

Peter Kallaway, Encyclopaedist and Bibliographer

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One of the things that marks Peter's work for me have been his attempts at encyclopaedism. It is evident not only in his conceptual approach, of trying to look at society and education in its full interrelationship, but also in his efforts to develop bibliographies. Political economy was Peter's approach to the history of education. It was a method and perspective that enabled him to situate education within its broader context of political, economic, and social relations. Over time, I am of the opinion that his work moved towards intellectual history. In the early period, the 1980s and 1990s, when he was trying to shape a way of understanding the place of Black education in South African educational history, he used a political economy rooted in historical materialism.

The Annales school was likely also influential in Peter's efforts to achieve a 'total history' of education in his bibliographies. These were part of his belief that it is important to be as comprehensive as possible, not only in the histories one tells, but also in the sources one uses to tell them. I want to highlight two. There may be more, and the two I have selected here differ in that the one is national in scope, the other regional. Each in its own way exemplifies Peter's striving for wholeness, for showing the complete picture.

When I first met Peter at Wits in the early 1980s, I vividly recall a conversation with him on the streets of Braamfontein about a comprehensive bibliography that he was trying to develop of everything that had ever been written on Black education in South Africa. It was a bold and ambitious goal and, to my mind, also a bit quixotic. But that was Peter. He dreamed big and tried to achieve big things, and in the process, achieved something. Maybe not exactly what he dreamed of, but something that nonetheless left a mark.

His bibliography was conceived just as the transition from paper to the internet was occurring. At first, it was literally a doorstopper of a book. Over time, as its description on the UCT website indicates, “it migrated formats several times, from floppy disks to stiffy disks, then to CD-ROMS, a flash drive, and finally to cloud-based storage provided [here – at UCT] on the ZivaHub. The School of Education at UCT kindly allocated space for the project up to 1992, and the physical collection now resides at UCT Libraries Special Collections, as the ‘BC1584 Edubase Collection’. Various people worked with Peter on the bibliography over the years, including Jackie Kallaway, Debbie Sheward, David Hiscock, Vera Hulley, and Deidre Birch.

The EDUBASE collection includes nearly 9000 publications on the topic of education for Black South Africans.¹ This collection might by now have been overtaken by the resources made available on the Internet, but it not only provides an invaluable resource for scholars on education, it is also a testament to Peter’s lifelong commitment to the history of Black education in South Africa his way of righting the wrongs of colonial history.

Another example of Peter’s interest in comprehensive history is his *Bibliography of Materials Relevant to the Study of Education in the Colony of Natal, the Province of Natal and KwaZulu—Natal, 1839–1994: Selected with Special Attention to “Native Education* published in the *Journal of Natal and Zulu History* (2012).² Published in a journal devoted to regional scholarship, it provides a meticulously organised bibliography of finding aids and tools, archival and secondary sources, including newspapers, that tell the history of Black education in colonial Natal simply in their presentation as sources. It is an example of a scholarship that aims at leaving no stone unturned in trying to tell the whole story.

These are two not very well-known examples of Peter’s scholarship, however, they say everything about his approach to all his work and what he was trying to achieve: a comprehensive overview that uses all the sources possible available on the topic. Peter Kallaway has acted as a cartographer of the intellectual landscape, mapping the vast, often neglected territory of Black educational history to ensure that no vital perspective is lost to the erasures of time.

¹ P Kallaway, J Kallaway, D Sheward, D Hiscock, V Hulley, & D Birch, *EDUBASE – A bibliography of education for Black South Africans*. University of Cape Town. Dataset. 2018. (available at https://figshare.com/articles/dataset/EDUBASE_-_A_bibliography_of_education_for_Black_South_Africans/6993917/1)

² P Kallaway, “Bibliography of materials relevant to the study of education in the colony of Natal, the province of Natal and KwaZulu—Natal, 1839–1994: Selected with special attention to “Native education”, *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, 30(1), 2012, pp. 107–138. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02590123.2012.11964181>