

# A 'break with tradition' in interwar teacher education

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**Abstract:** British teacher education in the interwar years was a contested field, dominated numerically by women but regulated by the Board of Education. The traditional perception of women's residential training colleges was that they were autocratic and socially isolated. By focusing on Gipsy Hill Training College (GHTC), the first specialist training college for nursery school teachers, and its foundation principal, Lillian de Lissa, I challenge this perception. I explore the relationships between young women students' social worlds, teacher educators' understandings, teacher education curriculum and GHTC's institutional culture. The main argument is that under de Lissa's leadership GHTC was a socially and educationally progressive and democratic institution that focused on shaping students' identities as women, teachers and citizens. © 2010 Taylor & Francis.

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