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Links Between Devolution and Changes in Curriculum Policy:

**A Case Study of Year 8-10 Social Studies
Curriculum in Western Australia Since 1987**

Xie Shaohua

M.Ed.

A Doctoral Thesis Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the
Faculty of Community Services, Education and Social Sciences
Edith Cowan University

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the links between devolution and Year 8-10 Society and Environment (SAE) curriculum policy in Western Australia (WA) since 1987. It explores whether changes to the structure within which SAE resides, the process through which curriculum decision making occurs, and the content of SAE are consistent with the principles and practice of devolution. An attempt is made in the study to determine whether these changes would have occurred anyway, even if devolution had not been introduced.

The investigation is based on a radical humanist model of social inquiry. As such, it uses a critical theory conceptual framework to inform a qualitative research paradigm. Two sources provide qualitative data for the study, namely, interviews and documentary material. The interview material comes from discussions with twenty-six senior education officers, school staff, academics and other stakeholders. The documentary material includes key system-wide policy documents, Year 8-10 curriculum frameworks, guidelines and syllabi, and relevant school level publications.

Generally, the analysis of data gained from those two sources support the claims made by critical theorists about the impact of devolution upon curriculum policy. More specifically, the findings show that in WA, since 1987, state curriculum development has contributed to a reinforcement of social control, a widening of social inequality and an intensification of the school's role as an agent of narrowly defined economic interests. These links are shown to be consistent with the critical theory argument that devolution is underpinned by corporate managerialism and that it involves not only a decentralisation of responsibility but also a recentralization of power. The study concludes by suggesting that the implications of WA's experience of devolution for China depend largely on whether China's context and needs are examined in terms of a consensus model or a critical theory model of society.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;
- (ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or
- (iii) contain defamatory material.

Signature:

Date: 11-1-1998

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SECTION ONE

SETTING THE SCENE

1

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, government education systems in advanced capitalist countries have been undergoing a process of devolution. This has led to a major focus on central administrative restructuring and local school development. At the same time, education systems in these countries have undertaken a substantial amount of curriculum development. Much research has been carried out on each of these two reform agendas as separate spheres of change. Less is known about the links between them, though claims have been made, particularly by critical theorists, about the impact of devolution on curriculum. This study attempts to explore the existence and nature of such links by examining, as a particular case, changes in the Year 8-10 Social Studies curriculum in Western Australia (WA) since 1987.

Chapter one outlines the contextual framework for the thesis. This involves briefly showing that Australian attempts at devolution have occurred against the background of similar developments overseas. In doing so, some of the issues raised by critical theorists are introduced to foreshadow the perspective from which the thesis is written. Following that, major curriculum changes in Social Studies are outlined, at the national and state (WA) levels. The chapter concludes by discussing the aims and significance of the study, as well as the research questions that it investigates.

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND OF DEVOLUTION

Many writers (e.g. Porter et al, 1992; Marginson, 1993; Dudley and Vidovich, 1995; and Scott, 1995), observe that, since the mid-1980s, education policy in Australia and elsewhere, has become increasingly part of an agenda for economic reform. In other words, educational policies have been progressively designed to promote Australia's

economic competitiveness in the international market. As a result, the education sector has been undergoing dramatic restructuring to make it more exposed to market forces. This restructuring, according to McCollow and Graham (1997, p.61) has been underpinned by “the dictates of corporate managerialism”. Other scholars (e.g. Pusey, 1991, Smyth, 1995) believe that this economically-driven restructuring of the public education sector has been prompted by “governments’ inability to manage their economies autonomously” (McCollow and Graham, 1997, p.61).

Western Australia was not spared in this wave of restructuring. In 1984, a Committee of Inquiry chaired by Kim Beazley was set up to investigate secondary education in WA. The report of this committee contained 272 recommendations. Seventy-seven of these recommendations focused on curriculum changes and improvement, most of which centred on curriculum content because the Committee “assumed that the organisational structure of the education system would stay intact” (Angus, 1995, p.12). However, this structure did not stay ‘intact’ very long.

During the mid-1980s, like many other governments within and outside Australia, the Burke government of Western Australia found itself caught in a difficult situation of dwindling resources on one hand and increasing demands for new and improved social services on the other. In order to improve the public sector’s capacity to meet these demands, Burke’s government turned to a model of corporate managerialism. In part, this involved setting up a Functional Review Committee to examine the purpose of every agency and position in the public sector. According to Trestrail (1992, p.4), the purpose of this committee was undoubtedly “to cut the size and cost of the public sector though under the banner of ‘efficiency’.” Subsequently, a white paper was published in 1986 titled *Managing change in the public sector*. This document signalled the beginning of devolution or restructuring in all public sector departments in Western Australia.

Early on in the process, the Minister for Education, Robert Pearce, “volunteered his Ministry as a target for the Functional Review Committee” (Trestrail, 1992, p.4). Consequently, and soon after the release the white paper, the functional review of the state education system led to the publication of the report *Better schools: A Program for improvement* (EDWA, 1987). This report expedited educational restructuring in

Western Australia. According to Angus (1995, p.8), “the reforms proposed for Western Australia in the Better Schools report were the most radical this century”. The report embraced the concept of “self-determining schools” and contended that:

...good schools make a good system. Accordingly, the efficiency and effectiveness of the system can be achieved only if schools have sufficient control over the quality of education they provide. It is only at the school level:

- that the professionalism of the teachers can be exercised;
- that meaningful decisions about the educational needs of each student can be made; and
- that programs can be devised which reflect the wishes and circumstances of local schools’ communities. (EDWA, 1987, p.5)

Thus, one of the facets of restructuring was the reallocation of authority and responsibility for educational decision making in general and curriculum decision making in particular. Dramatic structural changes took place in the Head Office of the state Education Department of Western Australia (EDWA). Subject superintendents who had been in charge of specific curriculum areas were replaced by ‘district superintendents’ whose tasks were not so closely related to curriculum matters. Significantly, a ‘Schools Division’ in the Ministry of Education was set up. Under the ‘Schools Division’, a ‘Curriculum Directorate’ was established. The role of this division was:

- to establish and monitor curriculum policy and national goals and standards;
- to provide schools with guidelines and syllabuses;
- to co-ordinate and plan system-wide curriculum initiatives; and
- to provide system-wide curriculum support services and materials. (EDWA, 1987, p.17)

With regard to curriculum decision making at the district and school level, the district superintendent had almost no authority. Similarly, the principals’ authority over curriculum decision making was limited to the “design, implementation and evaluation of the educational program of the school (in accordance with the priorities and policies established by the Ministry and the school decision-making group)” (EDWA, 1987, p.11). Though the Better Schools Report did not provide any detailed

information about teachers' responsibility and authority in curriculum decision making, the following passage did offer some indication of their role:

Improved training of teachers has led to a highly skilled professional workforce. The existing system, with its highly centralised nature, does not encourage teachers to fulfil their professional role. Enhancement of the professionalism of teachers has been a key principle under-pinning this Report. (EDWA, 1987, p.5)

According to Chadbourne and Clarke (1994, p.49), this sort of restructuring did not achieve its objectives and "led to a serious decline in the level of curriculum leadership and support to schools".

The rhetoric of devolution maintained that sound curriculum decisions occur if made by the right people at the right level, that is, where curriculum activities are taking place. This was believed to be the key to improving students' learning outcomes. Such rhetoric gave teachers hope to expect that more and more responsibility for curriculum decision making would be shifted from Central Office down to the school level. However, things seemed to go in the other direction. Compared with the 1970s, a period when administrators and practitioners enjoyed more responsibility and flexibility in school-based curriculum decision making, the late 1980s and 1990s appeared to be characterised by re-centralisation. For example, Trestrail (1992) points out that:

In response to various pressures, the Minister issued a statement in July 1988 setting out minimum times to be spent in the study of English and Mathematics by all students. There have been several moves to make certain elements of the curriculum compulsory and it seems inevitable that health education, especially on AIDS, will be imposed on all schools. New methods of selection for compulsory courses will be mandatory for all schools by 1994. (Trestrail, 1992, p.10)

A variety of writers have drawn attention to this gap between the re-centralisation of power and authority in curriculum decision making and the rhetoric of devolution (e.g. Rizvi, 1986, 1993; Smyth, 1993; Ball, 1993; Watkins, 1993; Ryan, 1993; Brennan, 1993; Anderson and Dixon, 1993; Angus, 1993; Apple, 1989; Quicke, 1988; Kell, 1993; and Codd, 1993, 1989a). They see two processes running parallel - the process of decentralising responsibility and financial crisis down to the schools, and the process of re-centralising power and authority up to Central Office. The

bottom line, as Smyth observes, is that devolution enables “central educational authorities to increase rather than decrease their control over schools” (1993, p.5).

Similarly, Hoffman’s report (1994, p.41) found that “many submissions have argued that devolution has had virtually no effect on classroom learning” and has been “mainly to do with management and administration beyond the classroom”.

Simultaneous decentralisation and centralisation has also occurred elsewhere. According to Gary Sykes¹, what happened in WA with devolution took place with “site-based management” in the United States (US), where “real authority is not devolved to the school. Power is kept centralised under a covering rhetoric of devolution”. Sykes went on to say that in the US,

The idea of devolution is that you would get much more responsiveness to local school communities, you would create opportunities for teachers to be more innovative, you would empower teachers and students because instead of just responding to remote authorities they now have more freedom to be self determining around curriculum. Those are the arguments that are made in favour of site-based management. But the reality more often than not is that in fact not much real authority is devolved and that many of the real control mechanisms that have always been in place remain in place, they are not touched. The superintendent stands up and says - I am moving to site-based management - but all the tests are in place, curriculum instruction materials ordering continues to be centralised, the teachers’ contract continues to have a whole set of rules and regulations about working conditions that cannot be broken, and so on. And all of those little things have prevented site-based management from delivering what it promised.

The same story applies in the United Kingdom (UK). There, devolution was part of the 1988 Education Reform Act. According to Phillip Gammage², the 1988 Reform Act featured a decentralisation of management responsibility to local units and a re-centralisation of power and control to the Central Authority. Gammage argued that devolution mainly occurred in the area of financial management “to make sure that the running of the school devolved to the head teacher, the principal, at both the primary and secondary levels”. At the same time, said Gammage, the re-

¹ Personal communication with Gary Sykes, a visiting scholar at Edith Cowan University in January 1997.

² Personal communication with Phillip Gammage, a visiting scholar at Edith Cowan University in January 1997.

centralisation of power to control education was attempted through several strategies. One was to set up national committees and offices. For example, the National Curriculum Council (NCC) was established and charged with developing the national curriculum for all the children (5-16 years) in state schools. The Schools Examination and Assessment Council (SEAC) was established to take charge of nation-wide standard testing. In addition, the Office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate was abolished and a new group called the Office of Standards and Education was set up under a Chief Inspector of Schools. This Office was expected to inspect schools "on a very much more regular basis". Another strategy, said Gammage, was to remove from office, people not of the same mind with the Central Authority. In 1993 SEAC was dismissed because,

it said things that the Government didn't like. It said, look the examinations are much more complex than you think, and examinations don't always help, and examinations aren't doing this properly. So they [the government] scrapped it. They scrapped the National Curriculum Council and got rid of the people who said 'it's difficult', and merged the National Curriculum Committee and the Schools Examination and Assessment Council into one group - called SCAA - the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority, which is now responsible for all the State National Curriculum and Testing.

A third strategy was to take away power from the Local Education Authority (LEA) through a move towards what was called 'Grant Maintained Schools'. The government encouraged schools to opt out of Local School Board or Local Authority control altogether. According to Gammage, "what the Government is trying to do is to remove the power of that middle intervening structure of local politics, which it regards as dangerous, and concentrate on central politics". More broadly, this means "strong central control, a strong belief in privatization, a somewhat nationalistic belief, and devolved management".

Devolution has already become a world-wide trend. China, a country with a highly centralised education system of several thousand years standing, is planning to shift on a large scale, and already has shifted on a small scale, some of the responsibilities from the State Education Council down to the provincial committees, the district committees, the county committees and the schools. In 1992, a trial project was undertaken. The responsibility for tertiary entrance, previously tightly held by the

State Education Council, was devolved to the five provincial education committees in the south-eastern part of China. In addition, schools across the whole country were delegated the responsibility to develop locally relevant curriculum materials. This was carried out mainly by the district and county offices in consultation with individual schools. More and more responsibilities are expected to be passed down from the State Education Council in the coming years ahead. It is fair to say that China, with a huge and complex education system characteristic of high centralisation, is making its first step towards decentralisation in the educational sector and, as such, should benefit from referents. It is hoped that by documenting Western Australia's experience, this study will provide China with some food for thought.

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT (SAE) AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

In Australia, according to Kennedy (1990, p.476), the development of Social Studies, as part of an attempted national curriculum, has involved at least five phases. The first three were identified by Christie (1985); the fourth and fifth were added by Kennedy.

Phase one: The committee phase. From the early to the late 1970s, some national committees were set up, such as the Social Science Committee, the Asian Studies Coordinating Committee, and the National Committee on English Teaching. These committees were established as coordinating mechanisms for joint curriculum endeavours between the Federal and State and Territory governments.

Phase Two: The Curriculum Development Centre (CDC). In 1975, the Curriculum Development Centre was established as a Commonwealth statutory authority "for more coordinated and expansive" federal endeavour in the curriculum area. This phase "was terminated in 1981 by the Review of Commonwealth Functions (RCF) Committee (more commonly known as the 'Razor Gang')" (Kennedy, 1990, p.476).

Phase Three: Reactivation of the Curriculum Development Centre. In 1983, the first Hawke Labor government reactivated the Curriculum Development Centre to

“honour one of its election promises”. Thereby the Curriculum Development Centre became a “semi-autonomous unit within the Commonwealth Schools Commission” (Kennedy, 1990, p.476). It reported directly to the Commonwealth Minister for Education through the Curriculum Development Council.

Phase Four: CDC incorporated into DEET. In 1987, when the third Hawke Labor government came to power, a new Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) was established. The previous Commonwealth Schools Commission was abolished and the Curriculum Development Centre was incorporated by DEET. There the centre maintained most of its programs and functions but had no reporting mechanism outside DEET.

Phase Five: The Curriculum Policy Unit. On 1 July 1989, the Curriculum Development Centre was abolished and replaced partly by a Curriculum Policy Unit within the Schools and Curriculum Policy Branch in DEET. This unit was later retitled the Gender Equity and Curriculum Policy Unit. However, the materials development function of the previous CDC was transferred to a newly established company, the Curriculum Corporation, which was jointly owned by the Commonwealth and State Ministers for Education, except the New South Wales Minister.

The last two phases are not clear-cut. The present national curriculum collaboration between the Commonwealth and State and Territories is commonly believed to have begun later than phase four, but earlier than phase five. However, it is these two phases that witnessed the most significant and substantial projection of Studies of Society and Environment (SAE) for more than two decades.

In 1988, the Federal Government made its general statement for the focus and content of schooling in Australia in *Strengthening Australia's Schools*. This paper documented directions for the curriculum of Australian schools and argued for a common curriculum framework that would establish the major domains of knowledge, skills and values appropriate for the diverse curriculum needs in Australia.

A year later (1989), the Australian Education Council (AEC) reached a historical agreement on the directions for Australian schooling by releasing a set of ten *Common and Agreed National Goals for Australian Schools* (commonly referred to as the Hobart Declaration). Three of these goals have direct bearing on SAE, namely:

6. To develop in students: skills of analysis and problem solving; a knowledge and appreciation of Australia's historical and geographical context; an understanding of, and concern for, balanced development and the global environment; and a capacity to exercise judgment in matters of morality, ethics and social justice.
7. To develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable students to participate as active and informed citizens in our democratic Australian society within an international context.
8. To provide students with an understanding of, and respect for, our cultural heritage, including the particular cultural background of Aboriginal and ethnic groups.

Another Commonwealth report, *Education for Active Citizenship* (1989), focused attention on the pivotal role of SAE in undertaking citizenship education. It recommended that:

- ...the Commonwealth designate education for active citizenship as a priority
- (citizenship education become an) area for improvement in primary and secondary education.
- (citizenship education become an) area for expenditure on in-service education. (1989, p.6)

Since 1988, the States, Territories and Commonwealth have been working jointly on eight major national collaborative curriculum projects. *Studies of Society and Environment for Australian School* was first released as a draft for consultation in November 1992, and a final unedited manuscript was released in June 1993 by the Curriculum Corporation. Curriculum mapping exercises, briefing, and work on national statement and profiles was completed. Thereby, a defacto centralised national curriculum was developed. In Western Australia, a 1994-1995 working edition of *Student Outcome Statements*, a WA version of the national curriculum, was released to WA government schools (McCreddin, 1994) for trialing the national curriculum.

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT IN WA

The major Social Studies developments within Western Australia leading up to the introduction of the present Student Outcome Statements can be outlined as follows.

According to Down (1994a; 1994b), the development of Social Studies in Western Australia dates back to the early 1940s. At that time, youth delinquency became a serious social concern. Many measures were taken to tackle this social problem. These involved setting up “socialising agencies” which included “the Education Department, the Child Welfare Department, the Children’s Court, the Medical Department and the Police Department” - all under a big umbrella of a Child Council (Down, 1994a, p.2) - as well as Youth Centres, Boys Schools and Girls Schools (Down, 1994a, p.3). In addition, many programs were developed to strengthen youth social education, such as, “a series of weekly lectures on the subject of juvenile delinquency” by the Adult Education Board of Western Australia in 1958.

Down points out that during this period the first major Social Studies curriculum development occurred. The *Social and Moral Education Curriculum* was introduced in 1955. This curriculum “reflected public concern and ‘moral panic’ about juvenile delinquency in Western Australia” , and attempted to foster in children “a spirit of cooperation, responsibility and loyalty to Nation and Empire” (Down, 1994a, p.6). The emphasis of this curriculum reflected a number of concerns and objectives, such as: “public concern about Australia’s post-war immigration program”; a “fear of communism and preoccupation with security”; and an aim to “quickly assimilate the ‘new arrivals’ into Western Australian society” and teach children “to ‘accept loyalty to their country’” (p.7). Down claims that the curriculum “attempted to shape children to desire a particular set of social arrangements founded on unequal relationships of power and domination” (p.9). These developments took place within the Year 8-10 Junior Certificate.

In 1972, the Achievement Certificate replaced the Junior Certificate. It created two types of subjects—core and optional. As a core subject, Social Studies was given equal time in the school curriculum with English, Mathematics and Science; together they accounted for 60 per cent of the secondary curriculum. But it was not until the

late 1970s that a major development in Social Studies took place. In 1981, the K-10 Social Studies syllabus replaced “Social Studies A and B”. A significant feature of this new syllabus was its arrangement of knowledge, skills and values in a developmental sequence and scope. For Years 8-10, seventeen topics were arranged. The syllabus emphasised “process skills, evaluative techniques, decision-making, participation and social action” (Down, 1994a, p.11). Students taking Social Studies were awarded “Advanced, Intermediate, and Basic” levels of achievement with a predetermined percentage for each group; that is, 25% Advanced, 50% Intermediate, and 25% Basic. Down regards the syllabus as being designed “to produce citizens who would fit into a pre-existing set of social arrangements” and as “a part of a larger process that sought to maintain stability and social harmony rather than any fundamental transformation of society” (1994a, pp.12-3).

In 1984, the Beazley Report recommended a ‘Unit Approach’ to secondary education and the creation of seven lower secondary curriculum areas, each to have more or less equal weighting. Another significant recommendation was the replacement of norm-referenced assessment with criterion-based assessment, and the replacement of “Advanced, Intermediate and Basic” with five levels of student achievements (A, B, C, D and F). A third major proposed change was a shift from horizontal timetabling to vertical timetabling.

The following two years, after the release of the Beazley Report, saw a lot of development work in the Education Department. The recommended ‘unit approach’ was developed into a Unit Curriculum. The Unit Curriculum was trialed in 1986 and introduced to government schools across the state in 1988, the same year when restructuring or devolution was implemented in Western Australia.

The development of Social Studies in Unit Curriculum involved repackaging the original seventeen topics in the Social Studies K-10 syllabus into six stages of study, and adding two new units, ‘Technological World’ and ‘Contemporary Australian Society’. Also, year-long courses were shortened to forty hours of delivery.

Unit Curriculum was designed initially to enable schools, teachers, parents and students to have more control of their own unit choice and to benefit from more

personal timetabling. However, because of rigid guidelines and lack of resources, it did not work as expected. Chadbourne and Clarke (1994) found that in the view of most principals,

Unit Curriculum has also undermined the spirit of devolution by reducing the professional discretion of teachers to devise the best way to achieve centrally specified student learning outcomes. (pp.50-1)

The Print inquiry (1990) into the Social Studies and Social Science curricula K-12 in Western Australia found further problems. For example:

Social Studies teachers generally agreed (64.7 percent) that current skills teaching has been fragmented by Unit Curriculum to the extent that the existing units no longer provide an effective sequence. (p.60)

The data on student unit selection show clearly that Social Studies has been adversely affected by the provision of student choice. Consequently fewer Social Studies areas than in the Achievement Certificate curriculum could be studied. (p.61)

The Review found substantial evidence to suggest that too many Social Studies teachers demonstrated little confidence with standards based assessment. (p.73)

Trestrail (1992) and Gardiner³ (1995) argue that the movement away from norm-referenced to standards-referenced assessment and grading caused practitioners a lot of confusion and generated considerable resistance. All of these concerns with Unit Curriculum paved the way for the next major curriculum reform, the introduction of Student Outcome Statements.

The development of Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia began in the early 1990s. Initial work had been done in English and Math. At the same time, work on national curriculum was going on at the Federal level. Eventually, Western Australia abandoned its own work and joined the national curriculum collaborative endeavour. After some curriculum mapping exercises and briefing, the national curriculum was released in 1993, in the form of National Statements and Profiles in eight learning areas, one of which was Social Studies (newly named as Society and Environment). A trial of the national curriculum was conducted in most of the States and Territories. In Western Australia, after some trial and refinement of the national curriculum, a Western Australian version of the national curriculum - Student

³ Personal communication with Gardiner on 23rd May 1995.

Outcome Statements - was ready for further consultation, in the later half of 1997. Implementation of Student Outcome Statements has been planned to begin in 1998, and all government schools are expected to take it on board by the year 2003. More details are provided later in this study.

AIMS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Chapter two documents a range of claims that critical theorists make about the impact of devolution upon curriculum policy with respect to social justice, social control and economic productivity. This study aims to investigate the validity of those claims. A broad concept of curriculum policy is adopted throughout the thesis, one that allows the critical theorists' claims to include observations on changes to the structure, process and content of SAE. A more specific aim, then, is to explore the expected and actual changes to these three aspects of SAE curriculum since devolution in WA.

A lot of research has been conducted on the impact of devolution upon teachers' workload, pedagogy, school development and educational administration, and also a lot of studies have been carried out on the national curriculum (see chapter two).

However, although devolution and curriculum reforms, like Unit Curriculum in Western Australia and the present national curriculum, have been in progress for over a decade, very few studies have been conducted to investigate the links between devolution and curriculum policy changes. The same applies even more so, to Year 8-10 SAE policy in the Western Australian government school system. Nonetheless, there are some relevant studies.

On a relatively large scale, Andrew Sturman conducted a somewhat similar study and published his findings in a book titled *Decentralisation and Curriculum* (1989). He selected three government high schools in Queensland, South Australia and Victoria to investigate the difference that devolution made on the curriculum decision-making process and the degree of participation of various stakeholders across the selected state systems and individual schools.

His study entailed a mixture of quantitative and qualitative approach and was based on a methodology he calls “multisite qualitative research”. His analysis of the curriculum focuses on aspects of the total curriculum in general and a detailed review of two subject areas - Science and Social Science. The investigation of each school’s total curriculum was examined at all year levels, while the study of the two subjects focused only on Year 9 (as an example of the compulsory years) and Year 11 (as an example of the post-compulsory years). Sturman found that:

In general, decentralisation to regional offices was perceived to be administrative decentralisation and did not affect substantially decision making in the curriculum area. Furthermore, it was the general view of administrators and teachers that ultimate control over the key areas of policy still remained in the hands of the central office. (Sturman, 1989, p.241)

Sturman’s study also revealed that there are similarities and dissimilarities within what he calls ‘the system frame’, ‘the school frame’, ‘the individual frame’ and ‘the community frame’ with regard to the curriculum decision making process and the participation of various stakeholders.

At the state level in Western Australia, O’Donoghue conducted a case study in 1993 of a school district in the Perth metropolitan area. He sought to “access the thinking of primary school teachers (in four schools) about the impact of the devolution process on their curriculum work”. His study found that:

(Teachers) in general, view and assess the restructuring process largely in terms of the influence they perceive it to be having on their curriculum work. This influence they see as being a very negative one. Furthermore, they cannot see that the situation will improve in the future and in some respects they consider that it will deteriorate. The overall result would appear to be a low level of morale amongst the teachers. (O’Donoghue, 1993, p.20)

In the early 1990s, Goddard (1992) conducted a case study about the Western Australian state education system. He focused on the pattern of control in the state education system. His argument called upon three major reports - the McGaw Report, the Beazley Report and the Better Schools Report - and the events surrounding the development and implementation of these reports. Within a broader socio-political context, Goddard used the concepts of ideology, knowledge, and

structures of domination and control to review the management of policy and practice in the Western Australian state education system.

Of particular relevance to this study, Goddard gave much attention to the development and implementation of Unit Curriculum. His study reveals that while Unit Curriculum was being planned,

ideological differences in educational purpose became visible among senior officers of the Education Department. A conservative group sought to centralise control while a radical group wanted devolution. (p.119)

Goddard noticed that, as the development process went along, a third group came into play, that is, the government which “developed visible knowledge in the form of ‘new right’ corporatism for economic rationalism to achieve central control” (p.126). This group clashed with the second group ideologically, but gained control by the end of 1986 when the “press for economic rationalism in education” was mounting. As a result, the government group, particularly at the implementation stage, used Unit Curriculum as a vehicle “for promoting ‘new right’ corporatism for economic rationalism” (p.168). Goddard concluded that,

The political imperative, using visible knowledge and control, was crowding the space for the social imperative which required invisible control developed through invisible knowledge. The socio-political context was reflected in education as a clash between purpose and management, with management becoming the dominant theme. (p.233)

Waugh and Godfrey (1995; also 1994, 1993, 1992; Waugh, 1983) conducted a case study of teachers’ receptivity to system-wide change at the implementation stage of Unit Curriculum. Their study design was “qualitative and cross-sectional” (p.41), with a survey sample of 549 government secondary school teachers involved in Unit Curriculum. Attitudes towards the Unit Curriculum System were “measured with ten adjective pairs as a four-category semantic differential in line with previous research” (p.42), such as that performed by Osgood et al (1970) and Waugh and Punch (1985). Their survey found that basically, “insufficient resources were provided to some schools to implement the Unit Curriculum” (p.42), and schools and teachers “implemented the Unit Curriculum System in varying degrees depending on, among other factors, the resources available” (pp.42-3). Their study also found that

teachers' dissatisfaction with the Unit Curriculum mainly focused on the inadequate evaluation of the trial and consultation of the curriculum, large class sizes, lack of staff, too much course content in the time available, and restrictive and prescribed assessment procedures (p.43).

Waugh and Godfrey describe in more detail, teachers' attitudes towards Unit Curriculum on six general aspects: cost-benefit, practicality, alleviation, participation at school in decision making, support for the change, and comparison of the new system with the previous one (pp.48-9). They conclude their study by suggesting that "administrators would sell the change to the teachers" (p.50) better if they gave enough consideration to the six aspects listed above.

With the national curriculum or its WA version - Student Outcome Statements - Rose Moroz (1997) conducted a study similar to what Waugh and Godfrey did with Unit Curriculum. Moroz also tried to investigate teachers' receptivity to system-level change (the introduction of Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia) in secondary schools. Her study was designed to measure teachers' receptivity in four areas: feelings, attitudes, intentions and behaviour (p.1). She sampled a total of 126 teachers to respond to a questionnaire. In her study, 43% of the participants had involvement in trialing Student Outcome Statements. The study found that teachers felt,

the use of Student Outcome Statements in comparison with the old system was a more positive experience. They agreed that Student Outcome Statements address the needs of individual students better (83.4%), that they better describe student learning, and that they are able to make better judgments about student learning achievements (80.1%). (p.8)

Moroz's study suggested that teachers' attitudes to Student Outcome Statements are "generally extremely positive". However, it also acknowledges that,

over half of the respondents felt that Student Outcome Statements were complicated (63.5%), time inefficient (54.7%) and unclear (53.2%). Just over 30% of the respondents thought Student Outcome Statements were idealistic. (p.9)

Elsewhere, Marland et al. (1997) report the impact of national curriculum initiatives on teachers' thinking. They selected three schools in the Queensland state education

system. Four teachers from each of the three schools were involved in their study, two English and two mathematics. Data about changes in teachers' thinking was gained through in-depth, semi-structured interviews (p.3). Their study found that,

Generally, teachers in the smaller, rural schools, whether classroom teachers or subject coordinators, reported no changes, or very few changes, to their practical theories as a result of the curriculum and profile forms. The situation in Tallowood, the larger provincial secondary school, was in marked contrast to that, with two of the teachers, a classroom teacher of mathematics and the subject coordinator in English, reporting numerous changes (n = 18 and n = 33) to their thinking about teaching and the third, the subject coordinator of mathematics, also reporting some changes (n = 8). (pp.4-5)

Marland et al. claimed that reforms related to the use of profiles and nationally developed curriculum statements “appear to have had a surprisingly diverse impact on the thinking or practical theories of the Queensland secondary teachers in this study” (p.9). Their study further identified what accounts for the change and what hinders the change. The factors cited are: access to change information, commitment to traditional practice, teacher's experience, school size and culture, availability of resources and support (pp.14-5).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With these considerations in mind, the following central research question was formulated to inform this study. What links exist between devolution and changes to the Year 8-10 SAE curriculum policy in Western Australia since 1987? It should be noted that this question limits the study to: Society and Environment curriculum policy; for Year 8-10 (the lower secondary school) students; within the government school system; in Western Australia; from 1987 up to early 1997.

The meanings of key concepts such as ‘devolution’ and ‘curriculum policy’, for the purpose of this study, are defined in chapter two. The term “links” here does not refer to ‘cause and effect’ or causal links. Rather it refers to conceptual, ideological and operational connections between devolution and curriculum policy, as identified by critical theorists and participants in this study.

To help clarify what the central research question involves, the following subsidiary research questions were devised.

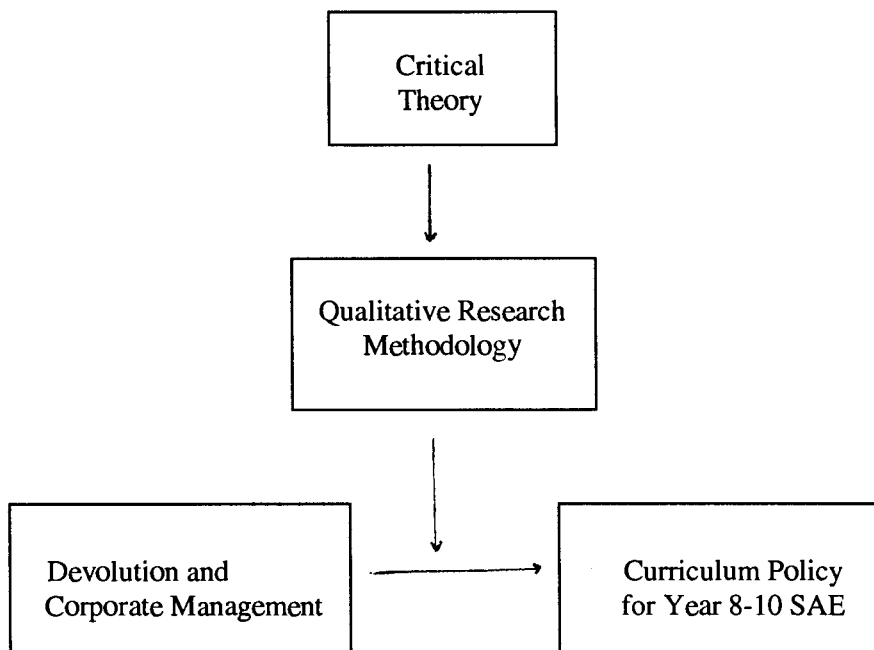
- What changes to the external and internal structure of SAE curriculum policy have been introduced in WA since 1987?
- What changes have occurred in the process by which these policy changes have been formulated, adopted and implemented?
- What changes to the content of SAE have been made since 1987 in WA?
- Would these changes have occurred if devolution had not taken place?
- Are the critical theorists' claims about the impact of these changes on social justice, social control and economic productivity valid?

The way in which these questions are informed by critical theory is indicated in chapter three.

FOCUS AND PROCESS OF THE INQUIRY

In simplified form, then, the broad focus and process of inquiry of this study is shown diagrammatically in Figure 1:

Figure 1. Focus and Process of the Inquiry



2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The overarching conceptual framework for this study is derived from critical theory. This choice is based on the grounds that: in China the dominant theory in any research area is Marxism which is closer to critical theory than other sociological theories; the findings of this study can be expected to go through the filter of Marxism if considered in China; as a researcher who is trying to learn something for China from Western Australia's devolution experience, I am expected to use a critical eye; from a personal perspective, critical theory is of high value because of the importance it places on equity and social justice; critical theory focuses on social change rather than on social order, which makes it appropriate for the central research question of this study; and finally, the topics dealt with in SAE are susceptible to analysis by critical theorists.

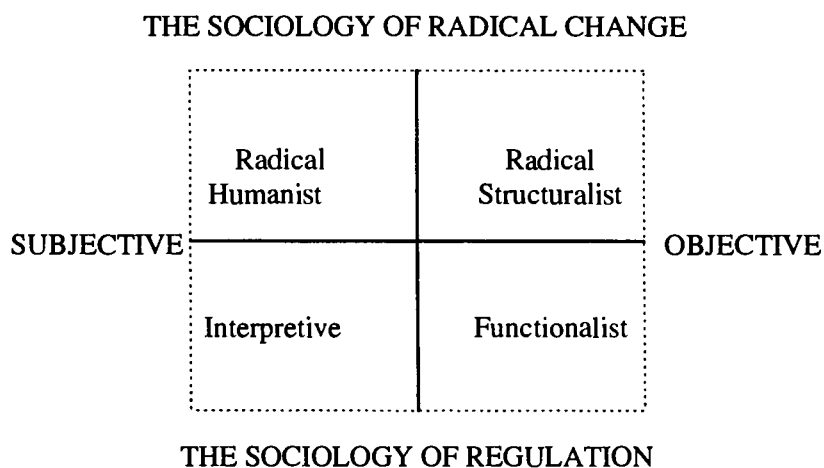
Throughout the thesis, particular aspects of critical theory are outlined and used to make sense of the findings. In this chapter, the literature on the broader dimensions of critical theory are reviewed and a theoretical model discussed to indicate the position from which research data was collected and analysed. As a way of clarifying what critical theory means, for the purposes of the study, the stance of critical theorists on key concepts embodied in the central research question is identified. This serves the added function of further defining the boundaries of the investigation. The review of literature also includes a brief survey of research on the national curriculum in Australia. Comment is then made on these studies from a critical theory perspective which, in turn, helps underline the significance of this thesis.

DIFFERENT SOCIAL THEORIES

Critical theory was established in Frankfurt by a group of German neo-Marxists during the 1920s and was re-invigorated by a second generation group based in Germany during the 1960s and 70s. These critical thinkers became disenchanted with the overly mechanistic interpretation of Marx's work that result in economic determinism (Habermas, 1968; Schroyer, 1973). Critical theorists also rejected the philosophy of positivism (Sewart, 1978) and a form of sociology that overemphasised the impact of social variables on individual behaviour (Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, 1973). At the same time, critical theorists maintained that domination and repression occurs in modern capitalist societies through instrumental rationality and technocratic thinking (Marcuse, 1964; Habermas, 1970; Tar, 1977), through the 'knowledge industry' and the 'cultural industry' (Schroyer, 1970, 1973), and through the *legitimations* created by ideology (Habermas, 1975).

Prunty (1984) conceptualises critical theory by suggesting that it combines the subjectivist approach to social science with a sociology of radical change. As such, it differs from structuralist theories (e.g. functionalism and deterministic Marxism) and interactionist or interpretivist theories. Prunty cites the work of Burrell and Morgan (1979) who construct a matrix of four theoretical paradigms using two sets of dimensions (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Four paradigms for the analysis of social theory
(Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.22)



One set consists of an objectivist approach to social science (characterised by realism positivism, determinism and a nomothetic methodology) and a subjectivist approach (characterised by nominalism, anti-positivism, voluntarism and an ideographic methodology). The other set of dimensions consists of the sociology of regulation (concerned with the status quo, social order, consensus, social integration, solidarity, need satisfaction, actuality) and the sociology of radical change (concerned with radical change, structural control, modes of domination, contradiction, emancipation, deprivation, and potentiality).

Of the four quadrants in Figure 2, critical theory is located within the radical humanist paradigm. In brief, Prunty outlines critical theory's opposition to the other three paradigms can be outlined as follows.

Functionalism assumes a consensus about the values, beliefs and norms binding the system together, and as such concentrates on order rather than change. In addition to questioning the existence of such a consensus, critical theorists claim that the functionalists' deterministic assumption about human nature is "indefensible, and denies the freedom, dignity, and potentiality of the individual" (Prunty, 1984, p.24). They also argue that the regulation view of society constrains social reforms and that the positivist nature of much functionalist research is antithetical to an acceptance of the social construction of reality.

Radical structuralism shares with functionalism an objective orientation to social science. Critical theorists find it deficient on the ground of "its positivistic determinism and disregard for subjectivity and human consciousness" (Prunty, 1984, p.27).

Interpretivism is a complex collection of frameworks including symbolic interactionism, dramaturgy, hermeneutics, phenomenology and ethnomethodology. For critical theorists, these frameworks fail to recognise the impact of social constraints on human actors and the unequal power relationships that characterise most interactions between people. Furthermore, their concern for 'what is', make interpenetration "inadequate in a policy arena that is oriented to 'what ought to be'." (Prunty, 1984, p.27)

Critical theory or radical humanism differs from the other three paradigms identified by Burrell and Morgan. Prunty argues that it strives both to understand and reveal the workings of the broad political, economic, social, and cultural processes, and to explore the inner sanctums of human consciousness where the meaning of social life is constructed. The overarching aim of radical humanism is emancipation. It is manifestly political, with an *a priori* commitment to take sides with the oppressed and those whose interests are threatened by external sources of domination and masked by internal misperceptions of this state (p.29). Radical humanism contends “that positivist ideology and technical rationality support a system of domination that is firmly rooted in the social and economic infrastructure of modern capitalist societies” (p.31), and agrees with “Marx’s conclusion that the system of production and distribution of commodities serves the interests of a few to the disadvantage of the many” (p.32).

Kincheloe and McLaren (1994) attempt to extend the critical perspective by saying that a “criticalist” researcher conducts social and cultural criticism based on the following assumptions:

- that all thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are socially and historically constituted;
- that facts can never be isolated from the domain of values or removed from some form of ideological inscription;
- that the relationship between concept and object and between signifier and signified is never stable or fixed and is often mediated by the social relations of capitalist production and consumption;
- that language is central to the formation of subjectivity (conscious and unconscious awareness);
- that certain groups in any society are privileged over others and, although the reasons for this privileging may vary widely, the oppression that characterises contemporary societies is most forcefully reproduced when subordinates accept their social status as natural, necessary, or inevitable;
- that oppression has many faces and focusing on only one at the expense of others (e.g., class oppression versus racism) often eludes the interconnection among them; and finally,
- that mainstream research practices are generally, although most often unwittingly, implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race, and gender oppression. (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p.139)

Overall, then, critical theory can be seen to emanate from neo-Marxist sociological theory but it needs to be distinguished from Hegelian Marxism, structural Marxism, neo-Marxian economic sociology, and historically oriented Marxism (Ritzer, 1983). Also, the Frankfurt School pointed to culture, not just material production and the economy, to theorise the nature of society (Pinar et.al., 1995, p.247). It hoped to develop a critical social consciousness that would penetrate existing ideology, foster independent judgement and maintain freedom to construct alternatives (Held, 1980). Conceptually, this helped lay the foundations for a move away from mechanistic reproduction theory to the notion of resistance (Giroux, 1983). Since the mid 1980s, some writers have taken the emphasis beyond resistance and placed it on radical intervention. For example, Whitty, after warning against over romanticising the resistances of the working class, argues that:

What the American worker increasingly recognises is that whether or not particular aspects of education are ultimately reproductive or transformative in their effects is essentially a political question concerning how they are to be worked upon pedagogically and politically, and how they become articulated with other struggles in and beyond the schools (1985, p.90).

DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF DEVOLUTION

In relation to educational restructuring, Hoffman (1994, p.11) points out that over the past two decades, the term “devolution” has been used to refer to different processes, such as:

- school principals establishing councils and committees which enable teachers and parents to have a say in the running of schools;
- Central Office handing over to schools, regions or districts the authority and responsibility to make decisions;
- the handing over of set tasks (jobs, work) that used to be carried out centrally but which are now carried out locally;
- the handing over of funds that used to be administered centrally;
- the handing over of funds that have been saved by the discontinuation of some part of the Education Department’s operations; and
- the amendment or repeal of Education Act Regulations.

Hoffman concludes that the term devolution “should be restricted to its ordinary, everyday meaning: the delegation of a centrally-held power” (1994, p.11).

Caldwell and Spinks (1988) use the term devolution to refer to 'self-managing schools', 'self-governing schools', and 'school-site or school-based management'. They define a self-managing school as one that has been given authority to make decisions with regard to the allocation of resources (p.5). For them, resources include:

knowledge (decentralisation of decisions related to curriculum, including decisions related to the goals or ends of schooling); technology (decentralisation of decisions related to the means of teaching and learning); power (decentralisation of authority to make decisions); materials (decentralisation of decisions related to the use of facilities, supplies and equipment); people (decentralisation of decisions related to the allocation of people in matters related to teaching and learning, and the support of teaching and learning); time (decentralisation of decisions related to the allocation of time); and finance (decentralisation of decisions related to the allocation of money). (1988, p.5)

Critical theorists would have reservations about these definitions. They regard devolution as underpinned by corporate managerialism and economic rationalism. In their view,

The truth is that there is no single uniform meaning of the term "devolution". It is an inherently political concept, the meaning of which is struggled over and contested Devolution is not simply a decision making system; rather, it is a moral principle for organising social life. (Rizvi, 1993, pp.1-2)

Other critical theorists expand on these points and in doing so not only develop the concept of devolution but also convey a greater 'feel' for what critical theory represents. For example, Smyth (1993) argues that school self-management means "no more than an opportunity for schools to manage dwindling fiscal resources, within tightened centralist policies over curriculum, evaluation and standards" (p.3). He sees self-management as being used as a conservative managerial device rather than as a basis for genuine democratic reform (p.5), because devolution is,

not fundamentally about 'choice', 'grassroots democracy', or 'parent participation'. It is 'about tightening central controls through national curricula and frameworks; national and state-wide testing; national standards and competencies; teacher appraisal and curriculum audits - while in the same breath talking about empowering schools and their local communities. What we have instead of genuine school-based forms of participation are increasing forms of managerialism, hierarchy, individual competitiveness and task orientation. (Smyth, 1993, p.4)

According to Smyth (1993), devolution is a New Right device that: enables central authorities to increase rather than reduce their control over schools (p.5); intensifies central power and cuts back resources for public services, “while having the appearance of devolving power further down the line” (p.6); and allows the state to abdicate “its social responsibility for providing an equitable quality education for all” (p.8). Smyth (1993) goes on to say that, devolution is “a deliberate process of subterfuge, distortion, concealment and wilful neglect” (p.2) because it allows the state “to retreat in a rather undignified fashion from its historical responsibility for providing quality public education” and leaves “school communities to own and manage the decline” (p.8). In his view, devolution strengthens the capacity of small elite policy-making groups to set guidelines, while allowing them to shirk responsibility for the implementation of these frameworks (p.3). Furthermore, he says, “control of education, in these circumstances, is shifted away from educationists as ‘producers’ and towards ‘consumers’ (politicians, the business community and parents)” (p.6).

Similarly, Ball (1993) argues that under devolution, “the state is left in the position of having power without responsibility” (p.77). Devolution “gives apparent autonomy to the manager while taking away apparent autonomy from the teacher” (p.70). Ball also contends that free choice and market schooling “provide two avenues for the displacement of the legitimisation crisis in education” because the state can “distance itself from problems in education by blaming parents for making bad or ill-informed choices” and blame schools for the faults and difficulties inherent in or created by devolution (p.77). He warns that devolution,

drives a wedge between the curriculum and classroom-oriented teacher and the market and budget-oriented manager, thus creating a strong potential for differences in interest, values and purpose between the two groups. (p.70).

Ball’s view is supported by Watkins (1993, p.139), who claims that,

While the central offices at both state and federal levels will arbitrarily, with the help of the powerful interest groups, set goals, targets, instruments of surveillance and the extent of resource and financial help, the self-managing school will be left to sort out the problems. In this way the economic and fiscal crises facing business and governments will have been effectively displaced to the local school context.

Ryan (1993) continues the critique by claiming that the bottom-line rationale for devolution is not 'better schools' but 'cheaper schools' (p.193). Politically, says Ryan, devolution allows for more formalised and judgmental evaluations of teachers' work by both administrators and the community (p.199) in the "narrow accountability sense that is now being assiduously cultivated by increasingly powerful central planners" (p.192).

Ryan predicts a range of negative consequences of devolution. One is that "there can be no real sense in which learning outcomes are seen as a coproduction of principals, teachers and community" (p.199). Another is a retreat to "a very narrow focus for democracy at the local level" with stakeholders' autonomy limited to discretion over how best to implement more tightly defined curricular frameworks (p.197); that is, "restricted largely to the methodological, or specialist understandings of a particular area of the curriculum" (p.210). A third consequence is the growth of power divisions within schools and a steeper pyramidally structured corporate system of educational administration (p.198). Finally, there is an intensification of "class bias in parental representation across the schools of the state", which "would serve an important control as well as 'efficiency' function" (p.208).

Hartley (1993, p.112) expects that, due to devolution, there will be an ever-increasing division within schools "between those who control files and finance, on the one hand, and those who educate, on the other". Similarly, Davies' (1990, p.31) view of devolution is that,

In terms of the relationships both between and within key stakeholder groups at the local level, divisiveness rather than solidarity would be the defining political characteristic. This would constitute a fragmentation and dissipation of the power of the periphery and a substantial strengthening of that of the reconstituted centre as a consequence.

Brennan (1993, p.97) conducted a study which showed that devolution "spells the end of official support for the school improvement initiative". She also found that many teachers felt the process of parental input would devalue their own knowledge and experience (p.93) and that, "a number of schools treated participatory evaluation as an event through which existing power relations were further entrenched, or participation as an end in itself, with little interest in educational outcomes" (p.96).

Anderson and Dixon (1993, p.59) are critical of devolution because they see it as “modelled on entrepreneurial, free enterprise ideology with its emphasis on individualism fully intact.” They dispute the claim that devolution increases the power of parents and teachers. In their view, all it does is entrench the power of those already empowered over the less influential groups (p.59), because,

...in practice it does not challenge the fundamentally conservative interests of existing governance structures. First, the local manifestations of site-based management do not challenge vested interests because membership in local school decision-making groups is determined by pre-existing social conditions that result from these interests. Decision-making is framed by the interests of like-minded participants. Second, top-down decision-making which emerges in national curriculum and testing schemes goes unchallenged because it fits within the widely accepted objectivist (functionalist) paradigm which asserts that scientific rationale is value-free. (Anderson & Dixon, 1993, p.59)

Angus (1993, p.24; also see Rizvi, 1986) says that under devolution there is a clear separation between policy and implementation. He further warns that devolution “may have the effect of eroding team building and collegiality among principals and staff and of limiting rather than enhancing democratic, school level decision-making” (p.18). Moreover, under devolution basic educational relationships at the periphery “assume a more commercial, ‘contractual form’ or a ‘commodity form’.” (p.18; also see Apple, 1989).

Quicke (1988, cited in Smyth, 1993, p.2) contends that instead of being emancipatory or liberating for teachers, school self-management is just “another ‘iron cage’ that serves to entrap them within the New Right ideology of radical interventionism”. He suggests that, at best, participation becomes restricted to formats approved by government policy. And, at worst, participation becomes virtually non-existent because the managerial imperatives exclude teachers, students, parents and workers from the policy making process. To make matters even worse, says Codd (1993, p.168), devolution diminishes teachers’ commitment to the values and principles which define the field of educational practice, because it “treats teachers as workers rather than professionals”.

In yet another criticism, Codd (1993) argues that devolution “involves the importation into education of the instrumentalist values of economic rationalism”

(p.159). Moreover, under the influence of market liberalism, educational administrators are “being forced to surrender their traditional commitment to social justice in order to pursue the goals of competition and increased individual choice (e.g., privatization of services, de zoning of schools, etc.)” (p.157).

DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS OR CONCEPTS OF POLICY

Among leading writers on policy, there is a lack of consensus on the meaning of ‘policy’. Take, for example, the following definitions.

Dror (1968, p.14) regards policy as the “general directives, rather than detailed instructions, on the main lines of action to be followed.” Jenkins (1978), lays more emphasis on the procedural and pragmatic aspects of policy by defining policy as:

A set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where these decisions should, in principle, be within the power of these actors to achieve. (Jenkins, 1978, p.15)

For Easton (1953, pp.129-30), the essence of a policy lies in its capacity to deny certain things to some people and make them accessible to others. In other words, a policy, whether for a society, narrow association, or any other group, “consists of a web of decisions and actions that allocates values.” In the same vein, Lasswell and Kaplan (1950, p.71) view policy as a “projected program of goal values and practices”. According to Mann (1975, p.11) policy is public in nature, consequential, complex, dominated by uncertainty, and reflecting and being reflected by disagreement about goals to be pursued.

Critical theorists would accept that policy can include ‘general directives’, ‘procedural and pragmatic’ elements, the ‘allocation of values’, and a ‘projected program of goal values and practices’. They would also acknowledge Anderson’s (1979, pp.126-31) distinctions between substantive and procedural policies, and distributive, regulatory and redistributive policies, and material and symbolic policies. What critical theorists do emphasise, however, is that “policy making is an exercise of power and control directed towards the attainment or preservation of some preferred arrangement...some desired state of affairs” (Prunty, 1984, p.3). For

that reason, this study will focus on the values orientation, power and control aspects of policy.

DIFFERENT MODELS OF POLICY ANALYSIS

The literature outlines numerous models of policy analysis, such as: the 'garbage can' model (Cohen and March, 1974), socio-political model (Lasswell, 1971), rational model (Dye, 1978; March and Simon, 1958; Kerr, 1976; Carley, 1980; Dror, 1968), incremental model (Lindblom, 1959, 1979), mixed and comprehensive models (Etzioni, 1967), systems model (Easton, 1965), group theory model (Latham, 1965) and elite theory model (Hunter, 1953).

Critical theorists would find difficulty wholeheartedly embracing these models because of their foundation in functionalism. As an alternative, they would endorse Prunty's six signposts for critical educational policy analysis, which are:

Firstly, a critical analysis is overtly political.

Secondly, a critical analysis strives to expose the sources of domination, repression, and exploitation that are entrenched in, and legitimated by, education policy.

Thirdly, a critical analysis of educational policy would pay careful attention to Bernstein's three message systems [curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation] of the school, viewing these as conduits through which the values legitimated by the policy process are imposed upon students.

Fourthly, a critical educational policy analysis would be concerned with the 'pathology of consciousness', addressing itself to the ways in which humans unknowingly abet their oppressors.

Fifthly, the critical educational policy analyst is committed to praxis - the unity of thought and action, theory and practice.

Sixthly, the critical educational policy analyst must be a savvy actor in the policy arena. (Prunty, 1984, pp.42-3)

In a more recent account, Taylor (1997) reinforces and extends Prunty's six signposts for critical policy analysis. She advocates that discourse theory be used in critical policy analysis because it allows us to "address the complexity of educational policy making through a focus on the 'politics of discourse'," (p.32), and contribute to "a deeper understanding of how the policy-making process works at a fine-grained level" (p.32). She suggests that critical analysis of educational policy texts needs to be located within a "broad economic, social and historical context" (p.32) and "in

relation to their impact on policy arenas in the broadest sense” (p.33). Taylor places particular importance on the multiple layered nature of educational policy making and the need to explore “linkages between the various levels of the policy process with an emphasis on highlighting power relations” (p.32). She supports Dale’s (1994) recommendation for comparative work in critical policy analysis. Along with Finch (1984, p.231), she takes the stance that critical policy analysis should engage the researched as well as the researcher “in evaluating the status quo and bringing about change” and providing information “upwards to remote policy makers”. For Taylor, “what is important is an underlying value commitment to social justice, and an analysis which is as rigorous as possible” (p.34). In addition, she concurs with Ball’s (1994, p.2) contention that “the critical analyst must take risks, use imagination, but also be reflexive. The concern is with the task rather than with theoretical purism or conceptual niceties”.

DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF CURRICULUM POLICY

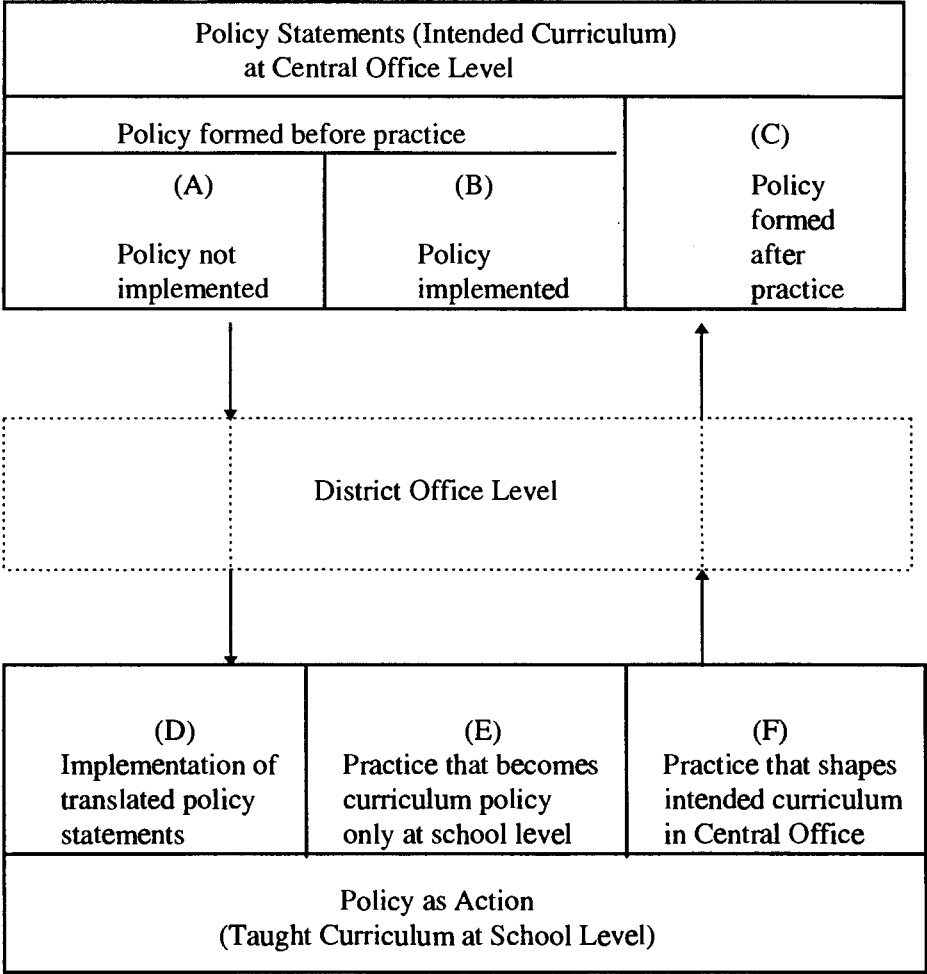
In order to identify the features of a critical theory model of curriculum policy analysis, different conceptions of curriculum and curriculum policy need to be reviewed. Before doing so, it is necessary to delineate the various components of curriculum policy. At a broad level, curriculum policy can be defined as the de jure and defacto guidelines used to influence what is and should be taught in schools. These guidelines can take the form of policy statements or policy actions at the system and school levels (Elmore & Sykes, 1992, p.186). De jure policies are often written while defacto policies are often unwritten.

Hughes (1991) makes a distinction between policy for the policy making process and policy as the product of the policy making process. Elmore and Sykes (1992) argue that curriculum policy includes policy as statements of intent and policy as action; that is, policy as statements of what ought to be and policy as what actually happens. They go on to argue that:

This distinction between policy statements and policy actions suggests that policies are not simply made and then implemented (or not implemented). Rather, a constant tension develops between the intent of formal policies and the ensuing actions of people and institutions. (p.186)

Diagrammatically, this distinction can be portrayed in more detail as follows:

Figure 3. Diagram Of Curriculum Policy Components



This diagram shows that: (1) there is a difference between policy statements (intended curriculum) and policy actions (taught curriculum); (2) Central Office curriculum policy statements can be formed either independently of what happens in schools or can be formed from what happens (policy actions) in schools; (3) some curriculum practices at the school level never become policy, while others do become policy statements (intended curriculum) at the school and/or Central Office level - that is, some school level curriculum policy actions shape curriculum policy statements at the Central Office level; (4) the policy statements from Central Office that are implemented in schools can become both policy statements (the intended curriculum) and policy actions (taught curriculum) at the school level.

Another diagram to clarify the focus of the inquiry is provided in Figure 4. This diagram was constructed by Gordon et al.(1977, p.27). It identifies five dimensions of policy analysis. This study focuses particularly on analysis of policy determination and analysis of policy content. However, the findings from studying these two dimensions will be of value for further investigations into the other three dimensions.

Figure 4. Categories of Policy Analysis (Gordon et al. 1977, p.27)

<i>Analysis for policy</i>		<i>Analysis of policy</i>		
Policy advocacy	Information for policy	Policy monitoring and evaluation	Analysis of policy determination	Analysis of policy content

Elmore and Sykes (1992, p.195) argue that there are four traditions of inquiry into curriculum, each setting problems for policy, raising particular questions, and pointing to forms of influence over curriculum:

The oldest, mainstream tradition regards curriculum as worthwhile knowledge and focuses on what knowledge is of most worth within a society, in order to set the criteria and grounds to develop curriculum.

A second tradition sees curriculum as a rational system. Curriculum, in this view, is a rational means for achieving collective social ends and for making improvements on a scale that cannot be achieved by enlightened individual actions.

A third tradition emphasises curriculum as control and includes two streams of analysis.

A fourth perspective, related to the third, treats curriculum as capital.

Critical theorists would see the first two of these traditions as being aligned with functionalist models of analysis. They would embrace the third and the fourth traditions as being closely related to their own model of policy analysis.

Another group of analysts, such as Boyd (1979) and van Geel (1976), seek to determine “who should and actually does exert influence over curriculum”. In a review of judicial opinions in court cases involving the curriculum, van Geel (1976, pp.7-12) developed ten principles that came into play in justifying the allocation of authority. The ten principles are: paternalism, the right of parents, the interests of state and nation, liberty and democracy, the principle of affected interests, no

delegation of legislative power, community control, equity, efficiency and effectiveness, and keeping education out of politics. Most of these ten principles are consistent with those underlying the critical theory model of policy analysis.

Yet another group of analysts, such as Schwille, Jennings and Gant (1979), Scribner and Englert (1977), and Ziegler, Jennings and Peak (1974), focused their studies on the role of organised elites and interests groups. To them, curriculum is neither a knowledge claim nor a rational means of achieving collective ends, but a product of pluralist political bargaining. Critical theorists would accept much of what these analysts say, but would question whether in practice curriculum policy is always the product of pluralist political bargaining.

Writing from a critical theory perspective, Laird, Grundy, Maxwell and Warhurst (1994) argue that:

Over the past two decades in Australia, educational policy in general, and curricular policy in particular, has been the subject of sustained, intense scrutiny and debate, involving educationists, politicians, representatives of business and trade unions sectors, and the wider community. (p.137)

One aspect of this debate is the location of control over the curriculum.

Consistent with critical theory, analysts such as Apple (1979; 1982; 1986), Young (1971), Bernstein (1975), Bourdieu (1971; 1973), and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), maintain that curriculum is an expression of the dominant interests in a society and of the fundamental values such 'interests' use to determine the distribution of knowledge. Through curriculum, privileges are transmitted and inequality is reproduced. Apple states that, "the study of educational knowledge is a study in ideology, the investigation of what is considered legitimate knowledge.....by specific social groups and classes, in specific institutions, at specific historical moments" (1979, p.45).

The contestation in curriculum policy, in most cases, reflects contestation of different values, beliefs and interests among stakeholders. This contestation usually results in the choice of curriculum orientation. Kemmis, Cole and Suggett (1984) distinguish three curriculum orientations: the vocational/neo-classical orientation, the liberal/progressive orientation, and the socially-critical orientation.

Though curriculum policy research is an artificially constructed field and has a relatively short history, there is no shortage of relevant literature. As intimated earlier, many writers (e.g., Hughes, 1991; Elmore & Sykes, 1992; Ripley, 1985) argue that curriculum policy includes policy as statement of intent and policy as action. Along this line of thought, a variety of researchers comment on the nature of curriculum policy. Landau (1977) and Pressman and Wildavsky (1974) argue that curriculum policy contains a high degree of uncertainty with respect to its potential consequences. Elmore and Sykes maintain that curriculum policy has multiple forms of authority. Some researchers, such as Mayhew (1974), Edelman (1967), and Elder and Cobb (1983), consider policy as symbolic action, while others such as Schaffarzick (1979) and Boyd (1979) contend that most policies are combinations of instrumental and symbolic action which pervade many curriculum policy decisions.

Elmore and Sykes (1992, p.188) summarise the research results related to the nature of curriculum policy, in these terms:

Policy includes not just the intentions of policy makers embodied in law and regulation but the stream of actions that follow from those intentions. Policies are not simply authoritative edicts but also uncertain predictions about means and ends that can be subjected to test. Policies are not the sole determinants of official actions; rather, they work in concert with other influences. Policies operate not just as instruments for accomplishing tangible results but also as powerful symbols for mobilising political interests and as ideologies that legitimate authority. These complexities in the meaning of policy run parallel to the complexities in the meaning of curriculum.

Critical theorists would not reject these depictions of curriculum policy. They would emphasise, however, that like all other types of educational policy, curriculum policy is an “exercise of power and control directed towards the attainment or preservation of some preferred arrangement of schools and society” (Prunty, 1984, p.3). Or, more generally, as Pinar et al. explain, the move beyond simple reproduction theory to the view that the cultural sphere is relatively autonomous, should lead critical theorists to move even further and go “beyond resistance to a belief in the possibility of meaningful intervention in the schoolsand that connections between the schools and the larger society must be made” (1995, p.255). Curriculum policy for modern critical theorists, then, focuses not just on structure but also on human agency and the political action it implies.

Given all of these complexities, a broad concept of curriculum policy has been adopted for this study. The concept includes the policy on the structure within which SAE curriculum operates. It includes the policy on the process through which SAE curriculum has been developed. And it includes what policy as action means in terms of the content of SAE curriculum.

DIFFERENT FACTORS DETERMINING CHANGE AND STABILITY IN CURRICULUM POLICY

Because this study focuses on the impact of devolution on curriculum policy, it is appropriate to review briefly the literature on factors determining change and stability in curriculum policy. Clarification of the critical theory stance on change generally can be gained by comparing its position with that of functionalists.

Broad Perspectives on Change

Cohen (1968) identifies a range of differences between the consensus (functionalist) and the conflict models of society. To the consensus model, he attributes the features of “commitment, cohesion, solidarity, consensus, reciprocity, cooperation, integration, stability and persistency”; whereas, the conflict model, which has close links with critical theory, is characterised by “coercion, division, hostility, dissensus, conflict, malintegration and change” (pp.166-7). In general terms, the consensus model assumes that capitalist society is basically sound and therefore requires no fundamental changes, though from time to time minor problems need to be addressed. On the other hand, the conflict model maintains that capitalist society is fundamentally flawed and can not be salvaged by reform from within. Thus, when talking about change, advocates of the consensus model, such as structural functionalists and systems theorists, “essentially seek incremental alterations in existing system (Paulston, 1978, p.14). Advocates of the conflict model, however, (such as Marxists and neo-Marxist theorists, cultural revival and social movement theorists, and anarchistic and utopian theorists), argue that achieving greater social justice and harmony is only possible through radically restructuring capitalist society into a more egalitarian society.

In relation to egalitarianism, Paulston (1978) points out that structural-functionalists “not only accept inequality in society, but see it as a necessary condition to maintain the existing normative order”. In doing so, Paulston cites Davis (1949) and Lenski (1966) who contend that social inequality is “necessary.....inevitable and beneficial” (p.13). Paulston observes that this school of theorists holds the view that:

Substantial educational change will only be possible when preceded by a significant change in the normative structure of a society, when schools are allowed to take on new major functions not directly related to socialisation, or when the public is willing to grant schools greater autonomy and freedom to develop alternative structures and directions.

Functionalists, says Paulson (1978), prefer equilibrium and stability and bringing “educational programs into more harmonious relations with socio-economic developments at the national level” (p.14). As such, the task of educational reform or change is nothing more than “to facilitate investment in personal development” (p.15) and to “prepare skilled manpower, innovators, entrepreneurs, and the like for social-economic modernisation” (p.14), or to use Simmons’(1974) words, “to increase the ability of education to equalise competition for economic resources”. Paulston (1978, p.17; also see Miller, 1967; Hoos, 1968; Kochman, 1969; Martorana, 1974; McLaughlin, 1974 & 1975) says that, to structural-functional theorists and their ‘school-mates’,

The problem of educational change is essentially one of rationalising existing education systems through the introduction of innovations that respond both to new social needs and to the need for greater efficiency in on-going functions.

Therefore, says Paulston (1978), structural-functionalists make no effort to eliminate “structured inequality, social-class hierarchies and class conflicts” (p.15) and pay little attention to the role that “power must play in structural-change efforts” (p.24). Furthermore, when social problems arise, structural-functionalists often blame the ‘victim’ of society rather than the ‘system’ of the society; they see “inequalities, inefficiency, and ‘dysfunctionality’ in schools as largely the result of bureaucratic or teacher ‘mindlessness’, or of parental ignorance, but rarely as a consequence of social-class self-interest leading to structured inequality” (p.24). Thus, if an educational change or reform fails, it is not so much because the design of the change

itself is problematic but because there is something wrong with those implementing it.

Critical theorists oppose structural functionalists on these matters. They regard social inequality as unnecessary, unfair and unproductive. They blame the 'system' rather than the 'victim' for social problems. Their conception of the role of educational reform in helping solve these problems focuses on structural change, not simply personal development. This means a type of cultural revisitation that involves "deliberate organised conscious efforts by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture" (Wallace, 1956) and "attempts to innovate not merely discrete elements, but largely new cultural systems specifying new social norms and behaviours", within which educational change might be possible (Goodenough, 1963, cited in Paulston, 1978, p.30). Or, as Horton (1973, p.340) explains,

The only way to effect radical changes in the educational system is for educators to make alliances.....with community people, students, various ethnic groups, union members.....Goals, curriculum, and policy.....will be changed to the degree that more and more people begin participating in decision making and become agents of fundamental change in the educational system and society at large.

Along similar lines, Curle (1973, p.10) argues that educational change "should be toward increasing the awareness levels of youth and adults in existing schools" to form a "counter-system" to fight back against "greed and aggression" and "power and exploitation networks that dominate human relationships".

Unlike Bowles and Gintis' reproduction theory of the 1970s, structural and cultural change for critical theorists does not mean the absence of a concept of agency; it does not mean there is "little hope for significant change, aside from attention to the economic base, i.e. socialism" (Pinar, 1995, p.252), though that is the general direction change needs to take. In other words, while critical theorists regard human agency to be powerful, they also see "education-reform efforts in nonsocialist countries that are not accompanied by efforts to change the social relations of production" as just one more use of public institutions to enable the few to maintain a self-serving cultural hegemony" (Paulston, 1978, p.27).

McNeil (1990, p.518) identifies three powerful drivers of curriculum policy as shaping what is taught in American public schools, namely:

increasing power of testing and of standardised models of accountability to determine curriculum; the pressure for 'cultural literacy'; and the school restructuring movement, which can have the effect of subordinating the curriculum to organisational factors in the school.

Devolution in Western Australia is seen to be closely related to two of these forces, namely, the desire to ensure accountability in a devolved system and the school restructuring movement.

Particular Factors Affecting Change

Cuban (1992), arguing, from a pluralist political, and an organisational perspective, maintains that curriculum "change may or may not be progress" and "the journey from design to practice is far more a zigzag than a straight line" (p.217). He divides curriculum into "intended", "taught" and "learned" (p.222) and addresses in detail a range of external and internal factors and actors that affect change and stability in the intended and taught curriculum in the USA (pp224-38). The determinants of change in the intended and taught curriculum include: (a) external factors like the progressive movement, cold war and national defence, legislative and legal decisions; influential groups such as publishers, foundations, professional associations; and influential individuals; and (b) internal factors such as students, teachers, principals, curriculum specialists and superintendents. The determinants of stability in the intended and taught curriculum include: external factors such as the goals and functions of schooling, accrediting and testing agencies, and textbooks; and internal factors such as students, teachers, principals, and the school and classroom structure.

According to Fullan (1982, p.30), there are components or dimensions at stake in implementing any new program or policy, namely: "(1) the possible use of new or revised materials (direct instructional resources such as curriculum materials or technologies), (2) the possible use of new teaching approaches (i.e., new teaching strategies or activities), and (3) the possible alteration of beliefs (e.g., pedagogical assumptions and theories underlying particular new policies or programs)".

MacKenzie (1964) maintains that the focal points for curriculum change are: “(1) teachers, (2) students, (3) subject matter, (4) methods, (5) materials and facilities, and (6) time” (p.402). He lists a wide range of participants in curriculum change. Internal participants include “students, teachers, principals, supervisors, superintendents, boards of education, citizens in local communities, state legislatures, state departments of education, and state and federal courts”. External participants include “non-educationists, foundations, academicians, business and industry, educationists, and the federal government” (pp.409-15). He sees the sources of power and methods used by participants as advocacy and communication, prestige, competence, money or goods, legal authority, policy, precedent and custom, and cooperation or collaboration (pp.417-9). According to him, curriculum change initiated by internal or external participants includes the following phases: criticism; proposal of changes; development and clarification of proposals for action; evaluation, review, and reformulation of proposals; and comparison of proposals. Those initiated by internal participants, however, only include: action on proposals and implementation of an action decision (see pp.420-3).

Smith and Lovot (1995), identify factors which impede change generally, such as “lack of interest, lack of resources, no leadership, lack of support, lack of time and conservatism” (p. 213). They then add some additional factors which hinder changes in schools, namely: “the captive nature of staff, the lack of coherence between people and units, the abstract ambiguity in the nature of education, and the lack of autonomy” (pp.213-7). According to them, changes in schools will be facilitated by factors like, previous history of change, the divisibility of a change plan into achievable sequential parts or phases, explicit and shared perceptions of the problem, clearly identified and shared reasons for the change, a sense of ownership of and commitment to change from participants, and multiple channels of communication. (1995, pp.217-21)

Chadbourne (1989) argues that two major factors account for different responses to educational change: “self-interest and ideology” (p.55). People will respond positively if the change serves their interests or is considered in agreement with their ideology. Therefore, to make change happen, it is necessary to: convince all

participants “that their interests will be well served by the change”; reduce resistance by persuading all participants that “self-interest is not a legitimate basis for opposing change in the field of education; and ensure that all participants “accept the ideology underlying the change” (p.57).

Ritchie (1986) offers an alternative set of factors to account for resistance to change, namely: “fear of losing control, misunderstanding, lack of skill, different criteria for what needs to be done, lack of motivation, ‘If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it’, future shock, personal vendetta, ‘bean theory’, new social relations, lack of resources, bureaucratic hassle and lack of rewards” (pp. 97-8). To successfully manage curriculum change, he points to the need for agreement on the “ethics of curriculum change, a culture of innovation, zero-based curriculum review and curriculum committees” (p.101).

McNamee and McNamee (1996) in their case study of school-level implementation of Australian national curriculum also document factors that hinder the implementation process. These factors include: lack of in-service for teachers, ambiguity of outcomes, failure to see the need for change, external imposition of change, lack of professional support, lack of time, and a negative view that change will intensify staff workloads.

Some of these accounts of the particular factors affecting change are conceived by their authors, in isolation from the broad societal context within which the change occurs. Critical theorists would not deny the influence of these factors. They would argue, however, that their impact needs to be seen within the framework of the larger issues outlined in the discussion of consensus and conflict model perspectives on change.

CRITICAL THEORISTS’ CRITICISMS OF CURRICULUM IN A NON-DEVOLVED SYSTEM

In the critical theory literature, schools are said to perform three main roles or functions: serving as an instrument of social control, reinforcing the structural bases of social inequality, and meeting the needs of industry.

Function of Schools

Social Control: Hlebowitsh (1993) documents the critical theorists' claim that schools in advanced capitalist societies serve as an instrument of cultural consensus, encourage adjustment rather than resistance (p.60), reproduce social-class structures (p.38), act as an instrument for social predestination and focus on vocational training (p.54). For critical theorists, he says, schools serve as an "instrument of social control" (p.4), an instrument of "oppression" (p.34), and "a mechanism for the calculated management and control of society, as 'an economic system of police' (p.55)". This occurs because rationalisations of the school curriculum are "historically born out of the ideological act of social control" (p.47) and are "rooted in the soil of social control and cultural consensus" (p.2). Schools perform this function of social control and cultural consensus by: structurally reinforcing the power of dominant groups to exercise "economic and cultural hegemony over marginalised ones" (p.42); legitimising capitalist rationality and sustaining cultural reproduction (p.43); and technocratically "restricting school experiences" (p.35).

Social inequality: According to Hlebowitsh (1993, p.38), critical theorists also see schooling as "always acting to sustain the structural bases of inequality in society". Clark and Davies (1981) give some of the reasons why schooling functions to reinforce social inequality. One reason, they suggest, is that "comprehensive schooling closes off opportunities for the working class per se" (p.75). The other reason is that,

Teachers unquestioningly help to reproduce the status quo or develop a sympathetic awareness of the needs of the pupils and educate them to the source of their oppression. (Clark & Davies, 1981, p.78)

Needs of Industry: Clark and Davies (1981, p.98) also argue that schooling serves the interests of industry because it is "still a power for grading and disciplining future labor power". Hlebowitsh (1993) documents similar claims by other critical theorists who maintain that the "preoccupation with efficiency has depoliticized the curriculum in ways that tacitly promote established political and economic interests" (p.17); that "school and curriculum were used as instruments for social predestination focusing on vocational training" (p.54); and that,

The main functions of the schools are the reproduction of the dominant ideology, its forms of knowledge and the distribution of skills needed to reproduce the social division of labor. (p.43)

Functions of the Curriculum

In performing these three functions, schools rely heavily on the curriculum which, say critical theorists, is strictly controlled, carefully selected, and ideologically biased in advanced capitalist societies.

Social control: According to Clark and Davies (1981, p. 101), experts develop curriculum without adequately consulting classroom teachers, students, or working class parents. These two writers also observe that “financial measures are increasingly being used to control and restrict the development of new courses” (p.99). Apple (1981, p.152) argues that teachers’ professional jobs have become more ‘deskilled’ and ‘proletarianised’, a process which has sidelined them from curriculum development. According to Hlebowitsh (1993, p.34), many critical theorists have viewed “the commitment to principles of curriculum development as inviting the exercise of technocratic rationality in the conduct of the school and as further entrenching normative values for the purpose of social control”. This claim is consistent with the work of Schroyer (1970), Tar (1977) and Marcuse (1964).

Social inequality: Clark and Davies (1981, p.73) suggest that “traditional schooling leads to a highly selective and inequitable system of curriculum tracking”. Whitty (1981, p.60) contends that the ideology underlying the common core curriculum excludes class and cultural conflicts and thereby contributes to a “self-legitimizing system of cultural and social reproduction”.

Apple (1981, p.134) also claims that “the knowledge that was taught and our methods and actions helped the structural basis of inequality”. Likewise, other critical theorists regard curriculum as being,

more attuned to the function of social efficiency than to the mission of democracy, which allowed for the exercise of corporate prerogatives in the life of the school, leading to a culture of differentiation that is inequitable and unjust. (Hlebowitsh, 1993, p.61)

Furthermore, argue critical theorists, the curriculum is biased in favour of middle-class values and against minority youth. Not only the form but also the content of school curriculum, is dominated by the “logic and modes of control of capital” (Apple, 1981, p.150) and “middle-class values” which “disempowers minority youth” (Hlebowitsh, 1993, p.41).

Economic interests: According to Huebner (1975, p.223-4), current curriculum ideology reflects a technical value system with a means-ends rationality akin to an economic model. Likewise, for Whitty (1981, p.53) decisions on curriculum content are based on job analysis models, “which itemise specific activities of adult living and the activities become the objectives in the curriculum”. Apple (1981, p.149) argues that “the logic and ideology of capital enter school and its curriculum in some powerful ways and have profound impact on day-to-day school practice”. Curriculum is “aligned with behaviorism” (Hlebowitsh, p.1993, p.34); or as Hlebowitsh (1993, p.17) points out, critical theorists tend to see curriculum as bound up with mastery learning, management by objectives, and other competency-based approaches supporting a technocratic rationality. Consistent with these claims is Apple’s (1975, p.125) observation that curriculum “has patterned itself on behavioural psychology which is interested in certainty and technical control”.

CRITICAL THEORISTS’ VIEWS OF CURRICULUM UNDER DEVOLUTION

As outlined above, critical theorists regard the curriculum as a major instrument for enabling schools to function as an agent of social control, social injustice, and the interests of industry. The impact of devolution will intensify these functions, according to critical theorists. They say this because they consider devolution to be underpinned by the New Right ideology of economic rationalism, human capital theory and corporate managerialism. Accordingly, they argue that in a devolved education system, the curriculum will perform the same functions as exist in non-devolved systems, except that the functions will be exacerbated. That is, say critical theorists, the curriculum can be expected to ‘get worse rather than better’ with the introduction of devolution.

Reinforcing Social Control

Critical theorists argue that the social control function of curriculum would be intensified under devolution. Their reasoning centres on a number of assertions. First, that devolution is employed as “a conservative managerial device” (Smyth, 1993, p.5) for business and government to shift “economic and fiscal crises” to the local school context (Watkins, 1993, p.139), and for the state to abdicate responsibility for providing an “equitable quality education for all” (Smyth, 1993, p.8) and “tighten centralist policies over curriculum, evaluation and standards” (Smyth, 1993, p.3). Second, that devolution is characterised by a “clear separation between policy and implementation, and in their precise allocation of specific roles to particular individuals and groups” (Angus, 1993, p.24; also see Rizvi, 1986). Third, that under devolution, central control of education would be tightened through “national curricula and frameworks; national and state-wide testing; national standards and competencies; teacher appraisal and curriculum audit” (Smyth, 1993, p.4). Fourth, that with respect to curriculum decision making, the central offices at both state and federal levels will arbitrarily maintain the authority for setting goals, targets, instruments of surveillance and financial budgets. As a result, “the work of the local educator would be restricted largely to the methodological, or specialist understandings of a particular area of the curriculum” (Ryan, 1993, p.210). Fifth, that devolution excludes teachers, students, parents and workers from the curriculum policy making process (Kell, 1993, p.225) and denies any real possibility for substantial inputs from these stakeholders (Ryan, 1993, p.191). And even in situations where stakeholders at the grassroots do have a chance to participate in policy making, their role is expected to be played “according to approved formats within an overall government policy and framework” (Quicke, 1988, p.18).

According to Ball (1993, p.70), devolution reduces teachers’ professional autonomy and increases the managerial discretion of managers, politicians and the business community. Watkins (1993) reinforces this and other points by saying that,

Similar to the relationships in the business world, in schools there would be an element of dependence on the central power for political, financial and legal help; there would be domination, with schools being closely monitored and assessed with regard to both ‘standards’ and teacher and

student 'performance'; and there would be a degree of competitive isolation as the sense of solidarity held by teachers is gradually broken down by an enforced competitive individualism as not only schools but also teachers are forced to compete with each other in the so-called 'marketplace'. (p.137)

Ryan (1993) emphasises the point that devolution involves not only decentralisation but also recentralisation. This means that democratic discussion of viewpoints and concerns at the local level becomes "limited by and large to questions determining how best to implement more tightly defined curricular frameworks in a variety of different socio-cultural contexts" (p.197).

Ryan (1993) also makes the point that devolution represents an intention by state education departments to transmit new, instrumental cultural objectives as cheaply as possible. As a result, he suggests, education departments become "increasingly prescriptive with respect to the most important elements of curricular policy and much more inquisitorial in their evaluation of key educational outcomes" (p.197). He anticipates that the implementation of policy will be streamlined, denied any considerations of custom, politics and ethics, and made mainly a matter of technical expertise (p.197). Therefore, in order to survive, "principals, program coordinators and individual teachers would increasingly be subjected to the tyranny of 'the test'" (p.198)

Similarly, on reflection, Robertson (1993, p.130) insists that during the late 1980s, when devolution was introduced in WA, "the pressure to assess dominated the routine, and undermined any opportunity to foster longer-term problem-solving and process skills". Speaking from a New Zealand perspective, Codd (1989b, p.168) supports Robertson's observation by concluding that the specification of objectives, performance reviews and other management techniques encourages teachers to act in ways that are "antithetical to certain fundamental educational values such as intellectual independence and imagination."

Enhancing Social Inequality

Walford (1993, p.242) argues that, instead of making an education system more democratic and fair, devolution is destined "to put an end to egalitarianism and to rebuild a differentiated educational system which will more closely aid social

reproduction". He sees this intention as being masked partially by the rhetoric of 'choice and self-management'. Similarly, Angus (1993, p.29) claims that devolution tends to "exacerbate social inequality by de facto fostering racial, ethnic and social class differences, and favouring higher income families." Or, in Smyth's (1993, p.8) words, those who have the financial and cultural capital will be able "to flee by buying a better education, and the rest remain trapped in some kind of educational ghetto". That is, devolution creates a situation "where children are schooled in ways deemed 'appropriate' to their social class and ethnic group" (Walford, 1993, p.240).

The inequalities between schools created by 'choice' and 'self-managing school' policies raise the question of whose interests education will serve, who will benefit and who will lose. Hartley (1993, p.112) suggests that under the policy of 'choice', "the academic standards of some children will be enhanced, but the overall academic standard of all our children is set to fall".

Anderson and Dixon (1993) argue, with respect to educational resources, that,

micro-level (site-based) empowerment within a large policy context of social disempowerment will contribute to an increasingly unequal distribution of educational resources', and that the so-called 'fair' distribution of resources fails to take into account current unequal needs among schools. (1993, p.59).

Likewise, Demaine (1993, p.45) predicts that a 'free market' increases the range of schools closely related to the socio-economic status of their pupil intake, with 'sink' schools at one end of the spectrum and expensive well resourced ones at the other. Similarly, Walford (1993, p.229) suggests that,

the reorientation of the school system is better understood in terms of the government's desire to increase competition between schools and to create a hierarchy of unequally funded schools which will help perpetuate class, gender and ethnic divisions.

Ryan (1993, p.200) contends that under devolution, a conservative efficiency perspective is likely to dominate within 'well managed' schools and produce a situation where there would be growing divisions within the student body, because,

differences in measured achievement would be seen as necessitating the introduction of selective devices like streaming, an interpretation that would be given added strength by the importance assigned to the early

spotting and fostering of talent in the name of the 'national economic interest'.

This view is supported by Walford who says that devolution will produce student divisions, "closely linked to social class and ethnicity, and discriminate in particular against the working-class children and children of Afro-Caribbean descent" (1993, p.242).

Ryan (1993, p.199) also predicts that devolution will lead to a situation where schools and teachers increasingly categorise students on the basis of test results on the ground that these results constitute an objective measure of the essential qualities of the 'learners' involved.'" Thus, there would be "an increased stratification of real education inputs along class-cultural lines at all subsequent year levels as the cumulative effects of early selection are allowed substantially free expression". Ryan concludes that this increased polarisation of basic student experiences would create a less socially just and less culturally harmonious new educational order (p.200). This would happen, he explains, because,

Once it is accepted that, within 'the one best system', persistent failure is the consequence either of fundamental, irreducible characteristics of the learner or of poor teacher performance, then the basis for a new divisiveness at the local levels is established. Thus teachers would become increasingly alienated from underachieving students, thereby preventing precisely the kinds of interaction between professional and client that are necessary if a commitment to social justice is to have a determining impact upon mainstream education practice. In the name of this equity, extra barriers would be raised between the life of the school and the cultural identities and social aspirations of many communities. (Ryan, 1993, p.200)

Serving Narrow Economic Interests

Ryan (1993, p.193) argues that under devolution, informed by a systemic and corporate culture, the mainstream curriculum is redesigned to "serve narrowly defined economic ends". This narrow economic version of the general interest increasingly directs all major areas of educational policy. Two consequences follow. General educational goals that are not economically relevant are abandoned. And autonomy over substantial curricular programs that address distinctive socio-cultural needs of particular communities or groups is lost. (p.192)

Furthermore says Ryan, in the name of the dominant group's definition of relevance, children increasingly are being offered "only one viable form of future social participation, one that is based upon competitive careerism". He expects that competition will become the major currency of classroom relationships and eventually "terminate any residual elements of a common cultural life within the classroom" (1993, p.200; p.191). Once it is accepted that economic concerns are the prime business of schooling,

parents will increasingly be locked into a preoccupation with the exchange value of their children's schooling - rather than seeing themselves in any sense as collaborators with local professionals in the pursuit of distinctive community needs and interests. (Ryan, 1993, p.192)

Ryan (1993) further warns: that under the dominance of economic relevance, school councillors typically will limit their focus to "market-determined forms of calculation and enterprise" (p.199); that parental inputs will amount predominantly to little less than pressing schools and teachers to raise student achievement in the 'key competencies' (p.192); and that the pursuit of long term socio-cultural solutions to educational problems "will be ruled out by consumer demands for immediate improvements" (p.199). Education systems that introduce devolution, says Ryan, should expect that,

Basic curricular decision-making would be restricted to a clearly defined operational framework, one in which those with a developed understanding of the various forms of knowledge and generalised laws of childhood development would be sovereign - and in which there would be a clearly established pecking order of subjects based on perceived economic utility. (1993, p.201-2)

Similarly, Ball (1993) notices that "the financial discourse is the dominant discourse of school, not education" (p.76). According to Angus (1993, p.18), "this has resulted in a situation in which school level decision making has been dominated by financial considerations".

Likewise, Robertson's study of devolution in WA found that "links with industry were significantly shaping the curriculum of schools" and "market niches tied to future employment were being exploited by the schools" (1993, p.130). She also

found that under devolution, the status of less economically relevant subjects dropped. In her words,

The new regime of power also exacerbated status differentials between subject areas, with some areas increasingly marginalised and viewed as less legitimate because of the nature of the knowledge taught (such as Industrial Arts). The outcome was, according to the teachers involved, less favour and financial support. (Robertson, 1993, p.129)

Codd (1993) argues that devolution paves the way for “the instrumentalist values of economic rationalism” to be imported into education (p.159). He maintains that, the influence of market liberalism leads educational administrators “to surrender their traditional commitment to social justice in order to pursue the goals of competition and increased individual choice” (p.157). As a result, says Codd,

we are more likely to have schools in which the needs of society and the economy are given priority over the development of rational autonomy and independent thought. Under these conditions, political forces are better able to ensure the school remains an instrument for social control committed to the dominant social and political values and the perpetuation of the existing economic order. In these circumstances, schooling loses its capacity for democratic social renewal and the promotion of social justice. (Codd, 1993, p.168)

SUMMARY OF KEY ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING CRITICAL THEORY

Critical theory covers a broad area, encompassing the realms of social philosophy, theory and practice, and several schools of thought. Rather than confined to one specific version of critical theory, the construction of the conceptual framework for this study is based upon the principles generally held by most critical theorists. As such, it comprises the following assumptions:

- that interests are the basic elements of social life which involves inducement, coercion and division, and generates opposition, exclusion, and hostility, and structural sectional conflict;
- that certain groups in any society are privileged over others and, although the reasons for this privileging may vary widely, the oppression that characterises contemporary societies is effectively reproduced when subordinates accept their social status as natural, necessary, or inevitable;
- that society is a contested struggle of power between groups with conflicting aims and perspectives;
- that social systems tend to change, a process in which people are the active creators of themselves and society through practical and autonomous social action to eliminate domination and to pursue emancipation;

- that policy analysis should locate unique and changing events within a broad historical, economic and political context in quest for understanding;
- that a critical policy analyst should not only evaluate the status quo, to expose the sources of domination, repression, and exploitation, but also be committed to bringing about change - raising the consciousness of the oppressed, and getting rid of the constraints imposed upon them;
- that positivist ideology and technical rationality support a system of domination that is firmly rooted in the social and economic infrastructure of modern capitalist societies;
- that critical policy analysis is not value-free; its ultimate goal is social justice. It is manifestly political, with a priori commitment to take sides with the oppressed and those whose interests are contravened by external sources of domination and masked by internal misperceptions;
- that curriculum and curriculum policy function as an agent of reproducing and intensifying social inequality, reinforcing social control, and serving narrowly defined economic interests; and
- that educational and curriculum policy making is multi-layered and critical policy analysis should explore the linkages between the various levels of the policy process with an emphasis on highlighting power relations.

MAJOR FEATURES OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

The model of corporate management constitutes a fundamental part of the conceptual framework for this study. As mentioned earlier, critical theorists consider devolution to be underpinned by corporate management. Thus, if the basis of the structure, process and content on which SAE is developed fits the corporate management model, then a case can be made to argue that changes to SAE curriculum policy in WA since 1987 are closely linked to devolution.

Definition of Corporate Management

Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, a large amount of literature has focused on new organisational forms intended to ensure the survival of an organisation and promote its competitiveness in the world economy. Many writers, such as Handy (1978, 1985), Peters and Waterman (1982), Deal and Kennedy (1982), Clutterbuck (1984), Toffler (1985), Hayes and Watts (1986), and Naisbit and Aburdene (1986), use different terms to describe these new forms; for example, 'the dispersed organisation', the 'membership organisation', the 'multi-purpose organisation', the

'cellular organisation', the 'atomised organisation' and the 'constellation'. However, the generic term used is 'corporate management'. According to Beare (1988, p.251), the term 'corporate management' implies that these new organisational forms,

are complicated entities, bodies corporate with many limbs. They survive because they can be simultaneously tightly controlled yet free-wheeling, locally autonomous but centrally cohesive, using the benefits of big size but operating like small businesses.

Beringer et al. (1986, p.17) define corporate management in the Australian context as,

a set of processes: to determine an organisation's overall aims and objectives, recognising its opportunities and the constraints placed upon it; to devise strategies to meet those aims and objectives; to develop evaluation techniques to ensure ongoing satisfactory program and project planning and implementation; to communicate these activities both within the organisation and with other bodies.

Beringer et al. further claim that corporate management is based on the assumption that an organisation's performance should be measured in terms of its output, and that it is concerned with "optimising outputs and improving performance" (1986, p.19).

Critical theorists would acknowledge the validity of these definitions but regard them as ignoring important political and economic dimensions. For example, according to Yeatman (1993, p.3), "corporate managerialism refers to a radical reshaping of the culture and administrative structures of the public sector", the essence of which,

has been to reorient the business of the public sector so that it no longer services a welfare state, but instead, services a state which defines its primary objective as one of fostering a competitive economy.

Corporate management for Dudley and Vidovich (1995, p.7) represents,

a model of government and policy making in which capital (business and industry) and labor (the union movement) are incorporated into the formal decision making process of government.

Dudley and Vidovich (1995, p.6) contend that,

Managerialism is the reification in the practices of administration of the rationality of 'the market'. The traditional values of civic virtue and public service and the substantive expertise of the professional have little space in this model of public administration - the discourse of efficiency

and the joint sovereignty of the economy and the market legitimate managerialist forms of organisation and practices.

According to Dudley and Vidovich (1995, p.6), by adopting economic rationality and practices of corporate management, “the public sector has been reformed into a provider of services to consumers rather than citizens, in a manner compatible to the private sector”. Consistent with this claim, they cite Stephen Ball’s (1990, p.156) definition of corporate management, namely, that,

the management advocated by corporate models of administration and policy making is a discourse of power and control, where those who are managed are disempowered. Students are effectively commodified as products, whilst educators are reconstructed as process workers, and society is redefined as the economy (cited in Dudley and Vidovich, 1995, p.48)

Goals of Corporate Management

Besides the intention of maintaining power and control, as observed by Ball (1990), many other critical writers have offered views on why the corporate management model was embraced in the 1980s. Like Ball, Dudley and Vidovich(1995) argue that desire for power and control played an influential role, in the sense that,

Pluralist models of policy making and policy implementation appear to have been regarded as too slow and inefficient, and also too unpredictable. The potential for experts in the field (such as professional educators) to challenge and resist the government’s preferred changes would have attracted ministers and senior bureaucrats - particularly those in the central agency departments of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Treasury and Finance - to more efficient and controllable processes and policy making and implementation. (Dudley and Vidovich, 1995, pp.43-4)

Dudley and Vidovich (1995, p.2) also argue that “the goal of establishing corporate management practices in the public service sector” was influenced by “the pursuit of economic rationalist goals”.

In similar vein, Yeatman (1990, p.1) makes the point that in Australia, during the 1980s, “the rise to dominance of corporate managerialism in the administration of government is Labor’s response to New Right calls for small government and privatisation” (cited in Dudley and Vidovich, 1995, p.6).

Further support for these views comes from Macpherson (1991) who, in examining nine sites of systemic educational restructuring, identified three major themes: economic concern for efficiency in systemic and school administration; concern with the educational effectiveness of management; and concern with political effectiveness of system and school management (pp.53-5).

Major Features of Corporate management

Quite a few writers have attempted to summarise the features of corporate management in broad terms. For example, Beare (1988, pp.251-2; also Beare et al, 1989, pp.77-8, 1989), writing from a non-critical theory perspective, provides the following list of characteristics of an 'ideal type' or pure form of corporate management identified by writers like Handy (1978, 1985), Peters and Waterman (1982), Deal and Kennedy (1982), Clutterbuck (1984), Toffler (1985), Hayes and Watts (1986), and Naisbait and Aburdene (1986):

- Work becomes more professionalised. Only trained manpower can cope. So time and money are pumped into the health and education of the company's members.
- Management is by consent or else by contract. Managers are less and less 'order givers' and more and more facilitators.
- 'Money is paid for work done rather than for time spent'. Wages tend to be replaced by a 'fee for service'. There is shift from hired labor to contract labor.
- Technologies are harnessed to replace people-work as much as possible. In consequence, middle management shrinks in size.
- Work hours become flexible. Work locations can vary too.
- People operate in small, self-determined units rather than in huge organisations. There is a 'diversified menu of work styles'.
- To compete, the large organisations have to adopt the values of small business.
- 'Organisation villages' replace the megalopolis. In fact, 'quality of life' considerations affect the business infrastructure.
- The communications revolution removes the 'paper warfare' of large organisations, and change the internal dynamics of the firm.
- Machines are not seen as 'equipment' so much as tools to extend the range of the people in the firm.
- The members of the organisation are not owned, as though they are things to be bought, sold, or discarded. Rather the members are stakeholders with an investment (both literally and metaphorically) in the firm.

- The 'economics of quality' influence the firm's behaviour. Naisbitt uses the phrase, 'Quality first, cost second'.
- The large organisation becomes a 'confederation of entrepreneurs'. The word 'entrepreneurs' is now used to describe the inventive people encouraged to operate inside large organisations.
- Networks replace hierarchies. The organisation has a flat structure in which people tend to operate like equals.
- Performance is rewarded. There is increasing competition for the best operators. Intuition and nous are highly prized qualities.

Likewise, Macpherson (1991, p.56) summarises six characteristics of "effective" corporate management as follows:

First, strategic decisions have to be made in a deliberate and systematic manner. Secondly, there has to be provision for effective participation. Thirdly, planning and other management decisions for any part of the organisation have to affect all other parts. Fourthly, the performance of the organisation has to be measured and assessed in terms of its output. Fifthly, monitoring and evaluation techniques are needed to provide accurate feedback. Sixthly, and finally, the corporation requires a series of managed processes that are continuous and repetitive: defining objectives, developing priorities and strategy, providing budgets and resources for programmes, implementing plans, monitoring progress, accounting for the use of resources and achievements against objectives, redefining objectives, and so on.

From a more critical perspective, even if implicit, Bessant in summarising the work of Cullen (1986; 1987), Beringer et al (1986) and Considine (1988) argues that, in practice, corporate management has the following five features:

1. The creation of a senior administrative elite who can plan the overall corporate objectives and monitor progress at all levels.
2. In line with its origins in the private sector, there is an emphasis on quantifiable objectives and performance indicators which allow precise allocation of responsibility for achievements and shortcomings, and that also facilitate the auditing process. 'Outputs' rather than 'inputs' are the main concern. They are often given a 'cost-value' and placed within a real or imagined market with the result that there are attempts to establish a price per 'product' and to recover the costs of production by charging participants who are then defined as 'consumers'.
3. Closely linked with the above is the necessity for all managerial staff to have clear role specification within a framework that allows a delegation of lesser responsibility down the line within the managerial group.
4. As in private industry corporate management assumes that managerial expertise is transferable to any area. Selection of managers emphasises general management and policy performance rather than

experience within a particular area, e.g. experience in education would not be seen as a primary requirement for managerial responsibility in the Ministry. The assumption is that a quick staff development program could give the good manager all the expertise needed to tackle any area.

5. Corporate management makes a clear distinction in the managerial roles of the manager and non-managers. Non-managers have no place in management other than to understand their role in the overall management strategy which is achieved by effective communication methods exercised by management. Essentially the non-manager's role is to function in conformity to management guidelines and objectives, or to put it more simply, 'to do what they are told'. (Bessant, 1989, pp.1-2)

The Corporate Management Model of Policy and Decision Making

Some other writers have tried to paint a more specific picture of how a corporate management model operates in educational settings. Dudley and Vidovich (1995, p.6) argue that changes in management models of administration (e.g. from a pluralist management model to a corporate management model) have also brought about a "dramatic shift in the practices of educational policy making from committees of inquiry to the 'efficiency' of small group decision making".

Basically, the corporate management model of policy making in education operates in such a way that all major policy related decisions are made at the top by a small group of people; middle managers and people at the grassroots are left with the task of implementing those policies. As Dudley and Vidovich (1995, p.7; also see Emy and Hughes 1991, pp.555-9) observe, "this classic corporatist tripartite partnership of government, business and industry (capital), and the union movement (labor) effectively marginalises all other groups". Or, in Pusey's (1988, p.16) words, "all the central agencies have to do is keep you permanently on the back foot and keep forcing changes on you".

One of the main features of corporate management model of decision making is the empowerment of Ministers for Education and their increasing intervention in education. Dudley and Vidovich (1995, p.7) claim that the corporate management model of policy making sees "education principally as a political rather than a professional matter". Therefore educational policies are "formulated within the

minister's department by departmental officers, whilst control of the education policy agenda remains with the minister".

Similarly, Macpherson (1991, p.59) refers to "diverse forms of ministerial intervention" in the politicisation of educational administrative services. For example, his study found that,

Most of the systemic reforms were driven by a highly committed minister early in a parliamentary term.....Generally, expert public administrators implement the decisions of their minister's CMG⁴; key educational policy issues are being settled at Cabinet or supra-state level. While power over pedagogy remains almost entirely in the hands of Australian teachers, curriculum powers have been redistributed recently in favour of an oligarchy, the AEC. In the emergent national (federal) structures of policy making, ministers can determine educational policies as they will, in camera. Their loyal chief executives, agency managers and functional directors can plan implementation, deploy resources and mobilise commitment, without any real opportunity for public gaze or comment. (Macpherson, 1991, p.59)

Macpherson (1991, p.59) calls this a "new 'secret garden' of policy making" and argues further that "ministers and their executives have a similarly insulated pathway to implementation" because the "line-linked CMGs in each of the states can guarantee policy fidelity to an extent never seen before in Australia". In the same vein, Bessant (1989, p.5) says that with corporate management, "an effective Minister would have a direct route to the schools".

Another major feature of corporate management policy making hinges on establishing a "lean middle management" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982) which serves as "a device to enable local managers to remove impediments to head office goals" (Bessant, 1989, p.3). For example, Macpherson (1991, p.57) argues that under corporate management, "executives were deployed across portfolio and state boundaries on a project basis". They "were selected by ministers to manage lean agencies in order to implement policies determined by a minister's CMG". Their most important job is to ensure "not the quality of the policy but its fidelity during implementation". Among them, the lines of control are significantly simplified, with less and less responsibility down the line. They take advice "from commissioned

⁴ CMG stands for corporate management group.

experts, not from semi-autonomous statutory authorities or representative policy advisory bodies". According to Macpherson, at the cluster or district level, the job of school principals and superintendents is to "consider district provision, and together handle rationalisation and organise support services" (1991, p.57).

While executives are only order-takers, says Bessant (1989), school councils and regional boards "have no direct concern with policy matters and have no place in a corporate management structure other than political window dressing". The reason why they are not abolished or altered is "political, that is, maintaining the facade of devolution and offering some say to the 'stakeholders'." (p.4).

With the recentralisation of power for policy making, professionals are excluded largely from the policy making process. Before the corporate management model of policy making came into dominance, a pluralist model was employed where,

professional educators, parents, teachers (rarely students) and increasingly, formerly excluded groups such as women, Australians of non-English speaking background and Aboriginal people were acknowledged as having a legitimate role to play in policy making. Business and industry, and union representatives (if a Labor government was in power) were legitimate participants but their status was not necessarily higher than that of other interest groups. (Dudley and Vidovich, 1995, p.7)

In contrast, the corporate management model of policy making limits the 'legitimate participants' in policy making to "the 'key players' of government, business and industry, and the trade union movement" (Dudley and Vidovich, 1995, p.7). The corporate management model "does not provide for worker participation in decision making, and in this case teachers are clearly seen as the 'workers' (Bessant, 1989, p.3)". Instead of having a say in the policy making process,

Teachers will be told what to teach by 'experts' who may never have had teaching experience but are strong in 'management' and who will be aware that for corporate management practices to succeed, objectives laid down must be precisely quantifiable. Teachers will be provided with specific resources to teach new courses of study (optimistically) and assessment of their performance will be quantified. Teachers can be confronted with tests and appraisals of their classroom performance, their adherence to curriculum guidelines, their administrative capacity, their interaction with parents, etc., measured against fixed criteria or norms decided by management. It would quite consistent with this approach to link teachers' salaries with the results of these tests, as well as the test performance of their students. (Bessant, 1989, p.3)

In addition, says Macpherson, “students tend to be subordinated to the increasingly concerted action of professionals organised into teaching-subject or year-level CMGs”. Student choice is very much limited as “there are fewer than ever examples of negotiable curricula”. Moreover, “organisational units within schools also tend to be coordinated by the school CMGs programme-budgeting process”. (1991, p.57)

Dudley and Vidovich (1995, pp.44-5) offer a view of why corporate management model of policy making has been adopted and why professionals have been excluded from the policy making process. They argue that;

Economic rationalism redefines education principally as an element of the micro-economy, so that education reform becomes simply one aspect of the micro-economic reform. Thus the substantive knowledge and professional expertise which prioritised the educational in education policy making are no longer considered legitimate. The relevant expertise and priorities are economic. Yeatman (1990, p.102) and Marginson (1993, p.xii) refer respectively to economic rationalism as ‘metapolicy’ or the ‘master discourse’, within which all policy is framed. It is the form of rationality within which education policy is formulated, and its assumptions determine the principles, priorities and orientations of education policy. Accordingly, a politically and ideologically pluralist model of educational reform and policy making can no longer be accepted as valid. First, the autonomy and independence of the process is considered to be neither sufficiently responsive to, nor controllable by, government. Second, because education is an element of the economy, those with economic expertise are most appropriate to determine policy - the role of educators is simply to implement policy directives. In addition, public choice arguments view the education profession as constituting a vested interest whose policy recommendations are unlikely to serve the best interests of society - by which is meant the market economy. As a result, it is assumed that pluralist processes of educational policy making will produce distortions in the economy. The appropriate response to these distorting policy processes therefore, is to ensure the control of education policy by those with either economic or management expertise.

Separation of Policy and Operation

From a ‘pro’ corporate management stance, Beare et al (1989, p.79) suggest that this kind of structure explains why decentralisation and recentralisation are now happening simultaneously in educational organisations. To them, recentralisation “lays down strong control from the centre for some parts of the enterprise’s

operations”, and decentralisation “encourages local autonomy, devolving an increasing number of functions to local units like the school and regional office”.

From a critical stance, Bessant (1989, p.3) warns that while separating the functions of curriculum policy making and curriculum implementation may be appropriate to the operation of a school system, “at the chalk face level it will lead to innumerable practical problems and frustrations for the staff of the schools”. Furthermore, says Bessant (1989, p.3), the “separation of policy and operational roles also means that bureaucratic mechanisms will take over when moral, philosophical, political problems arise”.

Control of Organisations under Corporate Management

From a consensus model perspective, Beare et al. (1989, p.79) argue that organisations under corporate management model are “usually controlled in two ways”. First, corporate management “builds a culture which pervades all the organisation’s functions”. Secondly, “it tends to exercise control through resource management, by such devices as programme budgets, productivity audits and resource agreements whereby finance and goods are given against a planned audit of usage and outcomes”.

Beare et al. (1989, pp.80-3) also observe that corporate management has brought about the shift from a divisional structure to a functional structure in Head Office; more specifically, a shift from a structure of pre-primary, primary, secondary, technical and teacher education divisions to a structure of curriculum, personnel, resources, finance and policy functions. This “weakens the control which any one branch or division can have over a particular school or category of schools” and “gives a great deal more responsibility to schools and their local managers” (p.82).

Critical theorists would point out that Beare et al.’s analysis runs counter to one of the intentions of corporate management - tightening power control. They would point out that while the power of divisions or branches may be weakened, schools are given much more responsibility under corporate management, but with the same amount of power as before, if not less. What they would infer here is that this structural shift takes away the power from the middle managers and gives it to the

top managers while pushing down more responsibility to schools; that is, a three tier power structure becomes flattened into two, thereby giving the minister and his executives “the direct route to the schools” (Bessant, 1989, p.5)

Consequences of Adopting a Corporate Management Model

According to Macpherson (1991, p.58), in Australia and New Zealand, “corporate management has been adopted, but only to a varying degree across the systems”. Nevertheless, he says, there have already been some undesirable consequences. For instance,

Schools have been receiving administrative policy guidelines and local governance and self-management powers on corporate managerialist assumptions, and not, as perhaps once more commonly supposed, to enhance schools as the cradles of democracy, civic responsibility and humanitarianism. Instead of educative guidelines which might suggest a particular combination or balance of plural values for pedagogy, curriculum and leadership in education, computerised administrative systems and standardised management, processes yield school development plans expressed as annual programme budgets. These programme budgets allocate costs to activity without suggesting, discussing or justifying the values involved. The likely values are usually presumed to be provided in systemic curricular policy frameworks. (Macpherson, 1991, p.57)

Yeatman (1993, p.4) claims that corporate management will “turn public servants into economic managers working inside a permanent depression mentality”, and “restructure the organisational culture of public administration in terms of managerial prerogatives”.

Dudley and Vidovich (1995, p.137-8) state that “autonomy for individual institutions and academics, and collegiality were threatened” by corporate management. However, “institutions were scrambling to conform because financial penalties for non-compliance were sufficiently strong”.

A Summary of the Major Features of Corporate Management Model

Based on this review of the literature on corporate management, it is possible to construct a model of corporate management that place key characteristics into four categories: corporate process; corporate structure; corporate culture; and corporate resource management. An outline of these features is presented in Figure 7. As part

of investigating the links between devolution and curriculum changes, this study will be informed by an interest in finding out how far corporate management, as captured in Figure 5, penetrated EDWA between 1987-1996. This applies particularly to Section II, Parts A and B, and Section III, chapter 17.

Figure 5. Major Features of Corporate Management Model

<p>1. Corporate process</p>	<p>a. Corporate planning and policy making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capital (industry and business) and labor (union movement) form small CMG; • small CMG sets directions, goals, outcomes, priority, strategies & MIS, etc.; • small CMG & its executives work out policy guidelines & frameworks, etc.; • policies are made at Cabinet or supra-state level, controlled by Minister. <p>b. There is a clear separation of policy and operation roles: Those who are to implement policy (e.g. professionals) are excluded from policy making process.</p> <p>c. Modular functions are franchised out by consent or contract.</p> <p>d. Bureaucratic mechanisms take over whenever moral, philosophical or political problems arise.</p>
<p>2. Corporate structure</p>	<p>a. Centrally cohesive but locally autonomous.</p> <p>b. Two-tier flat structure.</p> <p>c. Lean or no middle management.</p> <p>d. Less and less responsibility down the managerial line.</p> <p>e. Non-managers do what they are told.</p> <p>f. Functional structure replaces divisional structure.</p> <p>g. Increased ministerial intervention & direct control of schools.</p> <p>h. Organisational control through corporate culture building & resource management.</p>
<p>3. Corporate culture</p>	<p>a. Underpinned by economic rationalism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students treated as products, teachers as process workers, and society as economy; • emphasises economic/material development more than cultural/social development. <p>b. Prefers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • competition over collaboration; • consumerism & materialism over social justice, self-development, democracy & humanitarianism; • education for work over education for life; • employment related competencies over intellectual development, etc.; • science, technology & computer over humanities & arts; • privatisation over state ownership of education; • deregulation & free enterprise over tight control of local

	<p>operation.</p> <p>c. Output/outcome oriented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasis on output/outcome, not input; • emphasis on optimising outputs & improving performance; • emphasis on quantifiable objectives & performance indicators; • reward for performance & outcomes, based on criteria assessment. <p>d. Pursues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotion of economic competitiveness; • increasing efficiency; • reducing cost per product; • controllability of process. <p>e. Demands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • corporate loyalty & identity; • fidelity of policy implementation. <p>f. Values general management experiences more than professional expertise.</p>
<p>4. Corporate resources management</p>	<p>a. Fee for service replaces wages/salary.</p> <p>b. User-pays.</p> <p>c. Programme budget & productivity audits.</p> <p>d. Resource allocation based on planned audit of usage & outcomes.</p> <p>e. Prefers vertical cuts over horizontal cuts to solve budget problems.</p> <p>f. Corporate sponsorship.</p>

NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Across Australia, the curriculum policy most closely linked to devolution is the national curriculum. In WA, the most recent curriculum policy development, called Student Outcome Statements, represents a local state version of the national curriculum. As will be explained later, critical theorists regard national curriculum as being closely linked with corporate management which, in turn, they see to be closely linked to devolution. Contrary to the rhetoric - about 'self determining schools', 'local school management', and 'site-based management' - critical theorists consider devolution involves not only decentralisation but also recentralisation. For them, national curriculum embodies recentralisation.

It is appropriate, then, to review the literature on national curriculum. Such a review provides further details on the context for this study and an increased indication of what critical theory comprises. Put differently, although national curriculum may not

form part of the conceptual framework for this study, it does illuminate and set in contextual perspective, aspects of that framework.

Over the past decade in Australia, the national curriculum has been the subject of ongoing debate. Within this debate, critical theorists have tended to belong to the side that holds reservations about national curriculum rather than the side that supports it. To conclude this chapter, then, the literature on support for the national curriculum will be reviewed, followed by a review of the literature on the reservations.

Supporters of National Curriculum

Beazley (1992), the then Commonwealth Minister for Employment, Education and Training, argues that the approach to a nationally common and agreed curriculum will, ...

enable teachers to assess the levels of achievement of their students within a common framework, using a wide range of strategies for which the teacher will be directly responsible. At the same time it will enable teachers to report the achievement of their students in terms of a nationally agreed set of attainment levels. (p.26)

Beazley also promises that a collaborative national curriculum approach and a sharing of resources among all states will enable Australia to,

deliver high quality curriculum, at low cost, to the three million students in schools across the country - without any need to compromise the role of States and Territories as education providers. (p.27)

Kennedy (1993) suggests that the Australian national curriculum statements could be useful under the following conditions:

If they are not set in concrete and can be regularly updated.

If teachers are brought closer to the action so that they can influence the statements and be influenced by them.

If it is recognised that curriculum areas such as the Arts may need to be treated differently to cater for their unique needs as a curriculum domain.

If they are able to act as a form of curriculum support for teachers who have responsibility for school based curriculum development. (p.48)

He concludes that if the statements can meet these requirements, they “have the potential to contribute to the professional lives of teachers” (p.48; also see Kimber,

1995, pp.72-4). Moreover, Kennedy (1995; also see 1989, pp.72-9) suggests that the national curriculum can give teachers an opportunity “for using innovative approaches to assessment” and “have the potential to improve understanding of student achievement at different levels of schooling” (p.59). Therefore, it has “a great deal of appeal” (1992, p.37).

Eltis (1993) insists that “a country the size of Australia desperately needs to pool its expertise and resources and arrive at a more consolidated, yet flexible, set of curriculum offerings in its schools”, because,

such a move would be in the interests of those responsible for curriculum delivery and would greatly assist students and their parents, many of whom now find themselves compelled to move across State and Territory borders. (p.49)

Brewer (1992), after documenting the major events in the Australian national curriculum development process, concludes that the “apparent advantages” of a national collaborative curriculum activity are that it:

avoids some duplication of effort and resources by curriculum personnel in the various systems;

de-mystifies the curriculum and curriculum expectation for employers, parents and the general community;

assists local and national level monitoring and assessment of student performance;

provides enough comparability in the delivery of the curriculum for students to move freely from one system to another without disadvantages;

uses high levels of consultancy and involvement with a wide variety of non-education interest groups;

identifies areas of achievable change in the curriculum for future development;

has demonstrated the capacity to maximise the best subject talents in the nation;

identifies priority areas of the curriculum that are in urgent need of resource development to meet the specific needs of teachers. (pp.57-8)

Boston (1994, p.43) believes that “a national agreed approach to schooling is essential to the future of this country”; and that it will “improve the standard of education”.

Hannan, Chair of CURASS, and Wilson, executive officer of CURASS

(1992, p.2; also see Hannan, 1992, pp.28-31) cite some “pragmatic” and “qualitative” reasons for a national curriculum. The pragmatic reasons are;

that unnecessary differences in curriculum and assessment between states disadvantage mobile students, of whom there is a considerable number, and that the pooling of resources involved in collaborative development is more economical than separate development in each state. (p.2)

They argue that these pragmatic reasons lead to qualitative reasons, which are:

first that a combined effort should improve the quality of the framework documents used throughout Australia, and second that Australian schooling as a whole deserves a national curriculum that is forward-looking, Australian and rigorous: a curriculum that is capable of raising the present gutter level of educational debate. (p.2)

Mitchell (1993, p.60), from a teacher’s point of view, contends that a national curriculum would achieve the “aim of giving common goals of curriculum directions to all schools throughout Australia”. It would remove “the great diversity of educational philosophies and directions between different schools and different States”. It would also remove the “problems encountered by students moving between schools”. In addition, Mitchell argues that a national curriculum would encourage students in many ways to “become increasingly self-reliant”, which is “in line with the Finn Report that encourages schools to focus more on preparing students for work”.

Morris (1992, pp.42-5), writing from a parent’s perspective, argues that “a collective vision of what our young people need to equip them to be active participants in a democratic society”, and “the equality of all our children and the right of all to a fair go in education”, as well as the quality of public education, could be served well by,

the establishment of a ‘curriculum guarantee’ in the form of broad curriculum frameworks for all children. There is no convincing reason why such framework should not national, rather than State-specific (in fact, the argument for national statements are compelling both on the grounds already mentioned and for more pragmatic reasons such as avoiding unnecessary duplication and gaining economies of scale). (pp.42-3)

Hill (1994; also Masters, 1994, pp.48-52; Collins, 1994, pp.45-8) wants the national profiles to function effectively “as an assessment and standards monitoring framework” and to be “established empirically” (p.38). He sees the national profiles

as providing “a highly cost-effective means of obtaining comparable information on standards” and providing for schools with a tool to respond to the challenges of monitoring standards and evaluation programs (p.41; also see Jacob & Cockshutt, 1995, pp.61-3; Rout, 1995, p.65). Hill goes on to say that,

Thus, within the classroom there can be monitoring of performance levels of individuals to ensure that they are making progress and that their level of performance is within the expected standard for their year or age cohort. At the school level, through the compilation over a number of years of profile results, it is possible for schools to obtain evidence regarding overall standards and trends over time in performance levels...Finally, it is possible for systems to make use of national profiles in monitoring standards. (pp.40-1)

Similarly, McLean and Wilson (1995) claim that the strengths of a national curriculum include the assurance of “comprehensive curriculum provision, the benefit of a shared language for planning courses and for describing and reporting student achievement, and the usefulness of the outcomes for making expected student achievement explicit” (p.57).

Stehn and Smith (1995, p.67) maintain that one of the real benefits of the national profiles is “the ability of the social justice learnings of the last decade to inform the statements and profiles development and implementation processes”. In their view,

The nationally developed materials make explicit what is valued in curriculum. Their content is more inclusive than many previous curriculum documents. The documents define the expectations of teaching and learning in all schools and for all students in the States regardless of gender, socio-economic status or cultural or linguistic backgrounds. (p.67)

Williamson and Cowley (1995) indicate that “the national statement and curriculum profiles provide the framework within which the innovation can proceed”. They also suggest that if teachers adopt the national statements and curriculum profiles, teachers will be able to “make the necessary changes at their own pace and adapt any curricula and pedagogy to their own situation” (p.71).

Randall and Kerr (1995) claim that the Student Outcome Statements, a WA version of the national curriculum, can be used to enable teachers to “monitor the achievements of students” and “improve teaching and learning” (p.74).

In addition to the above reasons offered by advocates of national curriculum, White (1981, p.255) adds another. In his view, curriculum decisions should be made centrally, because “teachers have no professional expertise which justifies them to make such decisions”.

Reservations About the National Curriculum

Opponents of a national curriculum hold different views. Cumming (1992) summarises the ongoing debate by saying that “the thrust of developing common and agreed approaches to curriculum is seen by some to be at odds with current moves towards devolution and the self-managing school”. He goes on to warn that “there can be tensions for many practitioners who are endeavouring to respond to a myriad of demands at local, regional, State as well as national levels” (p.8). Critics of national curriculum can be placed into three groups which correspond to the three functions of curriculum which critical theorists claim will become more intensified under devolution, namely, the schools’ role in serving industry, exercising social control, and reproducing social inequality.

One group of critics of the national curriculum see it as being intended to serve the interests of the business and industry sector. Ryan (1993, p.195, also Porter, Rizvi, Knight and Lingard 1992; Marginson, 1993; Dudley and Vidovich, 1995; Scott, 1995) maintains that the significance ascribed to the school’s human capital role has given “a momentum and focus to current moves towards a national curriculum”. He regards the national curriculum as “little less than the instrument of economic policy” (p.195). In his view,

While some rhetorical deference is still paid to the need for a liberal education, this is usually defended in terms of the increased vocational significance of general cognitive skills in a rapidly changing economy. There is no real attempt within official statements to elaborate upon the need for a liberal education in terms of its contribution to the making of an independently minded citizenry or to a genuine social pluralism. (Ryan, 1993, p.195)

In the same vein, Howden (1993, p.29; also see Hughes, 1992, p.21-34; Bartlett, 1992, p.219; piper, 1992, pp.20-3) suggests that the movements towards centralised curricula and national assessment “are part of the broad agenda of Western

democratic governments to make education more responsive to the needs of society, especially in the economic sense”, or, in other words, “to meet the needs of industry”. Similarly, Hill (1995, p.32) argues that the national curriculum is meant to “conscript the nation’s schools into his [the Commonwealth minister] plans for economic restructuring”. Also, Skilbeck (1992, p.12) notices that,

competencies and skills increasingly are presented in terms of general, generic qualities: a broad, general education with competencies developed through a wide and varied array of learning activities is far more in evidence in national curriculum statements, including those directed at preparation for working life, than is a narrow vocationalism.

Moreover, Ryan (1993, p.207) says that “within the ‘one best system’ no scope can be allowed for the expression of cultural differences and their behavioural manifestations”. He further observes that,

within the dominant ideology, since the national interest is viewed essentially in asocial, narrowly economic terms, what is being promoted under the banner of a national curriculum is a narrowly focused emphasis on the core skills and knowledge of the ‘economically relevant’ disciplines, notably the languages, mathematics, sciences and technologies. (1993, p.195)

A second group of critics of the Australian national curriculum movement argue that a national curriculum is being used as a tool for central authorities to tighten education control. For example, Foggo and Martin (1992, p.39), from a teacher unionist perspective, observe that teachers see the agenda of national curriculum as being “top-down”, and because of the “speed of change and the scope of the agenda and notwithstanding the attempts made at consultation, teachers feel excluded from decisions related to their profession”. Likewise, McTaggart (1992; also McCollow & Graham, 1997, pp.60-75; Reid, 1997) feels “alarmed” because “the nationalisation of the Australian curriculum places us in the grip of approaches to accountability” (p.72). He concludes that;

Educators at all levels face containment by descriptors of ‘performance’ which are imposed by people who know little about education working within an ideological economism with little to recommend and much to condemn about it. These descriptors are also reductionist and simplistic - designed to allow judgment by those who do not understand and do not want to understand how complex and how morally demanding educational work actually is. (p.78)

Stringer (1992, p.63; also 1991, p.12), while listing the purposes for the national curriculum movement in the UK, argues that one of the purposes of national curriculum has “to do with controlling schools and teachers”. Macpherson (1990, p.216) supports this view and predicts that “the governance of curriculum will more and more become a matter of national and ministerial determination” and that “oligarchic political practices will result in a greater standardisation of the quality, scope, detail and prescriptiveness of curriculum”. In Watkins’ (1992, p.47) words,

It does not take much imagination to envisage the central body (the planning department) on the one hand, as that being responsible for the formulation of the national curriculum, or on the other hand, the decentralised operational units being the schools where teachers work to the conceptual scheme laid out centrally for them. For teachers in the schools the central determination of curriculum will mark a decisive loss of control over their work practice.

Watkins (1992, p.48) further argues that with the implementation of a national curriculum,

the hours of work that people on the Curriculum Committees have spent in conceptualising curriculum statements and policies which are context specific to a particular schools’ needs ultimate will be wasted. Similarly, the skills of the members of the committees in debating, negotiating and bargaining over the content, means of appraisal and implementation of specific school based curriculum will be lost for the time being.

Skilbeck (1992) also claims that it is safe to generalise that central authority has extended and that,

the provision, organisation and, to a degree, control over schools, and overall direction of the curriculum by governments and their agencies are a defining feature of public education policy. (p.9)

A third group of critics of national curriculum focus their attention on social inequality, which they see to be intensified by introducing a national curriculum. For instance, according to Reid (1995), although proponents of national curriculum such as Boomer (1990) argue that a common curriculum will give students equal access to the same valued knowledge and will be inclusive of the values, cultures and experiences of all students, social justice has taken “a back-seat to more pragmatic rationales” (Reid, 1995, p.79). The result is what Kennedy (1995) calls “a very

traditional and very conservative curriculum". Reid (1995, p.79) summarises the social justice issues raised by critics of a national curriculum by saying that;

They point to the development processes which deliberately excluded the possibility of a socially critical orientation to the knowledge in some curriculum areas (Hoepper, 1993); to the reviews which provide examples of how some groups of students have been written out of various State-based adaptations to the statements and profiles (DECS, 1995; Willis, 1995); and to the project's liberal-progressive curriculum stance which does nothing to invite students to challenge an unjust social status quo (Reid, 1995).

In the same vein, Apple (1993), with regard to calls for higher standards and more rigorous curriculum at a national level, insists that the question of 'who benefits and who loses as a result of this' must be asked. He argues that because the national curriculum agenda is set by rightist groups,

the same pattern of benefits that has characterised nearly all areas of social policy - in which the top 20% of the population reap 80% of the benefits - will be reproduced here. (p.3)

Apple further criticises national curriculum reform as being "reform on the cheap". In his view;

A system of national curriculum and national testing cannot help but ratify and exacerbate gender, race, and class differences in the absence of sufficient resources both human and material. (1993, p.9)

CLOSING COMMENT

This chapter has focused on the conceptual framework, or perhaps more aptly the ideological framework, used during the study for collecting and analysing data relevant to the central research question. This framework consists of a critical theory perspective on devolution, policy, curriculum change, corporate management and the national curriculum. Fundamental to the critical theory perspective is the claim that under devolution three main functions of curriculum in advanced capitalist societies become intensified, namely, acting as an agent of social control, reproducing social inequality; and serving narrowly defined economic interests. A major mechanism for linking devolution with curriculum change, according to critical theorists, is corporate managerialism. The major objective of this study, then, is to examine whether changes to the structure of SAE, the process by which SAE has been

developed and the content of SAE support or refute the claims made by critical theorists about the impact of devolution on curriculum.

3

METHODOLOGY

QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

This study is based on a qualitative rather than quantitative model of disciplined inquiry. Patton (1991) points out that qualitative research, including ethnomethodology, symbolic interactionism, hermeneutic inquiry, grounded theory, naturalist inquiry, and ethnography, belongs to phenomenological paradigm that attempts to understand the meaning that events have for persons being studied. Writers such as Merleau-Ponty (1962), Polanyi (1962, 1967), Polanyi and Prosh (1975), and Valle and King (1978) have contributed substantially to the development of the phenomenological position as a counter to the positivist research paradigm.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) also argue that “qualitative research is based on a phenomenological position, while quantitative research is based on a positivist position” (p.3). According to them, from these two different positions, researchers construct different answers to questions about the nature of reality, the relationship between the knower and the known, the role of value in understanding, the causal links between bits of information, the possibility of generalisation, and the purpose of research (pp.3-4). Answers to these questions are based on competing sets of postulates that make claims about how research should be conducted. That is, the different postulates adopted by positivists and phenomenologists shape the different ways they approach problems, the methods they employ to collect and analyse data, and the different types of problems they choose to investigate.

As Maykut and Morehouse (1994, pp.11-3) explain, positivists see knowledge as being able to be “separated into parts and examined individually” and the researcher

as being separable from what is to be known. Whereas, phenomenologists see knowledge as being “constructed” and the knower as not being able to be totally separable from what is known.





Qualitative researchers regard reality as being “multiple and constructed”, and the meaning of events as multidirectional, rather than believing in one-way causal links and a unidirectional meaning of events, as perceived by positivists. As such, phenomenologists look for patterns emerging from the data they collect while positivists form hypotheses and then collect data to test them. ✓

Positivists claim that research can be value-free because the knower can stand independently from what is to be known. Phenomenologists, on the other hand, regard values as embedded in their research; that is, the research topic, the research methods and the researchers themselves all have certain value orientations.

While qualitative researchers regard events as being “mutually shaped” and “multidirectional relationships” as being discoverable within situations, quantitative researchers focus their attention on causality between events. Moreover, qualitative researchers pay considerable attention to the complexity of an event and its context, while quantitative researchers try “to eliminate all of the unique aspects of the environment in order to apply the results to the largest possible number of subjects and experiments” (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994, p.13).

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) table the philosophical differences between quantitative and qualitative research as outlined in Figure 6. Other writers (e.g. Spindler, 1982; Smith & Glass, 1987; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992) include the following characteristics as typifying qualitative research method: ‘naturalness’ of the data, contextualised observation, emergent design, human-as-instrument, researcher self-criticism, exploratory and descriptive focus, purposive sample, early and on-going inductive data analysis, making tacit knowledge explicit, disturbing the setting as little as possible, and eliciting informants’ sociocultural knowledge.

Figure 6. Postulates of the Research Paradigms
(Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.12)

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Postulates of the positive approach (the dominant paradigm)</i>	<i>Postulates of the phenomenological approach (an alternative paradigm)</i>
1. How does the world work?	Reality is one. By carefully dividing and studying its parts, the whole can be understood.	There are multiple realities. These realities are socio-psychological constructions forming an interconnected whole. These realities can only be understood as such.
2. What is the relationship between the knower and the known?	The knower can stand outside what is to be known. True objectivity is possible.	The knower and the known are interdependent.
3. What role do values play in understanding the world?	Values can be suspended in order to understand.	Values mediate and shape what is understood.
4. Are causal links possible?	One event comes before another and can be said to cause that event.	Events shape each other. Multidirectional relationships can be discovered.
5. What is the possibility of generalisation?	Explanations from one time and place can be generalised to other times and places.	Only tentative explanations for one time and place are possible.
6. What does research contribute to knowledge?	Generally, the positivist seeks verification or proof of propositions.	Generally, the phenomenologist seeks to discover or uncover propositions.
		
	These postulates undergird different approaches to inquiry.	
		
	Quantitative research approach	Qualitative research approach

As Maykut and Morehouse (1994, p.17) stress, the emphasis of qualitative research is on “understanding through looking closely at people’s words, actions and records” (p.17) and “in a narrative or descriptive way more closely representing the situation as experienced by the participants” (p.2). Such an emphasis makes the qualitative paradigm appropriate for this study which aims to construct participants’ understandings of the links between devolution and SAE curriculum changes in Western Australia since 1987. However, rather than a ‘pure’ phenomenological approach, the qualitative methodology employed for this study is informed by critical theory, resulting in a critical qualitative research methodology.

CRITICAL QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) explain that, whereas in traditional ethnography the authority for research decisions lies with the researcher, in recent years “increased sensitivity to issues of power and control has encouraged.....looking carefully for ways in which historical and cultural context shapes the researcher’s perceptions” (p.10). Or, as Maher and Tetreault (1988) point out, postmodern ethnographers try to uncover and untangle “hidden relations of power and domination with relationship to knowledge” (p.27). In part, Glesne and Peshkin (1992) take this to mean that, “Rather than write research reports, qualitative researchers translate social experiences and construct narratives” (p.11).

Quantz (1992) makes a similar point by drawing attention to one type of phenomenology, critical ethnography, which takes place when,

a researcher utilising field methods that place the researcher on-site attempts to re-present the “culture”, the “consciousness”, or the “lived experiences” of people living in asymmetrical power relations. As a “project”, critical ethnography is recognised as having conscious political intentions that are oriented toward emancipatory and democratic goals. (pp.448-9)

Quantz argues that for researchers to engage in critical ethnography, they “should participate in a larger ‘critical’ dialogue rather than follow any particular set of methods or research techniques” (p.449). For him, critical ethnography refuses to “bifurcate theory from method” (p.449). According to critical ethnographers, says

Quantz, data collected will not “become meaningful to the researcher” until the researcher “brings a theoretical focus to it” (p.459). He further claims that ethnography strengthens critical theory and “ethnography can be deepened” by critical theory” (p.461).

Likewise, Gouldner (1968) rejects “romanticism” in ethnographic research which lays more emphasis on displaying the exotic life of “an exotic specimen” being studied. What he wants is to “tear down the bars” that restrict the freedom and empowerment of this specimen (p.106). Held (1980, p.89) also insists that a critical researcher should “engender self-knowledge” so as to “liberate people from the oppressiveness of their social arrangements” (particularly asymmetrical material relations), a process referred to as ‘praxis’. To critical theorists, praxis involves effective social change. This requires a researcher to “approach the concrete practice with the ideological constructions overtly identified and utilised for analysis” (Quantz, 1992, p.465).

In relation to education, Carspecken and Apple (1992) argue that critical qualitative research should avoid simply seeing “schools as existing in a social context that sets limits on what education can and cannot accomplish” because,

These limits are structured around the class, gender, and race dynamics and conflicts that organise society. In the process, critical investigators will interpret schools as institutions that are under considerable pressure to perform vital “functions” for the larger political economy. (p.510)

For critical theorists, a qualitative researcher needs to see schools, as well as people in schools, as “agents of change” because they are not simply “carriers of external sets of dominations”. They can create social forces. Moreover, agency in this sense should not be regarded as existing “in general” since “people are not abstractions”. They are “embedded as classed, raced, and gendered subjects themselves, acting within differential relations of power” (Carspecken and Apple 1992, p.510).

This task serves as a framework for critical qualitative research; that is, a critical qualitative researcher is oriented by “concerns about inequality and the relationship of human activity, culture, and social and political structure” (Carspecken and Apple, 1992 p.511).

DATA COLLECTION: SOURCES OF DATA

Two sources of data were used for this study: interviews and documents. Interview material forms the basis for the findings reported in Section Two, Part A and B. Documentary material was used mainly for arriving at the findings reported in Section Two, Part C.

Interviews

In selecting people to interview, this study adopted a purposive sampling approach. Within the limits of resources available, it used the maximum variation sampling strategy of trying to include people of “greatest differences” in “contexts and settings” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990; Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). It also employed a “snowball sampling” strategy. This occurred partly because analysis of initial interview material suggested “who and where to go next” by providing “clues as to what was important” and what was missing in the data already collected in order to understand the links between devolution and curriculum changes in Western Australia. It also occurred because many participants in this study often referred the researcher to someone else whenever they were not sure of some points they made. Thus, “one research participant led to another” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.57). In a word, the inclusion of participants in this study took place on an on-going basis. Thus, sampling became emergent and sequential.

Many writers (e.g. Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Guba, 1978) agree that sample size should be determined by the process of deciding when “saturation point” is reached in gathering information (Maykut & Morehouse 1994, p.62). However, writers vary in their view on the number of participants needed for saturation point to be reached. For example, Lincoln and Guba (1985) estimate that saturation point might be reached with “as few as twelve participants and probably no more than twenty”. Douglas (1985) claims that “in-depth interviews with twenty-five people were necessary before he reached the saturation point” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.63). Given that the researcher of this study had a strict timeline and limited funding, twenty-six people were interviewed in total. They comprise:

- eight education officers who were working or had worked in EDWA;

- seven heads of Social Studies departments in schools;
- seven classroom teachers;
- two officers from professional associations; and
- two academics.

These participants were selected according to their expertise, experience and position, and by referral as part of the snowball sampling strategy. Many of them had held various positions before, such as, education officer, principal, head of department and classroom teacher.

More specifically, of the 26 interviewees, ten were female and sixteen were male and between them they ranged in age from the mid 30s to the mid 50s. Apart from the two academics, virtually all the interviewees had been classroom teachers in Western Australian government schools prior to the implementation of devolution in 1987. Thus, those holding managerial positions had come up through a career ladder established within the state education system. While all interviewees held positions in the Perth metropolitan area during the time of their participation in the study, over half of them had taught in country schools during the 1970s and 80s.

The duration of the interviews was between one and two hours, amounting to a total of about forty hours. Each interview was tape-recorded and transcribed. Interviews were conducted on-site - in schools, Central Office, or wherever participants wanted to be. Most of the interview took place in 1996.

Informed by the “orienting theory” identified by Carspecken and Apple, a set of questions were formulated to investigate the links between devolution and curriculum change in Western Australia since 1987. For example, the following questions were designed for the interviews. Who exercised most influence in the decision-making process? Were these changes contested? Why were they contested? Who supported these changes and who opposed them? Who won and who lost? Whose values prevailed and became legitimated and institutionalised? In whose interests is control over curriculum policy now exercised? Who benefits most from the changes? Who loses most from the changes? What capacity or opportunity is there for dissent? What further changes in curriculum policy can be advocated or opposed? (a full set of interview questions is provided in Appendix B).

The interviews, then, could be described as semi-structured. Some broad questions were formulated, along with probes for each question. In practice, however, these broad questions were modified according to each participant's expertise, experience and position. Moreover, although this set of questions was clearly and deliberately influenced by critical theory, in practice the interviews were fairly open-ended. For example, although, in some cases, participants were given the set of questions prior to the interview, it was always stated that they did not have to stick to the list of questions, and could talk about the central research question in whichever way they felt comfortable, which happened in some cases. An effort, then, was made to understand "the informants' perspectives on their lives, experiences or situations as expressed in their own words" (Taylor and Bogdon, 1984, cited in Burns, 1994, p.278).

The interviews were emergent in design. Roughly four rounds of interviews were conducted. After each round, important leads that emerged from what the interviewees said were identified for follow up in subsequent interviews.

Documents

Various kinds of documents were used as a source of data for this study. The main ones were the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus and its associated Teachers Guide (for Years 8-10); the Unit Curriculum Syllabus and its teacher support materials; the national curriculum (the National Statement and Profiles) and its WA version - Student Outcome Statements (mainly the 1994 Working Edition as well as the draft Curriculum Framework released by the Western Australian Curriculum Council in 1997). This group of documents formed the basis for comparing SAE curriculum content changes in Western Australia since 1987, as reported in Section Two, Part C.

Another group of documents included: EDWA publications (e.g., the 'Squiggle documents', and other policy documents related to devolution and curriculum changes); SSTUWA policy documents; and SSAWA policy documents⁵. These documents were mainly used in Part A and B.

⁵ EDWA refers to Education Department of Western Australia; SSTUWA refers to State School Teachers Union of Western Australia; and SSAWA refers to Social Studies Association of Western Australia.

A third group included school level documents, such as” written material on programs, policies concerned with implementing devolution; and curriculum change related policies. Together with the second group of documents, this material was used to help identify what changes were intended and what changes actual occurred in SAE.

DATA ANALYSIS

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) regard the process of qualitative data analysis as “fundamentally a nonmathematical analytical procedure that involves examining the meaning of people’s words and actions” (p.121). They recommend that “data analysis is best conducted as an early and on-going research activity” to produce findings “inductively derived from this data” (p.123).

Maykut and Morehouse (1994, p.122) also document three approaches to analysing qualitative data identified by Strauss and Corbin (1990). In the first approach, the researcher presents the data “without any analysis”. In the second approach, the researcher reconstructs the data “into a ‘recognisable reality’ for the people who have participated in the study”. This approach requires the researcher to select, interpret and organise collected data into “a rich and believable descriptive narrative”. Belenky (1992) calls this the “interpretive-descriptive” approach. The third approach focuses on the development of theory. It requires,

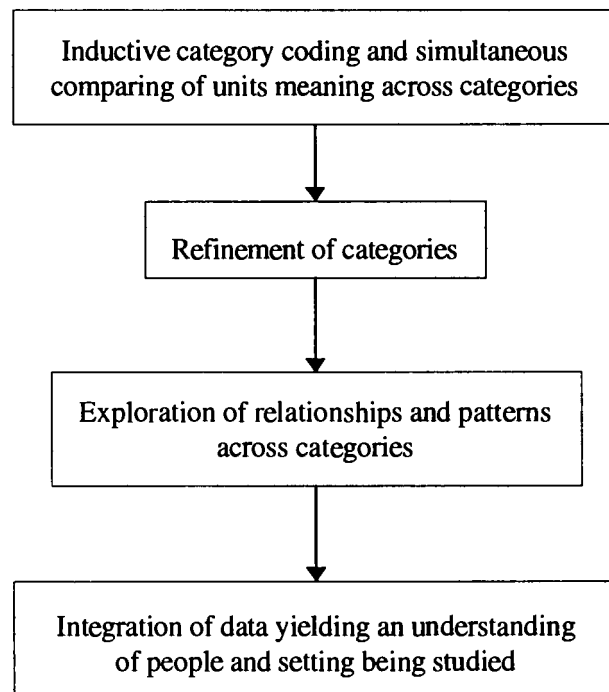
the highest level of interpretation and abstraction from the data in order to arrive at the organising concepts and tenets of a theory to explain the phenomenon of interest. (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.122)

In addition Maykut and Morehouse (1994) suggest an “inductive approach to data analysis”, in which, the “data are not grouped according to predetermined categories. Rather, what becomes important to analyse emerges from the data itself, out of process of inductive reasoning” (pp.126-7).

Basically, the data analysis for this study followed an early, emergent, on-going and inductive approach. In particular, it adopted the constant comparative method, outlined in Figure 10 by Maykut and Morehouse (1994) and based on the work of Glasser and Strauss (1967). The bulk of the analysis fits the second approach identified by Strauss and Corbin (1990), as outlined above.

Data analysis for Section Two, Part A and B in this study was emergent. Initially, each of the interview transcripts to be used for Part A and B was divided into “chunks of meaning” (Marshall, 1981). Then based on a “look/feel-alike criterion” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.137), similar units or chunks of meaning were

Figure 7. Constant Comparative Method of Data Analysis
(Maykut and Morehouse, 1994, p.135)



clustered together under refined categories or “propositional statements” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.134). Then the researcher focused his attention on exploring the relationships and patterns between all those unconnected propositional statements, and came up with some “outcome propositions” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.144). For example, in the categorised data, one propositional statement was called “teachers’ perceptions of devolution”, another was called “teachers’ attitudes towards Unit Curriculum” and still another was called “teachers attitude towards Student Outcome Statements”. After carefully examining data clustered under these three propositions, the researcher found they were closely linked in that, generally, when teachers had a negative view of devolution, they were resistant to Unit Curriculum or sceptical of Student Outcome Statements.

However, at this first level of analysis, the researcher attempted only to identify the patterns and themes that emerged from the data; that is, the similarities and differences in what participants said. No attempt was made to squeeze all categorised data into a predetermined conceptual framework. As such, a lot of Part A and B tells the story from the participants' viewpoint; that is, the researcher constructed a narrative that captured participants' experiences, reflections and observations. At this stage, the data analysis and 'thick description' was grounded in participants' accounts of what happened with respect to devolution and curriculum changes. An attempt was made here to let participants speak for themselves, and to minimise the imposition of an ideological framework. However, even at this stage, concepts and themes associated with critical theory came through, such as interests, power, conflicts, contestation, and negotiation.

A second level of analysis was applied in Part C of Section Two and in Section Three. In these parts of the thesis, a critical theory conceptual framework provided a structure for processing and analysing the data more directly and explicitly. Apart from addressing the central research question underpinning this study, this second level of analysis provides an indication of the capacity of critical theory to explain the impact of devolution on curriculum policy making, or to "arrive at the organising concepts and tenets" to explain the links between devolution and curriculum changes (Hancock, 1989; Levinson, 1978).

TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE FINDINGS: VALIDATION

Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe several process to increase the trustworthiness of research findings. Of these processes, Maykut and Morehouse (1994) emphasise four: multiple methods of data collection; building an audit trail; working with a research team; and member checks (pp.146-7). In this study, the combination of interviews and relevant documents provide multiple sources of data.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) suggest that the validity of qualitative research findings "ultimately rests on whether the participants or people who know them will see a recognisable reality" (p.176). As a form of 'member checking', four reviewers were chosen to validate the findings of this study. These reviewers did not take part

in the interviews. However, all of them were participants in the curriculum changes that occurred between 1987-1997. Thus they were in a position to not only act as independent auditors but also to determine whether or not the findings portrayed a “recognisable reality”. The choice of the four reviewers was based on their expertise and specialisation in most of the areas covered in this study. None of them are known to be critical theorists. A brief account of their bio-data is provided below:

Reviewer One: a Social Studies teacher during K-10 and part of Unit Curriculum, an academic during part of Unit Curriculum and the whole of Student Outcome Statements. This person has been in the education profession for thirty years, and has been involved in the deliberations of some of the key curriculum committees.

Reviewer Two: a Social Studies teacher, curriculum writer, and member of curriculum committees over the last fifteen years, with significant involvement in the development of both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements.

Reviewer Three: a Social Studies teacher for over twenty years, closely involved in the development of Student Outcome Statements, and very familiar with both K-10 and Unit Curriculum materials.

Reviewer Four: a past high ranking Central Office administrator who was a powerful figure in the move towards devolution and the implementation of Unit Curriculum, and who has had experience as a school teacher and an academic in WA.

These four reviewers were given four weeks to read and annotate different parts of the findings. Reviewer one audited Part A, reviewer two Part B, reviewer three Part C and reviewer four Chapter Seventeen. Each reviewer was asked to identify: (a) factual inaccuracies; (b) unwarranted assumptions; (c) unfair conclusions or judgements; and (d) missing points. Their comments are recorded as footnotes and referenced by codes R.1, R.2, R.3, and R.4., though factual inaccuracies they identified were corrected in the text of the thesis.

Ideally, it would have been helpful to have more reviewers to validate the findings so that either each reviewer could read and annotate the whole thesis or more than one reviewer could read and annotate the same part of text, in which case a comparison of their comments could be made. In reality, the task was enormous and the reviewers

were busy people. It would have been unfair to impose on them more than was the case and the researcher could not afford to approach more people to comment because of the unavailability of research funds.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research proposal for this study gained clearance from the Ethics Committee of Edith Cowan University. Ethical requirements identified by this Committee have been fully met through the whole process of this study. All participants took part in this study by informed consent (see attached letter in Appendix A). Permission to record the interviews was sought and gained from participants. Measures have been taken to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. All comments quoted from interviews are coded. Unless otherwise indicated by the participants, details within these comments which would identify the source of information have been removed.

NOTES ON THE TEXT

- In reporting the findings of the study, the following conventions have been adopted. 'Student Outcome Statements' constitutes one curriculum (equivalent to, say, Unit Curriculum) and as such is referred to in the singular rather than the plural. Comments cited from interviews are referred by a set of codes: So refers to senior officer in EDWA, Tr to teacher, Hod to head of a Social Studies department in a school, Pa to a representative of a professional association or teachers union, R to a reviewer who audited the validity of the findings; and the numbers after the letters distinguish one participant from another within a particular category. A number of abbreviations, in addition to those already mentioned, are used in this manuscript, namely:

- AEC: The Australian Education Council
- CMGs: Corporate Management Groups
- CURASS: The Curriculum and Assessment Committee
- K-10: The K-10 Social Studies Syllabus
- SEA: The Secondary Education Authority (of Western Australia)
- SOS: Student Outcome Statements
- SSAWA: Social Studies Association of Western Australia
- SSTUWA: The State School Teachers Union of Western Australia

SECTION TWO

FINDINGS

PART A

CHANGES IN CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

Part A outlines changes to structural aspects of SAE curriculum policy, and the reasons for these changes in terms of underlying rationales and intentions, where the push has come from and other contextual factors. This involves an analysis of documents related to the three curriculum syllabuses, namely, the K-10 Syllabus, Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements in Social Studies in Western Australia since 1987. It also involves an analysis of data gathered in the interviews. The K-10 Syllabus is intended to serve as a departure point to identify changes in Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements.

The structural aspects of curriculum policy dealt with in this analysis are divided into external structure and internal structure. The external structure refers to policy that applies to all high school subjects like assessment, time allocation and the division between core and elective courses within the curriculum. Within a broader context, it also refers to the status of a specific curriculum. The internal structure refers to policy on the subject specific frameworks of the three Social Studies curriculums (K-10 Syllabus, Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements). It covers matters such as scope and sequence, and links between year levels and between primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools.

4

STRUCTURE OF THE K-10 SYLLABUS

This chapter discusses the structural aspects of K-10 Social Studies Syllabus policy. It begins with a brief outline of three developments leading up to the K-10 Syllabus. Then it examines the rationale, structure and criticisms of the syllabus.

BACKGROUND DEVELOPMENTS

1900-1960: During this period, there was no subject called Social Studies. What did exist and what might be considered as part of today's Social Studies, were some individual subjects like history and geography, which were delivered separately through to Year 10. They were offered within a broad external structure called the Junior Certificate, within which, as with the other subjects, students doing history and geography were required to sit an examination at the end of Year 10.

1960-1970: The 1960s saw the integration of the separate disciplines (history, geography and economics, etc.) into Social Studies. As one subject, Social Studies was taught from Year 8 through to Year 10. And it still operated within the broad structure of the Junior Certificate. During this period separate subjects, such as history, geography and economics, were delivered in Year 11 and 12. Students doing these subjects were examined at the end of Year 12 for the Leaving Certificate or university entry.

1970-1981: In the late 60s and early 70s, more changes took place to Social Studies. The Junior Certificate was replaced by the Achievement Certificate, which lasted until 1981. As a subject, Social Studies only covered Years 8-10. There was

nothing for upper secondary and primary schools. Therefore, primary schools picked up “bits and pieces here and there from the secondary syllabus” and taught students something in areas like Western Australia, ancient civilisation, and Australian Aborigines, a topic which was treated very superficially and, reportedly, never beyond the realm of “spears and boomerangs” (So.4)¹. The internal structure of Social Studies for Years 8-10 was also different from that of the 1960s. It was changed into Social Studies A and B. A was supposed to be easier than B. Both subjects (A & B) were a series of disjointed units or topics loosely based on expanding horizons. Year 8 dealt with the cradles of civilisations, from local to worldwide, and from past to present. Year 9 basically focused on Western Australia, Australia, Australia in the world and the Australian people. Year 10 examined the world and its people outside Australia.

Within the Achievement Certificate, subjects were divided into core and non-core. Science, Mathematics, English and Social Studies comprised the core subjects. At the end of Year 10, students received a certificate recording marks for all subjects. In the case of the four core subjects, the marks were graded into Advanced, Intermediate and Basic levels. Across the state, only 25% of the students received Advanced level passes, 50% received Intermediate level passes and 25% received Basic level passes. The distribution of marks for these levels was fixed. Therefore assessment was competitive and norm referenced, rather than criterion referenced or standard-based.

¹ Primary school Social Studies was to be school centred, that is, school staff to develop their own syllabuses to cater for the needs of the children within their school or district. This had limited success. In some schools where staff members were enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject, some outstanding achievements were made. In others, teachers continued to use the previous curriculum and teach as they had done previously, while in others, as stated in the text, very little Social Studies was attempted. The Curriculum Branch produced Topic Books to help teachers develop their own school-based curricula. Due mainly to the poor communication between the Curriculum Branch and schools, many teachers accepted the Topic Books as a combined syllabus and textbook, and their students were taught a series of unrelated and disjointed topics. I do not think it is correct to say the topics were treated very superficially and never beyond the realms of ‘spears and boomerangs’. Generally each topic was well covered, but there was no linkage or development from one topic to the next. (R.1)

Criticisms of the Social Studies syllabus prior to K-10 fell into five areas². Firstly, Social Studies was considered a “Mickey Mouse” program because all the units or topics tended to be separate and discrete; there was a lack of developmental sequence in knowledge, skills and values. Secondly, very few skills were introduced. Thirdly, teaching of the subject was content-driven; not enough attention was paid to process. Fourthly, curriculum support materials, especially textbooks, were poorly developed and inadequate; therefore teachers had to base their teaching largely on material covered in resource materials and publications of uneven quality. And finally, there was a discontinuity in what was taught between primary and secondary schools.

RATIONALE FOR K-10 SYLLABUS

In the late 70s and early 80s, Social Studies was changed from Social Studies A and B into the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus. This took place partly because of the educational stakeholders’ dissatisfaction with Social Studies A and B. But, there were other reasons.

According to one senior officer, the basic philosophy underpinning the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus from the curriculum designers’ stand was that “if you want to take your kids somewhere, we think this is the best way to go and we recommend you to do this and this which will most probably get you there”. The overarching rationale or intention of the syllabus was to “provide a developmental sequence and scope of understandings” (So.2). Another senior officer said that, to achieve this, the developmental sequence was intended to provide:

- a sequential development of students’ knowledge;
- comprehensive skills development with skills clearly mapped in a sequence of difficulty;
- a sequential values development in students; and
- a map of concepts spiralling in complexity. (So.4)

2 Agree with these five. I would add one more, that is, the disregard for the values component of Social Studies. This had been present previously in schools as civics, but was eliminated because the direct approach of telling children what was good or bad, right or wrong, had been ineffective. (R.1)

The K-10 syllabus was intended also to incorporate new topics. In a rapidly changing world new subjects or topics were emerging and Social Studies was considered the most appropriate place to fit them in.

Additionally, the K-10 Syllabus was designed to address criticisms directed at deficiencies in the previous syllabus, Social Studies A and B. In terms of the external structure, it tried to “overcome the discontinuity in Social Studies between primary and secondary schools” in order “to provide a better coherence between primary and secondary curriculum material”; it tried “to cut out repetition that existed in primary and secondary classes” and “to provide a more systematic and comprehensive curriculum for teachers of Social Studies from kindergarten to Year 10” (So.4). As mentioned earlier, prior to K-10 there was no adequate linkage between primary and secondary schools and often primary school teachers would pick up something from the secondary syllabus to deliver to their students.

Another intention of the K-10 syllabus was to raise the status of Social Studies by setting it as a core subject. Before 1980, the status of the subject was so low that even Social Studies teachers themselves “were not convinced or didn’t have a belief in or identification with the curriculum that was produced” (So.4). In addressing this problem, the K-10 syllabus was intended to strengthen Social Studies teachers’ morale and increase their commitment to the subject.

Finally, the K-10 syllabus was meant to pay more attention to process “as distinct from merely content because Social Studies teaching used to be content-driven and focused on delivering factual things”. (So.2)

STRUCTURE OF K-10 SYLLABUS

Most of the intentions outlined above were reflected in the final product of the K-10 Syllabus. The syllabus established a close linkage and coherence between primary and lower secondary schools, and at the same time avoided repetition and overlap between them. Originally an attempt was made to extend this linkage to the upper secondary school Social Studies subjects. However, the task proved to be too complex partly because “Year 11 and 12 were controlled by the Secondary Education

Authority” (So.4) and partly because History, Geography, Economics, Anthropology, Sociology, Social psychology and Politics were too loosely coupled. Therefore the new syllabus focused on the compulsory years of schooling from kindergarten to Year 10 at the request of Early Childhood educators even though K was, strictly speaking, not compulsory. Nonetheless, the syllabus was “also organised to provide a base for the study of separate social science disciplines at Year Eleven and Twelve” (Curriculum Branch, EDWA, 1981, p.5).

Instead of presenting Social Studies as “A and B”, the K-10 Syllabus provided a developmental scope and sequence in knowledge, skills values and concepts³. The new syllabus identified three major themes for pre-primary Social Studies programs: “learning about individuals and their needs; learning about the family and the community; and learning about the natural environment” (Curriculum Branch, EDWA, 1981, p.5). For Years 1-10, the syllabus grouped Social Studies into five major themes. They were Environment (geography), Resources (economics), Society and Culture (anthropology, sociology and social psychology), Change (history) and Decision-making (politics).

Centred around the five themes, a K-10 scope and sequence matrix was constructed which provided teachers with a plan to select content for each specific year from K through to Year 10. To take an example, the Year 8-10 lower secondary school program consisted of seventeen topics or units spread over three years, threaded by the five themes. This is diagrammatically shown below in Figure 8.

Within each topic, the substructure for knowledge followed the macro-micro pattern of starting off with Generalisations followed by Understandings followed by Concepts and Facts⁴. For each topic, there was recommended subject matter and

3 ‘Concepts’ and part of the knowledge component of Social Studies; i.e. K-10 provided scope and sequence in knowledge, skills and values. (R.1)

4 Generalisations were divided into understandings. Each understanding contained certain concepts. It was the teachers’ responsibility to select appropriate factual information that would allow students to expand their knowledge of the concepts.

The designers of the syllabus nominated the broad generalisations they believed all students should be able to comprehend by the end of year ten. They reduced these generalisations to understandings (i.e. statements that link important concepts) and placed

suggested approaches to achieve the understandings. Accompanying the scope and sequence of knowledge development were comprehensive K-10 skills sequence matrices for each of the following categories: Verbal, Map, Graph and Table, Picture and Diagram, and Time and Chronology⁵. Moreover, the K-10 value education scope and sequence matrix consisted of three approaches: awareness of feelings, clarification and analysis of values, and decision and justification. For each of the three approaches, some typical focus questions were presented and exemplified, and relevant strategies suggested. The first approach was mainly for K-3 level students to work with, the first and second for year 4-6 levels, and all three together for year 7-10 levels.

Figure 8: Arrangement of Year 8-10 Topics in K-10 syllabus

Year levels Topics Themes	K-7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Environment	omitted	Earth & people	Australian landscapes	World environmental issues
Resources	omitted	Specialisation & the economy	The consumer in the economy	Economic systems issues
Society and culture	omitted	The ancient world	Australian society Asian studies	Social issues European studies
Change	omitted	The changing world	Western Australia: Yesterday & today	Australia in the international community

them into themes and year levels based mainly on their levels of complexity. Suggestions as to possible subject matter to explore the key concepts within the understandings, were provided. It was expected that teachers would begin their planning by selecting appropriate content and learning strategies to develop within their students the conceptual knowledge required to fully grasp the understandings appropriate to the year level they were teaching. Ideally, if all teachers achieved this, students would acquire the understandings needed to have a working knowledge of the broad generalisations that formed the basis of the knowledge component of the syllabus. That is, the planning was: generalisations → understandings → concepts → factual information; but the process of teaching was: factual information → concepts → understandings → generalisation. (R.1)

⁵ Although not sequenced in the same ways as these 'intellectual' skills, the K-10 also required the development of social and group interaction skills. (R.1)

Decision-making	omitted	Law	Australia's government	International cooperation & conflict
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As a curriculum package, the K-10 Syllabus also contained a section on teaching Social Studies. Included in this section were examples of how to prepare a teaching program, how to organise purposeful learning activities, how to ask the right questions in the process of teaching, how to maintain an awareness of developmental stages, and how to evaluate student's work. (Curriculum Branch, EDWA, 1981, pp.60-74).

The external structure of the K-10 Syllabus did not change very much. The syllabus continued to operate within the Achievement Certificate which was introduced in 1972. As such the K-10 Syllabus was and still is often referred to as the Achievement Certificate. However, within the broad structure of the Achievement Certificate, some changes were made to the certification and assessment grading structures. Schools issued two or three reports to parents and students each year, either at the end of term or half-yearly, with a final report at the end of each year. These reports made confidential statements about students' achievements and efforts. Nonetheless, the major responsibility for issuing certificates or statements of student performance rested mainly with two external bodies, the Board of Secondary Education and the Tertiary Institutions Service Centre. Year 8-10 students who completed the Year 8-10 course were awarded the Achievement Certificate by the Board of Secondary Education of Western Australia. However, those who left school during Years 8 or 9, were also issued the Achievement Certificate. This certificate not only reported students' achievements in the four core subjects (English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies), but also their achievements in the whole range of option subjects that they had studied. The Board of Secondary Education also took responsibility for issuing the Certificate of Secondary Education to the upper school students who completed and met the requirements of Year twelve courses. The Tertiary Institutions Service Centre was responsible for issuing a separate statement which indicated student performance in each of the Tertiary Admissions Examination subjects that the students had taken and the students'

aggregate for each of the four tertiary institutions in Western Australia as well. It also stated whether or not students had qualified for admission to those four institutions.

The division of Year 8-10 subjects into core and option also brought about a difference in grading or reporting scales. There was only one level for option subjects, which had two categories, namely, Pass and Credit Pass. For the core subjects, with the exception of mathematics, student achievement was graded into three distinct levels: Advanced, Intermediate and Basic. Within each of the three levels, there were also two categories as with the option subjects: Pass and Credit Pass. Normally, in the core subjects, the division of the awards was 25% advanced, 50% intermediate, 23% basic and 2% 'no credit'. Another requirement that applied to both the core and option subjects was that an even number of Pass and Credit Pass marks were distributed in any subject in any school. Though the assessment of students' achievements was school-based, the responsibility for 'moderation' to ensure 'comparability' across the system rested with the Secondary Education Authority in Western Australia. It was a norm-referenced or population-referenced assessment.

Closely related to the division of subjects into core and optional was the time allocation. By and large, sixty percent of the school time for Year 8-10 was allocated to the core subjects and only forty percent to the elective subjects. As one of the core subjects, Social studies was allocated 160 minutes per week. Each of the seventeen topics covered by the Social Studies K-10 Syllabus was scheduled for approximately 30 hours of instruction per topic with a total of 510 hours. Within that time allocation, schools and classroom teachers had the flexibility to make adjustments to suit their local needs. However, there was a difference between core subjects and option subjects in terms of time allocation. Beazley (1984, p.66) noted that although "courses in Year 8-10 are organised on the basis of one-year duration", core subjects were "allocated the equivalent of six 40-minute periods per week, and option subjects, with a few exceptions, two periods per week".

By making Social Studies a core subject, and giving it the same amount of time and the same number of students as English, Mathematics and Science, the K-10 Syllabus raised the status of Social Studies to be as high as the rest of the core subjects.

CRITICISM OF THE K-10 SYLLABUS STRUCTURE

The K-10 Syllabus was highly regarded seemingly by all stakeholders in the education system. For example, after an extensive investigation, the Print (1990, p.60) inquiry reported that,

A hallmark of the Social Studies K-10 syllabus was the sequencing of a range of appropriate skills from kindergarten through to Year 10. This task had not been tackled before in Social Studies and, along with the changes reflected in the scope and sequence matrix, represented a major breakthrough in curriculum development within Western Australia. Indeed, the sequencing of skills was perceived by teachers to be major strength of the syllabus and essential for students.

The same view was articulated by the people interviewed for this study. Even today, sixteen years after it was produced, many teachers and advisory staff, especially those at the grassroots, apparently still have very positive impressions and opinions of the structure of the K-10 Syllabus. Below are just a few examples of the positive views and attitudes voiced by interviewees.

See, with the syllabus, the old K-10 syllabus, we had a nice neat sort of framework - there were generalisations - there was a sort of holistic view to it. You could look at the generalisations then go to the understandings, and then follow the sort of hierarchy to knowledge values and skills. It was all sort of a nice package and it was clear and most teachers felt - I think very happy - with it as a Social Studies syllabus. (Hod.6)

K-10 was far more sequential than Unit Curriculum, was based on better pedagogy and had a far better result - although much of it had become outdated and maybe what it really required was just an updating. Things like values were involved; skills and knowledge were soundly based in the K-10. (Hod.5)

Yes, I think in the main it [K-10] was pretty well received. One of the indicators of this is the fact that it endured. It was produced in 1981 and in 1997 teachers are going back to it - you know - so 15 years later it's seen as a good document! I think that is a measure, because it has survived Unit Curriculum, Achievement Certificates etc. It survived a number of other changes and in fact it's still in my view, far superior to what is being produced in terms of the curriculum frameworks right now, from what I've seen. (So.3)

Yes, you see there was an opportunity for them [the Geography Teachers, and the History Teachers] to specialise to some extent and to capitalise on their expertise. While each of the teachers was expected to teach five units, and they had six teams, they therefore could - in those days we had three teams and therefore it was possible to teach one unit in half a term I believe. There was opportunity for teachers to capitalise on their expertise and to expand and contract the units to some extent according to their background knowledge. Teachers were encouraged to integrate where they could to combine; that was another approach that could have been adopted - instead of teaching them as separate units under the five headings, they could have adopted an integrated approach. (So.3)

However, this does not mean that the structure of the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus was perfect. Criticisms of its structure are fully documented in both the Beazley Report (1984) and the Print Report (1990). The Beazley Report recorded criticisms mainly related to the syllabus' external structure while the Print Report outlined those mainly concerned with its internal structure.

The Beazley Report (1984, pp.43-5) received a wide range of submissions from stakeholders complaining about the "shortcomings associated with the Achievement Certificate system". Common criticisms focused on the division of subjects into core and optional leading "to a downgrading of the value of optional subjects", the school program being "limited" because of sixty percent of school time allocated to the four core subjects, and school work being too "academically oriented".

Besides these three "most common short-comings", the Beazley Report also noted (see pp.66-7) that some "inflexibility" existed in the structure. It pointed out that structural inflexibility was due to the fact that "year-long courses in Year 8-10 in some cases were not being modified sufficiently to motivate student interest and to meet the needs of all students"; and that "once a student was allocated to an Advanced, Intermediate or Basic level, it was very difficult to change levels". Furthermore, school timetabling also made the structure rigid and inflexible, which, in turn, had "a negative effect on student retention rates from Year 10 to Year 11".

The Beazley Report made some criticisms about the certification structure of the K-10 Syllabus. It contended that the problems with school reports were that "even though they are confidential to parents they are often used by students when seeking employment" and that "the very comment meant to challenge a capable student who

is performing well, but not up to his or her potential, could be interpreted by a prospective employer as an indication of inadequacy” (p.161). The school reports, along with the Achievement Certificate and the Certificate of Secondary Education issued by the Board of Secondary Education of Western Australia and the statements issued by the Tertiary Institutions Service Center, were seen to have the following “weaknesses” by the Beazley Report (pp.162-3):

- It is difficult to maintain the confidentiality of school reports.
- The Achievement Certificate has different reporting scales for core subjects and option subjects.
- The Achievement Certificate is largely irrelevant for students who subsequently complete Year 12 and thereby qualify for a Certificate of Secondary Education and a Tertiary Institutions Service Center statement.
- For students who continue schooling beyond Year 10, but leave before the end of Year 12, there is no certification other than the Achievement Certificate gained at the end of Year 10.
- Students who complete Year 12 and who sit for the Tertiary Admissions Examination receive both a Certificate of Secondary Education and a Tertiary Institutions Service Center statement. The information on one is of a different type and is reported in a different way from that on the other.

Another problem, identified by the Beazley Report (pp.169-70), with the Achievement Certificate, and thereby the K-10 Syllabus structure, was the pre-determined distribution scheme for the awarding of grades (25% Advanced, 50% Intermediate, 23% Basic and 2% No Award)⁶. This was seen as being “unresponsive to changes in standards of performance” and failing “to provide incentives for students to aspire to higher standards of achievement”, because whatever improvement in teaching and learning might occur, only 25% students were to be awarded Advanced. Furthermore, *labelling* the lowest 25% as ‘basic’ level students, appeared to “have influenced both student motivation and incentive, and may have led to some students becoming unco-operative and disruptive”.

⁶ I don’t think the K-10 syllabus and the Achievement Certificate are the same thing. The Beazley Report criticisms were of the Achievement Certificate that was imposed upon Secondary Education in general well after the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus was introduced. (R.1)

Still another problem pointed out by the Beazley Report was the grading system. The two-category system (Pass and Credit Pass) was considered as “neglecting the No Award category” and the discrepancies between core subjects and option subjects in grading scales. That is, an eight-point scale for mathematics, a six-point scale for English, science and social studies, and only a two-point scale for option subjects, was “a source of concern to teachers of option subjects” and “caused confusion in the general community and among the employers” (p.171).

In contrast to the Beazley Report, the Print Report focused its attention on the internal structure of the K-10 Syllabus. However, it should be noted that to criticise the content as out-of-date⁷ or as failing to incorporate things considered important today, does an injustice to the syllabus, because as one senior education officer argued,

I think it is really ghastly to see teachers dealing with the content that is totally inappropriate, that's remote from the kids, and they are trying to make something that was written in the 1970s work in the 1990s. That was never intended. (So.4)

Therefore criticisms of its content being out-of-date will not be discussed here. That being said, three major areas of the K-10 Syllabus' structure were disposed to criticism, namely, its scope and sequence of knowledge, skills and values.

First, the Print Report pointed out that “much of what is presented as values education” in the K-10 Syllabus,

can best be described as value skilling. Activities associated with values identification, values clarification and values appreciation form an essential set of skills with which to process values issues. They do little to encourage the adoption of desirable values by students. (p.31)

Therefore, Print argued that “a fourth phase, the application of these values to facilitate social competence/active participation, is also required” because,

⁷ Difficult to determine what is meant by the term ‘out of date’. The knowledge content is meant to be selected by the teacher. In this sense, the knowledge component is not ‘out of date’ even though the suggested content in associated Teachers Guides may be. Some of the ‘intellectual’ skills are out-of-date due to changes in technologies particularly the use of computers. Controversy still surrounds the values education component, but, the philosophies and strategies suggested in the K-10 syllabus are not more out of date today than twenty years ago. (R.1)

It is simply not sufficient to provide opportunities for students to acquire appropriate knowledge, skills and values through a curriculum. In the teaching of that curriculum, support, encouragement and opportunity to apply such learning are required to reinforce the value of that learning.” (p.29)

With regard to skills, the Print Report made two points. One is that “many skills were set inappropriately with respect to the level of student ability” (p.30). The other is the categorisation of skills. Print argued that “the term ‘verbal’ is highly inappropriate in the existing curriculum, confusing a term associated with oral skills with information and literacy oriented skills” (p.31).

Finally, the Print Report noted that “a discrepancy existed between the amount of content detailed as objectives (the same applies to Unit Curriculum) in curriculum documents and what teachers were able cover in class sessions”. Teachers tackled this problem by teaching “from the top of the list downwards until time runs out”, a strategy which “jeopardises the sequential nature of the syllabus structure” (p.32)⁸.

CLOSING REMARKS

Despite deficiencies documented in both the Beazley and Print Reports, the structural change from Social Studies A and B to the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus represents an unprecedented educational attempt within Western Australia to develop a sequence and scope of knowledge, values and skills. The K-10 Social Studies Syllabus operated within the Achievement Certificate. In terms of the internal structure of the syllabus, seventeen topics were arranged into five themes spread over three years of lower secondary schooling.

Assessment was norm-referenced. Structurally, Social Studies was designed as a K-10 core subject and thus enjoyed the same status as English, Sciences and Mathematics. Critical theorists would be supportive of this arrangement. However, as pointed out in the Beazley and Print Reports, the external structure of K-10 subject

⁸ This applied particularly to the primary schools where there was less control over time allocated to each subject area. As you mentioned earlier, in secondary schools, heads of department (plus the assessment system applied) ensured that each section of the syllabus was given approximately even time. In primary schools the class teacher decided upon what was taught and what was assessed. (R.1)

assessment created social inequality by labelling students 'Advanced, Intermediate and Basic', a practice that critical theorists would regard as unacceptable on social justice grounds.

Another feature of the K-10 internal structure was year-long courses. This made it possible for teachers to have enough contact with their students so that they could target individuals or groups in need of extra help, identify their needs, and develop programs to meet their needs. On the other hand, the year-long courses locked up students and lacked some flexibility to cater for all student needs. Nevertheless, according to some participants in this study, most teachers were more satisfied with the K-10 Syllabus than with any other Social Studies syllabus or curriculum framework developed in Western Australia.

5

STRUCTURE OF UNIT CURRICULUM

RATIONALE FOR UNIT CURRICULUM

In 1988, the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus was replaced by Unit Curriculum. While the change from Social Studies A and B to the K-10 Syllabus took place in the Social Studies area from kindergarten to Year 10, the replacement of K-10 Syllabus by Unit Curriculum only affected Years 8-10, leaving primary school social studies (called K-7)⁹ still operating with the old Syllabus. In Years 8-10, not only were all lower secondary school subjects changed, but also the external structure - the Achievement Certificate - was replaced by Unit Curriculum as well. This chapter will focus only on Social Studies within the Unit Curriculum framework.

Unit Curriculum was developed from recommendations in the Beazley Report (1984). The intentions embedded in the proposed unit approach and its accompanying vertical timetabling were directed at the shortcomings which existed in the K-10 Syllabus and the Achievement Certificate. These intentions can be summarised as follows:

- to tailor courses to individual needs;
- to give student needs precedence over subject requirements;
- to endorse student-centred learning;
- to provide the student with comparatively short-term goals and lead to a more readily identifiable incentive system;

⁹ The Achievement Certificate only really applied to Year 8-10. Primary school Social Studies was not affected by either the Achievement Certificate or the Unit Curriculum. Both were systems applied to all subjects in the Year 8-10. (R.1)

- to abolish the three or four levels of subjects and awards;
- to increase flexibility in a student's program; and
- to break the chronological age grouping of students and allow for the establishment of remediation classes as part of a student's course in a way that makes it a benefit with minimal handicap. (pp.68-70)

The following is an elaboration of some of these intentions. Where possible, an attempt is made to match the intentions of the unit approach with the shortcomings in the K-10 Syllabus. For instance, to overcome the inflexibility which existed in the K-10 syllabus and the Achievement Certificate, the Committee suggested that "the needs of all students will be met more adequately by abandoning subject courses which currently occupy one full year and replacing the existing system in Year 8-10 with one based on units of study of a shorter duration". This, "coupled with the use of vertical timetabling", said Beazley, would do much to minimise the inflexibility, and it would provide,

greater flexibility in opportunities for all students to move to higher level of study, better opportunities for students to accelerate or decelerate in some subject areas, and better opportunities for all students to have a more balanced educational program. (Beazley, 1984, p.67)

To allow students to study at their own pace, the Beazley Committee suggested that "it should be possible for students who...study largely Year 9 units to take some Year 10 units in strong subjects or Year 8 units in subject areas which need further reinforcement" (pp.70-1).

To increase the range of programs for students to choose from, the Beazley Committee proposed that there should be "three categories of subjects units - those centrally designed and approved, those designed by schools or systems and approved, and those planned at the school level which do not have or do not require official approval" (p.71). This was also meant to be reinforced by the shortening of the previous full year long subject courses into units of 30 or 32 hours per term, a total of 150/160 minutes weekly (p.73).

To maintain a balance in a student's educational program, the Committee suggested seven curriculum components and recommended that "as a minimum requirement

during Year 8-10, at any given time each student study at least one unit from each of the seven curriculum components” (p.74).

Much freedom was meant to be given to students to meet their needs. The Committee proposed that students should not be “assigned to levels but be entitled to attempt study in the units of their own choice, the only condition being that they meet the unit pre-requisites” (p.78).

The replacement of horizontal cross-setting by vertical timetabling was designed to maintain the curriculum flexibility and to preserve student choice of units. It was also meant to “enable schools to group their students according to their interests and abilities rather than age” (p.80).

To combat the five weaknesses of the certification system in the Achievement Certificate, the Beazley Committee developed a set of criteria for the public certification scheme. These criteria were:

- statewide certification of student achievement in secondary schooling should be the responsibility of a single statutory authority;
- the statutory authority should issue one certificate, and only one, to each student as official certification of the student’s achievement while in secondary school;
- the certificate should report achievement in terms which the public can understand and which are simple to interpret;
- the standards on which the report of achievement is based should be comparable across all schools;
- a common set of reporting grades should apply for all subjects; and
- the reporting should not be too detailed. (pp.165-6)

Based on the above criteria, the Beazley Committee proposed to replace the Achievement Certificate with a “school leaver statement” which was intended to “provide employers with information to assist them when selecting applicants for jobs” and to “provide the post-secondary institutions with information useful for selecting students into courses” (p.163).

With regard to moderation, the Committee saw the previous comparability testing based on sets of fixed tests as being “a major constraint in the development by schools of educational programs that are more responsive to the needs of their

students”. It therefore suggested the development of an “item-bank” and “several distinct processes” for moderation in school assessments. These processes were:

- regional meetings of teachers of a given subject, involving discussions on selected samples of student work, and leading to moderation by consensus;
- visits to schools by moderators, involving scrutiny of samples of student work and of the school’s assessment procedures; and
- comparability testing programs. (p.167)

Finally, the Committee considered the grading system in the Achievement Certificate with different grading scales for core and option subjects as problematic and the norm-referenced assessment as being unresponsive to improvements in teaching and learning standards. Thus the Committee proposed to combine norm-referenced assessments with standard-referenced or criteria-referenced assessments in order to “satisfy all the audience to be served by a system of public certification” and to “enable the distribution of grades to reflect the changes in student performance” (p.171).

It might be pointed out that all the intentions of the unit approach documented above are based on educational grounds and address criticisms of the Achievement Certificate within which the K-10 syllabus operated. Beside these, there were some contextual and political reasons for the introduction of the unit approach.

Contextually, the push for Unit Curriculum matched the spirits of the mid-80s. According to one senior officer who was interviewed:

The spirit of the time in the mid-80s was ‘get things done’. In the mid-80s Governments were trying to get control of the school system because up to the early 80s State Governments had paid no attention to what was happening in Government Schools. A quarter of the State Budget - in WA that’s about \$10 billion - goes on schools, but the politicians have never paid a lot of attention to how that was spent as long as the schools were running. And in every State people started saying - if we are going to spend that much of money on schools, are they doing a good enough job, should they be doing it cheaper? And they are asking the same questions about hospitals, police etc. so in the 80s there was a lot of talk about re-examining the way Governments did their business. (So.7)

Also, during the period when the idea of a unit approach was floated, talks on restructuring, devolution, accountability and the like gathered momentum. Another senior officer commented that:

...a whole series of policy documents were written to support that movement - the so called "squiggle documents", those that talked about the development of school development planning and talked about the kinds of accountability practices that would be required in a devolved system. What never actually was developed at that stage and should have been - should have been the first thing written in fact - was any kind of documentation of talk about the sorts of curriculum structures that would need to be or that would be best set in place to kind of allow a devolved system to develop. (So.1)

This spirit of the mid-80s and a desire to do something in the curriculum area to make a curriculum fit into a devolved system was pushed further by the political party in power and the Ministry of Education in Western Australia. The cabinet members of the government were relatively young and active. Again a senior officer made the observation that:

All these young people who had been going to change the world had changed it for the worst, so it was just a matter of which years. My story is about the importance of the political intentions of the party in power and their desire not to be frustrated. And they would say to themselves, we've been elected so why can't we do what we want to do. What is the point of standing for election if some Director General is going to tell you that you can't do it? He didn't stand for election. (So.7)

These intentions were spelt out explicitly in one of EDWA's policy documents concerning Unit Curriculum. It clearly stated that:

The introduction of Unit Curriculum is part of a wider process of educational change in Western Australia....The new proposals for the administration of Government schools are based on a number of principles, which are listed below.

- Self-determining schools.
- Maintaining educational standards.
- Community participation in school management.
- Equity.
- Responsiveness to change.
- Professionalism of teachers. (EDWA, Jan. 29, 1987, p.1)

STRUCTURE OF UNIT CURRICULUM

Many intentions of the unit approach recommended by the Beazley Committee were reflected in the final product of the Unit Curriculum, some of them without alteration and others with varying degrees of amendment.

The Unit Curriculum abolished the division of subjects into core and option, as operated in the Achievement Certificate. Instead, seven curriculum groups or components were established and all units were housed in one of these components or learning areas, which were:

- English, Languages and Communication;
- Mathematics;
- Personal and Vocational Education;
- Physical Education
- Practical and Creative Arts;
- Science and Technology; and
- Social Studies.

All together nearly 300 units were prepared across the seven components. The intention here was to make sure that “there are many more units than any one school has the resources to offer, or than any one student will take” (EDWA, 1986, p.3) in order to maximise student choice of units. There were three sources for these units. Some units were just a repackaging of the previous Achievement Certificate courses; some were newly developed syllabuses to fit into the Unit Curriculum; and the rest were supposed to be derived from school initiatives¹⁰.

Within each of the seven curriculum components, there was a sub-structure to accommodate all units. Units were allocated to six stages of progress through three

¹⁰ In the case of Social Studies there were a few repackaged units, e.g. The Consumer in the Economy, and Specialisation and the Economy, but please note, the changes were really exchanges, i.e., sections of one unit were transferred to the other to fit the standard time allocation given to each unit. Technological World and Contemporary Australian Society were newly created units, but the Large majority of Unit Curriculum units came directly from the K-10 syllabus. There was so little change to what was taught in Social Studies that only two teachers’ support guides were created, i.e., Technological World and Contemporary Australian Society. (R.1)

years from Year 8-10. The allocation of units into six stages in Social Studies is shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Social Studies Unit Map

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6
Earth & people 1.1*	The consumer in the economy 2.1*	Australia's Government 3.1*	Law 4.1*	Australian landscapes 5.1** (G)	World environmental issues 6.1 (G)
The ancient world 1.2	West Aust.: Yesterday & today 2.2**	Australian society 3.2**	European studies 4.2	Specialisation & the economy 5.2 (E)	Economic systems and issues 6.2 (E)
Changing world 1.3	Technological world 2.3	Asian studies 3.3		International cooperation & conflict 5.3 (H) Contemporary Australian society 5.4**	Aust. in the international community 6.3** (H) Social issues 6.4

Within each unit, the subject matter structure by and large continued the pattern established in the K-10 syllabus; that is, it followed the pattern of macro-micro - beginning with generalisations followed by understandings followed by objectives and then teachers' notes which included some focus questions.

In order to ensure that students had a balanced education, a minimum number of units had to be completed in each subject during Years 8-10. It was expected that "most students will complete about 24 units in one year and a total of 72 over the three lower secondary years" (Ministry of Education, WA, no date, p.3). In the case of Social Studies, out of nineteen units, students were normally "required to study a minimum of six units". It was also recommended that (see Figure 2) "those units marked with asterisk (*) be included together with at least one of those units of Australian studies indicated by (**)" (Curriculum Branch, Education Department of Western Australia, March, 1987, p.5). Print (1990) says that "the reality of competitive time in secondary schools meant that the maximum number of units for Social Studies was highly likely to be 12 spread over Years 8-10". This again meant

that fewer Social Studies areas could be studied in Unit Curriculum than in the Achievement Certificate curriculum. In reality, the actual number of units selected by students was between eight to twelve (Print, 1990, 61).

In the area of assessment, Unit Curriculum standards or criteria-referenced assessment replaced the Achievement Certificate norm-referenced assessment. Within the standard-referenced assessment, students were no longer assessed against all students across the state, but against pre-determined standards. Unit Curriculum also removed the three levels of awards in the Achievement Certificate (Advanced, Intermediate and Basic) and replaced them with five grades - A, B, C, D and F- which stood for "excellent achievement, high achievement, sound achievement, limited achievement and failure" (Department of Social Science, Western Australia College of Advanced Education, August, 1987). Grade-related descriptors were attached to each of five the grades. The assessment was still school-based, and still moderated by the Secondary Education Authority. The SEA also held responsibility for approving units developed for use in schools and issuing the Certificate of Secondary Education that replaced the Achievement Certificate.

The year long courses of the K-10 syllabus were shortened in the Unit Curriculum. For example, each of the nineteen units in Social Studies for Year 8-10 was mandated to be taught for 40 hours. Teachers almost had no flexibility to vary the time. The intended number of units was twelve, therefore the intended amount of time was 480 hours of instruction across three years of lower secondary schooling. This meant that Social Studies was allocated 30 hours less time in Unit Curriculum than in the Achievement Certificate. Moreover, since students studied only eight to twelve units (that is, on average, only ten units) in Years 8-10, then the average amount of time spent on Social Studies was 400 hours. That is, Social Studies actually received 110 hours less time in Unit Curriculum than was the case in the Achievement Certificate curriculum across the three years of 8-10. If we take the minimum requirements of six units as stated by the Education Department, the total amount of time would be 240 hours, less than half the 510 for Social Studies in the Achievement Certificate, and the number of units studied by students was only slightly over one-third of that in the Achievement Certificate.

The reduction in the time allocation, number of units selected by students, and the overall number of student enrolments in Social Studies in Unit curriculum, indicated that the status of Social Studies was lower in the Unit Curriculum compared with the Achievement Certificate. Another indicator of the lowered status of Social Studies in the Unit Curriculum was that, of the former four core subjects, students had no choice but to study twelve units in English, Mathematics and Sciences respectively while they could only study six as a minimum in Social Studies; though, many schools decided that, to maintain the status of Social Studies as high as those of the other three former core subjects, students had to study twelve units as well.

In simplified form, the major structural changes from K-10 Syllabus to Unit Curriculum can shown as below:

Figure 10: Structural Change from Achievement Certificate to Unit Curriculum¹¹

	Achievement Certificate	Unit Curriculum
Curricula composition	Core subjects & option subjects	Seven curriculum components
Time allocation	Unequal time allocation between core and option subjects	Equal time allocation among all subjects
Length of course	Year long courses	40-hour units
Model of progress	Progress based on age or year levels	Progress based on achievement
Type of assessment	Advanced: 25% Intermediate: 50% Basic: 25% Norm-referenced assessment	Six stages of progress Standards-referenced assessment
Grades in assessment	Grades: Credit Pass & Pass	A, B, C, D & F
Timetabling	Limited vertical cross-setting	Increased vertical cross-setting
Course selection	Student choice among option subjects	Student choice among all subjects

¹¹ This is based on an overhead projector used by an officer from the Curriculum Branch to explain the structural changes from K-10 to Unit Curriculum at a seminar in 1986.

CRITICISMS OF UNIT CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

Though Unit Curriculum was developed to resolve problems associated with the Achievement Certificate and the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus operating within it, some of the outcomes were quite unexpected. Most comments about of its structure from stakeholders were negative and cover a wide range of areas or aspects. Sources of comments and criticisms in this section are mainly from the Print Report (1990) and interviewees in this study.

The K-10 Social Studies Syllabus was well-known and popular among teachers because of its developmental scope and sequence matrices in knowledge, skills and values. The Unit Curriculum was considered to have lost those features. The Print Report noticed that “all submissions from teachers who commented upon the lower secondary school raised the issue of lost skills sequence” (p.60). Most Social Studies teachers agreed that the developmental scope and sequence of skills and skills teaching was fragmented by the Unit Curriculum. This was mainly caused by the cutting of year-long courses into discrete units, and by “students taking different combinations of units” (p.60). Apparently, many teachers tried to keep teaching skills in a sequential and developmental way, but found it impossible and unrealistic and eventually gave up. The loss of the sequence in skills and skills teaching, and the loss of scope and sequence in knowledge and values, was the most frequent criticism of Unit Curriculum made by the people interviewed in this study. Below are a few examples of the many comments they made:

[Since] 1988 when Unit Curriculum was introduced in Western Australian schools, the feeling has been that we lost the kind of sequence and development that was the strength of the K-10 syllabus in Year 8-10. As teachers taught their discrete and separate units, they may well have been teaching some very interesting part of skills development, they may well have been teaching some interesting values development, they may well have been teaching some interesting content, but in fact there was no sequence one to the other and no development of skills over the years. And there was no necessary connection between one unit and another because teachers would change. (So.1)

It's unfortunate though there's been compartmentalisation into different sections so when you teach some units often you miss the time to have some of the skills done. Or you do them all in one little section and you don't continue it through. So if you are teaching Time and Chronology in the Year 10 Australia and the International Community then that's okay; you can go through and do all your time lines; you know how things mix

in throughout the world. But when you are doing Australian Landscapes then you don't do that so the students do that.....You could always reintroduce things in the K-10 system and also you taught more units - see you teach five units through the year and often they were melded better so you could keep this continuum going. (Hod.3)

We've moved away from this steady progression that we had into discrete subjects and so unfortunately, depending on what the students chose, some skills weren't treated. This was not envisaged, but it did in fact become a reality which we as Social Studies teachers were very disturbed about. (Hod.3)

One of the things which was lost in Social Studies with Unit Curriculum was skill development, sequential skill development. We need to be able to get back to that sequence of skill development somehow. Some schools have tried to do something, but basically I think it's been a bit of a failure. We've really lost sequential skills development. (Hod.4)

Well, Social Studies is still being taught in schools but it is now being taught in a much more rigid way. I think we've lost that continuity. People translated the K-10 Syllabus across to Units but the skills were not actually written into the Units. So the whole idea of a skills development framework has been lost and I suspect that that side of Social Studies has deteriorated. (So.4)

...but it [Education Department of Western Australia] was recognising the fact that there were some children at Year 10, for example, who were being taught units about International Co-operation and International Conflict who were still struggling to find some of these places on a map. So their understanding of their world was not at the level that that unit required. So they were experiencing failure. (So.8)

The loss of sequential development in knowledge, skills and values in the K-10 Syllabus structure also resulted from the displacement of and overlapping between some units, and inadequate adjustment being made when previous curriculum materials were chopped into units.

The Print Report noticed an “overlap between the unit Law and an associated unit offered within Business Education, namely, Legal Studies” (p.67). However, the classroom teachers interviewed thought there was more than that. One commented that:

A lot of the units overlap too. What you do in Law 4.1 and Government 3.1 are very similar. Both have similar sorts of objectives in the sense that both look at similar subject matter and it's just a repeat of one or the other - which is law which is government - sometimes it's difficult to distinguish between. (Tr.2)

This sort of overlap happened not only between units within the Social Studies area, but also between the seven curriculum components in the Unit Curriculum. The same Social Studies teacher (Tr.2) further commented that:

There's also the problem of other subject areas encroaching on our area. You've got people trying to build their departments up so they come in and teach your subject area to build their area up. And Social Studies - because we're such a wide subject area, - is typically open to that sort of things going on, like in this school Business Studies is taking over Law. And they run their own Law units and try and get upper school Law running as well. Whereas we would see that as our area. And so we have a conflict of interest there. Careers Education, which has also made leaps and bounds in schools, typically centers on the values systems that we look at in Social Studies. So you know, they nip at the bud too. Work Studies, which has typically been taken over by Social Studies Departments, is now being taken over by Career Departments. So there's all sorts of problems. Whereas Maths is Maths; you know that's theirs and no-one else will hit into it. Social Studies has been open to raiding by other subjects departments who take students away from us in various areas - especially in the upper school areas. (Tr.2)

The Print Report argued that “the stage placement of specific units reflects their appropriate level of study as well as their relationship to primary school Social Studies and the formation of sequences...” (p.69). Within this framework, the Report considered that some of the units in the Unit Curriculum had been misplaced. For example, the stage 3 unit Asian Studies and stage 2 unit The Consumer and the Economy should have been placed at stage 1. Stage 1 unit Earth and People should have been placed at stage 2. A stage 6 unit World Environmental Issue was considered better to be located at stage 3. Moreover, the Report saw it as very desirable to make rearrangements about all Australia-related units.

In an effort to prevent the loss of essential learnings in the Unit Curriculum (discussed later in this section), the Print Report suggested there should be a “core” of units. This core was considered to “require some structural changes from the existing pattern of units that will involve minor rewriting of many units and minor adjustment to the levels of others to suit new positions in the stage sequences” (p.70). These minor structural changes were anticipated to include the following:

- Australian Society to be renamed Australian History and cover Aboriginal culture and European settlement to 1945;
- Australian Society to commence at 1945 and provide a greater multicultural perspective as a contemporary unit;

- Consumer in the Economy to be modified to remove the overlap with several Business Education units; and
- Earth and People to be divided into two parts, the smaller to become the basis of the Year 7 transition unit. (p.70)

Another set of criticisms of Unit Curriculum focused on the outcomes of vertical timetabling and student choice of units. The intention to maximise student choice required maximum flexibility in the operation of the Unit Curriculum. But many schools just could not afford that flexibility because of financial, resource and personnel constraints. As one teacher said:

I mean students' choices are limited. It's too tight now, the timetable is too tight for the number of staff we've got to slot everybody in. I mean we've got staff for 26 periods of Social Studies, or 26 classes, yet we've got to run 27 classes. So we are going to have to call someone from outside to run that twenty-seventh class. So I mean there's no flexibility there. And that flexibility is even taken out further when you then take your year 11/year 12 subject selections into place. I mean I'm already slotted in as the only Economics teacher in the school to take year 11/year 12 Economics. That limits the flexibility down in the lower school units and it's the same for the Geography and History. So the time table virtually picks itself. (Tr.2)

The Print Report argued that because of the provision of student choice, fewer Social Studies units were studied and the overall student enrolment fell in Social Studies in Unit curriculum as compared with the Achievement Certificate. Within the former four core subjects, where choice was available, students preferred English, Mathematics and Science over Social Studies (pp.61-2). Coupled with less time allocated to it, as mentioned earlier, Social Studies had a much lower status in Unit Curriculum than in the Achievement Certificate. It was "rated the lowest of the former four core subjects". Not that it was considered intrinsically less valuable than other subjects, just that it was considered by students and their parents to be less helpful in obtaining employment. Many people interviewed had the same opinion. For example, one head of department commented,

Social Studies or Studies of Society and Environment was a worry. We were being perceived as being less significant than some other subjects. When the decision was made as to what would be offered we at the school decided that Maths and Science would have four units each year and Social Studies would have three or four. A lot of the quite able students dropped down and were only doing three Social Studies units. This became a problem because they said there was very little value in

them doing Social Studies because it wasn't going to be much use for employment. (Hod.3)

Within the Achievement Certificate, students were required to study all seventeen topics in Social Studies which were allocated into five themes over three years in a developmental sequence. By contrast, in Unit Curriculum students were required to choose only six out of nineteen units that had been prepared; "So any idea of continuity, as measured against the previous system, is an unrealistic one" (Print, 1990, p.61). The result of student choice of unit was a "disjointed, unsequenced and fragmented array of learnings lacking in coherence and direction" (p.65).

Given the fact that units were discrete and fragmented and students often only chose the minimum required units in Social Studies, the Print Report noticed that essential learnings in Social Studies were lost¹². Print therefore suggested "a core of nine units spread over five stages" to be studied by all students" and allow for "pathways to commence at stage 5" (1990, pp.63-8). This was also because students' choice of units was considered problematic. A head of department put it this way:

See our students have a smorgasbord - they get a big list, you go and put your name there, there, there, and there sort of thing and it's got some problems in that students do choose inappropriately. Or else their aspirations are just not realistic. (Hod.4)

Closely related to the loss of essential learnings was the loss of a balanced education for students. Student choice of units was seen to be "an opportunity to do less Social Studies with Unit Curriculum" (Print, 1990, p.61). An interviewee further commented that:

There were some schools that were operating Unit Curriculum and running Semester units. For example, at Kent Street we were running two units, but only one per semester. So the students didn't have to do one unit, they could actually drop a unit and do something else. So what it meant was a lot more fragmentation of the curriculum. A student could go through Years 8, 9 and 10, through the Unit Curriculum map - so to speak - that their school offered them and they could have no history in it, or no citizenship unit, and that is a worry. (Pa.2)

¹² Because the knowledge component of the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus was based on the belief that students had to fully grasp all understandings in order to reach the generalisation upon which they were based, i.e., the theory of the K-10 Syllabus could not work unless children covered all the understandings. (R.1)

The possibility for students to do as less Social Studies units, combined with the minimum requirement of six units, greatly lowered the status of Social Studies. This not only broke the balance in student education, but also prompted a chain-reaction. A fewer unit minimum requirement led to less time allocated to Social Studies and less students choosing Social Studies units; less Social Studies units being studied led to smaller student enrolment in the Social Studies department; a lower student enrolment led to a reduction of Social Studies staff and a lower profile for them. Also, the lowered status of Social Studies made it vulnerable to encroachment by other subjects. Below are some comments by participants about the consequences derived from the lowered status of Social Studies.

Mainly when there was a lot of emphasis on Science and English, and there was a question about whether we needed to have Social Studies as a compulsory lower school subject. The Government always supports literacy, numeracy and Science as being very important. But the fact of the person being an active citizen, there doesn't seem to be any priority put, and there hasn't been since I've been in education for a long time, but we are always the poor cousins. (Pa.1)

Under the structure of devolution, the dynamics of your staffing can be determined by the school now. I know of schools that have lost their Head of Department Social Studies. An example would be [.....] Senior High School where they had two Heads of Department for Social Studies and were told that your services were no longer required, we are only going to have one Head of Department. (Pa.1)

We have a great difficulty because when you have things coming on board from the Department saying that you should teach this, you should teach that, it take not only resources but our time. If we are told that students need to study a language and it is compulsory - where is that time going to come from? If you say a student has to know English, Social Studies, Maths, Science, they need Health Ed, they need Technology or Career and they need another language, how many hours in a day are there? Who loses out? I know already that has happened in a few schools, that they have already lost Social Studies time. And obviously when you lose time, you lose staff. (Pa.1)

With the year-long courses in the Achievement Certificate, a teacher could stay with the same class for a year and maintain continuity in terms of both teaching knowledge, skills and values and teacher-student social interaction. This was lost in Unit Curriculum where one teacher had to meet different classes during the year. Most teachers saw this situation as being very undesirable for student development, both intellectually and socially. One head of department commented that:

In a way the big advantage of the system although in hindsight it mightn't have been an advantage, was that as a Geography teacher you would teach the Geography units and the Economics teacher would take the Economic units and so on. But in the end the contact with students was lost and you know as educators you look at how you get on with the students rather than how you teach the subject and we had so few contact times with the students because we were changing around so much. (Hod.3)

At the moment we teach four one hour lessons of Social Studies. But in those times it was two one hour lessons per week with different classes and that was not enough contact time. And then, at the end of the semester, you changed and took on other groups. And so things like the regular development of skills and identifying areas of weakness and discipline and that sort of thing were very much diminished because of that. (Hod.3)

Many criticisms were directed also at the standards-based assessment in the Unit Curriculum. It was considered to be too complicated and too difficult. A senior officer said:

In Unit Curriculum I think the problem has been that the standards were too fine grained. Unit Curriculum had units, supposedly written at six stages of difficulty, and in each of those stages of development - stages one to six - there were grade related descriptors written to try and measure kids performance at A B C or D or F levels. So that in fact over the three years of lower secondary schooling you had six stages times five gradations, that is thirty levels of student performance trying to be measured. (So.1)

Another senior officer's view of the standards-based assessment, especially the grade-related descriptors was so negative that he saw it as "one of the most stupid things...a bad idea and a lot of work" (So.7).

The standard-based assessment, together with comparability across the system, was also seen to have placed constraints on teachers. It "restricted teachers' freedom to branch out into new content" (Hod.4) or "forced teachers into the same year content and focusing their teaching on producing an assessment result" (Tr.7).

The Print Report (1990) pointed out that "nearly 70 percent of Social Studies teachers perceive that they do not effectively understand standards-based assessment" and "too many Social Studies teachers demonstrated little confidence" with it (p.73). As a result,

some schools employed outright normative assessment procedures, while others collected data as though to conduct standards based assessment,

only to analyse and report it normatively. Still another group, tentative about the new procedures, collected data on student performance, using standards based objectives which were subsequently modified by a normatively based 'end of unit' test. (Print, 1990. pp.73-4)

The most commonly used forms of assessment were teacher-made tests, assignments, worksheets and work samples. Other forms such as group work, field work, checklists, oral presentations, group discussions, diaries and logs - which were included in the K-10 Social Studies syllabus - were rated very low and rarely used by teachers (see Print, 1990, p.74).

The Print Inquiry also found evidence of grade inflation where it was quite easy for students to get a D or C pass if they submitted work for standards-based assessment. It also found evidence of over-assessment where "it was not uncommon to find students submitting eight to ten pieces of work for assessment in a term-length unit covering ten weeks" (p.74). Over-assessment forced teachers to pay more attention to assessment than to the teaching itself and it forced them to rush through the content in a very limited time. As several participants in this study commented:

The trouble is sometimes the assessment is the dog which wags the tail. In other words, what I'm getting at there is that people are more worried about the assessment than the content now. You know you've got to have six assessments or whatever in that time and we worry too much about assessing the kids all the time and not getting some knowledge over to them. Maybe we need to concentrate on the knowledge and just concentrate a little bit less on the assessment side of things in lower school. (Tr.2)

I think Unit Curriculum helped encourage the situation of people rushing through the course, because you only had 10 weeks, but you had to test in 7 or 8 weeks, so you could get the results into the front office so the kids could get their reports. So, actually you weren't really doing 10 week units, you were doing 7 or 8 week units, and you had this amount of work that you had to cover, and that's where the Unit Curriculum really encouraged that part. (Pa.1)

The Beazley Report criticised the Achievement Certificate as lacking the category of "No Award" in assessing student performance. Unit Curriculum did have a "F" grade for failure but evidently it was rarely awarded. Not that all students were doing fine in Unit Curriculum. Rather,

the realities of timetabling complexities have placed Social Studies teachers in a dilemma - whether to fail students and 'promote' them to the next stage as failing students with acknowledged weaknesses or to

allow them to pass because the timetable generally cannot cope with students repeating units. In most schools the Review was informed that failing students were largely 'ignored' because the problem was too difficult to resolve and consequently these students usually went on to even more demanding courses. (Print, 1990, p.75)

Social Studies in the Achievement Certificate had a developmental sequence and scope from K through to Year 10 with a vision to Year 12. However, the linkage in Unit Curriculum between primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools was seen to be weak and problematic. A senior officer commented:

The other problem is that once again you've got secondary Social Studies operating in units without any linkage at all to the primary Social Studies, and without any linkage to what happens after in Years 11 & 12. In 8 - 10 you do this, in 11-12 you do something completely different. In primary schools they do something completely different. It's just too absurd. (So.4)

Finally, Unit Curriculum was also seen to have created problems for students to move interschool, intracity, intrastate, interstate and internationally. With different choice of units between students, different schools offering units at different times, different length of units between schools, and the different stages that different students had reached, it was almost impossible for a student to fit in when s/he wished to move around.

CLOSING REMARKS

The driving forces behind Unit Curriculum were political and economic, as well as educational. The reform was intended to remedy deficiencies of the K-10 Syllabus, provide schools with more flexibility and offer more choice to cater for all student needs. SAE in Unit Curriculum was structured into nineteen forty-hour units allocated into six stages. A major change was the shift from norm-referenced assessment to criterion or standard-based assessment.

Flexibility and choice remained only as intended policies. They were unable to be implemented because of the lack of money, curriculum support material, curriculum leadership, and sufficient training for teachers to handle the new criterion-based assessment strategies. Nevertheless, 'progress' was made in cutting education

funding and strengthening social control in a devolved system through accountability, and teacher and student performance indicators.

Critical theorists claim that devolution intensifies the curriculum's function of maintaining social control, reproducing social inequality and serving economic interests. The evidence in this chapter supports that claim with respect to the structure of Unit Curriculum. Teaching and learning were kept under control by making teachers and schools accountable to their system, community and students, and by the system of the criterion-based assessment. Teachers and schools could not afford to fail students who persistently underperformed; they had to let them drag on to the next stage. This, combined with the loss of teacher-student contact because of the shortened unit delivery time, left unsupported those who needed help. Moreover, the structural design of Unit Curriculum lowered the status of Social Studies. On one hand, time allocation for Social Studies in Unit Curriculum was reduced compared with Social Studies in the Achievement Certificate and with the other three core subjects. On the other hand, Social Studies always had to take on board new topics which further squeezed its time. And other subjects kept encroaching on its territory. The lowered status of SAE resulted in less students choosing Social Studies units and a lower profile for Social Studies teachers. A head of department provided a fitting comment to end this chapter:

At the moment in Australia, and it's part of this whole devolution movement, the curriculum debate is in the hands of big government, big unions and big business. And there's a danger in that. You know things like the liberal arts, for instance, they're not going to get a guernsey for very long with those sorts of players because they're not interested, there are no dollars in it. (Hod.4)

6

STRUCTURE OF STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

RATIONALE FOR STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

The change from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements has been long and slow. Though work on Student Outcome Statements began in Western Australia during the early 1990s, it was still in the trial and consultation stage during 1997. However, based on data from the documents that have been produced so far and interviews with people who had varying degree of involvement in the process, it is possible to identify structural features of Student Outcome Statements and the stakeholders' viewpoints of the structure.

Unlike the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus and Unit Curriculum, where the push was generated from mainly within the educational sector in an effort to overcome weaknesses entrenched in their antecedent structures, the impetus for Student Outcome Statements has come largely from outside the educational sector both at the national level and the state level. Moreover, there are similarities between the two levels in terms of the rationale to adopt Student Outcome Statements.

Many of the participants in this study argued that political and economic considerations underlay the decision to adopt Student Outcome Statements. According to one senior officer, Australian politicians believed that "Australia was not competitive in the international economy" and therefore they sought to "develop an educational system which would allow us to become more competitive internationally" (So.5). Some participants even claimed this to be a political game

where the driving force for Student Outcome Statements was not educational, but political. In their view, educational arguments for Student Outcome Statements were only a mask for the real political intention, namely to reduce funding in education.

As one head of department argued:

That's common practice that you always put your pragmatic intent in idealistic terms and that's a commonly taught practice of political argument. So while your argument might be to reduce your spending on education, you are not going to say to your community, I'm going to reduce spending on education. You say to your community, I'm going to actually devolve responsibility to you so you can have greater input and therefore it's better for you and reduced spending and that means exactly the same thing. (Hod.1)

Politically again, if you are going to want to actually change from one system to another - like from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements - or let's say you want to actually reduce spending and you've got to manufacture a reason for change, because you can't reduce spending in a current system without it being obvious, but if you actually mask the spending by arguing the need for change and then you cover that with rhetoric on the need for change, then you can actually hide a reduction in spending. (Hod.1)

Student Outcome Statements was also seen to be driven by the notion of accountability. In Western Australia, the origin of Student Outcome Statements was closely related to two educational policy documents. One was *School development planning: Policy and guidelines* and the other was *School accountability: Policy and guidelines*. It also had links with two other policy documents, *School decision making: Policy and guidelines*, and *School financial planning and management: Policy and guidelines*. These four documents were commonly referred to as "squiggle documents".

Ever since devolution in Western Australia, schools and teachers have been required to be more and more accountable to their system, communities and students. Student Outcome Statements was seen to be a better way to ensure that kind of accountability. Politicians wanted something that they could measure school performance with, partly because politicians or decision-makers were under pressure to promote Australia's economic competitiveness in the international market and wanted schools to produce the sort of individuals to meet that need. And partly because politicians and taxpayers were suspicious that schools were not using their educational funds effectively. The architects of Student Outcome Statements saw it

as the right tool to deal with these matters. A number of senior officers and a head of department made several relevant comments here:

It's come more from the accountability. As knowledge has grown, as the demands of society for students leaving school have got higher, people have had to capture what are the skills that we require of students when they leave school. Then they've looked back and they've said, well are schools producing the sorts of students that we want leaving school? I think it's the eighties/nineties global economic shift. (So.2)

Countries are spending more and more on education. In order to justify that expenditure just saying, well we are teaching them. That's not good enough. You've got to say, well okay so what did you produce. And it's all that shift to performance indicators that became part of organisational structures in the eighties as well that shift as well and that's been reflected in the education field. (So.2)

I guess the Education Department was promoting outcome statements because for them it was a better form of accountability than some sort of national testing. There was this accountability notion that in Parliament if someone stands up and says, how do you know the education system is working, how do you know that kids are learning, how do you know that there is improvement? And the argument that was given to us was that they saw outcome statements as the better option than a form of national testing or a form of, you know, all kids in Western Australian schools will be given this test covering this content and we'll give it to Year 9's and we'll see if there's any improvement or whatever. There was a sort of fear that if we didn't come up with some instrument to measure learning or the improvement in learning then the political masters would. This was a case of, at least you can do it within your schools and you can still maintain your autonomy and so on. (Hod.6)

The thing about the student outcomes is that they provide a framework, the required framework for curriculum development in schools. In this devolved system all the principals in all schools are accountable for the outcomes that are achieved in their school. Nonetheless there is some need for accountability beyond that to make sure that schools are achieving in the directions that the system requires of them. And so that accountability, the use of the student outcome statements and the eight levels of performance that are described in the student outcome statements is that people can measure school performance against those outcomes. (So.1)

In fact, the notion of accountability was explicitly and repeatedly stated in the 1994 working edition of *Studies of Society and Environment* (EDWA, 1994). At one point the document states that:

The Student Outcome Statements will represent an appropriate framework to give the government and the community confidence that government school education is soundly based and that all students are being given opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and understandings necessary for post-school situations. (EDWA, 1994, p.5)

The Student Outcome Statements will be a focus for school development planning and will provide a basis for teachers and schools to monitor and account for their performance. (EDWA, 1994, p.5)

This was reinforced in the document's rationale which said:

During the development of the policy on school accountability, it was apparent that the shift from external judgments about the work of schools to the use internal judgments by the school which focused on student performance highlighted the questions for making such judgments. Therefore some kind of framework which provides a clear specification of standards was necessary. (EDWA, 1994, p.8)

At the central state policy making level, then, the notion of accountability was closely related to the devolution process in Western Australia. Similarly, according to some participants in this study, Student Outcome Statements was also intended to provide schools with more flexibility in their curriculum decision making so that teachers would be able to "design curriculum and set up curriculums appropriate to them" (So.2). It was perceived to be "the kind of curriculum structure that best allow for a devolved system to develop" (So.1). Two senior officers further commented that:

We in Western Australia I suppose are only now just moving to a position where the devolved system can be met with a curriculum structure that allows for it to operate and that's one where you'll have a structure of student outcomes which become the broad framework for curriculum delivery in schools, which allows schools to develop their own mechanism for structures for the delivery of curriculum but that the mandated bit for all schools is going to be a set of required student outcomes. (So.1)

So what we are trying to move to is a system where we're not looking at what the teacher is going to do. What we're trying to do is provide a framework of, well these are the outcomes we're trying to achieve in our schools. So that if you're at a school that's way up in the north of the state or if you're out in the country or if you're in the metropolitan area how you get to those outcomes is best determined by the school, considering the resources that they have, the students that are at that school, the teaching expertise that they have in the school. All of those sort of factors will determine the extent to which they can achieve those sorts of outcomes. And those people are the best ones to decide what's the best way we can go about achieving these outcomes. (So.2)

The intention to provide schools with increased flexibility was clearly stated in more than one place in the working edition of Student Outcome Statements produced by the Education Department of Western Australia in 1994. In this document, Student Outcome Statements was seen to be "providing the freedom for teachers to take into

account local context” (p.5) and an ideal structure to divide the “non-negotiable and negotiable” (p.7) parts of a syllabus in terms of curriculum decision making in a devolved system.

Quite a few participants in this study believed that another driving force behind Student Outcome Statements was the intention to save money or reduce funding on education. For example, in answer to the question of who was pushing Student Outcome Statements, one head of department commented that:

Devolution is a de facto means of reducing funding and that in there lies the answer I believe. Who is going to actually save the money? Those responsible for the funding in the government. So it's government which is pushing it. (Hod.1)

The push for Student Outcome Statements was also seen to come from the industrial and business sector. Some of the people interviewed believed that Student Outcome Statements was related to the industrial input into education policy conveyed through Mayer and Finn, two captains of industry. For example, a head of department argued that:

I see outcomes coming from industry wanting ready made products for their workforce - products being the people for their workforce. Outcome statements really are business' way of saying whether or not a person can actually achieve to a standard rather than be rated as part of a cohort. So business is behind outcome statements because of the assumption that they will get people who are more able to do things than they are getting at the present time. (Hod.1)

Besides these contextual or community factors, Student Outcome Statements was also seen to be driven by forces within the educational sector. Student Outcome Statements was meant to “get some kind of national consistency in student education” (So.5). Across education systems in Australia there are discrepancies between different subjects or learning areas in terms of assessing and describing student's performance. Student Outcome Statements was intended to remove these problems and provide some commonly accepted terms or standards to describe student performance. The perceived idea here was to provide understandable and accurate information when a student moved around from school to school, city to city or state to state. A senior officer put it this way:

It means that everybody is using a similar description for kids. So, for example when they come from your class to my class there is a description that comes with them that says X is at this level, Y is at this level and I understand what that means and we all understand what that means, because it is described in the pointers and things like that. We have a basis from which we can then do our planning in the curriculum sense. (So.8)

Student Outcome Statements was designed to shift some focuses of schooling, classroom teaching and learning. Firstly, it was meant to shift the focus from input to output. It was supposed to focus not on “what was given to kids”, but rather “focus attention on what happened as a result” (So.8). Quite a few participants shared this view. For instance, another senior officer said that:

...You can teach but the kids may learn something quite different and so there's this real separation in thinking now between inputs and necessary outcomes. I mean we've changed the focus away from the inputs model to an outcomes model, because it's a far more practical way in an accountable kind of an environment - economic and educational. (So.1)

Secondly, Student Outcome Statements was intended to shift the focus on content-driven teaching and learning to a focus on teaching and learning process where not only was the content covered but also students were helped to “come to a better sense of their world” (So.8).

Finally, Student Outcome Statements was based on a shift from teacher-centred learning to student-centred learning. It was a paradigm shift where teachers were required to move from “content-based teaching to outcome-based student learning” (Hod.5).

Student Outcome Statements was designed to provide students with the opportunities to go into things in greater depth and to provide them with a broader picture which was supposed to be achieved by “putting all the curriculums in line with each other” (Pa.2). One senior officer commented that:

So the idea is to try and help kids. Sure they are going to need the breadth in order to come to a greater depth of understanding, but it is to try and juggle that a bit there. Because that's what the levels of Outcome are about. It's not if you've done that, it's the degree to which you then can pull all that together. In *Society and Environment*, it's not that they have covered all these facts, it's how all those things come together in the kid's head, which is what you are about. It's the construction of meaning that the child has got as a result of that that you are after. And

that is the focus then. So at the end of the unit you want to get the kids not only just to conduct the investigation and give it back to you, but you want them to apply it and think about it. That's when in *Society and Environment* terms we will see kids performing better. (So.8)

Student Outcome Statements was seen by more than one person as trying to provide a broader overview. One head of department said that,

What appealed to me about outcome statements was that it was addressing the big picture - they were saying Social Studies is about these strands. Now we're really talking about natural systems, we're talking about legal systems and political systems and it tried to sort of address that bigger picture again and it tried to sort of take us one step back from that forest of objectives that we were forced to teach in from '87 through. So it had a certain broader view about Social Studies and for me that was important because I think we just got lost in the detail of objectives. We didn't have the broader view. (Hod.6)

To conclude, a senior officer summarised the differences in rationale between the K-10 Syllabus and Student Outcome Statements by saying that,

Before, we had a K-10 syllabus and said, look whether you are in Turkey Creek or whether you are in Albany or whether you are in Perth we think this is a reasonable way to go. What we're now saying is, well we think these are the important things that kids need to leave school with but how you get kids to that point is really the professional judgment of the teacher in the school and the school staff as a whole. (So.2)

STRUCTURE OF STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

The driving forces behind Student Outcome Statements from both outside and within the educational sector have generated proposals for structural changes (internal and external) from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements. It must be pointed out, however, to date, the structure of Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia has not been finalised. At the time of writing (1997), SOS is still at a development stage and some changes are still being made to it. For this reason, the following description of Student Outcome Statements structures is based mainly on information obtained from interviews and relevant documents that have been produced so far. Where possible, though, an attempt is made to provide the latest information about the changes that have been made from the 1994 Student Outcome Statements (working edition) to the newly-drafted document ready for consultation later this year (1997).

The internal structure of Student Outcome Statements can be analysed at different levels. As the change to Student Outcome Statements from Unit Curriculum was a whole package reform, it has affected all the curriculum areas of schooling from Years 1-12. (Originally, the 1994 Student Outcome Statements was only intended to cover Years 1-10 of the compulsory years of schooling.) While there were only seven curriculum components in Unit Curriculum, eight learning areas were identified in Student Outcome Statements in the 1994 working edition. These areas of learning are: the Arts, Health and Physical Education, Mathematics, Society and Environment, English, Languages other than English, Science, and Technology. It should be noted that Society and Environment is a WA version of the national Studies of Society and Environment.

The overall structure across curriculum areas starts off with an over-arching Curriculum Statement (also called Major Outcomes); then, beneath that are eight Learning Area Statements. Under each learning area statement, there is a huge number of statements at different levels in different strands and sub-strands. Again, there was no over-arching curriculum statements and learning area statements in the 1994 working edition of Student Outcome Statements. These two levels of statements, the Over-arching Curriculum Statements and the Learning Area Statements, were developed respectively by the Interim Curriculum Council and the Learning Area Committees set up in Western Australia in late 1996 and early 1997, and put on top of the Student Outcome Statements. Below are some details of the structures at various levels.

The over-arching curriculum statement takes broad things about what the whole curriculum in a school should be developing, “things like interest in numeracy, problem-solving, creative thinking, respect for other kids, those sorts of outcomes” (So.8).

A senior officer explained that under the big umbrella of the Major/Over-arching Curriculum Statements, the Learning Area Statement for Social Studies is:

a statement of what the curriculum in Social Studies should be like for WA schools. Now it gives a definition, it gives a rationale, it stipulates the major outcomes to be achieved through the curriculum that schools devise, it also gives some indication of essential content to be used, and

it also describes how that might occur by phase of schooling. By phase - it means something like early childhood years, K-3, mid-childhood years, say Years 3 to 7 of schooling, adolescent years, say Years 7 to 10, and then young adults, Years 10-12. And each of the major outcomes are sort of described at each of those phases, so for example kids should have an understanding of the past, so how that will typically develop and emerge is described. (So.8)

In terms of syllabus structure, the 1994 working edition of Student Outcome Statements for Studies of Society and Environment contained four sections: Introduction, Student Outcome Statements, Pointers, and Work Samples. The subject matter structure of Studies of Society and Environment (now called Society and Environment) started off with six strands, each strand comprised three sub-strands, leading up to a total of eighteen sub-strands¹³. Within each of the sub-strands, there were eight levels of student outcome statements. All together, 18 by 8, there were 144 outcome statements. Under each outcome statement, there were some pointers indicating if a student achieved a certain level of outcome. And finally, there were some work samples for teachers' reference. This is shown diagrammatically in Figure 11.

The six conceptual strands were meant to cover “the whole of the existing curriculum” and “any additional things that would need to be covered” (So.5). There is a great similarity between the six conceptual strands in Student Outcome Statements and the five themes in the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus. One difference, however, is that skills development in Student Outcome Statements is treated as a separate strand whereas it was incorporated into all five themes in the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus. The rest of the six strands roughly matched the five themes. Time, Continuity and Change is roughly matched with Change (history); Place and Space with Environment (geography); Culture with Society and Culture (anthropology, sociology and social psychology); Resources with Resources (economics); and Natural and Social Systems with Decision-Making (politics)¹⁴.

13 Changed now, and very likely to change again. At present, there are seven strands, and the process strand (Investigation, Communication and Participation) now has four sub-strands. (R.1)

14 The new strand matches the Action Learning section of Social Studies that was encouraged in the mid 1990s, but, not officially written into the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus. (R.1)

Originally, the first six levels of SOS were intended to “cover the first ten years of schooling roughly” (Tr.1), and levels 7-8 were for the upper secondary schooling. However, later this was found to be inconsistent with the rationale of Student Outcome Statements.

Figure 11: Subject Matter Structure of Society and Environment
(EDWA, 1994)

Investigation, Communication & Participation	Time, Continuity & Change	Place & Space	Culture	Resources	Natural & Social Systems
Investigation Communication Participation	Understanding the past Time & change Interpretations & perspectives	Features of places People & places Care of places	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander cultures Cultural cohesion & diversity Personal, group & cultural identify	Use of resources People & work Management & enterprise	Natural systems Political & legal systems Economic systems
Twenty-four outcomes at eight levels	As left	As left	As left	As left	As left
Pointers to signal progress towards achievement of an outcome at a certain level (the number of pointers varies with each outcome)	As left	As left	As left	As left	As left
Work samples (number varies with each outcome)	As left	As left	As left	As left	As left

As one senior officer argued:

Eight levels were chosen because we didn't want to have, for example, 12 levels which would have meant that Level 1 would be Year 1, Level 2 would be Year 2 and so forth. We wanted to have a system where, for example, students could be in Year 3 but still be at Level 1, and they make rapid process and by Year 4 they may be at Level 4. So we didn't want to have levels which could be equated to years. We wanted to break down the lockstep progression that occurs in education of students. You do Year 1 and then you do Year 2, and then you do Year 3, so if students could proceed more quickly, that's fine, proceed more quickly; if students work more slowly, then they work more slowly. That was the theory. (So.5)

Unit Curriculum abolished the Achievement Certificate division of subjects into core and elective. Student Outcome Statements restored the division of non-negotiable and negotiable parts of the curriculum. The non-negotiable parts include the strands and sub-strands, the eight levels of outcomes and some particular content; the rest were supposed to be negotiable¹⁵. One of the teachers interviewed commented that:

Well, the non negotiable is particular content that has to be done. That's non negotiable. But then as far as I'm concerned you can't be an Australian without knowing something about your own country. Then after that you have all the other negotiable parts about content. All right, then there is the conceptual growth, that is non-negotiable, there are certain concepts that have to come through. But how you teach those certain concepts is up to you. If you want to take them out into the bush for three weeks or whatever, fine, if you want to keep them in the classroom that's much more open to us. (Tr.6)¹⁶

The external structural changes from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements were not as substantial as the internal ones outlined above. Assessment in Student Outcome Statements is criterion-referenced, much the same as that in Unit Curriculum. Nevertheless, there are several differences. Assessment in Unit Curriculum had five levels or grades (A, B, C, D and F) whereas Student Outcome Statements has eight levels. Unit Curriculum used grade-related descriptors to assess student performance while Student Outcome Statements uses pointers and outcomes to locate the level of student achievement.

15 Confusing; i.e., Achievement Certificate did have core and elective subjects, but, you can not compare these with strands and sub-strands which form part of all "subjects" or "learning areas" within the Student Outcome Statements system. (R.1)

16 Seems to apply whether you are discussing the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus or Society and Environment Outcome Statements. (R.1)

So far no information is available on the time allocation for each learning area nor is any information available about moderation and certification. It is believed that as long as the outcomes are achieved, it does not matter how much time is spent on achieving them or at what levels, provided the students have developed to their full potential. Also, it is a matter of speculation whether moderation and certification will remain the same as they were in Unit Curriculum.

The major changes from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements are summarised in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Structural Change from Achievement Certificate to Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements

	Achievement Certificate	Unit Curriculum	Student Outcome Statements
Curricula composition	Core subjects & option subjects	Seven curriculum components	Eight learning areas
Time allocation	Unequal time allocation between core and option subjects	Equal time allocation among all subjects	Time varies with student ability & pace of study
Length of courses	Year long courses	40-hour units	Depending on how soon an outcome is achieved
Model of progress	Progress based on age or year levels	Progress based on achievement	Progress based on achievement of outcomes
Type of assessment	Advanced: 25% Intermediate: 50% Basic: 25% Norm-referenced assessment	Six stages of progress Standards-referenced assessment	Eight levels of outcomes Standards-referenced assessment
Grades in assessment	Grades: Credit Pass & Pass	A, B, C, D & F	Levels 1-8
Timetabling	Limited vertical cross-setting	Increased vertical cross-setting	Requires vertical timetabling or students of different levels in one class
Course selection	Student choice among option subjects	Student choice among all subjects	Unclear

CRITICISMS OF STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

Criticisms of the structure of Student Outcome Statements made by participants in this study are levelled at six aspects: the nature of the structure; the nature of the Learning Area Statements; problems in setting outcomes; deficiencies in the outcome statements; problems associated with assessment; and undesirable future consequences if the structure is implemented.

Nature of Student Outcome Statements Structure

Many participants in this study saw Student Outcome Statements as just a monitoring or assessment tool, or, in one participant's words, "a measuring stick" (Hod.4). These participants argued there were at least three problems associated with Student Outcome Statements functioning as a monitoring tool instead of a K-10 Syllabus type curriculum framework. Firstly, they argued that the pressure of assessment would force teachers to teach for the examination, because "the outcomes are the examination and people always teach to an examination, not to a curriculum" (Hod.1). Secondly, although there are many ways to demonstrate that a student has achieved a certain level of outcome, teachers, being unable to grasp the "nitty gritty of what a outcome statement is about", would focus on the pointers that "the curriculum writers had chosen" (Tr.1). This was seen to be a constraint on teachers' creativity in their classroom teaching. Finally, the development of an assessment tool such as Student Outcome Statements was seen to be not a priority thing to do at the moment. Also doubts were held about the effectiveness of such a tool. One of the heads of department made this view quite clear by saying:

I don't know how good a tool it is for measuring where students are up to within the different strands. It might be really good. I think there are question marks over it. But what are you going to measure? Because at the moment the content and skills area of the curriculum are what needs to be patched up, fixed up, and made more relevant. (Hod.4)

Nature of the Learning Area Statements

By May 1997, the Learning Area Statements had not been available to all schools. Those who had seen and responded to it saw it as an attempted replacement of the understandings in the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus. However, these people

concluded that the Learning Area Statements were not what they were supposed to be, which caused them great concern. One of them commented that:

We have a concern with the fact that they may become a legal document. Once they are ratified through the structure, teachers are expected to cover values, or teachers are expected to cover cultures. Our concern is that it covers things in depth too much and it goes beyond what one would consider a Learning Area Statement. It goes into assessment and things like that which we have grave concerns about. I think, when you read the document, it appears that they are trying to make it more of a public statement rather than having a typical educational purpose. (Pa.1)

Problems in Setting Outcomes

Quite a few participants were very suspicious of the setting of outcomes. Some textbook companies were already producing outcome-based curriculum materials and selling them on the market. They placed some outcomes at the end of a given amount of materials, which implied that “kids do this and this in activity and this is going to be the outcome”. One of the participants who had been very much involved in Student Outcome Statements was at a loss to understand how they set those outcomes. This teacher argued that,

How they say that I don't know. I've no way of knowing, because one can interpret it quite differently, which is another problem with setting assessments in student outcome statement terms. Because you can't necessarily predict you are going to know the outcome that you are going to get. (Tr.1)

Deficiencies of Outcome Statements

Many participants in this study argued that the outcomes were behaviour-oriented and would narrow education to simply training. For example, a head of department said that,

Some of the outcome statements appear to be stupid or trivial. It's a bit what I call educational technologists taking control and they like to sort of say, okay if a person can learn to climb to the top of a ladder they've mastered something. Then they relate that simple task to education and I think that's where this sort of thing is coming from. You've got to have measurable and achievable levels. And in a way it's anti-education because it reduces back our tasks to simply like a rat in a maze being able to push a lever and get a reward, rather than having a philosophical base to your education and sort of reasoning and questioning and reflection and all those things, and, developing insight and developing interpretation skills. (Hod.2)

Some participants claimed that the outcomes were set in too broad and abstract terms for people to understand. Moreover, according to them, no attempt had been made so far to help those who were going to implement Student Outcome Statements at the school level to understand and grasp those outcomes. One can imagine the degree of difficulty classroom teachers will experience from one of the participants' comments. The language used in Student Outcome Statements and the structure of it were so difficult that even this much involved senior officer had to acknowledge that:

I have been involved for nearly five years one way or another with the whole process so I still don't have, I don't think, 100% grasp of what this is all about. At the moment I am still grappling with how to use the Outcome Statements as a document for advancing students' education, and so are the teachers I work with. (So.5)

Within this broad framework of outcomes, schools and teachers were supposed to develop their own curriculum, a task they didn't have much experience in. What they most needed was something they could work with, or hands-on guidelines. According to one participant:

There is a file now that is just on the market that they have said, it's something that curriculum planners can look at for developing new curriculum. But it is just the strategic planning and I think, well, what were people doing over the last two years, and what can we actually use? And the answer is, basically nothing. (Pa.1)

Many criticisms were directed at the internal structure of the outcomes that had been set. These included a wide range of related issues. One was that the structuring of Student Outcome Statements lacked a sequence of levels. For example,

There was also a problem with the sequencing of levels assuming that there is an increase in knowledge and ability, but that doesn't happen. There are some levels that are at a lower level that should be at a higher level, so consistency is a problem. (Pa.1)

The placement of some outcomes at wrong levels was seen to have caused the loss of sequential development of student skills. This compared negatively with the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus which had a very structured skills list which students did progressively from K right through to Year 10¹⁷. Student Outcome Statements does

17 Is this saying some outcomes within the process strand are at wrong levels? If so, only this strand could be said to "compare negatively with the K-10 Syllabus structured skills

have a separate strand called Investigation, Communication and Participation, which was designed to cover the skills or process domain and which teachers have to look at when they are developing their lessons in most topics. However, it was considered a “farce” (Pa.1). A head of department pointed out sharply the inadequate attention to process, by saying,

See the political technique, the way to not teach anything, is to say, it’s a general area to be covered in all areas, and everyone understands that.
(Hod.1)

Apparently, while classroom teachers were only thinking that the “processes themselves need looking at because they are not necessarily all that well put together at this stage” and “further development needs to occur there” (Hod.5), some curriculum developers were trying to cut down the only process strand and to “drop Participation in the Studies of Society and Environment classroom” (Tr.1).

Student Outcome Statements was meant to shift the focus from input to output. One head of department argued that it was problematic to emphasise output by neglecting the input and process. This person maintained that,

If you're actually looking at whether something's working, you should also look at process and you should also look at inputs. And particularly the effects of inputs and process, rather than only the output. So there is fairly common acknowledgment that you should look at all of those.
(Hod.1)

The internal structure of Student Outcome Statements was also seen to be limited in its coverage. In particular, value education and cultural education were seen to be minimal and marginalised. One of the teachers noticed that “valuing type exercises” were “not really captured in the outcome statements” (Tr.1). According to another participant, “values in the original Student Outcomes Statements rated three little points of two lines each. That was a bit of a shock” (Pa.1). A head of department gave a detailed account of the situation and expressed concern by saying,

Now curriculum outcomes is a very specific use of the term, outcomes. And if I was arguing about the outcomes of schooling in my school I would say that curriculum outcomes might be 40% of it but there are other outcomes like learning how to learn. In other words, learning problem solving techniques which isn't tested in - well it might be tested

list”. I think problems of sequencing of levels can be argued more easily in the other strands, but these are cognitive levels and not equivalent to the skills sequence list. (R.1)

in specific outcomes. There are the values that students have. The values that they don't hate our Indonesian neighbours or hate our Aboriginal population or that they co-operate with each other or that they'll be prepared to help each other, but they don't steal their mate's assignments and put them in under their own name. Things like that. So you know there are those values sorts of things which are really important which don't appear in the outcomes. Now when people are working on outcome statements this sort of thing gets only a very small coverage and yet many of us would say it's a very important part of schooling and the values that people take when they leave school. (Hod.1)

The other limitation in coverage was seen to be in the cultural studies area and the social systems area. Those who did a mapping exercise between the K-10 syllabus and Student Outcome Statements found that,

The Student Outcomes Statements limited what we were able to cover in our curriculum when it came to Cultural Groups, because of the fact that we had to teach Aboriginals, and at that time it was Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, I believe now that it is just Aboriginals. When we looked at Cultural Groups, the Student Outcomes Statements only related to that particular cultural group. It didn't look at other cultural groups, which is what we do in quite a lot of our K-10 Syllabus. So, from that point of view it was a bit narrow, and also it didn't cover very well the areas of Law and Government. (Pa.1)¹⁸

Problems Associated with Assessment

As with Unit Curriculum, Student Outcome Statements received a lot of criticism on assessment. It was seen as locking teacher into a "teach-assess-teach-assess" circle (Hod.5). As mentioned earlier, teachers were seen as having to teach to a test.

Given the fact that students at different levels are put in the same class and most often are assessed with the same test, one of the difficulties perceived by many participants was "getting an assessment which would show whether kids were here or here or even up higher" and that proved to be difficult because,

If you make it too open ended you're going to straight away lose some kids in the class whose ability is not as high and they're going to see some abstract idea, they're just going to freak out and not even try the assessment. So we always had this trouble of, if you make it too open ended you might lose the kids who struggle. Sure the brighter kids might see the nuances and the implications of the question and write a good answer. (Hod.6)

18 Is this criticism still valid? There have been changes made, but, maybe insufficient ones. (R.1)

Even if a test could cover all levels of students, what followed might be more difficult. It was very difficult for teachers to make a decision to grade student performance into different levels or to reach a consensus about what level a particular student should be allocated because teachers were “all doing something quite different” and “becoming more and more subjective” (Tr.3). One of the heads of department said that,

It seemed to be quite a tedious business, assessing just what level the students are at; you know it's not as clear cut as people thought it was. (Hod.3)

From previous experience with assessment in Unit Curriculum, a teacher participant argued it would be difficult for teachers to reach a consensus in categorising student performance into different levels:

I see the big area [of difficulty] is in assessing it. It is going to be the hard part. If you've got ten Social Studies teachers together and you gave them one piece of work they'd probably mark them from one to ten and the same thing with student outcomes. They are going to say, right this kid is at level 1, this one is going to argue that it's level 6. I mean we have similar sorts of problems at SEA meetings where we try and moderate students' assessment and say, right what would you give it as an A B C or D. I mean there's great arguments there as to who says it's an A and who says its a D. (Tr.2)¹⁹

Another problem related to assessment in Student Outcome Statements concerns how to decide if a level has been achieved. Several participants asked two interesting and similar questions not answered yet by the developers of Student Outcome Statements. These two questions were:

How many times do you have to prove that you have achieve a particular set of outcome statements at a particular level? (Tr.1)

Do you achieve an outcome when you can actually achieve it a hundred percent correct fifty one percent of the time or ninety percent correct a hundred percent of the time. So in other words with an outcome what does it actually mean to achieve it? (Hod.1)

One of the Student Outcome Statements' intentions was to give the school community a more accurate description of student performance, especially in school

19 There are a number of teachers who share the fears expressed here, but, they may be unfounded; i.e., if the pointers and work samples are developed well, this problem should be less than it was with the Unit Curriculum. (R.1)

reports to parents. However, apparently not all parents wanted this. According to some participants, some parents were not interested in what level their children had reached; they just wanted to know for sure how well their children were doing compared to other students in the class²⁰. For example, one school that had trialed parental reporting in Student Outcome Statements' terms had been,

besieged by parents who want to know how well their kid is doing in relationship to the rest of the class or their cohort. They are not interested in knowing that your child is at level two - sub strand da da da.
(Tr.1)

Future Undesirable Consequences

Based upon what they had gone through during the last decade, many participants in this study envisaged some undesirable consequences and difficulties that Student Outcome Statements would bring about once it was implemented. Firstly, Student Outcome Statements was seen to compartmentalise Social Studies. Compared with the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus where all social sciences, skills, knowledge and values emerged and gelled, Student Outcome Statements has “gone back to place and space, gone back to history and those sort of discrete groups” (Pa.1).

Secondly, Student Outcome Statements did not fit into the current school structure. One head of department put it this way:

Whilst we've been free to develop our curriculum to develop our student outcome statements and have freedom in that and the teachers have decided which way to go, we are not yet free regarding school structures.
(Hod.5)

Thirdly, some participants (Tr.3 & Tr.4) felt that, because they did not have “common models” in Student Outcome Statements assessment and everyone was doing something different, they had become “isolated professionally”. They claimed that Student Outcome Statements might in some cases endanger collegiality and collaboration between teachers.

20 Parents are likely to have a lot of difficulty in understanding levels of achievement. They are accustomed to their children progressing one year at a time. As there are eight levels of outcomes over twelve years of schooling, I wonder how many parents will be able to understand and appreciate that their children are still at the same level as they were last year. Fear of the difficulty of explaining the apparent “non-progress” of a quite capable student may encourage some teachers to be over generous in their assessments. (R.1)

Fourthly, some school staff envisaged another difficult situation they were going to face with Student Outcome Statements. They thought it would not be possible for them to cater for all students at different levels at one class at the same time because teaching had always been directed at “the middle”. One of the heads of department gave this picture of the situation they were going to face:

Within your one class you've got seven or eight groups of different learning. But we don't incorporate the notion of all these different learning abilities within the one class. We tend to teach at the middle ground. The weaker kids struggle, the brighter ones go off and you still tend to teach that middle ground. So outcome statements raised this whole issued of, if some of your kids are here and you want to take them from here to here but some of your kids are already here and you want to take them to here, do you have to start changing your teaching methodology? And well we haven't answered that question but that's an issue that's going to face schools as they come to grips with outcome statements. (Hod.6)

Fifthly, some of the participants could foresee a situation where it would not be easy for classroom teachers to monitor student progress because the level a student might be in could vary from subject to subject and from time to time even with the same subject.²¹ Some of them argued that,

One of the problems of outcome statements is that it works on the assumption that the development of knowledge is sequential. And there is a lot of evidence to say that it is not. Much of it is not. And you know some students might be able to do a level five task when all of the other people in their class are around about level three. But on other issues they're behind them because they can't actually do a lot of the so called sequential tasks leading to the level five task they're doing. But they can do that one. (Hod.1)

It's quite possible for a student to be at a particular level at one point in time and then five months later have slipped back. So actually how you monitor a child's progress along the continuum is going to be also very difficult. (Tr.1)

Sixthly, some of the participants argued that under the pressure of assessment, and the need to show indicators of student performance, teachers would teach to an examination or assessment. Apparently, there had already been evidence showing that. One of them observed that,

²¹ This is more likely to be the norm than the expectation. Student Outcome Statements were developed with this expectation. (R.1)

The people who have been trialing it have been doing a wide range of things that I had great concerns with when I saw what they were doing. They were picking up a particular classroom activity and saying, you can teach this outcome to your class by using this activity, in which case, the outcome is again driving the syllabus, and there didn't seem to be any thought such as, what does my student need to know and how do I develop the curriculum? (Pa.1)

Finally, within the Student Outcome Statements framework, schools and teachers are supposed to have more flexibility to develop their own curriculum to suit local needs. This raised the issue of curriculum materials, about which, almost every participant in this study was concerned. They feared Student Outcome Statements would increase the inequality in resource materials between government and non-government schools, and between schools in well-off areas and those in poor communities. For example, one teacher expressed concern by saying,

I don't know where I can get all the resources at the present moment. Lots and lots more are being printed and you've got to keep up with them, but that becomes expensive as well and given the fact that schools are asked to fund their own things these days I do have a real problem with the fact that State schools may not be able to offer the same standard of education as non government schools because we won't have the funds to be able to buy what we need. (Tr.6)

The same teacher further commented that Student Outcome Statements would involve more resources. Moreover, to keep resources materials up to date and relevant, teachers would have to buy packages on the market and find more time to look for resources, particularly those "relevant to their particular school population". But this teacher doubted whether staff would be given that time because "schools are asked to fund their own things these days".²²

CLOSING REMARKS

Overwhelmingly, participants in this study saw the national curriculum and its WA version - Student Outcome Statements - as driven predominantly by forces from outside the educational sector. These forces include pressures to promote Australia's

²² Xie has a real problem in attempting to discuss Student Outcome Statements at this point of time. What is a valid criticism today may not be tomorrow. It is a two edged sword really. That is, Xie describes a problem today, tomorrow a solution to that problem is found, but this also results in the creation of a further two problems. (R.1)

economic competitiveness in the international market, to provide a basis for cutting government funding on education, to incorporate input by industrialists into the curriculum, and to ensure accountability in a devolved system. Even the objective of creating consistency across all systems within Australia was seen to be economically-driven, as will be shown later. Other perceived aims of SOS include the provision of more flexibility for schools and more opportunity for students to 'have a broad picture' and to go into things in greater depth.

The internal structure of Student Outcome Statements contains three levels of outcomes: the overarching outcomes, the learning area outcomes, and student outcomes. The internal structure of SAE in Student Outcome Statements also contains six strands, eighteen sub-strands, and eight levels of outcome statements. Career education, work education and vocational education form an important part of the structure. The external structure is still much the same as that of the Unit Curriculum; assessment is still criterion-based and student achievement is to be graded into eight levels.

The findings reported in this chapter tend to support the critical theorists' claim that curriculum under devolution will function to intensify social control, increase social inequality, and serve narrowly defined economic interests. Making teachers and schools accountable to their community, system and students, and the use of performance indicators, will tighten managerial control. Social inequality is likely to be increased by the fact that there are too many levels of students in one class for a teacher to cater adequately for them all. As teaching is directed frequently at the middle level, students at either a lower or higher level will not get the same teacher attention as those in the middle level. Although there is no labelling of students in assessment, grading them into eight levels could serve the same social stratification function as was the case with both the Achievement Certificate and Unit Curriculum assessment. Finally, the main driving forces behind Student Outcome Statements, and the incorporation of work education, career education and vocational education into Student Outcome Statements, suggests that Student Outcome Statements serves economic interests more so than previous curriculums.

PART B

CHANGES IN PROCESS

This part is divided into three chapters to discuss changes in the process of curriculum policy making of the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus, and SAE in Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements. Process here is seen to consist of three stages: development, trial, and implementation.

In the development stage, an attempt is made to answer three basic questions: What was the rationale for the development of the three major curriculums? Who developed the curriculums? And how were the curriculums developed? A detailed answer to the first question has already been provided in Part A. Here, only a brief account is given to reset the scene. In answer to the second question, three categories of developers are identified: full-time developers, part-time developers and those who were consulted during the curricula development. The major emphasis, however, is placed upon the third question of how these curriculums were developed. To answer this question, a detailed discussion is provided about: the organisational structure of policy formation process; the strategies, processes and models used; the financial and personnel resources available; controversial issues; consultation and negotiation; and the time duration for the development of each of the three curriculums. At the end, an attempt is made to try to identify the differences and similarities in the development process between the three curriculums: K-10 Social Studies Syllabus, Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements.

Part B also focuses on issues related to trial and implementation processes. The trial of the three curriculums is discussed in terms of scale, time duration, range of content that was trialed, strategies used for the trial and the purpose of the trial. For implementation, attention is paid to matters such as responsibility for implementation, adoption of the three curriculums, teacher induction, inservice and PD, teachers' responses to the curriculums, quality control, financial and personnel support, and curriculum materials support for teachers. A brief account of the trial

and implementation of the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus is provided as a basis for a more lengthy comparison between the three curriculums at the end of this section. The main emphasis, though, is upon the trial and implementation of Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements.

7

K-10 SOCIAL STUDIES SYLLABUS

DEVELOPMENT OF THE K-10 SYLLABUS

Initiation of K-10 Social Studies Syllabus

The K-10 Social Studies Syllabus was initiated in the mid 1970s by a Social Studies superintendent, who was well supported by the Director of Curriculum in the Education Department. According to some participants, no matter who the subject superintendent was, the K-10 syllabus was bound to be developed because the “time was right for it” and people were “ready for further development” after “a major change in the 1960s and early 1970s” (So.4). The development of the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus could also be seen as a “response to irritation from teachers about the then current quality of the curriculum” (So.3) in Social Studies. More specifically, the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus represented an attempt to address perceived deficiencies in Social Studies A and B, such as: lack of continuity, coherence and consistency between primary and secondary schools; lack of systematic and comprehensive curriculum materials; the low status of Social Studies; poor commitment from Social Studies teachers; and excessive content-driven delivery. K-10 tried to raise the status of Social Studies and shift the emphasis from content to process. Most important of all, it attempted to strengthen the links between primary and secondary schools by providing a comprehensive developmental scope and sequence in knowledge, skills and values education as well as incorporating into Social Studies new topics that were becoming more and more important in the rapid changing world.

Developers of the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus

The appointment of the K-10 syllabus developers was made by a Social Studies subject superintendent on the basis of “tapping people on the shoulder” (So.3). Three people were appointed by the superintendent and brought into the Curriculum Branch in the Education Department to form a team specifically for the development of the K-10 syllabus on a full-time basis. This team comprised an officer from the Education Department, an “Early Childhood expert” and a primary school teacher who “had done some studies in curriculum and education” (So.4). The two subject superintendents had the overall responsibility and worked closely with the team. Meanwhile they travelled around the state to talk with Social Studies teachers about the concept of a K-10 syllabus.

Through the whole development process, various interest groups had input. One avenue for their input was through committees established to develop the K-10 syllabus, namely, the Syllabus Committee and the Consultative Committees. The other avenue was through consultation conducted outside these committees. (Details of this are provided in the following section).

The development of the K-10 Syllabus was a lengthy process. It had people coming and going from a wide variety of interest groups; through the whole process, it “involved community members and educators from pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary institutions”. These included one Regional Director, ten superintendents, twenty-seven education officers, fourteen advisory teachers, seven principals and teachers, eighteen academics, nine representatives from the Independent School System, seven representatives from educational organisations, five representatives from community organisations, and representatives from forty-four primary schools, five district schools and seven secondary schools (see Curriculum Branch, 1981, p.iv). According to the participants in this study, the actual Syllabus Committee was made up of representatives from the Education Department of Western Australia, the WA Principals’ Associations, WA Social Studies Association, WA State Schools Teachers Union, the Board of Secondary Education (now called Secondary Education Authority), the Catholic Education Commission, parents and universities (So.3 & So.4). This Syllabus Committee was the major avenue for interests groups’ input.

The avenue of input for the rest of the pressure groups was the Consultative Committees or advisory groups. Generally, there was “a reference group (advisory group) for each section” (So.4), that is, for each of the seventeen topics. For example, there was a small reference group of people in business for the Consumer and the Economy and a variety of reference groups for immigration, environment, history, sociology, the Peace Education Foundation, Aboriginal education and law courts. It needs to be pointed out that textbook publishers did not have input into the development process of the syllabus. They played a role in the implementation phase. However, they kept a close eye on the development process and frequently made contact with the syllabus developers. One senior officer recalled that,

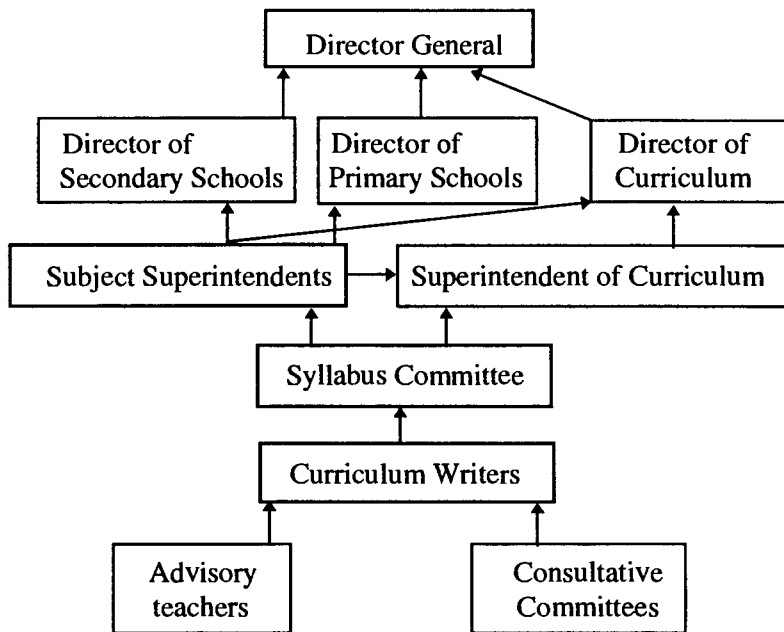
They wanted to write it all the time and as the Syllabus was forming, they wanted to know exactly what was going to be the layout of it so that they could get textbooks ready for it. Albert Koutsoukis’s first book on Syllabus matched up perfectly with all of the units. Albert was continually ringing up and saying “What are you recommending for Year 9? What are you recommending for Year 6 and 7?” so that there were textbooks ready pretty quickly. (So.4)

Based on the information from interviews, the working structure of the K-10 developers can be outlined as in Figure 13 below.

However, the actual responsibility or power structure for the development of the K-10 Syllabus was slightly different from the organisational chart in figure 13. Within this power structure, the Director General had the responsibility to approve the final product of the whole syllabus and to agree to release it. The responsibilities of the Director of Schools and the Director of Curriculum were more managerial and symbolic. They had the overall responsibility for their own directorate, but neither of them had a specific role in K-10 Syllabus development, though the superintendents had to report to them about the development progress.

The most important group was the subject superintendents. In practice, they had the formal or “end of line” responsibility and the most power (So.3). It was they who initiated the K-10 Syllabus, formulated the ideas for the syllabus, chaired the Social Studies Syllabus Committee, supervised the curriculum writers, and at a de facto level, had the responsibility to approve the final product of the K-10 Syllabus. The

Figure 13: Organisational Structure of the K-10 Syllabus Developers



superintendent of curriculum did not “have anything to do with the structure or the way that the syllabus was mapped, only the editorial work”; though, he did not have the final editorial approval to ensure that a “certain editorial standard was put to every one of the booklets before they were printed” (So.4).

Like lots of steering committees, much of the development work was done outside the Social Studies Syllabus Committee. This committee was informed about what was going on and provided with what the curriculum writers came up with. Nonetheless, it had the power to see that its recommendations came through and were implemented (So.4).

The curriculum writers were responsible for the actual writing of the syllabus. They had the power to decide what was included and how those materials were organised. But they were made accountable to the groups above them and had to put their materials out for criticism (So.3).

The advisory teachers travelled around all the district high schools and brought back feedback to the developers. As mentioned earlier, the rest of the stakeholders’ roles were limited to having a say through their representatives on the various committees and consultative bodies.

Process to Develop the K-10 Syllabus

Overall, the process to develop the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus was “collaborative” and “consultative” (So.4). During the whole process, there was a lot of interaction between teachers and the curriculum team and between teachers and the subject superintendent who travelled around the schools across the state. Therefore, an important feature of this process was the intertwining of development and consultation. These two ran parallel almost through the entire process. From the initial emerging of ideas for K-10 Syllabus to the final product, four phases of development can be identified.

Phase One: Adoption of K-10 Ideas

This phase featured the efforts made to get people to accept the ideas that were to be embedded in the K-10 Syllabus. It was a slow movement lasting from 1974 to 1976. Some participants in this study call this the “talking phase”. (So.3 & 4)

In 1974, a new Social Studies superintendent was appointed. Soon after his appointment, he and another superintendent were flooded with ideas of things that needed to be done in Social Studies. However, they did not immediately move on the actual development of the K-10 syllabus. Instead, they started talking about it in 1974 and through 1975. It was towards the end of 1975 and the beginning of 1976 that they moved quite strongly into it.

With a background of teaching in both primary and secondary schools, one of the superintendents was conscious that there needed to be a much better coherence between primary and secondary curriculum materials. He was also concerned that while everyone talked about skills, “there was no clear map showing the sorts of skills that needed to be developed and the sort of sequence that could be sensibly developed” (So.4). The superintendents and some curriculum officers were also considering issues about the sequencing of knowledge and concepts. They were trying to work out “what sorts of concepts are more difficult and what sorts of concepts need to be introduced when children are young” (So.4). They looked at people like Piaget and Bruner, and looked at development and curriculum theory, trying “to collect ideas from everywhere about sequencing” (So.4). Once they

became more confident about sequencing and had some sort of broad picture of what the K-10 Syllabus should look like, they started going around schools to get their proposals accepted and to further clarify their ideas.

The superintendents went from school to school to “sort out ideas” with Social Studies specialist teachers. They also started visiting primary schools which traditionally had never been visited by subject superintendents. There they found that “primary teachers had a lot to say about what the Social Studies Syllabus should be” (So.4).

Much of the in-service courses they conducted at the time was devoted to matters relating to the Social Studies Syllabus. During these in-service sessions and in the schools they visited, they “drew maps of skills all the time” and talked about “sequential skills gradually increasing in difficulty”; they talked about concepts being visited and revisited and spiralling in terms of complexity; they talked about how the whole thing would be held together by a core of key understandings; and people would say, “Yes, that’s what we need” (So.4).

In fact, the “talking” went on for so long that teachers became impatient. They urged the superintendents to “cut the talking and start doing it!” (So.4). They made the superintendents realise that “for curriculum change, the time could probably never have been more right” (So.4). The superintendents seized this opportunity and moved to the next phase.

Phase Two: Formulation of Framework for Developing the K-10 Syllabus

What the superintendents got across to schools and teachers was no more than some rough ideas. Much more needed to be done to make a syllabus out of those ideas. To that end, the superintendents did some preparation work in organisational structure and personnel appointment, then moved directly into setting a framework. This involved persuading the Director of Primary Education and the Director of Secondary Education to agree to scrapping the Primary Syllabus Committee for Social Studies and the Secondary Syllabus Committee and to develop a single Syllabus Committee with one of the superintendents as chairperson. Having done that, they assembled a team of three curriculum writers in 1977. Then, they gave the team a briefing about

all the ideas that had been floating around and all the discussions that had been going on in the past couple of years. With guidance from the superintendents and help from other sources, the curriculum writers put time aside “to actually draw up the framework, develop a time-line and set the process of development in train” (So.4).

As another senior officer said,

Yes, considerable time was spent in setting up the frameworks for the curriculum because if we were going to be concerned about scope and sequence and comprehensiveness, there had to be this framework, and there were lots of time spent sitting round in the groups discussing this. (So.3)

Phase Three: Development of the K-10 Syllabus

At this stage, when the framework was laid out, some working parties were established, such as the Content Working Party, the Values Working Party, the Process Working Party and so on. The curriculum writers took the notes of the working party meetings and tried to absorb them into their actual writing. Meanwhile, the superintendents were still travelling around schools. They would meet with the writers formally every week, see them frequently during the week to “compare notes on what they had heard in schools” with the on-going work on syllabus materials. If the writers felt the need to trial some material in schools, the superintendents would suggest a few schools. So there was a lot of interplay and consultation between the writers and the teachers. This was also reinforced by the advisory teachers,

whose job was to go round to all of the schools, and especially the more remote schools to explain the policy and curriculum to them. Also during the construction of the curriculum, they had special responsibility to try and obtain feedback from people in the field to try and understand the problems that people were facing and therefore they reported back on a weekly basis - every Friday morning - to discuss their feedback and then adjustments were made to the policy and the curriculum as it went through. (So.3)

In addition, the curriculum writers put their material out for comment and criticism. In some cases, people who had expertise in the field, like university lecturers, teachers and special interest groups, were called in to “contribute to that particular area” (So.3).

According to another senior officer, during the whole development process nothing was written until it was approved by the trial schools. He said,

The documents were really passed back to us by teachers who said “that’s okay”, so they had already been through a process that we were pretty confident of. (So.4)

By November 1981, the K-10 Syllabus materials, including the teachers’ guide, were released to schools. It had taken almost seven years to develop the K-10 Syllabus, from the first stage of shaping ideas to the final product and it still had not been completed.

Phase Four: Refining the Syllabus

It needs to be noted that this was only a planned stage. The developers had a goal to refine and work over the Syllabus every year. In the released syllabus documents, an attempt was made to match content with understandings. The developers identified some content and understandings, then they had understandings spread through the Syllabus and linked the mandatory content to the understandings in order to avoid repetition. In a subsequent edition of the Syllabus they linked alternative content to the understandings so that the Syllabus started off with an understanding followed by recommended content. In the refinement phase, the Syllabus started off with a lot of recommended content plus some alternative content. The developers,

were hoping to refine it to the stage where the Syllabus would comprise the framework of understandings and skills, and much of the content would be free for the teachers, because there was always this recognition that the content was going to die. What you thought of as great content one year would turn out to be lousy content the next. As they were formulating these plans curriculum development in the Education Department came to a halt. That was about 1983/84. (So.4)

Consultation of the K-10 Syllabus

As mentioned earlier, consultation characterised the development of the Syllabus. Though that happened mainly between the developers, superintendents and teachers, other interest groups were consulted and had representation on the committees.

For example, the developers used the National Curriculum Development Council’s resource material, though they were “not driven at all by a national framework”.

They ran meetings of representatives from principals “to explain the Syllabus” (So.3). Professional organisations such as Social Studies Association¹, were also involved. Some of the drive behind the K-10 Syllabus came from these associations and the teachers within them. One senior officer recalled that,

At each of the Conferences, like the Social Studies Teachers Conference and Geography Teachers Conference², the K-10 was discussed and developed, and there were lots of forums for Social Studies Teachers to come and have an input. There was a wide degree of ownership in this process, and because of the lengthy time-line, I think, there seemed to be many levels of discussion and there were some forums which did involve the Teachers Association. (So.3)

The Secondary Education Authority³ “provided the frameworks for curriculum” but was supposed “to accept what had been developed by the Education Department as long as it had gone through a good process”. University academics were strongly involved in the committees and had lots to say, but they were not the “final arbiters and didn’t have a lot of control over the final product”, though they debated issues hotly (So.3).

Controversies in K-10 development

According to some senior officers (So.3 & 4), a few controversial issues emerged during the K-10 Syllabus development. The biggest issue was whether any elements or sections of the Social Studies Syllabus should be compulsory; that is, whether there should be non-negotiable elements in the Syllabus, such as knowledge of Australian history.

Another controversial issue centred on Aboriginal studies. One aspect of the issue was whether the incident in Pinjarra should be called “the Battle of Pinjarra” or “the Pinjarra Massacre”, and whether the whites should be presented as “settlers or invaders”. There was “considerable heat and tension there” (So.4). The other

¹ My recollection is that the Social Studies Association of WA was formed later, more as a response to Unit Curriculum. Similarly, Western Australian Social Studies Association was formed in about 1987. (R.2)

² Were these conferences conducted by the professional associations or EDWA? (R.2)

³ Check if it was called the SEA then or if it was still Board of Secondary Education. My recollection is that the SEA never had responsibility for lower school Social Studies, the earlier Board did. (R.2)

controversial aspect of the issue was the way Aboriginals were presented. This attracted lots of criticism and anger, although the developers had sent all of their materials across to the Aboriginal Education Section in the Education Department for comments three or four months in advance before they printed any of it. This threw the developers into a dilemma. One of the senior officers described it in these terms,

If we talked spears and boomerangs then we were casting the Aboriginal people as primitives. If we talked drugs or petrol sniffing, it was not so big in the 1970s. If we talked 'fringe dwellers' then we were encouraging prejudice; we were sort of type-casting. If we talked achievement, then we were being paternalists. Whatever we did it seemed wasn't going to satisfy some of these people because they were so fiercely protective and so indignant at just about everything that had been done to Aboriginal people, so the Aboriginal sections did attract a great deal of criticism. (So.4)

In addition, a lot of debate took place around Career Education and Religious Studies. Some contended that they should be included in the Social Studies Syllabus. Eventually they were excluded.

However, most of these issues were solved either technically or through negotiation. For example, with the issue of negotiable versus non-negotiable elements in the Syllabus, the developers eventually discovered that it was almost impossible to identify sections which should be compulsory⁴, which every student and every classroom throughout Western Australia had to learn. And so the resolution was achieved by,

going back and giving greater emphasis to what was called the 'generalisations' and then the 'understandings' which were the powerful underlying ideas....to give some recognition to the people who wanted particular areas to be emphasised by introducing focus questions, and that was helpful. The objectives were also further clarified, but there was still a fair degree of choice, the only pre-requisite was the broad understandings. So achieving the understandings was gained through a variety of learning processes from which the teachers could choose, which might have been relevant to that content, that stage of development of the children or whatever resources they might have had. (So.3)

⁴ There is some content - in a broad sense - that is compulsory in Social Studies K-10 Syllabus. If you look at Scope and Sequence chart in the Teachers Guide you will see that content in italics is compulsory - most pertains to Australian content. (R.2)

One of the strategies the developers used to tackle the issues was talking, collaborating, and trying to get eventually what was acceptable to those groups into the Syllabus.

Another strategy they used was to set “an attenuated time-line” so that they were able to accommodate pressure groups along the way. They tried to “talk to just about every conceivable group” to see “what they wanted”. Therefore, they “didn’t have warring pressure groups” (So.4).

Still another strategy employed to avoid “disharmony” was to set up a team of curriculum writers that was of somewhat the same mind. Measures had been taken to make sure that this team worked “openly and honestly and constructively together” so even if there was going to be a lot of disagreements, there would not be “savage and permanent disagreement”, and eventually they would “reach a point of consensus” (So.4).

Through the entire process of development and consultation, “the ultimate power, the ultimate decisions” were made at the Curriculum Branch level with the Superintendents: “They could make a decision which would upturn five or six weeks of work if necessary” (So.3). The same senior officer commented that,

there were weekly meetings chaired by the Subject Superintendent with all members of the group present, the curriculum writers and also the advisory teachers and these problems and reports and things like that would be presented and then debates would occur and decisions were made at that level. (So.3)

Resources for K-10 developers

The developers did not have any problem with financial resources or personnel resources. During all those years of development, the then superintendent worked “without ever having a budget” or it “seemed to be a limitless budget” (So.4). Whenever he wanted something printed he would say, “I need 20,000 copies of this book” and that would go through the system. What he would do was to negotiate bodies, so that his main resource was people. He had the ability to travel round schools and communicate, and if he wanted to run an in-service course, he had to ask for funds from the Superintendent of In-Service. Moreover, “there was a little bit of

Commonwealth money available for in-service too, gradually through the late 70s” (So.4)

Autonomy for K-10 developers

Some participants argued that the developers had considerable autonomy. They did not feel any censorship or constrained by anybody. In one of the participant’s words, “we were still able to do whatever we liked in terms of our curriculum, so we had considerable autonomy” (So.3).

TRIAL OF THE K-10 SOCIAL STUDIES SYLLABUS

Strictly speaking, it was the ideas of the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus rather than the Syllabus itself that was trialed during the years from 1979 to 1980, because “nothing was written down into the Syllabus until they had all been trialed” (So.4). A large number and variety of schools were involved in the trial process. These included forty-four primary schools, five district high schools and seven secondary schools.

According to one participant (So.4), the range of content in the Syllabus was trialed thoroughly. In his words, “all of the ideas in the Teachers Guide from years K to 10 - and there are heaps of ideas there - every one of those ideas was trialed”. Furthermore, teachers were involved constantly in the trial process. The ideas later documented in the Syllabus came largely from teachers. According to a superintendent, what the Syllabus was trying to do “was actually draw from the field the best ideas” from as many teachers as possible because “there was no one teacher who had all those ideas”. All these “ideas had been trialed and okayed by teachers before they went into the Syllabus” (So.4). What can be inferred here is that the purpose of trialing those ideas was to get teacher feedback, to improve the quality of the Syllabus and to ensure that the Syllabus would work.

The strategies for trialing the K-10 Syllabus were collaborative and diverse. One of the strategies involved the superintendents and advisory teachers travelling around the State visiting the schools, meeting with the trial teachers, discussing with them issues that emerged from trial, and collectively working out how a topic or a piece of content could best be taught.

Another commonly used strategy was to bring teachers together and workshop some of the best teaching ideas. A senior officer described the use of this strategy by saying,

Let's take social issues for instance. We have a Teachers' Guide for the Year 10 Syllabus on Social Issues. They are all those teaching ideas. The strategy we used was that we brought in teachers from about ten schools, put them in a workshop for a day and said, come up with the very best ideas you can for teaching this material, you know, here's a set of Let's take social issues for instance. We have a Teachers Guide for the understandings, here's some suggestions, rack your brains, talk to each other, come with good ideas for teaching, jot them all down, now let's agree who's going to trial what. And they went off with the classes and trialed the material, then they came back and reported on it. (So.4)

These workshops were run sometimes by superintendents or advisory teachers, sometimes by one of the trial teachers, and sometimes by high profile educators. Many master teachers, academics and the like were invited in to run workshops from which WA teachers benefited a lot. A senior officer recalled that,

Jack Frankel came out to Australia in the late 70s I believe. He ran a series of workshops. In fact some were at Churchlands, what was then Churchlands College of Advanced Education. We actually bussed a classroom of kids in. It was in one of the lecture theatres and Frankel had his class of kids out the front, 25 kids, and he put them through some values exercises. It was fascinating to see a master teacher and a very good theoretical thinker, and an author - highly regarded in the USA - actually put his ideas into practice. A lot of us learned from that. We had an audience of teachers and curriculum writers. We frequently used people like that and then got their ideas. (So.4)

Basically, teacher responses to the trial of K-10 Syllabus were quite positive because the ideas being trialed were drawn from the teachers themselves, so they "had a sense of ownership" (So.5). This positive attitude towards the Syllabus lasted beyond the trial and helped the implementation of the Syllabus.

IMPLEMENTATION OF K-10 SOCIAL STUDIES SYLLABUS

In 1981, the ideas were put together and documented in the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus and the Teachers Guide. All these documents were released to schools and implementation of the Syllabus began.

Responsibility for K-10 Implementation

Responsibility for implementing the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus was shared among the superintendents, curriculum officers and key teachers within schools. According to one senior officer, the superintendents set up the plan, the curriculum officers were largely responsible for organising what were fairly extensive implementation or orientation courses, and the key teachers were responsible for the day-to-day implementation activities of the Syllabus. The same officer said that,

There would be one or two representatives from a school invited in for an extended period of time, two weeks, and I think some went on for longer, and they had a thorough indoctrination to the programme. They were not only trained about the Syllabus but how they were going to deliver it back in their schools, and how they were going to support teachers, and how to prepare programmes and things like that. With this training, it was the teachers themselves who were then going to be implementing the Syllabus at the classroom level, at the school level. (So.3)

Teacher Inservice for Implementing the K-10 Syllabus

During the implementation process, there was “extensive teacher support in terms of professional development” (So.5). Besides the indoctrination and training of key teachers, as mentioned above, teachers “had some opportunity through their professional associations, and there were workshops run in a lot of different forums” by the superintendents. Workshops were conducted “after school at about four o’clock in the afternoon, for two hours at places like TAFE Colleges, universities and different centres in Carnarvon”. Usually there would be “a hall full of people”. At these workshops, the superintendents would explain the structure of the curriculum, and would go into the teacher groups for discussion and feedback. (So.3)

In addition, the superintendents would visit schools to offer their support and get teacher input. The superintendent “visited every school each year” and during their visits, usually one day in a school, “there was normally an hour and a half session with the teachers and there would be an explanation of the structure and there would be questions asked”. Also the Advisory Teachers⁵ played an important part in

⁵ Difference between then and now - there are no centrally-based advisory teachers to facilitate implementation of SOS. (R.2)

supporting teachers. They were able to go and visit schools, especially the remote ones and “run courses” for them on invitation (So.3). Another senior officer described the teacher inservices offered as follows:

In 1982 the superintendents were taking the documentation round to schools. They did some excellent work with teachers in training, alerting them to what was in the Syllabus and talking about the different sorts of teaching methodologies proposed, and sparking enthusiasm amongst teachers who were preparing to teach, for what they were going to be doing the following year. So the Syllabus hadn't been introduced and the superintendents were working with the teachers in training, running courses all round the State, using the Syllabus documents and talking to the principals of primary and high schools. It was a very strenuous year, but it was satisfying. (So.4)

Resources For the K-10 Syllabus Implementation

Financial resources for implementing the K-10 Syllabus were quite sufficient. Several factors were at work here. First, part of the implementation work, particularly the preparation for implementation such as teacher inservice and PD courses and workshops was inexpensive. One senior officer put it this way,

These courses were low cost courses because they were presented by people like the superintendents and advisory teachers who were not paid. It was part of their duties. They were held after school, so there was no teacher relief. All that mattered was to get a venue and there might have been a bit of afternoon tea, and that's all. It was low cost! (So.3)

Second, as mentioned earlier, “the superintendent of Social Studies had a budget and a lot of autonomy to run those courses” (So.3). As another senior officer put it, the superintendents “seemed have a limitless budget” (So.4).

Third, personnel resources for the K-10 Syllabus implementation were also sufficient. Besides the three superintendents, there were three advisory teachers and a large number of curriculum officers in the Curriculum Branch, and a lot of key teachers across the State. With the “limitless budget” and “a lot of autonomy”, the superintendent would “negotiate bodies” and allocate personnel resources where needed. (So.4)

In addition, support for teachers to implement the K-10 Syllabus in terms of curriculum materials was very “intensive” (So.5). There were three sorts of

curriculum support materials. The first was the Syllabus or curriculum framework material itself. It provided teachers with “a scope and sequence” of knowledge, skills and values so that teachers were quite clear what they were expected to do for student development through the years from K-10. (So.2)

The second was the teacher resource materials for each year from K-10. They were high heartedly called “the last of the door stops” (So.1). These Teachers Guides provided teachers with some appropriate content, some strategies, background material and some activities that “they could use to try and get kids towards the understandings” and objectives specified in the Syllabus (So.2). To help teachers in their daily delivery of the curriculum, a lot of handy “Syllabus manuals and resource sheets” were prepared (Pa.1). A senior officer made explicit the intention of the Teachers Guides by saying that,

We had to write teacher notes, background notes, what contents you need to understand to be able to manage this, because a lot of teachers of Social Studies, say in primary schools, would have no background in some cases, in history, geography and economics, so therefore it was a requirement that there be some reading material that they could go to immediately to be able to bring them up to speed in terms of understanding the material. (So.3)

Finally, there were student resource materials. Though it was impossible to provide all the student resource materials, there were some resource packages prepared by Central Office which teachers could take and photocopy. Later on, some commercial providers also produced student resource material.

One participant summarised the provision of curriculum resource materials by saying that “the main emphasis was on supporting teachers and giving them a lot to choose from in terms of the strategies they might use and the evaluations they might select” (So.3).

Teacher Acceptance of the K-10 Syllabus⁶

Apparently, the adoption of the Syllabus was successful. Teachers widely accepted it. They felt an sense of ownership of the Syllabus because the ideas were from them. They wanted to familiarise themselves with it, “so there didn’t seem to be any argument about whether they would attend the inservice courses or not!” (So.3), and “no one said this is a lot of codswallop” (So.4).

Quality Control Processes in Implementing the K-10 Syllabus

Attention was paid also to quality control of the implementing process. Heads of Department were expected to play an important role. One senior officer put it like this:

Heads of Department would have attended conferences where they would have learned about the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus and what was expected of it, and thereafter their normal supervision of their staff would be the means by which they would see whether or not it was being implemented faithfully. (So.3)

Another quality control was through the advisory teachers and the superintendents who “visited the schools around the state at least once a year” (So.4). Finally, said one senior officer, “there was reliance upon the curriculum material” because it was fairly explicit about what was required” (So.3). The same officer concluded that “it was probably better implemented than many programmes that have been implemented in the State”.

CLOSING REMARKS

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the major driving forces behind the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus came from the educational community and were directed at deficiencies within Social Studies A and B. In the initiation and development process of the syllabus, the subject superintendent played an important role. He held

⁶ A huge difference that may account for the difference in teacher response (apart from consultation process in K-10) is that prior to K-10, Social Studies was a ‘mess’. There was only a series of outdated topic books; in primary schools there was no proper sequencing - children studied the same topic time and time again. In other words, teachers wanted a syllabus; they sought to change. This was not the same for either Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements - where the change has been imposed. (R.2)

the overall responsibility, appointed and worked with, the developers of the syllabus, and enjoyed great autonomy.

All together, seven years was spent on the development of the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus. It took five years to write the actual syllabus because every new idea was trialed and approved by schools and endorsed by classroom teachers before it was written down in the final syllabus. This lengthy process made it possible for the superintendents and advisory teachers to travel around the state to consult with, and gain feedback from schools, teachers and interest groups. Controversial issues were resolved mostly through constant and lengthy negotiation. A relatively high level of consensus was achieved.

The K-10 Syllabus was trialed in fifty-six primary and secondary schools. The trialing was designed to get feedback and draw the best teaching ideas from teachers to refine the syllabus. Many avenues for feedback were set up, such as subject superintendents, advisory teachers and curriculum officers constantly visiting trial schools to discuss and resolve issues, conducting workshops to inform teachers, and training key teachers to be responsible for implementing the syllabus in their schools.

Responsibility for implementing the K-10 syllabus was shared among education officers in Central Office and schools. Teachers were quite willing to adopt the syllabus because they had a sense of ownership. They were well supported in terms of money, personnel and curriculum support materials. These factors contributed to its success.

8

UNIT CURRICULUM

DEVELOPMENT OF UNIT CURRICULUM

Rationale for Unit Curriculum⁷

The idea of Unit Curriculum emerged from the criticisms of the Achievement Certificate by the Secondary Principals' Association in 1980. These criticisms were later incorporated in the recommendations for a "unit approach" in the Beazley Report (1984, pp.66-83).

The intentions underpinning the Unit Curriculum were both educational and non-educational. The educational ones were directed at deficiencies in the Achievement Certificate and the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus. Educationally, the Unit Curriculum was designed to:

tailor courses to individual needs; give student needs precedence over subject requirements; endorse student-centred learning; provide the student with comparatively short-term goals and lead to a more readily identifiable incentive system; abolish the three or four levels of subjects and awards; increase the flexibility in a student's programme; and break the chronological age grouping of students and allow for the establishment of remediation classes as part of a student's course in a way that makes it a benefit with minimal handicap. (Beazley, 1984, pp.68-70)

However, there were some non-educational or contextual and political driving forces behind Unit Curriculum. The introduction of Unit Curriculum coincided with the

⁷ Also at the time of increased retention rates. Recognition that more students staying on beyond 10 were not TEE-bound/university-bound. The need for more 'vocational', 'practical' courses for non-academic students in lower secondary schools. The need to make clear that Unit Curriculum only affected lower secondary school; not K-7, unlike previous syllabus which was K-10. (R.2)

movement away from centralisation to decentralisation in the mid-80s. During this period, state governments across the country started to review funding in every public sector agency. Education in government schools was amongst the first to be targeted. Government school education was required to be restructured along devolutionary lines. One view of this change was that it allowed governments to cut funding and save money, and shift responsibilities down to the educational practitioners while still holding them accountable to the system and school community. Unit Curriculum was part of a wider process of educational change in Western Australia. This change was based on the principles of “self-determining schools, maintaining educational standards, community participation in school management, equity and responsiveness to change” (EDWA, Jan. 29, 1987, p.1).

This contextual driving force was reinforced by the then newly elected Labor Party and the Ministry for Education in Western Australia. The cabinet members were relatively young and active. They were eager to make changes. Arguably, action got the upper hand over wisdom in the mid-80s, and the Ministers were determined not to be told ‘No!’⁸.

Developers of Unit Curriculum

The selection of Unit Curriculum developers was rather complicated. The posts for full time developers such as curriculum writers were filled by invitation (So.7)⁹. These writers worked on a “contractual basis” (Pa.1). Mostly, they had a one or two year contract. They went and worked in the Central Office for a couple of years, writing the Unit Curriculum, then went back to schools. According one senior officer,

They were just teachers¹⁰ who had maybe been on the Subject Association Committee or had done something of interest, and then got a job as a writer and often afterwards went back to being a teacher. (So.7)

⁸ Agree totally! (R.2)

⁹ I was one of these writers. There were not ‘contracts’. We went into Head Office for an indefinite amount of time. We were ‘invited in’. There was no advertisement . (R.2)

¹⁰ People who had done the writing were ‘just teacher’ too. (R.2)

This group of writers formed different parties in every subject area. Another group of full time developers formed a team to develop the final conceptual framework for Unit Curriculum. Because Unit Curriculum was a wholesale reform, it also involved other subject superintendents. One Social Studies senior officer said that there were,

meetings in the Education Department where there would be all the Subject Superintendents, of which there were about 30 very senior officers, all sitting around a big table and each one representing their subject. So there was the Superintendent of Media Arts, the Superintendent of Home Economics, the Superintendent of Art, the Superintendent of Music... and the difficulty was that in the beginning it was left to those Superintendents to work out among themselves, because they were the curriculum experts, what to do with the curriculum structure. (So.7)

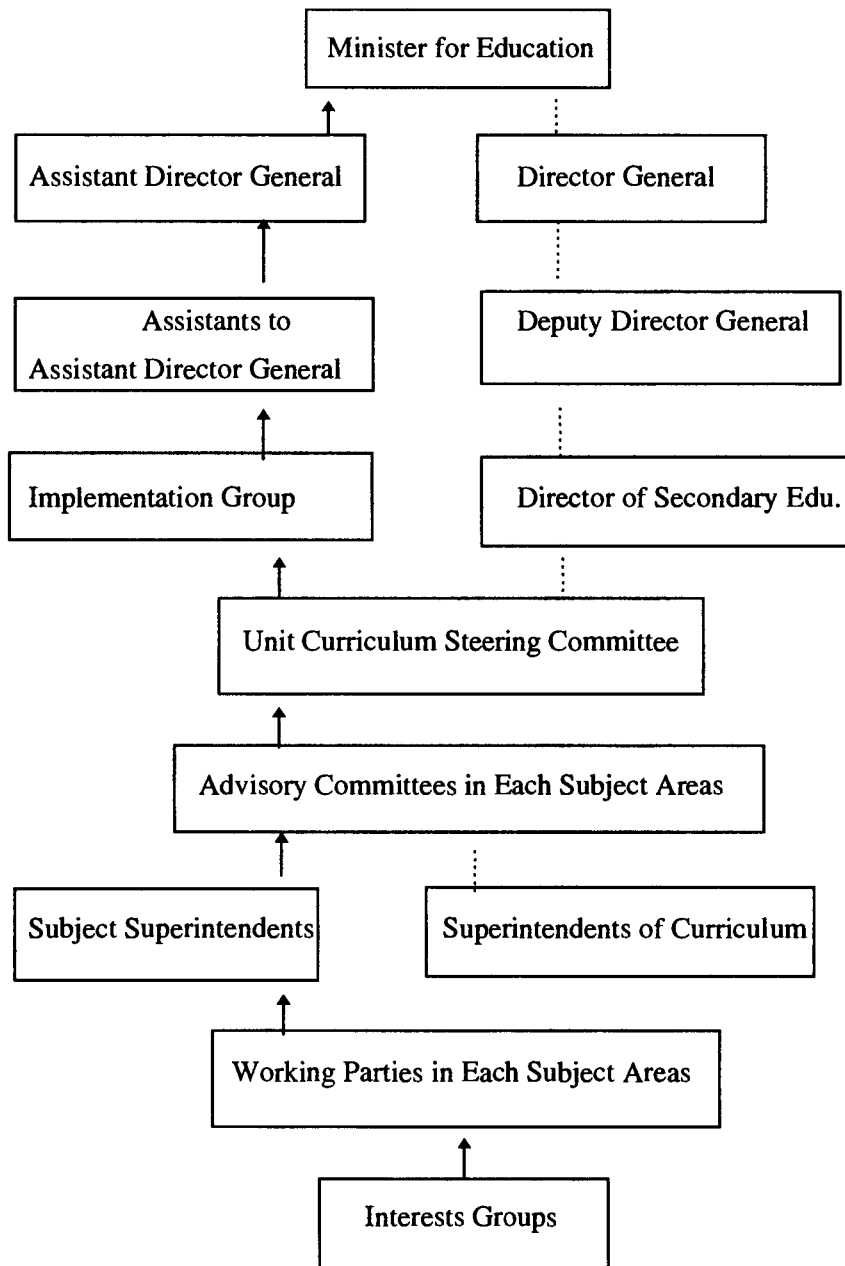
In the middle of the development process, the then Minister for Education, who was one of the major driving forces for Unit Curriculum, played a leading role. He appointed an Assistant Director General to oversee the development and implementation of Unit Curriculum outside the usual bureaucratic line management within the Education Department. The newly appointed Assistant Director General set up his own team to manage the development and implementation of the Unit Curriculum.

In addition to these full time developers, there were also some individuals and interest groups involved at various stages. They were either represented on the Committee of Inquiry chaired by Kim Beazley (see Beazley, 1984, pp.viii-ix) or advisory committees. Some had their input during consultation. Details are provided in the next section, the Development Process.

The working structure of Unit Curriculum developers is outlined in Figure 14. Within this structure, ultimate responsibility rested with the Minister for Education. He established the Beazley Inquiry, appointed his own staff to ensure that Unit Curriculum would happen, and set the time-line for Unit Curriculum development and implementation. What the developers had to do was to “get the materials ready” (So.7)¹¹.

¹¹ In an environment of limited/declining resources, also a very tight time line. (R.2)

Figure 14: Organisational Structure of Unit Curriculum Developers



The decisions about how many hours in a unit and how many units would be compulsory were all decided by the Implementation Group chaired by the Assistant Director General. This Implementation Group comprised some 20 people who held the overall responsibility for “making the Unit Curriculum happen, and who would have come to an agreement about what that would be, and what would be approved by the Director General” (So.7).

The working parties of curriculum writers, mostly chaired by subject superintendents, did the actual writing. They were responsible, in consultation with the Advisory Committees, to make decisions about what to put in each unit.

The subject superintendents reported to the Director of Secondary Education; they were also “the defacto bosses of these teams” of curriculum writers (So.6). The Superintendent of Curriculum at the time was more a facilitator who would do what the subject superintendents suggested. Nonetheless, the subject superintendents’ responsibility was quite limited. They were powerful in their subject area and within the specific working parties, but they did not have the overall responsibility. They just did what they were told to do. One of the participants commented that the subject superintendents were “nothing more than the person who tried to translate that idea [Unit Approach recommended in Beazley Report] into something that would work in schools” (So.4).

The stakeholders’ involvement in Unit Curriculum development was also very limited. The State School Teachers Union was “not concerned at all about the curriculum issues” (So.6). The WA Social Studies Association¹² “did not have any input in the formation of the units” (Pa.1), the textbook publishers “weren’t involved in the presentation of it at all” (So.7), and neither were parents (So.6 & 7). Other interest groups, no matter whether they had representatives on committees or not, did not have much input either. Some of the participants explained why. One argued that:

I have to say that there were dozens of consultative committees of various kinds. There was certainly an Aboriginal Consultative Committee around the Unit Curriculum. But I want to say that it doesn’t matter how many of them you find out existed, my guess is that none of them had much impact. So it’s not that they didn’t exist, just that it’s hard for them to influence things when the Minister has decided that something is going to happen. (So.7)

The Secondary Education Authority played a role only in the assessment area, though it struggled to have more control, albeit unsuccessfully. One of the senior officers accounted for their limited input by saying,

¹² I am not sure that the Association existed then. (R.2)

The Secondary Education Authority had some impact and that was because for a while they struggled to take control of the lower secondary syllabus. Think about it like this. The Secondary Education Authority Act gave them responsibility for high schools. The Achievement Certificate was a SEA Certificate. The Education Department decided that they didn't care what the SEA thought, because the SEA dealt with government schools and non-government schools, and so a decision was taken down at the Department that we would do the Unit Curriculum any way we liked and we wouldn't care what the SEA said, and if people down there didn't like it, it would be tough luck. So that led to a struggle with the SEA over that issue and led eventually to the SEA backing off and acknowledging that it really didn't have a role in lower secondary. For the next few years they really only paid attention to upper secondary. They had some impact, and the main impact was I think the one to do with grade related descriptors and criteria based assessment. (So.7)¹³

More details about responsibility in the development of Unit Curriculum are provided in the following section where stages of development are identified.

Development Process

The development of Unit Curriculum went through five stages: initiation; democratic indecision; shift of responsibility; rushed development; and unsuccessful persuasion. The overall time duration was seven years from 1980 to 1987, but the actual development of the syllabuses was pushed through in a very limited amount of time. The following account elaborates each of the five stages.

Stage One: Initiation

The idea to have a Unit Curriculum had been "floating around in the professional thinking for quite some time"; later it "got crystallised into *The Beazley Report*" (So.6). The Beazley Report documented the origin of Unit Curriculum. In 1980, the Western Australian High School Principals' Association recommended that the Achievement Certificate be replaced by "one consisting of units of study" (Western Australian High School Principals' Association, 1980, p.12). In 1983, this Association, in a joint study with Heads of Independent Schools, investigated the possibility of a replacement of the Achievement certificate. The WA State School

¹³ My recollection is that GRDs for Unit Curriculum were developed within EDWA. I am not sure the SEA had anything to do with them. (R.2)

Teacher' Union responded to this inquiry and recommended something similar to Unit Curriculum, namely:

that a number of units should be developed and that each individual unit should have the same allocation of periods or run for the same length of time each week; that curriculum design be aimed at enabling all students to perform to the best of their ability; that students be allowed to develop skills and attitudes at individual rates; that extension or remedial units of work be offered where necessary; that advancement through school not be entirely chronologically based; and that timetables be sufficiently flexible to allow students to select units appropriate to their ability and needs. (Beazley, 1984, p.70)

In the same year, the Australian Labor Party (ALP) was elected to power. After a long time out of Government, "virtually the first thing the ALP did was appoint Bob Pearce, a former teacher, as Minister for Education, and the first thing he did was appoint Kim Beazley senior to chair a committee of inquiry" (So.7). The Beazley Committee, represented by principals and deputies of both public and private schools, the Teachers Union, business associations, academics, parents and education officers, came up, in March 1984, with 272 recommendations. One set of recommendations focused on the unit approach. This "authoritative" report lead people to think that "there should be a Unit Curriculum" (So.7).

Stage Two: Democratic Indecision

What followed after the Beazley Report was a long time of indecision, not about whether to adopt the unit approach, but about how to develop it into a curriculum structure. Although people in the Education Department formed a working party to "flesh out what should happen" and attempted to "design the Unit Curriculum" (So.6), some basic questions remained unclear, but had to be answered. These basic questions were: How many hours should there be per unit? How many units should there be per year? Which units should be compulsory? Which units should be optional? Should the old division of subjects into four core subjects and optional subjects in the Achievement Certificate continue?

The Superintendents tried to tackle these questions "in a kind of democratic way but they would never reach a conclusion because they disagreed with each other. The 'options people' wanted equality with the 'core subject' people" (So.7). Meetings

after meetings were held in the Education Department, attended by all the subject superintendents, of whom there were about thirty very senior officers, “all sitting around a big table and each one representing their subject”. One senior officer said that,

It was left to those superintendents to work out among themselves, because they were the curriculum experts, what to do with the curriculum structure and that went on and on and on and didn't reach a conclusion. (So.7)

Stage Three: Shift of Responsibility

Stage three saw a sudden shift of overall responsibility to develop Unit Curriculum.

In late 1984, the Minister for Education became irritated because,

he had been waiting to be the Minister of Education for ten years. He was finally in charge. He gave his instructions, and nothing happened! And this was in the political climate of the 80s in WA and that climate meant the whole of the State Government Cabinet, almost all of them, were under forty years old. They were a very young Government. They were very impatient with old men who said it couldn't be done or it was too hard. And it was not an environment where wisdom was a highly regarded quality, it was an environment where action was highly regarded. So it was a time when old men and old women saying it couldn't be done was not popular with the Minister. (So.7)

Finally, the Minister decided to put someone else in charge, rather than leave it to the ordinary line management of Director General, Deputy Director General, Director of Secondary Education and superintendents to decide what to do. He appointed an Assistant Director General in charge to make sure that Unit Curriculum happened. The Assistant Director General was not only put in charge but was also told that it had to be done straight away. The Assistant Director General was an 'off-line' person. Though he was put in charge, he was out of the usual structure of the Education Department. To ensure that Unit Curriculum happened, the Assistant Director General had to appoint his own staff and take major responsibility for Unit Curriculum development from the hands of those in the ordinary management line. This planted the seeds of heated and constant contestation at a later stage between two groups in the Education Department.

Stage Four: Rushed Development

In late 1984 and early 1985, the development of Unit Curriculum gathered impetus. A Unit Curriculum Steering Committee was convened to supervise the construction of a framework for Unit Curriculum. The Committee moved swiftly to decide what the structure would be and the number of hours per unit. Eventually it was decided that units would be forty hours long and there would be an equal time allocation among all units. The final conceptual framework for Unit Curriculum was also completed “in desperation” by the team during Easter 1985 (So.4).

Once the framework was ready and basic decisions had been made, large teams¹⁴ of curriculum writers were gathered in the Curriculum Branch whose job was “to take the syllabuses and chop them up into Units and to develop materials for teachers” (So.6). Every syllabus in every subject was to be re-written, so that they would be in 40-hour blocks. Every subject superintendent at that point had an opportunity to update their subject, instead of taking the subject as it existed and just dividing it up. What was hoped for was not a simple two-page instruction to do topic A in such and such a unit, and topic B in another one, but a whole new set of material, objectives and assessment procedures¹⁵. A senior officer gave a very vivid account of what was going on then in the Curriculum Branch. He said:

There was about a year in 1985 which was completely crazy in the Curriculum Branch.....where there were more than 100 people busy re-writing all of the units for Years 8, 9 and 10. Some of those units were written for brand new syllabuses which were already coming in on the line. In the case of English, a project group had been writing the English Syllabus. They were going down their track writing their syllabus, and they could see the Unit Curriculum coming along on a parallel track telling them what the building block shapes would be, what they would be like, so they were able to fit in with the Unit Curriculum without too much of a problem. Mathematics had a bigger problem because they

¹⁴ In Social Studies, there were two of us who worked on Unit Curriculum, as well as other things. (R.2)

¹⁵ In Social Studies, there was not a whole-scale rewriting of materials. Many units /topics were unchanged. The most significant change was when they were to be taught, i.e., at what level. Objectives were not changed for Social Studies although some were swapped between units. Only two new units were written - Technological World and Contemporary Australian Society - very limited materials were developed in the rush of time. A lot of work was done on moving to a criterion-referenced assessment approach - but again materials were fairly limited. They went out as draft documents and nothing else followed. (R.2)

were about a year behind the English project group in rewriting their syllabus, and they could never catch up with Unit Curriculum. So when Mathematics started, the units were finished, but there were no text books for them. Big problem! In Science they jumbled all the topics up into new units and teachers could hardly recognise what had happened to the subject. And in Social Studies, they had a relatively new Syllabus, the K-10 Syllabus, and people were generally unhappy that anything had been done to it at all¹⁶. They wanted it left alone. So the 1985 period was all this mucking around, re-writing syllabuses. (So.7)

However, Unit Curriculum writers in the Social Studies area did not really 'leave the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus alone'. They found that the existing K-10 Syllabus was not written up in "nice clean little discrete packages of ten weeks". So, what they had to do was "re-market it and repackage it" (Pa.1). They also looked at writing some new units. Eventually they added two new units to the original seventeen topics in the K-10 syllabus.

Stage Five: Unsuccessful Persuasion

The units that had been produced were trialed in 1986 at seven schools for refinements. By the end of 1986¹⁷, it became clear in the pilot period that some schools were going to have a lot of trouble. According to one senior officer (So.7), at that point a few people, particularly the Assistant Director General and his group, tried to persuade the Minister to go more slowly and delay the implementation of Unit Curriculum for another year, but without success. The same officer commented that,

The Minister was only interested in action! He didn't want to be told no, he had been told no before. It was unhelpful to say no. What he wanted to hear was, tell me how you are going to do it, not why you can't do it. (So.7)

This failure to slow down or stop completely, later resulted in a "complete disaster" (So.6).

¹⁶ Agreed. (R.2)

¹⁷ Even during 1986. (R.2)

Controversial Issues in Developing Unit Curriculum

Quite a few controversial issues emerged during the process of Unit Curriculum development. First, there was an issue as to whether there should be a Unit Curriculum. Secondly, there was a controversy about who should take charge of Unit Curriculum development. Thirdly, opinions differed as to how it should be done. Fourthly, there was disagreement between different subject superintendents because each of them wanted different things out of Unit Curriculum. Fifthly, there were debates about how many hours per unit, how many units per year, which units would be compulsory, which units would be optional, and whether the old idea of four core subjects would continue. And finally, some schools wanted to have substantial changes and vertical timetables, and some schools did not. Some people saw the whole exercise as an opportunity for schools to have more control over the curriculum, some people saw it as the curriculum being changed by Head Office without consultation. All these issues were contested. Some were eventually resolved and some not. Details of the contestations and their outcome are provided in the next section.

Contestation in Unit Curriculum Development

According to one participant, there was “a constant contestation in the Education Department between those who thought that it was time for a change and those who thought it wasn’t” (So.7). This resulted in a ‘victory’ for those who wanted a change.

What came next was contestation over who should take charge of the whole business. This contestation took place both outside and within the Education Department. On one hand, the Director General did not approve of the Minister for Education wanting to interfere. In his view the Director General should make key policy decisions in the education system, not the Minister. On the other hand, the Minister and his colleagues in the Cabinet and Labor Party were firmly of the view that the politicians should make policy and that bureaucrats should implement it as directed. Clearly, the Director General and the Minister for Education were in a fight for power. The struggle ended in the Director General’s decision to retire and to move on to another

job, and the Minister took over the overall responsibility for Unit Curriculum development.

There was also a power struggle between the Education Department and the Secondary Education Authority. The latter fought to take control of the lower secondary syllabuses because the Secondary Education Authority Act gave them responsibility for high schools. However, as noted earlier, the Education Department decided that,

they didn't care what the SEA thought, because the SEA dealt with government schools and non-government schools, and so a decision was taken down at the Education Department that they would do the Unit Curriculum any way they liked and they wouldn't care what the SEA said, and if people down there didn't like it, it would be tough luck. So that led to a struggle with the SEA over that issue and led eventually to the SEA backing off and acknowledging that it really didn't have a role in lower secondary. For the next few years they really only paid attention to upper secondary. (So.7)

Within the Education Department, there was continued contestation between people who had formal and informal power. The Assistant Director General was put in charge of Unit Curriculum. In effect, he reported directly to the Minister rather than to the Director General and he had formal authority to do it. But, subject superintendents wanted it done in a different way and they had a lot of informal power. So there was a contest between the person who had the formal power and people who had informal power. One senior officer described the contestation in these terms:

There were a couple of superintendents who were very keen on the idea that Unit Curriculum would be much better, but they were not at all keen on people who weren't subject superintendents deciding what would happen. So they were working for the Assistant Director General, but not for him happily. It was a house divided in the beginning. There were different interest groups struggling about what would happen. Some of those struggles were very tense struggles. (So.7)

The same officer further commented that,

Well on every issue, at every committee meeting there would be a difference of opinion. So, sitting around the conference table in the Director General's conference room, there would be some subject superintendent who would have one view and the Assistant Director General would have a different view. It felt like different teams operating and are you for me or are you against me. There was a contest

between formal and informal power. Eventually it resolved in favour of formal power. (So.7)

In addition, the subject superintendents in general were interested in what would happen to their subjects, not what would happen to the whole school. So they were fighting amongst themselves to get equal status for their subject, which meant equal time, and “most of them didn’t go beyond that in terms of what they were fighting for” and they could not reach an agreement amongst themselves (So.7).

In brief, negotiation began from the release of the Beazley Report (1984) and went on for the next three or four years, unceasingly. In the beginning a lot of time was spent negotiating among the superintendents and so forth. However, the Minister decided that there had been too much talk and not enough action, because the superintendents actually used up too much time for negotiation. In his view, there was no time left to negotiate between Central Office and schools. One senior officer summarised this by saying,

So, there was plenty of negotiation, but with the wrong people, and the time was used up. If the superintendents had been able to decide very quickly what they wanted done, then there would have been as much as another year available - but because it was allowed to drag on and on there was no time left at the end. (So.7)

Although there was a relatively high level of consensus at the time when the Beazley Report came out, that consensus disappeared almost as soon as Unit Curriculum development went to details of how many minutes per unit, how many compulsory units and how many units in each subject each year. So there was consensus in 1984, but from 1985 onwards, the consensus disappeared and never returned.

Despite the lack of consensus, the development of Unit Curriculum went ahead as the Assistant Director General wanted it to. He and his group debated and negotiated their way through with the people who had informal power and a different view. Though he and his group could not just do whatever they wanted, basically their view prevailed. They did their job and made Unit Curriculum happen in accord with the Minister’s directive.

Consultation

Because of the lengthy negotiation process within the Education Department “with the wrong people” (So.7), very little consultation was conducted with those who were to implement the Unit Curriculum. The formation of units was “all done in the Education Department” (Pa.2). Some consultation took place between the curriculum writers and the various advisory committees represented by interests groups, but the input of these groups was limited.

Things that the curriculum writers came up with had to go through lots of committees, but those committees could not function well. The existence of “the strongest voice” (So.6) blocked their input. Another senior officer offered a further reason why interests groups did not have much input in the consultation process. He said,

A lot of the groups, particularly business groups, and political groups, had just gone through an enormous consultation process to get the Beazley Report, and I feel that they felt they had their say. So when it came down to the actual implementation it really was, from my point of view, left to the Education Department to do the right thing. So we didn't get that much pressure from other groups about what to do about it. I think there was very little concern once the decision had been made to do it. There wasn't really that much harassment or concern, or interest from the pressure groups. (So.6)

Furthermore, the haste to get the curriculum done within a rigid timeline and the lengthy negotiation at the preliminary stage left little time for consultation and input from interest groups. Unit Curriculum was expected to be formally approved by the Secondary Education Authority, but having to assess too much materials in too little time made it difficult for the Secondary Education Authority to do their job properly. One of the senior officers said:

I think that when things were all finished and bound together, which was in a big hurry, they would have been sent to the SEA but there was so much material that the SEA could never have considered it line by line for approval. The SEA might have had formal authority to approve it but they couldn't possibly have responded to all the materials for all the units in every subject which was half a meter high and which all arrived at once. Not possible, too little time. (So.7)

This officer further argued that the only input the Secondary Education Authority had was with respect to the “grade related descriptors and criteria based assessment that they put into the Unit Curriculum”. (So.7).

The dearth of consultation during Unit Curriculum development also applied to other parties. Universities responded minimally because they thought Unit Curriculum was a “dead bull and not something that they really should pick up” (So.6). The State School Teachers Union of Western Australia was “not concerned at all about the curriculum issues” (So.6). Its input was through union members out in schools who gave feedback on draft documents. The WA Social Studies Association “didn’t have any input” either (Pa.1). Teachers in schools felt they “had no real opportunity to take part in the process” (Pa.1). Textbook publishers and parents “weren’t involved in the presentation of Unit Curriculum at all” (So.7).

Autonomy of Unit Curriculum Developers

The Unit Curriculum writers had little influence over what happened. They did not have the authority to make decisions, for example, about how many hours would be in a unit and how many units would be compulsory. They were “nothing more than the persons who tried to translate the idea of unit approach into something that would work in schools” (So.4). In relation to this writers, one senior officer said that,

they felt they had very little autonomy because of the pressure that was on them. I would think that in terms of what they wrote on the page they would have quite a lot of autonomy, but the pressures that were surrounding them like time pressures and having to deliver things to committees would mean that they would have very little opportunity to reflect and put in what they would really like to see. (So.6)¹⁸

However, another senior officer who was involved in the actual writing said that they had a great deal of autonomy about what to put in a particular unit. He said:

I don’t ever recall being told by a senior officer what to put in or what to take out. We would argue amongst ourselves about what to put in, but there was no external constraints anyhow. Nobody said he has to have more of this or less of that. We thought of ourselves as the experts so we did as we wanted really. We would have been disapproved of if we had been late in getting it finished, but not disapproved of if we had done it slightly differently. (So.7)

¹⁸ We had to work within very strict frameworks - with which we did not agree. (R.2)

What can be concluded is that Unit Curriculum writers' autonomy was confined to chopping up the current syllabuses into different units, what one senior officer called, "cutting and pasting" (So.6), and adding different forms of criteria based assessment.

Resources for Unit Curriculum Development

Evidently, there were sufficient resources, both financial and personnel, for Unit Curriculum, at least during the development process (So.7). Certainly, there were a great deal of personnel resources. All together, 120 to 140 people worked on it full time in Central Office and there were other people on committees. Also, for a short term, a huge amount of money was put into it. However, "As usual with curriculum projects, all the money went into preparing the documents and then there was no money left for implementation" (So.7).¹⁹

TRIAL OF UNIT CURRICULUM

The trial of Unit Curriculum began in 1986 and was carried through into 1987. Seven schools were involved. These included four senior high schools and one district high school in the state education system, one college in the Catholic education system, and one independent school controlled by the Uniting Church.²⁰

Most of the seven pilot schools "tried to implement all these new curriculum materials" which included over three hundred units as well as vertical timetabling. However, the trial schools differed in the strategies they used. Some schools "tried everything at once" (So.7). They changed both the curriculum and timetabling. Other schools just trialed the new curriculum, not vertical timetabling. The result was that the more things the schools trialed, the more trouble they got themselves into. The smaller a school was, the less troubles it had. In one senior officer's words,

Well it would have been better if they had just trialed one aspect, but mostly they tried everything at once. That meant it was very hard to get it right. They changed the curriculum for one thing. The second thing

¹⁹ There were not a lot of resources for Social Studies, probably because lots had been spent on K-10 and everyone thought we had a good syllabus. Money was spent mainly in English and Math where new syllabuses were being developed at the same time. (R.2)

²⁰ Disagree from Social Studies point of view. (R.2)

they changed was the school time-tables, because the idea was that since there are six stages, a kid could be in Year 9 in Stage 2 in this subject, and Stage 4 in that subject, so they were trying to make the timetable completely vertical, so that all 8s, 9s and 10s could have access to all the same units. If you have the Unit Curriculum, but you don't have a vertical timetable, you are not doing the whole thing, okay? So, some schools went right down that track and they made it as hard for themselves as they possibly could. And they got exhausted and then they said the system didn't work! Some schools said, we aren't going to change very much, we are just going to change the things we absolutely have to, and they survived the pilot year without too much trouble. So, there were secondary schools trying various things such as Meekatharra District High School, and they had no trouble with the Unit Curriculum. They found it fine. But it is a small school and it didn't try and change everything. (So.7)

As the trial process went along, curriculum policy makers began to receive negative feedback. Some schools wanted to give up, but they were not allowed, because, they were told, the trial was not meant to be a trial. More specifically,

As 1986 went along, it became clear that some schools were in trouble and some were not. Then people began to say, is this a trial of the Unit Curriculum or not, because if it is a trial then it's not right, and we are going to stop. But they were always told by the Minister, this is no trial, we are not deciding whether to have the Unit Curriculum, we decided that in 1983/84/85/86, so we are not deciding now whether to do this, we decided to do this then, all we are deciding now is exactly how to do it!! So, some people said it wasn't a real trial, which is true, it wasn't a real trial, the decision to do it had been made in 1983. (So.7)²¹

Since it was not a real trial, not much attention was paid to feedback from the pilot schools and there was not much communication between the pilot schools and the curriculum developers. One participant who was involved in the pilot programme said that,

Basically they put it into schools and said, we'll trial it for one year and all schools will implement it the following year. I was at one of the trial schools and we actually did trial it, but what we trialed wasn't actually fed back to the Department. I think we saw the Department people about two or three times and, from memory, I think we might have had one or two groups visit us and that was it. So, regardless of what the trial was, it was implemented regardless. So, in a way, it was a *fait accompli* regardless of what the trial was going to show. (Pa.1)

²¹ The pilot was only ever a pilot in name - there was never enough time to tell other schools about the experiences of the pilot schools. Secondary schools began planning timetables six months in advance; so that the pilot had been underway for only six months of 1986 before all secondary schools had to begin plans for implementing Unit Curriculum for 1987. (R.2)

IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIT CURRICULUM

Adoption of the Unit Curriculum

In 1987, the Minister for Education set a timeline for Unit Curriculum implementation by announcing that,

All government schools and some non-government schools will be introducing the Unit Curriculum next year. From 1988 student in Years 8, 9 and 10 will be taught in courses (or units) of 40 hours length. As well, there are changes in the way students work is graded. (EDWA, 1987, p.1)

Many participants argued that Unit Curriculum was introduced into schools too quickly and teachers were not well prepared for it. They felt that the change was imposed upon them and that they did not have a choice. In most of the comments cited below, one can still sense a touch of resentment at the way Unit Curriculum was introduced even though almost a decade has passed. For example:

It was also rushed in, "We're having unit curriculum and it will start tomorrow". That's how it was announced and so there was no, we want to change this and that sort of thing. It was slapped on us. (Tr.2)

Unit Curriculum was imposed from above. There were five pilot schools. Very little was known about what the pilot schools were doing, what they found etc. etc. But there was a pilot programme and then the edict came from above, the Minister of Education, as from 1987 all Government Schools in Western Australia will be on Unit Curriculum structure. (So.5)

The big thing that really hit schools was the fact that you had to implement it in the next 12 months. It was being trialed, but you do it next year. And it wasn't a matter of - we'll help you and we'll come up with all these ideas for you. There wasn't much support. (Pa.1)

In 1987 we were told curriculum policy was changing. We didn't have a choice. Much as we've been told curriculum policy will change again but it's on a much longer time line. Teachers need time. They can't sit down and undertake massive curriculum change every second year. It just takes too much time and effort. Unit Curriculum was presented as a fait accompli to the teachers. (Hod.5)

Unit Curriculum had to be done by everyone in the same year. With the Unit Curriculum, the Achievement Certificate stopped, it was finished. And so it had to change, everything changed at once. It was quite obvious as it started that there was going to be trouble, but no willingness to go back and unpick it and start again. Everything just went downhill from then. (So.7)

I think Unit Curriculum came in far too fast with not enough debate. You know it was not there one minute and it was there the next. It happened too fast. (Hod.4)

But with Unit Curriculum there was development and then it was dropped on schools. (So.4)

Responsibility for Unit Curriculum Implementation

At one level the Director General had overall responsibility for implementing Unit Curriculum, because it was a big reform. But when it came down to the day-to-day operation of the curriculum, the principals of each school were “technically responsible, which probably meant the heads of department in the school were responsible”. Nonetheless, though the principals and heads of department had the responsibility, “none of them had the power and capacity to make it work” (So.6).

Teachers’ Reaction to Unit Curriculum

The implementation of Unit Curriculum was strongly opposed by most teachers. One teacher described it as “a mess”, because Unit Curriculum was regarded as “just the whim of the Minister at the time who thought it was a good idea, let's do it, and without really thinking”. Therefore, said the teacher,

People hated it. It just created extra hassles that people didn't want at that time. And so there was huge negative responses. The state school system hated it. Most private schools refused to even look at it. They sat on the fence and refused to put it into place²². (Tr.2).

Teachers were “grumbling and unhappy about Unit Curriculum” (So.7). The State School Teachers Union’s attitude to Unit Curriculum was “determined entirely by questions of resources”. They had “the very strong view that there needed to be more resources and support for teachers and they used it as an industrial lever which resulted in huge industrial problems at the time” (So.6).

While Unit Curriculum was being developed, there was a sort of balance between supporters and opponents. But right after its implementation, many supporters joined the opponent, which meant, there was huge opposition to it from almost everyone. In one senior officer’s words,

²² Nor were they required to. It was an EDWA initiative for EDWA schools. (R.2)

I don't recall anyone really, even the Minister of Education at the time, supporting Unit Curriculum. It just lost all support. I think everyone was opposed to it. I think this was mainly after it started to be implemented. (So.6)

This strong opposition to Unit Curriculum was expressed both verbally and in the daily operation of the Curriculum. Apparently, verbal opposition became more and more fierce. According to the same senior officer,

When the Director of Curriculum went to many conferences, they were always exceedingly hostile and there would be a huge amount of abuse that the Director had to wear. There were letters to the Minister from all sorts of groups and associations opposing it, more or less saying, stop this, it's hopeless etc., etc. (So.6)

In actual classroom teaching and learning, teachers went around it. They kept teaching what they had been teaching, only "shifting some bits of paper from one file to another or giving the same file a different name". Furthermore,

In Unit Curriculum most people were doing mostly what they did in the Achievement Certificate, because it is a great vanity of curriculum writers to think that because they write something down, people will do something different. It doesn't happen. People don't even read the documents, let alone reading them wouldn't be enough to persuade them to do anything different!! (So.7)

Teachers Induction, PD and Inservice for Unit Curriculum Implementation

The State School Teachers Union insisted that teachers "have to have an opportunity and relief time to get some professional development, get some training to learn about Unit Curriculum". Yet, during the period in which Unit Curriculum was being implemented, little induction, PD or inservice was provided "because the Education Department did not have the funds, or would not acknowledge that the teachers needed that much training to take on a new curriculum" (Pa.2). Each individual school was expected to provide funds and relief time for teachers' PD, induction and inservice. However, this proved to be "beyond the school's capacity" (So.6). Therefore, teachers were left "struggling on their own" (Hod.4).

One participant argued that teachers did not receive PD "anywhere near enough". According to him, a Social Studies conference for subject seniors in schools about "what to do and what not to do" was "the only systematic system driven professional

development to help the people who were responsible for implementing it". Furthermore, this person commented, "that was really done when it was too late, and everyone was all cross and upset and it obviously wasn't working". (So.6)

Most other participants mentioned the same lack of teacher PD and inservice. Below are just two examples of many similar remarks:

And so there was the change but we didn't get the advice and inservice that we used to have in the previous system. (Hod.3)

A significant difference is, from what I can tell, it is going to be harder to get professional development. Unless of course it occurs in your own time and you pay for it as well. Generally speaking the schools' ability to pay for professional development is slowly disappearing. (Hod.5)

The lack of teacher inservice provided by Central Office increased inequality between teachers in the government school system and those in the private sectors. Teachers in the private systems were well resourced to get their inservice whereas those in the government system just could not afford it. As one of the interviewees observed,

People that pay to go to PD are mainly in independent schools, more so now over the last couple of years than it has been in the past, because the independent school pays for them to come, whereas we don't have the school pay for us to come. Their teachers are getting more resources than what we are. (Pa.1)

Not only were teacher inservice and PD courses limited, but also support for implementing Unit Curriculum was inadequate in terms of finance, curriculum leadership and curriculum support materials. Most participants agree with the claim that, "Unit Curriculum was implemented with minimal resources" (Hod.5).

Financial Support for Unit Curriculum Implementation

Basically "there was no money for implementation of Unit Curriculum" because "all the money went into preparing the documents" (So.7) and "the Education Department was absolutely flat out". What the Education Department did was "to try and keep up with problems". Where a problem occurred, the Department would put some resources to it; when the next problem occurred, some more resources would be put into it. (So.6)

Also, as mentioned earlier, responsibility for implementing the Curriculum was shifted from Central Office to each individual school; therefore, schools were expected to fund the implementation, particularly the development of new units, from their stringent financial budget set in the School Development Plan. However, many participants noticed that whenever a school wanted to develop new units to broaden student choice, the school's budget could not cover that because, "the money is just not there!" (Hod.2)

One head of department detailed the sort of financial difficulties confronting schools by saying that,

And curriculum resources is the sticking point. And this is where any sort of devolution has to fall down. If you don't resource the Department enough then you just haven't got the chance to widen course choice. Now we've some schools if you go and visit it might be interesting to see just what they're doing in the way of new units and that sort of thing, but we've been hamstrung by the fact that we haven't got the money or the time to widen into other units. We've stayed with the ones that the Department has given us. The theory was that you could widen out and do things the way you wanted to but the resources just aren't there. We spend, say buying these books this year, which are new, and they've got the basic units in them and they're \$20. Now a school this size can't go out and say, let's spend all this money on developing resources. And even just the cost of duplicating is a problem. You've got to produce materials for the students and so your budget, 20/25% would go on duplicating materials. (Hod.3)

These financial difficulties not only put subject departments in a "counterproductive" situation where they had to "bid for or compete for resources within the school and within the system", but they also made heads of department "only look after their own departments and not care what's happening to the other departments" (Hod.4). They also increased social inequality between schools in richer and poorer areas. A senior officer admitted that,

Certainly I think schools in the wealthier suburbs are better resourced than schools in the poorer suburbs because the parents and P & C and other groups tend to contribute more in terms of fees and other donations to the schools themselves. (So.5)

Personnel Support for Unit Curriculum Implementation

Personnel support or curriculum leadership during the process of Unit Curriculum implementation was also seen to be one of the major problems by many participants in this study. By 1987, the Education Department realised that “everything was just going downhill” and therefore it “put on thirty extra people called school development consultants to help people get into the Unit Curriculum”. Though these consultants ran “around all the 70 senior high schools trying to be helpful” (So.7), they did not make much difference. Many participants argued that personnel support or curriculum leadership provided by Central Office was far from sufficient. This added extra work on the heads of department in schools. For example, one commented that,

Unit curriculum put a lot of pressure on individuals to organise themselves in what they were doing without leadership from the top. We lost our superintendent with the Unit Curriculum and that meant that the top down information just wasn't there and that became a serious problem for inservicing. And it was put down onto people like myself. (Hod.3)

The inadequacy of personnel support or curriculum leadership was caused partly by the removal of the subject superintendents in 1987, partly by the changed role of the consultants who replaced the superintendents, as well as that of the new district superintendents. But most importantly, it was because of the net reduction in curriculum support officers in the Education Department, despite increased schools. One senior officer highlighted this reduction in personnel resources by comparing the K-10 Syllabus with Unit Curriculum and concluded that,

The changes that have occurred have been that fewer and fewer people are actually involved in Central Office in providing support for teachers in schools. In the Social Studies Branch when the K-10 was being developed, there were two superintendents, about nine curriculum writers and three to five support teachers who visited the schools to support teachers there. During Unit Curriculum that was greatly reduced. (So.5)

The lack personnel support from Central Office and putting principles in charge of daily implementation of the curriculum were seen as being problematic as well as intensifying social inequality between schools in the metropolitan areas and the remote areas. More specifically,

Principles are supposed to show leadership. It's part of their role to show leadership in the curriculum. They haven't got time to scratch themselves. They would spend that much time doing administrative low order tasks they haven't got time to show curriculum leadership in my experience. You know, it's all getting the timetable to work, looking after absenteeism and making sure that there are enough teachers in the school and all this sort of stuff. (Hod.4)

A head of department explained why lack of personnel support from Central Office intensified social inequality between schools. He cited two reasons. Firstly,

Western Australia is such a big place - you know such a big extent of territory and much of it lightly populated so you get schools way out there many kilometres away. There are problems with devolution because when you get isolated communities making decisions they can make them sort of in a vacuum - they don't know what's going on. They tend to be small schools and small communities, perhaps without terribly much expertise. (Hod.4)

And secondly,

The other thing about those isolated schools is that often the people are only out there teaching for two or three years and hoping to get back to the city. Everyone wants to come back to Perth to live and so you haven't always got people out there with very much experience in the remote areas. (Hod.4)

Curriculum Materials Support

For much of the history of education in this state, teachers have had text-books and curriculum support materials prepared for them by the Education Department. This changed dramatically with the implementation of Unit Curriculum. Many participants in this study maintained that they received very little curriculum materials support from Head Office, even though the Teachers Union argued that "the Education Department should provide every teacher with a copy of each of the curriculum materials" (Pa.2). For example:

There was no support from the Department. There were no materials written up for the new courses. The only thing I remember was getting an outline of a proposed course, but as far as resource material etc., there was nothing. (Pa.1)

The other thing is that we've been very badly supported by the Ministry since 1987. From the Achievement Certificate, you had very large curriculum books, hundreds of pages of objectives and examples and things like that which you could use in the classroom. So it went from that to having just one very thin document which wasn't particularly satisfactory. Now teachers as a result of that had to really develop their

own resources and their own assessments and everything else. So as far as resources go, there's been nothing from the Ministry for the last eight/nine years. We've had no materials at all. Basically we develop our own or we go and buy commercial books. (Hod.2)

The Education Department have got out of providing support materials. They published their last one some years ago and that's been on the agenda for the private sector to pick up the production of support materials. (Hod.4)

Well, because the Education Department has stopped producing curriculum resource materials, schools are forced now to purchase more of their own. (So.4)

Schools never had enough money to purchase curriculum materials from private commercial publishers, as shown in previous discussion²³. But even if they had the money, they would still tend "to find that we get resources which come from other states and which don't necessarily fit to our state system" (Hod.2).

Because of the lack of curriculum support materials from Central Office, schools had to spend a big part of their grant and lot of time in photocopying. A head of department commented that,

Now what we do is spend thousands and thousands of dollars on photocopying. So my photocopying bill is probably \$3000-4000 a year. Teachers are busily photocopying bits and pieces from books and there's a whole range of material that's available and we spend a lot of time photocopying and doing cut and paste. You know, take this bit of content here, this map there - these questions here - you know, producing work. (Hod.6)

Quality Control of Unit Curriculum Implementation

A commonly held view among the participants in this study is that the quality of Unit Curriculum implementation was extremely low. One of them, a senior officer, argued that it was implemented "without an effective implementation process" (So.3). This officer further commented that,

So, there wasn't a sense of ownership, there hadn't been the build up for it, there wasn't a clear understanding of the rationale for it, in my view, and there wasn't the teacher support or the student support for that matter, so the Unit Curriculum resulted in a frenetic rush through a series

²³ A huge problem for Social Studies was that because it had had lots of money poured into the development of K-10, it had to go to the back of the line (It's still edging its way to the front)! (R.2)

of objectives that teachers felt compelled to follow, driven by an assessment treadmill which became quite frustrating for them. (So.3)

Another officer said that “things went wrong right from the beginning and continued to go wrong year after year after that”. He concluded that “Unit Curriculum was not very much implemented” (So.7). Two other participants went as far as to claim that the implementation of Unit Curriculum was a “completely political disaster” (So.6) and an “absolute disaster” (Tr.2). Moreover, a teacher and a senior officer respectively said that,

I mean it caused just so many problems in high schools that I think if we could go back to the old system a lot would. It caused absolute disaster for a number of years as schools tried to come to grips with it. (Tr.2)

My point of view is that Unit Curriculum did more damage than good in the first instance (So.3)

Recently, at the annual 1997 SSAWA conference, a high ranking education officer also acknowledged that “Unit Curriculum was a disaster, we won’t do that again”.

Many participants attributed the failure of Unit Curriculum implementation mainly to two factors: vertical time-tabling and the lack of curriculum leadership, particularly the changed role of the superintendents. For instance, two senior officers saw the low quality of implementation as being entrenched in the curriculum structure itself:

Right from the beginning it was clear that the more thoroughly schools tried to implement it, the more trouble they would have. Especially they had trouble with the timetable. And so the schools started to fall to bits because the kids didn’t know who the teachers were, and the teachers didn’t know who the kids were, and you see how that would make a problem. (So.7)

With the Unit Curriculum you were appointed to a group of students for a year but because of the idea of choice you could actually have a group for 10 weeks and then another group for 10 weeks and things like that. So there wasn’t the tendency to consider things in depth as much and to build relationships with kids, which was the key problem. Thus the values element dissipated, and also the process was lost because you didn’t have the time. You had to rush through, get through, cover the course so that you could get a score at the end of 10 weeks. (So.3)

The pre 1987 superintendents kept track of their staff, knew who the good teachers were and who the bad teachers were, had the power to move people around, and could shuffle the staffing to support a weak teacher with good teachers as a way of

ensuring the quality teaching and learning. However, after 1987, “the current staffing officers don't know that; they just see you as a teacher, just as a number - 1, 2, 3” (Tr.2). They had no control of staffing. As a result, staffing during Unit Curriculum took place on the basis of, “we've got a hole there, let's put that person to that spot” and,

I mean there's no performance management of staff. You could be doing anything and there's virtually very little that they could do about you. And so I think the quality of teaching has probably dropped too. (Tr.2)

K-10 SYLLABUS AND UNIT CURRICULUM: A COMPARISON

Development of K-10 Syllabus and Unit Curriculum

From what has been reported so far, some differences and similarities can be identified in the way the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus and Unit Curriculum were developed. On the whole, there are more differences than similarities between the two. The two main similarities were that sufficient financial and personnel resources were put in to develop the two curriculums, and that the total time duration of development for both was more or less the same, K-10 from 1974 to 1981 and Unit Curriculum from 1980 to 1987.²⁴

There were more than two major differences between the two curriculums. The major driving forces behind the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus were generated from the educational field and directed at the deficiencies of the previous syllabus. But the driving forces behind Unit Curriculum came from multiple sources. Some of them were educational, but the main ones came from politicians and the spirit of the mid-80s. This led to differences in who initiated the two curriculums and who had the overall responsibility for them. The K-10 syllabus was initiated by the superintendent who also oversaw the whole development process and had the end-of-line responsibility. Besides, the superintendent being one of the developers himself gave the curriculum developers great autonomy. With Unit Curriculum, though it was initiated by the professionals, without the Minister's push for the Beazley Report

²⁴ Disagree from Social Studies point of view. There were only two people working for 2-3 years on materials for Social Studies Unit Curriculum, compared this to the team which worked on K-10 for x years. (R.2)

those professional initiatives would still be “floating around” (So.6). Mega-responsibility for Unit Curriculum was held by the Minister. Major development responsibilities were, since stage three, taken away from the hands of those in the formal bureaucratic structure in the Education Department, like superintendents, and put in the hands of an “off-line” Assistant Director General and his own staff (So.7). This allowed limited autonomy for the curriculum writers.

The curriculum developers for the K-10 Syllabus were appointed by the superintendent in charge. With Unit Curriculum, the curriculum writers were recruited through advertising²⁵ while those who were to take the major responsibilities were appointed.

More differences occurred during the development process. Both K-10 and Unit Curriculum had almost the same time span of seven years, but the actual time for writing the two syllabuses was quite different. It took five years to write K-10. It was a slow process and nothing was written down in the syllabus until trialed and approved by schools and endorsed by classroom teachers. There was also an additional stage designed to refine the syllabus. By contrast, all units in Unit Curriculum were written within two years (plus the time for framework development) in haste and desperation.

The slow process in K-10 development left a huge amount of time for the superintendents and advisory teachers to travel around the state to consult with and gain feedback from schools, teachers and interest groups. This allowed sufficient input from those who were concerned and had an interest in the curriculum. The desperation and haste in Unit Curriculum development made it virtually impossible for adequate consultation and stakeholders’ input.

Finally, controversial issues emerged during the development processes of both curriculums. But with K-10, controversial issues were resolved through constant and lengthy negotiation. This led eventually to a high level of consensus. In Unit Curriculum development, controversial issues were also attempted by negotiation, but with the wrong people. Moreover, no agreement could be reached. Though there

²⁵ Not for Social Studies. We were ‘invited’/appointed. (R.2)

was some consensus in the early stages, it soon “disappeared and never returned” (So.7). Therefore, developers turned to bureaucratic decisions for a resolution of the issues. An outline of the differences and similarities between the two is provided below:

Figure 15: Differences and Similarities between K-10 Syllabus and Unit Curriculum Development

Curricula	K-10 Syllabus	Unit Curriculum
Major Driving Force	Educational	Political Contextual Educational
Main Initiators	Superintendents	Politicians Administrators
Method for Choosing Developers	Appointment	Appointment Public advertising
Overall Responsibility	Superintendent	Minister for Education Assistant Director General
Stakeholders' Involvement	Sufficient	Limited
Stages of Development	Four	Five
Total Time Duration of Development	Seven years	Seven years
Actual Syllabus Writing Time	Five years	Two years
Pace of Development	Slow	Hasty
Consultation with Stakeholders	Adequate	Little
Strategy to Resolve Controversy	Negotiation	Negotiation Bureaucratic decision
Level of Consensus	High	Very low
Financial Resources	Sufficient	Sufficient
Personnel Resources	Sufficient	Sufficient
Developers' Autonomy	Large	Limited

Trial and Implementation of K-10 Syllabus and Unit Curriculum

Basically, there are a lot more differences than similarities between the K-10 Syllabus and Unit Curriculum with regard to their trial and implementation processes. The only similarities are that both curriculums were trialed for about two years²⁶, and that the content of both syllabuses (all ideas in the K-10 Syllabus and all units in the Unit Curriculum as well as vertical time-tabling) were thoroughly trialed in schools. They differed from each other in many aspects.

First, they differed from each other significantly in their number of trial schools. Although the K-10 Syllabus was only for one subject area, Social Studies, it was trialed by fifty-six primary and secondary schools. Even putting the primary schools aside, there were still twelve secondary schools trialing it. By contrast, Unit Curriculum covered all subject areas, but only seven secondary schools were involved in its trial.

Second, they differed from each other in terms of strategies used for the trials and the purposes of the trials. The trial of the K-10 Syllabus was meant to get as much feedback as possible from teachers to refine the syllabus and to make sure that it would work successfully. Therefore, superintendents, advisory teachers and curriculum officers constantly visited trial schools to discuss and resolve issues that emerged from the trial. Many workshops were conducted to inform teachers, train key teachers who were to be responsible for implementation in their schools, and most important of all, to “draw the best teaching ideas of the field” (So.4). With Unit Curriculum, the trial was symbolic. Strategies used for the trial only involved “a team of people visiting the trial schools once or twice through the whole process” (Pa.1). Even though messages from the trial indicated lots of problems ahead, they were not taken seriously, because some policy makers “would not go back and do it again” to improve the syllabus (So.7).

If there were a few similarities between the K-10 and Unit Curriculum in their trial processes, the two curriculums sat almost at the opposite end of a continuum in their

²⁶ In effect, the trial of materials for K-10 was longer than two years and the trial of Unit Curriculum was only a year. (R.2)

implementation processes. While education officers in Central Office and schools shared the responsibility for the K-10 Syllabus implementation, Central Office virtually abdicated such responsibility for Unit Curriculum and left it to the schools, which “did not have the capacity” (So.6). Teachers responded positively to the K-10 Syllabus and willingly adopted it because they had a sense of ownership. By contrast, their response to Unit Curriculum was very negative. They “hated it” (Tr.2) because it was “imposed on them” (So.5) and they “had no sense of ownership” at all. (So.3)

Many participants used words like “sufficient”, “adequate” and “enough” with regard to teacher inservice, PD, induction, and financial, personnel and curriculum material support for the K-10 Syllabus. With Unit Curriculum, the most commonly used words and phrases used were “nothing”, “not satisfying”, “stopped producing” and “money just isn’t there”.

As such, the differences in the implementation outcomes between the two curriculum were quite obvious. The K-10 Syllabus was considered to be so successful that even today “a lot [of schools] would go back to it” (Tr.2) whereas Unit Curriculum was seen by many participants as a “complete disaster” (Tr.2 & So.6).

A summary of the differences and similarities between the two curriculums is provided in Figure 16.

CLOSING REMARKS

This chapter has compared the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus and Unit Curriculum in terms of their development, trial and implementation. The findings tend to support the critical theorists’ claim that devolution will intensify the curriculum’s functions of tightening social control, increasing social inequality, and serving narrowly defined economic interests. The development of Unit Curriculum saw a shift of control over curriculum from educationists to politicians, an increase in the power of the Minister for Education, a decrease in autonomy for managers down the line (particularly curriculum writers), an increase in ministerial intervention and the exclusion of professionals (particularly classroom teachers) in the curriculum policy

Figure 16: Differences and Similarities in the Trial and Implementation of the K-10 Syllabus and Unit Curriculum

	K-10 Syllabus	Unit Curriculum
Number of trial schools	Fifty-six	Seven
Trial duration	Two years	Two years ²⁷
Range of content trialed	All ideas in the Syllabus	All units
Trial strategy	Visiting trial schools Conducting workshops	Visiting trial schools
Purpose of trial	To get teachers feedback To refine syllabus To ensure it worked	Symbolic
Major responsibility for implementation	Shared among: - Superintendents; - Curriculum officers; and - Key teachers within schools	Shared among: - Principal; and - Heads of Department
Teacher response to implementation	Very positive	Very negative
Adoption	Teacher widely accepted and willingly took it on.	Imposed upon teachers
Inservice for teachers	Sufficient	Very little
Financial support	Sufficient	Very little
Personnel support	Sufficient	Very little
Curriculum materials support	Sufficient	Very little
Quality control	Successful	Failure

²⁷ Effectively about six months. (R.2)

making process. The input of traditional stakeholders was blocked by the Minister's strong voice, by sidelining opponents of devolution (and Unit Curriculum), and by placing curriculum and curriculum policy making under the control of supporters of devolution.

The trial of Unit Curriculum was not really a trial. It was implementation. There was no earnest attempt to get feedback from the trial schools so that policies related to the curriculum change could be refined. Despite much resistance and negative response from the trial schools and teachers, Unit Curriculum was still imposed across the whole state.

While Central Office had ultimate power in setting curriculum policies, it shrugged off much of the responsibility to implement Unit Curriculum. It had the overall responsibility, but gave responsibility for the daily operation of the curriculum to individual schools. Central Office had little money for implementing the Unit Curriculum and thus provided little inservice, PD and induction for teachers. It reduced personnel support for schools and curriculum leadership, and almost totally stopped producing curriculum support materials. With a far from adequate school grant, individual schools were left virtually to struggle on their own.

The lack of various kinds of support from Central Office not only made it difficult for individual schools and teachers to implement the curriculum, but also increased social inequality between schools in rich and poor suburbs, and in the metropolitan and remote areas. In particular, the lack of curriculum material support increased teachers' workload in finding and photocopying materials. It also left the school curriculum open to the influence of the business and industry groups, because they had the money to produce curriculum support materials. It is reasonable to assume that these materials reflected the values and ideologies of this group and thus served their interests.

9

STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL STATEMENTS AND PROFILES

Marsh (1994) has documented details about how the Outcome Statements and Profiles were developed at the national level. Here only a brief account of the ‘national curriculum’ and responses to it by participants in this study is provided to set the broader context for the development of Student Outcome Statements at the Western Australian state level.

Rationale for Student Outcome Statements and Profiles

The push for National Outcome Statements and Profiles came from outside the education sector. Political and economic considerations were the main driving forces. Firstly, Outcome Statements and Profiles were part of the Federal Government’s efforts to respond “to the major economic challenges now facing Australia” (Dawkins and Holding, 1987, p.iii). It was believed that education, particularly curriculum reform, would play an important role in promoting Australia’s economic competitiveness if schooling was “to be integrated with the economy” (Bartlett, 1991, cited in Marsh, 1994, p.43).²⁸

Closely related to this was the intention of Outcome Statements and Profiles to incorporate the key competencies identified by Mayer and Finn, two captains of industry. One head of department interviewed in this study argued that,

²⁸ Push for national curriculum also flowed from Hobart Declaration on Schooling 1989. (R.2)

I see outcomes coming from industry wanting ready-made products for their workforce - products being the people for their workforce. Outcome statements really are businesses' way of saying whether or not a person can actually achieve to a standard rather than be rated as part of a cohort. So business is behind outcome statements because of the assumption that they will get people who are more able to do things than they are getting at the present time. (Hod.1)

Educationally, the Outcome Statements and Profiles were also intended "to utilise the maximum effort, and to utilise scarce curriculum resources and to ensure that unnecessary differences in curricula from state to state were minimised" (AEC, 1986, cited in Marsh, 1994, p.39). However, some participants in this study claimed that this sort of educational argument for Outcome Statements and Profiles was only a mask for the real political intention, namely to reduce funding in education. A head of department said,

Let's say you want to actually reduce spending and you've got to manufacture a reason for change, because you can't reduce spending in a current system without it being obvious, but if you actually mask the spending by arguing the need for change and then you cover that with rhetoric on the need for change, then you can actually hide a reduction in spending. (Hod.1)

Developers of National Student Outcome Statements and National Profiles

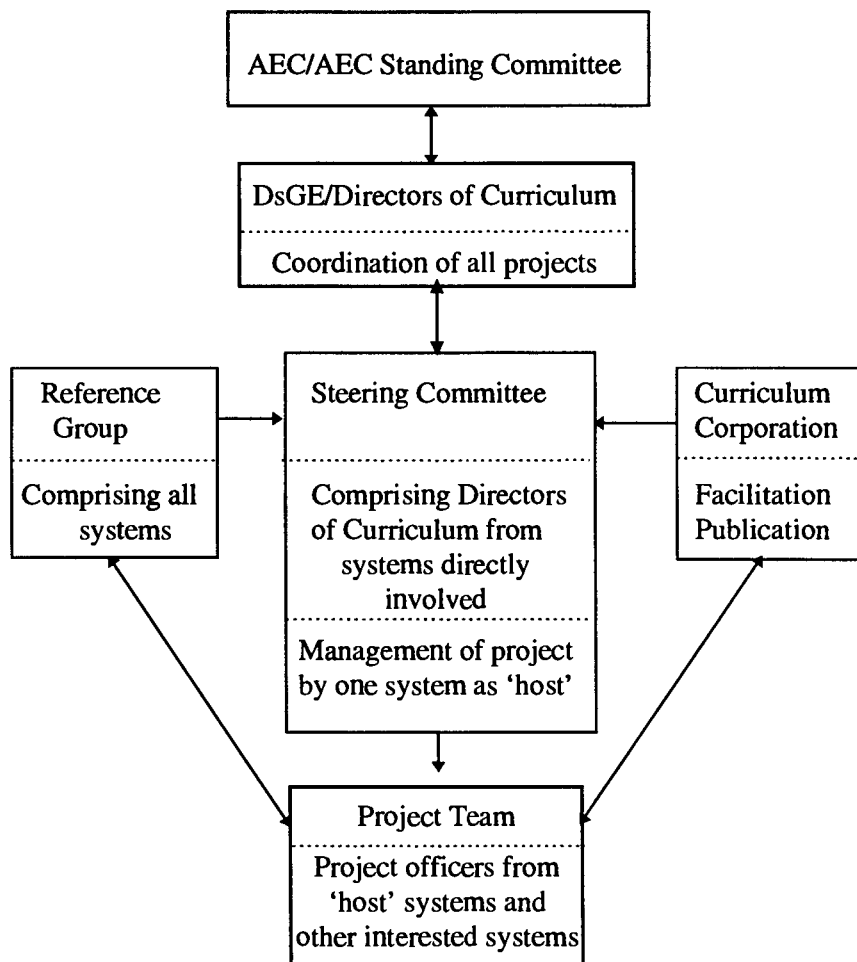
A variety of methods was used in the selection of the National Outcome Statements and Profiles developers. The positions for writers of the Studies of Society and Environment Brief, Outcome Statements and Profiles were advertised in national newspapers. The team members for the mapping exercise were appointed or "commissioned" (Marsh, 1994, p.71). The rest of the developers were appointed directly or indirectly by the Australian Education Council (AEC). They included members of the AEC Standing Committees, Directors General, Directors of Curriculum, members from the National Reference Groups and officers from the Curriculum Corporation of Australia.

These developers fell into three categories. One group was full-time developers. It comprised the team members for the Mapping Exercise, writers of the Brief and the Outcome Statements and the Profiles, members of the secretariat under the Curriculum and Assessment Committee (CURASS), those on the Steering

Committee, as well as members of the Curriculum Corporation of Australia (CCA). Another group consisted of part-time developers. These included the Ministers for Education, Directors General, and Directors of Curriculum. Those who had a say in the development of National Statements and Profiles formed the third group.

Marsh (1994, p.73) described the working structure of the developers as “the management model for national collaborative curriculum development”. It is reproduced below:

Figure 17. The management model for national collaborative curriculum development (AEC, 1991, p.3)



Within this working structure, responsibilities allocated to different interest groups for the development of the National Outcome Statements and Profiles varied at different stages. Throughout the entire process, overall responsibility rested with the AEC which comprised Ministers for Education. However, executive responsibility was held by the Directors General and Directors of Curriculum, who established

what Piper (1991, p.5) called a “closed shop”, or, in Marsh’s term (1994, .47), “a hijacking enterprise”. Nevertheless, part of their responsibilities was later taken away and given to a secretariat under CURASS. This secretariat was powerful enough to overturn work done by the writers of the Brief, the Outcome Statements and the Profiles.

According to Marsh (1994), stakeholder involvement was very limited at the early stages. Some major players in curriculum development were excluded. “Academics, professional associations and non-government schools” (p.50) were denied any role in the development process. The situation changed a little at later stages, where individuals and organisations other than Directors of Curriculum and their respective curriculum staff became more involved in the process. Nonetheless, “professional subject associations” and “private consultants” still did not have any input (p.52).

According to one of the participants in this study, teachers did not have an important role to play either. Even though some of them responded to a few draft documents, the number of teachers across the whole of Australia was fairly small. This participant estimated that there were about “twenty to twenty-five teachers” that were consulted in each state, making a total of 150 teachers across all the states. Furthermore, this small number of teachers in each state were “selected by the Education Departments” for consultation. (So.8)

At the national level, Western Australia’s involvement was not very strong either. Though it played a part in writing the Brief for Studies of Society and Environment and the strand for Place and Space in the Profiles, most work was “done mainly in the Eastern States” (Tr.1); and Western Australia’s role was confined to responding to draft documents. In one of the participant’s words, “We, in Western Australia had an opportunity to look at their first draft” and “we were responding to stuff that they came around with” (So.8).

In the case of Studies of Society and Environment, “Most of the SAE stuff went to the Queensland people”, because “they were politically more active and it really was a who’s who in Australian Curriculum” (Tr.1).

Development Process of National Outcome Statements and Profiles

Over a seven year period, five stages can be identified in the development of National Student Outcome Statements and Profiles: initiation, mapping the curriculums, writing design briefs, developing the outcomes, and developing the profiles. In the following account, because different subject areas went through these five stages at a slightly different time, the focus will be laid on Studies of Society and Environment.

Stage One: Initiation

The initiation stage dates back in the year 1986 when the AEC was “considering national collaborative endeavours” to maximise scarce curriculum resources and to minimise curriculum differences between the states. (Marsh, 1994, p.39)

In the following year, the then newly appointed federal Minister for Education, John Dawkins, strongly held the view that schooling in Australia should be integrated into Australia’s economy and that there should be a national curriculum which could be used as a vehicle to promote Australia’s economic competitiveness in the international economy. He made his intentions clear in his publication *Skills for Australia* (Dawkins and Holding, 1987). Consequently, at the AEC meeting of the same year, the skills issue was addressed and “five priority areas were identified for collaborative activity: science, numeracy, literacy, LOTE, and ESL” (Marsh, 1994, p.44).

In 1988, to push the national collaborative curriculum endeavour further, Dawkins published another paper titled *Strengthening Australia’s Schools*. In this paper, he called for a common curriculum framework that “sets out the major areas of knowledge and the most appropriate mix of skills and experience for students in all years of schooling” (Dawkins, 1988, p.7). Clearly, he had his own vision of what that common framework should look like. In his view,

A major feature of a common curriculum framework should be criteria for determining content in major subject areas. Criteria for methods of assessing the achievement of curriculum objectives should be outlined. The framework should provide a guide to the best curriculum design and teaching practices. (Dawkins, 1988, p.8)

Dawkins was also successful in employing the AEC as a vehicle to achieve his goals. At a 1988 AEC meeting, it was decided to “develop a statement of national goals” and “undertake a mapping exercise of Mathematics and general curriculum in all States and Territories” (Marsh, 1994, p.45).

Stage Two: Mapping the Curriculums

In the latter half of 1988, the mapping of numeracy/mathematics was conducted by the Directors of Curriculum. By the end of the year, an AEC meeting decided that the mapping exercises would extend to six areas: mathematics, science, English literacy, ESL, LOTE, and technology. However, it was not until an AEC meeting in October 1989 that it was decided that mapping activities would be expanded to include Studies of Society and Environment. By September 1991, the curriculum mapping exercise for Studies of Society and Environment had been completed and eventually two documents were produced. These were the *K-12 Studies of Society Curriculum Map* and *Mapping the Environmental Education Curriculum: Report of Project Team*. As soon as the mapping exercises were finished, developers of the national curriculum went to the next step of writing briefs for each of the eight learning areas.

Stage Three: Writing Design Briefs

In 1991, a new body was formed to manage the national collaborative curriculum endeavour. The Directors of Curriculum, Australian Cooperative Assessment Program (ACAP), Directors of Assessment Boards, and representatives from national bodies within the educational community were brought together to form a new committee, the Curriculum and Assessment Committee. This committee became effective soon after its inception. At its first meeting in late 1991, the Committee decided to discontinue the ongoing mapping exercises and, instead, set up a strict timeline for a three-phase process of developing a design brief to be followed by a national statement and then a national profile. The design brief was intended to give the national statement writers some “specifications and guidelines” (Marsh, 1994, p.72). In the case of Studies of Society and Environment, expressions of interest were called for to write the design brief by the end of 1991. A consortium of staff

from the Secondary Education Authority in Western Australia and the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia was given the job. In a very short period of time, this team came up with a number of drafts of the design brief. But, because there were too many concerns raised about it, the team produced a fifth draft which was finally approved at the July 1992 CURASS meeting. The design brief was accepted as “an appropriate basis for development of the national statement” (Marsh, 1994, p.106).

Stage Four: Developing the National Statement

In August 1992, advertisements were put in national newspapers for national statement writers. A team representing professional associations and the Queensland Education Department won the contract for Studies of Society and Environment. They produced their first draft in September 1992, but there were lots of disagreements about it between the secretariat officers of CURASS and the writing team. The team was asked to water down their first draft because they it was considered to be too radical. As one of the participants, a senior officer, in this study said,

The decision was taken by CURASS that there were elements of it that were too, I suppose the polite way of saying this was ‘*forward looking*’, but it was a little bit controversial for some states in the sense that it talked about the *invasion of the British in 1788*, as opposed to *settlement* or *exploration*. Those sorts of terms in Queensland were not looked upon very favourably at that time. (So.8)

On October 18, 1992 the team presented their revised version, but it was still not accepted by CURASS. Following that, CURASS decided to use curriculum officers and subject associations to form another team to make necessary changes to the draft document. This new team was “given some directions as to what to do” (So.8). They were called together in Sydney just before Christmas 1992, and virtually had a version back January 1993.²⁹

²⁹ Good, you’ve picked up on this. But the Queensland group was sacked, (their ideas were too radical) and I think that it was a joint Victoria-New South Wales group who did the final work. (R.2)

Stage Five: Developing the Profiles

While the national statement draft document for Studies of Society and Environment was undergoing a process of consultation and modification, an advertisement was put out in newspapers calling for profile writers. The contract was eventually given to a consortium of members from the Secondary Education Authority in Western Australia, the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia, and the Department of School Education in New South Wales. This team was supervised by two coordinators from Victoria and Western Australia respectively. It was intended that the Victorian coordinator would oversee the strands of Time, Continuity and Change, Cultures and Beliefs, and Investigation, Participation and Communication. The Western Australian coordinator was to oversee the strands of Place and Space, Resources, and Systems. However, according one of the participants (So.8) in this study, Western Australia only looked at the Place and Space strand.

The final draft profile document had been completed by March 1993. It was approved for consultation, trialing and validation. Three months later, the team finalised the profile document on the basis of feedback from trialing and validation. At the June 1993 CURASS meeting, the document was approved and submitted to the AEC.

It needs to be pointed out that, even though all statement and profile documents had been ready by July 1993, they were not going to be necessarily accepted by all States and Territories. In the event, only South Australia, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory accepted the national statements and profiles.

Consultation on National Statements and Profiles For Studies of Society and Environment

Marsh (1994) argues that consultation for the design briefs was quite limited. Even though there were reference groups established for each of the steering committees in the eight learning areas, it proved “extremely difficult for them to operate as a group”, because “there were no funds available” for “face-to-face contact of members of national reference groups” and the “distribution of draft materials by post was largely ineffective” (p.74).

The consultation of the draft document for national statements in Studies of Society and Environment was also limited. According to Marsh (1994, p.106), there were only about two hundred copies of the draft document distributed for consultation, plus some consultation meetings held in all States and Territories.³⁰

The Studies of Society and Environment profile had only two months (April and May 1993) for consultation. As mentioned earlier, a small number of teachers, about 150 all together across all States and Territories, “were asked to comment on the levels of statements, the outcomes statements, the pointers, the language style, and levels of inclusiveness” (Marsh, 1994, p.148).

This low level of consultation led to a huge amount of dissatisfaction in the wider community. In Marsh’ words (1994, p.51), “many groups felt disenfranchised and were becoming increasingly vocal in representing their concerns”.

Controversial Issues

Quite a few controversial issues emerged during the national curriculum development process. Firstly, there was disagreement in identifying the learning areas. Except for a consensus on Mathematics, Science and English, the other five learning areas later established underwent considerable debate. For example, some argued for Environment to be a cross-area element in all learning areas; others wanted it to be included in Social Studies³¹. Some interest groups wanted Business Studies to be established as a ninth learning area; others preferred it to be merged into Social Studies.

The design brief for Studies of Society and Environment also created some concerns. Some stakeholders considered there was a lack of attention to Work Education and Career Education, and an underemphasis on Asian Studies.

³⁰ As well, any comments could only be tinkering around the edges. The framework - with its strands and sub-strands - was set in concrete. As was the name Society and Environment - with which many of us disagree. Why environment? Society includes everything. (R.2)

³¹ Others believe it should be in science. (R.2)

Marsh (1994, p.107) detailed eight concerns related the Studies of Society and Environment statements, namely:

- The treatment of Environment was inadequate, especially in terms of the “time, continuity and change” and the “resources” strands.
- There was some concern about the place and role of the “systems” strand.
- It was a concern that a passive cultural transmission model was conveyed in the statement—it failed to show the learning area as an active, participative exploration of knowledge, skills and understandings.
- Several systems identified the lack of a critical perspective in the document.
- The document failed to give emphasis and direction to how students learn to take action.
- There was concern about the concentration on Australia in the outcomes section and in the bands, at the expense of a wider global perspective.
- There was concern about the components included for the “place and space” strand.
- Several systems suggested that the statement could be improved by the inclusion of a future perspective, adding depth to each of the strands, but especially to the strand “time, continuity and change”.

Some of these concerns were left unresolved and reappeared when the Studies of Society and Environment profile was subjected to a further consultation stage. The profile was regarded to have underemphasised the environment, overemphasised key learnings about Australia, and contained a somewhat³² conservative flavour (see Marsh, 1994, p.148).

Moreover, at a late stage in the development process, state-federal conflict emerged because of governmental changes at the two levels. This left the fate of the national curriculum in a state of uncertainty. In 1992, when there were Labour Governments virtually in every state, most Ministers for Education were “dinkum” about the national statement and profiles. By July 1993 that had almost completely changed because the Liberal Party came to power in almost every state except Queensland. A senior officer’s interpretation of this situation was as follows:

³² Very conservative. (R.2)

You have got Ministers now meeting and saying, well yes we are in it, but have to make sure now because of the focus on the states' rights, rather than a centralist organised curriculum. They said, well, we want to have a look. We are still dinkum about it, but we have now got to make sure that this fits the bill for our state. That was interpreted in a whole different way in different states. Victoria virtually adopted it straight away, but they put their own cover on it and called it the Curriculum Standards Framework, the CSF. Other states picked it up at varying degrees, and Western Australia indicated that it would go to a trial which it did at the beginning of 1994 and proceeded through until the end of 1995. (So.8)

A head of department in effect endorsed those comments by saying that,

The West Australian Minister went over [to the AEC meeting], and my understanding was that he was not prepared at that stage to say we are going with outcome statements. We want to basically see what the trial information produces and whether we need the information before we can say that we are going to accept outcome statements. I think it was a reluctance by the Liberal Government here to accept something that was seen as the Labor Party pushing from Canberra the idea of learning areas common throughout Australia, you know having a common framework and I think there was sort of a hesitancy of this particular Liberal Government to march the tune of a Labor centralised government in Canberra. (Hod.6)

This state-federal conflict led to the revision of the national profiles in most of the states after 1993. What has happened since then in Western Australia will be dealt with in detail later in this section.

On the whole, most of the controversial issues were resolved through the AEC and CURASS meetings. A certain level of consensus was reached by negotiation. However, where negotiated consensus was not possible, other strategies were used. For example, in the case of the draft document for the Studies of Society and Environment statement, when consensus could not be reached between the writers and the CURASS secretariat, seconded officers from seven states were used to replace the original team and instructed "to rewrite the national statement according to principles enunciated by CURASS" (Marsh, 1994, p.147).

National Curriculum Developers' Autonomy

The way controversial issues were resolved overshadowed the autonomy of the national statements and profiles developers, particularly the autonomy of the writers. Under strict supervision of CURASS, and with the “mapping and design briefs having set the structure and framework for it all”, there was not much opportunity for the writers to “reconceptualise the whole thing” (So.8).

While the team for the Studies of Society and Environment statement had little scope to express their ideas in the statement, the seconded officers who were used to replace the team did not have much autonomy either. They were confined to modifying the way the statement was expressed. One senior officer commented that,

The basic work that had been done by the design brief and by the mapping virtually set the structure and the framework for it all. It was the way in which it was expressed that basically had to be modified. It was in terminology. But it was a very long document as well, so there had to be some reduction and basically we got back to what were the essential core things that were needed rather than all of the stuff that was added to the previous version, so it was bringing it back to something that everybody could agree on, expressing that in a form that people could live with. (So.8)

According to Marsh (1994, p.49), financial support for the national collaborative curriculum endeavour was “very modest” and represented “a ‘bottom-line’ figure”. In fact, this accounts partly for the unavailability of funds for the national reference groups to have “face-to-face contact”, the rigid timelines for the mapping exercises, and the writing of briefs, statements and profiles. It also partly accounts for the inadequacy of consultation which, in most cases, was conducted through post.

STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS DEVELOPMENT IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

It needs to be pointed out that the WA Student Outcome Statements model of curriculum is nothing new; it is simply a state version of the national profiles.

Rationale for Student Outcome Statements

Besides those driving forces behind the national collaborative curriculum endeavour, such as making full use of scarce curriculum resources, minimising curriculum differences across the systems, and cutting funding in education, the development of Student Outcome Statement in Western Australia had some intentions of its own.

As discussed in the section on 'structural change', Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia was intended to be a monitoring tool. Politicians hoped to use this tool to hold schools and teachers accountable to their education system, community and students, because accountability was becoming more and more important in a devolved system like that in WA. Student Outcome Statements was seen to be capable of ensuring that kind of accountability through the measurement of schools, teachers and students' performance.

Closely related to the desire to ensure accountability was the intention to provide schools with more flexibility and capacity in their curriculum decision making so that they could "design curriculum and set up curriculums appropriate to them" (So.2). Student Outcome Statements was regarded as: "the kind of curriculum structure that best allow for a devolved system to develop" (So.1); "milestones along the way towards an outcome at various levels" (Tr.1); and "a vehicle for that information to be provided to the students" and "for curriculum design to start off with" (Hod.5).

Student Outcome Statements development in Western Australia was also intended to shift the focus from input to output in schooling, to shift the focus on content-driven teaching and learning to a focus on teaching and learning process, and to shift from teacher-centred learning to student-centred learning. It was also meant to provide students with the opportunities to go into things in greater depth and to provide them with a broader picture as a result of "putting all the curriculums in line with each other" (Pa.2).

Developers of Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia

The selection of Student Outcome Statements developers in Western Australia was based largely on appointment. Only a few positions were advertised in newspapers.

For example, the consultant position for Social Studies was advertised, a number of people applied and the shortlisted applicants were interviewed. Following the interview an appointment was made (So.5). Some developers of Student Outcome Statements were selected by virtue of already being in the position, such as the Minister for Education, the Director General, the Director of Curriculum and the superintendents. The rest of the developers, such as members of the working parties and members on the Consultative Committee were appointed or selected by various processes. For instance, teachers on working parties or reference committees were selected by the consultant. One senior officer described how they were selected as follows:

Well, they didn't have to necessarily go through any selection process. Working parties that were established in WA - initially there were no teachers involved during the development phase, only a very small number of people were involved in that process. Some teachers who were either on working parties, or reference parties, were generally selected by the consultants so it was people that the consultant knew and thought would be appropriate people for the position. (So.5)

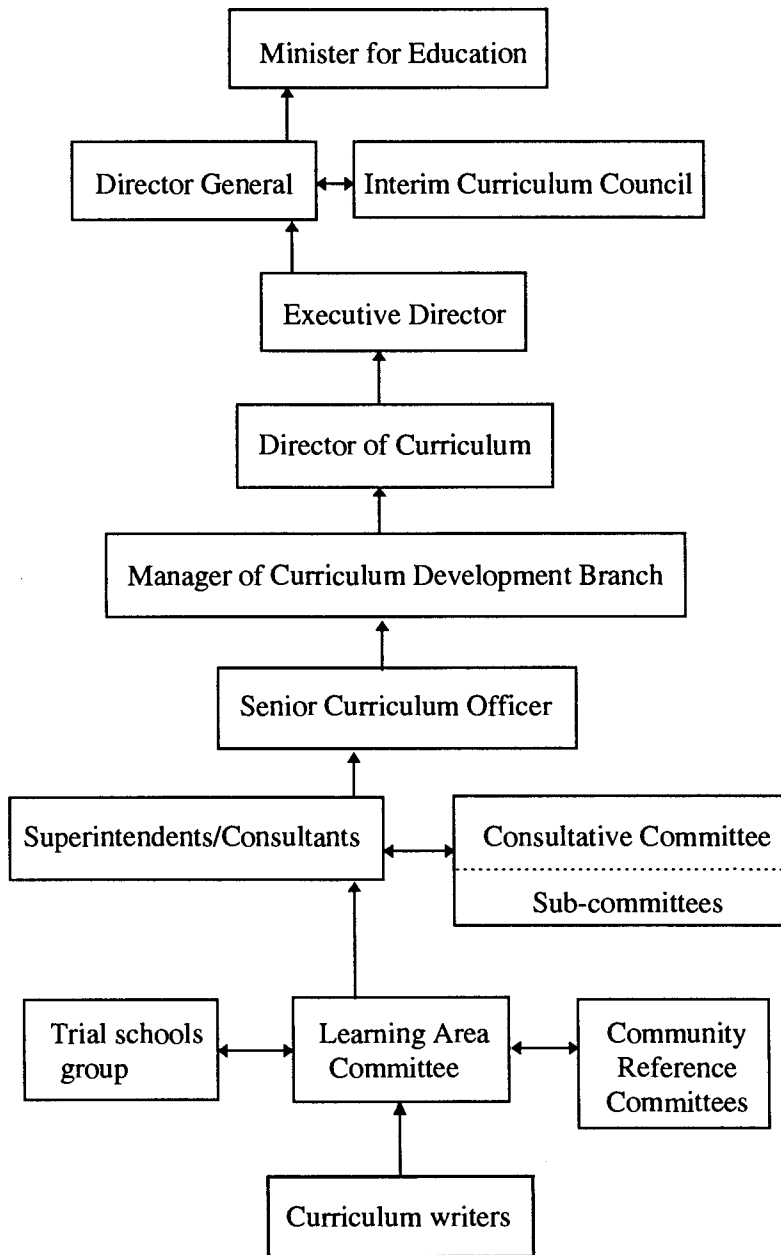
Another teacher participant said the positions for members on the Consultative Committee were filled neither by appointment nor advertisement. She said that,

In the initial stages there were about a hundred people and from those a hundred people it went down to about fifteen. And in a sense it's mainly on a volunteer basis. So in terms of having people with vested interests they've got that but they haven't necessarily got a democratic process operating. It's more, you know, who's ever been there and up front and interested etc. And who's known. (Tr.1)

The developers of Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia can be also categorised into three groups: full-time developers, part-time developers, and others who had input. The full-time developers consisted of members of the working parties, the contract writers, and those who have been trialing Student Outcome Statements in the trial schools. Part-time developers comprised the Minister for Education, the Director General, the Director of Curriculum, the superintendents and consultants, and the members of the Consultative Committee. The last group, who were consulted and had a say, comprised those other than members of the Consultative Committee. These included individuals and organisations both inside and outside the education community.

Because the development of Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia ran almost parallel to the development of the national statement and profiles, and at one stage, was part of the national process, the working structure for Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia was more complicated and multi-levelled. This structure is tabled below in Figure 18.

Figure 18: Working Structure of WA Student Outcome Statements Developers



Within this structure, the ultimate power rested with the Minister of Education who had the final say. A senior officer outlined the power hierarchy by saying that,

Any work that the consultant or superintendent did would have gone from the consultant or superintendent to a senior curriculum officer who was the overall person in charge of the Student Outcome Statements project, to the Manager of the Curriculum Development Branch, to the Director of Curriculum, to the Executive Director, to the Director General. But the final step as to whether we will use Student Outcome Statements or not will be dependent upon the Minister for Education. He or she as the case may be in the future, and they will decide and he or she will make a decision. Initially it was just Education Department personnel who would okay or not okay the process. (So.5)

Another participant indicated who had the overriding authority by stating that, “the Minister has not said yes or no to student outcome statements at the moment. He is allowing it to be trialed in schools. That does not mean he is going to accept it” (Tr.1).

The Curriculum Development Branch had a manager. S/he had the overall responsibility for managing the development process. Under the Curriculum Development Branch manager was a senior curriculum officer who “overviewed all the work of the Student Outcome Statements” (So.5).

Then there were all the curriculum consultants. They were “the ones who did the work” (So.5). In the case of Society and Environment, the consultants “had a lot of say” (Tr.1), or “did most of the work in developing Student Outcome Statements” (So.5). The consultants and superintendents were responsible for “responding to national curriculum draft documents” (So.8). They “co-operated with their counterparts in each of the other States and they would meet periodically either in Canberra or generally in Melbourne” (So.5). They were “responsible for the Learning Area Statements” (Tr.1). The consultants also “got together the Consultative Committee” (Tr.1). The consultants also “went to a number of meetings in the country to talk to the teachers and get their feedback” (So.8).

The trial schools were “doing particular bits and pieces in student outcome statement areas and they report back to a central authority” which was “the superintendent and his consultants who then report back to consultative committee”. At the same time the Consultative Committee had set up “sub-committees to look at particular problems”. (Tr.1)

The Learning Area Consultative Group (LACG) met and consulted.³³ Attached to the LACG were some contract writers. On the basis of the discussions of this group, the writers were asked to go away and prepare a statement of what the curriculum in Social Studies should be like for WA schools. (So.8)

The Interim Curriculum Council was set up in 1996 to construct the K-12 curriculum framework. It is independent of the Education Department. It developed an Overarching Statement to sit on top of the Learning Area Statements and Student Outcome Statements. The Education Department “had to respond back to the Curriculum Council” and “say to them whether they thought the Overarching Statement was a document ready to go out to schools for consultation” (So.8).

The stakeholders’ involvement in Student Outcome Statements development in Western Australia was mainly through their representation on the various committees, participation in a few seminars and consultation conducted by the superintendent and consultants. For example, the Consultative Committee was represented by “various organisations in the community such as business, teachers and professional associations” (So.8).

The Learning Area Consultative Group was made up of educationalists, and the Community Reference Committee was made up people in the community who wanted a say on what should be the Social Studies curriculum now and in the future. Though stakeholders’ involvement was “meant to be a balance on each of the committees” (So.8), their role was virtually limited to responding to draft documents. Moreover, these committees could not function well. Take the Consultative Committee, for example. A teacher explained why it could not function well by saying that,

I would very much suspect that the person who’s on that doesn’t really understand the implications of these statements to the classroom teacher. It’s not that he or she wouldn’t want to. It’s just not really made that clear at the consultative group meeting. They’re not the people actually doing the nuts and bolts of it. They’re not actually trying to implement it. They’re just making rhetorical statements about it, which is a whole heap easier than having to go back and work with these things. (Tr.1)

³³ The Learning Area Consultative Group (LACG) played a significant role. (R.2)

In Social Studies, academics were represented on the Learning Area Consultative Group, but they did not “play a very big thing” (Tr.2), because there was no “attempt to ensure that the universities were fully involved in the process” (So.5).

Textbook publishers “haven’t had any involvement so far” in the Student Outcome Statements development process (So.5). Some companies, though, are already “producing stencil masters on Student Outcome Statements”. They actually put the outcome at the end of the page, saying “kids do this and this activity and this is going to be the outcome” (Tr.1).

The Western Australian Social Studies Association (WASSA) was involved, “mainly as a consultative group”, “kept informed”, and “allowed to react to what was happening” (So.5). One participant summarised the Association’s involvement in these words:

When the National Outcome Statements were first written, when the Queensland crew were still employed as our writers, when they sent their outline (which is Draft Number 1) we responded to that document. So, as an Association we provided the response for the National Document, Draft Number 1 and Draft Number 2. We also have had response to the state Student Outcomes documents in relation to the pointers. We have also had input to the Student Outcomes Statements and their relationship with the original K-10 document. We did a mapping exercise and looked at the statements themselves and looked at how the statements fitted into the existing K-10 Syllabus. So, we have responded to the official documents. We did get involved in the initial writing of the pointers, but that’s a useless bit of document anyhow. (Pa.1)

The History Teachers Association’s involvement was also “done in that representative sort of sense” (So.8). The Geography Teachers Association was “only interested in the financial market” and was “only considering the fact that they can broaden their profit margin” (Pa.1).

Although there were meetings around the metropolitan area asking for teachers to come along to discuss the national profile, the number of teachers involved was very small, about twenty teachers in total. On some occasions, a teacher who went to those meetings might be “the only person there besides the guys who were on the panel who were actually writing it” (Tr.6). Furthermore, teachers’ involvement in the

profile was confined by the fact that they could only “react to it” (So.5). According to a senior officer,

They also went through a process where once a draft of all the Outcome Statements was available, it was sent to teachers. Now the Outcome Statements were divided up into eight levels, and teachers were then sent the product on disk and asked, do you think these levels are appropriate? There was a gradation procedure, if you like, used to try and come to some consensus about whether the levels were appropriate or not. So, Level 1 was less difficult than Level 2 and Level 2 less difficult than Level 3 and so forth, whether they thought it was developmental in nature or not. (So.5)

The same officer attributed teachers’ inadequate involvement to their unwillingness to participate and said,

I don’t think that most teachers would necessarily want to have a say. There would be only a very small number who really want to become involved in that process. While many people may say - oh yes I would like to have the opportunity to - if the situation arose and they had to become involved in a series of workshops in decision making groups, I don’t think they would be willing to give up time, energy and effort to do that. (So.5)

There was no student involvement, nor was there much parental involvement. “They didn’t appear to have much of an idea about Student Outcome Statements and what they were about”. This “has always been the case”, since “the community has never been involved in making decisions within the subject areas” (So.5).

Regional officers were involved as consultants. Their task was “basically to meet with officers from the Curriculum Branch usually once a term at least, and for them then to go back and speak to the people in schools” (So.5).

The Secondary Education Authority “had an active role” (Tr.2) and gained a contract for writing some of the Student Outcome Statements. The WA State School Teachers Union was “both informed of what was happening and at times also invited to send representatives to meetings” (So.5). It was represented on the Consultative Committee and the working parties, but its role was also limited to feedback. It did “not have any influence at all” to “stop or change the curriculum” (Pa.2).

According to one participant, the input of interest groups into Student Outcome Statements development was reflected in the final document. For example, the

religious group had their say. Originally, they were concerned that “religion is not evident enough in the Student Outcome Statements”. As a result of their input, “modifications” have been made to “meet their concerns” (So.8). Apparently, the same happened to Aboriginal groups and the environmental group.

So far, it can be concluded that the Student Outcome Statements in Society and Environment in Western Australia was mainly developed by the superintendent and consultants and a small number of curriculum writers. Stakeholders were largely excluded from the policy making process, and left only to provide feedback.³⁴

Development Process

Though the development of Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia is still in process at the time of writing, four stages can be identified: initiation, joining in the national collaborative curriculum endeavour, trial and modification of the national profiles, and revision of the national statement.

Stage One: Initiation

In 1990, the Ministry of Education in Western Australia released two policy documents: *School Development Planning: Policy and Guidelines* and *School Accountability: Policy and Guidelines*. Essentially these two documents told to schools that the system was moving from a centrally prescribed syllabus base to a system where “schools would be given more flexibility” in the curriculum area while at the same time “accountability could be ensured in a devolved system” (So.8). The Ministry of Education was looking for some kind of curriculum structure that could better describe teacher and student performance and Student Outcome Statements was seen to be “the right structure” (So.1).

³⁴ You’ve not mentioned any of the works of the 3-year (1994-1996) DEET funded project in WA - Studies of Society and Environment National Professional Development Project (NPDP). The project worked with primary and secondary teachers in government and non-government schools in Perth and Geraldton to trial the Investigation, Communication and Participation strand of SOS. As a result of that work, that strand has been substantially modified. (R.2)

English and Mathematics took the lead in the movement towards Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia. Curriculum Officers in these areas in Central Office “were looking for a product or a structure to better measure student achievement”. By the end of 1991, two sets of documents had been produced: a blue set of documents for Mathematics and a red set of documents for English. These documents described “what the student was doing, the way in which they had put together whatever it was in Maths or in English - their ability to write, their ability to whatever” (So.8). These two documents were the forerunners of and, later, absorbed into the national profiles for Mathematics and English.

During late 1991 and 1992, work was being done in all of the main units. Similar Outcome Statements in the *Society and Environment* area were also being developed.

At the same time around Australia, the curriculum mapping exercises were finished, national briefing was well under way, and the national statement and profiles were already on the national curriculum agenda.

Stage Two: Joining in the National Collaborative Curriculum Endeavour

In June 1992, while work on both the national statement and profiles, and the development of Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia was going on, AEC held a meeting where all Ministers for Education in all States agreed to commit to the development of national profiles in their respective systems (Marsh, 1994, p.42). “The response from a WA point of view was that we became more involved in the work on the Statement and on the National Profiles that were being developed at that time” (So.8). Before then, Western Australia had only been involved “in a consultative way”, being “advised” and “providing advice back” (So.8). From then on “WA abandoned its local products and decided to join with all the other states in the federal system and develop Student Outcome Statements nationally” (So.5). In the learning area of Society and Environment³⁵, WA had a member on the team which was to revise the draft national statement document produced by the

³⁵ Up until the formation of the Interim Curriculum Council in 1996, the name for the learning area was Studies of Society and Environment. One of the first decisions that the Interim Curriculum Council made was to change the name to Society and Environment. Studies was deleted. (R.2)

Queensland team. Later, it won a contract to develop the national profiles in association with two other agencies from South Australia and New South Wales. It also shared the responsibility with Victoria to coordinate the production of the strands for the profiles. Western Australia oversaw the strands of Place and Space, Resources, and Systems. Moreover, it had the responsibility to develop the Place and Space strand.

The work that was being done in Society and Environment up until October 1992 was virtually put on hold. The working party virtually stopped doing its own developmental work and “put all of its energies into ensuring that the work that was being done nationally was going to be a product that WA could use” (So.8).

Stage Three: Trial and Modification of National Profiles

By June 1993, all the work on national statements and profiles had been finished and was ready for implementation in every State. But an important political change had taken place. In 1992, when Ministers for Education offered their systems’ commitment to the development of national statement and profiles, virtually every state government and the Federal Government was ruled by the Labor Party. By July 1993, this had almost completely changed, leaving only the Federal Labor Government and one state Labor Government (Queensland). At the July 1993 AEC meeting, most Education Ministers from state Liberal Governments were reluctant to accept the national statements and profiles. They wanted to “have a look” first and “make sure that this fits the bill for their states” (So.8).

Western Australia indicated that it would go to a trial first. It began the trial early in 1994 and proceeded through until the end of 1995. The trial was conducted in schools right across the State. Consultative committees in each of the eight learning areas were set up and working parties established to look at specific issues. Basically, the trial was intended to decide the extent to which the profiles could meet WA’s needs and what needed to be done in order to make them suitable for Western Australian schools (So.8).

By the end of 1996, based on trial feedback and the needs set out in the original two education policy documents (*School Development Planning and School*

Accountability), modification of the national profiles had been completed and a WA version of the national profiles called Student Outcome Statements had been produced.

As one participant explained, in the WA version of the national profile for Society and Environment, some of the outcome statements were “reordered and reworded”, and the strand of Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders was “completely reworked” (Tr.1). According to another participant, there was also “a massive re-write of the process strand” (Tr.6)³⁶.

Stage Four: Revision of the National Statements

Stage four saw changes to the national statements. The national statements, in fact, stayed intact for a while when the profiles were being revised and modified. However, in 1996, the Minister for Education in Western Australia set up a committee chaired by Terese Temby to “evaluate the curriculum being offered in Western Australia schools”. According to a senior officer, the aim of the Committee was to investigate “what is it in WA schools that the curriculum is trying to achieve? What are the Outcomes that we are trying to achieve? And to what extent is curriculum work able to achieve those outcomes?” (So.8). However, the reviewer questioned this account by saying,

Not really. Have you read the terms of reference? I was on the committee as a research officer - most of the emphasis was on how syllabus and materials were developed and implemented rather than on what it contained or what was it trying to achieve. (R.2)

The Committee looked at the existing curriculums, sought documents, consulted widely with the people and called for submissions as well. Eventually the Committee came up with a report known as *The Temby Report* which drew “a picture of what the curriculum was in Western Australia and made some recommendations”. (So.8)

As a result of the Temby Report, the Minister for Education set up the Interim Curriculum Council. Its role was “to spell out for all schools in this state, what are the major outcomes of learning to be achieved by all students in their state” (So.8).

³⁶ And were also made to accommodate Religious education in the culture strand. (R.2)

The Interim Curriculum Council met in March 1997. It produced an overarching statement, namely, a curriculum framework for K-12 education in Western Australia. The Catholic education system, the independent school system and the Education Department were asked to “have a look” and “respond back” (So.8)³⁷. Details about the overarching statement have already been provided in the section of ‘structural change’.

Meanwhile, work on Learning Area Statements was also conducted and eventually added on top of the national statements and profiles. Furthermore, some of the national outcomes were modified. Modification was conducted,

mainly in terms of adjusting, in making the Outcome Statements more reflective of the state’s view on education, and the state’s view on Social Studies education, for example, making them more “user friendly for teachers” because they are still very, very difficult products for many people. (So.5)

However, according to another senior officer (So.8), modification went beyond that. Even though Student Outcome Statements is WA’s “interpretation of the national work”, the underpinnings for Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia was changed from that of the national statements and profiles. The same officer described the difference between the two by saying that,

The national ones tended to be a little bit of a diagram like this: At level 1 you do this, at level 2 you do that, at level 3 you do this, at level 4 you do that. And that didn’t exactly match this sort of view that we were trying to paint here in this state. We wanted a framework, as defined by those Squiggle Books where we wanted a framework that described how the kids build up their understanding, rather than how the curriculum builds up their understanding. Now there is a difference there in terms of what you are trying to describe. You can write an outcome here - kids will listen to stories about the past or something like that. Now, so what you had from the national one was - yes we’ve taught that, we’ve taught that outcome and these kids have got it and these kids haven’t got it, whereas the way we are viewing the curriculum is - we’ve taught them this stuff and as a result of that this is the understanding that has emerged out of that. We are trying to describe what typically that understanding looks like. (So.8)³⁸

³⁷ More than that. They had representatives involved in putting the framework together. (R.2)

³⁸ The emphasis was on what the students have learnt rather than what they have been taught. (R.2)

So far, the development of Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia has gone through four stages for over six years (1990-97), but the process is not finished yet. "Development work is still occurring, and further changes are occurring and will probably occur throughout the [1997] year". (So.5)

Consultation

As mentioned earlier, consultation with teachers other than those already involved in the development process was very limited. At stage three when the national profiles were being trialed and modified, consultation took the form of a few seminars and talks with teachers in the country by the consultants. However, on each occasion, only a very small number of teachers were involved, a total of about twenty teachers.

Also, some seminars were held with other interest groups, like university academics. Through the Community Reference Group, interest groups such as religious groups, Aboriginal groups and environmental groups, were consulted. One participant argued that modifications made to the 1994 working edition of Student Outcome Statements in Society and Environment accommodated the findings from 1994/95 trial and interest groups input as well. This participant maintained that interest groups "concerns have been met" (So.8).

However, teachers generally have not had an opportunity to comment on the Over-arching Statement, the Learning Area Statements and some of the modified national statements and profiles as a package. It is anticipated that "schools in third term (1997) will get to see the framework" (So.8).

Controversies in Student Outcome Statements Development in Western Australia

Some of the controversial issues that emerged in the development process of the national statements and profiles lingered on and had to be faced by the developers of Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia. Some of the issues were hotly contested and eventually resolved. Others, though also hotly debated, were left unresolved.

First of all, the state-federal conflict remained. Several aspects of this conflict warrant mention. One was that the underpinnings of the national statements and profiles were different from those of the Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia. This aspect of the conflict was resolved in favour of the state by modifying the national statements and profiles. Another aspect of the issue was the competition between state and federal governments to get control of education. At one stage of the development process, the Liberal Party controlled the state government in WA and the Labor Party controlled federal government. Each of the parties had a different policy on how education should occur and different standards of education. The state government, “wanted to have more say in the standard of education and greater emphasis on discipline in schools”, so they were “more concerned about how kids look or uniforms” (Hod.2). By contrast, the federal government saw the standard of education as being decided by whether schools could promote Australia’s economic competitiveness in the international market. How this is going to be resolved still remains a question. But the remarks by a head of department offer one possibility,

³⁹The federal government largely controls the money. Now if the federal government wants to do something, change education in some way and move it towards what they think is more related, for example, to industry, then they will use that control of money to influence the states or force the states to change their system. (Hod.2)

Secondly, within Western Australia there was very strong disagreement as to whether the system should adopt the Student Outcome Statements approach itself. At one level, there was disagreement between education officers in the Ministry of Education. “Some offices and some senior officers” in the Ministry were “constantly questioning the educational value of the process, or at least of this type of education”. They were concerned that the British education system had moved towards an outcomes-based approach and that created “tremendous problems”, so they “feared that the same type of thing would occur” here in WA. (So.5)

At another level, there was “strong opposition from some teachers to the whole process”. Some of the teachers were “simply sick of the constant change that was

³⁹ For example, money injected into WA through National Professional Development Project was federal government money. (R.2)

occurring within the education system”; others were “questioning whether Student Outcome Statements was an appropriate approach or not for education in Western Australia” (So.5). These teachers were sceptical of the Student Outcome Statement approach. They were not convinced and asked “why this is better, or how this will improve student performance” (Hod.5).

In the learning area of Society and Environment, there were also “a lot of questions and controversial issues” (So.5). For example,

There were questions about whether the actual Outcomes Statements as they were written were really indicating a developmental sequence. Whether the developmental sequence that they attempted to portray was an appropriate one, whether we needed 8 Levels, or 10 Levels, or 12 Levels or 4 Levels, whether we needed all the strands and sub-strands that were developed. So, there were a lot of issues revolving around those particular areas. (So.5)

For example, one of the controversial areas was the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders strand: “There's a lot of dissent as whether or not that should be treated as a substrand” (Tr.1). This strand was very controversial because there were “a lot of people who do not believe that there should be a specifically named cultural group that you have to study or has to be studied.....A lot of people think that Aboriginal Studies should be for Aboriginal people only” (Tr.1). Furthermore,

There's a lot of movement against it because they think, why should they tell us what to put into a curriculum. Why shouldn't it be Asian people? Why shouldn't we be learning about Chinese people or Japanese people? Why do we have to learn about Aboriginal people?

This strand was even more controversial for Aboriginal people because “they don't want the Torres Strait Islanders in it”. (Tr.1)

Nevertheless, these controversial issues were merely “contested verbally in the sense of argument for the pros and cons” (Hod.5). Opposition took the form of “constant questioning of what was happening” and “talking at various meetings” (So.5). Though the opposition was not powerful enough “to sabotage or to stop the process”, it was powerful enough “to cause concern” (So.5). For instance, the “general body of teachers” and “some offices in the Ministry of Education as well as some senior officers” were constantly “questioning the whole process”, but the “small group of

curriculum officers” who were involved in developing the Student Outcome Statements had the formal power and strongly pushed it through, even though they were the only “driving force” plus “limited support from some tertiary educators”. (So.5)⁴⁰

Negotiation and Consensus

The strategies used to resolve those controversial issues and concerns were multi-faceted. The concern whether the system should adopt the Student Outcome Statements approach was resolved politically. To defuse opposition, various consultative committees or groups were set up. A senior officer put it this way,

They were mainly set up, I think, partly as a political issue, especially since, over the last couple of years, there was a counter-reaction to Student Outcome Statements and outcome based education. A number of people began to question quite vociferously where this was heading and the significance of it. So the Consultative Groups were partly set up to try and overcome some of these problems. So within the Consultative Groups there was an attempt to ensure there was representation from teachers, administrators, heads of departments, the Teachers Union, various teacher professional associations and universities. I think the initial pressure for the establishing of these was a political rather than an educational one. They were required not only to give input about what was happening, but also to try and allay some of the fears that were occurring. (So.5)

Even though the strategy to “ensure that your opponents then become part of a process” was regarded as “very powerful”, opposition still remains and questioning of the significance of the approach continues. (So.5)

In other cases, attempts were made to try to reach a consensus through constant discussion and debate. Nonetheless, where a consensus was impossible, the consultant “would decide” bureaucratically to “go forward” (So.5).

Issues related to the structure and levels of the Student Outcome Statements were resolved in a different way from that outlined above. Despite concerns and debate, they were resolved in that the developers “were told” by the AEC secretariat that “this is the structure that’s going to be used nationally so the developers have to work within this structure” and “the limits provided” (So.5).

⁴⁰ Some Territory educationists have been critical of it, too. (R.2)

Yet, other issues were resolved through negotiation and consultation on the Consultative Committee and its sub-committees. For example, the issue about whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders should be a substrand and whether Torres Strait Islanders should be left out was resolved through debate among people working on this strand. Eventually an agreement was reached that “it should stay in the curriculum as a specific statement or else it wont get taught” (Tr.1).⁴¹

Generally speaking, the level of consensus on these issues was low and “most of the issues were not resolved”. The questioning of the approach continues and “there are still changes occurring to the Student Outcome Statements”. Consensus exists only “within a small group of people”. These included “the small group of curriculum officers⁴² involved in developing the product, people from the Curriculum Corporation and some tertiary educators”. There was “not consensus amongst the general body of teachers who strongly opposed and will probably continue to do so” (So.5). Moreover,

In some cases the consensus was made for us, we were told **you will** by Senior Officers. This is what you will do. Under those circumstances there is not much you can do. (So.5)

Autonomy of WA Student Outcome Statements Developers

The developers of Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia had very little autonomy. Despite their power with the pen and their expertise in particular subject areas, the developers’ autonomy only “came in terms of the words that they used in the documents”. Even this bit of autonomy was limited because “again the words were sort of constantly looked at by others and changes were made” (So.5).

In fact, some participants in this study who were involved in the development process felt that “the constraints that were there were pretty severe” because,

We had to work within existing structures, and we all had to work towards achievement of a common structure and the structure was what we were presented with. (So.5)

⁴¹ That’s not my understanding of what’s happened, now. I think that the sub-strand is now called Culture and Beliefs. (R.2)

⁴² One of the problems, I think, for curriculum officers is that they have to make it work and they have to be seen to support the innovation. (R.2)

Also the curriculum writers “could not work without or outside” some “givens” from their senior officers. In more detail,

The “givens” were that we would have strands and sub-strands. For example in Social Studies there were to be five conceptual strands and one process strand. The “givens” were that we would have eight levels. Those levels as far as possible would be developmental in nature, and any documents we produced would, for example, include work samples for teachers to use as a basis for making judgments and to look at what students work would indicate. So those sorts of things were “givens” that we could not work outside, we had to work within those structures. (So.5)

Another teacher participant said that developers had to accept these givens “as a fait accompli and they've worked within it, rather than querying it” (Tr.1). There was political pressure on the developers in the sense that,

There was pressure on us to write the final level of the student outcome statements for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders strand with students showing an empathy towards an Aboriginal point of view. (Tr.1)

In addition, according to one participant, developers also felt the pressure of deadlines because “the amount of time was fairly limited” (So.5).

Support for WA Student Outcome Statements Developers

Evidently, Student Outcome Statements development in Western Australia was sufficiently funded. However, the money came not from the state government, but from the federal government through DEET. It was estimated that the developers “had probably each year a minimum of \$2.5 million across all the officers that were working developing the curriculum product” (So.5).

Nevertheless, support for Student Outcome Statements development was very poor in terms of personnel and professional expertise. According to one teacher, some developers “did find it frustrating” that the persons that were above them had “less knowledge than those who were on the working parties or the curriculum writers or even who were working in the trial schools” and could only “bellow forth with the rhetoric” (Tr.1). This teacher further commented that,

We've had no assistance from him whatsoever to do this task we've been set, and as I said right from the beginning, we got the feeling we were set up to fail. (Tr.1)

And there's virtually no curriculum support except for a bit of time off from school. But there's no support in that because you've still got to do your marking, you've still got to do all your preparation, so it's minimal support. We're taken out of the classroom for a couple days here and a couple of days there. We've still got to do all the preparations and everything so really they haven't actually taken anyone that I'm aware of and divorced them completely and said, look get down and get this job done. You're meant to have your foot in both worlds. (Tr.1)

TRIAL OF STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS⁴³

Scale and Time Duration of Trialing Student Outcome Statements

As mentioned earlier in the 'development process', at the AEC June 1993 meeting, Western Australia's Minister for Education agreed to trial the national statements and profiles. In the Social Studies curriculum area, the trial of Student Outcome Statements began with the release by the Education Department of Western Australia of *Studies of Society and Environment: Student Outcome Statements with pointers and work sample (working edition)*. This document, published in 1994, was a WA version of the national statements and profiles. The trial process lasted till 1995. With different starting and finishing timelines between each of the trial schools, it was estimated that the total and average time length for trialing Student Outcome Statements was about eighteen months.

The number of schools involved in trialing Student Outcome Statements was small. According to a senior officer (So.5), there were "at least eleven or twelve schools actually trialing aspects of Social Studies", including senior high schools, district high schools and primary schools. Originally, there were not so many schools officially involved, but as the trial process went along, some other schools joined in. They did not belong to the official trial process. Instead,

They are just working for themselves because either the teachers are interested, or because they can see benefits, or because they feel that we may as well learn now before we are actually told to do it, and it will be a

⁴³ It is worth noting that trials of Student Outcome Statements were taking place in a context of industrial unrest - where I think 'out of hour' work was black-banned. (R.2)

lot more difficult if we are suddenly told to do it across the whole subject area. (So.5)

However, some of the participants argued that there was a problem with the trial schools in that they were fairly small: “Most of the trial schools are smaller country schools”. They were “only as big as a department in the big senior high schools” in terms of student enrolment and staff. Therefore, they claimed that what worked in a small school in the trial process was possibly “not going to happen in these big schools” (Tr.1 & Hod.1).

Range of Content Tried

All together, there were eight learning areas. In Society and Environment, there were six strands, eighteen sub-strands and eight levels of outcomes - a total of one hundred and forty-four outcomes. Not all the trial schools trialed the eight learning areas, nor did they trial all the outcomes in Society and Environment. But “they’re all doing different strands and sub strands with different levels of commitment” (Tr.1).

For example, one trial school “basically only focused on three units”. It did not trial across a whole year group nor across the entire school. In one participant’s words, “it was very much just a little snap shot on a particular area study”. Though they tried to use outcome statements as an assessment tool to “level kids’ work”, their main aim was to rearrange the content or to use the existing K-10 Syllabus or Unit Curriculum syllabus “to see how Student Outcome Statements would fit in there and what sort of issues would arise from that”. They didn't go into the stage of reporting to parents the students’ achievements on Student Outcome Statements. They were only “using students’ work to try and increase their knowledge about how Outcome Statements can be used to determine levels”. Therefore, the trial “was pretty much low key” (Hod.6).

Another trial school “attempted to dip their toes in the water of Student Outcome Statements”. The school had a one day workshop for all Social Studies teachers on Student Outcome Statements and expected to “try one sub-strand or strand with one or two outcomes and see how that goes”. The intention was to “get familiar with the

terms and to use it as a planning document but also as an assessment tool and to understand the structure” (So.3).

Strategies Used for Trialing Student Outcome Statements

The trial for Student Outcome Statements was initiated by the subject consultants. They contacted some schools through the post to see if they were interested in trialing Student Outcome Statements. The schools’ responses were not very positive. However, where a positive answer was fed back, the consultants would go into schools and talk to staff members. One head of department commented that,

The schools really at that stage weren't interested in taking in the trial. So I felt the responsibility as Head of Department to be a bit more positive, saying yes we are interested in doing it. But my other motive was that I had a feeling that it was going to be inevitable and that rather than having it dropped on me. here it is you are now implementing outcome statements, I'd rather have some time do it slowly over a period of time and become more knowledgeable about what's expected of me and at least have some other people in the Social Studies Department who would also be given time. So there would be a few people around in the Department who would know a bit more about outcome statements than the average person. So it was a case of, I might as well learn then rather than having it dropped on me in 1996 or whenever it was to be official. (Hod.6)

After the trial schools were chosen, the consultants came into schools to give the trial departments and trial teachers a briefing on Student Outcome Statements, usually in after school hours because of industrial action. A head of department recalled their first and only meeting with the consultant:

It was an after school meeting, four o'clock till six o'clock. And it was an overhead job, you know. He would say, these are the outcome statements, these are the learning areas. So we had to learn a whole new vocabulary of learning areas, strands, substrands, contents strand, process strand and you know that sort of terminology was fairly new to us. So his job was really just to sort of say, well you know, these are some of the words that you are going to use, this is the broad idea about outcome statements, you have to change your whole thinking about teaching from this to this. It was just pretty much a show and tell about outcome statements. (Hod.6)

Central Office provided relief time and financial resources for the trial teachers and schools. Therefore those were involved could “go along to some inservice meetings and jot their ideas about Outcome Statements” (Hod.6).

Basically, the trial task was left to the school or the Social Studies department in the school. In some cases, it was left to two or three trial teachers in the department, because the rest of the department or the school “showed no interest in how the trial was going on” (Hod.6). But in either case, the trial teacher “was doing something different from that of other schools or their colleagues” (So.5). As such, some trial teachers felt they “were both emotionally and professionally isolated” (Tr.3, 4 & 5). There was not much collective problem solving. Most trial teachers had to struggle along or turn for advice to the consultant who did not visit schools very often because s/he could not do that unless invited.

The most commonly employed avenue through which trial teachers could discuss issues that emerged from the trialing was after-school meetings. These meetings were “attended on a voluntary basis” and the issues discussed there “were not systematic, nor in depth” (Hod.6). The result was that “there have been some trial and errors in a number of schools that dabbled in Student Outcome Statements”.

Purpose of Trialing Student Outcome Statements

The purpose of the trial was to gain feedback for a revision of the national statements and profiles; trial information was intended to be made “available to all to learn by” (So.5). As seen by a head of department,

The current thinking is that when the Education Department finally goes through all this information they've collected from all the different schools, it has a look at it all and decides, well what are we going to do and which bits need fixing, and fix it. (Hod.5)

For example, when Student Outcome Statements initially came out, the idea was that perhaps there needed not to be any key content in the Social Studies area. However, because this area deals with such things as citizenship education, environmental issues and values etc., the trial showed “that there ought to be something stipulated”. (Hod.5)

The trial schools were also meant to find out if the structure of the Student Outcome Statements, the strand and sub-strands, and outcome statements “would work”. After finding out that some of them worked and some did not, reorganisation and rewriting followed to “make it more sequential, to make it more developmental and to make it

more understandable” (Hod.5). A revision of the whole document based on the findings from the trial has been sent to schools for consultation at the time of writing. And further feedback is expected to come to the Education Department by the end of 1997.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

Before moving on, it needs to be pointed out that in WA implementation of the Student Outcome Statements has not begun yet. As such, information contained here is based on some implementation plans recently announced by a higher ranking official from the Education Department and some participants’ anticipations of how Student Outcome Statements will be implemented.

Timeline for Student Outcome Statements Implementation

The timeline for Student Outcome Statements implementation has been changed again and again in the past few years. There have been various dates given and “it has been continuously put back” (So.5). At first, people expected it to be implemented in 1997 (So.1 & 2; Tr.1; and Hod.1). Later another senior officer heard that “1998 would be the year in which we will start implementing aspects of outcomes-based education” (So.5). Still another senior officer, seeing the frequent postponement of the implementation timeline, commented that “the year 2000 now seems appropriate” (So.3).

On August 2nd, 1997, at the SSAWA Biennial Conference, a high ranking education officer released the implementation timetable to over two hundred Social Studies teachers attending the conference. According to this timetable, 1998 will be the “planning year” when all preparation work is scheduled to be finished. 1999 will be the first year of implementation and by the year 2003, “all schools will have implemented the Curriculum Framework”.

One senior officer in this study pointed out a major factor determining the postponement of Student Outcome Statements implementation. He said that,

One of the reasons is because the Education Department needed to save money and one of the ways it saved money was to postpone implementation of Student Outcome Statements in Schools. (So.5)

Responsibility for Student Outcome Statements Implementation

Responsibility for the implementation of Student Outcome Statements will be shared among the Curriculum Council, the learning area superintendent, and school personnel⁴⁴ like principals, heads of department and senior teachers. The Curriculum Council is expected “to play a large part in the implementation process” at the system level. In each learning area, the superintendent is said to be going to “play a major part”. But the responsibility for daily implementation of the Student Outcome Statements “resides with the principals, the subject heads of department in the high schools, and key teachers plus the principal in the primary schools”, because the schools are “where the ultimate responsibility will lie and the work will be done by the teachers and heads of department”. (So.5)

Teachers will “have two roles first of all”. These are:

.....to look at their existing curriculum in relation to the Student Outcome Statements framework. Once they feel that they are comfortable with the existing curriculum in their schools, they will then look at the extent to which their kids are achieving and make judgments as to how happy they are with the existing curriculum, and on the basis of their judgments they will then look at what new materials need to be brought in to help kids achieve those outcomes. (So.8)

In fact, within the curriculum framework set by the central authority, it will be the teachers’ responsibility to make sure that Student Outcome Statements work in their schools. Put another way, it will be the teachers’ responsibility to help students to achieve those outcomes specified by the Curriculum Council and the Education Department.

It is every teacher’s responsibility in the sense that what they have to do, at some stage for their own accountability, is demonstrate, this is how I’ve done it, and this is the extent to which your child has achieved, whether it’s to a parent in an interview or to a principal on the school decision making meeting. (So.8)

⁴⁴ It’s my understanding that non-government schools will not have to use SOS. They will have to demonstrate how they are addressing the Curriculum Council’s Curriculum Framework (which of course reflects the same titles, strands etc. as SOS). If they wanted, and if they had the resources, non-government schools could develop their own mechanisms other than SOS. Also the point that must be clear is that SOS are not a syllabus, they are a monitoring tool, only. Schools and teachers choose their own content. (R.2)

Another participant commented on this sort of responsibility allocation by saying, “Here’s where a student needs to be at the end of a period of time, and how you get the student there is up to you” (So.6).

Adoption of Student Outcome Statements

According to the implementation plan announced by the Education Department high ranking official (SSAWA.C), from 1998 to 2003 all government schools will have to implement Student Outcome Statements. Schools will not have the choice about whether do it or not. Their only choice will be when they take Student Outcome Statements on board within the timeline set by the Education Department. This means, “Student Outcome Statements will be imposed more slowly, and teachers will have a little bit more time in which to implement it” than they had with Unit Curriculum. (So.5)

A head of department explained why this would be imposed slowly. According to his understanding,

The Minister for Education has said, look we are not going to repeat the mistake of Unit Curriculum, we are not going to force it down teachers’ throats, we are going to gently approach it. The Education Department I think realised that teachers were affected pretty much by the fiasco of Unit Curriculum, how it was implemented, how it was rushed, and they did not want to make the same mistake. (Hod.6)

A teacher claimed that, long before the official announcement of the plan, in early 1997 “all government school principals received mail from the Education Department indicating that Student Outcome Statements would be taken on board”. This person argued that the intention of the mail was to give schools some time to get teachers prepared, mainly psychologically, so that teachers would not “feel intimidated by the new curriculum framework” when the time came to implement it. (Tr.6)

To avoid teacher panic, 1998 has been set as “planning year” to “familiarise teachers with Student Outcome Statements” and to “engage teachers initially into Student Outcome Statements” (Hod.5). Furthermore, other measures will be taken to ensure that eventually every school and every classroom teacher will work within the Student Outcome Statements framework. Some participants argued that through teacher

accountability and performance management, the Education Department will make sure that Student Outcome Statements is implemented in schools, otherwise, things would become tough for teachers. For example, a senior officer said that,

I think Student Outcome Statements will be used as part of an accountability process, so teachers whether they like it or not are accountable for what they do and they will have to operate in their classrooms accordingly. So there is both a carrot that we can see benefits for ourselves as teachers and our students, and there is also the stick that the Education Department will use this as an accountability tool. There may be sanctions associated with using the Outcome Statements as an accountability product. If you don't do it, then there could be some consequences associated with it, but I don't know what they will be. It may be government policy that says, you will do it this way, then teachers won't have a choice. (So.5)

A teacher participant offered a similar comment on why teachers would be “made more accountable”:

The new primary teachers coming through are not given permanency from what we're hearing. They're going to be put on contracts. Now if you are put on a contract then that means you are being assessed. And if part of the assessment is that you should use Student Outcomes Statements, then yes it will be picked up. I think in time that's how they will make sure student outcomes comes through because I think that keeps teachers on their toes. (Tr.6)

Teachers' Response to the Implementation of Student Outcome Statements

Basically, the teachers' response to the implementation of Student Outcome Statements has been “wait and see” (Hod.7), or more negatively, “not again”, “not another one”. Nonetheless, most teachers, seeing the determination of the Education Department and realising that they would not have much choice of their own, also “wanted to know what ‘another one’ is” (Pa.1).

Another participant was more optimistic and claimed that teachers “will readily accept it [Student Outcome Statements framework]”. This person further predicted that, “When they [teachers] look at this they should say, yes that's what I typically see my kids demonstrate to me as a result of what we do in this”. According to this participant, the Student Outcome Statements “are a reasonable description of how kids get better”, but at the same time he acknowledged that “the framework should not be necessarily seen as a fixed document”. (So.8)

There seem to be some inconsistencies here in the teachers' responses to the implementation of the Student Outcome Statements. However, another senior officer's comment might shed some light on this contradiction. This officer claimed that,

It [teacher response to Student Outcome Statements implementation] will vary, and it will vary greatly from those who already are working in this way and love it because they think they can see benefits for themselves as teachers and very importantly for the students, to those who will look upon this with loathing because it means that they will have to change the way they are teaching, change their performances etc. For some people it will be very beneficial. I think for the vast majority of teachers currently, they are still waiting to see what is happening, and I think there are quite a large number of teachers who do not really know what the Student Outcome Statements are anyway. (So.5)

The State School Teachers Union has not agreed yet to the overall implementation of Student Outcome Statements, and "most of the members are not involved in Student Outcome Statements" (Pa.2). The Education Department and the State School Teachers Union have different policies towards implementation of the Student Outcome Statements. If a school wants to adopt Student Outcome Statements, then the Department will encourage it to go ahead and do it, whereas the Union's policy is, "You are not to do it until you get the training and resources that we think that you need to do it" (Pa.2).

Teacher Inservice, PD and Induction

According to the implementation timetable set by the Education Department, a teachers' "professional development plan will be formulated" in the second half of 1997 and "professional development by schools and systems will commence in 1998". It is expected that major responsibility for teachers' inservice will rest with the schools which are supposed "to provide time and funds from their own school budgets" (So.5).

Some induction has already been conducted at the system level for principals, deputies and some heads of department by the Central Office. But the task of inservicing the vast majority of teachers will be left to schools, according to a senior officer:

I think any induction would be still on that level, it will not be wholesale support for professional development for teachers. That will have to be done by the head of department, key teachers and principals. It will have to be done during teachers' own time and the school will have to look at providing their own resources. (So.5)

As such, even though it is widely acknowledged that "there is a great demand for professional development" (Pa.1) and the vast majority of teachers "need professional development to take on Student Outcome Statements" (So.5), many participants in this study still felt the provision of teacher inservice or PD will be inadequate. They remained suspicious about whether they could get what had been promised by the Education Department. In their words,

Yes we've got the statements, but we will probably have no inservicing on how to implement them. We are just expected to learn it and do it. (Hod.2)

We are getting very little professional development on student outcome statements. We're not quite sure what it means either and how it's going to affect us. (Tr.2)

In the absence of teacher inservice provided by the Education Department, some subject associations like the WASSA (Western Australian Social Studies Association) are "picking up the gaps and are slowly providing some professional development to interested teachers" (Hod.5). They have tried to run a few workshops after school and on the weekends for their members to "get people informed about what organisations are available or what resources are available, tangible classroom activities or information that they can use in their classrooms" (Pa.1).

However, these subject associations "could not get a cent" (Pa.1) from the Central Office to fund their inservice courses. They had to rely on their membership, which only enabled them to provide limited services to a small portion of their members. For instance, said a WASSA member,

We don't have any financial support. Our Association perceives that there is a problem with the Department, with the Government, in relation to professional associations. We do not get any support from them. They have handed their responsibilities to us as regards curriculum, but that has been a state of play for the last five or six years. They are glad we are doing it. The Social Studies superintendent and consultants are well aware of what the scenario is and they support us, but they have their hands tied; there are no financial resources to provide any service. (Pa.1)

Even the inservices conducted for principals, deputies and heads of department, were regarded by many participants as unsatisfactory and of low quality. For instance, one teacher commented that,

Well, it's all a political philosophy. You sit there and hear them mouth off the platitudes that, this will lead to restructuring and this'll do this for the school and it's not based on inputs, it's based on outputs and all this sort of hogwash, which is what they're going to deliver to the teacher at the classroom face. But there's not going to be any hands on activities like, 'Look here's a couple of simulated lessons, this is how you could probably go about doing it'. The persons who conducted the inservices wouldn't have a sausage of a clue how to implement it at the classroom level. I could speak all the rhetoric too. I could go in there tomorrow and give a good talk about how vital this is for you to do this as a classroom practitioner, but the nuts and bolts of it is they want hands on stuff. They want something practical. They want something they can go in and use. They don't want to be stuck with five hundred hours of reading in order to come to terms with a new topic. At the end of it I'm not too much the wiser as to how I go about doing it and that's the inservicing. (Tr.1)

Financial Resources for Implementing Student Outcome Statements

Financial resources for the implementation of Student Outcome Statements still remains a question mark. In the recently announced implementation plan, there was no mention of financial resources provision. One participant guessed that “resources would be fairly limited” (So.5).

As indicated earlier, the Education Department tried to save money⁴⁵ by postponing again and again the implementation of Student Outcome Statements in schools. According to the recent plan, the Education Department will only “provide resources for documentation of some materials, and inservices for principals, deputies and heads of department”. It can be speculated that funding for inservicing the majority of teachers will be drawn out of the budget of each individual school. A senior officer put it this way,

As to how much resources will be available, I don't know, and I guess a cynical answer is that there will be very little in the way of resources for implementation. It will be left up to the schools and up to their own devices to do much of the work. (So.5)

⁴⁵ Was this the only motivation? I guess there were at least two others - industrial action slowed everything, and recognition that time is needed if teachers are to adopt and implement change. (R.2)

Personnel Support for Implementing Student Outcome Statements

Curriculum leadership from Central Office is one of the major concerns that teachers have. The transition from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements requires a lot from teachers. But most teachers do not know much about it and this has thrown them into a kind of uncertainty. They “desperately need some more guidance” (Hod.3), but the Education Department does not seem to be able to provide much support. This is partly because at present, “fewer and fewer people are actually involved in Central Office in providing support for teachers in schools” (So.5), and partly because the role of the support personnel in the Central Office has changed dramatically.

For example, in the Social Studies learning area, there is currently one superintendent and two consultants, one for secondary schools and one for primary schools. The superintendent is no longer a subject superintendent. The post involves many other managerial duties which distract the superintendent from providing curriculum leadership. The consultants can not go to the schools, even if they want to, unless invited.

Therefore, many participants in this study worried that they would not be able to get enough support. The following remarks by some of the participants reveal their concerns about the amount and quality of that kind of support:

Someone like the present superintendent wouldn't have a sausage of a clue how to implement it at the classroom level. The consultant is going to be the person responsible for making a broad statement as to what Society and Environment is about and what things we hope to achieve as outcomes for our students and that from what I can gather is going to be about the limit of help from the central office. (Tr.1)

There is one consultant for the learning area and there are seven hundred and sixty schools. So the person will be spread fairly thin. (Hod.1)

But in terms of people providing me with assistance, it was always the consultant. And that was my only contact. So there was no one in my district office servicing me or taking an interest in what I was doing. (Hod.6)

Curriculum Materials Support for Implementing Student Outcome Statements

Teachers are most concerned about the lack of curriculum support material. Though it has been already planned that “support documentation will be drafted in the second half of 1997 and “support documents will be published” in 1998, together with some “exemption guidelines” and “reporting requirements”,⁴⁶ teachers still remained sceptical. They will “wait and see”.

One of the heads of department doubted whether any curriculum support materials would be produced. He said,

Now I've also been told that the Education Department will produce a five, ten, fifteen page outline and they will provide general concept materials whatever, but whether or not they actually produce curriculum support material or whatever is anybody's guess. They may do, they may not. (Hod.5)

Many other participants predicted that even if some support materials are produced, there will not be many. For example:

I think the curriculum support materials that will come out from the Education Department will be purely in the form of the Outcome Statements themselves, annotated work samples, the learning area frameworks, and then perhaps some syllabus support materials, but they will not be anywhere near what was provided for the K-10 Social Studies curriculum; the funds are not available for that. (So.5)

It will be nothing like what we've had in the past like the K-10 syllabus which was a big thick document for each year with lots of ideas and strategies and references and what have you. It wont be like that. I don't gather there's going to be a whole lot more other than the curriculum framework. There's not going to be a lot of documents really explaining how to operationalise these Student Outcome Statements. And that's going to cause I would say some concern in the schools, especially when it comes to getting up to date and relevant information. (Tr.1)

Well if they do that they haven't given us anything apart from the statements themselves. They've given us no support materials. (Hod.2)

Some participants claimed that currently available support materials were not much help. One of the them gave the following example,

There is a file now that is just on the market that they have said, oh it's something that curriculum planners can look at for developing new

⁴⁶This implementation timetable was presented as an overhead projector at the SAAWA Biennial Conference, August 2 1997, Perth.

curriculum, but it is just the strategic planning. It is supposedly tallied for curriculum leaders to look at when developing a curriculum, and it's got examples of what people have done in the trial schools, but it is just examples of strategies that people can use, so they are not really what I expected to see, like, this is what you can do if you have Student Outcomes and you want to re-visit your syllabus, this is what you could do. But that doesn't seem to be there to any great extent, it's just basically strategic planning which you can use for anything. I have been a little bit negative, but I don't see that there has been much tangible information that teachers can use. (Pa.1)

Still another participant, a senior officer, predicted that the inadequacy of curriculum support material by the Education Department would "mean the schools will have to fund curriculum materials themselves and purchase materials produced by private publishers from the market". As such, this would inevitably raise the issue about the quality of textbooks and support materials. Though this officer was quite confident that,

Teachers are relatively astute, and will not purchase substandard materials. I think they are intelligent enough to know what is good and what is not good. They will only buy what they consider to be good and appropriate for their students. (So.5)

This officer also acknowledged that teachers and schools might have to make a choice between quality and cost, because,

There is no doubt that unfortunately the situation already exists where, even if you know what is the best quality, but if it is too expensive and you can't afford it, you have to then purchase something cheaper. (So.5)

The business and industry sector could take advantage of the shortage of curriculum support materials. They have already produced their own materials. This makes it possible for the school curriculum to serve the interests of the business and industry group. For instance,

Mining certainly has had a fairly good show. They happen to have a Chamber of Mines member on the Interim Curriculum Council, but also they've got one on the Geography Syllabus Committee and also they have had the money to produce resources - teachers sometimes pick up things because there is a great resource available. (So.5)

Quality Control and Success of Student Outcome Statements Implementation

So far, no quality control process has been put into place. The quality and success of Student Outcome Statements implementation rests in teachers' hands. As such, the Education Department, on one hand, tries to inservice principals, deputies, heads of department and key teachers, and expects them to train and supervise the vast majority of teachers in schools. On the other hand, it expects the quality to be maintained through the mechanism of teacher accountability and performance management; that is, if a teacher refuses to take Student Outcome Statements on board and does not do a good job, some "sanctions and consequences" will follow (So.5).

In addition, one officer predicted, quality control will rely on teachers' professional commitment because, he said,

I think the vast majority of teachers have the welfare of their students at heart, and I think that this approach allows us, as Social Studies teachers, to better teach the subject area and make it more interesting and more relevant and more applicable for students, and therefore from that perspective I think we will succeed. (So.5)

However, optimistic as this officer was, he still acknowledged that "ultimately once the teacher is in the classroom and the door is shut, what happens there, who knows?". (So.5)

Almost all the participants in this study argued that the future of Student Outcome Statements remained uncertain. They contended that its success depended on many "ifs", prerequisites or enabling conditions.

First, it will require teachers "to have to do a little bit of a switch over first from input to outcome based education in their thinking before they can go ahead!!" (So.8).

Second, schools need "to have the flexibility of staff and the flexibility of time tabling, the flexibility of hours, to free up the regulations that schools currently work on" (So.2). Another senior officer stressed the importance of staff control by saying that,

What you need to make a real difference is a really good team of teachers working together and supporting themselves to do something different. I

don't think you can do that unless you have got control of your staff. I don't think you have got control of your staff in Western Australia because the Union and the Department control the staff. So you really have not got much capacity to gather together a team of people who are like minded and committed. (So.6)

Third, many participants held the view that the success of Student Outcome Statements would require sufficient and good quality professional development and inservice. For example:

That will need a lot of professional development, a lot of teacher support, to help them through the change process and there's no expectation that people will move directly to a totally outcomes based educational structure within a year or two. (So.1)

A one day inservice is nothing, it's not worth very much at all. You have to get somebody who is prepared in that one day to go beyond the rhetoric. So many times we've gone along to these inservices and we have to listen for three quarters of the day to stuff that's not going to help us and then you get down to the nitty gritty and these people who are explaining how to do it honestly don't know how to do it themselves. See you really do need people who can get up and model the situations and model a teaching process which is more student centred learning. (Tr.1)

Our heads of department do not get inserviced and they are told by the administration to do this and there's no support basis for that level and there's no dissemination of information on how best to do it. They don't seem to pick up that middle management level and train them and that would be crucial. You don't have to train every teacher but if you trained your middle level management properly and gave them a bit of a chance to get going you might have some success, but just one day inservice courses for teachers, I can't see it being worth the paper it's written on quite frankly. (Hod.1)

If they drop Outcome Statements onto us without proper inservicing then it's going to be more chaotic than Unit Curriculum as I see it. (Hod.3)

Fourth, it requires the provision of sufficient curriculum support materials and enough relief time for teachers to look for and develop relevant materials as it will "involve more work initially" (Hod.7). In some other participants' words,

You actually need also to provide the kind of day to day support for teachers, some kind of replacement for teachers, like for the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus. There will still need to be some kind of teacher support materials like that. It'll obviously have to be re written in the sense that it needs to help them better make the movement towards an outcomes based educational programme. (So.1)

I mean there will have to be some centrally or privately produced materials. If teachers want relevant information, the schools will have to build that up and teachers will have to be given time to build it up. If

we're not given the time or the resources then we're not going to move forward and that's been proven before with Unit Curriculum and things like that. (Tr.6)

To me it's all about resourcing. It has always been my belief that the Education Department has a responsibility to provide a very sound, well researched current curriculum framework within which teachers operate and make decisions. (So.3)

Fifth, there would need to be financial support for schools and teachers because "it all costs money and takes time" (Hod.4). Therefore,

They are going to have to put a lot of money into it. If they don't do that it'll happen just like Unit Curriculum, it'll just get twisted around to fit what we can do and the value of it just won't be there. (Hod.3)

I think if the incentive is there financially for teachers to take on Student Outcome Statements, I see that as an extra task and a lot of unionists would see it as an extra task which requires more pay and if there's no pay to come with that they'll probably resist it. So it's going to be difficult. It depends totally on the money. (Tr.2)

Sixth, some participants argued from a personnel management perspective that, the success of Student Outcome Statements would depend upon whether the Education Department could win over most of the teachers, particularly the heads of department. Because "if you can get the HODS on-side then you will get the staff on-side especially in the larger schools" (Tr.6). It was considered crucial "to get the majority of teachers on your side" as "those teachers who almost sabotaged Unit Curriculum in some schools are still there operating in schools" (So.5).

Seventh, closely related to sixth factor, is that the quality and success of implementation will rely on teachers' commitment and understanding. Because,

It will not happen unless there's some understanding or commitment from the grass roots. There's lots of ways to circumvent, even in a situation that's dictatorial or authoritarian, but there are ways of paying lip service to the overall perspective. (Tr.1)

Therefore "everyone should be clear about what they are doing it for" so that they will "take it seriously" (So.6).

Still, others argued that "the teacher would have to be equipped with a laptop" (Tr.1). This is "because there's too much recording and reporting and monitoring and all of that sort of thing for them to be able to do it with pencil and paper" (So.6).

In addition, to succeed, the “implementation pace has to be slow” and will need to “bite off little bits at a time” (So.6). And reformers will “have to restructure the school differently” to fit into the curriculum framework (Hod.1).

Overall, participants did not see the future of Student Outcome Statements as brightly as expected by some policy makers. The themes embedded in the following remarks are those of uncertainty, scepticism and confusion.

It’s quite possible that the Student Outcome Statements will either never be implemented, or implemented badly, or implemented well. But it remains to be seen whether they provide any money to do that! (So.7)

But I can predict that five years from now you'd be lucky if 50% of the schools were actually doing Outcome Statements. Some of them will tell you they are doing it, but they won't be doing it at all. So I'd probably say it's got the same chance of success as Unit Curriculum. It'll be no better and it'll be no worse. It'll just be a change. (Hod.2)

But it's going to cause a lot of confusion for everybody for a number of years and they'll be forced into making some of those changes. (Tr.2)

If there is proper training, proper time, proper tools, etc., I am sure that it can, but I suspect it won't. (So.6)

The following comment from a head of department captured what most of the other participants in this study felt.

I've seen the change from the Junior to the Achievement Certificate to Unit Curriculum. Now when the Achievement Certificate came in I remember people coming and talking to us in schools and saying that this will be different, it'll be better, we will support you, we'll resource you, and it will work fine. That lasted for about ten years and then we had people come to us again from the Ministry and say, okay the Achievement Certificate didn't really work, it was a failure, now we've got this new system called Unit Curriculum, now we'll support you, we'll resource you, and we won't make the same mistakes as we made with the Achievement Certificate, now this system will be fine. And then we'll probably get the same story with Student Outcome Statements. They'll say the Unit Curriculum was a failure, this new system is a better system, it'll be fine, you'll get all this help. That'll last ten years and then something else will come along. (Hod.2)

K-10 SYLLABUS, UNIT CURRICULUM AND STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS: A COMPARISON

Development of K-10 Syllabus, Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements

On the whole, there are more differences than similarities in the development of the three curriculums⁴⁷. In some cases, the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus shared some common features with the Unit Curriculum; in other cases it shared common features with Student Outcome Statements. This also applies to the differences. Furthermore, in some aspects, the three curriculums differed from each other.

The driving forces behind the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus were mainly educational, but there were political, contextual as well as educational driving forces for both the Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements.

In terms of the major originators, the K-10 Syllabus was initiated by the superintendent, Unit Curriculum was initiated by politicians and administrators, while Student Outcome Statements was initiated by Curriculum Officers because the “poor subject consultant was in no position to initiate any major curriculum changes” (So.6).

The three curriculums differed somewhat from each other in regard to how their developers were selected. The superintendent appointed all the developers for the K-10 Syllabus. Some of the developers for Unit Curriculum were appointed, others were selected through public advertisement. Appointment and public advertisement also featured the selection of Student Outcome Statements developers. Nonetheless, some developers of Student Outcome Statements were neither appointed through official channels nor selected through advertisement, but were chosen on the recommendations of friends or acquaintances. (Tr.1)

The subject superintendent had overall responsibility for developing the K-10 Syllabus. In the process of developing Unit Curriculum, overall responsibility was

⁴⁷ I'd argue that they are not curriculum(s) - You've a syllabus, a repackaging of that syllabus, and a monitoring tool. (R.2)

taken away from the subject superintendents and placed in the hands of the Minister for Education and a then newly appointed “off-line” Assistant Director General (So.6 & 7). With Student Outcome Statements, the Minister also had overall responsibility, but the day-to-day development activities were overseen by the Curriculum Branch manager and a senior curriculum officer.

The three curriculums were similar in that they all went through four or five development stages in more or less than seven years. However, the development process for Student Outcome Statements is not finished yet (August 1997). From 1979-1997, stakeholder involvement became progressively reduced, from sufficient with K-10, to limited with the Unit Curriculum and to very limited with Student Outcome Statements.

Although development of all three curriculums lasted for about seven years, the actual syllabus writing time and the pace of development were quite different. Some participants in this study compared the three and pointed out the differences by saying that,

The K-10 Syllabus was developed slowly over a long period. The Unit Curriculum was developed quickly in a single year by pulling the K-10 Syllabus to pieces and reassembling it. So the development of one was long and careful and the development of the second was quick and not very careful. Now Student Outcome Statements have been developed with the same sort of care that the K-10 Syllabus got. I would expect the quality of the Student Outcome Statements to be similar to the quality of the K-10 things, and superior to the Unit Curriculum. (So.7)

My understanding is that K-10 development followed very closely commonly accepted curriculum development principles of consultation - a lot of people had been involved, a long period of time, meeting with teachers and providing very extensive support both in terms of professional development and in terms of documentation. Unit Curriculum was imposed from above. There were five pilot schools, very little was known about what the pilot schools were doing, what they found etc. etc. The documentation and support for that was very, very limited. Again what was developed, was developed very hurriedly - assessment, structures and procedures - and that was it. (So.5)

According to one of the senior officers (So.5), developers of Student Outcome Statements also felt the pressure of limited time.

As a result of the different pace of development for the three curriculums, there was variation between the three in terms of consultation with schools and teachers during the development process. The lengthy process during which the superintendents and advisory teachers travelled around schools across the State for the K-10 Syllabus made it possible to adequately consult with teachers. With the development of Unit Curriculum, the wrong people were consulted and there was no time for school and teacher input. Though teachers were consulted with Student Outcome Statements, the numbers were very small. As a consequence, the level of consensus among teachers for K-10 was high, and the level of consensus and endorsement for both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements was and is very low.

The three curriculums differed greatly in terms of personnel and professional support. The K-10 Syllabus and Unit Curriculum had sufficient personnel resources while Student Outcome Statements did not. Quite a few senior officers (So.5, 6 & 7) said that personnel support became more and more inadequate. One of them put it this way,

The changes that have occurred have been that fewer and fewer people are actually involved in Central Office in providing support for teachers in schools. In the Social Studies Branch when the K-10 was being developed, there were two Superintendents, about 9 Curriculum writers and 3-5 support teachers who went to the schools - visited the schools - to support teachers there. During Unit Curriculum that was greatly reduced and during the Outcome Statements it was reduced even further. We now have currently - until at least July (1996) - one Superintendent and two Consultants working in the Social Studies area. There have been fewer and fewer people involved within the Social Studies education area. (So.5)

Finally, the three curriculums differed from each other significantly in that their developers had less and less autonomy. From K-10 to Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements, the developers' autonomy went from large to limited to very limited.

In summary, the differences and similarities between the three curriculums can be outlined as below in Figure 19:

Figure 19: Differences and Similarities between K-10 Syllabus, Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements Development

	K-10 Syllabus	Unit Curriculum	Student Outcome Statements
Major Driving Force	Educational	Political Contextual Educational	Political Contextual Educational
Main Initiators	Superintendents	Politicians Administrators	Curriculum Officers
Method for Choosing Developers	Appointment	Appointment Public advertising	Appointment Public advertisement Recommendation
Overall Responsibility	Superintendent	Minister for Education Assistant Director General	Minister for Education Curriculum Branch Manager
Stakeholders' Involvement	Sufficient	Limited	Very limited
Stages of Development	Four	Five	Four
Total Time Duration of Development	Seven years	Seven years	Seven years and still going on
Actual Syllabus Writing Time	Five years	Two years	Three years
Pace of Development	Slow	Hasty	Relatively slow
Consultation with Stakeholders	Adequate	Little	Inadequate
Strategy to Resolve Controversy	Negotiation	Negotiation Bureaucratic decision	Bureaucratic decision Negotiation
Level of Consensus	High	Very low	Very low
Financial Resources	Sufficient	Sufficient	Sufficient
Personnel Resources	Sufficient	Sufficient	Poor
Developers' Autonomy	Great	Limited	Very limited

Trial and Implementation of K-10 Syllabus, Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements

Overall, as with the development processes of the three curriculums, there are more differences than similarities in the trial and implementation of the three curriculums. The only similarities are that all three curriculums were trialed for about two years, and that the content of the three syllabuses, that is, all ideas in the K-10 Syllabus, all units in the Unit Curriculum as well as vertical time-tabling, and almost all the outcomes in Student Outcome Statements were trialed in schools.

Nonetheless, they differed from each other in many other respects. Basically, if we could place the K-10 Syllabus and Unit Curriculum at each end of a continuum, Student Outcome Statements would be located in between. In some areas, the trial and implementation processes of Student Outcome Statements are more similar to the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus than the Unit Curriculum, whereas in other areas, vice versa. In still other areas, the three curriculums differed from each other.

First, Student Outcome Statements is closer to Unit Curriculum than to the K-10 Syllabus in terms of the number of trial schools. The K-10 Syllabus was only for Social Studies, but it was trialed in forty-four primary and twelve secondary schools. Unit Curriculum was trialed in only seven secondary schools across all subject areas. With Student Outcome Statements, twelve secondary schools were involved in trialing the outcomes in the Society and Environment learning area. These differences became more significant when the increase in number of new schools operated in WA between 1980-1996 is factored in.

Second, Student Outcome Statements and Unit Curriculum share a similarity in the strategies used for their trial, particularly the role of the superintendent or consultant visiting the schools. With the K-10 Syllabus, apart from visiting schools, the superintendents, curriculum officers and advisory teachers also conducted many workshops to inform teachers, train key teachers and most important of all, to “draw the best teaching ideas of the field” (So.4). However, in terms of the purpose of trial, Student Outcome Statements differed greatly from Unit Curriculum, but was more similar to the K-10 Syllabus. While the trial of Unit Curriculum was symbolic, the

trials for the K-10 Syllabus and Student Outcome Statements were to get feedback and refine the syllabus or framework.

Third, almost the same can be said about the allocation of major responsibilities for implementing the three curriculums. While Central Office shouldered its responsibility off to schools to implement Unit Curriculum, the sharing of responsibility for implementing Student Outcome Statements will be much like that of the K-10 Syllabus; that is, the superintendent and school personnel will share the responsibility. The slight difference between the K-10 Syllabus and Student Outcome Statements is that, in addition to the superintendent, the Curriculum Council will also play a part in implementing Student Outcome Statements.

Fourth, the three curriculums differ from each other with respect to teachers' responses to their implementation and method of being introduced into schools. As mentioned earlier, teachers responded very positively to the K-10 Syllabus and willingly adopted it because they had a sense of ownership, whereas they strongly opposed Unit Curriculum because it was seen to be imposed on them, and they had no sense of ownership for it at all. Student Outcome Statements, like Unit Curriculum, will also be imposed upon teachers, only more slowly; at present, the teachers' response is neither positive nor very negative, they will just wait and see.

Fifth, in the areas of teacher inservice, PD, induction, and financial, personnel and curriculum materials support, the K-10 Syllabus was considered to be "sufficient", "adequate" and "enough", whereas Unit Curriculum was frequently linked with words and phrases like "nothing", "not satisfying", "stopped producing" and "money just isn't there". According to the implementation plan⁴⁸, the Student Outcome Statements situation will become better than that for the Unit Curriculum, but definitely not as good as for the K-10 Syllabus. It is planned that the Education Department will provide a limited amount of human resource and material support, but the major part of them is expected to be provided by each individual school within their own budget.

⁴⁸This implementation timetable was presented as an overhead projector at the SAAWA Biennial Conference, August 2 1997, Perth.

Finally, while the implementation outcomes of the K-10 Syllabus and Unit Curriculum represented two extremes, with the K-10 Syllabus being a success and Unit Curriculum a complete disaster, many participants in this study pointed out that the future of Student Outcome Statements was uncertain and yet to be seen.

In summary, the differences between the three curriculums are outlined in Figure 20:

CLOSING REMARKS

Many of the events that occurred in the change process from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia support the critical theorists' claim that devolution intensifies the curriculum's functions of maintaining social control, reproducing social inequality and serving narrowly defined economic interests. Student Outcome Statements, at the national level, was initiated by strong advocates of economic rationalism. At both national and state levels, Student Outcome Statements was intended, more so than previous curriculum changes, to promote economic competitiveness, save money on curriculum resources, and incorporate key competencies into the curriculum. Put another way, economic rationalists hoped to strengthen Australia's economic competitiveness in the international market by integrating economic imperatives within the school curriculum.

Social control through the curriculum was reinforced by centralising power further in the hands of the AEC and its executive group, which had the overall responsibility and power. Developers were either appointed or carefully selected through advertisement followed by interviews. Developers who were not of the same mind as the AEC and its executives, like the Queensland team for SAE national statement, were sidelined and replaced by seconded curriculum officers. Moreover, developers such as curriculum writers had so little autonomy that even the words they used were constantly checked by managers above them.

Correspondingly, many stakeholders' involvement in Student Outcome Statements was increasingly reduced. They were excluded from the policy making process, and

only a small number of teachers and other stakeholders were given the opportunity to respond to the draft documents. Reference groups or consultative committees could

Figure 20: Differences and Similarities in the Trial and Development Between K-10 Syllabus, Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements

	K-10 Syllabus	Unit Curriculum	Student Outcome Statements
Number of trial schools	Fifty-six	Seven	Twelve
Trial duration	About two years	About two years	About two years
Range of content trialed	All ideas in the Syllabus	All units	Almost all outcomes
Trial strategy	Visiting trial schools Conducting workshops	Visiting trial schools	Visiting trial schools
Purpose of trial	To get teachers feedback To refine Syllabus To ensure it worked	Symbolic	To get teachers feedback To refine outcomes
Major responsibility for implementation	Shared among: - Superintendents; - Curriculum officers; and - Key teachers in schools	Shared among: - Principal; and - Heads of Department	Shared among: - Curriculum Council; - Superintendent; - Principals, heads of department or key teachers
Teacher response to implementation	Very positive	Very negative	Wait and see
Adoption	Teacher widely accepted and willingly took it on.	Imposed upon teachers	To be imposed slowly upon teachers
Inservice for teachers	Sufficient	Very little	A little provided by Central Office, mainly funded by schools
Financial support	Sufficient	Very little	As above
Personnel support	Sufficient	Very little	As above
Curriculum materials support	Sufficient	Very little	As above
Quality control	Successful	Failure	Uncertain

not function effectively because insufficient funds were provided.

Although not yet implemented, teachers will have to take Student Outcome Statements on board, but with less haste than Unit Curriculum. According to the announced implementation plan, the superintendent and school personnel will 'share' responsibility. The Education Department will provide some curriculum leadership and material support to teachers, but much more is to be provided by individual schools within their own budget. Given that scenario, what happened with Unit Curriculum implementation in terms of widening social inequality between schools is likely to occur again.

PART C

CHANGES IN CURRICULUM CONTENT

Critical theorists maintain that formal schooling promotes and protects the interests of the dominant groups in a society, as defined in terms of social class, ethnicity and gender. Schools do this by performing a selective function and reproducing social, racial and sex-based inequalities. As such, schools are agents of social inequalities.

Critical theorists also maintain that formal schooling promotes and protects the interests of industry and business. It does this by equipping students with the skills and attitudes that make them productive workers, and by ensuring they accept the values underlying our political and economic system. This includes transmitting the ideology of capitalism and social stratification. As such, schools are agents of social control and economic growth.¹

Critical theorists disapprove of the way schools serve the interests of the dominant groups and industry. They see schools as operating according to values underlying the consensus rather than the conflict model of society. The differences between what the critical theorists approve and disapprove of in a school curriculum, both in non-devolved and devolved systems in capitalist society, can be located within a broad framework of differences between the conflict model and consensus model of society. This framework provides Part C of this study with a structure for the content analysis of the K-10 Syllabus, Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements. A simplified selection of these values is tabled in Figure 21:

¹¹ The emphasis in recent years has been to develop curriculum which enables students to 'learn for life'. This has seen a shift from learning to become employable to becoming life-long learners, achieving personal potentials, as well as playing an active role in civic and economic life. To this end the curriculum developers have identified, as a major outcome of schooling, that "students understand their cultural, geographic and historical contexts and have knowledge, skills and values necessary for active participation in Australian life". (R.3)

Figure 21: A Framework of Differences Between the Consensus and Conflict Models of Society

WHAT CRITICAL THEORISTS DISAPPROVE OF		WHAT CRITICAL THEORISTS APPROVE OF
<i>Consensus Model of Society</i>		<i>Conflict Model of Society</i>
Social	1. Meritocracy	1. Egalitarianism
Justice	2. Liberal view of gender equity	2. Marxist view of gender equity
Domain	3. Multiculturalism	3. Anti-racism
Eco-	4. Capitalism	4. Socialism
Political	5. Economic growth	5. Environmental issues
Domain	6. Instrumentalism	6. Expressive qualities

Investigating the impact of devolution on the content of SAE involves documentary analysis. In this study, three sets of documents were analysed, namely the materials for Western Australia’s K-10 Syllabus, Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements. The K-10 Syllabus was developed in 1980 and used until replaced in 1987 by Unit Curriculum. As will be shown later in this paper, Unit Curriculum was just a repackaging of the K-10 Syllabus. Thus the bulk of Part C involves analysing the Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements in terms of the dichotomies listed in Figure 1.

To analyse the content of Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements, a framework was constructed from criteria listed by Chadbourne and Bostock. Chadbourne (1974, p.18) argues that “there are at least four ways in which textbooks can present children with political attitudes, values, and ideas”, namely by: cartoons and pictures; value judgments made either directly or by more subtle means such as the use of emotive words; the use of assignments; and, most importantly, by selective inclusion and omission of information. Bostock (1982, p.3-5) identifies some criteria for analysing racial attitudes embodied in textbooks, namely: restricted information; terminology; exotic emphasis; thematic studies; negative stress; and neglect and omission. These literary techniques can be used to perpetuate stereotyping,

ethnocentrism, racism, and faulty theories of human cultural development. The framework for analysing the Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements, then, consists of these criteria: space/selection of details; types of assignments; value judgments; and stereotyping through the use of emotive words, pictures and cartoons.

In addition to this general framework of literary techniques, the two sets of curriculum documents are analysed in terms of the conceptual differences constructed for each of the six issues listed in Figure 21.

10

CHANGES FROM K-10 TO UNIT CURRICULUM

A comparison between the K-10 Syllabus and Unit Curriculum (Year 8-10 SAE) reveals that, on the whole, there are many more similarities than differences between them. Except for two new units that were added, Unit Curriculum was, in the main, simply a repackaging of the K-10 Syllabus.

OVERALL DIFFERENCES

Overall, there are very few differences across the whole range of units in both curricula. The most important difference is that all units in K-10 Syllabus for Year 8, 9 and 10 are more flexible in terms of the amount of time allocated to teaching and learning while all the units in Unit Curriculum have a mandatory 40 hours of teaching and learning time. The next most important difference is that the K-10 Syllabus used a norm-referenced evaluation model while Unit Curriculum used a standards-referenced model, as with Year 11 and 12.

There are three other less significant overall differences. First, there is no separate listing of skills for each objective within a unit in the Unit Curriculum, whereas in the K-10 Syllabus each objective across the whole range of units has one or more specified skills, either verbal, graphs and tables, or pictures and diagrams. Secondly, again in terms of skills listing, the skills matrix in Unit Curriculum mainly covers skills that are introduced for the first time for a relevant year or stage, while the skills matrix for K-10 Syllabus accommodates all those skills that have been introduced previously as well as those skills that are introduced for the first time for a relevant

year. Thirdly, the objectives for each unit in the K-10 Syllabus have three separate categories for 'knowledge', 'skills' and 'values' while all objectives in the Unit Curriculum are compound ones listed under the title of 'knowledge and values objectives'.

DIFFERENCES WITHIN UNITS

A more detailed analysis of differences between the two curricula can be made by identifying whether Unit Curriculum has deleted, relocated or added aspects of the K-10 syllabus.

Deletions

Overall, very little has been deleted. The most significant is the deletion of some objectives. The following objectives from the K-10 Syllabus have been deleted in Unit Curriculum:

Australian Society

- (1.6) Relate the distinctive nature of Australia's population distribution to some of the cultural features of Australian society.
- (1.7) Realise that Australia is a nation of migrants.
- (1.8) Develop an awareness and appreciation of the cultural diversity of Australian society.
- (1.9) Develop an awareness of the experiences which face new migrants.
- (2.1) Describe the main distinguishing features of natural environments in Australia.
- (2.2) Recognise the ways in which natural environments has influenced cultural features of Australia', and values objective.

The Consumer in the Economy

- (6.1) 'Distinguish between insurance and life assurance' has been deleted.
- (5.2) Outline the ways in which consumers can invest their savings. (The term 'invest' has been deleted).

Western Australia: Yesterday and Today

- (2.11) Consider how present developments will influence the society in which they will live in the future.

The minor items that have been deleted from the K-10 Syllabus are:

- the structured and growing body of knowledge (K-10 Syllabus, p.2).
- knowledge which is considered important to Australian society (K-10 Syllabus, p.2).
- These skills use such value strategies as questioning and discussion, moral biography, role play, research and dilemma resolution' (K-10 Syllabus, p.3).
- the phrase 'positive self-concept' (K-10 Syllabus, p.3).

Relocations

A few things have been relocated. However, these relocations do not significantly alter the structure or content of the SAE curriculum; they represent only a cosmetic reform, not a major restructuring.

Overall Things

Two Year 8 units, 'Law' and 'Specialisation and the Economy', have been moved up respectively to stages 4 and 5. One Year 9 unit 'Australian Landscapes' has also been upgraded to stage 5. Another two Year 9 units, 'The Consumer in the Economy' and 'Western Australia: Yesterday and Today', have been shifted down to stage 2. The Year 10 unit 'European Studies' has been downgraded to stage 4 as well.

Specific Items

Understanding (3) in the Year 9 unit 'The Consumer in the Economy' - 'Inflation weakens the purchasing power of money and affects borrowers and lenders differently' - has been shifted to a stage 5 unit 'Specialisation and the Economy' as understanding (4).

Knowledge objectives (3.1) and (3.2) in the Year 9 unit 'The Consumer in the Economy' have been moved into stage 5 unit 'Specialisation and the Economy' as knowledge and values objectives (5.1) and (5.2).

In the Year 9 unit, 'Western Australia: Yesterday and Today', the following objectives have been respectively moved into the stage 3 unit 'Australian Society' as knowledge and values objectives (2.1), (2.2), (2.3), (2.4) and (2.5).

Knowledge objective:

- (2.6) Identify ways in which the First World War influenced the lives of Western Australians and values objective.
- (2.7) Appreciate the ways the Great Depression influenced the lives of Western Australians.
- (2.8) Examine the impact of the Second World War on Western Australia and its people.
- (2.9) Consider major factors contributing to the prosperous conditions experienced in Western Australia during the post-Second World War decades.

Values objective:

- (2.10) Comment on the impact of Vietnam War on the lives of Western Australians.

Generalisation (2) 'All societies transmit their culture to new members and interact with other cultures with which they come into contact.' in the Year 9 unit 'Australian Society' has been shifted to stage 5 unit 'Contemporary Australian Society' as understanding (2).

Additions

There are two big additions and several minor ones. The two big ones are the addition of two new units and the minor ones are the adding of some objectives.

Technological World

'Technological World' is based on the 'generalisations' and 'understandings' in and is supposed to either replace or supplement the Year 8 unit 'The Changing World' (Curriculum Branch, EDWA 1987, p.14). However, the generalisations are deleted while the understandings stay intact with only one incident of rewording, namely, the phrase 'ways of life' into 'lifestyle'. Nevertheless, within the same framework of generalisations and understandings, the two units have completely different knowledge and values objectives. 'The Changing World' had eight objectives while 'Technological World' only has seven which are quite different from those eight in terms of content and emphases. Those in 'The Changing World' focused on the changes in agriculture and industry in England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Those in 'Technological World' centre on the technological changes in the twentieth century since 1900 with specification of communication, energy production,

food and farming, lifestyle, manufacturing, medicine, space exploration, transport, and warfare and armaments. As a result, the focus questions for the two units are dramatically different as well.

Contemporary Australian Society

This new unit focuses on the 'demographic and sociological analysis of Australian society' (Curriculum Branch, EDWA, 1987, p.30) in the 1980s. However, both at the 'generalisations' and 'understandings' levels, there are some repetitions. And of the 14 knowledge and values objectives, only two deal with Australia's population, one with education, one with living standards, one with leisure time, one with the images of the typical Australian, and three with ethnic groups; while four concentrate on workforce, the relationship between technology, work and leisure and matters related to union versus employer groups in Australia. The same division format applies to the focus questions.

Minor Additions

In the stage 4 unit 'Law', a new understanding 'Everyone has legal rights' has been added. Correspondingly, three new knowledge and values objectives have been added as well. They are (3.1) 'Consider that everyone is equal before the law', (3.2.) 'Identify the ways in which all individuals can obtain legal representation' and (3.3) 'Describe the rights that all individuals have if apprehended by officers of the law'.

CONCLUSIONS

Unit Curriculum came in almost at the same time as devolution. It operated in the government school system from around 1987 to 1994, which roughly matched the first phase of devolution in Western Australia. Changes in SAE curriculum were expected by many school staff, but the above comparison shows that Unit Curriculum virtually made no significant changes to K-10 curriculum, only some minor ones. Unit Curriculum was basically a repackaging of the K-10 Syllabus. As such, it is possible to argue that devolution made no changes to SAE curriculum content during the period from 1987-1994 in Western Australia.

Given that there is no substantial change from the K-10 Social Studies Syllabus to SAE in Unit Curriculum, it is reasonable to assume that it is possible to identify the impact that devolution has had on curriculum content through a comparison between the Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements. The following six chapters analyse Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements in terms of where they stand on the consensus model versus conflict model of society issue in general, and each of six issues in particular. (See Figure 21)

11

MERITOCRACY VERSUS EGALITARIANISM

As Carspecken and Apple (1992) emphasise, the critical (theory) approach to qualitative research places central importance on social justice. In broad terms, critical theorists tend to adopt the egalitarian concept of social justice as constructed by advocates of a neo-Marxist conflict model of society. By contrast, liberals tend to adopt the meritocratic concept of social justice advocated by functionalists or the consensus model of society. According to egalitarianism, social justice involves distributing rewards on the basis of need, which means a move towards equality of rewards. Meritocrats, on the other hand, argue that social justice requires distributing rewards on the basis of merit, which means equality of opportunity to compete for rewards. Rewards here, refer to money, influence and prestige. To keep this study within manageable limits, this chapter will examine only one aspect of the multiple dimensions of class, status and power, namely, poverty.

The consensus model 'blames' poverty on the 'victim', not the 'system'. That is, the people who become poor do so because of deficiencies in their values, knowledge and skills. They are not born with these deficiencies, but are bred with them. They grow up in homes and communities characterised by a 'culture of poverty' which leaves them with inadequately developed language and thinking competencies, dysfunctional attitudes, and negative self concepts. For example, Lewis (1966; also see Frazier, 1966; Chilman, 1966; Glazer & Moynihan, 1963; Matza, 1966) insists that,

Once it [the culture of poverty] comes into existence it tends to perpetuate itself from generation to generation because of its effects on children. By the time slum children are aged six or seven, they have usually absorbed

the basic values and attitudes of their subculture and are not psychologically geared to take full advantage of changing conditions or increased opportunities which may occur in their lifetime. (1966, p.xiv)

Consequently, they fail at school because of 'culture shock' resulting from a 'cultural discontinuity' between their homes and traditional schools, and end up either unemployed or in low paid, low status jobs.

The conflict model 'blames' poverty on the 'system'. This model regards poverty as "a condition of society, not a consequence of individual characteristics" (Watchel, 1971, p.1). The culture of the poor maybe different, but it is not deficient; that is, the poor maybe culturally different, but not culturally deprived. Despite material deprivation, the poor maintain self respect and a positive sense of their individual and social worth. Their language, even if not standard, is as powerful as that of the middle class. The same applies to their cognitive development. Also, they have no less desire to succeed, no less initiative and no less will to work than the dominant group. They are poor not because of a dysfunctional culture or culture of poverty, but because they are locked out from success by blocked economic opportunities. Their lack of ownership and control over capitalist economic institutions denies them a share in the profits and thereby the type of money that can buy education and social success. In Valentine's (1968, p.13) words, "the essence of poverty is inequality".

To remove social injustice, particularly poverty, meritocrats see no need for fundamental changes to the structure of social stratification within capitalist society. For them, equality of opportunity can be provided through affirmative action, extra resources for the educationally disadvantaged and programs to improve the child rearing practices of parents in poverty; that is, by measures designed "to reform the 'victims' or to eliminate the culture of poverty" rather than to "eliminate poverty itself by making fundamental changes in the 'system' of social stratification" (Chadbourne, 1980, p.91). Egalitarians regard those type of measures as 'band-aides' and ultimately destined to fail because they treat the symptoms, not the cause (Connell, 1974). For them, eliminating poverty requires dismantling institutions which preserve economic inequalities and rebuilding them along socialist lines.

These conceptual differences between the liberals and critical theorists can be located within the consensus and conflict models of society. They are outlined below in Figure 22.

Figure 22: Differences between Liberalist and Critical theorists' View of Social Justice

CONSENSUS MODEL The Culture of Poverty Theory	CONFLICT MODEL The Blocked Opportunity Theory
1. Individuals are responsible for their own positions in the economic structure of society.	1. The system is responsible for a person's position in the economic structure of society.
2. Poverty is caused by a lack of qualities such as: - drive; - merit; - initiative; and - will to work.	2. Poverty is caused by inequality which is caused by capitalism's basic institutions such as: - private property. - labor market.
3. Blames poverty on the 'victim'.	3. Blames poverty on the 'system'.
4. Given the same material opportunities as their middle-class counter-parts, the poor are unable to profit by them because of 'deficiencies' in their values and attitudes.	4. The poor are poor not because they are trapped in a dysfunctional subculture but because they are locked out from success by blocked economic opportunities.
5. Does not question the necessity and justification of social stratification.	5. Challenges the necessity and justification of social stratification.
6. Solution: - No need for fundamental changes to capitalist society. - Reform within the capitalist society. How: - Change/replace the culture of the poor. - Inculcate them with middle-class values and virtues.	6. Solution: - Need fundamental change - replace capitalism with socialist society. How: - Applying remediation measures to the subculture of the poor is doomed to failure. - Abolish private ownership of the means of production and distribution of goods and services in order to remove economic inequalities.

ANALYSIS OF UNIT CURRICULUM

Although social justice has always been a big issue in Australian society, SAE in Unit Curriculum does not allocate much space to it. Nevertheless, from the limited information available, it is possible to find a few examples and some circumstantial evidence which provide a brief view of the stance SAE in Unit Curriculum takes with regard to social justice. Overall, SAE in Unit Curriculum adopts the liberal view of social justice, that is, it endorses meritocracy, not egalitarianism. This can be viewed from the dichotomies as listed in Figure 22. At times, the strategies employed to address social justice leave students in a situation in which they have no rational option but to believe the culture of poverty theory. At other times, SAE simply tries to defuse the issue as much as possible so as to make sure the capitalist system itself is beyond critique.

Personal Responsibility versus System's Responsibility

SAE in Unit Curriculum supports the culture of poverty theory view that every individual is responsible for his/her own position in the economic structure of society. It ignores the blocked opportunity theory view that, instead of the individual, the system itself is responsible for a person's well-being. First, it embraces the meritocratic notion of social justice. For instance, the Teachers' Notes (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.164) warmly endorses sections in SAE in Unit curriculum that talk about modifying the Marxian principle of "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" to "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work".

Blaming Poverty on the Victim versus Blaming Poverty on the System

SAE in Unit Curriculum takes the position that poor people are poor because of their own deficiencies. The poverty they are experiencing has nothing to do with the system. A number of assignments are related to the relationship between a person's qualifications and career path which can be seen as suggestive of the meritocratic notion of blaming poverty on the victim. A range of examples of this kind are

documented in the chapter on instrumentalism versus expressivism. Here just one is cited as a reminder. In the unit Contemporary Australian Society, objective 1.8 deals with the inequalities in education experienced by different groups, followed by objective 1.9 which concentrates on poverty. Youth is one of the major concerns. A focus question to inquire about the effect of inequalities in education on career opportunities and a specific assignment are set for this. Viewed together, these two objectives seem to assume that youth who experience poverty do so simply because they do not have enough qualifications to get a job to earn a decent living, a situation which is their own personal responsibility and fault. There is a strong suggestion here that the more qualifications youth get, the better-off they will be. Whether everyone has the equal access to education is left unquestioned. For example:

Table Interpretation assignment (Resource Sheet 25):

Students are to discuss the table on Resource 25 and then complete the following tasks.

1. (a) Calculate the total number of male and females in the sample.
(b) What percentage of the Australian population aged 15 and over has attained a post-school qualification?
(c) What percentage of the Australian population aged 15 and over is without a post-school qualification?
(d) What percentage of males and females have a degree?
(e) What percentage of males and females have a qualification in a trade or an apprenticeship?
2. Construct a bar graph that shows the percentages of employed and unemployed people with post-school qualifications and without post-school qualifications.
3. Comment on the employment rates of people with and people without post-school qualifications. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.52)

In the same vein, we can find explicit statements that blame poverty on the victim. For example, when talking about poverty groups at risk, the Teachers' Notes refer to women being poor because their marriages are not successful; that is, being burdened by sole-parenting as a result of divorce. The Teachers' Notes also discuss the large number of children living in poverty in terms of it being their parents' fault; that is those children are experiencing poverty as a direct consequence of their parents' divorce. What the Notes imply is that the capitalist system is okay because it provides the opportunity for everyone to live a happy and decent life, but a democratic system can not intervene in personal and family affairs; therefore, if people fail one way or

another due to divorce in marriage and being born to a family of failure, and thus experience poverty, then it is their own choice, responsibility and fault. For example, the following excerpt from the Teachers' Notes focus on the victims rather than the system.

Poverty: groups at risk

Women. Women and particularly those with dependent children bear a high risk of living in poverty. A disproportionately large number of women rely on social security pensions and benefits. Forty-eight per cent of sole parent families had incomes (1986 census) less than \$9000 per year and 84% of these were headed by women.

Children. Estimates suggest that 40% of Western Australians living in poverty may be dependent children. Also, children are more likely to be living in poverty if they belong to sole-parent families. Children in impoverished households are more likely to suffer because of various social and health problems which statistics indicate are more prevalent among low income families. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.54)

Personality Deficiency versus Institutionalised Inequality of System

SAE in Unit Curriculum aligns itself with the culture of poverty theory and assumes that poverty is caused by poor people's lack of desirable qualities such as merit, drive, initiative and will to work, not by inequalities which are caused by capitalism's basic institutions like private property and the labor market. The following statement from a Teachers' Note discusses Aborigines' poverty in terms of a subculture of unemployment and alcoholism. The Notes do not go further and inquire as to why Aboriginal labour force participation is low, and why their unemployment rate is high and why they are paid less.

Teachers Note:

Aborigines. The incidence of poverty among Aborigines is extremely high. Their median income is less than half of that for the total population. This is directly related to:

- low labour force participation rates;
- high unemployment rates, four times the state's average; and
- a high percentage of employed Aborigines having jobs in low paying occupations.

Aboriginal communities in the north and east of the state are some of the most financially disadvantaged in Western Australia. Unemployment is high and alcoholism is frequently a major problem. Some examples are Roebourne, Onslow, Turkey Creek, Jiggalong, Panngur and Punmu.

Maintaining versus Challenging Social Stratification

SAE in Unit Curriculum, on the whole, does not question at all the necessity and justification of social stratification. For instance, one specific objective dealing with social justice is to “describe the living standards of a representative cross-section of an Australian community”. On the surface, the following six focus questions attached to this objective might seem to focus attention on challenging the necessity and justification of social stratification:

- What are some indicators of level of living standards?
- What range of living standards exist in Australia?
- What proportion of Australia’s population controls most of the wealth?
- Is wealth distribution in Australia equitable?
- What is the ‘poverty line’?
- Do Australians have a social responsibility to ensure that no person lives below the poverty line? (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.54)

However, there are only four assignments set to cover those six focus questions, which is a little ‘thin’ for a issue as substantial as social justice. Moreover, all of the four assignments merely ask students to identify what inequalities already exist in Australian society in terms of social justice; they do not direct students’ attention to why the inequalities exist and how to overcome them. For instance, in the table interpretation assignment below, students are asked to generalise the “living standards in Australia”, to assess the validity of “indicators of living standards” and to work out how to measure “success”. There is a comparison between states, but no comparison between specific households in terms of class. Similarly, in the map interpretation assignment below, the focus is on the area distribution of low income families and a comparison between states. Thus students’ attention is directed to surface symptoms, not deep causes, thereby leaving the necessity and justification of social stratification unquestioned, unchallenged and beyond critique.

Table Interpretation Assignment:

Students are to study the table showing households by selected appliances and facilities (Resource 28) to do the following tasks.

1. (a) What does the table show?

2. (a) Which items are used/owned by a higher percentage of Australian households than by Western Australian households?
(b) Can you account for this?
 3. Western Australians use/own a higher percentage of swimming pools and air-conditioners than Australians. Suggest reasons for this.
 4. (a) Which items in the table do you consider to be 'good' indicators of living standards? Explain why.
(b) Which items in the table do you consider to be 'poor' indicators of living standards? Explain why.
(c) Suggest items that would be effective indicators of living standards.
 5. Make a list of items that you and your classmates like to own/use. Are these good indicators of Australia's living standards and of your own living standards?
 6. (a) Is success in Australia measured by owning expensive items?
(b) Is this a good measure of success? Why or why not?
- (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, pp.56-57)

Map Interpretation Assignment:

Student should study the map showing low income households (Resource 30) and discuss the information contained in it before attempting the following tasks.

1. What information does the map attempt to present?
2. (a) Which areas appear to have the lowest incomes? List eight.
(b) Which areas appear to have the highest incomes? List three.
3. An interesting feature is the high percentage of low income families in high status areas as Subiaco and South Perth. Discuss with the class and suggest reasons for this.
4. (a) One might expect the high income families to be located near the water frontage. Can you see this pattern on the map?
(b) Does the map reveal any identifiable patterns?
5. (a) How reliable do you think this map is in presenting a picture of the distribution of disadvantaged households?
(b) Suggest an alternative way to research and present this information.

(Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, pp.57-58)

Summary²

From what has been said so far, what can be concluded is that SAE in Unit Curriculum supports the meritocratic view of social justice. It blames poverty on the victim rather than on the system as it assumes that the poor are poor because they do not have the drive, merit, initiative or will, to work. Therefore the individual should be held responsible for his/her own position in the economic structure of society, and no blame should be attributed to the system of social stratification. What can be speculated further is that SAE in Unit Curriculum seems to assume that there is no need for fundamental changes to the capitalist Australian society and that eliminating poverty is only a matter of changing the poor's subculture and inculcating within them the middle-class values and virtues like drive, enterprise and the will to work.

ANALYSIS OF STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

SAE in Student Outcome statements, as in Unit Curriculum, mainly adopts a meritocratic view of social justice. By and large, it is underpinned by the culture of poverty theory that individuals are responsible for their own positions in the economic structure of society and that the system has virtually nothing to do with the poverty those individuals' experience. However, unlike SAE in Unit Curriculum, SAE in Student Outcome Statements does contain some isolated elements aligned with the blocked opportunity theory. Before going into detail, one thing to note is that SAE in Student Outcome Statements does not provide any information on the social justice issue of meritocracy versus egalitarianism in its outcome statements or in its work samples. As such, all relevant examples are taken from the "pointers". The page numbers documenting information in Part C refer the 1994 working Edition of Student Outcome Statements.

Blaming the Victim versus Blaming the System

As in Unit Curriculum, SAE in Student Outcome Statements mainly blames poverty on the victim. For example, in the following pointers, the "differences in access to

² Comments regarding Unit Curriculum seem fair to me. (R.3)

financial resources”, the difficulties people experience in “obtaining goods and services”, or even the fact that people’s “basic needs are not being met”, are attributed to natural and personal factors such as “harsh environment”, “isolation”, “drought or famine”, “low income or lack of money”, “disability” and lack of “ability to communicate with providers”:

Compare and report on differences in access to financial resources of a range of individuals in different communities. (p.38)

Give examples to show that many people have limited choices in their use of places (e.g. harsh environment - desert and arctic, lack of money, disabilities. (p.12)

Identify what makes it easy for people to obtain goods and services and what makes it hard (such as their income, ability to communicate with providers, isolation). (p.15)

Relate economic indicators to the effects of economic trends on different groups in society der stereotypes in work. (p.50)

Identify situations where basic needs are not being met (the effect of drought on food production, poverty, famine, unsafe work conditions). (p.22)

However, unlike SAE in Unit Curriculum, SAE in Student Outcome Statements contains some isolated touches which blame poverty on the victim as well as the system. For example, the two pointers below refer poverty to “inefficient administration” and “legislation”:

Identify barriers individuals and groups experience in obtaining goods and services (language, distance, lack of facilities for the disabled, inefficient administration). (p.23)

Describe barriers to resource ownership and consumer access (such as legislation, lack of income, lack of education, lack of paid employment). (p.38)³

Even in these two pointers, however, one can notice that the emphasis is laid on blaming the victim. In the second pointer, there is only one system factor for the cause of poverty and three personal factors. Of the three personal factors, “lack of education” and “lack of paid employment” suggest that poverty is caused by laziness

³ Another point which could be included here is 4.14 People and Work (p.30): Investigate and report on laws which promote non-discriminatory practices in school and community workplaces (equal opportunity and anti-racism legislation). (R.3)

and the poor's lack of talent. This is more or less what SAE in Unit Curriculum has suggested.

Non-fundamental change versus Fundamental change

Similar to Unit Curriculum, SAE in Student Outcome statements also takes the position that, to eliminate poverty in Australian society, there is no need for fundamental changes to the existing capitalist system, as demanded by the blocked opportunity theory. It prefers the notion that the problem of poverty is curable by reforms within the system. Therefore, as shown in the pointers listed below, it seeks to "design and implement a plan to work towards social justice", and turns to "strategies", "policies and regulations" and "legislation on equal opportunity" to "reduce" (not eliminate) "economic inequality". There is no suggestion of eliminating economic inequality altogether along with institutionalised social and political inequalities.

Design and implement a plan of action to work towards social justice within the school. (p.29)

Identify and assess the effectiveness of policies and regulations in reducing economic inequality (minimum wage rates, taxation, social welfare measures, subsidies). (p.54)

Examine case studies to analyse the impact of economic systems on various individuals (such as people who are poor) and groups (such as industrial associations) and the strategies to them to achieve, review or reform. (p.55)

Evaluate the impact of movements for, and legislation on, equal opportunity in Australia. (p.61)

CONCLUSIONS

The analyses of Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements show that SAE in both curriculums virtually adopt the stance of the consensus model of society, rather than the conflict model of society, in terms of social justice. In both curriculums, SAE mainly blames poverty on the victim, not the system. It supports the culture of poverty theory view that people are responsible for their own poverty; that some individuals are poor just because they do not have the necessary skills, knowledge and commitment to work; and that, therefore, changing the cultures of the poor and

inculcating within them some 'desirable' values and virtues, and implementing some minor changes within the existing system, can eliminate poverty.

The only minor difference between the two curriculums is that while SAE in Student Outcome Statements is underpinned by the culture of poverty theory, as in Unit Curriculum, it also has one or two isolated touches which blame poverty on the mechanism or operation of the system⁴, but still not the capitalist system itself. As such, what can be concluded is that there is virtually no change from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements with regard to the social justice issue. Critical theorists, then, would be right to claim that SAE adopts the consensus model of society view on social justice. Again, given that Unit Curriculum addresses the social justice issue mainly in its newly added unit Australian Contemporary Society, it can be also argued that SAE, at least in Unit Curriculum serves to increase social inequality as critical theorists expect. However, there are a few minor changes which are for the better in Student Outcome Statements, a matter which should please critical theorists, but how they would explain this remains unanswered.

⁴ Another "touch" which blames the system: 7.14 (p.54) Explain how wages and working conditions are influenced by the actions of employees, employers, unions, employer groups and governments. (R.3)

12

MULTICULTURALISM VERSUS ANTI-RACISM

Race relations refer to the way people from different races regard and treat each other. Negative race relations can be regarded as constituting a form of social injustice when it takes the form of a dominant racial group benefiting at the expense of minority racial groups.

Liberals (functionalists, consensus model theorists) and radicals (critical theorists, neo-Marxists) agree that negative race relations should be seen as a problem but they disagree on the nature, cause, consequences and solutions to the problem.

For liberals, the nature of the problem is simply one of 'bad race' relations; that is, racial conflicts are basically cultural in nature, racial conflicts are conflicts of culture. Radicals, on the other hand, conceptualise the problem of race relations as one of institutionalised racism, as basically structural in nature, and as consisting of a conflict of interests.

More specifically, liberals reduce race relation problems to discrimination and prejudice arising from differences in socio-cultural values (see Apple & Weis, 1983). For them, ignorance of other cultures and the value of other cultures represents a type of mindlessness that leads to ethnocentrism and 'tribalism'. Radicals, however, consider prejudice and discrimination to be symptoms rather than the cause of negative race relations. In their view, the root cause is institutionalised or structural inequality that results, not in mindlessness but in manipulation of the minority groups by the dominant group. Thus the focus for them includes power relations rather than simply race relations. Put differently, unlike liberals, the radicals see the problem of

racism as closely related to, if not inseparable from, class conflicts. For example, Berlowitz (1984), Bowles and Gintis (1976), and Nkomo (1984) locate problems of race within social and economic structures of capitalism. In Pinar et al's words (1995, p.318; also see McLaren and Dantley, 1990), radicals see race "as a social process interwoven with other social processes, especially with class and gender".

According to liberals, no one benefits from racism, and certainly not capitalists. If anything, in their view, discrimination can be seen as irrational because it leads business to suffer a loss of profit. Radicals take an opposing view. They point to examples of where racism serves the interests of capitalists. It does this in several ways. Racism can function to divide black workers from white dominated worker unions. Racism can also function as a force to keep ethnic groups available as a reserve army of unemployed, ready to provide cheap labor during boom times. White politicians can use racism as a scapegoat for social problems they can not solve, as a lure for inspiring soldiers to kill, and as a tool for imperialism. For example, McCarthy (1988) exemplifies this radical view by saying that,

Racism as an ideology fulfils capitalism's economic requirements for superexploitation and the creation of a vast reserve army of labor. Racial strife disorganises the working class and hence weakens working-class resistance to capitalist domination. (p.271)

Liberals argue that the problem of 'bad' race relations requires a cultural solution because the cause is cultural. In this case, education is seen to be the cure for cultural ignorance and mindlessness. Proper education, say the liberals, would produce equality of respect for different racial groups; it would lead to a genuine understanding, appreciation and acceptance of minority ethnic group cultures. As Rizvi and Crowley (1993) put it in their critique of the liberal perspective, multicultural education,

seeks to develop in students a sensitivity to the cultural habits and lifestyles of ethnic groups and a general tolerance of differences in order to ameliorate prejudice in schools and society. (p.43)

Liberals, then, support the concept of multicultural education, which, they consider operates in the 'true' interests of all ethnic groups. Cultural self-determination

enables all groups to find and take pride in their true identity and thereby feel equally valued within a society characterised by enlightened capitalism.

Radicals, on the other hand, regard multicultural education as “serving to sustain a focus upon individual responses and understandings” (Rizvi and Crowley, 1993, p. 43), as promoting a form of ‘false consciousness’, as seeking to coopt black/white minority group struggle, and hence as being used as an agency of social control rather than social justice. In the view of radicals, ethnic and racial tensions can only be resolved effectively through structural reform; that is, by a type of economic restructuring in the direction of socialism and equality of rewards, not simply equality of opportunity to compete for those rewards. They support anti-racist education, as distinct from multicultural education, to give “students a critical understanding of the structure of oppression and to attend to those pedagogic relations that help reproduce the unequal social order” (Rizvi and Crowley, 1993, p.43; see also Rizvi, 1985).

These conceptual differences between liberals and radicals are outlined in Figure 23 below.

Figure 23. Conceptual Differences between Multiculturalism and Anti-racism

Liberals	Radicals (Neo-Marxists)
1. Want multicultural education.	1. Want anti-racist education.
2. Problem is bad race relations.	2. Problem is institutionalised racism.
3. Negative race relations caused by: - prejudice. - discrimination.	3. Negative race relations caused by: - exploitation. - needs of capitalism. - interests of capitalists.
4. Prejudice & discrimination caused by: - ignorance of other cultures. - ethnocentrism/tribalism. - mindlessness.	4. Prejudice & discrimination caused by: - institutionalised inequality. - manipulation.
5. Concentrate on race relations.	5. Concentrate on power relations.
6. The problem of racism can be treated separately from class analysis.	6. Problem of racism is inseparable from class analysis.
7. Race conflicts are cultural (conflicts	7. Race conflicts are structural (conflicts

of culture).	of interests).
<p>8. Need cultural solution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - education. - enlightened capitalism. - equality of respect. 	<p>8. Need structural solution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - socialism. - restructuring. - equality of rewards.
<p>9. Multicultural education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is in 'true' interests of ethnic groups. - enable them to find their true identity. - is based on genuine respect for validity of ethnic cultures. - will increase equality of opportunity and remove prejudice and discrimination. - is a form of cultural self-determination. 	<p>9. Multicultural education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is a form of 'false consciousness'. - is a cultural 'cooling out' and 'opium of the people'. - cooptation of black/ethnic struggle. - is a means of social control. - is a cultural solution to a structural problem (i.e. won't work.)
<p>10. No one benefits from racism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discrimination is irrational because businesses lose profits as a result. 	<p>10. Capitalists gain from racism because it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - divides workers & workers unions. - keeps ethnic groups as unemployed reservoir of cheap labor for boom times (provides handy but disposable labor force). - provides white politicians with a scapegoat for social problems. - helps to inspire soldiers to kill. - is a handy tool for imperialism.

ANALYSIS OF UNIT CURRICULUM

Broadly speaking, an analysis of the content of Unit Curriculum supports the critical theorists' contention: SAE does present the liberal view that multiculturalism (equality of opportunity and equality of respect) is achievable within a capitalist and class structured society; that is, SAE presents the consensus theory view of social justice in relation to the ethnic and race relations, rather than the conflict theory view that capitalism prevents minority ethnic/racial groups from having equality of opportunity, equality of respect, and status and equality of rewards etc. The overall message from the units dealing with Australian society is that, although there are racial inequalities in Australian society, they can be removed without dismantling

capitalism. This is noticeable when students are asked to work out so-called 'policies' and 'solutions'.

Blaming the Victim versus Blaming the System

Race relations is one of the main areas that SAE in Unit Curriculum focuses on. Where bad race relations exist, usually Aboriginals and Asian immigrants are held responsible because they are portrayed as having one problem or another. It is hard to find explicit value judgments in Unit Curriculum that say this. The statement that comes closest to being a value judgment is:

In 1984, there was a vigorous debate regarding the rate of influx of 'Asian' and other 'non-European' immigrants. It was claimed that their presence was causing tensions in some certain urban areas and that this could lead to violence in the communities. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, 1990, p.67)

Phrases such as "their presence was causing tensions" and "violence in the communities" suggest that Asian migrants are to blame for the bad race relations in Australia because of perceived personality deficiencies.

A number of assignments focus on race relations, rather than challenge the power relations between races, which is what Marxist anti-racism calls for. For example, the wording of the project assignment below refer to "Problems facing Aboriginals" and "Problems facing Aboriginals in the broader context when interacting with non-Aboriginals"⁵. These statements suggest that the problems are associated with the Aboriginals; that is, problems belong to Aboriginals, or put simply, the Aboriginals are the problem. "Government sponsored assistance given to Aboriginals" suggests that Aboriginals are helpless and dependent, and the whites are patronising. Under such circumstances, talking about "Outstanding Aboriginals of today" can be regarded as tokenism.

Project Assignment:

Students could be allocated to groups to study and complete a project on Aboriginals in Western Australia today. They could investigate such aspects as the following:

⁵ Aboriginal people are as diverse in their viewpoints and ambitions as any other group of people. We endeavour to show/teach this to students in non-Aboriginal schools. (R.3)

- Aborigines in the wider Australian workforce.
- Efforts made by Aborigines to maintain and promote their traditional lifestyles.
- Problems facing Aborigines.
- Problems facing Aborigines in the broader context when interacting with non-Aborigines.
- Land Rights.
- Government sponsored assistance given to Aborigines.
- Outstanding Aborigines of today.
- The Aboriginal Communities Act 1979. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, 1986, p.350)

The graph construction assignment below asks students to compare the number of centres that Aborigines and Europeans have been living in Western Australia. Within context this actually could be used to infer that although Aborigines have been living here much longer than the Europeans, they have not made much progress at all. Such an inference would reinforce an impression that Aborigines are deficient and can not cope with change. This, in turn, would serve to account for all those 'problems' they have.

Graph Construction Assignment:

Students could represent in a bar graph the number of centuries that Aborigines and Europeans have lived in Western Australia. Students could comment on the time-depth comparison between these people. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, 1986, p.331)

Mindlessness versus Manipulation

SAE in Unit Curriculum adopts the liberal view that bad race relations are caused by prejudice and discrimination. It does not present the conflict theory view that the problem is institutionalised racism caused by exploitation, the needs of capitalism and the interests of capitalists. Furthermore, SAE suggests that prejudice and discrimination reflect ignorance of other cultures, ethnocentrism and tribalism, and mindlessness, rather than institutionalised inequality and manipulation.

To take one example; in the cartoon interpretation assignment below, items 1-3 suggest that racism is just a matter of personal attitudes characterised by prejudice and discrimination. Racism is depicted neither as institutionalised nor as having

anything to do with exploitation, the needs of capitalism and the interests of capitalists. Further, item 2c suggests that school, home, sport and leisure, rather than capitalism, are the cause of racial prejudice and discrimination. There is no mention of racism from the critical theory point of view and students are not given any building materials or concepts to construct a critical theory view of race relations. This leaves institutionalised racism in capitalist society basically beyond critique.

Cartoon Interpretation Assignment (Resource 39):

Study the cartoon on Resource 39 and then refer to the things you have studied in this unit to help you answer the following questions.

1. (a) Why do you think the girl said: 'I'm against multiculturalism, aren't you?'
(b) What is her attitude and can you explain how it might have been developed?
(c) How could you help her to develop a more positive attitude?
2. (a) 'Yea' - what does this response tell you about the boy's knowledge of multiculturalism and about his attitude toward it?
(b) What kinds of experiences might have caused the development of this attitude?
(c) What kinds of experiences at school, at home and at leisure and sport would result in his attitude becoming more tolerant?
3. (a) What do you understand by a responsible attitude?
(b) Do you think that the two characters have responsible attitudes? Why or why not?
4. 'It is the responsibility of all Australians to learn about other cultures.' Write several paragraphs that explain why you agree or disagree with this statement. Draw on the knowledge you have gained in studying this unit.
5. Is there a lesson to be learned from the cartoon? What is it?
6. What do you understand by multiculturalism?" (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, 1990, p.77-8)

Conflict of Cultures Versus Conflict of Interests

SAE in Unit Curriculum presents poor race relations as a conflict of culture (values, customs, beliefs etc.) rather than as a conflict of interest (wealth, power and status). This focus on cultural differences leaves the structural inequality of society unexamined, unquestioned and unchallenged. For instance, the two assignments below emphasise cultural conflicts, not conflicts of interests between ethnic groups in

Australia. They direct students' attention to "cultural practice", "possible reactions", "cultural shock" and "cultural differences". In doing so, they gloss over the structural (especially political and economic) divisions between different race groups in Australia. This is particularly manifest in the Katanning Case Study assignment.

Sketching Assignment (Resource 33):

1. Study the sketches on Resource 33 and for each one, explain the cultural practice that is being illustrated and possible reactions to that practice.
2. Prepare a series of cartoon sketches that illustrate the kinds of cultural shock that might be experienced by some immigrants to Australia. You may like to use dialogue and captions. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, 1990, p.68)

Katanning Case Study Assignment (Resource 34):

Read the story *Katanning: Without Prejudice* on Resource 34 and then do the following activities.

1. Explain the meaning of the following terms and relate them to Katanning:

memorial garden	bushies' drone
prejudice	mosque
exotic presence	gentleman grazier
2. (a) When did the Muslims first come to Katanning?
(b) Why did the Muslims come to Katanning?
(c) Where are Christmas Island and the Cocos Islands?
(d) Where is Katanning?
3. (a) List the ways in which the Katanning Muslims are different to the other residents of Katanning.
(b) How do the Katanning Muslims display their culture?
(c) What cultural differences exist between the two groups?
4. (a) What do you understand by 'halal-certified chicken necks'?
(b) What does their availability tell you about the Katanning community?
(c) What are the attitudes of Mrs Hilary West and the delicatessen owner toward the Muslims?
5. Explain what you think the author mean by the following quotations:
(a) 'Katanning is the town that forgot to be prejudiced.'
(b) 'The Muslims are not migrants. They are Australians...'
6. 'Katanning is a Multicultural Community.' Write a series of paragraphs to support this statement.
(Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, 1990, p.68-9)

Shallow Cultural Treatment versus Deep Cultural Treatment

SAE in Unit Curriculum not only treats race culturally rather than structurally, it often treats the culture of racial minority groups in a superficial fashion. Willinsky argues that, in America, the Social Studies Curriculum treats 'cultures other than the dominant one as both exotic and monolithic' and represents 'these cultures through food-and festival events' (cited in Pinar et al, 1995, p.326). The three assignments below (display, food for thought, research) are a few examples of how this type of thing also applies in Unit Curriculum in Western Australia.

Display Assignment:

Students could examine and prepare a display on the ways in which Europe has influenced the Australian way of life. Students could be allocated a number of areas to investigate from the following list:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| * Dress | * Tourism |
| * Cars and Other Vehicles | * Food and Restaurants |
| * Architecture | * Entertainers, Films and |
| * Sports and Sporting Events | * Television Programmes |
| * Literature, Language and Writing | * Community Groups. |

(Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, 1987, p.366)

Food for Thought Assignment:

1. (a) Make a list of all the traditional/cultural foods regularly eaten by class members.
(b) Make a list of some of the popular traditional dishes that are regularly eaten by class members.
(c) Collect traditional food recipes of the country of origin of people in the class and compile a class multicultural recipe book.
2. Organise a special lunch to launch the book within the school or community. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, 1990, p.64)

Research Assignment:

Select one ethnic group that forms part of the Australian community and research:

- cultural aspects of these people in their country of origin; and
- the way their culture has enriched Australian culture.

The teacher and students should firstly establish which aspects of culture will be researched (for example, food, customs, dance, music, crafts, celebrations, architecture, traditions, festivals and legends/myths) and the model of presentation. Refer to Objective 1.6 (Library Research/Essay) for information on library research. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, 1990, p.64)

Other assignments focus students' attention on deeper aspects of ethnic minority group culture. For example, when investigating Aboriginal tribal or language groups,

students are asked to discuss concepts such as dialects, conventional terms, self-other identification, territorial spread, similarity in cultural patterning, and strong mythic ties. Still other assignments focus on Aboriginal religious beliefs, myths and legends of traditional Aboriginal people (see Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, 1986, p.332-4).

Language, religious beliefs, myths and legends are important aspects of a culture. What they do not do is focus on structural issues. If focused on exclusively, they can divert attention from considerations of institutionalised racism against Aborigines and their institutionalised lack of power, status and wealth in present-day Australian society.

Dominant versus Subordinate Ethnic Groups

Whatley (1988, 1993, see Pinar et al, 1995, p.338) claims that racial representation in American school curriculum is dominated by “ethnocentrism”, a perspective in which “white western culture is clearly the norm” and “all else is other”, and in which ethnic groups are represented through “negative patterns or themes”. Is this also true of SAE in Unit Curriculum? In the process of presenting multiculturalism itself, Unit Curriculum displays some partiality towards different races. Europeans are given the most attention and emphasis, and are treated predominantly in a positive way. A more negative picture is painted for Aborigines and Asians. These differences emerge through the selection of information, types of assignments, value judgments and stereotyping.

Selective Information

SAE in Unit Curriculum devotes eighty-five pages to race relations (forty-one in Unit 9122, ten in Unit 9132, seven in Unit 9133, four in Unit 9142 and twenty-three in Unit 9154). Of these eighty-five pages, a lot more focus on European settlers than Aborigines, and within these pages, only one or two paragraphs mention racial prejudice (see Social Studies, Contemporary Australian society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.66-7). Take one unit for example. In Western Australia: Yesterday and Today, four objectives (1.2, 1.3, 2.3 and 2.4) are devoted to European settlers while only one objective (2.1) deals with Aborigines. Put differently,

European settlers are covered in twenty-six pages whereas Aborigines have only eight pages.

Still within these five objectives in the unit *Western Australia: Yesterday and Today*, there is also a difference in the selection of details. While information about positive, or more accurately the traditional, aspects of culture as well as problems associated with Aborigines is provided, only positive things can be found about European settlers (see *Social Studies teachers Guide, Year 9, 1986, p.317-24, 330-60*).

Types of Assignments

Although there is not much difference in the types of assignments dealing with different races in Unit Curriculum, they do require students to undertake different tasks. Students are asked to appreciate what European settlers have done. There is a strong notion of 'No European settlers' exploration and settlement, no today's Australia'. This can be regarded as an 'Ode to the European settlers'. For Aborigines, students are asked mainly to know the unique aspects of culture which were and are important to the Aboriginal society (note: not to Australian society) and which separate the Aborigines from the whites (see *Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, 1986, p.330*). For example, in the following assignment, the words "traditional"⁶, "basic", "wild fruit", "vegetable food", "animal food" and "implements" associate the Aborigines with being primitive and backwards.

Local Area Study Assignment:

Students could investigate what the natural environment of their local area would have been like before European settlement. Students could then identify how traditional Aborigines may have used that environment to meet their basic needs. For example:

- Students could first map the area, showing where water was likely to be found.
- Students could collect samples and/or draw diagrams of wild fruits and vegetable foods that are or were available.
- Students could draw diagrams of animal foods that are/were available.
- Students could draw labelled diagrams of implements used (and perhaps still being used) by Aborigines of the area to assist them in

⁶ "traditional" - listed as preferred or more appropriate terminology in the Aboriginal Studies K-10 framework. (R.3)

collecting food and water. (Social Studies teachers Guide, Year 9, 1986, p.335)

The next assignment (picture study) suggests that Europeans are much more civilised than Aborigines, that they have a 'well-known and established religion', and that people who believe in their religion are living a happy life. Being baptised means happiness and a bright future, and being saved from misery.

Picture Study Assignment(Resource Sheet 48):

Students could examine the photograph of *The Baptism of Takencut by Father Bernardus Martinez OSB, New Norcia Benedictine Community, 1868*, and complete activities similar to the following:

- Write a description of the situation shown in the photograph.
- Conduct an investigation in order to compare the religious beliefs of traditional Aborigines and those of the Benedictine Monks of New Norcia shown in the photograph.
- Discuss in groups:
 1. The series of events which is likely to have culminated in this Aboriginal being baptised.
 2. The likely feelings of the people shown in the photograph.
 3. How other Aborigines may have viewed the event at the time.
- Role-play a similar situation that could occur in your family. For example, your sister has been persuaded by a group of her friends to join a new religious group, about which little is known. The other members of your family are firm and happy believers in a well-known and established religion. (Social Studies teachers Guide, Year 9, 1986, p.346)

A number of assignments suggest that progress from Aboriginal society to modern advanced Australian society is due to the Europeans. Put in a broader context, these assignments suggest that Aborigines made no progress for thousands of years and Europeans have advanced Australia significantly in just two hundred years. The conclusion? Europeans are superior and Aborigines are inferior!⁷ For example:

⁷ The "Teachers Notes" on pp.330-1 put these assignments into context. For example, "the impact of European settlement on the traditional way of life of Aborigines has been devastating...The delicate traditional balance between human beings, land and mythic characters has been eroded". Also, pp.342-3, "Only recently, however, has an emphasis been placed on the preservation of the Aboriginal way of life and policies now tend to support self-determination". Conclusion? It signifies great strength and pride that despite enormous odds, mainly in the form of European interference and bungling, the Australian Aborigines have successfully preserved their identity and working towards achieving reconciliation: "A united Australia which respect this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all". (Vision of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation). (R.3)

Debate Assignment:

Students are to prepare for and conduct a debate on the topic 'But for the convicts, the development of the Australian colonies would have been much slower.' (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, 1986, p.192)

Group Discussion Assignment:

Students could be allocated to groups to discuss a topic similar to *How would life be different here if Western Australia had been colonised by the French?* A blackboard summary could be constructed from the contributions of groups. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, 1986, p.341)

Research Assignment:

Students could use the library to locate information on the work of Western Australian explorers, with the aim of collecting information on any of the following:

- What route did the explorer take?
- In what ways did the explorer increase knowledge of the geography of Western Australia?

Does the written evidence tell us anything about the feelings of the explorer on his journey? (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, 1986, p.317)

Value Judgments

The Unit Curriculum SAE contains only a few statements that directly imply a value judgment. Some are in favour of a certain race. For example, consistent with the assignments mentioned earlier in this paper, Europeans, both as early settlers and later migrants, are judged more favourably and positively. To take some cases in point, the following statements imply Europeans made more substantial and lasting contributions to the development of Australian society than did the other groups.

With the coming of European settlement, the explorers had a special role of increasing the knowledge of the settlers of the geography of Western Australia.....It is apparent from their written descriptions that explorers were the forward scouts in the spread of settlement, searching for resources most valuable to settlers at that time: fertile soils, water and grasslands. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, 1986, p.317)

Europe enjoyed political and economic dominance over other races, and with these came cultural and religious influence. In most cases, native culture was lost. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, 1987, p.363)

In addition to statements that directly suggest the superiority of Europeans over Aborigines, the latter are often portrayed in a very unpleasant and undesirable light. For instance:

The incidence of poverty among Aborigines is extremely high. Their median income is less than half of that for the total population. This is directly related to 'low labour force participation rates' and 'alcoholism is frequently a major problem'. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, 1990, p.56)

Stereotyping: Words, Pictures and Cartoons

As shown earlier, the most frequently used words and phrases associated with the 'whites' or Europeans are: 'explorers', 'pioneers', 'forward scouts', 'contributions', 'achievements', 'success', 'increase the knowledge' and 'enjoy political and economic dominance over other races'. On the other hand, Aborigines are associated with more negative and unpleasant words and phrases, such as, 'traditional'⁸, 'unemployment', 'poverty', 'problems', 'alcoholism' and 'government assistance for Aboriginal'. In similar vein, words and phrases associated with other non-Anglo-Celtic groups in general and Asians in particular are 'language barrier', 'low skills' and 'tensions'.

Consistent with word stereotyping are some pictures and cartoons contained in the Unit Curriculum. However, it is hard for an outside researcher to decide whether one picture or cartoon is more powerful and impressive than another. To make any judgement requires classroom observation and asking both students and teachers their responses, reactions and feelings, which is beyond this study.

Overall

It can be concluded from what has been said so far that there is some evidence, even if weak, to support the argument that the Unit Curriculum advocates a multicultural perspective on race relations. It can be concluded more confidently that the Unit Curriculum neither promotes anti-racist education nor suggests socialism as the solution to racism; that is, it gives virtually no recognition to the critical theorists' structural solution to race and ethnic group issues; it does not consider who wins and who loses from racism; and it devotes no space to the Marxist view that multicultural education is a form of 'false consciousness', a cultural 'cooling out' process, and a means of social control. Furthermore, Unit Curriculum ignores the issue of whether

⁸ Preferred terminology. (R.3)

the problem of racism can be treated separately from Australia's class structure (the cause of unequal rewards in society) or whether it is inseparable from class analysis.

For all these reasons, it can be claimed that Unit Curriculum adopts the liberal view that multiculturalism serves the 'true' interests of ethnic minority groups, enables them to find their true identity, is based on a genuine respect for the validity of all ethnic cultures, will increase equality of opportunity, will remove prejudice and discrimination, and is a form of cultural self-determination.

ANALYSIS OF STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

Overall, race relations in Student Outcome Statements is dealt with, as in Unit Curriculum, within a liberal multiculturalism framework rather than a Marxist framework, apart from a few anti-racist touches. Because of the different format of Student Outcome Statements, compared with Unit Curriculum, and the fact that it does not have detailed content materials, evidence to support claims will be taken from the Outcome Statements, Pointers and Work Samples found in *Studies of Society and Environment, Student Outcome Statements with Pointers and Work Samples, Working Edition*, released by Education Department of Western Australia in 1994. It should also be noted that there are eight levels of achievement for each outcome statement. Although each of the eight levels might be seen as aligned with a particular year level⁹, the reality is that students in the same class may be found on different levels ranging from level one to eight (see *Student Achievement in Studies of Society and Environment in Western Australian Government Schools* (Education Department of Western Australia, 1994). Therefore, this analysis incorporates all eight levels.

Cultural Treatment versus Structural Treatment

Student Outcome Statements treats race culturally rather than structurally. It contains a separate strand called Culture, under which there are three sub-strands, namely,

⁹ The eight levels represent typical milestones of student achievement and are definitely not aligned with a particular school year (nor the chronological age of a student). Based on conceptual development, they are carefully sequenced to parallel the major developmental stages of learning. (R.3)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture¹⁰, Culture Cohesion and Diversity, and Personal, Group and Culture Identity. Within these and other sections of Student Outcome Statements, numerous examples of a focus upon a ‘cultural’ perspective on race relations can be found. For example, the following Outcomes emphasise “cultural importance”, “core values” and “cultural adaptation”. All of them focus on cultural factors, not structural issues¹¹ of institutionalised racism, institutionalised prejudice and discrimination, and the institutionalised lack of power, status and wealth of Aboriginal people. All of them suggest that the place of Aborigines in Australian society and their perceptions of that place can be understood best by focusing on their culture.

- 5.10. Identifies and describes issues that are culturally important to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander societies and groups.
- 6.10. Analyses the core values of Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander groups and societies.
- 8.10. Analyses contemporary issues of cultural importance from the perspectives and beliefs of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander groups.
- 8.11. Analyses factors that bring about cultural adaptation within groups, communities or societies. (p.5)

Similarly none of the Pointers¹², listed below, involves examining conflicts of interests between Aborigines and non-Aborigines. They suggest that for Aborigines to fit harmoniously into the white Australia, Europeans need to understand and accept their culture and accept their values as having validity or legitimacy. That is, the emphasis is upon equality of respect, not equality of rewards.

Listen to and discuss Dreaming stories, Aboriginal stories and/or the legends of the Torres Strait Islands that indicate indigenous people’s long period of occupation. (p.5)

¹⁰ We no longer have an ATSC substrand under the Cultural strand; it has been replaced with “Beliefs and Culture”. (R.3)

¹¹ We may be getting closer to focusing on structural issues with this pointer from “Time, Continuity and Change” level 6. 6.1. Describe and explain changes in the rights and freedom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the 20th century (Reconciliation). (R.3)

¹² The Pointers were never intended to be syllabus entries. They are ways a student might demonstrate performance or achievement in relation to an outcome. They are therefore neither prescriptive, nor exhaustive in intent. (R.3)

Describe the contemporary lives of Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Island children in the local or other communities (compare games of indigenous and non-indigenous children, sing songs that have been approved by the community). (p.5)

Examine and discuss the role of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander groups involved in the arts. (p.21)

Investigate diverse Aboriginal groups and/or Torres Strait Islander groups to identify those things that they share and those things that are unique to their groups. (p.21)

Examine and explain an Aboriginal Dreaming Story or a legend of the Torres Strait Islands and its meaning for a particular group. (p.21)¹³

Discuss the importance of language maintenance, retrieval and revival for the cultural identity of Aboriginal people and/or Torres Strait Islander people. (p.37)

Discuss the importance of land, sea and water connections of Aboriginal people and/or Torres Strait Islander people in maintaining their cultural identity. (p.37)

Analyse the core spiritual values of an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander group. (p.45)

Bad Race Relations versus Institutionalised Racism

Student Outcome Statements also adopts the liberal view that the problem is bad race relations caused by prejudice and discrimination rather than the conflict theory view that the problem is institutionalised racism caused by exploitation to meet the needs of capitalism and interests of capitalists. Furthermore, Student Outcome Statements endorses the notion that racial prejudice and discrimination are caused by ignorance of other cultures, ethnocentrism and mindlessness rather than by structured inequality and self-serving manipulation. Correspondingly, the solution lies in educating students to develop some sort of awareness of other cultures. The Pointers listed below, for example, focus on changing personal attitudes, an approach which leaves the class, power and status structure of Australia beyond analysis and reform.

Demonstrates awareness of Aboriginal culture, such as listen to stories, music or songs of Aboriginal culture. (p.5)¹⁴

Determine the relative contribution of various factors in altering attitudes to Asian immigration to Australia. (p.51)

¹³ The above pointers are typically primary in focus/pitch and would not necessarily be addressed in Year 8-10. (R.3)

¹⁴ This pointer comes from the Foundation Outcome Statements and as such signals progress towards achieving level one for students with intellectual disability. (R.3)

Explain why attitudes towards Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders have changed over time. (p.51)

Here the focus is on change in attitudes, not change in the economic and political structure of Australian society¹⁵. The only Pointers which might be seen to place institutionalised racial inequalities under consideration are these:

Describe how sexist, violent and racist behaviour affects the rights of others. (p.23)¹⁶

Describe how the ways people are stereotyped can adversely affect their chances of obtaining paid work, job satisfaction and/or advancement and work effectiveness. (p.23)¹⁷

Investigate and report on laws which promote non-discriminatory practices in school and community workplaces (equal opportunity and anti-racism legislation). (p.30)

Conflict of Cultures Versus Conflict of Interests

Student Outcome Statements talks about racial disharmony as being caused by ignorance, misunderstanding, lack of education and poor socialisation as well as by conflicts of interests such as land issues in Australia. For example, several Pointers direct students to:

Describe the traditional way of life of Aborigines of the local area and describe the impact of European settlement on their way of life. (p.19)

Research a particular Land and/or Sea Claim and its impact on the language group of the area in economic, social and political terms. (p.61)

In these two examples, race conflicts are dealt with both in terms of culture and in terms of interests. Compared with Unit Curriculum, this might be considered as progress by critical theorists.

¹⁵ It must be stated that the pointers are examples only of how students might demonstrate achievement of outcomes. (R.3)

¹⁶ Reworded as “describe how discriminating behaviour affects the rights of others” (level 3). (R.3)

¹⁷ Resources: 5.14. Investigate the ways in which factors such as gender, geographic location, disability, race, non-English speaking background have an impact on access to employment or career advancement. (R.3)

Cultural Solution versus Structural Solution

Student Outcome Statements provides a vision of a cultural solution to racism, such as through educating both individuals and communities. However, it also leaves a little room for the critical theorists' structural solution — socialism — through, for instance, Aboriginal ownership of land. Nonetheless it places more emphasis upon multicultural education¹⁸ than anti-racist education. The following Pointers exemplify the Student Outcome Statements approach:

Analyse ways developed in Australia to maintain the multicultural nature of Australian society. (p.45)

Explore the contribution of social institutions such as education, the arts or sport, to the notion of a multicultural society. (p.45)¹⁹

These pointers are typical of the liberal cultural solution to racism. Nevertheless, isolated instances of Pointers more or less aligned with a Marxist structural solution to racism can be found too. For example:

Analyse the feeling towards land ownership held by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. (p.45)

Positive Representation versus Negative Representation

Again in Student Outcome Statements, as in Unit Curriculum, European settlers are given the most attention and emphasis and are given predominantly positive treatment, while Aborigines and non-Anglo-Australian immigrants are often represented negatively. Take, for example, the following Pointers and Work Samples:

Describe the importance of exploration in colonial Western Australia. (p.19)

¹⁸ Aborigines wish to be accepted as equal by maintaining cultural differences. This is the right of all people. There is a new and growing respect for and acceptance of Aboriginal culture by non-Aboriginal teachers and students. It is my understanding that Aboriginal people have supported devolution of curriculum provision as it has allowed for more Aboriginal participation at the local and regional level. (R.3)

¹⁹ Change of wording: 6.1. Discuss the consequences of the concept of terra nullius to Aboriginal cultures in Australia. 6.2. Describe how the ways in which people use, modify and exploit their natural environment have changed over time. (R.3)

Describe the contribution made by convicts to the colonial development of Western Australia. (p.27)

Work Sample Task: Make a chart to show community centres and groups and the services they provide. (Also see two pictures and a student work sample, p.18)

At one stage, Student Outcome Statements acknowledges (see p.37) that Australia was 'occupied' by Europeans (note the difference between occupation and invasion). However, based on the white society's culture and value system or on what Whatley (1988) terms 'ethnocentrism', convicts (Anglo-whites) are favoured with words like 'importance', 'exploration' and 'contribution' as shown in the above two pointers. By contrast, in the work sample, Aboriginals are portrayed as helpless and dependent; they are depicted as receiving government and non-government organisation sponsored assistance. The overriding picture presented by Student Outcome Statements shows white people making contributions to Australia while Aboriginals are receiving benefits. It suggests that Aboriginals are living off the white people, and therefore whites are superior to Aboriginals.

Again, like Unit Curriculum, Student Outcome Statements does not provide any space or expression for the Marxist view of multicultural education. From this and all that has been said, it can be concluded that Student Outcome statements endorses the liberal perspective of multicultural education as shown in Figure 23.

And finally, it might be suggested that Student Outcome Statements can be seen as no more than a curriculum framework²⁰. Theoretically, it leaves much room for teachers to do what they like to with regard to what to teach and how to teach²¹. This leaves us uncertain as to how race will be treated in the classroom. It almost totally depends on what conceptual framework a teacher adopts. Students will get a multicultural education if the teacher adopts the liberal view, and an anti-racist education if it is the

²⁰ The Student Outcome Statements are not a curriculum framework. They are the monitoring statements written in eight progressive levels of achievement. They support and strongly link to the actual "curriculum framework" which is used to develop curriculum in schools and classrooms. (R.3)

²¹ Clear outcomes for each learning area have been articulated in the Curriculum Framework. It is mandatory that opportunities be provided for all students to achieve these outcomes. Teaching, learning and assessment strategies have been identified which will most effectively achieve student understanding and progress. (R.3)

Marxist view. Arguably, whether the issue of race relations is treated properly rests, to a large extent, with the teacher. On this point, as Sizemore (1990) observes that, “the classroom teacher has not been prepared multiculturally”.

CONCLUSIONS

Critical theorists claim that in a devolved education system, the curriculum will perform the same functions as it does in a non-devolved system. Or, more specifically, it will not only continue to function as an agent of social injustice, social control and economic growth, but also intensify these functions. Moreover, critical theorists argue that in the case of multiculturalism versus anti-racism, the curriculum will contain a strong preference for liberal multiculturalism over Marxist anti-racism, and for them this is unacceptable and regrettable.

Devolution ‘Phase 2’ (1994—) saw a proposed change from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements. But the change is not exactly what critical theorists expected. There are more similarities than differences between Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements. Both adopt a liberal multiculturalism approach in their treatment of race relations; that is, both curriculums see negative race relations as being caused by prejudice and discrimination and as resulting from ignorance of other cultures and mindlessness; both curriculums see racial disharmony as being caused by conflicts of cultures, not institutionalised inequalities. Therefore, both curriculums endorse liberal multicultural education as a cultural solution to racism, the only exception being that Student Outcome Statements contains some isolated touches of a Marxist structural solution. Critical theorists could not expect such a change, but they should be pleased with it. A simplified version of the changes from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements in terms of multiculturalism versus Marxist anti-racism can be tabled as in Figure 24 below:

To conclude, the findings of this chapter suggest that critical theorists would be right to predict that SAE prefers multiculturalism over anti-racism. But there is no strong evidence in this case to support their claim that devolution will intensify the curriculum’s function of reinforcing a multicultural rather than anti-racist perspective on social justice. How critical theorists would explain this remains to be explored.

Figure 24. Changes from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements in Terms of Multiculturalism versus Anti-racism

Unit Curriculum	Student Outcome Statements
1. Blaming the victim versus blaming the system.	No change.
2. Mindlessness versus manipulation.	Minor change.
3. Cultural solution versus structural solution.	Minor change.
4. Conflict of cultures versus conflict of interests.	Minor change.
5. Treating race culturally rather than structurally.	No change.
6. Dominant versus subordinate ethnic groups.	No change.

13

LIBERAL VERSUS NEO-MARXIST VIEW OF GENDER EQUITY

Gender equity is another strand of social justice on which liberals and critical theorists have different positions. In broad terms these differences parallel those that distinguish their perceptions on race relations. For example, with respect to the cause, consequences and remedies of gender inequality, liberal feminists focus on culture while critical theory feminists focus on structural factors.

Liberal feminists maintain that the lack of equity between male and female is an outcome of a culture that sanctions discrimination and thus denies women the same opportunities and outcomes as men. This culture contains traditional sex role stereotypes that identify distinctive feminine and masculine personality traits and occupational/social roles. Through processes of sex role socialisation, girls learn to become 'feminine' and boys learn to become 'masculine'. More power, status and rewards are attached to the 'masculine' traits and roles than to the 'feminine' ones. Schools serve as an important agency of sex role socialisation.

Critical theorists "locate the construction of gender in the nexus of economic, cultural and political forces in society" (Pinar et al, 1995, p.369), and regard women's lack of civil rights, educational opportunities and positive cultural expectations as symptoms rather than causes of sexism. In their view, women occupy subordinate social positions fundamentally because they have little ownership or control over the means of production and distribution of goods and services. Lack of social and political power is a function of lack of economic power. As observed by Haralambos and Holborm (1991), Marxist feminism "relate women's oppression to the production of

wealth” and regard the disadvantaged position of women as “a consequence of the emergence of private property and subsequently their lack of ownership of the means of production, which in turn deprives them of power” (p.535).

Nobody benefits from sexism, according to the liberals. Gender inequality blocks women’s opportunities to achieve their potential. And men, though the dominant group, also suffer; for example, being excluded from a nurturant role denies them a close relationship with their children. While liberals consider sexism to be irrational, critical theorists claim that capitalists benefit from female subjugation in a number of ways. For example, women add to the reserve army of the unemployed, they produce a new generation of workers at no cost to the capitalists, they keep the average wage low, and they intensify division among workers by increasing the competition for jobs (Haralambos and Holborm, 1991, pp.535-6).

The liberals’ strategy for removing sexism focuses on education (see Kenway and Willis, 1993) and legislation; that is, they “want reforms that take place within the existing social structure” (Haralambos and Holborm, 1991, p.536). To them, school and community education can be used to challenge traditional sex role stereotyping, expose prejudice, change the attitudes of individuals and reshape the culture of our society. Legislation can outlaw discrimination in all spheres of life, introduce civil rights for members of both sexes, and give women legal equality with men in employment, business, education and work.

By contrast, critical theorists argue that the removal of sexism requires a radical restructuring of capitalist society. This means eliminating institutionalised inequalities of wealth and power, industrialising housework, and joining forces with the working class to overthrow the system of private property and class domination; that is, “to struggle against all forms of oppression and exploitation”, and “together with other oppressed people, to fight for a new social and economic order” (Charlotte Perkins Gilman Chapter of the New American Movement, cited in Jaggar & Rothenberg, 1993, p.189).

An outline of differences between the consensus model (liberal view) and conflict model (Marxist view) in terms of gender equity is provided in Figure 25.

Figure 25 Differences Between Liberal and Neo-Marxist View of Gender Equity

Liberal View	Neo-Marxist View
<p>1. Causes of Sexism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of civil rights. - Lack of educational opportunity. - Culture and attitudes of individuals. - Social sex roles expectations. 	<p>1. Causes of Sexism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of the ownership of the means of production. - Lack of private property. - Lack of eco-political power.
<p>2. Forms of Sexism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women denied opportunities to develop their talents. - Men denied the pleasure of having a close relationship with their children. 	<p>2. Forms of Sexism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women as housewives and mothers (not 'real' work). - Women put in a disadvantaged position in paid employment.
<p>3. Nature of Sexism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sexism is irrational. - Nobody benefits from existing gender inequality. 	<p>3. Nature of Sexism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capitalists benefit from sexism. - Sexism is a necessary aspect of capitalism: - Low wages for women keep the average wages low. - Women produce new generations of workers at no cost to the capitalists. - Women provide a pool of nonemployed but potential workers for the capitalists. - Potential women workers increase competition for jobs, hence low paid wages and division amongst workers.
<p>4. Focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removal of discrimination in employment. - Legal equality for women in employment and business. 	<p>4. Focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Struggle against capitalism and its institutionalised inequalities.
<p>5. Solution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of equal opportunity in education and work. - Equal opportunity for self-fulfilment. <p>How:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislation of equal opportunity. - Change attitudes to remove discrimination. - Reform within existing social structure. 	<p>5. Solution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Socialism -- equality in wealth, power, and social worth. <p>How:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First, industrialise housework. - Women become part of the industrial labor force and fight together with men to overthrow the system of private property and class domination.

This framework of conceptual differences between liberal and Marxist views of gender equity will be employed as a set of lens through which both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements will be analysed to see which stance they take.

ANALYSIS OF UNIT CURRICULUM

Not much information is available in Unit Curriculum regarding the gender equity issue. Only two units have something to do with sexism, namely, Social Issues and Contemporary Australian Society. Of these two units, Contemporary Australian Society provides more detailed information, while Social Issues only touches on the matter. All together, only three objectives and eight focus questions deal with gender equity, all of which are from the unit Contemporary Australian Society. In Social Issues, sex-roles are dealt with in the form of Background Notes in relation to social changes.

Despite this limited coverage, it is clear that Unit Curriculum treats the liberal view of gender equality positively and to the exclusion of the Marxist view, which receives no attention or space at all. This becomes clear mainly in the section on assignments. No evidence of explicit value judgments or stereotyping appears in Unit Curriculum materials.

Blaming the Victim versus Blaming the System

SAE in Unit Curriculum adopts the liberal view that gender inequality is caused by women's lack of civic rights and educational opportunity, by attitudes of individuals, and by a culture of different sex role expectations of women, rather than the Marxist view that gender inequality is caused by women's lack of the ownership of the means of production, private property and eco-political power. The following assignments provide examples of the liberal stance of SAE in Unit Curriculum. First, the questions listed below contain phrases such as "sex roles", "the different roles and behaviours expected of men and women", "typical male and female", and "different viewpoints regarding the role of men and women". They suggest that gender inequality is the result of sex role expectations and attitudes held by individuals. Secondly, the table interpretation assignment implies that gender inequality arises

from lack of education. Both of these examples do not give students any building blocks to construct a Marxist view of the cause of gender inequality in Australian society.

Questions:

What are sex roles?

What are the different roles and behaviours expected of men and women?

Can you explain what is meant by the concept of a 'typical male', or a 'typical female'?

Are the different behaviours of men and women natural or learned?

What sanctions are prescribed in our society to promote the concept of typical male and female behaviour and the role of each sex in the workplace?

In what ways have the roles of women changed in the last decade?

How have changing family sizes and changing technology contributed to this social change?

What are some of the different viewpoints regarding the role of men and women in our society? (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.312)

Table Interpretation Assignment (Resource 25):

Students are to discuss the table on Resource 25 and then complete the following tasks.

- (a) Calculate the total number of males and females in the sample.
- (b) What percentage of the Australian population aged 15 and over has attained a post-school qualification?
- (c) What percentage of the Australian population aged 15 and over is without a post-school qualification?
- (d) What percentage of males and females have a degree?
- (e) What percentage of males and females have a qualification in a trade or an apprenticeship? (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.52)

Individualised Inequality versus Institutionalised Inequality

SAE in Unit Curriculum concentrates on eliminating discrimination and establishing legal equality for women in employment and business. This becomes clear in the Teachers Notes and assignments. The Teachers Notes for the unit Contemporary

Australian Society provide information about the various kinds of employment for women. For example:

In Western Australia in 1987, ABS labor force estimates indicate that:

- 51% of women participated in the labor force;
- 31% of the employed labor force was women;
- 29% of full-time employment was held by women;
- 80% of part-time employment was held by women; and
- 74% of women were concentrated in just three of eight occupational groupings: clerical, sales and labourers (includes cleaners and factory hands).

Women are heavily concentrated in a narrow range of jobs and industries. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.27)

Then SAE in Unit Curriculum goes on to investigate inequality in employment between the sexes, leaving the institutionalised gender inequalities unexamined. This sort of approach suggests that gender inequality in employment is the outcome of individual choice and has nothing to do with the capitalist system. Moreover, some assignments (e.g. Table Interpretation Assignment, Speech Preparation Assignment) suggest that female oppression and disadvantage in employment is the consequence of males blocking female access to equal jobs, rather than systemic inequality. For instance:

After leaving school however, it appears that boys enter apprenticeships and formal training schemes at colleges of TAFE in greater numbers than girls.

Between 1984 and 1988 in Western Australia.....the number of female apprenticeships rose by 40.3% from 1063 to 1491; the number of male apprenticeships rose by less than 2% from 8968 to 9112. [Even so] Males apprentices outnumbered females by a ratio of 9:1.

The increase was most pronounced in the traditional female-dominated occupation of hairdressing. In the non-traditional occupations associated with building, electrical, metal and printing trades, there has some increase in female registrations but absolute numbers remain small. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.50)

Table Interpretation Assignment (Resource 13):

Students are to use the table showing Australia's civilian workforce by age and sex (Resource 13) to perform the following tasks.

1. (a) Calculate the total number of males and females in the Australian workforce.

- (b) Calculate the total percentage of males and females in the Australian workforce.
 - (c) Calculate and complete the Total % columns for each age group.
2. (a) Which age group (male and female total) make up the largest proportion of the Australian workforce?
- (b) Which age group (male and female total) make up the smallest proportion of the Australian workforce?
- (c) Which male age groupings dominate female age groupings in terms of proportion of the workforce? Can you account for this in any way?
- (d) Which female age groupings are predominant? Can you account for this?
- (e) What proportions of males and females make up Australia's workforce?
- (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, pp.28-9)

Table Interpretation, Speech Preparation Assignment (Resource 14 and 15):

Students are to discuss and compare the information in Resource 14 and 15 before attempting the following tasks.

1. Explain the difference in meaning between *employed persons by industry* and *employed persons by occupation*.
2. Which occupations:
 - are dominated by females?
 - are dominated by males?
 - employ most people?
 - employ least people?
 - employ the smallest proportion of females?
 - employ the largest number of married females?
3. (a) Calculate the percentage of married females by occupation and percentage of females by occupation.
- (b) Which occupations employ significant percentages of married females?
- (c) calculate the percentages of males and females employed by occupation and list those occupations that are sex-linked to females and sex-linked to males.
4. (a) In pairs, discuss and categorise the occupations listed in Resource 15 as semi-skilled, unskilled or skilled.
- (b) Calculate the percentages of males and females that are employed in semi-skilled, unskilled and skilled occupations. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.31)

Equality of Opportunity versus Equality of Rewards

SAE in Unit Curriculum supports the liberal view that the problem of gender inequality can be solved by reforms within the existing capitalist system, that is, by

the creation of equal opportunity in education and work as well as equal opportunity for self-fulfilment. The Marxist approach to eliminating gender inequality by replacing capitalism with socialism is totally ignored. Quite a few assignments exemplify this stance. For example, the following assignments only deal with male and female access to equal employment. They seem to assume that having the same amount of education or making a good choice of education will necessarily lead to equal employment opportunities between males and females.

Collage Assignment:

Students are to gather pictures, newspaper articles, headlines and sketches and prepare a collage which encourages boys and/or girls to pursue non-traditional career paths. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.50)

Affirmative Action Assignment:

In groups, students are to discuss and then prepare a list of actions that could take place in the school community, that would encourage boys and girls to choose to study non-traditional subjects. These suggestions should be presented to the senior teachers in the school. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.51)

Newspaper Study Assignment:

Students are to gather examples of the types of jobs offered in newspapers. Discuss the range of employment opportunities that are available exclusively to males and exclusively to females and those that stipulate equal opportunity employment.

Write a series of paragraphs that encourage males and females to select subjects and plan for careers that are non-traditional. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.51)

Table Interpretation Assignment (Resource 26, 27):

Students are to discuss the tables on Resource 26 and then answer the questions which follow.

1. How many people were enrolled at technical colleges in Western Australia in 1987?
2. (a) Which TAFE fields of study are dominated by females?
(b) What career opportunities do these lead to?
3. (a) Which TAFE fields of study are dominated by males?
(b) What career opportunities do these lead to?
4. (a) Make predictions about the enrolment patterns at TAFE by the year 2000.
(b) Account for these predictions.

Extension

5. What actions and campaigns have you observed that attempt to redress the balance between male and female employment opportunities? (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, pp.52-53)

Though gender inequality is acknowledged to exist in Western Australia and throughout Australia, the message given is that this sort of problem could be overcome sooner or later within the capitalist Australian society. In various assignments, such as the Extension Assignment and Task Assignment below, students are asked to take what already exists and to work out ways, policies or directions to solve problems of this kind. They do not require students to ask why inequality exists²². This blocks the students' opportunities basically to construct a Marxist solution to gender inequality.

Extension Assignment:

You have been appointed to the position of Minister responsible for Employment. Your first task is to publicly comment on the current position of women in the workforce and to formulate policy that will increase the access of women to all industries and occupations. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.31)

Task Assignment:

In groups, discuss the above task and then prepare a short speech entitled '*Women in the Workforce - New Directions*'.

Scan through the answers to the previous activities to gather information that will explain the current situation; put on your caps to devise new policies and directions.

The teacher should select several speeches to be read and discussed by the class. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.31)

With regard to the forms and nature of gender inequality, no information is available on SAE in Unit Curriculum. However, from what has been said so far, it can be concluded that SAE in Unit Curriculum takes its stance on the liberal view of gender inequality issue, and that it gives no space or attention to the Marxist perspective on gender inequality.

²² True! (R.3)

ANALYSIS OF STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

As does SAE in Unit Curriculum, SAE in Student Outcome Statements also promotes the liberal view of gender equity. This applies particularly to the liberal view perspective on the cause of, and the focus on, the solution to gender inequality.

Blaming the Victim versus Blaming the System

SAE in Student Outcome Statements adopts the liberal view that gender inequality is caused by different sex role expectations, and gender prejudice and discrimination, rather than by the lack of ownership of the means of production, private property and eco-political power, as suggested by the Marxist view. The five pointers listed below are indicative of this approach:

Describe customs associated with childhood for girls and boys in different generations. (p.11)

Discuss the roles of male and female members of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island society. (p.13)²³

Describe the respective roles of men and women in a particular culture. (p.29)

Use techniques of content analysis to investigate gender stereotypes in work. (p.50)

Discuss the impact of the changing role of women in cultures and religions. (p.53)

Furthermore, in the Work Samples, SAE in Student Outcome Statements tends to attribute women's inequality to male domination rather than the capitalist system itself. For example:

Women are also not only deterred by politics because of its male-domination but a women's role imposed by society and sometimes taken by choice is that of a wife and mother. (p.74)

²³ Pointers have been reworded to read: 2.3. Identify and discuss how male and female roles are portrayed in stories. Trace changes in the roles, rights and responsibilities of family members over several generations. (R.3)

Removal of Discrimination versus Struggle against Capitalism

Rather than focus on struggle against capitalism and its institutionalised inequalities, SAE in Student Outcome Statements emphasises the elimination of discrimination in employment and the establishment of legal equality for females in employment and business. Of the Outcome and Pointers listed below, the first, a pointer, focuses on the different work done by the different sexes; the second, an outcome, concentrates on discrimination in employment. Both of them lay a foundation for the next two pointers which deal with removal of discrimination in work and the legal establishment of equal rights and access to employment.

Illustrate, collect pictures or discuss examples of a wide range of work done by girls and boys, women and men, people with disabilities. (p.6)²⁴

5.14. Describe factors affecting opportunities for paid work. (p.38)²⁵

Political and Legal Systems. Describe how sexist, violent and racist behaviour affects the rights of others. (p.23)

Debate whether sexist attitudes are consistent with championing individual rights. (p.50)²⁶

Equal Opportunity versus Structural Elimination of Gender Inequalities

As for the solution to gender inequality, SAE in Student Outcome Statements adopts the liberal approach as well. That is, it advocates reform within the existing capitalist social structure rather than an 'overthrow-capitalism' approach. Within the range of the reforms it promotes, the main theme is the legislation of equal opportunity in work and equal representation in politics for females. The following two pointers and work samples provide examples here.

Investigate the history of the feminist movement as a force in social change. (p.51)

²⁴ Pointer written for level 1. (R.3)

²⁵ New pointer: 5.3. Identify discrimination and /or disadvantage (acceptance in society, treatment by the legal system) resulting from difference in gender, race, disability, ethnic group membership or socio-economic status. (R.3)

²⁶ New Pointer: 7.4. Present an analysis of behaviour using the concepts of 'role', 'norms' and 'stereotype'. 5.3. Examine through sources of the period changing portrayals and attitudes towards groups in society and suggest reasons why these may have changed. (R.3)

Explain the policies of women's rights movements on the issue of sex-based harassment. (p.53)

Task. Examine the positioning of women in the (1993) federal election, considering (a) representation as measured by numbers of women in Parliament, and (b) representation of issues and individual women during the campaign. (p.74)

Between 1943 and 1973, a period of thirty years, only two women were elected to the House of Representatives. There have been women elected to what is commonly known as an exclusive "Men's Club" but the balance of power remained in the men's favour. Since the 1987 election, there has been an increase of four women in the House of Representatives, making 12 females members and one hundred and thirty six male members. Clearly if this imbalance of influence and power existed in another sphere, there would be a huge public outcry of the discrimination of women but not in politics which is patriarchal in its base and changing at a very slow pace, if it is really changing at all...This means that what chance a female representative has of making any real change of carving out a political career is near to impossible. (p.74)

In the next work sample students are asked to investigate the historical origins of a current image of the Australian identity, the Anzac legend. One of the questions here is, "What groups are either not shown or not emphasised?" The following excerpt draws attention to the subordinate role played by women.

As in almost everything, there need to be people "behind the scenes" in war. These people were mostly women. How did the soldiers get ammunition? It was made in factories. Who made it? Women! Women were the nurses who cared for wounded soldiers. Women kept the home and family together while their husbands were gone. (p.34)

CONCLUSIONS

Unit Curriculum presents the liberal view that gender equity is possible and achievable within a capitalist society rather than the conflict theory view that gender equity is not possible in a capitalist society. This issue is dealt with solely in terms of male or female access to equal employment, underpinned by the assumption that having the same amount of education or the possession of equal formal qualifications will necessarily lead to equal employment opportunities between the sexes. Students are not asked to explain gender differences in terms of class structured capitalist society. The same applies to Student Outcome Statements. Students are encouraged to investigate cultural factors that lead to sexual inequality, but not focus on the

structural ones. Both curriculums advocate equality of opportunity for males and females, not equality of rewards between the sexes.

As far as the gender issue is concerned, then, it can be concluded that critical theorists would be right to claim that SAE adopts the liberal view of gender inequality. Given that the gender issue is mainly dealt with in the added new unit of Unit Curriculum - Australian Contemporary Society, it is also reasonable to suggest that critical theorists are justified in their claim that devolution will strengthen SAE's preference for the liberal stance over a neo-Marxist stance on gender equity, and thus function to reinforce social inequality.

14

CAPITALISM VERSUS SOCIALISM

Much has been written by sociologists on the conceptual differences distinguishing capitalism from socialism. Capitalism is ideologically compatible with functionalism, liberalism and the consensus model of society. Socialism is ideologically compatible with various types of neo-Marxist, radical and conflict model theories of society. Within Part C of this thesis, some of the differences between capitalist and socialist conceptual frameworks have been represented as reform versus restructuring, blaming the 'victim' rather than the 'system', meritocracy versus egalitarianism and culture versus structure. Underpinning these differences are opposing concepts of human nature, society, the state, knowledge, and social justice. For the purpose of this chapter, the complexity of all these differences will be simplified to a few of the major eco-political dimensions that distinguish capitalism and socialism.

As Bates (1985) observes, liberalism originates from "concerns over the freeing of individuals from the tyranny of absolute rulers" and as endorsing the notion of "the separation of the state from the civil society". This notion has developed into a definition of "an ever-widening private sphere of action in personal, business and family life". Bates also identifies a central feature of liberalism to be "the protection of individual rights within a framework of a minimal state" (p.9).

Minimal state intervention here means minimum restrictions for individuals to pursue their interests and happiness. Similarly, Held (1983) argues that, for liberals, the role of the state is to ensure,

.....the conditions necessary for individuals to pursue their interests without risk of arbitrary political interference, to participate freely in

economic transactions, to exchange labor and goods on the market and to appropriate resources privately. (p.16)

Held further claims that the liberal version of state's role makes the establishment of democracy as nothing but "a means for enhancing and maximising private gain" (p.17).

According to Schotter (1990) contends that the liberal preference for free market, private ownership and its enhancement tool, democracy, is underpinned by several assumptions. The first is that "all social actions must be sanctioned by the will of the rational individuals composing society". This individualistic philosophy is accompanied by the Lockean idea that "people have an inviolable right to keep what they have earned" (p.2). This assumes that individuals can make 'rational' decisions, as such, they do not have to consider how their actions affect the lives of others" (p.3). The second assumption identified by Schotter is that, "if individuals are left alone and allowed to contract voluntarily, the welfare of society will be enhanced" and "any intervention in this process is bound to make things worse" (p.5). Schotter names the third one, "the efficiency-equity tradeoff assumption", which holds that,

if society uses a nonindividualistic social ethic to define the equity of social outcomes, there is likely to be a dropoff in the efficiency of existing institutions. Society is forced to choose between an economic system that maximises social outputs (the free market) and one that maximises some nonindividualistic ethical objectives, such as the socialist ethic of 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs'. (p.5)

By contrast, the conflict model of society sees the state's role of protecting individuals' interest as only "managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" (Marx, cited from Bates, 1985, p.25), that is, the propertied class. It sees social relations mainly as class relations, in which the moneyed class owns the means of production and takes the surplus value and the working class is thus exploited. Therefore, it prefers state ownership over private ownership and a planned economy over a free market economy because "expropriated wealth allows the moneyed class to become the dominant class socially and politically as well as economically" (Bates, 1985, p.26). Politically, the conflict model of society supports an increase in state's role so that the state can exercise relative independence from the rich class. A

simplified list of differences between the conflict and consensus models of the state or society is outlined below in Figure 26.

Figure 26. Conceptual Differences between Capitalism and Socialism

Capitalism	Socialism
1. Individualism	1. Collectivism
2. Competition	2. Cooperation
3. Private ownership	3. State ownership
4. Profit	4. Sharing of rewards on basis of needs
5. User pays	5. State pays/social welfare
6. Free Market (unplanned economy)	6. Planned economy
7. Capitalist democracy	7. Communist government
8. Meritocracy	8. Egalitarianism

(Note: Point 8 has already been treated separately in the section on ‘Meritocracy versus Egalitarianism’)

ANALYSIS OF UNIT CURRICULUM

The way in which SAE in Unit Curriculum treats capitalism and socialism is rather different from how it treats race, gender and social justice. Almost all attention, priority and emphasis is given to capitalism, while the different aspects of socialism are either criticised or neglected. Socialism seems to be treated negatively in order to show the justification and superiority of capitalism. Furthermore, as will be shown later, more units, generalisations, understandings, objectives and focus questions are included to cover capitalism than socialism. Capitalism also enjoys more diversity than socialism in terms of the type of assignments.

Free Market Better Than Planned Economy

SAE in Unit Curriculum promotes the view that the free market or ‘unplanned’ economy is better than a planned economy. It provides more space, more attention,

more assignments and more diversity of assignments to the free market economy than the planned economy.

Assignment

The types of assignments related to capitalism are greater in number and diversity than those set for socialism. For example, in the unit Economic Systems and Issues (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.154-5, 163-4), there are two equivalent objectives dealing the economic systems of USA and USSR. For objective 1.2 'Describe the economic system of the United States of America as an example of a basically unplanned economy', there are twenty-six assignments covering seven full pages. For objective 1.3 'Describe the economic system of the USSR as an example of a basically planned economy', there are only eighteen assignments covering only five and a half pages.

There are some similarities in the assignments on the free market economy and the planned economy. Again take the two objectives for example. For example, on both topics, there are assignments such as 'Summary', 'Class (group) Discussion', 'Diagram (chart, graph) Construction/Interpretation (study)', 'Debate' and 'Graphing'. Other assignments, however, are quite different. For capitalism, the types of assignments range from 'Population Pyramid', 'List', 'Flow Diagram', 'Study of Agriculture', 'Mapping/Report', 'Collage', 'Levi Jeans Study', 'The Stock Exchange', 'Examining Shopping', 'Way of Life Study', 'Song Study', 'Role-Play/Interview', 'The New Deal', 'Election Posters', 'Radio Broadcast', 'Guest Speaker' and 'Circular Flow Model Modification'; a total of seventeen kinds. For socialism, the types of assignments range from 'Research', 'Investigation', 'Cartoon Interpretation', 'Film/Novel Study', 'Film Appraisal', 'Central Planning', 'Production Poster', 'The Making of the Minsk Tractor', 'Quotation', 'Newspaper Article', 'Tourist's Letter' and 'Women in the Work-force'; a total of twelve kinds.

Different types of assignments serve different purposes. By doing the assignments set for capitalism, students are guided, if not forced or encouraged, to investigate positive features. By doing those set for socialism, students are led to identify the dark side of socialism and be critical of socialism.

For example, the class discussion and explosion chart/brainstorm assignments below are designed to familiarise students with the features of the American economic system as a typical example of a free market economy.

Class Discussion (Resource Sheet 3)

Teachers could remind students of the diagram they examined in Objective 1.1, showing the classification of economies into subsistence, planned and unplanned economies. Students could note where the United States of America is located and discuss what features the economy is likely to have.

Explosion Chart/Brainstorm:

Students could prepare an explosion chart showing the aspects of the American economy with which they are already familiar. The charts could be displayed around the classroom. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.156)

Following the familiarisation stage, students are directed to identify the advantages of a free market economy. For example, the collage assignment below leads students to appreciate the positive features of the free market by asking them to collect pictures indicating the technological advancement of the United States' economy. This is followed immediately by an assignment dealing with positive things such as "freedom" and "choice".

Collage:

Students could collect pictures that indicate that the United States has a technologically advanced economy. These could be presented in the form of a collage. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.158)

Summary/Essay:

Students could prepare a summary or write an essay on how the US economy exhibits the main features of the market system, viz.:

- 1. Freedom of enterprise;
- 2. Freedom of choice by consumers;
- 3. The existence of private property.

(Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.160)

By contrast, the treatment of planned economies is quite different. Here, students are encouraged to critically investigate the advantages and, in particular, the disadvantages of planned economy. For instance, the central planning exercise below first asks students to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of central planning, then asks students to conduct research into the advantages and disadvantages, and finally associates these with the USSR, a former communist state. However, in all

the assignments set for the United States' economy, the word 'disadvantages' is not mentioned.

Central Planning (Resource Sheet 33):

Students could read the information on the resource sheet and conduct further research to complete activities similar to the following:

- *Group Discussion.* Students, in groups, could discuss the meaning of the term, economic planning and consider and list what they see as possible advantages and disadvantages of central planning.
- *Research.* Students could conduct research into the advantages and disadvantages of central economic planning, and compare their findings with lists previously constructed.
- *Chart.* Students could prepare a chart explaining how a Five-year Plan is devised and implemented in the USSR.
- *Plan.* Students could, in groups, prepare a five-year plan to achieve a particular local goal. Details of the plan, and how it could be put into effect, could be shown on a chart.
- *Picture Study.* Students could study the picture of the Lenin hydroelectric power station on the Volga River and then answer these questions:
 1. What are some of the items the Soviet Government would have needed to produce in order to build this power plant?
 2. What organisation planned this power plant?
 3. How would planning have been carried out?

(Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.166)

The film appraisal assignment provides another example of a focus on the negative things of a planned economy. Through answering a group of pre-set questions, students could be encouraged to identify disadvantages of the USSR economy, such as: a preference for heavy industry over consumer goods; workers' motivation being lowered because their interests are not invested in the companies in which they work; workers' benefits being sacrificed because their unions can not protect them; and the whole economic system relying heavily on western countries. These sort of things are never mentioned in the assignments set for the free market economy.

Film Appraisal:

Students could view the film *Working - Soviet Style* (available from Audio-Visual Education Branch) and answer questions similar to the following:

- How is industry organised in the USSR?
- What are the Five-Year Plans?
- How is worker motivation sustained and increased in the USSR?
- What priority has been given to heavy industry, compared with the production of consumer goods, in the USSR? Why?

- What is the role of the trade unions in the USSR? What benefits do they provide to their members? Is their role different from their roles in America and Australia?
- How important is Siberia to the USSR?
- In what way has the USSR relied on western countries?
- How are pay scales determined in the USSR? What other benefits are available to workers?

(Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.167)

Having guided students towards detecting disadvantages in the planned economy, a quotation assignment invites students to consider a judgment that is critical rather than complimenting about the USSR planned economy.

Quotation:

The Soviets have, in effect, created an economic system that values the production of 100 clucking, breakdown-prone trucks more highly than that of ten smoothly running ones, simply because the plan demands higher unit production and makes no allowance for quality.

Students could consider the quotation and discuss whether it is a valid or invalid criticism.

(Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.168)

Another assignment suggests that the Soviet economy is rather backward compared to the ‘technologically advanced economy’ of the United States. This assignment asks students to examine how and why women are encouraged to work, and the importance of large families in the Soviet economy. It does so in a context where labor-intensive economies are commonly regarded as backward. No mention is made of the fact that historically the Soviet Union suffered a heavy loss of men during World War II.

Women in the Work-force (Resource Sheets 42 and 43):

Students could examine the material on the resource sheets and consider the importance of women in the work-force, how and why women are encouraged to work and the importance of large families for the Soviet economy.

(Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.169)

Even though it is made clear that, ‘The final decision as to which is the better system is difficult’ (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.170), SAE in Unit Curriculum continues by encouraging students to try to decide which is better. By this stage, the message that capitalism is better than socialism will have been sent by

asking students to be critical of things related to socialism, based on a framework of capitalist ideology. For example:

Debate:

Students could form two debating teams to consider which economic system is better - the planned or the unplanned. One team could represent supporters of the planned economy of the USSR, the other the unplanned system of the USA. Each team should explain why their system is better, as well as point out the deficiencies of the other. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.171)

Letter to the Editor/Discussion/reply (Resource Sheet 47):

Teachers could prepare a letter purporting to be from a reader in Leningrad to the *Washington Post*. The letter contains commonly heard arguments and phrases criticising the economic system of the United States. The resource sheet contains a sample letter that teachers could modify to suit the abilities of their students.

Students could read the 'Letter from Leningrad' and critically assess it. Discussion points could include:

- The type of language used in the letter.
- Whether it appeals to reason or the emotions.
- Whether facts are used to justify arguments.
- Whether logic is used in developing arguments.
- The purpose of such letters (whether genuine concern, propaganda, etc.).
- Whether such letters are really sent by one country to the other.

Students could then prepare a reply to the letter.
(Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.171)

Inclusion or Exclusion of Information

The alignment of SAE in Unit Curriculum with capitalism rather than socialism is also apparent in the inclusion and exclusion of detailed information. Overall, the positive aspects of capitalism are treated in some detail, while its negative things are either ignored or only mentioned briefly, and in the latter case, usually followed by information showing how those things have been improved. In contrast, the positive aspects of socialism are touched on briefly while the negative things are treated in detail. Some examples can be cited here from the Teachers' Notes. In the unit, Economic Systems and Issues, two objectives deal with the economic systems of USA and USSR respectively (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.154-5, 163-4). Objective 1.2, 'Describe the economic system of the United States of America as an example of a historically unplanned economy', the showing and explaining of the

Circular Flow Model of market or capitalist economy, is followed by comments that provide a basis for forming a positive view of the US system. These comments are:

Although the economy of the United States of America is often cited as the best example of a market economy, it differs from the model in a number of ways.

For example:

The involvement of the Government in economic affairs is perhaps the most important. Although most capital remains in private ownership, the amount of publicly owned capital has greatly increased. The Government has also taken a more regulatory role in economic affairs, as is seen in anti-trust (monopoly) legislation, and since the Depression of the 1930s the Government has played an active part in welfare programmes.

Although the making of profit remains industry's major objective, other motives may influence managers. For example, some companies may be aware of their public image and may prefer reduced profits to criticism from society for, say, polluting the environment or creating unemployment by introducing labor-saving machinery.

The general trend towards large companies has reduced competition among firms and has reduced the power of the consumers to determine what to produce.

Trade unions have been playing an increasingly important part in economic affairs." (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.155)

However, objective 1.3, 'Describe the economic system of the USSR as an example of a basically planned economy', is followed by comments that represent a negative evaluation. For example, students are told that in the USSR,

The economy, however, is still unbalanced. Productive effort is channelled mainly into heavy industry and defence, while there are shortages of consumer goods and housing. Many people believe there has also been a cost in human rights." (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.164)

Stereotype: Words, Pictures and Cartoons, etc.

Accounts of capitalism in Unit Curriculum are often couched in terms that have positive connotations, such as 'advanced specialist economies' (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 8, p.154); 'democracy' and 'complete freedom' (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, p.404); 'rich market economy', and 'capitalist democratic power' (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.59; p.395). When talking about

socialism and socialist countries, however, the most frequently used terms are ‘poor’, ‘problems’ and ‘less-developed’.

Capitalist Democracy Better Than Communist Government

As with the case of free market economy versus planned economy, SAE in Unit Curriculum strongly and explicitly supports the view that capitalist democracy is better than communist government. Various strategies are used here. One strategy involves the use of positive declarations about capitalist democracy and negative ones for communist government. For example, the following debate exercise first predisposes students to think that capitalist democracy offers complete freedom. Any debate would be conducted along this bottom line. By contrast, the essay assignment for communism sets the initial scene as “bad”, and any further elaboration would be colored by this scenario.

Debate:

Students to prepare for and conduct a debate on the topic, ‘In a democracy people have complete freedom’. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.404)

Essay:

Students could prepare and write on the topic *Communism is not all bad*. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.357)

Another strategy used was to try to find fault with socialism or communism’s achievements; that is, to make students think that if socialism does anything well, there must have been something wrong with it. But capitalist achievements are taken for granted and never questioned. The following hypothesis testing exercise exemplifies this strategy. It encourages students to ‘draw inferences’:

Hypothesis testing:

Students could investigate the hypothesis that ‘The achievements of Eastern European countries have been attained at a severe cost in human rights’.

When examining the hypothesis, students should

- Discuss the meaning of human rights.
- Be aware of the use of value judgments in arguments.
- Draw inferences from evidence.
- Discuss reasons for contradictory information on the topic.
- Identify sources of information that are more acceptable than others.
- Identify problems associated with the investigation.

(Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.356)

Still another strategy is to present communism as a 'monster' by putting it together with something 'very terrible' like Japanese militarism. The mapping exercise below alerts students to their communist neighbours. The debate assignment, in effect, puts communism and Japanese militarism together and lets students make a choice. After so many negative things had been said about communism, it can be predicted that students would like Japan to 'act as a buffer to China', even at the risk of 'a resurgence of Japanese militarism'.

Mapping:

Students could identify those nations in Asia that are communist and those that are not, noting any communist nations among Australia's near neighbours. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.394)

Debate:

Students could imagine they lived in Australia during the early 1950s and prepare a debate on whether or not Japan should be reinstated as a full member of the international community.

Arguments for the issue would include the expectation that, as a capitalist democratic power, Japan would act as a buffer to China. Arguments against the issue would include Australia's fear of a resurgence of Japanese militarism. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.395)

A final strategy is to make comparisons between the two different system. This might seem to be an even handed activity. But after a biased presentation against communism, students would have no option but to conclude that capitalism is better than socialism. Moreover, in setting this sort of assignment, pre-judgments are embedded in the construction of the activities. Take, for example, the role-play exercise and 'if the wall could speak' assignment.

Role-Play/Interview:

Students could role-play an interview with a family from a Western European country and a family from an Eastern European country, discussing their ways of life. The effects on their ways of lives of the political institutions in their country should be apparent. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.356)

If This Wall Could Speak (Resource Sheet 28):

Students could examine the photograph of the Berlin Wall and gather information to complete a creative writing exercise called *If This Wall Could Speak*. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.357)

Explicit and Implicit Value Judgments

Unit Curriculum transmits the message that capitalism is better than socialism by introducing some implicit or indirect value judgments. For example, the following statement strongly implies that communist countries were not committed to free world trade, economic growth and development and did not observe the 'rules for secure conduct of trade':

Australia became a foundation member of GATT (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) in January 1948, and since then the organisation has expanded to include over eighty-four countries of the non-communist world. The aims of GATT are to liberalise world trade, and to encourage economic growth and development by providing a framework of rules for secure conduct of trade. Australia's membership of this organisation not only reflects her economic interests but her political attitudes as well. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.416)

ANALYSIS OF STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

As in Unit Curriculum, SAE in Student Outcome Statements, by and large, promotes the view that capitalism is better than socialism in a range of ways, and the view that problems within the capitalist society could be cured by reforms within the society.

Capitalist Democracy Better Than Communist Government

In taking the position that capitalist democracy is better than communist government, SAE in Student Outcome Statements first lays the ground that in a capitalist democracy, people are fully represented. For example, the following two pointers ask students to:

Identify how people elect others to represent them at all levels of government. (p.39)

Identify ways that people can access the legal system (such as industrial dispute resolution). (p.39)

Secondly, SAE in Student Outcome Statements maintains the view that capitalism is basically healthy, and that its problems can be cured by reforms within the existing structure. An outcome and a pointer listed below suggested that reviews or reforms are achievable through the political and economic system, or through consensus.

7.17. Analyses ways in which review or reform has been or could be achieved through political and legal systems. (p.7)

Identify and describe examples of a country choosing to change its political structure through consensus (changing from colony to republic, one party to multi party, Federation, Republic). (p.43)

Thirdly, SAE in Student Outcome Statements presents communist government as system that Australians need to guard against. The following pointers and tasks imply that communism is as objectionable as Nazism, and that any revolution associated with communism can be expected to have a detrimental impact on individual and groups. By contrast, capitalist societies are presented as a pleasant refuge for those who fled their communist countries.

Identify the ways democracies in the 20th century attempted to guard against the growth of totalitarian movements and their motives for doing so. (p.51)

Describe the social and economic impact on a nation of major political movements (Nazism in Germany in 1920s and 30s, Marxism-Leninism in China, green movements in Europe). (p.51)

Assess the impact on individuals and groups in society of revolutionary change to a political and legal system (French Revolution, Cuban Revolution, Communist Revolution in China). (p.63)

Task: To explain why people migrated to Australia

They also left because they knew Australia was part of the Commonwealth so it was not overpowered by Communism or religion: in other words, it was a free country. (p.44)

Free Market versus Planned Economy

SAE in Student Outcome Statements endorses free market economies rather than planned economies. Some pointers only give students a chance to look at the further deregulation of a free market economy, and not any opportunity to investigate the consequences of a centralising economy. For example, students are asked to,

Analyse viewpoints on attempts to deregulate economic systems and evaluate their consequences. (p.63)

Other comments seem to take for granted that the transition of a planned economy to a free market economy in Russia is a worthwhile development. For instance,

The IMF is using the large amount of power it has over Russia to try to get them to complete the change from a socialist economy to a market economy very quickly. (p.55)

In addition, SAE in Student Outcome Statements, like in Unit Curriculum, suggests that any problems associated with the free market system can be solved through reform or review in the existing system. The outcome statement below, for example, assumes there are many ways to improve the capitalist economic system, as well as many 'theories, models or ideologies' that can be used for the reform suggested in the pointer. Moreover, SAE in Student Outcome Statements assumes that problems entrenched in the free market economy can be cured through governmental intervention and legislation as indicated in another two pointers.

7.18. Analyse ways in which economic systems have been or could be reviewed or reformed. (p.7)

Explain the ways in which theories, models or ideologies have been applied to the review and reform the economic system (including capitalism and market forces). (p.55)

Explain ways in which governments are involved in the Australian economic system (regulations on production and consumption of goods and services, regulations for labor market practice, resource development projects, taxation, government production and consumption of goods and services). (p.39)

Investigate a piece of legislation in relation to workplace issues (such as industrial awards, equal opportunity, workplace health and safety, sex-based harassment, training guarantee scheme) and evaluate its impact on productivity. (p.54)

Individualism versus Collectivism

Conflict theory might anticipate that SAE would promote individualism rather than collectivism. However, SAE in Student Outcome Statements does not seem to support this expectation. If anything, it devotes more attention to collectivism than the culture of individualism. For example, the following outcome statements focus on group work:

2.3. Explore a variety of group work strategies. (p.2)

3.3. Choose a suitable technique to achieve a group purpose. (p.2)

5.3. Identifies causes of conflict and ineffective group work and negotiates solutions. (p.2)

2.14. Describes ways in which people cooperate with and depend on one another in their work. (p.6)

Accordingly, many pointers seem designed to determine whether these outcomes are achieved. They specify how individuals should behave in group work situations,

Negotiate and follow group rules. (p.10)

Identify the skills needed for people to work cooperatively to complete a task. (p.14)

Describe how people depend on each other in work situations (including in the school). (p.14)

Carry out a role and responsibility allocated by the group. (p.18)

Contribute alternative ways of achieving tasks to whole group discussion. (p.18)

Identify ways in which individuals and/or groups in the community cooperate to resolve conflict. (p.21)

Identify an issue within their school or community and work cooperatively with others to find and implement an innovative solution. (p.22)

Contribute to the completion of a group task by allocating areas of responsibility for data collection and working on one of the areas. (p.26)

Construct and adhere to contracts with peers. (p.34)

Put personal feelings aside to complete tasks (working with peers other than friends in order to share skills and knowledge). (p.34)

CONCLUSIONS

Basically, critical theorists would be justified in claiming that SAE promotes capitalism rather than socialism. Overall, SAE in both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements supports a free market economy over a planned economy, and capitalist democracy over communist government. Many examples²⁷ of capitalism being promoted as better than socialism, particularly in terms of economics and politics, can be found. Even though there was not much information indicating whether individualism was better than collectivism, private ownership better than state ownership, competition better than cooperation, profit accumulation better than sharing of rewards on basis of need, and user pays better than state pays and social welfare, it might be assumed that SAE in Unit Curriculum also values individualism, private ownership, competition, profit and user pays more than their counterparts, because these things are integral parts of the economic and political systems of the

²⁷ I found very few examples which explicitly stated a preference for one form of social organization over the other. I believe that the statements invite student inquiry and an understanding about the features of both so that informed decisions can be made. E.g., students are asked to: evaluate, describe, offer explanations, assess, explain and analyze major economic, political and social systems. (R.3)

capitalist society. This almost applies to SAE in Student Outcome Statements²⁸. However, one point at odds with what critical theorists might expect is that, SAE in Student Outcome Statements supports collectivism in preference to individualism.

²⁸ The Student Outcome Statements invites student investigation, understanding and decision making regarding different systems of social organization. (R.3)

15

ECONOMIC GROWTH VERSUS ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Economic growth and environmental protection have been two highly contested issues over the past decade. Public debate has linked them so closely that they have almost become two faces of the same coin. What can be traced in the move from early environmentalists' 'systems in equilibrium' to the modern environmentalists' 'sustainable development' is a shift from protest to consensus and negotiation. At the same time, various visions of how to resolve the contradictions between economic growth and environmental conservation have been offered by people from different point of view or different interests groups. For example, Beder (1994a, p.38) observes that,

In 1982, ...the British Government began using the term 'sustainability' to refer to sustainable economic expansion rather than the sustainable use of resources. This new formulation recognised that "economic growth could harm the environment but argued that it did not need to", and that "Australian environmentalists have sought to retain the focus on sustainability of ecosystems rather than economic systems by using the term 'ecologically sustainable development' (ESD)" and this term has willingly been adopted by the Commonwealth Government - which nonetheless uses it to mean economic growth that takes account of environmental impacts. The concept of sustainable development now in use accommodates economic growth, business interests and the free market and therefore does not threaten the power structure of modern industrial societies.

According to Beder, the concept asserts that "economic and environmental goals are compatible" but "subtly emphasises the priority of economic growth" while paying "lip-service to environmental goals" (p.38). He claims that "the rhetoric of sustainable development gave the impression that the environment could be saved

through sound, commonsense adjustments to the ways things were done, without the need for social upheaval”, though many environmentalists argue that,

the existing power alliance of moneyed interests, industry and government is itself the problem: environmental problems will not be solved while that system remains in place, because it is this power structure that leads to environmental destruction. (p.39)

Beder goes on to point out that, the concept of sustainable development has been coopted to encompass the idea,

that wealth creation can compensate for the loss of environmental amenity; that putting a price on the environment will help protect it unless degrading is more profitable; that the ‘free’ market is the best way of allocating environmental resources; that business should base their decisions about polluting behaviour on economic considerations and the quest for profit; that economic growth is necessary for environmental protection and therefore should take priority over it. (p.39)

Beder then suggests that if environmentalists want to stop the manipulation of environmental agenda by economic interests, they have to “move beyond sustainable development into a third wave of environmentalism that transcends both the protest and consensus approaches of recent decades” (p.39).

In addition, Beder (1994b) argues that “advocates of sustainable development in the 1980s sought to find ways of making economic growth sustainable, mainly through technological change” (p.8). He claims that their interest in environment focused on a desire to “ensure a continuous supply of goods and services to meet human wants” (p.9). For them, environment is “a source of inputs and a sink of outputs of the economic system”. This forces the protection of the environment to move to “a secondary and indeed a supplementary position with respect to economic growth” (p.9). As such, “sustainability becomes a problem of how to sustain the economic functions of the environment rather than how to sustain the environment” (p.9). Beder argues that within the framework of ‘sustainable development’, the environment is seen “as part of the economic system” and the market has taken primacy over the environment (pp.9-10). She proposes that “sustainability should require that markets and production process be reshaped to fit nature’s logic rather than ‘the logic of profits and capital accumulation’.” (p.9).

Trainer (1989/90, p.9) argues that solving the environmental problem can not be achieved without facing up to a drastic reduction in GNP and 'living Standards'. The most important issue for environmental educators to focus on, says Trainer, is the question of "whether it is sufficient to patch up the damage being caused while plunging on down the track to ever-greater affluence and GNP, or whether the problems can only be solved by fundamental transition to a very different society, a conserver society."

Similarly, Huckle (1989/90) and Greenall Gough (1989/90, p.19) argue, from an environmental education perspective, that in a capitalist society, "greed takes priority over need" while "considerations of justice, need, and ecological sustainability are overlooked". Therefore, environmental education should be about,

revealing how the world works and how it might be changed, critically examining the economic and political processes shaping the social use of nature within different, but interrelated societies, and helping pupils recognise the struggles of those working for greater democracy and improved environment. (Huckle, 1989/90, p.6)

Wright (1988) examines the views of Coomb (1971) on ecology and economics and summarises them in the following four proposals:

- We must halt population growth, reduce it, and stabilise it at an ecologically safe level.
- We must modify resource use so as not to threaten the survival of other species.
- We should limit the use of scarce resources, ideally using only those which can be renewed indefinitely or recycled perfectly.
- We must control the emission of waste products to a safe level, particularly those of a kind or produced on a scale likely to affect the ecological balance.

From these comments on economic growth versus environmental conservation, it is possible to construct a typology of differences between the consensus model and conflict model of society stance on this issue. These differences, reproduced in terms of an economic rationalist versus critical environmentalist dichotomy, are portrayed in Figure 27 below:

Figure 27. Differences Between Economic Rationalists and Critical Theorists in Terms of Economic Growth versus Environmental Issues

Economic Rationalists	Critical Environmentalists
1. Goals: - Economic growth.	1. Goals: - Systems in equilibrium.
2. Focus: - Sustainable economic development.	2. Focus: - Environmental conservation (ecologically sustainable development).
3. Causes of environmental damage: - Human needs and wants. - Environmental resources not commoditised. - Democratic sanction of people's insistence on short term material benefit (living standards) which takes precedence over long term environmental protection.	3. Causes of environmental damage: - Industrialism/technology. - The power alliance of moneyed interests, industry and governments. - The greed of capitalism in the pursuit of profits and capital accumulation.
4. Underlying assumption: - Economic growth and environment conservation are compatible.	4. Underlying assumption: - Economic growth and environmental conservation are not compatible because of the conflict between the capitalists' greed and the common good.
5. Solutions: - No need for fundamental social change. - Increase economic growth to compensate for environmental loss. - Advance technology to solve environmental problems. - Put a price on environmental resources. - Allocate environmental resources through the mechanism of free market. - Take account of environment in economic decisions.	5. Solutions: - Need fundamental social change. - Change the greedy capitalist society to a conservation society. - Change the power structure of the moneyed interests, industry and governments.

ANALYSIS OF UNIT CURRICULUM

Overall, the emphasis of SAE in Unit Curriculum is laid upon economic growth rather than environmental issues. Attention is paid to economic growth in five units,

namely, The Changing World, Australian Landscapes, Specialisation and the Economy, Economic Systems and Issues and Australia in the International Community. Only four units deal with environmental issues; namely, Earth and People, Australian Landscapes, World Environmental Issues and Australia in the International Community.

On the other hand, across all five units, one understanding, seven objectives, and twenty-four focus questions center on economic growth, while two understandings, eighteen objectives and sixty-nine focus questions are allocated to environmental issues. Also, Unit Curriculum allocates more space/pages to environmental issues than to economic growth. While thirty-six pages are allocated to economic growth, one hundred and twenty pages are devoted to environmental issues.

Assignments for both economic growth and environmental issues are similar in some ways, but differ in others. For example, both have assignments called 'Definition', 'List', 'Discussion (class, group, revision)', 'Research', 'Debate', 'Hypothesis Testing', 'Brainstorm', 'Collage', 'Local Area Examination (Study)', 'Newspaper Cutting/Study', 'Graph Construction and Interpretation', 'Excursion', 'Case Study', 'Cartoon Interpretation and Construction', 'Posters', 'Speech', 'Visit', and 'Group Investigation'. These similarities aside, there are some differences. A lot more assignments are set for environmental issues than for economic growth. The assignments for environmental issues contain more diversity - only thirty-one types of assignments are set for economic growth, compared with fifty-four for environmental issues. Partly because of the uniqueness of the units themselves that deal with environmental issues, there are some specific types of assignments such as 'Atlas Study', 'Graph (Diagram, Table) Study', 'Landscape Art', 'Topographic Map-reading: Grid References (Directions or Scale)', and 'Block Diagram' to achieve environment-related objectives. Apart from those specific types of assignments, other types of assignments apply to 'economic growth', but not 'environmental issues'. For example, assignments such as 'Report', 'Display', 'Essay', 'Comparison', 'Timeline', 'Survey', 'Questionnaire' and 'Checklist' are set for economic growth, but not for environmental issues. On the other hand, assignments such as 'Action', 'Viewpoints', 'Field Trip/Work', 'Planning', 'Values Analysis'

‘Simulation Game’, ‘Observation and Creative Writing’, and ‘Survival’, to name a few, are set for environmental issues, but not for economic growth.

In terms of inclusion or exclusion of detailed information, economic growth and environmental issues get roughly equal treatment. For example, in the Teachers’ Notes, objective (3.2), four aspects of the benefits of economic growth are identified:

- Greater production and higher income allow consumers to buy more goods and services than before. The range of goods and services available for choice usually increases also.
- As consumers demand more goods and services, more inputs are required to produce these, and previously unused resources of land, labor, capital and enterprise are employed.
- The amount of leisure time may also increase, as it may be possible to maintain or expand output while spending fewer hours in actual production.
- As people’s income rise, taxation receipts for the Government may also rise. This may allow the Government to provide further facilities (for example, welfare assistance, public works and educational services), that aid those not directly benefiting from growth, as well as encouraging further growth to occur. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.207)

However, this is followed by objective (3.3) in which the four disadvantage of economic growth are listed as having harmful implications for the environment:

- Economic growth has led to serious problems of air, water and land pollution as the waste-products of both production and consumption are forced on the environment to be absorbed in some ways.
- Economic growth involves urban problems, including industrial noise and stench, ugly cities, sprawling suburbs, and traffic congestion with many related social effects, such as stress and loneliness.
- Resource depletion (and eventual exhaustion) is another major environmental consequence of growth.
- Rapidly changing technology, which is at the core of our economic growth, has led in many cases to anxiety and insecurity... (Social Studies Teachers Guide, (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.211)

Nevertheless, the greater number and more diversity of assignments set for environmental issues are only superficial. In essence, SAE in Unit Curriculum promotes economic growth more than it does environmental protection.

Economic Growth versus Ecological Equilibrium

Although environmental issues gets more space than economic growth, the goal for economic growth in SAE Unit Curriculum appears very much stronger than that for the goal of systems in equilibrium. There are more examples of statements that could be considered as value judgments in favour of economic growth, than in favour of environmental issues. For example, in the unit Economic Systems and Issues, a list of the benefits of economic growth in the Teachers' Notes is followed by the supportive statement that:

The Australian Government considers continued economic growth as an important objective. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.207)

Elsewhere, environmental conservation is portrayed as serving the goal of economic growth. In the unit, Australian Landscapes, it is clearly stated that,

The growth of tourist industry has been influenced by the desire of people to experience a variety of landscapes. Tourism has been hailed by some people as an important growth industry with high employment potential. For this reason alone the importance of protecting unique features in Australia's landscape heritage is apparent. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, p.101)

Here environmental conservation is presented as "an important growth industry" which can enhance employment opportunities and help boost economic growth. Environmental conservation is seen merely as a means of promoting the economy. The notion of systems in equilibrium is not addressed.

Sustainable Economic Growth versus Environmental Conservation

In line with its endorsement of economic growth, SAE in Unit Curriculum focuses more attention on sustainable economic growth than on environmental conservation. This is most noticeable in the setting of assignments. For example, the collage assignment, outlined below, directs students' attention to economic growth in Australia. The examination of inputs and outputs exercise focuses on how to increase the outputs and how to overcome the difficulties that hinder increasing outputs. Similarly, the essay assignment asks students to identify factors that have contributed to Australian economic growth in the past and what factors will still be

influential in the future. Evidently, the intention here is to make sure that continued economic growth be sustained in the future. This becomes quite clear in the checklist/group discussion exercise where students are directed to consider what precautions should be taken to ensure ongoing economic progress.

Collage:

Students could collect photographs, pictures etc., and prepare a collage to illustrate economic growth in Australia. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.204)

Examination of Inputs and Outputs (Resource Sheet 77):

Students could study the chart depicting the relationship between inputs and outputs. Remembering that GDT measures the value of the output of final goods and services in the economy, students could complete the following activities:

Label the resources used as inputs (land, labor, capital and enterprise) and explain in a paragraph what each involves.

Prepare a collage of possible outputs in the space provided, distinguishing carefully between goods and services.

Write a series of paragraphs explaining

- (a) How the output of goods and services could be increased.
- (b) What difficulties might be encountered in increasing output.
- (c) How these difficulties could be overcome. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.205)

Essay:

Students could write an essay on the topic 'Economic Growth in Australia'. In the essay students could consider:

- The meaning of the term 'economic growth'.
- What they believe to be the major factors that have contributed to economic growth in Australia in the past.
- What factors they consider will be most influential in the future. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, pp.205-6)

Checklist/Group Discussion:

Students could prepare a checklist of precautions that an economy should take to ensure progress is made in the future. The ideas which emerge could be discussed in groups, and then by the class as a whole. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.221)

Although a few assignments are set also for environmental conservation, the design of these assignments seems to be somewhat different from those for economic growth. The assignments for economic growth centre on how to sustain continued economic growth in the future. The assignments set for environmental issues are largely confined to directing students' attention to the actual or present situation in

environmental conservation. In most cases, they are limited to letting students make decisions of their own, such as taking their own value stance with regard to conserving environment. The notion of conserving the environment embedded in these assignments is promoted less strongly than the notion of sustaining continued economic growth. These assignments do not go beyond that of encouraging students to explore what further actions and measures should be taken to conserve the environment. For instance, the 'research - endangered species' assignment simply asks students to find out the meanings of 'survival of the fittest' and 'endangered species', why some people care about endangered species and why some do not. It stops short of asking students to explore what might be done to save these endangered species.

Research - Endangered Species:

Students could conduct research on an environmental issue involving an endangered species. Research could be directed to the collection of evidence to prove or disprove the statement that:

Nature operates on the principle of the survival of the fittest. That is why people should not be concerned about endangered species.

Encourage students to plan their research by analysing this statement and devising a list of focus questions, such as:

- What is meant by 'survival of the fittest'?
- Is it implied that any particular species is the fittest?
- What is meant by 'endangered species'?
- What are some examples of endangered species?
- Why are some people concerned about them?
- Why do other feel that people should not be concerned about endangered species?

Students may wish to follow such a line of investigation through the analysis of a particular endangered species. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.108)

Similarly, the desertification exercise only asks students to understand what desertification is, how, why and where it happens, and what the consequences might be. It does not go beyond that to discuss some action plan of how to stop it. In fact, the same situation could apply to most of the assignments set for environmental issues. There are very few exceptions. One of them is cited below. In the oil pollution of the ocean assignment, the issue of what actions might be taken to solve the problem is addressed. But compared to the serious problems faced by the

environment today, the attention to conserving the environment is far from comprehensive.

Desertification (Resource Sheet 45 and 46):

Students could research the global environmental problem of desertification. Information gathered from the resource sheets and from other sources could be used by students to answer questions such as:

- What is desertification?
- Where are the world's major deserts located?
- Which continents are classified as 'vulnerable to desertification'? Which continents are not classified in that way?
- What types of human pressures might contribute to desertification?
- If desertification is not dealt with effectively, how might it affect your life, or the lives of future generations?

(Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.86)

Oil Pollution of the Ocean:

Students could research the impact of oil spills on ocean ecosystems.....In their research students could consider:

- Evidence that oil pollution is having an impact on ocean ecosystems.
- Case-studies where oil spills have occurred (for example *Torrey Canyon* 1967, *Amoco Cadiz* 1978, Iran-Iraq war 1983), to demonstrate their causes and effects.
- Problems of clearing up oil pollution.
- Action which needs to be taken by the global community to reduce the problem. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.99)

Dual Explanations of the Causes of Environmental Damage

SAE in Unit Curriculum adopts both economic rationalist and critical environmentalist views about the causes of environmental damage. On the one hand, it presents the view that environmental damage is caused by human needs and wants, and their pursuit of material benefits. For example, the film/discussion assignment below links pollution to humans' misuse of their environment and directs students' attention to the control of human daily activities.

Film/Discussion:

Discuss the ways in which people may misuse or exploit their natural environment in everyday activities. Some points which may be raised are:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| littering | noise pollution |
| air pollution | sight pollution |
| water pollution | harming plant life |

Students to view the film *The Biggest Bug* (available from Audio-Visual Education Branch 614.7/1). From the film students to make a note of how people are using the natural environment and how the natural

environment is being exploited. In discussion of the film consider such questions as:

- Have you ever done something similar?
- Why do people behave in this way?
- What are the consequences of this behaviour?
- How can these actions be controlled?

Students to design a poster encouraging people to be more conscientious about their natural environment. Display these in class. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 8, p.118)

On the other hand, SAE attributes environmental damage to industrialism and technology, though it pays no attention to the critical environmentalists' claim that damage is also caused by the power alliance of moneyed interests, industry and government, nor to the claim that damage is caused by the greed of capitalists. For example, the group discussion assignment below addresses the damage mining does to the environment by disposing an overburden of waste rocks, and waste products or products like brown coal. The research exercise focuses on the damage of mining not only in terms of environmental costs, but social costs as well. And the environmental issues research assignment alerts students to the damage that food production industry does to the environment, such as causing the world's deserts to spread at an alarming rate (leading to permanent loss of soil resources and damage to water resources), using pesticides and fertilisers which cause problems for mankind and reduce fish resources.

Group Discussion:

Students could work in groups to consider the impact of different types of mining technology on mining landscapes. Students could apply knowledge gained in research to suggest changes made to the natural landscape in the following situations.....[Kalgoorlie, Latrobe Valley, Darling Scarp].....Students could describe to other members of the class the different types of landscape produced in each situation. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, p.91)

Research:

Students could research a mining landscape to identify the costs and benefits of using the mineral resource..... The concepts of social and environmental costs may need to be developed. Students could discuss the difficulties of determining a monetary value for social and environmental costs.

After considering the costs and benefits of a particular mining development, students could determine their own value stance on this issue. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 9, p.92)

Environmental Issues - Research:

Having gained a general background of some of the problems associated with modifying the environment for food production, students could research one issue in greater depth.....and test any of the following hypotheses:

- Widespread clearing and overgrazing are causing the world's deserts to spread at an alarming rate.
- Unwise clearing may lead to permanent loss of soil resources and damage to water resources.
- The use of pesticides and fertilisers to increase food production may cause problems for mankind.
- Uncontrolled use of the ocean as a food resource has led to declining fish resources.
- Careful use of water resources, terracing of steep slopes and land reclamation are three types of environmental changes made by humans to increase the world's food production.

(Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.87)

No information appears in SAE in Unit Curriculum to suggest that economic growth and environmental conservation are compatible, nor is there much data indicating a solution to reduce environmental damage already caused by economic growth. The following assignments are the closest examples that could be found. They seem to be aligned with the economic rationalist view that there is no need for fundamental social changes in order to solve environmental problems. Both assignments suggest that there are possible solutions to the issue of economic growth versus environmental conservation.

Simulation Game:

Students to discuss the problems which arise when there are conflicting views concerning the use of the environment. Consider who makes a decision and what basis decisions are made on.

Students to play the SEMP simulation game *Paradise Island*. After the game students to discuss:

- What were the conflicting interests?
- How did each group try to impose their views?
- How was the situation resolved?

Retaining their role from the simulation, students to write a letter to the editor explaining their views and how they feel about the decision which was made. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 8, p.123)

Newspaper Study:

Students could follow a current trade issue being commented upon in newspapers. Students could identify the issue, and the parties involved, summarise the various opinions expressed on the issue and suggest possible solutions to the issue.....A collage of newspaper articles and letters could be prepared on various issues. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.421)

Stereotype: Words, Pictures and Cartoons, etc.

SAE in Unit Curriculum contains more pictures and cartoons which deal with environmental issues compared with economic growth. There are fifteen pictures and cartoons obviously addressing environmental issues whereas only three relate to economic growth. As mentioned earlier, an outsider researcher is not in a good position to decide whether one picture or cartoon is more powerful and impressive than another, because, to make any judgments requires classroom observation and asking both students and teachers their responses, reactions and feelings.

In summary, SAE in Unit Curriculum accords primacy to economic growth over ecological systems equilibrium. More serious attention is given to sustainable economic growth than to environmental conservation. The role of the greed of capitalism in environmental damage is left unquestioned. The overriding impression is that environmental issues can be resolved within the existing capitalist structure, without fundamental changes to the power structure of the moneyed interests, industry and government. However, students are given the chance to understand that not only human needs and their material pursuit, but also industrialism and technology are the causes of environmental damage, as claimed by critical theorists.

ANALYSIS OF STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

Overall, SAE in Student Outcome Statements paints a complex picture with regard to the issue of economic growth versus environmental conservation. In some cases, it supports the economic rationalist view, and vice versa in other cases.

Heavy Focus on Environmental Conservation

Unlike Unit Curriculum where more emphasis is laid on economic growth, SAE in Student Outcome Statements supports critical theorists' call for environmental conservation; it gives much more attention to environmental conservation, or 'caring of place', than to economic growth. Three major groups of outcome statements and pointers can be identified in the promotion of caring for place. Firstly, SAE in Student Outcome Statements directs students' attention to the different views about caring of place. For example, the following two outcome statements and a pointer

ask students to describe the different views and why there were different views. Most importantly, the pointer clearly states that these different views and related actions should be judged by “the principles of ecological sustainable development”.

4.9 Describes different views of individuals and groups about issues related to the care of places. (p.4)

5.9 Explains why various individuals and groups have different views on issues related to caring of places. (p.4)

Make a judgment about whether an individual's or group's actions about caring for places meet the principles of ecological sustainable development. (p.36)

Secondly, SAE in Student Outcome Statements focuses on how places can be best cared for. For instance, the outcome asks students to identify “how people can care for places in a community” (p.4). The relevant pointers below ask students to work out the ways, the rules and the factors that could assist people in their caring for places.

Identify ways in which they can take care of places (dispose of own litter, prevent vandalism, plant gardens). (p.4)

Identify rules in the local area that assist people in caring for places. (p.12)

Suggest ways to improve resource use in the classroom or school environment (such as energy, time, water, paper). (p.14)

Explain factors which can limit or enhance an individual's or group's actions to care for places (money, access to political and legal avenues). (p.36)

Thirdly, SAE in Student Outcome Statements encourages students to take part in various activities to care for their surrounding environment. For example, with respect to the outcome “1.9. Takes part in routines and projects to care for a significant place” (p.4), students are asked to:

Report on their participation in caring for special places at home, in their classroom and community. (p.4)

Participate individually, in pairs or in small group, in school projects or community schemes (recycling projects, using compost in a school garden, energy conservation). (p.6)

Nonetheless, SAE in Student Outcome Statements is also concerned with sustainable economic development. It draws attention to the concern that degraded natural

systems might do harm to future productivity rather than enhance human survival²⁹. It also talks about best practice in economic growth within the boundaries of ecologically sustainable development. For instance, students are asked to:

Predict the impact that degraded natural systems might have on future productivity. (p.54)

Analyse a range of examples in order to identify best practice for ecologically sustainable development in agriculture, mining, forestry or manufacturing. (p.54)

Causes of Environmental Damage

As in Unit Curriculum, SAE in Student Outcome Statements adopts both economic rationalist and critical environmentalist views to explain environmental damage. It blames environmental damage on industrialism and technology and on human needs and wants. For instance, the following pointers clearly suggest that environmental problems are caused by industries like agriculture and mining, as well as technology.

Describe the effects of industries on the Australian society and environment (grazing, wheat farming, extraction industries on land, air, water). (p.43)

Explain modifications to natural features of places made by agriculture and/or mining. (p.44)

Identify examples of how technology impacts, or has in the past impacted, on the way resources are used. (p.30)

However, these pointers leave unquestioned the critical environmentalist claim that environmental damage is caused by the greed of capitalism and the power alliance of moneyed interests, industry and government³⁰. Some pointers associate

²⁹ 8.13. Options for future - enhance human survival could be addressed in the following pointers:

Analyze competing views over resource use and predict possible outcomes.

Discuss use of resources on a global scale, critically analyze different options and justify a preferred strategy.

Place and Space - level 6

Describe how modifications to place have included unintended, long term and short term consequences. (R.3)

³⁰ People and Place - level 8

Use a case study to demonstrate results of human modifications (e.g. water resource, forest, soil, coastal region management). (p.44)

environmental problems with human demand and supply factors as well as the need to provide humans with employment opportunities. For instance:

Use examples to show how demand and supply factors affect decisions made about resource use. (p.30)

Analyse specific examples where the need to provide employment opportunities has been decided as more important than preserving a natural system. (p.55)

Assuming Economic Growth and Environmental Conservation Are Compatible

SAE in Student Outcome Statements presents limited grounds for assuming that economic growth and environmental protection are compatible. In a rare example, the pointer below shows that, while there might be conflicts between the two, there are presumably some “points of agreement”.

Prepare a case study which identifies points of agreement or conflict between specialisation of production and ecologically sustainable use of resources. (p.46)

Solutions to Environmental Problems

In terms of solutions to environmental problems, SAE in Student Outcome Statements ignores critical environmentalists’ claim that fundamental social changes are necessary to turn the greedy capitalist society into a conservation society³¹ and dismantle the power structure of moneyed interests, industry and government. Instead, it supports the economic rationalist view that there is no need for fundamental social changes. It assumes that environmental problems can be solved through technological advancement and including environmental considerations in economic decisions. For example, the first three pointers cited below suggest that innovations, methodologies, new ideas and technologies can “assist growth and sustainable development” and therefore, “solve problems for people and environment”.

Care of Place 6.9

Describe consequences of modifications made to vegetation areas. (R.3)

³¹ Level 4 Outcome: Students understand that people act to sustain the environment according to their values. Describe the various positions individuals and groups hold on an issue related to changing use of a place and related to impacts of people’s actions on plants and animals. (p.29)

Use examples to show how innovation and enterprise can be used to solve problems for people and for the environment. (p.22)

Analyse methodologies and technologies which will assist growth and sustainable development (energy audits, cradle to grave assessments, clean production, reforestation). (p.54)

Describe the ways that new ideas and technology have changed farming. (p.22)

The next three pointers assume that the environment can be protected because industries will make decisions to “protect environment”, and they will “use natural resources in a planned way”. In addition, they assume that the environmental issue can be resolved because capitalist societies have already made legislation to protect natural environment and resources.

Analyse how industries use natural resources in a planned way so that where possible, replacement, rehabilitation or rejuvenation occurs (strategies used in mining, logging, fishing and farming) (p.55)

Identify decisions made by producers and consumers to protect the environment (waste disposal and clean production process). (p.31)

Summarise and evaluate legislation in relation to protection of the natural environment and of natural resource reserve. (p.54)

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, there are some similarities and differences between SAE in Unit Curriculum and SAE in Student Outcome Statements in their treatment of the issue of economic growth versus environmental conservation. SAE in Unit Curriculum emphasises economic growth more than environmental conservation, whereas in Student Outcome Statements, SAE focuses more on environmental protection, or caring for place, than on economic growth. However, this does not mean that SAE in Student Outcome Statements does not pay attention to sustainable economic development. It, too, is concerned about the harm that degraded natural systems might do harm to future productivity.

SAE in both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements adopt the same view about the cause of environmental damages. They both adopt the economic rationalist view that environmental damage is caused by human needs and wants, and our pursuit of material benefits. Also, they both acknowledge the critical

environmentalist view that environmental damage is due to industrialism and technology. On the other hand, they both pay no attention at all to critical environmentalists' claim that environmental damage is caused by the power alliance of moneyed interests, industry and government, nor to the claim that environmental damage is caused by the greed of capitalism.³²

SAE in Unit Curriculum does not suggest that economic growth and environmental conservation are compatible, but it does in Student Outcome Statements, albeit rather mildly.

SAE in Unit Curriculum does not provide much information to indicate its stance on the solution to reduce environmental damage. A couple of assignments indicate an alignment with the economic rationalist view that there is no need for fundamental social changes in order to solve the environmental problems. SAE in Student Outcome Statements is not much different in this respect. It ignores the critical environmentalists' claim that fundamental social changes are necessary to turn a greedy capitalist society into a conservation society, and to dismantle the power structure of moneyed interests, industry and government. It takes the economic rationalist stance that there is no need for fundamental social changes, and assumes environmental problems can be solved through technological advancement and by including environmental considerations in economic decisions.

³² Pointers: Evaluate the role of international agreement in planning for the use of place. Identify and explain important issues that deal with social justice and democratic process which are involved with decisions regarding the use of place. (p.160) Care of Place: (Reworded): Outcome 8.9. Students understand that public decision making on the uses of place and space involves consideration of people's diverse views about ecological sustainability.

It must be remembered that the pointers are examples of the types of learning activities students might undertake in order to achieve an outcome. They are not prescriptive and they can be replaced or added to according to the needs of individuals or groups of students.

Natural Systems: 8.16. Evaluate the different approaches to environmental impact assessment (those used by indigenous people, government, industry, conservation groups and community action groups). (p.63) (R.3)

16

INSTRUMENTALISM VERSUS EXPRESSIVISM

In the critical literature related to instrumentalism, two major themes can be identified: one focuses on education as an instrument of social control (instrumental rationality) and the other centres on education as an instrument or tool to economic growth (vocationalism in education and schooling).

A group of critical theorists focus their criticism on instrumental rationality. They view it as being “concerned unreflectively with the question of the most effective means for achieving any given purpose”(Tar, 1977; cited in Ritzer, 1983, p.263), and as “technocratic thinking”, in which the objective is to serve the forces of domination, not to emancipate people from domination. Technocratic thinking rules out reason which “involves the assessment of the means in terms of the ultimate human goals of justice, peace, and happiness”. According to these critical theorists, one of the major forms of instrumental rationality is modern technology, which Marcuse (1964; Cited in Ritzer, 1983, p.264) sees as leading to totalitarianism; that is, leading to “new, more effective, and even more ‘pleasant’ methods of external control over individuals”. In the same vein, Habermas (1970; cited in Ritzer, 1983, p.264) regards technology as the most important manifestation of instrumental rationality being used “in the modern world to control the mass of people”.

Likewise, Gibson (1986) argues that “instrumental rationality is a cast of thought which seeks to dominate others, which assumes its own rightness to do so, and which exercises its power to serve its own interests” (p.8). Gibson also contents that “instrumental rationality represents the preoccupation with means in preference to

ends. It is concerned with method and efficiency rather than with purposes” (p.7).

He observes, in particular, that,

the wholesale growth of management and organisation in schools and colleges is further worrying evidence of preoccupation with methods over purposes, with efficiency over aims. It is all too easy to lose sight of the child in the classroom, to reduce the complexity of human needs to a neat timetable and an administrative memorandum, which can run counter to its *raison d’etre*: the education of pupils. (p.8)

Another group of critical theorists talk about instrumentalism in the sense of education serving as an instrument to economic growth. Ryan (1993) argues that,

a narrowly economic version of the general interest increasingly directs all major areas of educational policy, effectively ruling out, as a mainstream schooling activity, the pursuit of general educational goals that are not economically relevant. (p.192)

He predicts that the mainstream curriculum will be redesigned “so that it would be made to serve narrowly defined economic ends” (p.193). He further claims that,

while some rhetorical defence is still paid to the need for a liberal education, this is usually defended in terms of the increased vocational significance of general cognitive skills in a rapidly changing economy. There is no real attempt within official statements to elaborate upon the need for a liberal education in terms of its contribution to the making of an independently minded citizenry or to a genuine social pluralism. Instead, this absence of a distinctively educational perspective in official discourse signals the likely development of a mainstream curriculum that is little less than the instrument of economic policy. (p.195)

According to Ryan, what gets promoted would be “a narrowly focused emphasis on the core skills and knowledge of the ‘economically relevant’ disciplines, notably the languages, mathematics, sciences and technologies” (p.195). Similarly, Junnor (1988, p.135) notices that “employers are prepared to support schooling to the extent that it delivers what they define as the basic skills of literacy and numeracy”.

In the same vein, Robertson (1993, p.130) observes that “links with industry were significantly shaping the curriculum of school” and “market niches tied to future employment were being exploited by the schools”.

Marginson (1992), while criticising competency-based education in Australia, also argues that it is underpinned by a view that “better education will provide a better

preparation for work” (p.35); that is, education is now being regarded as an instrument for economic growth. He further argues that “education is also functioning as a substitute for work. If you cannot have work, at least you can have simulated work, in vocational education” (p.35).

Crittenden (1979) opposes vocationalism and calls for the strengthening of liberal education on the grounds that it,

is a systematic introduction to the main forms of rational understanding that we possess in our culture. Its central purpose is to enable each individual to acquire the knowledge and disciplined skills of thought, feeling, and imagination that are needed for understanding, interpreting, critically evaluating and appreciating the many particular contexts in which human life is enacted - as working, playing, being a parent, a citizen, and so on. It is liberal in the historical sense that it is the education fitting for free and responsible citizens, and in the more important sense that it enlarges the quality and scope of human choice. (p.13)

McLaren (1989) argues that the conception of education merely as a means to an economic end “denies the value of learning and study as an intrinsic part of human development” (p.13). Rather than empowering citizens to shape their own world, “the unholy alliance of plutocrats, bureaucrats and technocrats wants to reduce them to efficient units of production”, because there is an uneasiness among the “corporate managers with any attempt to allow students to study matters which might give them power in their society” and there is a general philistinism which opposes intellectual curiosity or creative imagination (p.14; also see Bowles & Gintis, 1976). Thus McLaren strongly supports the recovery of “the idea of education as meaningful play by which society endorses individuals to make its future” (p.15). Similarly, Preston (1989) also argues that for the sake of social control,

the drive to increase efficiency in education is often a cloak for an agenda whose underlying purpose is to make education more adaptive and subservient to the dominant ideology and, in particular, to create a passive and uncritical population and workforce. (p.39)

Lonsdale (1989) argues that while the postmodern curriculum in Australia offers a vehicle for Australia’s economic recovery, it also “commodifies its citizens, seeing individuals in terms of their likely productivity rather than as potential contributors to a socially just, knowledgeable and compassionate society” (p.98). He claims that,

In providing the 'more highly skilled, adaptive and productive workforce' needed to increase Australia's competitiveness, schools become instrumental in meeting the needs of the state. The rationale for the postmodern curriculum thus becomes labor productivity and the cultivation of transferable skills. (p.99)

Lonsdale also makes several other claims. First, the most distinguishing feature of the economic rationalist educational model is its lack of humanitarian vision. Secondly, as the emphasis of the postmodern curriculum is laid on an "individualistic pursuit of economically oriented goals", we can not expect to develop in students "a sense of commitment to others" (p.101).

Else where in Britain, Kapferer (1988) observes that British secondary schooling has become re-oriented "away from the ideas of liberal education and toward labor training". Thus, formal curriculums have been modified to emphasise the teaching of transferable skills and information gathering techniques so that the 'employability' of young people entering the labor market will be enhanced (p.4). He warns that "the short-sighted technocratic policy carries with it the germs of further social unrest, and, indeed, further economic decline" (p.11), because,

by providing a broad, general education to the populace, education systems create the cultural preconditions favourable to economic development. An education system that focuses narrowly on meeting the specific demands of existing economic structures sows the seeds of its own future irrelevancy. Only a broadly educated workforce [and citizenry] can meet [all] the demands of a rapidly changing world. (McCollow, 1987, p.5)

However, some critics such as Ayers and Marginson also see the conceptual links between education as an instrument for social control and education as a tool for economic ends. Ayers (1993, p.38) argues that "the very notion of outcomes is culturally specific, belonging to that tradition of instrumental rationality, the calculation of and reduction to means and ends, which has been so intrinsic to Western European thought".

Marginson (1992, p.36) sees competency-based training as "a principal example of what Foucault has called 'technologies of the social' - systems of regulation that are designed at one and the same time to mold individuals and to control the relationship of social groups". He points out that "competency measurement provides a straight-

forward and common-sense way of differentiating between job applicants for selection purposes”, and concludes that competency reform is “one vehicle for the development of markets in education”.

Critical theorists only go as far as criticising the dominance of instrumentalism and vocationalism in education and calling for the enhancement of liberal education. Their basic view of society and their support for the oppressed, however, provides grounds for the following speculation. In order to achieve the emancipation of individuals from social constraints and dominance, there needs to be a fundamental social change from a capitalist society dominated by the moneyed, business and industry groups to one which empowers individuals to critically understand how the world works and empowers them to shape their own worlds.

Given all these considerations, the differences between instrumentalism and expressivism, as conceived by critical theorists, can be outlined as in Figure 28 below:

Figure 28. Differences Between Instrumentalists/Vocationalists and Critical Theorists in Terms of Instrumentalism versus Expressivism

Instrumentalists	Critical Theorists
<p>1. Problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liberal education is not relevant to economic ends. 	<p>1. Problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vocationalism and instrumentalism narrow the quality & scope of human choice.
<p>2. Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education is to prepare individuals for the world of work. 	<p>2. Rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education is to prepare individuals for the world of life.
<p>3. Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase economic productivity, competitiveness & employability. - Intensify social control of individuals. 	<p>3. Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emancipate individuals from social constraints & dominance. - Empower individuals to shape their own world.
<p>4. Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short term goals such as ‘key competencies’ & job-related skills. - Means/methods & efficiency. 	<p>4. Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long term goals such as socialisation & civilisation (expressive qualities). - Ends/aims & individual empowerment.
<p>5. Solution:</p>	<p>5. Solution:</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase business group and industry's intervention in education. - Promote economically relevant disciplines. - Economically rationalise education management. - Impose external standardised assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to change capitalist society into one which empowers individuals to make its future & to shape their world. - Enhance liberal education to develop individuals' ability of reason (understanding, interpreting, critically evaluating & appreciating the way the world works).
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ANALYSIS OF UNIT CURRICULUM

Overall, some of the SAE units within Unit Curriculum lay more emphasis upon instrumentalism than on expressive qualities. However, this does not mean that expressive qualities are neglected or criticised. Rather, both types of qualities are valued and treated positively, though expressive qualities receive less attention, emphasis and priority than instrumental ones. The difference becomes clear mainly in the assignments, number of units, and space occupied by instrumental and expressive elements.

More units deal with instrumental than expressive qualities. All together, seven units have something to do with instrumentalism. They are: The Consumer in the Economy, Technological World, Specialisation and the Economy, Contemporary Australian Society, Economic Systems and Issues, Australia in the International Community and Social Issues. Examples of expressive qualities can only be found in two units, namely, Technological World and Social Issues.

Accordingly, the overall number of objectives and focus questions dealing with instrumentalism greatly outnumber those dealing with expressive qualities. More specifically, there are sixteen objectives and sixty-one focus questions for instrumentalism, but only two generalisations, one understanding, six objectives and twenty-seven focus questions related to expressive qualities.

In terms of space, there is a significant difference between instrumentalism and expressive qualities. Broadly calculated, one hundred and five pages deal with instrumentalism, only fifty-five with expressive qualities.

Some of the assignments that cover both instrumentalism and expressive qualities are similar in that they ask students to 'list', 'list and discuss', and 'problem solve'. However, there are some differences. Firstly, in terms of quantity, more assignments cover instrumentalism than expressive qualities. Secondly, the assignments that cover instrumentalism are more diverse than those for expressive qualities. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, the assignments that cover instrumentalism such as 'Division of Labor in the Class', 'Mime Exercise: A Factory Worker', 'Job Advertisement', 'Mount Advertising Campaign', 'Posters', 'Excursion' and participating in 'Work Experience' programs are time consuming, practical, vivid, and require more student involvement than those set for expressive qualities such as 'Observation' and 'Audio-Visual' activities. And as such, it can be argued that assignments for instrumentalism are more powerful than those for expressive qualities.

The reason why no meaningful comparison can be made between the number of exercises related to instrumentalism and expressive qualities is that it is very hard to know how many of them need to be actually done in the classrooms. For example, though there might be fifteen exercises set for one objective, some students may have to do all of them to achieve that objective, while others may only need to do five to achieve that objective. This reason applies to all comparisons in terms of assignments.

Education for Work versus Education for Life

SAE in Unit Curriculum appears to be more aligned with the philosophy of education for the world of work rather than the philosophy of education for life. Three assignments can be cited as examples of this. In the group discussion, the value of education is conceived in terms of preparation for better paid jobs in the future. Similarly, the group work exercise tries to show that the more education you have, the more decent the job and the more pay you will get. The excursions/guest speakers/work experience assignment is clearly designed to prepare students for the transition from school to work. The places which students are encouraged to visit, the information that is considered important, and the questions designed for students to ask, all focus on jobs.

Group Discussion: Value of Education

Skills Verbal

Write the following on the board.

Education is an investment for the future. People may temporarily go without an income in order to get more education, but later on their incomes tend to be considerably higher than those with less education.

Groups to discuss these statements and compile a brief report on them.

Compare and discuss reports. (Social Studies Teachers' Guide, Year 8, p.195)

Group Work:

In groups, students to list 5 different occupations in the Australian economy and to estimate the amount of education needed for each, e.g. Doctor: 12 years of school plus 6 years of tertiary education; Unskilled labor: 10 years of schools only.

Compare and discuss lists and suggest why some occupations require more education than others.

Using the original list of 5 occupations, groups to report on the training aspect of occupations. E.g., Which of these occupations require additional training? Why is such training required? Compare and discuss reports.

Groups to finally consider whether there is any evidence that highly educated and trained people tend to receive higher income than people with little education and training. Discuss this consideration with other groups. (Social Studies Teachers' Guide, Year 8, p.195)

Excursions/Guest Speakers/Work Experience:

Students could visit places and organisations which have information important to the transition from school to work (workplace, career reference or job centres).

Alternatively, students could invite guest speakers (employers, employees, career advisers) or participate in work experience programs.

Whatever the activity selected, students could use it to gather information on various fields of employment. In order to do this, students could be encouraged to devise a list of questions which they would like to ask. These might include:

- What are the training and skills required?
- What are the conditions like?
- What are the rates of pay?
- Are there any special conditions and responsibilities?
- What are the future prospects in this occupation?
- What are the most favourable/unfavorable features about the jobs?
- Are there any special social skills which would help a young person to get a job? (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, pp.248-9)

Economic Goals versus Humanity Goals

SAE in Unit Curriculum places considerable value on increasing economic productivity, competitiveness and, in particular, employability. It provides little support for critical theorists' belief that SAE should commit itself to emancipating individuals from social constraints and dominance and empowering individuals to shape their own world. SAE is dominated by promoting economic goals. Youth employability is a major concern. The table interpretation assignment below, for example, tries to get across the idea that without post-school qualifications, students face fewer chances to be employed.

Table Interpretation (Resource 25):

Students are to discuss the table on Resource 25 and then complete the following tasks.

1. (a). Calculate the total number of male and females in the sample.
(b). What percentage of the Australian population aged 15 and over has attained a post-school qualification?
(c). What percentage of the Australian population aged 15 and over is without a post-school qualification?
(d). What percentage of males and females have a degree?
(e). What percentage of males and females have a qualification in a trade or an apprenticeship?
2. Construct a bar graph that shows the percentages of employed and unemployed people with post-school qualifications and without post-school qualifications.
3. Comment on the unemployment rates of people with and people without post-school qualifications. (Social Studies, Contemporary Australian Society, Unit 9154, Teacher Support Material, p.52)

At times, even skills development is reduced to employment related skills training. In the communication skills exercise, social skills like dress and appearance, readiness to conform, ability to get along with people, and communication skills are addressed only as ways to increase youth chances of getting and keeping a job. Improvement of these social skills is intended merely to maximise employment opportunities.

Communication Skills:

Students could work in small groups to list some social skills which might increase their chances of getting and keeping a job. Lists might include dress and appearance, readiness to conform, ability to get along with people, communication skills. Each group could share its ideas with others in the class by building a blackboard list.

Consideration could then be given to ways in which these social skills could be improved to maximise employment opportunities. In particular, communication skills might be considered and suggestions applied to job interview and letter writing situations. Information may be gathered from the local Commonwealth Employment Service office to support this activity.

Finally, students could consider the statement: 'The reason why kids are unemployed is that they have not been taught the correct and proper communications.' (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, pp.246-7)

Youth unemployment seems to be blamed largely on the youth themselves for their deficient and improper communication skills rather than on the capitalist system. Therefore, rather than being encouraged to question the existing system for their unemployment, students are simply told to accept the do's and don'ts in their social skills training, as in the poster assignment. In line with the consensus model of society, SAE in Unit Curriculum also took the stance that the problem of youth unemployment could be solved within the existing capitalist societal structure.

Posters:

Students could design posters illustrating important social skills, and do's and don'ts in the interview or written application situations. These could be displayed around the room or in other parts of the school. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, pp.247)

The group discussion, and chart on unemployment policies assignments suggests that capitalist society has ready proposals to combat youth unemployment; that there are lots of options available for employment; and that governments at all levels have done a lot to tackle youth unemployment, such as making unemployment policies.

Group Discussion (Resource Sheet 12):

Students could form groups to discuss the problem of youth unemployment. Questions similar to the following could be discussed, and a group report compiled and read to the class.

- Why are young people particularly susceptible to unemployment?
 - What proposals could be adopted to combat unemployment?
 - How could young people best maximise their chances of getting a job?
 - What options are available to those who cannot find employment?
- (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.182)

Chart on Unemployment Policies:

Students could research measures being taken by the local, State and Federal Governments to combat unemployment in their areas. The policies of the State and Federal Oppositions could also be considered.

A large chart could be prepared, summarising the policies of each.
(Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.184)

Training versus Educating

SAE in Unit Curriculum pays considerable attention to training students in key competencies and job related skills. It focuses on production means, methods and efficiency. It also gives some attention to expressive qualities.

Assignments

Exercises set for this sort of skills training function as what Marginson (1992, p.35) calls “a substitute for work” or “simulated work”, even though they are not in vocational education, but in Society and Environment. There are many assignments of this kind. Here only a few are cited. For example, the exercise of division of labor in the class simulates the factory production line of making dolls. Efficiency in division of labor and production are the major concerns.

Division of Labor in the Class:

Divide the class into groups of about 6 students.

Each group to be provided with paper, 4 different colored pencils, crayons or felt pens, 2 pairs of scissors and 1 stapler with the aim of making ‘doll’ such as teddy bears, gingerbread men etc., to a set design. Each ‘doll’ should have a separate body, head, legs and arms stapled together with a drawn-in face, shoes and bow tie, in stipulated colours.

Groups to compare the number of completed ‘dolls’ after 10 minutes. Consideration to be given to the quality of each model. The group that has the best result so far to continue producing in the same manner. The other groups to try to improve their methods by setting up a more efficient production line - perhaps by re-organising tasks for each person.

Two additional 5 minute production periods are given. Allow three minutes between production periods for group discussion of production methods. The ‘winning group’ should be that with the most efficient division of labor. Less efficient groups to ask themselves ‘What went wrong?’

Allow groups to talk to the rest of the class about the division of labor and specialisation in their production of dolls. (Social Studies Teachers’ Guide, Year 8, p.168)

The assignment of a modern production line directs students’ attention to the tools and machines involved in the production line, the skills needed on the line as well as the strategies used to divide labor.

A Modern Production Line:

Plan a visit to a factory that utilises a modern production line. If this is not possible, show a film which illustrates one.

Students to list the specialist jobs that have to be done in the factory. They are also to list the specialist tools or machines operated by people in the factory.

Compare lists and discuss the skills that are needed by workers in the factory.

Students to write a summary paragraph describing how division of labor is applied in the factory, i.e. how is the job divided up among different workers? (Social Studies Teachers' Guide, Year 8, p.168)

The exercise - a tale of three package and delivery teams - attempts to train students' job analysis skills and management skills in labor division, and encourages students to do the same kind of simulated work to enhance these skills. It focuses on methods of labor division and production efficiency.

A Tale of Three Package and Delivery Teams:

Students to consider the following description and job analysis of 3 work teams and attempt the related activities.

Team No. 1

Three men with no experience in packing and delivery are hired by supermarket operator Number 1. All work from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. The result is broken eggs, soft icecreams and long delays to customers, as well as a ruined clutch in the delivery truck.

Team No. 2

This team has two packers and a truck driver, all with experience are hired by supermarket operator Number 2. All work from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. While the packers work the driver reads a book and while the driver is delivering, the packers sit down and wait for his return. There are, however, no damages or consumer complaints.

Team No. 3

This team hired by a third supermarket operator also has two experienced packers and an experienced truck driver. But the packers arrive at 8.00 a.m. and leave at 4.00 p.m., while the truck driver works from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. There are no damages or complaints received from consumers.

In groups, students to discuss the likely relative efficiency of each team and then report to the class. Discuss reports. (Social Studies Teachers' Guide, Year 8, pp.169-70)

The marketing a product assignment is a simulated exercise of managing a real business. It is intended to train students in packaging and advertising skills; it also aims to familiarise students with the daily operation of a business.

Marketing a Product:

Students are to collect an item sold at the school canteen and outline a packaging and advertising program which will encourage students to purchase the product. If possible, students should design posters and slogans to be displayed around the school. Students then collect daily sales figures of the canteen for a week, prior to their advertising and after. After graphing the before and after sales figures, students analyse the effects of their advertisements and write a brief report. In their reports, students are to note any outside influences, such as change in weather, which may have affected sales. (Social Studies Teachers' Guide, Year 9, p.167)

Although some attention is given to expressive qualities, the assignments set for these long-term goals are far from what critical theorists advocate, that is, socialising, civilising and empowering individuals. All the assignments related to expressive qualities are concerned mainly with group behaviour, modeling or conformity. For example, the cartoon analysis assignment below focuses on groups having influence on individual behaviour. The extension activity is also meant to “make that individual to conform”. The non-conformist exercise basically does not encourage students to deviate from the norm because it is only “sometimes necessary, but never easy”.

Cartoon Analysis (Resource Sheets 22, 23 and 24)

Students could be divided into groups, each of which is allocated a set of cartoons. For each cartoon, students could identify the group which is exerting an influence and the behaviour which is being influenced. Other behaviours, which might be influenced by that group, could be listed. Students could also outline the methods which are used to exert group influence.

As an extension activity, students could select one of the cartoon characters and present a short play, illustrating various methods to make that individual to conform. (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.271)

Non-conformist:

Students could research the achievements of famous non-conformists such as Galileo and Copernicus. The following hypothesis could be tested: ‘Deviating from the norm is sometimes necessary, but never easy.’ (see Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.276)

Only a few assignments come close to encouraging critical understanding, interpreting, evaluating and appreciating, as advocated by critical theorists. Basically, this sort of assignment consists of some situations or dilemmas designed for student discussion. These assignments suggest that individual behaviours are influenced by other individuals or groups. They deny students the opportunity to explore what role capitalist society might play in influencing individual behaviour. This is left unquestioned.

Status and Expectation Behaviour - Discussion

Students could put themselves in the following situations, stating how they would feel and predicting the type of behaviour they would expect.

Situations:

- Just before doing a test you are told by a very popular teacher that only students with blonde hair are clever. You have black hair.
- You have red hair and often hear parents and their friends say that a person with red hair has a bad temper.
- Other students in your year at school laugh because of the way you wear your hair. One of them explains, in a demeaning manner, that only 'strange people' wear their hair like that.

Students may be able to discuss these examples and any others in their own experience which prove or disprove the generalisation that expectations influence our behaviour. It may also be desirable for them to consider the following: 'It is better if we expect the best from people rather than the worst.' (Social Studies Teachers Guide, Year 10, p.269)

Explicit and Implicit Value Judgments:

There are a few positive value judgments about instrumentalism, but none about expressive qualities. For example, in the Teachers' Notes (Social Studies Teachers' Guide, Year 10, p.247), the following teaching suggestion indicates that the focus of SAE in Unit Curriculum is on instrumentalism and training students in job-related skills.

It would be worth checking with teachers in other subject areas to see what activities have been organised on job-seeking skills. It may be possible to integrate social studies activities with those in other subject areas.

In summary, SAE in Unit Curriculum supports the view that education is to prepare students for work rather than life. Much of the emphasis is upon the promotion of economic productivity, competitiveness and employability. As such, it largely centres on training students in key competencies and job related skills, familiarising

students with the world of work, and preparing them for the transition from school to work. Limited attention is paid to the long-term goals of socialising and empowering students to shape their own world.

ANALYSIS OF STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

Overall, SAE in Student Outcome Statements is more aligned with instrumentalism than expressivism. It is more aligned with the view that education is to prepare students for the world of work, more so than for life. Accordingly, more emphasis is laid on the promotion of economic goals and job related skills training. Nonetheless, some attention is paid to the development of expressive qualities in students.

Education for Work versus Life

A few pointers show that Student Outcome Statements is underpinned by the instrumentalist philosophy that education should prepare students for the transition from school to the world of work. Of the two pointers below, for example, the first draws attention to role played by education, training, and skills in increasing work opportunities. The second could also be seen as an attempt to take education down the track of occupational pathways. By contrast, no examples can be found in which students are asked to explore the potential of education to prepare for living a better and richer life, one characterised by more self-fulfilment.³³

Describe relationships between education, training, skills and experience and work opportunities. (p.38)

Investigate and report on different occupational pathways and the education and training requirements of these pathways. (p.46)

Economic Goals versus Humanity Goals

SAE in Student Outcome Statements reflects some concern with increasing economic productivity, competitiveness and employability. The same does not apply

³³ This research is looking at one learning area only. It is of course, one of the eight major learning areas and together they provide a balanced curriculum. Preparation for a better life and more fulfillment in personal and group endeavors is picked up in other learning areas, e.g., Health and Physics Education. Self-management skills - making informed decisions about their lives, - gaining skills to maintain their own and others' self-esteem. Interpersonal skills - leadership and collaborative skills, etc. (R.3)

to the issue of emancipating individuals from social constraints and dominance, and of empowering individuals to shape their own world. For instance, the first pointer below focuses on the role that moral choices play in employment policies, while the second one deals with the impact of technological change on employment opportunities. The remaining four pointers deal with improving performance and productivity. One of them, the first is directed at enhancing personal and group management skills development in order to help enterprise meet its performance objectives, hence promoting productivity. Another represents a concern to avoid any mismanagement of human resources so that productivity will not be reduced. Similarly, the final two pointers talk about workplace issues and their related legislation, not with a view to empowering individuals in the workplace, but out of fear that these issues might harm productivity.

Argue whether employment policies involve moral choices. (p.61)

Analyse the impact of technological change on men's and women's employment. (p.51)

Describe situations in which development of personal and group management skills could assist an enterprise to meet its performance objectives. (p.46)

Assess ways in which human resource management practices influence productivity and conditions of work. (p.54)

Identify and analyse a range of workplace issues and how they can influence productivity and/or conditions of work (child care, parental leave, sex-based harassment, redundancies, grievance procedures access to training). (p.54)

Investigate a piece of legislation in relation to workplace issues (such as industrial awards, equal opportunity, workplace health and safety, sex-based harassment, training guarantee scheme) and evaluate its impact on productivity. (p.54)

Training versus Educating

With its instrumentalist underpinnings and economic goals, what comes through in SAE in Student Outcome Statements is a predominant focus on training in key competencies and job related skills. Three major aspects can be identified in this focus. The first is an attempt to work out the education and training requirements for different career pathways. Identifying these requirements goes beyond skills and qualifications. Personal qualities, and even clothing and behaviour requirements in work situations are considered. This reveals how SAE in Student Outcome

Statements seems determined to ensure that students cover all requirements to secure employment. An outcome statement, two pointers and a work sample listed below illustrate this attempt.

6.14 Analyses occupational pathways and their education and training requirements to develop possible career plans. (p.6)

Develop career related action plans based on information gathered about occupational pathways and their entry requirements. (p.46)

Work Sample. Task. Students were asked in Part A to select a job they would like to apply for and explain what personal qualities and skills they would bring to the position. Part B asked students to provide summary information about the qualifications and skills required. (pp.52-53)

Identify examples of work situations that require use of appropriate equipment, materials, clothing and behaviour. (p.30)

A second aspect of the focus on instrumentalism, based on the realisation that it would be difficult for a student to meet all the requirements of an occupation in a time of change, focuses attention on how to prepare students for future work transition. In the following examples, the outcome statement and the first pointer try to familiarise students with possible future workplace changes or work transitions, and how to cope with them. The other three pointers centre upon the key competencies or transferable skills, seen as a solution to work transitions.

8.14 Analyses trends to predict likely future workplace changes and ways in which individuals and groups can respond to and influence them. (p.6)

Discuss planned and unplanned work transitions they may encounter during their careers and how they may respond to them. (p.62)

Identify examples to show that skills and understanding developed and used in one work role are often transferable to others. (p.22)

Identify general competencies required in the workplace. (p.46)

Demonstrate skills needed to effectively manage planned and unplanned work transitions (problem-solving, communication and interpersonal skills and coping with unrealised aspirations). (p.62)

A final aspect of the focus on instrumentalism is the application of personal and group management skills needed to run an enterprise in real or simulated work situations. As shown in the pointers below, real or simulated work situations are constructed to strengthen the work related skills training.

6.15 Describes and applies the personal and group management skills required in an enterprise. (p.6)

Assist in planning and running a real or simulated classroom enterprise (class newsletter, cake stall, class shop, garden plot or raising animals) in order to comment on different ways of managing and using resources. (p.14)

Apply appropriate procedures in planning, implementing and evaluating a school-based enterprise. (p.54)

Though the emphasis on job related skills training is strong, long-term goals like socialisation and civilisation also receive some attention. The following outcome statement and pointers show that moral education, values education, the fostering of social responsibility, respect for others, and human rights issues are also treated in SAE in Student Outcome Statements.

8.12 Evaluates moral and ethical issues and justifies personal positions. (p.5)

Identify and describe some of their own values and those values commonly held in the culture in which they live (hard work, equality, friendship, cooperation, sharing). (p.13)

Identify the rights and responsibilities that individuals have when belonging to a group. (p.23)

Demonstrate respect for others through inclusive and considerate behaviour. (p.26)

Justify a personal stance on an issue pertaining to the core values of Australian society. (p.51)

Design an appropriate plan of action pertaining to a human rights issue. (p.53)

CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, as in Unit Curriculum, SAE in Student Outcome Statements is also aligned with the view that education should prepare students for the world of work, more than the world of life³⁴. It promotes the economic goals of productivity,

³⁴ This is rapidly changing. Curriculum development has seen a shift recently in that it “reflects the diversity of human experience”. All school level curriculum in government schools is guided by a set of policy and guidelines and is committed to helping learners “make sense of the world”. (Curriculum Provision, p.3). The Curriculum Framework from the Curriculum Council “reflects contemporary thinking about what students need to learn in order to lead successful and rewarding lives in the twenty first century”...” It is important that they (students) be provided with the tools to deal effectively with the

competitiveness and employability. It focuses mainly on training in key competencies and job related skills, with a little attention being paid to the long-term goals of socialising and empowering students to shape their own world. Therefore, there is no substantial change from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements in terms of instrumentalism versus expressive qualities.

Critical theorists would be justified to claim SAE curriculum content to be more closely related to instrumentalism than expressivism. However, there is no evidence, at least in this case, to support the claim that devolution would push SAE further down the track of instrumentalism. In fact, some minor changes from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements, like some attention being given to expressivism in Student Outcome Statements, represent a direction which should please critical theorists.

SUMMARY OF BROAD FINDINGS OF PART C

Part C has compared Unit Curriculum with Student Outcome Statements to determine what impact devolution has had on curriculum content. The broad findings can be summarised as follows:

Chapter 10 shows that the introduction of Unit Curriculum and devolution occurred almost at the same time in Western Australia. Though many expected there would be dramatic changes in the SAE in Unit Curriculum, a comparison shows that Unit Curriculum virtually made no significant changes to the K-10 Syllabus, only some minor ones. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that devolution made no changes to SAE curriculum content during the period from 1987-1994, roughly, the first phase of devolution in Western Australia.

Chapter 11 shows that there is virtually no change from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements with regard to social justice. SAE in both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements prefer the consensus model of society to the conflict model of society perspective on social justice. SAE in both curriculums, in the main,

opportunities, challenges and changes which they encounter in life.” (Draft Curriculum Framework, p.11). (R.3)

blames poverty on the victim, not the system. It supports the culture of poverty theory thesis. It assumes that poverty can be eliminated by changing the culture of the poor, inculcating within the poor some 'desirable' values and virtues, and implementing some minor changes within the existing system. One minor difference is that SAE in Student Outcome has several isolated touches which blame poverty on the mechanism or operation of the system.

Chapter 12 shows that SAE in both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements adopts a liberal multiculturalism approach to race relations; that is, it sees negative race relations as being caused by prejudice and discrimination and as resulting from ignorance of other cultures and mindlessness; and it sees racial disharmony as being caused by conflicts of cultures, not institutionalised inequalities. In both curriculums, SAE endorses liberal multicultural education as a cultural solution to racism, except for some isolated touches of a neo-Marxist structural solution in Student Outcome Statements.

The evidence outlined in Chapter 13 suggests that SAE in both curriculums advocates equality of opportunity for males and females, not equality of rewards for the sexes. It presents the liberal view that gender equity is possible and achievable within a capitalist society. Gender inequality is dealt with solely in terms of male or female access to equal employment, underpinned by the assumption that having the same amount of education or the possession of equal formal qualifications will necessarily lead to equal employment opportunities for both sexes. It does not ask students to explain gender differences in terms of class structured capitalist society.

Chapter 14 indicates that SAE in both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements supports a free market economy over a planned economy, and capitalist democracy over communist government. It is also reasonable to assume that SAE in both curriculums values individualism, private ownership, competition, profit and user pays more than their counterparts, because these things are integral parts of the economic and political systems of the capitalist society.

Chapter 15 documents some similarities and differences between SAE in Unit Curriculum and SAE in Student Outcome Statements with respect to their treatment

of the issue of economic growth versus environmental conservation. SAE in Unit Curriculum emphasises economic growth more than environmental conservation, whereas in Student Outcome Statements, SAE focuses more on environmental protection, or caring for place, than on economic growth. Nonetheless, SAE in Student Outcome Statements is also concerned about the harm that degraded natural systems might do harm to future productivity. SAE in both curriculums sees environmental damage as being caused by human needs and wants, and the pursuit of material benefits. SAE in both curriculums acknowledges the critical environmentalist view that environmental damage is due to industrialism and technology, but pays no attention at all to critical environmentalists' claim that environmental damage is caused by the power alliance of moneyed interests, industry and government, nor to the claim that environmental damage is caused by the greed of capitalism. While SAE in Unit Curriculum does not suggest that economic growth and environmental conservation are compatible, it does so in Student Outcome Statements, though rather mildly.

In addition, SAE in both curriculums does not provide much information to indicate its stance on strategies to reduce environmental damage. However, in both curriculums, SAE ignores the critical environmentalists' claim that fundamental social changes are necessary to turn a greedy capitalist society into a conservation society, and to dismantle the power structure of moneyed interests, industry and government. Instead, it takes the economic rationalist stance that there is no need for fundamental social change, and assumes that environmental problems can be solved through technological advancement and by including environmental considerations in economic decisions.

The findings in Chapter 16 indicate that SAE in both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements supports the view that education should prepare students for the world of work, more than the world of life. It promotes the economic goals of productivity, competitiveness and employability, focuses mainly on training in key competencies and job related skills, with little attention being paid to the long-term goals of socialising and empowering students to shape their own world.

To conclude, critical theorists would be justified to claim that SAE adopts the consensus model rather than the conflict model of society perspective on social justice, race, gender, social systems, environment, and the purpose of schooling. Part C indicates that critical theorists are justified in claiming that devolution intensifies the curriculum's function of reinforcing social inequality and social control. But there is no strong evidence of the intensification of the other function - serving narrowly defined economic interests. Instead, there are a few minor changes which are 'for the better'. For instance, SAE in Student Outcome Statements supports collectivism in preference to individualism and pays some attention to expressivism. Critical theorists should be pleased with these minor changes, but how they will explain them remains to be seen.

SECTION THREE

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

17

LINKS BETWEEN DEVOLUTION AND CURRICULUM CHANGES

INTRODUCTION

Part A and B of Section Two identified changes that took place in the structures and processes associated with the development and implementation of K-10 Syllabus, Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements. Part C examined changes to the content of these three curricula. Section Three attempts to identify whether those structure, process and content changes were due to devolution. In so doing, a basic question has to be answered: would Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements have occurred anyway even if there had not been devolution? Put another way, what role did devolution (based on corporate management) play in the development, adoption and implementation of Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements?

To fully answer this question, interview data is used to construct an argument, based on the assumption that devolution is underpinned or informed by corporate managerialism¹. The model of corporate management adopted throughout the

¹ Are corporate management and corporate managerialism different? To me corporate managerialism implies a criticism of corporate management. It implies someone who has taken these ideas too far. For myself I don't like it when people say, I am a corporate managerialist. It implies that I am doctrinaire in my attachment to these ideas. Now I think that there is no question that the Education Department or the Ministry of Education set about to develop principles of corporate management. In fact they began before 1987,

discussion is the one developed in Chapter two. Within the framework of the model the question of whether SAE curriculum changes were due to devolution is explored. More specifically, the data and argument is organised by looking at: the philosophical and ideological commitment of the curriculum change initiators; the timing of curriculum changes in relation to devolution; the rationales underlying those changes; structures of the changed curriculums; developers and development processes of the curriculums; adoption of the curriculums; and implementation of the curriculums. Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements will be treated separately.

UNIT CURRICULUM

A range of views were voiced, by participants in this study, on whether devolution has had anything to do with curriculum changes that have taken place in Western Australia since 1987. The affirmative views range from “there were a couple of direct links” (Hod.4) to “linked with devolution, but the links weren't very strong” (Hod.5). The opposing views range from the strong claim that “devolution had nothing to do with Unit Curriculum” (Hod.1) to the weaker point that “devolution was a more recent thing” than Unit Curriculum (Hod.2). A third set of views can be described as indecisive; that is, some people interviewed voiced confusion and could not tell whether there was any linkage. For example, a head of department argued that the answer was “Yes and No”. This person, who said at one place that “Unit Curriculum was linked to devolution, but the links weren't very strong” (Hod.5), also said in another place that,

Was Unit Curriculum linked with devolution? I don't think so. I think it was probably meant to be but it probably didn't turn out that way. I didn't see much devolution in that. (Hod.5)

with Dr. (...) as Director General and Dr (...) and there was an attempt to make the Education Department more corporate in the way in which it made its decisions and how it operated, but then things certainly did develop much further with corporate planning and attempts at program management, and other sorts of ideas in terms of making the system operate more effectively. Whether the Education Department or Ministry of Education was, or its officials were, implementing corporate managerialist policies, I am not sure. In the Education Department we at that time didn't talk about corporate managerialism, although we did sometimes talk about corporate management. (R.4)

Therefore, to investigate the links between devolution and Unit Curriculum, two major arguments will be considered in this section: Unit Curriculum would have happened even if there had been no devolution; and, if it was not for devolution, Unit Curriculum could never have happened. Overall, this study supports the second argument. After presenting each of the arguments, an attempt will be made to see which one fits more into the framework of the corporate management model, then, a conclusion will be drawn about whether or not the changes from K-10 Syllabus to Unit Curriculum were due to devolution.

Claim: Unit Curriculum would have happened even if there had been no devolution.

Firstly, Unit Curriculum was seriously considered prior to devolution. As discussed in the previous sections, the idea of Unit Curriculum had been ‘floating around the professional field’ long before devolution was introduced in Western Australia in 1987 when the *Better Schools Report* was released. The idea of Unit Curriculum was first generated in 1980 by the Secondary Principals’ Association of WA, and later recommended as a ‘Unit Approach’ in the *Beazley Report* in 1984. This gap between the introduction of the idea of Unit Curriculum and devolution provided grounds for a belief that the two phenomena had nothing to do with each other.

Secondly, other states in Australia that introduced devolution more or less at the same time as Western Australia, did not have Unit Curriculum. It might be argued, then, that if devolution caused the introduction of Unit Curriculum, it would have caused it in other states as well, but Unit Curriculum was something unique to Western Australia. Put differently, the argument here is that if devolution can occur without Unit Curriculum elsewhere, then the independence of the two phenomena may be such that Unit Curriculum would have occurred without devolution in Western Australia.

Thirdly, Unit Curriculum did not seem to fit a few aspects of corporate culture. One was that if Unit Curriculum was closely linked to devolution, it should have been outcome-based, because devolution was informed by a results-oriented corporate culture that focused on outcomes rather than the means or inputs to achieve those

outcomes. However, Unit Curriculum was content-driven, both in design and practice. Another point is that Unit Curriculum was advocated by groups in the educational community such as the Secondary Principals' Association and the Beazley Inquiry Committee. These people, ideologically and philosophically, were not regarded as being aligned with economic rationalism. Their proposal to introduce Unit Curriculum emerged mainly from dissatisfaction with the Achievement Certificate. As discussed earlier, the 'Unit Approach' was directed at deficiencies in the Achievement Certificate. It was as much concerned with equality of educational opportunity and social justice, as with the quality or outcome of education.

Fourthly, it can be argued that the introduction of Unit Curriculum was largely a political decision which did not have much to do with devolution. For example, a senior education officer (So.7) argued that the 1980s spirit of getting things done, the fact that the then Cabinet members were relatively young, and their eagerness and determination to do something after having waited for so long to gain power, all contributed to the introduction of Unit Curriculum.

A final argument against linking devolution to the change from K-10 Syllabus to Unit Curriculum focuses on the developers of Unit Curriculum. The reasoning here is that if Unit Curriculum was caused by devolution, it should have been developed by supporters of devolution. However, perceived opponents of devolution like the subject superintendents were, at one stage, put in charge of developing Unit Curriculum.

Counterclaim: If it was not for devolution, Unit Curriculum would never have happened.

As indicated earlier, this study, by and large, agrees with the views of some participants who maintained that 'there were a couple of direct links between Unit Curriculum and devolution', that 'it was meant to be linked', but that 'the links were not strong' and in practice 'it did not turn out that way'.

Timing of Unit Curriculum with Devolution

Unit Curriculum was introduced a few years prior to before devolution. However, as shown earlier, the period from 1980, when the Secondary Principals' Association spelt out criticisms of the K-10 Syllabus, to the 1984 Beazley Report, only involved talking or 'floating of the idea of unit approach'. This was followed by a stage of indecision about how to 'translate the unit approach into a curriculum'. It was not until the end of 1985 that the framework for Unit Curriculum was developed (in haste), and furthermore, it was not until 1986 that substantial development work on Unit Curriculum had began. In addition, two important factors can be kept in mind. One is that the document *Managing Change in the Public Sector* was drafted and released in 1986; the other is that the *Better Schools Report* was also being drafted while Unit Curriculum was being developed.

A line of reasoning here can be developed as follows. Given that the then Minister for Education, who later played a substantial role in Unit Curriculum, offered the Education Department to be targeted early in the devolution process when *Managing Change in the Public Sector* was released, and given that the *Better Schools Report* had a huge impact in the next few years upon the middle management group (subject superintendents), then it can be speculated that some of the key developers of Unit Curriculum, if not all, were informed by corporate managerialism. Most importantly, both Unit Curriculum and the *Better Schools Report* were implemented at the same time, 1988.²

² When Unit Curriculum was being developed in the Beazley Committee, no one had ever heard the word corporate management and devolution but some general ideas and changes were taking place, like school based curriculum development. But I do agree with the point you are making, that by the time the implementation was well underway in 1987 and the Better Schools Report came out, there was a deliberate attempt to make sure that the implementation of Unit Curriculum was consistent with the principles of the Better Schools Report. Because I and others felt at the time that you couldn't have one curriculum development program according to one set of principles, for example the old fashioned set of principles, given that it was a very important program. At the same time, the government was implementing a different way of structuring the government school system. So, I am not surprised you find, talking to people and elsewhere, that after 1987 there was a deliberate meshing together of Unit Curriculum (thinking about how to implement it) and the Better Schools Report. At the time, I think, the Minister wished that the Better Schools Report could have been deferred, or no doubt wished that Unit Curriculum had been implemented two years earlier. But to have both things happening at

The argument that other states which had embarked on devolution did not have Unit Curriculum is only superficially true. While they did not have a curriculum called *Unit Curriculum*, it was the case that “every other state had a major curriculum change and had a major report” (So.7). The Education Department of Tasmania released the report of *Secondary Education: The future (policy statement)* in 1987; the New South Wales Education Portfolio published *School-centred education: Building a more responsive state school system* in 1990; and the Department of Education of Queensland circulated in July 1990 a document named *The future organisation of educational services for students: A discussion paper*. In one senior officer’s words,

That happened in every state, and I’ve got a row of reports there from other states which are just like Better Schools. There isn’t a Western Australian version, but I can show you a NSW version. It looks the same! All the same. And if you look at it, all the same entries will be in there. You would think it would be the same thing. (So.7)

This informant claimed that these and other states had similar curriculum reforms. For example, Tasmania had a Vocational Certificate of Education, South Australia had a Certificate of Education, and the Northern Territory had a version of the South Australian model called the South Australian Certificate of Education.

Rationale for Unit Curriculum

Although Unit Curriculum was developed from recommendations in the Beazley Report (1984) and was directed at deficiencies of the K-10 Syllabus, it did have some ‘non-educational’ intentions. These intentions had much to do with the corporate culture of promoting economic competitiveness, increasing efficiency and reducing cost per product through rationalisation and cutting of educational funding.³

the same time turned out to be virtually fatal. But could the Unit Curriculum have happened without the Better Schools Report? My answer to that is, yes it could have, would have happened, but it would have been implemented in a different kind of way. If there had been no Better Schools Report, it probably would have been implemented with a great deal more approval and support from teachers. But that wasn’t the way it was. You had this coming together, this conjoining of these two major programs, by accident, not design. (R.4)

³ I do not think this is true. What is true, is that at the point of implementation it was very difficult to fund Unit Curriculum with release of teachers to attend inservice courses and manage it on a centralized basis; that was true. But the intention behind the Unit

The claim that Unit Curriculum represented merely a political push was only partially right. There was a political push, but it had much to do with the economic context. This push was generated by the intentions to deliver education more cost-efficiently, to make the school system accountable to the public and government, and to justify the state budget allocation to education; in a word, to rationalise education economically. In a senior officer's words,

Devolution has been as a result of the great, great reduction in resources available for Social Studies education. I think it doesn't just apply to Social Studies, it applies to other areas as well. I mean, you look at it cynically and say that devolution, and a lot of teachers will say this, that devolution actually came about because of the need for the Education Department and the Government to spend less on education to save money. The Better Schools Report of 1987 that started the process is referred to as The Bitter Schools Report by many teachers, so they don't actually see it as Better Schools, but as Bitter Schools and problems associated with it. As I said, this has been brought about or is a result of, fewer and fewer funds being available for education. (So.5)

Contextually, the push for Unit Curriculum matched the spirits of the mid-80s, to 'get things done' (So.7). The desire to 'get things done' was prompted by economic rationalism and 'things' here were defined predominantly in terms of monetary or budgetary matters. Another senior officer saw 'getting things done' as governments "trying to get control of the school system", and as politicians wondering if "schools are doing a good enough job with that much money" and if "they should be doing it cheaper". (So.7)

The idea of a unit approach was still being floated when talks were going on about restructuring, devolution, accountability and the like. In some quarters, Unit Curriculum was seen as intended to be "a sort of curriculum structure that would need to be or that would be best set in place to allow a devolved system to develop" (So.1), and at the same time to ensure that schools and teachers were accountable to the system, their students and their communities. Accountability here was conceived

Curriculum had nothing to do whatsoever with economic rationalism or cost cutting. I am very confident that it had nothing whatsoever to do with it. That wasn't why it was developed. As I said, there were problems with the implementation of being able to fund sufficient relief time for teachers to prepare materials and to fund inservice and various other sorts of things and that was complicated because of the new devolution arrangements that were being put in place, but I don't think that is stated in there. (R.4)

in terms of corporate loyalty and fidelity of policy implementation to corporate culture. A head of department claimed that in the WA case, accountability equalled “inspection” as practised in Britain. This person said,

I know some of the people in the Education Department. I've heard them and seen them and the Minister for Education - he's another one - when they talk about accountability there is no doubt what they mean by it. They mean inspection. And so they see that as being part of their devolved system. Devolve the decision making and then come in and inspect to see that it's going well. (Hod.4)

As mentioned earlier, a draft policy document (EDWA, Jan. 29, 1987, p.1) clearly linked Unit Curriculum with devolution by stating that “the introduction of Unit Curriculum is part of a wider process of educational change in Western Australia”. To make the connection more explicit, the document went on to cite the principles on which the educational change in WA was based, without any change of order or wording as listed in the *Better Schools Report* (EDWA, 1987, p.5). The first three of the six principles, “self-determining schools, maintaining educational standards, and community participation in school management” reflected characteristics of corporate management.

Similarly, a senior officer claimed that the notion of ‘self-determining schools’ and ‘community participation’ linked Unit Curriculum closely with devolution. This person contended that,

Unit Curriculum did have something to do with devolution. The idea of Unit Curriculum was to allow schools to have more control over their own curriculum. Better Schools was about running schools differently. But in both cases there was a similarity around schools having more control.....There was a connection because there was the sense that not all the wisdom about what to do is tied up in the senior officers of the Education Department, that lots of people in the field, principals and so forth and people in the community do have good ideas - but the system was run - in my opinion - in a very military way, with a lot of obedience to the person who was in charge and then obedience to the next person. A lot of ‘doing as you were told’, and not a lot of opportunity to exercise discretion. In my opinion it was a very old fashioned tyrannical organisation, not suited to the warm, fluid environment of the 90s. And devolution - that was part of unpicking that, and it's still going on. It's not unpicked yet, it's still somewhat bureaucratic - and people there have only experience of Western Australia, they don't understand that you cannot have an educational system where one person is in charge! The fantasy in WA is that the Director General is in charge of all the schools. And this is clearly nonsense. He could never know what's going on, so it's just a fantasy that because you've got layers, he actually controls

them. So, that's what's having to be broken up in the sense that one person is in charge. It will allow for more political forces, more local forces to be at work - so that's the idea. (So.7)

Structure of Unit Curriculum

Many aspects of the Unit Curriculum structure reflected the features of the corporate management model in terms of corporate process, corporate culture, and corporate resources management.

First of all, the structural feature of central cohesion with local autonomy and the preference for less regulation (or more deregulation), and more free-enterprise, as contained in the corporate management model, were reflected in the Unit Curriculum idea of 'meeting local needs' and 'increasing student choice'. To achieve these outcomes, about 300 units were prepared across the seven learning areas to ensure that "there are many more units than any one school has the resources to offer, or than any one student will take" (EDWA, 1986, p.3).

The intention to deregulate and maximise student choice was pursued by several strategies used in developing the Unit Curriculum structure. One strategy was to shorten all the year long courses in the Achievement Certificate to 40 hours in the Unit Curriculum. The intention here was to let students cover as many units as possible in the same amount of time. Another strategy was to change horizontal timetabling into vertical timetabling to ensure student free access to the units they chose. A further strategy was to organise units within each of the seven curriculum components into different stages. For example, in Social Studies, the nineteen units were structured into six stages of progress through three years of lower secondary schooling. This structural arrangement was designed to break the old tradition of regulating students of the same age group to study the same courses all the year around. It was also designed to free up students to allow them to choose units according to their own interests, to choose as many units as they wished, to choose the difficulty level of units according to their own ability, and to study units at their own pace and with the amount of time they needed.

While student choice of units was deregulated, centrally controlled cohesiveness was not abandoned. It was guaranteed by the central setting of system-wide requirements.

Students were not allowed to choose less units than the minimum number set, namely, “24 units in one year and a total of 72 over the three lower secondary years” (Ministry of Education, WA, no date, p.3). In Social Studies, six units in three years was the minimum. Furthermore, certain units were to be studied mandatorily by all students. For instance, students studying Social Studies had to choose “at least one of those units of Australian studies indicated by (**)” (Curriculum Branch, Education Department of Western Australia, March, 1987, p.5).

Secondly, a large part of the units were prepared and funded by the Education Department by repackaging the existing Achievement Certificate courses and developing some new ones. Individual schools were expected to develop and fund a small part of the units which were supposed to be oriented to local community and student needs. However, school developed units were centrally controlled as well. These units were required approval by the Secondary Education Authority of WA before being delivered to students. This added another example of the ‘centrally cohesive and locally autonomous’ corporate management policy making.

Thirdly, the corporate management model’s preference for science, technology and computers over humanities and arts can be traced in the Unit Curriculum structure. The status of Social Studies was lowered in the Unit Curriculum structure. Besides the fact that fewer Social Studies units were studied (Print, 1990), the status of Social Studies was also lowered by design. The setting of the minimum requirement of six units in Social Studies lowered its status. This minimum requirement meant that the total amount of time for Social Studies would only be 240 hours, less than a half of 510 for Social Studies in the Achievement Certificate, with just over one-third of units being studied as compared with the Achievement Certificate. Also, of the former four core subjects, students had no choice but to study twelve units in English, mathematics and science respectively while they could study as few as six Social Studies. Another point to be noted is that the reduction of time for Social Studies and minimising the number of units in Social Studies was conducted in a context where education for work and work related key competencies dominated the discourse, and where student enrolment in Social Studies had already been dropping and student interest in Social Studies had been dramatically falling in Western

Australian government schools (Moroz, 1993; Moroz, Baker & McDonald, 1995; Phillips & Moroz, 1996). This situation could have been counteracted if Unit Curriculum had given Social Studies the same amount of time and unit requirements as the other three core subjects.

Fourthly, Unit Curriculum changed norm-referenced assessment into standards (criteria)-referenced assessment. Though the word 'outcome-based' did not appear, it was a step in that direction. The change from three levels of awards in the Achievement Certificate to five grades in Unit Curriculum, and grade-related descriptors attached to each of the grades, was intended to provide more specific student performance information for the proposed "School Leaver Statement" (later changed to the Certificate of Secondary Education). The intention of standards-referenced assessment and certification was clearly work-oriented. It was intended "to provide employers with information to assist them when selecting applicants for jobs" (Beazley, 1984, p.163).

Moreover, the responsibility structure for assessment also followed the pattern of 'centrally cohesive and locally autonomous' policy making. Assessment was school-based. Schools had the autonomy to call upon different forms of information to describe student performance and allocate grades to students at the end of each unit. Nonetheless, all schools' assessments were to be centrally moderated by the Secondary Education Authority to ensure compatibility. The SEA also held the responsibility for issuing the Certificate of Secondary Education. Consistent with the corporate process, the operational functions of student assessment were devolved to schools while framework functions like quality and comparability insurance, and the right to issue a Certificate of Secondary Education, were centrally reserved.

Arguably, Unit Curriculum was content-driven, and concerned more with equality of education rather than quality of education⁴. But this alone does not confirm the claim that Unit Curriculum was not linked with devolution. As will be shown later in this

⁴ I do not think you could say that. I feel that I wouldn't have said 'more than'. I think the equity issues did come up, but I think there was also a focus on quality, but it is not a big deal. (R.4)

section, Unit Curriculum remained content-driven, partly because it was initiated and recommended by educational professionals at the early stage of its development, partly because at one stage the subject superintendents who were generally opposed to devolution were in charge of its development, and partly because it was developed at later stages in real haste.

Developers of Unit Curriculum

A number of factors related to the developers of Unit Curriculum point to a connection between devolution and Unit Curriculum. To argue against such a linkage by insisting that Unit Curriculum was initiated by educational professionals who were not committed to corporate managerialism, is difficult to sustain. As discussed earlier, these people exercised influence for a very limited time. From stage three onwards, when Unit Curriculum development was rushed through, opponents of devolution, and accordingly, Unit Curriculum, were sidelined and replaced by supporters of devolution. A senior officer maintained that,

The people who had the most to do with Unit Curriculum were supporters of Better Schools. They weren't different people. [.....] was a supporter of Better Schools, and he was running the Unit Curriculum implementation. [.....] wrote Better Schools, and she was the Director of Curriculum. [.....] was the manager of the Curriculum Branch in the first year of Unit Curriculum, and he would be a supporter of Better Schools, and so forth. Many of the people involved in Unit Curriculum were also supporters of Better Schools. But some weren't. The subject superintendents didn't ever support Better Schools, and they were sidelined as time went on. (So.7)

The removal of the subject superintendents, and the amalgamation of primary school superintendents and subject superintendents into district superintendents linked Unit Curriculum with devolution in several ways. Firstly, as said before, this move ensured that Unit Curriculum would be developed by supporters of devolution. The subject superintendents were battling strongly with supporters of devolution, they wanted to develop Unit Curriculum in a different way, and therefore, were seen as blocking the push towards corporate managerialism. To make sure Unit Curriculum happened the way supporters of devolution wanted, the Minister appointed an

Assistant Director General⁵, a supporter of devolution, to oversee the development and implementation of Unit Curriculum. This newly appointed Assistant Director General had his own team of supporters⁶ of devolution to manage the development and implementation of the Unit Curriculum. Secondly, in terms of corporate structure, the removal of subject superintendents represented a flattening of a three-tier administrative structure into a two-tier one, in order to make the middle management as lean as possible to enable direct ministerial control of schools⁷. For example, a senior officer contended that,

Strategically they wanted to destroy the 'subject barons' because they saw them as the basis of a centralised system and therefore teachers had an allegiance to a subject superintendent. They didn't have an allegiance to the principal. In a devolved system you had to have allegiance to the principal, so if you destroyed the subject barons, whatever they called them, who had this huge influence all over the state, there was greater

⁵ I was appointed as an Assistant Director General before the Better Schools Report, before anyone even talked about devolution. The reason I was appointed had only to do with the fact that the Minister wanted someone. He didn't know me, didn't know me personally, I had just come back from the US with a PhD. The Minister wanted someone senior to take special responsibility for making it happen, but it wasn't connected to devolution. Why the subject superintendents didn't like it is because I wasn't a subject superintendent and therefore I didn't have to commit myself to how they saw the world. But it wasn't because of devolution. (R.4)

⁶ I don't know who they mean. In this account, I think your account makes it seem too tribal, as though it was my tribe versus someone else's tribe. I had numbers of people on the committees that I worked with who didn't agree with me and who strongly opposed and had different points of view. So I think that is again part of that myth making, this kind of simplification into my side and the other side. I think it is true that the tensions in Head Office, go back to this responsibility for the Curriculum Branch, to who had final responsibility for the curriculum. This was the real tension, but completely unrelated to devolution. You had two separate lines of accountability and they clashed with each other, and the Minister had decided I would be responsible finally for the implementation, not the development, I had very little to do with the development, when most of the subject superintendents were involved. But during that phase, there was still that tension between those people who were subject superintendents who had come through the secondary school system and whose job brought them backwards and forwards with the secondary schools, and those others who work in Central Office, whose job was basically curriculum development and policy and so on. That was the tension, they were the teams if you like, or the opposing sides. And it would have been the case whether it was me or anyone else in those positions, there was always that tension. I can remember that tension 20 or 30 years ago. It was always there. That is what they are referring to. (R.4)

⁷ I think that is overstating it. The Minister didn't want to get involved directly in these kinds of things. He became involved when there was a dispute, usually involving the teachers union, but he himself didn't want to be involved. But again, it is part of the myth, the myth of the Minister controlling all the detail. The Minister is too busy to be interested in the detail of the things. This is my view. (R.4)

chance that this might happen.....They were just imposing this decentralised system upon us and it was seen that there had to be this massive purge to allow the devolution process to take place. (So.3)⁸

Another senior officer offered a similar view by saying that the sacking⁹ of subject superintendents meant “the line of patronage was broken. So it was the thing that happened to the superintendents that linked the two things” (So.7). More specifically, what happened to the subject superintendents linked Unit Curriculum with devolution, because,

In 1984 the subject superintendent was a very important person in a secondary school. There were eighty secondary schools and twenty or thirty subject superintendents. Every teacher in secondary schools would get transferred or promoted because of what the superintendent thought of them. So you’ve got all these hundreds of schools and on top of each group was a superintendent, and each superintendent has got some authority over every single school like that. Whilst [.....] was writing Better Schools her analysis was, you have to get rid of subject superintendents because until the subject superintendents are gone, principals aren’t in charge of their schools and Better Schools is about devolution of power to schools. And so the principal has to be the important person. So you can’t have all the senior staff in the school looking outside the school for sources of power and authority. Her argument was, I am sure, that there was too much control given to the subject specialists, and not enough to the principals. So that made the schools weak and the central system strong, and it would be better if you had strong schools. So that’s why she wanted to get rid of subject superintendents. (So.7)¹⁰

In addition, the new district superintendents’ role was much weaker than that of the subject superintendents. They no longer had the authority over staffing or teachers’ promotion. They only comprised a lean and weak middle management group. They passed their authority and power up to the Ministry and down to the principals, thus, holding teachers directly accountable to their principals and their principals

⁸ What are the facts? (R.4)

⁹ What happened to the subject superintendents? Was anyone sacked? No one was sacked. Numbers of older people chose to take redundancies. But as I recall, no one was sacked. It is true the subject superintendents would have needed to have been shifted into a new job and numbers of them did. (R.4)

¹⁰ She didn’t! She was on the Functional Review Committee and no doubt was a major contributor to it. But other people wrote the Better Schools Report alongside with this person and several others. It is just part of the kind of mythologising that occurs. (R.4)

accountable to the system¹¹. To accompany this, the previous divisional structure in the Education Department was replaced by a functional structure as proposed in the *Better Schools Report*.

What can be argued here is that it took Unit Curriculum four years from recommendation to implementation because there was a lot opposition in Head Office. Basically, those who supported devolution supported Unit Curriculum, and those who opposed devolution opposed Unit Curriculum¹². The replacement of opponents of Unit Curriculum by supporters of it secured the introduction of Unit Curriculum. If there had not been this power structure change, opponents might have been able to stop Unit Curriculum from happening, or, even if it was implemented, it might have been something quite different.

Some other factors related to Unit Curriculum developers were also aligned with the corporate management model.

First, the Unit Curriculum writers were merely responsible for the modular functions of writing the actual syllabus. They worked on contractual basis. Most of them had a one or two year contract. As non-managers, they did not have the authority to make decisions about anything except what to put in a particular unit.

Second, in contrast to the Achievement Certificate, the development of Unit Curriculum saw a huge increase of ministerial intervention and power. The Minister for Education, a big supporter of devolution, had the ultimate responsibility. It was he who ordered the Beazley Inquiry, sidelined and replaced the subject superintendents with 'his own staff'¹³, set the time-line for Unit Curriculum development and implementation, and ordered its continuation in times of crisis.

¹¹ In theory. (R.4)

¹² This wasn't so. (R.4)

¹³ I don't think that's exactly right. He didn't order the Beazley Committee to be sidelined, the Beazley Committee reported. He became involved as I said because the Education Department seemed to be unable to implement its recommendations two years after they had been made and approved by the government. I wasn't on the Minister's staff then. There was still a Director General, a very strong one. I was accountable to him. Now admittedly the Minister became more involved more directly in the Unit Curriculum, so I had some more contact with the Minister, but not a great deal during this phase. (R.4)

Third, the allocation of responsibility among developers featured the corporate management process in that many decisions, like the length of units, what content went with what unit, and what units should be compulsory, were made in Head Office by a small Implementation Group comprising some 20 people chaired by the Assistant Director General. Through the whole policy making process, stakeholders and other interest groups were not able to have much a say, even though they struggled for it, as did the Secondary Education Authority.

Development Process

Closely related to factors associated with the developers of Unit Curriculum was the development process, which corresponded closely with the corporate management model. Of the five stages in the development process, the first stage of 'initiation' did not quite fit the corporate management model, because the initiators were mainly educational professionals. But it needs to be pointed out that the Beazley Inquiry Committee comprised not only educational professionals. It also contained representatives of business, industry and political groups. They had their say and their interests "had been saved" (So.6). Most importantly, as mentioned before, it was the then Minister for Education who initiated the inquiry and appointed Kim Beazley to chair the inquiry committee. From a common sense viewpoint, it might be speculated, that the Minister appointed people of the same mind with himself, that is, supporters of devolution.

From the second stage of 'democratic indecision' onwards, what happened in the process pointed to a connection between devolution and Unit Curriculum. During stage two, the subject superintendents were in charge of 'translating the idea of a unit approach into a curriculum structure' that would fit into a devolved system. In the event, they found it too hard, partly because they were trying to do it in a democratic way¹⁴, involving all those concerned. Also, they were strongly opposed to devolution and could not agree among themselves. It would be unreasonable to expect some

¹⁴ It is a fairy tale to say they were trying to do it in a "democratic way". They weren't democratic. They were just pushing their own line, that's all. They would have said they were democratic, but show me the evidence of where the subject superintendents were democratic, not at all. (R.4)

opponents of devolution to develop a curriculum structure that would fit into a devolved system.

Given the fact that the Minister was determined to push Unit Curriculum through, and that the subject superintendents were seen as blocking the process, it should come as no surprise that the subject superintendents were replaced by some supporters of devolution. As said earlier, the Minister appointed an Assistant Director General in charge of making sure that Unit Curriculum happened. The Assistant Director General was not only put in charge but was also told that it had to be done straight away¹⁵. To ensure that Unit Curriculum was introduced as directed by the Minister, the Assistant Director General appointed his own staff and took the major responsibility for Unit Curriculum development from the hands of those down the management line. Three observations can be made about this sudden shift of overall responsibility, namely: bureaucratic mechanisms did prevail during a political or philosophical crisis in the process; the Minister increased his intervention in and control over the process; and Unit Curriculum was developed by supporters of devolution.

It was not until after the supporters of devolution took over the responsibility that earnest development work on Unit Curriculum began. Also, it was not till the end of 1985 that a Unit Curriculum Steering Committee was established to supervise and to develop the framework for Unit Curriculum. This framework was developed “in desperation” during Easter 1985 (So.4). Then followed “a year of craziness” in the Curriculum Branch with over a hundred people rewriting all the units. However, in Social Studies, because the developers of the K-10 Syllabus were also in charge of developing Unit Curriculum for an interim period, they were able, to some extent, to stop Social Studies from being influenced too much by devolution. However, although they “wanted it left alone” (So.7), they were not fully successful and eventually were forced to “repackage” (Pa.1) the K-10 Syllabus structurally to fit it into the Unit Curriculum framework. This accounts for why Social Studies in Unit

¹⁵ That’s true! (R.4)

Curriculum was still content-driven whereas its structure reflected some of the features of corporate management model.

Another event during stage five of the development process exemplified the Minister's determination to take education down the track of corporate management and thereby increase his power and intervention in policy making. According to most people interviewed in this study, a majority of teachers in the schools trialing Unit Curriculum were particularly negative¹⁶. In response, the Assistant Director General and his group, tried to persuade the Minister to go a little more slowly and put it off for another year. But the Minister "didn't want to be told, no. What he wanted to hear was, tell me how you are going to do it, not why you can't do it" (So.7).

The way in which controversial issues in developing Unit Curriculum were resolved also bore some resemblance to the corporate management model. First, the issue of whether there should be a change to adopt Unit Curriculum was resolved in favour of those who supported devolution. Second, the issue about who should take charge of Unit Curriculum development ended in the removal and sidelining of professionals such as the subject superintendents and the Director General, the Minister taking control and the appointment of an off-line Assistant Director General to manage the whole business. Thereafter, all framework functions related to Unit Curriculum were controlled by the Minister and the Assistant Director General and his group; professionals no longer had much of a say in the policy process.

This separation of 'policy and operation' was reinforced in the consultation process. Consultation took place only between the curriculum writers and the various advisory committees. Very little consultation was conducted with those who were to implement the Unit Curriculum. Even the representatives on the committees found difficult having their say because the Minister had "the strongest voice" (So.6). Business, industry and political groups had their say in the Beazley Report, but

¹⁶ In the pilot schools I worked in, I spent a lot of time in one of the pilot schools, the school morale was actually very good, and they became quite supportive. Now I am not saying that all the schools were, I am just saying it is not all that straightforward. (R.4)

professionals (like academics), the State School Teachers Union of Western Australia, subject associations, and other stakeholders such as textbook publishers and parents, had little input in the policy making process. Generally, they were excluded, but were expected to do what they were told in implementation.

*Implementation of Unit Curriculum*¹⁷

The adoption of Unit Curriculum provided another example of increased ministerial intervention and power. Even though the Minister's allies of devolution persuaded him to postpone Unit Curriculum for another year, and most schools did not want to go on with it, the Minister still announced the implementation of Unit Curriculum.

The responsibility for Unit Curriculum implementation also showed a clear separation of policy and operation roles. Central Office retained the overall responsibility while local schools were held responsible for the daily operation of the curriculum. As such, many schools felt they were implementing something decided outside and imposed upon them.

¹⁷ My view is that the implementation of the Unit Curriculum was by most standards unsuccessful, it was very controversial, and principally, that had to do with the way it got mixed up with the Better Schools Report and the way, the timelines for it and the role played by the Teachers Union. But the Teachers Union particularly lead the reaction to the Unit Curriculum and had, to be fair, consistently complained about the impact of Unit Curriculum of workloads. It is ironic, now that years afterwards, many teachers want to keep the Unit Curriculum. It makes me wonder, whether any centrally mandated change is going to be popular; only after it has happened, will people start to feel good about it and accept it. I don't think that is exactly true, but there are elements of truth about that statement. I think the Unit Curriculum would have happened irrespective of the Better Schools Report. But the implementation, if there had been a different Minister and different people in the Education Department would have happened in the older way, the Curriculum Branch would have produced mountains of materials, they would be sent out to teachers. There still would have been complaints from the Teachers Union. There would still have been demands for more time off, more PD. The government at the time would have said no, and there would have been some unhappiness about it, but not as much has happened with the Unit Curriculum and its introduction at that time. The people whose idea it was, the school principals, they thought it up, when the pressure went on, they backed away from it and partly that was because of the way it got mixed up with the Better Schools Report and with what they perceived to be the lack of resources. So a lot of it, the reception to it basically, a lot of it had to do with bad luck of the timing of these two things. Bad luck and also a change in the way in which the implementation was to take place, where by you wanted schools to become more responsible rather than subject superintendents responsible for its implementation. That by and large to me is the story. (R.4)

The franchising out of modular functions took place in the area of teacher induction, PD and inservice for Unit Curriculum implementation. Basically, Central Office provided no inservice, PD or induction “because the Education Department did not have the funds, or would not acknowledge that the teachers needed that much training to take on a new curriculum” (Pa.2). As proposed in the Better Schools Report, each school was given a grant. Out of that grant, each individual school was expected to provide funds and relief time for teacher PD, induction and inservice. But this fund proved to be far from sufficient, and, therefore, teachers were left “struggling on their own” (Hod.4). Prior to devolution, teacher inservice, PD and induction were provided by Head Office. But with Unit Curriculum implementation, these activities were franchised out. Some participants argued they were conducted on a user-pays basis, or, as a head of department put it, “unless of course it occurred in your own time and you paid for it as well” (Hod.5).

The lean middle management’s weakened capacity was felt strongly in the reduced personnel support for Unit Curriculum implementation. The removal of the subject superintendents and the appointment of consultants and district superintendents with less power and authority, effectively flattened the three tier structure into two and broke the patronage of authority. It also resulted in the great loss of curriculum leadership in a time when it was most needed. A head of department in this study claimed that personnel support was cut in Unit Curriculum because,

There are decision makers in the Education Department and the Government who are not interested in state government education at all. And their attitude is that if you want to get a good education you’ve got to pay for it and you send your kids to private schools. And the government education will be a safety net for the rest. (Hod.4)

To some extent, curriculum support material in Unit Curriculum implementation had to come from corporate sponsorship. Many participants in this study maintained that they received very little curriculum support material from Head Office. Schools were expected to use part of their grant provided by Head Office, and find other sources of revenue to purchase curriculum materials from private commercial publishers.

To conclude, there seems to be more evidence for than against the argument that Unit Curriculum was linked with devolution. Apart from what happened in the very

preliminary stages, devolution had an impact upon the development and implementation of Unit Curriculum. The claim that “it was intended to be linked with devolution, but did not turn out that way” could not apply to the way it was developed and implemented. Still, the claim rings true in the sense that Unit Curriculum ended “as a disaster”.

STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

One question can be raised before moving on to an investigation of the links between devolution and Student Outcome Statements. If Unit Curriculum was underpinned by corporate managerialism and fitted into the framework of devolution, then, why should people want to replace it with Student Outcome Statements? This study argues that the answer lies in the fact that the development of Unit Curriculum framework did not fit completely into the corporate culture. First, during the early stage, some opponents of devolution were still in charge of developing the Unit Curriculum framework. Second, the framework was developed “in desperation” in a very short period of time, and as such, it might be speculated that even if the supporters of devolution had been completely in charge and wanted to base the framework upon corporate managerialism, they would not have had enough time to think it through. Third, as a whole package, Unit Curriculum was developed in real haste. It was impossible to fit everything neatly into a corporate management model. Fourth, closely related to third, though an attempt was made to write some new units, not much was done. The major part of Unit Curriculum development, in essence, merely involved a ‘cut and paste’ of the K-10 Syllabus. Finally, for a period of time, the developers of the K-10 Syllabus were also in charge of developing Social Studies units in Unit Curriculum. Because the K-10 Syllabus had only been developed and implemented for a few years and was relatively new, developers in this area wanted to leave it alone, though they were forced to repackage it into forty hour blocks to fit the Unit Curriculum structure.

According to some participants in this study, devolution and the push for Unit Curriculum were intended to save money and cut government education funding. If true, then, at best, the development of Unit Curriculum represented an attempt to

make full use of existing curriculum resources rather than spend additional money on developing new curriculum materials. At worst, it represented an attempt to save money by fitting an old curriculum into a new framework through a 'cut and paste' repackaging. One aspect of the early stage of Student Outcome Statements development might shed some light on this reasoned speculation. According to one teacher (Tr.1), developers of Student Outcome Statements initially were given the job of "looking at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders sub-strand in Student Outcome Statements within the guise of Unit Curriculum" to see if they could "fit a new philosophy into an old curriculum framework". Apparently, these developers "did not have any real success" because "you can not go in and see your job as teaching chunks of curriculum in a Student Outcome Statements based process".

This might account for why many aspects related to Unit Curriculum could fit into the model of corporate management even though it was still content-driven. It might also partly account for the failure of Unit Curriculum, because an old curriculum would not fit unproblematically into the new framework of corporate management model. Thus, supporters of corporate managerialism were eager and determined to replace Unit Curriculum with Student Outcome Statements which is outcome based and perceived to be more consistent with corporate culture.

However, as was the case with Unit Curriculum, there are different views about whether Student Outcome Statements was brought about by devolution. These different views on the relationship between Student Outcome Statements and devolution range from "connected" (So.1 & Tr.1), to "very very loosely connected" (Hod.1), "they are separate issues" (Hod.6), and "totally separate issues and not connected at all" (Hod.1).

To cover the different viewpoints, two arguments are developed and examined here. One is that the introduction of Student Outcome Statements was not linked to devolution or informed by corporate culture; therefore, even if there had not been devolution, Student Outcome Statements would still have happened. The other argument is that Student Outcome Statements was linked closely to devolution and if it were not for devolution, Student Outcome Statements would never have happened.

Argument One: Student Outcome Statements was not linked to devolution. It would have happened even if there had not been devolution.

One head of department in this study insisted that Student Outcome Statements and devolution are “totally separate issues”. This head of department could not “see devolution connected to Student Outcome Statements at all” (Hod.1). The reasoning this head followed is,

You can have Student Outcome Statements under a central or a devolved system and you can have Unit Curriculum under a central or a devolved system. I think it's purely coincidental that they're both happening at the same time. If under a centralised system we had Student Outcome Statements, then under a devolved system we might have everything, but the one thing we would not have is Student Outcome Statements, because there would be a reason to actually justify the change in structure and the change in spending. (Hod.1)

This claim is based on two premises: that corporate management only “involved centralisation, not devolution”; and that Unit Curriculum was implemented in a centralised system where “you could still have centrally set curricula and local schools deciding how they put kids in advanced, intermediate and basic” (Hod.1). On the one hand, this head said that Student Outcome Statements was “certainly connected to the corporate culture of outcome/result orientation”, and Student Outcome Statements and Unit Curriculum were underpinned by an identical rationale, namely, “they specified what would happen, and left schools to get on with the business of how they did it”. On the other hand he took the view that devolution,

has got nothing to do with whether it's Unit Curriculum or Student Outcome Statements. That's to do with a central government's decision as to how much they're going to give you to do the job. Now the actual structure of it whether it's Outcome Statements, Unit Curriculum or anything else doesn't really matter. (Hod.1)

Another claim supporting the lack of connection between Student Outcome Statements and devolution is that “Student Outcome Statements was something from Canberra that was separate from the state [WA]” (Hod.6). However, this claim fails to see that devolution has not only happened in WA, it has taken place in all the other states and at the federal level as well. It also fails to see that the federal and state governments are virtually inseparable in their joint effort to push Student Outcome Statements and that as a result, Student Outcome Statements in WA is a WA version

of the national curriculum. This point will be dealt with in more detail later in this section.

Finally, it might be argued that countries which do not have devolution, nevertheless have had Student Outcome Statements or outcome-based education. It is beyond the scope of this study to identify countries that do not have devolution but still have had Student Outcome Statements. Nevertheless, most of the countries that have had devolution have Student Outcome Statements or outcome-based education or a standards-based national curriculum, or, are moving in that direction; for example, the UK, USA, Netherlands, New Zealand and Australia, to name a few. Furthermore, Student Outcome Statements is being introduced in nearly all the states in Australia which have been undergoing devolution.

Argument Two: Student Outcome Statements was linked to devolution and informed by corporate managerialism.

Some participants in this study suggested that there was a linkage between devolution and Student Outcome Statements. Some (So.1, 2 & 8) argued that what Student Outcome Statements and devolution have got in common are: centrally set outcomes; discretion devolved to the school level to decide how to achieve those outcomes; and a focus on output/outcomes rather than on input. To them, Student Outcome Statements and devolution are ideologically and philosophically consistent with each other.

One teacher (Tr.1) saw the connection between the two from a somewhat different point of view. This teacher claimed that “the only way I can see them as relevant to each other is in the way that the centre is going to say this and you will do that”. This view is quite similar to that of centrally set outcomes and devolved autonomy in choosing the means to achieve those outcomes. However, this teacher went into some detail by saying that,

We're going to get from the central body a learning area statement and a philosophical point of view, we're going to get the Student Outcome Statements and pointers and maybe a couple of work samples. I don't gather we're going to get anything like what we had before in Unit Curriculum or prior to Unit Curriculum which really could be tacked on, giving you a lot more strategies and hands-on. (Tr.1)

Basically, the weight of evidence gathered in this study supports the argument that Student Outcome Statements is linked to devolution, and that the linkage between the two goes far beyond what has been suggested by the claims discussed above. A detailed case is provided below. The case is based on the proposition that WA joined the curriculum reform at the national level, and that the final product of WA Student Outcome Statements is nothing more than a WA version of the national curriculum. So, what happened both at the federal and state levels is called upon in combination to decide whether Student Outcome Statements was linked to devolution, or, put another way, whether devolution had an impact on Student Outcome Statements. The format of presenting the case is the same with that for Unit Curriculum.

Timing

According to Marshall (1988, p.22), the movement towards corporate management at the national level has been in progress since the election of the Hawke Government in 1983. Dudley and Vidovich (1996, p.43) argue that a pre-election paper *Labor and the Quality of Government* and a White Paper *Reforming the Australian Public Service* foreshadowed the policies for this movement. A major and decisive step in this direction came when the Hawke government was re-elected in 1987. This step featured the reorganisation and amalgamation of existing departments into sixteen 'mega-departments' and dramatic "changes in administrative practice - program budgeting, a focus on outputs rather than inputs, performance indicators, competition between sectors and programs, together with an emphasis on coordination and integration of similar functions" (Dudley & Vidovich, 1996, p.42). These changes characterise the corporate management model and the beginning of its practice in the Federal public sector.

Around the same time, the national curriculum was put on agenda. In 1986, the AEC was "considering national collaborative endeavours" (Marsh, 1994, p.39). In 1987, the Minister responsible for DEET, John Dawkins, published *Skills for Australia* (Dawkins and Holding, 1987), stating that there should be a national curriculum. At an AEC meeting of the same year, the skills issue was addressed and "five priority areas were identified for collaborative activity: science, numeracy, literacy, LOTE, and ESL" (Marsh, 1994, p.44). In 1988, Dawkins pushed the national curriculum

further down the track by releasing another paper *Strengthening Australia's Schools*, which called for a common curriculum framework. In the same year, an AEC meeting decided to “develop a statement of national goals” and “undertake a mapping exercise of Mathematics and general curriculum in all States and Territories” (Marsh, 1994, p.45). Thus the development of the national curriculum began.

At the state level in WA, in 1990, four years after the release of the report *Managing Change in the Public Sector* and three years after the *Better Schools Report*, the Ministry of Education published *School Development Planning: Policy and Guidelines* and *School Accountability: Policy and Guidelines*. These two policy documents marked the start of the movement towards Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia¹⁸. By the end of 1991, several other sets of documents had been

¹⁸ The Department was switching to student outcome statements back in 1986/87 and to some extent that shift in thinking was attributable to, or is attributable to corporate management thinking. And in particular the idea that schools should be focused on outcomes, it is reflected in the school development plans, it is reflected in performance indicators, it is reflected in the corporate plan. There is a shift towards focusing the organization on outcomes and that started to take effect in the Curriculum Branch, probably in 1987/88, and it also started to take effect in what was known as the Organization Development Unit that produced the squiggle documents, the school decision making, school planing and so on. So I think that would have probably happened even if there had been no Better Schools Report. Already in the Curriculum Branch and Curriculum Directorate, people were starting to think in terms of outcomes, but there was considerable resistance to it, because there was an established way of writing syllabus documents and outcomes often featured very narrowly in the discussion. If there had been no National Curriculum, there would still have been in WA, I am quite sure of this, a student outcomes statements framework, because in many ways WA was a national leader in this thinking. I am quite sure of this too, because I used to be in the directors of curriculum meetings and so on. So afterwards what was happening in the Education Department in WA got caught up with the national agenda in other states and ministers and so on, but the seeds had already been sewn back there in the late 80's.

People seem to forget that the Curriculum Branch at the time was a very important branch in the Education Department. Politically it was very important because subject superintendents all had there little groups of people in there. It became very successful and very good at producing curriculum documents. So successful in fact, that you would need just about a wheelbarrow to carry all the documents it had produced into a school. Every subject superintendent wanted to produce their own documents. At one stage when I was a senior person in there, I had someone bring them all into my room and looked how tall the pile of documents was. The problem was in schools, some teachers were very enthusiastic teachers and liked the documents. Many teachers felt there were too many documents and there was too much work associated with all of these curriculum changes and so forth. And to some extent the changes to the roles of the subject superintendents

produced: a blue set for Mathematics and a red set for English. They were the forerunners of, and later were absorbed into, the national profiles for Mathematics and English followed by outcome statements in other areas developed during late 1991 and 1992.

What can be argued here is that Student Outcome Statements at both federal and state levels was proposed after devolution had been introduced, so it would be quite reasonable to expect that what was proposed as a curriculum would have to be consistent with the prevailing corporate culture of the time. Thus the claim that Student Outcome Statements is linked with devolution.

Rationale

The push for National Statements and Profiles at the federal level, and for Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia, came largely from outside the educational sector after devolution had been introduced. The intentions embedded in these statements and profiles were overwhelmingly aligned with corporate culture.

First, both the National Statements and Profiles, and Student Outcome Statements were intended to help increase Australia's economic competitiveness in the international market. One of the main features of corporate culture is the promotion of economic competitiveness. The dominance of economic competitiveness over curriculum reforms at federal and state level came out of political concern that Australia was not competitive in the world economy and faced some "major economic challenges" (Dawkins and Holding, 1987, p.iii). As a response, politicians turned to education to help promote Australia's economic competitiveness. In

and to the focus on student outcome statements were designed to regulate more effectively the rate of curriculum change in schools that came from the Central Office, because under the previous arrangements there was just constant recycling of curriculum and curriculum development activities without any clear central control over that activity. And student outcome statements to some extent challenged that arrangement because it implied for a start that you didn't need such bulky service documents, that you could state more clearly what the outcomes were. That was the essential piece of information and how the outcomes were to be taught was something that could be followed up later but weren't necessarily part of the core documentation and that certainly was some thinking at the time. (R.4)

particular, they invested hope in curriculum reform as a way for education to serve the economy (Bartlett, 1991).

Secondly, closely related to the first, the National Statements and Profiles were intended to incorporate the key competencies identified by Mayer and Finn, because “issues relating to vocational education and training began to press down upon CURASS”. The releasing of the *Australian Vocational Certificate Training System*, “led Ministers to ascertain the potential links with national curriculum developments” (Marsh, 1994, p.51). This move mirrored the emphasis that corporate culture placed on education for work.

Thirdly, the national curriculum and Student Outcome Statements were consistent with corporate culture in that they were also meant to reduce the cost and funding of education. At first glance, the intention “to utilise to the maximum effect, scarce curriculum resources and to ensure that unnecessary differences in curricula from state to state were minimised” (AEC, 1986) seems to be very educational. However, Marsh (1994, p.39) suggests that the real intention was to cut education funding when he says that “the collaborative proposal had more than little merit” because “States and Territories were experiencing major resourcing problems”. In fact, some participants in this study explicitly regarded this seemingly educational argument for national curriculum as a mask for a political intention to reduce funding in education. One of them claimed it was just a “manufactured reason for reducing spending in a current system without it being obvious” (Hod.1).

Fourthly, the national curriculum and Student Outcome Statements were linked with devolution by their intention to ensure accountability. Corporate culture advocates controllability of process, demands fidelity of policy implementation, and rewards performance outcomes measured against predetermined criteria. Within this culture, Student Outcome Statements was intended to be a tool for making sure that schools and teachers were made more accountable to their system, communities and students. Many participants held this view. For example, they said: “It's come more from the accountability” and “it's all that shift to performance indicators that became part of organisational structures” (So.2); “it was a better form of accountability than some sort of national testing” that could give “political masters” some “hard and fast data”

with which they could answer questions about whether schools were doing a good enough job (Hod.6); and Student Outcome Statements “are the benchmarks for the accountability of the school against system requirements and against community requirements” (So.1). Arguably, it was the potential to measure schools and teachers’ performance against the outcomes and levels that made Student Outcome Statements acceptable. This notion of accountability was quite explicit in the 1994 working edition of *Studies of Society and Environment* (EDWA, 1994, p.5; p.8).

Fifthly, the intention of Student Outcome Statements to provide schools with more flexibility in their curriculum decision making was in line with corporate policy making being ‘centrally cohesive but locally autonomous’, and with the corporate process of ‘franchising out modular functions’. Student Outcome Statements was considered to be a “kind of curriculum structure that best allows for a devolved system to develop” because the outcomes are “the mandated bit” (So.1). This structure or broad framework for curriculum delivery in schools allows schools to develop their own mechanism, “to consider the resources that they have, the students that are at that school, and the teaching expertise that they have in the school”, and to choose their own means to achieve those outcomes (So.2). Again, the notion of flexibility was clearly stated in more than one place in the working edition of Student Outcome Statements produced by the Education Department of Western Australia in 1994 (p.5; p.7).

Finally, Student Outcome Statements was linked to devolution in terms of its outcome orientation which emphasises outputs rather than inputs. Educationally, Student Outcome Statements was designed to shift the focus from input to output, from a focus on “what was given to kids” to a “focus attention on what happened as a result” (So.8). However, this shift to an outcomes model occurred because “it was a far more practical way in an accountable kind of an environment - economic and educational” (So.1). The intention of Student Outcome Statements to shift the focus on content-driven teaching and learning to a focus on teaching and learning process also promoted the pursuit of controllability of process in corporate culture. And the shift from teacher-centred learning to student-centred learning in Student Outcome

Statements was also outcome oriented because it required teachers to move from “content-based teaching to outcome-based student learning” (Hod.5).

Student Outcome Statements contained a couple of educational intentions that might seem to be less than consistent with corporate culture. For example: the intention to remove the differences between education systems across Australia and remove discrepancies between different subjects or learning areas in terms of assessing and describing student’s performance; and the intention to provide some commonly accepted terms or standards to describe student performance by adopting a common national curriculum in order to provide understandable and accurate information when a student moved around from school to school, city to city or state to state. At first glance, these intentions appear educational and isolated from devolution. However, Marsh (1994, p.44) claims that this was “largely economics-driven” in that it attempted to save money through avoiding duplication of curriculum material production between all the states.

Another intention of Student Outcome Statements that might not seem consistent with corporate culture was that of providing students with opportunities to go into things in greater depth and to provide them with a broader picture by “putting all the curriculums in line with each other” (Pa.2). Nonetheless, in an environment where corporate culture prevails, this single educational intention would be too weak to be influential. Moreover, it only indicates a possibility whose realisation largely depends upon daily classroom practice, which again would be influenced by other aspects of corporate culture in a devolved system.

Structure of Student Outcome Statements

Structurally, Student Outcome Statements is aligned with corporate culture by the outcome orientation in its internal structure, as the name itself suggests. It contains several levels of outcomes, starting off with an over-arching Curriculum Statement, followed by a lower level set of eight Learning Area Statements. Under each learning area statement there is a huge number of statements at different levels in different strands and sub-strands. As will be shown later, the development of these outcomes adopted a corporate process of policy making.

The over-arching curriculum statement prescribes what the whole curriculum in a school should be developing; and the learning area statements mandate what the curriculum in each of the eight learning areas should be like for WA schools. They specify the outcomes to be achieved through the curriculum in each area, and indicate some compulsory content to be covered. These levels of outcomes, together with the strands and sub-strands, are set as the framework functions. They are non-negotiable. The modular functions of choosing the means to achieve these outcomes are franchised out to each individual school. They are negotiable.

Student Outcome Statements is also aligned with corporate culture through its internal structure of strands and sub-strands. More than any previous curriculum framework, Student Outcome Statements formally incorporates career education into the Resource strand as one of the eighteen sub-strands of the whole framework for Society and Environment. Students are required “to study the dynamic nature of work” and “the availability of work opportunities.....in order to make informed and realistic career decisions” (EDWA, 1994, p.2). This embodies the corporate culture preference of ‘education for work’ over ‘education for life’.

Within each strand, the division of outcomes into eight levels was designed to deregulate the lockstep progression that traditionally occurred in the education of students, “so if students could proceed more quickly, that’s fine, and, if students work more slowly, then they work more slowly; that was the theory” (So.5). The philosophy behind this structure reflects corporate culture’s preference for deregulation and free enterprise.

Corporate culture also emphasises quantifiable objectives and performance indicators. The influence of this characteristic is evident in Student Outcome Statements. For instance, many pointers in SAE are attached to the one hundred and forty-four outcomes in eight levels, and indicate if a student has achieved a certain level of outcome.

In terms of its external structure, Student Outcome Statements is aligned with corporate culture as well. Assessment in Student Outcome Statements is intended to be criteria-referenced and school-based. Student performance is meant to be assessed

against the pointers and outcomes to locate a student within one of the eight levels. This external structural design clearly fits into the value that corporate culture places on rewarding performance and outcome achievement, as assessed against predetermined criteria.

It might be concluded that both the internal and external structures of Student Outcome Statements reflect the influence of corporate culture. It also needs to be pointed out that the overall structure of Student Outcome Statements is underpinned by the principle of being 'centrally cohesive and locally autonomous', an important structural feature of the corporate management model.

Developers of the National Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements

John Dawkins, the then Minister for DEET, and commonly regarded as an economic rationalist strongly committed to corporate management, played a significant role in launching the national curriculum. He also attempted to rationalise education and restructure education within a corporate management model because this was the direction favoured by the Labor Party. Dawkins, in particular, was keen to take education down the corporate road of an outcome/result oriented culture with a small group at the centre setting the outcomes, and local units (schools) being left to decide the means to achieve those outcomes. Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia was linked to the national curriculum in that its developers at a very early stage were "aware the national work was going on" and sensed that "later on it was going to provide them with a set of documents that they would be able to report nationally what they were doing in WA". In fact, Student Outcome Statements was linked so closely to the national curriculum, it was "nothing more than a WA version of the national curriculum" (So.8). Therefore, it can be argued that, Student Outcome Statements, by coming out of the national curriculum, was linked to devolution or corporate management culture.

The process of structural change in EDWA's Curriculum Branch at the state level and the amalgamation of departments at the federal level began with devolution in 1987. With corporate managerialism gaining dominance, it is reasonable to assume that this structural change process served to replace people, in DEET and state Head

Offices, opposed to devolution with people who were supportive of it. It is also reasonable to assume that the longer devolution lasted, the more likely that influential positions would be filled by people in favour of devolution. That is, the people who were making the decisions for the national curriculum and Student Outcome Statements were more likely to be sympathetic toward devolution and aligned with corporate management culture than those making decisions for Unit Curriculum. Or, at least, an attempt would be made to ensure that would happen when selecting curriculum developers.

This seemed to be the case at both levels. At the national level, positions for curriculum writers, which did not have much responsibility and authority, were advertised. The rest of the developers were appointed directly or indirectly, or commissioned by the Australian Education Council (AEC), particularly those who were to be in charge and hold the major responsibility; for example, members of the AEC Standing Committees, Directors General, Directors of Curriculum, members from the National Reference Groups and officers from the Curriculum Corporation of Australia.

The selection of Student Outcome Statements developers in Western Australia followed the same kind of procedures, that is, largely by appointment. For example, members of the working parties and the Consultative Committee were hand-picked by the consultants. Only a few positions were advertised and even then when interviews were conducted, apparently there was a trend to pick up like-minded people in favour of devolution. Some were recommended by colleagues of the same mind. One participant claimed that there was no “democratic process operating” (Tr.1).

The allocation of responsibilities among the developers reflected the corporate process of separating policy and operation roles. At the national level, overall responsibility was centralised to the AEC, a small group comprising Ministers for Education and their executive - the Directors General and Directors of Curriculum and a secretariat under CURASS. All framework functions were conducted by this group, which in Piper’s (1991, p.5) terms comprised a “closed shop”, or, in Marsh’s words (1994, p.47), “a hijacking enterprise”.

The same situation applied to Western Australia where the corporate structure was characterised by 'less and less responsibility down the managerial line'. In the process of WA Student Outcome Statement development, the ultimate power rested with the Minister of Education who had the final say. Down the managerial line of the Director General, the Executive Director, the Director of Curriculum, the manager of the Curriculum Development Branch, superintendents and consultants, each had progressively less and less responsibility and power.

The curriculum writers who had the operational role of writing the actual outcome statements were under the strict supervision of CURASS and had very little autonomy, though, they had the power of the pen and expertise in particular subject areas. Their autonomy only "came in terms of the words that they used in the documents". Even this autonomy was limited because "again the words were sort of constantly looked at by others and changes were made". They "could not work without or outside" some "givens" from their senior officers (So.5). They had to accept these givens "as a fait accompli and they've worked within it, rather than querying it" (Tr.1).

Closely related to the separation of policy and operation roles was the exclusion of some stakeholders from the policy making process. For policy making related to the national curriculum, Marsh (1994) contends that some major players in curriculum development were excluded: "Academics, professional associations and non-government schools" (p.50) as well as "private consultants" (p.52) were denied any role in the development process and did not have any input. There were only about "150 teachers" across all the states that were "selected by the Education Departments" for consultation (So.8).

Other stakeholders in Student Outcome Statements development in Western Australia also were excluded. As described in Part B of Section two, representatives of various committees, textbook publishers, the Western Australian Social Studies Association (WASSA), the History Teachers Association and the Geography Teachers Association, were largely excluded from the policy making process, and left only to provide feedback. There was no student involvement, nor was there much parental involvement. "They didn't appear to have much of an idea about Student

Outcome Statements and what they were about” (So.5). Moreover, regional officers were involved only as consultants.

Development Process of the National Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements

Many events took place during the development process of both the national curriculum and Student Outcome Statements that were consistent with the corporate management model.

At the national level, all corporate planning and policy making were conducted within a small corporate management group (CMG) - the AEC, the Directors of Curriculum, and later an executive group - the secretariat under AEC. For example, the Directors of Curriculum conducted the mapping of numeracy/mathematics in 1988. By the end of the year, an AEC meeting made a decision to extend the mapping exercises to six areas: mathematics, science, English literacy, ESL, LOTE, and technology. An AEC meeting in October 1989 decided to extend the mapping activities to include Studies of Society and Environment. Later on, a Curriculum and Assessment Committee was formed. This committee decided to discontinue the ongoing mapping exercises and, instead, set up a strict timeline for a three-phase process of developing a design brief to be followed by a national statement and then a national profile. In Studies of Society and Environment, this Committee did not approve the design brief until the fifth draft which it accepted as “an appropriate basis for development of the national statement” (Marsh, 1994, p.106). Moreover, only AEC had the power and authority to approve all final products of the National Statement and Profiles.

What happened in relation to the development of the National Statements made the process identical to the corporate management process. As mentioned before, a Queensland team won the contract for the National Statement of Studies of Society and Environment. The team produced its first draft in September 1992, but the secretariat officers of CURASS would not accept it and asked the team to water down their first draft because they considered it was too radical. On October 18, 1992 the team presented their revised version, but it still failed to satisfy CURASS. Therefore, CURASS decided to sideline this team and use curriculum officers and

subject associations to form another team to make necessary changes to the draft document, with “some directions as to what to do” (So.8). This event showed how clearly the policy and operation roles in the development process were separated; it showed “who was the boss” and who should do as they were told; and it also showed how corporate culture demanded central control of process and corporate loyalty. The replacing of the Queensland teams gave a strong message of that corporate loyalty must be observed, and that “you do as you are told or you will be kicked out” (So.8).

Generally, the lack of adequate consultation during the national curriculum development process served, in effect, to exclude stakeholders from the policy making process. The consultation for the design briefs was only token. Reference groups were established for each of the steering committees in the eight learning areas. However, these groups could not function properly because of the lack of funds for “face-to-face contact of members of national reference groups” and the ineffective alternative of “distribution of draft materials by post” (Marsh, 1994, p.74).

The same applied to Studies of Society and Environment in particular. The consultation of the draft document for national statements was limited to a distribution of about two hundred copies of the draft document, plus a few consultation meetings held in all States and Territories. The consultation for the profile was also symbolic in that it only allowed two months for consultation. It also involved a small number of teachers, about 150 across all States and Territories, who “were asked to comment on the levels of statements, the outcomes statements, the pointers, the language style, and levels of inclusiveness” (Marsh, 1994, p.148). These teachers were asked only to respond to the decision made by a small group, they had no role in the policy making process itself.

The way in which controversial issues were resolved in the national curriculum development process was similar to the corporate management model process where all directions, goals, strategies, guidelines and frameworks are set by a small CMG and its executives, and where bureaucratic mechanisms take over whenever a moral, philosophical or political problem arises. For example, the controversial issue of

identifying the eight learning areas, as well as the concerns related to the Studies of Society and Environment statements detailed by Marsh (1994, p.107), were mostly resolved through the AEC and CURASS meetings. However, where resolution could not be achieved, bureaucratic mechanisms took over. For instance, in the case of the draft document for the Studies of Society and Environment statement, when the disagreement between the writers and the CURASS secretariat persisted, the team was removed and seconded officers from seven States were used “to rewrite the national statement according to principles enunciated by CURASS” (Marsh, 1994, p.147).

At the state level, Student Outcome Statements development in Western Australia also adopted some of the strategies of the corporate management model. Many decisions were made at Cabinet or supra-state level controlled by the Minister. It was the Minister who decided to join the national curriculum endeavour in 1992 and put on hold of the then on-going work; it was the Minister who decided to give green light to the trial of national curriculum in WA in July 1993; it was the Minister who set up a committee chaired by Terese Temby to “evaluate the curriculum being offered in Western Australia schools” and to investigate “what is it in WA schools that the curriculum is trying to achieve? What are the Outcomes that we are trying to achieve? And to what extent is curriculum work able to achieve those outcomes?”; and it was the Minister who set up the Interim Curriculum Council “to spell out for all schools in this state, what are the major outcomes of learning to be achieved by all students in their state” (So.8). The Interim Curriculum Council served as the Minister’s executives. It worked out the major policy guidelines and framework by producing an overarching statement, namely, *a Draft Curriculum Framework for Kindergarten to Year 12 Education in Western Australia*, released in August 1997.

As was the case at the national level, consultation of Student Outcome Statements in WA did not give many teachers much chance to contribute, because only a few seminars and talks with teachers were conducted across the state. In the event, a very small number of teachers (about twenty) were involved.

The resolutions to controversies in Student Outcome Statements Development in Western Australia followed a of corporate management model pattern. The state-

federal conflict over control of education ended in a sort of compromise in which WA modified the national curriculum to suit its own needs and the Federal Government pushed its common curriculum through by sponsoring directly the development work of Student Outcome Statements at the system level and by funding programs in individual schools. As a head of department observed, “the Federal Government often does that. They will have money available and people will be applying for it. So, money rules” (Hod.2). For example, the Federal Government through DEET allocated \$2.5 million for Student Outcome Statements development in WA each year. (So.5).

There was very strong disagreement between education officers in the Ministry of Education about whether WA should adopt the Student Outcome Statements approach. There was also a “strong opposition from some teachers to the whole process” (Hod.5) as well as “a lot of questions and controversial issues”. Nevertheless, the “small group of curriculum officers” in charge of developing the Student Outcome Statements had the formal power and pushed it through. To defuse opposition, various consultative committees or groups were set up. Whenever a consensus could not be reached, the consultant “would decide” bureaucratically to “go forward”. Despite concerns and debate, issues related to the structure and levels of the Student Outcome Statements were resolved in that the developers “were told” by the AEC secretariat that “this is the structure that’s going to be used nationally so the developers have to work within this structure and the limits provided” (So.5).

The settlement of controversial issues showed that the small group of Student Outcome Statements developers were strong supporters of devolution; that money played a big role in control over education; that the majority of teachers could not resist Student Outcome Statements because they had virtually no role in the policy making process; that there was clear separation of policy and operation roles; and that there was less and less responsibility down the managerial line from AEC to its secretariat and then to the managers of the actual curriculum development work, such as the consultants.

Trial of Student Outcome Statements

The trial of Student Outcome Statements reflected a 'centrally cohesive and locally autonomous' and a corporate resource management process. The trial schools were chosen and then given a briefing on Student Outcome Statements by a consultant. Central Office provided relief time and financial resources for the trial teachers and schools. All the rest of trial work was left to each individual school and each individual department or individual teachers. Except for going to one or two inservice meetings in the relief time provided, teachers usually had to do their trial work after school hours because of industrial action in 1995. Often, a trial teacher "was doing something different from that of other schools or their colleagues" (So.5). As such, some trial teachers felt they "were both emotionally and professionally isolated" (Tr.3, 4 & 5). There was not much collective problem solving, nor was there much advice from the consultant, who, under a corporate structure of two tiers and a lean middle management, could not visit schools unless invited.

Implementation of Student Outcome Statements

Implementation of Student Outcome Statements has not started yet (1997). Nonetheless, the announced implementation plan is, to some extent, aligned with the corporate management model.

Adoption of Student Outcome Statements: All government schools are required to take on Student Outcome Statements between 1998 and 2003. This decision was made in Head Office through a corporate process from which those who are going to implement Student Outcome Statements were excluded. Schools and teachers were not consulted on the matter. They now have no choice other than to take Student Outcome Statements on board within the timeline set by the Education Department, that is, Student Outcome Statements will be "imposed upon" schools and teachers (So.5), or in terms of corporate structure, 'non-managers do as they are told'.

Other measures will be taken to ensure that Student Outcome Statements will be implemented; that is, in the terminology of the corporate management model, to secure the controllability of process, corporate loyalty and fidelity of policy implementation. One senior officer maintained that the Education Department would

use Student Outcome Statements as “part of an accountability process”. And no matter whether teachers like it or not, they will be held accountable for what they do. They will have to take on Student Outcome Statements, otherwise, “if you don’t do it, then there could be some consequences associated with it, and then teachers would not have a choice” (So.5).

Similarly, another participant claimed that teachers, particularly new ones, will not have any choice but to take on Student Outcome Statements in their classroom. This person argued that the Education Department will put new teachers on contract without permanency. This means these teachers will be constantly assessed. As such, if part of the assessment is that teachers should use Student Outcomes Statements, then they can do nothing but to pick it up. In this participant’s words, putting teachers on contract will “keep teachers on their toes” (Tr.6).

Responsibility for Student Outcome Statements Implementation: As in the development process, the allocation of responsibility for implementing Student Outcome Statements fits into the corporate management model; that is, framework functions are maintained by a small group at the top and modular functions are franchised out to schools. In this case, the Curriculum Council and the Education Department set the guidelines for implementation and specify the outcomes to be achieved, and schools and teachers determine the means to achieve those outcomes within the implementation guidelines. In a word, the responsibility is, “here’s where a student needs to be at the end of a period of time, and how you get the student there is up to you” (So.6). Schools and teachers are responsible for the daily implementation of the Student Outcome Statements. Schools and teachers will be responsible for determining the curriculum resources needed to help students achieve those outcomes, and for demonstrating what they do, how they do it and to what extent they help their students to achieve the outcomes.

Teacher Inservice, PD and Induction to Student Outcome Statements Implementation: According to the implementation plan, professional development by schools and the system will commence in 1998. It is expected that Central Office will conduct some induction or inservice at the system level for principals, deputies

and some heads of department. There will not be any wholesale centrally provided professional development support for teachers. Schools are responsible to inservice the vast majority of their own teachers. This task is supposed to be accomplished by the head of department, key teachers and principals during teachers' own time and with schools' own resources. Therefore, schools will have "to provide time and funds from their own school budgets" (So.5) or other avenues.

In the last couple of years, most teachers have "had no inservicing on how to implement Student Outcome Statements (Hod.2)". Some subject associations like the SSAWA tried to "picking up the gaps and are slowly providing some professional development to interested teachers" (Hod.5). But they "don't have any financial support" from either the government or the Education Department. They have had to fund their inservice courses with their membership fees. (Pa.1)

Financial Resources for Implementing Student Outcome Statements: Although there was no mention of financial resource provision for the implementation of Student Outcome Statements in the recently announced plan¹⁹, some participants in this study claimed that financial resource provision would also follow a corporate management model. A senior officer argued that financial resources provided by the Education Department "would be fairly limited". Apparently, the Education Department will only "provide resources for documentation of some materials, and inservices for principals, deputies and heads of department" as announced in the implementation plan. "It will be left up to the schools and up to their own devices to do much of the work" (So.5). Presumably, CMGs such as AEC at the federal level, and Head Office at the state level, considered the development of Student Outcome Statements as a framework function and implementation as a modular function. That being the case, they would only fund the framework function, and leave it to schools to decide the means to perform the modular functions.

¹⁹ This plan was presented as an overhead projector transparency at the SSAWA Annual Conference August 2 1997.

Curriculum Materials Support for Implementing Student Outcome Statements: The provision of curriculum support material in the Student Outcome Statements implementation process is expected to adopt the same sort of approach. The implementation plan²⁰ says that the Education Department will “publish support documents” in 1998, together with some “exemption guidelines” and “reporting requirements”. There will not be much beyond that, because “the resources are not there to provide additional material”. As such, “schools will have to fund curriculum materials themselves and purchase materials produced by private publishers from the market” (So.5).

Personnel Support for Implementing Student Outcome Statements: Personnel support for implementing Student Outcome Statements features the corporate structure of ‘leaner and meaner’ middle management. Though in a time of transition, teachers “desperately need some more guidance” they will not be able to get it (Hod.3). A result of devolution has been that “fewer and fewer people are actually involved in Central Office in providing support for teachers in schools” (So.5). Moreover, these people, as managers down the line, have much less power and authority than their predecessors. As discussed earlier, currently, in the Social Studies learning area, there is only one superintendent and two consultants, one for secondary schools and one for primary schools. The superintendent is no longer a dedicated subject superintendent. He has many managerial duties to perform other than providing curriculum leadership. In fact, so many managerial duties have been added to the post of superintendent that it requires generic management competencies more than professional expertise, an important feature of the corporate model (Rees & Rodley, 1997). Indeed, one teacher claimed that “someone like the present superintendent wouldn't have a sausage of a clue how to implement it at the classroom level” (Tr.1). There is one consultant for the learning area and there are seven hundred and sixty schools. “So the person will be spread fairly thin” (Hod.1). Moreover, they can not go to the schools, even if they want to, unless invited. And most importantly, they no longer have the staffing power.

²⁰ This plan was presented as an overhead projector transparency at the SSAWA Annual Conference August 2 1997.

CLOSING REMARKS

The case against linking Unit Curriculum to devolution can be argued on several grounds. For example, Unit Curriculum was content-driven, both in design and practice, rather than outcome-oriented. It was initially advocated by groups in the educational community, a few years prior to devolution, and it was mainly directed at deficiencies in the Achievement Certificate.

In other ways, Unit Curriculum can be claimed to fit the corporate management model. The development of its framework and the syllabus itself as well as its implementation occurred at the same time as the introduction of devolution in WA. The rationale underlying Unit Curriculum was consistent with the corporate culture of promoting economic competitiveness, increasing efficiency, reducing cost per product through rationalisation and cutting of educational funding, and ensuring accountability conceived in terms of corporate loyalty and fidelity of policy implementation,

Structurally, through its shortened and staged units to increase student choice, Unit Curriculum reflected the corporate culture preference for local autonomy, and less regulation (or more deregulation) and more free-enterprise. At the same time, central cohesion was guaranteed by centrally set system-wide requirements. Corporate management's emphasis on science, technology and computers over humanities was reflected in the lowered status of SAE within the Unit Curriculum structure design. The replacement of norm-referenced assessment by standards (criteria)-referenced assessment was in line with an outcome orientation, if not 'outcome-based'. And the allocation of responsibility for assessment adopted the pattern of 'centrally cohesive and locally autonomous' policy making.

Developers of Unit Curriculum tended to be supporters of devolution. Key opponents of devolution initially in charge of developing Unit Curriculum were later sidelined. The removal of the subject superintendents, and the installation of district superintendents with weakened power and authority was intended to flatten the three-tier administrative structure into a two-tier one in order to make the middle management as lean as possible and thus enable more direct ministerial control of

schools²¹ This was accompanied by structural changes in Head Office; the divisional structure was replaced by a functional structure. The allocation of responsibility among Unit Curriculum developers reflected the corporate management process in that: many framework functions were decided in Head Office by a small Implementation Group comprising some 20 people chaired by the Assistant Director General; professional associations and other interest groups were largely excluded from the policy making process; the curriculum writers only performed the modular functions of writing the actual syllabus and did not have much authority in decision making; and ministerial intervention and power increased substantially.

²¹ (Your conceptual framework) says that one of the major features of corporate management models of decision making is the empowerment of Ministers of Education and their increasing intervention in education. In my experience, Ministers from the 1980s onwards, did become more involved in the administration of the education system than they used to in the past. But, basically, they only became involved when there was a major problem that the Education Department couldn't solve, or when other interest groups approached the Minister directly, for example, the teachers union or parent associations and so forth. But during the whole period of the implementation of the Unit Curriculum, I only ever met the Minister on a small number of occasions and people don't understand this. They assume the Minister made every decision. The Minister didn't, and in fact if I could just say this for the record here that the Minister's view was that he was very frustrated by the Education Department at the time. The Beazley committee has come out in 1984 and the Education Department two years later had appeared to have made little progress with the implementation of one of its principle recommendations. I think his involvement and an appointment of someone from outside of the line management structures to take responsibility for the implementation of the Unit Curriculum was not Ministerial interference, or not so much based on the Minister poking his nose into something that he shouldn't, but more out of complete frustration. He felt under pressure as Minister for Education since the government had accepted the report and he was the Minister, to actually try and turn the recommendations into fact, to make them happen. I think the Minister was quite justified in being unhappy with the progress that the Education Department had made. One of the reasons that it found it very difficult to make progress was because various officials couldn't agree or found it too difficult to make decisions or were resistant to what the report was recommending etc. And as far as he was concerned, after two years of waiting, it was time to actually say, well now, let's do it. And because the Education Department was so slow to begin to implement the Beazley Report in relation to Unit Curriculum, it put pressure on the Education Department later during the implementation phase, which should have been undertaken at a much slower rate than it was. But the Minister's feeling would have been that this was a problem which the Education Department had created for itself by being so slow and resistant to getting on with implementing the recommendation. The Minister himself had no particular interest in Unit Curriculum. He wasn't on the Beazley Committee. The Beazley Committee, mainly professional people, had recommended it. So he was irritated by the fact that now, having accepted the recommendations, nothing appeared to be happening. (R.4)

During the development process, a corporate management model approach was adopted to resolve controversial issues. These issues were resolved in favour of the supporters of devolution, in some cases by sidelining opponents of devolution. The nature and extent of consultation reflected clear separation of policy and operation roles, with little consultation conducted with those who were to implement Unit Curriculum.

The introduction of Unit Curriculum was imposed upon teachers. The allocation of responsibility for Unit Curriculum implementation also reflected clear separation of policy and operation roles. Central Office retained the framework functions and franchised out modular functions such as teacher induction, PD and inservice training. Curriculum support material in Unit Curriculum implementation increasingly came from private or corporate providers. Because of little support from Head Office, schools had to fund curriculum materials out of their grants provided by the Education Department, and find other sources of revenue to purchase curriculum materials from private commercial publishers.

However, some advocates pointed out that Unit Curriculum did not fit the corporate culture completely mainly because it was still content-driven. Therefore they were eager to replace it with Student Outcome Statements. It is reasonable to conclude that Student Outcome Statements has moved further down the track of corporate culture. It was difficult to mount a case against linking Student Outcome Statements to devolution.

Both the national curriculum and its WA version - Student Outcome Statements - were proposed after devolution had been introduced for some years. It is reasonable to expect them to be consistent with the prevailing corporate culture of the time.

The intentions behind the national curriculum and Student Outcome Statements were largely aligned with corporate culture. They focused on the need to promote economic competitiveness, incorporate key competencies, reduce cost and education funding, and enhance accountability in devolved systems. They also focused on the need to promote deregulation and free enterprise and be outcome-oriented. Even a

couple of their educational intentions were “largely economics-driven” (Marsh, 1994, p.44).

The structures of both the national curriculum and Student Outcome Statements embodied an outcome orientation. The components of their strands and sub-strands represented a preference for work-related skills training and career education. With levels of outcomes and attached pointers, and criteria-referenced and school-based assessment, the national curriculum and Student Outcome Statements endorsed corporate culture with their emphasis on quantifiable objectives and performance indicators.

Developers of the national curriculum and Student Outcome Statements were strong supporters of devolution. Most of them were appointed to their positions. Though small in number, they pushed the national curriculum and Student Outcome Statements through.

As was the case with Unit Curriculum, the allocation of responsibilities among the developers of the national curriculum and Student Outcome Statements reflected the corporate process of separating policy and operation roles. At both levels, overall responsibility was centralised in the hands of a small group and the further down the managerial line, the less responsibility people were allocated. Non-managers such as the curriculum writers were under the strict supervision of CMGs and thus had very little autonomy. Except for a small number of teachers, stakeholders did not have a chance for input.

Like Unit Curriculum, the development process of the national curriculum and Student Outcome Statements was characterised by a clear separation of policy and operation roles, demand for strict loyalty (e.g. the Queensland team experience), bureaucratic resolutions to controversial issues, Federal intervention through program funding, and further centralisation of power for the Minister or AEC.

Implementation of Student Outcome Statements seems destined to be similar to that of Unit Curriculum; that is, imposed on teachers. Measures will be taken to ensure the controllability of process, corporate loyalty and fidelity of policy implementation.

The allocation of responsibility for Student Outcome Statements implementation is based on the principle that framework functions are maintained by a small group at the top and modular functions are franchised out to school. That is, the AEC, the Curriculum Council and Head Office specify the outcomes to be achieved and set the guidelines for implementation; schools and teachers decide how to achieve those outcomes.

The provision of teacher inservice, PD and induction, financial resource support, and curriculum support material will involve a corporate approach. Central Office plans to provide some of them, but the major part is expected to be funded from the school budget or other sources of revenue which schools themselves have to find. And finally, personnel support for implementing Student Outcome Statements will be limited by moves towards a 'leaner and meaner' middle management, a characteristic of the corporate management model.

EXTENDED DISSENTING COMMENTS BY THE REVIEWER

As mentioned earlier, none of the four reviewers asked to audit the findings of this study is known to be a critical theorist. Given that conceptual frameworks are not ideologically free or value neutral, it is not surprising that the reviewers took issue with some of the findings. This applies not only to the interpretations of events but also to what might seem to be matters of empirical fact, because a key postulate within the critical qualitative research paradigm is that reality is socially constructed. The following extended response by a reviewer contains comments which dissent from some of the findings presented in this chapter. As such, they indicate that for any matter under investigation there can be more than one definition of the situation.

My view of what you have written about in this chapter is that, in relation to devolution and unit curriculum, as you have pointed out, it is very clear that the Unit Curriculum was developed before anyone even talked about devolution, this happened in the early 1980's. So in that sense you could say that devolution hasn't caused the Unit Curriculum to occur. You're asking whether, Unit Curriculum would have occurred without the introduction of corporate management. I think that is one of the questions you are asking and historically I'm saying the Unit Curriculum began before anyone had ever heard the word corporate management or devolution. But one could argue that some of the thinking about education and about public sector management had begun before 1984, with the Beazley Committee and 1987 with Better Schools Report, and some of that thinking

influenced both corporate management and Unit Curriculum. It's the same kind of thinking about what the Education Department should be doing and how it should be doing it and so forth. So that you could argue then that it is not simply a case of corporate management causing Unit Curriculum to take a form but rather some more general influences were causing both of these developments to take on the shape that they took on.

The second point is that I think with the Unit Curriculum, and I think you have done this, you have to separate the period when the materials and structures were being developed from the implementation. I was appointed Assistant Director General in 1986, and I had very little to do with the development of these materials. Mostly this was being done and had already been done by subject superintendents and by other directors and various other people. I was mainly engaged in 1986 with the implementation and particularly the implementation in the pilot schools. So that when we talk about Unit Curriculum, you really have to think of it in these two separate phases, or at least I do anyhow. I personally had very little influence on the design of the Unit Curriculum and the conceptual thinking behind it. I had no involvement in any of that working on the Beazley Committee Report.

So my involvement came in 1986 or maybe 1985 when I was Director of Educational Services which included the curriculum branch. But the Curriculum Branch of 1985 was very complicated because subject superintendents supervised the staff in the branch, the Superintendent of Curriculum supervised the same staff in the branch, I was the director of Educational Services, I was in charge of the superintendent and the Director of Secondary Education was in charge of the subject superintendents and you can see that under those arrangements this was a formula for a lot of tension, because there is a famous saying in a book where Herotidus, says that "if two men ride a horse, one must ride behind." You can't have two people in charge of things at the same time, and it is very difficult when you have a situation like that. So there was always a tension between, in the development of any curriculum matter, because of this particular arrangement.

There is this thinking that occurred well before 1987 or 1984. One body of thinking which you haven't mentioned was this interest in school based curriculum development. Well school based curriculum development began well before the Better Schools Report and began well before the Unit Curriculum and was being generally encouraged through the Education Department as a way of developing curriculum. In a way you could say that school based curriculum development contained many of the principles of devolution. Meaning that schools should be more in control and more able to make adjustments and developments to their curriculum at the local level and they should become less reliant on the central office for everything which was part of the thinking. Similarly there was interest in school councils during the 1970's. The Better Schools Report had nothing directly to do with corporate management. Many of the ideas in the Better Schools Report didn't come from the White Paper or the public sector management group or business or economic rationalism; it had nothing to do with economic rationalism. It had to do with what people in the Education Department over the last ten years maybe, were thinking and talking about as being good for schools. So it is very complicated. I am not saying that devolution wasn't influenced by corporate

management thinking that had come from the private sector and then into the public sector of the government. It was influenced by it I am sure. But there were many other influences that already existed that were moving the Education Department in that general direction well before the Better Schools Report.

18

JUSTIFICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study set out to investigate whether critical theorists' claims about links between devolution and curriculum policy are valid. The previous chapter discussed the findings by analysing whether changes to Year 8-10 curriculum policy would have occurred regardless of devolution. This final chapter discusses the findings in terms of three functions that curriculum policy performs, according to critical theorists. As discussed in previous chapters, critical theorists (Pinar & Grumet, 1981; Clarke & Davies, 1981; Apple, 1981; Huebner, 1975; Schroyer, 1970; Tar, 1977; Marcuse, 1964; Whitty, 1981; also see Hlebowitsh, 1993) claim that under a non-devolved or centralised educational system, curriculum is the major instrument enabling schools to function as agents of social injustice, social control and economic growth. They argue that, in a devolved education system, the curriculum will perform the same functions, but with more intensity because they see devolution as being underpinned by the New Right ideology of economic rationalism, human capital theory and corporate managerialism.

The format of the chapter involves a brief account of what critical theorists claim about each of the three functions, an indication of what changes they would expect under devolution, and a review of whether the evidence presented in this thesis supports or refutes their perspectives. The chapter closes with a consideration of implications of the study for developments in China.

INCREASING SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Critical theorists maintain that the 'choice and self-management' policies underpinning devolution exacerbate social inequality (Angus, 1993, p.29), put an end to egalitarianism, and nurture the rebuilding of a differentiated educational system "which will more closely aid social reproduction" (Walford, 1993, p.242). This occurs, they say, because devolution: fosters racial, ethnic and social class differences; benefits higher income families who can "buy a better education"; and disadvantages students from lower income families who "remain trapped in some kind of educational ghetto" (Smyth, 1993, p.8). Therefore, "the academic standards of some children will be enhanced, but the overall academic standards of all our children is set to fall" (Hartley, 1993, p.112). Put differently, devolution is seen as contributing to an increasingly unequal distribution of educational resources, "which fails to take into account current unequal needs among schools" (Anderson & Dixon, 1993, p.50; p.59). As such, devolution produces a range of schools closely related to the socio-economic status of their pupil intake, "with 'sink' schools at one end of the range and expensive well provided ones at the other" (Demaine, 1993, p.45). Walford (1993, p.229) concludes that this "hierarchy of unequally funded schools will help perpetuate class, gender and ethnic divisions".

Critical theorists further contend that the free-market inspired 'choice and self-management' policies underpinning devolution will lead to the introduction of selective devices like streaming (Ryan, 1993, p.200). This streaming will "be closely linked to social class and ethnicity, and discriminate in particular against the working-class children and children of Afro-Caribbean descent" (Walford, 1993, p.242), and as a result, widen divisions within the student body (Ryan, 1993, p.200). Students will be "treated as the raw material of production, to be processed in a standardised way, and increasingly categorised by teachers on the basis of test results" (Ryan, 1993, p.199). Teachers, then, will become "increasingly alienated from underachieving students" (Ryan, 1993, p.200).

From these claims it can be further inferred that critical theorists would expect that SAE in a devolved system to be more biased against subordinate groups in society and aligned with the liberal or functionalist view of social justice.

Overall, the findings from this study provide support for the critical theorists' claim that the curriculum functions to maintain social inequality under devolution as it did in a non-devolved system. There is also some evidence, though not very substantial, to support the claim that devolution will intensify this function; that is, SAE under devolution can be expected to help increase social inequality.

To some extent, the introduction of Unit Curriculum was aimed at promoting greater equality of educational opportunity in WA. It attempted to abolish some socially unequal elements embedded in the Achievement Certificate. However, the objective to decrease rather than increase social inequality remained only as an intended policy. For example, Unit Curriculum was intended to meet the needs of all students. To do so, it developed over three hundred units, 'more than any school had the resources to offer and any student can take', for three years of lower secondary schooling; it shortened the year-long courses into forty hour blocks so that students might be able to take as many units as possible; it arranged the units in each subject area into different stages of difficulty so that students could choose the units according to their own ability; and it encouraged schools to change timetabling from a horizontal to vertical structure to provide students with flexibility to move around. The envisaged result was that every student could choose units according to their own interests and ability, and study them at their own pace so that no students was disadvantaged by the timetable and curriculum structure. However, the findings from this study show that in practice this intention to reduce inequality did not materialise, partly because some teachers thought students were too young to make the right choice and therefore they chose the units for their students; partly because individual schools did not have enough money, personnel resources and facilities to meet student demands; and partly because vertical timetabling was too complicated and Central Office provided almost no training for administrative staff. After about five years of effort, chaos and frustration, many schools gave up, and switched back to the Achievement Certificate structure.

The eight levels of outcomes in Student Outcome Statements are also meant to enable students to study at their own pace and develop to their own full potential. However, participants in this study predict this structure will not work because they

can see a situation where there will be too many student levels in one classroom for a teacher to cater for and thus teaching will remain directed at the middle level students - that is, teachers will continue 'teaching to the middle'.

Unit Curriculum was also intended to reduce social inequality by removing the labels 'Advanced, Intermediate, and Basic' used in the Achievement Certificate assessment. It replaced norm-referenced assessment with criteria-based assessment and graded students into 'A, B, C, D and F'. Again, innovation remained only an intended policy. In practice, it was implemented for a very short period of time and then abandoned. One reason was that parents were less interested in what grades their children received than in how they performed compared with other students. Another reason was that teachers were not adequately prepared for the new assessment strategy due to lack of training and time to adjust. Furthermore, it was too hard to reach a consensus on which grade a piece of student work should receive. Participants in this study predict that Student Outcome Statements will face the same fate on the grounds that it will also be too difficult for teachers to reach a consensus on grading student achievement into eight levels.

At one level, these attempts to reduce social inequality can be seen as having failed and as being likely to continue failing. At another level, together with some other factors, they can be seen as producing some undesired and unintended consequences which collectively increase rather than decrease social inequality.

Firstly, because of the shortened units, vertical timetabling, and pressure to rush through each unit in about eight weeks 'to get the examination result to the front office', teachers lost a lot of sustained contact with students. Consequently, they were unable to identify and address the particular needs of certain student groups.

Secondly, since schools did not have enough money, personnel and facilities to run extra classes, teachers could not afford to fail students. Even if students persistently failed examinations, teachers could do little else but let them pass and 'drag on' to the next stage. Student failure and the need for additional help were ignored. Most participants in this study anticipate the same will happen with Student Outcome Statements. Instead of giving a class of students the same schooling experiences and

helping them achieve the same level of results, teachers will have to focus on the middle level students and neglect those at the bottom and top. The envisaged result is that students in the same class will have different schooling experiences, receive different amounts of teacher attention and achieve different results at the end of day.

A third factor leading to increased social inequality springs from the intention of 'grouping students according to their ability' and criteria-based assessment in both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements, where students were, or are to be, assessed against a set of predetermined criteria. What might be argued here is that within the Achievement Certificate, students were labelled and selected within the range of three levels at the end their lower secondary schooling. With Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements, students were/are to be selected and grouped into five levels (in Unit Curriculum) or eight levels (in Student Outcome Statements), from the very beginning of their schooling. The word 'level' might sound more comfortable than the labels 'Advanced, Intermediate and Basic', but it performs the same function of differentiating students. For example, the Unit Curriculum certification was clearly designed to provide information to employers to help them select applicants for jobs, and to post-secondary institutions for selecting students into courses.

Fourthly, the content of both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements also served to increase social inequality. While Social Studies within the K-10 Syllabus did not provide much information about social equality except for a few references in the section 'Social Issues', Unit Curriculum dealt with social justice issues mainly in the added unit 'Contemporary Australian Society'. Both curriculums adopted the liberal concept of social justice in terms of race, gender and social rewards. Both curriculums presented race in favour of the whites and associated problems, violence, tension, laziness and so on with Aboriginals and immigrants. Basically, they both blamed poverty and gender inequality on the 'victim' rather than on the capitalist 'system'. The poverty and misery experienced by youth, women and minority groups were presented as being attributed directly to personal deficiencies such as lack of education and the will to work, or indirectly to personal deficits like an unhappy marriage or being born into a poor and problematic family. In the main, students

were asked merely to accept the reality. Little attempt was made to lead students to investigate the roots of social inequality, though Student Outcome Statements touches occasionally on the roots of social inequality.

Fifthly, increased social inequality can be seen as a function of reduced support for the implementation of Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements. When the K-10 Syllabus was implemented, teachers had sufficient induction, PD and inservice from the Education Department. Central Office also provided adequate financial support and curriculum support materials. Schools and individuals that needed special help in curriculum delivery could always turn to the subject superintendents and advisory teachers. With Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements, a 'self-help' approach applies. Central Office produces no or very little curriculum support materials, and offers far from enough personnel support. Individual schools, with a per-head school grant, are held responsible for the daily operation of both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements. Out of this school grant, schools are expected to fund inservice, PD and induction for their own staff, and provide curriculum support materials. Schools are expected to find other sources of revenue. Moreover, curriculum leadership is also supposed to be provided by members within each individual school. Participants in this study claim that this increases social inequality between schools, teachers and students for the following reasons.

The per-head based school grant looks like an equal distribution of resources, but does not address the special needs of some school communities. For example, a multicultural community might want the school to provide special services such as language tuition to students of non-English speaking background.

Under the pressure of a tight school budget, schools in poorer areas might not be able to raise much revenue from the local community and therefore have to purchase cheaper curriculum materials or hire less experienced but cheaper staff members. By contrast, schools in better-off areas can raise much more money and receive donations from its community members to buy high quality and expensive curriculum resource materials. These schools could also raise pay levels to attract more experienced teachers.

The reduction in government education funding creates inequality between teachers in the government school system and some parts of the private school system. It has nearly always been the case that teachers in the wealthy private schools get more resources than those in the government school system. Teachers in wealthy private schools have the funds to go to PD and inservice courses in situations where government school teachers can not afford to.

Finally, the lack of curriculum leadership intensifies inequality between metropolitan and remote schools. The lack of enough experienced staff members, because of the small size and high teacher transfer rate to the metropolitan areas, leaves remote schools in need of expertise to make the right curriculum decisions. Eventually, this lack of expertise affects the schooling experiences of students in remote areas and puts them in a disadvantaged position compared with their counterparts in better staffed metropolitan schools.

In summary, critical theorists appear justified in their claim that SAE curriculum under devolution tends to increase social inequality. As shown above, the argument for the claim outweighs that against it.

REINFORCING SOCIAL CONTROL

Critical theorists also predict that curriculum under devolution will reinforce social control. Devolution functions as a “conservative managerial device” (Smyth, 1993, p.5) to strengthen social control through a process of “centralising power to the top while shifting the political and financial crisis down the school community”. In this process, says Ball, “the state is left in the enviable position of having power without responsibility”(1993, p.77). Smyth (1993, p.3; also see Watkins, 1993, p.139) argue that under devolution, small elite policy-making groups intensify their capacities to set guidelines and frameworks and divest themselves of the responsibilities for implementing them. This means leaving schools “to manage dwindling fiscal resources, within tightened centralist policies over curriculum, evaluation and standards” (Smyth, 1993, p.3).

Put another way, there is a clear separation between policy and implementation (Angus, 1993, p.24; also see Rizvi, 1986). Control of education is shifted “away from educationists and toward politicians and the business community” (Watkins, 1993, p.143). Central control is tightened through a variety of mechanisms, such as: “national curricula and frameworks; national and state-wide testing; national standards and competencies; teacher appraisal and curriculum audit” (Smyth, 1993, p.4). As such, state education departments become more prescriptive with regard to the most important elements of curricular policy and “much more inquisitorial in their evaluation of key educational outcomes” (Ryan, 1993, p.197).

Critical theorists also point out that devolution (corporate management) excludes teachers, students, parents and workers from participating in the policy making process (Kell, 1993, p.225), and that “substantial inputs by representatives of teacher, citizen and community groups” will continue to be denied (Ryan, 1993, p.191). Should there be any participation, argue critical theorists, it will be “according to approved formats within an overall government policy framework” (Quicke, 1988, p.18). As such, the existing power relations that determine who controls education will be further entrenched (Brennan, 1993, p.96). The implementation of policy, then, becomes mainly a matter of technical expertise (Ryan, 1993, p.197) and “the work of the local educator will be restricted largely to the methodological, or specialist understandings, of a particular area of the curriculum” (Ryan, 1993, p.210).

According to critical theorists, devolution strengthens the social control function of curriculum through a range of processes, such as: establishing one-line budgets (Ryan, 1993, p.193), which spell the end of official support for school improvement initiatives (Brennan, 1993, p.97); imposing a “managerialist ideology on all schools and other learning institutions (e.g. bulk funding, individual employment contracts, merit pay, etc.)” (Codd, 1993, p.157); “closely monitoring and assessing schools with both ‘standards’ and teacher and student ‘performance’; breaking down the sense of solidarity held by teachers through an enforced competitive individualism” (Watkins, 1993, p.137); subjecting teachers to more formalised and judgmental assessments under the guise of accountability (Watkins, 1993, p.192; p.199); and treating teachers as workers rather than professionals (Codd, 1989a, p.168).

These strategies of social control through choice and free-market schooling enable the state to “distance itself from problems in education by blaming parents for making bad or ill-informed choices” and by “blaming schools for mismanagement” (Ball, 1993, p.77).

Critical theorists expect teachers’ work to become intensified under devolution (Robertson, 1993, p.125-6), and budgetary control to fail to produce staffing profiles of the best trained, qualified and experienced teachers (Smyth, 1993, p.8). They also expect devolution to empower further the already socially dominant groups (Anderson & Dixon, 1993, p.59), produce a growing class bias in parental representation (Ryan, 1993, p.208) and promote “a more commercial, contractual form or a commodity form of school community relationship” (Angus, 1993, p.18; Also see Apple, 1989). Under this tightened control, the pressure to assess will dominate the routine (Robertson, 1993, p.130). To survive, practitioners at the grassroots level will be “subjected to the tyranny of ‘the test’” (Ryan, 1993, p.198), and be forced “to behave in ways that are antithetical to certain fundamental educational values such as intellectual independence and imagination” (Codd, 1989b, p.168).

Moreover, as in a non-devolved system, critical theorists would predict that SAE curriculum under devolution will endorse the consensus model of society perspective on social control; that is, SAE will support the liberal or functionalist view of maintaining capitalist society rather than the conflict theory view of replacing capitalism with socialism.

Overall, the findings of this study support the critical theorists’ claim that SAE curriculum in a devolved system will intensify its function of social control. Evidence supporting this claim outweighs that opposing it in relation to intentions, structures, ideologies embedded in the content, and strategies used to develop and implement both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements.

Only two pieces of evidence emerged to mount an argument for refuting this claim. But compared with huge amount of evidence supporting the claim, this evidence appears trivial and inconsequential. One type of evidence is that both curriculums

are intended to provide schools with more flexibility and students with more choice. This appears to go in the opposite direction of increasing social control. However, as discussed earlier, this intended policy was unable to be implemented because of the shortage of money, personnel, facilities, and curriculum support materials, and because too many levels of students existed in one class for a teacher to cater for.

The second type of evidence to use for refuting the claim is found in the content of Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements. To reinforce social control, the content of SAE under devolution needs to become increasingly aligned with the values, philosophy and ideology of the socially dominant groups in Australia. It is not certain that this has happened since devolution. Of the six topics covered in the content analysis of both curriculums, on the issues of capitalism versus socialism and economic growth versus environmental protection, there is no change from K-10 to Unit Curriculum through to Student Outcome Statements. All three curriculums endorse the free market economy, adopt the view that capitalist democracy is better than communist government, and strongly suggest that environmental problems as well as other political and economic problems can be resolved through reform within the capitalist system. In fact, on one particular point, the change is for the better; Student Outcome Statements pays more attention than its two previous curriculums to collectivism or collaborative work.

Nonetheless, there is much more evidence to argue that both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements serve to intensify social control.

Firstly, while the K-10 Syllabus was concerned about the scope and sequence of student development in knowledge, values and skills, both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements are intended to ensure the accountability of schools and teachers to their communities, students and system. This intention is embedded also in the structural designs and regulations set for the implementation of both curriculums. With Unit Curriculum, the external assessment structure placed constraints on teachers. The criterion-based assessment, the external moderation by the Secondary Education Authority to ensure comparability across schools in the government school system, parental reports, and the centrally determined content and performance indicators, greatly restricted teachers' freedom. They also placed

teachers and schools under constant pressure to demonstrate to their communities and the system that they were doing their job well and to justify the small amount of money they spent. In fact, teachers felt constrained to rush through the centrally determined content, frequently assess student performance (indirectly their own performance) and forward assessment results to the front office by the end of week ten.

Similarly, the structure of Student Outcome Statements can be seen as trapping teachers in an 'iron cage'. The overarching statements, the learning area statements and in particular, the eight levels of student outcome statements, are all designed to monitor teacher and student performance. They function as a form of performance indicators or measurement stick. Both teachers and students are required to demonstrate in one way or another that they reach a certain level of outcome. Though the rhetoric says teachers have the freedom to decide what to bring into their classroom and how to achieve prescribed outcomes, most participants in this study predict that teachers will stick to the performance indicators, or just teach to the standards-referenced assessment, as they did in the Unit Curriculum. By forcing teachers to teach to the assessment requirements, accountability to the system, community and students is ensured, and thus control of the schooling process as well as students' educational experience is secured.

Secondly, social control is strengthened by the values, ideology and philosophy endorsed by the content of both curriculums. Though SAE in Unit Curriculum was mainly a repackaging of the K-10 Syllabus, it added two more units - Contemporary Australian Society and The Technological World. Social issues were dealt with largely in the added unit Contemporary Australian Society and to a much lesser degree in the Social Issues unit in the K-10 Syllabus. The content of both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements serve to reinforce social control by basically ignoring class conflicts in capitalist society, defending the existing capitalist system, and directing student attention to and blaming problems on the victims rather than the capitalist system. For example, on the race issue, both curriculums adopt the liberal view that bad race relations are caused by prejudice and discrimination, not by institutionalised racism and capitalist inspired greed, and that bad race relations are

only a result of cultural conflicts, not class interests. Therefore, both curriculums take the position that racial tensions in capitalist society can be resolved by getting rid of prejudice and discrimination through educating people, and by understanding the cultures of ethnic minority groups.

Both curriculums take the same stance on environmental, gender inequality and poverty issues. They support the liberal view that inequality and poverty are caused by personal deficiencies such as an unhappy marriage, lack of will or drive to work, lack of education and qualifications, and a resultant low employment rate. As such, they clearly blame inequality and poverty on the victims, and deny students an opportunity to investigate the possibility that social inequality, poverty and environmental problems may be caused by the greed fostered by capitalism. Furthermore, both curriculums strongly suggest that all these problems can be solved by reforms within the existing system, and that there is no need to replace capitalism with socialism. This is not to say that both curriculums present capitalist society as being a paradise for all and socialism as being monstrous. It is reasonable to argue that, by ignoring class tensions, blaming victims, and leaving the systemic problems in capitalist society intact, both curriculums function to (a) protect the interests of the already moneyed and powered class, (b) entrench capitalists who generate greed, and (c) help calm down any uneasiness, complaint or threat to the existing system. In short, they function to reinforce social control.

Thirdly, the K-10 Syllabus was meant to give students a sequential development in skills, values and knowledge. The Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements, however, appear intended to help socially dominant groups (particularly business, industry and political groups) tighten their control over education. This intention saw a huge centralisation of power in the hands of politicians like Ministers for Education, the AEC and their executives. The overall responsibility for the K-10 Syllabus rested with the subject superintendent. By contrast, the overall responsibility for the development and implementation of Unit Curriculum was taken away from the subject superintendents and placed with the Minister, the Assistant Director General and his group. The Minister ordered the Beazley Inquiry, initiated the restructuring of education in WA, set the timeline for the development and

implementation of Unit Curriculum, appointed his own staff to oversee the process, and imposed Unit Curriculum upon schools in the face of huge resistance. Power and responsibility are further centralised with Student Outcome Statements. The national curriculum, of which Student Outcome Statements is the WA version, was initiated by the federal education minister and endorsed by the AEC. The AEC, and later its executive group - secretariat, took charge of the curriculum mapping process, the briefing and appointment of developers and setting the outcome statements. Moreover, the final decision of whether to take Student Outcome Statements on board was an end-of-line responsibility of the Minister.

Fourthly, besides the centralisation of power in the hands of politicians, many other strategies were used to reinforce the Central Office's control over education and curriculum change; or, put another way, to ensure the hegemony of the values, ideology and philosophy of the socially dominant groups. One strategy was to directly appoint the key developers, and sideline anyone not of the same mind. As both curriculums are closely linked with the devolution process, supporters of that process and those informed by economic rationalism and corporate managerialism were put in charge. With Unit Curriculum, strong supporters of devolution such as the Assistant Director General and the Director of Curriculum were directly appointed by the Minister. Opponents of devolution, like the subject superintendents, were sidelined. The same applies to Student Outcome Statements. Key positions for its development were either directly filled by AEC, or advertised, followed by interviews to make sure those selected were of the same mind as the AEC. Correspondingly, anyone who did not totally agree with the AEC was not appointed or dismissed. For example, the Queensland team selected to develop the SAE statement was replaced by seconded curriculum officers simply because its value stance and ideology conflicted with that of the socially dominant groups. One brief aspect of this situation was that the Queensland team called white settlement, 'white invasion'. This sort of sidelining not only ensures that control of curriculum remains in the hands of advocates of socially dominant values and ideologies, but it also secures the values, ideological and philosophical basis of the curriculum content, thereby strengthening social control.

Another strategy to enhance control over education and curriculum is to clearly separate the framework functions (e.g. policy) from modular functions (e.g. operations), and to exclude professionals from the policy making process. The K-10 Syllabus was developed through cooperation between subject superintendents and classroom teachers; it involved a lengthy and full consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, and it incorporated input from grassroots practitioners in the policy making process. The development of Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements, however, were conducted in dramatically different ways, which helped increase politicians' control of education. First, all framework functions of both curriculums were decided by a small corporate management group. With Unit Curriculum, the length of unit, the number of units for each subject, the minimum requirements of unit selection and the timeline for implementation were all decided by an implementation group chaired by the Assistant Director General. In addition, almost all the units were developed in Head Office; very few got off the ground at the school level, though schools were supposed to develop some of their own to meet local needs, at least according to the rhetoric. Second, lower level managers and non-managers were given less and less power, authority or autonomy. Curriculum writers of K-10 Syllabus had a lot of autonomy in deciding the structure and content of the syllabus, but the writers for Unit Curriculum only had the autonomy to decide what went into what unit. Even this autonomy was taken away from the Student Outcome Statements writers. They did not have any role in decision making. Even worse, the words they used in expressing centrally predetermined ideas were constantly checked. Third, classroom teachers had virtually no role in the policy making process of Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements. The only opportunity for them to have a say was through responding to some draft policy documents. And fourth, stakeholders' involvement in both curriculums was minimal. With Unit Curriculum, there was virtually no consultation at all with those who were to implement it. Also only about twenty teachers have been consulted in the Student Outcome Statements development process so far (mid 1997). Although in both cases, reference groups were set up, they could not function well, either because their voice was blocked by that of the Minister, or because funds were not available for them to function effectively.

A third strategy to secure the control of education in the hands of the dominant groups was to increase ministerial and bureaucratic intervention in morale, political or ideological crises. While controversial issues that emerged in the development process of K-10 Syllabus were resolved through constant negotiations and consultation with the stakeholders, controversial issues and concerns about Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements are, in most cases, resolved at the top level exclusively by a small group. This allows the dominant groups to shape both curriculums the way they wish.

Finally, social control is reinforced by setting strict implementation guidelines and regulations. The K-10 Syllabus was widely welcomed by teachers. By contrast, both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements were imposed upon schools and teachers. The abolition of the K-10 Syllabus left teachers no choice but to take on Unit Curriculum, as the Central Office wished. Teachers do not have much choice with Student Outcome Statements either. It is just a matter of when within the timeline set by Head Office. Moreover, failure to implement Student Outcome Statements involves consequences. By recruiting teachers on a contractual basis, and linking sanctions with poor performance, Head Office can push Student Outcome Statements through and rigidly control the education process.

To conclude, critical theorists would be justified in claiming that SAE curriculum in a devolved system will intensify its function of social control. Both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements, through the driving forces behind them, their structural design, the values and ideologies contained in their content, the strategies used for their development and regulations for implementing them, serve to re-enforce social control and, in particular, politicians and socially dominant groups' control over education and curriculum.

SERVING NARROW ECONOMIC INTERESTS

Ryan (1993) sums up the stance of many critical theorists by saying that “a narrowly economic version of the general interest increasingly directs all major areas of educational policy, effectively ruling out the pursuit of general educational goals that are not economically relevant” (p.192). This applies to pre and post devolution

situations, say critical theorists. They see curriculum as redesigned to serve narrowly defined economic ends (p.193). As Ryan observes, liberal education is seen to be important only because of the “increased vocational significance of general cognitive skills in a rapidly changing economy”. Ryan concludes that the development of a mainstream national curriculum makes it little less than an instrument of economic policy (p.195). He predicts that there will be a “clearly established pecking order of subjects based on perceived economic utility” (p.201-2). Within this order, he further argues, what gets promoted will be “a narrowly focused emphasis on the core skills and knowledge of the ‘economically relevant’ disciplines, notably the languages, mathematics, sciences and technologies” (p.195). Similarly, Robertson (1993, p.130) claims that links with industry significantly shapes the curriculum of schools and that market niches tied to future employment are being exploited by the schools. She also maintains that devolution exacerbates “status differentials between subject areas, with some areas increasingly marginalised and viewed as less legitimate because of the nature knowledge taught (such as industrial arts)”. According to her, less economically relevant subjects are less favoured and less financially supported (Robertson, 1993, p.129).

As a consequence of the dominance over curriculum exercised by economic interests, typical parental input is expected to be confined to improving “student achievement in the ‘key competencies’” (Ryan, 1993, p.192); students will increasingly be offered “only one viable form of future social participation, one that is based upon competitive careerism”; classroom relationships will be dominated by competition (Ryan, p.200; p.191) or what Sachs and Smith (1988) call “a culture of competitive and possessive individualism”; parents will only seek exchange values for their kids’ schooling (Ryan, 1993, p.192); school will be dominated by “financial discourse” rather than by education (Ball, 1993, p.76); and school level decision making will be dominated by financial considerations (Angus, 1993, p.18) where “school councillors will limit their initiatives to market-determined forms of calculation and enterprise” (Ryan, 1993, p.199).

Basically, the findings of this study provide support for the critical theorists’ claim that devolution intensifies the curriculum’s function of serving narrow economic

interests. While the intensification is not so clear in the content of both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements, it becomes quite obvious in their intentions, structures and some aspects in their development and implementation processes.

In terms of SAE content, critical theorists would be only partially right to claim that, under devolution, SAE will perform the same function of serving narrowly defined economic interests, as they say occurs in a non-devolved system. This study found no substantial evidence to support the claim that this function will be intensified. Given that SAE in Unit Curriculum was only a repackaging of the K-10 Syllabus, it seems reasonable to assume that if the function of serving narrowly defined economic interests has not been intensified from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements, it also means the function has not been intensified since devolution. And in the area of SAE content, the findings of this study suggest that to be the case.

Both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements adopt the instrumentalist view that education is to prepare students for work rather than for life. They value economic goals more than expressive goals and focus on economic productivity, competitiveness and employability. The emphasis on training students in key competencies and job related skills was strong in Unit Curriculum, but has become even stronger in Student Outcome Statements. In the pursuit of economic goals and the dominance of job related skills training, even social skills are taught not because they can help students to live a better life, but because they are seen to have the potential to increase youth employability. On the issue of economic growth versus environmental protection, Unit Curriculum clearly focused more on economic growth than on ecological equilibrium or environmental conservation. But in Student Outcome Statements, the focus seems to have been shifted from economic growth to environmental protection, or at least, to ecologically sustainable development. As such, the function of serving narrowly defined economic interests in both curriculum is quite obvious, but there is no substantial evidence to suggest an intensification of this function. In fact one or two isolated changes from Unit Curriculum to Student Outcome Statements are for the better, from a critical theory viewpoint.

Nonetheless, there is more evidence in relation to other aspects of the two curriculums that indicate the function of serving narrow economic interests has been intensified since devolution, that is, from the K-10 Syllabus to Unit Curriculum and up to Student Outcome Statements.

Firstly, both curriculums seem driven by an intention to cut government spending on education in order to increase the net capital accumulating for the business and industrial sector; though, this intention is disguised under the banner of cost-effectiveness and efficiency. Even the intention of Student Outcome Statements to increase national consistency across all education systems is partly 'economic-driven'. It is meant to save money by reducing curriculum material costs.

Secondly, both curriculums are intended to better produce a ready made labor force for the economic market. One of the intentions of Unit Curriculum was for students to get 'credentials for post-school life'. Arguably, to live a better life after schooling does not require credentials. Credentials or qualifications are meant for seeking employment. Both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements in particular, set out to incorporate the key competencies identified by Mayer and Finn, two captains of industry.

Thirdly, as devolution has progressed, the function of serving narrowly defined economic interests has been intensified even more in Student Outcome Statements. This is due to a centred push by economic rationalists to promote Australia's economic competitiveness in the international market. Curriculum reform such as Student Outcome Statements is expected to play an important role here by integrating education, particularly the curriculum, with the economy.

Fourthly, because SAE is perceived to be less helpful for students seeking jobs and less relevant to the economy, its status has been much lower in the structural design of both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements. Before devolution, SAE in the Achievement Certificate was a compulsory course, enjoying the same status as Mathematics, English and science. But in Unit Curriculum, while the status of the other three previous compulsory courses remained the same, the status of SAE has dramatically changed. While a minimum requirement of twelve units during three

years of lower secondary schooling was set for the other three subjects, a minimum of only six units was set for SAE. In the Achievement Certificate, SAE used to be allocated 510 hours, whereas in Unit Curriculum, by design, the amount of time was reduced by more than a half to 240 hours. In Student Outcome Statements, although the design does not specify the time allocation and minimum number of units, it is quite noticeable that career education, work education, and vocational education have become a very important part of SAE. At the same time, values education and cultural education have become very limited and increasingly marginalised, according to participants in this study. Some also argued that the student outcomes are behaviour-oriented for job related skills training.

Fifthly, the lowered status of SAE by structural design has a negative impact on SAE in practice. The negative consequences identified by participants in this study include: (a) students choosing less and less SAE units, but more and more units in subjects perceived to be more closely related to economy or to be of more help for employment; (b) other subject areas encroaching on SAE and taking students away; (c) SAE being treated as a subject for taking on board new 'subjects'. This not only takes SAE's time but resources as well; (d) the reduction of time allocation for SAE resulting in a loss of staff, particularly head of department positions; and (e) most importantly, the perceived irrelevance of SAE which puts it in a disadvantaged position for funding - for example, SAE departments have to constantly struggle hard in 'a survival game' to get equal resources with other departments.

Finally, because the Education Department does not provide resource materials, schools have turned to the commercial market where there is a great choice available because the business and industry have got the money to produce resources. Being forced to pick up curriculum resources produced by the business and industry sector, places SAE curriculum under pressure to operate in the interests of this sector.

CLOSING REMARKS

Overall, the findings of this study provide support for the critical theorists' claim that curriculum under devolution will intensify its functions of increasing social inequality, reinforcing social control and serving narrowly defined economic

interests. The driving forces behind Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements, their internal and external structure, as well as their development and implementation processes provide more evidence to validate critical theorists' claims than to refute them. The findings of this study also suggest that curriculum changes in WA serve the interests of the socially dominant classes more than they serve those of the poor and working class, despite what the rhetoric for change claims.

SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR CHINA

The education system in China is quite different from that in Western Australia due to different social, cultural, political and historical factors. Thus, the findings of this study can not be applied directly to the Chinese context. Nevertheless, WA's experiences in devolution and curriculum change over the last decade offer, China, food for thought. This applies particularly if China is to launch some system-wide educational reform down the track, especially curriculum changes as mentioned in its ninth Five-Year Plan.

Any change, big or small, can affect people's thinking and ways of doing things. A proposal does not necessarily get implemented as planned. The path from intended policy to actual policy implementation is often a zigzag rather than a straight line. To some extent, the quality of the outcome of implementing an intended policy depends on the quality of policy itself and the extent to which it is implemented. Intended policy, then, needs to be well formulated. At the same time, those who are going to be affected by or implement an intended policy need to be motivated, convinced and psychologically prepared so that they will fully and willingly cooperate. In this sense, policy makers at the top have much more to do than those at the grassroots.

Below is a brief account of some general implications of this case study for China. They are of necessity general because any decisions about specific implications need to be based on a detailed consideration of China's context. And the differences in context between WA and China are too complex to examine here.

Sufficient Communication

Policy makers should make clear the reasons for change. Quite often there are disagreements between policy makers and grassroots practitioners about the need for a change. The findings of this study suggest that these disagreements arise for a variety of reasons. One is that practitioners feel they are working productively and there is no need for change. For example, teachers were quite happy with the K-10 Syllabus; they did not think it was necessary to change to Unit Curriculum. Another reason is that policy makers and practitioners see different phenomena as in need of change. While teacher saw a need to update the SAE curriculum, particularly in the primary schools, the policy makers for Unit Curriculum had on their minds matters such as cutting education funding and ensuring accountability. Still another reason is that policy makers and practitioners want to get different things out of an educational reform. While policy makers for both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements want to achieve their economic and political goals through curriculum change, practitioners are more concerned about the educational value of such a move. Until these disagreements are resolved, and practitioners are convinced of the need and value for change, a proposed policy is likely to meet with scepticism or even strong resistance in its implementation.

The Right Balance Between Push From Top and Desire From Bottom

The findings of this study indicate that it is often very hard to push a change through from the top when those at the bottom do not have the desire for change. It is also difficult for a change generated from individuals at the bottom to become widely accepted without support from the top. Supporters of devolution pushed Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements very hard, but Unit Curriculum ended up less than successful and Student Outcome Statements faces a fate of uncertainty. By contrast, though the K-10 syllabus was initiated by the subject superintendent, most teachers were dissatisfied with the old Social Studies A and B and desired a change. A lengthy 'talk period' made the teachers' desire grow stronger, and the subject superintendent capitalised on this desire for change. He not only easily pushed the change for K-10 Syllabus through, but also won teachers' enthusiasm and cooperation. In the K-10 case, a system-wide curriculum change proved to be a

success. Thus, it seems more effective to find a balance between top-down and bottom-up forces and pick the right moment to push a change with joint forces than to move with a single force either from the top or the bottom.

Well Balanced Interests Being Served by Intended Policy

An intended policy, is partly a choice of value orientations. An intended policy that fails to serve the interests of all, can expect to face resistance from those who will be disadvantaged by the policy. In a society of diversity, it is not easy to maintain a balance of interests in a proposed change, but this can not justify serving the interests of one group at the expense of putting another at a disadvantage. No matter what rhetoric 'whitewashes' an unbalanced policy, sooner or later, people will see the intentions, benefits, negative consequences and value stance of a policy, and question whose interests it serves. If policy makers and practitioners can reach a consensus or working agreement on this fundamental issue, an intended change can go smoothly; if they can not, it is more likely to fail. The findings of this study suggest that when attempting to identify different interests to be served by an intended change policy, it is easier to satisfy all parties if the focus is on student needs and the quality of their schooling experience. With the K-10 Syllabus, both policy makers and teachers shared the same desire to provide students with sequential development in knowledge, skills and values. With a widely consulted syllabus, and sufficient financial and curriculum material support, the K-10 syllabus was welcomed by the vast majority of stakeholders. By contrast, Unit Curriculum was perceived to serve the interests of politicians and the business groups and was met with resentment and opposition from the educational community. Student Outcome Statements is also seen as serving mainly the interests of the socially dominant groups. It already has been met with some scepticism.

Clearly Articulated Policy

An intended policy should be articulated clearly so that those who are going to implement it can easily and fully understand it. Any ambiguity in the description of the policy itself will cause confusion and affect its implementation. An articulation of a major policy needs to contain the right mix of specification and generalisation.

Too much specification will place constraints on the creativeness of the practitioners, and description in overly general terms will leave too much space for misinterpretation. Teachers had no difficulty in understanding the K-10 Syllabus because it had generalisations, understandings, objectives and suggested specific content. The same partly applied to Unit Curriculum. However, teachers found it hard to grasp the assessment descriptors. They may also find the outcome statements too general. In the case of Unit Curriculum, teachers gave up the criterion-based assessment after some years of effort and frustration. They may do likewise with the outcome statements because even those who have been working on it for a number of years can not fully understand it.

Explicit Requirements Created by an Intended Policy

An intended policy for change creates new requirements of those who are to be affected by it. It may require a different way of thinking about education and schooling; it may need a different approach or behaviour pattern in education practice; and it may involve a different level of educational resources - financial, material or personnel. A clear specification of the requirements will give people some idea about the extent to which they will be affected. It will let people get ready for the change psychologically as well as in terms of resources. People need directions to prepare themselves to cope with a change. A specification of requirements demanded by an intended policy can provide a type of checklist against which people can identify what needs to be done by comparing the requirements with the existing resources they have got. The developers of K-10 Syllabus spent several years 'talking' about the change, mapping resources and testing new ideas to be put in the syllabus, so when its implementation began, teachers were confident to handle it. Unit Curriculum failed mainly because there was not enough preparation in this area. With Student Outcome Statements, teachers feel uncertain because the outcome statements and the framework for its implementation do not provide them with the necessary directions to prepare themselves, particularly in the area of resources.

Strategies to Cope With Resistance

It would be unwise to assume that an intended policy will be implemented smoothly as planned. For one reason or another, there are often controversies about, and people opposing, a change. The findings of this study suggest that it is better for policy makers to predict sources and forms of opposition, and develop some strategies to cope with possible resistance as part of an intended policy package. The commonly used strategies in the development and implementation processes of the K-10 Syllabus, Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements include: sidelining opponents of change, ministerial intervention, bureaucratic resolution of conflicts, setting up consultative committees or reference groups, and consultation with stakeholders. The strategies used for K-10 Syllabus were a combination of forming the SSAWA to act as a consultative committee and wide consultation with stakeholders. The controversial issues that emerged during the development and implementation processes were mostly resolved and opposition basically disappeared. The development of Student Outcome Statements also used almost all of the above mentioned strategies. However, its consultative committees could not function effectively, and consultation with stakeholders, teachers in particular, was very limited. Consequently, many people, particularly professionals, feel they were excluded. Dissatisfaction with the framework remains and scepticism of its success lingers on. With Unit Curriculum, the sidelining of opponents, strong ministerial intervention and bureaucratic resolution of conflicts only suppressed resistance and concerns for a short period of time. Problems were not really solved. Supporters got the upper hand during the intended policy development stage, but when it was being implemented, resistance arose again and opponents 'sabotaged' the framework as an actual policy. The different strategies used in each of the three curriculums indicate the importance of the need to accommodate dissent, resistance and concerns in an attempt to bring about the successful implementation of an intended change policy.

Inclusive Decision Making Process

The findings of this study show that the success of a proposed change depends, to a great extent, on the sense of ownership about a change created during the decision making process. This sense of ownership has implications for who make the

policies the type of structure for allocating responsibility, who has the most power and authority, what people are consulted, what channels for input are provided, and whether stakeholders' input counts. In the case of the K-10 syllabus, the full cooperation between subject superintendents and teachers, wide consultation, and the testing by many teachers of new ideas before they were written into the new syllabus, created a great deep sense of ownership among teachers and they implemented it as a product of their own. The exclusion of professionals, teachers in particular, in the policy making processes of both Unit Curriculum and Student Outcome Statements created a division of 'they at the top and we at schools' instead of a sense of inclusive ownership. Teachers see these two types of curriculum as something alien to, and imposed upon, them. There was and possibly will be not much enthusiasm from teachers for their implementation. The outcome for one was 'disaster' and for the other, uncertainty.

All this suggests that if a curriculum change is to succeed, the authority for curriculum decision making should rest within the school community. Professional teachers in particular should be the key players. They are the experts. They know best what students need and how to meet their needs. As such, professionals should play the leading role in curriculum change and central authorities play a supportive role. Any move to downgrade professionals into 'technicians' whose task is to merely achieve centrally-set goals and objectives would make a change process problematic and reduce its chance of success.

Trial Run Before Implementation

An intended policy is, at best, a vision based on theory and experiences. No matter how adequate the consideration given to contextual factors, there is often a distance between intention and reality. In these cases, it is only a matter of how great the distance will be. Moreover, a system-wide change is not a small business. Its consequences are deep and far-reaching. Any failure to make an intended policy as sound as possible will create problems and chaos. Therefore, an intended policy must be fully trialed in order to get necessary feedback so that amendments can be made. Useful feedback depends upon the length of the trial, the number of aspects of a policy being trialed, how many agents are involved in trialing, and the number of

different contexts in which the trial occurs. An effective trial also relies on sufficient avenues for feedback and how feedback is treated by policy makers.

The trial of the K-10 Syllabus was a lengthy process. It involved a large number of secondary and primary schools in different systems. All new teaching ideas were trialed before they were written down in the syllabus. Feedback was sought by the subject superintendents and advisory teachers who travelled around schools across the whole state, and also by conducting seminars in which teachers were asked to generate, test and comment on teaching ideas or the contents of the syllabus. Eventually, teacher feedback was incorporated into the syllabus. All this contributed to the success of its implementation.

By contrast, the trial of Unit Curriculum was shorter in time. It involved only seven secondary schools from the government education system. Although it is believed that all centrally developed units and criterion-based assessment were trailed, the seven schools were left basically on their own. The consultants only came into the trial schools once or twice. Not much information about the trial was available to other schools. Feedback from the trial, though very negative, was not taken seriously or taken into account because the trial was not a trial at all, it was implementation. Lack of a sufficient trial, combined with its hasty development, contributed to the final demise of Unit Curriculum.

The trial of Student Outcome Statements involves a similar amount of time as Unit Curriculum. It also involves only a limited number of schools, namely, twelve. Feedback is taken into consideration. However, because there are too many 'givens' from the top, amendments to the framework are restricted to things such as, rearranging the levels of outcome statements and changing some forms of words to suit the WA context. Whether its implementation will be successful remains to be seen.

Right Pace of Policy Adoption

As mentioned earlier, the implementation of a new policy often requires changes in people's thinking and patterns of behaviour. Traditions of thinking and behaviour

take time to shape. Once shaped, it takes time to change them. People need time to adjust to meet the requirements demanded by an intended policy for change. Therefore, if the timeline set for adopting a new policy is too short, people will not have enough time to complete their adjustment. They will be thrown into a situation where old ways of thinking and behaviour are being dismantled, but new ones are yet to be formed. This situation can cause a sense of disorientation, frustration, chaos and hopelessness. People may feel the requirements demanded by a new policy are beyond them and they will resist, give up or unwillingly adopt the policy if forced. The timeline for adopting the K-10 Syllabus was reasonably long. Teachers had enough time to prepare themselves, and they were confident and willing to take it on board. By contrast, Unit Curriculum was 'dropped on teachers' too quickly. They made an effort to adopt it, but later gave up, partly because the newly introduced criterion-based assessment proved to be too unwieldy. Policy makers of Student Outcome Statements seem to have learned a lesson from the Unit Curriculum experience. A planned implementation timetable gives schools and teachers five years from 1998 to 2003 to take Student Outcome Statements on board.

Collaborative and Fully Supported Implementation

Much collaboration and support are needed for an intended policy to be successfully implemented. In a change situation, people face some uncertainty and need help. Cooperation, shared responsibility and support help make people realise that they are not struggling alone and that they can learn from each other and join forces to tackle new issues. This can create confidence and trust. The implementation of the K-10 Syllabus featured cooperation between subject superintendents, advisory teachers and classroom teachers. It also benefited from satisfactory provision by Central Office of financial and curriculum support materials, curriculum leadership, and teacher inservice, PD and induction. With Unit Curriculum, there was basically no support from the Education Department. Teachers felt that the Education Department left them stranded and was just devolving responsibility to schools. The implementation plan for Student Outcome Statements promises some support from Central Office, but teachers remain sceptical and hold a 'wait and see' attitude. The success of it seems to depend on how much support Central Office is going to provide, and the degree of

cooperation between policy makers at the top and grassroots teachers in the classroom.

FINAL OBSERVATION

The implications of this study for China have been outlined in general terms. Most of them centre on the management of change at a generic and non-ideological level. No attempt has been made to draw out what might be considered the more serious and substantial implications for social control, social justice and economic growth. The complexities of contextual differences between Australia and China place such a task beyond the scope of this thesis.

What can be said is that the validity of any larger implications of this study for China - in terms of social control, social justice and economic growth - depend upon whether China's context and needs are examined in terms of critical theory or functionalism. Sometimes people in power use a consensus model of society to take stock of their own country but use a conflict model of society to critique other countries.

The usefulness of large implications of this study for China depend on whether the findings of this thesis about links between devolution and curriculum changes are valid. As indicated by some of the four reviewers who audited the thesis, non-critical theorists are likely to take issue with some of the findings.

There are uncertainties, then, about what agreed upon lessons Australia can confidently learn from its experience of the links between devolution and curriculum, and what lessons other countries can learn from that experience. It can be suggested, however, that once a country has implemented devolution there is no turning back, no matter how dissatisfied some people become. That being the case, decisions to introduce system-wide radical restructuring should not be taken lightly. It also means that when devolution and corporate management are deemed to have outlived their usefulness, replacements need to be formed in future developments rather than past arrangements.

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APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT

Introduction

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Xie Shaohua. I am an overseas student from China, sponsored by AusAID. I am now doing a Ph.D. in the Education Faculty at Edith Cowan University, majoring in Educational Policy and Administrative Studies.

Topic

My research topic is “ The impact of Devolution on Year 8-10 ‘Studies of Society and Environment’ Curriculum Policy in Western Australia”.

Research

Data for the research will be collected by up to 45-60 minute tape-recorded interviews, which will be transcribed and sent back to the participants for confirmation. Participants will not be made to feel any discomfort or embarrassment during the interviews. Moreover, they will have the chance to make comments on the preliminary findings of this research prior to the final thesis being written.

Benefit

In WA, the study has the capacity to contribute to an improved understanding of the impact of devolution on curriculum policy, shedding some light on the relationship between policy as intent and policy as action in this state. For my own country China, which is also moving towards devolution (though very slowly), the benefits of this study will take the form of lessons learned from the Western Australia’s experience.

Your support for this study and willingness to outline your perspectives on the impact of devolution on the selected curriculum policy area will be greatly appreciated.

Any questions concerning this research can be forwarded to Dr. Rod Chadbourne, Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies, Education Faculty, Edith Cowan University on phone:

I (interviewee) have read the information above and received satisfactory answers to all the questions I have asked. I agree to participate, realising that I may withdraw at any time.

I (the interviewee) agree that the research data of interview gathered for the study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

Signature: Date: / /
(interviewee)

Signature: Date: / /
(interviewer)

APPENDIX B: BROAD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. What changes to curriculum policy were envisaged, expected, proposed when devolution(corporate management) was introduced in 1987?**
 - A. What issues were at stake with respect to the ideology, content and processes of SAE curriculum policy?
 - B. What changes in SAE curriculum policy were anticipated in what counts as valid knowledge(curriculum), what counts as valid transmission of knowledge(pedagogy) and what counts as valid realisation of knowledge(evaluation)?
 - C. Who exercised most influence in the decision-making process?

- 2. What changes have actually taken place to SAE curriculum policy since 1987?**
 - A. What changes have taken place to the process of the curriculum decision making?
 - a. Has there been any change to the roles of the policy makers?
 - b. Has there been any change as to who makes the policy?
 - c. Has there been any change to the policy making procedures?
 - d. If “yes”, what are the indicators?
 - B. What changes have taken place to the content of year 8-10 SAE curriculum policy?
 - a. Has there been any change in the aims, goals and objectives?
 - b. Has there been any change in the content?
 - c. Has there been any change to the learning and teaching activities?
 - d. Has there been any change to evaluation?
 - e. If “yes”, what are the indicators?
 - C. If there has been any change, how much is it due to devolution?

- 3. Were these changes contested?**
 - A. Why were they contested?
 - B. What were the motives, interests etc. of the participants?
 - C. Who supported these changes and who opposed them?
 - D. On what sites did the contestation take place?
 - E. What form did the contestation take?
 - F. What strategies and counter strategies were employed by supporters and opponents of the changes?

- G. What forms or bases of power and influence could supporters and opponents of these changes call upon to gain and maintain control over curriculum?
- H. What forces of change and stability did the supporters and opponents of changes to curriculum policy face?

4. Who won and who lost?

- A. Whose values prevailed and became legitimated and institutionalised?
- B. In whose interests is control over curriculum policy now exercised?
- C. Who benefits most from the changes?
- D. Who loses most from the changes?

5. Has the outcome of the struggle for control over curriculum policy been decisive?

- A. Is there any contestation going on now?
- B. Is there any resistance to the current policy?
- C. What capacity or opportunity is there for dissent?

6. What further changes in curriculum policy can be advocated or opposed?