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Fred Clarke, the Institute of Education (London) and educational studies

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Abstract

Fred Clarke (1880–1952) made a significant national contribution to the institutionalisation of educational studies in his position as director of the Institute of Education (IOE), London, UK, and afterwards. He encouraged distinct specialisms in particular areas of educational studies and promoted an international basis for teaching, research and professorships at the IOE. He also led the first national survey of its type on educational studies and research and cultivated a favourable public discourse for educational studies, especially through his published work *The Study of Education in England*.

Keywords research; survey; disciplines; sociology; history; public discourse; professors

Introduction

The year 2022 marks not only the 120th anniversary of the IOE (Institute of Education), UCL's Faculty of Education and Society (University College London), UK, but also the 70th anniversary of the death, in January 1952, of one of its leading early directors, Sir Fred Clarke. It was Clarke who presided over the early development of the IOE under its new title at the University of London as its director from 1936 to 1945. His role as a significant educational reformer is well established, based on his book *Education and Social Change* (Clarke, 1940) and his support for reforms leading to the Education Act of 1944 (McCulloch, 1994; Ku, 2013, 2020). He was a member of the McNair Committee, which helped to reshape teacher education after the Second World War (Crook, 1995), but it is less well known that he also helped to shape educational studies not only at the IOE but also at the national and international level. When he assumed the directorship of the IOE, taking over from Sir Percy Nunn in 1936, he took steps to develop distinct specialisms in particular areas of educational studies and to encourage an international basis for teaching, research and professorships at the IOE. He followed this by instituting and leading the first national survey of the study of education in England before the start of the Second World War in 1939. The findings of this were published in his short book *The Study of Education in England* (Clarke, 1943), the first sustained study of this new field in the English context, leading after the war to the development of educational studies on a national basis.

It is important to take both external conditions and the internal dynamics of the relevant institutions into account when explaining curriculum change, in higher education no less than in schools. Ben Morris (1955) of the National Foundation for Educational Research stressed broad intellectual, social and professional factors, and later on, William Taylor (1972: 7) – then at the University of Bristol, although he would also go on to become a key leader at the IOE – argued that a precondition for the growth of educational research was 'the existence of a climate of political, social and educational ideas sympathetic to research pursuits'. This externalist emphasis, while certainly valid in its awareness of wider social change, may overlook the necessity of key institutions to be in a position to lead and shape the direction of change. At the same time, institutional histories that dwell on internal relationships often neglect their connection to the wider society, and their deeper significance as social history (McCulloch, 2018). Nevertheless, the institutional base and individual commitment also matter, and can make a difference for wider developments at regional, national and even international levels. Previous research has demonstrated the IOE's broader significance in setting fresh agendas and new constructs in subdisciplines such as the sociology of education, educational administration and curriculum studies in the period since the Second World War (see, for example, McCulloch, 2014a; McCulloch and Cowan, 2018: Chapter 3).

The history of changing configurations of knowledge can be understood not simply as intellectual history, but also in social and political terms (Burke, 2012). Equally, the history of the formation of academic disciplines and fields, although often conceived as a nostalgic account based on heroic founders and foundation myths, may also offer opportunities to undertake critical assessment of their development (see McCulloch, 2014a). For example, Thackray and Merton (1972) have reflected interestingly on the 'discipline building' of the historian of science George Sarton in the United States in the early twentieth century. They note in this regard that the creation of both a cognitive identity and a professional identity is necessary for the institutionalisation of an area of knowledge to be fully successful. Thackray and Merton (1972: 474) argue that this process is deeply rooted, especially in its early stages, in 'the private vision of its founders', which is 'a matter of personal, sometimes heroic, endeavour by some one or a few persons seized with the possibilities of an as-yet-unrecognised, unorganised area of knowledge'. At the same time, they suggest that this process is bound up with the building of a professional identity in the context of Western universities based on patterns of teaching and research that have facilitated the growth of career structures and networks.

In Europe, Hofstetter and Schneuwly (2002, 2004) have analysed the institutionalisation of educational science in terms of the creation of the first academic chairs linked to education, the production of textbooks condensing the main features of the new disciplinary field, the emergence of institutions whose mandate includes research and which allowed the constitution of a body of specialists, the creation of specialist journals, and the generation of discourses produced from within and outside.

Judged by these criteria, Clarke and the IOE made a significant contribution to the institutionalisation of education as an academic subject, field or discipline, although in a particular way. First, there already were a number of academic chairs in education, at the IOE and elsewhere in England,

but it was Clarke's singular achievement to establish them in specialist areas of education during his tenure as director. Second, the establishment of the IOE in the 1930s was a prime example of an institution that included research in its remit and allowed the creation of a body of specialists. Clarke as director presided over this development. Third, there was no academic journal that covered education in general, but it was Clarke's ambition to establish such a journal towards the end of his career, culminating in 1952 in the creation of the *British Journal of Educational Studies*, the first national academic journal of education to be produced in England. Fourth, Clarke himself promoted a discourse around education as an academic field, especially through his authorship of the first published critique of the field, *The Study of Education in England*, in 1943. Finally, there were many textbooks about education, not least *Education: Its data and first principles* by his predecessor, Percy Nunn (1920), but it was Clarke who helped to support the development of textbooks in particular areas of education. Certainly, this latter development was by a circuitous route, and as a by-product, in which the sub-communities encouraged by specialist chairs led by the 1960s to the establishment of distinct societies, conferences and journals, accompanied by the relevant specialist textbooks. J.W. Tibble's (1966) influential textbook *The Study of Education* was the harbinger of many such compartmentalised or specialised works, including those in the Students' Library of Education, which it helped to launch (McCulloch and Cowan, 2018).

Clarke's support for specialist academic chairs in different areas of education, his endorsement of specialist textbooks in different areas, his promotion of specialist research and researchers and his championing of an academic journal marked him out as institutionalising not simply education, but the new discipline-based field of educational studies. Moreover, his contribution to this development also included two achievements that have previously been neglected. First, in the late 1930s, he established the first national survey, or map, of educational studies and research across England. Second, as the author of *The Study of Education in England* (Clarke, 1943), he created a discourse about education that resonated strongly in post-war society, and helped to generate what Taylor later recognised as a favourable climate of ideas. The next section of this article will highlight the general features of Clarke's contribution to the institutionalisation of educational studies, as noted above. The following section will investigate in more detail his production of an educational survey. The final section will discuss his authorship of *The Study of Education in England* and what this represented.

The institutionalisation of educational studies

Educational studies as a knowledge formation became institutionalised at the IOE during Fred Clarke's period as director, and then more broadly in other higher education institutions around England in the first decade after the Second World War. This process included the creation of specialist academic chairs and research in distinct areas of education, closely associated with Clarke's work at the IOE. Clarke himself, born in 1880, had been a pupil teacher at St Ebbe's Boys' School in Oxford, and studied history at Oxford Day Training College. He was appointed professor of education at Hartley's College, Southampton, in 1906, at the age of 26, and then became the first professor of education at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, in 1911 (Clarke, 2006).

It was during his time in Cape Town that he became widely known as a leading international figure with lofty aspirations for the future development of the study of education. *Essays in the Politics of Education*, which he published in 1923, highlighted his misgivings at how education had previously been represented in higher education as being based on teacher training, and now grounded mainly in the discipline of psychology. A university department of education, he insisted, should not be justified solely as a training college for teachers incorporated in a university, but should establish the systematic study of education itself. He argued, moreover, that this study should not be focused on individual psychology, but on social relationships and the social order as a whole, beginning 'from the conception of the Great Society or Civilisation as a whole', and summoning psychology and biology 'when we want them for elucidatory purposes, not as masters of the whole situation' (Clarke, 1923: 149).

Thus, Clarke (1923: 150) allied himself with the philosophies of John Dewey in the United States and of Georg Kerschensteiner in Germany (see, for example, Lagemann, 2000; Winch, 2006), in favouring the idea of freedom 'as a determinate condition in a place in a social order (essentially Plato's conception)', and against individualism and 'the superficial notion of personal independence'. Indeed, if there was to be any controlling science for education, it should be 'neither Psychology nor Biology, but Sociology' (Clarke, 1923: 13). His view was that education should set out from the notion of an 'objective spiritual

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order to which all educational effort is relative' (Clarke, 1923: 23). In the academy, he feared, 'the ship of education, now that it has come to be officered very largely by Professors of Education, may yet get itself stuck in academic flats and shallows, and be lost in the quicksands of statistics or on the sunken reefs of experimental psychology'. Instead, he enthused, there was the 'open sea' ahead (Clarke, 1923: x), with the promise of 'constant renewal from its tingling air and its vast spaces' (Clarke, 1923: xi; see also McCulloch and Cowan, 2018).

Yet, while education could be considered as a unity, in Clarke's view it could be studied in differentiated ways, led by professors who were trained in different disciplines. This was a somewhat different outlook from that of Percy Nunn (1920, 1930), whose vision for research in the reorganised IOE under the aegis of the University of London was grounded in the individualism that was a hallmark of his own work, and initially based on experimental child psychology in collaboration with the psychological departments of the university. Meanwhile, Clarke (1923) preferred the appointment of senior staff who could specialise in particular aspects of education, such as history and organisation, methods and instruction of training, and the philosophy and psychology of education, and to engage in research in those areas.

In the early 1930s, now based at McGill University in Canada, Clarke took an active interest in the IOE's efforts to establish itself as an international centre for research in education. He cultivated relationships with Frederick Keppel at the Carnegie Corporation of New York, which had funding set aside for philanthropic support in the social sciences (see Lagemann, 1989: Chapter 7), and Isaac Kandel at the Teachers College at Columbia University, as well as Nunn, to promote potential new initiatives at the IOE. In 1935, he embarked on a self-styled 'world tour' of key centres in Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand to establish further contacts. In his formal report on this tour, he recommended the further development of advanced research facilities at the IOE, including the appointment as professors 'of a few men [*sic*] of outstanding attainment and with outstanding attainment and reputation in selected fields' (Clarke, 1935: n.p.), and individuals in mid-career who might form the 'natural sequel' to the Carnegie Corporation's funding of fellowships. These would include in particular educational philosophy, comparative education, history of education and economics of education (Clarke, 1935). Further plans included a senior appointment in English as a foreign language (Clarke, 1939a). Thus, there was a close link between the internationalisation of a pool of researchers and the formation of a multidisciplinary approach that could attract specialist expertise in a range of disciplines, such as history, philosophy, sociology and comparative education (McCulloch, 2014b).

This fresh scope for diversification was reflected after Clarke was appointed to the directorship of the IOE in 1936, in a discussion over new professorships between Clarke and his predecessor. Nunn expressed a preference for the appointment of a chair in comparative education and a half-time chair for Susan Isaacs who had established a Child Development Department in 1933. He also supported the idea of a chair in the principles of education, which he had been teaching himself. Clarke favoured approaching Francis Cavenagh to appoint him to a chair in the history of education. Nunn (1937: n.p.) demurred: 'If I had my way I should be inclined to make him professor of Education *sans phrase*, and let him give himself partly to history and partly to principles'. He recognised that it might be essential for Cavenagh to be devoted entirely to history, 'assuming that a clear delimitation of the frontiers of that subject and comparative education is desirable and possible' (Nunn, 1937: n.p.). Nunn (1937: n.p.) was worried lest appointing chairs in both history of education and comparative education would create 'two big wheels' that 'may not both find room underneath the coach'. In the event, Cavenagh was appointed as professor of education at King's College London, and Joseph Lauwerys became professor of comparative education ten years later in 1947, while Isaacs was never appointed to a chair (Aldrich and Woodin, 2020, especially 100–2 on Isaacs). Such considerations of demarcation and relative purpose continued to raise difficult issues in particular cases, but over the long term Clarke successfully pursued his aim of specialisation.

Clarke enjoyed better fortune with regard to the sociology of education, due to the contribution of Karl Mannheim, a Hungarian who had left his chair in sociology in Germany in 1933 to come to the London School of Economics. He came to know Clarke through the discussion group the Moot, where they exchanged ideas on education and the future of society (Mannheim, 1939; Taylor, 1996). When Clarke retired as professor and director in 1945, Mannheim was appointed as professor in his place, and a year later he became the first professor of the sociology of education at the IOE, but died in 1947 (Stewart, 1953).

Indeed, it was in these immediate post-war years that the fruits of Clarke's endeavours in this area came to be evident. A large number of overseas students, still being supported by Clarke, were catered for in their MA and PhD studies by seven full-time professors who were specialists in different areas, six of these based at the IOE (Clarke, 1949a): Lauwerys in comparative education; Lester Smith in sociology of education; Pattison in English as a foreign language; Read in colonial education; Reid in the philosophy of education; and Vernon in educational psychology (history of education was now led by A.V. Judges, based at King's College London; Aldrich and Woodin, 2020). For H.N. Knox (1951: 40), in a considered reflection on the study of education in British universities, this process of establishing specialist separate chairs in different areas, pioneered in London, had already led to the notion of a single professor of education becoming 'anachronistic', and improved the future prospects of education as a university field of study. By the same token, the study of education had given way to educational studies.

A national survey of education

A further feature of Clarke's contribution was his leadership of the first national survey of research in education, created in 1938 by Section L (Educational Science) of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) with the formal terms of reference 'to consider and report on the possibilities of organising and developing research in education' (CRE, 1939a: n.p.). Clarke was to chair the committee, and it was agreed to invite a group of high-level educationists to serve as members: E. Salter Davies (editor of the *Journal of Education*), Professor C.W. Valentine (Birmingham University), Dr J. Gurney Dixon (chair of Hampshire education committee), Dr Evan Davies (director of education at Willesden), J. Compton (director of education at Ealing) and P.B.H. Lyon (head of Rugby School) (CRE, 1939b). The only university professor, Valentine, was unable to take part, and Professor R.A.C. Oliver of Manchester University, an educational psychologist, took his place (CRE, 1939c; see Pearson et al., 1989), soon forming a good working relationship with Clarke (Oliver, 1939a).

The method of enquiry chosen by the committee was to circulate a questionnaire to local education authorities (LEAs), university departments of education (UDEs), training colleges, educational associations and teachers' organisations, asking whether they took part in research, and also whether they would favour a national organisation for research to be created (CRE, 1939d). A questionnaire was sent to all 315 LEAs in England and Wales, with replies received from 114, although 77 of these were nil returns. The remainder, 37, reflected the kinds of educational research of more than local interest that had been recently conducted by the LEAs; 24 of these favoured the creation of a national organisation for research. The questionnaire was also sent to 21 UDEs; 10 of these sent responses, and of these, 9 supported a central organisation. Of 82 questionnaires sent to training colleges, 13 replied, of which 7 favoured a central organisation. Of 12 questionnaires circulated to educational associations, such as the British Institute of Adult Education and the New Education Fellowship, 7 were returned with evidence of varied and extensive educational research being carried out, and all approving of the idea of a national organisation. Of 10 questionnaires that were sent to the main teachers' organisations, 5 replied, with 4 endorsing the notion of a central organisation. Finally, a further questionnaire sent to educational research organisations elsewhere, including Australia, New Zealand and Scotland, found a wide range of types with differing means of financial support (CRE, 1939e).

Armed with this further information, Clarke's committee compiled a draft report. It presented the results of the questionnaires that it had received, describing these as the first general survey of educational research to have been conducted in this country. It also observed that educational research in England and Wales had not been well coordinated, unlike for example in the United States through the International Institute of the Teachers College at Columbia University, in Geneva with the International Bureau of Education and through the educational research councils set up in Scotland, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. This, it found, was despite a number of earlier attempts to establish such a coordinating body by a range of organisations. It went on to argue that a central council to direct and prosecute research would not be appropriate, as much research was already being conducted by many agencies, and such a council might diminish spontaneous activities. Moreover, a department of educational research situated either at a centrally situated university or else an autonomous unit would also not be suitable as 'the tradition of English education is against central control or monopolistic activity' (CRE, 1939e: n.p.). It decided in favour of a third alternative, which was an organisation to coordinate research rather than to undertake it, to register and record it, to prevent duplication and to

guide studies, with an administrative rather than an executive national committee. It recommended that the BAAS should take the initiative to establish such a body before the end of 1939, concluding with the stinging reminder that no money at all was allotted to educational research from the annual educational estimates of £45 million, and that this must be addressed (CRE, 1939f).

Further discussion and implementation of the report was delayed by the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, to be resumed only after the end of the war in 1945. Nevertheless, it had achieved the first national map or survey of educational research to have been compiled in England and Wales, and identified both its areas of relative strength and its significant weaknesses. It had also pointed the way towards a national infrastructure for the field. Clarke's own position on this is also noteworthy. As IOE director and chair of the committee, he might perhaps have steered the report towards recommending a dominant position for the IOE in a national organisation, in line with the second alternative that was considered. Professor Oliver wrote to him to commend the IOE for adopting 'such a wide and non-monopolistic view in the suggestions for a bureau of enquiry and research' (Oliver, 1939b: n.p.). Clarke's (1939b: n.p.) response to this was revealing: 'I do not see how we could have adopted any other line,' he replied to Oliver, adding: 'There are vast ranges of work to be undertaken that no one institution can hope to tackle, yet a start must be made somewhere, and if we are asked to do so we are willing to make it.' There was in this a recognition of the IOE's potential role in helping to organise the national field as a whole, while also asserting a view that partnerships rather than central control would be most appropriate, in line with the notions of liberal democracy that he and other influential educators commended for educational reform during the war (see Ku, 2020).

Further comments by Clarke highlighted both the significance of the national survey and the need for further action. He pointed out that there was very little research carried out by the Board of Education, or directly financed by the Board, unlike the reports that had been produced by Matthew Arnold in the late nineteenth century, or the United States reports by Horace Mann in the 1830s:

> I believe that nothing like this has been published for 25 years. I often wish steps could be taken to get such reports written now. They are, perhaps, the most influential and effective manner of bringing about changes in educational practice ... Why can't we have a series of reports on 'Education in the English speaking lands'? (Clarke, 1939/1940: n.p.)

He regarded the work at LEAs as 'almost-research', in that 'someone has an idea; he tries it out; it works; he shows it to an inspector; a meeting is called and the new knowledge becomes public knowledge' (Clarke, 1939/1940: n.p.). Overall, he concluded, the research that was currently available from a range of sources was 'mainly exploratory in nature', with a 'tiny amount' of 'real research'. Most of it was '*merely* empirical', that is, it was 'try this, try that rule-of-thumb stuff ..., very weak as regards theoretical background, or interpretation' (Clarke, 1939/1940: n.p., emphasis in original). For good measure, he complained, it was very uncoordinated, in that 'the bits are not related to each other; one authority will cheerfully repeat without improvement what has been done better by another ... [and] that there are big gaps – some promising lines of research are simply not explored at all'. This meant, in addition, that there was 'a great lack of means of spreading new knowledge, of coordinating what is known, of planning new research, of letting people know what is being done by others'. Finally, it was 'all small-scale stuff', especially when compared with the large-scale enquiries carried out in the United States (Clarke, 1939/1940: n.p.).

Clarke's scathing analysis of the lack of coordination began to be addressed in the period after the war with the creation of a national organisation on behalf of educational studies, the Standing Conference for Studies in Education, in 1951 (see McCulloch, 2012). This was supplemented by comprehensive listings of research, begun by Oliver (1946) at Manchester University, and leading to large-scale surveys of research by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER, 1976–78) as the field expanded in the 1950s and 1960s (McCulloch and Cowan, 2018: Chapter 6; Blackwell, 1958). Separate societies for different groups of researchers also sprang up from the 1960s, and the establishment of the British Educational Research Association (BERA) marked a further key stage in representation at a national level for educational research as a whole (see McCulloch and Cowan, 2018; McCulloch, 2018). Nevertheless, there continued to be criticisms of a lack of effective coordination, and in 2018 there appeared a new report, *Harnessing Educational Research*, the product of a four-year collaboration between the British Academy and the Royal Society (2018: 6), highlighting 'areas where flows are missing or need to be strengthened; uncover[ing] tensions or barriers between the actors in the ecosystem that need to be

addressed; and identify[ing] facilitators that would enable improvements in the ecosystem'. It was, had they been aware of it, the latest phase in the project begun by Fred Clarke, some eight decades before.

In terms of the institutionalisation of education in higher education institutions discussed by Hofstetter and Schneuwly, Clarke's national survey was surely a further contribution to this in relation to England and Wales, and yet it suggests a further feature of this process beyond those key criteria suggested by Hofstetter and Schneuwly (2002, 2004) themselves. This was the creation of a network or a collaboration between individuals and institutions committed to the study of education in some form, which could identify both the long-standing weaknesses and the potential strengths of educational studies and research in England and Wales. The national survey led by Clarke, pointing as it did to the urgency of greater coordination, and to the relationship between a range of different organisations and types of research, was at least the first step in this long and apparently uncompleted journey.

The study of education in England

During the Second World War, in 1943, Clarke was knighted for his contributions to education and invited to serve on a new Board of Education Committee set up to reform teacher training, leading to the McNair report (Board of Education, 1944). This was full recognition at a national level that led, after the war, to Clarke chairing a number of key bodies, including the newly constituted Central Advisory Council for Education (England) as well as the new NFER and Section L of the BAAS. It was in 1943, also, that Clarke published the final work in what was overall a surprisingly small published output over his long career: *The Study of Education in England*. It was not a textbook to support teaching in this area, but rather a commentary on its development and future prospects. As a further contribution to the institutionalisation of educational studies and research, in the terms proposed by Hofstetter and Schneuwly (2002, 2004), it was an attempt to help create a favourable public discourse that would enable it to become a respected and respectable feature of higher education.

Clarke described his new work, at its outset, as a systematic survey of what had been achieved in education, and a way to make clear the next steps that it was necessary to take. In doing so, he was emphatic about what was inadequate in established approaches in the understanding of education. By contrast with other areas of social and public policy, he reflected:

> The conviction has found itself that if we conducted our medical and engineering sciences and our industrial production with the same slipshod carelessness, the same disregard for precision of thought and language, the same wild and reckless play of sentimentality or class prejudice or material interest masquerading as principle, with which we carry on our public discussions about education, most patients would die, most bridges would fall down, and most manufacturing concerns would go bankrupt. (Clarke, 1943: ii)

Indeed, he insisted: 'what so often passes for educational discussion in England is no more than the noise made by a medley of uncriticised habits' (Clarke, 1943: iii). The key point was that education should be treated with even more organisation and discipline than many other areas of study, as Clarke (1943: iv) continued: 'The argument here is not simply that education has at least as much claim to systematic study as animal husbandry or rural economy or coal-mining. It is something much more urgent and momentous than that.' Indeed, he averred, 'Systematic, courageous and uncontaminated thinking about national education touches our national salvation much more nearly than it did, and much more nearly than is yet generally realised.' Studying education more deeply and systematically would, Clarke insisted, engender greater self-awareness and articulateness of thought among the public as a community: 'Taking the future seriously means taking education seriously, and taking education seriously means the dropping of amateurism, sentimentality, and the queer kind of toadyism which equates the value of an utterance with the social prestige of its author.' Ultimately, Clarke (1943: iv) concluded, 'In the place of all such things seriousness will bring the scientific temper to the service of social zeal and imaginative administration.' Thus, Clarke began this work with what was intended to be a rousing public clarion call for the study of education, and study of particular kinds on behalf of a nation at war.

Clarke (1943) supported these vigorous assertions by rehearsing his by now familiar insistence on the need for organised provision, for greater clarity in the function and scope of UDEs, and especially for systematic investigation of the social relationships of education. His plan for action was, first, to develop existing resources and facilities and, second, to create a central organisation. Together, these

steps would change attitudes and habits, and bring a consciousness of purpose throughout education. A suitably equipped central office, independent of the Board of Education, although working in close collaboration with it, would receive and review suggestions and projects for studies, plan investigations, allocate work and supervise procedure. Such projects might well include learning English as a foreign language, a history of English education in its full cultural and social setting ('no such book exists!', he exclaimed), and a study of comparative education (Clarke, 1943: 12–13).

This analytical method would replace the English tendency of 'muddling through and allow the country to adapt to new conditions in society and technology' (Clarke, 1943: 28). It should also help to challenge the entrenched class interest that he found in England. He stressed that schools should recognise the range of different needs, rather than education as the same commodity for all children, and in this sense he was a supporter of a tripartite system of secondary schools, although by no means one as rigid and rooted in social class as that proposed by the Norwood report of the same year (Board of Education, 1943; McCulloch, 2008). His notion of tripartism was of 'a sufficient variety of forms of secondary education to meet the wide variety of needs and aptitudes ..., variety of organised *curricula*, whether provided together in a multilateral large school, or distinctively in separate schools' (Clarke, 1942: n.p., emphasis in original). Overall, then, Clarke's work contributed significantly to the institutionalisation of studies in education according to one of the key criteria proposed by Hofstetter and Schneuwly (2002, 2004), that of promoting a public discourse favourable to education. He was also able, after the war, to associate this discourse with the wider cause of social reconstruction, a 'new setting', as he suggested, amid a cultural crisis that affected the world (Clarke, 1944). In his position as president of Section L of the BAAS, he could draw attention to the 'widening scope' of the study of education, and advance the view that 'the wheel has come full circle and that the study of education has returned to where it was placed by Plato and Aristotle, at the very centre of the study of politics' (Clarke, 1949b: 233). Indeed, he announced portentously, 'Education has become a major instrument of policy, say, if you like, a main agency of social control, and that in a nation which daily grows more concerned about its peculiar duty, both to itself and to the world' (Clarke, 1949b: 233). It was in this spirit that he promoted the launch of the Standing Conference on Studies in Education (SCSE) in 1951, albeit one that was reserved exclusively for professors of education, as opposed to the representative body of all researchers in education that was belatedly formed in 1974 (McCulloch, 2012).

Conclusions

On 19 December 1951, Clarke presided as chair over the inaugural conference of the SCSE, which would be responsible for helping to coordinate studies in education and for a new journal, launched in 1952 as the *British Journal of Educational Studies*. Three weeks later, on 6 January 1952, he died unexpectedly (Judges, 1952). His death brought to a close his unique contribution to studies in education in his generation, in the IOE and also nationally. This article has focused on Clarke's role in the institutionalisation of education in English higher education. In retrospect, this broadly fulfils the key criteria outlined by Hofstetter and Schneuwly (2002, 2004) for the institutionalisation of the field, but in particular ways. Seized with the possibilities of an as yet unrecognised, unorganised area of study, as Thackray and Merton (1972) were to put it, he helped to institutionalise not simply the study of education, but studies in education, or educational studies – a broad church of discipline-based studies committed to education in its wider context. Moreover, in his national survey of education in 1939, the first of its type, he added a further kind of contribution, that of helping to provide communication, coordination and eventually a national infrastructure for the field over the longer term. His final published work as an individual scholar, *The Study of Education in England* (Clarke, 1943), helped to create a public discourse favourable to education in the final years of the Second World War during the passage of the Education Act of 1944, and in the immediate post-war years in social reconstruction and the welfare state.

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Research ethics statement

Not applicable to this article.

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Gary McCulloch is a member of the Board of the *London Review of Education*, in which this article is included. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the author during peer review of this article have been made. The author declares no further conflicts with this article.

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