

## CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	xi
Guide to online resources	xii

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
Making sense of mass education	2
Changing contexts of education	3
Some problems with modernist sociologies	4
Beyond modernist sociologies of education	4
The structure of the book	5

### **PART 1 RE-ASSESSING THE THREE PILLARS: MODERN AND POSTMODERN SOCIOLOGIES OF EDUCATION** **7**

<b>[CHAPTER 1] SOCIAL CLASS</b>	<b>9</b>
Introduction	10
Myth #1 Australia is a society characterised by equality	14
Myth #2 Schooling success is only about individual ability	17
Myth #3 Social class is all about money	22
Conclusion	26

<b>[CHAPTER 2] GENDER</b>	<b>27</b>
Introduction	28
Myth #1 Sex and gender are really the same thing	32
Myth #2 Schools are passive spectators to existing gender differences and inequalities	34
Myth #3 Boys are the latest victims of the schooling system	41
Myth #4 Sexuality is simply best ignored at school	44
Conclusion	49

<b>[CHAPTER 3] RACE/ETHNICITY</b>	<b>51</b>
Introduction	52
Myth #1 Humanity is naturally divided into races	57
Myth #2 We no longer discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity	60
Myth #3 Educational outcomes are unaffected by race or ethnicity	64
Myth #4 There is an 'Indigenous problem' in education	66
Conclusion	71

## **PART 2 THE FOUNDATIONS OF AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH: EDUCATION AND GOVERNANCE** **73**

### **[CHAPTER 4] GOVERNANCE** **77**

Introduction	78
Myth #1 Society has always been simply a collection of individuals	81
Myth #2 Schools are primarily about education, not regulation	84
Myth #3 The structure of the school isn't really that important to the education process	87
Conclusion	91

### **[CHAPTER 5] SUBJECTIVITY** **94**

Introduction	95
Myth #1 The sole purpose of psychology is to understand the nature of the human mind	97
Myth #2 My conduct may be governed, but my mind remains free	101
Myth #3 Psychology simply discovers new behaviour disorders; it plays no role in creating them	105
Conclusion	109

### **[CHAPTER 6] PRE-ADULTHOOD** **111**

Introduction	112
Myth #1 'Childhood' and 'youth' are facts of nature	114
Myth #2 The categories of 'childhood' and 'youth' have nothing to do with governance	118
Myth #3 'Childhood' is characterised by its innocence, 'youth' by its natural resistance to authority	123
Conclusion	127

### **[CHAPTER 7] BIG DATA** **129**

Introduction	130
Myth #1 Big data isn't that big, or that important	133
Myth #2 The rise of big data has no implications for the field of education	137
Myth #3 NAPLAN is the best thing to happen to education since the invention of chalk	142
Conclusion	148

## **PART 3 CULTURAL CONTEXTS OF CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION** **151**

### **[CHAPTER 8] THE MEDIA** **155**

Introduction	156
Myth #1 We do not need pointless subjects like 'media studies' in our already crowded curriculum	158
Myth #2 With the news media, you don't need to think, you just need to read and listen	162
Myth #3 The media doesn't create moral panics, but even if it does, this doesn't affect education	167
Conclusion	175

**[CHAPTER 9] POPULAR CULTURE 176**

Introduction	177
Myth #1 Popular culture is rubbish – in terms of taste, it's awful; as an object of study, it's irrelevant	180
Myth #2 Teachers need to be up to date with student cultures	185
Myth #3 Popular culture has no place in the classroom	189
Conclusion	193

**[CHAPTER 10] TECHNOLOGY 194**

Introduction	195
Myth #1 'Technologies' aren't that important; they don't affect the fundamentals of what it is to be human	200
Myth #2 Digital technology is the answer to all our education problems	205
Myth #3 Technology signals the end of teaching	209
Conclusion	213

**[CHAPTER 11] GLOBALISATION 214**

Introduction	215
Myth #1 Understanding globalisation is easy; it's simply another word for Americanisation	218
Myth #2 We have an Australian education system here, not any kind of 'globalised' one	223
Myth #3 'Education for Sustainability' has nothing to do with globalisation; it's a politically inspired waste of time	228
Conclusion	232

**PART 4 PHILOSOPHY AND MASS EDUCATION 235****[CHAPTER 12] PHILOSOPHY 239**

Introduction	240
Myth #1 Philosophy has no place in the 21st-century curriculum	243
Myth #2 'Education' is self-evident; we don't need philosophy to explain it	248
Myth #3 Teachers don't need a 'personal philosophy of education'	255
Conclusion	259

**[CHAPTER 13] ETHICS AND THE LAW 260**

Introduction	261
Myth #1 Understanding ethics doesn't help you be a good teacher	263
Myth #2 Unlike ethics, the law is straightforward; everyone agrees what it is, and what it does	268
Myth #3 We have an ethical education system; it does not discriminate	272
Myth #4 There are no real ethical dilemmas left for education law to deal with	276
Conclusion	280

## x CONTENTS

**[CHAPTER 14] TRUTH AND POSTCOLONIALISM 281**

Introduction	282
Myth #1 'Truth' is the most straightforward thing there is	284
Myth #2 Given we haven't been a colony for 100 years, postcolonial theory has nothing to tell us about ourselves	289
Myth #3 The knowledge in our school curriculum is both true, and culturally neutral	294
Conclusion	297

**[CHAPTER 15] ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION 298**

Introduction	299
Myth #1 There are no serious alternatives to traditional mass education	302
Myth #2 If you do choose to stay within the current schooling system, there are no realistic ways to change it significantly for the better	309
Conclusion	317

**CONCLUSION: THE CENTRAL AIMS OF THIS BOOK 319**

The intended approach of this book	320
Finally	321

References	322
Index	349