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Social problems and technological innovations:

Motives of curriculum reform in the 1970s¹

We have learned in yesterday's lecture that there is something like a cultural reflex to solve social problems through education. The emergence of this idea can be traced back to the time around 1700 and a century later, around 1800. It became institutionalized at a time when compulsory schooling was just about to become established. This coincidence is not accidentally, quite the opposite. In fact, many tasks of the so-called enlightenment like the use of one's own reason, the liberation from superstition, the use of improved cultivation methods or the use of new agricultural products like the potato asked for some kind of education or teaching, what encouraged the by all means existing schools to take over this function. The schools and in particular the teachers were, however, not the only ones who took on this role – the clergymen and the societies for public utility should also be mentioned here – but they were the only ones having an already existing organization at their disposal that could be expanded and modelled for this purpose. With this takeover, the school became more and more important and developed in the course of the 19th century into the today known compulsory schooling (Horlacher 2019; forthcoming). One of the main questions of the teachers and education policy makers engaged in this process at the end of the 18th century was how to organize compulsory schooling, how to guarantee an appropriate teacher training and adequate teaching technologies, how to provide sufficient textbooks and how to structure the rising amount of pupils, be it in classes, in learning groups or with the help of elder students as assistant teachers. The unanswered questions thus moved both on the content and on the organizational level.

Today's lecture will take up on these assumptions and focusing on the content level of school reform. However, I will not concentrate on examples from around 1800, but on curriculum reforms in the second half of the 20th century, a time, when the school curriculum was generally said to be too far away from real life. This assessment was certainly not inaccurate, but mirrors also a changing society that wanted to implement the societal changes into the school curriculum (Künzli/Fries/Hürlimann/Rosenmund 2013, pp. 43ff.; Goodson 1997). In fact, similar criticism of an outdated curriculum was and is formulated again and again, be it the life-

¹ Public lecture at the PhD Course *Educationalization – or Why and how we think that education is the key solution to all kinds of problems* at the University of Oslo 12-14 August, 2019

adjustment movement in America at the beginning of the 20th century or the more contemporary debates about Latin teaching in German-speaking grammar schools.

However, in the German speaking countries, the discussions on curriculum reform in the second half of the 20th century were not just discussed as a curricular question to be decided on a content level, but much broader as a theoretical or ideological question regarding the tasks of the schools, the role of the teachers and the educational duties of schooling. The discussions were among other things attributed to the two terms *Lehrplan* and curriculum, whereby these terms stood for different understandings of education and schooling (see Horlacher/De Vincenti 2014; Horlacher 2018). On one hand the term *Lehrplan*, literally the syllabus or the order of content, stood or still stands for the “traditional” German understanding of education and schooling, arguing with the notion of *Bildung* and emphasizing an “educational”, holistic understanding of schooling, which guarantees the teacher great autonomy and responsibility within the classroom. On the other hand, the term curriculum signified and signifies the modern, Anglo-American understanding of education and schooling, conceptualizing the curriculum as a result of social negotiation processes, restricting the autonomy of the teacher by the syllabus and arguing with psychological knowledge for improving pedagogy (Künzli 2009; Pinar 2009, p. 159f.; Pinar/Reynolds/Slattery/Taubman 2004, p. 201ff.).

One of the prominent proponents of the new term *curriculum* in the German speaking realm was Saul B. Robinsohn, since 1963 director of the Max-Planck-Institute for Human Development in Berlin, a non-university research organization. His use of the term *curriculum* was not accidental, even if he argued in his eponymous book titled *Educational reform as a revision of the curriculum (Bildungsreform als Revision des Curriculum, 1967)* – a kind of a blueprint of the curriculum reforms of these times – that he did not want to commit himself to one of its “specific manifestations in the UK or in the US”. He rather wanted to stress the “rational dimension” of this term and to offer a possibility to reform curriculum “with the help of methods that take decisions about the content of the curriculum not accidentally or based on diffuse traditions” (Robinsohn 1969, p. 1). Curriculum reform should thus be made predictable and controllable, based on rational concepts and decisions, and thus free from coincidences or impacts not related to the curriculum, like for example party politics.

Thus, by using the term *curriculum*, Robinsohn aimed to shift the German educational discourse from its traditional neo-humanistic tradition towards social science research. Furthermore, he pursued the objective of responding to “an extreme reduction of the horizons of the field of pedagogy” (ibid.) and to enable a “real curriculum revision” (ibid., p. 9), not dividing between content and structure. The notion of curriculum was therefore also linked to

a “new”, “modern”, and “up-to-date” education, oriented to the American educational psychology, to empiricism, to reliably data, to social science research, and to a belief in governing by expert knowledge (Tröhler 2014).

In fact, school reform through curriculum reform was a highly discussed topic in these times. At the same time various school development projects by curriculum reform took place and new subjects were implemented into the curriculum, with a temporal focus in the 1970s. I will discuss the case of school reform through curriculum reform using three intertwined examples of curriculum reform, all of which have taken place in the economically most potent Canton of Switzerland, the Canton of Zurich, but which may have taken place in the same or a similar way in other European countries. In this sense, my paper is not about curriculum reform in Zurich, but about the way in which societies deal with situations that are regarded as challenging or even problematic and to which educational measures are taken.

The presentation of the examples follows a chronological order. The first example deals with programmed instruction in the 1960s, a teaching method that was overwhelmed with extensive expectations, but very soon also aroused great fears.² The second example discusses the implementation of sex education in the 1970s, a socially sensitive issue, which was why the protagonists of this new teaching content took great care to position the subject as educational rather than political.³ The third case deals with film education also taking place in the 1970s, which soon developed into media education and tried to position itself as an up-to-date education science and as a theoretical guideline for a contemporary education and curriculum.⁴

In sum, these three case studies aim to better understand the ways in which school reforms occur with regard to curricular content and forms of teaching. The first example shows different expectations that are placed in new teaching technologies, while these expectations affect also the traditional understanding of education and schooling. The other two examples show the various expectations that are placed in education and schooling in regard to deal with social challenges. All three examples show the great willingness of schools and teachers to appropriate the various requirements and to consider the expectations on schooling and education as justified and achievable.

1) The introduction of programmed instruction

² This example is based on a more comprehensive study, see Horlacher 2015.

³ This example is based on a more comprehensive study, see Horlacher/De Vincenti 2019.

⁴ This example is based on a more comprehensive study, see Horlacher 2020.

Programmed instruction roots in behaviorist psychology and is linked to the American psychologist Burrhus F. Skinner (1904-1990) who since the early 1950s made some very effective criticisms of traditional teaching methods (Skinner 1965). He emphasized a strict stimulus-response pattern and propagated an according organization of learning. In the mid-1960s, the international debates on programmed learning had also been received in Switzerland, and the Pestalozzianum, an institution for the further education of teachers in Zurich, named after the overall Zurich-born Hero in education, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) – and this just in brackets, one of the main propagator of the idea of solving social problems through education (Tröhler 2013) – was asked by the ministry of education to inquire the use of technical teaching aids in the classroom (Erziehungsrat 1964). The Pestalozzianum was also commissioned to draw up programs specifically tailored to the situation in Zurich and to test these programs in practice.

Introductory courses in programmed learning were offered (Pestalozzianum 1965), which generated a great deal of interest independently of existing anxieties. Detailed minutes of a course provide concrete information on the content. According to them, programmed learning was not only propagated as an instructional technology for the effective and efficient transfer of knowledge and skills, as Skinner had propagated it, but as much more than that. It was stressed that the method had even produced positive results in “alleviating neurotic disturbances” and had demonstrated some success in so-called “problem children” and in children with brain injuries. Concretely, “mongoloid children” had even apparently learned to read “with the help of these programs” and were therefore now “mature for schooling” (Hauser 1968, p. 7). Teaching machines were further presented as a tool properly suited to the modern, industrialized, and engineered world that could be perfectly utilized to prepare students for a changed and changing world. In this, the most ardent hopes of the era are clearly expressed, hinged as they are to applied technologies. In fact, the technologies were in no way perceived as threatening but rather as liberating, as a release from repetitive, boring, and strenuous work; now that machines could perform these tasks neatly, conveniently, and efficiently, more time would be available for leisure (ibid., p. 8).

Despite the rather well known difficulties of programmed learning such as the time-consuming nature of the work of developing these programs and the considerably limited choices, the authorities in the educational administration were convinced that ultimately all the experiences had demonstrated the programs’ efficacy, particularly in certain fields of instruction. Vocational training seemed the most promising, here, because there, in contrast to the academic classroom “the emphasis is not placed on the student’s personal development”

(Stadtrat Zürich 1965), but on the transfer of knowledge and the development of skills. In this way, a distinction was drawn between public schooling and vocational training according to the varying requirements each had to fulfill. Whereas upbringing and personal development were given priority in the public schools, vocational training was primarily concerned with imparting and acquiring knowledge, making it ideal for programmed learning applications.

International developments were also closely followed in particular the rapid dissemination of programmed learning throughout the world. The driving force had been the US, which was, however, an ambiguous example, as in the US programmed learning compensated at least in part for the country's egregious teacher shortage. This fact reinforced the popular fear to replace teachers altogether by programmed instruction. Mainly teachers feared a decline in focus on educating the "whole person" and deterioration of learning and teaching to the mere provision and acquisition of information (Pestalozzianum 1968, p. 8). With this, the debate on programmed learning broadened into a debate on the 'correct' concepts of schools and curricula and to the question – to reduce this fact to a catchword – of schooling as transfer of knowledge or as *Bildung* (Horlacher 2016).

Thus the battle lines demarcating the critics and the proponents of the new method were clear. While one side waved the flag of modernity, progress, science, and the future, the other side stood in defense of personality, affinity, and holism. The debate thus not only came back to the question as to whether useful teaching methods might be derived from psychology or whether teaching was an art of its own, but it also vividly demonstrated the divergent conceptions of educational engineering and technology. Whereas the one side conceived technology as an educational support, the other saw it rather as an educational threat.

Despite the ideological debate and the divergent views on engineering and technology, more and more teachers were getting trained in programming, and teaching materials were developed for programmed learning. Nevertheless, beyond the affirmative rhetoric a persistent topic in the wider discussion on programmed learning remained the lack of appropriate teaching materials. By and by, the initial euphoria about the new method gave way to a more realistic estimation of the possibilities programmed learning had to offer. And increasingly the talk was turning away from programmed learning and towards computer-supported teaching. In that way, the effort to introduce programmed learning soon shifted in the direction of IT teaching, and the hopes associated with programmed teaching were transferred to the new teaching content.

2) The implementation of sex education in Zurich

At the same time as the first euphoria about programmed instruction reached Switzerland, a so-called “sex wave” swashed across Europe (Siegfried 2018, p. 85), leading to a widespread feeling of a “sexualization of all areas of life”, what called around 1970 for educational measures in schools (Horlacher/De Vincenti 2019). The proponents of sex education propagated the imparting of knowledge about how to deal with the own sexuality and about better control of the children’s sources of knowledge about sexuality. Mainly pulp fiction and pop culture were accused to provide inappropriate knowledge which asked for modern sex education. The opponents of sex education, on the other hand, feared that innocent minds could be corrupted by the school-based thematization of sexuality and that a natural “reluctance” could be destroyed and the “sense of shame” impaired. They therefore favored the assignment of the topic to family education, which resulted in a controversy about the educational treatment of sexuality.

Nevertheless, the demand for sex education fell on fertile ground at school in the context of the “life-world orientation” of the curriculum, discussed since the 1960s. This was also the case in Zurich, where in 1969 a Parliamentary interpellation on sex education was submitted to the Cantonal Executive, arguing with an “exuberant sexualization of all areas of life”, which made “rapid and positive measures in favor of the children” necessary (Wespi 1971, p. 1). Since the political authorities assumed, that the topic – sex education – could be controversial, a commission, reflecting quite different opinions (ibid., p. 2), was set up to discuss this issue. Despite this diversity, the commission’s demands regarding sex education was quite unanimous (ibid., p. 7), probably due to the very general formulations of the objectives: they should, very fundamentally, include the “tasks as man or woman”, the development of “feelings of values and conscience” or the “necessity of moral decision” (ibid., p. 10). Sex education was thus more on the level of a moral education and did not (yet) claim to address controversial ideological questions.

The commission cited also biological motives for introducing sex education in schools. In particular, it was argued that the “advancement of puberty”, presented as a scientific fact, often took place without a simultaneous “psychological maturation”, what leads to a “psychosomatic split” and a “dangerous vacuum approximately from the thirteenth to the seventeenth year” (ibid., p. 4). Reference was also made to “an increasing mental disorientation and psychological instability among *children and adolescents*” and to their alleged “*serious sexual distress*” (ibid., p. 3). The current status was thus described as worrying and the need for action was beyond question, while the members of the commission shared the fundamental conviction that both the changed social approach to sexuality and the perceived biological change must be met in

school in order to capture undesirable developments. Accordingly, the envisaged learning content was by no means merely biological knowledge but designed as sex education, what meant to be comprehensive and offering guidance.

Thus, the implementation of sex education at primary schools was required, even if such basically educational tasks were actually attributed as the responsibility of the parents (*ibid.*, p. 2f.; Zimmerman 2015, p. 3). It cannot be guaranteed – so the widely shared argumentation – that the family fulfils the task of sex education really comprehensively and that the children receive the guidance important for this topic. In order to compensate possible restrictions of family origin, however, the schools have a certain responsibility to assume. Sex education was thus defined as the general task of the schools, not taking place in a separate “subject”, but to be integrated as a so-called teaching principle and thought “as casually and inconspicuously as possible into the entire curriculum”. The open-minded, amenable and honest “personality of the teacher” as well as his specific training was regarded as decisive both for the “success of the lessons” and for the exchange with the parents, while the task of the teachers had still to be supported with appropriate teaching materials and the relevant knowledge (Wespi 1971, p. 11). The new learning content had to close the “not harmless gap in the ‘education of the human being’ as the supreme commandment of our pedagogical efforts” (*ibid.*, p. 21), as the head of the commission noted in the final report. The social problem of the “sexualization of all areas of life” was thus handed over to education and most of all to the schools.

In view of the delicacy of the issue a survey among local school authorities was conducted to find out the current state of sex education in the schools of the Canton of Zurich. The question was, if and if so, how and by whom sex education was offered in the schools. It resulted that some schools already offered sex education, while the corresponding lessons were provided for more than half of them by the class teacher. In other schools, medical doctors, pastors or “other persons” were responsible for this subject (Wespi 1971, p. 9). The teaching staff of one school community was particularly active in this field, why it was asked to report on its experience. The question to what extent sex education had been integrated into the curriculum was of particular interest. Unfortunately, the teachers reported that it had not always been possible to “remain strictly within the given pedagogical framework”, since primary school children often demanded “information [...] on so-called ‘sensitive’ topics”, which the teachers had to face (Schule Urdorf 1974, p. 3). In fact, the “sex instruction” did not necessarily adhere to the learning goals set by the experts. Even though recommendations had been developed for the pedagogical “correct” handling of sex education including the question of who was the appropriate person to teach this subject, the class teacher or an external expert, the everyday

school life did not always fit into the given concept. It became also clear that mutual exchange with parents was an important part of sex education in schools.

On the basis of the preparatory work of various commissions, school experiments carried out and as an “educational question to be solved”, the sex education project was further developed. One question that still had to be solved was for example whether and if so how sex education should be integrated into the new subject of “life skills” (*Lebenskunde*), which listed sexuality “in second place within a 14-fold structured framework program” (Vontobel 1976, p. 1). Even if the coherence in content was undisputed, the fear was that the integration of sex education into the subject “life skills” could jeopardize it and reject the project as a whole, which was why the integration of sex education into the subject “life skills” was renounced (Lehrmittelkommission 1977, p. 2; Schulsynode 1977, p. 1).

The “educational” aspect of sex education, however, was not disputed and was justified by the educational mission of the schools (Abteilung Lehrerfortbildung 1976, p. 1). Nevertheless, a certain caution becomes clear in the various statements on sex education in dealing with the topic, which refer to the different perceptions of the topic in the various interest groups. “The sex education contents and goals of the project workers are obviously in some essential points divergent to the value horizon of the educational decision-makers” (Vontobel 1976, p. 1), noted for example one of the leading proponents of sex education in Zurich. In fact, during the 1970’s, the public meaning on sex education changed or at least critical voices expressed themselves more clearly. The task of introducing sex education in schools was questioned by very conservative parties who did not question the social problem-solving competence of the school itself, but only criticized the introduction of the concrete content sex education, what was labelled as an inappropriate attack on the privacy of the family (Meyer 1980; Oertly 1980a, b). It became obvious, that the school had to answer questions which were not yet clearly decided in society (Vontobel 1976, p. 1f.). One strategy to deal with this problem was to widen according school experiments and to prove that the teaching contents and materials were “applicable” (ibid., p. 3), in order to provide legitimacy for the planned but socially controversial content.

Thus, the school did not only have to teach a socially relevant but controversial content. Above all, its concrete formulation and design was handed over to the schools and to the individual teachers. At the same time it was officially stressed that “the elementary schools [...] must not be the place where sexual moral conflicts take place and different dogmas collide”. Quite the contrary: “The schools should rather awaken the understanding for different views and help the children to cope better with the problems of sexuality” (Erziehungsrat 1979, p. 3).

Sex education in schools should thus take place beyond normative-moral discussions, refer to solid, that means rational knowledge, whereby the educational goal of this instruction was clearly to remain being settled on the normative, life-management level. Against this background of sex education, which was normatively charged despite all assertions to not do that, the task for the schools and the individual teachers was not just comprehensive, but mainly paradoxical.

3) The case of film and media education

Similar developments like in the case of sex education can be detected in the handling of film and television at school, even though the subject itself in this case was hardly controversial. In 1968, educational television programs were broadcast for the first time in the Swiss 'national' broadcasting company (Stambach 1972, p. 11) and soon it was stressed, that "film education is an urgent necessity" (Frehner 1968, p. 1). The focus of such an education was not placed on the technical side of the film, but rather on the pedagogical treatment of the new medium, whereby under film education everything was summarized which dealt with "moving pictures". It was mentioned, that the film had become an "environmental factor to be interpreted" and not to be neglected in school, because "a large number of boys and girls have access to films via television and forbidden cinema" (ibid., p. 2). Thus similar reasoning patterns were used as in sex education, whereby the problem in this case was not the wrong knowledge, but how to deal with popular mass culture, which was suspected of being trashy. The guidance of the teachers was therefore all the more necessary. The aim of such an educational activity was less to avoid contact with "bad films", but rather to awaken an understanding of "film as a work of art" and to confront the children "with its message" (ibid., p. 3). In addition, the pupils should learn "in the conscious confrontation with films" that a film is "a means, a possibility to represent things of life or life itself in one way or another" (ibid.). Therefore, the film was to be made "comprehensible as an experience" and was seen as a possibility "to bring up a certain problem and to process it in conversation" (ibid., p. 2). Thus film education meant primarily knowledge about the production of films, what was secondly important to counter the seductive power of moving pictures.

In the same time, a survey among primary and secondary school teachers showed that educational television was accepted as a teaching aid by the vast majority of the responding teachers and that a majority was in favor of further expansion of such education, even if only just under one third of the teachers had actively used the new medium (Stambach 1972, p. 9ff.). Like in the case of sex education, the teachers were positively inclined about the new teaching

content, whereby in the case of film education the subject itself was also used as a pedagogical tool.

The use of film and television in the classroom was also supported by educational policy makers. They argued, that even though television was a “controversial reality”, film education was a question of “educating young consumers to become critical and discerning viewers”, a task that the school could not ignore (Egger 1969, p. 29). Like in the case of sex education, the schools were asked to work pedagogically on the new medium in the classroom. In contrast, however, to the example of sex education, the public perception of this new subject was much less controversial.

Given the low level of public controversy surrounding film education, its proponents soon argued for an expansion of film education into a comprehensive media education. In this extension of the topic the educationalization of social problems becomes most obvious as media education was conceptualized as a comprehensive theory for *all* social challenges. The necessity of media education was justified by the fact that the various forms of “modern development of knowledge transfer” like pictures, slides, film, television, the respective distribution services and audiovisual support for foreign language teaching, which by the way was also a consequence of programmed learning, should be brought together (Regierungsrat 1971, p. 3f.) and a concept for media education was commissioned as “basis for future media studies at our elementary school” (Regierungsrat 1973, p. 4). It soon became clear that such a media education would also have to take into account the subject areas newly to be included in the curriculum such as sex education or “life skills” (Saxer 1973, p. 1; Erziehungsdirektion 1974, p. 2). Thus, at the same time that the proponents of the introduction of sex education discussed whether sex education could or should become part of the subject “life skills”, the protagonists of media education were very self-confidently arguing for a comprehensive concept of media education that would unite all new, life-oriented curricular subjects, regardless of their public perception and of their maybe controversial nature.

The educational demands associated with media education became clear at a conference on media education in 1978. In the introductory words of the conference it was pointed out that it was not the participants fault that “the common denominator of the various efforts” within media education “is relatively small” (Doelker 1978, p. 3). The reason lies rather in the “complexity of the subject” (ibid.), in the unclear curricular status, and in the fact that media education is not an independent science (ibid., p. 4). At the conference itself, a variety of projects were presented: An empirical study on the role of the mass media in the lives of schoolchildren (Saxer/Bonfadelli/Hättenschwiler 1979), the basic features of “action-oriented

media education” were explained (Baacke 1978, p. 14), and representatives of the Catholic film office, the Protestant film service and the trade unions pointed out where and how they were specifically involved in media education. The Swiss Youth and Mass Media Working Group proposed the establishment of a “general, supra-regional and supra-confessional coordination office for documentation and information” (Meier 1978, p. 3) and a lecturer working at the local teachers college pleaded for media education as practical communication training, which almost took on world-saving traits, since it helped to “reduce alienated learning and school stress”, to grasp the “student in its entirety” and to make “lively learning” possible, “by causing personal dismay and leaving the constitution of meaning to the learner”, by conveying “insights into social, political and economic contexts” and by initiating “the development of individual and collective strategies for coping with the damaged life in a damaged world” (Ramseier 1978, p. 9f.).

Thus, at this conference, very different ideas of the content and the function of media education were presented, which could also contradict each other. However, it also became clear that media education and its starting point, film education, did not see itself as a clearly definable teaching content to be concentrated on one “subject”, but rather as a teaching or even a life principle that almost paradigmatically promised to redeem the contemporary pedagogical demands for the orientation of the curriculum to the world in which we live.

This comprehensive claim also explains why the discussions in Zurich were able to develop so quickly from the question of film and television education to a much broader media education. If film education wanted to be part of the orientation of the curriculum facing the surrounding modernizing world, then it also had to turn to other medias, whereby the practical implementation did not call into question the instructional dimension and thus the normative side. Even though the aim of film education was at the beginning to understand the history of production and the staging of a film, this enlightening intention was soon associated with a normative dimension, since the aim was to learn to distinguish reality from fiction, to see through medial staging and to protect oneself with additional knowledge from the danger of indoctrination. Especially in film education, normative convictions could be supported by aesthetic arguments that could easily give the impression of being “non-normative”.

4) Conclusion

These three case studies exemplified different aspects of curriculum reform, of the understanding what a teacher is and of the educationalization of social problems in regard to schooling. The first case study, programmed instruction, illustrated the various hopes connected

to pedagogical tools and teaching methods, promising to make teaching and learning easy and most of all effective. The example stands for the claim of pedagogical tools to guarantee learning success and to make education manageable. The fact that programmed learning has emerged not only in the context of behaviorism but also of cybernetics reinforces the expectation of controllability. The example also showed, however, that the promise of planning conflicts with a certain understanding of the teacher if the teacher is to be more or something else than the person imparting knowledge. The conflict becomes particularly apparent when the teacher is given an educational task and is contextualized within the framework of *Bildung* as the realization of the individual perfectibility and the harmonious development of all forces.

The second example, sex education, is the showcase for the educationalization of social problems. The “sex wave” was a social phenomenon, a cultural change, visible in mass media, movies, music, and a changing youth culture. The changed way of dealing with sexuality that became obvious in these phenomena, called for educational support. Even if the question to what extent this issue was in fact a public and thus a school issue was disputed, the strategy to include this topic into the curriculum was not fundamentally discussed, if ideologically fundamental positions are disregarded.

The third example, film education, oscillates between the pedagogical work on a socially challenging topic and the hopes of developing a pedagogical tool in order to deal with social challenges. Film education per se was a much less controversial issue than sex education and the pedagogical treatment by the school not controversial. In that sense, the example of film education and programmed instruction are comparable. The expansion of film education into media education was all the less surprising, as it “fitted” perfectly into the educational debates of the 1970s, which in the wake of the 1968 movement and critical emancipatory educational science reinforced the self-image of the education science – at least in the German-speaking context –, that education science is responsible for normativity and the implementation of the correct idea of the good life.

In addition, the examples showed the expectations associated with the new teaching contents as well as a certain skepticism of teachers or the public in regard to this new teaching contents, whereby the skepticism came from different sides depending on the topic and was also oriented differently in terms of content. While in the case of programmed instruction the main concern was losing pedagogical autonomy and the very essence of education and teaching, signified by the concept of *Bildung*, the concerns in the example of sex education revolved around the question of the division of the tasks between family and school or between private and public. In the case of film education, the public expectations were quite unspectacular and the subject

not disputed, what made it easy to transform film education into media education and to promote a new discipline within education science that recommended itself as a guarantee for a modern pedagogy and education.

Over all, the case studies show the ultimate importance attached to education and pedagogy strengthening once again the importance of schooling as a tool for prevention and solution of social problems. The case studies also show, how the task of social responsibility is delivered to the teachers, without, however, reflecting to what extent this attribution is an individual overload or an institutional error, since neither education nor schooling can solve social problems. This self-understanding of teachers and schooling was not only an external attribution or a result of the society-changing ideas of the 1968er-generation, but rather reflects a long and culturally embedded tradition of education and schooling to correspond to these tasks, what in general is closely connected to a so-called modern understanding of education and schooling. The 1970s are a particularly suitable example to show this mutual conditionality, because in this decade a general desire for the reform of the living and political conditions was articulated vehemently, at least by parts of the society. And it was also a time, when education science – at least in German speaking contexts – was triggered by psychology and empirical research, what was mirrored in the curriculum-Lehrplan-debate mentioned in the introduction. Thus the curriculum reform projects of the 1970s focused on subjects and teaching methods, but these issues always included overarching questions that were not or could not be made explicit, but which nevertheless shaped the discussions.

If one compares today's debates about digitalization with the discussions reconstructed here, then not only numerous argumentative parallels become obvious, but above all also the shared conviction of both times that schooling and education are one of or even *the* important actor in overcoming social challenges and that there is an infinitely great potential for improving society through education be it media education or digitalization. However, the history of school experiments, reform ideas or “revolutionary” pedagogical innovations also show, that the associated hopes are usually disappointed and replaced by disillusionment, whereby the hope that everything will be better in the next technical, pedagogical or ideological “revolution” because it will now be “properly” implemented, is not called into question. In pedagogical and educational contexts hope apparently dies last.

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