

Murphy, Jude, 1997, *Media Education. Policy and Practice in Irish Second Level School*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

This dissertation examines the educational policy, the practices and attitudes of Irish teachers towards media education. It begins by briefly alluding to various definitions of media education. The history of media education in England to the present day is examined, showing it to be in a healthy state, though not without problems. The question of where media education should be placed in an already overloaded curriculum is examined. Teachers consistently express a need for continuing training. There appears to be uncertainty about media education's subject matter and anxiety about teachers' competence to do and manage practical work.

The history of media education in Ireland reveals a far slower evolution. Successive Department of Education policies have fleetingly referred to media education but to no serious degree. This is emphasised by the lack of investment in the in-career training of teachers and lack of provision of equipment in schools. A survey administered as part of this research reveals that, as in Britain, media education is developed and practised by a small body of enthusiastic teachers though all teachers see the extreme importance of media education.

The results revealed a lack of awareness of the facilities available to teachers for media education, a dearth of in-career training, and an enthusiasm by teachers for media education which is hampered by a feeling of inadequate guidance and support. A number of recommendations are made for development and improvement of media education in Ireland.