

# ECNAIS 2016

**Nordic light on freedom and independency: The non-public schools in the northern part of Europe**

# The confluence of pedagogy and politics.

– A view on the changes in theory and  
concepts dealing with pedagogy and  
education.

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# Scandinavia: What's the story?



# What is Happening today?

To answers:

- 1) The school system in Denmark (and in many other countries) did actually have some practical and theoretical problems before the reforms.
- 2) The new focus on the concept of learning represents a change in the way we think about schools and education.

# Some historic events – the Danish case

- \* In 2012 the Danish parliament agreed on a major reform of the teacher education.
- \* The "Inclusion Act" was also passed in 2012, aiming to increase the quantitative level of inclusion.
- \* A greater reform of the public schools followed in 2013.
- \* Mostly, there is a political focus on quantitative performativity alongside an ambition to find usable, evidence based and “best practice” methods (Dyssegaard et al 2013a).
- \* Educational research has become more and more strategic, focussing on the priorities of the new reforms.

# A theoretical perspective (Mårtensson 2015)

Era	Theoretical frame	Scientific method
<b>Modernity</b>	<b>Linked to great narratives</b>	<b>Studies are carried out within the limits of the great narratives</b>
<b>Post-modernity</b>	<b>An absence of great narratives</b>	<b>Deconstruction and emancipation</b>
<b>Post-postmodernity</b>	<b>Linked to a specific construction of a great narrative</b>	<b>Use (and construction) of evidence in line with the great narrative.</b>

# The competitive state ( Ove Kaj Pedersen)

	National state (1850-1950)	Welfare state (1950-1990)	Competitive state (1990-)
Subjekt	Individual	Person (irreplacable)	Person (self-maximizing)
How to rule the population?	The disciplined individual	The free citizen (the good life as an ideal)	The effective citizen-worker
What combines us?	Nation (national identity)	Democracy (participation)	Allies in the struggle for survival (work)
Right	Freedom (by right)	Equal access to knowledge/ information	Equal access to job



# Theoretical movements in official educational policy and research

**All children are special (a systemic view)**

**All children have disabilities (the cannot yet join the workforce)**

**What to they need?: Learning, standardized programs and evidencebased cures!**

# The solving of the paradox of pedagogy?

Thinkers like Kant and Rousseau based their pedagogical theory on the presence of a eternal paradox: How can we force other people to be free?

Today, modern governments seems to have solved that problem by focusing on competence-based learning programmes. Or have they?

# State and pedagogy

Some movements  
and some problems

# But: What is a school?

The concept have its roots in the Greek *Schole* and the Latin *schola*. Orginially, the meaning of the word was "free time", referering to the fact that pubils in schools did not have to work. Therefore, a school is etymologically the opposite of anything connected to the labor market.

# Democracy and schools

Democracy is often viewed as:

- \* A formal political organisation
- \* A way of living together
- \* An approach to life
- \* A devotion to reason and freedom of thought

How can we sustain democracy without schools that encourages these ideas?

# Biesta and Säfström (2010):

“We propose that to speak for education in an educational manner means to express an interest in freedom and, more specifically, an interest in the freedom of the other: the freedom of the child, the freedom of the pupil, the freedom of the student. Freedom is not license. It is neither about ‘anything goes’ nor about individual preference and choice. Freedom is relational and therefore inherently difficult.”

(“A manifesto for education”)

# What should the independent schools do?

A new position in society?

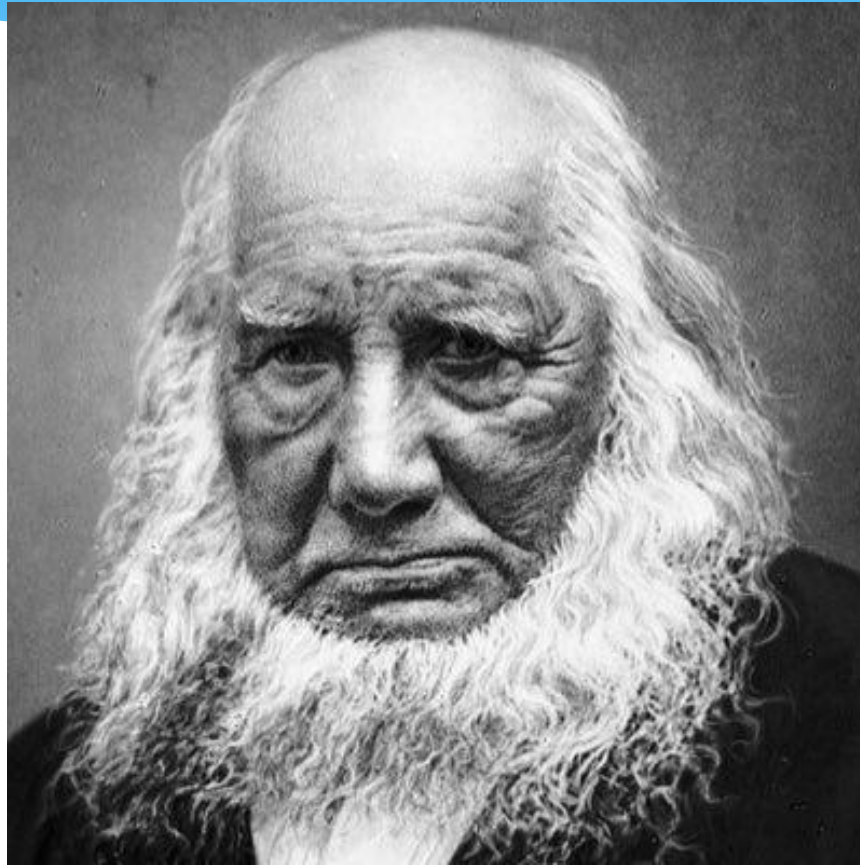
A new responsibility?

# Independent schools in Denmark

- \* Friskoler (“free schools”)
- \* Efterskoler (in some ways similar to boarding schools)
- \* Lilleskoler (often Dewey-inspired independent schools)
- \* Privatskoler (private schools)
- \* Højskoler (Independent schools for adults – without exams)



# Some old ideas that might inspire



N.F.S Grundtvig (1783-1872)

# Enlightenment and awakening

- \* Bringing things into the light

- \* To bring the world – and the student – to life

”One has not lived, who has not held something dear”

# More old ideas...



Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813-1855)

# Love is the beginning of everything!

Individuality

Faith

Love

# In conclusion

Perspectives on the major change in paradigms:

What is a human being/ what has it become?

Why are we here?

# A final perspective

Reinventing the basic idea of pedagogy and education:

Holding something and someone dear!

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# Thank you!

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