreaves, *Changing Teachers, Changing Times: Teachers' Work and Culture in the Postmodern Age* (Teachers College Press, 1994).

How can today's education graduates make sense of the present if they have only a limited understanding of the past? And how can we imagine the future without knowing what has been tried before? In my mind, educating educators today should include at least a basic understanding of the most significant works, ideas, and thinkers of the past. If you read this book and ask yourself which writings have shaped Andy as an educator, you'll quickly see the wide range of books and articles that influenced his early career as a teacher and teacher educator, including those mentioned above. It's difficult, in my view, to be an educator without familiarity with some of the classics.

If you read memoirs, as I do, you know that it's all about story-telling. Every life is worth a story – if you know how to tell it. Without revealing too much about what will follow, I can say that the story-telling in this book is engaging, entertaining, and occasionally funny. And remember that this book is not a memoir; it's something between a biography and a memoir – and it's an incomplete one. There is still much more to come in the making of an educator.

In the end of a memoir or intellectual biography, one question remains: legacy? What is a legacy? In the Broadway musical *Hamilton*, Alexander Hamilton responds, 'It's planting seeds in a garden you never get to see.' I hope this quote serves as a bridge to Andy's story because it raises the essential questions that all serious educators will ask at some point in their lives.

The story here is the most important – the legacy will follow.

Preface

This is not a memoir. It is not an intellectual biography either. It is a book that describes my experiences as an emerging educator and academic in my 20s and 30s as a way of looking at a great historical shift in education and society half a century ago that is reverberating in another shift of seismic proportions today. The book shows how crystallising moments in early career at key moments in history can shape people generationally through the insights and agendas they carry with them as their careers evolve over time, and as they develop the capacity to exercise leadership and make an impact on an increasingly large scale.

Some readers may be aware of my work on teacher collaboration, educational change, and professional capital after I moved from England to North America in the late 1980s. It has yielded eight book awards and over 100,000 citations, so it is quite well known. This book is about my professional and, in some parts, personal life before that point, from 1973 to 1987. What I experienced and accomplished then is probably less familiar, but, like the early work of other professionals, it laid the foundations for much of what followed.

Like many immigrants, all the work I did and all the expertise I had developed before changing countries was, and still is, largely

unheard of. It is as if my accomplishments were achieved afresh and due entirely to the country that apparently discovered and adopted me. Leaving England and moving to Canada, then the United States, was like beginning a new life and career as a man without a past – a man that never was.

In the 1980s, before the widespread use of email, the internet, and fax machines, taking a job on another continent was an act of professional disappearance, almost. My work in the 1990s on the teaching profession, school leadership, and educational reform may have reintroduced me and my research to the UK once telecommunications had advanced, but even that made no reference to anything I had done before I left. When novelists wanted to dispose of a British character, one common plot device was to say, 'And then (s)he went to Canada.' Nothing great or terrible happened to the character in question, but the explanation seemed sufficient for the reader never to have to think about them again.

This book explains how and why almost 15 years starting out as an educator and academic in England set up my contributions to research, writing, and policy advocacy on the teaching profession, and educational reform after that once my family and I moved to North America. More than that, it shows how these experiences took place at a remarkable moment in history – the mid-1970s to the late 1980s – when there was a Great Shift in education and society. This shift, through the eyes and experiences of my own life and work at the time, threw up issues about teaching, learning, and school reform that have had immense and lasting importance ever since. Half a century later, in the mid-2020s, we are witnessing another Great Shift of global politics and economics. How we understand it and deal with it can be informed by how we experienced the previous one.

Other than wanting to know about the life of a minor public figure in education, along with a series of events that all took place in the previous century, why might you want to read this book? Who is it for?

If you feel lost in a chaotic world that you don't fully understand, this book will draw on knowledge of the past, without dwelling on it or wallowing in it, to help you understand the world you are in now. Because it speaks of a Great Shift when the world order was changing, it will help you to not only improve your grasp of how the world order is changing again today, but also how to capitalise on that uncertainty by involving yourself in innovation, change, and leadership that can help shape the future for the young people you teach. It may help inspire you to make 'shift' happen in your own work and in the world around you.

If you are a teacher, this book, through the lens of my research on middle school teachers, should provide insights into why teachers teach the way they do – indeed, why we all do things the way we do, even when it doesn't make sense to other people, and even when it isn't really working any more. It should acknowledge and explain your frustrations when other people – in politics, business, your community, or the media – are quick to judge teachers and slow to understand them, their life issues, and their work conditions. And it should affirm just how important our colleagues are to us, whether we are teachers or academics, and why building communities where we collaborate with colleagues and where we give and receive great mentoring matter so much.

If you are a leader in schools, of schools, or of whole groups or systems of schools, this book should also help to persuade you that the most important factor when we are changing teaching and learning, or changing anything really, is not structures, plans, programmes, or accountability mechanisms. It is culture – what we believe and commit to, how well we push and support each other, and how functional or dysfunctional our teams are when we do things together. This applies just as much to universities and faculties of education as it does to schools.

If you use or are engaged in any kind of research or enquiry, then this book should help to deepen your understanding of what

research truly is and involves. It should help you not to be intimidated by it on the one hand or mesmerised by it on the other. It will show you that school-based and university-based researchers and enquirers can and should be on a more equal footing where both are accorded dignity and respect, and that teachers should not just be recipients of external expertise from non-teachers but should be critical consumers of research and partners with researchers too.

Professional knowledge in education, or anywhere, combines three forms of valued knowledge and expertise:

1. On-the-ground, upfront expertise of professional judgement built up over many years of knowing people and circumstances in unique situations.
2. Knowledge about external research that does not falsely elevate some kinds of research – quantitative methods, experimental procedures, or blind-controlled studies – over others that use interviews and observations with people up close in the complex worlds of real schools and classrooms.
3. Knowledge of collaborative enquiry that teachers themselves conduct into problems and challenges in their own institutions.

There is good and bad research in all traditions – quantitative and qualitative alike. This book shows that qualitative research, when it is done well by you or anyone else, is scientifically rigorous and respectable and has a long history. It reveals things that quantitative research cannot. It shows what is happening on the ground now, what it means to the people involved, what is emerging in the experiences of teachers and young people before it comes to public or official attention, and how what teachers know can therefore be ahead of the game of what more traditional 'scientific' researchers claim. When schools and universities work as equal

partners and value multiple methodologies, as I have, research can advance knowledge and insight about teaching and learning, rather than teachers just being convinced or compelled to implement the findings that university researchers have come up with on their own.

If you are a starting-out researcher or graduate student, you will also learn from my own research experiences about the value of building your own theory. There is nothing more practical, we will see, than having a good theory. Theories are frameworks that we all develop or adopt to make sense of what is around us – why children behave badly, why attendance has fallen off, or why parents seem to complain more than they did, for example. Formal theories are constructed over many years by experts who are paid to have the time to read and think in depth. Sometimes, we latch on to a theory early because it makes sense to us, but then we can become overly subservient to it. This dependency on a singular set of sources can turn our minds into echo chambers of our own unshakeable beliefs. We can become overly enamoured of one single set of theories – growth mindsets, phonics, or critical race theory, for example – without examining their drawbacks or considering alternatives to them. We might attach ourselves too firmly to the ideas or beliefs of a single professor or group of professors who taught us or whom we have read, and then take no time to wander, with a sense of curiosity and intellectual adventure, outside their familiar paradigms into the unexplored theoretical terrains of others. This book will show what it takes to build your own theories with professional independence and integrity from multiple components, rather than from a standardised set of building blocks that are owned and produced by just one brand.

If you believe in free speech, intellectual balance, and academic integrity, this book will show you how to escape from your own echo chamber and treat your opponents' theories, research findings, and beliefs with curiosity, dignity, and respect, even when you

continue to disagree with them. And it will show you how to develop that mentality of curiosity and independence among our young people in schools and universities, too, so that they do not become blinded by their own ideological lights.

If you are near the beginning or end of your career, you will look through a window into my own early adult life and career and, perhaps along the way, that window will become a kind of mirror for your own life and career, and the lives and careers of those around you. You might learn to develop greater generational generosity towards those younger and older than yourself, and towards their life struggles and accomplishments. Perhaps you will learn to judge less, empathise more, and not treat junior colleagues as flawed versions of your younger self or dismiss older peers and forbears as outdated and irrelevant people of privilege either.

If you are in early adulthood, near the start of your career, and sometimes get discouraged about a lack of progress, this book will share my own challenges in getting started, becoming recognised, trying to stand up for myself and stick by my principles, struggling with money, raising a young family, and having to keep moving from one job to another just to stay afloat. In doing so, it will also reveal how, when we feel like this, we are often making a lot more progress than we probably think. In chess terms, we are moving our pawns so that we can bring out our rooks and queens later. And we are making sacrifices that might well prove worthwhile in the end, perhaps spectacularly so.

Like a movie, the book zooms in and pans out from my own experiences of educational developments during early career to a larger landscape of key research and policy literature at the time, and back again. And like a multi-generational novel, it also loops back and forth between the present and the past to show how the themes that this literature exposes, along with my own and others' experiences, continue to preoccupy many educators and educational researchers now.

The language and vocabulary may from time to time feel unusual to readers in different countries. When I write about the UK, I will refer to pupils, head teachers, state education, and local authorities. When I fast forward to my career in Canada and the United States, these terms will be replaced with students, principals, public education, and school districts. I will talk about football and crisps in England and soccer and chips in Canada. Otherwise, the rest should be self-evident.

I have several people to thank for helping me assemble what is in this book with greater accuracy and coherence, and for preventing me from becoming captive to the distortions and vicissitudes of my own memory. Foremost among all these professional colleagues and friends is my namesake, David Hargreaves. David has known me from the very start of my university career in England until the moment my family and I left for Canada. We worked closely together for almost five years at Oxford University and connected in many other ways over those years.

My gratitude to David knows practically no bounds for the time he has spent in the middle of a long struggle with cancer to reply fully, freely, and frankly to ideas, drafts, and recollections as this book has evolved. We spent a delightful day at his home near Cambridge on a visit I made to England in the spring of 2024, and then, from his tablet in his hospital bed after yet another surgery, he engaged generously with an earlier draft of a chapter about the 1980s in Oxford. In return, I have been privileged to read, respond to, and endorse what he says is his last book on ethics and happiness.[1]

Martyn Hammersley, my friend, former neighbour, and first university colleague, gave detailed and direct responses, as he has throughout his career, to my recollections about the early seminars at St Hilda's College, Oxford, that we participated in, and on one occasion organised together, and about the two years I was employed by the Open University. Particularly helpful were his extensive

published reflections on nationally controversial accusations about Marxist bias among some of the group of scholars I joined, and the implications of this event for intellectual balance and freedom today. Martyn also enabled me to access the university's archives and retrieve my first ever media broadcast, which was shown on the BBC, so that I can now verify that my course presentation as a 29-year-old was indeed as pedagogically wooden and sartorially challenged as I remembered it being.

Peter Woods, who figures large in several chapters, and who, in addition to hiring me at the Open University, worked with me as a co-author, showed nothing less than complete kindness, including times I didn't fully deserve it when I was in early career. He has shared his own memories about the university and the field in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In his 90s now, and as a mark of his unshakeable lifelong optimism and resilience, he told me that he has just bought a new dog!

Geoffrey Walford, Emeritus Professor of Education Policy at Oxford University, also responded to my recollections of the St Hilda's conferences and shared with me an important paper he has published about its history.

Eileen Baglin was a student of mine at Oxford. Already a Justice of the Peace as well as a middle leader in her local secondary school when we met, Eileen went on to have an impressive career as a senior local authority advisor. Although we were poles apart politically on some issues, she became a dear friend of our family and a co-author with me and her fellow students of a book on personal and social education. She too has reflected with warmth and honesty on draft chapters I sent to her, and she has helped me to edit down what was a heavy-going theoretical section in the middle of the book.

There are other readers who didn't know me, or who scarcely knew me at all during the years I was establishing myself professionally in England, and for that reason their feedback on how the manuscript might make better sense to readers of different gener-

ations today, as well as beyond the UK, has been especially valuable. Particular thanks go to my long-standing colleague and friend, Steve Munby (who also helped me to ditch some of the theoretical jargon); my co-author and close friend for the past 20 years, Dennis Shirley; the voraciously reading director of one of my local school districts in Ottawa, Tom D'Amico; another co-author, Dean Fink, now almost 90 years old, who provided me with my first research opportunity when I moved to Canada to study collaborative school cultures in his district; and, not least, Pasi Sahlberg, who I invited to write the foreword to this book. Pasi and I have known each other and collaborated in various ways for 30 years. However, this did not include the times I worked in England. He is, in this respect, especially well positioned to connect and communicate who he knows me to be now, and what he knows I have done since I moved to North America, to the years before that, as he views them from a greater distance of time and space.

This book is my second that has a life history flavour to it. Both books have the same purpose: to use my own experiences as a looking glass for compelling educational and social issues of the periods being explored, as well as their continuing relevance today. Alongside my educational background, they contain a lot of detail about family and community life.

The previous book of this nature – *Moving: A Memoir of Education and Social Mobility* – described my experience of growing up in a working-class family in the North of England and of being educated in local primary and secondary schools.[2] It cast light on the nature, importance, and obstacles as well as the opportunities that are created by social mobility. This second book goes on to describe what the first starting-out years of professionals are like when they move up from the working class with few resources other than their own qualifications and wits. As my publisher, David Bowman, commented when he read an earlier draft, my narrative has quite a bit of impecuniousness about it.

People's careers cannot be understood apart from their lives and the world around them. Through the mirror of my own life and that of my growing family, this book relates the formative years of being a new professional to the life circumstances and struggles of getting a financial foothold in the middle class and to a generationally influential period when a Great Shift was occurring in education and society. My wife of 50-plus years, Pauline Hargreaves, and our adult children, Stuart and Lucy, have helped me to look back on this period and what it meant to us all, including the leaving of it all, for Canada.

Almost all the material in this book is entirely original in how it reports on my research and publications over the years. There are five instances of more extended extracts that are adapted more directly from previous publications, and I want to acknowledge the following sources for use of that material:

- A. Hargreaves, 'The Significance of Classroom Coping Strategies', in L. Barton and R. Meighan (eds), *Sociological Interpretations of Schooling and Classrooms: A Reappraisal* (Nafferton Books, 1978), pp. 73–100.
- A. Hargreaves, 'Experience Counts, Theory Doesn't: How Teachers Talk About Their Work', *Sociology of Education*, 57 (1984), 244–254.
- A. Hargreaves, 'Teacher Collaboration: 30 Years of Research on Its Nature, Forms, Limitations and Effects', *Teachers and Teaching*, 25(5) (2019), 603–621.
- A. Hargreaves, 'Tim Brighouse: Sustainability Maker', in D. Cameron, S. Munby, and M. Waters (eds), *Unfinished Business: The Life and Legacy of Tim Brighouse* (Crown House Publishing, 2024), pp. 39–42.
- A. Hargreaves, 'The Dark Side of Networks: and the Implications for School Leadership', *School Leadership & Management*, 45(1) (2025), 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2025.2454157

Last, but not least, I am extremely grateful to David Bowman at Crown House Publishing for having faith in this book as a viable part of his impressive stable. Meeting David for the first time was an encounter and an experience that is becoming less and less common – a publisher who reads manuscripts inside out, not just to assess their worth as a market product but also out of intrinsic intellectual interest.

If you have got this far, you have obviously not given up yet. Hopefully, you will find the rest of the book just as engaging, if not more so. So, let's get started.

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Introduction

The Great Shift

The book begins in England in the 1970s. This was, at first, a period of public investment, pursuit of equality, commitment to education for a common good, belief in autonomy and choice in learning for children and teachers, romantic attachments to the idea of educating the whole person, enthusiasm about engaging in innovation, and support for a strong and highly qualified teaching profession as an attractive and well-regarded career. Although the lustre of this golden age began to tarnish and fade in the second half of the decade, it was still a time of public confidence in the value of state education, of education as a path to upward social mobility, of schools as places that could help to change society, and of teaching as a desirable career that many young people from working-class families could use as their stepping stone into middle-class life and opportunities.

Following Margaret Thatcher's election on the cusp of the 1980s, there was a political and, ultimately, a global move towards what is now known as neo-liberalism. It would define the next half century of social and economic policy, including in education, and would bring populism in its wake – marking the start of another Great Shift that is bringing the neo-liberal era to a close.

What does it mean to become an educator during one of the most profound periods of educational and social change in modern history?

Charting the first 15 years of his career in education as a teacher, researcher, academic, and growing collaborator with schools, world-renowned educator Andy Hargreaves casts light on what he calls the 'Great Education Shift' of the 1980s.

Andy's reflections on the present and the past offer powerful and often provocative insights into some of the most pressing issues in education today, including teacher autonomy, evidence-based practice, early career struggles, intellectual bias, the rise of populism, and the impact of mentors.

A must-read for anyone working or interested in education today.

Read this book first before you pick up any of his 30+ other titles.
Professor Emeritus Michael Fullan, OC, OISE/University of Toronto

Powerful, endearing, and transformational – a compelling read.
Dame Alison Peacock, CEO, Chartered College of Teaching

Brilliantly reflective and often disarmingly funny, Hargreaves invites us into the inner life of an educator navigating a world in flux. Insightful and inspiring.
Yong Zhao, PhD, Foundation Distinguished Professor, University of Kansas

Relates what happened in the 1980s and 1990s to the education issues and challenges of today and gives us a new and wiser perspective. I loved it.
Professor Steve Munby, CBE, former CEO of the National College for School Leadership, England

An invaluable 'bringing together' of the journey that school policy has taken over almost half a century.
Rt. Hon. Baroness Estelle Morris, former Secretary of State for Education

Truly a monumental piece of work and generous contribution to further feed our 'passion for understanding education'.
David H. Edwards, General Secretary, Education International

Chock-full of reflective insights, coping strategies, and ideas to implement.
Avis Glaze, International Education Advisor, former Ontario Education Commissioner

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Andy Hargreaves is a world-renowned British-Canadian educator who has dedicated his life to working with teachers and schools to make learning and teaching more engaging, fulfilling, and collaborative for everyone. An author or editor of almost 40 books, Andy is a gifted writer who has become one of the most cited education scholars alive and has received 10 outstanding writing awards. He is an education advisor to the First Minister of Scotland and to the Minister of Education for New Brunswick in Canada. He holds Honorary Doctorates from Sweden, Hong Kong, and the University of Greater Manchester, has been honoured in the UK, Canada, the US, and Australia for services to public education and educational research, and was awarded his university's Excellence in Teaching with Technology Award in 2015 at Boston College in the US.
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