

The Labour party and citizenship education: Policy networks and the introduction of citizenship lessons in schools

Ben Kisby



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The Labour Party and citizenship education provides the definitive account of why and how Labour introduced citizenship education as a compulsory subject in the National Curriculum. Based on interviews with the key players, including former Education Secretary David Blunkett and Chair of the Advisory Group on Citizenship Bernard Crick, and a wide range of primary and secondary sources, it analyses the development of the policy in its historical context and examines the ideas motivating those involved in this important initiative.

In doing this, it provides not only a new and distinctive analysis of the development of Labour's citizenship education policy and its core underlying presuppositions, but also an original approach to analysing policy-making, contributing to our understanding of the role of ideas and policy networks in the policy process. The book also contributes to debates about the nature of New Labour as a political phenomenon, drawing attention, in particular, to concerns expressed by key figures in the party about levels of political participation and trust in political institutions amongst citizens and about stocks of 'social capital' in society more generally.

Dealing with the significant and topical issues of political disaffection and community cohesion, the book is essential reading for academics and students of political science, public and social policy, education, contemporary history, and political theory. Written in an accessible style, it will also be of interest to the general reader concerned about issues of citizenship, political participation, disengagement and re-engagement.

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