



## A Citation for Professor John Elliott, Doctor of Education, *honoris causa*

Mr Chairman,

It is both an honour and a personal pleasure to deliver this citation for Professor John Elliott.

Let me begin by briefly outlining Professor John Elliott's career. Professor Elliott traces his professional development to five institutions that shaped his thinking about education and educational change: the Senacre Secondary School, the Schools Council's Humanities Curriculum Project, the 'Cambridge Group' of philosophers of education, and the Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE) at the University of East Anglia (UEA), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation) project on 'Environment and School Initiatives'. Professor Elliott himself writes how these "institutions of the mind" were inextricably linked in the development of his ideas about educational and curriculum policy making.

Today John Elliott is Professor of Education at the University of East Anglia within the Centre for Applied Research in Education, which he directed from 1996 to 1999. He is also a former Dean of the School of Education and Professional Development there. The UEA is now recognised as one of the premier institutions of educational research and teacher training in the UK and internationally, and this is no small part due to Professor Elliott's leadership at UEA.

Internationally renowned for his role in developing the theory and practice of action research in education, John Elliott has directed a number of funded collaborative classroom research projects with teachers and schools. These include the Ford Teaching Project and, more recently, the Norwich Area Schools Consortium on the 'curriculum and pedagogical dimensions of student disaffection' funded by the Teacher Training Agency.

In addition, John Elliott has been involved in policy-oriented evaluation research, and has served as a consultant to numerous national and international organisations. His distinguished list of publications is too long to cite here. Suffice it to say that Professor Elliott is the author and editor of a number of well-known publications in the fields of curriculum and teacher professional development.

Notably, and relevant to this occasion, he serves as an Advisory Professor to the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd), and as a consultant to Hong Kong's Curriculum Development Institute (CDI) on the strategic development of its curriculum reform proposals.

As impressive as his resume is, this rather brief recitation of accomplishments from Professor Elliott's curriculum vitae hardly provides the full measure of the man we honour today. When Professor Elliott is introduced to new audiences, the focus is understandably often on his seminal role in the development of the theory and practice of action research. On occasions Professor Elliott has been variously described as the "father," or even the "godfather" of action research. Though this recognition is richly deserved, it is a somewhat superficial representation of his work and contribution. Action research is only one aspect of Professor Elliott's more fundamental concern with the nature of knowledge in the central educational experience, that between teacher and student. In this regard, Professor Elliott's work in terms of "life in classrooms" is both radical and revolutionary. It is 'radical' in the sense of going to the root of the problem, and it is 'revolutionary' in that seeks fundamental change in how we view and process knowledge.

To illustrate this point it is best to use Professor Elliott's own words:

If the traditional view of knowledge, reinforced by government policy and legislation, continues to be deeply embedded in school cultures within liberal democratic societies, then schools will fail as educational institutions, not because they are failing to maintain 'standards' but because they are failing to supply the culturally appropriate form of motivation for pupils to learn. The basis for such motivation resides in bestowing recognition and status on pupils as autonomous learners.

In this context "action research" becomes one important tool for recognising students as autonomous learners and supplying a culturally appropriate learning environment. Again let me quote Professor Elliott:

The problem of helping teachers to gain access to the authentic voice of their pupils persists. It is the central methodological problem in educational action research, and my enduring commitment to helping teachers become action researchers is based on the knowledge that worthwhile curriculum change will only occur when those on the receiving end are given a voice and thereby enabled to influence the conditions which shape their experience of schooling.

In this regard, the underlying message of Professor Elliott's professional body of work is both immediate and profound, both universal and local. In bringing his message to Hong Kong, he has become not just a consultant, but a true partner in the development of HKIEd and a champion of educational reform in Hong Kong through his work with CDI. Whenever Professor Elliott's name comes up in Hong Kong's educational circles, colleagues invariably express their gratitude for his accessibility, his engagement in helping them address their own (and not his) problems and issues, and the indefatigable energy, experience and wisdom he brings to each challenge.

To give some sense of the high regard with which he is held in this East-West city, let me turn to sages from both East and West for inspiration. First, I quote the Eastern sage, Confucius: "to be able to practise five things everywhere under heaven constitutes 'perfect virtue'. These five things are dignity of manner, generosity of soul, sincerity, earnestness, and kindness." I cannot think of a better description of the qualities of Professor John Elliott.

Secondly, I turn to a Western sage, but don't expect Plato or Habermas. Here I draw on a favourite genre of Professor Elliott, the Hollywood movie "western", which he readily confesses is one of his guilty pleasures — revealing in his own writings that he naughtily used to hide a western novel in his desk to read in preference to the texts he was studying for his GCE. In the Hollywood film western, *The Professionals*, the noted "Western sage" Jack Palance says: "Without love, without a cause, we are nothing. We stay because we believe, we leave because we are disillusioned, we come back because we are lost, we die because we are committed."

For his inspirational embrace of and commitment to the cause of the improvement of education in Hong Kong, we now honour Professor John Elliott.

Mr Chairman, I have the pleasure to present Professor John Elliott and to request that you confer on Professor Elliott the award of the degree of Doctor of Education, *honoris causa*.



## A Citation for Professor Ruth Hayhoe, SBS Doctor of Education, *honoris causa*

Mr Chairman,

It is a great privilege for me to deliver this citation for Professor Ruth Hayhoe, who is no stranger to all the staff and students of the Hong Kong Institute of Education, as well as to many people in Hong Kong. As we all know, Professor Hayhoe is the former Director of the Institute from 1997 to 2002, and was Associate Dean of the world renowned Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto before she joined us, where she served continuously in various capacities since 1986.

Professor Hayhoe is a well known scholar in comparative education and a sinologist. She holds MA and PhD degrees in comparative education from the Institute of Education, University of London and a BA degree in classics from the University of Toronto. In 1998, she was conferred the title of Honorary Fellow by the Institute of Education, University of London. Professor Hayhoe retired from the Institute as Director at the end of March 2002, and the Council has conferred on her the honorary title of Director *Emeritus*, now known as President *Emeritus*.

Professor Hayhoe has a special interest and affection for Chinese culture and has devoted a substantial part of her life in Asia studying the Chinese culture and traditions in great depth. I am sure many of you know of her story of coming to the East and first arrived at Hong Kong 35 years ago and taught in Heep Yunn School for 11 years from 1967 to 1978, followed by serving as a foreign specialist teaching Western Literature and journalistic writing in Fudan University in 1980 to 1982, and then taking up the important role as Head of Cultural & Academic Affairs at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing from 1989 to 1991. She has also been appointed as advisory or visiting professor by ten major universities in China. During these years of living in the East, Professor Hayhoe had developed a very good understanding of and published very extensively on China and the Chinese culture, from a comparative perspective, showing an outstanding scholarly record of studies in this field.

Apart from being a highly regarded scholar and prolific writer, Professor Hayhoe has also shown a remarkable record of professional and community services. Among these, she is a trustee of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia in 2000 to 2003, president of the Comparative and International Education Society (USA) in 1999 to 2000 and in various capacities earlier, member of Hong Kong's Education Commission from 1998 to 2001, president of the Hong Kong Educational Research Association from 1997 to 1999, consultant, advisor and project director of a number of development projects, member of the editorial board of several international journals, as well as member of a variety of international boards and committees in Canada, USA and UK since 1984.

Professor Hayhoe has contributed significantly to the advancement of education both internationally and in Asia and hence is a very well deserved candidate for the Doctor of Education award. Her original comparative education researches and publications about China and the East have contributed greatly to the advancement of knowledge in this field internationally. In the last 20 years she has published over 100 papers, articles and books covering areas related to the values, culture, policies and modernisation of China, as well as its education and universities.

Professor Hayhoe has also made very important contributions to the advancement of teacher education in Hong Kong through her role as the Institute's Director. Under her leadership, the Institute has made very rapid and significant changes to improve and upgrade itself to a university-level institution in the last five years. The establishment of a clear vision for "Optimising each child's potential through the shared joy of learning and teaching" through Institute-wide efforts led by

Professor Hayhoe was an important first step. Together with the mission and Strategic Plan subsequently developed, the Vision provided an important aligning force for coherent developments in the Institute's teacher education work. The successful development, validation and introduction of 13 new degree and postgraduate diploma programmes replacing the sub-degree programmes, together with that of two collaborative degree programmes, significantly turned the Institute from a sub-degree to a degree-offering institution and marked another milestone for the Institute. In addition, putting in place significant quality assurance and improvement initiatives consistent with university-level practices, and the establishment of the early childhood learning centre and the primary school on campus, which have important implications for improving the Institute's teacher education programmes, are all achieved under the leadership of Professor Hayhoe. In addition, Professor Hayhoe has significantly fostered the Institute's partnership and exchanges with institutions in China and overseas, which have broadened the Institute's outlook and enhanced its position in the international arena. All these achievements have significantly transformed the Institute and have greatly enhanced its capacity to contribute to quality teacher education in Hong Kong.

Apart from her contributions to teacher education through transforming the Institute, Professor Hayhoe has also significantly contributed to the advancement of education in Hong Kong. For example, she is an enthusiastic advocator and an excellent role model for Hong Kong's bi-literate and trilingual language policy. She has a deep affection for early childhood education and has worked diligently in promoting its importance and enhancing its status in Hong Kong, both through her work in the Institute, as well as through her chairmanship of an Education Commission sub-group on early childhood education developments for Hong Kong. She incorporated the concept of early childhood education being the foundation of lifelong learning into the Institute's core values, and fully supported the development of a bachelor degree programme for early childhood educators, which has in the end become a milestone for this sector. We are all very pleased to witness the government's recognition of her work through the Silver Bauhinia Star Award.

On a personal front, Professor Hayhoe has impressed many of us who work with her as a very capable, dynamic, lively, pleasant, energetic and caring leader with high ideals in education. She is close to staff and students, as is evidenced by her series of visits to staff and regular breakfast meetings with students.

With such a distinguished record of scholarly achievement and contributions to education and teacher education in Hong Kong and beyond, Professor Hayhoe is certainly a very good role model for all of us in the field. Mr Chairman, may I therefore have the pleasure and honour to present Professor Ruth Hayhoe to you and to request you to confer on her the award of the degree of Doctor of Education, *honoris causa*.