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**Curriculum integration for early adolescent schooling in
Aotearoa New Zealand: worthy of serious trial.**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

The concept of curriculum integration has long held seductive appeal as a way to unite knowledge *and* meet the educational needs of young people. However, researchers have largely dismissed the concept as a romantic but unworkable idea. Nonetheless in the short history of education in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ), notions of integration have persistently reappeared in the national curriculum. In the 1930s, innovative teachers implemented world-class examples of curriculum integration in rural schools. Later, the Freyberg Project (1986-1991) demonstrated that curriculum integration admirably meets the needs of young people. Recently, the Ministry of Education trialled curriculum integration in several schools but, since the literature indicates that curriculum integration is represented by a plethora of models, this raised an important question: which model is preferable?

This thesis combines historical and theoretical methodology to conduct an investigation of the concept of curriculum integration with respect to the needs of early adolescents in NZ. The historical investigation demonstrates that curriculum integration is best described by two broad traditions which stem from nineteenth century USA: the 'student-centred' approach based on Dewey's 'organic' education and the 'subject-centred' approach based on the Herbartian notion of 'correlation'. These two approaches are represented in current practice by the student-centred *integrative* model (Beane, 1990/1993) and the subject-centred *multidisciplinary* model (Jacobs, 1989). The theoretical investigation draws from American experience to examine the respective claims of the integrative and multidisciplinary models as the preferred model of curriculum integration for middle schooling. It finds that the 'thick' ethics associated with the politics of the integrative model ensures that it meets the needs of all early adolescents whereas the 'thin' ethics of the multidisciplinary model is indifferent to the needs of young people. The thesis concludes that the integrative model should be seriously considered in the middle years in NZ. It also concludes that historical understandings of curriculum integration are vital to further research, policy-making and teacher education. Moreover, attention to political and ethical issues would enhance implementation of the integrative model in NZ and would help avoid a set of problems which have impeded implementation of the model in the USA.

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Dedication

*This thesis is dedicated to my wife
Marina
and our children, Ben and Christina
with my love and gratitude*

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Preamble

This thesis investigates the concept of curriculum integration and its potential as a dedicated curriculum design for early adolescents¹ in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ). The stage of early adolescence – where young people of about 10-15 years old experience a period of profound physical, intellectual, social and emotional change – is often neglected, yet it is at least as important as any other stage of human development². A century of theory and practice, commencing with the work of John Dewey, suggests that curriculum integration is especially responsive to the developmental needs of early adolescents. Yet surprisingly, in NZ and elsewhere, the single-subject curriculum – which is not responsive to either individual or particular developmental needs – has been the usual approach to middle-level (Years 7-10) education.

In NZ, curriculum integration is an old idea. Notably, the 1943 Thomas Report³ – the foundational document for mass secondary education in NZ – developed a compelling case in favour of curriculum integration. While the Report was primarily concerned with subject reform, it also stressed the need for young people to be engaged in fruitful learning. In particular, it developed an argument for an holistic or ‘organic’ curriculum. The authors stated that they were, “strongly in favour” of a curricular approach which would take, “full account ... of the interests, experiences and relative immaturity” of early adolescents (Department of Education, 1943a:25). In particular, they asserted that all schools should consider the concept of curriculum integration to be, “worthy of serious trial” (1943a:25).

¹ The term of ‘early adolescent’ is equivalent to the less frequently used term of ‘emerging adolescent’ which was introduced into the NZ literature by Stewart and Nolan (1992:2).

² This claim is amply supported by research (Carnegie Council, 1989; Hinchco, 2005; Lipsitz, 1984; National Middle School Association (NMSA), 1995), however the construct of early adolescence is still occasionally contested (Beane, 1999a). For instance, in the late 1990s NZ historians Howard and Greg Lee (1996 & 1999) questioned whether early adolescence should be regarded as a discrete developmental stage.

³ The full title of the Thomas Report (Department of Education, 1943a) was: *The post-primary school curriculum: report of the committee appointed by the Minister of Education in November 1942.*

The Thomas Report's support for curriculum integration reflected the twin influences of the American progressive movement and the British 'New Education' movement. The Report referred to the then newly-available results and conclusions of the Eight-Year Study (Aikin, 1942) which trialled curriculum integration in thirty high schools in the USA. It also captured the essence of Dewey's 'organic' curriculum (1896-1904) when it explained:

To give a pupil's course organic unity ... the basic integrating factors are not patterns of subject matter, but purposes in the minds of pupils (1943a:14).

The Report authors were influenced by the British and indigenous 'New Education' movements, quoting leading theorist Percy Nunn and drawing attention to pertinent curriculum innovations in NZ schools. The enduring significance of the Report was its concern for the needs of early adolescents and its identification of curriculum integration as a promising way to engage them in their learning.

Echoing similar concerns, contemporary researchers have argued that the two-tiered structure of the NZ education system constrains the education of early adolescents (Stewart & Nolan, 1992; Hinchco, 2005). As Neville-Tisdall put it, early adolescents have, "traditionally fallen through the crack" between primary and secondary schooling⁴ (2002:45). As a consequence, many early adolescents in NZ have not received the kind of schooling they need or deserve. Some secondary teachers frankly admit:

We know we are not doing the right thing with these students in the middle years despite our best efforts. We do not know how to work any better with them and we are locked into systems which do not allow us to work differently or better (Nolan & Brown, 2002:35).

Furthermore, the single-subject curriculum is indifferent to the more particular needs of students who do not come from middle class homes or otherwise fail to fit the norm. In his summary of recent NZ research, Fancy concluded:

Many students in our system are not doing well enough – especially those from poor socio-economic backgrounds, who are Māori (or) Pasifika, have special needs, are highly gifted or with disabilities (2004:2).

⁴ In NZ intermediate schools (Years 7 & 8) are categorized as primary schools. They are staffed by primary teachers and reflect the child-centred culture of other types of primary school in NZ (Beeby, 1938; Stewart & Nolan, 1992).

Early adolescents in unsympathetic educational settings quickly adopt adversarial strategies in an effort to avoid classroom work. McNeil explained that mediocre classroom environments may deteriorate to the extent that the teacher and students strike:

A cynical bargain in which students who sense no connection between the world of the school and their own individual and collective lives, do the bare minimum to get by and resist any teacher who expects more. Or they simply turn off and ultimately drop out (1986:136-137).

This notion of 'connection' is a crucial component of curriculum designs for early adolescents. Young people at this unique developmental stage not only need to feel competent, they need to consciously connect it with their classroom achievement (Stevenson, 1998). Moreover, early adolescents do not learn effectively unless they develop positive relationships with their teachers and peers and can readily connect schooling with their everyday experiences. They need plenty of opportunity to express their creativity, display their knowledge and practice self-management skills (Eccles, Midgley, Buchanan, Wigfield, Reuman & Mac Iver, 1993).

The primary purpose of curriculum integration is to resituate subject matter into relevant and meaningful contexts, which leads to more highly motivated learners and improved teacher-student relationships (Beane, 1997; Vars, 1997a). Gehrke broadly defined curriculum integration as:

A collective term for those forms of curriculum in which student learning activities are built, less with concern for delineating disciplinary boundaries around kinds of learning, and more with the notion of helping students recognize or create their own learning (1998:248).

The research base on curriculum integration indicates that it is a promising alternative to the traditional single-subject curriculum. In his review of more than 100 studies of curriculum integration over a seventy-year period, Vars concluded:

Almost without exception, students in any type of interdisciplinary program do as well as, and often better than, students in a conventional departmentalized program (2000:87).

Recent case studies of curriculum integration in American middle schools show that student-centred designs respond well to the developmental needs of early adolescents

(Brazee & Capelluti, 1995; Pate, Homestead & McGinnis, 1997; Stevenson & Carr, 1993). Moreover, in their review of middle schooling, Beane and Brodhagen stated:

There is substantial evidence that multidisciplinary and integrative approaches to curriculum are comparatively more effective (than separate subject approaches) with regard to affective outcomes (2001:1169).

Despite its impressive credentials, curriculum integration has never been implemented at the level of the school system. Occasionally it has gained the attention of mainstream educators in the USA but it has never won general acceptance. In the years following the Eight-Year Study (1933-1941), the 'core' model of curriculum integration was a genuine contender for mainstream acceptance in American high schools but it quickly fell from favour on the advent of the Cold War (Cremin, 1961; Kridel, 1998). In the 1990s, a few middle school advocates championed curriculum integration as a developmentally responsive approach for early adolescents. Although Gehrke (1998) asserted that curriculum integration held the 'moral high ground' and it enjoyed the support of the National Middle School Association (NMSA) – culminating in publications which advocated curriculum integration for the middle level (Vars, 1987; Beane, 1990a) – its implementation was sporadic at best. Accordingly, curriculum integration has been widely regarded – perhaps unkindly – as an off-beat approach espoused by backward-looking progressives.

Curriculum integration has been obstinately difficult to implement because it is at variance with almost everything the deeply entrenched 'single-subject' curriculum sets out to achieve. Tyack and Tobin explained that the concept of the single-subject curriculum is a key component of what they called, "the 'grammar' of schooling" (1994:453). This term defines a bundle of entrenched norms for schooling which are highly resistant to change. Curriculum integration sabotages this 'grammar' because it diametrically opposes the hegemony of the single-subject curriculum. The democratic ideology of curriculum integration redistributes power and provides free access to knowledge (Bernstein, 1971). Moreover, it disrupts the smooth transfer of what Apple (1993) called 'official knowledge'. Accordingly where ever it is implemented, curriculum integration is prone to political pressure. Secondly, the original meanings and

intentions of curriculum integration have been garbled by the ‘subject-centred’ multidisciplinary curriculum which has masqueraded as curriculum integration (for example: Jacobs, 1989a), thus the recent literature of curriculum integration has been characterised by confusion (Erb, 1996; Beane, 1997). Accordingly, even though educators have frequently called for curriculum designs which reach out and connect with young people’s lives, the rich potential of curriculum integration to fulfil precisely this aim has been obscured to such a degree that it goes largely unrecognised.

Overview of the thesis

I investigate the concept of curriculum integration and its potential as a curriculum which will explicitly meet the educational and developmental needs of early adolescents in NZ. This topic was motivated by my experience as a science teacher for fifteen years, facilitating the learning of Years 7-13 students in NZ and Samoa. Like many other educators, I became concerned that too many early adolescents failed to engage in their learning when they were confronted with the traditional single-subject curriculum. My thesis adopts a problem-solving metaphor where the concept of curriculum integration is investigated within historical and theoretical parameters as a potential solution to the problem of how to engage *all* early adolescents in their learning. Phillips and Pugh (1994) referred to research like this as, “a theoretical research puzzle”. They explained that it, “involves pushing out the frontiers of knowledge in the hope that something useful will be discovered” (1994:49).

My thesis uses a combined historical and theoretical methodology. It investigates both past and present understandings of the concept of curriculum integration. It situates the concept within historical, geographical, philosophical, political, and social contexts, thus it draws from an eclectic range of supporting literature. The scope of my thesis is delimited by restricting the investigation to a consideration of curriculum integration from a NZ point of view, or more specifically, the viewpoint of the NZ practitioner. Accordingly, my thesis investigates the concept in the countries which have influenced NZ education – that is Britain and the USA – as well as NZ itself. The first stage of my investigation resolves the confusion and ambiguity in the current literature of curriculum

integration. The next stage of the investigation explores historical meanings and understandings of curriculum integration from the USA, Britain and NZ. It shows that historical understandings and practice of curriculum integration are absolutely essential to a modern understanding of the concept. Last, the investigation appraises the extant integrative and multidisciplinary models with respect to their efficacy for early adolescent education. It situates these models in their historical contexts and then examines them with respect to the political and ethical environments. I conclude that a student-centred model of curriculum integration for early adolescents is worthy of serious trial in NZ as an alternative to the subject-centred curriculum approaches which predominate at this level.

The thesis structure

Chapter 2 commences by investigating contemporary understandings of curriculum integration in NZ. This shows that few NZ educators discriminate properly between subject-centred and student-centred models of curriculum integration. The main task of Chapter 2 is to dispel the confusion and ambiguity within the recent literature of curriculum integration and impose a modicum of order. This shows that the high level of confusion is largely due to ahistorical research, thus it signals the need for an historical analysis of curriculum integration in later chapters. The key finding of Chapter 2 is that extant versions of curriculum integration are best described by a dichotomy of theoretical models. It identifies these as the student-centred *integrative* model and the subject-centred *multidisciplinary* model. Chapter 2 also asserts that while the notion of a 'continuum' might adequately describe the practice of curriculum integration, the popular notion that curriculum integration is a continuum of theoretical models is misguided.

In Chapters 3, 4 and 5, I carry out an historical investigation of the concept of curriculum integration. These chapters explain how the concept developed in the USA, Britain and NZ. My historical investigation is limited to these three countries because they were the primary influences on the development of curriculum integration in NZ. The current literature of curriculum integration almost never refers to research outside the USA, Britain or NZ. Thus, although a case exists for including Australia, as NZ's immediate

neighbour – as well as the sources of early ideas about integration from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as Germany and Switzerland⁵ – the subject matter of this thesis retains an internal integrity without casting the net more widely. The design of the historical analysis also ensures that the full range of understandings of curriculum integration within the USA, Britain and NZ is investigated. I achieved this by intensive cross-checking and by examining all curriculum designs which ‘hint’ at notions of integration. The sources of data for the analysis of these three chapters are limited to published material. Chapters 3 and 4 generally rely on major texts for data whereas Chapter 5 gathers data from an extensive range of published material on curriculum integration, including sources such as teacher gazettes, magazines and newspapers. Although, the data rarely allows accurate reconstructions of ‘what actually happened’ in classrooms, broadly similar themes repeatedly emerge from the historical analysis. Above all, each of these three chapters demonstrates that historical understandings of curriculum integration are essential to the analysis of recent models of curriculum integration. In particular, the historical analysis shows that the dichotomy of models identified in Chapter 2 has a century-long history. The respective antecedents of the *integrative* and *multidisciplinary* models were Dewey’s ‘organic’ curriculum and the Herbartian idea of subject ‘correlation’.

Chapter 3 investigates the contribution to the concept of curriculum integration by the American progressive movement in the first half of the twentieth century. It identifies various ‘notions of integration’ and explains how the progressives utilised them to create curriculum integration. It argues that, while at least four factions within the progressive movement trialled their own curriculum designs, only two distinct models of curriculum integration emerged. These were the student-centred *core* curriculum based on Dewey’s ‘organic’ curriculum and the rival subject-centred *multidisciplinary* curriculum based on the Herbartian idea of subject ‘correlation’. This chapter also traces the development of a theory of integration, in particular Hopkins’ research which gave explicit meaning to Dewey’s earlier efforts. Chapter 3 also investigates American efforts during the 1960s

⁵ For instance, on returning from a tour of Europe, Canada and the USA in 1908, NZ Director-General and pioneering educational reformer George Hogben intriguingly suggested that NZ could learn much from Switzerland (Roth, 1952). Note that Hogben’s ideas will be discussed in Chapter 5.

and 1970s to design a middle level curriculum which would respond to the unique developmental needs of early adolescents. This shows that the extant models of curriculum integration – the *multidisciplinary* and *integrative* models – were directly linked to earlier middle level curriculum designs in the USA.

Chapter 4 examines the relatively modest contribution to curriculum integration of the British progressive movement. It divides its attention between the second ‘wave’ of progressive education – or the ‘New Education’ – during the 1920s and 1930s and the third wave of progressive education during the 1960s and 1970s. It emphasises that Britain influenced the development of NZ curriculum integration for the simple but important reason that the NZ education system was almost a carbon-copy of the British model. In particular, Chapter 4 examines various curriculum innovations inspired by the ‘New Education’ which were reproduced in NZ. It gives special attention to a few British innovations which incorporated Dewey’s ideas. It provides evidence of extensive links between the British ‘New Education’ and NZ education. Chapter 4 also examines British contributions to curriculum integration during another ‘wave’ of progressive education during the 1960s and 1970s. The research in this period contributed little to understandings of curriculum integration however Chapter 5 shows that the work of Bernstein, Pring and Stenhouse was influential in NZ during the 1980s. The most significant British research was Bernstein’s (1971) sociological analysis of the curriculum⁶. Bernstein’s analytical framework was important because it provided an analytical tool for the critical comparison of different models of curriculum integration.

Chapter 5 investigates the development of curriculum integration in NZ as an outcome of progressive influences from Britain and the USA. It examines the efforts of various educational leaders to reform the NZ education system which, for those with egalitarian inclinations, was an uncomfortable reflection of the class-bound British system. It explains that when reform of the NZ education system gathered momentum in the 1930s and 1940s, it coincided with the flowering of an indigenous ‘New Education’ which encouraged child-centred pedagogy and innovative curriculum design. It notes the small

⁶ Although Bernstein’s work was acknowledged by other sociologists (for example: Young, 1971), it received little attention from British curriculum theorists of the time.

but significant influence of the American progressive movement which spread both via NZ officials who travelled to the USA and Americans who visited NZ. It also examines official support for curriculum integration, most notably in the Thomas Report. This chapter catalogues the rich range of innovatory practice which emerged in NZ schools both prior to, and after, World War II. This task is achieved by perusing the archive provided by the teachers' *Gazette* and *Education* from 1928-1960. This chapter investigates key examples of curriculum integration in rural schools. It also traces a gradual rekindling of interest in curriculum integration in NZ over the 1960s and 1980s due to the wave of progressive education in Britain. It discusses the Freyberg project (1986-1991) which trialled a version of curriculum integration for Years 9-10 students derived from British research. It concludes that NZ has a rich history of curriculum integration where its meanings and intentions have been understood by at least some educators, if not the majority, but – as Chapter 2 shows – this heritage has been largely forgotten.

Chapters 6-8 contrast and compare Jacobs' multidisciplinary and Beane's integrative models of curriculum integration. This investigation is confined to the American context where curriculum integration has been implemented widely at the middle level. Chapter 6 investigates the theoretical basis of each model. In particular, it discusses the theoretical framework of each model with respect to the historical context examined in earlier chapters. Chapter 7 investigates the political implications of implementing the two models in the USA. It explains the origins of political opposition and discusses ensuing barriers to classroom implementation. It asserts that the integrative model is met by political pressure from several sources because it disrupts the transmission of 'official knowledge'. In contrast, it argues that the multidisciplinary model generally escapes political pressure except when teachers strive to create locally relevant curricula. Chapter 8 investigates the ethical aspects of each model. It argues that political influences have shaped the ethics of each model. It illustrates and explains the ethical positions adopted by each model by discussing their responses to certain subject matter, appraising classroom examples and examining their respective approaches to curriculum planning. This chapter shows that although Jacobs' multidisciplinary model often meets the

educational needs of select middle class groups, it fails other young people on at least two counts. It does not address the developmental needs of early adolescents or the more specific needs of young people from minority groups and those of lower socio-economic status. In contrast, Beane's integrative model meets the educational and developmental needs of all early adolescents.

Conclusion

This initial chapter presented the case for a critical investigation of the concept of curriculum integration with respect to the educational needs of early adolescents in NZ. It explained the intention and motivation for the thesis topic. It also explained how the thesis was structured and detailed the purpose of each chapter. The next chapter shows that recent understandings of the concept of curriculum integration – in NZ and elsewhere – have been fraught with confusion and ambiguity.

Chapter 2

Recent understandings of curriculum integration in the literature

This chapter argues that recent understandings of curriculum integration are confused and ambiguous because contemporary research of the concept has been largely ahistorical. First, it investigates understandings of curriculum integration in NZ. It finds that NZ educators tend to conflate the concept of curriculum integration with the subject-centred multidisciplinary approach. Second, it reviews the recent literature of curriculum integration. It examines the terminology of curriculum integration and identifies the main causes of confusion and ambiguity. It argues that widespread reluctance to refer to historical understandings of the concept has resulted in a proliferation of models for curriculum integration which are uninformed by theory. It asserts that extant models of curriculum integration can be comfortably reclassified according to historical understandings of the concept which stem from the *subject-centred* and *student-centred* traditions in American education (Beane, 1997; Gehrke, 1998).

Recent understandings of curriculum integration in NZ: a case study

Over the last decade or so the concept of curriculum integration has gained a modicum of support from NZ officials as a credible alternative to single-subject approaches. The language of the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (NZCF) (Ministry of Education, 1993) offered implicit support for the notions of integration and coherency. It also explicitly suggested that schools could use, “an integrated approach ... or thematic approaches” to attain a, “balanced and broad” curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1993:8). Later, the Ministry endorsed curriculum integration in its 23rd *Up-date* to the NZCF (1997) which showcased exemplars of curriculum integration from school trials. In her review of the NZCF, Le Metais (2002) commented favourably that the *Essential learning areas* allowed teachers to ‘integrate’ subjects within each learning area and develop local curricular contexts. Moreover, in her synthesis of ‘best evidence’ compiled for the Ministry of Education, Alton-Lee asserted that research in NZ and elsewhere showed:

(The) opportunity to learn is effective and sufficient (when) curriculum enactment has coherence, interconnectedness and links are made to real life relevance (and) curriculum content addresses diversity appropriately and effectively (2003:81).

She concluded that the research base indicates that, “curriculum integration” has the potential to enhance, “what constitutes quality” in the NZ curriculum (2003:131). Advocates for early adolescents have also voiced support for curriculum integration. Stewart and Nolan asserted that due to their unique developmental needs, “emerging adolescents ... require a form and quality of education different from that which other children receive” (1992:2). They argued that curriculum integration promises to provide the necessary point of ‘difference’ for this cohort of young people. The Education Review Office (1994 & 2000) – occupied by their concern that conventional classroom contexts alienates too many Years 7-10 students – also offered support for curriculum integration on the grounds that it responds to the needs of each individual.

At first glance, the weight of rhetoric in favour of curriculum integration suggests that it would be sensible to implement it in Years 7-10 classes without further ado. However, although NZ educators seem to have assumed that they share a common understanding of curriculum integration, few have explained what they mean by the concept. While some NZ educators understood the concept of curriculum integration in its heyday (for instance: Beeby, 1938 & 1992; Department of Education, 1943a; Ball, 1948), there is little evidence to suggest that contemporary NZ educators understand it. Waikato academic Deborah Fraser argued:

Curriculum integration is one of the most confused topics in [NZ] education ... many teachers and researchers use the term to mean a raft of things, some of which have nothing to do with curriculum integration at all (2000:34).

She explained that the most common understanding of curriculum integration in NZ is that it equates to ‘thematic units’. In other words, curriculum integration is widely interpreted to refer to a multidisciplinary approach. Thus, the notion that curriculum integration might have a student-centred intention and purpose has been subsumed by the subject-centred hegemony of the multidisciplinary curriculum. As Chapter 5 shows, Fraser’s view is supported by historical evidence which suggests that subject-centred perceptions are a legacy of the popularity of multidisciplinary approaches in the 1950s

and 1960s (for example: Richardson, 1964 & 2001). Recent research also supports Fraser's position. For instance, most of the examples of 'curriculum integration' in school-based Ministry trials (Ministry of Education, 1997; Harwood & Nolan, 1999) displayed characteristics more closely associated with multidisciplinary curriculum than (student-centred) curriculum integration. The results of the recent 'Stocktake' of the NZCF suggested that the majority of NZ educators have a subject-centred perception of curriculum integration. The Stocktake, which was a 10% sample of NZ schools, included two rounds of 'general' questionnaires for teachers (McGee and others⁷, 2002; McGee and others⁸, 2004). Question 10 in the first questionnaire⁹ asked, "How integrated is your teaching of the curriculum areas you teach? Teachers had a choice of five responses: 'mostly separated', 'sometimes separated', 'mostly integrated', 'always integrated' or 'not applicable'. The construction of this question suggested that a multidisciplinary meaning of curriculum integration was intended, where 'integration' is a process carried out by *teachers*, not by students. Question 11 was open-ended. It asked, "How does the structure of the national curriculum statements help or hinder integration?" The analysis of Questions 10 and 11 indicated that respondents understood curriculum integration as a process which involves the reordering of subject material but it did not provide any evidence that they understood it as a student-centred approach which includes processes such as collaborative teacher-student planning¹⁰ (2002:28-32). The second questionnaire¹¹ omitted specific questions about curriculum integration but it did include a question which gave respondents an opportunity to describe examples of innovatory practice in their school (McGee and others, 2004). One¹² response was about curriculum integration. The teacher, a department head from a 'decile 4' intermediate school, stated:

Last year we introduced the curriculum integration concept into four of our classrooms. The organisation of the curriculum is around significant problems and issues collaboratively identified by teachers and students, without regard for subject-area boundaries. This year four more classrooms have joined the program.

⁷ McGee, Jones, Bishop, Cowie, Hill, Miller, Harlow, Oliver, Tiakiwai & MacKenzie (2002).

⁸ McGee, Harlow, Miller, Cowie, Hill, Jones & Donaghy (2004).

⁹ N=1997 for the first questionnaire (McGee and others, 2002).

¹⁰ Collaborative teacher-student planning is discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

¹¹ N=1886 for this second questionnaire (McGee and others, 2004).

¹² 989 teachers responded to this question but the authors only provided a representative sample of 27 replies from a 'sub-sample' of 200; just one of which pertained to curriculum integration.

We have the attitude at our school that thinking skills and intelligent behaviours are planned for and taught as part of a negotiated curriculum (2004:62).

This example is significant because it showed that teachers in at least one NZ school have an operational understanding of student-centred curriculum integration. Moreover, as ‘the exception proving the rule’, it effectively reinforces Fraser’s view that most NZ educators have a misconceived view of curriculum integration because they equate it with multidisciplinary curriculum. In conclusion, understandings of the concept of curriculum integration by NZ educators are vague at best.

In other countries the situation has been similar. For instance, in a review of official documents from the Canadian province of British Columbia, Werner stated that ‘integration’ was repeatedly used as a, “vague slogan” (1991:225). Moreover, Brophy and Alleman¹³ asserted that vague policy statements in the USA frequently lead to ‘ill-conceived’ versions of curriculum integration (1991:66). As the remainder of this chapter demonstrates – given the parlous state of the recent literature – general vagueness and misconceived understandings are entirely understandable.

The recent literature of curriculum integration

As pointed out in Chapter 1, the recent literature of curriculum integration has been characterised by confusion and ambiguity. In his *Middle School Journal* editorial, Erb (1996) asserted that the terminology of curriculum integration needed to be clarified. He remonstrated:

How can practitioners not be confused ... how can they not be frustrated in their attempts to implement ‘interdisciplinary’ or ‘integrated’ or ‘integrative’ curricula? (1996:2).

Curriculum integration received a fresh burst of attention during the 1990s but many writers failed to situate their work historically and few paid more than scant attention to the existing literature. Confusion has stemmed from three interconnecting sources. First, a lack of consensus led to fragmented terminology. Second, new models of curriculum

¹³ Although the authors’ assertion is eminently defensible, they themselves did not differentiate between types of curriculum integration, thus they are vulnerable to their own charge about vagueness.

were developed without sufficient reference to existing theory. Third, researchers and practitioners failed to differentiate between different forms of curriculum integration.

Fragmented terminology

The output of books on curriculum integration in the USA increased from a trickle during the 1970s and 1980s to a flood in the 1990s (Gehrke, 1998; Vars, 1997a). The haphazard use of terminology quickly generated ambiguities (Beane, 1997; Grossman, Wineburg & Beers, 2000). Curriculum integration was described by a variety of terms including ‘interdisciplinary curriculum’, ‘multidisciplinary curriculum’, ‘integrated curriculum’ and ‘integrative curriculum’, as well as ‘curriculum integration’ itself. For instance, book titles of the period connected ‘curriculum’ with descriptors such as: ‘interdisciplinary’ (Jacobs, 1989a; Ellis & Stuen, 1998; Wineburg & Grossman, 2000), ‘integrated’ (Stevenson & Carr, 1993; Drake, 1993 & 1998; Pate, Homestead & McGinnis, 1997; Wolfinger & Stockard, 1997; Mallery, 2000), ‘integrating’ (Five & Dionisio, 1996) and ‘integration’ (Beane, 1997). Authors often failed to distinguish between specific (that is student-centred or subject-centred) and generic forms of curriculum integration. One author used ‘curriculum integration’ as a generic term *and* as a specific term for *both* specific forms (Fogarty, 1991a/1991b). Others changed their terminology arbitrarily. For instance within a single book-title, Jacobs (1989a) used ‘interdisciplinary curriculum’ (1989b) and ‘integrated curriculum’ (1989c & 1989d). Later she used ‘curriculum integration’ (1991) and ‘integrating curriculum’ (1997a), before finally reverting to ‘interdisciplinary curriculum’ (1997b). Table 1 summarises the recent usage of terms

Table 1: Recent terminology of curriculum integration

Generic terms	Subject-centred approach	Student-centred approach
Curriculum integration Integrated Interdisciplinary Multidisciplinary	Curriculum integration Integrated Interdisciplinary Multidisciplinary	Curriculum integration Integrated Interdisciplinary Integrative
	Correlated/correlation Fused/fusion Broad-fields	Core

for curriculum integration. In addition it classifies the terms of ‘correlated’, ‘fused’, ‘broad-fields’ and ‘core’ which – as Chapter 3 explains – were in common use in the USA during the 1930s and 1940s.

During the 1990s, the terms of *interdisciplinary curriculum* and *curriculum integration* were prone to increasing ambiguity. The difficulties associated with the first term were resolved within a few years but the problems surrounding the latter term were more persistent. Following Jacobs’ influential book (1989a), most educators opted to use ‘interdisciplinary curriculum’ as a reference to subject-centred curriculum integration. Although this ignored the earlier pedigree of the term – ‘interdisciplinary curriculum’ had been used throughout the 1960s-1980s by the middle school movement to refer to both subject-centred and student-centred curriculum integration – it was a logical development since, as Vars (1993) pointed out, the predominant interdisciplinary approach at the time was ‘correlation’. Vars was one of the last researchers to habitually use ‘interdisciplinary curriculum’ to refer to both subject-centred and student-centred curriculum integration. In his book *Interdisciplinary teaching: why and how*, Vars (1987/1993) outlined the essential differences between the two approaches. He stated:

Core is a type of interdisciplinary curriculum in which the primary commitment is to help students deal directly with problems and issues of significance to them ... (core) is unabashedly student-centred, beginning with student concerns, whereas correlation and fusion are adult-designed approaches that begin with more-or-less conventional subject areas (1993:23).

Jacobs’ (1989b) definition for her subject-centred model of interdisciplinary curriculum was too broad. She defined ‘interdisciplinary curriculum’ as:

A knowledge view and curriculum approach that consciously applies methodology and language from more than one discipline to examine a central theme, issue, problem, topic or experience (1989b:8).

While this definition adequately differentiates Jacobs’ model from the single-subject curriculum, it could be applied to most forms of curriculum integration. In reality Jacobs – and other advocates of subject-centred approaches – interpreted ‘interdisciplinary curriculum’ more narrowly (Jacobs, 1989a & 1997b; Fogarty, 1991a/1991b; Erickson, 1998). Grounding his argument in historical understandings of the concept of curriculum

integration, Beane asserted that the, “greatest confusion” occurred when subject-centred models were labelled ‘interdisciplinary curriculum’ or ‘curriculum integration’ when they should, “more accurately be called multidisciplinary (models)” (1997:10). Jacobs (1989b:8) quoted Meeth’s (1978) definition for the ‘multidisciplinary’ model as, “the juxtaposition of several disciplines focused on one problem with no direct attempt to integrate.” Jacobs unaccountably rejected this definition – opting instead for her loosely defined ‘interdisciplinary’ model – yet Meeth’s definition for ‘multidisciplinary’ was a precise definition for her subject-centred model. Accordingly, Beane’s assertion that Jacobs’ model was *multidisciplinary* rather than ‘interdisciplinary’, finally resolved the question of an appropriate term for Jacobs’ model, as well as any residual ambiguity surrounding the use of ‘interdisciplinary’.

The problems surrounding the term of ‘curriculum integration’ were difficult to resolve because it was widely used as a generic term and as a term for both specific forms of curriculum integration. Beane (1997) suggested that terms for multidisciplinary approaches – which simply ‘correlated’ or ‘fused’ subjects – should avoid using ‘integration’ as a descriptor. However, Tyler (1949) had established a precedent by using the term of ‘horizontal integration’ – meaning a correlation of subject matter – in the multidisciplinary sense. For a while Beane continued to use ‘curriculum integration’ and ‘integrative curriculum’ as synonymous terms for his student-centred model (1990a, 1991, 1993a, 1993b, 1995a, 1995b, 1996, 1997) but, as casual usage of ‘curriculum integration’ for multidisciplinary approaches escalated, he opted for change. In the late 1990s, Beane along with others established a convention where *integrative curriculum* referred to student-centred approaches which sought to promote personal and social integration¹⁴ (Beane, personal communication 2003). Nonetheless, the struggle to claim terminology is unlikely to disappear altogether. For instance, Erlandson and McVittie (2001) used ‘integrative curriculum’ to describe a range of approaches that included both the integrative and multidisciplinary models, while Warren and Flinchbaugh (2003) described a commercially available multidisciplinary unit as an ‘integrative’ curriculum.

¹⁴ Beane (2002) also suggested that integrative curriculum could be referred to as ‘democratic core curriculum’.

New models

Another source of confusion in the literature of the 1990s was the sudden proliferation of new models of curriculum integration. These presented, “popular attempts” to identify a ‘continuum’ of several alternative models, each with it’s, “own finely shaded description” (Beane, 1997:13). This trend occurred because the educators concerned constructed new theoretical models on the basis of practical experience without recourse to existing theory or historical meanings of integration.

Three educators – Heidi Hayes Jacobs, Robin Fogarty and Susan Drake – produced books describing ‘new’ models of curriculum integration situated along a ‘continuum’. Their work was widely disseminated and frequently cross-referenced in the literature (Gehrke, 1998; Wraga, 1997). Jacobs (1989a) described a continuum of six models, Fogarty (1991a/1991b) outlined a continuum of ten models and Drake (1993) described a continuum of six models. However, none of these models amounts to a new form of curriculum integration. As Chapter 3 shows, each model fits into classifications which were formulated in the 1930s. Apart from Beane, who touched on the problem of new models in his general critique of the multidisciplinary model (1993a, 1997), criticism of these three models has been muted. Nonetheless, Gehrke criticised Fogarty for ignoring the, “main classical groupings (correlated, fused and core)” and for being, “ahistorical” (1998:256). Wraga also singled out the work of Jacobs, Fogarty and Drake when he asserted that recent research was often flawed due to its, “ahistoricism” (1997:117).

The most influential of the three books was Jacobs’ *Interdisciplinary curriculum: design and implementation* (1989a) which was distributed to tens of thousands of educators in the USA (Beane, 1997; Gehrke, 1998). In a brief justification of her decision to adopt a subject-centred approach, Jacobs asserted that her six models represented a, “continuum of options for content design” (1989c:14). Jacobs’ first four models were subject-centred. The first model, ‘discipline-based’ referred to the single-subject curriculum. The next three models mirrored subject-centred approaches trialled by the American progressives in the 1930s. The second, ‘parallel disciplines’ equated to the *correlated* approach. The third, ‘multidisciplinary’ equated to the *fused* approach. Jacobs’ favoured

fourth, 'interdisciplinary' equated to the *broad fields* approach. The correlated, fused and broad-fields approaches are discussed in Chapter 3. Jacobs constructed her last two student-centred models as a result of two rare but unsuccessful forays into history. She stated that her fifth model, the 'integrated-day', "originated from the British Infant School movement in the 1960s" (1989c:17). However the 'integrated day' is not a curriculum design. It does not integrate or rearrange subject matter but simply gives children a say in the order and time-span of daily events (Hirst, 1975; Barnes, 1982; Beane, 1997). Jacobs called her sixth model the 'complete program'. She argued that it was, "the most extreme form of interdisciplinary work (where) students live in the school environment and create the curriculum out of their day-to-day lives" (1989c:18). She cited A.S. Neill's Summerhill school, founded in England in 1924, as her sole example of the 'complete program', stating that it was, "the most widely known of such an approach" (ibid.). Jacobs was not in favour of this last model as she thought that the Summerhill experience indicated there were, "no guarantees that students (would) receive exposure to the standard school curriculum". This is an understatement. As discussed in Chapter 4, Neill (1960) eschewed any form of formal curriculum-making in order to 'free' each child to create their own program of learning. Beane (1997) aptly summed up the circumstances at Summerhill by remarking that whatever else the school accomplished, it 'did not' achieve curriculum integration.

Robin Fogarty – best known for her teacher resource books – outlined a continuum of ten models in her book, *The mindful school: how to integrate the curricula* (1991a)¹⁵. She adopted the metaphor of 'lenses' as a device to suggest that subject matter could be viewed in different ways which implied that teachers could plan multidisciplinary approaches using a variety of perspectives. Fogarty acknowledged Jacobs' models as the catalyst for her ideas but did not refer to any other work. Although Fogarty outlined ten models on her continuum, her implication that they represented as many as ten different models of integrated curriculum was ill-considered and lacked coherence. The first model, 'fragmented' equated to the single-subject approach. The second, third and fourth, 'connected', 'nested' and 'sequenced' all equated to the *correlated* approach. The fifth,

¹⁵ A shortened version appeared in her paper, *Ten ways to integrate curriculum* (Fogarty, 1991b).

'shared' equated to the *correlated* and *fused* approaches. The sixth, seventh, and eighth, 'webbed', 'threaded' and 'integrated' all equated to the *multidisciplinary* model discussed in Chapters 3 and 6. The last two models, 'immersed' and 'networked' considered the notion of creating new subject matter at the tertiary level. Fogarty suggested that they might approximate research methods used by postgraduate students.

Canadian educator Susan Drake (1991, 1993 & 1998) outlined a, "continuum of integration" consisting of six models (1998:20). The first five models were subject-centred. The first model, 'traditional' simply referred to the single-subject approach. The second and third, 'fused' and 'within one subject' equated to the *fused* approach. The fourth, 'multidisciplinary' equated to the *correlated* and fifth, 'interdisciplinary' equated to the *broad-fields* approach. The sixth, the student-centred 'transdisciplinary' – which sought to reposition the curriculum in a, "real-life context" – approximated the 'core' approach discussed in Chapter 3 (Drake, 1998:23).

In conclusion, the idea that curriculum integration can be represented by a 'continuum' of theoretical models both ignores history and lacks logical justification. The notion of a continuum may be useful if it is understood as a range of *examples* of multidisciplinary practice which lean towards progressive ideas or a way to describe the 'stages' of professional development educators go through as they put aside traditional single-subject approaches and work through the implications of implementing curriculum integration in their classrooms (Brazee & Capelluti, 1995; Bergstrom, 1998; Snapp, 2006). However, Beane (1997) argued that the notion of a continuum remains unhelpful because it incorrectly implies that teachers can serendipitously 'move on' from subject-centred approaches to student-centred approaches. Chapters 6 and 7 show that there are significant barriers to such a transition associated with teachers' beliefs and self concepts.

Lack of differentiation or discernment

Another source of confusion arises when researchers fail to differentiate between different models of curriculum integration (Beane, 1997). Although seventy years of empirical research has indicated that, "almost without exception, students in *any type of*

(integrated) curriculum do as well as, and often better than, students (in single-subject programs)” (Vars, 1997a:181, emphasis added), many researchers do not discriminate between student-centred and subject-centred approaches. Accordingly, ‘curriculum integration’ variously means a subject-centred approach or a student-centred approach or a generic term for any kind of integration. Sometimes the issue has been crudely resolved by combining all extant terms for curriculum integration. For example, in a survey of curriculum integration in Missouri schools, Arredondo and Rucinski (1996) treated ‘interdisciplinary’, ‘multidisciplinary’ and ‘integrated’ synonymously. In another example, Hough and St. Clair (1995) opted to use the terms of ‘interdisciplinary’ and ‘integrative’ interchangeably when examining the effects of ‘integrated curricula’ on problem-solving abilities of early adolescents. Although this methodological decision may appear to usefully eliminate certain sources of confusion, it removes the possibility of discerning any difference between models of curriculum integration.

The importance of the historical meanings of integration

As intimated above, confusion and ambiguity in the literature of curriculum integration can be largely attributed to those who lack an historical understanding of the concept (Wraga, 1997; Beane, 1997). The concept of curriculum integration has a long and important history in the USA (Vars, 1991; Beane, 1996). This indicates that an historical perspective of curriculum integration would result in better practical outcomes. For instance, while working in New York City schools, Martin-Kniep, Feige and Soodak cited various difficulties they encountered when trying to apply Jacobs’ multidisciplinary model to ‘integrate’, “the student’s personal life with school” (1995:244). History shows that this called for a student-centred approach, not a subject-centred approach. The task was elegantly accomplished in the same city some 70 years earlier, at Lincoln School where Dewey’s student-centred ‘organic’ approach was used (Rugg & Shumaker, 1928).

Sometimes a lack of historical understanding or knowledge of curriculum integration compounds confusion in the literature. For example, O’Steen, Cuper, Spires, Beal & Pope (2002) ostensibly set out to simplify Beane’s integrative model. However their collective lack of appreciation for historical meanings of integration meant that they

discarded critical components of Beane's theory, with the result that their modified model had little substantive meaning. In other instances educators have produced 'hybrid' models of 'integration' which have little or no connection to the established theory of integration. Two examples were Kovalik (1994), who combined integrated themes, brain research and teaching strategies in her scheme of 'integrated thematic instruction', and Tchudi and Lafer (1996), who combined a multidisciplinary approach with a theory of learning in their scheme of 'integrated teaching'. In these two instances, potential sources of confusion were unimportant since their work was not referenced in the subsequent literature of curriculum integration¹⁶.

In another case, a lack of historical understanding resulted in an unbalanced and inaccurate portrayal of the field. In her article, *Understanding integrated curriculum* (1998), Kysilka devoted considerable space to an uncritical rendition of the three continua critiqued above, yet she barely mentioned other models. She precluded discussion on either the theory or the history of curriculum integration by stating that, "confusion, uncertainty and concern (abounds) ... integration means whatever someone decides it means" (1998:198).

In contrast, Gehrke (1998)¹⁷ competently dispelled any hint of confusion by situating the subject-centred and student-centred forms of curriculum integration within their historical contexts. She asserted that, "despite the use of a host of terms and slightly varied definitional attributes ... (examples of curriculum integration) can still be sorted into two (categories)" which she identified according to their historical progressive terms as, "correlated/fused and core" (1998:247 & 255).

Table 2 (below) summarises the terms for the concept of curriculum integration used in this thesis. *Curriculum integration* is reserved as the generic term for both the subject-centred and student-centred approaches. The specific term for the subject-centred approach is the *multidisciplinary* model (Meeth, 1978 cited Jacobs, 1989a & Beane,

¹⁶ However, Kovalik (1994) claimed a following for her model in The Slovak Republic.

¹⁷ Note that the papers by Gehrke (1998) and Kysilka (1998) were both accepted for publication in the same issue of *Curriculum Journal*.

1997). The specific term for the student-centred approach is the *integrative* model (Beane, 1993b). These three terms logically reflect the evolution of the concept of curriculum integration and, if adopted widely, could avoid future confusion or ambiguity in the literature.

Table 2: Terminology for the concept of curriculum integration

Generic term	Subject-centred approach	Student-centred approach
Curriculum integration	Multidisciplinary	Integrative

Conclusion

This chapter investigated contemporary understanding of the concept of curriculum integration. It appraised recent support for curriculum integration in NZ. It suggested that many NZ educators have a misconceived view of curriculum integration because they equate it with multidisciplinary curriculum. This chapter explained why the recent literature of curriculum has been characterised by confusion and ambiguity. It found that weaknesses in the literature are due to the reluctance of contemporary educators to situate curriculum integration in an historical context. This has resulted in two confounding effects. On the one hand, some educators have assumed that curriculum integration is homogeneous. They have failed to discern a dichotomy between student-centred and subject-centred approaches to curriculum integration. In many situations the subject-centred multidisciplinary model has dominated, so many educators have little knowledge or understanding of the student-centred model. On the other hand, some educators have described curriculum integration as a continuum of models. This has resulted in a proliferation of terms which have little substantive meaning. However, the ‘new’ models in the current discourse can be subsumed within the multidisciplinary model.

Bergstrom (1998) suggested that the work of the American progressives should be ‘revisited’ if the wider purposes of curriculum integration are to be understood. Over the last century, both student-centred and subject-centred educators in the USA have applied the term of ‘integration’ to their respective curriculum designs. The next chapter investigates the American contribution to the concept of curriculum integration.

Chapter 3

The American progressives and curriculum integration

This chapter investigates the contribution of the American progressive movement to the concept of curriculum integration. The first section traces the rise of the progressives in the first half of the twentieth century. It uses Kliebard's (1995) classification to outline ideological conflicts between various factions in the movement and explains how this shaped their curricula and gave rise to the notions of integration embedded within them. The primary intention of this section is to identify and explain the notions of integration used by the American progressives. Beane (1997) suggested that Dewey's research is probably a rich but untapped source of meanings for integration, thus the analysis begins with Dewey's work at the Chicago Experimental School at the turn of the twentieth century. The second section traces the evolution of progressive curriculum models, especially prior to, and after, World War II. Two competing models of curriculum integration dominated during this period. These were the student-centred 'core' approach which rose to prominence after the 'Eight-Year Study' and the subject-centred multidisciplinary approach popularised by the 'Virginian Curriculum Project'. The third section discusses the emergence of the theory of integration. It also examines the history of attempts by the middle school movement in the USA to design a developmentally responsive curriculum during the 1960s-1980s. The main intention of the second and third sections is to explain how notions of integration were used to develop models of curriculum integration.

Section 1: Early progressive curricula and notions of integration

The progressive movement and its main factions

The progressive movement in American education emerged from an early twentieth century political movement, 'progressivism', which aimed to build a democratic society by utilising public schooling (Morshead, 1995). Progressivism grew out of crises in the late nineteenth century, such as the sharp depression in 1896, to become an influential

political movement in the first quarter of the twentieth century¹⁸. Notably, American progressivism always attracted powerful political foes. It contradicted the American tradition of self reliance and rugged individualism prized by those of pioneering stock (Goldman, 1952). As explained later in this chapter, the progressive movement was also confronted by political resistance from conservatives at several points (for example: the Eight-Year Study and the social reconstruction agenda). Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 7, contemporary applications of student-centred curriculum integration have been subjected to persistent political pressure from the ‘conservative restoration’.

In 1861 British philosopher Herbert Spencer asked, “What knowledge is of most worth?” (1896:21). Spencer’s answer of, “(the) education for self-preservation” (1896:39), which encapsulated his ‘Social Darwinism’¹⁹ was anathema to progressives. Social Darwinism implied that social development was predetermined, thus it justified the rampant capitalism in the USA during the 1860s and 1870s (Goldman, 1952). In contrast, the progressives believed that social development was in the hands of society, thus society could improve by learning from experience and scientific experimentation. Leading American philosopher and progressive educationalist, John Dewey refined these ideas in his philosophy of ‘pragmatist instrumentalism’. Building on work by fellow philosophers Pierce and James, he asserted that individuals and society progressed best by collaboratively participating in a democracy (Dewey, 1916 & 1929). Accordingly, the progressive movement was founded on the pragmatic aim to improve the level of education of all Americans. The progressives had a strong influence on education in the USA for about sixty years, from the turn of the century until the first Russian *Sputnik* was launched in 1957 (Kliebard, 1995; Wraga, 1999).

In order to answer Spencer’s question to their satisfaction, the progressives needed to be sure that the curriculum would meet the needs of the individual. The story of the progressive movement and the development of notions of integration are closely linked to

¹⁸ For instance, Presidents Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) and Wilson Woodrow (1913-1917) brought substantive progressivist agendas to the federal government.

¹⁹ ‘Social Darwinism’ adapted Charles Darwin’s mid-nineteenth century theory of biological evolution and advanced the idea that social development is determined by evolutionary forces.

progressive attempts to answer Spencer's question. The progressives were a 'rainbow coalition' of reformers dedicated to challenging the domination of the nineteenth century subject-centred curriculum. Kliebard (1995) described four progressive factions which were important in the development of notions of integration. These factions were the *social efficiency* movement, the *developmentalists*, the *social meliorists* and the *social reconstructionists*. In 1919 the Progressive Education Association (PEA) was formed by a group of private and public schools interested in new educational ideas pioneered in laboratory schools (Kliebard, 1995). The PEA was dominated by the developmentalists throughout the 1920s but during the 1930s the realities of the Great Depression brought the social ameliorists and social reconstructionists to the fore.

The goals of the *social efficiency* faction were generally abhorrent to other progressives yet they shared the common goal to reform the traditional curriculum. Social efficiency was primarily concerned with fitting people into the, "right niche" in order to maintain a hierarchical social order (Kliebard, 1995:161). Accordingly, it relied on identifying the specific subject matter presumed to be pertinent for individuals from various social classes. Social efficiency advocates wanted to use resources efficiently, so they were eager to remove 'deadwood' from the traditional curriculum such as foreign languages for people who were never likely to need them (Kliebard, 1995). The social efficiency faction peaked about the time when Bobbitt asserted that curriculum development was simply a matter of:

Scientific technique ... which requires only that one go out into the world of affairs and discover the particulars ... the abilities, attitudes, habits, appreciations, and forms of knowledge that (people) need (1918:42).

Bobbitt's curriculum design relied on the unsustainable generalization that 'one size fits all', as well as the ability to somehow determine the members of each social class. In reality it was impossible to deliver the specific 'forms of knowledge' needed by individuals in the diverse society of twentieth century America, thus modernised versions of the traditional subject-centred curriculum were imposed on entire sectors of society according to social class. Social efficiency advocates usually worked out precise objectives well in advance of any classroom planning. Kliebard observed:

(A) persistent legacy of the (social efficiency) curriculum-makers is the continued insistence upon stating precise and definite curriculum objectives in *advance* of any educational activity (1995:104, emphasis added).

As discussed in Chapter 7, the contemporary textbook industry ably fulfils the aims of social efficiency. As explained below, social efficiency focuses on subject correlation and, in the process, marginalises the aims of other notions of integration.

The *developmentalist* or ‘child-centred’ faction was narrowly focussed on the child as an individual. While Bobbitt was promoting his social efficiency curriculum, Kilpatrick (1918 cited Kliebard, 1995) produced a sensational paper espousing a new child-centred approach to schooling. Franco-Swiss philosopher, Jean-Jacque Rousseau (1762/1972) had popularised the notion that the curriculum could be integrated with the ‘natural development’ of the child. Thus the developmentalists assumed that, “the natural order in the development in the child was the ... basis for determining what should be taught” (Kliebard, 1995:11). The developmentalists enjoyed a burst of popularity in the 1920s before their philosophy was found wanting, however they kept some stalwart supporters due to their genuine commitment to children’s needs.

The *social ameliorist* and *social reconstructionist* factions, born amid the grim realities of the Great Depression in the 1930s, were motivated to improve society. The social reconstructionists created a curriculum designed to facilitate social change so that students would be, “critically attuned to the defects of the social system and be prepared to do something about it” (Kliebard, 1995:161). Leading advocates such as Counts and Rugg developed a curriculum which encouraged critical thinking but were criticised for what was perceived to be a socialist agenda. For instance, Bobbitt labelled them as, “integrators ... (with) a desire to think and plan for the masses” (1934:205 cited Kliebard, 1995:170). The social ameliorists had a slightly different agenda to the social reconstructionists. They advocated a curriculum which stressed independent thinking and the ability to collaboratively solve problems within a democratic setting, rather than a narrow agenda intended to rectify particular, “social evils” (Kliebard, 1995:170). The social ameliorist vision was sown by Dewey in the Chicago Experimental School at the

turn of the twentieth century. By the 1930s Dewey and Bode had nurtured it into full bloom where it became the basis for 'core' education.

The remainder of this section describes the notions of integration which emerged from the curriculum theories developed by four key figures: Dewey who represents social meliorism, Kilpatrick who represents developmentalism, Rugg, who represents social reconstructionism, and Caswell who represents a 'hybrid' between social efficiency and social reconstructionism.

Dewey's organic community-centred curriculum

John Dewey made a profound contribution towards contemporary understandings of curriculum integration. Major changes in American society in the 1890s led to a state of curriculum 'ferment' (Kliebard, 1995). Mass immigration²⁰ and rapid urbanisation led to a surge in demand for public schooling. The traditional curriculum – where classical humanist philosophy had long held that a narrowly-defined field of 'fossilised' subject matter was worthy of study, "as an end to itself" – was subjected to renewed scrutiny (Beane, 1997:23). During the 1890s the Herbartians²¹ investigated the idea of subject correlation (Kliebard, 1995). They questioned the logic of the traditional subject-centred curriculum and began to consider how disparate subjects could be harmonised in ways which would benefit students (Kliebard, 1981). The Herbartian's work attracted the attention of Dewey who disagreed that the notion of the correlation of subject matter would benefit students but nonetheless gained inspiration for a radical new curriculum design (Wraga, 1997).

Dewey developed his innovative 'organic' curriculum based on notions of integration in the 1890s. He set up the Chicago Experimental School (1896-1904), now usually referred to as Dewey's Laboratory School, where he and his co-workers tested his

²⁰ Due to large-scale immigration, the population of the USA ballooned from 50.2 million in 1880 to 92.0 million in 1910 (Hobsbawm, 1987).

²¹ Founded in 1892, the Herbart Club or 'the Herbartians' was a zealous group of American educational reformers lead by Francis Parker who were interested in the ideas of German philosopher, Johan Friedrich Herbart who had propagated the idea of a scientific approach to education. In 1895 they reorganised to form the National Herbart Society for Scientific Study of Education.

theories. He developed and refined his philosophy of education over the next forty years, based on his experience in the Laboratory School. Although Dewey insisted his educational theory was incomplete, a sophisticated theory of integration can be gleaned from his voluminous writing.²² This section of the chapter outlines Dewey's curriculum design then it identifies and explains the notions of integration implicit in his writings.

Although Dewey rarely used the word *integration*, it is an appropriate metaphor for his philosophy of education. He believed that the recurring problem of education was the, "harmonizing of individual traits" of students with the aims and values of their communities, thus his philosophy of education identified the student and the community they lived in, rather than subject matter, as the locus of interest (1936:465). Dewey's understanding of integration is best captured by the frequent use of his trademark term, *organic education* in which he imbued a sense of biological symbiosis between the student and their social environment. Dewey (1938) emphasised that his theory of integration was more than a subject-centred correlation of subject matter. His theory of integration centred on his, "community-centred" curriculum²³ (Dewey, 1936:467). Two key notions of integration were embedded within Dewey's theoretical framework. These were *personal integration* which encapsulated his theory of learning, and *social integration* which used the organising theme of the school as a cooperative society.

Personal integration

The idea of a continuous, "reconstructing of experience" or *personal integration* lay at the heart of Dewey's theory of learning (1916:89). Dewey described the process of personal integration when he stated:

The mentally active ... (learner's) mind roams far and wide. All (subject matter) is grist that comes to (their) mill ... yet the mind does not merely roam abroad. It returns with what is found, and there is constant judgment to detect relations, relevancies (and) bearings on the central theme. The outcome is a continuously growing intellectual *integration* ... within the limits set by capacity and experience this ... is the *process of learning* (1931:424, emphasis added).

²² Dewey wrote at least thirty-six books and 815 articles (Goldman, 1952).

²³ Accordingly, Dewey's curriculum might have been best called the 'community-centred curriculum' or the 'organic curriculum', however it has generally been referred to as the 'experience curriculum'.

Dewey explained that this process implies a need for continual, “separating and reformulating” (1902:6) of knowledge which accrues as, “successive experiences are integrated with one another” (1938:44) before learners are able to make sense of subject matter. The crux of personal integration is that when people learn, they do their *own* integrating. This implies that students should not be ‘taught’ parcels of knowledge which are pre-packaged or ‘pre-integrated’ by teachers or textbook writers. Dewey asserted that, “the lack of any organic connection” with what the students has already, “seen and felt and loved” makes most textbook material, “purely formal and symbolic” (1902:24-25). To authenticate personal integration, Dewey insisted that students should *actively* experience fields of subject matter and engage in enquiry, thus he emphasised the importance of, “learning by doing” (1915:120). Dewey also linked personal integration with motivation. He argued that when subject matter becomes meaningful, for instance when it takes the form of a problem requiring a solution, “this need supplies (the) motive for learning” (1902:25). In contrast, Dewey pointed out that when irrelevant subject matter is presented to students, “in the form of a lesson to be learned as a lesson, the connecting links of need and aim are conspicuous for their absence” (ibid.). In such instances, students will be less motivated to integrate subject matter and less likely to learn effectively.

Social integration and democratic education

Dewey (1916) argued that education is the primary means of ensuring social continuity between generations. He believed that it was necessary for schooling to effectively incorporate young people into society so that they would be empowered to act as fully functioning citizens. For Dewey, such schooling ensured the *social integration* of the individual. He rejected the view that schooling is preparation for the adult world, where young people are placed on a, “waiting list” as a kind of, “probation for another life” (1916:63). Dewey believed that the curriculum should immerse students in every day life. He suggested that young people have a developmental need to, “fit in” to a range of social situations, therefore the development of cooperative learning activities allows them to, “acquire a social sense of their own powers” (1916:47).

Dewey promoted social integration in his Laboratory School by developing the idea of the school as a, “miniature community (or) an embryonic society” (1915:15). He found that participation in a miniature society developed skills and attributes needed in wider society, for instance: working collaboratively, solving real-life problems and building self-discipline (Dewey, 1915). Dewey asserted that, “(the) integration of the individual and society” only occurs when the curriculum allows the learner to enjoy the, “free give and take of experiences” of participation within the collaborative learning environment of a miniature society (1936:466).

Democratic education is an intrinsic aspect of social integration. Dewey’s commitment to social meliorism was reflected in his theory of education. In establishing the case for democratic education, he argued, “since education is a social process ... a criterion for educational criticism implies a *particular* social ideal” (1916:115, original emphasis). As Dewey (1916) envisaged it, the organisational structure of his miniature society implied the development of democratic practices, including collaborative curriculum planning by students and teachers. In order to further democratic goals, Dewey urged educators, “to deepen and broaden the range of social contact and intercourse of cooperative living” so that students learned by experience and make their, “future social relations worthy and fruitful” (1936:466-467). Kilpatrick summarised Dewey’s position by explaining that young people only, “learn democracy ... (as they) live democracy” (1942:78). Dewey concluded his argument by stating that young people should be prepared for adult responsibilities, not merely to adapt to, “changes in society” but to, “have the power to shape and direct those changes” as fully participating citizens in a democracy (1897:12 cited Tanner, 1997:10). Accordingly, a critical outcome of Dewey’s social integration is the emergence of a democratic learning community, where young people gain social experience and acquire the skills needed for democratic citizenship.

The integration of knowledge

Dewey (1936) emphasised that the curriculum should be personally meaningful to the learner, as well as being of value to society. By radically redefining the nineteenth century notion of *subject matter*, he sought, “material which was related to the vital

experience of the young ... (and) in touch with what is important and dependable in the best modern information and understanding” (1936:470). Dewey thought subject matter should consist, “primarily of the meanings which supply content to existing social life” (1916:226). Essentially, he argued that subject matter should consist of the specific knowledge that was uniquely important to each individual within the context of their role in society. Dewey suggested that the curriculum should develop in a close relationship with, “(the) one great common world” (1915:91). He explained that when children live, “in a varied but concrete and active relationship to this common world,” their studies naturally integrate (ibid.). Dewey did not spell out the link between subject matter and integration. Nonetheless, the point was clear: an integrated curriculum needs provision for both personal integration, which requires subject matter originating from the student’s immediate concerns; and social integration, which requires subject matter that will allow the student to participate in the wider community. For Dewey, the integration of knowledge was entirely different to the correlation of traditional subject areas, where subjects are realigned according to perceived commonalities. Dewey highlighted the artificial nature of this process by commenting that when the curriculum is rid of traditional subjects containing tightly prescribed subject matter, the effort, “to correlate studies” becomes straightforward, since teachers no longer need to, “resort to all sorts of devices to weave a little arithmetic into the history lesson, and the like” (1915:91).

The organising theme

Dewey’s redefinition of subject matter allowed the conceptual knowledge of the disciplines to be linked with an integrated curriculum. He maintained coherence within his design with an *organising theme* which integrated the curriculum horizontally across the disciplines of knowledge and vertically through children’s developmental phases. Fifty years later, American curriculum theorist Ralph W. Tyler formalised Dewey’s notions of *horizontal integration*, which aimed to ensure the continuity of learning experiences across the curriculum at each level, and *vertical integration* which aimed to ensure an appropriate sequence of learning experiences between developmental levels²⁴. Emphasising the desirability of vertical and horizontal integration in the curriculum,

²⁴ However, as discussed later Tyler (1949) did not consider any other notions of integration.

Tyler asserted that, “for educational experiences to produce a cumulative effect, they must be organised as to reinforce each other” (1949:83).

The Laboratory School used a single organising theme. Dewey used the theme of a miniature society as, “an organising principle for the subject matter of curriculum” (1896:419 cited Tanner, 1997:24). This flexible organising theme involved active student participation in, “occupations having a social origin and use” which Dewey noted were, “life activities with which young children are familiar” (1936:466). Active participation in the occupations allowed students to assimilate, “into their experience” subject matter which was, “communicated by others who have had a larger experience” (Dewey, 1916:226). Dewey stressed the need for adult involvement in student learning, by teachers as well as occupational specialists from the wider community. Thus, his curriculum was, “community-centred” with the purpose to develop, “individuals (with the ability) to live in *cooperative integration* with others” (1936:467 emphasis added). Later in the twentieth century, Dewey’s curriculum was known as the ‘experience curriculum’ – presumably with reference to his book, *Education and experience* (1938) – rather than as the ‘organic curriculum’ or the ‘community-centred curriculum’ which might have represented his views more accurately.

Kilpatrick and developmentalist or ‘child-centred’ education

William Heard Kilpatrick (1918 cited Kliebard, 1995) outlined a radical new curriculum for elementary education in his sensational paper entitled *The project method*. Kilpatrick dismissed what he described as passive learning and coercive teaching occurring in the traditional curriculum. In its place he promoted, “the conception of wholehearted purposeful activity proceeding in a social environment” (1918:323 cited Kliebard, 1995:140). Kilpatrick claimed that the learner would, “emerge with a higher degree of skill and knowledge and (their) knowledge will longer abide with (him or her)” (ibid.). The popularity of child-centred education surged and his paper ran to 60,000 reprints (Kliebard, 1995). Kilpatrick wanted to adapt Dewey’s ideas but he was hindered by his proclivity for, “flamboyance and over-simplification” (Kliebard, 1995:150). According to Cremin, he sought, “to make Dewey’s ideas manageable for ... (teachers but merely

ended up) transforming them into quite different versions from the originals” (1961:221). Kilpatrick attempted to theorise his *project method* but struggled to devise an adequate framework. At first he tried to apply Dewey’s (1910 & 1916) theories about intelligence and the methodology of thinking, which suggested that people think reflectively to solve problems (Morshead, 1995). Kilpatrick sought to situate his pedagogy within a ‘social environment’ but was unable to develop this idea. Eventually, Kilpatrick (1925) opted for a child-centred framework to theorise his curriculum, thus by the early 1930s his project method had given way to the *activity curriculum*. Although the activity curriculum has been seen as a descendant of Dewey’s Laboratory School curriculum (Morshead, 1995), Kilpatrick’s neglect of the social component within Dewey’s curriculum meant that children’s whims and desires tended to drive his curriculum. An exception to this trend was Meredith Smith’s curriculum (1921 cited Beane, 1997) which faithfully put Dewey’s ideas into practice by creating a mini community where children learned by participating in a democracy. By the late 1920s, the activity curriculum was wholly captured by developmentalism, which subscribed to the notion that children should construct their own curriculum and engage in activities *without* teacher direction. Accordingly, the developmentalists assumed that stimulating ‘activities’ were the panacea for preventing the student passivity associated with the traditional curriculum.

The activity curriculum ran into strong criticism, most potently from Dewey in his role as ‘protector’ of the progressive agenda. Dewey asserted that the notion of ‘activity’ was casually conceived and therefore, “too trivial to be educative” (1931:423). He added that any knowledge gained was often, “a merely technical sort, not a genuine carrying forward of theoretical knowledge” (1931:424). Boyd H. Bode, another social meliorist, accused the developmentalists of, “not carrying out a constructive educational program but harking back to Rousseau” (1927:165). Rousseau (1762/1972) based his pedagogy on the romantic notion of the child’s innate innocence. By the end of the nineteenth century this notion was a central developmentalist tenet but as Kliebard commented, it was actually nothing more than, “a sentimental belief” in the, “natural unfolding of children’s natural propensities” (1995:163). Cremin also alluded to the developmentalist agenda by noting that polemics between the various progressive factions, “pushed

different aspects of progressive education to their logical – if sometimes ridiculous – conclusions” (1961:184). Dewey (1938) strengthened his critique of developmentalism by insisting that teachers must be intimately involved in children’s learning. He added that it was fundamental to his notion of social integration for a miniature community to be led by a teacher. With uncharacteristic sharpness he stated, “it is absurd to exclude the teacher” from the group. He elaborated, “as the most mature member of the group, (the teacher) has a peculiar responsibility for the conduct and interactions and intercommunications which are the very life of the group as a community” (Dewey, 1938:58). Dewey argued – as had the Ancient Greeks before him – that, “education in its broadest sense is the means of ... *social continuity*” (1916:3, emphasis added). He insisted that teachers have, “not only the right but the duty to suggest lines of activity, and to show that there need not be any fear of adult imposition” (1928:124). In reality, the pedagogy in child-centred schools of the period contradicted their corresponding ideology. Teachers found it necessary to lead their classes and guide students’ learning. Moreover, teachers were still urged to plan lessons. For instance, in *The child-centred school*, Rugg and Shumaker offered daily and yearly, “programs of work” (1928:72-85). Dewey widened his critique of the activity curriculum to include the role of subject matter. He expressed concern over the rejection of organised subject matter by the developmentalists:

It is a ground for legitimate criticism when the ongoing movement of progressive education fails to recognize that the problem of selection and organization of subject matter for study and learning is fundamental (1938:78).

Others, including the ‘essentialists’, had similar concerns about the composition of subject matter. The essentialists argued that future citizens had to know certain things, thus specific elements needed to be prescribed within the curriculum (Kliebard, 1995).

The critiques of the role of subject matter pinpointed a specific weakness in Kilpatrick’s theoretical framework. Apparently shackled by developmentalist ideology, his best definition for *subject matter* was, “subject matter is what we study and what we learn when we study” (1925:281). Kilpatrick argued that subject matter could be portrayed as a dichotomy, with unchanging knowledge bound within a subject area on one hand and

constantly changing knowledge needed for everyday life on the other hand. He stated that the existence of ‘subjects’ presupposed that the world was, “fixed and static ... where children ... memorize answers to the questions they might expect to meet”, whereas in a dynamic situation, people faced, “a rapidly shifting and changing world ... education would stress thinking and methods of attack ... rather than merely what to do” (1925:108-109). Taking their cue from Rousseau, Kilpatrick along with the other American developmentalists chose the second option by insisting that the choice, composition and direction of subject matter should be the child’s prerogative. However, Kilpatrick’s notion of a dichotomy was ill-conceived and lacked an empirical basis. The practice in child-centred schools of the 1920s contradicted Kilpatrick’s position. Indeed, one of the defining hallmarks of the child-centred schools was their ability to relate subjects to everyday life and to capture student interest (Rugg & Shumaker, 1928). Cremin also noted that child-centred schools, “tended to organize subject matter in radically different ways, to take account of the surrounding community” (1961:279). Accordingly, the pedagogy and curriculum of child-centred schools does not appear to have been aligned with the idealism of its leading theorists.

Rugg’s social reconstructionist agenda

Harold O. Rugg – Director of Research at Lincoln School which was attached to Teachers’ College at Columbia University – was regarded as one of the, “stars of the curriculum world” in the 1920s (Kliebard, 1995:156). Taking Dewey’s lead, he helped pioneer a scientific approach to curriculum design (Nelson, 1978). Rugg initially supported the child-centred faction (Rugg & Shumaker, 1928) but during the Great Depression he realised that it failed to meet social needs. Rugg switched factions and became, “unequivocally” committed to the social reconstructionist agenda²⁵ (Kliebard, 1995:173). He designed an integrated curriculum applicable to elementary and secondary schooling organised around the theme of, “social worth”. Rugg explained that he, “wove (subjects) together”, rather than attempting to correlate all the subjects, which he viewed as an almost “impossible task” (1921:128 cited Kliebard, 1995:172). Rugg realised that

²⁵ Interestingly, Kilpatrick also, “wholeheartedly” committed himself to the social reconstructionist faction at about the same time (Kliebard, 1995:161).

subject matter could be extracted from the disciplines without particular regard to subject boundaries. His new curriculum was designed to actively engage students in classroom discussion and independent thinking, thereby developing a concern for social justice. Rugg's next step was to ensure that teachers could easily access appropriate subject matter. He produced a series of social studies texts which sold over one million copies nationwide (Schubert, 1995). His material centred on contemporary American life and provided a unique resource of open-ended background material designed to provoke students to critically question existing social structures (Kliebard, 1995).

Rugg's contribution to integration was to show how subject matter from the traditional subject areas could be 'woven together' so that particular contexts could be studied. His popular texts brought the notion that subject matter could be selectively drawn from resource material into mainstream practice. Although his agenda was directive, the prescription was written in a loose fashion which was intended to encourage creative classroom input. Nonetheless, Rugg gave no indication that he supported collaborative planning by teachers and students. Thus, although Rugg integrated subject matter to highlight social problems and to encourage students to think critically, he eschewed Dewey's approach which included these two elements but then went a step further by allowing students to share the ownership of the curriculum as they carry out the processes of personal and social integration.

Caswell's hybrid curriculum

Hollis P. Caswell combined social efficiency with social reconstructionism to create what Kliebard called a, "hybridization of the curriculum" (1995:179). Caswell sought to ensure the efficient utilisation of resources and, at the same time, build a better society. His curriculum directly challenged earlier interpretations of integration derived from Dewey's work. In 1931 Caswell initiated the Virginia Curriculum Program (VCP), a state-wide reform which set out to integrate the public school curriculum by organising subjects into an efficient package. The VCP attracted the bulk of elementary and secondary teachers in Virginia – 15,000 out of approximately 17,000 – on a 'voluntary' basis (Kliebard, 1995). Teachers were organised into, "study committees" where they

actively participated in the process of curriculum development (Kliebard, 1995:191). The teachers evidently felt empowered and, if measured by their massive participation rate, clearly endorsed the Program. Indeed, similar large-scale projects in the southern states of Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas in the 1930s indicated the presence of significant support from American teachers for 'alternative' curriculum designs (Wraga, 1997).

The VCP is particularly important in the history of curriculum integration because it was an antecedent of the contemporary multidisciplinary model. A key feature of Caswell's multidisciplinary VCP design was an innovatory 'chart' which organised the curriculum on a matrix. The chart linked 'scope', which consisted of various 'social functions' listed on the vertical axis, with 'sequence', which consisted of organising themes based on student interests listed on the horizontal axis (Kliebard, 1995). The social functions replaced the traditional academic subject areas. They contained aspects of everyday life which were to be inculcated into the lives of young people based on the social efficiency agenda. Groups of teachers mapped out their school curriculum for four consecutive years (Kliebard, 1995). As discussed in Chapter 6, the extant multidisciplinary model has a virtually identical design.

Appraisal of the early progressive curriculum designs

The progressive aspirations for curriculum reform in the 1890s provided the initial impetus for developing American notions of integration. Dewey's contribution was profound. His theory of integration was an outcome of his organic curriculum which interwove intellectual, developmental and social goals. Dewey's notions of personal integration, social integration and democratic education were embedded in his curriculum. He clarified the relationship between subject matter and integration, as well as emphasising the essential roles of educators and the wider community in the education of young people. When the pieces are put together, Dewey's 'organic' education was a fully-fledged theory of integration which explained how each learner constructs a unique understanding of curricular subject matter as a direct outcome of the combined processes of personal and social integration.

Schubert (1995) argued that the progressive search for a ‘coherent’ curriculum to provide an answer to Spencer’s question resulted in, “a debate over which of three competing factors to give primacy: the *individual child*, the *society*, (or) the *subject matter*”. He noted that Dewey recognised, “the need for balance” among these factors, “as a perennial curriculum problem”²⁶ (Schubert, 1995:151). Dewey’s work showed that he gave weighting to all three factors but added extra emphasis to the ‘social’ factor in order to establish democratic education. Conservative critics have occasionally suggested that Dewey dispensed with subject matter but this merely indicates that they did not understand Dewey’s radical definition for ‘subject matter’.

The developmentalist contribution towards notions of integration was negligible. Kilpatrick – along with the other developmentalists – seemed to be preoccupied with escaping from the tyranny of the traditional curriculum, thus according to Schubert’s analysis, his curriculum emphasised ‘individual child’ to the detriment of both ‘social’ and ‘subject matter’. As discussed in Chapter 4, the British progressives led by Percy Nunn (1920) developed a similar child-centred movement. The British movement lasted longer than the American movement and influenced mainstream education in Britain – and in NZ – because Nunn presented it as a *pedagogy* rather than a curriculum. Kilpatrick’s major contribution to the progressive movement lay in his strength as a charismatic communicator, where his efforts did much to turn the popular tide against the traditional nineteenth-century curriculum. In particular, he fired imaginations by describing how educators could start to put progressive ideas into practice (Schubert, 1995). Kilpatrick contributed to the concept of integration by ensuring that students had genuine curriculum choices and by championing the notion of an experiential curriculum but these were minor accomplishments. Indeed, Dewey’s multi-faceted critique of the child-centred curriculum advanced the cause of curriculum integration to a greater degree by steering the curriculum conversation in a more fruitful direction.

²⁶ Up until the 1940s, the only other theoreticians to clearly recognize this ‘need for balance’ were Bode and Rugg (Kliebard, 1995).

According to Schubert's analysis, Rugg's integrated curriculum resources emphasised 'society' and 'subject matter' but it underemphasised 'individual child'. Rugg may have underestimated the value of collaborative planning or perhaps he wanted to avoid any association with his earlier advocacy of developmentalism. The main weakness in his curriculum was that the subject matter might not be relevant or meaningful to the student which meant that the extent of personal and social integration could be limited.

Caswell's hybridised reform agenda had a strong emphasis on social efficiency, thus it was the, "virtual antithesis" of Dewey's work (Kliebard, 1995:78). His competing view of integration was that teachers – not students – 'do' integration, thus *integration* was redefined to mean nothing more than a reorganisation of subject matter. Caswell's 'top-down' curriculum design aimed to build a better society by carefully prescribing what children should know. It enlisted the help of teachers to promote social efficiency by involving them in the process of curriculum design. In contrast, Dewey's 'bottom up' curriculum design ensured that the curriculum would be relevant and appropriate to the interests and needs of the children in each unique setting. Caswell viewed the concept of *horizontal* and *vertical integration* from a subject-centred perspective, simply as a tool for teachers to use when rearranging knowledge, whereas Dewey used the concept to bolster the integrity of his organising theme. Applying Schubert's analysis, Caswell's hybridised curriculum emphasised 'society' and 'subject matter' but it ignored 'individual child'. Caswell's notions of integration were contrary to the notions espoused by other progressive educators. Perhaps he was primarily concerned with accomplishing a social engineering task, rather than considering the needs of individual children. In any event, Caswell's curriculum ran the risk of alienating large numbers of young people.

Section 2: The 'core' curriculum

A 'progressive curriculum'

The political, social and economic upheaval during the Great Depression prompted a sea change in the progressive movement (Kridel, 1998). While the early leaders of the PEA had, "paid a kind of spiritual obeisance" to European progressives Pestalozzi and Froebel who both focused on the individual learner, the new emphasis moved to a wider

consideration of the individual's role in society (Cremin, 1961:247). Dewey and Counts added impetus to change with their cogent critiques of developmentalism (Kliebard, 1995). Social ameliorist forays into mainstream secondary education with *general education* and *core education* found fertile ground. On the other hand, social efficiency advocates harked back to the past with their *multidisciplinary* approach. Eventually *core education*, which emphasised Dewey's notions of integration, became firmly established and formed the mainstay of the progressive movement for the next thirty years.

As the progressive movement evolved, the need for common goals and a greater degree of understanding between the factions became pressing. Bode called for a compromise between the social reconstructionists and developmentalists (Kliebard, 1995). While he acknowledged the worth of the developmentalist notion of freedom, he argued that children also need a measure of guidance and direction. Bode thought that the concept of democracy could allow these two elements to be spliced together within a meaningful framework. Recapitulating Dewey's *Democracy and education* (1916), he stated:

To survive, progressive education has to evolve a democratic education as a way of life ... (rather than as) a sentimental concern for children (Bode, 1938 cited Kliebard, 1995:200).

The notion of democracy, and its role in social integration, rose to new prominence in progressive education. The *general education* movement²⁷ which emerged in the 1930s was grounded in the concept of democracy. It was organised according to the concept of, "common learnings" which was viewed as, "essential for all mature citizens in a democratic society" (Vars, 2000:71).

The progressives were keen to settle on a 'progressive curriculum'. They considered three curriculum designs based on a subject-centred framework. These approaches (including the 'subject' approach as a basis for comparison) were:

- *Subject*, the traditional approach where tightly prescribed selections of subject matter are drawn from specific disciplines defined by clear boundaries;
- *Correlated*, where separate subjects are maintained and aligned so that related topics from different subjects are taught at the same time;

²⁷ By the 1940s this movement was subsumed into the similar *core education* movement (Wraga, 1999).

- *Fused*, where two or more subjects are merged together to form a new subject, for example history and geography to make social studies; and
- *Broad-fields*, where several subjects are recombined into one or more broad courses and flexible boundaries between the subjects allow subject matter to be rearranged to form a common context.

According to Faunce and Bossing, the ‘correlated’ approach was trialled but teachers were generally, “dissatisfied” with it due to the difficulty of getting colleagues from different subject areas, “to plan and work together” (1958:44-45). The ‘broad-fields’ approach had superficial attraction due to its apparent flexibility but it was too closely aligned with the social efficiency agenda to win broad appeal (Hopkins & Hammer, 1937). Similar to the subject approach, the broad-fields approach was content-driven with a high priority accorded to predetermined subject matter and did not seriously consider students’ interests. Caswell side-stepped similar objections to his VCP design by involving teachers in the initial planning process. Accordingly the *multidisciplinary* approach, which combined elements of the correlated and broad-fields approaches, became firmly established in some regions of the USA.

The progressives developed two of their own curriculum designs. These were:

- *Experience*, where the nature of the subject matter is entirely determined by the experiences of the student (thus it was the antithesis of the subject approach); and
- *Core*, where the student’s personal and social problems are identified, subject matter is drawn from the traditional subjects as required, and teachers and students plan collaboratively.

The ‘experience’ approach usually referred to the ‘child-centred’ curriculum of the 1920s but this term was also used to describe other curricula, including those directly modelled on Dewey’s Laboratory School curriculum. The adoption of ‘core’ as a term was also problematic because it had been used since before the turn of the century to mean various things, including a tightly prescribed body of subject matter taught to all students. In all likelihood, achieving a consensus on the meaning of ‘core’ would have been difficult to achieve without the PEA’s ‘Eight-Year Study’ where core emerged as the star.

The Eight-Year Study and the emergence of ‘core’

The 1933-1941 ‘Eight-Year Study’ – one of the most prominent examples of large-scale curriculum reform in American history – found that the *core* approach to curriculum integration was the key feature of the most effective and successful schools (Aikin, 1942; Alberty & Alberty, 1962). The Study, which conducted progressive schooling on a grand scale in thirty American high schools, represented a heroic attempt by the PEA to introduce progressive education into the secondary school mainstream. It set out to produce empirical evidence proving that a progressive approach to college preparation was superior to traditional subject-centred college preparation. The Study matched 1475 graduates from the thirty schools in pairs with graduates from other high schools according to scholastic aptitude, interests and socio-economic status (Chamberlain, Chamberlain, Drought & Scott, 1942). To some observers the initial Study results were anticlimactic. Study graduates were only slightly more successful by academic and social measures than their comparisons (Aikin, 1942). Principals from traditional schools suggested that the relatively small differences in performance between the two cohorts would be explained simply if the Study graduates had received a college preparation similar to traditional college preparation (Aikin, 1942). However, the Study graduates were found to exhibit a superior range of positive characteristics than their comparisons. Aikin stated that they, “more often” possessed, “a high degree of intellectual curiosity and drive” and were “precise ... (and) systematic and objective in their thinking.” He added that they, “demonstrated a high degree of resourcefulness in meeting new situations” and showed a, “more active concern for what was going on in the world” (1942:111-112). Further analysis, which sorted Study graduates according to the degree of curriculum innovation in their schools, produced startling results. Study graduates from the six most innovative schools were, “*strikingly more successful*” than their comparisons, whereas Study graduates from the least innovative schools showed little difference to their comparisons. Moreover, the differences in favour of Study graduates from the most innovative schools were, “*much greater*” than the only slightly favourable differences between the whole cohort of Study graduates and their comparisons (Chamberlain & others, 1942:209, emphasis added). A further probe analysis of the

Study graduates from the two most innovative schools²⁸ found an even bigger favourable difference between Study graduates and their comparisons. Chamberlain and his colleagues concluded:

When the secondary school program is adapted to *the needs of students*, and gives ample opportunity for the development of their potentialities, the probability of success in college is enhanced (1942:211, emphasis added).

The methodology of the Eight-Year Study appears to have been suspect in at least one regard. Although students were paired according to socio-economic status, the sample was, “strongly” skewed towards elite schools²⁹, thus it almost certainly largely excluded disadvantaged students³⁰ (Kliebard, 1995:215). Contemporary research shows that ‘high poverty’ students do well where student-centred approaches are used and community involvement in the school is actively promoted (Cuban, 2003). Accordingly, if the Study samples had not been skewed, the results achieved by the most innovative Study schools might have been *even better* since their (hypothetical) cohorts of disadvantaged students would be expected to make larger gains than the respective cohorts from other categories of Study school.

The Study results showed that the ‘most innovative’ curriculum approaches were best. Mindful of the diversity of opinion within its membership, the PEA had sensibly allowed each Study school to design its own curriculum (Kliebard, 1995). Nonetheless, once the Study schools described how they had implemented their curricula, the core approach emerged as the best design (*Thirty schools tell their story*, 1942 cited Aikin, 1942). In their analysis of the Study curricula, Alberty and Alberty also concluded, “(the version of) core based upon common problems, needs and interests of adolescents within a framework of problem areas” was best (1962:216). According to Tyler (1946 cited Kridel, 1998), the Study had a significant impact on high school curriculum reform of the

²⁸ Jennings and Nathan noted that practices in these two schools included: “community learning, mentor systems, peer teaching, and interdisciplinary problem-solving approaches to curriculum” (1997:568).

²⁹ When samples are skewed in this particular direction, the magnitude of the difference between groups of test results will be smaller than it would be for a random sample.

³⁰ The final sample of 29 schools – one school withdrew from the Study – included 15 exclusive private schools, 4 elite university-affiliated schools and 4 public high schools from wealthy suburbs which left only 6 schools which could be described as ‘typical’ American high schools and *no* schools from poor districts (Lancelot, 1943 cited Kliebard, 1995).

time. Core was accepted as a, “*bona fide* movement” in the USA during the 1940s and 1950s (Wraga, 1997:113). It was also regarded as, “the best structure” for general education (Wraga, 1999:530), thus it subsumed the ‘general education’ movement which had developed earlier. Surveys in the years following the Study found that core was implemented in up to half of the junior high schools in the USA (Wright and Greer, 1963 cited Vars, 1998a). Koos (1955) also noted a reduction in departmentalisation and a rise in popularity of block scheduling and core programs in junior high schools of the period.

The decline of core

Contemporary researchers agree with Cremin (1961) that Aikin’s 1942 Study report – published just as the USA joined World War 2 – failed to attract the attention it deserved (Kahne, 1995; Kridel, 1998; Lounsbury 1998; Schubert, 1995). The advent of war gave fresh impetus to social efficiency, since developmentalism was perceived to be, “lacking in social commitment” and social reconstructionism was seen as, “unpatriotic” (Kliebard, 1995:206). The social efficiency faction sowed the seeds of confusion in the literature by borrowing ‘core’ as a term for their own purposes. For example, Caswell’s VCP was perceived at the time as, “a prime example of the core curriculum” (Kliebard, 1995:193). Caswell defined core as, “a continuous, carefully planned series of experiences” based on, “significant personal and social problems (of) common concern to all youth” (1946 cited Faunce & Bossing, 1958:54). However, Caswell did not state who should do the planning or who should decide what is personally significant to ‘all youth’. Presumably he intended teachers to do their planning without student help (as he had in the VCP), rather than allowing collaborative teacher-student planning.

Tyack and Tobin suggested that the Eight-Year Study – and by implication the core approach – was construed as an attack on what they called, “the ‘grammar’ of schooling” or the established norms of the classroom (1994:453). They found that, although the, “grammar of instruction became less like batch processing in academic subjects and more individualised and student centred”, by the early 1950s conservatism had reasserted itself and, “most (Study) schools had returned to the old mould, with spotty relics of the new practices” (1994:468-469). Thus, although the progressive movement reached its zenith

with *core* in the post-war period, by this time the political tide had already turned against their agenda (Cremin, 1961). Notwithstanding pressures from without, the PEA was compromised by an ideological split between the developmentalist faction and the social reconstructionist/ameliorist factions which was, “never really solved” (Cremin, 1961:231). According to Taba this state of affairs finally, “split the (PEA) in 1942” and eventually led to its demise (1962:285).

After the war conservatism took hold and progressive philosophy was dominated by ‘life-adjustment’ with social efficiency as, “it’s most potent ingredient” (Kliebard, 1995:206). Although life-adjustment enjoyed broad support from politicians and school principals, it came under withering fire from intellectuals. Noted historian Arthur Bestor gained, “considerable support” from fellow academics when he argued that life-adjustment was a form of social engineering (Cremin, 1961:346). Isaac Kandel – who, as discussed in Chapter 5, left a lasting impression when he visited NZ in the late 1930s – equated life adjustment with Bobbitt’s social efficiency. He stated that it implied that, “all the contingencies which human beings ... encounter in their lives must be anticipated and education must be adjusted to them” (1947:347 cited Kliebard, 1995:214). In the end it was political reasons – such as right-wing criticism of progressives in the 1940s and anti-communist sentiment during the McCarthy era in the 1950’s – which caused *core* to lose its mainstream acceptance (Kahne, 1995). Perhaps the most damaging attack on *core* – and, indeed, the entire American progressive movement – came from a military source. In a series of speeches commencing in 1956, Vice-Admiral Hyman G. Rickover (1959, cited Kliebard, 1995) asserted that Soviet education was superior to American education and that progressives like Dewey had allowed American education to go ‘soft’. Rickover’s most damaging claim – albeit untrue – was that the education system was responsible for deterioration in the standard of the USA’s military personnel. While the ensuing *Sputnik* launch in 1957 was hardly responsible for the demise of progressive education, it marked its death knell. As Cremin observed, “a shocked and humbled nation embarked on a bitter orgy of pedagogical soul-searching” (1961:347).

In 1955 the PEA disbanded and beyond the early 1960s the term ‘core’ rarely appeared in the literature. Nonetheless, a remnant group held on to the progressive ideal. At the height of the Cold War, William Van Til insisted that progressive education was, “not obsolete”. He asserted:

The basic questions which men like John Dewey, William Heard Kilpatrick, George Counts and Boyd H. Bode raised are inescapable: What are the aims of education? Upon what foundations should the school program be built? Given such aims and foundations, what should the schools teach? (1962:56 cited Lounsbury, 1998:11).

Crucially for later student-centred approaches of curriculum integration, the core concept was preserved by Van Til, Harold Alberty, John H. Lounsbury, Gordon F. Vars and a few others³¹. In a career spread over fifty years, Vars acted as the, “long-time ‘keeper’ of the progressive core curriculum” (Beane, 1997:viii). Vars described his interpretation of core as:

A curriculum in which teachers and students jointly plan, carry out, and evaluate learning experiences focused on problems or issues of genuine significance both to learners and to society, and also consonant with the purposes of education in a democratic society (2000:78).

As discussed in Chapter 6, Beane (1990a/1993a, 1995b & 1997) revived the essence of the core approach in his *integrative* model of curriculum integration. The remainder of this chapter discusses the emergence of the theory of integration and its application to designs for curriculum integration. It also investigates the idea of utilising curriculum integration as a developmentally responsive curriculum for early adolescents.

Section 3: The theory and application of integration

Hopkins’ concept of ‘integration’

The term of *integration* emerged from the flurry of reform following the Great Depression. In 1937, *Integration: its meaning and application* edited by L. Thomas Hopkins (1937a) was published. This book laid the foundation for the theoretical

³¹ The ‘lineages’ of progressive academics in the USA suggest that the notion of an academic culture may be important for the transmission of progressive knowledge and understanding. For instance: Bode was one of Dewey’s more able disciples; Bode was a mentor to Alberty who was the Director of the Ohio State University School (a school in the Eight-Year Study); Van Til completed his doctorate under Alberty and then taught in his experimental school; Van Til was Vars’ mentor and Lounsbury’s doctoral supervisor (Kliebard, 1995; Bullough, 1999; Vars, 2000) and more recently Lounsbury, Vars and Conrad Toepfer have mentored a new generation of American ‘neo-progressives’ led by James Beane (Beane, 2001).

development and practical application of integration. In his introductory chapter Hopkins asserted that the casual use of 'integration' as a descriptor had caused, "confusion rather than clarity of thinking" about curriculum integration (1937b:1). Nonetheless, Hopkins' early attempts to define or explain integration lacked clarity. He stated that integration implied, "the conscious intelligent improvement ... (by the individual within a social) interacting process" (1937b:10). He also referred to Dewey's concepts of *personal integration* and *social integration* but was unable to explain them adequately³². To be fair, Dewey did not produce a succinct account of integration either. Although he outlined the theory of integration as an outcome of the work in his experimental school, Dewey's contributions to the notions of integration were scattered throughout his voluminous writing.³³ In time, Hopkins (1937b, 1937c, 1937d, 1937e, 1937f, 1937g, 1941 & 1954) developed a comprehensive theory of integration which was similar to Dewey's earlier effort.

Hopkins (1937a) methodically analysed and critiqued possible curricular approaches to integration in the 1920s and 1930s. He assessed the integrative potential of the correlated, broad-fields, and core approaches before concluding that *core* was the most promising (Hopkins, 1937d, 1937e & 1937f; Hopkins & Hammer, 1937). Hopkins rejected the correlated and broad-fields curricula because they were subject-centred. He argued that the correlated approach 'hindered' integration, since:

The more teachers lock together subject matter in terms of *their purposes* ... the more difficult it may be for pupils to disassociate the subject matter to use in achieving *their own goals*, a need which is fundamental to all intelligent conceptions of integration (1937d:209).

Hopkins was especially critical of Caswell's 'coercive' VCP design. He argued that although Caswell ostensibly based his design on the, "immediate experiences growing out of students' interests", he disingenuously gave curriculum 'scope' and 'sequence' a much higher priority than students' experiences (1937f:270-273). Hopkins could have extended his critique by arguing that personal integration can only be achieved by

³² Note that Hopkins and his contemporaries did not have access to some of Dewey's more pertinent material on integration, such as *Experience and education* (1938) which had yet to be published.

³³ With respect to Dewey's writing style, Cremin wryly noted, "despite Dewey's turgid prose, his arguments are, in the last analysis, comprehensible" (1961:238).

allowing students to reconstruct knowledge (Dewey, 1916). Accordingly, the only approach in Hopkins' analysis which fully permitted integration was the core approach, which allows young people to reconstruct knowledge based on their own experiences.

Hopkins (1941 & 1954) argued that personal integration and social integration could only reach its potential in appropriate social contexts. Reiterating Dewey's work, he called for a reconsideration of the 'experience curriculum' where the learner could creatively interact within a democratic peer community. He asserted:

(Schools) should promote cooperative human relations. To learn democratic action children must understand, accept, and practice it in every life experience (1954:47).

In his book, *The emerging self* (1954), Hopkins suggested that the unique needs of the early adolescent implied a particular need for curriculum coherence. He also restated his belief that early adolescents should be involved in the design and implementation of curriculum integration. He stated that, "*who* should make the curriculum ... (is) the most important curriculum question" (1954:108, emphasis added).

Hopkins' contribution to the theory of integration was to lucidly communicate Dewey's multifaceted vision of integration. Thus, Hopkins was the first theorist to clearly outline a coherent framework for curriculum integration. As Beane (1996) acknowledged, Hopkins provided a vital intellectual link between Dewey's pioneering work and contemporary research on student-centred curriculum integration.

An early vision of curriculum integration in middle schools

Sociologist, E. C. Lindeman³⁴ (1937) discussed how the theory of integration might be applied to the schooling of early adolescents. This was foreshadowed in an earlier commentary on the junior high school by Briggs, who wondered why there had been, "relatively few attempts to fundamentally reorganize subject matter" when, in his opinion, junior high school teachers were often enthusiastic about such ideas (1920:156). Lindeman (1937) fulfilled his brief from Hopkins to consider the sociological

³⁴ Dewey and Lindeman were contemporaries. They held lengthy tenures at Columbia University in New York and they were executive members of the PEA, thus it seems likely that they collaborated (Garraty & Carnes, 1999; Kliebard, 1995).

implications of integration in his contributing chapter to *Integration*. Positioning himself as an ‘outsider’, Lindeman chose to offer some substantive issues for others to reflect on, rather than attempting an in-depth analysis. His major contribution was to extrapolate the social ameliorist agenda and Dewey’s concept of integration to suggest a vision of curriculum integration for the middle school of the future.

Lindeman assumed that progressives wanted to use Dewey’s organic approach to integration to ensure social progress. Accordingly he asserted, “the present task is to relocate education within an organic context (so that education can) attain social justification” (1937:29). He summarised the role of integration in democratic education by questioning:

Is it possible to teach pupils and to operate an educational institution in such a manner as to give assurances that the learner will become an integrated personality functioning creatively in an integrated society? (1937:21-22).

Lindeman thought early adolescence was ideally suited to integration. He stated:

There is one period in which a series of crises furnishes an excellent opportunity for integrating educational experiences ... (It begins with the) last two grades of the standard elementary school and continues ... (for the first) two grades of the secondary education ... These four years of pubescence and early adolescence constitute that stage in growth when the confluent problem of adaptation reveals acute needs in the spheres of logic, emotion, ethics and aesthetics (1937:32).

Lindeman went on to outline the middle school concept implied above. He emphasised that a school for early adolescents would look quite different to the ‘mechanistic’ junior high schools. He foresaw:

A school focused on the goal of integration (which) could now introduce the pupil to the world of knowledge, not merely as knowledge, but as experience which bears upon (the pupil’s) perplexing questions (1937:33).

Fifty years after Lindeman’s insight, Beane argued the case for, “the middle school (as the) natural home of (integrative) curriculum” (1991:9).

Support for integration from the Eight-Year Study

The Eight-Year Study contributed to notions of integration by reinforcing and refining earlier ideas. Firstly, the Study results endorsed the benefits of core which had been

previously identified by Hopkins as offering the most promise for curriculum integration. Secondly, the Study schools presumed that their curricula should balance personal concerns and societal demands, as indicated by Dewey (1916 & 1936). Aikin stated that, “the (Study) schools were convinced that both present needs of youth and adult social demands should be used as sources for the curriculum” (1942:76). Third, the Study showed that it was feasible for students and teachers to collaboratively structure the curriculum according to, “problem areas” where student concerns and societal expectations intersected (Vars, 1998b:137). As Dewey had indicated in his Laboratory School, these ‘problem areas’ could be used as organising themes for curriculum integration.

Terminology problems

By the 1950s increasingly broad definitions for integration were adopted. Earlier, Hopkins (1937d) had complained that terms like ‘correlation’, where students had no input, were often casually described as ‘integration’ but his protest had little lasting effect. In his influential and widely read curriculum ‘rationale’, Tyler limited the notion of integration in the curriculum to meaning, “the horizontal relationship of curriculum experiences” or, in other words, a correlation of subject areas as per the multidisciplinary approach (1949:85). Moreover, he redefined, “personal integration” as a process one step removed from the curriculum, where a maturing individual was assimilated into society³⁵ (1949:30). As discussed in Chapter 2, this trend for contentious and changing definitions for curriculum integration has persisted and is a prominent and vexatious feature of the recent literature of curriculum integration.

Later efforts added little to the theory of integration. In his survey of extant approaches to integration, Dressel arrived at the same conclusions as Hopkins. He described three approaches: “those developing interrelationships among existing courses” (correlation); “those involving reorganisation of content into more general courses” (broad-fields); and “those involving the centering of content about vital problems of society or of the student” (core) (1958:15). Dressel argued that the first two approaches could not be

³⁵ This definition would be more appropriately applied to Dewey’s notion of social integration.

regarded as genuine forms of integration. Following Dewey, he insisted that integration was a process which the learner must accomplish. He stated:

The task is not that of communicating to the individual an integrated view of all knowledge; it is rather that of developing individuals who will seek to do this themselves (1958:5).

Others were less sure about the role of integration. Core experts, Faunce and Bossing (1951/1958) offered sensible advice for core practice but were vague about notions of integration. For instance, when describing the broad-fields approach they explained, “(subjects are) fused together in a more or less an integrated approach” (1958:44-45). As the progressive movement waned some educators probably realised that core lent itself to integration but, as understanding of the vital role of democracy within the process of social integration faded, designs for curriculum integration lost their focus and coherency. Cremin wrote what he probably assumed was an appropriate epitaph for curriculum integration. He stated:

What the progressives did prescribe made inordinate demands on the teacher’s time and ability. ‘Integrated studies’ required familiarity with a fantastic range of knowledge and teaching materials; while the commitment to build on student needs and interests demanded extraordinary feats of pedagogical ingenuity (1961:348).

Although this statement by a pre-eminent historian contained an element of exaggeration, his points had validity. As discussed in Chapter 7, teachers of curriculum integration need to be thoroughly trained and properly resourced, thus in cases where there is little tangible support, the increased demand on teachers’ time as they implement curriculum integration can be the limiting factor which determines its viability.

The quest for a developmentally responsive curriculum for early adolescents

The advent of the middle school in the 1960s led to a search for a curriculum which would respond to the needs of early adolescents. Lindeman (1937) had cogently pulled together the concepts of ‘integration’, ‘middle schooling’ and ‘early adolescence’ in a logical extension of the social ameliorist agenda. Later, Gruhn and Douglass (1947, 1956 & 1971 cited Vars, 1998a) outlined certain junior high school ‘functions’ which they believed would lead, “most directly to the fullest realization of the ultimate aims of education” (1971:72 cited Vars, 1998a:223). One of these functions was ‘integration’ but

for Gruhn and Douglass this meant a subject-centred, “correlation among the studies” (Vars, 1998a:223). The first middle schools in the early 1960s eschewed out-of-favour student-centred core approaches and implemented William Alexander’s middle school proposal which included a subject-centred ‘interdisciplinary curriculum’³⁶ (Vars, 1998a). A distinctive culture of interdisciplinary practice and organisation in the middle school soon evolved. Echoing the organisation of Caswell’s VCP, Eichhorn (1966 cited Vars, 1993) and Alexander (1968 cited Vars, 1993) both argued that interdisciplinary curriculum should be implemented using a team approach. Thus by the 1990s, ‘teacher teaming’ was the most common pedagogical approach to interdisciplinary curriculum (Vars, 1987/1993). Other aspects of interdisciplinary curriculum such as ‘block scheduling’, and ‘student activities’ – including ‘initiatory’, ‘developmental’ and ‘culminating’ activities – also became commonplace (Beane, 1990a/1993a; Vars, 1987/1993). Nonetheless, core advocates managed to exert some influence over middle level curriculum design (for example: Alberty & Alberty, 1962; Faunce & Bossing, 1958; Noar, 1961 cited Powell, 2001; Van Til, 1962 cited Lounsbury, 1998). Moreover, the ‘Open Education’ period during the 1960s and 1970s offered a more benign environment for student-centred core designs than had been the case in the 1950s (Gehrke, 1998; Vars, 2000). Accordingly, up until the mid-1980s the term of ‘interdisciplinary curriculum’ referred to *both* subject-centred and student-centred approaches to curriculum integration (Lounsbury & Vars, 1978; Vars, 1987/1993).

From its beginnings³⁷ in 1963, the central ethos of middle schooling was to meet the unique developmental needs of early adolescents (Beane, 1993a; Eichhorn, 1980; Johnson, 1980). Accordingly, middle school advocates were united by their desire to develop a suitable middle school curriculum, designed especially for early adolescents. Eichhorn (1966 cited Vars, 1993) and Alexander (1968 cited Vars, 1993) both used a subject-centred approach in their attempts to create a developmentally responsive

³⁶ As discussed in Chapter 2, this amounted to a multidisciplinary approach.

³⁷ The junior high school, as the fore-runner of the American middle school, first appeared ‘around 1910’ (Beane, 2001). It developed for complex reasons – including mass-immigration and over-crowded elementary schools which had a ‘horrendous’ attrition rate – rather than as a deliberate response to the educational needs of early adolescents (Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

curriculum but Beane (1993a) argued that they merely reshuffled subject matter from the existing curriculum into new categorisations or ‘domains’ which lacked real connections to the developmental needs of early adolescents. Beane asserted that, “at best, (Eichhorn and Alexander) each proposed various pieces of the curriculum to match various developmental dimensions of early adolescence” (1993a:28). Perhaps Eichhorn and Alexander underestimated the significance of early adolescent developmental needs and the inherent contradiction attached to their attempts to reconstitute unsympathetic subject matter into ‘developmentally sensitive’ domains.

Student-centred efforts to connect the developmental needs of early adolescents with interdisciplinary curriculum design seemed to be a more promising approach. As indicated by the progressives, the consistent approach was: first, to identify the characteristics and developmental needs of early adolescents; second, to determine how they learn and develop new skills; and third, to find a way to generate personally relevant and socially appropriate subject matter for early adolescents. While some researchers made significant progress towards accomplishing the first two steps, a satisfactory way to complete the third step remained elusive.

In their book *A curriculum for the middle school years* (1978), John Lounsbury and Gordon Vars made progress towards the goal of a developmentally responsive curriculum for early adolescents. Their in-depth knowledge of earlier progressive curriculum models allowed them to build on the work of Hopkins (1937a, 1941 & 1954) and Faunce and Bossing (1951/1958), as well as identifying promising directions for further attention. For instance, Beane noted that they were the first to consider, “the power of personal-social aspects of (the early adolescent) stage” (1993a:28). Following Lindeman (1937), Lounsbury and Vars also identified early adolescence as a discrete developmental stage. They asserted that early adolescents were:

Characterized by precocity, diversity and rapid change, with pressing needs for self-understanding and human relations, whose learning involves changes in perception as a result of active and increasingly rational problem-solving (1978:34).

They insisted that, “a curriculum for this age group must take these dominant features into account” (ibid.). Lounsbury and Vars revitalised the progressive ‘core’ approach by asserting that early adolescents should engage in a, “problem-centred, block-time program” consisting of a common, problem-solving curriculum oriented around personal and social issues (1978:46). They explained that their approach emphasised, “student needs, rational inquiry and democratic processes” and made, “extensive use of problems of social concern or topics of current interest ... identified by pupils, rather than content determined by teachers” (1978:57-58).

Lounsbury and Vars (1978) described two variations of their core program. They called the first, “structured core”, where – like Dewey’s Laboratory School – teachers structure the curriculum by choosing the organising centres (1978:61). At about the same time, Van Til (1976) proposed 16 organising centres for the ‘structured’ variation based on the needs of learners, values analysis, social realities and personally meaningful knowledge. An inherent weakness in the ‘structured’ design was that it assumed that its organising centres would be relevant to all young people. Lounsbury and Vars seemed to want to promote democratic learning but they were unable to satisfactorily accommodate this aspect within their first variation. For instance, they attached seemingly conflicting provisions to their ‘structured’ approach which simultaneously set out to allow teachers to, “do some planning in advance” but also to promote democratic learning by keeping planning, “open to student input at all stages of the actual study” (1978:66).

Lounsbury and Vars’ second variation represented a radical attempt to base the curriculum on democratic principles. They called their second variation, “unstructured core”, where the teacher and students were, “free to consider any problem they consider worthwhile” (1978:62). They implied that their ‘unstructured’ program was workable by detailing substantive suggestions for curriculum material by children from Kent State University School, Ohio but they were unable to find a way to ensure that it contained worthwhile subject matter. This issue might have been resolved by applying Dewey’s notion of social integration which simultaneously promotes democratic education and ensures that subject matter is worthwhile. Another weakness in Lounsbury and Vars’

(1978) proposal was that the 'core' component was restricted to English, social studies and aspects of Science. In all likelihood this meant that the other subjects would be taught in the traditional manner as discrete subjects. Accordingly, both the 'structured' and 'unstructured' variations of core were not 'full-blown' designs for student-centred curriculum integration because students would experience a mixture of student-centred and subject-centred approaches depending on which class they attended.

Lounsbury and Vars' core proposal attracted minor attention but few educators in the 1980s³⁸ were willing to offer unqualified support for a student-centred approach to curriculum integration. In their influential book, *The exemplary middle school* Alexander and George (1981, cited Beane 1993a) offered a modicum of support but they obviously preferred subject-centred approaches, such as Eichhorn's 'domain-centred' planning. Moreover, they stipulated that all curriculum planning should be done by teachers. Nonetheless, Eichhorn (1980) was less eager to endorse subject-centred approaches. He argued that, while most researchers agreed that early adolescent, "characteristics" were important and that the commonalities in other proposed curricula merited, "close scrutiny", there was, "no universally accepted (curriculum) prototype" for middle schooling (1980:68-69). In her book, *Successful schools for young adolescents*, Lipsitz asserted that, "translating (a developmentally sympathetic) philosophy into curriculum is the most difficult feat for schools to accomplish" (1984:188).

Lounsbury and Vars (1978) were reluctant to abandon hope for a student-centred approach to curriculum integration for the middle school. They hinted that historical understandings of integration might provide 'the missing jigsaw-piece' they needed. In particular, they praised the early work of James Beane, whom they noted had, "drawn from the long history of core curriculum to describe options available to interdisciplinary teams and how to progress toward the core ideal" (1978:67). Beane (1975) suggested that the middle school movement had not seriously addressed the personal and social needs of early adolescents. Advocating the type of core approach preferred by Alberty

³⁸ During the 1980s the political environment in the USA was characterised by the rise of the 'Conservative Restoration' as led by (Republican) President Ronald Reagan (1981-1989). The political implications of implementing models of curriculum integration in the USA are discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

and Albery³⁹ (1962), he argued that the middle level curriculum should be, “devoted to personal and social problems without regard for and transcending subject areas” (1975:33). Beane claimed that the aims of middle schooling, the developmental needs of early adolescents and the philosophy of the core approach were all, “entirely compatible” (1975:34). As discussed in Chapter 6, Beane (1990a/1993a; 1997) applied Dewey’s theory of integration to create an elegant method of generating substantive subject matter for a student-centred – or ‘integrative’ – model of curriculum integration.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the concept of curriculum integration emerged from the American progressive movement early in the twentieth century. Historical understandings of integration are particularly relevant to contemporary research on curriculum integration, since much of the best work on the concept was accomplished in the first half of the twentieth century. The first section of this chapter identified and explained the notions of integration utilised by the American progressives. Dewey developed the notions of integration needed for a fully-fledged theory of curriculum integration. Later, Hopkins made Dewey’s ideas more explicit. In the only other development of lasting significance, Caswell developed a multidisciplinary model of curriculum integration derived from the Herbartian idea of correlation. At times the lively discourse generated by the progressive factions threatened to make their curriculum designs subservient to ideals. Dewey’s ideal was democracy, for Kilpatrick it was the freedom of the child, Rugg’s ideal was raising social consciousness and for Caswell it was efficiency. The second section of this chapter discussed progressive attempts to unite their agenda under the banner of the ‘core’ curriculum. It traced the twin development of the core approach favoured by student-centred advocates and Caswell’s multidisciplinary approach which emphasised social efficiency. Although core was vindicated as the best curriculum design by the Eight-Year Study, it was undermined by on-going conflicts with the social efficiency faction. The third section of this chapter traced the gradual refinement of the theory of integration. As the progressives settled on

³⁹ As discussed in Chapter 2, Albery and Albery asserted that the best type of core was, “based upon common problems, needs and interests of adolescents within a framework of problem areas” (1962:216).

the core approach as the best curriculum design for their purposes, Hopkins independently concluded that core was the best design for curriculum integration. This section also examined research by middle school advocates in the 1960s-1980s which sought to apply curriculum integration as a developmentally responsive curriculum. Although their research efforts lacked conspicuous success, the work of Lounsbury and Vars (1978) implied that the 'core' concept could inform a developmentally responsive student-centred approach.

This chapter has explained that the concept of curriculum integration in the USA consists of two broad approaches which each have a century-long history and tradition. These two approaches are the student-centred model concerned with the integration of the student within 'real-life' learning experiences and the subject-centred model concerned with the correlation of subject matter. Chapter 4 investigates the British contribution to the concept of curriculum integration. Although the British contribution to the theory of integration was relatively modest, Bernstein's (1971) research provided a useful tool for the comparative analysis of models of curriculum integration. Britain was the major conduit of educational ideas to NZ thus, while Dewey's influence on British education was relatively slight, his relatively significant influence on educational reform in NZ was due to a small group of British educators who both espoused his views and had strong connections with NZ education.

Chapter 4

The British progressives and curriculum integration

This chapter traces the development of concepts of integration during two ‘waves’ of progressive education in Britain. The first section of this chapter investigates the wave of progressive education or ‘the New Education’ which occurred in the 1920s and 1930s. It contributed little to notions of integration because its philosophy and practice was almost exclusively child-centred. Nonetheless it strongly influenced the development of progressive education in NZ. The main intention of the first section in this chapter is to identify notions of integration associated with New Education and to describe and appraise its contribution to NZ education. It also highlights links between British progressives and NZ. The second section of this chapter investigates a later wave of progressive education which occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. The concept of curriculum integration gained significant attention, especially as a promising method for educating adolescents of average or below average ability. The main intention of this second section is to appraise the British contribution to the concept of curriculum integration during this latter period.

Section 1: The New Education and curriculum innovation

Following World War I British education was strongly influenced by a wave of progressive education which was soon known as ‘the New Education’. While the British progressive movement with its agenda of educational reform already had a long history⁴⁰, the collective horror and trauma associated with the realities of the ‘Great War’ galvanised fresh support for the movement (Selleck, 1972). The intellectual origins of the British progressives were represented by the work of European developmentalists, such as Johann Pestalozzi and Friedrich Froebel⁴¹, and by home-grown Fabian socialism.

⁴⁰ The first wave of progressive education in Britain started about 1870 and was well underway by 1890 (Selleck, 1968). Stewart (1972) indicated that progressive innovations had occurred in Britain as early as 1750, some years before Rousseau’s *Emile* was published in 1762.

⁴¹ Dewey was also influenced by Froebel (for instance Dewey’s 1915 work, *The school and society*).

Swiss educationalist, Johann Pestalozzi was influenced by Rousseau. Early in the nineteenth century, he called for education for common people, humane treatment of schoolchildren and a psychology of education which would consider the nature of the child and the process of learning. Pestalozzi's education was centred on the child, their interests and their natural activities. Friedrich Froebel, who studied with Pestalozzi, founded his *Kindergarten* or 'children's garden' in 1837. Froebel believed that development came, "from within", thus children should be free to indulge in games and creative play (Armytage, 1969:103). Pestalozzi's emphasis on meeting the differing needs of students appealed to many NZ educators. For instance, on the 200th anniversary of Pestalozzi's birth, the *Education Gazette* stated that education in NZ owed, "much to Pestalozzi ... (whose work implied the necessity for) the development of every individual in accordance with (their) capabilities" (Department of Education, 1946a:149).

The Fabian Society was founded in Britain in 1883. Opposed to the implicit violence of Marxism, its adherents believed that the existing political structure could be reformed which would allow socialism to be peacefully ushered into existence. George Bernard Shaw and Sidney Webb were the leading proponents of Fabian socialism, although other advocates such as science fiction writer H.G. Wells were also influential.⁴² On its inception in 1900, the British Labour Party adopted the main tenets of the Fabian Society. In NZ, Fabian socialism influenced NZ Labour Party politicians such as Peter Fraser, Terry McCombs and Walter Nash (Alcorn, 1999). It is noteworthy that Fraser – the Labour architect of sweeping education reforms in NZ during the 1930s and later Prime Minister – committed himself to socialism shortly before he migrated from Britain to NZ in 1910 (McLintock, 1966). One of Webb's tracts foreshadowed the language of the Labour government's reform of NZ education under Fraser. Webb asserted:

What the national well-being demands, and what we must insist upon, is that every child, dull or clever, rich or poor, should receive all the education requisite for the full development of (their) facilities (1901 cited Alcorn, 1999:98).

⁴² George Hogben – the reform-minded Inspector-General of Education in NZ from 1899-1915 – was involved in similar left-wing politics in England before migrating to NZ in 1881 (Roth, 1952). Hogben's contribution to educational reform in NZ is discussed in Chapter 5.

New schools and new movements

After World War I, a succession of extraordinary schools sprang up in Britain. By and large these schools provided an alternative to public school education for the privileged class. The schools were generally established in rural areas as a symbolic rejection of industrialisation and urbanisation. According to Selleck, “the (British) progressives were ... latter day romantics who escaped with their small schools into the British countryside” (1972:99). The British progressives emphasised Froebel’s notion of ‘self-activity’, or what Dewey (1915) called ‘learning by doing’. Ideologically, the British progressives were child-centred. However like various other European educators of the time, their primary concern was to reform the traditional curriculum, thus their discourse was filled with calls for ‘liberty’, ‘freedom’ and ‘equality’. The two most influential progressives in Britain following World War I were Homer Lane from the USA and Maria Montessori from Italy (Stewart, 1972).

Homer Lane brought American progressive ideas to Britain from New England. In 1913 he began work at ‘Little Commonwealth’, a coeducational community for delinquent children. The community attained a degree of self-government which, “astonished and shocked many of (Lane’s) contemporaries” (Selleck, 1972:26). Lane inspired A.S. Neill, who in 1924 founded Summerhill, “the most extreme of the radical schools” (Stewart, 1972:248). Neill’s humanistic education, famous for its singular cry for ‘freedom’, was based on the work of psychoanalysts, Sigmund Freud and Wilhelm Reich (Neill, 1960). The notion of freedom apparently appealed to the ‘bohemian spirit’ of the 1960s but philosopher Paul Hirst refuted the notion that freedom counted as an education, by arguing that a pedagogy of ‘freedom’ without a formal curriculum was, “only freedom to be irrational” (1975:146). Self-government became a hallmark of the British progressive schools. In 1917 Caldecott Community school, noted for its emphasis on ‘freedom’, opened with philanthropic assistance as a coeducational boarding school for working class children (Selleck, 1972). The Community included notions of integration in its curriculum. Rural occupations were, “woven into the curriculum ... (and) efforts were made to cater for (children’s) interests” (Selleck, 1972:33). In 1920 Rendcomb, a boys’ boarding school, developed a self-government which gave pupils, “real power” (Selleck,

1972:34). As discussed in the next chapter, self-government also occurred in NZ schools, most notably at Rangiora High School (Strachan, 1938) and Feilding Agricultural High School (Wild, 1938).

Italian psychiatrist and educator, Maria Montessori had a significant influence on the British progressive movement. Following earlier work with disabled children, she opened a school in Rome in 1907. Her book, *The Montessori Method* (1912) was read widely. Montessori's education was based on a firm belief in the child's creative potential, desire to learn and right to be treated as an individual. For instance, Montessori interpreted 'liberty' as, "those conditions adapted to the most favourable development of the child's entire individuality" (1912:104). Teachers applying her Method were expected to demonstrate the use of a special 'didactic apparatus', then discreetly observe from a distance as children handled particular tasks. When Montessori first visited England in 1919, she had a thousand enquiries for her training course⁴³ (Selleck, 1972:28). Both the strength and weakness of her Method lay in her obsessive control over teacher training. She ensured that she personally taught all Montessori teachers, insisting that in the interests of scientific 'precision', the fidelity of her method must be strictly preserved (Stewart, 1972). However, her desire to control teacher practice effectively suppressed classroom refinements unless individuals were willing to break ties with her movement. Moreover, the rigidity of her Method discouraged creativity which was at odds with a central ideal of the developmentalists. Even so, Montessori's insistence that the child should be treated as an individual guaranteed that her Method endured in Britain and NZ. In NZ Montessori schooling has been maintained by the private sector, where it enjoys a dedicated following in early childhood education.

Rudolf Steiner established the first 'Steiner' schools in London in 1925.⁴⁴ He perceived the traditional curriculum as the product of a deadened industrial society. His approach interwove spiritual, creative and artistic dimensions through every subject area (Carlgren, 1972). Although the Steiner or 'Waldorf' movement never attained widespread approval,

⁴³ Montessori revisited England to continue teacher training every second year until the outbreak of World War 2 (Standing, 1962).

⁴⁴ Steiner started his first school in 1913 in Dornach, Switzerland.

its enduring commitment to values such as pacifism allowed it to preserve a foothold in parts of Europe and the USA (Mollet, 1991). It also maintains a minor presence in NZ.

The 'Dalton Plan' became popular in Britain after 1921. Helen Parkhurst, a former disciple of Montessori, developed the Plan at Dalton High School⁴⁵ in Massachusetts, USA. Her interest in the notion of the self-managing student arose out of her earliest teaching experience where, as a raw 16-year-old, she was faced with a multi-level class conducted in a log cabin in Wisconsin (Stewart, 1972). The Plan included an assignment system where work in the major subjects was divided into 'contract jobs' which children could work on at their own pace. Due to the relatively widespread adoption of the Plan – by 1926 it was used in at least 2000 schools – it has been judged as one of the most successful progressive innovations in Britain (Selleck, 1972; Stewart, 1972). In contrast, Kilpatrick's 'Project Method' was never popular in England (Selleck, 1972). The Dalton Plan satisfied the notion of 'individuality' and assignments were tailored to meet students' interests and abilities (Selleck, 1972:150). For instance, one version of the Plan used in London, deemed it to be, "of the utmost importance ... (that children follow) their own line of interest" (Davies, 1949:134). However since the Plan left the traditional curriculum virtually intact and its pedagogy still relied on textbooks, it was easily adapted to meet the purposes of a range of ideologies. According to Selleck (1972), the Plan was often confined to top streams where the notion of 'freedom' tended to be narrowly interpreted as nothing more than freedom from time limits. Within a few years after the peak of its popularity, the original child-centred ethos of the Plan was unrecognisable and by 1940 it was almost extinct. In NZ the Dalton Plan was tried out in Christchurch schools during the 1920s but it soon faltered (Alcorn, 1999).

Malting House experimental school opened in Cambridge in 1924. Its wealthy patron Geoffrey Pyke was intrigued by the claims of psychoanalysis and had concluded that children should be educated, "free from neuroses" (Stewart, 1972:254). From 1924-1927 Malting House was run by remarkable teacher and researcher Susan Isaacs, judged by Stewart (1972) to have made the greatest individual contribution to the development of

⁴⁵ Dalton High School was one of the thirty schools chosen for the PEA's 'Eight-Year Study' in the USA.

understanding and treatment of British children. In NZ Isaacs was similarly judged to have been a major influence on both the development of early childhood education and effective teaching methods in primary schools (Alcorn, 1999; May, 1997). Although Pyke specifically employed Isaacs to operate a school with a singular focus on psychoanalysis, she synthesised the work of Dewey, Montessori and Freud. Isaacs was strongly influenced by Dewey. She explained:

I was a trained teacher of young children and a student of Dewey's educational theories long before I knew anything about Freud, and by no means approached the work of the school ... primarily as a psychoanalyst. My work was more truly an application ... of the educational philosophy of John Dewey (1933:19).

Isaacs (1930) thought that Dewey's Laboratory School curriculum had been underrated and suggested that she might be the first person to implement his ideas in England. She explained that, like Dewey, she proposed to present, "the real world ... not the school 'subjects' ... (so that children could) seize and understand (it)" (1930:20). Malting House was well equipped, with the expressed purpose of creating a 'provocative' and 'stimulating' environment. The school had an extensive range of art and craft equipment and materials. Specific areas were designated for a kitchen, a workshop and a science lab. It had sand pits, water pools, a small menagerie of animals and a 'jungle gym' (Stewart, 1972). Hamley observed in the *NZ Education Gazette* that Isaacs' approach encouraged children to, "discover things for themselves, to think for themselves and express their thoughts clearly" (1949:12). In answer to criticism that children had too much freedom, Isaacs (1933) insisted that her methods did not encourage laxity but followed a 'technique' with clearly defined aims where teachers were co-investigators with the children. Isaacs appreciated the value of Montessori's work – Malting House had a complete set of Montessori's apparatus – but, like Dewey before her, her aim was to redefine subject matter rather than teach traditional subjects more effectively. She summed up Montessori as, "(a) genius for devising technique to the narrow ends of the scholastic subjects" (1930:21). In 1933 Isaacs became head of Child Development at the University of London, where her work continued under the influence of her progressive director, Percy Nunn (Alcorn, 1999). Isaacs disseminated her ideas about teaching young children widely, including NZ when she visited in 1937.

Bryanston opened as a school for boys in a rural Dorset setting in 1928 (Stewart, 1972).⁴⁶ It had the unusual status of being the only progressive school in Britain with a distinctly Christian character. Furthermore, it exists to the present day with several features of the New Education preserved intact, most notably a modified version of the Dalton Plan. The early development of Bryanston owed much to its renowned headmaster of 27 years, Thomas F. Coad (1933-1959). The New Education Fellowship was an important influence in the development of Coad's thinking. According to Stewart it was an, "article of faith" for Coad that every boy at Bryanston would learn to, "use (his) hands, to feel, to know, and to create through the plastic arts, the crafts and music" (1972:307). On the Bryanston 'Speech Day' in 1959 Coad stated that, "true teaching can never be mere instruction: it must always be a shared experience" (cited Stewart, 1972: 314). The Bryanston version of the Dalton Plan closely resembled the original. One commentator wryly stated, "at worst the boys are not bored (by the Plan) and at best are developing maturely" (quoted Stewart, 1972:311). A measure of the success of the Plan was the high rate of school-leavers who opted to continue on to tertiary study (59% during 1958-1961). Bryanston was committed to the social integration of students. Students could join up to fifty clubs or societies. Bryanston adopted a form of self-government with its student-run School Council. It also promoted extensive community-service within the school including building, maintenance and conservation, and other improvements (Stewart, 1972). A recent newsletter from Bryanston clearly communicated the school's continuing commitment to the New Education ethos. It stated:

Education is not just a process of learning but also of developing self-esteem, which in turn forms the basis for social, personal and academic development.⁴⁷

A theoretical framework for New Education

The New Education spawned new schools and new movements but what did it add up to? In 1920 Percy Nunn, Professor of Education at the University of London, attempted to answer just this question in his highly influential *Education: its data and first principles*. Nunn's efforts provided British progressives their own 'textbook' (Selleck, 1972) and

⁴⁶ A 'sister school' for girls, Cranbourne Chase opened in 1946. Later in the 1970s, the two schools were amalgamated into a coeducational college which preserves the name and ethos of the original Bryanston.

⁴⁷ Retrieved September, 2005: www.bryanston.co.uk (Newsletter 13, Winter, 2002).

gave classroom practice ‘theoretical depth’ (Stewart, 1972). Nunn’s book was hugely influential. It was reprinted 14 times before being revised in 1930 then reprinted nine more times by 1941. Nunn’s key thesis asserted, “the claim of *individuality* ... as the supreme educational end” (1920:vi). He gathered a potpourri of evidence from the ‘new’ psychology and educational practice to support his thesis. He advised teachers to encourage pupils to experiment, play and create. In a nutshell Nunn believed that education should enable children to realise their potential. He stated:

Educational efforts must, it seems, be limited to securing for everyone the conditions under which the individuality is most completely developed (1920:4).

Although Nunn (1920 & 1930) unequivocally espoused child-centred education, he was opposed to the radical views put forward by Kilpatrick in the USA and Scottish teacher, A.S. Neill. As argued in Chapter 3 Kilpatrick struggled to define subject matter, whereas Neill (1960) adamantly maintained that a formal curriculum interfered with ‘free’ development of students’ creativity. Nunn did not accept that child-centred activities could be construed to represent the curriculum. He thought that the curriculum should draw subject matter from the disciplines of knowledge. Thus, Nunn stated that while the curriculum should avoid, “certain knowledge” pertaining to rigidly prescribed subjects, he thought a curriculum of, “activities” should consist of, “literature ... art ... music ... handicraft ... science, including mathematics ... history and geography” (1920:211-212). Nunn disagreed with the radical developmentalist idea that children should be left to their own devices to develop ‘naturally’. He stated that, “a main function of the school is to socialise its pupils”. However, following Dewey’s lead, he insisted that, “(this last statement) in no wise contradicts (the aim) to cultivate individuality” (1920:198).

The New Education Fellowship

In 1915 the New Education Fellowship (NEF) was founded as a coalition of progressives seeking reform in British and European education.⁴⁸ According to Stewart (1972), NEF principles strongly influenced teacher training and, in turn, British primary schooling at

⁴⁸ The PEA established ties with the NEF in 1925. According to Beeby, “both movements owed much to John Dewey” (1992:103).

least until the 1970s. Selleck agreed with Stewart, finding that progressive thinking was firmly established in teacher training institutions by the end of the 1930s where progressive views were, “the most popular” (1972:121). Progressive thinking was similarly enconced in teacher education in NZ (Armstrong, 1956). NEF conferences in Britain and continental Europe in the 1920s and 1930s provided an important conduit for exchange of ideas, as well as offering solidarity (Selleck, 1972). In 1937, the NEF held a conference in Australia. A group of leading progressives from the conference were invited to NZ by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) where they participated in a government sponsored tour which visited all the main centres (Campbell, 1938; Beeby, 1992). As discussed in Chapter 5, this allowed educators, parents and the general public in NZ to gain wide exposure to progressive ideas.

The Hadow Committee

By 1931 progressive thinking penetrated into British official circles (Selleck, 1972). In particular, the government’s Hadow Committee (1920-1934) was well informed by progressive ideas. Percy Nunn was co-opted onto the Committee where he played an important role in drafting its recommendations, especially in the curriculum (Selleck, 1972). Nunn and psychologist Cyril Burt presented the child-centred case. The Committee also referred to the work of Dewey, Froebel, Montessori and Pestalozzi. In 1926 *The Education of the Adolescent* was released. It represented a new departure for officialdom, with the commitment to the best interests of adolescents clearly reflected by its progressive input. In 1931 the *Report on the Primary School* was released. Its progressive credentials were firmly established by its now famous statement that, “the curriculum is to be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored” (quoted Musgrove, 1973:4). Later Susan Isaacs was ‘closely consulted’ for the Committee’s 1933 *Infant and Nursery schools* report (Selleck, 1972). NZ officialdom became increasingly receptive to progressive ideas, especially after the Labour Government assumed office in 1935. Thus the Hadow Report findings were rapidly incorporated into official NZ policy (Beeby, 1937) where they significantly influenced post-primary education reforms in the 1940s.

Dewey's influence on New Education

Nunn's comments about the role of society in schooling suggested that Dewey may have had more influence on British academics than school teachers. For instance, J.J. Findlay commented:

So far as I can survey the influences which are remaking pedagogy at the present day, their source is largely traceable to ideas which, consciously or not, are in general accord with what is known as pragmatism (1910, cited Selleck, 1968).

Nonetheless, Selleck (1972) thought that Dewey's social meliorist education had, 'little influence' on the British progressives. However in NZ, Dewey's minor influence on British education was intensified because he had a particular influence on certain British individuals with strong NZ links such as Isaacs and Findlay. According to Renwick (1989), a small coterie of British academics – most notably Findlay⁴⁹ – 'legitimised' Dewey for students of education in NZ as one of the world's great educational thinkers.

New Education in decline

Despite increased recognition for its ideas in official circles, New Education lost much of its momentum in the 1930s (Stewart, 1972). British primary school teachers who wanted to be innovative had to 'combat' the Eleven-plus examination (Selleck, 1972). In contrast, the equivalent hurdle to curriculum reform in NZ, the Proficiency examination, was abolished in 1936. As Nunn (1920) pointed out, progressive schools tended to offer 'cases' rather than a coherent argument for progressive education. As war clouds threatened European democracy during the 1930s, the emphasis in British education moved, "from the 'individual' to 'society', whose rights ... (according to critics) the progressive schools had consistently under-played" (Selleck, 1972:127). Nunn (1920) had emphasised that all forms of education should meet the needs of wider society but this message seems to have been unpalatable to the radical child-centred educators. While Nunn emphasised the need for the individual to enjoy liberty and freedom, like Dewey before him he also stressed that development takes place within the social context. He argued that, "individuality develops only in a social atmosphere where it can feed on common interest and common activities" (1920:8). Nunn asserted that the school

⁴⁹ Note that Selleck suggested Findlay was Dewey's, "most important interpreter" in Britain (1968:208).

culture should reflect the community culture. He stated that, “while the school must be a society ... it must be a natural society ... (with) no violent break between the conditions of life within and without it” (1920:202). Accordingly, Nunn could not endorse the British progressive habit of establishing schools in the countryside and creating artificial communities which were largely unconnected with children’s original communities. In the aftermath of World War II progressive education had a low profile, nonetheless some progressive schools – including Bryanston – continued to flourish. NEF principles also continued to influence colleges of education and, through them, the primary school culture (Stewart, 1972).

Section 2: Curriculum integration – general education for adolescents

The concept of curriculum integration emerged when another ‘wave’ of progressive education spread through Britain in the 1960s and 1970s. The 1959 Crowther Report and the 1963 Newsom Report highlighted the need for a new focus on the general education of adolescents, especially for those who were unlikely to continue into higher education (Morrish, 1970). The Crowther Report on the educational needs of 15- to 18-year-olds hastened the expansion of comprehensive schooling and the Newsom Report on the schooling of 13- to 16-year-olds ‘of average or less than average ability’ asked direct questions about curriculum design. Moreover, in 1972 the school leaving age in Britain was raised to 16, which had long been predicted to result in a greater proportion of students with little enthusiasm for traditional subjects.⁵⁰ British researchers gave serious attention to the concept of curriculum integration. Integrated approaches with interesting unifying themes were perceived as a promising approach to schooling for comprehensive school students who might lack academic aspirations (Pring, 1973; Bames, 1982). The well-received 1967 Plowden Report on primary education echoed aspects of the New Education. In particular, it criticised the unnecessary ‘compartmentalisation’ of subject areas and stressed the need for coherent curricula. Primary teachers interpreted the Report as an official sanction for progressive approaches and the ‘open-classroom’

⁵⁰ Raising the school leaving age to 16 was signalled much earlier. Mooted by the 1938 Spens Report then urged by the 1959 Crowther Report, the Newsom Report set a ‘firm date’ for the change in 1965, thus most researchers and policy-makers in the 1960s assumed that a rise in the leaving age would be inevitable (Morrish, 1970).

movement quickly gained momentum⁵¹ (Stenhouse, 1975; Simon, 1991). According to Pring (1973), the idea of integration was implicit ‘throughout’ the Report. Although this may be over-stated, the rhetoric of the Plowden Report clearly offered significant encouragement for research into the concept of curriculum integration.

Although Esland (1971) and Pring (1973) both predicted that curriculum integration would become a mainstream approach, others were more circumspect. Young (1971) suggested that British efforts to implement curriculum integration were likely to remain limited to two relatively narrow interpretations. The first type was an integration of ‘humanities’ subjects, regarded to be a suitable option for ‘less able’ students. The second type was a multidisciplinary organisation of subjects around a natural commonality, such as ‘general science’ which connected biology, chemistry and physics via the scientific method.

The Newsom Report grouped the curriculum into ‘three broad fields of experience’: practical subjects, the humanities and the sciences. The government promoted innovatory approaches by sponsoring a number of curriculum development projects via the Schools Council. Two projects which trialled a student-centred form of curriculum integration in the humanities field were the Humanities Curriculum Project (Stenhouse, 1968) and the Keele Integrated Studies Project (Keele Integrated Studies Team, 1972 cited Pring, 1976a). The Humanities Curriculum Project aimed to provide a general education for adolescents of average or below average academic ability. The Project integrated the ‘humanities’ subjects of English, history, geography, religious studies and social studies to create topics drawn from ‘areas of practical living’ such as *Family, War, Poverty, People at work* and *Law and order* (Stenhouse, 1968). The ‘enduring human interest’ of these topics promoted both personal and social integration because they met the needs and interests of individuals as well as the needs of the community (ibid.). Research in Project schools found, “extensive evidence of an increase in speculative confidence in students and also of increments in reading comprehension, vocabulary and

⁵¹ Early support for open-classrooms in NZ was evidenced by examples in *Education* during the mid-1950s.

pupil self-esteem” (Stenhouse, 1975:50). Some years later, the Project provided the practical inspiration for a similar project in NZ (Nolan & McKinnon, 1991).

The British focus on integrated studies also led to the emergence of subject-centred multidisciplinary curriculum designs in the form of ‘fused’ subject areas. For instance, environmental studies – which drew from biology, geography and rural studies – gained attention and eventually achieved parity with established subjects as an ‘A level’ subject with its own syllabus and examination (Goodson, 1983).

The British discourse on curriculum integration

Although the concept of curriculum integration gained relatively wide attention during the 1960s and 1970s, its purpose and meaning were not clear (Pring, 1973 & 1976a; Hirst, 1975). Among others, Pring (1973) asserted that a ‘critical appraisal’ of the concept of integration was essential. However the ensuing discourse on curriculum integration was dominated almost entirely by philosophers.⁵² The discourse was shaped by a tension between philosophers who defended the position of the Ancient Greeks by maintaining the integrity and inviolability of the ‘forms’ of knowledge and those who sought the notion of ‘unity’ within the curriculum. Drawing from classical humanism, philosopher Paul Hirst and his supporters asserted that knowledge had a limited number of logical ‘forms’ (such as mathematics or science) with unique concepts allied with logical classifications as well as ‘fields’ (such as geography or education) which were composites of different forms (Hirst, 1969; Hirst & Peters, 1970; Hirst, 1975; Phenix, 1964 cited Pring, 1976a). As the wave of progressive thinking gathered strength, Hirst (1975) moved to head off overly romantic attempts to find curricular unity which might be derived from the child-centred approaches of the 1920s or the then attention-grabbing story of *Summerhill* (Neill, 1960). Going on the offensive, Hirst stated that it was, “not at all clear what is meant by synthesising knowledge achieved through the use of logically quite different conceptual schemes” (1966 cited Musgrove, 1973:5).

⁵² The philosophers generally ignored research on curriculum theory by British sociologists Basil Bernstein and Michael Young. Young (1971) explained that, “very few” sociologists were involved in educational research at the time and, more pertinently, that there was a, “consensus among sociologists and non-sociologists alike that the curriculum was not a field for sociological research” (1971:24-26).

Although he seemed to accept the status and implications of the forms of knowledge, Pring (1975a) politely argued that Hirst's position was too extreme. He asserted that Hirst had arrived at his standpoint via a purely 'logical' consideration of subject matter rather than a reflection on the 'complex practical reality' of curriculum-making. Michael Young (1971) offered a blunt sociological critique of the philosophers' position outlined by Hirst (1969). He argued that it was based on:

An absolutist conception of a set of distinct forms of knowledge which correspond closely to the traditional areas of the academic curriculum and thus justify, rather than examine, what are no more than socio-historical constructs of a particular time (1971:23).

Although Young's argument was not well received (Barnes, 1982), Stenhouse (1975) argued that it had an undeniable logic. He supported the essence of Hirst's argument but reworked it by stating that the forms of knowledge have a degree of independence from social influence, thus the forms of knowledge should only partially inform curricular content. Later the previously unassailable position of the philosophers was criticised more overtly. For example, Barnes asserted that the world view of the learner was, "unlikely to split up into forms of knowledge – except in the retrospective analysis of philosophers" (1982:126). However, interest in curriculum integration evaporated when the Thatcher government (1979-1990) assumed power and the discourse soon ended.

British contributions to the theory of integration

The philosophers' discourse steered the British contribution to the concept of integration towards subject-centred imperatives. Accordingly, while the 1960-1970s wave of progressive thinking reinvigorated child-centred pedagogies in Britain, it failed to catalyse interest in student-centred curriculum integration as had been the case in the USA. In any case the British contribution to curriculum integration was not extensive. Hirst proposed a multidisciplinary curriculum which was closely linked to his work on the 'forms' of knowledge. Richard Pring laid the foundation for a theoretical framework of curriculum integration. The most important work was accomplished by Bernstein who conducted an analysis of the transmission of educational knowledge which compared the 'collection code' of the traditional single-subject curriculum with the 'integrated code' implied by some models of curriculum integration. As explained below, his framework

provided a useful tool for examining the political implications of implementing models of curriculum integration (Hargreaves, Earl & Ryan, 1996).

Hirst's contribution to the concept of curriculum integration was modest but, coupled with his substantial contribution to the philosophical discourse on integration, it established an important point of reference for other British work. Hirst thought that the notion of an integrated curriculum made sense where the imperative was to, "educate pupils for the context in which they actually live" (1975:134). However, he insisted that efforts to integrate subject matter should not violate the forms of knowledge. Hirst proposed that curriculum integration should take the form of, "units ... which did not seek to 'integrate' the forms of knowledge, or cut across them for no real reason"⁵³ (1975:145). He justified his proposal by arguing that, "from a logical point of view, the central problem in designing units is to cater for the formal structure within the forms of knowledge and the formal structure which links them" (1975:150). Hirst's advocacy of the notion of the multidisciplinary unit seems unlikely to have been unequivocal. Earlier he had warned against poorly conceived multidisciplinary units with 'contrived connections' and asserted that the act of creating multidisciplinary units made 'vast demands' on teachers (Hirst & Peters, 1970). Perhaps Hirst thought that advocating a multidisciplinary design was the lesser evil compared to the radical 'Summerhill' pedagogy which might conceivably masquerade as a form of curriculum integration.

Pring (1973, 1976a, 1976b) was the only British researcher of the period in question to systematically investigate the concept of curriculum integration. He believed that curriculum integration held 'particular promise' for the education of early adolescents but did not explain how he arrived at this viewpoint or what type of curriculum integration might be best for this stage⁵⁴ (Pring, 1976a). Pring argued that there were two purposes for curriculum integration. He stated that these existed, "to provide a more flexible

⁵³ Hirst frequently used the term of 'curriculum integration' but when he referred to what were evidently subject-centred multidisciplinary units, he used the various terms of 'integrated unit, 'curriculum unit' or simply 'unit' (Hirst & Peters, 1970; Hirst, 1975).

⁵⁴ The merits of curriculum integration for early adolescents in Britain were not seriously discussed. For instance, Derricott and Richards (1980) noted that the short-lived English middle school movement gave 'inadequate consideration' to curriculum policy.

arrangement (of subject matter)” and, “because of some deep-seated belief about the unity of knowledge” (1976a:99). He suggested that the terms of ‘interdisciplinary’ and ‘integration’ should be defined according to these two purposes. Thus he proposed that ‘interdisciplinary’ (or multidisciplinary) should indicate, “the use of more than one discipline to pursue a particular inquiry” and ‘integration’ should encapsulate, “the idea of unity between forms of knowledge and their respective disciplines” (1973:135). Although Pring’s definition for ‘interdisciplinary’ was unambiguous⁵⁵, his colleagues preferred the term of ‘curriculum integration’ to describe the same process, so later on he followed their lead (Pring, 1975a, 1976a & 1976b). Pring’s definition for ‘integration’ was inadequate. His attempt to limit the term of ‘integration’ to the ‘unity of knowledge’ was not only too narrow; it was too vague to be of practical use. Moreover, Pring himself admitted that his second definition could be mistaken, since the quest for the unity of knowledge could amount to nothing more than, “chasing a chimera” (1973:149).

Later, Pring (1976a) widened his attempt to define and explain integration. He described four, ‘kinds of curriculum response’ for integration. These were:

1. Integration in correlating distinct subject matters;
2. Integration through themes, topics or ideas;
3. Integration in practical thinking; and
4. Integration in the learner’s own interested enquiry (1976a:103-111).

Pring’s ‘kinds’ have been uncritically accepted as representations of four different models of curriculum integration. For example, Barnes referred to them as, “four distinct kinds of ways of integrating curricula” (1982:124). However, if distinctions between kinds are redefined as an analysis of curriculum *purposes*, then only two models of curriculum integration emerge. Pring’s first ‘kind’ described the same subject correlation suggested by the Herbartians in the late 1800s and discussed in Chapter 3. Pring’s second ‘kind’ described a multidisciplinary model with the subjects situated around an organising theme as discussed also in Chapter 3. Thus, Pring’s first and second ‘kinds’ described aspects of a subject-centred multidisciplinary model. Pring’s third ‘kind’

⁵⁵ Although British researchers of the time failed to refer to American work, note that in the same period in the USA the term ‘interdisciplinary’ was widely recognized and had essentially the same meaning.

raised the possibility of personal integration by the learner as they respond to ‘practical’ real-life subject matter (1976a:108). Pring cited the Humanities Curriculum Project which used ‘areas of practical living’ as integrating topics as an example of his third kind (Stenhouse, 1968). Pring’s fourth ‘kind’ was an extension of his third kind. He suggested that the learner could undertake their ‘own interested enquiry’ and choose their own subject matter in the tradition of the child-centred New Education which, “*for the pupil* integrated (their) work in school” (1976a:110, original emphasis). However, he suggested that this was likely to be unworkable since, “such a curriculum cannot be pre-planned in any detail” and it placed unrealistic demands on the teacher by expecting them to find out, “the *real* interests, questions concerns, anxieties, preoccupations” of students (1976b:57, original emphasis). By pointing out the short-comings of the third and fourth ‘kinds’ Pring edged towards a student-centred design for curriculum integration but, like Lounsbury and Vars (1978) discussed in Chapter 3, he was unable to overcome certain design problems. Pring apparently understood the notion of personal integration but he did not explore its implications. For instance he proposed:

The concepts ... within which one views oneself ... are constantly open to revision ... (this) may be an example of what could be meant by an integrated conceptual framework within, say, the humanities (1973:138).

On balance Pring’s contribution to the theory of integration had little independent significance because he was unaware of an important body of earlier American work. Although he fleetingly referred to the work of Dewey (1916) and Dressel (1958), he overlooked the definitive work on integration by Hopkins (1937a) as well as Hopkins’ later work (1941 & 1954). Moreover, although Dressel (1958) specifically emphasised the point, Pring did not seem to appreciate that the American progressives widely understood integration as a process carried out by the *learner*, not the teacher. As a consequence, he failed to recognise the central importance of the notions of ‘personal integration’ and ‘social integration’. This had two ramifications for Pring’s work. First, Pring’s framework for a student-centred model of curriculum integration was incomplete because it did not include the notion of ‘social integration’ which plays a vital role in the generation of appropriate subject matter for curriculum integration (Dewey, 1916).

Second, an understanding of ‘personal integration’ and ‘social integration’ and their implications for a unified theory of integration would have allowed Pring to offer a plausible solution to the problem which had so bothered the British philosophers. Dewey’s theory of integration implied that the ‘unity of knowledge’ is found within each and every learner. As explained in Chapter 3, Dewey argued that when the learner carries out the processes of personal and social integration, a unique understanding of curricular subject matter – or in the British parlance, a unity of knowledge – is attained by each individual.

Bernstein’s sociological analysis of the curriculum

Bernstein’s paper, *On the classification and framing of knowledge* (1971) was part of an ambitious research program on the sociology of cultural reproduction, however it also offers a useful tool for the theoretical analysis of curriculum integration. Bernstein examined the scope of the curriculum and the degree of ‘openness’ of subject areas with respect to power and social control. He argued that formal knowledge is transmitted and controlled by the three ‘message systems’ of *curriculum*, *pedagogy* and *evaluation*.⁵⁶ His theoretical framework included several unique terms which each had a precise meaning. He used *code* to indicate that the transmission of educational knowledge is mediated by the distribution of power and the level of control within society (1971:47). He also distinguished between two main types of curricula. He called the first type *collection* curricula, where the contents of subject areas are clearly bounded and well insulated from each other. These curricula are *closed* with no transfer of knowledge between subject areas. The second type was *integrated* curricula, where subject areas have an *open* relationship allowing both formal and informal knowledge to be shared between different subject areas (1971:48-49). Bernstein also defined curricula according to their *classification*, which refers to the degree of boundary maintenance between subject area contents and their *framing*, which refers to the degree of teacher and student control over the selection and organisation of knowledge as well as the pace of knowledge transmission. He explained that where classification is strong, subjects are ‘well

⁵⁶ Bernstein stated that, “curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge, pedagogy defines what counts as a valid transmission of the code, and evaluation defines what counts as a valid realization of this knowledge on the part of the taught” (1971:47).

insulated' from each other but where classification is weak, subject boundaries have 'reduced insulation' or are 'blurred'. Similarly where framing is strong, teachers and pupils have little control because subject boundaries are 'sharp' but where framing is weak, teachers and pupils have increased control because the boundaries between what may or may not be transmitted are indistinct or 'blurred' (1971:49-50). Bernstein divided the message system of 'curriculum' into *collection code* curricula which are characterised by strong classification and strong framing and *integrated code* curricula which are characterised by weak classification and weak framing. Bernstein's interpretation of the concept of integration referred, "minimally, to the *subordination* of previously insulated subjects ... to some *relational* idea", thus integrated code curricula consist of an organising theme or 'relational idea' where teachers – and pupils as permitted – draw appropriate subject matter from loosely defined subject areas (1971:53, original emphasis).

Bernstein's paper gained considerable attention from sociologists (Atkinson, Davies & Delamont, 1995) but with the exception of Pring it was ignored by the curriculum theorists of the day. Pring (1975b) sought to critique Bernstein's framework but – despite his position as the leading British authority on curriculum integration – he missed its importance as a vehicle which could explain the political and social contexts associated with the implementation of curriculum integration and sort examples of curriculum integration into meaningful categories. Pring concluded that unless Bernstein's theoretical framework could be, "backed up by empirical work" (1975b:71), his efforts were little more than, "sophisticated theoretical games" (1975b:68).

The respective socio-political implications of Bernstein's collection and integrated code curricula were markedly different. Collection codes involved a 'hierarchical organisation' of knowledge where the power and status of those involved was clearly differentiated. Bernstein explained:

The stronger the classification and framing, the more the educational relationship tends to be hierarchical and ritualized and the pupils (are) seen as ignorant with little status and few rights (1971:58).

In contrast, Bernstein predicted that integrated code curricula with particularly weak classifications would disturb ‘authority structures’ and ‘specific educational identities’. Bernstein explained that his framework implied further dualities. He argued that, in principle the collection code allowed, “considerable differences in pedagogy and evaluation because of the high insulation between the different contents” (1971:60). In contrast he argued that the integrated code developed, “an authority structure which exerts jealous and zealous supervision ... (or) in other words ... creates homogeneity in teaching practice” (1971:60). Moreover, he asserted that the collection code concentrated the power of the teacher and left students with little power, whereas the integrated code reduced the power of teachers which compelled them to share power with students. Furthermore, Bernstein argued that, “*in principle*” the collection code allowed, “staff to hold – within limits – a range of ideologies, because conflicts can be contained *within* its various insulated hierarchies” (1971:63, original emphasis). In the case of the integrated code, he asserted:

It may be that integrated codes will only work when there is a *high* level of ideological consensus among the staff ... integrated codes at the surface level create weak or blurred boundaries (between subject areas), but at bottom may rest upon closed explicit ideologies (1971:64, original emphasis).

Although Bernstein (1971) described his analytical framework as a ‘limited sociological theory’, it provides a useful tool for the comparative analysis of models of curriculum integration. According to Bernstein’s categorisation of curricula, the multidisciplinary model – which organises discrete subject areas around a theme – is classified within the collection code, whereas the integrative model is classified within the integration code. Bernstein’s framework predicted that the structure of many Western education systems – including the USA, Britain and NZ – would favour the multidisciplinary model rather than the integrative model. Indeed, Bernstein asserted that the collection code was deeply embedded in the British, American and various European education systems. In particular he noted the ‘exceptional’ strength of classification in the British secondary curriculum due to its orientation towards public examinations and university entrance. In contrast, Bernstein (1971) suggested that examples of the integrated code had yet to emerge in Britain. Although he perceived, “some movement towards forms of the

integrated code”, he concluded that the integrated code only existed at a theoretical level (1971:54).

Bernstein’s narrow definition for integrated code curricula caused him to exclude examples which were a natural fit for the integrated code. For instance, he evidently classified the Humanities Curriculum Project (Stenhouse, 1968) as a collection code curriculum, yet – as argued below – it displayed characteristics which are more akin to the integrated code. According to Bernstein’s theory, weak framing within a relatively loose collection code curriculum allows the boundaries between common-sense knowledge and formal knowledge to be blurred. As Bernstein pointed out, weak framing usually occurs in instances involving ‘less able’ students. Weak framing was a key element in the design of the Humanities Project which, as discussed earlier, integrated five ‘humanities’ subjects in the attempt to offer a more flexible curriculum for less able students. The Project’s organising themes were based on controversial social issues which made it difficult for teachers to assume the traditional role of subject expert. As a consequence most of the Project teachers experienced a significant shift in their professional identity from ‘subject affiliation’ to the mastery of pedagogical skills (Stenhouse, 1975). Since Bemstein (1971:65) predicted precisely this outcome for teachers who implement the *integrated* code, his analytical framework indicates that the Project was an example of an integrated code curriculum rather than a collection code curriculum. This case suggests that in some instances of curriculum integration it is debatable whether or not subject areas are subordinate to the organising theme. This suggests that the classification of particular examples of curriculum integration as integrated or collection code curricula may depend on factors such as the dynamism or appeal of the organising theme along with teachers’ pedagogies and beliefs. A more accurate – albeit less tidy – definition for the integrated code could include qualitatively derived components which situate the curriculum alongside pedagogy and teacher beliefs, as well as assessing the extent to which *students* carry out the process of personal and social integration.

Conclusion

The British progressives instigated child-centred reforms in the 'New Education' of the 1920s and 1930s but unlike the American progressives they gave little emphasis to social aspects of the curriculum. Nunn categorised the New Education movement as a child-centred pedagogy rather than a curriculum. Accordingly, New Education contributed little to the theory of curriculum integration. Most of the British progressives, including Montessori and Isaacs, adopted Nunn's position. This was the New Education which was introduced to NZ. In the 1960s and 1970s another 'wave' of progressive thinking in British education prompted serious interest in curriculum integration. The British contribution to the concept of integration was not extensive and the resulting designs for curriculum integration added little to earlier American work. British research on curriculum integration was dominated by a group of British philosophers who held dogmatic views about the inviolability of the subject areas. Their research was reified by examples of subject-centred multidisciplinary curricula which demonstrated that subject matter could be successfully extracted from old subjects and rearranged to form new subjects. The exception to the British trend was the Humanities Curriculum Project which attempted to develop a student-centred version of curriculum integration similar to the student-centred 'core' approaches developed in the USA in the 1940s and 1950s. Arguably, the most enduring British contribution to the theory of integration came from Bernstein who developed a theoretical framework for analysing the sociological implications of different curricula. This framework inspired me to utilise Michael Apple's political analysis of American education to theorise my investigation of the multidisciplinary and integrative models in Chapters 6-8.

Chapter 5

Progressive education in Aotearoa New Zealand

The 'New Education' made rapid progress in the formerly British colony of Aotearoa New Zealand. Links with Britain and the British progressives were strong, both within the teaching profession and at academic and official levels. New Education advanced from an embryonic movement in 1920, to widespread acceptance in the 1940s. At the turn of the twenty-first century, primary education in NZ still clearly reflected the philosophy laid out by Nunn. Although several examples of British 'New Education' were faithfully recreated in NZ, they contributed little to the development of curriculum integration in NZ. Instead, it was American progressive thinking – imported via British educators and directly by Americans such as Kandel and Rugg – which caused curriculum integration to bloom in NZ.

The first section of this chapter traces the development of progressive education in NZ through the leadership of George Hogben, Frank Milner and Clarence Beeby. It pays particular attention to the changes which encouraged curriculum innovation. It analyses the 1943 Thomas Report which offered outspoken official support for curriculum integration. The second section of this chapter examines curriculum innovations by progressive teachers from the 1930s to the 1950s. This is achieved by methodically examining the archive provided by the *Education Gazette* (1928 to 1950) and *Education* (1948 to 1960). It highlights the point that NZ has a history of producing world-class examples of curriculum integration. Most of the innovations during this 'golden era' of progressive education in NZ focused on the child-centred approach to teaching discussed in Chapter 4. While they added finesse and functionality to classroom teaching, the framework of the existing curriculum was left virtually intact. In a few cases innovators developed sophisticated curriculum designs which incorporated the notions of integration identified in Chapter 3. These innovations challenged the prevailing 'wisdom' of the time because they accorded greater priority to the needs of students than the dictates of the traditional curriculum which was oriented towards public examinations. The most successful innovations utilised Dewey's idea of the learning community.

Section 1: The leaders of progressive education in NZ

Hogben: reform attempts in the 19th century

In 1881 George Hogben arrived in NZ from London as a product of the earliest ‘wave’ of progressive thinking in British education. He was a brilliant scholar and a gifted teacher of humble origins who held similar political views to the Fabian socialists (Roth, 1952). Hogben combined elements of social efficiency with a child-centred approach to teaching (Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993). In 1890, as the new rector of Timaru High School (THS), Hogben stated that the school’s ‘bookish’ curriculum was unsuited to the needs of most of the 68 boys and girls on the roll⁵⁷ (Butchers, 1953; Roth, 1952). Hogben quickly reformed the THS curriculum, adopting what he called ‘the natural method of teaching’ which aimed to encourage students to make connections with their immediate environment. Two years later Hogben added swimming, cooking and *sloyd*⁵⁸ to the THS curriculum but it is not clear whether these new subjects were made available to both boys and girls (Roth, 1952).

As Inspector-General of Education (1899-1914), Hogben introduced progressive ideas at the official level, beginning with his revision of the primary school curriculum in 1904. He visited the USA in 1907 where his first-hand observations of American education reinforced his beliefs about progressive education. On his return he stated that, “teaching should be real, having direct relation to the practical needs of life” (1908, quoted Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993:101). Hogben tried to reform the secondary curriculum but the high schools resisted his efforts. His response was to establish technical high schools as an alternative pathway for less academic students. In the end, the conservatism of parents and employers in Hogben’s era meant that successful reform of the secondary curriculum was delayed until favourable conditions arose in the 1930s (Openshaw & others, 1993). Even so, the Cohen Commission praised Hogben for trying to apply, “modern methods of education to the problems of everyday life” (1912 cited Openshaw & others, 1993:101). The enduring legacy of Hogben’s progressive methods has been that NZ teachers are noted for their ability to meet children’s learning needs (Roth, 1952).

⁵⁷ Timaru High School was coeducational until 1898, when two separate single-sex schools were formed.

⁵⁸ ‘Sloyd’ was a form of manual instruction developed in Sweden which used wood and cardboard.

Milner: towards a liberal curriculum for all

In 1933 Frank Milner, long-serving rector of Waitaki Boys' High School and president of the New Zealand Secondary Schools' Association (NZSSA), addressed the NZSSA national teachers' conference. He argued for a wider education which would help students mature and demonstrate an, "intelligent (democratic) citizenship". Milner's belief that NZ society already valued, "democratic equality of opportunity ... (and the) avoidance of social stratification" made him optimistic that reform would be successful (1933:9 cited Lee & Lee, 2002:2). Earlier, Milner had visited the USA in 1921. At that time he asserted that American junior high schools avoided a, "deadness of curricular content" which they achieved by implementing a curriculum, "rich in social, civic, and vocational interests" (1921:3, cited Lee & Lee, 2002:3). He had been enthusiastic about the junior high school curriculum which met students' personal needs and interests and provided for individual differences (1921:4 cited Lee & Lee, 2002:3). Other like-minded principals supported Milner. William Thomas⁵⁹, the rector of Timaru Boys' High School, believed that all pupils should receive a general education. He asserted that working-class students, "should receive as cultural an education" as students destined for professional positions (1922:31 cited Lee & Lee, 2002:19). James Strachan, principal of Rangiora High School, agreed. He proposed, "a general course of instruction for all students, irrespective of (their) vocational ambitions" (1930:40). In 1925 Milner advocated a core curriculum which would provide, "a harmonious combination of the cultural, and the practical and economic in one organic whole" (1925 cited Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993:155 & 163). By 1930, the view that music, art, crafts and manual training were a necessary aspect of adolescents' citizenship training was grudgingly accepted (Openshaw & others, 1993:136). Some also realised that traditional subject areas could be reorganised and used for new purposes. For instance, liberal advocates suggested that history could be used to prepare young people for 'democratic citizenship' (Kivell, 1970 cited Openshaw, 1992). Nonetheless, the ultimate goal of teachers and parents was still success in the Proficiency and Matriculation examinations. This concern was reflected in the classroom. For instance, Somerset (1938) found that teaching towards Proficiency was skewed in favour of English and arithmetic because pupils had

⁵⁹ Thomas later chaired the committee responsible for the 1943 Thomas Report.

to score 240 marks out of a possible 400 in these two subjects, whereas science, drawing and handwork attracted scant attention since they were only worth 50 marks each and did not require a pass.

Milner had eclectic views. Like Hogben, social efficiency, “figured prominently in Milner’s thinking” (Lee & Lee, 2002:3). For instance, he decried the exalted position of Latin in the traditional curriculum, even though he was a prominent Latin scholar himself (Lee & Lee, 2002:9). On the other hand when Milner visited the USA, he realised that the strength of the core movement in American junior high schools was its effective check against a new curriculum driven entirely by social efficiency (Lee & Lee, 2002). In particular, Abraham Flexner impressed Milner, who found Flexner’s ideas summed up in his ‘modern’ school curriculum, “immensely persuasive” (Lee & Lee, 2002:9-10).⁶⁰ Isaac Kandel, an American social meliorist, also influenced Milner (Lee & Lee, 2002:11). Kandel cautioned against a child-centred education which ignored social needs. He asserted that, “democracies will fail if they attempt to adopt a type of education which ignores any values but those chosen by each individual” (1937:129, cited Lee & Lee, 2002:11). Kandel reiterated this point immediately following the 1937 NEF conference by emphasising, “all studies must be social and part of the culture of a society ... some systematic training in the duties of citizenship is necessary” (1938a:9-10).

In 1936 Milner presented his recommendations for curriculum reform to the NZSSA (Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993). The ‘Milner Curriculum’ – as it was coined – called for a new core curriculum to be studied by all secondary school pupils.⁶¹ He maintained that schools should be given leeway to develop their own curriculum by offering a core program with prevocational courses, “to suit local needs” (1936:12 cited Lee & Lee, 2002:8). Milner’s report was well received by his NZSSA peers who, “called for a more generous and integrated, though not necessarily less academic education” (Alcorn 1999:124). The Labour government supported the tenor of the Milner Curriculum but

⁶⁰ As discussed later, Flexner had developed a ‘modern’ school curriculum, similar to Milner’s. Also note that Flexner’s educational ideas are currently influential at the tertiary level in NZ’s medical schools.

⁶¹ Note that Milner was not referring to technical colleges or district high schools (Lee & Lee, 2002), however his report ultimately influenced changes in all post-primary schooling.

stopped short of making general education compulsory. Some years later, the Thomas Committee (Department of Education, 1943a) officially endorsed the Milner Curriculum (Openshaw & others, 1993).

Beeby: architect of educational reform

Clarence E. Beeby was probably NZ's most influential educational reformer. Beeby trained to be a teacher at Christchurch Teachers' College in 1921-1922 where he was strongly influenced by Professor James Shelley, who was an early pioneer of child-centred education in NZ (Beeby, 1992). Earlier, Shelley had studied in Britain under Findlay. Findlay – a leading British progressive – had considerable influence in NZ, since his books⁶² were the set texts for education in NZ's four university colleges and he served two stints as the overseas examiner of education (Alcorn, 1999). Shelley introduced his students to two books. The first one was Nunn's *Education*⁶³ (1920). Beeby was deeply impressed with *Education* which he found, "electrifying" (1992:49). The second book Shelley asked his students to read was Dewey's *Democracy and Education* (1916), thus progressive ideas gained widespread influence in Canterbury. Later when Beeby planned to do a doctorate, Shelley recommended Findlay as a supervisor but when Beeby arrived in England he found that Findlay had recently retired. Nonetheless, Beeby stated that he, "came to know (Findlay) well and, like Shelley, was influenced by his liberal thinking" (1992:67).

Christchurch was the centre of progressive education in NZ in the 1920s. At the Teachers' College Shelley delivered inspiring lectures on the 'New Education' and Dorothy Baster taught about the notion of 'freedom' in the infant classroom. The Dalton Plan was tried out in several Christchurch schools in 1922 (Alcorn, 1999). Between the wars a generation of teachers in the region infused progressive ideas into their teaching, with innovations appearing in various localities on the Canterbury Plains and at least one on the West Coast (Lee & Lee, 2002; Shallcrass, 1983; Somerset, 1938; Strachan, 1938). Beeby attributed the enthusiasm for progressive ideas in Canterbury to Shelley who –

⁶² These books were *The School* (1911) and *Principles of class-teaching* (1914).

⁶³ *Education* was used in NZ teachers' colleges until the 1960s (Openshaw, personal communication).

despite writing ‘practically nothing’ – had a ‘profound’ influence on educational thinking in the region (1992:43). Progressive ideas eventually became influential at the national level. By 1925 Labour politicians were claiming that all pupils should receive a ‘cultural education’ (Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993:154) and in the 1930s the NZEI⁶⁴ popularised the notions of ‘freedom’ and ‘activity’ and fought for recognition of individual differences (Alcorn, 1999).

Beeby was the founding Director of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) (1934-1938) and the Director of Education (1940-1960). His commitment to progressive education profoundly impacted on his work in these important posts. As NZCER director, Beeby oversaw the publications of landmark books by Somerset (1938), Strachan (1938) and Wild (1938) which detailed progressive innovations⁶⁵. During the 1930s he developed an enthusiastic familiarity with both the British and American streams of progressive work. For example, in 1932 when five-year-olds were temporarily excluded from state schools, Beeby and his wife Beatrice started up a ‘free-play school’ (Alcorn, 1999). Beeby soon developed a sound understanding of the child-centred approach as well as the social reconstructionist and social ameliorist approaches. In 1936 he remarked that he had, “discovered” Rugg’s work (Alcorn, 1999:85). Later, Beeby reminisced that he had been, “brought up” on the theories of Dewey (1984:108). In his final work he summarised his main influences. Beeby stated:

(Percy Nunn and JJ Findlay) were the progressives, the idealists, liberal and eager for practical reforms of educational systems ... They along with John Dewey ... (did) much to mould my ideas on education (1992:70).

The 1937 NEF Conference

The 1937 NEF conference held in Australia presented a unique opportunity to showcase progressive education in NZ. In a turn of events ‘masterminded’ by Beeby, the government financed a satellite circuit of speakers from the conference (Renwick, 1992). Schools were closed and large numbers of teachers and the general public heard the ‘New

⁶⁴ The NZEI (New Zealand Educational Institute) is the primary teachers’ union in NZ.

⁶⁵ The Carnegie Foundation in the USA provided substantial funding for the NZCER. Furthermore, it provided travel grants to the USA for several prominent NZ educators, including these three innovators (Renwick, 1989). Note that Somerset, Strachan and Wilds’ innovations are discussed later in this chapter.

Education' message (Campbell, 1938). Thus, the radical NEF agenda was accorded official acceptance and given unprecedented exposure throughout NZ. The circuit featured 14 international speakers including Isaac Kandel⁶⁶, Harold O. Rugg and Susan Isaacs. Kandel stressed the need for a core curriculum in adolescent education. He stated:

All students have a right to a general education for as long as they can profit by it ... (this) can be safeguarded when different types of schools exist by insisting on a common core of curriculum for all ... (which) should give priority to living interests (1938b:289).

Rugg (1938) asserted that 'social progress' in a democratic nation – such as NZ – depended on a liberal education which could teach pupils the skills and values needed for citizenship. Isaacs emphasised that teachers needed to recognise the, "individual differences and temperaments" of young people (1938:146). She advocated an educational approach which included curriculum integration. She explained:

(All) aspects of nature and human experience have their place in school for 7 to 11 years; not as separate subjects of study, but as part of a full life. Since it is life in which children are interested, they learn best by taking some main 'project' or 'centre of interest' – a journey, a visit to the zoo, life on a farm, England in the Middle Ages – whatever it may be, according to the age and ability of the children, ... such a method keeps alive the young child's desire to learn (1938:148).

Isaacs' speeches were very popular (Campbell, 1938). She used uncomplicated language and chose case studies which resonated with teachers' and parents' concerns alike.⁶⁷ According to Lowrie, her speeches:

Gave a great stimulus to the recognition of growth of needs of little children and made teachers aware of the necessity of relating those growth needs to educational practice (1956:9).

Beeby's collaboration with Kandel helped him refine his curriculum philosophy. Kandel was critical of NZ secondary schooling which he saw as, "standardized, unimaginative and static ... still dominated by requirements for university entrance" (1938a:67). He called for a reformed curriculum which would be relevant to students' lives and respond

⁶⁶ Note that Kandel was Professor of Education at Columbia University, thus he was a colleague of Dewey's (Campbell, 1938).

⁶⁷ Isaac's impact on NZ primary teachers was so great that when she died in 1948, a memorial fund was established in her honour (Alcorn, 1999).

to their varying abilities. Kandel (1938a) praised the innovations at Feilding Agricultural College⁶⁸ and Rangiora High School⁶⁹ as significant steps towards a liberal education. Beeby (1939) outlined his vision for a liberal curriculum in the *Educational Yearbook* edited by Kandel. He maintained that a liberal education should be relevant to everyday life and available to everyone. Beeby argued that it should be defined:

Not (in terms) of the ‘subjects’ that a ‘gentleman’ should have ‘done’ but the experiences that fit each citizen, whatever (their) status or powers, for life in a complex and rapidly changing democracy (1939:248).

Early adolescent schooling

In his review of intermediate schooling⁷⁰ in NZ, Beeby (1938) argued that many schools were not functioning as they should. Although the main function of intermediate schools was meant to be ‘exploration’ of subject areas, up until the abolition of the Proficiency examinations in 1936 most schools, “spent most of their time on Proficiency work” (Beeby, 1938:77). Beeby thought that intermediate schooling had a crucial role to play in a liberal curriculum where – as Dewey (1916) had envisaged – early adolescents could achieve social integration. He asserted:

It (should be) the chief function of the intermediate school to provide ... a period of expansive, realistic, and socially integrative education that will give all future citizens a common basis of experience and knowledge. No other function should be allowed to interfere with this (1938:210 & Department of Education, 1943b:64a).

Beeby endorsed what he called a, “multi-track ‘try-out’ curriculum” – commonly used in American junior high schools at the time – where students could try out a variety of short courses (1938:50). He dallied with the idea of turning two-year intermediate schools into four-year middle schools at some future point. He argued:

The four-year intermediate is advocated on both psychological and administrative grounds ... the group from 11 plus to 15 plus is relatively homogenous emotionally and socially (1938:179-180).

Beeby favoured a general curriculum for a four-year middle school. He stated:

⁶⁸ Described by Wild (1938).

⁶⁹ Described by Strachan (1938).

⁷⁰ Intermediate schools were known as ‘junior high schools’ from 1922-1932.

It is not the purpose of the four-year school to prepare for either a further school or a specific occupation. Differentiation of courses there will be, but *the essence of the school will lie in its common integrating core* which all pupils will take (1938:179-180, emphasis added).

However, Beeby realised that for at least the then foreseeable future, a four-year middle school would limit secondary schooling to a span of one or two years⁷¹ which would result in an untenable '6-4-1' or '6-4-2' year structure for primary-middle-high schooling.

Educational reform

As Director-General of Education, Beeby's efforts to implement a liberal curriculum were remarkably successful. He revamped the *NZ Education Gazette* by placing a new emphasis on communicating progressive ideas to teachers with a range of editorials, articles by offshore writers⁷² and local examples of innovatory practice (Alcom, 1999). In 1948 the new journal, *Education* was created to carry on this particular function⁷³.

Beeby wrote Peter Fraser's famous statement which signalled the Labour Government's firm commitment to educational reform. He stated:

The government's objective, broadly expressed, is that every person, whatever (their) level of academic ability, whether (they) be rich or poor, whether (they) live in town or country, has a right, as a citizen, to a free education of the kind for which (they are) best fitted and to the fullest extent of (their) powers ... (this) will involve the reorientation of the education system (1939:2 quoted Alcom, 1999:99).

The Fraser-Beeby statement fused Beeby's desire for a 'liberal' curriculum which would accommodate individual differences and Fraser's enduring commitment to Fabian socialism.⁷⁴ In his official memorandum to the Thomas Committee, Beeby (1942 cited Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993) gave particular prominence to liberal education. Put plainly, Beeby was, "determined to ensure" that the Thomas Committee would back the Milner Curriculum (Openshaw & others, 1993:169). He stated:

⁷¹ At the time only a minority of students stayed at school beyond Form 5 (Year 11).

⁷² For instance in the late 1930s: 5 articles by Dewey and 2 reprints from the NEF journal, *The New Era*.

⁷³ *Education* lost government funding in 1950 after Labour lost the 1949 election. It resumed publication in 1955 with financial support from the two main teachers unions (Department of Education, 1955).

⁷⁴ As was customary for the time, the statement was originally attributed to Fraser, however he signed Beeby's statement, "without changing a word" (Renwick, 1992:17).

The Department is anxious to maintain high academic standards for the scholarly but even this end must not be allowed to interfere with the school's main function of giving a full and realistic education to fit the bulk of the population, culturally and economically, for the world of today (1942 quoted Alcom, 1999:126).

Beeby concluded his brief to the Committee by stating that the community could not have adolescents, "safely let loose" without a core curriculum in all three types of high school (1942 quoted Openshaw & others, 1993:170).

The Thomas Report

In a series of dramatic statements, the 1943 Thomas Committee Report laid the foundation for the implementation of a liberal post-primary curriculum in NZ. This included strong support for 'integration'. The Report signposted a commitment to adolescent needs and a departure from, "the traditional academic approach" in secondary education which was suited to a select few but, "quite inappropriate for the ordinary pupil" (Department of Education, 1943a:6). The authors drew from the findings of the Eight-Year Study (Aikin, 1942) in the USA and the theoretical work of Nunn (1920) to support their argument for a core curriculum. They asserted that the government had, "the duty ... to encourage progressive developments", but hedged against the possibility of the state imposing, "a cut-and-dried philosophy" by leaving schools with a modicum of responsibility for their own curriculum (1943a:1). The authors specifically invited each school to, "re-examine its whole theory and practice, make up its mind about the real needs of its pupils ... and then act courageously according to its findings" (1943a:3). The Report also emphasised the need for training in democratic citizenship. The authors reflected, "if (the war) has a lesson for us, it is that human values we sum up in the word 'democracy' are taken for granted" (1943a:5). The Report offered a blueprint for a liberal core curriculum. The authors stated:

We have set out to ensure ... that all post-primary pupils, irrespective of their varying abilities and their varying occupational ambitions, receive a generous and well balanced education ... (which aims) firstly, at the development of the adolescent as a person; and secondly, at preparing (them) for an active place in our NZ society as worker, neighbour, home-maker, and citizen ... (the core curriculum) represents what we consider is needed by the adolescent as an aid to growth and as a general preparation for life in a modern democratic community (1943a:4).

This statement clearly indicated that personal and social integration of adolescents should be an important feature of the new curriculum however, with the notable exception of social studies, this sentiment was largely absent in the latter part of the Report which detailed the implications for each subject area.

Support in the Thomas Report for integration

The Thomas Report offered support for various notions of integration. The authors apparently understood the difference between the notion of personal integration and correlation. They explained:

To give a pupil's course organic unity ... the basic integrating factors are not patterns of subject matter, but purposes in the minds of pupils (1943a:14).

As discussed in detail below, the Report developed a cogent case for curriculum integration in the new subject of social studies. The authors asserted:

Subject boundaries (between Geography, History and Civics) ... are artificial ... with consequent loss of meaning to the pupil ... (thus) the Social Studies course should be an integrated one, definitely organised around the central theme of the life of (people) in society (1943a:24).

The authors commented that many schools were already doing, "excellent work of the regional survey type" (1943a:27). The regional or 'local' survey allowed teachers and students to situate subject matter within interesting contexts without regard to subject boundaries (for example: Gerrand, 1943).

The Report authors insisted that the needs of early adolescents must be met. They asserted that this should start with personal and social integration. They argued:

Full account should be taken of the interests, experience and relative immaturity of pupils at the early adolescent stage. This is ... so often neglected in practice.

The authors elaborated:

These (factors) should be reflected in the Social Studies course, which should take as its starting point the interest and problems of the pupils themselves (1943a:25).

The Report emphasised that early adolescents need opportunities for social integration. The authors stated that social studies should be used, "to assist the development of individuals who are able to take their parts as effective citizens of a democracy"

(1943a:23). In the process, they maintained that, “(pupils should) have experience of first-hand inquiry in their own community and actually perform services for it”

(1943a:26). The authors also endorsed the child-centred teaching methods introduced to NZ by earlier progressive educators. They commented that they, “assumed (teachers would use) a combination of class teaching and group and individual assignments of the ‘project’ type” (1943a:26).

The Report suggested that some subject boundaries could be flexible and that an enterprising teacher might attempt to fuse two subjects. The authors suggested:

Subject boundaries between English and Social Studies in particular might well be partially abolished ... where one teacher is competent in both English and Social Studies it would be most valuable if (they) could take them together and ignore subject divisions as much as possible (1943a:19).

However, in other subject areas the authors seemed to be more at ease with the notion of subject correlation. They stated:

The integration areas of the subjects should be clearly indicated, after discussion among the teachers concerned, when syllabuses are drawn up (1943a:19).

The Thomas Report and social studies

Although the Thomas Report encouraged teachers to present subject matter in creative ways, the history of social studies immediately after the Report suggests that attempts to actually alter the content of subject matter were contentious. Social studies was a brand new subject in 1944, however the Report’s recommendations to teachers were, “both vague and ambiguous” (Openshaw, 1992:207). At one point the Report explicitly stated, “we ... recommend that (geography and history) ... be regarded as one subject and learned as such” (Department of Education, 1943a:24), yet in other instances the Report implied that history, civics and geography, “were all actually social studies in their own right” (Openshaw & others, 1993:184). The new approach to social studies also implied that school work schemes should be rewritten and teaching approaches re-examined. For instance at Dunedin North Intermediate School, teachers worked hard to design a social studies course which emphasised, “(humans) and (their) progress and development, rather than reigns and countries” (Forsythe, 1949:83).

The Report's relatively wide-ranging consideration of integration within the new subject of social studies, juxtaposed with its narrow interpretation of integration within the other established subjects, sent a confusing message to teachers. Unsurprisingly, teachers of social studies soon divided into factions. Openshaw and others (1993) described two groups of social studies teachers: the 'moderates' who sought to fuse history and geography into a human context, and the 'radicals' who sought to integrate subject matter from a range of disciplines. The groups were represented by two innovative teachers, Phoebe Meikle and Averilda Gorrie (ibid.). Although both women supported progressive teaching methods such as the local survey, their views about the subject matter of social studies were sharply divergent. Gorrie fought to maintain the academic standing of history and geography and was suspicious of other agendas. For instance, she questioned whether, "social studies should be linked to idealized notions of liberal, democratic citizenship training" (Openshaw & others, 1993:187). In the final sentence of, *The teaching of geography and history*, Gorrie summarised her position by stating that, "social studies is best regarded as a covering term for history and geography" (1964:158).

In contrast, Meikle argued in favour of, "an autonomous social studies discipline which would draw upon other disciplines but nevertheless uphold its own particular teaching methods, themes and goals" (Openshaw & others, 1993:186). In the spirit of the Thomas Report, Meikle argued, "for an integrated approach to social studies which would break down subject barriers" (Openshaw & others, 1993:187). She asserted that subject matter could be drawn from the disciplines, thus social studies teachers could combine citizenship goals with history and geography along with, "a dash of economics or sociology (in an manner that is) ... social and moral as well as intellectual" (Meikle, 1960 cited Openshaw & others, 1993:187). Openshaw and others concluded that, although the Report clearly suggested that social studies could be integrated, innovators such as Meikle tended to, "gravely underestimate the strength of (opposition from stakeholders in) the traditional subject disciplines" (1993:186).

The integrated subject area of social studies was a popular vehicle for political agendas. Harvey Franklin revived elements of social reconstructionism by disseminating the idea

that social conditions could be modified through political action. Influenced by Franklin, David Francis introduced the notions of social justice and emancipation from oppression into social studies during the 1960s (Openshaw & others, 1993). Conservative opposition to allegedly subversive agendas embedded in the curriculum ensured that advocates of social studies struggled to improve its standing. Meikle (1969 cited Openshaw & others, 1993) concluded that social studies was unlikely to be regarded as a 'serious' subject until it attained School Certificate status. In his sociological analysis of the British curriculum, Young (1971) arrived at a similar conclusion. He commented that it was 'not surprising' attempts to integrate subjects are rarely successful when the subjects concerned are reduced in status. As Chapter 7 also demonstrates, the act of challenging the status of established subject matter within a subject area is likely to entail political ramifications which can result in diminished collegiality and trust between teachers.

The aftermath of the Thomas Report

Following the Thomas Report, the newly reformed NZ education system aimed to, "give every child the kind of education for which (they are) best fitted" with the purpose to, "help each child to understand (themselves) as a person and in relation to society" (Department of Education, 1949a:1). The Minister of Education, Rex Mason strongly endorsed the Thomas Report. He argued that citizenship training for adolescents was necessary for the 'preservation' of democracy (Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993). Much was expected from teachers but the rapid growth of schooling after the war compromised the quality of teacher applicants, teacher training and professional development. Openshaw and others concluded that the Labour government had been over-optimistic to assume that teachers could act as, "agents of adolescent socialisation", to fulfil the goal of, "establishing a partnership between individuals and their society" (1993:175). Moreover, the Report, along with the progressive approaches it implied, received sustained criticism from the news media (Alcorn, 1999). Criticism persisted until the early 1960s, especially from conservative academics and Roman Catholic spokespersons⁷⁵ (Lee & Lee, 2002). Meikle concluded that the Report, "in its humanism, idealism and genuine democratic

⁷⁵ Note that the Roman Catholic church was not represented on the Thomas Committee. In hindsight, Beeby (1992) commented that this was a regrettable omission.

feeling, reflected the strengths of the best type of New Zealander of the period” but when exposed to the reality of teachers isolated in their classrooms, it was no more than a, “book of suggested recipes ... (for) cooks of varying abilities” (1961:36). Whitehead (1974) agreed with Meikle. He asserted that, “most teachers either did not understand fully the nature and implications of the proposed changes⁷⁶ or they were opposed to them in principle” (1974:52). The Currie Report⁷⁷ (Department of Education, 1962) supported the above assertions. The Report emphasised that recruitment and training of teachers following the post-war baby-boom in the 1950s was the, “most clamant problem of all (those it had faced)” (1962:6). Accordingly, few teachers were likely to appreciate or understand the rationale for a liberal education, and fewer still were likely to be equipped to implement a student-centred model of curriculum integration. Ultimately, the progressive vision for a liberal education was swamped by a wave of public demand for credentials generated by the prestige attached to the School Certificate examination (Meikle, 1961; Whitehead, 1974; Openshaw & others, 1993). This demand effectively revoked the ‘licence to innovate’ which had been extended to teachers by the Thomas Report (McKinnon, Nolan, Openshaw & Soler, 1991).

The impact of the NZ progressives on the teaching profession

Progressive philosophy became institutionalised, especially in colleges of education (Armstrong, 1956). For instance, Cumming and Cumming found that, “in the 1940s and later young NZ teachers in training were given heavy doses of Dewey” (1978:283). By the 1940s teachers commonly adapted their teaching methods to children’s individual differences, whereas this would have been unusual a generation earlier. The influential 1967 Plowden Report on British primary education, which endorsed child-centred approaches, also had a significant influence on NZ education. In contemporary primary schools, the legacy of the child-centred approach still endures as a distinguishing feature of NZ education (Ministry of Education, 1993 & 1996; Snook, 2000).

⁷⁶ Actually it seems likely that many teachers must have been unaware of the precise nature of the proposed changes, since copies of the 1943 Report were soon unobtainable and only became available after a long delayed second reprinting in 1959 (Alcorn, 1999).

⁷⁷ The full title of the Currie Report was: *Report of the Commission on Education in New Zealand*.

Section 2: Curriculum innovations in NZ during the 1930s and 1940s

Favourable conditions for innovation

The 'New Education' movement in NZ soon made an impact at the official level. For instance as early as 1929, an *Education Gazette* article entitled 'Experiment in light woodwork', indicated that practical work could, "(reinforce) the instruction in ordinary subjects of the curriculum" (Department of Education, 1929:21). The author stated that there was:

No question as to the interest of children in this work – indeed the main difficulty is to keep them (away during) lunch periods ... The Department is to be congratulated on the introduction of such a valuable means of 'learning by doing' (1929:22).

Innovation was encouraged unless it interfered with academic aspirations. As a rule, most curriculum innovations occurred in rural areas where the imperatives regarding examination preparation were less pressing. Innovatory practices such as building model cottages, running school farms and engaging in various forms of animal husbandry gained widespread attention. These recurring motifs were copied and modified by teachers in diverse localities throughout NZ. Many of the curriculum innovations in NZ were associated with teachers' desire to use contexts which were familiar to their students however the subject matter within each discipline or 'subject' often remained intact. This section examines some representative curriculum designs and discusses how they applied notions of integration. Most of them promoted a degree of personal integration but few emphasised social integration.

Practical education in Māori schools⁷⁸

In 1931 Māori education policy was revised. Although the long-standing policy of assimilation of Māori into a 'European' life-style was left more or less intact, Māori school programs were reoriented towards practical activities so that they simulated rural work. The new policy also reinforced existing social efficiency initiatives which stressed the need for, "health, cleanliness⁷⁹, individual initiative, self reliance and cooperation"

⁷⁸ In this period schools for Māori were known as 'Native Schools'. In 1947 the Labour government substituted the term 'Native' with 'Māori'.

⁷⁹ Up until the 1930s the Māori death rate for diseases associated with poor hygiene was alarmingly high. In this period the average life expectancy for Māori (both men and women) rarely exceeded 45, whereas by the late 1950s it had risen to nearly 60 (King, 2003).

(Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993:60). Although social efficiency dominated Māori schooling well into the 1940s, child-centred ideas also gained a strong following.

Teachers in Māori schools made every effort to ensure that, “community life centred around the school” (Somerset, 1946:88). School activities were designed with parallel home activities in mind, for instance calf-rearing and sending home seedlings to encourage the introduction of new crops (Department of Education, 1932a; Wills, 1933). Married (Pakeha) couples were appointed to Māori schools so that teachers could mix with Māori communities more comfortably. Various types of clubs – including poultry, sports, dramatic and garden groups – helped to bring the school and community together (Department of Education, 1932b).

The model cottage

The new approach to Māori education was exemplified by the introduction of scale-model cottages which were often built by the children themselves (Department of Education, 1949b; Jennings, 1949; Openshaw & others, 1993). One of the earliest was built in 1935 near Te Puke (Department of Education, 1949b). Teachers linked the construction of model cottages with the curriculum. They found, “much correlation” with applications in, “arithmetic ... drawing ... calculations ... (and) much material for oral discussion” (Department of Education, 1934:111). For several years, cottage construction was correlated with the secondary curriculum at Manutahi Māori District High School⁸⁰ in Ruatoria by using the topic of ‘Building a home’ (Department of Education, 1949b).

Model cottages were also found at state schools. Edward Darracott, sole charge teacher from 1935-1942 at Jack’s Mill School in Westland, and his senior children built a model bungalow (Darracott, undated cited Shallcrass, 1983; Tonkin, 2001). Darracott used the building project as an organising centre for the existing curriculum to create a version of multidisciplinary curriculum (Tonkin, 2001). The children planned, designed and built

⁸⁰ According to Jennings (1949) the construction of model cottages was an intrinsic part of the curriculum for all Māori District High Schools.

the house under their teacher's guidance. Children who had previously been reluctant to attend school came at weekends and worked long hours into evenings (Darracott, undated cited Shallcrass, 1983). In comparison to the approach to cottage building generally used in Māori schools where children passively followed instructions, Darracott adopted a student-centred pedagogy where the children were expected to demonstrate initiative.

While the Māori school curriculum seemed to offer scope for originality, the policy of assimilation ensured that most innovations were inspired by the social efficiency agenda (Department of Education, 1934). For instance, Buchan (1938) described a correlated curriculum in Kaikohe Native School which synthesised the 'fused' and 'broad-fields' curricula. It featured an innovative timetable where subjects were fused,⁸¹ "to ensure more efficiency" (1938:14). The subjects were then fitted into the broad bands of: *mechanical* (various drills), *exploratory* (various investigations), *aesthetic* (physical and mental recreation), *creative* (expression and construction) (ibid.). In another example, Walker described an, "activity" curriculum at Te Kao Native School (1940:190). However instead of being child-centred, this so-called 'activity curriculum' was driven by a paternalistic brand of social efficiency. The Te Kao curriculum included home-making, cookery, cafeteria service, laundry, bathing (for hygiene), woodwork, engineering, gardening, milk room techniques and health clinic checks. Walker concluded that, "these educational experiences should be the creation of better home-makers, better citizens, and, we hope, happier and more effective human beings" (1940:191). The futility of a social efficiency approach to Māori education was exposed after World War 2. In perhaps the most dramatic demographic shift in NZ history, Māori moved en masse into urban areas where their rural education was largely irrelevant.⁸²

The school newspaper

The production of school newspapers was an indoor innovation which crossed subject-area boundaries as, unlike activities wholly directed by teachers, children working on

⁸¹ For instance, three fused subjects were created by combining: geography & history, drawing & handwork and speech-training & recitation.

⁸² In the thirty years following World War 2 the proportions of Māori living in urban areas compared to rural areas increased more than five-fold: from 15% in 1945 to 76% in 1975 (Openshaw & others, 1993).

newspapers were not constrained by subject prescriptions. Teachers' responses to the interdisciplinary nature of newspaper making were varied. In an article in the *Education Gazette* entitled "Projects", Roland (1940) attempted to explain the theory of Kilpatrick's child-centred approach. He stated that, "when the child wishes to accomplish a purpose of (their) own, (they direct their) activities towards the accomplishment of that object". Roland grounded his argument by asserting that, "the task is related to some need in (the child's) life and therefore he can see the use if it." He then suggested that, "schoolwork can be arranged so that we ... (use) the child's own desires and purposes ... (so that they direct their own) learning" (1940:15). Roland described the production of a school newspaper as an example of Kilpatrick's 'purposeful activity'. Roland seemed to be in some doubt about Kilpatrick's theory, especially *who* should 'arrange' children's schoolwork. In the case at hand he conceded that the teacher played a role. He stated, "before going further it must be admitted ... the teacher played the major part at the beginning" (1940:36). Despite his ill-founded reservations with regard to teachers giving children assistance⁸³, Roland recognised the potential of the 'activity' as an organising centre for curriculum integration. He stated that newspaper production included subjects such as, "arithmetic, letter-writing, drawing, English, handwork (and) business methods", thus the, "purposeful activity is covering a number of subjects that have to be used (to complete the project)" (1940:36).

In another instance, Campbell (1942) collaborated with his class to produce a school newspaper made with a press. He organised his students into compositors, proof-readers, printers and binders. Campbell seemed to understand the benefits of the activity for social integration. He asserted that the class was a small community working collaboratively to achieve a goal. He observed:

The management (of newspaper production) ... in groups under leaders teaches lads to cooperate, to understand each other's capabilities; in short, to experience human relationships in the industrial work-a-day world (1942:73).

⁸³ Writing in *Education*, Pryor (1955) clarified the role of teachers in the 'activity' curriculum. He asserted that children should be allowed to choose from at least half a dozen activities (painstakingly) set up by teachers beforehand. He stated that, "(teachers) must be enthusiastic, clear in (their) aims, and willing to devote a great deal of time and thought to preparation and execution" (1955:17).

Campbell recognised that the activity had natural links with subject areas. For instance, he commented that the tasks gave, “great scope to applied art and craft” (1942:73). Campbell believed that making a newspaper gave schoolwork a fresh relevance to everyday life. He stated that, “the pupil has something real for which to write.” He added that the, “lay-out of the paper, lino cutting, and block-making give a sense of purpose that the former drawing-book lacked” (1942:73). Campbell concluded that the activity created an, “invaluable” link between home and school (1942:73).

In 1937, a ‘Native School teacher’ described how a school newspaper, the *Korero Wikiri*, became inextricably linked with community life (Department of Education, 1937). The English-language newspaper was published by the teacher in a laborious ‘cyclostyling’ session each week. It genuinely served the community by including local news, sports, ‘scoops’ – found by keen child reporters – and paid advertisements. In a community where 97 out of 103 children on the roll spoke, “nothing but Māori at home” the newspaper was an important community resource for teaching and learning English (1937:110). The teacher wrote, “we, as teachers, are constantly devising ways and means for ‘reaching’ the Māori (to promote) a close relationship between the school and the kainga” (1937:111). Newspaper making was an extra-curricular activity with multiple links to the curriculum. The teacher noted:

Here is all our ‘English’ ... spelling, reading, writing, grammar, composition, appreciation, speech-training, oral expression ... poetry and drama (1937:111).

In this instance, the first language of the community – Māori – was overlooked which compromised the quality of social integration. During this period assimilation was official policy, thus Māori language (‘Te Reo’) was excluded from the official curriculum (King, 2003). Despite the pedagogical and curricular limitations with respect to Māori language, the production of *Korero Wikiri* acted as an organising centre for curriculum integration and promoted both personal and social integration in these young people.

Other noteworthy innovators

J. E. R. McKay (1945), who taught at Tweed Street Intermediate School in Invercargill, echoed Dewey by insisting that science lessons should be connected to children’s

experiences. He asserted that scientific knowledge should be portrayed to children as the, “experiences of others as recorded in books”. He advised science teachers to, “(take) into the classroom the commonplace objects used by children and grown-ups, and discovering the scientific ‘how’ and ‘why’ connected with them” (1945:188). McKay’s work challenged other teachers to adopt a child-centred approach. His approach promoted a degree of personal integration but did little to achieve social integration.

In the 1950s Silvia Ashton-Warner developed an innovative, “organic reading” method for Māori children at Fernhill School (1963:27). Ashton-Warner’s method resituated reading in local contexts which children could appreciate and understand. She rejected the sterile ‘Janet and John’ readers of the time, insisting that children’s, “first books must be made of the stuff of the child” (1963:35). In his report on preschool education, Colin Bailey warmly approved Ashton-Warner’s work, commenting that it was, “tapping into the most dynamic source of teaching – the child’s own life” (1947 quoted Hood, 1988:143). Bailey and Arthur Fieldhouse, who had studied with Isaacs in the 1930s, visited Fernhill School in 1951. Later, Fieldhouse recalled that the children, “could read like mad ... it was incredible ... it was hard and fast proof that the theory (of organic reading) worked” (1990 cited May, 2001). Ashton-Warner’s method promoted personal integration but it did not attend to social integration. Nonetheless, her insistence that reading should be taught in contexts which children could understand and enjoy made an important contribution towards child-centred teaching in NZ, especially with respect to the needs of Māori students.

During the 1950s Elwyn Richardson developed an innovative pedagogy in Oruaiti School, in Northland. He developed a multidisciplinary curriculum allied with a child-centred pedagogy and anchored in contexts drawn from the natural history of the area (Richardson, 1964 & 2001). Richardson was particularly interested in children’s emotions. He believed that education was about ‘knowing’ and ‘feeling’, thus his approach accentuated the role of art and poetry. This had parallels with Steiner’s work – as discussed in Chapter 4 – which also placed an emphasis on poetry and art as subject matter. Richardson developed a curriculum of creative activities which he referred to as

his, “theory of image integration” (2001:vii). However, his narrow focus on natural history prevented his students from experiencing and understanding wider aspects of community life. This ultimately led to criticism from the school inspectorate who accused him of failing to attend to the developmental needs of his students (Richardson, 2001). His approach allowed a degree of personal integration but it did not promote social integration. Even so, Richardson’s curriculum gained wide attention with certain aspects of his curriculum, such as organising subject matter around themes, becoming a familiar part of the primary school landscape.

Self government

The new principal of Feilding Agricultural High School (FAHS), L.J. Wild implemented self-government at the school in 1922. The FAHS community developed its own ‘judicial system’ to become the most advanced example of self-government in NZ⁸⁴ (Wild, 1938). Somerset (1941) suggested that participation in self-government could teach democratic citizenship to students in other schools. His argument seemed to have merit but the concept of self-government failed to attract interest from other schools, even though the Thomas Report explicitly recommended it as an aspect of the Social Studies course (Department of Education, 1943a:23; Murdoch⁸⁵, 1944). In Britain self-government was associated with child-centred schools which promoted unfettered freedom, like Neill’s Summerhill. In such environments the curriculum was determined according to the whim of the child but in NZ curriculum-making remained the reserve of professional educators.

The prefect system was the only expression of self-government to gain comparatively widespread attention in NZ.⁸⁶ However, its hierarchical framework meant that it gave only, “limited power” to a few students (Murdoch, 1944:246). Even in the FAHS example, Wild diluted the power of self-government by determining that a ‘constitution’ had to allow him a ‘right of veto’ for any situations he deemed to be, “hurtful to the

⁸⁴ The original NZ example of self-government in Rangiora High School is discussed later in this chapter.

⁸⁵ In another NZ connection with British progressives, Murdoch completed a PhD in Britain under Nunn.

⁸⁶ Later, the Currie Report recommended that secondary schools investigate the ‘possibility’ of school councils comprised of pupils (1962:373).

interest of the school” (1938:21). Murdoch summed up the mood of the time.⁸⁷ He argued:

The spirit of self-government may be encouraged and partly realised but there is a certain unreality about the whole procedure that restricts its educational value ... since it is teachers, not students, (who) bear ... ultimate responsibility ... The adolescent ... needs, and looks for, a measure of direction and firm and stable control (1944:450).

Although self-government had the potential to develop the democratic aspect of social integration, the FAHS example showed that it made little sense to try to marry a method of governance which shared power, with the traditional curriculum where teaching was didactic and teachers could not sensibly share power. Findlay also explained this principle in the early years of the British ‘New Education’. He stated:

While we recognise in this movement toward self-government a valuable contribution to progress, we must anticipate that it will only succeed in schools where the teachers are equally concerned to *recast* the course of study (1923:199, emphasis added).

Towards an indigenous model of curriculum integration: the school farm

School farms were relatively common during the 1940s. Social efficiency was the main driving force behind the trend for rural schools to have attached farms, especially since it was regarded as a patriotic duty for schools to assist the war effort. Nonetheless, teachers often made special efforts to develop child-centred teaching methods. The curriculum in schools with an attached farm was related to the ‘life adjustment’ curriculum in the USA, which was itself a hybrid between social efficiency and other approaches (Kliebard, 1995). In one example, a school with an eight-acre farm planned to breed pigs as stock for farmers and grow experimental crops as a, “service ... (for) the whole community”. A teacher insisted that, “the main purpose of the model farm is not to teach the boys how to farm, but to teach them how to carry out their own research on the land at their disposal” (Department of Education, 1943c:98). An *Education Gazette* article maintained, “to create an interest in purely rural activities ... (one should) bring the district into the school” (Department of Education, 1943d:91). Activities which children

⁸⁷ Note that in the late 1930s and early 1940s NZ had effectively committed itself to confronting fascism on the world-stage, thus this was an inappropriate time for romantic idealism.

could accomplish single-handedly, such as lamb-rearing, became common. Ventures in pig rearing, bee culture and forestry also took place (Department of Education, 1943d).

Teachers in schools with an attached farm⁸⁸ have sometimes mused about the possibility of curriculum integration. At a Taranaki school Heyes (1945) described linkages between the curriculum and co-curricular activities. The Egmont Village School poultry club utilised an endowment of six acres developed a range of co-curricular activities. The children planned and built a fowl house. They ran a commercial enterprise by selling 200 shares for a shilling each and enlisting community help for killing and dressing. Heyes reflected that it was, “surprising how well these activities can be made to fit in with school work” (1945:270). In a school that was 95% Māori, O’Donnell showed the school farm could be used as an organising centre for curriculum integration. He stated:

We never used the (school) farm as an excuse for an arithmetic lesson, but we never missed an opportunity of demonstrating the value of school-work in solving our practical problems (1949:36-37).

In another school with an attached farm of 30 acres⁸⁹, Boon (1944) arrived at a similar conclusion. He stated, “I know of no better means (than the school farm) that will link up every subject of the curriculum and give a practical basis for this purpose” (1944:85). Boon described in detail how subjects were genuinely ‘linked’ with co-curricular farm activities which included sheep farming, poultry farming, forestry, orchard culture, cropping, dairy farming, pig farming and bee keeping. The school also ran an innovatory six-day timetable where the sixth day was used for ‘practical farm management’.

A Māori school near Whakatane with an attached poultry farm developed a curriculum which appeared to incorporate various notions of integration⁹⁰ (Department of Education, 1946b). In an unusual move for a Māori school of the period, the Standard 3 to Form 3 (Years 5-9) boys were given full responsibility, “for the organisation and management of

⁸⁸ Note that school farms were not confined to rural schools. For instance, Mt Albert Grammar School, a metropolitan secondary school in Auckland, had an agricultural department with a twenty-acre farm (Murdoch, 1944:69).

⁸⁹ Boon described the farm as, “gum land” and “sub-tropical”, so the school was probably situated in rural Northland.

⁹⁰ A note at the beginning of this article indicates that the Editor ‘persuaded’ a teacher in the Māori school to write an article about the farm but the first two paragraphs appear to have been written by someone else.

the poultry farm” (1946b:28). Real-life experiences and community living became part of schooling, thus enhancing the process of social integration. The curriculum aimed to:

Give a practical basis and a vital purpose to the academic work of the classroom, to provide real life problems for discussion and solution, and to link the classroom with the life of the community around it (1946b:26).

The distinction between the official curriculum and co-curricular activities was often blurred. Practical activity was not perceived as extra-curricular but, “as a normal department of the school’s work, one of a number of practical cores around which the classroom is built” (1946b:26). The author seemed to appreciate that personal integration is promoted when the organising centre is relevant and interesting. The author explained:

‘Centres of interest’ provide problems of mutual concern for both teacher and pupil and make the school not only a place of classroom learning, but also a series of absorbing activities built on ... observation and personal interest (1946b:26).

The poultry farm was also perceived as a co-curricular activity as it generated, “practical problems in arithmetic, (material for) drawing, material for morning talks ... (and) discussions” (1946b:28). The author concluded by suggesting that the curriculum design, “added district interest in the school and its work” (1946b:28).

Curriculum integration: from the ‘school farm’ to the wider rural community

In the 1930s two innovations in the small North Canterbury towns of Oxford and Rangiora sought to connect the curriculum with the everyday life of the local farming community. Both examples expanded on the idea of the local or ‘regional’ survey – as discussed earlier – by featuring a community-centred curriculum design which promoted personal and social integration. More than any other curriculum innovation from this period, they relied on Dewey’s theory of integration.

In 1938 NZCER published Crawford Somerset’s *Littledene*, a sociological study based on participant observation.⁹¹ In 1923 Oxford District High School (ODHS) offered two courses: an ‘academic course’ leading to matriculation and an innovative ‘rural course’ which offered a, “sound education to the farm-life boy or home-life girl” (Somerset,

⁹¹ Butchers (1953) noted that ‘Littledene’ was a pseudonym for Oxford and that Somerset was the sole-charge teacher of the secondary department at Oxford District High School from 1923-1930.

1938:79).⁹² The innovatory curriculum was justified by the argument that most secondary students failed to receive a relevant education, since only about two percent of the school's students advanced to university. The philosophy of the secondary department's 'scheme of work' relied on Cyril Burt⁹³ with regard to the need for adolescents to learn skills rather than facts, and Dewey with respect to the idea that learning involves actions which can be embedded in everyday living (Somerset, 1938:82). Both courses at ODHS included, "as much practical work as possible" (p.80). School subjects were woven into community living and unified by work-oriented organising themes. ODHS did not have a school farm so it, "co-opted the community (as a) living setting for its work" (p.82). Local farmers and students in the Oxford community cooperatively investigated, "irrigation of lucerne, the fattening of lambs (and) the use of lupins in the laying down of pastures" (p.82). An outcome of this collaborative investigation was that local farms habitually used, "subterranean clover on their pastures" up to a decade earlier than most other farms in the region (Shallcrass, 1983:14). The ODHS example may have prompted Director of Education, T.B. Strong to urge teachers to forge links between the school and the rural community. During this period he stated:

Encourage questioning by the pupils and encourage them to bring scientific problems to you. Get in touch with the farmers and find out what is puzzling them on their farms ... you may find out something of great commercial value to your district (1932:160).

At about the same time, Wills (1933) argued that new cooperation between schools and communities in NZ had resulted in the development of new fodder crops, improved weed recognition and eradication, the introduction of silage pits and improved recognition of pasture grasses.

In 1917 James Strachan was appointed principal at Rangiora High School (RHS). He quickly proposed a, "drastic overhaul of the curriculum" to the school board (1938:64).

Echoing the sentiments of British progressives of the time, he reflected:

The lesson of the war years seemed to me to be the futility of much of our education ... the old schooling (is) not good enough for children of the new era (1938:64).

⁹² Somerset may have been responsible for other innovations at ODHS. According to Butchers (1953), the students at ODHS elected a school council and in 1925 they produced a school magazine entitled *Pitiarero*.

⁹³ This refers to Burt's advice to the Hadow Committee (1920-1934) about adolescent education in Britain.

Strachan adopted a child-centred pedagogy similar to other NZ progressive approaches of the time. However, he also posed an insightful question: rather than simply changing the teaching approach, he asked how might the curriculum – and thus the school and the local community – be shaped to meet the needs of the individual? Strachan envisaged an ‘organic’ curriculum which could be embedded in the community setting. He explained:

This calls for an integration of studies and a cooperation of staff and students that cannot be effected without the most careful planning and organisation ... the school must become ‘organic’ in respect to its curriculum, ‘organic’ in respect to its human constitution, and ‘organic’ in its environment (1938:26).

Strachan integrated his ‘course of studies’ by adopting an organising theme he called ‘human life’ which emphasised the everyday life of the local community. He argued that subject matter needed to be horizontally and vertically integrated to achieve unity. He stated:

There are ... important differences between this organic course ... and the group of subjects that superficially resembles it ... It should be a unified course, and not a number of independent subjects. There must be unity of theme and unity of purpose (1938:50).

Strachan’s design enhanced personal and social integration by including students in the process of curriculum planning and development. He used the school farm – with its rich links with the rural community – as the context for his organising centre of ‘human life’ (1938:26). Strachan envisaged the school as an egalitarian learning community where students worked collaboratively with their teachers and peers, as well as with individuals in the wider community. He stated, “school life must be one with the life of the community and the life of the world” (1938:36). Previously, RHS students had been streamed according to their presumed vocations however Strachan decided to allot time for general education where the students were kept together. Adopting the ‘pragmatism’ of the American progressives, he argued that the RHS students had a, “common heritage of culture” and, “should work together as a cooperative society, realising their interdependence and striving by common effort to raise their social life to a higher level” (1938:65). Strachan also enhanced cooperation and goodwill in the school community by creating a student ‘council’. The council wielded significant power, thus it operated as an effective form of self-government. He later reflected:

In the period just prior to the institution of the School Council, order and discipline in the school were decidedly bad. The School Council effected an immediate and decided improvement (1938:91).

The RHS 'experiment' survived an initial period of antagonism from officials before finding favour in the 1930s with Minister of Education, Harry Atmore (Strachan, 1938).

Strachan was influenced by an eclectic range of progressives (Strachan, 1938 & 1940). An early influence was British liberal thinker and science fiction author H.G. Wells who espoused progressivism, social evolution and utopianism.⁹⁴ On the home front in NZ, Strachan was buoyed by Shelley's tireless enthusiasm. He stressed that Shelley was, "of (the) greatest help and inspiration" (1938:7). Strachan visited the USA in the 1930s, where his observations in progressive schools left a lasting impression on him. Dollard commented:

That (Strachan) finds much to admire in our progressive schools is not remarkable ... he has insisted that due recognition be given to variations in ability and interest and has so organized the curriculum of his own school as to give his students comprehensive and useful knowledge about themselves and about the world in which they must live (1940:vi).

Strachan (1940) was impressed by the integrated curriculum he observed at Lincoln School. Founded by Abraham Flexner in 1917, Lincoln School was attached to the Teachers' College at Columbia University (Cremin, 1961). Flexner's approach, "employed an extended 'centre of interest' method, developing many of the lines of theory and practice started by Dewey in Chicago" (Stewart, 1972:266). Strachan enthusiastically asserted that the educational philosophy of Lincoln School, "(could be) expressed in one word: integration" (1940:88). He explained:

(Lincoln School) has given up traditional courses of more or less related subjects and has substituted an 'integrated curriculum' ... much the same thing as the core course of some other American schools and our own organic course. Integrated courses ... suitable to different age groups are then planned by groups of teachers with some help from students (1940:90).

Strachan remarked that early adolescents at Lincoln School exhibited much energy and vitality. He observed a lesson as the class presented their research on New York housing.

⁹⁴ Wells was also a founding member of the PEA's advisory council (Cremin, 1961).

He noted, “the discussion was very animated ... (the students were) obviously keenly interested ... and had prepared thoroughly” (1940:91). Strachan observed another class as they explored literary ‘Utopias’. He observed:

The relationships of student and teacher seemed to be very natural and friendly. It was obvious that there was (a) complete understanding and community of interest and that in all matters each represented the other’s point of view (1940:93).

Strachan’s curriculum incorporated the same notions of integration previously articulated by Dewey. He understood that genuine curriculum integration requires the aggregation of the formal curriculum, the ‘hidden curriculum’ (including all aspects of school life) and wider community life as the subject matter for personal and social integration.

As a long-serving principal, Strachan controlled his school curriculum for a lengthy period, so eventually won support for his innovatory curriculum from the community and from government officials. Although his work was widely respected, it was not adopted by others. Strachan was admired for adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of his community but most educators overlooked the wider significance of his curriculum design (for example: Department of Education, 1949b). Murdoch was one of the few to comprehend Strachan’s approach. He described it as, “closely inter-correlated and interwoven (with) selective courses representing different routes that all lead, in their distinctive ways, to the understanding of life” (1944:68). He asserted that Strachan’s, “daring (and) original” approach, “embodied the spirit” of Milner’s resolution to the NZSSA in 1933 (Murdoch, 1944:67).

Understandings of curriculum integration in the 1940s

Even at its high point, only a handful of NZ educators grasped the significance of the concept of curriculum integration. In a short article entitled, *What does integration mean?* Douglas Ball (1948) described personal integration as, “the process by which an individual improves the functional unity of (their) experiences”. He explained that personal integration, “is deepened by purposive, deliberative action in a social setting” (1948:114). Ball’s description of integration recalled Dewey’s Laboratory School approach. Ball rejected the multidisciplinary view which suggested that integration is

simply, “the coordination or correlation of several studies”. Impressed by an overseas approach⁹⁵, he asserted:

I am certain that any kind of integration that is going to be vital must begin by considering together the children, the teachers, and the subject content of the curriculum (1948:115).

Ball also realised that the process of curriculum making and the choice of subject matter is unique to each community, thus he urged teachers to find out, “how best to integrate the curriculum for their particular schools” (1948:115).

Somerset (1941 & 1948) outlined his vision for progressive education in NZ. As a sociologist he was well aware of the role the social environment could play in curriculum design. He stated that, “the new education aims at making (young people) aware of the communities of which (they are) a member” (1941:218). He suggested that links between the classroom and the community could be strengthened by self-government in the school, embedding subject areas into the community setting, and cooperative enterprises between community and school. Later, he added that learning tools such as the community survey provided, “a living experience of community” (1948:173).

Murdoch (1944) outlined a vision for adolescent schooling in NZ which was strikingly similar to Lindeman’s (1937) vision for middle schooling in the USA. He thought that student-centred curriculum integration within community contexts was especially appropriate for adolescent learners. He argued that, “the education of the adolescent is finally a sociological problem” (1944:431). Murdoch called for curriculum planners to consider subject matter within a social context. He stated:

I would urge that the future curriculum planning should not be thought of in terms of subject alone; that we weigh with great care the real values that each possible subject may contribute to life, and then see how far and by what means those possibilities may be realised (1944:408).

⁹⁵ Ball referred to an approach adopted by the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland in their 1946 report on Scottish primary education (no reference).

Understandings of curriculum integration in NZ after the 1940s

The vision of curriculum integration for early adolescents contained by the Thomas Report gradually faded after the 1940s and 1950s. However, much of its spirit – if not always the same intent – was kept alive in the pages of official reports between the 1960s and 1990s. The 1962 Currie Report offered its, “thorough endorsement” to the aims of the 1943 Thomas Report which, it judged, had enhanced the ‘social and creative aspects’ of education⁹⁶ (Department of Education, 1962:366). It also extended the concept of equality of educational opportunity enshrined in the 1939 Fraser-Beeby statement, by stating that equality should apply to education, “at all levels, not just post-primary (1962:11). In particular, the Currie Report argued that ‘common schooling’ – implying a general curriculum – represented, “one of the greatest (social) integrating forces in the community” (1962:402). The Report also stated that teachers had a ‘duty’ to avoid narrow specialisation and to help students explore and understand the interdisciplinary significance of each subject area as, “a part of the (whole) complex of knowledge” (1962:367). The Educational Development Conference (Department of Education, 1974) echoed these aspects of the Currie Report. Summarising a wide range of submissions from communities in the lower North Island, it called for a general curriculum which promised to make learning for young people, “more relevant to later life” (1974:29) and provide, “a *broad general education* ... (which) emphasised *interdisciplinarity*” (1974:46, original emphasis). Even the comparatively conservative 1984 Ross Report⁹⁷ suggested that school time-tabling should allow interdisciplinary studies such as, “traffic education”, “consumer education” and “energy education” (Department of Education, 1984:23). The Brice Report⁹⁸ (Department of Education, 1987) argued that the national curriculum should be based on key ‘Principles’. In doing so it recapitulated the doctrine of the Thomas and Currie Reports by stating that a curriculum of the, “*highest quality*” should be “*accessible*” to every student. It reiterated that education is a, “*continuous and lifelong process*” thus it insisted that the curriculum, “shall be *balanced*” with “broad and

⁹⁶ However, the authors noted that, “development of in-service training, curricular revision and the strengthening of core studies” was needed to assure the value of ‘social content’ in the curriculum (1962:366).

⁹⁷ The full title of the Ross Report was: *A review of the core curriculum for schools*

⁹⁸ The full title of the Brice Report was: *The curriculum review: report of the committee to review the curriculum for schools*

general” learning aims (1987:10-11, original emphasis). Later, ‘The Principles’ within the NZCF (Ministry of Education, 1993:6-7) faithfully reflected the same concerns.

The Brice Report ‘Principles’ signalled a stronger commitment to democratic education than earlier official reports on the NZ curriculum. They gave special emphasis to the needs of each individual and provided a clear mandate for student-centred curriculum integration. The ‘Principles’ stated that the curriculum, “shall be *whole* ... not fragmented by artificial divisions of school organisation, time-tabling, or subject boundaries” (1987:10, original emphasis). They also stated that the curriculum should be, “planned” and, “cooperatively designed” (1987:11, original emphasis). The committee enlarged:

Decisions about the curriculum will be shared by people representative of the many groups who make up each school and its community, *including students*, (family) and teachers. Provision shall be made for people affected by decisions to participate in making these decisions (1987:11, added emphasis).

The ‘Principles’ also stated that schools were to be, “*responsive*” to their communities (1987:11, original emphasis). The Report clarified this by stipulating:

Each school must continually review its curriculum to make sure it is responding to the needs of communities and cultures, to the needs of NZ society, to new understandings of how people learn, and to the changing needs of individual learners (1987:11).

The ‘Principles’ also highlighted the requirement for an, “*inclusive*” curriculum (1987:11, original emphasis). The committee clarified this by stating:

All students should feel part of an educational system *which has been designed with their active involvement – it should be learner friendly*. The curriculum will take account of the needs and experiences of all students, including their background knowledge and existing ideas, and the diverse character of the community (1987:11, emphasis added).

Accordingly, the Brice Report ‘Principles’ shaped a vision for a democratic kind of education which provided ideal conditions for the integrative model of curriculum integration. In particular, the ‘Principles’ recognised that the national curriculum would not be genuinely student-centred or inclusive until each student is actively involved in curriculum planning and decision-making. The Brice Committee thought that many NZ

schools needed to reorganise their curricula in ways which would ‘best suit’ the needs of students in each community. Although they wanted to avoid being prescriptive, the authors expressed their preference for curriculum integration. The committee stated:

Some schools may choose to continue, for a time, an organisation based on the present subjects; others will choose to organise their programs around themes or experience-based activities; yet others will integrate some or all of their programs into broad areas such as humanities, technology, or social and cultural activities (1987:13).

Nonetheless, the Brice Report failed to differentiate between student-centred curriculum integration and subject-centred multidisciplinary curriculum.

In general, the rhetoric of official NZ documents, from the 1943 Thomas Report through to the 1993 New Zealand Curriculum Framework (NZCF), has been favourably disposed towards the concept of curriculum integration but – as has also been the case in Canada (Werner, 1991) and the USA (Brophy & Alleman, 1991) – support has been expressed in vague and imprecise terms. As discussed in Chapter 2, official documents in NZ have not differentiated between types of curriculum integration which raises significant doubt that NZ officials have had a sufficient understanding of the concept.

The Freyberg Integrated Studies Project

The first few years of the 1984-1989 Labour administration provided a window of opportunity for educational innovation. Aware of widespread dissatisfaction with the state of junior high schooling in NZ, the then Minister of Education, Russell Marshall foreshadowed the message of the 1987 Brice Report by urging schools to develop better programs – such as curriculum integration – which would be more relevant and meaningful to students (McKinnon, Nolan, Openshaw & Soler, 1991). One of the most significant curriculum innovations in this period⁹⁹ was the ‘Freyberg Integrated Studies Project’ (1986-1991) at Freyberg High School (FHS), a mid-decile secondary school in Palmerston North. The Project team implemented ‘integrated studies’ in an ICT

⁹⁹ Another curriculum project in Christchurch aimed to democratically develop, “a democratic and technologically relevant curriculum for fifth formers in three working class schools” (Khan, 1990:123). The original intention was to develop curriculum integration at the ‘grass roots level’ but this was abandoned after officials refused to allow certification unless the schools involved adhered to the School Certificate syllabus (Khan, 1990).

environment to develop collaborative learning communities in several Years 9-11 classrooms (Brown & Nolan, 1989; McKinnon, Nolan, Openshaw & Soler, 1991; Nolan, Openshaw, McKinnon & Soler, 1992). The Project resulted in significant changes of student attitudes towards learning. In particular, Project students accounted for only 10% of the disciplinary problems referred to senior management staff, despite representing 60% of the school population (McKinnon, Nolan, Openshaw & Soler, 1991). Moreover, Project students achieved significantly better results in School Certificate examinations than students who opted for traditional schooling approaches (McKinnon, Nolan & Sinclair, 2000). In contrast to earlier examples of curriculum integration in NZ¹⁰⁰, the Freyberg curriculum had a solid theoretical foundation. The Project innovators relied on the British literature on curriculum integration from the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁰¹ In particular, the work of Bernstein (1971), Pring (1976a) and Stenhouse (1968) provided them with a theoretical framework for the design of the Project curriculum (McKinnon, Nolan & McFadden, 1992). The authors asserted that notions of integration were apparent via:

1. The linking of one subject in the context of another;
2. The linking of subjects by addressing a common theme; and,
3. Through the application of knowledge and skills from a variety of subjects to study selected issues and problems (McKinnon & others, 1992:18).

Although this seemed to imply a subject-centred version of curriculum integration, the innovators also incorporated out-of-class activities to examine ‘real issues and problems’. They asserted that their concept of curriculum integration also included students’ ‘interests and concerns’ and used subject matter which students perceived as worthwhile and motivating (McKinnon & others, 1992:18). The Freyberg innovators seemed to have an implicit understanding of personal integration. They also appreciated the pedagogical value of collaborative work but placed little emphasis on the democratic purpose of social integration (McKinnon & others, 1992:9).

¹⁰⁰ The outstanding exceptions were the two curricula mentioned earlier in this chapter (Strachan, 1938; Somerset, 1938) which, inspired by Dewey’s ideas, connected the school with the rural community.

¹⁰¹ Note that the Project researchers were unfamiliar with key American contributions to the theory and practice of curriculum integration such as Hopkins (1937a, 1941 & 1954) (Nolan, personal communication 2005).

Up until the 1990s the emphasis on the secondary school examination system and the presence of a centralised bureaucracy tended to stifle curriculum innovation in NZ (Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993; Khan, 1990). Indeed, a key to the success of Strachan's and Somerset's curriculum innovations in the 1930s is that they were alternatives to academic courses, thus they did not threaten the examination system. An outstanding feature of the Freyberg Project was that it successfully implemented curriculum integration as an *academic* course. As a result the Project repositioned the concept of curriculum integration as a serious alternative to traditional methods of preparing candidates for public examinations. Moreover, it produced convincing evidence that student-centred curriculum integration ably meets the educational and developmental needs of early adolescents. The Freyberg Project (1986-1991) brought the concept of curriculum integration to the attention of NZ educators, however – as discussed in Chapter 2 – the evidence suggests that for most the concept remained an enigma.

Conclusion

This chapter traced the development of progressive education in NZ. It explained that in the 1920s and 1930s an indigenous strain of the British 'New Education' catalysed educational reform in NZ. The 1936 'Milner curriculum' and the 1943 Thomas Report led to a liberal curriculum which offered extensive support for curriculum integration. This chapter examined a range of curriculum innovations from the 1930s and 1940s at the height of the progressive influence in NZ. Certain iconic innovations from this period – including model cottages, school farms and school newspapers – played an important part in a paradigm shift which resituated subject matter into meaningful contexts. The most popular method of achieving this outcome was the child-centred teaching approach – exemplified by creative teachers such as Ashton-Warner and Richardson – which is still recognisable in today's primary school classrooms. Nonetheless as discussed earlier in Chapter 3, the child-centred teaching method did not promote curriculum integration because it left the subject matter of the traditional curriculum intact, thus it did not contribute to any kind of reorganisation of subject matter which, of itself, is the fundamental purpose of all approaches to curriculum integration. However as also discussed in Chapter 4, whenever Dewey's ideas were adopted with any coherency,

notions of integration were much more likely to flourish. Accordingly, this chapter argued that the innovative curricula of Strachan (1938) and Somerset (1938) – where student-centred curriculum integration was implemented by using the organising theme of the farming community – were important NZ contributions to the concept of curriculum integration. This chapter also examined official reports on the national curriculum since the 1943 Thomas Report. It found that the liberal spirit of the 1943 Thomas Report was recaptured in the 1987 Brice Report. The Brice Report provided the impetus for a brief period of innovation in the 1980s. This chapter argued that a key innovation from this period – the Freyberg Project – breathed new life into the concept of curriculum integration in NZ education by demonstrating that it was a valid choice for students with academic aspirations and that it was well suited to the developmental and educational needs of early adolescents.

Chapter 6

The general theory of the multidisciplinary and integrative models

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 discussed and analysed historical understandings of the concept of curriculum integration and allied notions. My investigation now turns to a theoretical analysis of contemporary models of curriculum integration in the USA.¹⁰² As discussed in Chapter 3, the American progressives developed two forms of curriculum integration. The first form – the forerunner of Beane’s (1990a/1993a) integrative model – was the ‘core’ approach popularised by the Eight-Year Study which, at its most innovative, was collaboratively planned and implemented by students and teachers. The second form – the forerunner of Jacobs’ (1989a) multidisciplinary model – was developed in the Virginia Curriculum Project (VCP) where teams of teachers prepared multidisciplinary units (Kliebard, 1995). This chapter introduces and critiques the general theory of the multidisciplinary and integrative models. It draws extensively from both historic and recent understandings of curriculum integration to situate and explain the conceptual frameworks of each model. It also examines common criticisms of each model and establishes the need for political and ethical analyses of the models in Chapters 7 and 8.

Section 1: The multidisciplinary model

Correlation as ‘horizontal integration’

The general theory of the multidisciplinary model has changed little over the last century. It is directly descended from the nineteenth century Herbartian idea of the *correlation* of subject areas¹⁰³ and the subject-centred curriculum designs discussed in Chapter 3. The only notion of integration entailed within the multidisciplinary model is ‘horizontal integration’ (Tyler, 1949) which is synonymous with the correlation of subject areas.

The multidisciplinary model represents an attempt to reposition subject matter more efficiently than the single-subject approach. However, its first priority is to protect the

¹⁰² As noted in Chapter 1, the analysis is confined to the American context where curriculum integration has been implemented widely at the middle level.

¹⁰³ According to Beane (1997), the Herbartian notion of correlation has also been referred to as ‘an integration of studies’.

integrity of the single-subject approach by retaining discrete subject areas within highly recognisable ‘building blocks’ (Gehrke, 1998). The correlation of subject areas involves the identification of overlaps which are eliminated when connections between subject areas are made. Subject areas are then organised around central themes found in one or more of the dominant subject areas. When overlaps between two or more subject areas are frequent, subject areas are sometimes ‘fused’. For instance: algebra, calculus and geometry might be combined or fused to form general mathematics.

Jacobs’ multidisciplinary model

Heidi Hayes Jacobs (1989a) popularised the multidisciplinary model however she added little to the theory of integration, other than extending the notions of ‘scope’ and ‘sequence’. Nonetheless, her contribution gained attention from subject-centred advocates because it gave teachers and administrators increased control over the content of the classroom curriculum. Jacobs based her multidisciplinary model on the apparent needs of gifted and talented students (Jacobs & Borland, 1986). Extrapolating this earlier work, Jacobs claimed that the main ‘advantage’ of her model was that it provided a, “more relevant, less fragmented and stimulating experience for students” (1989b:10). Although Jacobs did not attempt to justify this statement or indicate what she was comparing her multidisciplinary model with¹⁰⁴, others offered varying degrees of support. Vars asserted that correlation has, “obvious benefits in reinforcing learnings and showing students how various subjects relate” (1993:21). Tanner stated:

Integration¹⁰⁵ concerns the horizontal relationships of learning activities ... (its purpose) is to provide students with a unified view and, in so doing, offer a more effective curriculum (1997:56).

Beane (1993b & 1997) also offered qualified support for Jacobs’ claim. He agreed that research evidence offered support for the idea of repositioning knowledge within contexts or themes but he added the all-important caveat that learning contexts must be relevant and personally meaningful to students.

¹⁰⁴ Although she did not make the point explicit, the context of her writing strongly suggested Jacobs was comparing her multidisciplinary model with the single-subject approach (1989b:9-10).

¹⁰⁵ It would be more accurate to replace the term ‘integration’ with the phrase ‘the correlation of subjects’.

Although Jacobs did not refer to the long history of multidisciplinary curriculum in the USA, it is evident that her work was situated within this tradition. Her curriculum design was based on the Herbartian notion of correlation. It also replicated aspects of Caswell's VCP work and adopted the subject-area component of Tyler's (1949) curriculum 'rationale'.¹⁰⁶ Tyler had sought to ensure that the subject matter implied by curriculum designs would be worthwhile and meaningful. He stated, "in order for educational experiences to produce a cumulative effect, they must be organised as to reinforce each other" (1949:83). He endorsed the VCP design (1949:20) and approved, "the use of a two-dimensional chart" to define the 'scope' and 'sequence' of learning (1949:48). Tyler, who played a key role in the Eight-Year Study, also focused on individual and social needs but Jacobs (1989a) was apparently unaware of this aspect of his rationale.

Jacobs did not develop a complete theory of integration as such. In particular, she seemed to be unaware of Dewey's understanding that when people learn, they do *their own* integrating. As quoted earlier, Dewey described the basis for personal integration:

The mentally active ... (learner's) mind roams far and wide. All (subject matter) is grist that comes to (their) mill ... yet the mind does not merely roam abroad. It returns with what is found, and there is constant judgment to detect relations, relevancies (and) bearings on the central theme. The outcome is a continuously growing intellectual integration ... within the limits set by capacity and experience this ... is the process of learning (1931:424).

Jacobs (1989a, 1997a) developed a model which reduced the notion of 'integration' to a mechanical process conducted by teachers and administrators beyond the classroom, thus her model explicitly prevented students from participating in any aspect of integration.

According to Schubert's (1995) analysis outlined in Chapter 3, Jacobs emphasised the factor of *subject matter* but ignored the factors of *child* and *society*. Her model – essentially a 'one-legged stool' – lacked any semblance of 'balance' between the three factors. Jacobs' only priority was *subject matter*, which meant that she extended the notions of 'scope' and 'sequence' to an extreme.

¹⁰⁶ Bullough and Kridel pointed out that while Tyler's rationale emphasized, "individual needs and social needs, (it also had) a third orientation, subject areas" (2003:152).

Jacobs (1989b) identified two weaknesses in her model. She called the first weakness the ‘potpourri problem’ where a unit was spread too thinly, so that it consisted of ‘samples’ of knowledge dutifully collected from each subject area. Ackerman¹⁰⁷ asserted that the potpourri problem could be overcome by guiding students to see how subjects formed, “a coherent view”, however he did not explain how this complex process could be accomplished or assured (1989:26). Jacobs called the second weakness the ‘polarity problem’ where one subject area dominates other subject areas. Ackerman also expressed concern about the ‘polarity problem’ in teacher teaming where, “weak advocates for their disciplines may lose some turf” (1989:36). These two weaknesses in the multidisciplinary model – which have also been identified as traditional weaknesses in the notion of correlation – have been described by others (for instance: Aikin, 1942; Alleman & Brophy, 1993; Beane, 1997; Panaritis, 1995). Ellis and Stuen (1998) echoed Dewey’s concern that multidisciplinary connections could become increasingly artificial. They remarked on a, “siren call of superficiality” in the design of most multidisciplinary units (1998:11). Beane (1997) also asserted that teachers often adopted ill-considered unit themes. In such instances he suggested that the multidisciplinary model amounted to little more than the pursuit of, “collecting more and more trivial information ... (for) themes such as teddy bears, dinosaurs and apples” (1997:69). According to Bernstein’s (1971) framework outlined in Chapter 4, the multidisciplinary model is a ‘collection code’ curriculum where the theme is subordinate to the subject areas, thus it is unsurprising that many themes have been perceived to be trivial or contrived.

Jacobs developed a way to ameliorate the ‘potpourri’ and ‘polarity’ problems which gave administrators increased control over the curriculum and reduced teacher autonomy. She asserted that, “curriculum developers ... must develop a content scope and sequence for any (multidisciplinary) unit” (1989b:2). Later Jacobs (1997a) extended this idea by stating that multidisciplinary planning should include the use of an elaborate matrix where subject areas are cross-referenced in an exercise of, “curriculum mapping” (English, 1980:558) to ensure that the subject-areas are efficiently ‘covered’. In a recent interview with Perkins-Gough, Jacobs stated that, “the key to mapping is that each

¹⁰⁷ As discussed below, Jacobs (1989a) relied heavily on Ackerman for justification of her model.

teacher enters the data (about what is taught) electronically” (Perkins-Gough, 2004:12). Presumably, the ensuing computerised record gives administrators the means to check up on teachers in real time and ensure that they adhere to the official curriculum. Jacobs also stated that the curriculum should be ‘mapped’ ahead for years at a time (Brandt, 1991; Jacobs, 1997a). Although Jacobs’ strategy of curriculum mapping is likely to minimise the ‘potpourri’ and ‘polarity’ problems, it has certain drawbacks. First, the drive to eliminate ‘overlaps’ in the curriculum can stop richer meanings from emerging where two or more disciplinary viewpoints could otherwise be used to examine one idea (Siskin, 2000). Second, disciplines and subjects do not remain static over time – least of all in the twentieth-first century when new knowledge is being produced at a faster rate than ever before – thus a ‘mapped’ curriculum is soon rendered obsolete. Third, mapping marginalises the problems and interests of students. Accordingly, an intensively mapped multidisciplinary unit is not inclusive because it is not relevant to all students.

Ackerman’s ‘criteria for excellence’

Jacobs (1989a) justified her curriculum model with sole reference to the work of Ackerman (1989).¹⁰⁸ She claimed that Ackerman had established, “criteria for excellence (for her multidisciplinary model)”, thus his work is examined here in some detail (Jacobs, 1989b:10). Ackerman asserted that teachers should use four, “intellectual criteria” to assess the quality of a multidisciplinary unit (1989:27-30). His first criterion, *validity within the disciplines* required teachers to verify that concepts were important to ‘their’ subject, thus it aimed to reduce the incidence of trivial connections. Ackerman’s second criterion, *validity for the disciplines* required teachers to verify that the theme enhanced the learning of, “discipline-based concepts”, thus it aimed to minimise the likelihood of trivial themes. While Ackerman conveyed his first two criteria as explicit directives, his last two criteria were expressed in a more tentative – even speculative – tone. His third criterion, *validity beyond the disciplines* asked teachers to consider whether cross-curricular connections might offer, “a metaconceptual bonus – a ‘powerful idea’, a cross-cutting idea, a perspective on perspective taking, a direction of experience – that may be

¹⁰⁸ Ackerman’s (1989) work was Chapter 3 in Jacobs’ (1989a) book. Incidentally, he consistently used the term of ‘curriculum integration’ – rather than ‘multidisciplinary curriculum’ – to refer to Jacobs’ model.

of great value". Accordingly he asked teachers to look out for the exceptional which might be implied by certain synergies within integration. Ackerman's fourth criterion, *contribution to broader outcomes* recognised that schooling consisted of more than the transmission of subject matter. It asked teachers to consider whether or not students were likely to learn certain skills. Ackerman suggested that:

(Students who are taught using multidisciplinary curriculum) may become more skilled at and comfortable with flexible thinking and with adopting multiple points of view ... they may become more adept at generating analogies and metaphors, may comprehend them better and may better understand their limitations (1989:30).

Ackerman's repeated use of 'may' as a qualifier suggests that he doubted these outcomes would occur for many, or even a minority, of students. Perhaps he realised that the multidisciplinary model did not recognise individual student needs and differences. In one instance he implied that advocates of the multidisciplinary model should be more mindful that each young individual has unique abilities and aptitudes and that a cohort of learners – like early adolescents – exhibit unique developmental needs. Ackerman stated:

In deliberating over whether to adopt a (multidisciplinary) program it is legitimate to assess its potential contribution to the development of desirable intellectual dispositions, and more broadly, to the *development of the person* (1989:30, emphasis added).

Ackerman's argument lacked sufficient rigour to lend authority to Jacobs' work. He did not define Jacobs' multidisciplinary model. In common with Jacobs, Ackerman's approach was ahistoric and he ignored the literature of curriculum integration. Moreover, Ackerman's analysis rested on unwarranted assumptions. He assumed that all teachers would be subject specialists and that teacher teaming would be used. He also assumed that the single-subject approach and Jacobs' multidisciplinary model were the only existing curriculum designs. His assumptions therefore conveniently disqualified other designs for curriculum integration from his analysis.

Critiques of subject-centred curricula

Subject-centred curricula, which include the multidisciplinary model, are broadly founded on the assumption that it is in the best interest of society – and by extension, the individual – to transmit to each child the bundle of knowledge deemed to be vital.

Chapters 7 and 8 explain that while this assumption is the logical outcome of a neoliberal ideology, it is not in the best interests of every young person. The traditional curriculum takes the form of several carefully selected portions of subject matter drawn from the respective disciplines which are then presented as discrete parcels of knowledge or 'subjects'. However due to their artificial subject boundaries and arbitrarily defined subject matter, subject-centred curricula generally lack coherency and meaning to early adolescents. Dewey (1938) argued that subject-centred schooling was closely attuned to the needs of the industrial revolution thus it aimed to inculcate tightly prescribed subject matter and patterns of behaviour which were directly applicable to the factory floor. He stated:

Since the subject matter as well as standards of proper conduct is handed down from the past, the attitude of students must, upon the whole, be one of docility, receptivity and obedience (1938:18).

Moreover, Bernstein (1971) explained that 'collection code' curricula could only meet the needs of small minorities of students who go beyond the 'novitiate' stage in any given subject area. He asserted that subject-centred curricula nearly always inflict a sizable proportion of students with 'wounding' or 'meaningless' classroom experiences. In the context of contemporary post-industrial America, the objections to subject-centred curricula raised by Dewey and Bernstein are especially compelling. For instance, Ladson-Billings emphasised that curricula without relevance or coherence lack the capacity to, "transform and empower students to be active, critically aware participants in a democratic and highly technological society" (1995:162).

Vars singled out Jacobs' multidisciplinary model for criticism, commenting that it paid, "insufficient attention to the needs, problems, and concerns of students" (2000:79-80). Brazee and Capelluti also stated that Jacobs' multidisciplinary model was a, "shot-gun approach ... (indicative of) insufficient knowledge of both young adolescents and curriculum improvement" (1995:27). Lauritzen and Jaeger (1997) explained that themes and linkages used by practitioners of the multidisciplinary model were similar to those used in single subjects. They stated that such themes are, "synthetic, arbitrary and really no better than traditional organisation by separate subject areas" (1997:xiii). Beane

(1993a) aptly summarised the situation by arguing that subject-centred curricula are, ‘only tenuously’ justified on an educational basis but – as also argued in Chapter 7 – they are ‘more easily’ explained by referring to the dominant political agenda.

Section 2: The integrative model

Beyond the correlation of subject matter

As discussed in Chapter 3, the early American progressives rejected the Herbartian notion of correlation. Instead they developed a two-pronged curricular approach which utilised real life contexts to ‘correlate’ subject matter with the needs of the individual student and the needs of a citizenship democracy. Dewey asserted, “relate the school to life, and all studies are of necessity correlated” (1915:91). Later, Junius Meriam similarly stated that, “correlation will be natural when the problem studied belongs to real life” (1920:36 cited Wraga, 1997). As explained in Chapter 3, ‘correlation’¹⁰⁹ – or personal and social integration – was achieved in Dewey’s Laboratory School where the teachers redefined the notion of subject matter so that it related to human experience. For the individual learner this was just one step away from directly relating subject matter to their personal interests and concerns. Dewey, along with fellow social ameliorist Boyd H. Bode, also established the case for general education as a requirement for an effective democracy. Dewey stated, “what the best and wisest parent wants for (their) child, that must the community want for all of its children” (1915:3). This notion of ‘common learnings’ was also central in the Eight-Year Study (1933-1941) and a key element in progressive education thereafter (Vars, 2000).

Contemporary middle school teachers have often recognised that early adolescents need to ‘own’ the curriculum (Stevenson, 1998). Accordingly, one recent middle level trend has been to reintroduce the old progressive idea of ‘service learning’ so that students learn to engage in their communities and gain hands-on experience as active citizens in a democracy (Brazee, 1997; Epstein, 1996; Kielsmeier, 2000; Maeroff, 1990; Schine,

¹⁰⁹ It would be more accurate to replace the term of ‘correlation’ with ‘integration’. Once the term of ‘integration’ became established in the literature (Hopkins, 1937a) the use of ‘correlation’ in the student-centred sense became extinct.

1997). However, the key to developing a democratic learning community *inside* the classroom is to give young people genuine, “opportunities to assume initiative and responsibility with regard to curriculum and school life” (Arnold, 1997:31). As Amy Gutmann commented:

It would be ... remarkable if the best way to prepare students for citizenship (was) to deny them both individual and collective influence in shaping their own education (1987:94).

As explained in Chapter 3, the high-point of the American progressive movement coincided with the arrival of the mid-twentieth century ‘core’ approaches. Interest in purely child-centred approaches had largely dissipated by the end of the 1920s and, influenced by the social ameliorists and reconstructivists, core approaches placed more emphasis on the needs of a democratic society and rather less emphasis on the individual. Hopkins (1954) restored a balance between these two objectives by asking an important question: *who* should make the curriculum? As hinted by Lindeman (1937), Hopkins argued that as young people gain a sense of ‘self’, they need to construct and experience the notion of citizenship democracy as an integral aspect of their schooling. Hopkins’ work on notions of integration implied that a design for curriculum integration should take Dewey’s Laboratory School curriculum design one step further by situating the subject matter of the curriculum in the context of the personal interests and concerns of young people. As discussed in Chapter 3, the reincarnation of the middle school in the 1960s led to a fresh examination of Hopkins’ question with respect to early adolescent needs and middle level curriculum design. A select group of progressive educators made encouraging progress. Lounsbury and Vars (1978) proposed ‘structured’ and ‘unstructured’ variations of the core approach. Finally at the end of the century, Beane (1990a/1993a, 1997) repackaged Dewey’s and Hopkins’ ideas in his integrative model of curriculum integration.

The end of ‘problem-centred’ core approaches

The *unstructured core* variation of the core approach examined in Chapter 3 (Lounsbury & Vars, 1978; Vars 1987/1993) represented the last interpretation of the mid-twentieth century core approach. Vars (1991) asserted that the ‘ultimate’ student-centred approach

was unstructured core where teachers and students collaborate to develop units based on common problems. He argued that the only limits were that studies had to be, “worthwhile, doable and appropriate for the students’ level of maturity” (1991:14). Nonetheless, the unstructured core approach had its shortcomings. Subject-centred advocates claimed that the unstructured core lacked rigour, a definite form or even a clear purpose. Student-centred advocates struggled to resolve an uneasy tension between the democratic intent of unstructured core and the need to ensure that subject matter would be worthwhile. As a result, the unstructured core approach relied on highly talented teachers who were sufficiently conversant in the progressive tradition to prevent subject matter from becoming trivial. Core advocates were well aware that this was expecting too much. As discussed in Chapter 3, Van Til (1976) suggested a range of organising centres for ‘meaningful’ subject matter but these could not be logically applied to unstructured core because this would frustrate the democratic goal of student input. Finally, Beane (1990a, 1990b, 1990c) provided an elegant solution to the difficulties encountered by earlier student-centred advocates by designing a new model which superseded the unstructured core approach.

The integrative model

James Beane’s student-centred *integrative model* of curriculum integration represented a comprehensive theory which reinterpreted the notions of integration identified by Dewey and Hopkins more than half a century earlier. The integrative model took Lounsbury and Vars’ unstructured core approach a step further, since – as Vars pointed out – it meant that, “the entire curriculum, not just a portion of it, (would) be developed through wide-open teacher-student planning” (1993:25). Beane (1990a/1993a, 1997) incorporated the notions of: *horizontal and vertical integration* of subject matter (within organising centres), *personal integration*, and *social integration* into his design. Underlining the importance of historical understandings of integration, Beane stated:

As it is meant to be, curriculum integration involves ... the integration of experiences, social integration (and) the integration of knowledge (1997:4).

Beane’s main contribution to the theory of integration was to create a subject-centred curriculum model that overcame the problems which had dogged earlier student-centred

approaches. He tailored his integrative model to specifically respond to the developmental needs of early adolescents. As a student of both progressive history and the affective needs of early adolescents, Beane was strongly influenced by the social ameliorists who, in their commitment to the ideology of progressivism¹¹⁰, had emphasised the importance of democracy, human dignity and the recognition of diversity in the curriculum (Beane, 1975, 1980, 1990b, 1990c & 1996). Beane's theoretical work was guided by his conviction that, "(the) authentic integration of educational experiences ... emerges from what young people themselves see as significant issues or problems to explore" (1993b:3). He defined his model of *integrative curriculum*¹¹¹ as:

A curriculum design theory that is concerned with enhancing the possibilities for personal and social integration through the organization of curriculum around significant problems and issues, collaboratively identified by educators and young people, without regard for subject-area lines (1997:19).

The notions of personal and social integration are central to Beane's model. As explained in Chapter 3, they retain the same meanings and purposes elucidated by Dewey and other early progressives. Personal and social integration not only address knowledge and skills – what students should know and be able to do – but also prepare students for active and successful citizenship in a democracy. Bergstrom (1998) aptly recapitulated Dewey's notions of personal and social integration. He stated:

Personal integration engages students in real life learning experiences so that they can incorporate them into their own understanding of themselves and their place in the world. Social integration necessitates that we help learners participate responsibly in the experiences of a democratic community (1998:29).

More often than not, social integration has been omitted from other models of curriculum integration. Yet according to Beane, "democratic social integration" as outlined by Dewey is, "the most powerful use of the concept of curriculum integration" (1997:6). Beane (1990a/1993a) distilled the work of the progressives to achieve a high degree of developmental responsiveness within the design of the integrative model. He drew from progressive thinking in the 1930s which had proposed a general education for early adolescents to promote personal and social integration. Beane asserted:

¹¹⁰ As noted in Chapter 3, 'progressivism' was the political movement which spawned progressive education.

¹¹¹ In 1997 Beane still usually referred to his model as 'curriculum integration', however after this he preferred to use 'integrative curriculum'.

The middle school ought to be a general education school ... based on personal and social concerns ... with a coherent, unified and complete curriculum that defines 'general' upon the basis of what is genuinely of common concern to early adolescents and the larger world (1993a:55).

Beane also adopted Dewey's 'organic' approach towards achieving developmental responsiveness which had asserted that academic development should not be separated from personal development. He explained:

(An organic) developmental view rejects the incorrect separation of affect and cognition and instead integrates them into an accurate theory of authentic humanness (1990c:73).

He also asserted that a developmentally responsive curriculum should include:

Teacher-student planning, curriculum opportunities to discover self and social meanings and use of projects to extend personal ownership of the planned curriculum (1990c:147).

Accordingly, collaborative teacher-student planning facilitates the process of social integration as well as fulfilling several important developmental stage 'tasks' for early adolescents.

The theory of the integrative model

Beane's integrative model was based on the interplay between the dimensions of: (1) *curriculum themes* early from the intersection of personal concerns and social concerns, (2) *knowledge* needed to explore the themes, and (3) the *concepts* of democracy, human dignity and cultural diversity. Figure 1 (next page) depicts Beane's integrative model in diagrammatic form. Beane developed a significantly tighter approach to the selection of subject matter than the method Lounsbury and Vars (1978) had proposed for 'unstructured core'. He discovered a way to select appropriate subject matter *without* forgoing democratic aims. Beane replaced the 'problem-centred' organising centre with an integrative organising centre which generated curriculum themes from the intersections of students' personal concerns and their wider concerns about social issues. He explained that, "the inclusion of personal issues alongside social problems follows from the democratic possibility of integrating self and social interest" (1997:6). He noted that these concerns and issues were, "frequently micro or macro versions of each other"

(1993a:59). For example, the teacher and students might collaboratively plan a theme called 'Health and Disease' which connects personal concerns about longevity with social issues such as finding cures for diseases (Beane, 1997:48).

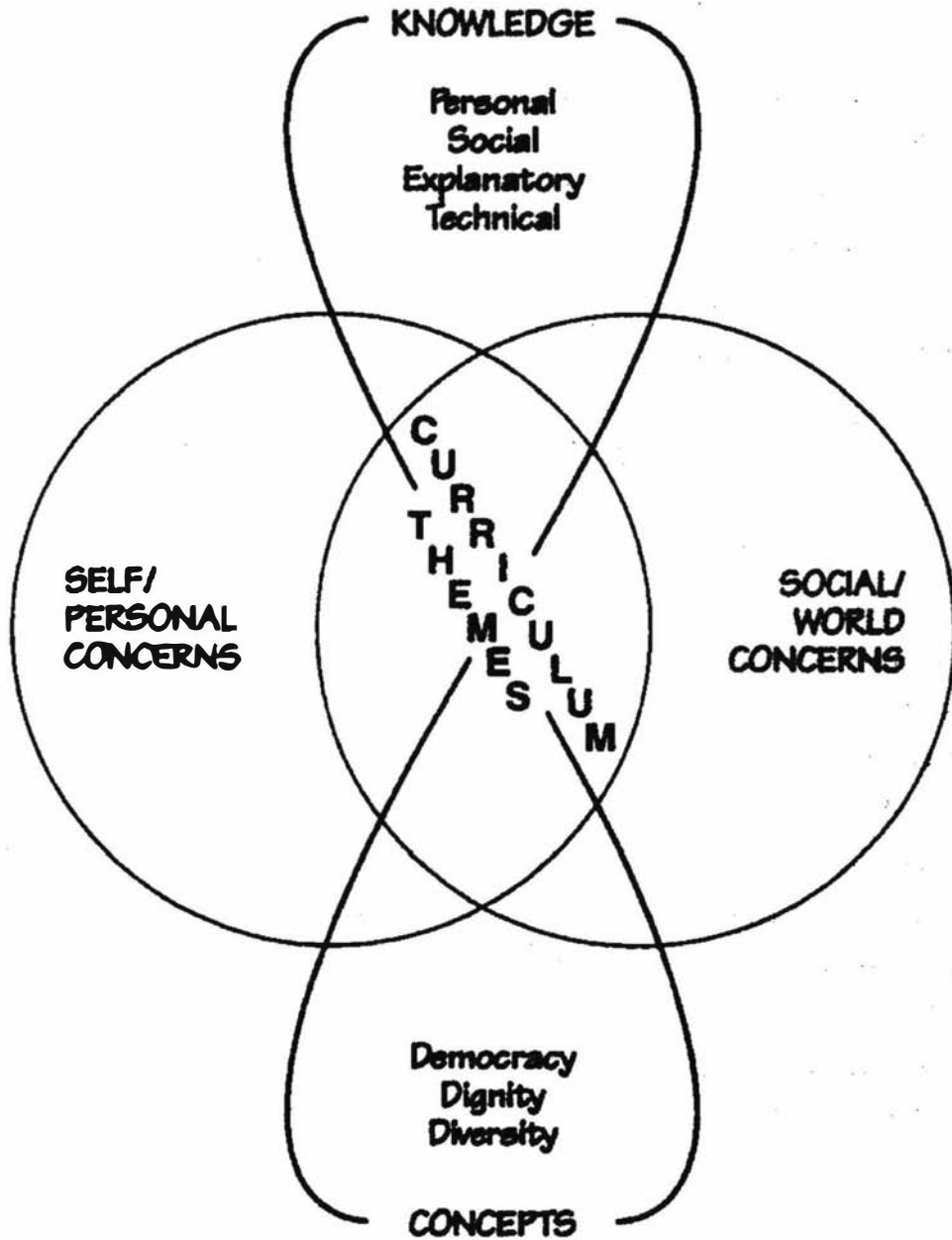


Figure 1: Diagram of the integrative curriculum (Beane, 1997:49)

Beane (1993a) described a ‘sample’ of possible curriculum themes derived from the intersections between personal concerns and social concerns. As Vars (1993) pointed out, these curriculum themes turned out to be similar to those found in Van Til’s (1976) ‘fields of knowledge’ list and an earlier list of themes devised by Vars (1969 cited Vars, 1993). However as Beane went to some pains to point out, unlike Van Til’s list his sample was not intended to be, “*the specific themes*” of the curriculum but simply an extrapolation from practice of the kinds of themes generated by applications of his integrative model (1993a:74). In the integrative model, themes are generated collaboratively as the teacher and students first identify concerns and issues, then plan and implement the curriculum. As discussed above, teacher-student collaboration is not only a vital aspect of Beane’s model; it also meets the developmental needs of early adolescents.

Beane outlined a straight-forward approach to collaborative planning which has been replicated throughout the USA (Brodhagen, Weilbacher & Beane, 1992). He stated, “(we) always (start by asking) the same two questions: What questions do you have about yourself? What questions do you have about your world?”¹¹² (1997:86). Accordingly, applications of the integrative model effectively integrate issues of self interest with those of the common good (Beane, 2002). Research data has consistently shown that young people throughout the USA have the *same* concerns, *regardless* of their background¹¹³ (Brodhagen, Weilbacher & Beane, 1992; Beane, 1997; Brodhagen & Beane, 2003; Powell, Skoog, Troutman & Jones, 1996). These concerns always centre on individual hopes and aspirations as well as the USA as a society. Beane asserted that these concerns effectively amounted to a ‘national curriculum’ which promotes personal and social integration in the innate search for life meaning which gathers pace in the early adolescent stage (1997:87).

¹¹² Later Beane included the words ‘or concerns’ (2002:26) and, during a seminar for educators in New Zealand, he used ‘concerns’ in place of ‘questions’ (Brodhagen & Beane, 2003). This slight adjustment seems to help young people focus more clearly on issues pertaining to the common good (Beane, 2002).

¹¹³ These issues and concerns may be intergenerational since, as Vars pointed out, “when it comes to life’s major problems, each generation must deal with very similar issues” (1993:34).

Beane (1997:49-50) described four kinds of *knowledge*¹¹⁴ which were integrated as students engaged in their themes. *Personal* knowledge included ways students could know about themselves. *Social* knowledge included ways students could know about social and world issues. *Explanatory*¹¹⁵ knowledge comprised of content for naming, describing and interpreting phenomena and included the ‘high culture’ disciplines of knowledge as well as ‘popular culture’ knowledge. *Technical* knowledge consisted of skills including investigation, communication and critical analysis.

Beane grounded his design in the *concepts* of *democracy*, *(human) dignity* and *(cultural) diversity* (1993a:64-67). If personal and social integration were at the heart of Beane’s curriculum design, then his ‘concepts’ – comprising a, “matrix of democratic values” – represented its soul (Vars, 2000:79). Beane asserted that, “there are, presumably, enduring ideas that ought to permeate the middle school, including the curriculum” (1993a:64). For Beane, and Dewey before him, the notion of democracy was more than a form of political governance. It was, “a disposition or, more broadly, a way of life in which people define and seek personal and social efficacy through full participation” (Beane, 1990c:53). Beane’s three ‘concepts’ provided the philosophical underpinnings for the collective notions of integration in his model. He asserted:

It is only by articulating these concepts that the intersecting themes of personal and social living may eventually lead toward an improved quality of life for early adolescents now and in their futures (1993a:67-68).

The first concept of *democracy* represented a commitment to the democratic way of life, thus it implied that the curriculum must be genuinely inclusive with subject matter which is ‘democratised’ by including everybody’s input. Beane stressed that, “the curriculum must include possibilities for all views to be heard and for the presence of all people to be recognized” (1993a:65). He also argued that ‘democracy’ should value young people’s knowledge as much as, or more than, academic knowledge. Accordingly he stated that:

(Teachers need to) recognize and encourage a different kind of knowledge ... the meanings early adolescents construct as they use what is around them to make sense of themselves and their world (1993a:66).

¹¹⁴ Beane originally referred to this dimension as ‘Content and skills’ (1993a:69).

¹¹⁵ Note that ‘explanatory’ was not present in Beane’s original diagram (1993a:69).

The second concept of *dignity* was implied by ‘democracy’. It was aptly summed up by, “the idea that all people ... have a right to self respect” (Beane, 1990c:60). Beane argued that dignity was a rare commodity within curriculum design. He explained that the existence of dignity is threatened by the lack of any one of: freedom, caring, justice, equality or peace (1990c:61-69). Accordingly he exhorted teachers to, “constantly seek human meanings” in early adolescents’ lives so that subject matter is both personally relevant and imbues them with a sense of self worth (Beane, 1993a:67). In particular, Beane asserted that dignity is threatened in social contexts where there is a reluctance to celebrate or prize diversity. Beane’s third concept of *diversity* was an extension of his second concept. He derived ‘diversity’ from the philosophical requirements for justice and equality based on, “the reciprocity of rights among people” (Beane, 1990c:63). Like all other people, early adolescents have individual and cultural differences. In addition early adolescents have their own youth culture, thus they derive their meanings for personal and social efficacy in many different ways (Beane, 1990c; Dewey, 1938). Taken together, Beane’s three concepts clarified the intent of his design for curriculum integration: to ensure that subject matter – and by extension, schooling – is relevant and meaningful for early adolescents. As Beane put it, “in this way, subject matter may come to life and offer a compelling sense of worth to young people” (1993a:67).

According to Schubert’s (1995) analysis outlined in Chapter 3, Beane’s curriculum design is evenly balanced between *child*, *society* and *subject matter*. Arguably the most distinctive feature of the integrative model is that it allows students from any background to choose subject matter which is valuable and meaningful to them. Nonetheless, Beane (1993a) emphasised that his model did not, ‘eliminate’ important subject matter from the disciplines but allows teachers and students to collaboratively ‘reposition’ subject matter within emergent organising themes. According to Bernstein’s (1971) framework outlined in Chapter 4, the integrative model is a genuinely ‘integrated code’ curriculum where the subject areas are subordinate to the organising centre. As explained in Chapter 3, when students carry out the processes of personal and social integration, subject matter gains substantive meaning and relevance. Vars asserted:

Nothing we learn is really functional until and unless we integrate it into our total personal-social being ... it just makes sense to provide learnings within an integrative context (2000:84).

Criticisms of the integrative model

The integrative model has rarely been criticised on educational grounds alone. Some mainstream educators seem to disapprove of integrative curriculum because they believe that it ignores standards or somehow lacks academic rigour. But charges that the integrative model ‘ignores’ standards are simply mistaken. Indeed, Nesin and Lounsbury (1999) argued that far from ignoring standards, the integrative curriculum ‘embraces’ them. For instance, according to Vars many educators dismiss the integrative model because it does not determine, “curriculum scope and sequence in advance” (1993:41). However ‘back-mapping’ the integrative curriculum is an entirely satisfactory alternative to ‘scope-and-sequencing’ the multidisciplinary curriculum (Brodhagen, 1999). In ‘back-mapping’ the subject areas which contribute to an organising theme – along with the required standards – are retrospectively identified then both the specific subject matter and skills learned by each individual are recorded in detail (Brodhagen, 1999; Nesin & Lounsbury, 1999; Pate, 2001; Brodhagen & Beane, 2003). Back-mapping usually includes a range of assessment including exhibitions of student work and performances of student skills (Beane, 1997). It may also include examples from the rich vein of assessment material available from ‘culminating events’ at the end of integrative units (Stevenson & Carr, 1993).

Other criticism of the integrative model has been oblique or vague. Nonetheless, in the conservative political climate which currently dominates in the USA, Beane reflected that, “half truths (about the integrative model) are as good as gold” (1997:77). At times it is unclear whether or not the integrative model is the intended target, yet – as explained in Chapter 7 – those who oppose the model on ideological rather than educational grounds have several weapons at their disposal.

A few researchers have attempted to reinterpret or simplify the integrative model. O'Steen, Cuper, Spires, Beal and Pope (2002) attempted to trace the theoretical and historical influences on Beane's model. They decided that the integrative model could be reduced to intersections of Dewey's idea that 'we learn by experience', the developmental needs of early adolescents, and the NMSA (1995) 'recommendations' for the middle level curriculum. O'Steen and others concluded that the, "tenets" of Beane's integrative curriculum were, "adolescent concerns and input, active inquiry and action-oriented end product" (2002:4). However, their efforts distorted the integrative model beyond all recognition. In their determination to simplify the model, they unwittingly 'threw the baby out with the bath water'. O'Steen and others did not properly consider the historical meaning of 'integration' implicit throughout Dewey's work and elucidated by Hopkins (1937a, 1941 & 1954). In particular, they failed to comprehend the notion of social integration and the democratic schooling it implies. As a result, their revised model lacked substantive meaning or sense as a student-centred model of curriculum integration.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that Jacobs and Beane developed their respective models of curriculum integration as logical extensions of two long established traditions which – as discussed in Chapter 3 – were formulated in the USA early in the twentieth century. While both models utilise the notion of a central theme, they have few other similarities. The integrative model is a student-centred 'integrated code' curriculum, whereas the multidisciplinary model is a subject-centred 'collection code' curriculum (Bernstein, 1971). The integrative model is designed to meet the needs of early adolescents (Beane 1990a/1993a) whereas the multidisciplinary model is primarily concerned with packaging subject matter efficiently (Jacobs, 1989a). Overall, Beane's integrative model holds the 'high ground' from a theoretical standpoint however Jacobs' multidisciplinary model has powerful political allies (Gehrke, 1998). Chapter 7 considers the impact of the political environment on the implementation of the integrative and multidisciplinary models.

Chapter 7

Curriculum integration and the political environment in the USA

This chapter investigates the fortunes of the multidisciplinary and integrative models with respect to the political environment in the USA.¹¹⁶ The primary role of education in the USA has long been assumed to be the preparation of young people for democratic citizenship. However, the ‘conservative restoration’ – that is the right-wing political movement which has prevailed since the 1980s – has sought to reconstruct American education in the terms of neo-liberal economics. The result has been sharp disagreement over the aims of education in the USA.

This chapter characterises the implementation of curriculum integration as a political struggle where the multidisciplinary and integrative models stake their respective claims as the preferred method of curriculum integration in middle level schools. In particular, it examines the outcomes of this struggle with respect to the prevailing conservatism. It explains that the dominant political power has embedded its ‘official knowledge’ in the subject matter of the national curriculum. This chapter argues that the conservative restoration has differentially influenced the reputations of the multidisciplinary and the integrative models; both in the literature and in the classroom. Finally, it closely examines the impact of the contemporary political environment on teachers of the multidisciplinary and integrative models.

The politics of subject matter in the USA

Educators, politicians and the public in the USA have traditionally agreed that the primary role of education is to prepare young people for citizenship. Ralph Tyler stated:

The most generally accepted goal of American education is to help all young people to learn the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and habits necessary for citizens who are to participate intelligently in the responsibilities of a democratic society (1988:267).

The National Middle School Association (NMSA) similarly stated:

¹¹⁶ As explained in Chapter 1, the investigation is confined to the American context where curriculum integration has been implemented widely at the middle level.

The overarching purpose of all schooling in our society is to help students become good citizens, lifelong learners, and healthy, caring, ethical and intellectually reflective individuals (1995:5).

If the primary purpose of education in the USA is in fact guided by the sentiment expressed in these statements, then curricula for young people would be designed with the purpose of preparation for democratic citizenship at their forefront. On one hand this has been the case. Throughout the twentieth century American progressives have taught democratic principles (Dewey, 1916; Noar, 1966 cited Beane, 1997; Apple & Beane, 1999) and propagated what Dewey (1934) and others have referred to as the ‘progressive faith’. Beane summarised the more recent progressive position:

The democratic life can be lived ... schools should and can bring democracy to life in the curriculum, in school governance, in community relations, and in the hearts and minds of young people ... Creative individuality should be balanced with concern for the welfare of others and a desire for a common good. Human dignity, equity, justice and caring (should) serve as both ends and means in our political, economic, and social relations (1998:8).

On the other hand, at certain historical moments the political environment in the USA has favoured other agendas – each with its specific curriculum – which have eclipsed the goal of inculcating young people into democratic citizenship (Kliebard, 1995). Michael Apple (1996) explained that ‘cultural politics’ has a major influence on the curriculum. He explained that the subject matter of the curriculum consists of carefully chosen ‘high culture’ knowledge which reflects the ideology of the dominant group (Apple, 1990). Apple (1993) coined the term, *official knowledge*¹¹⁷ to refer to the knowledge selected and legitimated by the dominant group. He explained that it shapes the curriculum so that the knowledge of the dominant group marginalises the knowledge of subordinate groups. Apple stated:

Whether we like it or not, differential power intrudes into the very heart of curriculum ... what *counts* as knowledge, the ways in which it is organized, who is empowered to teach it, what counts as an appropriate display of having learned it ... are part and parcel of how dominance and subordination are reproduced and altered

¹¹⁷ Official knowledge – as mediated by the state – is a more accurate way to describe how political power operates in a democracy than the Neo-Marxist explanation adopted by Bernstein. The Neo-Marxist position was derived from Marx’s analysis of 19th century European imperialism which argued that political power was held by the aristocratic class. Although Apple was indebted to Bernstein’s ideas, he argued that in a democracy, “the state is *not* guaranteed to serve the interests of a unified dominant class ... (but instead) the state is a site of *interclass* struggle and negotiation” (1995a:56, original emphasis).

in this society. There is, then, always a *politics* of official knowledge (1996:22-23, original emphasis).

Over the last three decades, the official knowledge of the ‘conservative restoration’ has fuelled a protracted struggle between the multidisciplinary and integrative models.

The conservative restoration

During the 1980s, the doctrine of social efficiency reemerged in the American curriculum within the right-wing ideology of the conservative restoration (Apple, 2001). The conservative restoration was formed by a powerful coalition of neo-liberal business interests and Christian evangelicals who gained broad support for traditional subject-centred curriculum approaches. Conservative interests – which want to ensure that official knowledge is transmitted smoothly – have gained immense political power in the USA (Apple, 2001). Indeed, the on-going enchantment with neo-liberalism implies that the USA has become a, “corporatist society with soft pretensions to democracy” (Saul, 1995:32).

Neo-liberalism substitutes what Apple called ‘thick democracy’ – with its concern with social equity and justice – with, “a much ‘thinner’ version of possessive individualism” (2001:18). It is strongly individualistic, thus it fails to satisfactorily account for relationships between individuals and society or knowledge and power. Neo-liberalism also replaces ‘thick ethics’ – where the notion of the common good supplies the moral basis for judgment – with ‘thin ethics’, where competitive individualism eclipses the concern for social equity¹¹⁸ (Apple, 2001). Apple (2001) concluded that in the existing neo-liberal environment, the notion of democracy had become an economic concept rather than a political concept.

The conservative restoration promoted a ‘thin’ subject-centred curriculum with the transmission of official knowledge as its leading priority. Schooling emphasised the attainment of specific standards but down-played other goals such as general education for citizenship. Standards testing in all subjects effectively mandated official knowledge

¹¹⁸ The curricular implications of thick and thin ethics are discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

in the curriculum of every American state (Apple, 2001). In Bernstein's (1971) terms the curriculum was characterised by very strong 'classification' and 'framing' where both teachers and students were disempowered. Indeed, some southern states passed legislation which closely stipulated the content of the school curriculum – sometimes even specifying the use of certain textbooks – as well as the type of pedagogy¹¹⁹ (Apple, 1995b & 2001). The trends toward tighter regulation, frequent high-stakes testing and more curricular content suited the multidisciplinary model. In contrast, the integrative model became increasingly difficult to implement in conservative districts because its design relies on the presence of a democratic learning environment where students have a say in the selection of subject matter (Powell, Skoog & Troutman, 1996). Vars (1998b) captured the frustration of progressive educators as the conservative restoration marginalised democratic approaches to education in the USA. He stated:

It is a sad commentary on the state of both education and society today that we must continue to explain, justify and even defend the values on which our society is presumed to operate (1998b:148, original emphasis).

The conservative restoration and the literature of curriculum integration

The conservative restoration has left its mark on the American literature of curriculum integration. In particular, the presence of bias has been indicated by differences in the degree of criticism aimed at terms associated with curriculum integration. The terms of 'curriculum integration' or 'integrative curriculum' have fallen from favour and attracted adverse criticism; whereas the term of 'multidisciplinary curriculum' has been widely accepted. The generic concept of curriculum integration has often been criticised when the term of 'curriculum integration' is applied but rarely when either of the terms of 'multidisciplinary curriculum' or 'interdisciplinary curriculum' is used. Ironically, Beane (1997) noted that negative criticism of 'curriculum integration' has usually amounted to criticism of the subject-centred multidisciplinary model rather than the student-centred integrative model (for example: Brophy & Alleman, 1991; Mason, 1996).

¹¹⁹ Note that these same southern states: Texas, Florida and Georgia – along with North and South Carolina – have the worst rates of high school 'dropout' in the USA (Balfanz & Legters, 2004).

Most attacks on the integrative model have lacked substance. For instance, Erickson (1998) rejected the integrative model solely on the grounds that it was ‘too political’. George (1996) also listed several ‘worries’ and ‘concerns’ he had about ‘integrated curriculum’. Although he failed to develop a coherent critique of either the integrative model or the multidisciplinary model – and neglected to include a single reference to research or practice – his article was accepted by an influential journal. In a similar vein, Gatewood¹²⁰ questioned the validity of ‘integrated curriculum’ which, he argued, “seems to diminish and devalue the traditional subject disciplines” (1998:38). Gatewood stated that he had read the work of Hopkins and other progressives on curriculum integration but his paper failed to either discuss the historic purposes of integration or reasonably examine the design of the integrative model. He portrayed the integrative model as academically ‘soft’ by asserting that, “(the) focus (of integrative curriculum) is less on the subject disciplines and more on participation in activities within the theme” (1998:39). However as explained in Chapter 3, the integrative model is not a descendant of the radical ‘child-centred’ approaches of the 1920s and 1930s – such as the ‘activity’ curriculum – but is closely related to the ‘core’ curricula of the 1940s. Beane (1998) also emphasised that the integrative model selectively draws subject matter from the disciplines of knowledge to create a curriculum for young people which is personally relevant, engaging and academically rigorous. Beane (1995b) also refuted the recurring charge that that the disciplines of knowledge are the ‘enemy’ of the integrative model. As shown by the ‘explanatory knowledge’ aspect in his theory of the integrative model discussed in Chapter 6, he explained that in reality the disciplines are, “a useful and necessary ally” of integrative curriculum (1995b:616). Others have also assumed that the integrative model lacks academic rigour based on the incorrect notions that it is ‘student-driven’, comprised of student ‘interests’ or – due to its accommodation of popular culture and knowledge – ‘anti-intellectual’ (Beane, 1997).

¹²⁰ Both George and Gatewood have been prominent figures in the American middle school movement. Paul George has been recognized as a senior leader of the movement since its inception in the 1960s. Tom Gatewood is a former president of the National Middle School Association and was the founding co-editor of the *Middle School Journal*. It seems that their concerns about ‘integrated curriculum’ were accepted on the basis of their reputations rather than the strength of their arguments.

Tanner (1997) showed that even curriculum specialists can be confused about the aims and purposes of the integrative model. In her review of Dewey's Laboratory School contribution to curriculum theory she asserted:

All too often, contemporary discussions about the need for curriculum integration sound like a stuck needle, endlessly replaying old arguments about, 'the separate subject curriculum' (Beane, 1995a:622) versus curriculum integration ... (these) arguments are not just boring, they are tragic ... teachers, children, and, yes, the fields of knowledge have been the losers (1997:82-83).

For Tanner, the 'villain' seemed to be curriculum integration or, more specifically, Beane's integrative model. She failed to distinguish between student-centred and subject-centred curriculum integration. Tanner's assertion that teachers, children and the disciplines are the collective 'losers' makes little sense unless she confused the integrative model with the multidisciplinary model. This seems plausible because of her comparison of contemporary 'curriculum integration' with Dewey's approach. Here she contrasted 'fragmented' subject-centred approaches prepared by, "teams of teachers" with Dewey's approach which she asserted, "began with ideas for a curriculum that would meet the developmental needs of individuals and society" (1997:78). As suggested in Chapter 2, it seems likely that Tanner – along with many other researchers – have lacked knowledge of the historical meanings of integration which is an essential prerequisite to understanding the purposes of the integrative model.

Lastly, when reviewing curriculum integration some researchers have blithely avoided any mention of the integrative model, along with its progressive roots (for example: Jacobs, 1989a & 1997a; Fogarty, 1991a; Kysilka, 1998). In particular, Jacobs – a professor at Columbia University, which in its time was the cradle of American progressive thought – ignored the long history of student-centred curriculum integration. Throughout the 1990s her work not only failed to acknowledge progressive work leading to the 'core' approaches of the 1940s and 1950s but it also ignored contemporary work such as, *A curriculum for the middle school years* (Lounsbury & Vars, 1978) and the (then) standard work in the field, *Interdisciplinary teaching: why and how* (Vars, 1987).

Official knowledge and the curriculum

Official knowledge significantly influences the choice of subject matter in the American curriculum. However, before examining how official knowledge interacts with the multidisciplinary and integrative models, it is useful to consider how it influences certain subject areas. In the subject of history, textbooks have been routinely simplified and revised so that their subject matter reflects the official knowledge of the period. For instance, LaSpina (2003) argued that history textbooks in the USA had ‘imagined’ the notion of a single national identity and, in doing so, had ignored the aspirations and agendas of indigenous peoples. The revision of history is antithetical to the democratic aims of the integrative model, which invites young people to engage in enquiry and help select the subject matter of the curriculum. In contrast the phenomenon of history revision is compatible with the multidisciplinary model, as it reserves the right to select subject matter for small groups of professional educators. In other subject areas, such as science, the choice of subject matter has not been questioned seriously. Ever since the launch of the *Sputnik* in 1957, the neo-liberal goal of ‘functional literacy’ has been the primary aim of science education in the USA (American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1998; Apple, 2004). However, a democratic approach to science literacy – as implied by the integrative model – which focuses on how young people use science in every day life and demystifies the science disciplines by putting textbook jargon and test-tubes to one side, would radically change the nature of science education in the USA (Jones, 2000; Roth & Barton, 2004).

Official knowledge and the multidisciplinary model

The multidisciplinary model has thrived during the on-going conservative restoration because, along with other subject-centred curricula, it has been a trustworthy vehicle for the transmission of official knowledge. During the conservative restoration the textbook industry developed a symbiotic relationship with the politics of official knowledge. Accordingly, official knowledge was successfully transmitted to American classrooms via the combination of subject-centred curricula and subject textbooks (Apple, 1993). The textbook culture has a vested interest in the multidisciplinary model and other subject-centred curricula. It includes teachers who gain professional status and financial

rewards for writing textbooks and school or district administrators who accrue benefits by ordering particular book titles. The privileged status of official knowledge means that textbooks which transmit it with high fidelity have the potential for large profit margins. Optimal profit conditions occur when official knowledge is stable, such as during the conservative restoration, thus publishers are especially attentive to the politics of official knowledge in such periods. The longevity of the conservative restoration has encouraged the production of ‘teacher-proof’ textbooks for subject-centred curricula with guides which, “tell the teacher what she or he should know, say and do” (Apple, 1995b:135). As a result, generic multidisciplinary units have become increasingly common (Vars, 2000; Warren & Flinchbaugh, 2003). Although these commercially available multidisciplinary units reduce preparation time by minimising the need for team-planning, teachers are disempowered because they are unable to select the subject matter. These generic units are inherently undemocratic because their themes are not relevant to all communities. Moreover, in communities where generic themes do seem to have relevance, the resulting units are nonetheless unlikely to be inclusive because they are designed by outsiders who are unfamiliar with the local context.

Some conservative educators have pushed for a curriculum consisting entirely of subject matter derived from official knowledge. For instance, Hirsch (1987) asserted that schools should teach certain values and a particular list of facts which, he alleged, would make all young people in the USA ‘culturally literate’. Jacobs (1989b) incorporated Hirsch’s ideology into the design of the multidisciplinary model. She adopted Hirsch’s device of a closed curriculum to solve her ‘potpourri problem’ so that the notions of scope and sequence acted as gatekeepers to prevent extraneous subject matter – or unofficial knowledge – from encroaching into the curriculum.

Official knowledge and the integrative model

The integrative model has been a thorn in the side of conservatives because the democratic purposes of the integrative model are antithetical to the ideology of the conservative restoration. As Amy Gutmann explained, the democratic curriculum specifically resists, “pressures (to inculcate) republican patriotism (in order to protect the

democratic) priority of basic liberties” (1999:314). Accordingly, the integrative model rarely transmits official knowledge¹²¹, nor does it accord any special status to official knowledge. It also has no need for textbooks because its subject matter is based on the interests and concerns of young people. Publishers cannot produce textbooks for the integrative model because the subject matter formulated in each classroom context is unpredictable and idiosyncratic, thus it cannot be generalized. According to Bernstein’s (1971) theory, the integrative model is an ‘integrated code curriculum’ with weak classification and framing. It is characterised by what Bernstein called ‘content openness’ or a weak classification where virtually any form of knowledge – formal, commonsense or personal – can enter the curriculum without hindrance. As a result, the integrative model mounts a serious political challenge to the hegemonic position of, “existing authority structures ... educational identities and concepts of (intellectual) property” (Bernstein, 1971:59). As Apple (1993) similarly explained, emancipatory curricula like the integrative model challenge the legitimacy of official knowledge.

As the conservative restoration gathered in strength, the ‘natural home’ of the integrative model – or the American middle school – came under increasing attack (Beane, 1991, 1999a & 1999b). Conservatives demanded a particular brand of ‘good’ schooling which explicitly excluded student-centred approaches (Cuban, 2003). In many cases the integrative model was summarily eliminated from schools. Beane stated:

In school after school some of our very best and most widely known teachers are being told to scrap their high-quality block-time ... (integrative) programs and bring back the intellectually impoverished, layer-cake science, history and mathematics courses ... (indicated by) a standardised curriculum (1999a:8).

Strict curriculum mandates also meant that block-scheduling – which is a necessary requirement for the integrative model – was ‘chipped away’, thus for many teachers the chance to implement an integrative curriculum was lost (Beane, 1993a). All in all, the recent political environment in the USA has been hostile towards the integrative model. By and large, teachers of the integrative model have borne this hostility.

¹²¹ Official knowledge reflects the dominant political power but it is not always conservative. For instance, Apple pointed out that at certain points in American history, educational policy has been, “genuinely progressive” (1995a:56). In such periods the integrative model would be much more likely to transmit official knowledge but this would be incidental rather than intentional.

Political pressures on teachers of the integrative model

While teachers of the integrative and multidisciplinary models are both susceptible to political pressures, teachers of the integrative model undoubtedly have to contend with a greater range of pressures. As Beane (1995c & 1997) warned, the integrative model is not for ‘professionally faint-hearted’ or ‘marginally dedicated’ teachers. While teachers may be enthusiastic about the classroom potential of integrative curriculum and be convinced that it is superior to other models, American schools do not support it. The culture, organisation and architecture of schools in the USA overwhelmingly reflect the needs of subject-centred curricula, with few concessions offered to student-centred curricula (Beane, 1997). The subject matter of the integrative model is guided by the concerns of students and is usually sourced from local communities, thus teachers of the integrative model often have to work hard to collect suitable resources (Beane, 1997; Powell, Skoog, Troutman & Jones, 1996; Weilbacher, 2001). In contrast, teachers of the multidisciplinary model only have to reach as far as a bookshelf¹²², since units can be resourced easily by using a range of subject textbooks, or – following the recent trend – some teachers may be given dedicated textbooks of generic multidisciplinary units.

The radical nature of the integrative model, along with its sheer complexity, means that teachers must have adequate support when they are implementing it for the first time (Lewbel, 1993). Beane and Brodhagen asserted that in middle schools new teachers of the integrative model are faced with major adjustments which involve, “complex issues of self-identity, collegial relationships and loyalty” (2001:1166). Some teachers express reluctance to commit to the integrative model because they believe it will be ‘hard work’ compared with other approaches or they are unwilling to share power with their students (Beane, 1997). However, the real reasons for trepidation or reluctance are likely to be embedded in the deep structure of the education system. For most teachers implementing the integrative model is a serious challenge which involves a paradigm shift – from a subject-centred perspective to a student-centred perspective – along with substantive changes to their professional identity (Bernstein, 1971; Beane, 1997). In the case of the

¹²² It also seems highly likely that generic multidisciplinary units will soon be available for download from the internet.

multidisciplinary model, subject matter is 'covered' by the teacher whereas in the integrative model each student 'uncovers' and then integrates subject matter (Powell, Skoog & Troutman, 1996). As a result, new teachers of the integrative curriculum may need to adjust their pedagogy from a didactic 'coverage' to a facilitatory 'uncoverage' of content. Teachers also often have significant doubts about the design of the integrative model due to prior commitments to certain subject areas (Powell, Skoog, Troutman & Jones, 1996; Robertson, Cowell & Olson, 1998). Bernstein (1971) explained that subject loyalty in collection code curricula is 'systematically developed' in all students from new entrants through to university graduates. Eventually a small percentage of tertiary students discover that the subject matter in their specialist subject is not immutable but open to revision via critical thought and research. The ranks of these privileged few then produce teachers and lecturers who perpetuate the phenomena of subject loyalty by dutifully transmitting it to the next generation (Bernstein, 1971). Accordingly Beane stressed that, "one cannot overestimate the power of these structures of tradition or the very deep loyalties many middle school educators have to (subject areas)" (1993a:12). Musgrove (1973) explained that any given subject area is more than an 'intellectual system'. A subject area is also a highly structured 'social system' which awards – and rewards – its members with authority and power. In addition, official knowledge nearly always bestows differing amounts of power and status to each subject area. As a result most subject teachers are acutely aware of the status of 'their' subject area. Thus, if an innovation threatens the status or integrity of the subject matter in their discipline, they are usually quick to protect their self-interest. Allegiance to subject-areas extends well beyond the school. It also includes extended 'networks' of teacher educators, university lecturers and district subject supervisors; all of whom are likely to judge that the integrative model potentially threatens their interests (Beane, 1997).

Teachers of the integrative model are highly susceptible to personal attacks on their practice (Beane, 1997; Weilbacher, 2001). This is because parents, teachers and other stakeholders tend to hold engrained views about schooling which, for the vast majority, reflects the experience of their own subject-centred education (Beane, 1993a). Moreover, as Bernstein (1975) explained, progressive teachers are 'visible' to critics because each

classroom curriculum is unique, thus each teacher is held accountable for their classroom program. For instance, in an in-depth study of teachers of the integrative model, Weilbacher found that, “colleagues, administrators, parents and students ... (all questioned teachers about) the legitimacy, rigour and effectiveness of (the integrative model)” (2001:23). He added that, “for one of the teachers, criticism from her colleagues and the principal was so severe that she transferred to a different school” (2001:24). Beane commented that, “almost always, a few (colleagues) engage in serious criticism of (the integrative model) and the teachers who use it” (1997:73). In contrast, teachers of the multidisciplinary model are ‘invisible’ because they can deflect concerns or questions about their programs by referring critics to official curriculum documents.

Teachers of the integrative model have also been met with the remarkable criticism that the integrative model allows too many young people to succeed (Beane, 1999a). This recapitulation of social efficiency comes about when parents harbour such high ambitions for their offspring that they demand a meritocratic reward system where their children are ‘winners’ and other children are ‘losers’, thus they oppose anything which frustrates their efforts to obtain a competitive advantage (Brantlinger, Majd-Jabbari & Guskin, 1996; Elmore, 2000). Most other opposition to the integrative model has been more subtle but it reflects similar sentiments. Despite solid research evidence that the integrative model is academically rigorous, some conservatives have portrayed it as academically ‘soft’ and undemanding. In one case a lobby group calling itself ‘Citizens for Excellence in Education’ claimed that, “(integrative curriculum) content focuses on values ... (which allows) so-called ‘self-esteem’ and tolerance to replace academics” (1992 cited Beane, 1999a:6). Beane (1997) suggested that conservative ‘fears’ that the integrative model will cause children to fail standardised tests or that subjects will be diluted, have been used as a scapegoat to disguise their real agenda. He pinpointed what he believed is the true source of conservative disquiet:

It is the values that (the integrative model) embodies: the emphasis on democratic practices, the concern for a wider access to knowledge, the recognition of everyday knowledge and popular culture, the critical analysis of social issues ... in the end (the integrative model) is criticised not for what it doesn’t do but for *what it does do* (1997:99, original emphasis).

Moreover, the visibility of teachers of the integrative model makes them an easy target because they are vulnerable to criticism about 'what they are doing' in their classrooms.

The politics of school-wide implementation of the integrative model

The pressures often borne by teachers of the integrative model indicate that it may be better to implement the integrative model on a 'whole-school' basis. In this case teachers are much more likely to receive unequivocal support from their principal, colleagues and the wider school community (Powell, 1999). Some middle schools in the USA have instigated school-wide curriculum reform by replacing the multidisciplinary model with the integrative model (Barr, 1995; Carpenter, 1995; Lewbel, 1993; Powell, Skoog & Troutman, 1996). Two well-studied examples, Brown Barge Middle School (BBMS) in Florida and Carver Academy in Texas, have a school-wide commitment to the integrative model and developmentally responsive schooling for early adolescents (Barr, 1995; Powell, 1999). Longitudinal research at BBMS has shown that the sustainability of the integrative model depends on a 'reculturing' stage; otherwise 'curriculum regression' back to subject-centred approaches is likely (Powell, 1999; Powell, Skoog & Troutman, 1996; Powell, Skoog, Troutman & Jones, 1996).¹²³ Powell and Skoog (2000) explained that reculturing is a vital step in the implementation of integrative curriculum because subject-centred approaches entail 'domain-independent teaching' – where subject matter is determined according to recognised ways of knowing in each discipline *without* reference to local contexts – which is 'profoundly inconsistent' to the philosophy of the integrative model. Beane (1995c) also emphasised that implementation of the integrative model for the first time requires teachers to make significant adjustments. He stated:

We must remember that an integrative curriculum is not simply about instructional methodology or technique ... (it) involves the search for curriculum possibilities that are more democratic, more significant, more powerful, more engaging, more respectful of the dignity and diversity of young people (1995c:xi).

¹²³ In earlier British examples of a similar type of regression, Stenhouse (1975) suggested that 'the integrated study may not integrate' when teachers retain a collection code orientation; while Hamilton (1973) asserted that a instance of 'integrated science' in Scotland was more akin to a collection code of reconstituted subjects rather than an integrated code curriculum.

Accordingly, the process of reculturing helps teachers to negotiate the paradigm shift from a subject-centred perspective to a student-centred perspective.

Sustaining school-wide integrative curriculum in conservative districts is not easy. For instance, Powell Skoog, Troutman & Jones found that teachers at BBMS felt, “alienated, isolated, misunderstood and disconnected from their own school district” (1996:25).

Unequivocal support from leadership for the integrative model is crucial. BBMS principal Camille Barr felt it was essential to shield her teachers from outside pressures. She stated:

The staff doesn't realize how much feeding of the alligators I do all the time. I just have to keep people off us long enough for us to do our work (Powell, Skoog, Troutman & Jones, 1996:51).

Powell and his colleagues were pessimistic that the integrative model could be sustained in conservative states like Texas and Florida. However despite school leadership changes in recent years, BBMS still retained an integrative model with distinctive ‘streams’ or units as recently as 2006.¹²⁴ This suggests that when reculturing is done well and teachers are properly supported, the integrative model may be resilient to outside political pressures.

Political pressures on teachers of the multidisciplinary model

The only significant source of political pressure on teachers of the multidisciplinary model arises when they attempt to create units which are relevant and meaningful to their students. Teachers in this situation invite political attention because they compromise the integrity of official knowledge whenever they introduce student-centred subject matter into the curriculum. These teachers evidently believe that it is worth risking a degree of disapproval and spending extra time and effort to create multidisciplinary units for local needs, rather than purchasing generic units. In other words, they warm to the multidisciplinary model because they perceive it has potential as a curriculum for a *student-centred* pedagogy.

¹²⁴ Retrieved May, 2006: <http://www.escambia.k12.fl.us/schsents/brobm/>

From time to time middle level teachers in the USA have infused multidisciplinary units with a distinctly progressive flavour (for example: Ellis & Stuen, 1998; Girardin, 1993; Renyi, 2000; Smith, Blaise, Mann & Myers, 1993; Smith, Mann & Steadman, 1993; Straub, 1993; Vossler & Moore, 1993). Presumably they have realised that early adolescents benefit by having a stake in curriculum planning or at least a degree of ownership in the content of the curriculum. Girardin (1993) found that her students assumed 'ownership' of a multidisciplinary unit with a hometown theme. She stated that, "the study (became) *their* project and *they* wanted it to be successful" (1993:79, original emphasis). Vossler and Moore (1993) developed a multidisciplinary unit on 'garbage'. During their planning stage they wondered how to, "balance structure and spontaneity" and, "ensure the unit was truly owned by the students" (1993:165-166). Afterwards they reflected:

Letting (early adolescents) deal with people ... allowing them to experience the struggles of learning how to work cooperatively, discovering things for ourselves along with them ... (felt) pretty risky. How much safer it appears to keep them in straight rows, memorizing facts for tomorrow's test. But how much more exciting, fulfilling and authentic it is ... (to see them) exploring, discovering and learning (1993:174).

Here Vossler and Moore rediscovered a key purpose of the student-centred approach: in the process of 'exploring, discovering and learning', students receive excellent opportunities for personal and social integration.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Cremin (1961) suggested that the main disadvantage of planning curriculum integration¹²⁵ 'from scratch' is that it costs teachers too much time and effort. He did not elaborate but seemed content to leave the impression that curriculum integration was untenable as a serious curriculum design and of merely historical interest.¹²⁶ However, when teaching is done well – by maintaining academic rigour, meeting developmental needs and accounting for individual differences among learners – it is nearly always a demanding and time-consuming enterprise, no matter what

¹²⁵ Note that Cremin did not differentiate between subject-centred and student-centred versions of curriculum integration.

¹²⁶ Cremin may have been informed by Redefer (1950 cited Tyack & Cuban, 1995) who suggested that teachers in the Eight Year Study were 'exhausted' by the demands of implementing core curricula. However, Redefer's claim is somewhat curious as Aikin (1942) did not draw attention to such a problem.

curriculum design is implemented. Recent research implies that the perception that curriculum integration is time-consuming may be associated with the lack of intrinsic or extrinsic rewards for teachers. Where the multidisciplinary model has been implemented from scratch, teachers working in teams have complained that the planning process takes up too much of their time (for example: Boix-Mansilla, Miller & Gardner, 2000; Ellis & Stuen, 1998; Hammerness & Moffett, 2000; Jacobs, 1989d; Reames, Gorman & Pillsbury, 1993; Renyi, 2000; Steffens, Conru & Garrett, 1993). Indeed, Fogarty asserted that a realistic approach to multidisciplinary planning should entail, “summer curriculum writing time” (1991b:62). However some multidisciplinary teams have heeded this advice and given up their summer holiday for little in return. For instance, a team from Vermont used several weeks of holiday time working on a topic they later abandoned (Reames, Gorman & Pillsbury, 1993). Another team from Massachusetts worked over the summer holiday only to receive a ‘luke-warm’ response from their colleagues (Ellis & Stuen, 1998). Yet another team from Missouri worked, “throughout the summer” before wryly reporting that, “compatible personalities are important” (Ellis & Stuen, 1998:132).

In contrast, teachers of the integrative model have rarely complained about excessive time commitments. Nonetheless, it is incorrect to assume that the integrative model can be implemented with a minimal input of time or effort. BBMS principal Camille Barr asserted that the integrative model was, ‘hard work’ for her staff and highly ‘demanding’ of their time and energy (Powell, 1999). Instead, the relative paucity of complaints about time suggests that although collaborative planning and on-going curriculum development demands considerable commitment, teachers are convinced their efforts are worthwhile. Nonetheless as discussed earlier, teachers of the integrative model – especially those who are isolated and lack support from their school community – are highly ‘visible’ and nearly always have to spend extra time and energy explaining and justifying their practice (Beane, 1997; Weilbacher, 2001).

Some teachers of the multidisciplinary model have commented that they find it difficult to choose a topic which keeps their students interested and gives them a suitable outlet

for their creativity and energy (for example: Girardin, 1993; Heins, 1993; Siskin, 2000; Vossler and Moore, 1993). In one school, a teacher who had been reluctant to implement the multidisciplinary model asserted:

It takes an incredible amount of time and energy. It's no joke. People really need to want to do it because it's no joke (Hammerness & Moffett, 2000:142).

A colleague who had advocated the multidisciplinary model stated:

I'm burnt out. It's hard to keep creating exciting, rigorous (multidisciplinary) curriculum. I'm exhausted (Hammerness & Moffett, 2000:142).

Similarly, in a highly regarded example of the multidisciplinary model in New Mexico, Renyi (2000) found that even when teachers' favourite themes were used and students' test scores were consistently favourable, teachers still eventually counted the cost. As multidisciplinary apologist Ackerman (1989) acknowledged, the 'sheer effort' required when teachers create new multidisciplinary units – let alone the need to sustain learners' attention by continuously exuding fresh energy and enthusiasm – is 'daunting'.

In contrast, teachers of the integrative model do not experience the same pressure to be creative and brim with energy and enthusiasm just to keep learners 'on task'. Right from the outset, the design of the integrative model harnesses the creativity and energy of young people by giving them 'ownership' of the curriculum (Beane, 1997; Weilbacher, 2001). The process of collaborative planning allows teachers to resituate themselves as expert advisors and pass on the 'burden' of creativity to their students. Moreover, the curriculum-making process is intrinsically motivating for teachers and students alike, which engenders fresh energy and enthusiasm to all concerned.

Recent research suggests that the teacher team structure found in many middle schools may not be the best way to plan multidisciplinary units. Dickinson and Butler (2001) claimed that teacher teams in the USA are often dysfunctional. They asserted that, "in middle schools across America the story is the same ... teams do not meet, even though they have allocated time in their schedules" (2001:7-8). Moreover when teams do manage to meet, curriculum planning time is too often frittered away by administration tasks or discussions about students (Beane & Brodhagen, 2001). Bernstein's (1971)

framework – described in Chapter 4 – also predicted that teachers who work together in teams to develop ‘collection code curricula’ such as the multidisciplinary model would be unable to cooperate with each other properly. As a result, some multidisciplinary programs have reverted to traditional departmentalised arrangements where students ‘rotate’ from teacher to teacher and subject to subject with little evidence of meaningful linkages in the curriculum (Vars, 1998a). Some middle-level researchers have concluded that the better way to create a multidisciplinary unit for local conditions may be to revert to the two-teacher model of ‘partner teaming’ pioneered by progressive teachers during the Eight-Year Study (Alexander & George, 2003; Beane & Brodhagen, 2001; Vars, 1998b). Extending this logic a step further, a fully satisfactory solution to the problem of planning integrated curriculum units may hinge on adopting a genuinely student-centred approach (Beane, 1997).¹²⁷

This section has argued that although teachers of the multidisciplinary model may gain personal satisfaction by creating worthwhile units, their efforts have rarely enhanced their professional status or gained them extrinsic reward. This state of affairs occurs because the dominant political group is disinclined to reward teachers who derail or corrupt the transmission of official knowledge in their efforts to make the multidisciplinary model more relevant for young people. For those who attempt to implement this sort of curriculum design without a solid commitment to student-centred pedagogy, it is only a small step back to the single-subject approach. Accordingly, when creating a multidisciplinary curriculum for local needs becomes a thankless task and time spent on planning receives little recognition, it seems inevitable that most teachers would want to opt out of the team-planning structure.

Conclusion

This chapter argued that the recent political environment in the USA has been a major influence on curriculum integration. Above all, the conservative restoration has marginalised the integrative model. Despite the potential of the integrative model as a seemingly ideal curriculum for early adolescents, it has been met by political opposition

¹²⁷ The issue of curriculum planning is discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

from almost every quarter. In particular, teachers of the integrative model have borne the brunt of political pressure. Accordingly, integrative curriculum may not be sustainable unless it is implemented on a 'whole-school' basis with the full support of the principal and the community. In contrast, the multidisciplinary model has been relatively easy to implement because it is a reliable conduit of official knowledge. However, a curriculum based on official knowledge raises significant ethical issues because it ignores social and cultural diversity along with the developmental needs of early adolescents. Chapter 8 examines the ethics implied by each model with respect to the guiding principle that a curriculum for early adolescents should meet the needs of *all* young people.

Chapter 8

The ethics of curriculum integration in the USA

This chapter compares and contrasts the ethics of Jacobs' multidisciplinary model and Beane's integrative model with particular reference to the recent situation in the USA.¹²⁸ The distinctions drawn from this investigation are significant because they demonstrate that an ethical curriculum for early adolescents needs to be both equitable and inclusive in order to meet the developmental and learning needs of every young person. This chapter extends the investigation of the political environment in the previous chapter by examining the ethics of the multidisciplinary and integrative models with regard to their respective claims as the preferred method of curriculum integration in American middle level schools. It argues that Jacobs' model adopts a 'thin' ethical position whereas Beane's model adopts a 'thick' ethical position. The rest of the chapter highlights differences between the ethical positions of each model and explains the importance of these differences with respect to middle level schooling. In particular, it argues that the contrasting ethical positions of the two models are revealed by their respective planning procedures. It also contrasts the ethical positions of the two models by discussing hypothetical applications of their designs.

An ethical curriculum for early adolescents

This investigation of this chapter is predicated on the assumption held by many prominent educators, both past and present, that an ideal ethical curriculum for early adolescents must be equitable and inclusive. As such, middle level curricula should be implemented by selecting subject matter from the local socio-cultural context. In their review of middle schooling in the USA, Lipsitz, Mizell, Jackson and Austin argued that the best curriculum approach for early adolescents is, "developmentally responsive, academically excellent and socially equitable" (1997:534). These three criteria are eminently achievable and – as discussed earlier in Chapter 3 – endow the curriculum with

¹²⁸ As explained in Chapter 1, this investigation is confined to the American context where curriculum integration has been implemented widely at the middle level.

a 'balance' between the individual, society and subject matter when young people are able to situate their learning in familiar social contexts (Schubert, 1995).

The inclusive nature of the ideal ethical curriculum requires it to respond to the needs of all young people, including those from minority groups, those from poor communities and those with disabilities.¹²⁹ Research also implies that an ethical curriculum needs to properly address the needs of early adolescents by being 'challenging, integrative and exploratory' (NMSA, 1995), by fostering 'resiliency' (Bernard, 1993) and by being 'relevant, engaging and rigorous' (Beane, 1998). An ethical curriculum enables young people to practice democratic citizenship by actively participating in the 'macroculture' of the nation and the 'microculture' of their local community (Banks, 2001a). In the process an ethical curriculum should respond to the developmental needs of the *whole* person (Noddings, 2005) and accommodate the educational needs of *every* young person (NMSA, 1995). Powell, Fussell, Troutman, Smith and Skoog (1998) underscored the particular importance of an ethical curriculum for early adolescents. They stated:

In a society which has become increasingly pluralistic, all young adolescents now face, and will continue to face, pressing issues that deal with race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexuality, social class, ableness and gender (1998:13).

The notion of an ideal ethical curriculum for early adolescents aligns well with the thick ethics of Beane's (1990a/1993a & 1997) integrative model but it is at sharp variance with the thin ethics of Jacobs' (1989a & 1997a) multidisciplinary model.

The 'thin' ethics of Jacobs' multidisciplinary model

As discussed in Chapter 7, the conservative restoration in the USA has championed a thin curriculum with a correspondingly thin democracy and thin ethics. This applies to 'top-down' subject-centred curricula like Jacobs' multidisciplinary model, which adhere to neo-liberal ideology and reliably transmit official knowledge. As explained in Chapter 7, Jacobs (1989a & 1997a) ignored key findings in the education literature. In particular, she adopted a thin ethical position which failed to recognise differences among learners. This position ignores the reality that young people in the USA are part of a vast society

¹²⁹ In the case of students with disabilities the notion of an inclusive curriculum is especially important. As Erevelles (2005) pointed out, the critical analysis of disability has been largely absent in curriculum theory.

with a mosaic of diverse backgrounds, different abilities and varying aptitudes (Hargreaves, Earl & Ryan, 1996). Moreover, Jacobs' position overlooks the wide range of maturational diversity within the stage of early adolescence where same-age cohorts display considerable differences in physical, social and cognitive maturity (Manning, 1993). Although Jacobs' model was derived from the subject-centred 'interdisciplinary' curricula adopted by many middle schools during the 1960s, her design focused solely on the rearrangement of subject matter within the disciplines. As mentioned in Chapter 6, her model was based on the perceived needs of gifted and talented students (Jacobs & Borland, 1986). Accordingly, Jacobs' model failed to address the developmental needs of early adolescents (or the needs of students at any other developmental stage). In particular, Jacobs' curriculum design ignored accepted research showing that education for early adolescents should be individualised (Arnold, 1997; NMSA, 1995). Indeed, the general failure of subject-centred approaches to satisfactorily link developmental needs with curriculum design has been recognised as an impediment to the advancement of middle schooling in the USA (Carnegie Council, 1989; Eccles & others, 1993; NMSA, 1995). *Turning Points* underlined the gravity of this problem when they stated that a 'volatile mismatch' existed between curricula at the middle level and the needs of early adolescents (Carnegie Council, 1989).

The thin ethics of Jacobs' model has serious implications for all early adolescents but this is especially apparent to those from certain sub-groups. For instance, Jacobs' model is inherently biased against young people with disabilities, those from minority groups and those from poor communities.¹³⁰ Giroux explained that in common with other subject-centred curricula, the multidisciplinary model effectively, "generates a privileged narrative space for some social groups and a space of inequality and insubordination for others" (1999:230). A corollary of this is that Jacobs' model refuses to admit knowledge into the curriculum from popular culture or alternative sources such as ethnic, ghetto and youth cultures. Beane asserted:

(Subject-centred) educators thus become implicated in an education that is, not only narrow and incomplete, but also *unethical* (1997:8, emphasis added).

¹³⁰ The likely responses of each model to the needs of young people from poor communities are considered in more detail later in this chapter.

The implication that subject-centred curriculum designs are ‘unethical’ is based on thick ethics where the common good – especially access to high quality schooling for all – is an essential outcome. Curricula based on the thin ethics of official knowledge tend to reinforce and add to existing inequalities. In particular, Jacobs’ multidisciplinary model tends to alienate early adolescents because it typically prevents them from situating their learning in relevant contexts (Beane, 1997; Hargreaves & Moore, 2000). In contrast, the integrative model is expressly designed to meet the needs of every young person.

The ‘thick’ ethics of Beane’s integrative model

The hegemony of the conservative restoration has been challenged by the development of an alternative thick curriculum based on a thick democracy and thick ethics. This applies to ‘bottom-up’ student-centred curricula like Beane’s integrative model which explicitly situate schooling in relevant, inclusive and democratic contexts. The NMSA (1995) argued that this kind of general education founded on thick ethics is desirable at the middle level. The authors stated:

In a healthy school environment, human relationships are paramount and all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. Students and adults recognize and accept one another’s differences; curiosity, creativity and diversity are celebrated (NMSA, 1995:19).

Beane’s model is strongly committed to thick ethics. Its design specifically ensures that early adolescents receive a personally meaningful and academically rigorous education (Beane, 1997; Pate, 2001). The integrative model is inherently responsive to the needs of every young person because the subject matter of the curriculum literally consists of *their* personal and social concerns (Beane, 1990a/1993a & 1997). Beane’s model owes much to Dewey’s concept of a miniature community of learners. The social nature of collaborative classrooms promotes highly effective learning because learners must engage in the deep structure of subject matter in order to effectively communicate their ideas or develop collegial relationships. In the process, personal and social integration are promoted. As Vars explained:

(The integrative model) may result in higher test scores, but even more important are its other benefits such as love of learning, concern for other people, critical thinking, self-confidence, commitment to democratic group processes, and a host of other so-called ‘intangibles’ (2001:9).

As discussed later, the integrative model also gives early adolescents genuine responsibilities by inviting them to collaboratively plan the curriculum with their teachers (Beane, 1990a/1993a). The thick ethics of Beane's model allows young people to grapple with real-life issues and problems, whereas the thin ethics of Jacobs' model often bars the entry of real-life issues into the classroom. The next section uses the example of young people from poor communities to show that the respective designs of the multidisciplinary and integrative models respond differently to the particular needs of some groups of young people.

Early adolescents from poor communities

One of the effects of Jacobs' model – along with other curricula informed by thin ethics – is that it side-lines the needs of early adolescents in poor areas (Beane, 1999a; Perkins-Gough, Sneyder & Licciardi, 2003). This issue is compounded by the reality that middle schools in poor communities fare badly compared to other middle schools in the USA (Balfanz, Ruby & Mac Iver, 2002; Elmore, 2000). These schools are typified by:

An instructionally bland and non-substantive curriculum ... (where students) memorize terms, facts, and procedures; recite and practice them; read textbooks that are boring and poorly written; and complete worksheets (Balfanz et al., 2002:128).

Young people in middle schools like these are vulnerable to alienation and may opt to disengage from classroom learning when the curriculum fails to respond to their needs.¹³¹ Unfortunately, few middle level teachers in the USA have received specialist training, so they often display little understanding or empathy for the developmental needs of early adolescents, let alone the particular needs of young people from poor areas (Beane & Brodhagen, 2001; Payne, 1998; Pitton, 2001).¹³² In the same vein, research in middle level education has largely failed to consider cultural or class differences (Beane & Brodhagen, 2001). Nonetheless, other research evidence suggests that young people from poor communities do better when the curriculum is based on thick ethics. The presence of supportive learning communities in middle schools promotes achievement

¹³¹ Wallace (2000) also pointed out that 'non-conformist' students are vulnerable to a similar form of 'alienation' when subject matter is unsympathetic to their needs.

¹³² Nonetheless, the NMSA has unequivocally stated that all middle level teachers should, "understand the developmental uniqueness of young adolescents" and to be, "as knowledgeable about their students as they are about the subject matter they teach" (1995:13).

(Carnegie Council, 1989; Strahan, Smith, McElrath & Toole, 2001). In particular, the need for caring relationships has been identified as the 'heart' of the learning community and a vital building block towards academic success (Carnegie Council, 1989; Lewis, Schaps and Watson, 1996; Powell, 2001). Indeed, the common theme in the literature of early adolescence is *relationships*. Almost every aspect of this developmental stage involves establishing, renegotiating or enhancing relationships. Issues such as social competence, making friends with peers, and developing warm and secure relationships with teachers and other adults are very important to early adolescents (Beane, 1990c; Carnegie Council, 1989; George & Lounsbury, 2000; Muir, 2001; Stevenson, 1992, 1998 & 2002; Takanishi, 1993 cited Brazee, 1997; Vars, 1998a).

One of the keys to developing learning communities in poor neighbourhoods is to ensure that curricula are designed to promote caring, thus they need to be genuinely inclusive and developmentally responsive. This implies that curricula should be aligned to connect with local communities. Research shows that strong links between schools and their communities are crucial to the success of schooling in low-income areas (Levin, 1987; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998; Cuban, 2003). Both families and local communities should be encouraged to claim a stake in the school curriculum as they are a significant influence in the lives of young people (Brown & Roney, 2003; Carnegie Council, 1989; Epstein, 1996; Epstein & Salinas, 2004; NMSA, 1995). Indeed, high-quality schooling based on thick curricula like Beane's integrative model and underpinned by the ideology of *Turning Points* (Carnegie Council, 1989) has improved the progress of early adolescents from poor communities in several American states; including Arkansas, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi and North Dakota (Felner, Jackson, Kasak, Mulhall, Brand & Flowers, 1997; Anfara & Lipka, 2003; Mertens & Flowers, 2003).

In summary, the thick ethics of Beane's model supports the learning of early adolescents from poor communities because it enables them to construct meanings for their learning with subject matter drawn from familiar contexts. In contrast, Jacobs' model tends to alienate young people from poor areas because more often than not subject matter is drawn from unsympathetic contexts. The manifestly different responses of the two

models to the needs of early adolescents from poor communities underlines that the ethics of the two models are different. Moreover, the thin ethics of Jacobs' model is likely to result in classroom applications which ignore the specific needs of a range of sub-groups of early adolescents, whereas the thick ethics of Beane's model specifically ensures that classroom applications will meet the needs of all early adolescents. Arguably, the differing ethical positions of the integrative and multidisciplinary models are best revealed by comparing and contrasting their approaches to curriculum planning.

Planning multidisciplinary units

According to Jacobs (1989a), the planning process in her multidisciplinary model belongs to teachers and curriculum writers. Multidisciplinary units consist of selected content and skills where, "knowledge is fixed in predetermined sequences" (Beane, 1997:11). As a result, the thin ethics which characterise the multidisciplinary planning process result in a 'top-down' organisation of prescribed content and skills into themes and patterns. This has three ethical consequences. First, planning disempowers students because it does not provide for their input. Second, the different subject areas are not always adequately represented. Third, the notion of 'mapping' disempowers teachers because it reduces their autonomy. These consequences warrant discussion in detail.

First, Jacobs' model disempowers young people because it excludes them from the planning process. Apple (1982) argued that processes similar to this not only suppress young people's understandings and experiences, they also engender feelings of alienation and antipathy towards classroom subject matter. Nonetheless, Jacobs (1989b) insisted that multidisciplinary units should be planned in 'teacher teams' *without* input from students. She stated that the planning process – and the curriculum as a whole – is the preserve of teachers (Jacobs, 1989c). As explained in Chapter 6, Jacobs (1989a, 1997a & 1997b) asserted that multidisciplinary units should be planned by applying the notions of 'scope', 'sequence' and 'mapping' to incorporate specific subject matter and skills into a curriculum blueprint. This 'top-down' process makes it difficult for young people to participate in curriculum planning because they lack the professional and academic knowledge of teachers. Jacobs (1989a) did not consider the developmental or

educational benefits of inviting young people to participate in curriculum planning. Instead, the emphasis in her model on ‘mapping’ – which often involves long-range planning over months or years – makes it impractical for students to be involved in even a low level of curriculum planning (Jacobs, 1997a & 1997b). Efforts to adapt Jacobs’ model to make it compatible with student-centred pedagogies are prone to failure. As explained in Chapter 7, when teachers develop multidisciplinary units for local conditions they expose themselves to political pressure because their efforts usually compromise the integrity of official knowledge. Moreover, any attempt to involve students in the planning stage of Jacobs’ model should logically fail. As Bernstein (1975) pointed out, if young people help plan a subject-centred unit with an organising theme purportedly based on their knowledge and interests, any knowledge which is not part of the official subject matter of any given subject would have to be summarily excluded.

When teachers opt to utilise Jacobs’ model, their decision not only prevents early adolescents from experiencing the democratic process associated with collaborative planning, it also situates their learning in contexts drawn from teachers’ preferences. Beane explained that the multidisciplinary model, “casts power relations not only in terms of decision-making but also with regard to who gets to define worthwhile knowledge and value of experiences” (1993a:89). Thus, Jacobs’ model recapitulates Caswell’s VCP design in the 1930s by giving teachers a modicum of control and ownership of the curriculum but withholding the same rights from students. As a result, the planning process of the multidisciplinary model – along with its thin ethics – is demonstrably ‘undemocratic’ (Beane, 1993a).

Second, the planning stage of Jacobs’ model rarely includes teachers from the full range of subject areas. This occurs because some subjects have a higher status than others. In many middle schools in the USA, the term of ‘multidisciplinary teaming’ refers to groups of teachers who represent the four subject areas of mathematics, English, science and social studies (Beane & Brodhagen, 2001). This leads to multidisciplinary units which correlate the ‘big four’ subjects but tend to marginalise or ignore the remaining subject

areas.¹³³ As discussed in Chapter 6, efforts to correlate subjects may run into the ‘polarity problem’ where a multidisciplinary unit is dominated by a single subject (Jacobs, 1989b; Ellis & Stuen, 1998). Jacobs (1989b) stated that this often leads to friction within teaching teams. The polarity problem was also encountered during the Eight-Year Study in a situation involving the correlation of two subjects. Aikin implied that a logical solution was to abandon attempts to impose correlation. He explained:

(Teachers found that) English became the handmaiden of history ... it became necessary to resort to artificial integration which was deemed worse than the evils which fusion sought to eliminate (1942:53).

Third, Jacobs’ (1997a & 1997b) recommendation that her model should be ‘mapped’ not only prevents students from sensibly participating in the planning process, it also disempowers teachers. Mapping implies that the curriculum should be ‘covered’ within a given timeframe which in turn implies that classes need to maintain a set learning pace. However, this makes it difficult for teachers to meet the learning needs of every student. Jacobs (1991 & 2004) also argued that educational districts should plan multidisciplinary units for every school but this would undermine teachers’ planning autonomy. Apple (2001) also warned that a district-wide curriculum could be dominated by a political agenda with thin ethics which marginalises minority groups.

Jacobs recently extended her meaning of the notion of mapping by proposing the use of ‘electronic mapping’ where teachers enter data during class time (Jacobs, 2004; Perkins-Gough, 2004). It is unclear how this might improve the multidisciplinary model however it could expose teachers to harassment if administrators monitored their classes in real time. Kallick and Wilson (2004) argued that electronic mapping offers some advantages in ‘flexibility and speed’ but this – along with their enthusiasm for district-wide software and ‘templates’ for curriculum blueprints – is indicative of an agenda in favour of centralised planning which, as already argued, erodes teachers’ autonomy. The next section asserts that one outcome of the thin ethics associated with Jacobs’ model is that units planned by teachers or curriculum writers sometimes fail to motivate young people.

¹³³ This ‘big four’ syndrome is also readily apparent in the commercially available generic multidisciplinary units discussed in Chapter 7 (for example: Warren & Flinchbaugh, 2003).

The 'hit or miss' nature of Jacobs' multidisciplinary model

The efficacy of Jacobs' multidisciplinary model tends to be 'hit or miss' because its design does not allow students to contribute to the planning stage. In contrast, Beane's integrative model depends on the notion that students and teachers should collaboratively plan and implement each unit. This collaborative approach is designed to ensure that early adolescents will 'own' organising themes and be motivated to actively engage in integrative units. However as explained above, Jacobs' model stipulates that teacher teams (or curriculum writers) should plan subject-centred units of work without input from students. As a result some multidisciplinary units are a 'hit' with students while other units 'miss the mark' altogether. When teacher teams hit on a theme which students enjoy, units can be conspicuously successful according to any educational measure. Students embrace subject matter as their own and immerse themselves in 'their' units. On the other hand, when a team – or, as often as not, a curriculum writer – utilises a theme which only motivates a few students, the educational value of the unit becomes problematic. When the curriculum lacks relevance, early adolescents are noted for their passive or resistant behaviour and general reluctance to participate in class (Apple, 1982; Willis, 1977). In these situations young people may appear 'dutiful' as they chum out what passes for work but they rarely engage in the deep structure of the subject matter at hand (Sizer, 1999).

An example of a successful multidisciplinary unit in terms of student ownership of subject matter was 'Big Alpha Circus' which ran for five weeks at a middle school in Vermont (Smith, Blaise, Mann & Myers, 1993). The unit was designed by a team made up of two core-subject teachers, a physical education teacher and a music teacher. It consisted of three interrelated 'mini-studies' organised about a 'circus' theme and finished with the culminating activity of a class circus. The teachers were convinced that the class had been highly motivated and had engaged in the deep structure of the subject matter. They suggested that the 'extravagant and exciting' circus theme had given rise to an extra dimension of creative expression where the students were inspired to achieve at a higher level than usual. The teachers asserted that the students made significant gains in academic and social skills, achieved excellence and grew in self-awareness and self-

confidence. For instance, several students expressed a sense of personal belonging and collective accomplishment. They stated:

Everybody loves the circus! ... Our circus was successful because everyone chose their personal contribution. We each had our own spotlight ... Improvisation was how we fixed our mistakes ... We had to work together, we even had to compromise ... The circus is a family (Smith, Blaise, Mann & Myers, 1993:154).

This multidisciplinary unit had thick rather than thin ethics. In particular, it acquired 'progressive' characteristics. For instance, the teachers utilised a student-centred pedagogy from the outset, so the unit responded to early adolescent needs rather than to subject area demands. The unit also met Bernstein's (1971) criteria for an 'integrated code' curriculum because at an early point the 'circus' organising theme became more important than the constituent subject areas. The students claimed ownership of the subject matter and their teachers soon invited them to join on-going unit planning.

An example of a less successful multidisciplinary unit in terms of student ownership of subject matter was 'Conflict with the environment' at a middle level school in Saskatchewan, Canada. Erlandson and McVittie (2001) elicited students' opinions about the unit. They found that the subject matter of the unit had a markedly positive or negative emotive impact on students, depending on whether or not it was personally relevant to them. This dichotomy aligns with developmental research showing that early adolescents tend to make unambiguous 'black-and-white' judgments which are then often mediated by peer opinion (Stevenson, 1992/2002). One girl expressed her enthusiasm for the unit in terms of her enhanced ability to think about the environment, which suggested that she had engaged in the deep structure of its subject matter. She stated:

Now we have our own thoughts on the environment ... I think its awesome that we know more about the environment ... it makes us not just know what's going on, but think about it too ... I don't think you should change it, because it all seemed like a good learning experience to me (Erlandson & McVittie, 2001:31).

In contrast, a boy who had enjoyed other units derided it as suitable only for 'tree huggers'. He refused to engage in the subject matter of the unit. He stated:

(The unit was) boring ... I didn't learn anything ... I read how they're cutting down two acres of trees, oh big deal (ibid., p.33).

In this instance, the 'curriculum message' of the unit – that is, that teachers decide 'what counts as valid knowledge' – told the boy his personal concerns and cultural knowledge were of little value (Bemstein, 1971). Nonetheless, the same boy indicated that meaningful learning contexts were important to him and that he would value the opportunity, should it arise in the future, to plan the curriculum with his teachers. He asserted:

If its something you enjoy, you'll learn more, you'll get more out of it ... maybe kids should teach teachers, once in a while, what to do (Erlandson & McVittie, 2001:34-35).

In another example of a less successful multidisciplinary unit in terms of student ownership of subject matter, Findley (2002) concluded that some students were 'unmotivated' by unit work unless they could make sense of their learning by drawing on personal experience. Findley observed that one boy, "often ignored curricular and teacher-made connections and learning goals, but found (his own) ways to make personal connections and sense of the material" (2002:62). In other words, the boy needed to carry out the process of personal integration on his own, as it was not something his teacher could perform on his behalf (Dewey, 1931; Davis, 1997).

In summary when teachers utilise Jacobs' multidisciplinary model, they cannot be assured that their planning will prompt early adolescents to actively engage in their learning. According to Lounsbury, the problem is that Jacobs' design falls short of, "the larger long-term goals of a democratically oriented, truly integrated curriculum in which students are active participants" (1998:13). In contrast, the design of Beane's integrative model explicitly recognises the knowledge and concerns of every young person by inviting them to participate in curriculum planning.

Planning integrative units

The planning process in Beane's (1990a/1993a & 1997) integrative model is collaboratively carried out by teachers and students. Planning is underpinned by a commitment to the principles of democratic education. Pate asserted:

Schools in general should be a place where democracy is lived and learned ... where decisions are made by students and teachers through consensus ... every person in the classroom should have a voice ... (and) should have the right to be taken seriously and involved in decision-making (2001:81-82).

As explained in Chapter 7, Beane's model is a 'bottom-up' approach with thick ethics which does not accord special status to official knowledge. While the integrative model still recognises the formal knowledge of the disciplines, it 'sequences' all knowledge brought to the classroom strictly according to its, "relevance to the problem at hand" (Beane, 1997:11). Teachers and students collaboratively select subject matter drawn from their personal and social contexts to determine their own local knowledge or, as Beane (1993a) put it, the knowledge that is 'known and prized' by the community.

The collaborative teacher-student planning process in Beane's model was pioneered by the progressives in the Eight-Year Study (Giles, 1941 cited Vars, 1997b; Aikin, 1942). According to Aikin, "(the) Thirty Schools were convinced that both the present needs of youth and adult social demands should be used as sources of the curriculum" (1942:76). Collaborative planning was an important part of the curricula in Study schools, otherwise the twin objectives described by Aikin as 'the present needs of youth' (or personal integration) and 'adult social demands' (or social integration) would have been difficult to achieve. More recently, *Turning Points* and the NMSA recognised that collaborative planning represents a significant step towards engaging early adolescents in their learning. *Turning Points* suggested that the, "core middle school curriculum" could be:

Organized around integrating themes that young people find relevant to their own lives (using methods which) capitalize on young adolescents' concerns and curiosity about their own physical and emotional development and their place within the family, peer group and larger society (Carnegie Council, 1989:48).

The NMSA called for, "curriculum that is challenging, integrative and exploratory" (1995:20). They explained:

Curriculum is integrative when it helps students make sense out of their life experiences. This requires curriculum that is itself coherent, that helps students connect school experiences to their daily lives outside the school, and that encourages them to reflect on the totality of their experiences (1995:22).

However for the reasons explained in Chapter 7, such endorsements of the integrative model and its collaborative planning process have had little impact in the USA.

Collaborative planning responds to the developmental needs of early adolescents. It gives them increased autonomy, responsibility and control over the subject matter of the curriculum (Beane, 1993a). For example, the planning process obliges young people to effectively communicate their thoughts and engage in productive discussions. Early adolescents are sensitive about how they are perceived or treated but appreciate recognition of increased social maturity (Stevenson, 2002). As such, collaborative planning gives rise to a collegial and supportive setting which allows young people to develop robust relationships with their teachers and peers (Pitton, 2001).

In contrast to the prescriptive planning approach in Jacobs' model, the collaborative planning process in the integrative model is specifically designed to enhance the dignity and personal efficacy of early adolescents (Beane, 1990c). When young people help plan the curriculum, they gain hands-on experience with regard to their democratic rights and responsibilities. The process of collaborative planning redistributes power and recasts roles so that teachers become mentors, and students become increasingly autonomous learners (Beane, 1993a). As a result, the democratic learning community engendered by the integrative model enables early adolescents to help plan the curriculum, evaluate their work and make substantive decisions which significantly impact on their learning.

Although classroom applications of the integrative and multidisciplinary models often draw from the same bodies of subject matter, they generally result in different ethical outcomes. The next two sections illustrate these ethical outcomes by utilising hypothetical examples of subject matter. The first example shows that Beane's model includes a democratic process which allows almost any subject matter to enter the curriculum, whereas Jacobs' model sometimes excludes contentious areas of subject matter from the curriculum altogether.

Religion as subject matter

The utilisation of religion as subject matter presents an interesting hypothetical scenario for the implementation of the integrative and multidisciplinary models because it is likely to result in opposite outcomes. Before considering how each model might respond to religion, it is worth noting that the issue of whether or not religion should enter the American curriculum as subject matter has been polarised by influential lobby groups which want to either introduce fundamentalist teachings into the curriculum or, conversely, expunge every last vestige of religion from the curriculum. This is relevant because the presence of controversy may influence teachers' decisions about curriculum content.

The thick ethics which underpin the integrative model indicates that religion as subject matter has a place in the curriculum because young people should have the right to consider the phenomenology of religion and its relationship to other disciplines (Beane, 1990c; Nord & Haynes, 1998). In Beane's model, an organising theme centred on religion is as valid as any other theme because subject matter is always determined by democratic means at each site of implementation.¹³⁴ Indeed, Beane argued that for early adolescents:

Anything less than a reasonably complete picture of the positive and negative influences of the wide variety of religious forces in past and present society is inappropriate (1990c:91).

Apple (2003) also urged democratic educators – whether or not they were predisposed to religion – to consider the role of religion in society. He stated:

We cannot act as if religious beliefs about social and educational justice are outside the pale of progressive action, as too many critical educators do. A combination of caution, openness and creativity is required here (2003:222-223).

The decision whether or not to allow young people to gain a 'complete picture' of religion is an ethical issue. Beane's design allows this to occur. For instance in a hypothetical integrative unit, teachers and students might collaboratively explore Beane's allusion to the 'negative influences' of religion. They might examine historical examples

¹³⁴ However note that an ethical approach to any form of religious instruction or indoctrination – where this is legal – should involve informed consent from the school community.

of gross distortions of Christianity in American culture such as those adopted by the Ku Klux Klan (Beane, 1990c) or by proponents of slavery (Apple, 2001). They might also consider less obvious distortions of the Christian message in present-day America like the continuing incidence of ‘unofficial racial segregation’ in the real estate market (Apple, 2001) or unofficial slavery such as the exploitation of immigrant ‘debt-slaves’ engaged in labour-intensive work in Southern states (Cockburn, 2003). Teachers and students might also examine ethical issues such as the questionable morality of the ‘prosperity gospel’ and single-issue lobby groups (Wallis, 2005)¹³⁵ or the persistent efforts of some churches to control people with various prohibitions on their personal freedom. An outcome of an integrative unit with religion as an organising theme could be that young people discern that religion is a key element of cultural diversity and the basis of many moral and ethical decisions. In short, the unit could allow them to gain access to valuable knowledge about the fabric and workings of their society.¹³⁶

In contrast, the design of Jacobs’ model suggests that young people would be denied the opportunity to gain a ‘complete picture’ of religion. As explained in Chapter 6, Jacobs’ model stipulates that teachers should develop units according to ‘scope’, ‘sequence’ and long range ‘mapping’ which prevents new knowledge from spontaneously entering the curriculum. The only way Jacobs’ model would allow the subject matter of religion to enter the curriculum would be if it gained the status of ‘official knowledge’ and was then recognised as an accepted component within a discrete subject area. In any case, teacher teams are likely to want to avoid choosing potentially contentious themes. Nonetheless, certain bodies of contentious subject matter sometimes manage to establish a place in the curriculum and gain recognition as a subject area. As the next section indicates, these subject areas may give rise to markedly different curricula, depending on whether Jacobs’ or Beane’s model is implemented.

¹³⁵ Note that the unorthodox doctrine of the prosperity gospel neatly explains why the interests of neo-liberalism and conservative Christian churches often intersect.

¹³⁶ Beane (personal communication) commented that in the USA young people almost always raise questions about religion during the collaborative planning stage of the integrative model. He stressed that they are always encouraged to discuss these issues with their families and to then bring their views to class as *descriptions*. He added that in the case of this subject matter teachers should withhold their own beliefs.

The subject matter of multicultural education

The hypothetical scenario of utilising the subject matter of multicultural education to implement the integrative and the multidisciplinary models is likely to result in different outcomes. Multicultural education presents an awkward challenge to the thin ethics of the multidisciplinary model but it fits neatly within the thick ethics of the integrative model. The primary aim of multicultural education – and the single focus of its theoretical framework – is to encourage young people to reflect on and respond to social diversity (Gay, 2004). Accordingly, multicultural education applies thick ethics to challenge official knowledge. The thin response to multicultural education is to control the content of subject matter with devices like tokenism which tend to distract or prevent substantive debate. For instance, the subject matter of thin multicultural curricula is often limited to a superficial study of ‘heroes and holidays’ or a narrow focus on certain cultural rituals and artefacts (Banks, 2001b). In other cases, subject-centred approaches to multicultural education have tended to resort to, “contrived character education lessons or moralizing stories” to train students to supposedly respect diversity (Beane, 2002:28). As a result, Jacobs’ model would be unlikely to adequately address multicultural issues.

In contrast, Beane’s model would be sympathetic to the thick agenda of multicultural education because it encourages young people to explore substantive issues such as the origins of institutionalised racism and discrimination. For instance, Brown Barge Middle School (BBMS) in Florida implemented an integrative unit with a multicultural emphasis called ‘American Tapestries’ (Barr, 1995). A former student from BBMS explained:

I went through the American Tapestries stream, which was about prejudice ... you learn a lot about yourself and how you feel. And you learn other ways to feel. We talked about different things but mainly culture. We got into arguments until we actually understood the other side (Powell & Skoog, 1995:99).

According to Powell, Fussell, Troutman, Smith and Skoog, the thick ethics of this integrative unit enabled the young learners at BBMS to genuinely develop a, “greater understanding of and acceptance” for others beyond their immediate peer group (1998:3). Beane’s model encourages early adolescents to engage in the deep structure of multicultural subject matter and empowers them to change their social environment by participating in ‘transformation’ and ‘social action’ (Banks, 2001a). In contrast, Jacobs’

model maintains tight subject-area boundaries which effectively prevent teacher teams from producing the kinds of units that would allow young people to actively engage in and respond to multiculturalism.

These two sections have suggested that the entry of subject matter into the middle level curriculum is an ethical issue. The examples of religion and multicultural education as subject matter indicate that Jacobs' multidisciplinary model controls the entry of subject matter into the classroom curriculum according to the dictates of the thin ethics of official knowledge. In contrast the thick ethics associated with the design of Beane's integrative model indicate that it allows almost any subject matter to enter the classroom curriculum.

Conclusion

This chapter compared and contrasted the ethical positions of Jacobs' multidisciplinary model and Beane's integrative model. Jacobs' design does not specifically address the developmental needs of early adolescents. Moreover, it disregards important issues of equity and inclusion by failing to address the needs of groups with any kind of special need. In its role as a conduit of official knowledge, Jacobs' model also excludes a vast range of educationally sound – and otherwise legitimate subject matter – from the curriculum. Accordingly, the 'thin' ethics attached to Jacobs' model suggests that it is a questionable choice as a curriculum design for early adolescents. In contrast, Beane's model meets the standard for an ideal ethical curriculum with respect to the education of early adolescents because its 'thick' ethics specifically ensures that it meets the diverse needs of all young people. Moreover, Beane's design specifically responds to the developmental needs of early adolescents by allowing them to participate in the process of curriculum planning. As discussed in Chapter 3, Beane's model is largely derived from Dewey's notion of a democratic learning community where individuals learn by communicating ideas and developing collaborative relationships. This collaborative planning process harnesses the creativity and energy of young people and ensures that they 'own' the curriculum and experience the democratic process. Unlike Jacobs' model, Beane's model permits and encourages early adolescents to learn, practice, and then

display a stage-appropriate range of social skills which are part of the maturational process and should be acquired during middle level schooling.

The argument in favour of Beane's integrative model as a middle level curriculum rests firmly on the 'high ground' of its thick ethics (Gehrke, 1998). Beane's model has the potential to genuinely engage and empower students who otherwise stand an excellent chance of being 'losers' in the educational 'race'. It provides a relevant and rigorous yet highly flexible curriculum design for the development of successful learning environments where every young person can make substantive social and academic progress. In contrast, the thin ethics of Jacobs' model means that, intentionally or otherwise, its design leads to classrooms where the education of many early adolescents is marginalised and diminished.

Chapter 9

Summary and conclusion

This final chapter brings together the findings of the preceding chapters to support my main conclusion that the student-centred integrative model is preferable to the subject-centred multidisciplinary model with regard to the systemic implementation of curriculum integration at the middle level in NZ. Moreover, a proper understanding of curriculum integration within the contemporary context requires a critical awareness of the history of the concept of curriculum integration. In addition, close attention to political and ethical issues associated with the implementation of the integrative model would help educators and policy-makers in NZ to avoid the problems which have plagued the implementation of the integrative model in the USA.

This chapter starts by explaining how I conceptualised the mixed historical-theoretical research methodology. It summarises the findings of my historical investigation in Chapters 2-5 and the theoretical investigation in Chapters 6-8. This chapter discusses the implications of my research findings for the research community, policy-makers, middle school advocates and teachers of early adolescents. I also propose directions for further research concerning the implementation and theoretical development of the integrative model. I conclude the chapter by speculating that both the timing and political conditions is currently favourable for student-centred curriculum integration to be implemented at the systemic level in the middle years (Years 7-10) in NZ schools.

Section 1: The conceptual framework

This research topic was motivated by my experience as a science teacher in NZ and Samoa. I was concerned that many early adolescents seemed to fail to engage in their learning when they were confronted with a single-subject curriculum which situated subject-matter in often unsympathetic contexts. As Head of Science in two high schools, I attempted to ameliorate this problem by situating the subject matter of the junior science curriculum within what I hoped would be sympathetic contexts or themes. For example, my department developed a six week unit called 'Sports science' which included aspects

of biology and physics. However this approach foundered on a similar problem inherent to Jacobs' multidisciplinary model, in that it also had a 'hit or miss' nature in terms of actively engaging young people in the subject matter of the unit. Nonetheless, I was intrigued that occasionally the subject matter of units could be a 'hit' with early adolescents. For instance, the 'Big Alpha Circus' unit discussed in Chapter 8 was a resounding hit (Smith, Blaise, Mann & Myers, 1993). I sensed that curriculum integration had exciting potential as a sympathetic curriculum for early adolescents because organising subject-matter in cross-curricular themes seemed to make classroom programs more relevant and motivating to young people than traditional single-subject approaches.

Early in my research, my conception of curriculum integration was limited to that of a subject-centred multidisciplinary approach which could be allied with child-centred pedagogical approaches familiar to many primary teachers in NZ. I conducted my research for several months before I understood that applications of curriculum integration divided naturally into subject-centred and student-centred approaches. At the same time I suspected that differences between these two approaches might be significant in the sense that one approach might meet the educational and developmental needs of early adolescents better than the other. I decided to carry out a research project investigating the potential of extant models of curriculum integration for solving the problem of how to actively engage early adolescents in their learning. At first I contemplated using a methodology involving in-depth case studies of recent examples of curriculum integration in NZ. Specifically, I considered investigating the implementation of curriculum integration in a few schools and the fidelity of their respective designs with existing models of curriculum integration. However, the predominance of confusion and ambiguity in the recent literature – especially the popular notion that several valid forms of curriculum integration exist – persuaded me that the theory informing recent practice needed to be treated with suspicion. In particular, the state of the literature raised the serious question of whether the concept of curriculum integration was actually a conglomeration of curriculum designs or perhaps something else altogether. Could it also be a pedagogical method, a political ideology, an article of faith or could it be a

combination of all of these? On reflection I decided that the concept of curriculum integration and the rationale for using it in middle level education was worthy of research in its own right. For this reason I utilised a methodology combining historical and theoretical investigation in order to explore both past and present meanings and understandings of curriculum integration.

I presented my case for a critical investigation of curriculum integration with regard to the educational and developmental needs of early adolescents in NZ in Chapter 1. I explained that progressive educators in the USA have shown that student-centred curriculum integration is especially responsive to the developmental needs of early adolescents, yet the single-subject curriculum – which is not specifically designed to be developmentally responsive – has been the predominant approach to middle-level education in NZ. The two-tiered structure of the education system in NZ has meant that early adolescent education – let alone attention to middle level curriculum design – has generally ‘fallen through the crack’ between primary and secondary schooling. Moreover, although the concept of curriculum integration has a distinguished history in NZ, its theoretical framework and promising potential as a curriculum design for early adolescents have remained obscure. As a result, unless we critically interrogate the concept of curriculum integration within historical and contemporary contexts and understand its implications for middle level schooling, we will struggle to implement it successfully.

Section 2: The historical investigation

My review of the literature of curriculum integration in Chapter 2 showed that applications of the concept fall into two categories, namely *subject-centred* and *student-centred* approaches. Although most historical sources have drawn the same conclusion, recent contributions regarding the nature of curriculum integration such as Fogarty (1991a) or Kysilka (1998) have failed to arrive at this conclusion unless – like Gehrke (1998) – they have consulted historical sources. I argued in Chapter 2 that the presence of widespread confusion and ambiguity in the recent literature of curriculum integration is largely due to ahistorical research. A key task in this chapter was to identify and

resolve the main sources of confusion in the literature. These sources of confusion were due to fragmented and inconsistent terminology along with the associated problem of ahistoric interpretations of curriculum integration. In the latter case, researchers and educators have either assumed that all models of curriculum integration have the same characteristics and lumped them together as one, or they have treated curriculum integration as a ‘continuum’ of different models with finely graded variations. In each case, these sources of confusion were resolved by reclassifying each model within subject-centred or student-centred categories. The justification for this was explained in the historical investigation of Chapter 3. In order to prevent further confusion, I recommended the use of *curriculum integration* as the generic term for all approaches to curriculum integration, *multidisciplinary* as the specific term for the extant subject-centred approach (Meeth, 1978 cited Jacobs, 1989a and Beane, 1997) and *integrative* as the specific term for the extant student-centred approach (Beane, 1993b). As depicted mathematically in the Venn diagram of Figure 2, the integrative and multidisciplinary

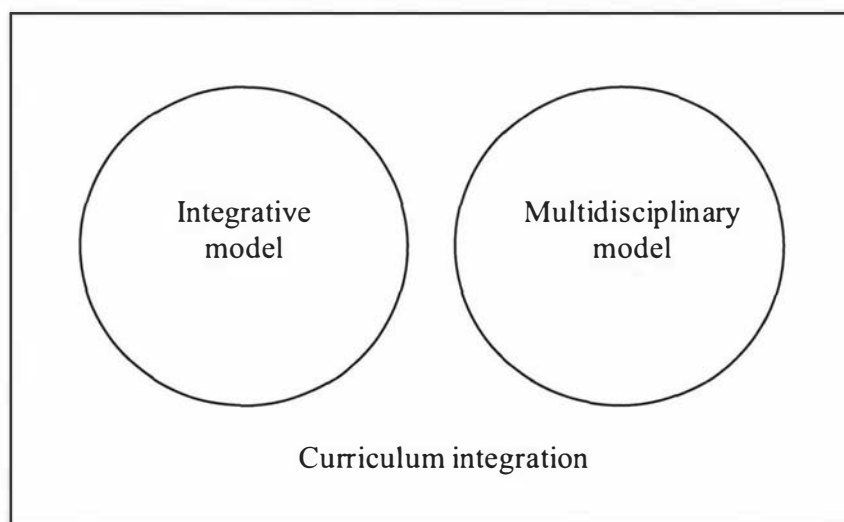


Figure 2: Recommended terminology for curriculum integration

models are subsets of curriculum integration – which is a superset containing all models of curriculum integration – but are distinct from each other, without overlapping characteristics. The differences between the two models are discussed in detail later in this chapter.

At the outset of my research I hoped that an historical analysis would shed light on the status of the two extant models of curriculum integration; namely the integrative and the multidisciplinary models. As so much of the recent literature is ahistoric, I also wondered whether earlier insights into the nature of integration may have been overlooked. Accordingly, the historical analyses in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 investigated the origins of the subject-centred and student-centred approaches identified in Chapter 2. This was accomplished by reviewing various historical applications of curriculum integration – and other allied forms of curriculum – in the USA, Britain and NZ then examining their curriculum designs for notions of integration. The collective findings of these chapters, as discussed below, confirmed the key finding of the earlier literature review: that the concept of curriculum integration developed within two separate and largely antagonistic traditions, namely the ‘subject-centred’ and ‘student-centred’ approaches. As explained in Chapter 1, I chose these three countries for the historical investigation because they have been the main influence on teaching practice in NZ. Moreover, the literature review in Chapter 2 indicated that most of the theory of curriculum integration was developed in the USA.

The historical investigation of Chapters 3-5 was subject to certain limitations. The NZ component of the historical research in this thesis was limited to published academic literature and archives of teacher gazettes. Although this limitation meant that the results were not derived from an exhaustive historical account, the investigation ably fulfilled its purpose which was to identify and appraise earlier understandings of curriculum integration in NZ. Similarly, the investigations of the American and British components of the historical research were limited to key texts or papers in the literature but this decision served the purpose of the historical part of my investigation which was to identify and examine the main influences on the development of the concept of curriculum integration in NZ.

Historical understandings of curriculum integration from the USA

Chapter 3 focused on the major contribution of the American progressives with respect to the development of the concept of curriculum integration. It showed that despite the

prevailing ahistoricism in the recent literature, the student-centred and subject-centred approaches to curriculum integration were both rooted in ideas dating from at least the nineteenth century. Dewey's 'organic' curriculum was an early version of student-centred curriculum integration developed at the Chicago Experimental School (1896-1904). Although Dewey rarely used the term of integration, the notions of *personal integration* and *social integration* were embedded in his organic curriculum. According to Dewey, personal integration is a learning process where students continually reconstruct their experiences and social integration is a socialising process which allows young people to acquire the skills and attributes needed for active participation in a democratic society. Thus, personal and social integration are processes which are carried out by the individual learner rather than by the teacher. Dewey clarified the relationship between subject matter and integration by devising curriculum themes or *organising centres* consisting of subject matter drawn from students' immediate concerns and their social context. Later, Hopkins (1937a, 1941 & 1954) and Dressel (1958) formalised Dewey's work by developing the concept of integration and applying it to curriculum design. Dewey's organic curriculum was a forerunner of the student-centred *core* approach which emerged as the curriculum of choice in the years following the PEA's influential Eight-Year Study (1933-1941). The earliest subject-centred *multidisciplinary* approach in the USA was derived from the nineteenth century Herbartian notion of 'correlation' which involved the harmonisation of subject areas. Although Dewey had rejected the notion of correlation for his Laboratory School curriculum in the 1890s, it provided the theoretical basis for Caswell's multidisciplinary design in the VCP during the 1930s (Kliebard, 1995). Caswell understood the notion of correlation purely in terms of social efficiency, where he utilised it as a technical method for aligning subject areas within a theme.

During the first half of the twentieth century the American progressives constructed two responses to Spencer's nineteenth century question which asked 'what knowledge is of most worth?' or, put differently, *what* subject matter should be in the curriculum? In the process they also resolved Hopkins' (1954) query of *who* should make the curriculum? The first response was to ask students and teachers to work collaboratively to plan and

implement the curriculum within a democratic learning environment. In this student-centred approach the processes of personal and social integration mean that the subject matter of the curriculum has coherency and relevance for each young person. The second response was ideologically antagonistic to the first. In this subject-centred approach centralised curriculum planners or teams of teachers decide on the content of the curriculum and prepare subject-centred units of work. Young people are taught pre-integrated knowledge or potted versions of 'official knowledge' deemed to be most appropriate to their status or level (Apple, 1993). In the subject-centred approach, 'integration' loses the meaning understood within the first solution and is merely a technique for realigning or 'correlating' subject areas according to topics or themes.

During the 1960s and 1970s the concept of curriculum integration gained renewed attention from middle school advocates in the USA who wanted to design a curriculum for early adolescents. As explained in Chapter 3, the *interdisciplinary* approach adopted by Alexander at the inception of the middle school movement was subject-centred, however a handful of progressives continued to work on student-centred interdisciplinary designs (Vars, 1993). These subject-centred and student-centred interdisciplinary designs were the antecedents of the multidisciplinary and the integrative models. Jacobs' subject-centred multidisciplinary model – which she termed 'interdisciplinary curriculum' – was essentially the same as the subject-centred interdisciplinary approach, widely implemented in middle schools between the 1960s and 1980s. Despite her ahistoric approach, Jacobs (1989a) applied the nineteenth century notion of correlation and recreated another version of Caswell's and Alexander's subject-centred approaches to curriculum integration. In contrast, Beane's integrative model, while partly influenced by Lounsbury and Vars' (1978) student-centred 'core' designs for curriculum integration, was historically grounded in progressive understandings from the earlier half of the twentieth century (Beane, 1975 & 1980).

Historical understandings of curriculum integration from Britain

Chapter 4 revealed that the British progressives made a relatively minor contribution to the concept of curriculum integration in the sense that their work was preceded by

existing understandings elsewhere. It investigated a select group of innovations from the 'New Education' movement from the 1920s and 1930s that incorporated some of Dewey's ideas and examined their designs for notions of integration. In the main, the 'New Education' movement in Britain was characterised by a commitment to child-centred pedagogies rather than the development of new curriculum designs. Accordingly, the British progressives shared similar views to the 'developmentalist' faction of the American progressives discussed in Chapter 3. As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, the New Education movement quickly spread to NZ which had extensive links with British progressives up until the 1940s.

Chapter 4 also considered British interest in the concept of curriculum integration during the 1960s and 1970s. Pring (1976a) developed a theory of integration which proposed a typology consisting of four 'kinds' of purposes for integration. However, his work was ahistoric and had little independent significance. Indeed, Pring's typology makes more sense if it is reinterpreted in terms of the subject-centred and student-centred approaches. Curriculum integration was implemented in some British comprehensive schools during the 1960s and 1970s. Subject-centred multidisciplinary approaches were relatively common. For instance, 'environmental studies' fused biology, geography and 'rural studies' (Goodson, 1983). On the other hand, student-centred designs were comparatively rare. The best known example was the Humanities Curriculum Project which utilised an approach similar to the 'core' curriculum implemented in the USA in the 1940s (Stenhouse, 1968). Perhaps the most significant British work in relation to curriculum integration was Bernstein's (1971) sociological analysis which provided a theoretical framework for comparing different curriculum models. In particular, Bernstein developed a definition for student-centred designs which required the subject areas contributing subject matter to a curriculum unit to be subordinate to the theme. Conversely, his definition for subject-centred designs required the theme to be subordinate to the subject areas. Bernstein's political analysis of the curriculum helped me shape the investigation in Chapters 7 and 8 which compared and contrasted extant models of curriculum integration in the USA. In particular, Bernstein's work made me realise that Apple's sociological analysis of American education would be an important

tool for examining political and ethical issues associated with the implementation of the multidisciplinary and integrative models.

Historical understandings of curriculum integration from New Zealand

Chapter 5 examined the history of curriculum integration in NZ with respect to influences from the USA and Britain. The flowering of an indigenous ‘New Education’ movement in the 1930s and 1940s led to a range of innovative curriculum designs. Although British child-centred approaches dominated, the development of curriculum integration in NZ owed much to Dewey’s influence. For instance, the best known examples of student-centred approaches from this period adapted Dewey’s community-centred curriculum design (Strachan, 1938; Somerset, 1938). These examples utilised the organising centre of the local rural community to offer a relevant and meaningful curriculum for young people who were unlikely to participate in higher education. The British idea of self-governance, which has the potential to lead to democratic education, was tried out in two high schools but it failed to attract further interest.

During the same period, Beeby laid out his vision for early adolescent education in NZ. He asserted that the ‘chief function’ of middle level schooling should be to offer an, “expansive, realistic and socially integrative education” (1938:210). The Thomas Report was also ‘strongly in favour’ of a curriculum framework which would be sufficiently flexible to respond to the developmental needs of early adolescents (Department of Education, 1943a). The chapter also examined official reports on the curriculum since the 1943 Thomas Report. From the 1950s to the 1980s most NZ educators interpreted the concept of curriculum integration in terms of a subject-centred design. For example, Richardson (1964 & 2001) implemented a widely admired multidisciplinary curriculum at Oruaiti School which utilised the theme of the district’s natural history. While Richardson’s pedagogy was child-centred, his curriculum design fell short of a genuine student-centred approach because it neither met Bernstein’s requirement for subject areas to be subordinate to the theme, nor Beane’s requirement for young people to be collaboratively involved in planning and implementing the curriculum.

Later, the student-centred approach reappeared in the Freyberg Integrated Studies Project (McKinnon, Nolan, Openshaw & Soler, 1991). The Project was born out of widespread dissatisfaction with the state of junior high schooling in NZ and the Brice Report (Department of Education, 1987) which, in recapturing the liberal spirit of the 1943 Thomas Report, provided educators with a fresh mandate for curriculum innovation. As discussed in Chapter 3, the results of the Project showed that the implementation of an academically rigorous student-centred approach responding to early adolescent needs is feasible for middle level schooling in NZ. The Project students achieved examination results which were demonstrably superior to those achieved by non-Project students with the traditional single-subject approach. The design of the Project was influenced by British research; especially Pring's (1976a) typology of curriculum integration and the Humanities Curriculum Project (Stenhouse, 1968). The Project researchers were also influenced by Dewey's concept of curriculum integration as articulated within the Thomas and Brice Reports. The researchers were initially optimistic that the right circumstances had arrived for the implementation student-centred curriculum integration at junior levels in NZ high schools. In the long run though, the Project encountered stubborn resistance because the social context – which included secondary teachers, students, parents and the PPTA¹³⁷ – was subject-centred in its orientation. As had been the case for earlier curriculum innovations in NZ, the strongly subject-centred focus of secondary schooling due to the apparatus of the national examination system proved to be a barrier to the implementation of student-centred curriculum integration (Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993).

In summary, my historical findings established that an understanding of prior meanings and interpretations of curriculum integration is essential to an informed interpretation of the concept of curriculum integration. During the twentieth century, curriculum integration developed within the two broad traditions of the subject-centred 'multidisciplinary' approach and the student-centred 'core' approach. Table 3 presents historic examples of curriculum integration from the USA, Britain and NZ. It shows that

¹³⁷ The Post-Primary Teachers' Association.

both student-centred and subject-centred approaches to curriculum integration have a long and well-established history.

Table 3: Historic examples of curriculum integration in the USA, Britain and NZ

	Student-centred tradition	Subject-centred tradition
The USA	Dewey's Laboratory School [1896-1904]	Concept of 'correlation' Herbartians [1890s]
	Core approaches Eight Year Study [1932-1940]	Multidisciplinary approaches VCP [1930s]
	Core models (Lounsbury & Vars, 1978)	Interdisciplinary approach in the middle school [1960s]
Britain	Humanities Curriculum Project (Stenhouse, 1968)	Multidisciplinary approaches like 'Environmental studies' (Goodson, 1983)
NZ	Rangiora High School (Strachan, 1938)	Oruaiti School (Richardson, 1964)
	Oxford District High School (Somerset, 1938)	
	Freyberg Project [1986-1991]	

The American progressive movement was primarily responsible for the development of student-centred curriculum integration. Dewey's contribution to the theory of integration was seminal but the details from his wide range of writings pertaining to student-centred curriculum integration have not been described until now. Never fully accepted by mainstream educators, student-centred approaches mainly relied on talented individuals who were not only well-versed in the theory of integration but were also able to put a student-centred design into practice. Student-centred approaches rarely persisted for any length of time. Indeed, rapid changes in political environments – in the USA the onset of the Cold War and in Britain a new Tory government – largely ended interest in student-centred approaches. In NZ student-centred curriculum integration gained a modicum of support at the official level – most notably in the 1943 Thomas and 1987 Brice Reports –

but resistance from subject-area stakeholders prevented it from winning general acceptance.

Subject-centred approaches to curriculum integration were underpinned by the nineteenth century Herbartian notion of 'correlation'. Examples of the subject-centred approach were usually long-lived and encountered little political resistance because their designs differed little from single subject approaches and were widely accepted by mainstream educators. Champions of subject-centred designs gained widespread political support because their curricula were reliable conduits of official knowledge. As a result the dubious educational value of subject-centred designs or the lack of a rationale for the integration of subject areas went largely unquestioned. Indeed, Caswell was able to both ignore the general theory of integration – which mainly offered support for student-centred approaches – and appropriate the progressive term of 'integration', by conflating it with the notion of correlation, without attracting undue criticism.

Section 3: The theoretical investigation

Chapters 6-8 examined the multidisciplinary and integrative models within the contemporary American context.¹³⁸ Chapter 6 situated and explained the general theory of the integrative and multidisciplinary models with respect to the historical findings of Chapter 3. Both models are based on historic ideas about integration of more than a century ago but otherwise they have little in common. Chapters 7 and 8 utilised a theoretical framework for sociological analysis of education developed by Apple in order to compare and contrast the two models. Chapter 7 explained how the political environment in the USA has differentially shaped the respective fortunes of the multidisciplinary and integrative models. Chapter 8 discussed various examples of curriculum implementation in order to show how the divergent ethics of the multidisciplinary and integrative models have been shaped by political influences in the USA. My investigation found that key differences between the two models become apparent when they are implemented. These differences are summarised in Table 4.

¹³⁸ As explained in Chapter 1, the theoretical investigation was limited to the USA because most of the recent literature on curriculum integration is American.

Table 4: Comparison of models of curriculum integration

	Integrative model (Beane, 1990a/1993a, 1997)	Multidisciplinary model (Jacobs, 1989a)
Design characteristics	<p>Democratic</p> <p>Collaborative teacher-student planning</p> <p>Holistic, ecological, site-specific</p> <p>Explicitly based on integration theory (American progressives, early 20th century)</p> <p>Strongly promotes personal and social integration</p>	<p>Autocratic</p> <p>Planning and implementation by teams of teachers</p> <p>Sequential, mapped, may not be site-specific</p> <p>Implicitly based on notion of correlation (Herbartians, late 19th century)</p> <p>Does not promote personal and social integration</p>
Political aspects	<p>Indifferent to official knowledge</p> <p>Vulnerable to political pressure</p>	<p>Transmits official knowledge</p> <p>Not exposed to political pressure</p>
Ethical aspects	<p>‘Thick’ ethics</p> <p>Assumes all students have individual needs</p> <p>Responds to the developmental needs of early adolescents</p> <p>Attuned to socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic differences</p> <p>Promotes academic rigour</p>	<p>‘Thin’ ethics</p> <p>Implies all students have identical needs</p> <p>Indifferent to the developmental needs of early adolescents</p> <p>Indifferent to socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic differences</p> <p>May lack academic rigour</p>

Whether she realised it or not, Jacobs used the 19th century Herbartian notion of correlation to fulfil the primary aim of her multidisciplinary model which was to efficiently arrange subject matter. Although her work was ahistoric, Jacobs’ model is part of the subject-centred tradition of curriculum integration which relies on the notion of correlation for its theoretical basis. Jacobs’ design extended the notions of ‘scope’ and

‘sequence’ to an extreme. Her model is characterised by long-range planning by teachers which includes detailed curriculum ‘mapping’ and, in the process, excludes the possibility of input from students.

Beane’s design depended on early progressive notions of integration in order to meet the needs of early adolescents. Beane grounded his model in understandings derived from Dewey’s work to create a simple but elegant method of generating relevant and appropriate subject matter for the middle level. Following Dewey, the integrative model is underpinned by a democratic philosophy where power is shared between the teacher and students. This democratic orientation is apparent in the ‘bottom-up’ planning process of the integrative model – allowing student voices to be heard and heeded – and involving collaborative teacher-student planning and implementation. The design of Beane’s model ensures that early adolescents experience a general education with shared experiences and understandings. As young people engage in the subject matter of integrative units, they develop the capacity to actively participate in democratic citizenship. The integrative model is specifically designed to respond to the developmental needs of early adolescents. It strongly promotes personal and social integration because students are actively engaged in the planning and implementation of the curriculum. ‘Integration’ is therefore understood as a process which students need to do. As explained in Chapters 7 and 8, Beane’s model is predicated on thick ethics which assumes that students are not all the same and accepts they will have different educational needs. The integrative model is finely attuned to maturational, socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic differences, thus it is inclusive. Beane’s model is always site-specific because each example is wholly developed within the local context. Each integrative unit is developed holistically so that the classroom curriculum derives its meaning and relevance from the social context. The collaborative design of Beane’s model has the pedagogical implication that class work tends to be creative and unpredictable. Groups of students will often initiate spontaneous problem-solving episodes, projects or performances. As a result, teachers must be able to flexibly respond to the individual needs of their students.

Jacobs' multidisciplinary model is autocratic with respect to the power relationship between the teacher and students. This autocratic orientation is revealed by the 'top-down' planning process which is the preserve of teams of teachers or curriculum writers. The planning process is sequential and can involve mapping over several semesters or years. As a rule, Jacobs' model faithfully transmits official knowledge because it is rarely site-specific. However, multidisciplinary units may become site-specific when teachers develop units for their own students. As explained in Chapter 7, these teachers are often subjected to political pressure if their efforts disrupt the transmission of official knowledge. The top-down approach of the multidisciplinary model disempowers early adolescents because they are unable to participate in the selection of subject matter. Jacobs' model does not respond to the developmental needs of early adolescents such as the need to assume degrees of responsibility, exercise choice or their need to establish, renegotiate and enhance relationships. As discussed in Chapters 7 and 8, the thin ethics of Jacobs' model is indifferent to the developmental needs of early adolescents along with the more specific needs of young people from minority groups and those of lower socio-economic status. Jacobs' model is planned and implemented by teachers with the pedagogical implication that students are often expected to work alone on tasks which focus on content and skills. Culminating performances tend to be staged and scripted by the teacher. The multidisciplinary model does not promote personal and social integration; rather the subject-centred notion of 'integration' – or correlation – is seen as a process carried out by teachers.

As explained in Chapter 7, the prevailing conservative environment over the last three decades has strongly influenced the fortunes of the integrative and multidisciplinary models. Applications of Beane's model have been consistently met by political pressure from several quarters because they tend to disrupt the transmission of 'official knowledge' between the dominant political group and the classroom. Political pressure has taken the form of bias in the literature, insufficient resources in the classroom and a lack of support for individual teachers from their colleagues. Although researchers in the USA have a rich historical legacy of curriculum integration to draw from, ahistoric work has been routinely accepted by the wider research community. Unless they have

accessed literature from earlier decades, educators have failed to recognise that the theory of curriculum integration owes its existence to century-old understandings: namely the subject-centred tradition derived from the Herbartian notion of ‘correlation’ and the student-centred tradition derived from Dewey’s ‘organic’ curriculum. Only a handful of contemporary American curriculum theorists – that is, Beane (1997), Gehrke (1998) and Vars (1998a) – have correctly used historical understandings to distinguish between the integrative and multidisciplinary models. Moreover, Dewey’s notions of personal and social integration – described by Hopkins (1937a, 1941 & 1954) and, more recently, by Beane (1997) – are an integral aspect of the student-centred tradition yet these notions have been ignored by the vast majority of contemporary researchers. Political pressure on teachers of the integrative model has also included hostility from teachers with strong subject affiliations, parent groups or other stakeholders such as textbook publishers and conservative church groups.

In contrast, applications of Jacobs’ multidisciplinary model have escaped political pressure because they faithfully transmit official knowledge to the classroom. Jacobs’ model has been rarely criticised in the literature. Like Caswell in the 1930s, Jacobs presented her subject-centred model to mainstream educators without recourse to existing theory or history. The favourable political environment in the conservative restoration allowed Jacobs to studiously ignore both historical understandings of curriculum integration and Beane’s contemporary integrative model. Following Caswell, Jacobs also effectively appropriated terminology by conflating the four terms of ‘interdisciplinary’, ‘multidisciplinary’, ‘integrated curriculum’ and ‘curriculum integration’.¹³⁹

Beane’s integrative model promotes academic rigour because the collaborative planning process ensures that the subject matter of any given unit will challenge and stimulate all students of every ability level. As Dewey (1915) explained, young people learn by actively and creatively ‘doing’ projects, problems and performances related to the subject matter at hand. The multidisciplinary model is less academically rigorous because its

¹³⁹ As explained in Chapter 2, Beane and others addressed the issue of appropriated terminology by reserving the term of ‘integrative’ to describe the student-centred model of curriculum integration.

design fails to challenge every student and cater for all levels of ability. Jacobs' model relies on a limited range of subject matter selected by teacher teams via a mapping process which has strict parameters according to subject and grade level. This process fails to account for individual differences in developmental maturity or ability level. Essentially, if a multidisciplinary unit fails to stimulate and challenge young people, then – despite the high hopes a teacher team might have held for the subject matter during the planning process – it lacks academic rigour because students will be reluctant to actively engage in the subject matter.

In summary, Beane's integrative model is an appropriate curriculum design for middle level schooling. It is highly responsive to the developmental needs of early adolescents and is inclusive of all sub-groups of students. However, broad attempts to implement Beane's integrative model at the systemic level in American middle schools have been successfully resisted by powerful political players within the conservative establishment. In contrast, the multidisciplinary model has serious drawbacks regarding implementation at the middle level which has gone largely unrecognised. Jacobs' model is indifferent to the developmental needs of early adolescents and tends to marginalise the needs of certain sub-groups of young people. However for political reasons, the multidisciplinary model has been the preferred model of curriculum integration at the middle level in the USA.

Section 4: Implications of the historical and theoretical investigations

The findings from my investigation of the previous chapters have three main implications for researchers, policy-makers and teachers. Firstly, the concept of curriculum integration should be situated and considered within the historical context. Secondly, the student-centred integrative model of curriculum integration should be preferred to the subject-centred multidisciplinary model as an appropriate curriculum for the middle level. Thirdly, in the interests of providing a 'good' education to early adolescents, barriers to the implementation of the integrative model must be identified and removed.

My findings showed that contemporary researchers and educators have failed to understand the concept of curriculum integration except when it is considered in the historical context. This problem has been difficult to overcome because at least one half of the equation – student-centred approaches – has had a low profile since the 1950s. However, an historical approach is crucial to understanding the concept of curriculum integration. The historical context allows educators to appreciate the knowledge and understandings of the century-old student-centred and subject-centred traditions of curriculum integration and how this pertains to understanding the extant integrative and multidisciplinary models. As explained earlier in the discussion following Table 2, middle level advocates and teachers of early adolescents need to be aware of the differences between the integrative and multidisciplinary models but are unlikely to achieve this unless they have at least a basic understanding of the historical meanings of curriculum integration. In addition, the quality of research on curriculum integration would improve dramatically if researchers were generally conversant with the student-centred and subject-centred traditions of curriculum integration. The accuracy of quantitative research on the efficacy of curriculum integration would be enhanced significantly if schools were differentiated according to the model implemented. Moreover, the historical context provides a proper basis for theoretical investigation of curriculum integration thus researchers would be less likely to discard or overlook important ideas. For instance as explained in Chapter 2, an historical approach provides a satisfactory resolution to the confusion surrounding the current terminology.

My findings provide a strong case in favour of the integrative model as the preferred model of curriculum integration for implementation at the middle level. Beane's model provides the blueprint for a developmentally responsive, equitable, inclusive curriculum for early adolescents in any educational setting. The flexible design of the integrative model means that classroom examples respond to the needs of early adolescents in general *and* respond to the specific needs of each young person. Beane's model also strongly promotes personal and social integration and encourages young people to actively engage in relevant and meaningful learning contexts. On the other hand, the multidisciplinary model is less desirable as a middle level curriculum because

applications of the model do not specifically respond to the needs of early adolescents and tend to ignore the particular needs of some sub-groups of young people.

Implementation of the integrative model should be seriously considered for middle level schools in NZ. In particular, applications of the integrative model would meet the educational needs of young Māori and Pasifika people because the collaborative planning process ensures that subject matter will be derived from familiar contexts. My findings also underline the need to establish clear policy directions with respect to the general design of curricula for early adolescents. In particular, developmental needs of early adolescents should be a key focus of any curriculum design for middle level schooling. The implementation of Beane's model at the systemic level in NZ should be preceded by a survey of extant examples of curriculum integration in NZ. This research would need to discern whether examples of curriculum integration are subject-centred or student-centred. It would also need to appraise the curriculum design of each example in terms of its ethics, efficacy and implications for pedagogy, assessment and reporting. The research methodology should include qualitative case studies which accurately describe local contexts (Beane, 1990a/1993a). Case studies should include teacher interviews which elicit their epistemological beliefs (Powell & Faircloth, 1997) and student interviews which elicit the perceptions of early adolescent learners (Mee, 1997; Powell, 2001).

My findings imply that middle school advocates and policy-makers in the USA need to clearly differentiate between the integrative and multidisciplinary models and make considered judgments about the efficacy of each. However, leading advocates such as the National Middle School Association seem to have been reluctant to make this distinction. Despite their much quoted position in *This we believe* – calling for a middle level curriculum which is, “challenging, integrative¹⁴⁰ and exploratory” (1995:20) – the NMSA appears to have been more concerned about crafting curriculum statements which will appeal to the full political spectrum of their membership, rather than unequivocally advocating a curriculum design which will meet the educational and developmental needs

¹⁴⁰ In this context ‘integrative’ effectively refers to the ability to promote personal and social integration.

of all early adolescents. In particular, the NMSA's *Position Statement on Curriculum Integration*¹⁴¹ (2002) posted on the organisation's website asserted that curriculum integration exists on a continuum, "ranging from intra-team planning of interdisciplinary units at a basic level to more advanced implementation of full-scale, integrative programs in democratic classrooms". As explained in Chapters 2 and 3, this statement, which implies that models of curriculum integration are best represented by a continuum, is not supported by the historical literature and misleadingly implies that one model of curriculum integration is as good as another. Although the Position Statement went on to extol the benefits of 'sophisticated forms' of curriculum integration – such as Beane's integrative model – it failed to consider the possibility of short-comings in the design of the multidisciplinary model where, as explained in the discussion of Table 2 above, applications often fail to result in 'challenging, integrative and exploratory' curricular outcomes at the middle level.

Researchers, policy-makers and educators need to identify and overcome barriers to implementation of the integrative model. My findings suggest that the most likely barriers are an unfavourable political environment and inadequate teacher education. In the USA the main barrier to the implementation of Beane's model at the middle level seems to have been the adverse political environment. While the integrative model is ideally suited to early adolescent education, the aims of student-centred approaches run counter to the well-entrenched 'grammar of schooling' which indicates that the curriculum should consist of differentiated subject areas (Tyack & Tobin, 1994). Although the aims and purposes of student-centred curriculum integration for early adolescents have been ably communicated by Beane – along with other progressive educators such as Lounsbury, Vars and Arnold – the integrative model has never been accepted by the mainstream. In particular, stakeholders in subject-centred approaches have been unwilling to allow the integrative model to be implemented on a systemic scale. As a result, young people in the USA have been denied access to equitable and inclusive middle level schooling. The political climate in NZ may be more supportive of efforts to implement the integrative model than the corresponding environment in the

¹⁴¹ Retrieved August, 2006 www.nmsa.org/AboutNMSA/PositionStatements/CurriculumIntegration/

USA. In NZ, conservatism has not been entrenched and nationalism is much less pronounced (White & Openshaw, 2005). In the USA, the conservative agenda has been first to make the curriculum 'student-proof' then second – with devices like curriculum mapping and externally imposed standards along with restrictive legislation relating to textbooks or allowable pedagogy – to make the curriculum 'teacher proof'. In contrast, the relatively permissive political environment in NZ has allowed schools a considerable degree of autonomy and would give teachers more leeway to implement Beane's integrative model. In addition, the relatively changeable political environment in NZ – due in part to its shorter three-yearly electoral cycle – seems more likely than the American environment to provide opportune periods for curriculum innovation. The most successful examples of student-centred curriculum integration in NZ occurred at about the same time as the liberal-leaning 1943 Thomas and 1987 Brice Reports. Indeed, the current Labour administration has encouraged an innovative approach to the organisation of middle level schooling. For instance, in 2005 Prime Minister Helen Clark opened Albany Junior High School (Years 7-10) with the comment that it was a model for future middle level schooling in NZ. More recently the Minister of Education, Steve Maharey asserted that effective middle level schools respond to, "the specific needs" of early adolescents and that curriculum integration is one of the, "key elements" of middle schooling practice (2006:7).

In NZ the main barrier to implementation of the integrative model has been a lack of understanding or knowledge about the student-centred tradition of curriculum integration. This situation has been compounded by inadequate teacher preparation for middle level schooling (Nolan, Kane & Lind, 2003). This lack of understanding about the student-centred tradition is understandable as the middle level and high school curriculum has been long dominated by subject-centred approaches. Although Beane's work has attracted increasing interest from NZ educators and some teachers have experimented with the notion of 'negotiating' the content of the curriculum, they do not appear to understand the deeper student-centred purposes of the integrative model. As Bernstein (1971) suggested, successful implementation of student-centred curriculum integration may be reliant on recruiting teachers who are conversant with its educational purpose and

committed to its ideology. In the USA the integrative model is symbiotically linked with the middle school movement because their ideological frameworks both focus on the developmental needs of early adolescents. For this reason, implementation of the integrative model in NZ is more likely to succeed in intermediate or middle schools than in high schools which tend to be subject-centred. The best site to foster implementation of the integrative model in NZ is probably within the emergent indigenous middle school movement (Nolan, Brown, Stewart & Beane, 2000; Hinchco, 2005). While some school communities may be reluctant to implement the integrative model, NZ policy-makers and early adolescent advocates such as the New Zealand Association for Intermediate and Middle Schooling¹⁴² (NZAIMS) should expect all middle level educators to adopt curriculum designs which respond to early adolescent needs. Teacher preparation for the integrative model should include studies of the historical basis of curriculum integration and the contribution of the American progressives to contemporary understandings about student-centred education. Preparation should also include a thorough investigation of the characteristics of early adolescents (Maharey, 2006) and a critical examination of thick and thin ethics in relation to curriculum design for the middle level. American experience shows that when the school principal is supportive and teacher preparation is attended to properly, the integrative model can be implemented successfully (Snapp, 2006). Three schools which have successfully implemented and popularised Beane's model are Brown Barge Middle School in Florida, Carver Academy in Texas and Sherman Middle School in Wisconsin. For instance, at BBMS the teachers went through a process of group 'reculturing' before they implemented the integrative model (Powell, Skoog, Troutman & Jones, 1995). This process included a careful survey of the literature before the staff decided they wanted to implement the integrative model (Barr, 1995).

Section 5: Further research

My discussion in the preceding chapters suggests a number of possibilities for further research. These areas of research are all concerned with the integrative model. The first area is comparative research of examples of curriculum integration. This research would provide further sources of data to test my finding that the integrative model should be the

¹⁴² Formerly named the 'New Zealand Association of Intermediate and Middle Schools'

preferred model of curriculum integration at the middle level. It may also provide additional insights into appropriate methods of curriculum implementation. The second area is historical research of student-centred curriculum integration. This research would extend and deepen my historical investigation of Chapters 3-5 in the hope that it would uncover additional understandings about the complex interplay between the design of curriculum integration and the politics of schooling. The third area concerns sociological research of teachers of the integrative model. This would examine the degree to which teachers of the integrative model might need to adopt an homogenous pedagogy in order to maintain the support of their colleagues. The remaining areas of further research concern the design of Beane's integrative model. The fourth area would consider whether stakeholders other than teachers and students should participate in the collaborative planning process of the integrative model. The fifth area would consider the extent to which the integrative model could accommodate other discourses alongside its democratic discourse. The sixth area of research takes the fifth area a step further. It would consider whether or not the integrative model could have its democratic discourse replaced by other discourses yet still remain an effective curriculum design for middle level schooling.

Comparative research

This thesis indicates that comparative research would be a fruitful field for further investigation. For instance, comparative research could examine further examples of curriculum integration from NZ and the USA in order to tease out differences between the integrative and multidisciplinary models. This research would consider the educative needs of a representative range of early adolescents; including gifted learners and those of above average ability, as well as groups which are typically disadvantaged by the thin ethics of subject-centred approaches. Research could also specifically examine the transformation which takes place when school communities change from the multidisciplinary model or other single-subject approaches to the integrative model (Lewbel, 1993; Powell, Skoog & Troutman, 1996). Other research could compare examples of collaborative planning of the integrative model in the USA with examples of curriculum negotiation from the middle level in Australia (Boomer, 1982; Boomer,

Lester, Onore & Cook, 1992; Smyth, McInerney & Hattam, 2003; Hunter & Park, 2005) and in NZ (Fraser, 2000). These avenues of research could be carried out by using case study methodology.

Historical research: searching for lost meanings or understandings

Further historical research could focus on the development of curriculum integration in particular countries or regions. In the American context, historical research might well focus on the development of the concept in a state like New York or a small group of states such as New England where progressive education has had a long tradition. In the European context, historical research could examine contributions to the concept of curriculum integration prior to 1900 by individuals such as Froebel and Pestalozzi. It might also search for more recent understandings of curriculum integration within the German and Swiss education systems.

Teachers of the integrative model: can pedagogies remain independent?

Further research concerning the implementation of the integrative model could investigate the sociological implications attached to the notion of teachers of the integrative model operating as a homogeneous community of educators. Bernstein (1971) predicted that teachers who implement 'integrated code' curricula are likely to gravitate towards a similar pedagogy. My historical investigation found that student-centred approaches like the integrative model seem to be difficult to sustain unless educators develop and maintain close-knit networks with other like-minded colleagues. For instance, in NZ the leading innovators of the early twentieth century – Hogben, Shelley, Beeby, Basher, Thomas, Somerset, Alley (nee Somerset) and Strachan – all worked within the single geographical entity of the Canterbury Plains where they could easily visit each other and swap ideas. Similarly in the USA, the framework for progressive education established by Dewey was successively nurtured and passed on by Bode, Alberty, Van Til, Lounsbury, Vars, Toepfer and Beane. Recent research on the implementation of the integrative model also supports the notion of an homogeneity of teaching practice among teachers of student-centred approaches. For instance, when the integrative model was implemented on a whole-school basis at BBMS, the staff found

they had to abandon individualistic approaches in favour of close collaboration (Powell, Skoog, Troutman & Jones, 1996). Further research could also examine whether the notion of homogeneity extends to teachers' ideology and epistemology; then consider the likely implications for both teacher preparation and the implementation of Beane's model.

Who should select the subject matter of integrative curricula?

Further research could consider how the integrative model might be adapted to specifically involve parents or other community stakeholders in the collaborative planning process. American examples suggest that this idea is worth consideration. For instance when Beane's model was implemented at Rochambeau Middle School in Connecticut, a commitment to improved communication between home and school resulted in an invitation for parents to be involved in individual goal-setting (Lewbel, 1993). Moreover, at Brown Barge Middle School, Florida, the success of 'American Tapestry' – an integrative unit with a multicultural theme – was due in no small part to the willingness of teachers to, "negotiate openly and consistently with students *and parents* about what is taught and how it is taught" (Powell, Fussell, Troutman, Smith & Skoog, 1998:12, emphasis added). Beane also offered support for the proposed research by recently asserting that young people, "learn best" when educators, "connect with families" (2006:4). One likely benefit of allowing families or other stakeholders to participate in decisions related to curriculum content and classroom pedagogy is that it could lead to better understanding and broader acceptance of the integrative model. On the other hand, checks and balances would be needed to ensure that the interests of early adolescents were protected.

Can the discourse of the integrative model coexist with other discourses?

Further theoretical research could consider how other discourses, such as religion, might impact on the democratic discourse of the integrative model. For instance, the culture at Bryanston – a private school in rural England discussed in Chapter 4 – has a religious ethos which underpins its curriculum, yet it also seems to be sympathetic towards the democratic intent of the integrative model. In this instance, a curriculum based on the

intersection of democratic principles and religious thought could be a hedge against the often pernicious influence of religious fundamentalism. This research would be relevant to NZ – and elsewhere – because it would help create a suitable political environment for the implementation of the integrative model in Roman Catholic schools or other schools characterised by a particular religious ethos.

Similar research could consider the potential of the integrative model for indigenous people groups where organising themes might focus on maintaining cultural coherence and continuity. For example, Bishop and Glynn (1999 & 2000) suggested that the integrative model has potential as an emancipatory curriculum for young Māori people because it allows power relations in the classroom to be redefined and readily accepts cultural knowledge as subject matter. The integrative model may be an ideal curriculum for cultures threatened with extinction – such as some tribes of aboriginal peoples in central Australia or northern Canada – because the essential design of the integrative model is acultural and non-judgmental with regard to the selection and content of subject matter.

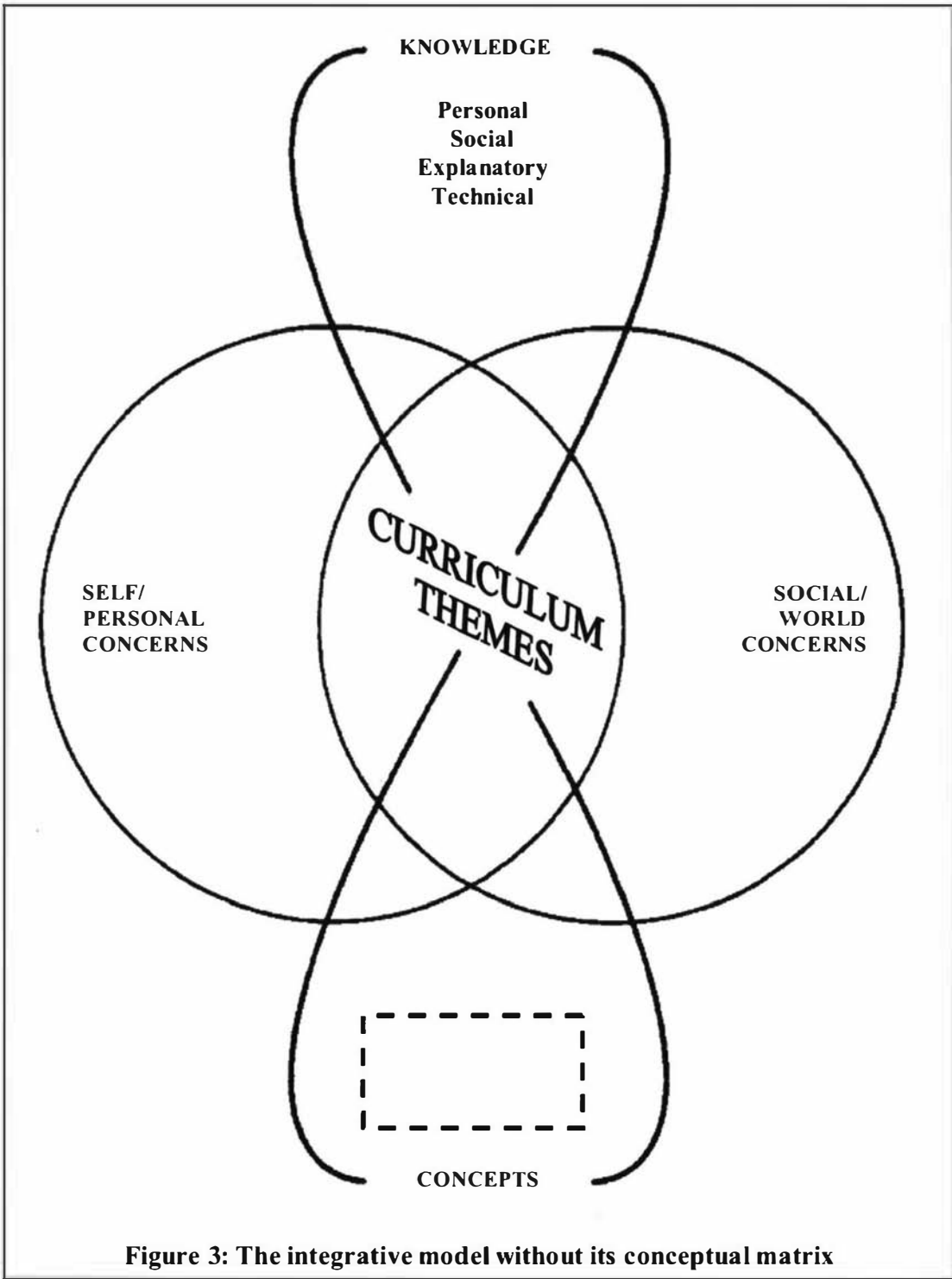
Will other discourses compromise the integrative model?

Further theoretical research could go a step further than the research proposed above and investigate the feasibility of replacing the democratic discourse of the integrative model with other discourses. Given that the integrative model has consistently claimed the moral high ground with respect to early adolescent education, this research would consider whether a curriculum specifically designed for the middle level requires a democratic discourse. Although Beane's design (1990a/1993a) for his integrative model exhibited a high degree of fidelity to the democratic faith of the progressives, his stated intention was to design a curriculum explicitly 'for' early adolescents. The proposed research – which might seem inimical to the student-centred tradition of the progressives – would be justified because questions about effective schooling for young people are fundamental to public education and should never be ignored. Moreover, a position derived from thick ethics would suggest that all early adolescents should have access to a first-class education with a curriculum based on the integrative model. Unfortunately, the

recent political environment in the USA has prevented the integrative model from being implemented at the systemic level. This situation has created a moral imperative for the middle school movement to consider recasting the integrative model so that a much greater range of communities will implement it and many more early adolescents will be benefitted.

Beane provided a means for focusing the proposed research. In the closing lines of *From Rhetoric to reality* he reflected that the best way to advance the cause of the integrative model seemed to be, “to return to the rhetoric of the middle school movement” which is to think and act according to, “what is *good and right* for early adolescents” (1993a:106, emphasis added). Further research on the integrative model could therefore consider whether a democratic discourse is an essential component of a ‘good’ middle level curriculum. One way to advance the proposed research could be to consider how adaptations of the integrative model might be implemented if the conceptual matrix of ‘democracy’, ‘dignity’ and ‘diversity’ was removed – depicted in Figure 3 below – then replaced by alternative conceptual matrices derived from other discourses. For instance, an adaptation of the integrative model for the NZ context could include a matrix derived from Māori cultural values. This model could appeal to Māori communities with *kura kaupapa*¹⁴³ because it would ensure that a student-centred approach to curriculum integration would be underpinned by a Māori discourse. Another adaptation of the integrative model for a conservative religious community could include a matrix of ‘God’, ‘family’ and ‘nation’. This curriculum model could appeal to communities who would be unwilling to implement the integrative model in its original form. While this model is antithetical to the democratic utopia and might even offend some progressive educators, I have included it to highlight a serious point. If, at the theoretical level, adaptations of the integrative model generate genuinely relevant and meaningful subject matter to cohorts of early adolescents, then these adaptations could be valid. Essentially, as long as a given curriculum model promotes the processes of personal and social integration, it is likely to be valid and appropriate for middle level schooling.

¹⁴³ Kura kaupapa are schools for Māori run by Māori which operate with total immersion to Māori language.



Section 6: Final remarks

This thesis has investigated the concept of curriculum integration and its potential as a dedicated curriculum design for early adolescents in New Zealand schools. My investigation found that student-centred approaches to curriculum integration, such as Beane's integrative model, are eminently suitable for middle level schooling because they are specifically designed to meet the needs of each young person. In contrast, Jacobs' subject-centred multidisciplinary model is an inappropriate curriculum design for the middle level because it fails to consider either the developmental or the individual needs of early adolescents.

The concept of curriculum integration and its association with early adolescent education has a long history in NZ, yet earlier understandings about student-centred curriculum integration are practically unknown to contemporary educators and policy-makers. Unfortunately, my findings demonstrated that historical understandings of curriculum integration are absolutely essential to an understanding of the concept. In particular, the extant integrative and multidisciplinary models are derived, respectively, from historical student-centred and subject-centred traditions originating from the nineteenth century. Accordingly, policy-makers and middle level advocates in NZ seem destined to repeat the mistakes of the past unless they assimilate historical understandings of curriculum integration and acknowledge that the integrative and multidisciplinary models have major differences which significantly affect their suitability and efficacy as curriculum designs for middle level schooling.

Both political and ethical contexts must be carefully considered before an innovative curriculum like the integrative model is implemented. While adequate teacher preparation and sufficient allocation of resources are essential, favourable conditions for implementation are similarly indispensable. For instance, my findings showed that in the USA political pressure on teachers of the integrative model results in several barriers to implementation which are not encountered by teachers of the multidisciplinary model. In the NZ context, antipathy towards middle schooling from subject-centred advocates, such as the PPTA, could extend to the integrative model and create a barrier to successful

implementation at the junior level (Years 9 and 10) in high schools. Yet a few schools like Southland Girls' High School in Invercargill are starting to break the traditional mould and are taking steps to explore alternative curricula resembling Beane's integrative model.¹⁴⁴ It could be that the PPTA may soon be out of step with the practice and directions of its most innovative and future-oriented members.

The dominant discourse of curriculum integration in NZ has long been the subject-centred approach which conforms to the 'grammar of schooling' (Tyack & Tobin, 1994). However when conditions are favourable, history has shown that the 'grammar' can be changed. For instance, the advent of the American middle school resulted in one of the biggest educational reforms of the twentieth century. This reform meant that the two-tier structure – or 'grammar' – of elementary and high school was changed permanently. At a critical moment in the 1960s, the leaders of the American middle school movement adopted the multidisciplinary model as their preferred curriculum, so missed a golden opportunity to change the subject-centred grammar of middle level schooling into a student-centred grammar. We now know considerably more about the developmental and educational needs of early adolescents, thus educators and policy-makers in NZ should be better positioned to avoid making the same mistake of failing to implement an appropriate curriculum for young people.

Current conditions in NZ may be propitious for curriculum innovation at the middle level. As mentioned earlier, the political environment in NZ seems relatively favourable for the implementation of the integrative model. At the same time the emergent indigenous middle schooling movement in NZ is gathering strength and momentum. For instance, the recent launch of a dedicated middle level journal in NZ, the *Middle Schooling Review* showed that the traditional subject-centred approach to schooling – most recently maintained by PPTA researchers¹⁴⁵ who claimed that student-centred schooling for early adolescents amounted to 'psycho-babble' – is being challenged by middle level advocates who espouse a student-centred approach. In the initial issue of

¹⁴⁴ Nolan (personal communication).

¹⁴⁵ Retrieved September, 2006 www.ppta.org.nz/cms/imagelibrary/100131.doc

the journal, the editor Pat Nolan indicated that, first and foremost, the Review would be a strong advocate for early adolescents in NZ schools. He stated:

(The Review) asserts and demonstrates (that) in Aotearoa New Zealand we know about, care for and will act with determination more than ever, present and past, to provide early adolescents with the educational experiences and opportunities they need and deserve (Nolan, 2006:3).

My findings indicate that the Ministry of Education needs to refine their trial of curriculum integration in NZ schools by implementing a student-centred model aligned with the integrative model. The best context for early implementation would be within the indigenous middle schooling movement which strongly advocates developmentally responsive education for early adolescents (Hinchco, 2005). Later stages could involve widespread implementation in intermediate schools and, perhaps, area and high schools willing to adopt middle schooling principles in their Years 7-10 cohorts. In conclusion, the student-centred integrative model of curriculum integration is, as the 1943 Thomas Report asserted, 'worthy of serious trial' as the curriculum of preference for early adolescents in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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