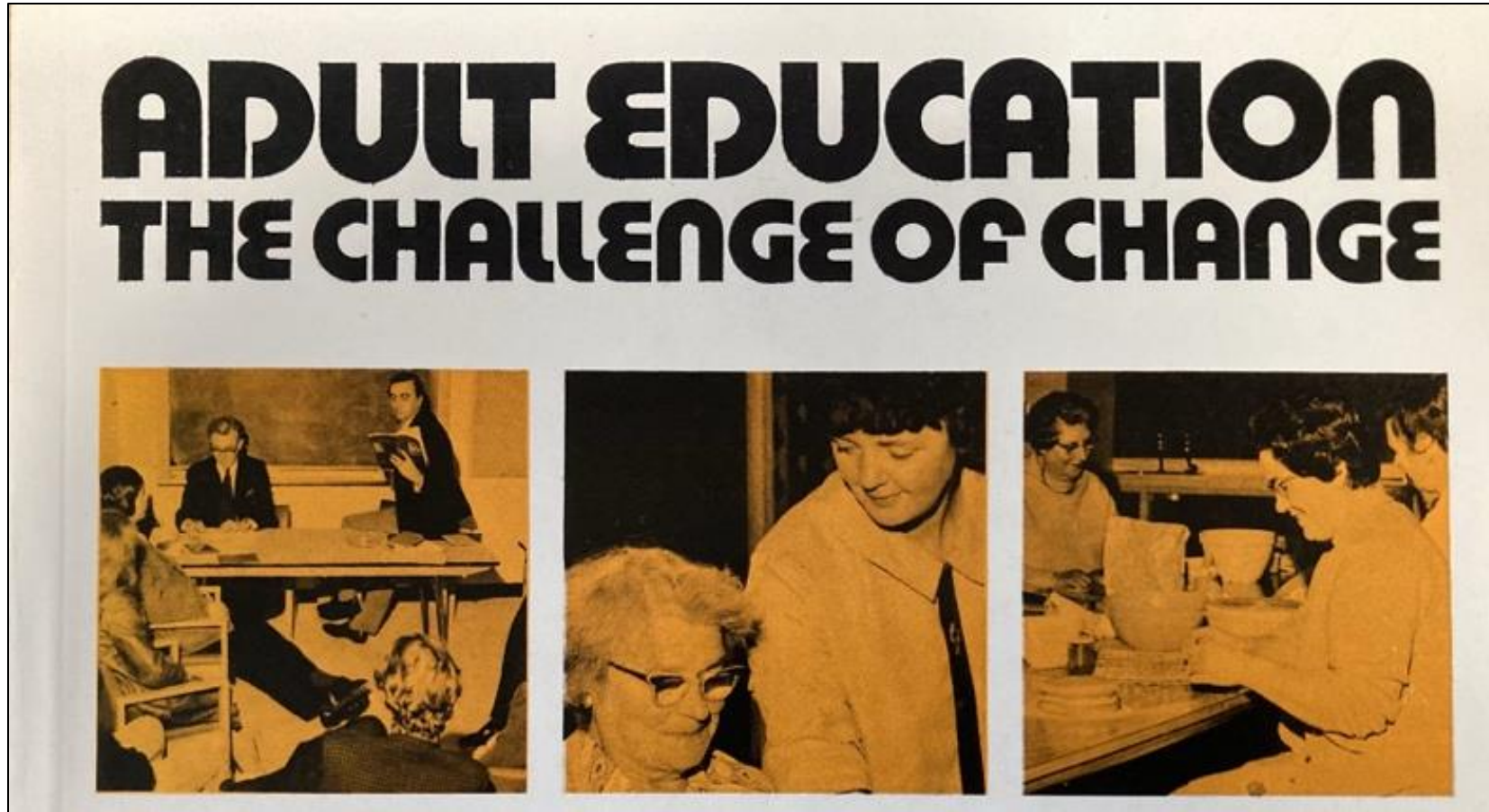


# 50th Anniversary of the Alexander Report: Reflections and Relevance for CLD Practice



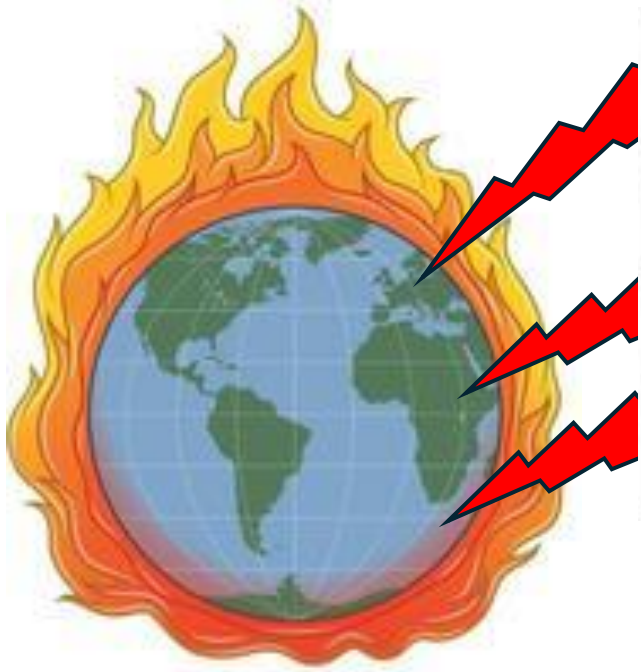
## WELCOME

Time	Item
1.00 – 1.15	Participant Arrival
1.15 – 1.30	Welcome & setting the scene
1.30 – 2.00	Keynote Lyn Tett
2.00 – 2.35	Practitioner perspectives - Lorna McBain & Lynn McCabe
2.35 – 2.50	Q & A to key speakers (Plenary)
2.50 – 3.20	Small group discussion – How can we reassert Alexander’s aims for CLD purpose & practice today?
3.20 - 3.30	Brief Feedback from groups (What is to be done?)
3.30 – 3.35	Concluding remarks
3.35	End of event – adjourn to pub for informal networking <b>(Holyrood 9a)</b>

## The state we are in?

***We live in ‘...a world of escalating social divisions, injustice and oppression, with an environment in varying stages of ecological decay.’***

(Allman 2010: 1).



***Education ‘...operates as an instrument of producing the workforce for a supposedly immutable capitalist society, ignoring all of its flaws of exploitation, inequality, subordination, top-down control, individualism, cut-throat competition, alienation, and rigid hierarchies...’***

(Stetsenko 2023: 582)

***‘...a socially and economically just society...where people can realise their full potential as human beings.’***

(Allman 2010: 6).

## What is to be done?



Raymond Williams

*‘To be truly radical is to make hope possible rather than despair convincing’*

(Quoted in Hall *et al.*, 2013: ix).

What are our *‘Resources for a Journey of Hope’*

(Williams 1981)



# The Challenge of Change – The Alexander Report's 1, 2, 4 of key ideas!

## Some 'Resources for a Journey of Hope'?

1

### One fundamental organisational change

Brought together Adult Education and Youth & Community services into a new educational profession and service - CE/CLD.

2

### Two fundamental impulses - **asserting the promotion of social justice?**

- i. Challenge poverty & disadvantage through participation in education
- ii. To promote full human flourishing.

*'We have acted on our belief that education enables man [sic] to increase his understanding of his own nature, to develop to the full his potentialities and to participate in the shaping of his own future'*

(Scottish Education Department , 1975: 35)

4

### Four specific aims – **established 'axioms' of practice?**

- |                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Reaffirmation of individuality. | 3. Foster the pluralist society |
| 2. Effective use of resources      | 4. Education for change.        |

Consistent with international developments of the time – UNESCO 'Faure Report' (1972) '*Learning to Be*' - Education should promote solidarity, democracy and contribute to the 'good society'.

# The Alexander Report - Four Specific Aims

## 1. Reaffirmation of individuality

- Risk of isolation & alienation due to *'...the dehumanising aspect of many kinds of work and the impact of the mass media.'*
- Build capacity for full & rich personal & social life & reduce the impediments to this – education to become *'fully human'?*

## 2. Effective use of resources

- Modern economy has an emphasis on consumerism - there is complexity in technological developments and resources, but our full understanding is *'...hidden behind verbiage & Hyperbole'*
- Education should help people understand & use this technology, *but emphasis on control and action i.e. shifting power in favour of individuals & communities against corporate interest.*

## 3. Fostering the Pluralistic Society

- *Educational support for people & groups to fulfill their rights to express opinions and to promote opposition to and criticism of government of the day.*
- Education to support & promote trade unions & industrial relations, support to immigrants & Vol Orgs.

## 4. Education for change

- Emphasis on community development approach - helping people act together to tackle problems they face in communities.
- *Promotion of social & political education – 'to make real the concept of the participating democracy'*
- Promote an understanding of the complexity of relationship between society, politics, science, technology, culture
- If not, people will feel *'...recipients or victims...'* of change rather than who *'...wills and controls the changes...'*

## Adult education (CLD?): The Challenge of Change



‘...the engine of change, of social progress, must be a more effective democracy and that – amongst its many other purposes and delights – adult education should openly and proudly adopt as a significant role, the strengthening of people’s ability to participate in the workings of an expanding democracy’ (Alexander, 1993: 39)

Sir Kenneth Alexander 1922 –2001

## References

- Allman, P. (2010) *Critical Education Against Global Capitalism: Karl Marx and Revolutionary Critical Education*, Sense Publishers: Rotterdam.
- Alexander, K (1993) 'Critical Reflections', *Edinburgh Review: Democracy and Curriculum*, Issue 90 pp29 - 40
- Faure, E. Herrera, F. Kaddoura, A. Lopes, H. Petrovsky, A. Rahnema, M. & Ward, F. (1972) *Learning to be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow*, Paris: UNESCO, Available at:  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0000/000018/001801e.pdf> (Accessed:14.5.2025)
- Stetsenko, A. (2023) 'Marxism in an Activist Key: Educational implications of an Activist-Transformative Philosophy', in Hall, R., Accioly, I & Szadkowski, K. (eds) *The Palgrave International Handbook of Marxism and Education*, Palgrave McMillan: Cham Switzerland, pp 581-600.
- Williams, R. (1981) *Towards 2000*. London: Chatto & Windus.



## In Praise of Dialectics

Today, injustice goes with a certain stride,  
The oppressors move in for ten thousand years.  
Force sounds certain: it will stay the way it is.  
No voice resounds except the voice of the rulers  
And on the markets, exploitation says it out loud:  
I am only just beginning.  
But of the oppressed, many now say:  
What we want will never happen  
Whoever is still alive must never say 'never'!  
Certainty is never certain.  
It will not stay the way it is.  
When the rulers have already spoken  
Then the ruled will start to speak.  
Who dares say 'never'?  
Who's to blame if oppression remains? We are.  
Who can break its thrall? We can.  
Whoever has been beaten down must rise to their feet!  
Whoever is lost must fight back!  
Whoever has recognized his condition – how can anyone stop him?  
Because the vanquished of today will be tomorrow's victors  
And never will become: already today

**Bertold Brecht**

